

Thursday Evening, July 2<sup>d</sup> '69

My Dearest Love,

It seems a long time since I wrote to you. It was yesterday morning. I am not well this evening. I did a very large washing to day, and it was so warm that I almost gave out. I worked two hours, and that and the heat made me sick. My head aches badly. You must not expect a good letter this time, my pet. I can't do a hard day's work with<sup>out</sup> getting sick, any more. You know I couldn't last summer, nor for two summers before that. I wish I were stronger. I have good health when I can't work hard, or overtask myself. But I shall be well again in the morning, I think. I wish I could know how you are, my love, and where you are, and what you are doing and thinking about. I hope you are well, and comfortable, but I am always uneasy. I believe I am looking for you home a little all the time. I don't say so, and I don't own it even to myself till last night. I was sitting up reading pretty late, after the others had gone to bed, when some one knocked loudly at the south door. In an instant I thought it was you, I was sure of it almost. Father called out for them to come around to the other door, but I ran through the room and unlocked the south door, and it was Mr. Bill Moore! He had been over here somewhere on business and, as he isn't able to ride after night, stopped to stay all night. I was so disappointed, do you see. You have no idea how bad I felt. It made me so nervous I couldn't sit up hardly. I went right off to bed, and lay there and thought of my good love for a long time. If it had been you, pet, I don't know what I should have done, something wild I expect. But it won't matter what I do, will it, dear, when you come, so I am glad to see you. I shall be glad. I wouldn't look for you any, had not Bill come so unexpectedly to us. I think you may be the same. But so you come, love, I will not care whether you surprise me or not. It has got round all through the country that you are coming, or are already here.

Hereafter, my darling, I am just going to believe what you tell me, "nothing more,  
nothing less." Won't this be right? Mr. Henry Delany was here this afternoon &  
talked a good while about the copperheads. He says he feels as if he could take the  
lines of a few of them without the least trouble. He told me about an anonymous let-  
-ter that George Stewart got last winter from Keulen. They all accused you of dictat-  
ing it, and he says they talked "awful," and some of them seemed almost ready to  
buy the ropes to hang all the abolitionists. Knew what he remembers of the letter, it  
must have been a good one, and rich too. Did you know anything of it, darling?  
He says Mr. Grissom is talking in soil, denying that he ever told all these  
stories about the way the soldiers live, &c. Will Grissom has been writing home some  
very strong letters from Keulen. He says if any of his relatives sympathize with  
the rebels, he disowns <sup>them</sup> and will never have anything to do with them. They think  
this is what has influenced the old man lately. I asked him how Mullin's  
stood now, in regard to the war, and he said he was a first rate Union man.  
"He is just as good a loyalist as any man of his party can be." I don't think you  
need have any doubts about him, my love. Do you still know? We surely can't  
all be deceived in him. He isn't sharp enough to come water on both shoulders  
and none of us find him out. Don't he don't think of such a thing, dear one. He  
is just like he used to be. I don't believe one word of all that stuff about his  
getting mad over your letter and swearing about it. That is just Mrs. Meyer's  
story; I have no doubt Deaton believed it; however, I should like to ask Mrs.  
Meyer about what she says you wrote home, but I won't till you come. She won't  
hardly look out the window at me as I pass there. She used always to come out  
and speak to me. I am sure she feels mean. Perhaps that is punishment enough.  
It is getting dark and I must go and take in my clothes. My head is no  
better yet, love, but I will go to bed early, and sleep it off. Won't that be best?  
I intended to write you a long letter to night, but I can't believe I can sit up to do it,  
now. I feel too badly. My dear one won't care, will he? I will write again in the morn-  
ing. Goodly, sweet love. I wish you would come to night, but don't say so. Who knows?  
We three I will make a home for the rest of my life.

Friday Morning, July 3<sup>d</sup>

My Aunt Darling:

It is very warm this morning. I think it is going to be the hottest day of the season, so far. There is hardly a breath of air stirring. The leaves on the locust trees drop motionless in the hot sunshine. Everything is suffering greatly for want of rain. If it don't come soon there will be short crops, I'm afraid. And I must have my flowers handy. This troubles me more than anything else, I believe. I am hungering to see them in bloom again. I am much better than I was last night. I was two times, that was all ailed me. My head aches yet this morning, but I shall get over that, I guess, pretty soon. I am not going to work much to day. I am going to Scenicum, though, as soon as I finish my letter, and that will be as hard as work, though this the blazing heat. Nothing in the world hardly could take me there to day, but my anxiety to hear from you. I want to hear the war news, very much, but I wouldn't go just for my papers. They got the war news, I suppose, last night, and I think there is a letter from my "Beach". I would go ten miles to get that. I don't want to go further than Mr. Grafton. I don't know whether he ever went to look at your oven or not. I haven't seen him since we talked about it. I fear they are not fat enough to go into the early market. Allie says she has turned Minky leg at last. I think she will soon be fat. I don't want to sell Cassie and Hovah, dearest. Mayn't I keep them here this winter, if you don't get home? Father is willing I should. I couldn't bear to see Hovah sold, any more than I could Beckie hardly. And we shall need Cassie after awhile. Mullinix - or Allie rather - wants to buy Minky calf. It is a very good one. But, darling, when is the use of talking about business, when you will soon be home and learn all about it for yourself? Will can tell you how things stand at Warville, and about the young cattle. They are very fine. Will said he wishes he had some way of getting Dr. or Bob down to Casper, K. He would be appreciated down there. I told him company I would be entirely welcome to him, if they would only get him. <sup>and</sup> they would be, love, for me. I believe there are several people up around here who would like to send them a nice fat beef.

If you have to stay out all next winter, and should be in reach of us anywhere I mean to send you a box of provisions from home, just as often as I can. I can send many things in the winter time, that would spoil now. I could get a wagon load of good things brought in to send to your company in two days any time. But we can't send anything till cool weather, that would do you any good. If you think of anything you want from home, just tell me at once, and you shall have it, if possible. My poor love! I wish I could do a great deal for you. But I can't, darling. I can do almost nothing - but love you. I can do that, can't I, dear? We have plenty of war news, but it all lacks confirmation. It is said that Banks has captured Port Hudson; and that Heintzelman has been relieved from the command of the army of the Potomac, at his own request. Nobody can remember the name of the general who succeeds him. He is a new man, they say. I hope this is not true. Hooker would not surely ask to be relieved just at this juncture, with Lee's army in Pennsylvania and Maryland. What competent general if indeed there is ever to be a competent general found for that army - would be willing to assume command at this moment? If it is true Hooker will be laid on the shelf, among all the rubbish that this war has accumulated, never to be heard of again. I have hoped better things of him. I am glad to see in my papers that the rebels have made a raid into Indiana. That is just the best thing that could happen there, for us. The Hoosier blood is up wonderfully, and they are after the rebels, bent on hanging the last one. There were about two hundred and fifty of them they were sweeping through Wayne county at last accounts. I don't care what damage they do. The more the better, as they treat friend and foe alike. They have no time to stop and parley with their copperhead allies. Some of the traitors about Fort Mifflin used to say that "they were not afraid of a rebel invasion. The southern men wouldn't hurt them, because they were not their enemies." Perhaps they are changing their minds! Darling, I have scribbled away here, in quite a hurry and said nothing of any interest. I wanted to get off before it gets any hotter. I do so want a letter from my love. I will write again to night, I think. Take good care of my "Peaches," want you, dear, for my sake? Goodly now. May heaven bless you, beloved. Write often to your I haven't told you anything I meant to but it don't matter this time. (Pallie)

Helena Arkansas

July 9<sup>th</sup> 1863

My Darling,

I have no news that we consider of interest here, for you this evening. This morning an order came around notifying us that all the forces at this place were required to fall into line of battle at day light, and remain there under arms until half an hour by sun. This shows that there is some danger, or that some General has a scare on him again. It is a very unpleasant thing to have to get a Company of men up every morning at day light, and take them out into line and keep them there for so long a time, but it will have to be done until this scare passes over. There may be danger here, but we have been <sup>here</sup> so long, and have never seen any of it, that we can hardly realize that such can be the fact. Yet we know it is always best to watch. Did we know to day that there was not one particle of danger, it would be the best to keep right a long in the regular military duty. It makes better soldiers of all of us. All soldiers are apt to look upon the service, too much as though they owe the Government no duty. The best way to prevent this is to keep at some kind of duty all the time.

While I think of it let me tell you what I want you to do for me in the way of business. Go or send to Mr Phillips at Isonium, and ascertain from him, how much money I

sent Old Mr Grissom for mail. I aimed to send forty dollars but the old man has written to Mill, telling him I only sent thirty five. Ascertain the facts, and if I didn't send but thirty five, pay the old man the other five dollars and take his receipt for it. Then write to me about it. Attend to it immediately Volie, if you please

The health of the regiment remains about the same since I wrote you last there has been one death in the regiment One poor fellow belonging to the Centerwell Company has died, and has been buried out here on the hill, where the regiment has many others. That Company buries along by the side of where we buried our boys. We do this because we are all from the same County

The health of my Company is much the same Lieut Wright appears to be quite well. If you see his father or mother you may tell them, he is full as well as <sup>has</sup> been at any time since we came off of the Gallahatchie river. He is doing duty. Lieut May is quite renewed, though he is still going around

No news from below to day, and judging from what the Memphis Bulletin contains this morning no good news from any direction. I say Hooker is relieved of his Command at his own request. I such proves to be the case I don't know but I shall have a spell of the blues. If Hooker is not the man to manage that Army who is, unless it is Fremont. Where I know nothing about. I would give the Command of that Army to Fremont for six months, and he could have the full support of the Government and

all of the subordinate officers, and he should fail too to accomplish any thing; I don't know but I should feel very much like giving up the contest. It seems as though that Army is to gain no great victories during this great rebellion. Every time there is a chance to do anything in that department, a change of Commanders becomes necessary. Will such work ever stop

July 27<sup>th</sup> Three good letters from you this day. Your big letter came all right. It was not any too large. I love such letters. Dolly about the Teater and Mullinix quarrel. No one ever wrote me one word, about the way things were going on at Woodside, but you and your father and I never said one word to any one, about what he and you have told me. E. C. Phillips has written me every letter John has ever sent me, and I suppose he reads all the letters I send John. The one letter is all the one I ever sent him, in which I said anything about the political sentiment of any one. That was very short as well as I recollect. It was the one your father read no doubt. I have no hand thing I have said about the northern rebels to take back, no idea what any of them may say. As to the potatoes, flowers, and ash hoppers and so on. I never heard any thing about them till I got Teater's letter. Fool that he is. I wrote to Teater that I would have nothing to do with their dispute whatever. That I had other things of far more importance to think of. Since then I have heard nothing from him. For some time I have been thinking about selling the horses in place of the Oxen. I am afraid the horses will be stolen

See Peate and if he can gather the corn with the oxen  
and you have not sold them when you get this, sell the  
haves if you can, otherwise sell the oxen. In fact do as  
you and your father think best about it

Now Dollie I must quit writing for this time. To-morrow  
is the fourth. We are going to have Roast Chicken for dinner.  
We only gave seventy five cents for it. Be cheerful Dollie  
Goodly Darling - My good Darling

M. J. Remondin



Saturday Evening, July 11<sup>th</sup> 1869

My Dear Dear Love:

In my letter yesterday morning I intended to write again last night, but I could not. I was sick, eating. I had sick headaches all day. I did nothing scarcely. I started to Scrimmon as soon as I finished my letter, but I didn't go any further than Mrs. Sheeks. They had been to the office, and inquired for me, but there was nothing. I felt disappointed, less, and I come home and went to bed awhile. In the afternoon I came a little, and went to bed at last, without saying a word to my "Beaches". Was that owing, my feet? This morning I was quite well, and I have been busy ironing and the like all day. But the first thing I did, after breakfast, was to get dressed and go to Mrs. Sheeks again, hoping that I would hear from you this time. But this time I was not disappointed. I got two good letters, my darling, dated the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> ult. Thank you, sweet love. You say you don't write to me, and that you don't love, and letters. I haven't burnt them yet. You won't scold, will you? You see, too, till you come home, then I'll let you scold as much as you please! I am afraid it is going to be a long time before you can get to come home. And only think how I longed for you last week. About that fight at Scrimmon, I have already told you, love, all I know. The excitement died away, and I never inquired or heard any more about it. They are all gone from the house. Permoner took the women and children to Ottumwa. That was the last I ever heard. You think we are going to have trouble here in Iowa. I would not be surprised provided, our armies in the field are not successful. If they are I don't apprehend any danger. The Copperheads are mean enough to kill us all, if they dared. But they don't dare, and this is what will save us. If they do attempt mischief, blood will run like water, for the Unionists are terribly in earnest. You have little idea of their bitterness. If it comes to the worst but brief mercy will be shown to traitors. But I don't think it will come; still I believe the safest way to prevent trouble is to prepare for it.

I want you to send me a revolver, darling. I am in real earnest about it. I think I ought to have some means of defence. Don't you, love? I will try my best to learn to use it well, and then if I ever have occasion to use it, in earnest, I will remember I am a soldier's wife. Now I know, my pet, that a few years ago you never dreamed that your soft-hearted Polli would ever come to this, but just as little did I dream that my love would buckle on his sword and be "off to the war." Time has changed fearfully, and whether we wish it or not we must change with them. We might sit down and grieve ourselves to death over the spectacle that is presented to us - our country bleeding at every pore, thousands of our bravest men falling and lying on a hundred bloody fields, our nearest friends absent and suffering, our homes all broken up, our own hearthstone cold and desolate and what would it avail? The great besom would sweep on all the same. For my own part, sweet love, I feel less like grieving, and more like fighting every day. Are you astonished at me? Do you blame me? I hope not, dear. The war is upon us, dire and fearful, and we must fight it through or be ruined. I feel like securing victory by trying to achieve it. But I was talking of our copperheads. You think if the war continues, we shall have trouble before our Presidential election. I don't fear it then, darling. If we can escape till next June we shall be safe enough. A dozen regiments, and more, of our scorned, war-worn veterans will be home by then. If there is a prospect of trouble here, they will stay at home, and they will keep the peace in Iowa! Suppose there was one company of some of those old regiments scattered over Appanoose county now, you wouldn't hear a copperhead open his lips! If Matt lives he will be here next summer, and I know I can keep him at home, if we need his protection. With him here, well armed, I should not be afraid of ten copperheads of the caliber of George Stewart, nor twenty. They are bold now because they know nearly all good Unionists are gone to the war except the old men, and women and children. A few thousand old soldiers in Iowa will change the aspect of affairs slightly. But don't think I am alarmed, my love, and be uneasy about me. I am not the least scared. I don't think there is any danger - at least any immediate danger - further than this: they may steal our horses, or burn our house, and they may possibly, come here

to rob us of our money. This last is what I am most afraid of. I don't know whether any copperheads know of my having money, but they may, as the first you sent was counted out in Phillips' store, and word sent to me that it was there. I have been very careful, I assure you, yet, and shall be. I don't feel afraid yet, but still I know that if two or three fellows armed and blacked were to break in here some night, we should be entirely at their mercy. You know it too, don't you love? But I will not dwell upon such a possibility. I hope such fears are entirely groundless. We have little to fear if our armies are successful in the grand struggle now going on. May God give us success, at last! You can't make me say, my dearest, that I would be ashamed of you if you were at home. I wish you were at home. We need you at home. I really believe that you could do more good to the cause here, than where you are. It needs men to work for it here, as well as fight for it there. The trouble is, not that we have sent too many men, but that we have sent too many good men, and left too many bad ones here. If you were at home careless and idle I might feel sorry, I am sure, for you, love, even then. But you could not be idle. You would not be, and you could do much good I know. This is just what I think about it. Don't you think I am right, dear?

Later. Father and another one gone to bed, and I am going directly, but I thought I would talk a few minutes to my "Peaches" first. I am quite well to night. There was a celebration to day at Melrose. I would have gone in some of the wagons if I had not been sick yesterday. I was afraid riding through the heat would bring on my headache again. They say they had really a good time. Dr. Linn and Dr. Hay and Mr. Merrill were the speakers. They had a nice dinner set, and plenty of music. And, best of all there were no traitors handsly present to mar the harmony and good fellowship. I am almost sorry I didn't go any how, so I could tell you all about it. Mr. Christies were telling me about it as they came home. Nearly all Iconium was there, they said. I guess they meant the loyal portion. Father went down there this afternoon, thinking he could hear something from Will, but he didn't. We are all uneasy about him. I got no letter this mail, darling. Though I got two this morning I wanted another one to night. I got yesterday's paper and the news is intensely exciting, but you know what it is as well as I love. I know you as anxious as I am, to hear good news. I will write more tomorrow. Good night, my precious darling.  
(I love you so much)

Sunday Morning, July 5th.

My Darling: It is too hot this morning to write letters, or read, or do anything, but  
just sit around in the shade and try to get one breath. It is such a morning as we  
used to have sometimes at Woodside, when we would conclude that that was the best  
best place in the world. How I pity our poor soldiers who have to work and fight  
this weather. You know that Hooker is removed, sure enough. Let us hope once  
more, that they have found the right man, at last. I know nothing of Gen. Meade.  
He has taken the helm in a trying moment; if he guides the ship skillfully, and  
safely through the storm, so much the more will he deserve our praise and gratitude.  
Our latest news is that he was fighting a desperate battle with Hill and Longstreet  
near Gettysburg, with the chances seemingly in his favor. His address to the army, as  
assuming command, is very modest, and, after Hooker's humiliating gasconade, I am  
glad to see that he makes no promises. From Vicksburg the news is favorable. The  
latest dispatches are about Logan's blowing up one of the rebel forts, and fighting desper-  
ately at close quarters. And just here we must wait for further news till next  
Tuesday evening. This is hot, isn't it? There is no further news from Indiana, only  
that the expected visit, or visits, in Sullivan county is gratified, and the folks go  
back to Indianapolis. There is no news here, nothing. We are all well. Father was not  
sick last night. He washed too hard, and drank too much salt water. He has made  
him a pallet on the grass, under the locust trees, and seems to be taking solid comfort.  
Mother, with her cap strings flying, and a huge Turkey wing in her hand, wanders  
about trying to find a good spot to "locate." Poor mother! I wish she could find it  
and I would "emigrate" with her. Peppy is crying in the yard because nobody talks  
to him. He is getting on bravely, and is already worth five dozen common dogs - to play  
with. He is getting spoiled, as everything I love always does! What is the reason, yet?  
When I go out he will run to shake hands with me, and when he gets in mischief and I lay  
his ears a little, he looks so sorry and lies down, rubbing the wounded spot with his paw.  
There, love, isn't that enough for this time? I want to write to you - our gone - to say, and  
to Will. But I shall not neglect my "Peaches." You know that, don't you, sweet love? I will  
make this a long letter yet. I hope you are well, and cheerful. I love you with all my heart.  
I love you more every day I live. May the good God watch over my only loved one, all the time!

