

## **Manitowoc, June 23, 1861**

Having determined to make a record of the events which have stirred the nation for the last three years so far as was possible and my connection with them, I will have to go back to the fall of 1860 when political strife first began to agitate the two sections of our country which are now so bitterly at variance with each other. All that winter I attended school in the little town of Manitowoc never thinking of the storm which was brewing and which was destined so to change all my plans for life. The cloud at last burst and the storm came with all its fury; the Rebels had actually fired upon the national flag and the cry of "vengeance" came from all parts of the North. All partisan feelings were crushed for the time and all classes quit their business and rushed to arms. A company was organized in Manitowoc and I became a member on the evening of the 20<sup>th</sup> of April 1861.

**Nov. 7, 1863**

Broke up camp at daylight this morning and marched towards the Rappahannock. At the railroad bridge we charged the enemy's works, 6<sup>th</sup> MA and 5<sup>th</sup> Wis. taking two redoubts with 6 guns. In men lost from the 5th, 7 killed, 56 wounded, 4 missing. Our Co. Lost in killed, Cap. Walker and Sergt. Jo Goodwin, my tentmate and best friend, also private Jo Beth and 5 others wounded...

**June 4 1864, Cold Harbor, VA**

In these days when every hour is a skirmish or battle I suppose you are all anxious to hear from me. We have had but few chances to write on this campaign and I have tried to improve them as much as possible. I wrote to you on the on the 13<sup>th</sup> of last month and also on the 18<sup>th</sup> and I wrote to Uncle Walter on the 26<sup>th</sup> and marked on the envelope where we were on the 28<sup>th</sup>, and told him to write and let you know that I was all right at that time...

This is a terrible campaign. Neither side will yield and although we drive the rebels from position to position they fall back and fight us as wicked as ever. Today is the 30<sup>th</sup> day we have been on this campaign and nearly every day of that time has been spent in fighting.

It is a bitter fight and only God knows how it will end... By the way, you can tell the ladies of Manitowoc who presented that new flag to the 5<sup>th</sup> Wis. that we have taken care of it so far although three men have fallen under it already. It is riddled with bullet holes and the staff is half shot off about 18 inches from the top. We have not enough men to support it however and if we get into a tight snap we may possibly lose it. It is very conspicuous and wherever it flies, there the lead and iron goes thickest.

Love to all.

Your Son & Brother

J.S. Anderson

P.S. I have written in a hurry so don't mind mistakes.

**Headquarters 5<sup>th</sup> WI Volunteers, Brandy Station, Va., Jan 7, 1864**

Your welcome letter came to hand by tonight's mail and was gladly welcomed by me. I was glad you spent Christmas so happily and I am very thankful to Mrs. Galvin for remembering you so kindly. Tell her so when you see her. I spent my Christmas on the picket line watching for rebels and my Christmas dinner consisted of a couple of hard tacks and a cup of coffee and some cold boiled pork.

I was glad that I did not have to stand on post as I used to do, for it was a very cold day and the pickets were on top of a high hill with no shelter from the storm whatever. All I had to do was see that the men relieved each other and then go and sit by a blazing fire of rails confiscated from a fence close by. Well, they seem to be marrying and giving in marriage at a great rate in Maniwoc. It would astonish some of my friends, I suppose, if I should bring home a damsel from one of the "first families of Virginny," the same as one of the boys of our Regt as done. He was on house guard where there was a good looking young lady and things got to such a pass with them that the old lady came into the General one day and got a Chaplain and made them one flesh.

**Camp near Alexandria, VA, September 5, 1862**

Dear Parents & Sisters,

...As you see by the papers we have had some terrible fighting here in Virginia, our Corps was not engaged as we arrived at the scene of action about 2 hours too late. We met the Wisconsin brigade at Centreville; they are all cut to pieces...There were a good many Manitowoc boys in those regiments and I have ascertained their fate as far as possible. Allie Glover all right, the 2 Washburn boys all right, Hank Garfield & Gus Esslinger wounded in the leg, Mendlick & Maurice Mullins had a brother killed.

I am obliged to cut short this letter as we have got orders to march. Our company is all well except one or two. Send me a couple of good flannel shirts if you can without much trouble.

I am glad Manitowoc is sending so many men to the war. We need help now if ever and if we do not have it soon I am afraid we shall have the war at our own doors...Give my love to all in Manitowoc. So Mead has enlisted. Well I am glad of it and I only wish I could pick out certain ones there and say to them, "you must go". Oh, those lubbers who have lain back till the 11<sup>th</sup> hour, blowing about our victories and our large army, while we were crying from the bottoms of our souls to take Richmond, how I despise them. I could almost curse them. I must close, give my respects to all and urge everybody to join our Co. and fill it again.

Your Son & Bro  
J.S. Anderson