

Selected Entries from the Civil War Diary of Dr. James Richmond Boulware

(Part Three)

James Richmond Boulware (1835-1869) was the son of Benjamin James Boulware and Sarah Barber Richmond. He was a brother of my great-great-grandmother, Nancy Ann (Boulware) Hall.

Graduated from South Carolina Medical College.

Enlisted in the 6th South Carolina Volunteer Regiment on April 11, 1861, in Winnsboro, SC, and served throughout the war as Assistant Surgeon until the surrender in April 1865.

Copy of diary transcription provided by Wes Phinney.

Antietam (Sharpsburg) - *From Time Line of The Civil War, 1862* (<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/cwphtml/tl1862.html>): "On September 17, Confederate forces under General Lee were caught by General McClellan near Sharpsburg, Maryland. This battle proved to be the bloodiest day of the war; 2,108 Union soldiers were killed and 9,549 wounded -- 2,700 Confederates were killed and 9,029 wounded. The battle had no clear winner, but because General Lee withdrew to Virginia, McClellan was considered the victor. The battle convinced the British and French -- who were contemplating official recognition of the Confederacy -- to reserve action, and gave Lincoln the opportunity to announce his Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation (September 22), which would free all slaves in areas rebelling against the United States, effective January 1, 1863."

Tuesday, 16th:

We had nothing for breakfast but apples. Later in the day the enemy (who had followed us) commenced firing at us and we (the Asst. Surgs.) were some distance (150 yards) from Brigade behind a brick house. Two shells came through the house. I was called to care for some wounded in the 6th Regt.; the firing held on from both sides for some hours, with little damage to our side, then ceased. I was really glad to know it had ceased for today.

I give a list of the wounded on 16th Sept., 1862.

Co. A	1st Lt.	J. W. McFadden	Wounded	leg broken	severe.
"	"	Priv. A. Hicklin	"	knee	slight

Wednesday, 17th:

Last night we were told to get green corn for our supper, since no rations had come for us. So eating apples all day & day before also we made our supper on roast corn. Got up and had the same for breakfast this morning. Jackson's forces had come to our assistance the day before and soon began firing on our left wing. Soon after the enemy's shell came down upon us at a terrible rate - came in a cross fire - piercing nearly every house in Sharpsburg - setting several on fire. We were behind one when their shots came through it, one shell bursting inside and setting it on fire which some of our boys extinguished after some difficulty.

Every glass window was shattered and the house (a brick building) filled with breeches in its walls, bricks were thrown over all of us, our eyes, hair and clothes filled with dust. I left that place and while passing to another place one passed (I think) in two feet of me, going through the cellar. The fight was terrific on our left but Jackson succeeded in driving them before him. Early in afternoon the fight became general in the center and our right. Late in afternoon the enemy overpowered us on our right wing and we were forced to fall back some distance. Our forces did not stand up to their duty as formerly and we came very near having a panic. Soon after our Brigade was pursuing the fleeing Yankees and the day was ours. The loss is heavy on both sides - neither party made much. Night came on leaving us in possession of the field fought over this day.

We have again lost some of the noblest men in the south. The wounds generally in more of a serious nature than heretofore. I pronounce this battle to have been the most terrible in artillery than any one of the preceding fights. I never was so tired of shelling in my life before. I hate cannons.

I give a list of killed and wounded in 6th Regt.

List of Casualties in 6th S.C.V. at Sharpsburg on Sept. 17th, 1862.

Co. A	Sergt.	J. E. Furgison	Wounded	neck	slight
"	"	J. N. Whitesides	"	side	"
"	"	Priv. J. L. McGairty	"	knee	"
"	"	" W. Hughs	"	face	"
Co. B	Lt.	Robt. Simms	"	wrist	"
"	"	Sergt. A. Bailes	"	hand	severe
"	"	Priv. W. T. Castles	"	arm(broken)	severe
"	"	" W. Adams	"	arm (flesh)	"
"	"	" W. C. Perry	"	both hands	"
"	"	" James Culp	"	arm	slight
"	"	" T. W. Richardson	"	face	severe
Co. C	Capt.	Canty	"	thigh & leg (right & left)	severe

