

I was born April 10, 1843 at Stockbridge, Massachusetts on the farm that was given to my ancestors by the Indians about the year 1700, so that I claim to be about as full blooded a Yankee as there is to be found. My early life was the same as other boys brought up on a farm, though I went to school more than many farmers' sons had a chance to do.

At the breaking out of the Civil War I was living at home with no definite plans for the future and was in a fit condition to catch the war fever, so as soon as possible I enlisted in the 2nd Massachusetts Militia, a company of which Regh was in our town and had been called out for 3 months service, but I never got away from town as father would not consent to my going. I next tried the 20th Massachusetts vols with the same result, but along in August 1861 I had resolved to go anyway, so I skipped to Albany, N.Y. and enlisted in the 2nd Regh of U.S. sharpshooters and father said if I was

so anxious he would not try to stop me anymore. The company that I joined was quartered at the Union Hotel, but soon moved to the barrack where I first began to find out something about soldiering. There were several N.Y. Regts at the barracks, and we were crowded and poorly fed and were very glad when early in November the company was filled up and mustered into the U.S. service and sent to New York City.

We stayed a few days in the park barracks, but the boys roamed around the city so much at night that we were sent to Rikers Island, which is a piece of barren land in N.Y. Harbor. We left this place in February for Washington. On arriving at that place we were sent to Bladensburg and in this camp we got our tents and arms. After a few days we were moved to Meridian Hill a short distance north of Washington City. Here we spent our time in dueling and target practice till in March we

packed our bags and marched to Alexandria, Virginia where we got on board the steamer Arrowsmith and went down to Fort Monroe. From this to Newport News 6 miles up the James River and into camp. Here we got our first taste of Virginia mud. It was so bad that teams could not get from the Fort with supplies, and a detail was made everyday to go to the Fort and pack stuff on their backs to keep us from starving. I never had to go but once, but a little incident occurred on the trip that I shall never forget. We left camp early in the morning and before noon got our loads and started back. My tent mate and I had a hard tack box full of beans for our load and before we had gone a mile we had exhausted all our resources. To try to find a way to carry it, we took turns carrying it on our backs and that soon played out. Then we got a couple of poles and took the box between us. We stopped to rest where a blacksmith's

shop had been burned and here we found some old stub nails and tinkered some handles on our box, put a pole through them, slung it on our shoulders, and got along finely. We trudged along through the mud till we came in sight of camp. I was ahead and I stepped over a ditch, but the fellow on the other end gave a jump to get across and off came the handle on his end of the box and every bean was dumped in the mud and water. After having said a few words which we considered appropriate for such an occasion, we took up contributions from the other boys and so did not go to the commisionary tent empty handed.

Our principal duty in this camp was to picket the James River as the Rebel ironclad Merrimac was across the river at Norfolk, and we expected they would come over with her and land troops and try to drive us away. We were camped quite near the river and at night lay

down with everything ready to run for the river if there should be an alarm. One night after all were asleep we heard shots down at the river and as quick as possible every man grabbed his gun and ran to where the shooting was. By the time I got there, there was a crowd of excited men shooting at something out in the river which they said was a boat load of troops. I took a hand at shooting with the rest but it quieted down pretty soon and it was discovered that the boat was a long narrow rock that the tide in going out had left exposed. But finally, as you all know, the Merrimac did come over to our side of the river but the account of the memorable battle of the Monitor and Merrimac has been read by you all so many times, written by those so competent to describe it, that I will not try to tell you anything about it. I will only say that we watched the battle from a respectful distance and really could not see much but a

dense cloud of smoke where they were. A large shot from one of them came ashore and smashed our cook shanty but did not hurt anybody. A short time after we left Newport News and marched to Yorktown where the Rebels had a strong line of fortification reaching from the York to the James River. Our camp here was in the heavy pine woods very near the picket line. A few days after we arrived at this place we got our first introduction to rebel bullets.

