

YANKEE DOODLING:
an Account of
Various Incidents
in
Several Military Reenactments
of the
200th Anniversary
of the
War of American Independence

Dedicated to Ron MacInnis,
who encouraged the publication
of these journals,
and also to the many men and women,
both named and anonymous,
without whose talents, energies, and commitments
none of what follows would have been possible



The author updating the journal
during a break
on the Great Carry,
30 September 1975

A Journal of
Arnold's Expedition to Quebec - 75
as Kept by
John F. Denis
of the
Company of Captain Oliver Hanchett
of the
Division of Major Return Jonathan Meigs

Foreword

In the following pages I have transcribed the contents of the journal which I kept from 20 September to 4 October 1975 while participating in the bicentennial reenactment of Colonel Benedict Arnold's march to liberate Quebec. Each day's record was written within twenty-four hours of the events described. Certain pages were composed at sea in the cockpit of a twenty-eight foot ketch; others were written in a cold, wet tent by the beam of a flashlight. On several days it required very nearly every moment of my free time to update these records. A single paragraph may contain several observations recorded at widely separated moments, and so the style of my writing is seldom smooth.

I have decided to transcribe the manuscript as accurately as possible. To attempt to polish the form of this journal, whether by reorganizing structure or even by correcting spelling errors, would alter its authenticity as a first-hand record of impressions of a participant in these significant events.

I have edited in the following manner: Punctuation has been added only in situations where its absence from the manuscript leads to confusion of the reader. Where words have been altered because of unacceptable misspellings or glaring errors of fact, the changes will be found within brackets. I have footnoted certain passages which I judge to require clarification or for which information became available after completion of the manuscript. A final note on the editing of this journal: In the rush to complete the manuscript I jotted down all manner of observation without consideration of suitability for later publication. Thus at a few points in this transcription I have employed discretion and have deleted, although not altered, certain passages.

It should be kept in mind by the reader that I was a mere corporal. As in any army, the enlisted man is furthest from the most accurate sources of information. What filters down to him is generally hearsay and often no more than rumor. I have tried to indicate the difference between that which I actually witnessed and that which I merely heard. And even in matters of which I was a witness, it must be admitted that my perceptions may have been faulty.

Finally I should also identify members of my family who were on hand at the beginning and end of the expedition and whose names appear in this journal. Shin and Dottie are Mr. and Mrs. John F. Moran of Chicopee Falls, Massachusetts, my uncle and aunt, who helped me to keep a photographic record of my adventures. Judy is my wife. I am grateful for the patience she has shown toward my activities with AEQ-75.

Saturday, 20 September 1975

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I arose at 6:30 AM, having slept fitfully due to my cold. I weighed my baggage and found that I shall be carrying something greater than 50 lbs., not including my military gear.

After a cold breakfast, I scrubbed the light coat of rust from my musket barrel and enjoyed my last hot shower for some time to come. I began dressing at 7:30, and Judy and I were en route to Lexington by 7:45. By 8:15 we had linked up with Shin + Dottie and headed to Cambridge.

We had some trouble finding the "Graves Co." parking lot (our staging area) because it is the Grace Co. parking lot. Verbal orders leave much to be desired. By 8:35 I was with Oliver Hanchett's Co.

The weather is solidly overcast, though bright, 68°, with some patchy ground fog now burning off.

The various units were called into parade order at 9:35. We then stood in the street, exchanging stories, making new introductions, and passing my flask around. At no later than 10:02 we stepped off, Hanchett Co. being in seventh position in line of march, followed by Capt. Henry Dearborn's Co. Dearborn is still accompanied by his dog, this time a skittish young Irish Setter.

We marched out along Alewife Brook Parkway to Mass. Ave. There were no more than two stops along the avenue, one required by the passage of a freight train. It was quite a spectacle: the eighteenth century marching south on Mass. Ave., contending with blistered feet and aching backs, while the twentieth century crawled north, honking, gaping, and occasionally cursing its luck to be caught by a parade.

Several companies had marched to Cambridge from Prospect Hill, Somerville, as had their predecessors. These units awaited us at an intersection just before Porter Square and then joined our line of march to Cambridge Common. I was somewhat surprised at the small number of spectators, many of whom had just stepped out of barrooms to investigate the noise.

We arrived at the common just one hour after stepping off. We swung around to the south side of the common, taking our position on a baseball diamond and facing north. Ranks tended to break down as we awaited the arrival of other units.

Shortly after 11:15 the speeches began, not following the programme's order — as is customary. The best speech was that of "George Washington", for it was brief and to the point. It is a disappointment that so many high-ranking officers fail to procure wigs, let alone allow their hair to grow. Benedict Arnold is the worst offender.

The speeches took an hour; Gen. Washington reviewed us so quickly that we had no time to salute him; and we then marched once around the park. Rev. Dana MacLean Greeley was to give a final benediction. He began before the last of the troops had finished their round, and so his words were lost.

At length, around 12:20, we were dismissed, most to go to a nearby church and receive a lunch of tunafish on a bulky roll. Shin, Dottie, Judy and I, followed by Terry Crean and his wife, headed out to Stoneham and had lunch at cousin Cathi Sullivan's.

Under Cathi's direction we drove up Rte. 1 and cut across to Ipswich. By mistake we almost joined those units assigned to camp in Ipswich. The three companies of Maj. Meigs's division gathered at White Farms Dairy at the Rowley-Ipswich line on Rte. 1A. 1

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The parade stepped off promptly at 3:30, Scott's Co. first, then Hanchett's, and finally Dearborn's. The crowds were small but polite. After the Rowley Training Field we swung off to the left on the way to Gov. Dummer Academy. I am told that this was the original line of march.

I believe we covered at least 6 miles, and much of that without an audience. As we tramped along on this very humid afternoon, we discovered that no one appeared to know where we were headed. Discipline began to break a little after the 4th mile, and the captain soon ordered us to carry our arms as was most comfortable and the drummers to rest. Dearborn's men were soon singing popular army marching tunes and making mutinous jokes against their captain. After crossing Rte. 1, we passed into woods and then onto a dirt track no more than 2 ft. wide, which led us over a hill. As we grumbled, wondering if we were yet in Canada, word was passed back that we were on the original trail. Up ahead we heard a few shots, and then two of Dearborn's men rushed by us out on the left flank. Over the crest of the hill we discovered a reception committee of local "Indians", most of them boys, with a few muskets. They accompanied us to the academy where we reformed from single file into columns of three. Having marched us once around a small yard, Maj. Meigs called us to order and informed us [that] 200 years ago almost to the hour (now 5:15) the Meigs Division finished cutting the road over which we had just passed. At this significant news the grumbling abated somewhat. We then boarded 3 school busses — standing room only — and went back to Rowley Training Field.