[1863]

Monday Night, July 6<sup>th</sup>

My Own Love: - I have been busy all day, and have not said one word to my "Peaches." That is mean, isn't it? But I am going to sit up to night to talk to you awhile. I can't do without writing to you any longer, ever one. And I have no news to tell you, nothing at all of interest or importance to say, but I want to write for all that. If I only write when I have something important to say, I should not send you half so much paper as I do. I wrote Jane a long letter to day, and a right good one, I believe. I urged her never to waver in her loyalty, for one moment, in word or thought, but the storm of treason sweep on ever so furiously I don't believe she will, I have no fear of her at all, but she needs somebody to encourage her a little, somebody to sympathize with her. I ought to have written to her sooner, but I kept putting it off, and writing to you all the time, love, when I wrote at all. And that was right, too, wasn't it yet? It is nearly always a task now to write to any one but you. But I wrote some to Will to day. I am sending him a long letter by this mail. He complains that he never gets my letters. I hope he will get this one. If he is at Helena to night - and he surely is there by this time - I wonder if you and he are not talking about home. I wonder if you didn't have a gooseberry pie for supper, and some home made butter. I fear it wasn't good, darling, if you did. It has been so very warm that I don't think it could keep sweet and good hardly. But you must tell me all about it. I wish I were down there in your tent to night, sweet love. I do indeed. I miss you more than common this evening. I have felt restless and uneasy about you all day. For two nights I have dreamed troubled dreams about your being sick, and in danger, and about devils, haunted houses, where I was lost and frightened. The remembrance of my dreams has cling to me all day. How foolish it is, love, but I can't help it. I hope I shall have a good, sweet dream of my loved one to night. Then when I wake I shall feel as if I had seen you

I have heard no later war news, and can't till to-morrow evening. I am trying to be patient, and to wait calmly, hoping it will be good when it comes. It is very warm to night, and there is some prospect of rain. It is surely needed. It is already getting late, I will go to bed now, my pet, and finish this in the morning. Won't this be right? I love my good dooling, and think of him every minute. I will think of him all night waking or sleeping. Good night, my dearest one. The good angels bless thee!

Tuesday Morning— You won't call this a young letter will you, darling? I believe it has been on hands four days, and it is long enough, isn't it? If I make it much longer you will not have time to read it all at once, I fear. It has cleared off bright and cool, but no rain yet. I am going to Iaconium after dinner, to take my letters to the office, and get some from my love. I want two or three, pet. I have had none since Saturday morning. I may not go further than Mr. Walker's. I would always rather wait there than go to town myself. Have I told you that there is to be a grand Union meeting at Iaconium on the 18<sup>th</sup> inst? Catep and Sharp are to be there. Who knows but what my Peaches will be there too? Oh, I hope you will come home by that time, my dear one. There is to be a similar meeting at uncle Billy Evans' grove on the 1<sup>st</sup> of August.

How are you going to like Col. Stone for Governor, dear? I have wanted to ask you this good while, but I could never think of it when I was writing. I am pleased with the nomination.

He is just the sort of man Iowa needs for Governor now, I think. You must do all you can for him, love. But I know you will. It is thought the Copperheads will nominate Col. Tuttle! Why do they go to the army for their candidate? I know nothing of Col. Tuttle, but if he is a good, honest man, he won't accept the nomination from such hands.

Any how, he can't be Governor. There is likely to be an exciting time up here, until after the election. How thankful I am that Iowa soldiers are not disfranchised because they are patriots! They will elect Col. Stone. I am quite well this morning, dear.

Father is plowing. Mother is making her new dress. Beppo is crying, and is nearly heart-broken because she won't let him come in the house and play. I am going out to whip him or let him in, I don't know which. I did have the sweetest dream of you last night, my pet. It does me good yet. Goodly now, my precious love. Don't forget your faithful I will write again to night, and mail the letter at Osprey to-morrow)

(Collie)

Helena Arkansas

July 6th/863

My Darling

All Helena this morning. Richburg is ours, and every thing in it.

Helena is not taken. We did the best work here on the morning of the 4th that has been done since the war began. We fought at least four to one, and placed at least half our number in combat.

My Company is all right. The boys all behaved well.

Capt. Mat. Walker was on picket where the line was attacked. He exchanged twenty odd shots with one rebel but did not get him. He killed one other certain, and the boys say two.

We fought under cover. The loss in the ~~regiment~~ regiment so far as has been ascertained, is one killed and four missing.

I can't write any more this morning  
I love you with all my heart  
Goodly Love

W. F. Vermilion

I am almost <sup>out</sup> of heart about your  
coming home soon. I am afraid  
you will leave Helena and not  
get to come at all. Admit you, dear?

(No. 5)

I am going to the garden to get me some  
ripe gooseberries to eat. I will eat some for  
you. There are plenty of them. They are very  
good. The weather is warm and still dry.

Tuesday Night, July 7, 1869

My Dear Love:

I went to Scrimm this afternoon and took my letters, but  
I didn't get any from you darling, nor any one else. Wasn't that too bad  
after my long, hot ride? I was sorely disappointed. But I know it is not your  
fault, any pet. You have written to your Dollie, haven't you? Her letters will come  
after awhile I guess, all at once. And that is the way you will get yours too I fear.  
I learned to day that they hardly ever send out the mail from Scrimm but  
once a week any more. I never dreamed of such a thing, dear. I supposed they  
sent out their letters every time they sent to Meravia for the mail, but they don't.  
I am very sorry about it, my love. This is the reason no doubt that you don't get  
letters from me oftener. I write all the time. I asked Fees to day if they sent  
out the mail last Saturday, but he couldn't remember whether they did or not.  
If they didn't there is a letter from your Dollie lying there yet, that was sent  
down last Friday. It ought to be half way to you by this time. But we will do  
the best we can, my dear one. I will write every day, if I can't send them regularly.  
I will send one to some other office every possible chance. If I can't do better I  
will go once a week to Mr. Gilbert's to take a letter for you. I will manage some  
way, darling. I shall not get to hear from you now before Thursday evening. It is  
so long till then. There were no letters in the mail to day, they said. I wasn't in  
the office two minutes to day. I rode up to the block and a soldier that I didn't  
know come and hitched Brother. I went in, put my letters - one for you, one for  
Will and one for Jane - in the box, got my papers, and come out. The room was  
full of men and women. I didn't look around, and I only saw one man I knew.  
That was Mullinnix. He come up and asked about you, and said they were all well.  
Phillips was at the lower end of the room weighing out something for some women.



and telling about General Longstreet being killed - which I guess he learned from my paper of yesterday, as this Hawk-Eyes didn't come. I am the only one who takes the Gate City. I stopped at Mr. Maithen's as I went down till I saw that the mail had come. Johnny had gone up to the office before I got there, and when he come, they wanted to send him back for mine, but I thought that wost too much and I wouldn't let him. I am a brave soldiers wife, and I will do anything that it is right to do, and not care for anybody. Isnt this right, my loved one? Mrs. Maithen was in a great way about your coming home. Some ones had just stopped there, on his way from the river, and told them about a Captain he saw at Ottumwa, on his way home, and, from the discription of him, she thought it must be you, - only he said he seemed to be a very religious man, and she didn't know so well about this part of it. They thought you have come by La Grange, perhaps. I talked a little with Mr. Maithen about the oxen. He says they are not fat enough for beef yet, and if they get fat, or if they dont, Word, the man he was buying for, will give as much for them as anybody. Beef is down to nothing scarcely now, since the rebels invaded Pennsylvania, and took up the rail roads. But it will be good again - the price, I mean - if Lee is beaten or driven back to Virginia, and he will be I think with out doubt. Of course, secret, I dont want to sell them now.

I am tired and sleepy, my pet; may I go to bed, and finish my letter in the morning? I think, my love, would say "yes." So good night, my best love, good night.

We are all right, this morning, my love. )      Wednesday Morning, July 8<sup>th</sup>  
Dont you see what a blunder I made, writing in the wrong line? It looks bad, but you wont care much about it, will you? I hate to send you awkward looking letters, dear, because I have plenty of time to write them, and nothing to bother me, and I have no excuse for such blunders; but I always make them nearly. But my Pauck must not care. Father will finish plowing his corn to day, I guess. After dinner he is going up to Casper to mail some letters, and get his papers. He says he would write to you, only I write so much that he dont suppose there is anything left for him to write about. And he dont have much time to write to anybody, you know.

I have now news from Pennsylvania up to the 31<sup>st</sup> inst. It is very good indeed if it only proves to be true. I have been disappointed in good news so often that I am afraid to put too much faith in anything I hear, any more. We shall soon know, however. It is said that Meade has won a complete victory, after the severest fight of the war. All the last account he <sup>had</sup> driven Lee four miles. The rebels are said to be utterly routed, and trying to escape. Pleasanton was expected to cut off their retreat. Generals Longstreet and Hill both reported killed. There is no estimate yet of the loss on either side, but it is heavy especially in officers. We have captured from fifteen to twenty thousand prisoners. How much exactly of all this good news, will prove to be true I can't tell yet, my darling. I hope it is all true. You will know before you get this, all about it. If it is all true a staggering blow has been struck the rebellion. Don't you think so, dear one? But why can't somebody make a dash into Virginia now and capture Richmond, while it is left almost at their mercy? From Vicksburg we have news up to the 29<sup>th</sup> ult. They were still fighting. The rebels thought Johnson would yet be there in time to save them. We have heard from some of the boys letters that the 6<sup>th</sup> regiment is doing only as sharpshooters at Vicksburg now, lying in their trenches all the time. It seems they are ready for anything that is wanted. I am afraid that many a brave fellow among them will "sleep his last sleep" out for from those fatal trenches. It seems that Bragg has, at last, slipped away from Resaca, and got to the mountains. This is bad. I fear he will go to rein force Johnson now, and both together fall upon Grant's rear. Oh, if we could only know that Vicksburg the strong hold of this wicked rebellion has fallen, what a relief it would be! I await further news with as much impatience as ever. The dispatches speak in the highest terms of General Meade. He is all right if he wins no victories. This is what the country requires of him, now. People up here are greatly excited about the news, and very eager to hear further. I was reading one of my papers as I rode along home yesterday, and twice some travelers that I met stopped and asked me if I had any late news from the east, or from Vicksburg. I told them briefly the most important items. They seemed quite rejoiced to hear of the victory at Gettysburg, and I knew by that they were Union men.

Several have been here to hear the latest news. I am always glad to have good news to tell anyone who wants to hear it. I am in good spirits about the war, darling. I think we are making some progress towards peace. We will reach it yet, in time. If I only could hear good news from you now, love. It is two weeks today since the last letter I have, ever written. That is a long time, sweet pet, for your Pอลลie to go without hearing from you, isn't it? I have been reading over the last letters I got from you. When I don't get any news over that is all the comfort I have. They may send after the mail to day. I wish I had inquired yesterday.

The great copperhead state convention is in session now, - at Des Moines City, I believe. We shall soon know who they want for Governor of Iowa. The Unionists hereabouts are hoping they will nominate Mahoney or Pley Dean or some one of their "mountys," but they are too cunning - knowing that our soldiers will vote to do anything of the kind, I think. But it won't matter much on whom the distinguished honor falls. Capt. Ben. Jones has just been home on a furlough. He passed through Melrose on his way to Bloomfield last Saturday. There was a man here yesterday who saw him. He said he was looking fine. I wonder if you didn't see him while the 3<sup>d</sup> cavalry were at Helena. I wish he had called here. I would liked very much to have seen him.

I will send this letter to Oxyres to day, my love. I can't tell when I shall get to mail the next one, but I will keep on writing, and if I can do no better I will make a chance to mail them at Lagrange. I would give anything if I lived where I could get a regular daily mail. Then you should have more letters than you would know what to do with, my darling. I have done nothing this week scarcely but write letters, and I am not done yet. I want to write to Jimmy, and send the letter by William Irvine who starts back next Friday. I have done up a little present to send him. I have neglected him a great deal, and I often feel badly about it. He makes a good soldier, his comrades all say. I fear he is getting to be a pretty hard case, though. This letter is long enough isn't it, pet, unless it were better? Write often to your Pอลลie, and love her all the time, won't you dear. Be of good cheer. Don't get the blues any, darling. Tell me all the news. Goodby. I send you one forgotten one, and a thousand kisses. Your own Pอลลie

Helena Arkansas July 7<sup>th</sup> 1863

My Darling

The smoke has now cleared away, and we can see we have gained one of the finest victories that have been gained since the beginning of the war. At daylight on the morning of the fourth, Lieut. General Homes, with an army estimated at various numbers, ranging from twelve ~~hundred~~ to twenty two thousand men, attacked this place, and were handsomely repulsed with a loss of fifteen hundred killed and wounded, and one thousand prisoners. Our loss will not exceed one hundred and fifty all told. The rebels were commanded by Homes, Price, Marmaduke, Parsons, and some others. On the morning of the fourth we had three thousand eight hundred men, all told. Out of that number there were many engaged as teamsters, nurses, musicians and so on, so our fighting number did not much exceed three thousand. The papers as far as I have seen do not speak of it as much of a fight, but they will change their tune surely when they get the official report. My Company Company and three others of the left wing of our regiment supported the Culbuge Battery. It did good work. I will try and give you an account in a few days, of everything we had to do with the rebels. The rest of the news you must get from the papers.

The Drums have just beat for us to go down to the Fort. We have a celebration there today. The Mass will go over before we get back, so you can't get any letter but this, this morning. There is no danger of any more fighting here, at present.

Be cheerful Dollie,

Goodly, My Dollie

W. F. Vermilion

Helena Arkansas

July 27/63

My Darling,

Now for another letter. This morning I sent you a short one, and I am not going to promise to send you any other kind this time. Yet there is plenty to write about, but I can't write it. Events are crowding upon each other too fast for me to write them. Here we are on the eighth day of July, but eight days of the month have passed as yet, and what has occurred. Even here on the Mississippi River, we have accomplished more than has been accomplished for the last year. Vicksburg has fallen and with it thirty one thousand rebels, and between one and two hundred large guns have passed into our hands. What a story there. But you will learn quicker of the events there and of their correctness than I will. So look to your paper for any thing you want to know from that point.

I told you this morning how many of the Union boys were thrown into the fight here, and how many of the rebels were precipitated against us, but I forget what I put the numbers at. General Prentiss said today that we had but 2500 men in the fight, and that

we fought the rebels at least fire to our own. Was that a fair fight my Colli? Lieut Gen. Hornes Commanded the rebel forces. In the attack Gen. Price commanded the center, Gen. Parson the rebel right, and Marmaduke the left. The attack was made simultaneously all around our whole line. They drove the Pickets in at day light, the signal gun fired from Fort Curtis in a few minutes afterwards. The forces had all been under arms for half an hour, and when the gun fired, each regiment moved off quickly to the position assigned it. Of our Brigade the 33<sup>rd</sup> Iowa moved down quickly to Fort Curtis to support it in case the rebels should make a charge. The 89<sup>th</sup> being nearer the point of attack got under way next, and were thrown into the hills on our extreme right, to support our pickets. Our regiment was divided. Three Companies were thrown into the rifle pits around Battery A on the hills, which is the first battery on our extreme right. Four-and-a-half were left at the levee to support the Dubuque Battery. The other three Companies were thrown under the hill on which the 89<sup>th</sup> Iowa was fighting, to support them in case the rebels should make a charge. As soon as the three Companies went into the rifle pits, they commenced firing, and continued with more or less success until the end of the engagement. As quick as the Battery got into

position and commenced work the Sharpshooters  
commenced firing at them across the bottom. That gave  
us work plenty to do. We could see them running from  
one tree or stump to another, or from one hill to an  
other. At first we thought our guns would not reach  
them. They were at least eight or ten hundred yards  
off and on higher ground than we were, but they were  
advancing and kept advancing until we fired  
several volleys into them. In the meantime they got their  
guns in position, on the hill across the bottom, and com-  
menced throwing shell and shells that at us at a rapid  
rate, at the same time throwing their rifle balls so fast  
as to make the air whiz with them. We were behind  
the levee which acted as a good protection. The cannon  
balls flew thick and fast, but we could dodge them  
I am a good dodger. We remained in that position  
for two or three hours, when we were ordered over to the  
other part of the regiment, where the Quarter Master had  
something for us to eat. This was near ten o'clock A.M.  
After eating breakfast, all the Companies went into the  
hills and relieved the 99th. I was ordered to keep my  
Company back as a reserve. Soon after our boys went  
into it, the rebels fell back and the fight ceased.  
About this time we heard from our left, and learned that  
we had taken about one thousand prisoners and had killed  
and wounded six or seven hundred. At that time the fight had ceased

[1863]

July 94

To day we have learned, that the rebels loss will reach fully three thousand. Of that number near fifteen hundred - yes near two thousand are killed and wounded the rest are prisoners. The prisoners were sent to Memphis in less than two hours after they were taken. Several Col. were killed. They were left on the battle field and were buried with the Common Soldiers. In our center where they took one of our batteries, and then commenced a charge upon Ford's left, the hills and hollows were covered with their dead and dying. Several men who visited the battle field immediately after the fight, told me they could have walked on them. They are all buried on the field.

The news is all good from every direction To day  
Bully for Meade, Bully for Grant. Bully for Prassers  
Bully for every loyal Soldier.

If I get time I will sketch you a map in the morning giving you a little idea of the way we were placed here, but your <sup>own</sup> it will not be much account. I am a poor map maker,

Gracely Collier

M. F. Merrill



[1863]

The  
24 1869

Friday Morning July 1

Dear Brother

It is with pleasure that I again take my pen in hand to write to you & again I have been waiting to receive a letter from you but I have not yet tho you have been so busy I know you have not had time to write much. I know it would not be worth my while for me to mention the good news that we have for you are aware of it ~~at~~ ~~the~~ the Cooperheads here vary much down the line they are not as willing to dye at home as they thought they would. When Morgan came in to this state Governor Morton called for troops long

enough to drive him from  
our state and in twenty four  
hours he had more men than  
he could do any thing with  
the Cooperheads then thought  
it was not worth while to  
talk a bout Resisting the  
draft if G<sup>o</sup>verner Milton  
could Rais 30000 troops in 24  
hours I hope how soon the  
government may draft in  
this state for I think that  
one man has as good a write  
to fight for his cuntry a not  
her Will you dont have any  
knowledge of the black hearted  
traitors in this cuntry but  
the union Men is that Much  
Stronger for their cuntry We  
are geting up home yards  
in this county we have a con  
pany a bout organized at Mimeri<sup>Char</sup>

for  
and we ~~are~~ will be ready any  
traitors should they make their  
appearance the mob that  
took squier Scots enrolling  
papers are about to get a  
free ride to Indianapolis  
there has been several men  
taken before the grand jury  
at Indianapolis from this neigh-  
borhood and I hope they have  
every mans name that was  
engaged in it. Father happened  
to be at Esq Silses the time  
the Mob come and took his  
Enrolling books he sees that  
he did not think the democ<sup>rats</sup>  
would ever go into such  
conduct as that but to his  
surprise he found them  
committed bad acts he sees  
he does not uphold such  
conduct as ~~the~~ but there

is one thing certain he  
supports Men that does  
so no more at present  
Remains yours untill death

Henry N<sup>o</sup> Vermillion

To W<sup>o</sup> F<sup>o</sup> Vermillion

If I don't get a letter this evening  
my pet, I shall be in despair  
almost. I have had none for a week  
almost.

