

April 21, 1869.

Grandfather Samuel McLollard's letters to his cousins, Mary and Flora Addison, and their father, his Uncle, in Cleveland, Ohio, during his service during the Civil War, 1861 - 1864.

Camp Woods, Jan. 6, 1861

Cousin Flora ..

I rec'd your letter last week and was glad to hear from you. I rec'd also two papers from you which was very thankfully rec'd. I am very well at present with the exception of the cold I have been stuffed up in the breast for over a week. We had to go out on picket last Fri. It rained on us all the time we were out which gave us a fresh dose of cold. I can scarcely speak above my breath today. We had a very pleasant Christmas and New Year but I could of had more fun at home where I would of had my liberty. There has been nothing of an importance transpired since I wrote to you last. There was a man killed Sat. morning on the R.R. There were two hand cars on the track the pickets were riding on. They ran into each other knocking the man off. The wheels passed over his head, killing him instantly. There was a man died at our camp Fri. night, which makes the 2nd death in our camp. Our sick list has been decreasing very fast of late, excepting the Howlers - they are going round all that have not had them - there are 3 of my men down with them.

There is a report current that Gen. Bachner is moving this way from Bowling Green, but I don't think there is any truth in it as he is aware of the fact that we are moving on to him with a much superior force and it is hardly likely that he will leave his entrenchments where he is, able to stand us a hand fight and meet us in the open field. He had a good many men deployed as <sup>K</sup> skirmishers between his army and ours, but his main force is still at Bowling Green. The R.R. bridge over Green river is about completed and I expect in a few days that the stars and stripes will float triumphantly on the hills and bluffs on the other side of the river. Our flag (so far as we have advanced) has never been dishonored nor shall it be so long as there is as good men in army as there is at the present time, but I will have to close and write a few lines to Mary. So Good bye

From Sam

Cousin Mary -

I will now endeavor to answer your letter which will be hard work as I hardly know what to write and if I had ever so much I have not time to write it now as it takes all my time attending to my sick messmates, but I think by the next time I write to you I will have something of more importance,, for we will move across the river in a short time. The rebels have burnt the R.R. track about 4 miles from here which will detain us awhile longer. Please to send me the papers. Nothing more at present. Give my love to Grandmother, your Papa and Mother and sisters. Goodbye

from Sam

Camp Woods, Feb. 9th, 1862

Dear Uncle -

It is with pleasure that I take my pen in hand to answer your kind letter which came to hand a short time ago. I am well at present and hope this short epistle may find you all enjoying the same blessing. This is Sabbath evening and I have just been out at preaching. Our 4th Sargeant preached to us this evening. Today our chaplain preached to us for the first time since we came to Green river. One reason is the weather has been so bad that he could not preach and the other is he don't care much whether he preaches at all or not. The only thing that he has ever done has been to exhort us about 10 or 15 minutes at a time. He is a Catholic priest. We have a first rate choir of singers in our rgt. which puts us a little ahead of the other rgts. around here. I see you have got all the particulars of the victory our boys gained at Sumner 'ere this. I think that it is one of the most glorious victories that we have gained since the breaking out of this unparalleled rebellion. It has brought them down to their natural feeling. They are beginning to get their eyes open as regards their condition. They are beginning to look around to see where they are and to their astonishment they find themselves completely hemmed in. They see the Blockade on the east and south. They see McClellan and Buell marching down on them with an immense force from the north. They see Price chased out of Missouri and followed on to the frontiers of Arkansas. They see all this now and still hope to come off conquerors. They are

beginning to think that there is not such hope of foreign intervention. I firmly believe that they never expected to conquer us themselves. They expected <sup>by</sup> some means or other to effect the sympathy of England and France which they came very near accomplishing. We have gained still another important victory. Our men have taken Fort Mifflin on the Tenn. I am unable to give you the particulars, but the whole thing was taken in less than 2 hours of fighting and with but small loss to our side. You will get it all in the paper ere this reaches you. Report says that the rebels have deserted Bowling Green and are moving this way. I won't give it for a fact, although there are now rebels within 4 miles of our pickets. Our Regt. was out on picket last Tues. and there was great excitement among the Boys for fear that there would be a night attack. There's taps, lights out. You will have to excuse me for tonight and you'll hear more from me again. Give my best respects to all. Tell Grandmother I often think of her, especially everytime I look at the socks she knit for me, but Goodnight for the present. Write soon, nothing more, but remain,

Son.