"	"	"	W. J. Cornwell	"	arm	"
"	"	"	A. D. Lace	"	leg	"
Co. G	"	"	A. C. Douglass	Killed		
"	"	"	J. H. Glass	Wounded	forearm	severe
"	"	"	B. F. Boulware	"	arm	slight
Co. H	"	"	John Banks	Killed		
"	"	"	J. H. Barwick	Wounded	leg broken	
"	"	"	R. M. Clark	"	thigh broken	
"	"	"	W. B. Simonton	"	leg broken	
"	"	"	Jno. M. Martin	"	arm broken	
"	"	"	C. P. Simonton	"	arm	severe
"	"	"	W. J. Clowny	"	thigh	"
"	"	"	T. W. Taylor	"	hand	"
Co. I	Lt.	"	J. Elliott	"	shoulder	slight
"	"	Priv.	O. Robins	"	knee	"
"	"	"	R. Pope	"	arm	"
"	"	"	G. Gordon	"	thigh & hand	severe
Co. K	Corp.	"	W. W. Cunningham	Killed		
"	"	Priv.	H. W. Johnson	"		
"	"	"	R. W. Barrow	Wounded	hip	severe
"	"	"	A. W. Flagler	"	leg	"
Co. K	Priv.	"	R. W. Chandler	Wounded	hand	slight
"	"	"	I. E. McElveen	"	thigh	"
"	"	"	S. R. Tobias	"	forearm	"
"	"	"	P. W. Floyd	"	head	"
						Total 50

Thursday, 18th:

Our Brigade is lying on the battlefield today. There is no firing going on at all. We got the mail today, having had none since the battle of Manassas. I received five. It was a treat, indescribable, yet I could not answer them for I have nothing whatever with me. We surmised from all inactivity this morning that we would fight again this afternoon but were agreeably disappointed as day waned away.

Friday, 19th:

Just after midnight our forces began to retreat. No one can imagine the crowd and pressure on such occasions unless he has been present in such a time, but no confusion. We recrossed the Potomac at Sun rise this morning at Shepards Town, Virginia. I imagined I would feel different from what I did when we came again into Va. but I must say I felt sad - very sad - we waded the river.

It was very low and only knee deep where we crossed. The hills on the Virginia side are awful while on Maryland side have a gentle slope. The sight from Shepards Town is indeed pretty. Just after crossing the guns of the enemy were heard behind us but we got over all our wagons &c. in safety. I saw Mister Yongue but felt sad and could not talk much to him, I fear that he may have noticed it and thinks strange of me. We moved on about 3 or 4 miles in the direction of Winchester. Stopped about noon and cooked up rations. At dark we formed line and marched towards Shepherds Town, but after going one mile we turned back and remained all night at our old stopping place, we were all quite glad of it.

Saturday, 20th:

We took our line of march in direction of Martinsburg, travelled very slowly indeed and at Sun set we had gone about three miles. We went on, on and still on over some of the roughest roads and through the darkest places I ever saw, positively I could not see my hand before me. I was following the Regt. on horseback and let her have her own way, she followed very well behind I believe. We camped in a patch of weeds.

Monday, 20th:

We moved camp two miles where we could have more room - plenty of wood, &c. Are settled on a Gentleman's Land who came to us and said that he owned several hundred acres of land and had only fifteen acres of woodland and we were on it cutting down all the timber he had. It was too true, I felt sorry for the man but he had to bear it. He was a true Southerner too.

Thursday, 23d:

All is yet quiet with the exception of grand reviews. Today Genl. Lee reviewed our (Pickett's) Division. We marched about five miles and was reviewed in a large field. I was very cold all the while. I endeavored to beg off from being present on the occasion but Col. Steedman would not let me off. Dr. Thompson and myself (after the review was over) galloped ahead and came to camp - kiting - my mare run off with me, but I soon stopped her.

Tuesday, 28th:

Jimmy Richmond arrived at camp last night.

"Jimmy Richmond" is James Law Richmond, who was J. R. Boulware's first cousin. James Law (1842-1908) was the son of James Barber Richmond.]

