

The following letters are some written by P.W. Fuller to his wife Zilpha during his time in the service and then recopied when he returned home.

We don't know if these were the only ones saved or whether he didn't finish the job. In the first letters are dotted lines signifying where the page of the ledger has been torn off. Also, in some places the writing was so faded or hard to read that a blank place was left.

The Journal was almost lost to the family and I believe it was more than 'luck' that it was brought back to those of us who treasure it. My mother loaned it to Wyn Faneuf and it remained in her house for several years. When I became interested in genealogy I remembered seeing it there in a bookcase. On a trip up there to Santa Cruz I asked Wyn for it and she told me to take it. It was nowhere to be found. Why finally suggested I ask her grandson if he had it. When his wife came over the next day I asked her about it and she promised to look for it. When she came the following day she had it and said she had found it in a cardboard box in their garage. A few months later she and Wayne were divorced and their belongings divided and spread around and goodness knows what would have happened to great-grandfather's Journal if I hadn't asked for it when I did. I am grateful I felt 'pushed' to ask about it when I did.

Journal received by Lovida Tufts Goodheart La Mois from Mary Ann Fuller (Anna) and passed on to Jean Goodheart Adams.

Jean Adams

1979

POLASKI WOODMAN FULLER

HIS JOURNAL

U.S. CIVIL WAR

JUNE 1861-OCTOBER 1861

TO WIFE

Grafton, Virginia

July

Dear Wife,

As you know we left Camp Denison at 12.....  
Sabbath 1st. Arrived at Columbus at 8 p.m. an.....  
over the Ohio Central RR for Wheeling. Owing to obstruction  
and the breaking of a bridge, we did not reach.....  
Monday night, at this point we crossed the river in..... a  
Ferry Boat--to Wheeling Va. Fortunate for me it was my turn  
to guard, and having our company baggage in charge, I managed  
to stow not only our baggage but myself into a freight car  
of the Baltimore and Ohio RR and slept soundly until daylight  
Tuesday morning. As we started with but two days rations in  
our haversack our provisions were now exhausted. The ride  
over the mountains on the Railroad was very interesting, and  
the men enjoyed it very much. So exciting was the scenery  
that we forgot our empty haversacks-but when the cars brought  
up at this place, about 5 o'clock last evening our appetites  
admonished us that we had eat nothing all day. Faint and  
exhausted our Boys could hardly wait-the slow movements of  
our commissary and the guard around our provisions is doubled-  
and alas for us all, the proximity of the enemy renders it  
necessary that we return to the cars-and move back 3 miles  
to a deserted village about the size of Milford, before we  
get our supplies, but 9 o'clock finds us feeling better- our  
supper of hard crackers and coffee has settled the difficulty-  
and our bed is made upon the floor of an upper room in an  
old two story house.

The people here (the few that remain) seem glad to see us. The Presbyterian minister, who professes to be a Union man is still at home and gave me a hardy welcome; I enjoyed a good breakfast with him this morning. His Church has deserted him and gone with the Rebel army. The Rebel Cavalry occupied Grafton till within a few hours of our arrival. A Union Doctor of medicine-hearing of our coming, purchased a few pounds of powder and with auger in hand retired to the woods, bored some dozen logs-loaded with powder and pug-and fired minute guns-to the consternation of the Rebels-who supposing it was our advanced guard-left Grafton in double quick time-fleeing toward Phillippi .....would judge the Union Peoples in Western Virginia to be.....we expect to move tomorrow-as preparations are.....the enemy out of this portion of the state or capture.....endeavor to care for myself, our regiment drew .....eleven hundred and fourty men(1140)but.....soon reduce this no. to how many we can not tell.....in Camp Denison-our writing table-stove, lantern..... 2 iron pots blanket and basket-by R. Manford. I suppose he took them to you. I saw George just as the cars moved off. I had only time to bid him goodbye. Tell him to be a good boy. I cannot tell you where to direct any letters. I will write again as soon as we get to a stopping place. But should you get ready to start for Vermont before you hear from me again-write-and direct to our regiment; and give it Adams Express agent-I presume I will get it. I hope we shall soon get the better of the enemy and have peace declared. I think of you all the time and pray God to sustain you in this hour of trial.