Camp Rutherford, April 13th, 1862

Dear Cousin

It is with pleasure that I seat myself to answer your letter of the 23rd which came to hand yesterday. I had almost given up getting a letter from you, but when you told me your excuse I was well satisfied. I have an idea of the ambitious spirit that exists in pupils of civil schools to excel and gain positions of honor. I have an exact idea of it from my own experience both in civil and in military life and I know that a person will do a good deal to gain the highest position that can be attained. You must excuse this bad writing for I am guarding one of the R.R. bridges today. I am sitting on one of the ties writing this letter and looking out for rebs at the same time. Rather nice Sun. work, ain't it? Standing out here guarding bridges instead of being in church. You will have to excuse me until I eat my dinner for my companion has been calling me for a good while. Dinner is over and I again resume my pen. I had almost forgotten to tell you where we are at the present time, which I will now attempt to do. I believe that we were at Nashville when I wrote the last letter to Uncle so up to that time you have a brief description of my travels. We remained at Nashville a short time and then our Regt. was split into a great

*all*

many pos. and we scattered over about 45 miles. We are stationed along the Nashville & Alabama R.R. between Nashville and Columbia. (Columbia is a small town situated on Duck River about 45 miles south of Nashville). Companies K & E are stationed on the outpost 2 miles north of Columbia on Rutherford Creek (which we have surmised Crooked Creek on account of its many horse shoe bends) for the R.R. in running in a straight direction <sup>cross</sup> has to <sup>cross</sup> the creek 4 times in the space of 1 1/2 miles, which gives us 3 bridges to guard. It empties into Duck Creek at Columbia and to follow the creek from its mouth up to our camp you will have to travel about 12 miles and to follow the R.R. you would only have to travel 2 miles. The rest of the companies of our Regt. are stationed at intervals along the road between this and Nashville. We have first rate times in this situation in one way and in another we have not. In the 1st place we are clear of all regimental duties which are arduous and confining in the extreme. We have perfect liberty and there are not so many men jammed up in a small space of ground and consequently not so much sickness. While on the other hand, we have pretty hard times in one way, that is there is none of us gets more than 4 nights rest in a week for there has to be such a strong guard kept on the bridges. But in other ways, we have good times. I suppose you will hear ere this reaches you of the important victory we have gained in the southern part of this state. I read an account of it in a paper a day or two ago. I suppose that it is greatly exaggerated, but even if the half of it was true, it was by all means the hardest fought battle that was ever fought on the American continent. I will not attempt to give you a description of the battle for I feel certain that it was not as large as it was represented to be. The battle commenced on Sun. by the rebels attacking a portion of Gen. Grant's division. They beat him back with severe loss having 6000 men against 2000. Gen. Grant kept skirmishing with them and retreating back. That day they slept on their arms. Sun. night our men engaged them again. On Mon. morning, our men were again beat back. The rebels thought then that they had gained the day, but Gen. Buell came up about 10 o'clock with about 3000 men. The battle then began in good earnest. The gun boats were brought into good position and did terrible execution on the enemy. It was hard to tell for a good while which side was going to gain the day. Both sides fought desperately, the rebels knowing that if they were defeated there, they might as well lay down their arms and abandon their cause.

They fought bravely until Gen. Buell with 4 Reg.s made a charge on their right flank and as usual the rebels flew like eowards at the sight of cold steel. That decided the victory. The rebels got pants stricken immediately and threw down guns and knapsacks and flew in all directions. Gen. Buell dispatched 1000 cavalry after them immediately and the last account we had of them, they were in hot pursuit of them, cutting and slashing as they went. Gen. Sidney A. Johnston of the rebel army was killed. Gen. Beaufigard had his right arm shot off. I cannot say what the loss was on either side, but know that it must be dreadful. Gen.'s Grant and Buell were both slightly wounded. Both these officers behaved admirable thru' the whole engagement. They were both exposed to the hottest of the fire and were constantly seen waving their swords and cheering their men on to victory. Well may the rebels say that they are not able to stand a charge from our men. It is an old saying and a true one that Right is Might no matter how weak it is.