This morning we packed up everything and began to march in the direction of Winchester, passing through the City (for it is a considerable size place). We saw crowds of people, mostly soldiers; also saw a lot of beautiful ladies - one very pretty indeed. Travelled until after dark and camped at the five mile post from Winchester, near a mill. Col. Bratton being in Winchester as we came through, joined us at our camp.

Wednesday, 29th:

Col. Bratton, reporting to Genl. Pickett this morning, was placed in command of the Brigade. Started on our journey at daylight, crossed the Shenandoah River, wading it. Saw quite a destruction of bridges - 3 in number - (all burned) one across each prong of the Shenandoah and a R.R. bridge over one prong. The R. Road running down in the fork of the two prongs. Genl. Jenkins came to us just as we were passing through Front Royal. It is a nice little town, yet, like all of the towns the Yankees have been in, shows the mark of Tyranny and Oppression. We camped on the mountains that night or rather in between two very high hills, as we were beginning to pass over the mountains. We were very late in getting rations at night. The boys, after marching all day had to go after and carry them for half a mile, the roads being so much blocked up with wagons, ours could not get up to us.

Thursday, 30th:

Genl. Jenkins reported for duty this morning, was placed in command of his Brigade and to my great satisfaction Col. Bratton was put in command of his Regiment. Yet I must say that there is no man - more clever - more brave than Col. Steedman was. He led our Regt. gallantly through all the battle except Williamsburg and Seven Pines and we all respect him & love him. We must and will always remember him kindly.

November 1862

22d: I slept very little last night, got up and got Dr. Owens to pull it for me. He made three desperate efforts at it and then only got one root. I could not stand it to pull again at the other root. Our journey led us through a poor looking portion of Va. in the direction of Fredericksburg. About noon we came to a plank road leading from the direction of Culpeper to Fredericksburg, and had good walking that evening. We camped some time before sun set, having travelled 16 miles this day & 18 yesterday.

Sunday, 23d:

We marched 10 miles today and are now camped two miles from the town. The citizens are all leaving as fast as possible. The enemy are on one bank of the river and our forces are on the other. The pickets do not fire at each other, they could easily kill one another, but I suppose it is an understanding between the opposing generals.

Friday, 28th:

I have been out today to see Dr. Boulware, a kinsman of mine. I found him to be quite a clever man, well fixed up, living in a rich portion of the country - about 9 miles from Fredericksburg. I saw some nice ladies there who were refugees from Fredericksburg. Jack Boulware is a strong Secession man. The enemy destroyed a great many things for him last summer.

December 2d, Tuesday:

We changed camp this evening on acct. of the scarcity of wood and to get a warmer position. Moved about 1/4 of a mile in a black jack woods.

3d: Dr. R. H. Jordan arrived here today from Leesburg and will soon report for duty.

Friday, 5th:

It commenced snowing and sleeting this morning and continued all day at a slow rate, the ground is now nearly two inches deep and we have no tents. Capt. Agurs, our Q.M. has gone to Richmond after them.

Lt. S. B. Clowney arrived today from home, having been absent on a wounded furlough.

The Battle of Fredericksburg

From *Time Line of The Civil War, 1862*: "General McClellan's slow movements, combined with General Lee's escape [from Sharpsburg], and continued raiding by Confederate cavalry, dismayed many in the North. On November 7, Lincoln replaced McClellan with Major-General Ambrose E. Burnside. Burnside's forces were defeated in a series of attacks against entrenched Confederate forces at Fredericksburg, Virginia, and Burnside was replaced with General Joseph Hooker."

Thursday, 11th: [December 1862]

Having received orders late yesterday evening, we were ready for marching at an early hour. I was aroused from my pallet of leaves by the booming of cannon at Fredericksburg. Got ready and were ordered out on the telegraph road leading from Richmond to Fredericksburg. Halted and lay until noon then marched to the center to form line of battle. Moved to and fro and camped in a pine thicket $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from our old camp.

The firing was principally at the town as we were trying to prevent the Yankees from throwing their pontoon bridge across the river. We either let them or they forcibly effected a crossing (I do not know which). The town was occupied in the evening late & they also crossed in force two miles farther down the river.

