

## Documents

### Civil War Letters of David Mitchell Hudson

*Contributed by Roy D. Hudson\**

David Mitchell Hudson, a sergeant in Company K of the 120th Indiana Volunteers,<sup>1</sup> was born in Jennings County, Indiana, January 15, 1837. In 1856 he enrolled in the preparatory school of North Western Christian University.<sup>2</sup> For his more advanced training, however, he chose Moores Hill College.<sup>3</sup> Upon the completion of his formal education, he taught school. Apparently the vocation of his choice did not occupy all of his time, and he became a tiller of the soil as well as a worker in his father's tanyard. Moreover, this busy schedule probably did not interfere with his social life, for on February 20, 1862, he married Sarah Margaret Hamacher.<sup>4</sup> To this union two children were born. Willey Victor, the first son, was born on December 7, 1862. The second son, David Edwin, arrived on July 9, 1864, six months after the father had entered the service of his country.

Although the date of muster was given as January 13, 1864,<sup>5</sup> the first letter in the collection bore the date of February 3. The messages from David to Sarah covered the period from February 3 to August 26, 1864. Much of the material has been deleted because of its personal nature.

Hudson was stationed at Camp Stansifer, Columbus, Indiana, until March 5, when his company was transferred to Camp Carrington, Indianapolis. He was impressed with the

---

\* Roy D. Hudson, a resident of Bay Village, Ohio, is a grandson of David Mitchell Hudson.

<sup>1</sup> *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Indiana* (8 vols., Indianapolis, 1865-1869), VII (1867), 146.

<sup>2</sup> It was incorporated under that name on January 15, 1850. On February 28, 1877, it began to operate as Butler University. *Laws of Indiana, Local, 1849-1850*, pp. 524-528; Jacob P. Dunn, *Greater Indianapolis* (2 vols., Chicago, 1910), I, 131, 436.

<sup>3</sup> The college was founded at Moores Hill, Indiana, in 1854. Due to the fact that the building in which the classes were to be held was not completed until December 1, 1856, the school did not open officially until that date. In 1919 the institution was moved to Evansville, Indiana, and the name changed to Evansville College. *Laws of Indiana, 1919*, pp. 24-25; Archibald Shaw (ed.), *History of Dearborn County, Indiana* (Indianapolis, 1915), 472-481.

<sup>4</sup> Sarah was born near Lexington, Scott County, Indiana, on July 3, 1846, the daughter of John and Nancy Noakes Hamacher.

<sup>5</sup> *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Indiana*, VII, 146.

size of this camp and wrote on March 8, "here we can see 3,000 men drawn up in line for battle, which I tell you looks considerably military. Our camp looks just like a town." About the twentieth of March his group moved to Taylor's Barracks and a few days later to Park Barracks near Louisville. The stay at the latter camp was also of short duration since on March 27 began the journey to Nashville. On April 5, the company of which he was a member left the latter city for more southern points in Tennessee and also entered Alabama and Georgia, arriving in Chattanooga on April 20. After spending a day here, he went to Charleston, Tennessee, but in May returned to Chattanooga. He was in the vicinity of Chattanooga until August 28, 1864, when he died, having been a victim of scurvy.

In his letters he gave interesting descriptions of the country through which he passed and the people he saw. He had a great dislike for the army doctors and gave vent to his feelings when he wrote to Sarah.

---

Camp Carrington  
March 13" 1864.

We have had our election. I will give you the names of our officers, Capt. Jas. Tobias, 1st Lieut Randall, 2nd Lieut H. D. Wilson, Orderly Sergt. P. Wilson, 2 Sergt. D M Hudson.

You know I was thinking of running for Orderly, but Jimmy run for that and I run for the next place. Jimmy was beat, I was elected. I will not have to do any duty, nor stand guard. The place suits me very well. If there is any promotions I will stand a good chance. I did not like the way Jimmy treated me, but I pity him now since he has got beat. Hen Fish, I. Hall and A. Calhoun run against me and I got more votes than all the rest together. If Jimmy had not wanted to run for Orderly, I could have got the place easy enough.

---

Camp Carrington  
March 18" 1864

Well Sarah, I hope you are all as well as I am, for I feel very well. Though there is several of our boys sick. Some have the Measles and some have the mumps. I am to be vaccinated to day for the Small-pox, as there has been a few cases around here. But none bad. I suppose Sarah you will be glad to hear, where and when we are going. Well I cannot tell you. It is generally admitted now, that we will go to Nashville or somewhere thereabouts to do Garrison duty, and that we will go in less than a week though we are not sure of this. Still there is some talk that we will leave next Saturday or Sunday. . . .

---

I will give you a list of our officers.

Capt. Jas Tobias	1" Corporal—Norman Simmons
1 Lieut W. H. Randall	2 " Will Hoard
2 " H. D. Wilson	3 " Mart. Robbins
1" Sergeant, W. P. Wilson	4 " F. Day
2 " D M Hudson	5 " W. Spears
3 " Rob. S. Dixon	6 I have forgotten the
4 " John Shambach	7 rest, but it is not particular
5 " Alex. Shepherd	8 anyhow.