On the field we were again lined by threes facing the reviewing stand. Captain [Ron] Davis called us to "shoulder firelocks" and then forgot us, much to our discomfort. The situation was rectified in no more than 3 minutes. Speeches were mercifully curtailed, and we were then treated to an equestrian display, which we could not see from our location.

Thirst was the biggest problem at this point, and Shin handed me a Fanta orange from behind the line while the captain wasn't watching. One young member of Scott's Co., no older than 17, was helped from the field by two men. I have no word as to his situation.²

By 6 PM we were dismissed. Not a drink was to be had. The line of troops awaiting the ham + bean supper stretched across the field at least 100 yards. Most of the afternoon events that had been scheduled were now cancelled because of our delay in starting. Darkness was coming on, and not a tent had been pitched. Considering the severity of my cold and the soaked nature of my clothes, I decided to return to Acton and sweat the sickness out rather than risk pneumonia. And so at 6:15 or thereabouts I headed for my home — at least the second casualty of AEQ-75.

Notes

- 1: Only two companies, Hanchett and Dearborn, were from Meigs's Division. The third company, Scott, was from Morgan's Division. Major Meigs and his staff were with us at Rowley.
- 2: This was Jim Ferguson of Conway, N.H., Meigs's Division ensign.

Sunday, 21 September 1975

When I awoke at 7:15 AM, my sore throat was gone, and I felt fit enough to face the expedition. After the preliminaries of breakfast and Mass, Shin, Dottie, Cathi, Judy and I drove to Rowley, where Meigs's Division was to have camped. Except for some litter and a few tattered booths Rowley Training Field was empty, and so we continued up Rte. 1A to Newburyport.

By following the main road we soon passed the common in Newbury where a few tents of one unit still stood. In Newburyport we saw plenty of action around the common, where Col. Sanders, of no particular unit, was feeding the multitude. Display of my AEQ-75 membership card got me a free lunch: 2 pieces of chicken, roll, cole slaw, potato salad, and Dr. Pepper — a "ninety-nine-center" plus.

Because I had arrived at noon, things were a bit hectic. Drums began to beat assembly while I was still eating, but fortunately I was not the only tardy soldier. Before anything else I had to arrange for my baggage to get to the dock — there was simply too much to carry in the parade. A tip from a comrade-in-arms sent me to the "Carling (Brewery) Command Vehicle", or whatever. The driver told me he would carry my gear, but because of size limitations I should tell no one else. Shin took care of the transfer of equipment, while I rushed to my company.

Captain Davis was calling us to order and was most displeased when all Concord Minute Men fell out to have Jason Korell take our picture. I was still struggling to sling my "harness" on when we began to march. This was a brief jaunt to the front of the town office building where all companies present lined up for review. We had started this bit on schedule at 12:30, but now were somehow held up. If there were speeches, I was too far down the line to hear them. At one point, as I stood there drifting along with my thoughts, Carl DeSuze snapped his camera in my face. I may be famous yet.¹

Soon Col. Arnold, Gen. Washington, and some others reviewed us and received our salutes. The parade began like a typical AVA film show — start, stop, start, stop, and all within the first 150 yards.² There was a high, thin overcast, but the sun had been shining through since mid-morning and the temperature registered at 75°. I perspired considerably en route to the harbor. Again the crowds were not large, but they seemed to enjoy us. I would judge the route to have been no longer than $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

As soon as all companies had been stood at ease on the dock, those 40 who would sail were called to fall out for instructions. While more speeches were read to the crowd and the other infantry, we new "marines" were told to gather all gear immediately. Shin got mine in no time flat, and so I was ready when names and boat assignments were read off. To my surprise I had been reassigned from Sultana to Vayu, rumor claiming that the Sultana had sunk en route. Once again all participants had to sign little, pink "release from liability" cards.

With 35 lbs. of kit in a sea-bag on my right shoulder and 10 lbs. of tent and sleeping bag under my left arm and musket on my back, I struggled through the crowds and quickly got onto the loading ramp. Two cabin cruisers stood by to transfer troops to their

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"ships". In the confusion that followed, we decided simply to board as the opportunity arose, rather than ship by ship. Five of us got on the first shuttle, and the other four men boarded the Truant, a ship run by sea scouts.

I boarded the Vayu, a 28-foot ketch out of Newburyport, owned by John and Jean Peabody. I was surprised at the small size, but I quickly settled in. All my gear went in the forward bunks, and because of the heat I removed my rifle shirt and took my camera back to the cockpit. Shortly we were joined by George Brooks of Morgan's and Jack Dwyer of Dearborn's, a last minute replacement. Our crew had been completed between 1:45 and 1:55.

The harbor was quite colorful with many non-fleet boats along for the ride. A neighbor anchored near the Vayu began playing his bagpipes.³ There was fife and drum music from the pier, and down

the shore a ways a field piece was being fired at 3-4 minute intervals.

By 2:40 the fleet was getting under way, Vayu being one of the last to go. We were happy to discover [that] Jack Dwyer is a veteran sailor, and his talents were soon put to use. Before long we began to cheat with our engine, for Capt. Peabody had been asked to lead the fleet from the harbor. We never did take the lead.

By 2:55 — with just 5 minutes to spare — we crossed the bar of the harbor. Here the waves ran a good five feet. We spotted a fin cutting the water off our bow and soon discovered a sunfish perhaps 3 feet across. At this point our escorts began to drop off.

Ever since our boarding the fleet an overcast had set in. Around 3:15 the south wind opened up enough sky for the sun to shine. The sun was still out at 3:25 when rain began to spit, so we pulled out our ponchos and other weather gear. The situation was cordial, but conversation was limited.

Even without the engine we made about 4.5-5 knots and eventually overtook better than half the fleet. At 6:15 we stood opposite the Isle of Shoals. A magenta sunset was not totally obliterated. At this point mal-de-mer hit George — it followed him throughout.

The passengers took turns at the tiller, and at dusk I started my stint. By now it was cold enough for me to have put my coat and scarf on in place of the poncho — there was no more rain.