Friday, 12th:

I arose this morning - having enjoyed a good sleep. Firing of cannon began on our left wing at $9\frac{1}{2}$ o'clock - continued for several hours. Towards noon the fog lifted and we could see immense numbers of Yankees in the flat country before us. No particular engagement took place during the day and we camped within a short distance from where we camped the night previous.

Saturday, 13th:

Another foggy morning, but seemed to get out sight somewhat earlier than the day before. Firing of cannon began about 10 o'clock and by 12 it had assumed a most gigantic attitude. Our Brigade being in the center we could very well see the battle as it raged - it was a sublime sight, though one I would rather

not have happened. Yet we enjoyed it very much - could plainly see column after column of enemy advance and as often saw them disperse until four were ruined. We watched with anxious eyes until we saw the day was ours. It was A. P. Hill's Division fighting them. Late in evening we were detached from Pickett's Div. and sent to McLaws, which had been fighting all day at Fredericksburg. We marched hard and got in position just before dark. As we were filing in to our left a shot from the enemy exploring in the midst of 6th Regt. wounded Robt. Tinkles in head severely. We lay in entrenchments all night.

McLaws' Division killed hundreds in attempting to charge them. Some of the drunken Yankees came within 30 feet of our men as they lay behind a stone fence - repulsed them five times with untold slaughter on their side while ours is comparatively slight. We lost three Brig. Genls. Genl. Cobb killed also Genl. Cook, Genl. Gregg mortally wounded.

Sunday, 14th:

Every one expected to see the battle renewed again but our surprise it was not. All quiet through the day, except occasional cannon firing on the right & left. At half past 6 o'clock in evening the N.E. sky was rendered beautiful with an Aurora Borealis. It gradually extended to the north where it unfolded beautiful rays and then N. westward - it disappeared after a stay of 15 or 20 minutes.

Monday, 15th:

Our Brig. was working on breastworks until two hours before day when we were relieved by another Brig. and marched back to our first camp, then back a half mile where we lay quiet all day. Most of us slept all day and camped as we lay.

Tuesday, 16th:

As we lay down last night the stars were shining, we little thought of getting a wetting before we arose, such was the case however, and at day break - it pouring down rain - were called under arms and marched in the direction of Fredericksburg. The road was dark and sloppy. We at last found ourselves at Fredericksburg, or in the position where were those who fought on Sat. Early in the morning we heard that the Yankees had left the south side of the river.

It was relief to all of us. We passed the day quietly. I visited the battle-field and saw such sights as I had seen before. Thus ended the battle. The cannonading was not so terrible as at Malvern Hill or Sharpsburg I did not think. The Yankees had all the advantage in getting across the river as the heights (Stafford) on the opposite side commanded the City. After dark we came back to camp and rested our wearied frames.

Wednesday, 17th:

A beautiful morning this is indeed, yet quite cold. In afternoon it began to snow but soon stopped and is now very cold and cloudy.

A letter James R. Boulware wrote to his brother-in-law, Major William Stokes, after the Battle of Fredericksburg. At the time, William was still in South Carolina serving in the 4th South Carolina Cavalry. William's unit was later transferred to Virginia. William Stokes was the husband of James R. Boulware's sister, Eliza (Boulware) Stokes.

*Camp near Fredricksburg, Va
Dec 18th 1862*

Dear William,

I received your letter yesterday morning just as we returned from the Battle. I suppose you know that a Battle has been fought at Fredricksburg. The enemy crossed the Rhappahanack in force on Friday and on Saturday we repulsed them with great Slaughter on their side. Our loss is small compared with theirs. Only two Divisions of our Army were engaged --namely McLain at Fredricksburg and A P Hill ten miles down the River. We were not engaged at all, yet had some killed & wounded in our Brig. by Shell from the enemy. Our Regt lost one man wounded, R A Tinkler, Private Co 'G,' Head wound--Since we were in the Center of Line of Battle and could see the Battle as it raged.

I believe I will close. You must write as soon as convenient and tell me all the news.

I am your Bro-in-law

J. R. Boulware