(No. 6)

William Penny, Julia Proje's nephew,  
died at Vicksburg not long ago. I am  
sorry, darling. He was a promising boy.

Thursday Morning, July 9<sup>th</sup> '69

My Best Love:

Father is going to Stonium this afternoon, to get some smit-  
ing done, and to get my mail, and I will send this by him, and if they are going  
to send out a mail tomorrow or Saturday it will be all right. If they are not, I  
will tell him to bring the letter back, and I will send it to Lagrange, by some  
means. My darling shall have letters oftener than once a week. I have sent  
you two very long letters this week. I expect you will get them both at once. If  
you do, you will have reading enough to keep you out of mischief one half  
day. Want you, pet? And if this is a short one you won't scold, will you? I was  
up last night till eleven o'clock writing to Jimmy. I am going to send his  
letter by William Irvine. I am going up to Mrs. Smith's after dinner to take  
it to him. I wrote to Matt yesterday, too. In fact I have done nothing all this  
week but write letters. But what of that, my love? What else need I do, till  
my "Peaches" comes home? I don't feel like doing much of anything else.  
We have plenty of news now, darling. One item is this: Old Mr. Ely was  
here yesterday evening, and told me that John Wafford's wife had just  
got a letter from him, later than any other from Helena, and he said she  
needn't expect any more letters, as the rebels had obstructed the passage of all  
mail boats above Helena, and that the 36<sup>th</sup> was gone to Vicksburg. I don't  
know, love, whether to put any faith in this or not. Mr. Ely said he didn't  
believe one word of it. I asked him if he thought Wafford would write such  
things, if there was no foundation for them in fact. He said he thought he  
thought he would do anything that is mean. The old man is dreadfully out of  
patience with the copperheads, old Mrs. Finton and John Sheek's wife in par-  
ticular. If it were not that John is a soldier the conduct of those two women

Tell me if you get all my letters, dear. You can tell my wife now they are numbered, can't you?

would hardly be tolerated three days. Every body is sorry for him. Mrs. Fintore says the quicker your men all die, and are killed off, the better. The work can't be done too soon. She says very hard and hateful things about you, but I will not repeat them, love, for I care nothing about them, and you would not. She can't get to you to kill you by putting a "big sack on your head" and as for her efforts to injure you in any other way, they will prove about as futile. Ely said that John Sheeks has got his blood up at last, and has written some very bitter letters to his wife and to Jim Hafford, denouncing their principles, and threatening to help kill all the "damned copperheads" as soon as he gets home. But what am I telling you all this for, dear one? I don't know myself. I "just got to talking" I guess. But such things are about all one hears of late. The enmity between the copperheads and the Unionists - particularly soldiers here - in furloughs grows bitterer and fiercer every day. We hear of collisions somewhere nearly every day. They are not fights, for I have never heard yet of a copperhead making any resistance, though they threaten bravely. It is this way: A traitor does or says something offensive, and a sick soldier knocks him down, and punishes him, by gouging out his eyes - as in the case of Bill Hickox - or any way he pleases almost. The soldiers are never molested for it, up here. Though in the lower countries I have heard of some being shot. Every soldier that comes home feels that he has a host of friends, if they are old men and women, and he is generally very sorry as he has a right to be. His blue coat commands universal respect among all loyal people. Will and Jake can tell you something about this. In every weakly looking stripling that comes home wearing the livery of our beloved Uncle Sam, we think we recognize a hero, and spair him accordingly. You will all be coming home, at once, after awhile, and then what we shall do, who can tell. A few of the calmer and stouter minded among us, will, I hope, retain a portion of their sober senses; the rest I think will go utterly wild. Such a time as there will be, my sweet love, no one of this generation ever imagined. The sun has shined to the office lately, dear precious love. Oh God bless her always.

<sup>and</sup> looked upon the like for centuries. Verily we are living in a grand time!

I thought I wouldn't say a word about the good news I have heard, but I can't help it, darling. It is not confirmed yet, and I much fear that it is too good to be all true, but, at any rate I can rejoice in the hope that it is true. Miss Phillips brought the news from Monrovia night before last, and yesterday a stranger brought the same word from Chariton, that Kicksburg and Fort Henderson both surrendered last Saturday! Can it be true, darling? You know by this time I have been so bitterly disappointed, so many times, that I am afraid to put much reliance in the report. I want it to be true so much. We will know something about it, <sup>this</sup> evening. Father believes it, and he is on a very high horse! I hope he will not have to dismount, as I have so often, discouraged and crestfallen. We have news also that Meade's victory over Lee was complete, and that General Dix is bombarding Richmond! I hardly credit this, though General Dix must be some where between Fortress Monroe and Richmond, with quite a large army. If he is not there, where is he? It does seem to me that now is the golden moment to take the rebel capital. It may not seem so to the "powers that be," and of course they know. If this news is all true, or if most of it is true, don't you think it means peace, my love? I do, and that is why I am so rejoiced, yet fearing to be glad. It means that my good darling will come home to stay. It means that we shall gather again our scattered "household gods." It means everything that is good, and that our hearts have longed for. I could talk about it all day, my pet, but then maybe tomorrow I should have to unsay it all, so I will refrain, and try to wait with patience. When you hear rumour of good news, or of important events transpiring, do you get excited over it, darling? Or do you take whatever comes calmly? It is hard for me to be calm. It would be, even if you were at home, and I had only the interest of our cause at heart. As it is how can I talk or think of anything else? I can't hardly say dear. Love  
Miss O. M. I have got over my goodness, and am all right. Father is just

It is dreadfully warm again this morning. There is hardly a breath of air. I have a bad headache. I guess it will get better before long. Father and mother are well. Mrs. Wright's little girl - their youngest child - was buried yesterday. She died of flux, I heard. She was a very sweet child. I have not heard from Sam for some time. I hope he is getting well. Alexander Sheik's funeral is to be preached, at his father's, next Sunday. The Sunday following Capt. Blair will be preached at Casper. I don't know whether I shall go. Mother will want to go, and we don't all leave home at once.

I have just read a letter that come from Jim Hickox last night. I forget already the date. They were at Haines' Bluff, and in fine spirits. They thought Jeff Davis was in Gicksburg, sure! I wish he had been. He said it was expected that Johnson would attack them soon, and if he wanted to "try that on" just let him come ahead. He would find Iowa boys there to meet him.

I am glad the boys keep up their spirits so well. It is a good sign. Mrs. Hickox was here yesterday, and she was talking about Bill's being hurt. She said she would hate to see him beaten, but she knew he deserved it, and she didn't care how badly he was punished. You can judge from this, dear how bitter the feeling is, even among members of the same family.

This is a hasty, and badly written letter, my darling, - and I have no excuse for my poor writing now - but it is so so warm, and my head aches so, that I can't do better, pet. I have not stopped since I commenced writing, only a few minutes to read that letter, that the little girl brought up. I will do better next time, dear one. We got three weekly papers last night, but I have not had time to look at them yet. We don't care much about a weekly paper now. The news is too old. Father is just done plowing his corn. I guess he will rest awhile now. He is nearly worked down. His corn is very good, and clean. Peppo is the finest little fellow in the world, though he does all manner of mischief. He pulls off my flowers, and girdles the stalks with his teeth, and scratches up my grass, and all such things, but he pays me in beguiling many a weary hour by his playfulness. Just now he is making a terrible racket about something. I must go and see what is the matter. Goodby, my sweet love, goodby. Don't forget to love your  
Dad



( No. 7 )

Sunday Night, July 12<sup>th</sup> 1863

My Own Darling:

I am going to try to write to you a few lines to night my love & one, though for two long days I have not written one word. I could not write, I don't believe I can now, but it is right to try. I am in some trouble, darling. Last Thursday I heard of the battle at Gettysburg, and up to this minute I have not heard one word from you, sweet pet. Do you wonder that your Dollie is almost crazed? that she can't write or do any thing? Every day we send for the mail, and get it, but there is nothing from Gettysburg since the battle. This morning I got your letter of the 28<sup>th</sup> yesterday I got one written the 30<sup>th</sup> inst. That is the latest I have, my love, though Mr. Maiken and others have letters written the 3<sup>d</sup> inst. But none of us has a word since the 21<sup>th</sup>. I hardly know how I have got on since I heard it, nor how I shall get on till I hear from you. I can't hear before tomorrow night. I think I will then. If I do hear that you are well and safe the happiest woman in this state will be your own poor Dollie, if I have had news what will I do sweet pet. God help me! I fear everything for you. If you are still living, I fear you are wounded and suffering, and I can't get to you. If you had only agreed to the plan I proposed, oh, if you only had, my precious one, I should have been in Kentucky many hours ago, and I might now be for on my way to you. As it is I was afraid to go, lest you would send me no word there, and I would miss my letters here. But if I hear that you are hurt I must try to find you. Oh, my love, I must find you. Sometimes I think you are safe, then again I am afraid to hope for it, almost. A soldier's life is hard, but nothing, it seems to me, can be

worse than this suspense, unless it be having our worst fears realized. Everybody is wild with joy over the fall of Vicksburg, but me, I can be glad of nothing till I hear you are safe. Much as I had longed for months and months to hear the good news, when it came I cared nothing for it. I feel no interest now in anything but your fate my good love, my own love. Oh darling, I love you too much. I have loved you more than I love all on earth besides, or all in heaven. I am afraid I have sinned in my wild idolatry, and God has punished me. I can't write. My darling, I can't write. How can I, when I don't know what has befallen you, or whether your dear eyes will ever look upon another letter from your poor Dollie? I know, if you are safe, that I shall soon hear it now, for you will know how wretched your Dollie will be till she hears, and will lose no time in sending her some word. I dread to hear, badly as I want to learn your fate. Oh I can't talk about it any more to night. May God help us all! If you are sick love I must come to you. Won't you let me come? I am ready to start at an hour's notice. But shall I have to stay here and wait now till you tell me to come? I must, for I don't know where to find you, sweet love. Darling, my own best darling, won't you forgive me for this? If I hear good news, I shall write you such long letters, but now I can't. I don't know what to say to you, dearest one. My heart is too full to talk. I can't cry. I wish I could. God bless you and save you, my too dear husband, is the constant prayer of your  
Dollie

Monday Morning: I have hired Mr. Gleickson to go to Moravia today for the mail. I can't wait till tomorrow, and I feared no one would go to day, he will get back about midnight. I shall sit up till he comes. Oh, my sweet love, shall I hear good news of you? Shall I hear that

you are well and safe? I am calmer and more hopeful this  
morning. I will hope for the best my love. We are all well.

I love you my own good darling, oh, I do so love you.

But I can't write till I hear from you. Are you sorry for your  
poor troubled Collie

July 12<sup>th</sup> 1863

My Darling,

I have taken a few moments and scratched  
you rough map of our battle field. It is the best I can do I might  
I have not been here a minute making it

I have marked with red ink where the principle fighting was done  
The square is Helena, with Fort Curtis in the West part of it. It  
is built on the lower point of a long hill, which is cut through  
in several places by streets. The place marked Battery C, is where  
the rebels came in on the center. They captured that Battery and then  
made a rush for Fort Curtis. As they came down the (it is steep) hill  
towards the fort the gunners opened with all nine of the guns  
they did not get half way down the hill till they had to surrender  
As quick as the rebels got possession of Battery C, the guns  
from the fort threw a few shots at the guns and dismounted  
about all of the guns.

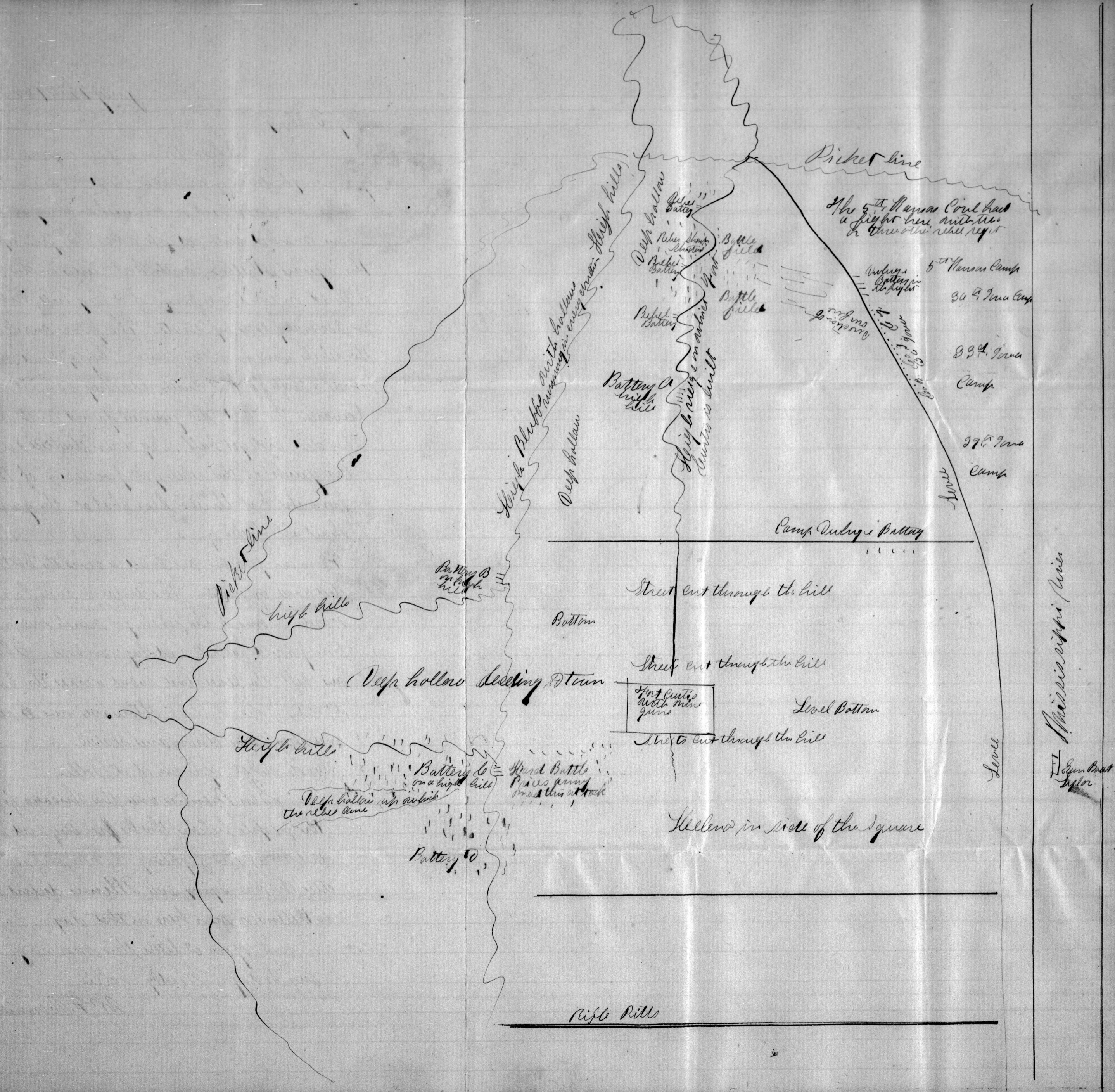
From our position we fired a salvo the bottom on the hill, and  
did good execution. The distance was from eight to ten hundred  
yards. Some of the rebels got much nearer however, but the paci-  
fism proved to be had and they ran back. About ten o'clock A.M.  
we left the levee and went across the bottom, under the hill  
opposite Battery A. So afterwards we were relieved the 29<sup>th</sup> Iowa  
and they came down and rested.

Make what you can of it. Dollie.

Gen. Prentiss and the Chicago papers are making  
the people believe, that he Prentiss and some Illinois troops  
did all of the fighting. When in fact Gen. Salomon  
did the managing, and Illinois did not have any troops  
in Helena or near here on that day

I sent you a letter this morning, but I did not get  
any today. So adly Dollie

M. A. Beornishon



Picket line

The 5th Kansas Co. had a fight here with the rebels

- 5th Kansas Camp
- 34th Iowa Camp
- 33rd Iowa Camp
- 27th Iowa Camp

High Bluffs with hollows running in every direction High hills

Deep hollow  
Rebel Battery  
Bottle field  
Bottle field

Battery A  
High bluff on which Curtis is built

Camp Underly's Battery

Street cut through the hill

Bottom

Street cut through the hill

Deep hollow Seceding town

Fort Curtis with three guns

Level Bottom

Street cut through the hill

High bluff

Battery C on a high hill

Hand Battle Pieces among them this at back

Deep hollow up which the rebels came

Battery D

Well in side of the square

Rifle pits

Mississippi River

Gen Grant Taylor

Helena Arkansas

July 12<sup>th</sup>/863

My Darling,

As to my getting 2 forty days furloughs as Mr Wright tells you. Such things dont exist here Dollie. No officers here are getting furloughs at all. Sick officers are getting leaves of absence for twenty days only, never longer. The men get furloughs for thirty days, and I suppose he thought there was some difference between an officer and an enlisted man. So there is but it is against the officers. But dont get discouraged Dollie. Things may be different after a while. We all think they will.

As to the time from which we have to serve. I have heard no one speak, who knows. It is my opinion we will have to serve three years from the time we were mustered into the United States Service provided the Government needs us for so long a time. But from present appearances the rebellion is going down long before the expiration of our three years. So dont let that trouble you Dollie.

