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John T. Kelly - Civil War Diary

The 1864 Diary of Private John T. Kelly of the Second Vermont Regiment, as edited by Don Wickman, is this issue's topic.

The diary lists brief daily entries beginning with the first of the year in 1864, and ending on the 31 of December. The opening entry begins in Camp, near Brandy Station in Virginia, and follows the Army's march to the juncture of the Appomattox and James rivers.

The comments' are laconic and unemotional, recording the daily events in a comment or two. The December 30 entry is typical: "Execution of a Deserter Very pleasant day"-no punctuation.

Accompanying these notations are several pictures of various activities including crossing of a pontoon bridge, two encampments and a burial party. There is in addition a large fold out map following the campaign, which relate to the daily notes.

A fascinating and clear eyed account of the war as it progressed, by one member of the Northern Army.