Most affectionately Yours

Woodman

P.S. The above was written in great trust with pencil  
and sent from Grafton Va. to Milford Ohio

## LETTER 2 TO MRS. FULLER

Phillippi, Barbour Co. Va.

6 July 1861

Dear Wife

Although I wrote you but three days ago-the movements of our little army are so full of interest, that you will be glad to hear from me again. Col. G.A. Porterfield-commanding the Virginia Rebel Forces-proved himself a coward-by running from Grafton-frightened nearly to death by the firing of a few logs by a Patriotic doctor. It seems now, that he did not halt until he arrived in this village some 15 miles from Grafton. Here he dug a few trenches and commenced building a fort but Gen. McClellan was after him. An order was issued to capture Phillippi by surprise. Two Brigades was to approach the Rebel camp by different roads, one of these roads was 15 miles and the other 22 miles long. The night being intensely dark and stormy, Col. Kelley having command of that Division which took the longest road could not arise in season, consequently the Rebels became once more frightened and as our boys call it-"skidadled". But just as they were leaving town Col. Kelley came in upon them and quite a little battle took place. Col. Kelley received a bullet through one of his lungs and two Union soldiers were killed.-- And the Rebels have gone we know not where, but suppose we are to follow-and capture them if possible. So far they prove to be good runners. Again I have to be thankful that it was my duty on guard when we left Camp Denison-receiving orders to care for our regimental baggage.

And not as yet been relieved, I have been spared double quick march of 15 miles over a very bad road, coming in this evening with the baggage train-our Boys had a hard time of it altogether unused to marching. Many of them gave out on the road-and all of us are beginning to realize that being a soldier in active service-and playing soldier in Camp Denison are quite different. Artillery gave this village a thorough cannoning before the infantry ventured in, and most of the houses are riddled with Cannon Ball. The few families that remain hid themselves in their cellars and came not out until we assured them of our protection. Maj. Gen. Geo. B. McClellan has command of our forces in Western Virginia-but Gen. Morris and Gen. Rosecrans appear to have the immediate control of the army. We expect orders to move on the morrow and are making preparations to that affect.

I will write as often as I can and keep you posted as to my whereabouts. I hope you have enjoyed your journey, but fear that you had a much harder time than I. May God be with you and sustain you and our children. I shall direct my letters hereafter to Barnard Vt. You may direct mine as follows. Rev. P.W. Fuller 6th Regiment Ohio Volunteers West Virginia. The rebels are too cowardly to meet us fair and so have become addicted to guerrilla warfare.

You may look for letters as often as once a week from me. If I fail in writing-it will be when I am disabled and then I will certainly obtain someone to write so you will not be kept in doubt as to my health and life.

In haste yours affectionately

Woodman

The above was written in pencil-by the light of a campfire after night.

LETTER NO. 3 TO MRS. FULLER

In Camp Near Laurel Hill Va.

July 17, 1861

Dear Wife,

I have been quite sick for the last week. Although I have not my dear wife to care for me the Boys have done all that can be done. I am some better today, and hope soon to be well. You will wonder that I am alive, after I inform you of my hardship since I last wrote. Two weeks ago, our Division of the Army consisting of 7000 men under the command of Gen. Morris, moved forward from Phillippi and took a position-the right of our column in sight of a strong fortification within which were 4000 Rebels under the command of a Gen. Robert S. Garnett. There was a good deal of skirmishing every day in which many men were killed and wounded on both sides-from some cause, as yet unknown to us-on Thursday night-(a very dark and rainy night and by the way it had rained incessantly for more than a week) Gen. Garnett undertook to run away from us: It was nearly morning before our Pickets ascertained the fact that the enemy had gone. I was suddenly Awakened by the long roll, expecting that we had been attacked, we thought of nothing but getting into line as soon as possible. We soon learned the fact. And the Boys seemed ready to follow-dark and rainy as it was the entire army with the exception of our Regiment started at once in pursuit of Garnett and his Rebel forces. Col. Bosley received an order to advance and take possession of the Rebel Fortification and wait further orders. Congratulating ourselves that we had escaped a long march through rain and mud, and expecting