If the Copperheads of Indiana want to try the strength of this Government, I am perfectly willing they shall do so. They have had warning enough. Good Statesmen have talked to them, and told them what the consequences would be if they persisted.

in their course of treason, but they have treated them  
not, until the crisis is near at hand, and if it does come  
I hope the loyal people will meet it as it becomes patri-  
otic. Such times as these will bring suffering to people  
where there is so much treason as there is in some portions  
of the State of Indiana. People think they work out their  
own destiny, so let them try it in that portion rebellion  
prevails. I am not a citizen of that State, neither are  
you My Colli, I am glad of it, ain't you? We never will  
be again. We will hence forth and forever live among  
loyal people, and where we can speak our sentiments  
freely. For these reasons I don't want to live in Appanore  
County any more. There are too many mean rebels there  
for us My Darling. You ask if my blood could boil when  
I get to thinking about these rebels worth. It always dies  
There never has been a time since the rebellion broke out  
when I could look upon a Mother patriot with any  
degree of allowance, what ever. At one time I thought  
party prejudice would lead them into treason, that  
they would give up old party associations and names for  
the Country. But their hearts are blacker than I could  
believe. The blood of our ancestors has become excited  
in their veins. They can no longer claim to be the descen-  
dents of the noble Washington. They should be proud  
of Aaron Burr. But Colli if all the news we have heard  
in the last few days is true, they will soon hide their  
faces in shame, and we will soon hear no more of their  
treason. Don't let them bother you

The news from the East is good, and I don't think Lee's  
army is annihilated yet. There is to be some very hard  
fighting done there yet. But from all appearances Meade  
is the man to do it. He has given Lee the only real  
whipping he has ever had, yet he must give him others  
that army must be captured or scattered before this  
the rebellion can be put down. There is where the struggle  
is, and all who are anxious may look in that direction.  
When that army is disposed of we can all count  
on getting to go home. And mean while till then  
Port Hudson must fall, and that very soon. Then  
the Mississippi river will be open from the fo-  
ren north to the sunny South. And what is  
better we have gun boats enough to keep it open, in  
spite of the rebels. The Government will be well pre-  
pared to sustain its self. A battery on the river banks  
will not stop the navigation of this mighty river any  
more. Let us be contented.

Several of the boys have the chill. Some have the  
billious fever. Jacob Grimes is sick in hospital Will  
is improving slowly I think. I have not heard him  
say how he is day through. He is not on duty  
Give my respects to your Mother and father, and to  
Mullinix's family. Tell Lizzy I ate her present  
on the battle field early Sunday morning. It was good  
Goodly for this time low. Send me lots of letters  
I will come home as soon as I can, Be sure of that  
W. A. A. Emilian

I have not written father for the same the  
batter. Don't get any the



Monday Night, July 13<sup>th</sup>

My Darling:

Thank God! The news has come and it is good. Oh, thank God! I am so thankful and so happy, my sweet precious love. I feared you were killed, or wounded. I feared everything bad. I feel like another being, now. But it was a providence, my pet, the good God watched over you. Let us both thank Heirn. It is after midnight. Mr. Heirney came up from Meravia, with the mail, just a little while ago. He brought me two letters from you dated the 2<sup>d</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> inst, and one from Will dated the 5<sup>th</sup>. Oh, my dear one, you don't know, you can hardly imagine I think, how I have suffered since last Thursday. I was nearly wild. We heard of the battle, of the desperate fighting, and that our loss was 230. I knew somebody had lost friends, and I feared it was I. How could I help it, my dear one? You don't blame me, do you? But it is all over now, and we won't talk much about it. I am rejoiced that your company all escaped, and that they all did their duty. I am rejoiced that "Vicksburg is ours," now. I am rejoiced about everything just now, my darling, my own good, brave darling. Shall I go to bed, love, or sit up here and be glad? I don't feel like going to bed. I lay down awhile before Mr. Heirney came, without undressing. I was too uneasy to write or sleep. I was afraid I should never have to write any more letters. But my "Peaches" is safe! Thank God, dearest! I couldn't rejoice any over the surrender of Vicksburg, for I only learned that it was mine at the same time I heard of the battle at Heirney. That put everything else out of my mind. But I shall jubilate now, love, and I know I can be gladder than any of them. Heaven it I more to be glad and thankful for, than anybody else, in the world, almost? I think I here, my darling, I do indeed,

3 your poor Dollie's heart would have been broken. I could not have lived over it. Oh, love, it makes me shudder yet to think of it. Have you ever thought how we have been favored and spared as a family since this war commenced? Many families have sent four of its young men to the war, but not one so far as I know, has four out yet. They have all lost one, or more. I could name almost a score of such instances. And we have been spared. At Keokuk, at Springfield, at Shiloh, and Hicksburg, in Will's severe sickness - all the time, my darling, God has been good to us. Let us be thankful! I think now that I will trust Him for the future, and that I will not be so troubled any more, but I don't know my pet, whether I can help it, if you get in another battle. But I hope you will not. This is enough for you, dearest. The papers speak of it as one of the most brilliant victories of the war. The Iowa troops are highly complimented. I have no thought that the rebels will attack you again, but you may have to follow them up, and fight under less favorable circumstances. But I want to harrow any trouble, darling. The people here were dreadfully <sup>uneasy</sup> about you all. Even those who are immediate friends in your company, seemed as eager as any others to hear. It is better than any of them expected. Father was very anxious. He went for the mail every day, and did everything he could for me. When I read him the good news last night, I believe he cried. He says he is glad now that you have been in a battle - a battle that went all right. Mother was not much uneasy about you. She said all the time that she thought you were safe and all right. Yesterday was the longest day I ever saw. I worked hard till two or three o'clock thinking to pass the time better; from then till night I could find nothing more to do, and I wandered around like a restless ghost. I could not sit still, or read, or write. I knew Mrs. Heikens would not get here before midnight. The mail doesn't leave Moravia before eight o'clock. Some one has gone after it every night since we heard of the battle; perhaps

2

The war news is good as it can be, almost. We want home the blues any  
over Hatcher's removal. Meade wins no victories. That is what we want, love.  
I think we shall soon have peace. Don't you, now? You will be home by  
Christmas, my pet, I really believe. Won't that be happiness? In one of your  
letters I got last week you ask if I want be afraid of you when you come,  
and say I want get to do as I please then, because you are going to exercise  
your authority. You are all wrong about it, darling. I want be much  
afraid, because the Bible says "Perfect love casteth out all fear," and I  
shall do just as I please, sweet love. You'll see if I don't. For I shall  
please to do just whatever my "Peaches" wants me to. I haven't done as  
I please since you left me, pet, if I had I would be by your side this  
minute, talking to you face to face. But we want quarrel till you come  
and we want much then, will we? I think not. Oh, I do love you so  
much, my precious one! You don't know how much. God bless you!  
It is going on for two o'clock, dear, and I guess I had better put this up  
and try to sleep some. Glad I do you think? I don't know whether I have  
been writing with any sense or not, but I hardly think I have. Don't my  
darling will forgive me, I know. Perhaps I can do better to-morrow.  
I will quit now. Good night, my only loved one, good night. I kiss you.

I have not looked at your likeness since Thursday. I can't bear to look  
at it. To night I am going to sleep with it in my bosom. How many  
times I will kiss it, for you! I hope you are sleeping sweetly my dearest.

Tuesday Morning, July 14<sup>th</sup>

My good love: Mr. Christie has just sent me word that he is going to Lo-  
gans to day, and I could send my letters by him. I have more written but  
this scrap, but I will write all I can till he comes by, and send it off.  
I see I wrote on the wrong page last night, but you want come, will you, pet?  
I was so glad and happy that I hardly knew just what I was doing. Why,  
my dearest, I had almost given you up for lost. If you had fallen

no one will take the trouble to night. I will go down to see Mr. Phillips about Garrison's money to-morrow, if father dont go. If he goes it will do as well I suppose dear. I told him what you said about selling the horses, and keeping the oxen. He thinks Leater wont consent to that. If you were here to night. I will talk to him about it. I was afraid that our horses would be stolen, and they may be yet, but there is not half so much danger this week as there was last. If our armies win another victory or two there wont be any danger at all. Mr. Christie has come, and I must quit. I will write again to day, I will write all the time now. He is in a hurry, I cant wait dear. Goodby, my own precious love. Be a good darling. I will make the next letter long enough. God bless you. I cant take time to read this. I love you with all my heart sweet pet. Yours Dolly

The other day my dailies came with  
"Bully for Gen. Grant, Ed." written  
on the wrappers, Phillips said the  
postmaster at Eddyville did it. He

(No. 9)

knew the writing. It was somebody  
who felt glad and wanted to tell every  
body. No wonder people are almost  
wild is it? Loved one? You are glad too!

Tuesday Afternoon, July 14<sup>th</sup> 1863

My Own Dear Love:

I sent you a short letter yesterday, and a longer one  
this morning, but I want to talk to my "Peaches" again. I must write twice  
a day, now for a while, till I make up the time I lost last week, when I was so  
troubled I couldn't write. Won't this be right, dear? I think you must be getting  
all of my letters now. I believe I get every one you send me. Sometimes they are de-  
layed a few days, but they come after awhile. The short letter I got last night, love,  
was worth I don't know how much. Such a letter, at such a time, has a value that  
cannot be reckoned by dollars and cents. It was worth everything to your Dollie.  
I think I will get a longer one, telling me all about the battle, by the next mail.  
Tell Will I sent him a very long letter one day last week. I hope he has got it.  
I am glad that he got back in good time. Tell him to be careful of his health.  
I believe there is no news up here, darling. People have rejoiced over the good  
war news till they don't know what to do next. They had a good time, they say,  
at Leominster a few nights ago. At Leagrave they had a general good time -  
speeches, and a torchlight procession, and so on. The copperheads were out with  
their drums and lamps! This is what we all expected, love. Let our brave  
soldiers win a few more victories, and there can't be a copperhead found in  
the state. But we know them, and we shall not forget them soon. Father says  
tell you that he heard George Stewart counting out the votes for Governor, the  
other day. He said Col. Stone wouldn't get his own regiment, nor his own  
country, and all such nonsense. He had heard officers of the army say so and  
so. His candidate is named Fisher. I don't know anything of him only that  
he is a copperhead Democrat, and that Stewart helped to nominate him.  
That is quite enough, my darling. But I don't want to talk about politics, love.  
I have written this letter since I got down here. You must not care if I say one thing

I have not been to Woodside, or heard from there, since Will went with me. I want to go over again before long. I don't think, dear, that Vester will be willing to have the horses sold, but he may be. If you can come, pet, you can manage it. I want you to come so badly. Father says the horses are not in condition to sell well, at all. But they ought to get fat now, the crop is made. I think horses were high in the spring, I don't know how they sell now. How much must I sell them for, love, if I meet with a chance to sell them? I have no idea. Father says he wouldn't sell them now if he were in your place but he never was afraid of having anything stolen in his life. I am, and I would rather the horses could be well sold. I should be better satisfied. You must tell me how you want me to do, dear. Shall we sell them if Vester objects? Has he any right to them after he gathers his corn? If we conclude to sell them shall we bring them here? - to stay till we could meet with a chance to sell them, I mean. I will ask Mr. Maithen's advice about it, pet; he will know better than I do. Want that he right? I want to save all the money I can for you. You will need it when you come home, my darling; and I want to have a big roll of "greenbacks" for you. Since the late victories I don't feel afraid, at all, of being disturbed here; or of losing our property, much. Everything will be very quiet here now for a time. If our arms meet with no serious reverse, again, there will be no further danger, I think. Were you ever so glad, pet, of anything in your life - except your own victory at Hellems - as when you knew that Vicksburg had surrendered, and Lee had been beaten, and routed in Pennsylvania? And it was all done in two days. Truly we have had no such fourth of July since the day of '76. How are we? We can't complain now that the war is "slow," surely. Have you noticed the change in the progress of the war, love, since the Government adopted the policy of freeing the slaves, and arming them; treating them as human beings, and friends, not as chattles or enemies? Darling, if I had never believed in God or Justice before I should do so now. I couldn't help it.

You remember how for two years, so a nation, we denied that the "niggers" had any thing to do with the war; we spurned their help, offered thought it was in all faith, and singleness of heart; we scorned the despised race, and thought them helpless and friendless; we boasted that we had white men enough to put down this rebellion, without the help of "nigger soldiers"; white officers would not lead them, and forsooth, white soldiers said they would not fight with them!

At the end of two dreadful years of war how much of our vain boasting had we made good? You know all the direful record of those two years of blunders and failures, my darling. Thank heaven, that it took only two years of reverses and suffering, to bring the Government to its senses, and make it willing to begin to do right. Only a few weeks ago the new policy was inaugurated, and see what a change! Is it not a good thing to have God on our side? Are not the captured Atlanta, Gettysburg, Vicksburg, &c. &c. some of the first fruits? May we not hope for still greater victories, till the rebellion is crushed, and a permanent peace conquered? It will not take long to accomplish the work now that we have set about it in the right way. I can't believe, my pet, that the war can last six months longer. What <sup>do</sup> you think about it, love? Have you seen the rebel account of the battle of Gettysburg? It was rather rich. In their dispatches of the fifth they claimed that Lee had won a plentiful <sup>victory</sup>, over a hundred and fifty thousand federals, killing from ten to twenty thousand, and capturing sixty thousand prisoners. One of the Richmond papers said "We see now a prospect of peace, but let us have no peace except on our own terms." It is a bad rule that won't work &c, you know. Is not the "prospect of peace" just the same only on slightly different terms? The "fanatics" up here think it should be. I am very anxious to hear from Meade's army, and also from Indians. The last dispatches I have seen from there said Morgan with five thousand rebels had crossed the river with the avowed purpose of reaching Indianapolis, and were marching on New Albany. All business was suspended in

the towns, and in Indianapolis they raised a full regiment of men in one night. Resistance to the Government will soon be played <sup>out</sup> in Indiana if Morgan does his duty. Every blow he strikes will tell wonderfully in our favor. What do you suppose the traitors there think now of their dear persecuted brethren of the south? They have invited them there - by their treasonable conduct - why don't they open their arms to receive them, and make common cause with them? I imagine they have less time now to abuse "old Governor Morton" than they had last winter. Let us talk of something else, my love. I believe I am wicked whenever I get to thinking or talking about the traitors there. I know so much about them darling, I heard so much treason talked in open daylight. I saw them plotting for the overthrow of our Government, and the murder of our soldiers. But I said we would talk of something else. I am glad, my love, that you want Jane to live with us, if she is not married when you come home. I want her to come too. And she will come, pet. I don't believe she would marry if she knew you would come home, and she could come to us. She has almost told me so much several times. She told me that she didn't want to marry. I believe she likes Wilcox, but she would wait a year or two, and so would he. If she could stay with us a year I hardly think she would have him at all. I am afraid he is not good enough for her, I know he isn't half good enough for what Jane might be. I love her, pet, for your sake, and for her own sake, and I want to do her good if I can. She is all the sister we have. Do I talk about her too much, my love? I know you are good and generous, and if you can contrive to do anything for her, be assured your Polly will help you in the good work all she can. In my last letter I told her if she would come to us when you come home, she should have the money. Wasn't this right, my love? She can never come unless we send her the money. It is very warm to day. We have had no rain yet. We are all well. Father is nearly worked to death. He is harvesting his oats now. It is slow work by himself. He would live if he could get any one. He will soon be done, though, now. I feel as if I had not slept any for a long time. I will sleep so good to night my darling. I will write some more in the morning before I send this out. Goodbye love.



( No. 10 )

[1863]

Wednesday Night, July 15<sup>th</sup>

My Best Darling:

I sent you a long letter this morning, and I promised to write again to day, but we have had company all day. I will sit up a while to night to talk to my love. I went to Scrimm this morning. It was cool and I had a pleasant ride. I didn't get off my horse, nor stop three minutes. Mr. Phillips came to the door and I gave him my letter and asked him about the money sent to Mr. Garrison. He shewed me the papers. It was only thirty five dollars, love. That is the amount stated on the paper, in your writing, that accompanied the money. It is all right I suppose, and I will pay him the five dollar the first opportunity - perhaps Saturday. I would go over there and pay it, but I might not find him at home. He will be apt to be at the Union meeting Saturday, and father or I one, will pay him. That will do, will it not, darling? Mrs. Phillips says there was one dollar more in the money sent by Episcopius Dickinson, than was accounted for in the paper. He paid it over to the old man, and took his receipt, but he thought it came out of your pocket, and I had better tell you about it. You can make it right. I didn't hear any news. They have two nice flogs fluttering to the breeze in Scrimm. It did me good to see them. One is on Phillips' stove, the other on the old Osborn horse. They are making great preparations for having a good time Saturday. One of Mrs. Chipman's children died of flux to day. It was thought another would die to night, and still another is dangerously bad. The disease is spreading, chiefly among children. Mrs. Wright is getting well. Father was up to Opey this afternoon, and saw Mrs. Wright. He had heard that John, <sup>Wright</sup> and Isaac Sheels were both killed on the fourth.

We have been hearing for a day or two rumors of serious trouble at Concord. He told him the straight of it. A few days ago a rebel from Mrs. came there and Estep had him arrested. The copperheads, with the sheriff at their head, then arrested Estep. While they were both in custody a squad of militia come from Mrs. after the rebel. They rode into town, formed around the flag staff and cheered the old flag. One of the men then dismounted, and asked the editor of their paper there, why he didn't cheer? The editor said he wasn't ready to, and the soldier knocked him down. Another one asked the sheriff to hurry for the Union. He said he would not do it, and the man knocked him down, planted his foot on his head, and in that posture made him give three cheers for the Union, and three more for Abe Lincoln. They then took their prisoner, and quietly went off. The copperheads complain of such inhuman treatment. Humphrey May was there at the time. "The way of the transgressor is hard." It is getting late, my love, I will go to bed now, and dream of you all night. You must lie down on your cot, with your dear head on Dollie's pillow, and think of her and home. Want you, pet? How do you like your pillow? By the way, dearest, when you come home to stay I want you to bring your cot and blankets, and pans and dishes and mess chest and everything you use. Bring them to me, love. I want them to keep. Mayn't I have them, sweet darling? I love you so much! Good night.

Thursday Afternoon, July 16,

My Darling: - It is quite warm again to day. I am making light bread. Whether I can attend to that, and write to you at the same time, and do both "up brown" is a question to be decided in the next hour. I can't put off the baking, and I don't want to put off the writing, for it seems a long time since I talked to my "Peaches." I went to Mr. Sheek's this morning, hoping to get a letter from you, love, but I was disappointed. They didn't go to Moravia for the mail yesterday. I will go again in the morning; perhaps I shall get one then.

