

Collection: ADOLPHUS R. PITCHER DIARY  
near Norfolk, Virginia

P.C. 875.1

1861

Physical Description: 1 volume: diary.

Acquisition: Purchased March 30, 1939, from E. L. Coon, [REDACTED]  
Columbia, S. C.

**Description:** Adolphus R. Pitcher, a printer, left his home on the Isle of Guernsey, September 8, 1856. He joined the Warren Guards (2nd Regiment, North Carolina Volunteers [later redesignated the 12th Regt. N.C.T.]) April 29, 1861. Orderly Sergeant Pitcher was killed near Winchester, Virginia, July 20, 1864. He is mentioned in Lizzie W. Montgomery's Sketches of Old Warrenton, (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1924), p. 424: "Before the war there was a noted printer in Warrenton, a Mr. Pitcher, an Englishman, an expert in his line of work, and well educated. He came to Raleigh and was engaged in the newspaper office of Governor Holden until the war broke out, when he volunteered in the Warren Company, the 12th regiment. . . . From the beginning of his service until his death, he kept a daily diary; he had given instructions to his closest friend that it should be sent to his fiancee, if he were killed. She lived in Raleigh, and was of a well known family."

The diary opens with a muster roll of Company A, 2nd Regiment, followed by a summary of the company's activities since April, 1861. Daily entries begin August 12, 1861, at Camp Caroline near Norfolk and continue until October 5, 1861, when he arrives in Warrenton on furlough.

The atmosphere of Camp Caroline is described in Walter Clark (ed.) Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War, 1861-1865 (Raleigh and Goldsboro: State of North Carolina, 5 volume, 1901), I 607: "The regiment, however, embraced in considerable proportion a class of men of education, of social refinement and wealth,

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who mingled freely on terms of social equality with field and staff and company officers, and military discipline was thereby rendered impossible. To add to the difficulties in the way of discipline, the camp was the constant scene of gayety, and the city of Norfolk was daily thronged with members of the regiment on social visits to citizens; and furloughs were generously granted." "

The entries note the army routine, Pitcher's daily trips to Norfolk to pick up the regiment's mail, and his off-duty visits to other camps and fortifications, hospitals, a newspaper office, and a hotel. Other activities included swimming, sailing, canoeing, listening to sermons, watching the fishermen with their seines, the "flag of truce" steamers, and a panorama of the battle of Fort Sumter. Another entry noted a gift of blankets, boots, and a company minute book from Anne DeCarteret of Raleigh. More than once there is mention of a dog, with a stone-filled canteen tied to its tail, being chased around and around the parade ground by 200-300 men. The diarist notes, "we are lying here wasting time when we ought to be off at the enemy."

Finding Aids

Main Entry Card

Date Card

1861

Subject Card

WAR--CIVIL--12th Regiment - 1861

Finding aid completed by Ellen Z. McGrew. 7 July 1967.