Jimmy is now acting as Company clerk,—an easy place. Cap Tobias offered me 4 dollars a month extra if I would take that place, but I did not like to give up the place I had. For you see Sarah I have an easy time and 2 promotions will go to a Lieutenancy. And then I would rather not always be pinned to the officers.

---

Park Barracks March 25" 64.

We left Taylor's Barracks the other day and moved out here 1½ miles further from Louisville, where we have been since, though we are expecting to leave here for Nashville in a few days, perhaps tomorrow. We are now trying soldiering the right way. We are in Cloth tents. Six in a tent. I like them better than I do the kind we had at Columbus & Indianapolis. We are not troubled by such noise and we can pick our own company.

---

Louisville March 27" 64

Sunday 1 P. M.

While sitting in camp this morning wishing I was at home with you about 20 wagons came into camp and we were ordered to cook 2 days rations and shove out for Nashville.

---

In Camp near

Nashville Tenn

March 28" 64.

We left Louisville Sunday evening at 6 O'C. at [sic] got here yesterday at the same time—24 hours on the road. We are now with our whole brigade—the 120, 124, 128 & 130 Ind Vols. The 22" is here. I was sadly disappointed in the land in Kentucky so far as we saw it is very poor. But in this state it is a great deal better. There are no towns at all worth notice on the whole route except Bowling Green Ky and Franklin Tenn—we passed through Bowling Green at 8 O'clock yesterday morning.

I rode 85 miles on top of the Cars, and I dont think I saw 85 acres of wheat on the whole rout. Here in Tennessee the fences are nearly all destroyed. Gardening is going on—and peach trees are now in full bloom. I was on top of the cars when the train went through 2 tunnels a half mile through. And I tell you it looks dangerous to set on top of a train, and see it bulging headlong in to a little hole in the ground—that looks more like the mouth of a cave than any thing else. The train run 60 feet under ground.

When we got to camp it was pouring down rain like fury, and we had to go to bed wet on the wet ground. Though we had plenty

of blankets and slept very well at last—as we slept none the night before on the train. . . .

We are now just 225 miles from home and talk of starting to Chatanooga a foot in a few days.

---

Near Nashville

Tuesday evening March 29<sup>th</sup> 64.

I have just been through Fort negley—the largest fort in this part of the country. It covers about 4 acres and is right on top of the highest hill round about here. From it you can see all of Nashville and the country for miles around. There is about 12 or 15 Canon in it and several hundred loopholes for rifles. From it you can see Soldiers tents all around the city, about 50,000 Soldiers are about here in a few miles of Nashville.

---

Near Nashville

Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> March 64

The weather is too cold to enjoy ourselves. It rained or snowed all yesterday evening and last night. Something very uncommon away down here in Dixie. And our wood is scarce too—but we will take care of ourselves. We tore down a small brick house yesterday to get the joists for wood—but they have hauled some since.

---

Still near Nashville

Apr 2<sup>nd</sup> 5 P.M.

You know our regiment left Indianapolis on Sunday! It left Louisville on Sunday, and I guess we will leave here tomorrow (Sunday). We stay just a week at a place. This may all be a mistake but it is generally believed that we will leave soon for Knoxville Tennessee. It would be funny to you . . . to see our regiment when marching orders is given—How the hill side is covered with our tents, but in an hour after the orders are rec'd the tents are all gone, and there is nothing left to show where we have been but some old dirty clothes and our temporary cooking furnaces.

The tents, our beds, bed furniture, and all our personal property is on our backs and we are off South. There is to be but 2 wagons with our regiment (and one ambulance). We must carry every thing but our cooking utensils. I tell you it makes a good load. . . .

But the hard marching is what I dont like—But our general told us he would be easy on us. He said, he would not make us march more than 8 or 10 miles a day at first until we got used to it. . . .

I was down in town yesterday and saw the turn bridge over the Cumberland river—It is 500 feet across and turns out of the way to let boats pass up or down and then it is turned back to let the trains run across the river. It is the greatest structure I ever saw.

---

10 miles from Nashville

April 5<sup>th</sup> 1864.

We left Nashville this morning at 9 O'clock and are now in camp about 10 miles from Nashville on our way to Murfresboro, Tenn.

---

Murfresboro Tenn

Apr 8" 1864.

We got here to Murfresboro yesterday 3 P.M. I have seen the famous battle ground where the tops of the trees were cut off with cannon balls. Yesterday morning we left Luverne or rather where Luverne use[d] to be—but there is no sign of a town there now but old chimneys.

We have passed through a country covered with rocks where Cedars are more plenty than beach trees are in Indiana. We marched all the way from Nashville to this place. And are going from here to KNoxville Tenn.

. . . Marching 15 miles a day with a Soldier's load is not pleasant work. Pick up our tents in the morning with all our bed cloths our Knapsacks and rations enough to last for 4 days, and then march all day in the sun and then all on a pike at that it is not funny. But I am in for it, and will have to stand it the best I can. A great many of our regiment give out to day. . . .

I never thought of seeing such fortifications as there is here at this place, rifle pits all around the town, and embankments, 10 to 15 feet high—it would be impossible for any force to take it.

---

In a little hollow between several  
big hills 8 miles from Tullahoma

Tenn Sunday night, Apr 10" 1864.