After about an hour and a half I gave over to George. With darkness we followed the lights of one or two sailboats. A full moon broke through around 9 PM and by 9:30 the wind had blown away all clouds. Under the moonlight the swell makes the ocean seem to pulse and so be alive. The peacefulness of sailing without engines is amazing. The foam along the bows sounds like carbonated water.

By 9:15 I was back in charge of the tiller. We passed Boon Ledge and heard its "whistle", a mournful, bovine sound. A little after 10 the fog set in. During this "first watch" Jack and Jean took bunks below, George stretched out along the port bench in the cockpit, and the captain and I stood by for duty. While I guided the boat by the star Vega — our binnacle had no light — the captain whipped up a supper of meatloaf sandwiches and macaroni + cheese. Only he and I ate that night.

By 11 PM we had sailed out of the fog and continued our course at 50°. At 12:15 the watch changed and I went below. I am told

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that everyone suffered some effect of sea-sickness except me.

Notes

- 1: Carl DeSuze is a "disc jockey" and much more for WBZ radio in Boston. He often lectures on his travel experiences. He was one of the few media people to take interest in AEQ, following our daily progress and reading selections from Kenneth Roberts's Arundel.
- 2: "AVA" stands for audio-visual aids, a group of high school students generally noted for their lack of skill in operating media equipment.
- 3: I believe that this was Donald Duncan, skipper of the Dorothy.

Monday, 22 September 1975

At 5:15 AM I awoke having slept for 5 hours with my specs, my watch, and a roll of film in my hand, there being no safer place to put these items. The sky was fair, the wind from the northwest, and I saw Orion for the first time since last winter. By 5:30 I was at the tiller once again and the skipper took a snooze. No land was in sight and we had been careless in recording our progress overnight, so we steered due north for a while.

Dawn was very beautiful with gentle pastel colors, though it was cold enough for me to pull my rifle shirt over my coat. The others began to rise around 8:30 and a breakfast of orange juice, doughnuts, and tea was served in the cockpit.

We gradually altered our course until by 9:30 we were heading due northwest. At about 10 AM we sighted what the skipper guessed to be — and rightly so — Seguin Island at the mouth of the Kennebec. At this point we cut power and by 10:30 I quit the tiller.

I spent much of my time now in catching up on my diary. The motion of a small boat helps to explain the worse than usual penmanship on the preceding pages. A lunch of sliced turkey sandwiches was served around noon. It was during this period that I suffered my one mishap afloat: as I sat in the cockpit writing, the mainsail jibed to starboard and the lines whipped me across the nose. I was told I looked as though I had been drinking all day with my "W.C. Fields" beak.

At 1:20 PM the Vayu passed the red channel marker which indicates the mouth of the Kennebec. On the western shore stands old Ft. Popham, apparently of civil war vintage, where a number of school children awaited the fleet. We quickly put on our full outfits and exchanged greetings with them.

George was soon feeling better and by 1:50 he ate a sandwich on the calm waters of the Kennebec. He then drew out and loaded his blunderbuss and sat beside the mainmast awaiting an opportunity to fire a salute. As we passed a church on the west bank and sighted four people ashore, he fired — with what effect I do not know.

Our trip up to Morse Cove in Phippsburg would have been uneventful, but John Peabody took ill with a dizzy spell.... ~~Jeadaak~~ Dwyer hauled in the sails and Jean piloted us up under engine power, which we had used since entering the river.

Eight boats had already dropped anchor and disembarked their troops as we entered the cove at 3:20. George fired two blasts from his blunderbuss. There was a crowd of about twenty locals waiting at the dock. The dock was no more than a pile of rocks set into the marshy shore, with a small boat house nearby.

Jack Dwyer rowed me ashore first, using the 8-ft. dinghy we had towed behind the Vayu. My sea-bag and myself were all that could go on one trip, and even at that, with me sitting in the stern, the sternboard was no more than 3 inches from the water.

Getting ashore was quite tricky, but the audience was quite helpful in taking the gear ashore, and I did not get wet. My sleeping bag and tent came across with George Brooks on the next shuttle, and we waited for Jack to come ashore later. In the meantime the Truant had followed Vayu to anchor, and I waited for Terry Grean to disembark before selecting a campsite. While we waited, George gave me a sample of his home-made beef jerkey.

Six local boys around ten or eleven years old quickly took up

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our baggage as Terry and I approached the steep hill. They also guided us to a shortcut to the campsite. I never expected such enthusiastic greetings — it must be a little like having liberated Paris in [144] — no girls and champagne, though.

Terry and I selected sites on the higher ground at the north end of the camp and pitched our tents facing south. We looked down into the fleet in Morse Cove.

I had just taken about 10 minutes to pitch my tent — the speed surprised even me — when Maj. Meigs called all troops to parade under arms. We scrambled out as fast as we could into columns of four facing the camp flags. Our officers seem to have been selected for softness of voice, and so I got little information from Maj. Bigelow's speech. What I did hear was most important: we were to stack our arms in the huge National Guard tent in the center of camp, where Morgan's men would provide security; we would then line up as before and march out single-file by columns to the mess tent on the west side of camp. I guess everyone heard those words.

The food was a surprise, for we had expected two weeks of baloney sandwiches. We had: sliced turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, butternut squash, boiled onions, turnip, gravy, cranberry, rolls — all home-prepared. For dessert there was a variety of home-made pies — I took mince. The Carling Beer was warm, the ice having long ago melted in the sun. Carling is not stingy, but none of us will become an alcoholic in the next two weeks.

After supper I scurried to our portable post office van and mailed a brief note, on borrowed paper, to Judy. Once again I was interrupted by an officer calling the company to order. I fell to quickly under arms and was ordered to fetch my own cartridges quickly. Perhaps twenty of us were formed into a double-column firing party for the benefit of our few visitors. It quickly became apparent that our various companies had learned various manuals of arms. Nevertheless, we proceeded and fired one volley with general success. The one problem was that there is not enough time for an immediate, proper cleaning of arms. I ran one oily rag and two dry rags through my barrel, but it was a poor job at best. I expect a considerable amount of rust before I reach home.