Two companies of my Regt were sent out to reconnoiter and try to straighten up a crook in the picket line. As soon as we reached our pickets, we were deployed as skirmishers and had only advanced a short distance when we came onto the Rebel pickets who at once fired and ran. We followed as fast as we could. We soon came to a new clearing that was covered with piles of cord wood behind which they made a halt and

we wasted a good deal of ammunition firing at holes in the wood. Some of the boys on the left of the line got around so they could see behind the piles and the Rebs ran again, but we captured quite a number of them. We chased them some distance till all at once we came in sight of a line of sandbag breastwork, and we got a volley that sent every man onto the ground as quick as he could get there. They fired too high and only one of my company was hit. The Captain sung out "get out of here every man for himself" and then there was some of the fastest running you ever saw. They did not follow us up and after awhile we all got together and fell back. We soon came onto a lot of infantry that were throwing up breastworks but as the Rebs did not follow up there was no more shooting done. In the confusion we lost all but one prisoner. We stayed in this camp nearly a month but did not do much but throw up works and

drill. One day an order came from brigade headquarters to have my Regt turn over their guns and equipment and take muskets and serve as infantry, and the next we knew we were formed in line and stacked arms and wagons came along with boxes of muskets which we were ordered to take. Then boys began to kick and swore they never would take them. Our officers were immediately put under arrest for mutiny and a heavy guard stationed around our camp. Then they tried to scare us by threats of being sent to the Dry Tortugas for mutiny in the face of the enemy, but the boys hung together and no coaxing or threats could induce them to take the muskets. The fourth day after we were put under guard the news came that Yorktown was evacuated and the army was on the move and our old guns and equipment were brought into camp and turned over to us. The guard was taken away and we started on

the march and nothing more was said about infantry duty. They scattered the Regh however by attaching a company to an infantry Regh for skirmish duty and the lot of my company fell with the 93rd N.Y. with which Regh we were identified till the close of the war.

The day after we left Yorktown we marched till late in the afternoon through a drizzling rain and deep mud and stopped in a clover field and were ordered to stack our knapsacks in piles and two men of a company were left to watch them. Near by was timber where there was heavy musketry and we were ordered in. Just as we got to the edge of the woods we met a Iowa? Regh coming out in perfect pairs. We tried to stop them but it was no use. They said the Rebs were right behind them but they did not make their appearance and my company was deployed and started ahead. We soon found their line. We did not skirmish but a few

moments for the line of battle followed us right up. But it was getting so dark that the firing soon stopped, and I shall always remember the night that following (portion missing) endured soaked through (portion missing) the dead and wounded spent the night shivering and trying to rub the cramps out of my legs. When morning came we advanced only to find that the Rebels had gone in the night. We stopped and cooked our coffee and pulled on after them but our knapsacks were lost and all we had except what we had on was forever gone. I never carried a knapsack from that time on. After several days hard marching, we arrived in the famous Chickahouny Swamp May 10th. Those of you that were there know what a lovely place that was where the ground was like a wet sponge and all the water we got to drink was thick with scum and filth. When it rained we used to catch water in our rubber blankets, and so

we lived along through May and June and the boys died off like rotten sheep with fever and diarrhea and we lost a number in battles of Fair Oaks and Cold Harbor. The 30th of June, 4 companies of the 93rd, with our company, were sent to White House Landing, then the base of supplies where immense stores of all kinds were accumulated. Our haversacks we filled then with matches and we were ordered to fire everything that would burn. A lot of Reb cavalry tried to drive us away but we ran the bank of the river and a gunboat that was there fired a few shots at them and they left us. After getting everything we could burnt, we got onto the gunboat and went down the river a few miles and the next day found the army which was going to the James River, this was the time of the seven days fight. The only engagement that we took any part in was the last day at Halvern Hill and then only for a short time. We

got to Harrisons Landing on the James River in the night and camped in a wheat field just ready to harvest and we pulled the wheat up and made beds like a lot of pigs. This ended McClellans Peninsular campaign, and I find by letters written from there that our company left Newport News in April with 87 men and got to Harrisons Landing July 7th with 52. While here we were treated to the liveliest shelling we ever got. The Rebs occupied the opposite bank of the river but it was so wide, some 3 or 4 miles, that we did not think of their doing us any harm, but one night after everything was still they opened on us with eighteen guns. Our camp was in an open field and there was nothing to do but to hug the ground and take it. Shot and shells came crashing through camp every instant and all was confusion and terror. There were a fleet of gunboats anchored up the river at City Point and as they heard

the firing they came down and soon sent them flying. Our camp next morning looked as though a cyclone had taken it, but strange as it may seem not a man was hurt in my company, while in the next company some 8 or 10 were killed or wounded. We left Harrisons Landing August 17th and went down the James to Fortress Monroe, camped a few days, and took boat again to Belle Plains Landing on the Potomac, marched to Centerville but was too late to take any part in the second battle of Bull Run as the army was falling back on Washington. When we got there we marched to that city and went into camp on the old ground at Meridian Hill. Here we had new wedge tents and got new clothing and laid around and rested till the first week in September when orders came to get ready for a march in Maryland to meet Lee's army that had crossed the Potomac and was headed for Baltimore. Notice was given that all