This is a curious Country. Nothing but hills & hollows. We have been imitating the King of France when as the Poem says—The King of France with 40,000 men Marched up a hill, & then marched down again, for we have been doing nothing else all day, except for a little while this morning while we passed Shelbyville where we saw a little level country.

---

Tullahoma Tenn Apr 12" 64

If the South is all like this that I have seen it isn't worth fighting for. We are here with the 27" I had a long talk with Volna yesterday evening. I went to the camp of the 27" and they told me Vol was out on picket and I followed the rail road out and found him, and then brought him to town and to our camp for the night. And such a town, it would take about 4 or 6 like it to make one like your native Crothersville. Volna and I bought 6 apples a little bigger than marbles for 25 cts. I cant write you much of a letter this time—as the 27" boys are so thick they wont give me time. [In margin] Hoveys Division.

We will leave soon for Chatanooga & from there to Knoxville. Our Generals orderly had a hole shot through his Cap to day while riding through the woods by himself. It was done by Gurrillas that will rob every lone soldier they find. We dont dare go much alone without enough to defend ourselves.

---

In the mountains  
Near Anderson Tenn  
Apr 15" 1864.

I will give you a history of my travels since I wrote to you last.

The last I sent you was from Tullahoma where I stayed all night with Volna. We left there day before yesterday and marched to Dec-herd Station. Yesterday we was all day in marching over the mountains, a distance of 10 or 12 miles, where rocks the size of a small house is no curiosity at all. We will be in Alabama by noon to day.

---

Near Stephenson Alabama  
April 16" 1864

I expect you think strange of our being sent away down here so far in Dixie. And it does look a little strange but you see this is the only way we can go to Knoxville and get supplies as we go. We have to follow the rail road to have supplies shipped to us as we go along. We will go from Stephenson (where we will be in 2 or 3 hours to Chatanooga Tennessee and then follow the line of the rail road to Knoxville or at least that is the talk, and it must be true, for those that give out or get sick are shipped through there on the cars.

We might perhaps be placed on Garrison duty at Chatanooga but I don't think that is the intention of the officers. But it is hard to say much about it. . . .

I've not seen a pretty woman in Tennessee. The people here say they are not for the Union. Down here in Alabama the children say their parents are in the Southern army.

---

In Lookout Mountain Valley  
Near Chatanooga Tenn  
Apr 19" 1864.

The last letter I sent you was from Bridgeport Alabama. On the 18" we marched out of Alabama, through the corner of Georgia, and into Tennessee. And to day we reached this place, the 15" day of our march from Nashville. . . .

We are in camp at the foot of Lookout Mountain—the place where the famous battle was fought last November. We got here about 3 o'clock P. M. and after resting an hour I started to climb to the top of the Mountain a distance of about 2 miles—and so steep a part of the way that we had to climb ladders to get to the top, but after just one hour I reached the top where the rebels once made a stand.

From the top of the Mountain they say we can see 6 States, but the whole view is one range of mountains after another as far as the eye can see. So that the more I see of the South the less I like it, and the more I think of old Indiana, my native state.

---

Charleston Tenn  
Sunday Apr 24" 64

Since I wrot you my last from Chattanooga we have marched 45 miles through the prettiest country I have seen since I left Hoosierdom. I like the country fine. We have stopped here for awhile and they say we will be scattered along the rail road here on Guard duty. I hope so. If we are thus scattered along the road we will have a tolerable easy time and may be get to stay here all Summer. I know *you* would like *that*.

There is a division of old Soldiers here and we will take their place and they will go to the front. We have been marching for 75 miles within 5 to 20 miles of the rebel lines but still there is not much danger because there is a large Union force between us and the rebel army. Rebels continue to come in along the lines and give themselves up. The other day a whole company came in down below here Captain Lieutenants and all. They say the rebel Soldiers are badly discouraged. . . .

The people through here are all Union and the country is a very healthy looking place—tolerable hilly with plenty of pure water. The wheat here looks well. And there will be plenty of peaches and apples. How I would like to stay here till fruit time—the old soldiers say we couldnt wish to stay in a better place than this for the people are sensible sociable and Union, and the country is pleasant and healthy. . . .

We have marched every day for 20 days. We left Columbus with 90 men in our company. 60 marched through a foot—30 were left behind, and 4 have died. . . .

We are in cam[p] now on the bank of the Hiwassee river a beautiful stream where there is plenty of fish. We'll have something now besides hard tack and sow belly.

---

Charleston Tenn

Apr 27" 1864

Marching was tolerable hard work for us, especially at first and a great many of the men give out and had to be shipped but our company nearly all made the trip a foot, and now they are glad they did for they got to see so much of the country by marching through. We marched some every day for 20 days. Some days 8 or 9 miles and some days 15 or 16 miles. . . .

We heard heavy canonading day before yesterday and yesterday the report came here that our men had taken Dalton Georgia, 39 miles from here. Rebel deserters here say if that is true the rebellion is played out here in the South West. That the Soldiers in Georgia and Alabama are so discouraged that they want to give the thing up and return to the Union. We have 12 rebel deserters here under guard now till we can send them down to Chattanooga. I guess they will be sent off tomorrow. They say if Dalton is taken and Grant whips the rebs in Virginia the war will be over.