Our water supply is a single garden hose run from a house over 100 yards away, and cups are hard to come by. The latrine facilities are two of those portable heads so popular at all bicentennial activities. They are located at least forty yards north of the camp and well off behind the shrubbery. The camp itself contains a variety of tents, from replicas of revolutionary period pieces to modern plastic jobs. On the west is one large National Guard tent running north-south, our mess tent. To the south of this is our own mobile post office on the same axis. A few yards southeast of the p.o. stands the Carling command van facing east. To the north of the mess tent, and facing northwest, is a mobile kitchen which prepares or heats all of our food. East of the kitchen is another N.G. tent on the east-west axis, originally a dining tent but now sleeping quarters. Five tents run east from this point, the fourth being mine. Directly opposite the first of these tents is the third large N.G. model, running north-south, again a sleeping area. Two more tents facing the center of camp are on the northeast

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side, and one small tent behind mine completes the camp.

By 7:30 I and most others had begun to crawl into the sack. A fifer anachronistically played "Taps" at 7:55, but chatter continued around the camp. Visitors had already been warned out by 7:15. By 8:30 the generator was turned off reducing both noise and light. Some jokers continued until well after 9, but sleep was quite easy to come by. My sleeping bag is warm enough that I had only to keep on my t-shirt and trousers to spend a comfortable night.

I should mention that I have found a new problem. At sea I was clumsy, but I felt not a touch of dizziness. However, after supper tonight I learned that I do not have my "land legs" back. Whenever I stand still, the ground rocks gently as with an ocean swell. Even as I lie in my tent, it feels like a boat cabin.

Tuesday, 23 September 1975

I awoke at 1:30 AM to the sound of rain, but my tent appears to be water-proof. I awoke again at 6:30, hearing no rain, but by 6:40 it had begun again. I noticed that the foot of my sleeping bag had pushed out under the flap of my tent and so was damp. I don't know when it will dry.

At 6:55 a reveille of sorts was fified, and so I arose to struggle into my leggings and a new shirt + t-shirt. This is most difficult in a pup tent in the rain, but I managed. (I do not yet "feel" the need of a shower or bath, but then my nose is still plugged.) The slicker side of my poncho, which I use as ground cloth, was muddy, so I wore it slicker side out for the rain to wash.

By 7:30 or so we were enjoying a pot-luck breakfast of left-over pie. I had one slice of apple and one of cherry-rhubarb with two cups of hot tea. We all ate in the mess tent.

The previous evening several of us had volunteered to visit local schools on this morning. After a while we received word that we were to be at Bob Cunningham's house, on the hill to the west of camp by 9:00. Some twenty volunteers had been sought and nearly thirty showed. Eventually we were shuttled out by car to various schools, but not before we had tracked considerable mud into the Cunningham kitchen.

Twelve of us were sent to the Phippsburg Elementary School around 9:30. Terry Crean and I were issued to a class of some thirty second-graders. I started by explaining my musket and then the rest of my equipment. I tried to tone down my usual presentation and asked a lot of questions to stimulate class interest. I learned a lot about local hunting habits. I also learned that some kids figure the next country north of here is Bath. Geography next week! Terry was much better at tying this all in to the country's birthday.

About 10:15 we were taken to the cafeteria-gym for a slide show. One little girl insisted on holding my hand on the way to the cafeteria, much to the amusement of my fellow-soldiers. Inside this room chairs had been set up, and while the student body settled in, most of us soldiers sat on side-line bleachers. Maj. Bigelow showed slides taken last year along the Arnold trail. Because of lack of action the kids soon lost interest.

After the slides we were called into order in a double line at the rear of the room. Capt. Dearborn quickly asked if anyone could handle the manual of arms, and since I do, I volunteered to drill the squad. We marched forward to a drum and then halted. Capt. Dearborn then said: "Private! Drill the company." I did so, and successfully went through firing drill. We then marched around to the front of the room and repeated the performance. If I am to continue in this work, I shall have to ask for a field promotion to sergeant.

At this point we broke ranks and prepared for lunch with the kids, a few of us sitting at each table so that a large number of them could talk to us. Lunch consisted of American chop suey, broccoli, roll, gingerbread, and milk. The kids were quite funny, many of them offering siblings to us for trade with the Indians. The principal even offered us use of the school showers, but we declined for want of towels.

By 12:15 we were headed back to camp for a second lunch. Someone had boiled a great many hot dogs, and at this point there were few

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of us in camp. I had three hot dogs and some milk after stowing most of my gear.

Around 1:00 PM we headed back to the Cunningham house for rides into Bath, where the Marine Museum was offering us free admittance. By this time a rumor was circulating that a woman in California had taken a shot at Pres. Ford, but the details were so similar to those of the last attempt, that some of us disbelieved the story entirely. It is amazing how cut off from the world we have become in so short a time. A real war could be breaking out, and still we move along playing at ours.

The main building of the museum is quite extensive and filled with nautical memorabilia. Our clothing was too hot to allow us to stay indoors in comfort. On the ride back I began to talk to Ivy Iverson of Vernon, Ct., who teaches at the Somers prison. On the way back, after a stop at a package store, several of us stopped to see the museum's boat yard. This section is just in preparation, but there is a Kennebec lumber bateau on display.

Finding no shuttle service after this stop, four of us began the walk to Phippsburg. Along the way several people tooted and waved. A couple from Michigan stopped to talk to us and informed us the latest assassination news was true. As we continued on down the road a mailman, who was already carrying back one of our sailors, gave us all a lift. Being in this army in Maine makes one as popular as being in the navy after Pearl Harbor.

Back in camp I mailed another letter to Judy, while the poor postman tried to close shop. I also noticed that Col. Arnold had arrived by some means and was chatting with Maj. Meigs. After questioning the major I went down to the dock to get the fleet roster from Commodore Duncan. Here an incident really hurt: I had gotten the list and decided to get a slide of the commodore at work. Some children walked in front of my camera, and their mother reproached them, telling them to "let the old guy take his picture". Can AEQ be aging me this fast?

Supper was a shore dinner: lobster, steamers, corn, and beer. Carling was now offering us Tuborg, a big improvement. Before we could get dessert, the colonel called us to order. He presented the commodore and his wife with AEQ pewter mugs, and we huzzaed them each. The colonel then read off boat assignments for tomorrow's sailing. John Peabody has recovered sufficiently to continue upriver, so tomorrow I reboard the Vayu.

