Nelson Stauffer enlisted in Co. A, 63rd Regiment, Illinois Infantry during the US Civil War. He kept a diary from 1862-1865. In it, he writes of his enlistment, training, troop movements, interactions with other soldiers, daily work assignments, patrolling, and a brief illness. He also describes the actions of some African-Americans he encountered while marching in the South, battlefield conditions, and the burning of Columbia, South Carolina.