They said that when they left they knew 1500 rebs that wanted to desert but they were afraid to, for if they try it and get caught they are sure to be shot. Still better. It is reported now that Dalton is taken and 7000 prisoners but you will know all about that before this reaches you. I can only hope it is true and that the war will soon be over.

---

Charleston Tenn

Apr 30" 1864.

You know my opinion of the part of Tenn that we have marched through. It is such that I am not at all surprised at the specimens of Tenn refugees that you see passing north on the rail road. And

here even in the Valley of East Tenn the people are almost starved, and most of them Destitute of decent Clothing. The refugees that come in here say that us Yankee soldiers (as they call us) know nothing at all about hardships; That the women and children through this country and Northern Georgia are bound to leave or starve. I pity the poor fellows. Still I believe that the Government is committing a great blunder in giving them the liberties they do.

The other day about 30 refugees came in here & were allowed to run at will. They took quarters for the night in an old church and during the night 6 of them undertook to run the picket lines and go back to rebeldom. So you see they dont know who to trust. I'd hold them all. I'd put them at work on Public works and issue them their rations and thus they could do some good & prove their loyalty at the same time. I tell you it wont do to trust the dogs at all, and in fact I doubt the loyalty of all of them if they thought their cause would be victorious.

There are a few Union men through this neighborhood, but the most of them are neutral, and a great many of them draw their provisions from the Government, Especially poor women who have no husbands or whose husbands are in the rebel army, and they too are avowed rebs.

---

Charleston Tenn  
Sunday, May 1st 1864.

We have been assigned to the 23rd army corps under General Schofield. He is now shipping his whole corps to this place, and I believe they are now about all here now. They say we (this corps) has to protect Gen Thomas's left flank which is East of Ringold and there about.

I will now give you what I promised to some time ago, our daily travels ever since I enlisted—as follows.

Station	Dis	Arrived	Left
Home Ind	—	—	Jan 6, 64
Columbus "	30	Jan 8	" 19
Crothersville "	30	" 19	Feb 1
Columbus "	30	Feb 1	" 20
Crothersville "	30	" 20	Mar 4
Columbus "	30	Mar 4	" 6 <sup>s</sup>
Indianapolis "	40	" 6	" 18
Crothersville "	70	" 19	" 20
Louisville Ky	40	" 20	" 27
Nashville Tenn	185	" 28	Ap 5
Murfresboro "	30	Apr 7	" 8
Shelbyville "	25	" 9	" 10
Tullahoma "	20	" 10	" 11
Decherd "	15	" 12	" 13
Stephenson Ala.	26	" 15	" 15
Bridgeport "	12	" 16	" 17

---

<sup>s</sup> The letter which he wrote to Sarah that they had arrived at Indianapolis was dated March 5.



Chattanooga Tenn.	30	"	20	"	21
Charleston "	40	"	24		

We marched afoot 210 miles

---

May 2nd 64.

Gen Schofield has nearly all of his Corps here. There is some talk that we will leave this place in a few days but we know nothing about it, nor we dont know where we will go if we do leave.

I think from the General movements and the news from home that the Government is going to put the war over this spring and summer if it is possible that it can be done. . . .

You have no idea . . . what it is to be among so many troops. There is now about 10000 or 12000 at this place. It is military and nothing else. There is as much rattle and noise as there is in Madison—but there is hardly a citizen to be seen, that is a man—there are plenty of women. Generally 5 or 6 in a house—refugees from the rebels.

---

Six miles South of Cleveland

May 5" 1864.

Contrary to our expectations we had to pull up stakes at Charleston day before yesterday and leave our comfortable arrangements and again betake ourselves to the march. We are now in camp 25 miles from Dalton on the rail road from Cleveland toward Dalton. We dont know where we will go. . . .

They are repairing the rail road along here so that the cars can run on further towards Dalton. The trains could only run as far as we are.

---

In the field Near Tunnel Hill

Sunday May 8" 1864.

After laying in the Sun half the day waiting orders we at last rec'd them and started off in the line of the rail road for Dalton. We marched 7 miles and went into camp where we remained till yesterday when we started and through the effects of bad whisky on the Generals & ignorance of the roads we marched about 20 miles to make 7 to this place. We are now about 2 or 3 miles in rear of Tunnel Hill held as a reserve and waiting further orders.

Our troops took Tunnel Hill the other day and are now getting along fine. But the best news we have is Grants victory in Virginia. Our regts were called up and the Dispatch read to them all. You ought to have heard the soldiers Cheering. If Grant comes out all right at Richmond, I think we will be sure to get home this fall, for I dont think there is any doubt but this army will use them up well enough at Dalton. Isnt that bully.

We are now in camp where the rebel pickets stood 2 days ago but our troops (that is Union troops) run them away and the cavalry say they are now retreating towards Dalton where old Gen Hooker will give them a lift some of these days and see if he cant lift them out of the place. And we feel pretty well satisfied that he will be successful.

They are pushing things along in a hurry down in front here, and I think by the time this reaches you you will hear good news from Dalton as well as from Virginia. The old troops by thousands have been passing to the front where they have a line of 8 or 10 miles.

