

Camped along this road for several miles without
meeting with the enemy, the 1st Division leading the way.
About 4 p.m. the advance encountered the rebels in force.
It's halted by the road-side and finally camped for the
night in a thick pine wood as usual. The day had
been bitter cold. We marched considerably farther than neces-
sary in order to avoid being discovered; going through low
places and woods. Hitherto our movements have been
still, no noise being allowed. But now the bayles and
drums were brought into use and the woods resound-
ed with martial music. So passed the pathos.

30th Nov 1863. 4 p.m.

In skirmish line - 300 yds.

from Rebel fortifications. Left camp at three o'clock.
Followed the plank road for a couple of miles as
far as the 1st Division went yesterday - leaving the road. Came
to the left and formed in line of battle. The 1st Min. being put
out as flankers. It was intended that the attack should
commence at 8 - but daylight revealed an entrenched po-
sition which in the opinion of the men as well as the
officers could not be taken by assault. But the order had
^{been} issued and it must be obeyed - though all felt that Gen

if any would be able to reach the works alive. An open
field had to be crossed - which could be swept by grape and
cannon. Rebels making fire from the breast-works.
Daylight disclosed the enemy's skirmishers - and the field
ready to dispute our further progress. While beyond their
artillery took up fearfully - the battle flag of the 1st Re
waving defiantly in our very faces. We had no position for
artillery could not use any. Our line of skirmishers had
orders to throw off knapsacks - to advance as far as possible
and then to remain standing until the line of battle came
up - and then to fall in with them and press forward.
The line of battle were ordered not to fire a shot. Thus
matters stood at 8. Everything in readiness to advance.
Gloomily the hours passed. Death looked us in the face.
The faces of the men told too clearly the danger to be incurred
but they were resolute - determined to do their duty though
it was plain that when General was the word - they would
walk out to certain death. In silence we waited orders.
" Dreadful suspense! But the time passed and no orders
were issued - and we are still ready and waiting. Night came
and the attack was not made - a wise conclusion in Gen
Meade's and our ^{own} relief. The untold buoyancy of spirit

returned to the men. Since writing the above we were
relieved by the 83rd N.Y. and went into camp about a mile in
the rear. Going through the thickest kind of pine woods. in
utter darkness - tearing our clothes - scratching our faces. stumbling
over logs. at finding the plank road - cold - weary. In pulling
my way through the brush I lost my ~~the~~ haversack - by the
breaking of the strap containing two days rations - coffee cups - &c.
Luckily I had a sabbie in my knapsack - How cold it is.
Water freezes in our canteens - in a few minutes. Well - the day
has gone - its events will long be remembered by me.

Dec 1st 1863. Evening -

The day has been clear - cold - and quiet. The
two armies have been watching each other. I have
failed to flank Genl Lee - or rather finding
him to strongly entrenched will probably fall
back to Fetter's skirting or to some other point
farther up the Rappahannock - tonight will
find no moving. Changed camp a short
distance this afternoon. The principal part
of the Brig have been building breast-
works since early morn along the old

Rail. Road. Hope this fine weather may
continue until the campaign ends. Rather
cool for sleeping on the ground - but am
thankful it is no worse. Dread a snow storm.

Dec 3rd 1863.

In camp near
Brandy Station.

Evening - From the movement of things I judged
when I penned a few lines on the 1st inst. that the army
would relinquish any further attempts to bring
about a general engagement - and retire to Fred-
ricksburg - or some point up the Rappahannock - but
had no idea that the troops were then moving.
The command had built a long fire by bringing
together several trees (oak) which were dry -
having been peeled of the bark - for a tan - bark.
The men collected leaves for beds - and laid
down to rest. For we all knew that we should have
to sleep early. Nine O'clock came - and "fall in" sounded
harshly in my ears. No more rest that night. The Brig
"lined off" in the direction of the plank road. and