Mrs. Sheehan sends to the office every night, and says he will keep sending. They are very anxious to get the news. I have the headache a little again to day, and am nervous. Father has got a lounge put up in one corner of the yard under the laurel tree and he is out there asleep. Mother is in the bedroom asleep too. I have the house all to myself. This suits me very well. I got a short letter from Jane this morning. George Hickox brought it down from Casper. I would send it to you but there is not much in it. She complains of my not writing oftener. Amanda has a boy at her house. Ellen had been up there all the week. They were very busy harvesting. She didn't say anything about the rest of them. She had received a letter from you, that did her more good than she could tell. A good loyal letter, she called it. She said the Copperheads were acting dreadfully, being determined to resist the draft. She and Henry were at a picnic at Fillmore on the 4<sup>th</sup>. They had a good time, and there wasn't a traitor there. The Copperheads had a picnic of their own in George Heron's pasture. I believe she and Henry will keep their faith in spite of all of them doings. The last paragraph in her letter I will quote for you:

"I hope I will get to come to Iowa yet. I am out of the notion of going to living this fall. I have had a little difficulty with Mrs W. I think we are not very good friends." I was glad to read this, love, though it is perhaps only a "lovers quarrel" to be made up in a month. If it should be more I don't think you will break her heart about it. You see, darling, she will be more than willing to come to us, if you want her to, when you come home. This is all the news there was in her letter. It is clouding up fast, as if it would rain in a few minutes, but I am afraid it will not. We need rain so very much. I feel uneasy about you, my pet. Are you right well? I am still afraid there is danger for you, sweet love. Oh, I wish I could see you, and hear you speak to me. How much longer must I wait? But this is waxy love, and I won't complain. You will come I know as soon as you can. Want you, darling? The war is going all right, and it will be over after awhile, and any love come home. I am so nervous to day, I can't write. I will wait till night and perhaps I can do better.

Friday Evening, July 17, 1863

My Darling, I received your letter of the 7<sup>th</sup> inst. this morning. Thank you  
very love. It did me good to hear from you. I was afraid you would get  
sick after the battle. You didn't say a word about your health, but said  
you were going to the Celebration, so I hope you were well. I haven't sent  
you a letter for two days, my dear, because I have had no chance to write  
one. I am sorry, but you won't think hard of your Dollie, will you? I will  
try to send this tomorrow. I didn't write any last night, because I was not  
very well, and I was working till after dark. Father had some fat pigs and we  
concluded to have a bit of fresh pork. If you could come home now, you  
should have something good to eat, pet. I am alone this evening. Father and  
mother are gone to Mill edgeville to meetings. They had their church  
meeting this afternoon instead of tomorrow, so as to give everybody a chance  
to go to the Union meeting. I think I will go, darling, though I didn't  
mean to, till a little while ago. They will no doubt have a very good time.  
Everybody is going I believe. And I think it is right for all loyal people  
to go to such meetings whenever they can. If I go I will tell you all about  
it. I wish you were here to go with me, sweet love. I hate to go there alone.  
But I think you would tell me to go, if you could see me, love. If it were  
anything in the world but a Union meeting, I should not think of going.  
We are going to take our dinner. I have been cooking to day. They had a  
great time at I conium last night rejoicing over the good war news.  
It is indeed good enough to rejoice over. We have heard of the surrender  
of Fort Henderson, and the attack on Charleston, and the utter rout of Lee.  
Are you not in better spirits than you have ever been, about the war,  
my good darling? Only think what we have gained during the last two  
weeks. From almost every quarter the news is good except New York!  
There for three days a lawless mob has turned the streets into a Pandemonium.  
I wish them joy of their copperhead Government. Don't you?  
I will write some more to night my dearest one. Goodbye for this time.

It is nearly dark now, and they have not come from meeting yet. They must be having an interesting time. The loyal portion of the church were going to separate themselves from the traitors this evening. I fear they have put it off too long. I doubt if they can find the traitors now. They say there isn't a copperhead to be found about Iscanium. Even Davenport has confessed his sins. And Mr. Bill Argo was always in favor of the war. He only opposed the Emancipation Proclamation! This was all! This is what Frank Thompson was telling here to day. This is why I want to go there to-morrow. I want to see how converted traitors look.

It is very still and lonesome. I have finished my work, all but setting up-jer. I have been reading over your letters, my darling. I always do that when I feel lonesome. What would I not give to see you step into the room just now? Oh, loved one, shall I ever see you come home any more? I know you don't think about me, and grieve over our separation like I do, my pet. You have too much else to engage your mind. I am glad you don't, love, for it could do us no good. But I have nothing but you to think of, or if I have I don't do it. The thought of you is hardly out of my mind in walking moments. I don't want it to be otherwise. What else can I think of when my only love is so far away, and in danger? I love you too much to forget you one minute. I hope I shall get a long letter from <sup>you</sup> to-morrow. You must not think, my dear, that your victory at Helema is not fully appreciated. It is in Iowa. Though Gen. Grant did take the wind out of your sails a little. If he had put off his entry into Vicksburg a few days longer, there would have been more said about Helema. But it is all right dearest. The Iowa papers say a good deal about it. The Gate yesterday put Helema's loss at from 2,500 to 3,000. A few hundred rebels, more or less, we met some these days, it seems. It is too dark to write any more. I will quit, and hullo to Peppie. He is very disconsolate because I won't let him tear the carpet, nor play on my mattress, nor pull at my dress while I am writing.

Lates— They are all gone to bed now but one. I must write a little more to my "Beaches." It is quite cold to night. This morning I rode up to Mrs. Shields and I wore my heavy winter shawl and was hardly warm then. I never saw such a mid-summer, I think. We have had no rain yet.

It was just as I expected at the meeting. They couldn't find the traitors, they offered their resolutions - as hard ones as you ever heard - and every member voted for them. Old Mr. McFarridge objected to them. There was no use in them. He didn't suppose there was a traitor or sympathizer in this country! Verily, that must have been good news to them. But even he voted for them after every one else did. I shall have a laugh at old Tom Christie about it.

I got a letter from Matt this morning, dated the 3<sup>d</sup> inst. He was well, and having a very good time. He didn't dream of the furious fourth awaiting them. I should be glad to hear from him now. They are a happy set of fellows, no doubt. I hear a drum beating, somewhere. How mournfully it sounds to me now. I used to be fond of a drum, till since so many brave men have marched to their death to the sound of such music.

We have a rumor to night that Charleston is taken, but I won't believe it too soon. I have yesterday's paper, and that is as late news as any of them have, I guess. There is also another rumor that there has been another battle at Dalton that lasted four days. Of course such idle stories as this don't trouble me any. I don't think there will be more fighting there soon. We are much more apt to hear, I am afraid, of an expedition fitting out from there to go to Little Rock or wherever the rebels have adjourned to. I don't want you to fight any more, my love, I am afraid you will never escape so well again. I do want to know all about how you felt, darling, in battle, and what you did. I know you did all your duty, perhaps more. I think you would be rash, my darling. I am quite well to night. I will put up my paper now, and go to bed. I will write this letter long enough, unless it were better. May heaven bless you my own good love. Take good care of my "Beaches," yet, and good night. Your loving Dottie

[1863]

Wednesday Morning, July 15<sup>th</sup>

My Love: I am going to Icaicum this morning to take my letters, the office, and ask Mrs. Phillips about that money you sent Mrs. Grisson. If it were not for seeing about that, I would send my letter up to Osprey, and not go. But you told me to see about it at once, and I will. I will tell you what he says about it as soon as I come back. It is cool enough for October this morning. I shall need my heavy shawl. It turned cold last night. It is cloudy, and I hope it will rain before long. There has only been two or three rains since I came home last April. Everything is suffering but corn. That looks well yet. We are all well this morning. Father is out just finishing his oats. He is nearly tired to death, but he can rest awhile now I hope. Mother is feeding the pigs. I am sitting here alone, writing to my good, sweet love. How are you this morning, darling? Are you well? I wish I could see you, oh, I do wish it so much. I hope you can come home now before long. I think there is no danger of another attack on Helena very soon, and if the regiment remains there I can't help thinking that you will come. Try your best, my pet. Want you? We have a little later news. I have read General Prentiss' official report of the battle at Helena. It is better than we heard at first. You know his figures, love. Oh, how thankful I am that my dear one escaped all harm! It seems like a wonder to me yet. You must tell me all about it, and you, dear? Did you think you would be hurt? I am so glad you men all did so well. If one of them had shirked I should have hated it very much. Shake hands with Capt. Walker for me, dear, and tell him Bravo! That was a cool thing for a young Iowa boy, wasn't it? I was scared almost to death about you, my dearest, but now that I know you are safe, I am as proud of the victory as you can be. But I don't want you to be in another battle, darling. Oh, I hope you never will be.

I am sorry to hear that Joke Grimes is sick. I'm afraid he won't live long.  
Are you still careful of your health, my pet? Don't grow forgetful about it.  
If you should get sick, come home if you possibly can. I am all the time  
afraid you will get sick, and have to lie there and suffer and your Dollie knows  
nothing about it. Mrs Greenwood Wright was very sick last week. I have not  
heard from her since. She had flux. I believe I told you that their little  
girl is dead. We have not heard from Frett for a long time. Don't you  
suppose darling that he had a happy Fourth of July this year? Poor fel-  
lows, they earned the right to a good time. I hope he is safe.  
You didn't get to eat your roast chicken for dinner on your Fourth, did  
you love? That was too bad. Did you have any dinner at all, or breakfast?  
Did you lie all night, Saturday in the rifle pits. Were you not sick almost  
from the heat and exposure and loss of sleep? I want to know all about  
it my dearest. This letter is long enough, isn't it? I will put it up, and go  
and get Backer, and put his saddle on. Father took him to Icarium  
one day last week and got his shoes put on anew. He is doing all right.  
I want to get home before noon, to day. I shall not stay ten minutes.  
Write Dollie a long letter right soon. Mother sends her love to you, and says  
she wants you to watch over Will's health a little if you can. She is afraid  
he will get down sick again. How goodby my precious love. Don't get the  
blues any. Dollie won't have them any more unless she hears you have been  
in another battle or are sick. Pray heaven she may never hear either one or  
the other! There was something I wanted to tell you, darling, but I can't  
think of it now. I suppose it is not of much importance, however.  
It is nine o'clock. I must go my love, or I may be too late to get my letter  
in this mail. I don't know what time the mail goes out of Wednesday.  
I gave old Mr. Fleckers half a dollar for going to Moravia for the mail  
Monday. I never got so much good of a half dollar before. If I had not  
sent him I couldn't have heard from you till last night. No one was going  
from Icarium. Now my paper is full and I must quit. God bless you always.  
Send me some long letters my darling. They are worth as much to your own  
Dollie



Helena Arkansas July 16<sup>th</sup> / 863

My Darling,

Forgive me won't you, for it has been several days since I wrote to you last. Somehow or other I could not write. You get so some times don't you my Darling? Even this morning I felt as though I could do nothing more than to tell you that I am well. Is that not enough this time, except that I love you with all of my heart. We have no news here of any importance since the fall of Fort Hudson nothing has come up from below of interest. I think every thing is going on well there, but I fear for Meade, yet I hope he is all right. If Lee's army had such a blow struck it as the rebel army of the west has this rebellion could not exist for three months longer. Do you think it could Dottie?

Will is improving slowly. He is on camp duty. That is not hard on him. It will not be very long I think till he can do any kind of duty there is to do here.

There is some excitement here again. Last night we had orders to sleep on our arms. Whether there is any danger or not I can't say. At any rate I don't think the rebels can take Helena. We have good fortifications, and can fight at least five to one. Don't be uneasy Dottie.

I will write again some time today or tonight, and will try and give you a better letter than this. You shan't be neglected any more Dottie. The mail goes from here to town in a few minutes. So I must send this, or you will be

without a letter probably for two or three days longer.

The troops here would fight harder now, than at any time since they have been in the service I think. So does every body else I think so. We have two good Gun Boats lying here ready for any emergency.

Jacob H. Grimes is still in the Hospital. He is quite poorly. I am going to try to get him discharged, though he don't want any one to know any thing about it.

The news boy is crying out late Memphis paper. Let me put this up and go and get me. Dock has breakfast ready.

Goodly Dollie. I love you this morning so much. Goodly Dollie.

M. H. Vermilion

Helena Arkansas July 18<sup>th</sup> / 63

My Darling,

I have been a little sad all day Dollie I have not had the blues, but I have been thinking of my loved one and of home, and wondering when I will get to see them, and I am still thinking of that my Dollie, but then thinking don't do any good towards getting me there it seems. But still the time will surely come, I will get there after a while. This war can't last always. The rebels can't keep us a part much longer surely; and when I do get there I will have something to tell you. I have told you the same thing often and I know you have not forgotten it, yet when I get there I am going to take you in my arms and tell you how much I love you. That is what I want to come home for. Does it seem strange to you now, that I intend to do this after being absent so long, and in the war too? If it does I am going to surprise you for one. If it were not for thoughts like these, - of having this pleasure I would not want to go home till the end of the war. Some days I get wearied towards night, then I begin to think of Dollie, and how good she is, and long after every one else in camp - but the guards have gone to bed I sit here in my cloth house thinking of her I love so much. Wait till the war is over and I get home my Dollie, and I will promise you that I meant what I said, when I told you, "I would stay with you when I get home. You remember it don't you love?" This separation is so painful to allow the thought to ever enter my brain of ever repeating it, unless I am compelled to under circumstances similar to the present I am not to blame now love, I am doing right. Even our happiness at home requires that I should be here and here I am. Nothing else but the cause of our beloved

Country could keep me here one week or not one hour  
if I could get away. I would promise Dollie that this  
long tedious separation is better to be sure as it is to her  
but every thing requires I should stay longer. Rebel-  
don is not done away with yet, and until it is my  
lot is here among the enemies of our Country. At present  
the sky is bright. I seem as though the enemies of  
this great republic were going under. I hope they are  
If Meade had only routed Lee before he got across the  
Potomac the sky would have been brighted. But now  
I fear we will have to wait an other long spell of  
inaction

July 19<sup>th</sup>

We are ordered out this morning on a two days scout  
So I must put this letter up and mail it before we  
start, or you will not get it for a long time. The mail  
don't go up any more now till on the day after tomor-  
row. I will not be back in time to send you any  
other letter but this by that mail.

Be of good cheer Dollie. I will write again as  
soon as I get in.

Goodly my precious Dollie  
W. T. Sherman

Helena Arkansas July 18, 1863

My Own Darling,

You have often asked me how the Major ship has been decided in our regiment. I can tell you now, for it is all over. The commission has come at last, and Adjutant Hamilton gets it. All of our Captains have to stand back, a Lieut. is appointed over us and we have to stand it. But I am not going to let it pass, without telling Colonel Kirtledge what I think about it. He is a mean man and so far as promotion is concerned, he has my destiny in his own hands and he will use me as he pleases. But let me tell you Dollie he had better be careful, or he will not be Col. of this regiment very long. The law is on my side and he knows it. At one time I had the charges and specifications all drawn up, that would have dismissed him from the Service, and at that time I fully intended to send them up, but I stopped long enough to reflect, and as is frequently the case with me, I got sorry and tore them all up. So he misses a Court Martial, and is here in the regiment yet. His object now is - no doubt - to appoint his brother in law who is now Sergeant Major, Adjutant, then all his relatives who are in the regiment will have commissions. It is said he has a sister in law living in Ottumwa, for whom he is very anxious to do something

If I can get my Company detached on some good service where it will be healthy, I am going to do it just as soon as possible. He should keep me in the regiment if a good opportunity serves me to get out. I am mad of price of him Dollo, and I never will be I hope. But enough of this now and for ever.

The excitement here has all died away here again. On dress parade this evening, we got word that our swords are not to be required to sleep on our arms as we have been doing for some time. I think myself there is no danger.

It may be that Price and Company are lying out here in the country waiting for me to be come a little careless when they will attack us again. He will have a good time of it, if he ever makes the attempt.

We have no news from below today, and nothing from the east, except that Lee has recrossed the Potomac with his whole army again. I am sorry of it. I wanted him to stay in Pennsylvania. He was doing us a great deal of good. Perhaps Meade will follow him, and perhaps Dix will keep him from falling back on Richmond. And the news is that the attack has commenced again on Charleston, and with pretty good success so far.

Will Kemper is doing pretty well. He is on picked to night. I do hope he will get well this time. The other boys from that neighborhood are generally well. Crimes is no better. He will go north in a few days, I hope he will improve.

This sheet is now filled up Dollie, and I am sleepy  
May I go to bed and write again to-morrow night  
Yes I will I know you are willing.

I guess I get all of my <sup>love</sup> that is all you send me  
I think I have the sixth one.

Before I quit let me tell you Dollie, that I love  
you with all my heart. Don't be afraid that I  
will forget you while I am here among so much  
excitement. If you only knew how much of my  
sleeping hours I spend in thinking of you, you  
would never let such thoughts enter your head.  
But then you don't think so do you Dollie? You  
know me better than that.

Goodly for this time sweet love. I wish  
I could see you to night. We would talk  
all night. Goodly,

W. S. Hamilton

Your likeness is lying open on  
the table before me, love, and I  
have been looking at that more

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than I have at my writing I think.  
It is just the noblest looking picture  
my pet I ever saw. A thousand dollars  
couldn't buy it of me. It looks so good.  
Sunday Morning, July 19<sup>th</sup> 1863

My Dearest Love:

It is raining this morning. Father inquired of Mr. Shepley  
to get my suit, and while he is gone I will tell you about the Union meeting  
at Scoville yesterday. It was the best meeting I was ever at, certainly. I al-  
most cried because you could not be there. You would have enjoyed it so  
much. We started about nine o'clock, and went down in the wagon. When  
we got to Mr. Walker's the roads were all alive with wagons and people.  
The meeting was in his pasture, just below the barn. It was a nice day  
and there was an immense crowd out, and the happiest crowd I am sure  
ever gathered in Appomattox country. Everybody felt good, I think. The utmost  
harmony prevailed all day. There wasn't a copperhead to be seen. They say  
the traitors down there <sup>are</sup> all converted, but they can't be very zealous converts  
for I don't think one of them was out yesterday, not even Davenport. But the  
day passed more the less pleasantly on that account. There were not many peo-  
ple there that I knew, except those from this neighborhood. Miss Jolly  
was there with her choir and sang some beautiful songs: "The Battle Cry of  
Freedom," and other pieces. I saw Mr. Stewart and his wife, and Louisa. They  
were very glad to see me. Mr. Stewart's health is very poor. He is nearly carried  
away with the good news. He said he had been up every night, but one, since  
the fall of Vicksburg, gasping. They try to have a special jubilee over every  
victory, but of late the good news comes so fast that it crowds them. Last  
night they were going to rejoice over Port Henderson, and the successes at Char-  
leston. They illuminate every house in Scoville but Henry Parkhouse's and one  
other - I forget whose. They all think the war is nearly over, and people are going  
nearly wild with joy. Is it any wonder, my darling? Oh, I wish you could be  
here, love!



were  
There, three good speeches, by Sharp and Estep, and the Provost Marshal of this District. His name is Shannon. He is a preacher, and a very pleasant speaker. I believe he is from Edgemoor. He has been in the service, and was eight months a prisoner in the South. During that time he says he "done up" Tennessee, <sup>Mississippi</sup> Alabama, Georgia, Fla. and S. Carolina and Virginia. He knows them better than he does Iowa. He is very ugly, but he said he would leave it to that audience if he was not a handsome man. In fact, he flattered himself, that he was an unconsciously taking institution. Then he paused, and asked them to look at him well, and behold an abolitionist! Then he told how he was brought up in the South, and how, at the beginning of the war, he entered the service a proslavery Democrat, anxious to save the Union if possible, but to save slavery any how. The first thing that tended to his conversion was lying in a filthy prison pen, with a negro soldier standing guard over him. He told how they were treated in the South; how filthy and lousy they were, how their clothes all wore out, and they patched them with old bits of carpet, and the patches wore out; how the Southern women taunted them, and would bring their little children, and hold them up to "look at the nasty Yankee"; how his comrades died off, one after another, and were buried among their enemies. But I need not try to tell you all he said, darling. It was a good speech, and will do good. He warned the people very earnestly, against all political strife and issues. The only politics that is good (Christianity now, is to know no politics. Jeff Davis has undertaken the work of abolishing slavery on this continent, and there is absolutely nothing left for Northern men to do, but to rally to their flag, and save their country. Estep followed him in one of his ninth-principles philippics against traitors. He made a better speech than I ever heard him before. One remarkable thing about him, dear, is his resemblance to you, both in looks and manner. Twenty persons I know have spoken to me about it. You haven't a brother who is half as much like you. The only difference is, he is not half so good looking, nor, I am sure, half so good a man. But he is like you, my love, I would like for you to see him

Altogether, my pet, the meeting was as good a Union meeting as could be, unless you had been there, dear, then it would have been a thousand times better to your Dollie. I missed you so much, sweet love. I got a letter from Jimmy, but none from you. Some of them had got letters from the boys dated the 9<sup>th</sup> inst. My latest was the 7<sup>th</sup>. Some how, darling, they nearly always get letters two or three days later than mine. I don't know what can be the reason. I know you write oftener than any one else. I sent you a long letter yesterday, to Lagrange to be mailed. I do my best to send you letters often, my good darling. Later I did get a letter this time, my pet, a good, long letter, and long enough though, it didn't tell me half I wanted to know, - dated the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. I thank you for it, dearest. It makes me shudder yet to think how near you were to death that dreadful day. I don't know how you ever escaped! The good God watched over you, I think. How much you will have to tell me dear, when you come home! Will we ever get done talking, do you think? You can't remember everything to tell me, pet. As for me I write you such long letters and tell you everything I know, so I want have anything left to tell when you come. Yes, I will have one secret, love, and I will get close to you, and whisper it in your ear, so that nobody in the world shall hear it. Wouldn't you like to know what it will be, darling? but if I tell you now, it won't be any secret, will it? But I want they say love in confidence. I am going to tell you if I can how much I love you! You will let me love you as much as I please if you are a hero, won't you dearest? You don't think I shall be afraid of you, do you? Afraid of my Peaches?