---

Chattanooga Tenn

May 21" 64

Still laying around here at Chattanooga. . . . They say the regt is about 40 miles the other side of Dalton with the army and the rebs running all the time. . . . The report now is . . . that the armies are fighting hard down in front.

I am laying here in camp where the Christian Commission furnishes us all the religious newspapers and Testaments we want. They also furnish us paper, pens & ink to write home and pay the postage on our letters if we wish them to do so. I have just been over and got a paper and a Testament. They also furnish us some potatoes, Crout &c but the officers get the most of the eatables and those that are very sick. Us convalescents dont get many good things. We have Bread, meat, beans and Coffee. Sometimes rice. . . .

I am getting tired of staying back here, but I am afraid that I would not be stout enough to march and carry a knapsack. It may be that I am missing some fun or fighting by staying here at Chattanooga. But war is all luck at best. So whether I am in luck or not it is all the same. It may be that I will get to do fighting before the war is over. They are all the time bringing wounded men in from the front and such as are able are sent on to Nashville. Though the numbers brought in are not great considering the size of the Army. Oh! may the war close. Pray all for the close of the war.

---

Chattanooga Tenn

Sunday May 22nd 1864

I am getting now perfectly stout and hearty. Still I am in the convalescent camp expecting every day or two to go to the regt. I have not heard much from the regt since I left it only that they are after the rebs beyond Dalton. They say fighting is still going on in front, and the rebs are retreating towards Atlanta, Georgia. Also it is said that 2 Corps of our men are between the rebs and Atlanta to keep them out of that place. If that is so, the rebs are surely in a desperate fix.

We have the news here that the 27" was in a hard fight and got badly cut up but we have not heard any names. I hope it is not as bad as represented. They say that they just cut and slashed the rebs all to pieces, just run mad and had no fears at all. . . .

Well, well I wonder what you will do up north for men. I see now since the 100 days men are furnished the Government is thin[k]-ing of calling for 300,000 more volunteers. I guess they are going to try to frighten the rebs out and make them lay down their arms without fighting.

---

U. S. General Hospital  
Chattanooga Tenn  
May 27" 1864.

I got a letter from Jimmy yesterday. he is with the regt and in good health. He said in his letter that the 120 had been in a small fight and that 5 in the regt were wounded. They had to charge the rebs across an open field. He said they stood it fine. . . .

We have the report here that our army corps (the 23") has been ordered to Virginia. If that is so, I may not see the regt for some time, for it would be impossible to overtake it after it leaves the rail road. Jimmy said in his letter that they were 90 miles from here and still kept going. But the rebs have crossed a river and burned the bridge which would stop them a day or two. They drew 10 days rations. . . .

A few words about Soldiers aid societys &c. I am here where I can see the workings of these things very well. And I see that the things which the people at home contribute for the poor sick and wounded soldiers are about half or more eaten by by the nasty cooks and lazy Doctors and nurses, while the soldiers for whom they were intended suffer. So I would say to all if you want to help the poor sick soldiers, send it to them your self by express, and dont allow any body else to handle it.

The other day I saw a soldier who was shot through the breast and in a bad fix cursing because he could not get half enough to eat, and at the same time the cooks were feasting on Butter, Onions, Potatoes, and such things sent from home for sick soldiers.

---

Convalescent Camp  
Chattanooga Tenn  
June 1" 1864.

I think the hard fighting will be over when Richmond and Atlanta is taken, and I think that will be done by the 4" of July. But after the fighting is done they may keep a body some time on Garrison duty. I tell you I have a low opinion of the Rebs. They will kill till they are all killed off unless the Government adop[t]s very strict rules of punishment. I think when the war is over there will be some forces kept as post Guards but who they will keep I of course cant say. One thing is certain I shant get mad if they send me home as soon as the thing is done or sooner if they wish. . . .

We can buy Cincinnati & Louisville Papers (if we have money).

---

Still at the Convalescent Camp  
Chattanooga Tenn  
June 5" 1864.

This evening I have wandered around to the Christian Commission where we can write on a good table. . . . As this is Sunday we thought we must have something extra for dinner to day, so we got us a nice mess of Greens and boiled it with our Sow-belly and fried our hard tack in water and grease which with good coffee almost made me think I was at home again. . . .

The bridge here at the foot of Lookout Mountain broke down the other day so that we have had no mail for a few days, though it will be fixed tomorrow. . . .

We have been having some very bad weather on soldiers for 3 or 4 days past. It has rained almost constantly since the morning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> inst till to day, and part of the time so hard that it almost washed our tents away. But I think now the rain is about over. It is the best growing weather I ever saw. I would like to see the corn in Indiana. How does young crops look? Yes, and then there is a great many things in Indiana I would like to see besides young crops, but I must wait my time. . . .

I am getting as fat as a dog, and twice as lousy. But I kill *em*. Every thing here is full of lice, go into an old camp and you can almost hear them crack under your feet as you walk along, but then it gives us good exercise to kill them and keeps us from getting so lazy. . . . The woods down about Dalton where the rebs left was alive with them.

---

Chattanooga Tenn  
June 22<sup>nd</sup> 1864.

