Dear Journal,

March 11th 1861

Today was a very tuff day. I had to watch my father leave to join the Union Army. I am very upset that I won’t be seeing him for a while. I am really going to miss me and him playing games outside and going down to the creek to catch some fish. I guess this isn’t a terrible thing that he joined the Union Army to defeat slavery. I am really proud of him to take a stand for what is right and wrong. I am not looking forward to all of the outside chores that I have to do. Being the only boy in my family, other than my dad. I have to do as of right now, chop the fire wood, fix patches in the ceiling from winter, tend the garden, groom/take care of the horses, and finally hunt for food for my family. I am especially not very excited about having to hunt for food. My father left me his musket named Ole’ Betsy to hunt for food. So right now me and my family are gloomy from my father leaving, my mother is also in her room weeping. I feel really dreadful for my dad he has to ride on a train and horseback for 5 days to the Union Army grounds. I have to now go hunt for food. With any luck tonight will be deer. Talk to you soon.

-David C. Jackson

Dear Journal,

April 25th 1861

Today me and my family received word that there was a battle at Fort Sumter, and that the Civil War officially begun. Also in the letter my father told us that the troop he is in has to march to some place to get supplies. We also received a letter from my father stating that he was very nervous and missed us all. He also said that the food that they served in the army wasn’t as nearly good as maw’s food. Also in the letter we found out that his dear friend was killed during a practice, he went to retrieve something when someone fired a gun and it hit him in the chest. They are possibly going to bury him out back behind the camp, they are at. My father also told us that the war is going to be much more violent than they thought it was going to be. My father says has worried for our safety up here, in New York. That’s all my father included in the letter. I have to go now and sleep for tomorrow’s big day. My friend and I are going to have a fishing competition tomorrow. I can’t wait. Hopefully I will win.

-David C. Jackson

Dear Journal,

May 15th 1861

Today was terrible. Me and my sister Susan went down to the creek today to swim and catch some fish when my sister cut her foot on a very sharp rock. The doc came and visited and said that it might become infected, this is not good. Also we received another letter from father saying that he might be returning home soon, if he decides he wants to leave. Also he said that he hopes were all doing well and sent some coins to mama to pay for some things. Oh, I forgot to tell you who won in that fishing tournament between my friend and I. I won!! I caught 5 trout and he caught 4. I was so excited that I won. Mama even made me my favorite dinner, bacon and eggs. I have also had to pick up on a lot more chores. My least favorite chore is chopping the wood, and cleaning the barn. They are the worst chore I have ever done. Chopping wood is terrible, the sledge hammer we have weighs like 10,000 pounds. Also the barn smells terrible and its all muddy and dirty. I mean I like getting dirty but, it’s like manor in there. Ok, mama is calling for dinner, I have to go.

-David C. Jackson

Dear Journal,

September 24th, 1863

Sorry I forgot about you for a couple of years. I left you underneath my bed and you were in the far back corner and I didn’t see you. Anyways, the war is still going on. My father hasn’t returned home yet, but in fact yesterday he sent a letter describing a battle that took place on July 1st 1863 he said that they called it the battle of Gettysburg. My father said in the letter that he was in hand to hand combat with the confederate soldiers. He said he was scared out of his mind, but he fought through his fear and came out brave and strong. My father also said that it was the most gruesome fight he had ever been in. For me, I am wanting my dad to come home and for things to be like they used to be. It makes me sad that I can’t see my father. It’s been to long that I haven’t seen him. He missed my grandfather’s funeral from him dying of typhus. So now my grandmother is living with us. She is sharing a bed with my sister in her half of the room divided by a cloth hanged by a string. I like my grandmother being her she helps my mom make more and different tasty foods that I love! Did I forget to mention that it is my birthday today! So yea, now I’m going to step down the wooden creaky ladder and see what the day has in store for me. I am so happy I found you again. Talk to you later.

-David C. Jackson

Dear Journal,

May 1st 1865

I am so happy my father sent a letter saying he was returning home! He also said that the war is over! I am so happy. He said that it would take him about a month to back home, from the camp he is at. By the way the Union won the war. Robert E. Lee surrendered at an Appomattox Courthouse. My mama said that we are going to have a big Welcome Home Party for him, I can’t wait. I am especially happy about that my chores will be lightened up. Oh, I forgot to tell you that my sister’s foot got healed and it never got infected. So I guess everything is going to be ok, after all. There will be no more fighting, no more arguing between the two sides (Union and Confederate). So I am going to go and step up on a ton of chores, so when father gets home, everything is in mint condition. I am so excited! I’ll write later. Goodbye.

-David C. Jackson