Arthur Rawlings and I repaired to the mess tent for dessert and found a good many pies plus draft Tuborg.... We...learned that a tail of some hurricane may hit tonight. If it gets too rough, we should collapse our small tents and duck into the big ones. I also learned that in a late order Col. Arnold required that muskets be left behind with excess baggage for truck transport tomorrow. I will not leave mine unless directly ordered as I board the Vayu. It's just too risky.

I crawled into my tent around 8:45. I don't know the temperature, but I can see my breath by flashlight beam. The rain has been off and on, but it is rather steady since 10:05. In the main tent across the way I hear an inebriated sergeant trying to hold a "town meeting" with his men to vote a protest against the colonel's musket order.... At 11:20 PM that tent is still going strong, and so is the rain.

Wednesday, 24. September 1975

I awoke a few times before dawn and each time I heard rain in progress or starting again. However, the threatened hurricane had not yet arrived. By 6:30 it was light enough to see objects in my tent without a flashlight. I lay around in my warm sleeping bag until around 7:00 when the noises from outside made it clear that camp was beginning to break up.

It was not terribly cold this morning, but it is still more comfortable in the sack than out. The rain was still falling fitfully and so I could not leave the tent without dressing fully. There really wasn't that much to put on. For fear of being driven to a larger tent by hurricane winds, I had left on my chinos, leggings, and t-shirt. It's still a clumsy business getting everything else on. I wore the same items as yesterday, for when it's this cold there is no fear of unpleasant odors.

The condition of my clothing is deteriorating. Everything is a bit smudged, and no matter how I try to prevent it, dead grass gets on everything. My rifle shirt and my long coat are a mass of wrinkles from being used as pillows. My vest has popped one button from the rubbing of crossed belts (The button was recovered by a fellow soldier in the mess tent, near the beer tap.). My leggings are spattered with mud, some dry, some fresh. And everything [is] damp, from the inside out or the outside in. My round hat takes on new shapes each day.

Having dressed as best I could I first headed for breakfast: one doughnut. I then slipped into the mess tent, grabbed a plastic Carling beer glass and walked out to the hose to brush my teeth — a true luxury.

Upon returning to my tent, I packed my sea-bag, which seems each day to get more full — it must be dirt. I then took this bag, all my slings, and my musket to the nearest N.G. tent for temporary keeping. The drizzle had been quite steady ever since breakfast, and I was trying to figure a way to pack my sleeping bag and tent with a minimum of wetness. I still used my poncho as a ground cloth for the sleeping bag, so I continued to get drenched myself. The bag got soaked anyway. I pulled out all stakes and tent posts first, and then took them to the field-hose to clean away the mud. I then wrapped them together in rubber bands and placed them on the sleeping bag. The separate tent halves I folded into squares and placed on either side of the stakes. I rolled the wet sleeping bag, tied it, and put it into the large tent with the sea-bag for later delivery. I then slung on all the other gear and took up my musket, putting my poncho over everything else.

I met Jack Dwyer, who was heading back to Vayu, and joined him. Jack's gear was at the boat house — he had also decided to disobey orders and was bringing his "Bess". The tide leaves mud on the rocks, so it was a difficult boarding of the dinghy for me. Anyway, I wound up no wetter than before, and by 8:30 I was aboard Vayu and enjoying a second doughnut. After a while Jack brought George Brooks out, and George regretted sending his blunderbus to Bath in a friend's jeep.

The drizzle changed to hard rain and then was blown away by a stiff north breeze, while we sat in the cockpit under an awning like on the African Queen. By 9:30 we were all aboard and under way with the fleet up the Kennebec. Most of us occasionally used engines in tight spots, but only the sea-scouts aboard Truant refused to

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hoist sail at all. Capt. Donald Duncan of Dorothy treated us from time to time to pairs of bagpipe tunes. I specifically recall the "Highland Cradle Song". The sound was perfect on this wide, quiet, overcast river.

By 10:10 a power boat from Bath came out to have us all use power to hurry to shore. We followed orders and before long came upon a strange situation: one of our boats, Philama II, had begun attacking her fellows. The crew had rigged a slingshot of surgical tubing and a plastic funnel, had tied it between two stays, and was firing water balloons at boats that passed by. Their aim was fairly good, though they missed us with two shots. They even fired upon innocent by-passers.

At around 10:30 Jean Peabody piloted us through the raised drawbridge at Bath so that we came first to the dock. Some kids on the bridge pelted us with chestnuts, one hitting my camera lens housing. George was tempted to shoot them back to the throwers, but his "bus" was ashore. We docked at 10:45 and I was first off a boat. Large crowds greeted us at Bath. Kids had been released from school for the morning with parental permission. While we waited on the dock I was interviewed by a local radio announcer.

Our parade started in a steady rain, and we watched our rusty muskets get worse. Here we were met and led by Capt. McCobb's Co. We must have looked like rabble in that rain. A short circuit of the town led us back by the docks and into the local Elks Hall. Here, by 11:45, we were served hot lunch by women in colonial garb; we got: American chop suey, baked beans, scalloped potatoes, clam-?, and white cake with chocolate icing. The cream of tomato soup which started lunch was most appreciated. It was 52° downtown at noon.

At 12:45 most of us headed back to the docks. Here Ivy Iverson told of how our pirate had bombed the Truant and hit him on the legs. Revenge was his key thought. Truant men were scouring the shores for a "secret weapon".

By 1:00 PM all troops were back aboard. The rain had abated shortly after lunch, but now the northerly wind had turned cold. The Vayu led the fleet out, but wind and tide running against us, the fleet quickly switched on engines. A short stretch beyond Bath Truant began making warlike gestures. She came up on our starboard quarter with two slings fixed to her stays. Truant's fire was generally poor. At least twice balloons exploded in the funnels upon firing, and so drenched the firing party. One small blue balloon came at me while I sat on the cabin. I raised my boot and deflected it without an explosion — there was too little water in it and so not enough tension to pop it. One shot did pop on our mainsail. We eventually crossed Truant's bows and stayed well enough ahead that their slings could not bear. All through this action George popped charges from his "bus" as our show of resistance.

As we proceeded up river the weather looked still uglier. Nevertheless, small groups of civilians appeared here and there along this sparsely-populated shore to cheer us on. For them George fired a number of rounds. Even one or two power boats came out to greet us. About 3:00 Mary Anne pulled along to the starboard and exchanged chatter. We were heating water at this time, and the skipper passed a cup of tea over to the crew of Mary Anne. Jack

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had procured a bottle of John Jameson's in town, so we had Irish coffee with Reddi-Whip on top — now that's roughing it!