You stated in your letter that Grandmother wished to know how the rest of her acquaintances were enjoying themselves. You can tell her that Capt. Hervy, Lieut. s Smith and Holstead are well. Will Dinsmore and Will Barnett and myself are well. Marion Dinsmore and George Bony are home on furlough. I would like very well to be at your exhibition for I am sure that I could enjoy myself, but that pleasure is denied me and I will try and enjoy myself as well as I can where I am. Give my best wishes to all the family and any of the Ladies that might enquire after my well being. Nothing more at present. Write soon, excuse all mistakes and bad writing. Goodbye from your Cousin Sam, the rambling soldier.

Columbia, June 25th, 1862

Dear Uncle -

I rec'd your letter a few days ago and have deferred answering until today, on acct. of having been on duty ever since we came here. We left Rogersville and arrived here last Fri. and I have been on guard at the pike bridge ever since we came here. It is very confining to be on guard every day and night, but still I would rather be here than to be in camp for when I am off duty I can go where I please and do as I please. I think we are going to be left here for some time. Gen Negly has the main part of his force at Shellyville, Chatanooga and Cumberland Gap. I suppose you have heard of the taking of the latter place.

I have not heard anything from Richmond lately, but suppose there is great events happening every day. Some of the soldiers are getting very despondent about getting home, but for my part I can see the winding up stroke of the war plainer every day. I have missed my calculation a little about getting home but still I don't expect to be in the service 2 months longer. It may be that while we are here that we will have some pretty hard work to do, but as long as I have health sufficient to endure it, I can do it with a light heart. I am not nearly so fat and hearty as I was some time ago, but it is easy accounted for. Traveling 300 miles without having any rest or our tents over us at night and sleeping out in swampy ground is enough to take the beef off the best of men. But if we get a few weeks of rest I will recruit up again. I was sorry to hear of you being crippled so badly with the Rheumatism and I hope as the warm weather approaches it will leave you.

You spoke of the rebels destroying everything. You have not the least idea of the wanton destruction of property since we started on the big tramp. We got so well hardened to it, that we had no respect for any person.

I have no more news to tell you at this time and consequently will have to cut this letter short. I expect you can't read it when you do get it for I wrote it in such a hurry. I have very little time to write while I am here, but I will try to do better the next time. Tell Grandmother that all her acquaintances are well. Capt. Hervy has offered his resignation. It is not accepted yet, but I expect it will be. I will now close by sending my love to all. Nothing more, write soon

from your nephew

S.A. McC.

Murfreesboro, Tenn. Jan. 25th, 1863

Dear Cousin -

I rec'd your welcome letter yesterday and hasten to reply, altho' it is with both pain and difficulty that I can write at all. My hand is pretty near well, but is still some swollen and sore yet. The large finger of my right hand is almost powerless. I am afraid I will never have the right use of it. The ball struck the finger close to the joint that connects the finger to the hand and I am afraid that the leader is badly bruised. I have never showed it to the Dr. yet and I don't suppose that there is any use. I cannot handle

my gun like a soldier has to do it on drill, but if there is any fighting to be done I can do my share in my own awkward way. You will have to excuse bad writing along with other things. My head has got well altho' the pain was a source of great annoyance to me, but I give the rebels credit for it and thank them for not taking my head. You did not say anything about Uncle in your letter and I have not heard anything from him for a long time. I would have written to him if we had not left Nashville so soon. The papers say Gen. Bragg has been reinforced with 4000 men and is going to try and re-take this place. I don't think there is any danger of his trying that game for I think that he was about as full of it before he left it as any man wanted to be and retaking it would be a tenfold harder job. It is very likely that they will make a desperate stand at Chattanooga, which is between 60 and 70 miles from here. The only way that we can take it is by stern, for it is on the other side of Tenn. River. It is by nature a very strong place and much more so by now, but should it prove a perfect Gibraltar, it will not stop our gallant Rosy (as we call him) from going the length and breadth of this state. He is determined to drive them out and he will do it. He has an army that is not to be played with by rebels.