We have no news much from the front, but still the news such as we can get is all good, especially from Grant. You know Sherman is very still & dont allow much said. The rebs captured a train below here the other day, and we looked some for them here, but I guess they thought hardly safe "so they let us alone." And we didn't get to use the canon we run up into the forts where none had been placed before. They are still fortifying this place, and will make it a strong military post after the war is over.

---

Chattanooga Tenn  
June 29<sup>th</sup> /64.

From what the old soldiers tell me . . . I am troubled by the scurvy. My teeth and Gums are sore and my legs hurt me and ache if I exercise too much. But still it is a disease that can be cured easy enough if I could get the right kind of medicine or it will leave when cold weather comes.

---

2<sup>nd</sup> Battallion Exchange Camp  
Chattanooga July 1<sup>st</sup> 1864

I suppose before you get this it will be the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. . . . I may hear them fire a few Cannon here but I don't like the sound of Cannon. I heard them out at Dalton. They have about 150 Cannon here.

The corn here has been in Tassel for a week, a little earlier I expect than it is up in Ind. . . . The mountains are beautiful to look at but still I dont like them. (Especially when I have to climb them.)

---

Street 11 2<sup>nd</sup> Batt. Exchange Camp  
Chattanooga July 3<sup>rd</sup> 1864

I never want to hear a drum or see a cannon after the war is over. I want them to put the Cannon away and burst the head of

every Drum in in the U.S. Or if they have them at celebrations they wont get me in the procession. I dont like to march to the music of Drum and fife as well as I did a few years ago. I expect after I get home if I was to hear a drum I would imagine I heard somebody saying fall in! fall in!! and then you'd see me bounce out of bed in my shirt tail and begin to look about for my knapsack and gun expecting sure to be attacked immediately. But then instead of looking for my gun I might jump up and break out at the back door under the supposition that a hasty retreat was necessary.

---

Chattanooga

July 4" 1864

An old rich reffugee from Atlanta says that one victory now and then the election of Lincoln and the war will be over. . . . The election of Lincoln will wind up the war especially if our arms are successfull this summer. . . .

Our Major is here in Town. He says that the 120" is completely run down what there is of it at the front. . . . The 120" has been put through too hard all for the Glory of officers. We could have missed this hard campaign if it had not been for the ambitious officers. Gen. Hovey has resigned because he could not get another star on his shoulder. I hate the looks of Gen. Hovey. . . .

Butternuts are our greatest enemys.

---

Chattanooga Tenn

July 7" 1864.

The prisoners are coming in by the thousand and report says we have taken 9000 but we will call it about 3,000 I think that will do. . . . I am still laying laying here in the Exchange Camp in charge of street 11. I sometimes get the blues and wish I was with the regt and then again I conclude I might as well be satisfied and stay where I am. . . .

I suppose by this time my wheat is ripe and perhaps is cut.

---

Chattanooga Tenn

July 17" 1864

There was a call yesterday for all who wanted to go front of the 23" corps. But I'll hold on a while and see if the weather wont get a little cooler befor I start front. Then you see I dont much like the way they shoot people out at the front. They're just as apt to shoot toward a mas as any other way. But what made me feel worse than any thing else when I was at the front was to set and listen at a charge on a battery when for a few minutes there was constant hollowing & shooting both from the Cannon and musketry and then all at once it stoped and all was as still as death. This awful stillness makes me feel uneasy till I hear the result, but when I learn that it is in our favor I soon began to feel better. Fighting near as bad as folks at home think. Still they kill.

---

Chattanooga Tenn  
July 22nd 1864

Capt Brasher of the 120<sup>th</sup> has come back after all the boys of the Division, and although I still could have remained here I would rather go up when the call is made and not stay back and give the boys room to think coward.

The Adjutant of this camp refused at first to let me go and leave my street, but at last he consented and gave me written permission to hunt up all the boys of the 120<sup>th</sup> that were able and have them ready to go too.

Oh! Well! Well!! Well!!! I almost forgot to tell you my reasons for leaving this place, or as the boys call it, this stinking hole.

Wo be unto the Doctors. That is my text and if I preach a hard sermon from it you may show it to all the Doctors you see and warn them of the dangers to come, for the latest news here, from below is that the Devil beleiving the doctors has a better claim than him he has evacuated Hell and given the Doc's undisputed possession. Having issued his general orders No. 1. constituting of that infernal place, one immense Doctors office, where by the carelessness of the Dr's and the ill-timed application of remedies through carelessness and laziness will greatly augment the punishment of those who[m] they cannot punish sufficiently with fire. . . .

While in Hospital No. 8 there was an immense amount of Sanitary goods furnished the Hospital for the sick and wounded soldiers. Did they get it? I looked about enough to see while the poor Soldiers were suffering and *Dying* for attention to their wants and were fed the coarsest fare the Dr's fared as well as they could have procured in Indiana with money, and then lazily lounged about refusing even to dress the soldiers wounds. I saw sick men dine on boiled beef and bread and maggots in the beef at that. I havent room to say what the Dr's had the same day, but all rareties of the season—Crout &c &c. And at the same time you could have seen a wounded soldier with maggots in his wounds for want of attention. Wo be unto the Dctors. And still there cometh another woe.