At 4:10 we followed Mary Anne to our assigned anchorage off Stearns Point, within sight of the town of Richmond. By 4:15 we had dropped anchor for the night. We were joined by Schoodic, Glad Tidings, and Susan. Most of Mary Anne's complement transferred to Schoodic and sailed down to the ramp at Richmond. Susan swung around and headed upriver under the town's swing bridge. The more boats that go under this bridge, the better its chances of surviving, so Susan was really trying to help out the operator.

George took our dinghy out for exercise and was soon joined by two more of Morgan's men in Glad Tidings's dinghy. We had anchored off a large island which divides the Kennebec to the south of us. This end of the island, at least, is conservation land.

Around 6:00 we were joined by Cockle, Spindrift, and Eastwind. Cockle, Mary Anne, and Susan (now returned) lashed together broadside about thirty yards off our bow. Apparently the rest of the fleet is still downriver.

By 7:00 we were enjoying a shipboard dinner of ham, pan-fried potatoes, and slightly soggy rolls. The skipper also poured out some bourbon, and in this cold two glasses helped a bit. I sat in the cockpit smoking my pipe and catching up on my diary — I'm always several pages behind. After dark we brought up a lantern, and we told a few ghost stories. At 8:55 we started to turn in. George took the forecastle bunks, John and Jean the port, I took the starboard bunk with a borrowed sleeping bag, and Jack slept on the cockpit's starboard bench in his down-filled sleeping bag, with the awning stretched above him. Again it drizzled on and off.

Shortly after we had retired, a dinghy came alongside requesting our Reddi-Whip. The boats in the triple-alliance were apparently having a party.

I should add that earlier in the afternoon, among the several boats that came out from Richmond, two boys came by in a wooden canoe. One is a member of Colburn's Co. which will join us tomorrow. Since he will take his canoe to Pittston, the skipper will let him tie on to us for the ride.

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We awoke and arose at 6:50 this morning. The rain had stopped, and a hint of sun showed through a slightly streaky overcast. The temperature is in the high 40's, but the northerly wind is bitter. Breakfast from the galley included coffee rolls, scrambled eggs, pan-fries, and bread, with hot tea and orange juice.

We are cleaning up from breakfast now. Jean mistakenly put garbage into the plastic bag Jack Dwyer kept his sleeping bag in. Two local canoes just came along, including our visitors from yesterday, looking for tows to Pittston. We'll haul one of them. The dinghy from Mary Anne also returned from Richmond under tow by a local motor boat, and a morning paper was delivered to Jack. Currently the skipper is in his dinghy trying to unclog the sink's drain. My hands are stiff from cold, and it's too hard to keep writing now (9:02 AM). No change of clothes today.

At 9:30 we started to move, but Glad Tidings had battery trouble for all its electrical luxuries. Spindrift put alongside to lend a hand. I find that my round hat has been ill-treated by the rain — it is damp, badly dented, and the chin strap has just pulled away, the glue no longer holding. I shall effect repairs with my knife and some shoe lace, if I can get some.

By 10:00 we were all underway, Susan and Glad Tidings following Vayu. At 10:05 we passed under the swing bridge, and the sun began to break through again. George and Jack got out a paper plate, and George placed one of his long-fused, black powder bombs on it to drift downstream. The firecracker exploded about ten yards before Susan's bow. At this point the canoe we were to pick up began a four-man water balloon assault on Spindrift and Dorothy. Art Rawlings got hit, and Maj. Meigs took a few close ones. Once these four "Indians" boarded Vayu, George took to the port bow with his "bus" and began firing salutes to the shore. At Pownalborough's Old Courthouse a party ashore began firing salutes, probably from a small cannon.

While all this was going on, I managed some repair to my hat by running waxed twine around the base of the crown, in and out, and then attaching a leather bootlace to this twine as the chin strap.

I notice several boats with water balloons now, and most seem to be after Maj. Meigs. The major has developed the reputation of a martinet quite early. Jack tells me that back in Rowley the major took offense when some of Dearborn's boys were still a bit noisy with beer on the Training Field at 2:30 Sunday morning. According to Jack the major put men on report, taking their names and threatening to dismiss them from the army at the next such incident. Jack says there was no obscenity used at that time, and the army has taken the incident badly.¹

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At 10:45 Susan and Glad Tidings straddled Meigs's flagship and bombarded her with balloons. There is still some confusion of names on the boats. Through the binoculars I find that Meigs is aboard Spindrift.

At 11:40, having passed Nehumkeag Island in the east channel, we sighted Ebony Queen coasting. This is our gathering point for the whole fleet, just opposite So. Gardiner. From here we sail to Pittston,

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so the skipper raised the sails, while Jack at the tiller circled the boat in place. The sun continues to play hide and seek but gives little warmth.

At 11:32 Truant hove around the island — we are clearing for action.

Action commenced at 11:38 as Truant fired at distance. Vayu crossed her stern and approached from her port. We passed within 20 ft. and fought hand to hand. [Cpl.] Dan [McNerney] of Truant took one behind the ears. George opened our action with one wet wad from the "bus". Action broke off at 11:43 as Vayu passed before Truant's bow. When Truant came by our port at 11:45 she was out for Meigs in Spindrift; we were congratulated on our initiative by the gallant crew of Truant.

As we passed So. Gardiner we were cheered by onshore crowds. George's "bus"-fire made a big hit with elementary kids in their schoolyard. Encores were fired upon request. Even a goat bleated enthusiastically among the crowd.

At 11:58 the skipper was "hoist upon his own petard" as a balloon he was throwing at Mary Anne, for no special reason, burst in his hand. Mary Anne's crew approved.

At 12:13 PM, all boats having been tacking under sail, Mary Anne ran aground on the west shore. Vayu dropped sail and approached under power. Susan approached but came off after hitting bottom. Jack cast over our bowline and we took a line from Mary Anne. We failed to back her off, and we broke our bowline trying to pull forward. Ebony Queen, a larger vessel, then took a hand, and Vayu, having a small engine, gave over the task. Having had this warning Vayu and Truant went on engines. At 12:38 Ebony Queen brought off Mary Anne.