I would like to have been in Cleveland on Christmas. I have no doubt that I could have enjoyed myself better than here standing picket, but I put in my Christmas a great deal better than New Year's. On Christmas there was a lady gave me a pretty good dinner, but on New Year's it was the very reverse. I was in line of battle all day and had not the 1st bite of anything to eat, would have given all of Uncle Sam's possessions (had I owned it) for 1 good meal of victuals. I never knew what hunger was until then. I was almost famished. I ate a pc. of dead horse and you will know that I was pretty near gone up when I did that. Did you ever hear of an American eating such a New Year's dinner? To tell you the truth, it was the sweetest bite ever I ate, but enough of that.

I will soon have to draw this scribbling to a close. I expect you cannot read the half of it, but if you can't read it just keep it till I get there and I'll tell you all that's on it and 10 times as much. Give my best wishes to all that may ask for them. Nothing more. Goodbye from your cousin, S.A. McG.

P.S. You will have to pay postage for this for I lost everything that I had along with my knapsack. Sam.

Memphis, Tenn. March 18, 1863

Cousin Flora

I rec'd a letter from you today which rather astonished me and in which you appeared to think some evil had befallen me, but when you hear my reasons for not writing you will not fault me. I will inform you in the outstart that this will be but a brief note. As near as I can recollect I wrote to you about 3 weeks ago and to Brother Rob also. To which ~~letter~~ letters I was still looking for an answer and never rec'd any word until today. I thought of writing every day last week, but put it off from day to day and I would have written yesterday evening but for a little accident which happened to me while out on drill. We were charging bayonets and my partner in rank by some accident or other wounded me with his bayonet in the right eye. The bayonet passed thru' the upper eyelid and as good fortune would have it, done nothing more than bruise the ball of the eye. However slight as it is, it will deprive me of the sight and give me a sore eye for a time. But I am well satisfied it is no worse for I don't know how I escaped having the eye put out entirely, so now you understand why I am not going to write much for it is with difficulty that I see the lines. To tell the truth I am not in a very good humor for letter writing, for the wound slight as it is, has caused a violent headache ever since I got it. According to orders I will write a few lines to let you know that I am well and have been since you last heard from me.

The rebels are disappearing in our front and report says that they are evacuating Vicksburg. If that is so they will be apt to try and outwit our Gen. Rosecrans, but if they succeed in getting back to Ky. by getting in our rear, they will have to get up before breakfast. I would not be a bit surprised if that is their point of view now, but they will not succeed as well as they did last summer when Gen. Buell had command of the army. I expect they will make another desperate struggle to regain Tenn. but I have no idea that they will succeed.

You will excuse this hastily written epistle which I would not have written had not the orders been imperative. Give my love to all. Goodbye until my eye gets well.

From your cousin, Sam



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Harrisboro, Tenn, March 30, 1863

Dear Cousin -

It is with pleasure that I take my pen this evening to address a few lines to you in answer to yours of the 24th inst, which I rec'd this evening. I am enjoying my usual good health and hope these few lines may find you all enjoying the same blessing. My eye has got nearly well. I can see out of it now pretty well and I expect in a few days to be able to see out of it as well as ever. I have been my own Dr. as I have been ever since I came into the army. I shall never consent to go to a hospital until I have to be carried there for there is no place I hate so bad and as long as I can stand on my feet I will never go. I have done duty ever since I got my eye hurt and I don't know but it healed as fast as if I had reported to the Dr. every day. It was not hurt near so bad as I had believed at first. The eyeball was only bruised. It was quite sore for a week or so, but by being very careful it soon got better. Did you really think that if I had lost my eye that I would have applied for a discharge? If you did, you were badly mistaken. There is too much good Pa. blood in me for that. I can sight a gun on a rebel just as well with my left eye as I can with my right. My movements would be a little awkward in ranks, but I would never leave the 73th Regt. for that. I intend to stick to Regt. until my 3 years have expired and if the war is not at an end then, I am going to re-enlist and fight till the last rebel is conquered. I don't like war a bit better than anybody else does, but when fighting must be done I for one am willing to do my share of it.

I would like very well to spend a few weeks with you and also at home, but you need not calculate to see me if I am blessed with life and health until this war is over. I could get a furlough now if I wanted one - for the Capt. told me that he intended to give the 1st furloughs to the men that had always stuck to the Comp. and did their duty and the men that had stood up to their work the best in the last battle and, says he, you are one of those men and I will frame a furlough for you anytime you want it. I told him to give the married men the 1st ones for they had something at home that needed their care and all that I had in the world was well cared for and then told him I would never ask him for one until I got sick and then I would expect him to try and get me one, which he promised to do.