to find food and shelter in the Rebel Camp, we left knapsacks and blankets in our tents-and marching about a mile and a half found ourselves within the Rebel entrenchments-the Rebels must have left in great haste-and without a moments warning (we rather guess Gen. Rosecrans has been flanking him) for we found their tents standing, their baggage and camp furniture far superior to our own, provision plenty-and it seemed to me, they must have expected to come back for in the officers quarters we found the tables standing with writing material, binders of letters to do (or etc). Our boys scattered over the camp collecting mementos to send home as trophies, and were just about to have food when they were startled by the assemble call. This call means get into line as soon as you can. No sooner in line than the order came "bout step-forward march". And off we started in the rain and through the clay mud, without blankets or even our Haversacks save in a few instances. We climbed or rather slid up Laurel Mt. 3 miles to the summit-3 miles down to Cheat River on the other side-marching all day as hard as we could walk over a wretched road. Made worse by the falling of trees across it every few rods-Cheat River, a rapid stream on one side-the mountains with dense laurel on the other. It rained pouring. Still on we marched, night came on-so dark we could not see our hand before us, an no order to halt until 10 o'clock. We had not overtaken the troops that proceeded us-and with the order to halt came the rather ludicrous command to build no fires, and make ourselves comfortable until morning. We had no shelter, no blankets, oh, it was a dreadful night with nothing to eat-but a few dry crackers some of us had in our pockets, wet through to our

skin, and obliged to lie down on the wet ground to sleep. And yet so tired were all of us that we slept soundly for some three hours. I then woke up shivering with the cold. I mentioned to Capt. Erwin that we must not be without a fire, we finally concluded to risk it and build a fire. One fire started-others soon followed until we could see down the road for more than a mile. Gen. Morris waking up-enquired what it meant. No one could inform him-and he immediately ordered us to march. Marching was much better than shivering with the cold, and the order was a relief to us all. We marched on until 3 o'clock p.m. More than half the time at double quick step, over mountains-through rivers up to our waist in water, through mud over shoe deep, raining hard all the time. Col. Bosley had sent back to camp for a load of crackers to be forwarded at once-but so rapid had been our movement that we looked back in vain for something to eat. We had just forded Cheat River for the 5th time when to our great relief we saw the wagon coming up, the driver informed me that we had cut up the road so badly it was almost impossible for him with 12 mules to draw the load of crackers-which when distributed gave to each of us one cracker a piece. We were just on the point of rebellian ourselves when bang went a cannon within a half mile of us, we lost our appetites at once, and hastened on-thinking only of revenge upon those that have caused us so much suffering. It seems that Gen. Garnett has taken a strong and sheltered position near a place known as Carricks Ford-which offered a good position for defense, and he had turned upon us, and now commenced a battle in good earnest. Gen. Garnett made a desperate effort to hold his position, without success.

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And lost his life in the attempt.

We lost some 12 or 13 killed and from 30 to 40 wounded while the Rebels lost more than 200 killed. We got over a thousand prisoners, 50 baggage wagons-5 or 6 cannon, as the remainder fled to the mountains-and what has become of them we know not. But the worst is yet to come-we had traveled 35 miles under the most unfavorable circumstances and after catching the Rebels found to our regret that they had no provisions. But Gen. Morris thought they could stand it back to camp as well as ourselves-held them under guard. We rested over-night but a little more comfortable than the night before, for I was fortunate enough to get possession of a Rebel wagon and we enjoyed a good fire. Truly we had nothing to eat, but we had got over being hungary, faint and exhausted we fell asleep to awake Sabbath morning and find to our delight a pleasant day. Pleasant, did I say-let us see. The sun shone bright so far it was pleasant. But the first duty of the day was indeed a sad one, it was to bury our dead. This accomplished we started back to our camp and such a march. I never shall forget that day. No breakfast but a small piece of fresh beef-wihout salt. (our quarter-master had found nine head of cattle in the woods-which he ordered killed and distributed to over 7000 men). We marched until about noon-when finding the road almost impossible our commander accepted as a guide a native Virginian who professed to be a Union man and said he knew the way perfectly. (I think if we had that man in our camp our boys would tar and feather him provided we could get tar and feathers) for he led us right out of the way and at 5 o'clock p.m. we learned from another native that we were no nearer camp than when