



Civil War Diary: 1864 (Expanded, Annotated) (Civil War Letters & Diaries Book 23)

Major Lemuel Abijah Abbott

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As a newly-minted 2nd lieutenant in the Union Army, Lem Abbott was tossed head-first into General Ulysses S. Grant's Overland Campaign. He saw action in all the major battles of that campaign and was severely injured while with Sheridan at the Battle of Opequon (Third Battle of Winchester).

Abbott kept a diary during his time in the American Civil War and his descriptions are vivid and compelling. As he lay wounded at Opequon, he nevertheless could not take his eyes off the frenetic Sheridan, commanding the field like a chess player while mounted on Rienzi, his black steed.

"My first wound was from the butt end of an exploding shell in the breast which maimed and knocked me down and simultaneously as I felt a minie ball fired but a rod away in my front just grazed my forehead, torn through my upper lip crushing both jaws and carrying away eleven teeth, the most painless dentistry I ever had done; but, Oh! the shock it gave my system and the misery I suffered that night!"

Despite his wounds, he returned to service and remained with the Federal Army until Appomattox. He then made a career in the army until mustered out in 1883 due to complications from his Civil War wounds.

Front-line letters and diaries of the Civil War bring an immediacy to a long-ago event and connect us to these everyday men and women who lived it, and this is one of the best.

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