

Pvt. Harrison H. Chamberlin
Served in the Civil War in Company D, 16th Vermont Regiment

“Harrison Chamberlin joined up the same day as James Follett, and the two were in the same nine-months’ outfit.... Chamberlin was a couple of years the older...His letters were written to Emma Dyer, whose brother John and perhaps a tentmate of Harrison was killed at Gettysburg.”---“A Stitch in Time: Townshend, Vermont 1753-2003.”

Selected Quotes from Chamberlin’s Civil War Letters to Emma Dyer

“We camped in a field, part of General Lee’s Plantation.”

“The next morning we started again from which is called Camp Vermont near Alexandria, Virginia.”

“We have some good times here. The boys get together and sing and dance.”

“Once in a while we see a woman. You’ll hear the boys say ‘There is a woman’, ‘There is a woman,’ as if they were elephants.”

“Thursday orders came to move.”

“We had to start a little before five, we marched all day until four at night without stopping to eat or rest except for five minutes at a time. Only the toughest ones made it, myself among them.”

“Though many was tired, they could not walk, I did not hear a murmur from one man, but they would shut their teeth, swear and try to move again.”

“Company D is the best company in the regiment.”

“There is not many more than fifty men in the company fit for duty. Some are sick, some are detached to work in hospitals, and some have gone home.”

“There was five more sick from the same camp. When we left camp, the fifteenth has lost 25 more men.”

“Company C could not muster more than thirty men fit for duty, they have the measles.”

“In the morning, I could hear drums beyond the lines which I suppose came from the Rebels.”

“There are great many bands of bushwackers who attack small parties of our men, burn bridges, tear apart tracks.”

“Bull Run Creek is a small stream about as large as the brook that carries your father’s mill.”

“The country miles around is fortified strongly. About a mile from here is the last battle ground of Bull Run.”

“Many bodies of men and horses lay unburied.”

“I think our country has given Martyrs enough now to the curse of Slavery. But we shall be called upon to give more and I hope our armies will do all in their power to put down this curse.”

“The land is filled with soldiers and mourners and many more will be called upon to mourn before this dreadful war is closed. The land has been baptized with blood but cost what it will of blood or treasure I hope the government will fight to the end if it takes the last man and the last dollar to do it and fills the land with mourning and if my life is spared, as dearly as I love home, I will stay as long as government shall desire, and fight as long as I have breath, to sustain the flag, and honor our country, and spill the last drop of blood that there is in the south that flows in the names of traitors.”

“Where we are going I cannot say but it looks as though we are going to Gettysburg or some other place.”

“It looks now as though the 16th would be permitted to claim some Laurels after all, at least we will hope for the best.”

Read more in: “A Stitch in Time: Townshend, Vermont 1753-2003” available for purchase at the Townshend Historical Society On-line Store.