Today has been very cool for this time of year, but I expect you would count it

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pleasant in the north. What few families are in town have their gardens all made and things are growing nicely. You need not be surprised if you hear of us having another big fight at this place. Gen. Rosecrans has had all the advance troops drawn in closer to town so that the different Brigades are now within supporting distance of each other. The Commissary stores have all been removed back over the river and everything is in readiness <sup>to</sup> act on the defensive.

I saw 2 men last night that had come thru' frza Chatanooga. They came here to join our army and talked of joining our Regt. They say the Rebel Army has nearly all left Chat. and gone to Trillahosa which place is some distance this side of Chat. and are fortifying themselves strongly there. They have also a portion of their army at Shelbyville about 23 miles from here. Everything looks as if they were going to try and retake this place, which they will find rather a serious business for we have been greatly reinforced with both Infantry and Artillery and our effective force is now double what it was. It will be folly for them to think of retaking it when they could not hold it when the advantage was all on their own side and our force is double what it was then. With the advantage of the best fortifications and rifle pits well mounted with large siege guns. That, with the light Artillery will feed them Grape and Cannister as fast as they care about it. You could not form the least idea of the strength of our fortifications without you could see them. They are all plated with Railroad iron which makes them shell proof. If they should attack us they will have to move on us on open ground which will give our Batteries a chance to play on them before they come close enough for our small arms, which will make it doubly severe on them. Us soldiers are very anxious for them to attack here for it will save us a great deal of hard tramping - which is the most unpleasant part of a soldier's work. We feel certain of success and don't care how soon they try us.

I had a letter from Brother Bob today. They were all well. He seems to think that son of his is as good as a fortune. I think I had better draw this to a close as I have written a great deal more than I intended in the outstart. Give my love to all.

Goodbye, from your cousin Sam

Murfreesboro, Tenn. April 26, 1863

Dear Cousin Mary --

I rec'd your welcome letter of the 20th inst. and as this is Sun. eve I have not much else to do -- I will occupy my leisure in answering your letter. I am enjoying good health as usual. We have very warm weather here and expect to have a good deal warmer to endure before we get the Rebs whipped out. We moved out of town last Mon. and are now on a very nice pc. of ground. We have our camp decorated with Cedars, which serves to shade us from the scorching rays of the midday sun. We have not got good water and what we have is nearly a mile away. Our Regt. was out on picket yesterday and brought 3 rebels, deserters, in. They say the Rebs are going to move onto us here. They say that they have moved 12 miles this way the day they left. They are tired waiting on us and have concluded to cease and pay their respects to us. I assure you they will be warmly rec'd. Perhaps a good deal warmer than they rec'd us when we visited this place to see them.

I have quit looking for a move of this army. I believe there is a great scheme being worked out by our commander. I believe that he is waiting for Burnside to get into East Tenn. and then he could easily outflank the Rebs at Chattanooga and at the same time be able to hold all the territory that we would gain. Which thing is very important as regards weakening the Rebs in the food and forage line, for this state has furnished more food for the rebels than any of the Confederate states. I would be better pleased if the Rebs would try us here for we have got such pretty fighting ground. If we are not strong enough for them in the field we have a line of the best forts in our rear to fall back into. It appears to me that I would like to see a battle fought on open ground such as we have in our front. We had to fight the last battle on such rough ground that we could hardly see 40 yds. ahead of us. If the Rebs attack us here, we will have the same advantage of them that they had of us in the last one.

The health of the troops is not as good as might be expected and I can't see any reason for so much sickness. We were never furnished with as good diet as we have at present. The troops are all kept in good exercise and better regulated camps than we have had yet. There is no prevalent disease. I think the exposures and hardships we endured during the last battle broke a great many constitutions. I was afraid for a month after it

that I was broke down, but by being careful and keeping in good spirits I have recruited up and am ready for another campaign at any time.

I will have to close this scribbling for the present. Give my love to all,

Cousin S.A. Mc'd.

P.S. I will send you my likeness some of these days and see what you think of black Sam now.

Dale Springs, Ala.