I heard bad news from Humphrey's yesterday. Little Anne was about to die of the flux. It was not thought she could live. Chapman's children were no better. I wish I could hear from Anne May. I do hope she will not die. Julia thought last winter that if Humphrey came home safe, she would never see any more trouble. Father was quite sick all day yesterday, though he went to Ferrisburgh, but he is a good deal better to day. I feared he was talking flux, too, but I guess he had worked too hard last week. He went clean to Ferrisburgh against this morning.

I didn't see Mr. Guissoon at the meeting, but father talked with him about the money. He said thirty five dollars was what he got, and that he would come over one day soon, and get the other five dollars. I saw Mr. Deater and his family there, but didn't speak with them. The horses look tolerably well. I don't know whether to say anything to him about selling them or not. If you come home soon, I would much rather you should do it. I am a little afraid he will get mad at me, dear one. But I don't want him to keep the horses all winter unless you should be at home. But I do believe you will all be home before winter, my beloved. What do you think of the prospects? Is it not growing brighter and brighter every day? You rejoice over the good news, but you can't be happier over it than we are. Yesterday's paper says there are two reports of the capture of Charleston, but that news seems almost too good to be true yet. But it will be true before long, I have no doubt. Then Meade or Rosecrans, or both can capture Richmond, and then will not the work be done? What more will be left of the Confederacy? Oh, I wish I could see you, darling, if it were only long enough to talk over all the good news. Jim was in wonderful spirits. The glorious news had reached even Springfield. He expects to eat his Christmas dinner at home, with you and Will and Matt. He says he wishes he could see what sort of looking soldier you make. He wants to see you pretty bad any how. I want to write to Matt to day. I haven't sent him a letter for a long time. I can't write much to anyone but you, my own sweet love.

Father and mother are gone to meeting again this evening, and I am all alone. We had a fine shower this morning, and I think it will rain again to night. They are going to have a Union Camp meeting at Newberr's - I believe in Lucas county, before long. The women are invited to go and take their knitting, and stay till the last sinner is converted. I don't know where Newberr is, but if it isn't too far I should like to go, one day. People are just going home from Capt. Blue's funeral. A good many passed here this morning. My letter is already pretty long, dear one, but I will write more to morrow. It is so warm and sultry this evening that one can hardly live. I am quite well now. I had the headache pretty bad last night. Are you well, my love? It will be nearly two weeks before I can know how you are this day. But let us be hopeful, my good darling.

[1863]

Monday Morning, July 20<sup>th</sup>

My dear Lou: I am not well this morning. I have head ache bad. Don't be uneasy about me, dear, it will get well. I think talking to you will help it.

Mr. Vester has just been here, working. He was at the mill, and came on up here to "settle up" with you, and get in his note. He had an account against you for road tax and seed oats and feeding the cattle, and some leather horse about the business, so we fell \$1,60 in his debt. I paid it off. His charges were reasonable, enough. He charged one dollar a month for feeding the cattle.

I told him what you said about selling the horses, and he was quite willing to let them go. He said he was uneasy a little himself, about their being stolen, and if you wanted to sell them he could make out with the oven.

But he wants to buy Capitula himself, and says if he can get the money in a few days, he will give a hundred dollars for her. He didn't know whether he could get it or not. If he can, dear, I am going to let her go. If father had time to look about he might get more, and in the meantime she might be stolen. I should hate that too bad, Lou, after your telling me to sell her. I think she ought to bring a hundred and ten dollars, but I don't know that I could get it.

Any how we won't lose anything, and will make a good interest on the money we paid for her. Will this be righting Lou? Will it please you? I wish it were so we could keep her, darling, for she is a pretty thing, but she is too good to keep on the farm for renters, and when you come you can get one that will please you as well, I hope, for the same money.

I want pay you, dear, to keep such horses to "let" with Woud side. Do you think it will? If she is sold we will sell Jake as soon as we can. There isn't much danger of anybody stealing him, I hope. You know him, dear, and you must tell me what to take for him. I want sell him till you tell me. I think, Lou, you would rather have the money safe, than the more, otherwise I would not let her go.

... otherwise I would not let her go.

1  
leather said he could do with the oxen, but father says I had better sell them, soon  
and we can make out a team to gather the corn. He thinks we had better hire  
a team to gather the corn, than feed the oxen all winter. If we don't meet  
with a chance to sell yoke before then, he would let one of his horses help to  
gather it, or if we do sell him, and dealer get (of) he might still manage it.  
But this shall be as you say, my love. I guess I will not do any more about  
it till I hear from you on the subject. I want to do to please you darling  
and to get, and save all the money I can for you. Dealer was very clever, and  
seemed willing to do right. He says his corn will not be good, unless it rains  
very soon. The oats were light. Part of the wheat is pretty good, the rest the bugs  
ate up. They are going to Oskaloosa on a visit next week, and will be gone about  
ten days. If he takes the more I guess he will be up here again before he starts  
Evening - My head still aches, aching, and I am hardly able to sit up to  
day. I have done nothing all day. I wish my "Peaches" were here to talk to me.  
I am looking for you a little, dearest, every day. I can't help it, though I don't  
know that you can come at all soon. Every night when I lie down I think  
you may come before morning. Do you guess your Dollie would be glad  
to see you, love? Glad! That is no word for it at all. I don't know what I shall  
do, darling, but I don't care much. Do you? It is nine months, to day, since  
you left me. It seems years to me, my pet. How little I thought them  
that I would not see you again for nine months. You know you promised  
to come back in a few months, or to let some go to you. But we are as far a  
part yet as ever, long as it has been. But it won't be so much longer, I hope  
and believe. The war is it must be nearly over. It won't that thought enough  
to make one wild, almost. I am very impatient to hear from Chevalier. If  
the news from there is right good, I shall look for you home in two months.  
This is a poor letter pet, but Dollie is too sick to day to write much. You will  
forgive her, and send her a long letter for this, won't you? Write, all you can, to me.  
God bless you always, my only love. Keeps in good spirit. Don't get the blues any, sweet pet.  
Dollie

You have never told me how  
how you liked the butter and honey  
I sent you. Was it all good? Did the  
preserves keep well? What did you  
do with them? If you don't tell me

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of how I like the butter and honey  
I don't know where he had tried to get it.  
So that trade is no trace you see, love. I don't care much for she is worth more  
than a hundred dollars. He is going to start to Oskaloosa next Tuesday, and father  
or told him if he could sell both the horses while he was gone for one hundred  
and eighty dollars to let them go; or if he could sell Papitola alone for a hundred  
and twenty-five dollars to do it. He said he would. But I don't have any idea what  
he will sell either of them. He was riding jacks, and he don't look very well.  
Father and Deeter both say that he will not sell for what he is really worth. He  
is quite hearty, but he is stiff at times. I fear he isn't quite sound. This is all I can  
know about them, darling. Will Deeter come home from Oskaloosa, and by  
that time, my feet, when I know but you will be at home! Oh, I hope you will be.  
Deeter says that Capt. Gidney is at home, and that he says as he come up the river  
he met orders going down for the 36<sup>th</sup> to repair the Abtaw, Ill. I don't know  
what to think of this, darling. I can't believe, though, that you are coming to Alton.  
Why that would be almost home, and I could go to you at once. But what do they  
want of you at Alton? If there is any truth in the report, it must be either to guard  
prisoners or enforce the draft in Ill. But I think most likely there is no truth  
in it at all, or if you have left Helena your destination is not Alton. It is hard  
to hear the truth these times. Whatever Capt. Gidney has told is no doubt true,  
but perhaps he has never heard of this in his life. I wish I could see him, even one  
long enough to ask him all about you. If it were not so far for the Bellair I would go and  
see him. But it is far, and I have no one to go with me, sweet love. My "Peacher" will  
be at home after a while, I hope. Then I shall want nothing nothing, and to have  
him come me, with all his heart. And he will, I know my darling will. Don't you think it too?

something about them. I  
won't know whether to send  
you any more if I have the  
opportunity. Perhaps I will  
have one of these days.

Friday Evening, July 24<sup>th</sup>

[1863]

My Dearest Love:

Just as I was putting up my letter to send you this morning

Deeter came in. He came to tell me that he could not get the money to pay  
for Papitola. His plans had failed. I don't know where he had tried to get it.

So that trade is no trace you see, love. I don't care much for she is worth more  
than a hundred dollars. He is going to start to Oskaloosa next Tuesday, and father

or told him if he could sell both the horses while he was gone for one hundred  
and eighty dollars to let them go; or if he could sell Papitola alone for a hundred  
and twenty-five dollars to do it. He said he would. But I don't have any idea what  
he will sell either of them. He was riding jacks, and he don't look very well.

Father and Deeter both say that he will not sell for what he is really worth. He  
is quite hearty, but he is stiff at times. I fear he isn't quite sound. This is all I can

know about them, darling. Will Deeter come home from Oskaloosa, and by  
that time, my feet, when I know but you will be at home! Oh, I hope you will be.

Deeter says that Capt. Gidney is at home, and that he says as he come up the river  
he met orders going down for the 36<sup>th</sup> to repair the Abtaw, Ill. I don't know

what to think of this, darling. I can't believe, though, that you are coming to Alton.  
Why that would be almost home, and I could go to you at once. But what do they

want of you at Alton? If there is any truth in the report, it must be either to guard  
prisoners or enforce the draft in Ill. But I think most likely there is no truth

in it at all, or if you have left Helena your destination is not Alton. It is hard  
to hear the truth these times. Whatever Capt. Gidney has told is no doubt true,

but perhaps he has never heard of this in his life. I wish I could see him, even one  
long enough to ask him all about you. If it were not so far for the Bellair I would go and

see him. But it is far, and I have no one to go with me, sweet love. My "Peacher" will  
be at home after a while, I hope. Then I shall want nothing nothing, and to have  
him come me, with all his heart. And he will, I know my darling will. Don't you think it too?

Saturday Morning, July 25<sup>th</sup>

My Love - Father came home from Scoville yesterday just as I finished the first page of my letter, and I didn't have time to write any more. He brought me lots of news - three papers, and three letters; one from Will, and two from you. Thank you, darling. One was an old one that had been delayed somewhere, the other was dated the 16<sup>th</sup> inst. But it was so short, love! What was the matter when you didn't write to me for four days? Were you sick, pet? or did you have the blues about something? Why didn't you tell your Dottie? You must not do so anymore - my good darling, will you? But you wouldn't have waited so long, if you had known your Dottie would be sick, and how she would pine for a letter from her "Beacher," her only love. I am sure you wouldn't, but you didn't know it. It would have seemed a long time to do without a letter if I had been well, but when I am sick, you know I haven't much fortitude, dear. But the letter came at last, and it did me so much good, if it was only a few lines, that I can't complain now about the delay. I am only afraid something was troubling you, darling. I am almost well again. I am a little weak yet, that is all. I ate breakfast with an appetite this morning. I believe I would have got down sick if I had not taken something in time. I am afraid of getting sick while you are away so I lose no time in trying to cure myself up when I get a little unwell. What is right, isn't it, love? I have done nothing severely all this week, but Monday I am going to work, if nothing happens. I hope I shall get another letter from you before that time. They will get the mail again to day, or to night. I am almost out of heart about your coming home soon. I fear you will not get to come all summer. I don't hardly know how I can wait, darling, I do so want to see you again. But I know it isn't your fault, and I must try to be patient. If this war ends and you come home once more, I never will let you leave me again, dear one, never, as long as I live. I never can, my darling. I know what separation is too well, and I love you too much. You shall go whenever you please, and I'll go with you. Don't you let me, my own love? I am going to put letters on you as soon as you come home, but they shall be very hard ones

The new news is very good. Charleston I think is almost taken. I have no fears of the assault there. The Mercury of the 15<sup>th</sup> admits that nothing can save the city but three bayonets! If that is all their hope they are doomed. Lee's army has escaped for the time, but Meade is on his track. On the whole, Lee's invasion of the North has been a hard blow on the rebels, and a grand success for us, though we did lose the best part of our victory when Meade allowed him to slip across the river. But I trust he will redeem that blunder if blunder it was. We know Lee's army must be demoralized; it can't, <sup>be</sup> otherwise. Their own defeat and flight, and the news of our victories in the South and West, and the complete failure of the New York mob, could have no other effect on them, I think. Morgan is completely routed in Ohio, and his forces, nearly the last one, captured. Rebel invasion of the North has "played out," darling, and we have copperhead mobs. Don't you think so? The President has set his foot down firmly" about the enforcement of the draft in <sup>New</sup> York. Thank God for that! It is worth more than Gettysburg to me. I am just beginning to feel that our country is safe, love, with our "honest Abe" at the helm. Altogether the prospect is very cheering, of a speedy peace. Thank God! It may not come for a few months yet, but it don't seem to me that the happy day can be very distant. We must keep up our courage a little longer, my own love! As we kept our hearts from fainting through the darkest hours of the long dismal night that is passing, surely now that we see the dawn already breaking, we can wait with patience for the glorious sunburst of perfect victory, and universal Freedom! It will come, sweet love. But I find it harder to wait patiently now, than ever before. Every day's good news makes me more eager for the next. I don't think the work all done in this present, glorious July. Will we not remember this July as long as we live? It is a lucky month for us, and I count every hour as precious to us, and our cause. Six days more, and it will be gone. Who can tell what its success may bring us?

Oh, are you tired of my absurdity, dear one? I must quit writing, and help another about the dinner. I am going to make a blackberry pie. Rachel Pickens brought me the berries yesterday. She thought I could eat a blackberry pie really my darling.



Sunday Morning, July 26<sup>th</sup>

Parling: I will finish my letter this morning, and I think I shall perhaps have an opportunity to send it to Mrs. Gilberts to day. I hope I shall.

It is clear and cool this morning - cool enough to sit by a good brisk fire. There is no prospect of rain. The prairie begins to look brown. One could easily fancy this morning that it was October, instead of July.

Father and old Mrs. Christie are gone over to Mrs. (Chapman's, to see how they are getting on. I have thought another one of their children would die yesterday. I have not heard whether it is dead or not. They have been sorely afflicted lately. The disease has not made its appearance on this side of the river yet. But the people are a good deal alarmed about it. It seems very fatal among the children. I feel quite well this morning, my darling. All I lack now is to know that you are safe and well, sweet love. I think maybe there is a letter for me at Mrs. Sheeks and I am going to get it, directly. If there is not one I shall have the blues again, I am afraid. But I think my own love has sent me a long letter by this time surely.

I wrote to you last evening, darling. You said you had not written to any of them since the battle, and I know, if they have heard of the battle, they are very anxious about you - Mother and Jane and Henry are. I thought it was right for me to tell them at once, love, that you were safe. I told her about the good Union meetings we have here, and how we have all been rejoicing over our late victories, and I "pitched in" pretty strong. I can't help it, dear one. They shall know my sentiments. We risked everything for our cause, and we loved our country, and were true to her, and stand by her in the darkest hours of her peril, and now we have a right to be glad, and we will be glad, and say what we please. It will please Jenny. If I don't send this off to day, I will write some more after while. I will write anyhow, but I will commence a new letter if I send this away. Be of good cheer, my precious one. Don't get the blues. Mother sends her love to you and Will, and I send mine. Be a good darling and write me plenty of letters, and, above all, don't forget to love your own  
Dullie

(No. 13.)

Thursday Afternoon, July 29<sup>th</sup> '63

My Own Darling:

I have been very unwell to day, but I must write to you  
"Peaches" any how. I will write a little, if I cant say much. I have not been quite  
well for several days, and as I didnt get any better, I took some pills last night.  
They have made me right sick all day. I think I shall be well again in a day  
or two now. Dont be troubled about me, darling, and imagine I am going to be  
bad sick. I dont think I am, at all. I should be better to day, if it were not  
for the medicine I took. Pills always make me sick, you know, darling.  
Last night, just at dark, I got the soap you sent me, and the half dollar en-  
closed, but the letter you spoke of starting has not come yet. But I hope it will  
this evening. I want a long letter so badly, my pet. I thank you for the  
soap, I can understand it very well. It is plain as can be. I cant under-  
stand much about it without looking at some soap, for in my head  
Helena is always on the east side of the river. It has always seemed so to me.  
I cant make it any other way, only while I am looking at the soap. I know,  
of course, that it is a foolish crutch, but I cant get it right, try as I may, so  
I am glad of your soap, dear one, on that account too. Will laughed about my  
idea of the "situation" a good deal when he was here. If I could be down there  
and look about awhile I guess I should get set right. And some day, my love,  
I want to go there, and see where you have spent so many long months, and  
where you risked your life in battle. If I cant go while you are there, darling  
now, sometime after the war is ended, we will go back there together. Dont  
me, love. No other place in the South can have as much interest for me.  
Now for you I should think, dearest. You have stayed there so long now. Do  
you begin to feel at home any? No, I know my love cant feel at home among rebels.