those that did not feel able to march could stay and guard camp by getting a certificate from the surgeon. I thought this would be a soft snap so I went up to the surgeon's tent, but he only laughed when I tried to tell him what ailed me, and I left without asking for a certificate, and this was my first and last visit to his shop while in the service. We left that afternoon with no baggage but haversack, canteen, and one article in the shape of a tent cloth green blanket or overcoat. We had a grand time going through Maryland, lots of green corn, apples, and as it was rich country that had never been overrun by an army we did not pay much attention to any rations. September 14th our brigade was in advance and we came onto the Reb skirmishers at Monacy Junction 3 miles from Frederick City. They did not make any resistance of any account and as we came onto the main street of Frederick City we saw their rear

guard going out of the other end of town and a long line of dust off toward South Mountain. We hurried along and about 3 o'clock in the afternoon came up with them at the foot of South Mountain Pass and after a sharp little skirmish we were relieved by the Vermont Brigade and we went back out of range and stayed while the Battle of South Mountain lasted. The next forenoon we crossed over the mountain to Boonesboro and arrived on the Battlefield of Antietam about dark September 15th, laid all night on our arms, and next morning the call opened in earnest and for some reason we stayed right there all the next day expecting every minute to be called in as the battle raged furiously all day, but we did not move nor fire a shot and we were out of range of anything but stray bullets occasionally. We did not lose a man. All we did was to take prisoners as they were hustled back and guard them till the cavalry started back

with them. From here we moved a few miles to a place called Pleasant Valley on the Potomac River below Harpers Ferry. We laid in camp nearly a month then crossed the Potomac, and started down the Saudon Valley. We moved along slowly and nothing occurred till in November we had a brush with the Rebs in Snickers Gap but it did not amount to much. We next tried to get through the mountains at Manassas Gap but after a little skirmishing we left and kept down the valley to Salem. It began to get cold weather and every few days would come a flurry of snow which was not very agreeable as we had no tents and not much to cover us nights. But we kept marching and at last stopped opposite Fredericksburg and went to building winter quarters. Burnside had taken McClellans place and I suppose wanted to do something, so in December he started out to Lake Fredericksburg. The Rebels were

entrenched on the heights back of the city and it was a desperate undertaking to cross the river and try to drive them out but the army got across and charged the works but it was useless and that night we crossed back and went into our old quarters, but we lost a number of the boys and it seemed a useless waste of life. We went to work and built good log huts, drew blankets and clothing, and passed the winter of 62 and 63 without any events worth mentioning. In April I was detailed as an orderly for General Joe Hooker who had relieved Burnside, and for the next year of service I had a good job, a horse to ride, plenty of rations, and a good tent to sleep in. There were four of us and all we had to do was to run errands from one headquarters to another. May 5th was the battle of Chancellorville, and although I got into some pretty hot places, I didn't get hurt. In June the army started north and went over much the

same ground as we did the Fall before in Maryland at Frederick City. General Meade relieved Hooker but we kept our places and kept on to Gettysburg. We arrived on the field the night of the 1st of July and Meade established his headquarters about a mile from town near the center of the line. It proved to be an extremely dangerous place, but General Meade would not move. When the Rebs made their big charge on the afternoon of July 3rd they poured all kinds of missiles into headquarters (a storm?). There was a low stone wall in front of the house that the General was in and I got behind that and hugged the ground for all I was worth. When it was over the land was strewn with dead and dying horses and men and the house was riddled with holes. One of the orderlies was killed. Two lost their horses, but myself and horse came out all sound. That night I started for Westminster, the nearest railroad

station, with Meade's horse "Baldy" that was wounded and put him on the cars to go to Philadelphia to be doctored up. While in town I got a canteen of apple jack which I sampled so often that on the way back to Gettysburg I was obliged to get passage in a supply wagon and lead my horse but there was enough left to floor the other orderlies. When I got back July 6th just at night, the General gave me an order to carry to Frederick City, 70 miles, and told me to go right along as fast the horse would stand it. Just after I started it began to rain and it was awful dark. I had no trouble keeping the road as it was the Old National Pike and the best road I ever saw. About midnight I stopped at a barn beside the road to rest and see if I could not get a bite for the horse. I groped around till I found the hay mow and got the horse up to it, took off my rubber blanket, and threw it into the mow, but it missed and fell

into a basement cellar. I did not dare to try to go after for fear I should break my neck, and I often wondered what the old farmer thought when he found it with my name, company, and Regh on it. I got to Frederick City about 9 o'clock tired out and galled by the saddle so I could scarcely walk. I handed over the dispatches and was given another to take to Boonesboro 16 miles more. I hated to start but was soon on the road again. Just outside the city I stopped long enough to see some cavalry men string up an old spy that I had seen around headquarters, lots of times, selling little muskets. I stayed at Bonnesboro 3 days when the headquarters came along and I joined in. From there to Falling Waters on the river where Lee's army was stopped from crossing by high water. Meade did not attack him and in a few days Lee crossed the river and down the Shenandoah Valley. We followed him along till in