Vayu anchored at Pittston at 12:50. Arnold and Meigs awaited us at the dock. Ben Soule aboard Schoodic provided a fife solo. Capt. Colburn's Co. huzzaed us from shore, and bateaux came out to take us off, but first we were to have a fast lunch aboard. By 1:00 Cockle had lashed broadside to Vayu. Donald Duncan again played his pipes. At 1:20 Commodore Roger Duncan was brought ashore to three huzzas.

At 1:30 in the middle of a roast beef and meatloaf sandwich lunch our "pirate" of yesterday came to anchor: Pilama II, of Pleasant Point, Me. Our final course aboard Vayu was vegetable soup.

At 2:00 George Brooks and I were put ashore on the dock at the Reuben Colburn House. The drizzle began again as we stepped from our canoe. Our new camp ground is down by the dock, and the Colburn House is up on a 50-ft rise. We climbed up but were unable to find our gear which was to have been shipped by land. Arthur Rawlings and I entered the house, and the crew inside knew nothing. As we left, we encountered Col. Arnold who took us to the barn and was himself surprised that there was no gear for half of us. It appears that some dummies moved our gear at the Phippsburg campsite to a second tent, where, hopefully, it was just overlooked. One of Cunningham's neighbors should be bringing it up shortly.

At 2:30 Capt. Dearborn drove a crew into the local laundromat, but for those of us with no change of clothes, this means nothing. We are also offered a shuttle to showers at the local high school around 4:15. We'll go there no matter what. In the meanwhile I have no film.

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At 3:40, while we were awaiting our gear and writing our letters, some Yorker with a spontoon and light infantry cap saying "Liberty" came for "volunteers" for the camp kitchen below the barn. Volunteers were slow in coming — his tone was a little too officer-like for the taste of this army. Five minutes later, when a truck backed [in] full of our supplies for unloading, all men in the barn quickly fell to and lent a hand when asked. Success depends on one's approach to people.

I have written postcards to Gil Douglas and Don D'Amato, and I'm going to send Judy another first day cover with a brief letter.

At 4:00 PM the sun showed again. Arthur Rawlings, Dennis Volpe of Sudbury, and I walked to the First Congregational Church next door, where the older folks had set up a food kitchen for AEQ members. Anything they offered cost 10¢ a piece, except the pie which ran 25¢. Once again, the hospitality here is fantastic.

We had not yet gone to those showers after all, for we'd had no change of clothes. When we'd come back to the Colburn House, the colonel told us that our gear was now in the barn, which it was. So I picked up my things and staggered downhill to the riverside camp site. As I selected a spot for tenting with as few mushrooms on it as possible, that Yorker I mentioned above walked over. It seems I was looking over a site next to his tent. He introduced himself as a lieutenant in Capt. Hendricks's Co., drawn from Thompson's 3rd Rifle Battalion, and he invited me to join his four comrades in a spaghetti supper from their camp kettle. I pulled out my own eating gear for the first time and accepted his offer. These riflemen are impressive: they are gregarious, generous, vulgar, and loud — just like the originals.

I had already got back to pitching my tent, when someone dropped by to say that most of the "marine force" had taken over Colburn's barn for the night and that I was welcome. Well, I had already started the job, the hill was very steep to the barn, and there were beautiful blue patches overhead, which I had not seen since Monday. I decided to stay in my tent — a mistake. Both my tent and sleeping bag were still soaked.

After spreading out my bag to dry as best it might, I set out to wash my dish. Water is a rare commodity in this camp. Someone pointed out a well in a nearby front yard. I approached the house to ask permission for use of the well, and an old timer, sipping cider in the backyard, led me into the house to use his sink while he explained his philosophy. His wife came in while I was rinsing my plate and she looked a little dubious about the whole business.

I strolled over to the riflemen's area at the south end of camp and struck up conversations with several. I finally introduced myself to the Yorker lieutenant by name and discovered him to be Ernie Tschanz of Rochester. While I placed my shot film into mailers I was approached by Arnold Palmer of Syracuse, another rifleman, who began a long discourse on the virtues of home-developing of slides. Eventually he drifted off.

We had one true suttler offering flags, uniforms, and pole arms. Ernie spent \$75 on a silver gorget and \$125 on a new spontoon. He himself was a bit of a suttler, carrying a number of small items, and from him I bought a Godwin knife for \$7.

I went back to the riflemen's area again and struck up a conversation

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with Dave St. John of Illinois, another of Hendricks's rifles. Dave is big on the Rangers and is part of a newly forming Rogers Co. He plans to spend a few extra weeks touring historical sites around New England, the Springfield Armory being high on his list.

As we stood around, the mess sergeant came over and grabbed me and one of Morgan's boys, a college student from Slippery Rock, for KP clean-up. Well, once we've done duty we're not supposed to be assigned it again, so we did it willingly. The warmth of the kitchen was great.

When we had finished this we hiked up to Colburn's barn with another rifleman, where we discovered much beer-drinking, if you had your own (Carling failed us this night). This rifleman from the KP detail had a car, and three of us made a beer-run into Pittston. We were a big hit at the supermarket.

Back at the barn we learned of troubles with some native in a pickup truck who disliked the driving of one rifleman (He claimed tailgating with high beams). This local followed our man to the Colburn House and got out with an aluminum bat. About twenty men bristling with weapons poured out and faced him down. The local beat down a post office sign and then left. Just as we returned from our beer-run, the pick-up made a slow pass, and so we made a circuit of the house just in case. Because of all this, those in the barn for the night took one-hour watches.

I had a talk with Jim Ferguson of Conway, N.H. (He's the one in Scott's Co. who fainted in Rowley from lack of food — there had been none in Cambridge for him). We discussed muskets and other arms. Dennis Volpe joined in with altar boy stories, and Joe Kolb of Watertown suggested restaurants in Cambridge. Jim helped me with my 6-pack.

Around 1:00 AM we stepped out of the barn to greet some new arrivals and swap more stories. Dan McNerney was the key man in the barn that night. Later five of us went down to sit around one of the dying fires until 1:40 AM when we hit the sack. For once I felt a little warm, a nice change.

At 2 a [rifleman] arrived with an honest-to-God camp follower he'd picked up in town. She must have been desperate to have spent the night in a lean-to in our camp....

Notes

- 1: I was not a witness to this incident at Rowley and so only report what I have heard. In fairness to Major Meigs it should be noted that members of Dearborn's Company, the most high-spirited in the army, frequently indulged in "outlandish" behavior and would have been a source of concern to any commander. I would not care to have been the officer accountable for all of their deeds, as the Major was.