Little Annie May was buried to day, at uncle Billy Evans' grave. She died yesterday. I am so sorry for Julia, love! If I had been well enough I would have gone to the burial. I wish I could have gone and seen her while she was sick, but I was not able, after I heard of her danger. I rode to Mr. Sheehy's this morning, and it was all I could do. I thought I would get a letter from you, pet, but I didn't, and the disappointment hurt me more than the ride. I am going back this evening if it isn't too dreadfully hot. This is the warmest day we have had this summer they say. It is all we can do to live, almost. We can hardly bear the heat up here, I wonder what you are doing more than a thousand miles south. I am so afraid you will get sick, sweet love. I know this weather is very trying on you. There is a good deal of sickness in the neighborhoods around here, mostly confined to children. Not as it has been to day, father has been ducking his oar. Mr. Stickney helped him. He is just done. I am afraid it will make him sick again. He can have quite a resting spell now I hope. We have no news of any kind, darling. I have not had a paper for two days. I don't know what can be the matter. I suppose they will come after awhile. We got about half a dozen vegetables yesterday but we don't care much for them any more. There is no news in them. I have been reading the Tribune to day. Greeley is more hopeful about the war than he has been for a long time. If I knew you couldn't get the Tribune, love, I would send you these news. We have lots of letters from all the boys. Jimmy says they expect to go to Little Rock before long. Half of the regiment was already gone somewhere. He says they had a glorious "jollification" over the fall of Vicksburg, in Springfield. The town was all illuminated. He is sure to leave Springfield, but is ready for whatever comes. Darling, I can't write to you much good. I will wait till evening and perhaps I shall feel better, and it will not be so warm. Won't this be right, my best love? I love you earnest, more than you ever dreamed of being loved, by any one. I know I do. Are you glad, right glad, my pet?

Friday Morning, July 24.

My Good Darling: I am a good deal better this morning. I am very weak, and my head feels dizzy, and aches a little, but I shall soon get over that. I took two more pills last night, and they will make me feel a little sick today I guess. I am not going to take any more. I got breakfast this morning before I had got up, so you know I can't be very sick now. Yesterday I didn't do anything. It has been cold I think that ailed me. A day or two ago I was a little afraid that I was going to have bilious fever, or something of that sort. But there is no danger now, my love. Don't you get uneasy about me, dear one, for there is no occasion. I will take good care of myself. If I could only see you, love, it would cure me in about five seconds, I think. I can hardly live without you, when I am well, but when I get sick it is a much worse. I always get the blues then about you, darling, and I want you home to make me well. But I can't even hear from you, hardly, dear one, any more it seems. Father went up to Mrs. Sheek's for me last night, but there was nothing there for me. They had just been to the office. He says he will go to Leominster this morning, and, if they brought up the mail from Moravia last night, there is surely some letters for me. I have had no letter from you, except the one, since last Sunday morning. That is too long to wait, isn't it, my pet? I hope I will get two or three when they do come. I know you have sent them often, darling.

Catharine Thompson sent me a long letter to read, last night, that they had just got from one of Frank's brothers, in the 29<sup>th</sup>. He gives a more detailed account of the battle, than any other I have seen. He says he was near enough to hear the rebel officers giving commands. Sometimes they would order the men to such or such a point, and the "rebs" would swear that they had Jawa men to fight. He says our boys were as cool and steady as though they were trying their skill on that many squirrels. For his own part he did better than he ever expected he would. He has a wonderful opinion of Iowa soldiers.

And indeed, he is far from being alone in that opinion. Everybody admits that Iowa soldiers have covered themselves and their state with imperishable laurels. To day, my love, I would rather you should be a soldier from Iowa than from any other state in the Union. Other states have done well, but Iowa has excelled them all. Every loyal man and woman is proud of the record of our state for the last two years.

Last night it thundered and lightened, and threatened rain all night. This morning it is cloudy, and cool again. If it only would rain. I have not heard anything from Vester since he was here. If he gets his money I think he will be back to day or tomorrow, perhaps. I don't believe you would take a hundred dollars for Capicola if you were here, darling. But then you are not here, and I think I had better take that than sheep her. I wish I knew what you would like for me to do about it, love. If you were here you could look about you, and sell her better than I can, you know, dear. But if we should lose her, I would always hate it. Cattle are down in price yet. Another one of Chapman's children died yesterday of flux. Mr. Stone's family are all down with it. Julia's ~~father~~ children are well.

Mrs. Hickey has come up, to go to Mr. Gilbert's. She is going to ride Buckner, and take my letter, there, and Mrs. Gilbert will send it to Lagrange. She is in a hurry to start and I must quit writing for this time, dearest. I will write some more to day, and tell you whether I get any letter from you this morning. I will send you another letter just as soon as I can. Take good care of my "Peaches" for me, darling. Want you? Don't get sick or get the blues, sweet love. Keep up a brave heart, and may God bless you always. Write me long letters, my pet. I know you don't begin to know how much good your letters do me. You don't know how much I love them. And you don't know how much I love you, my darling. I couldn't tell you if I tried, and Mrs. Hickey won't let me have time to try. Don't forget to love me and write to me, and come home if you can, love. How badly. This is a poor letter, but you must not blame your Dollie

Helena Arkansas

July 24<sup>th</sup> / 1863

My Darling,

I am quite well this morning. Are you? I do hope you are. You have had been uneasy about me this time have you? If you have you ought to be scolded a little, for our Scout didn't amount to anything scarcely. We traveled about thirty miles, and never saw an unrecd rebel. They have all disappeared from our front. I walked all the way, but about a mile. The Chaplain let me ~~ride~~ ride that far. He is a pretty clever old fellow. We came upon a rebel Hospital some six or eight miles out. There were eight-teen wounded rebels in it. They were Missourians, and belonged to Marmadukes Brigade. That trip convinced me that I could not march on such days as those were. The weather was so warm. The next day after we got in, I felt all right though, and now I feel as though if the weather were cool I could walk very well. But I would rather stay in camp till fall, unless I could ride.

Sell all of our cattle as soon as you can my Dollie. That is, as soon as you can sell to your advantage. I think you had better sell them all together except the one or if you can, otherwise you may have cows and heifers left on your hands. Frost will soon be here you know. They ought all be sold before then. We can't think of keeping them another winter. Keep the horses if you think best. Of course I can't tell anything about it myself. Heater has no right to the horses after the crop is gathered.

I send you another order on Jas. M. Maiken from Jake Grimms. Call and get the money. I let him know that much the other day.

His health is not much better. Will is doing finely he stood  
the march the other day full as well as I did. He has  
improved much faster since he came back than he did  
while he was gone home. Tell your mother not to be  
uneasy about him. Isaac Shuter is improving. He  
is on light duty. The other boys from your neigh-  
borhood are all doing well. Simon Ely is in the  
Hospital sick, but not bad. He is able to walk  
around. I think he is home sick as much as any thing  
- no that is not what I intended to say - but he is  
somewhat home sick.

I will write again to night Collie. Don't get  
mad at this letter, because it is sent to poor me. I can't  
do any better this morning. Be cheerful I say, but <sup>don't</sup> think  
the war is going to end immediately, for it is not, although  
the rebels are much weakened. They will fight just  
as long as they can hang together. If this were a war  
between nations, it would have ended on the fourth  
day of July, but it is not. It is a War of life or death  
with the rebels, and of course they will fight just as  
long as they possibly can. But goodbye Collie

I love you with all my heart this morning  
my good Collie. Goodbye

W. A. Pennington

Helena Arkansas July 26<sup>th</sup> / 63

My Own Dollie,

I have nothing but scraps of paper to write on tonight, so you must not look for much of a letter. The Suttle has plenty, but I am too lazy to go after it my Dollie tonight, it is so warm. Yesterday and today I think have been the warmest I have had this summer. There has been more or less fog for three weeks, and citizens say there is going to be considerable sickness, though we do not put any confidence in any thing they say. I think this country is subject to such fogs every year. So they do not alarm me any.

The boys are still having the chill some more of them badly. I send Will McCulley to the Hospital late this evening. He was able to walk around, but I thought he had better be in the Hospital. He has diarrhea.

We heard the other day that James Shecocks had been killed by one of our own men. Some how or other I hated it more than usual, on hearing of the death of a Southerner. He must have been a good boy, and then it will hurt his parents so badly. You thought if you could have seen Capt. Jones you could have learned much about me. I think not Dollie as I have never seen him since he was at our home in Teonium. The B. & F. Cavalry is divided. One half under Lieut Col. Selay Colwell has always been in Missouri. The other half under Col. Bussey was here nearly one year. It is at Berkeley Capt. Jones is under Col. Colwell.



I forgot to send you the order from Jacob Grimes on  
Mr Maiken yesterday, but will send it this time  
if he is no better. He is in the Post Hospital now. He  
was marked for up the river some time ago, but has not  
been sent yet. I was down to see him this morning  
I saw his Surgeon also, and I think I have the arrange-  
ments all made now to have him discharged, as soon as the  
pray day is over, which will be the fore part of this next  
week. I want him discharged as badly as if he were  
my own brother. It shall be done if I can have it done.

When he gets back up home I think it will be better  
with him. I don't know, but I believe he is a little in  
love with Mary Westfall. She says she is loyal, and her  
father I know is getting to be. If it were not for his wife  
Mary love he would be a pretty good man. She says he  
is glad the negroes are going to be freed; that he thinks  
now he would suffer himself, burned before he would  
vote for any man who has given his sympathies to the  
rebels. He seems to be very anxious to keep in the  
same opinion, so he can show the rebels about home when  
he gets there, what he believes in. I hope he may prove  
equal to the task, and true to his country.

Give my best respects to your father and mother, and to William's  
folks, and to Mr Maiken too. Don't be uneasy about us Dolly  
we will get a long down here in Dixie. The officers of our  
regiment are playing out very fast some here. Mine is the  
only company that has three commissioned officers for duty.

Isabel Dolly. M. G. Remillion

Helena Arkansas July 26<sup>th</sup> / 1863.

My Own Darling,

This is Sunday evening, I believe. Some times I forget the day of the week, and the day of the month too for that matter. The days here are all so much alike, it requires a closer observer than I am to keep the time correctly at all times. At sun up in the morning we have reveille. Soon after we have breakfast. At half past seven guard mounting, policing and so on, and if there is any fatigue duty to do, the men generally have to report at that time. Then those who are not detailed generally have nothing more to do till dinner. But some days they call on us for every man we have for duty. At six o'clock P.M. we have dress parade. Then at twilight roll call again, and half an hour later taps at which time, all the lights of the men have to be put out. Company Officers burn theirs as long as they wish to. This is camp life all of which I have to be gone through with every day. When there is danger of an attack, we are all called up and go into line of battle a little before day. We generally stack our arms on the parade ground, and return to quarters, until half an hour by sun, when we take arms and return to our every day duties. For several nights now one company of our regiment has been sent to the rifle pits to keep watch during the night.

None are out to night. Company F has never been out  
and troops from below have been coming up all day.  
The indications are that we are going to have to march over  
the country, probably to Little Rock. At any rate there  
is going to be something done. Government is surely  
not going to keep so many troops here simply to hold  
this insignificant place. If it does Helena is going to  
cost more than half a dozen such places are worth  
judging from the news in the papers today. Uncle Abra-  
ham is going to push the Draft ahead in the City  
of New York. Good for him. Not for a good deal would  
it otherwise. Those traitors have put themselves in  
opposition to the Government and are just as much  
wretches as Jeff Davis himself is. I wish more of them had  
been killed. In fact I wish all of them had been killed  
who were coming in the least to oppose the laws.

There is one rumor if it be true, that is going to create  
trouble. Some of the papers say that Governor Semore  
is going to bring the State authorities of New York  
in conflict with the General Government. That the Governor  
says the Draft must be suspended until its Constitutionality  
of the law is tested by the Courts. If the report is true it  
may cause trouble.

Morgan's force is captured before this. The latest news  
in the Bulletin says about all of his army is captured  
but that he got away, but that our Commanders thought  
they would still be able to capture him before he could  
get out of the State.

Of they do goodly John Morgan and all of your  
glory. I dont you think so Dollie

We expect in good <sup>time</sup> to hear from General Gilmer that  
Ford Sumter has fallen and that it is again in our possession  
He seems to be the man for that place. I like the way he is  
going at it. We have lost enough of men trying to  
storm the rebel strong holds. It is best to take it slower  
and make a surer thing of it. Look at Vicksburg will you  
Every effort made there to storm their works proved  
disasterous to us. Even after Grant had gained a good  
footing in their rear, every effort he made to storm their  
works proved a failure. So it was with Banks at  
Fort Hudson. After both places fell, and at last without  
the firing of a gun. It takes a little longer but what  
of that. There are men enough falling in this war to cap  
the hole Country in mourning any how. But where  
lives can be saved. I think it should be done. Had  
Lee stayed and fortified himself on Maryland Heights  
we could have ~~ended~~ this war in two months, without  
losing a thousand men. But he knew it, and trusted  
to his ability to retreat. Let him go, we cant help it now  
McCade may catch him yet, and force him to fight a decisive  
battle

Goodly My Dollie. I dont know whether this letter is  
fit to send you or not. I am afraid to look over it, for fear I  
dont send it, then you wont get any with this mail. So take  
it as it is done. My love to you. I came in yesterday.  
I love you Dollie. Goodby

M. F. Vermilion

Sunday Evening, July 26, '69

My Beloved.

I don't feel like I could write this evening, but I will try. I sent you a letter this morning to Longrange. I sent it by Mrs. Gilbert's little boy who was at Seibert's. That was your long letters that I sent you in the week. If you get them, darling, you will have enough for one week, surely. I thought I would get one to day, but I didn't. And I can't help having the blues over it a little. I wanted to hear from you so badly, my love. I am sure you are afraid you are sick. If you are well, yet, I know you have written to Collie; but I can't get a letter now before Tuesday evening. This has been a long, lonesome day. No one has been here all day, but Mrs. Dickens and Mrs. Christie a little while. I got two new papers, and read them through. There is not much news, but all seems to be going right. There is nothing later from Charleston. I wish we could hear from there. The capture of Yazoo City and Jackson is confirmed. Since I finished the papers, I have been wondering about like a restless ghost. I could not read. I didn't want to read anything in the world but a letter from my "Peaches." At last it struck five o'clock, and I went and got supper. I made toast and tea. Then we ate, and I washed the dishes, and then sat down here to write. I can't write you see, sweet love, and it is a good while till night yet. What shall I do next, darling? If you could only be here now, hours quickly by the hour would fly! But I must not get to thinking about that, or I shall finish with a good cry, dear me. Father was over to Chapman's this forenoon. They are nearly all sick. Another one of the children he thinks will die soon. Most of the sick over there are getting better now. He saw Mrs. Bill Chodd somewhere, who told him to tell me to give you his "best respects" when I write to you again. He said he would like to write to you himself, but he supposed

you were generally busy, and that you got more letters than you have time to  
notice. I am so dull, darling, that I can't write this evening. Perhaps I can  
do better tomorrow. If I could only know, my precious one, that you were well  
and cheerful, how much good it would do me. But I will hope for the best.  
May heaven bless you, my own love. Goodby. I shall see you in my dream to night.

Tuesday Evening, July 28<sup>th</sup>.

Dearest:- I didn't write any yesterday. I did a "big washing," and as I was not very  
strong yet it took me all day. And in the evening after I finished, I was too tired  
to write, I thought. I am well this morning, only my hands are sore and stiff.  
Father was sick again yesterday, and last night. I was quite uneasy about him, but  
he is much better this morning. He says he will be well enough to go to the post  
office after dinner. I don't know what we would do if he should get down sick  
hardly. He would be bad enough off, would it not, darling? But I hope he will  
get well now. He won't take anything. One of Mrs. Allen's children died  
yesterday. I have not heard from the other sick people over there, to day.  
There is no news, any here. I haven't seen anybody this week. Every day  
passes just like the day before did. The weather is awful - if night it is quite  
cold and as dry as ever. It don't look now like it would ever rain any  
more. But I suppose it will when the right time comes. Down in Miss  
Allen's the boys say it rains almost constantly. By the way, Jimmy is in  
a great way about enlisting in the regular service for five years. He wants  
to do so, and I expect he will, if he has not already. I am sorry he has  
taken such a notion. I want him to come home, but if he is bent upon it,  
it will do me good to talk to him about it. He says he would rather be a  
soldier than anything else in the world. He has never said a word to me  
about joining the regulars, he is afraid we will oppose him perhaps - but  
the other boys have written home about it. Two others of his company are going  
with him - Isley and Couchman. It may be the best thing he could do, but  
I doubt it. Still, I don't know enough about it to venture any advice to him.

What do you think about it, my darling? What I am afraid of is, that at the end of the five years, if he should live, he will be a good soldier, but good for nothing else. But I can't tell. He is young and it may be just the discipline he needs. We have had no letter from Matt since the 9<sup>th</sup> inst. I expect his regiment has been in the fight with Johnson. I wish we could hear from them. Yesterday morning while I was making up the beds and sweeping I happened to look out of the south window, and saw a buggy at the gate, and a man, in a soldier's uniform, tying his horse. I couldn't see him well, for the trees, and of course I thought, first thing, that it was you! You don't know how I felt, sweet love, I dropped into a chair and stared that was all I could do. Presently he stepped from behind the tree and I saw it was not you, but I did think it was Matt. He was a black looking fellow just his size, and had his hat drawn down over his eyes. He took a long carpet sack out of the buggy and came in, and he was somebody selling potent medicines. I never told anybody how dully foiled I had been, but I trembled for an hour, so I could hardly do anything.

Oh, my love, we have just heard bad news. Jim's Hickory is killed. The news came this morning in a letter from Ira Gilbert. Mr. Hickory and George were at Mr. Gilbert's when they brought out the letter. He was killed while on picket, somewhere near Johnson. Thirty of the regiment were wounded. Ira gave us names. He was not with the regiment himself. He was left sick at Snyder's Bluff, so he couldn't give any particulars yet. We fear Matt is among the wounded, if he is not I think we will get a letter from him to say. Father is greatly troubled. We are all afflicted at Jim's death. He was a good boy, and such a good soldier. And he and Matt have been like twin brothers ever since they left home. It is too dreadful my darling. From my heart I pity his poor mother. I am going down there this afternoon, but I can do them no good. Only God can help them bear their great trouble. May he, indeed, be near them.