I soon got tired of that place and told the Drs I wanted to go to the regt—they said I could go—but I was stopped out here where I have remained in charge of street 11. I have had generally from 30 to 50 sick men in the street for whom I had to get the medicine when the Doctors would prescribe for them. Of course I saw something of the sick and the Doctors. Now I will tell you what I seen here.

While the men were laying half dead the Dr's would remain away for 3, 4 and even 7 days without calling to see the sick and if you went to hunt them you might have to visit every beer saloon in town before you would find them and then likely so drunk as to be unfit for duty.

How would you like to take medicine issued by a steward so drunk that his tounge [*sic*] was very thick and he could hardly stand. I quit taking their medicines and soon got better. The Major raked them for staying away and then they would come up past the Major tents and slip into the back room of the sutlers tent and drink beer

(and whisky too) and play cards all day while the boys were suffering by hundreds for attention. This I know them to do. The Major has been informed of this also and says he will see too it.

Wo! Wo!! unto the Doctors. Soldiers despise them. Of course there are exceptions but the greater part come into the army for money and because the boys here are mostly strangers too [sic] them and they think it will not injure them. They are perfectly reckless of human life and suffering. Put me in the front under rebel fire rather than in a mean Doctors hands. . . . They shall reap their reward. . . . As I was in command of a street here the sick of course looked to me to have something done for them. And in lots of cases I have had men to lay unnoticed when I did not know but they would die in 12 hours and it was impossible to find a Doctor.

And then they would order me to put the men on duty when I knew they were not able. And taking it all together it made me anxious to get a good chance to get away. I have now a chance to go [to] the regt on the cars. The regimental baggage and books are being sent up so that I don't think they will move much longer and the way I feel I am able for duty and it will be a great deal easier than it is here now. . . .

The Johny's are so discouraged that they wont make a bold stand anymore. Altogether I think the rebellion is about played out.

---

Chattanooga Tenn Sunday A.M. July 24" 64.

I have not got away from Chattanooga yet and I will not till Capt. Brasher comes back from Knoxville where as I told you in my last he went to gather up the boys of the 120". I looked for him back before this time but I have not seen him, so I suppose I will not get off for 2 or 3 days yet. I was in hopes I would get to the front in time to march into Atlanta with the army, but I have missed that fun. . . . If Gen Grant is successful at Richmond I think the thing will be over and we fellows will get to come home before 6 months longer. . . .

I have drawn Drawers, socks a hat and a fine pair of Pants. So now I have a new suit all round. My new pants fit me the best of any I ever had. I'm not ready to go [to the] front, though I am getting afraid the Capt has went back and left me here though I think not.

---

Chattanooga Sunday P. M. July 24 64.

Since I wrote this morning I have been down in town and saw some of the boys from Knoxville that came down with Capt Brasher and we now expect to leave for the front tomorrow evening or Tuesday morning Early.

---

Chattanooga Tenn  
July 26" 1864

Again I can address you from Chattanooga. I expected sure to leave here this time sure. Capt. Brasher had transportation for us

from this camp, but after packing our knapsacks and starting down to town, the Major stoped us and told us if our Captain was wanting us he must come up and show his authority. He made us stop and stack our arms and wait to see if the cap would come after us. After waiting awhile I got permission to go down to town to see the cap. but just as I was getting into town the train left. So you see the Capt left without us and we were left behind. I asked the major if he did not give me written permission to gather up boys of the 23<sup>rd</sup> corps. He said he did, but before we could take them away the capt must come and show his authority. I'm madder than any bull, but now I might just as well say nothing about it and stay contented. I don't know now when I will go to the front. . . .

Well I suppose you have heard the good news and the bad. They are having a pretty hard time down at Atlanta, but so far as we can learn our troops are successful but we have lost our old Gen Rosseau who commanded our Corps and the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. But then he did not suffer any more than a high private. Still he was a good General.

The Prisoners and the wounded are coming in. And I guess our men still hold Atlanta. . . . I tell you the reb Prisoners are hard customers. The officers even to Colonels as dirty as dogs.

---

Chattanooga

Aug<sup>th</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> 1864

Sherman has not took Atlanta yet, but "we are looking every day when he will." And there is no doubt but what he will. The rebel Prisoners all admit that themselves. Tell the butternuts up there to either make peace and stop the war this fall or else stop their mouths and the soldiers will make peace their way.

---

Chattanooga Tenn

Aug. 13<sup>th</sup> 8 A. M.

We have no news from the front. I guess Sherman has laid siege to Atlanta. They were sending out some 100 Pounders from here yesterday. That looks somewhat like a siege. . . . I have just heard from the front that they had a small fight last Sunday and took 300 or 400 Prisoners. . . . Now if Sherman will just take Atlanta and all the rebs in it and Grant will blow Lee's army and richmond out of Uncle Sams Domain, I think we will soon see an end to this cruel war.