Friday, 26 September 1975

I awoke at 6:25 AM once more to the sound of rain. I had slept in my complete outfit, because my sleeping bag was so cold and damp. I had taken off my wet boots, of course, and now my feet were in agony. With considerable difficulty I found some dry socks in my sea-bag and got them on. My feet were still cold. I wrote in my journal by flashlight for a while.

By 7:00 Lt. Tschanz was about shouting a reveille of sorts. I put on my wet boots, there being no reason to ruin my other shoes, and crawled out to find some riflemen building a fire. The fire did not help much. We marched up the hill as a company to a drill scheduled for 8:00, and Frank Records, who had arrived the night before, joined me. The drill was postponed until 9:00, so I returned to my tent. Frank and Marge, his wife, served a breakfast of scrambled egg and sausage to the mess sergeant and me.

Around 9:00 again climbed the hill. At the barn was to be the main registration of all troops. Delay followed delay. Bob Cunningham explained the business at last to batteries of clerks, three or four to a division. There were several papers to be filled or signed, such as next of kin cards and more pink "risk waivers". Naturally, all of my papers had been misplaced, so Bob Cunningham and I ran around for about half an hour. Finally he insisted that I must pay another \$10 fee which would be cheerfully refunded if I could find my cancelled check! My sarcasm was scarcely restrained. I had already given him the money when a clerk resolved the problem. My name had been removed from Topham's roster when Concord went into Hanchett's. But since my papers had not been transferred from Topham's files, my name was never put on Hanchett's roster. At last my money was returned, my papers signed, and my official ID card issued. I later learned [that] several other Hanchett men and a 9-man squad of Morgan's rifles were in much the same boat. This seems more and more like a regular army.

After this episode I dashed off a letter to Judy and promptly forgot to address it. Perhaps I can retrieve it tomorrow.

I went back down to break my tent, and of course the rains instantly came in torrents. Once more everything I have has received a thorough drowning. My musket sling has so stretched that I can hook another notch. I took the sea-bag up to the barn for safe-keeping before breaking the tent. The tent I again rolled in the sleeping bag with the help of the suttler, who explained his own problems in gaining status with AEQ. It appears that he is a true camp follower.

Frank Records called me over, so I stashed my sleeping bag under his trailer tongue and entered his trailer. Marge, Frank, and I played two games of dominoes, and then at 1:20 I left for assembly.

This first assembly of Meigs's division was a rather sorry looking affair. Hanchett's Co. showed some fifteen men and officers. Colburn's, Dearborn's, Goodrich's, and McCobb's all looked a bit better. The major came along and called us to attention in the cold rain. A minister spoke a prayer over us, and then, with the full division called to present, three fifes and a drum attempted the National Anthem in a most sorry fashion. It all seemed to fit well into the way of this day. We then marched one last time to the hilltop, I wrestling with musket and wet sleeping bag.

At the top the road was [a] quagmire of sorts with hub-deep

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puddles of ugly yellow water. Through this we marched to the National Guard trucks which were lined up blocking the narrow road, which was already lined by parked cars. We were told that trucks with red squares were assigned to Meigs's Division. I threw my musket and sleeping bag into truck #39 and headed to the barn for my sea-bag. When I got back to the truck, I found that companies would be mixed. I was quickly joined by Lt. Ed Fitzgerald and several others of Colburn's Co., including a woman in fringed hunting garb.

The ride gives warning that our future mode of travel will be no great treat. When we arrived at the school grounds in Richmond, it was, of course, drizzling and misting. The five companies immediately set to pitching tents before the rains began in earnest. McCobb's is nearly a professional outfit: all tents are authentic in design, and pickets were immediately set on guard duty.

There was some confusion for Hanchett's Co., for most enlisted men were at the far end of the camp, while most officers and the guidon seemed situated in the parking lot in trailers. This made signaling to muster us difficult at least with the captain yelling at us over a great distance and much camp noise. In fact the captain confided to us that the three times he had met Maj. Meigs today he had had his "ass chewed" for our company's delays. Indeed the major was in a poor mood when he first called us to assemble by the school for our initial reception by town dignitaries (fire chief, etc.).

At 4:30 a second assembly was beat on the drum, and the major was disturbed that it had taken ten minutes to gather his command. We had arrived quickly (Various officers couldn't make up their minds where to put us), but McCobb's Co. had gathered at its own camp and then marched to the assembly. We received a proper army-style dressing down from the major for several minutes. At length he dismissed us to the school cafeteria for a supper of American chop suey, macaroni salad, baked beans, potato salad, milk, and vanilla ice cream. Since we had had no lunch (The mess sergeant didn't know how to operate his civil defense van), this food was most agreeable to us.

After supper each company began a campfire, and my tomahawk proved of little use in this effort. At 6:00 another assembly for parade was beaten, and the major was pleased with our quick response. We set off on perhaps a two-mile march through Richmond and down to the town wharf (ramp). There was an official reception, each guidon received a Richmond Sesquicentennial medallion, we cheered the town and then marched away. McCobb's pikes look awesome in the dusky fog. Back at camp the Carling man finally came through and so I enjoyed a couple of brews. Other men took a shuttle bus to a square dance in town.

Out in the camp I was chatting with Dick [Welch] about teaching when Pete Arnold came up to inquire about Terry Crean's health. Terry had missed our parade due to a resurging cold. We took him to the school where we thought a clinic was located. Then Peter struck upon the idea of getting Terry and me into the building to dry out for the night. A few phone calls got us permission to sleep in the industrial arts wing while my sleeping [bag] dried in the boiler room. A hot shower and change of clothes helped greatly.

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One janitor sent home for his sleeping bag to lend me overnight. I spread all my things around the shop to dry overnight, and before long Peter Arnold joined us with all of his gear. Capt. Davis has offered us his 4-man tent for the rest of the trip.

Lights out at 10:45.

P.S.: I have noticed increasingly that my legs seem wobbly, or my eyes do while marching, so that the ground seems to be moving. It is much as it was when I first got off Vayu. On the other hand my cold seems no worse, and perhaps a bit better than a few days ago.

Also, this has been the first day that my thoughts have been: only 8 more days to go! Thank God! Army veterans tell me that this is the turn off all vets feel when gung-ho recruits first arrive.

P.P.S.: 2 of McCobb's got fed up with their captain's professionalism and left camp today.