Later. - It is after dinner now, my love, and father is going to Scamion.  
I must put up my letter and send it by him. I will send you another  
letter tomorrow from Osprey. I can't write now, my precious one.  
Father has been down to Sickhouse and read Gus's letter, but there is  
nothing more in it than I told you. He says they talk it very hard,  
and he does himself. They always send Jim's letters up here for us to  
read, for he always speaks of Matt in them, and we would send Matt  
to them. In this way we learned a great deal about him, and he was  
such a whole-souled, good-hearted fellow, and such a good soldier  
that we all thought a great deal of him. He was killed on the 104<sup>th</sup>  
I think. But father is waiting, I must quit now, and write more  
after while. I am uneasy about you, my darling. If I don't get a letter  
this evening I shall be nearly crazy. I have had the blues ever since  
Sunday. May heaven bless you, my good love! Oh, I hope you will  
write to me often, my pet. Now Goodbye. Your own, faithful  
Pattie.

P. S. This is such a poor letter even me, that I am ashamed of it, but  
indeed, I could not help it this time. You must forgive me for it.  
I will try to do better. God bless my own sweet love! Again, goodly.



What blunder I made  
Dollie in spelling *Hypericite*  
I knew very well how to spell it

St Louis Arkansas July 30<sup>th</sup> / 63

My Darling,

I must take a few minutes this evening  
to write to you, or I will have nothing to send you by  
tomorrow's mail. This has been pray day. All the boys have  
their regular twenty six this evening, and I think if they  
had a good opportunity, would send a large proportion of it  
home. But they have no chance as I know of, and as is a  
natural consequence will be likely to spend it pretty rapidly.

With you I have not determined how we will send ours  
yet. Probably we will express it to Mr Phillips at Edgelyville.

He is the only person who does business there, who lives in your  
immediate neighborhood. He, no doubt, will be willing to

attend to it for us. If I send it I will write you and  
him immediately, that will be all right about it. My only  
objection to him handling the money is that every body will  
know all about it - just as much as you will yourself.

I have just returned from a call on Dr Lambert of the  
6<sup>th</sup> Iowa. He is in his way up to some point on the Ohio  
River with a boat load of sick soldiers. He looks quite well  
but I think he has not improved much intellectually since you  
knew him. He speaks more and I think talks more, but not  
any more to the purpose. His position is assistant Surgeon, though  
he is expecting promotion. I hope he will not get it simply because he  
is our enemy. Better men ought to have control of the poor sick and wounded  
soldiers.

She says Matt is quite hearty. He has never repeated on the sick list since he has been out. She says Dolly is the kind of a Soldier to have. No doubt he does all his duties properly. The Regiment is on Block Line. They were in the fight at Jackson. James Hensch was killed, but Matt passed through all right. She thinks Grant is going to let all of his troops rest for a couple of months, but he can't know much about it. Some think here that we will go out West on an expedition. Probably one will and probably one will not.

Dr. Lambert had no money for me this evening. Said he has not been paid for four months. Just as I expected. I guess he never will have any money when I see him. What would you think of me Dolly if I were as poor a financier as he is. He will never pay his debts while the Sun shines. Were he to draw five thousand dollars per annum, he would not keep any money. I doubt very much if he sends his good natured wife sufficient to keep her and her children. But then that is his business, not mine. But that other little affair is something of my business. When he was as poor as Doctors ever get (and that is quite thin you know) I gave him money that I had worked hard for. He took it and used it more freely than I would have done myself, and now when I want it back he never has any. But let him go on rejoicing with his white shirt collar. I can live without it. But what am I talking about such things for. When I commenced writing it was the least of my thoughts, that I would say any thing on such a subject. I will not do it any more. That is what I used have to tell Mother when I had been guilty of some thing she did not like. So I make the same promise to you  
My love

Your Copperheads my Dolly are the meanest people in the world  
to act so hypocritical, as to go into (or pretend to go into) a jubilee  
over the capture of Vicksburg, and the fight at Helena. They acted  
the hypocritical Dolly they never felt good, especially over the  
fight here in the South. I want nothing to do with them. I hate  
them as badly as I do the rebels here in the South. Let's not  
get to talking about it to night

Thomas Dooly, will die in a few days I think. He had gonorrhea  
die sometime ago. Now he has lung fever or, Pneumonia. I don't  
think he can possibly get well. All the rest of the boys are  
doing pretty well. Will McCullley and John Sears  
have both been sent up the river to the Hospital so has  
Sergeant Brims. I am sorry they sent him. I wanted to get  
him discharged here. Had they let him remain here for one week  
long he would have been discharged. Poor fellow I fear he  
will never get well

I have nothing to write about our business Dolly more  
than what I told you sometime ago. Sell the cattle to  
the best advantage as soon as you can. Get Government  
money for them. That is the best currency there is my Dolly

I have nothing more to write my Darling, except that I  
love you I can't tell how much. How I do wish I could  
see you this very minute my Darling, but I can't. all I can  
do is to love you with all my heart. That I will do my  
love. You know it though don't you my Dolly

Goodbye love

W. F. Benjamin

I thought I would write a short letter  
this time, dear one, but see! I have  
made it as long as I well can. Do  
you not get tired of such long letters.

(No. 16)

Try me, love, and see if I will. I  
do want a long letter filled with  
small details of everything about  
you. I want, because I love you so much.

Tuesday Evening, July 28, 1869

My Dearest Love:

I have just come home from Haikensis. They are in great  
trouble, but they bear it very calmly. I am so sorry for the old lady. She  
is sick too, but I think she has pined herself sick. Jim was her favor-  
ite among all her children. Indeed he was a favorite with all the family.  
Mrs. Garrison was there. She is a good woman. I like her very much.

It seems everybody has trouble. Missin Harscott's child died last night.

There is another poor woman left desolate. I am sorry for her.

Cunningham Evans has come home on a furlough. His health is better.

I am so nervous, my darling, that I can't write hardly. You see that.

Mother is sick in bed. She took colic while I was gone. I am visiting  
her some now. I hope she will not get bad. But I will quit writing  
and stay by her till father comes from the office, and see if he brings me  
a letter from my love. He will be here soon.

They are all gone to bed now, my dearest, and I will sit up and talk to  
you a little while. I have had the head ache badly this evening. I don't  
know what makes me have it so much. It is a little better now. I  
did get a letter, my pet, just one letter from you. It is a short one,  
and is dated the 18th. But if it isn't long, it is good, and it has done  
me good to get it. That is all the letter I have had from you since last Fri-  
day, and then only a few lines. I hoped I would get two to day. It is no  
wonder I had the blues, is it, my love? I always have them when I don't  
hear from you often. I can't help it, try as I may. You say you do love  
me and think of me. Bless you for those words, sweet love! I know you  
are darling, I don't doubt you for one moment, but I want to hear you say so.

I feel sorry about the way the Majorship has gone, because I know you hate it. Don't let it annoy you, dear one. If you should get your company detached from the regiment you would never get any more letters I'm afraid they would all be sent to the regiment. Henry's company was always separated from the rest of the regiment, on detached duty, and they never got any letters hardly. Capt. Harrah never got but two letters from his wife all the time he was in Kentucky. That would go hard with us wouldn't it, my darling? But I still feel hopeful that you will not be out very much longer. The war news is still good. John Morgan is captured at last, with the last five hundred of his guerrillas. This is good news, indeed. We have one subtle enemy the less to watch. We have reliable news from Charleston up to the 18th. Everything seemed going right, although our loss had been heavy. I hope the work there is accomplished before this time. And it is, if we are to succeed at all, I think. I've heard nothing from Matt. I was in hopes we would get a letter from him, to say I much fear he is wounded. I expect to hear bad news from him when I do hear. Company E must be nearly all surrounded. One of them was killed, and six wounded while crossing the Black River. Then five was killed and thirty more wounded near Jackson. There can't be many able for duty. A few of them were left at Saylor's Bluff sick. Among them was Ira Gilbert and he has written four or five letters home since we have heard from the other boys. All we know about them is what he has written. He is perfectly reliable. I have read a good many of his letters. I am sorry for father, he is so troubled about them. He can't wait he thinks hardly, he wants to hear so much. Oh, my dear one, how thankful I am that you didn't go to Vicksburg. I think I have trouble enough now, but only think if you were there! Bill Pennelaker is there east of Vicksburg somewhere. Jane has not had a letter for two weeks. She is almost sick, for a thing. She was in the taking of Jackson, and she don't know whether he is living or dead. It is so hard, my precious love.

It is getting late, and my head aches, dearest, may I not put up my letter  
and go to bed? I will think of you, and dream of you, and love you summer.  
You didn't say a word about coming home. I am getting out of heart.  
I am so afraid you won't get to come all summer. But let us not talk about  
that to night, my pet, or I shall, <sup>at</sup> the blues worse than ever. If I could  
only see you this night? But I can't, my love, I will put out the light, and  
go to my solitary bed, and think of my darling. My own good, noble love.  
Lie down on your cot, my pet, and go to sleep, while Dollie says "good night"

Wednesday Evening, 21<sup>st</sup>

My Darling: I have just looked over what I wrote last night. I was wild.  
There were not thirty men of Mullie's company wounded, but that many in  
the regiment. That is what I ought to have told you at first. I don't know  
what made me tell it as I did last night. I am quite well this morning.  
Mother is not very well, but she is better. She is crying down now.  
There was a man here a few minutes ago the rent Woodside. His name  
is Armstrong, and he has lately moved into that neighborhood from  
near Blacksburgh. Father told him he didn't know anything about what  
you would want to do with the place next year. I thought he looked like  
a copperhead who had moved to escape the draft. But I may be much  
mistaken, you know. He would take the team with the place, or furnish  
his own team; he is not particular. If he had talked to me I should  
have asked him if he was a Union man, and always had been, before  
I would have talked with him about Woodside. If he was not there would  
have been no occasion for my words on that subject. It hurts my feelings  
my darling, to see people carrying the rent over home, your home, dear one.  
Of course I am not going to have anything done about "letting" the farm, till  
you come home, or give order about it. The man said Teater was gone to  
Oskeloso, and that he was going to try to get him a home there, among  
his wife's people. I understood him to mean that he was going to buy.

Old Mr. Christie is going around with a subscription, raising money to build a church at uncle Billy's; and he comes over here and duns me for a little help, and says he knows you would help him, if you were here. I tell him I don't care anything about his meeting house, till the war is over, but that I will tell you and if you want to give him any thing, he shall have it. I get away from him that way. He is a good old man, and he is going to be quite a help to this neighborhood, I think. He stirs them up about a good many things. He is to preach at Edgewille next Thursday at The Union. I think I will go and hear him. We had a light shower of rain last night. It freshened up everything a little, but the sun is shining now. It is quite cool. I have just been out looking at the bees. One stung father on the cheek, and that gave me a hint that I had better let them alone. We are going to take a large cup in a day or two. Wouldn't you like to be here then, sweet love? I will put away some of the nicest for my "Bees." I shall not forget you my love, when there is anything good to be saved for you.

Drumlin's old father yesterday that he had received a letter from you. He said he wanted me to go over there and answer it for him. He wanted to send you a "bully" letter. He forgets that I have to write to you pretty often, for myself. I will go over before long, I think. I am afraid, dear, that John isn't doing much good this year. I think he goes to Iconium nearly everyday. He has fallen into his old habit of loafing. I fear he is going in debt, too, instead of trying to pay what he owes now, while money is plenty. If times should set in hard again, I fear he will be "done for." I am very sorry if it is so. I have never spoken about it to anyone but you. Allie I think is troubled about it. She works as hard as ever. John didn't cut his oats at all, and he has but little corn, even if it should be good. How is he to live and pay his debt? He can't do any good near Brandon. I believe that is the trouble. Please send me a long letter, my pet, all about yourself. Why, dearest, I don't know hardly anything about you. Talk more about my "Bees," to me. Keep in good spirits, my own love, and above all don't get sick. God bless you always. Goodby, and think often of your own Pattie

We have no word yet from Matt.  
We fear he is wounded, and un-  
able to write. His last letter was

(No. 17)

dated the 3<sup>rd</sup> inst. But as none come  
from any of his comrades, it may be  
that they have no mails. Poor fellow!

Thursday Evening, July 30<sup>th</sup> 1869

My Own Darling:

Mother has been very sick since I wrote to you yesterday  
morning. She is much better now, and can sit up a little. She had colic.  
Yesterday afternoon she took some strychny. I was scared about her. She was quite  
wild, and she lost her memory entirely. She could not remember anything.  
She asked where the boys were, and where you were, and how I came to be here,  
and a hundred such questions. She said we never had told her about your go-  
ing to the war, or that the boys were gone. You don't know how badly I felt  
darling, and I was all alone with her. Father was gone to Capez. I did the  
best I could, and after awhile she got better, and grew calm. This morning  
she was rational. I think she will get well now. I never knew her to have  
such a spell before, and it came on in half a minute I was scared, my love.  
I am tired. I have been very busy all day, and I was up late last night. I  
ironed this forenoon. You don't scold if I don't write much to day, will  
you, pet? There is nothing to write about. We didn't get any letter, or word  
from Matt yesterday. I wish we could hear from him. There was a speak-  
ing at Milledgeville yesterday. Provost Marshal Sherman spoke. Some  
men were there recruiting for the 8<sup>th</sup> cavalry. They got six volunteers  
but I don't know any but Bill McCloud. Some one said Bill Parnepart  
made a speech too. I should like to have heard what he said. If I see any  
one who was there I will ask how he talked. But I guess he was all right,  
or seemed to be. Tell Will that John Sullivan has enlisted in the 8<sup>th</sup>  
cavalry, and his father is mourning heaven and earth to get him released.  
I don't know whether he will succeed or not. He has written now to Gen. Baker.  
I will write more to you now, my pet. I must quit now. Goodby, my sweet love.



Friday Night, July 31<sup>st</sup> 1869

My Dearest Love:

We have had company, and I have been very busy all day, and could not get the time to my darling. But I will sit up to night and talk to you, dear, if I cannot talk with you. I got a letter from you the day dated the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> inst. It was not a long letter, but it was such a good sweet letter! I have read it over and over and over again. I can't tell you how many times I have read it, and I will sleep with it in my bosom to night. May the good God bless you, my precious one! It almost broke my heart to think how far apart we are, and we love each other, darling! I often feel like I cannot bear the separation much longer. I feel so to night. I have felt so constantly since last Sunday. I don't know why my pet, but I have felt so desolate since that day. I have grieved about you every hour. At first I thought, it was because I didn't get any letter that mail, but it was not all that. Part of the time I could hardly get on at all. I can't help it, sweet love. I am afraid I shall hear some bad news from you. Oh, this dreary waiting and watching for my love! Oh, this dreary listening for a dear step that never comes! Will it end, my love? do you think it will end? May I tell you what I have been thinking about all day, and many days before? You won't blame me, will you, dear one? I think and hope the war will not last much longer, but if it does, love, I want you to come home before winter. You can resign, can you not? It does seem, my pet, that I can't get through this winter without you. I don't want to do wrong, or to counsel you to do wrong, but I don't think it would be. This is what I am afraid of, darling, - in one thing I am afraid of - If the war lasts a few months longer, the new conscripts will be left to do garrison duty at Helena and everywhere else, and the trained soldiers will be sent into the Gulf states after the retreating confederacy. You will get in a strange climate, and so far from home

that I shall never hear of you sincerely, and a thousand dangers would beset  
you, darling. I can't be a Spartan or a Roman, love. I can't be anything  
but your own weak-hearted, loving Dollie. I don't want you to go. Besides,  
I can't think you can stand active service. Do you? Father got a letter from  
Will the day five days later than yours, and he said you could hardly walk  
when you came back from the scout. Poor darling! how sorry Dollie  
was for you. I do love our country, and our cause, but I love you more.  
You are all I have, my pet, and I have given you up almost a whole year.  
No one on earth can know how much I have given! God alone knows!  
But I won't talk about it any more, dearest. Think of it, won't you, for  
your poor Dollie's sake. I don't know whether I can write about any  
thing else to night, or not. If you were here I could talk all night.  
Do you know I look for you a little every night? I can't help it, love.  
To day I washed the window curtains, and cleaned the house all over,  
and I did it just because I thought maybe you will come to night,  
or the morrow night. I wouldn't have done it for anybody else. I  
wake up every morning, and look around with a dreary feeling of disap-  
pointment, because you won't come. But let us not talk about it, much.  
Mother is getting well again. She has been up all day. She has no  
symptoms of another attack now. Mrs. Heickcox will stay with her to-  
morrow, if we go to the Union meeting. I don't know whether I shall  
go. They are making extensive preparations for it, and I think they  
will have a good time. If you were only here, my dear one, I should  
want to go. I often feel like it is not right for me to go to such  
places while you are in danger, and may be sick, or suffering I know  
not what. Two weeks ago Heickcox's all went to Scrimner, and they en-  
joyed themselves very well, and that very day Jim was lying cold and  
stark in his bloody grave. But they didn't know it. Such things are  
so dreadful, dearest. I wish I could never think of them any more.

They have been getting a good many recruits for the 8th cavalry hereabouts, for instance: Bill Deloy, and Ben Head, and Pete Volkons, and Jake Mc Irinch, and others that I don't know. When the officers come around I didn't suppose they could get one. They will likely get several to morrow. Capt. Wilson is trying to get up a company of homeguards. I don't know how he is succeeding. Father went to Iccinum to day, Mullinnit is going to Murovic to morrow, <sup>night</sup> for the mail, and he said he would take my letters and papers to his house, and I must come for them soon Sunday morning. I shall go, of course. Johnny Maiken went to Murovic to day. They don't get the mail so often since Mr. Phillips has been gone. You know fees don't come much. We have no rain yet. The drought is becoming very serious. It is bad here, but north and east it is much worse. If it rains next week, there will be a great deal of corn raised, if it does not I don't think there can be much. I am very sorry that we sold ours when we did. If I had sold the young cattle then, deer, and kept the corn it would have been just right. But I've can't foresee these things. The cattle will not bring nearly so much now as they would in June. But I hope the prices will be up again before fall. People are getting scared - especially those with plenty of stock and no old corn. Father has corn enough to carry him through the winter, if he doesn't raise any, but he has quite as good a prospect as his neighbors. It is getting very late, my darling, and my eyes ache. I don't feel like sleeping, but I must put out the light and rest my eyes. I have been making bad work, you see. If I go to the meeting to morrow I will take my letter and try to send it by some one to Lagrange. Don't get sad, my precious love. Dollie will love you enough when you come home to pay for all the hardships now. We will be so happy. Goodbye. Be a good darling and write often, and tell everything to your Dollie