September we got to Culpepper and after a while went into ???? at Branily Station. In December the army crossed the Reapidan and had some fighting near Orange C.H. but the weather was extremely cold and we came back to the old camp and went into winter quarters. Along in the winter my company nearly all reenlisted and went home on 30 days furlough, but I was afraid I would lose my place if I left it for 30 days so I did not reenlist. The winter of 63 and 64 passed away without any particular events. 4 of us occupied a good small tent and without anything much to do and a darky to cook for us we enjoyed life pretty well. Early in April Meade issued an order that all volunteers on detached service should be sent to their Regh and their places filled by regulars and in less than a week I found myself back in the company which was then in the 2nd brigade, 3rd div., 2nd corps. I was glad to get back with the boys,

but it came hard to go back to old times. May 3rd we started across the Reapidan again and the night of the 4th slept on the old Chancellorsville Battlefield. The next forenoon went to Todds Tavern. No signs of Rebs, but while on this march occurred quite an exciting incident to me. It happened in this way. We were at Rappahannock Ford when General Meade called me and said I should go to Fairfax C.H. with a dispatch to the Quartermaster at that place. It was about 60 miles and the country between was infested with guerrillas and I might get picked up. He said to take one of his horses and he would send Adams, a scout that was familiar with the road, and not to stop and talk with anybody but get through if possible and if I got along all right to wait there for orders. So the next morning Adams and I started about daylight and soon we were outside the picket line. All went well till along in the afternoon we

came in sight of a grist mill and a house opposite and Adams said there was a bushwhacker lived there who would stop us if he was at home and saw us go by. We put our horses into a run and just as we got by bang! went a gun from the mill. The buckshot whistled around but before he got another chance we were out of danger from him. We saw no one else that looked suspicious, and Adams said if we got by the Wolf Run shoals we would not have any more trouble. There was a country tavern at the crossing which was a favorite resort for Mosby's men and they sometimes had a picket posted on the bank. It was quite a while after dark when we came in sight of the tavern and it was lit up from top to bottom. We went up slowly and discovered that they were having a dance and the fence both sides of the road was strung with horses with saddles and accoutrements on but not a man was outside, and we got

by and across the shoals without making any alarm. Then we rode as fast as we could to get out of that region. As we were riding slowly along an hour or so after two men jumped into the road ahead and poked their bayonets in our faces and hollered Halt! I was so scared I almost tumbled off the horse but soon found out that we had struck our pickets near Fairfax. They took us back to the reserve pickets and the officer of the day examined our passes and let us go. I never want to be in such a strain as I was that day and night again. I stayed at Fairfax about a week and then returned to Branily Station by cars as they had got the road opened-expecting anytime to run on to them we halted and got a little rest and dinner and started down the Plank Road toward Orange C.H. My company was acting as flankers for the Regh when all at once we met the Johnnies in full force and before we knew what to do we got a volley

that cut the boys down terribly. All was confusion and every man hunted some cover and began firing without regard or order from anybody. I have no idea how long it lasted but when about all the boys were either killed or wounded we heard a tremendous shouting in our rear and here came a brigade of the 6th corps hollering "get out of here give us a chance at em". About this time I went to the ground and when I next realized anything the firing had moved ahead and I lost no time in getting out of range. I happened to run onto a bunch of the company's boys that were wounded and we made our way to the field hospital. I slept soundly that night and the surgeons came around next morning looking up cases for amputation, and I was taken to a tent to have my right arm cut off as it was shattered between the shoulder and elbow. But, after I got there one of the other boys who was wounded almost the same in the left

arm proposed that we get out when the doctors weren't looking and skip to some other hospital. That suited me and we got away and went to the 5th corps hospital where we stayed that day, and when we saw a doctor coming around we would get up and fall in behind him and we managed to dodge them. The next day we were started for Washington and after 4 days of traveling got to Aequia???? Creek more dead than alive and got on a steamboat going to Washington. We got there at noon the next day and I was taken to the family hospital where I stayed till January 1865. Then home, and this ended my soldier's career.