---

[No date given]

Well, Well Sarah it may be that they will want the soldiers at home about Election times to put down this little insurrection up there. Now I just dare them to call them home for that. Unless the whole Democratic party should raise and then they might as well call the soldiers all home. Let the South go and whip the Copperheads half to death yes entirely to death for they deserve 10 deaths to where a southern rebel deserves one. . . . I think now Sarah that that disturbance at the north is the only hope the south has. They look for the North to split up and weaken themselves so that they



will be unable to continue the war next season. If the North does its duty and hangs a lot of those northern rebs the war will soon wind up—as soon as the South sees that the Copperheads cant help them.

---

Chattanooga

Aug 18" 1864

I will tell you how the scurvy works and as much as I know about it, though there are several different forms of the disease, but it is all called Scurvy, There is one kind that is closely akin to the rheumatism. That is it hurts just about like it but generally in the legs. The legs will turn black especially the Calves of the legs, and the skin on the shin bones gets tight to the bone so you cant shake it. And hard lump will raise on the shins like the bones were swelling. Then the legs will get stiff especially the knee joints. Well now that is the kind I am troubled with, but I have described the worst forms of that kind. I have seen men whose legs were as black as coal but mine never turned black more than a small patch and that is good now. My legs do not hurt me now unless I run about all day then it feels like I had the rheumatism in them. Then they swell some too. But my health is very good and I am getting fat all the time. I have plenty to eat and nothing to do. . . . The scurvy is caused by eating too much salt meat and no vegetables and also by exposure. . . .

I must now tell you about the times here at Katanoooger as the citizens call it. Truly we have had exciting times. The rebs in some force have been tearing up the rail road down at and about Dalton. Yes and they captured Dalton and a few of our men and 400 head of Uncle Sams Cattle. Well of course you know they got scared here and we had to all roll out with our rusty guns—us convalescents—to defend Chattanooga. Well we left our guns in the stack to be ready at any time the rebs might come in, but it so happened that they didnt come so we didnt have to fight! They sent 5 regts out from here to Dalton and they put down the disturbance. They put down this little rebellion by a severe charge by the 14 U. S. Colored troops. The nigs would not take a prisoner but killed every reb. that wanted to surrender. . . .

I was amused to see the citizens here when they were looking for the rebs to come in, more particularly those butternut Employees of Uncle Sams, who never saw [a] fight. I was laying over on the hill side in the cool of the evening and hearing folks talk when 2 Employees came by us fast as they could walk going over to a good place to see the fight, when they would be safe themselves. I asked them what the news was down in town and they told me our pickets had been drawn in and that the rebs were then coming right on to the town. But you see the soldiers knew that was all a lie, for I was laying where I could see to Rossville, 4 miles away, and the rebs would have to whip 2 regts of soldiers and 2 pieces of artillery before they could pass that place. So you see we knew we would hear some noise before the rebs got within 4 or 5 miles of us, but the noise didnt come—nor the rebs either. And then too we knew (or thought might strong) that the rebs would not attack Chattanooga, for if they did they would have to approach the town across a valley about 3 miles wide and all the time they would be crossing there would be

about 75 cannon pouring Grape and shell into them besides our minies from behind the breastworks & we all know the Johnys are not fond of such charges as that and a cross fire at that. . . .

I saw Lunt McGaurron this morning. He is here recruiting niggers for Jennings Co.

---

Chattanooga

Aug 19" 64

Vegetables are plenty here! Potatoes 2 dollars pr bushel. Apples and peaches plenty but sell pretty high. . . . The officer commanding here has made a great blunder I think. He has issued an order prohibiting soldiers from selling their rations so I cant get any vegetables at all now without money. I dont think that was right at all.

---

Chattanooga

Aug 21" 64

My back still hurts me some. I have just thought how to describe the Scurvy to you so you will all know just how it makes me feel. Just imagine if you can how Aunt Sally Tobias feels when she has a severe spell of the sick headache and you will know just how I feel. Though I have no old Handkerchief to tie my head up which perhaps makes mine a little worse.

---

Chattanooga Tenn Aug 26' 64

So I suppose from your account that the Butternuts are quite mute in Jackson Co. What do they say about this little affair at Indianapolis when Gov Morton got some of their arms and 20000 rounds of ammunition? What fools they are. Dont they know they will get whipped like dogs? Let them raise an army of 200,000 if they can and still they could not make a show. It is very true they might if they could raise that many compell this army to fall back and let the rebs alone for a while but when it fell back those Butternuts would get the best threshing they have had for awhile or heard tell of either. It is the general feeling of the soldiers that if they should have to fall back and leave the rebs they will whip the butternuts like Dogs anyhow. . . .

And Bill Stewart has the Minnesota fever, has he? I think at such times as this when a man can do well in Ind he had better stay there for it would be a hard time to go west and get fooled as bad as some have. And then . . . the Indians might be some trouble. And I would rather live with rebs than with them. I myself think this is a very good time for people to stay at home and make a living as best they can but by no means go in debt for anything for there is sure before long to be considerable change in money matters. . . .

I had forgot to say anything about my health. Well, it is not very good. My back and legs have kept me pritty still for the last week also I have light fever every evening which makes me weak, still nothing dangerous. Nothing but the scurvy. The fever is a kind of slow invalid fever. Not hot like I have had at home but it is now lighter than it was a few days ago. . . .

I am living fat on peaches Sarah. I had a peck given to me the other day.