Aug. 22nd, 1863

Dear Cousin Mary

I rec'd your welcome letter a few days ago and hasten to reply, but will inform you in the outstart you will not get much of a letter for the simple reason I have not time to write much. Well let me see you spoke about hot weather up there. I suppose that 90 degrees is pretty hot in Cleveland, but we had days that the thermometer was 112 and 114 in the shade. In fact, it was so uncommon hot that several soldiers in our Regt. were sunstruck when we were crossing the mts. but not seriously. I was a good deal afraid of it myself but I escaped very well. We had some pretty rough times and some romantic ones. I can't see much romance about it, but a novel writer that never saw a mountain let alone set a foot on one, could give it quite a romantic shade. I could not see much romance in climbing from rock to rock and falling head over heels every now and then if you don't happen to jump far enough and after you get up you have got to go right down again. The worst of it was we had the bags on our backs which held us back going up hill and pushed us forward going down. We are now encamped on Rush creek on a very nice pc. of bottom land. On either side not 10 rods from our camp the Mts. rear up to the length of a mile. It is very steep and rugged and is cov'd with Cedars. We will have a mountainous country to travel thru' for sometime. Part of our troops are busy crossing the river now and we <sup>have</sup> orders to prepare for a long march. We are having a fine time here. A large creek of fresh water to wash in and can catch some very nice fish in it, roasting ears, peaches and apples, we have in abundance.

I have not had any news lately from any other dept. of the army, but I feel satisfied that they are not idle. I think we can have this war over next spring and then won't there be some happy girls and boys. Wouldn't you like to see your soldier boy returned to you

safe and sound of limb? You needn't say you wouldn't for I know better. Jerusalem - won't there be some sweet work ~~staxx~~ done when the soldiers get home? I don't know whether I'll be able to stand it or not. You know I have a weak constitution and I can't bear much excitement. I believe I could bear the sight of a certain little namesake of yours. \*\* I guess I have written enough of nonsense for once. I have not time to write anymore at present. My love to all. Write soon. Goodbye, from your Cousin Sam.

\*\* Later - Grandmother Mary R. McMilland

Camp on Lookout Mt. Dec. 26th, 1863.

Dear Cousin Mary:

I rec'd your truly welcome letter of 6th inst. yesterday eve. I had waited long and anxiously for some word from you. I see by your letter that you were not to blame. I never rec'd the one you wrote in answer to my last. Your letter found me in good health as usual but not in as high spirits as I have been on many a previous Christmas. There was some pleasure on the Mt. for then that felt like enjoying it, but it is always my luck to be on duty on Christmas and as a matter of course could not mix in the pleasure throng.

There was a ball here last night and it was crowded to overflowing - more so with soldiers than with ladies. There were about 20 ladies gathered up - which was a small number considering the number of men. As far as I could see, they had a pleasant time of it. Our Lt. Col. gave out word yesterday morning that if any of the boys wanted to go out into the country after ladies, for to come to him and he would give them passes. There were plenty of them got the passes and started - came back in due course and, according to orders, went and reported the success of their expedition at headquarters. On being asked how they succeeded, one of them said that he had invited 15 ladies who consented to come if he would furnish them with shoes - for they were all barefooted. What do you think of that for Dixie Ladies? That's a true bill.

I suppose you will wonder why I could not enjoy myself when everybody else was merry. Well to tell the truth, I've got the blues and have had them for about a week. I took a notion of going home on furlough a short time ago and things did not work out as I was led to believe they would.

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I gave my name in on the 16th inst. as a Veteran Volunteer and was told by the mustering officer that we would be mustered right away and go home on a 30 day furlough. I don't know how it is, but if they don't soon do something, I'll withdraw my name. I was expecting I would be spending New Year's at home, but it is too late now. You need not answer this until you hear from me again. I might start before New Year's and if I should give up the notion of reenlisting, I'll let you know. I had a letter from Uncle sometime ago. He had some notion of coming down here. The weather has been very rough and disagreeable for a long time. If you see Geo. Burns, please give him my compliments. Give my love to all - nothing more.

W. A. McClelland.

Nashville, Tenn. Dec. 1, 1864.

Dear Cousin Mary -

I wrote a letter to you about 2 months ago and have ever since that time been waiting an answer, but as yet have not rec'd the scrape of a pen from you. Perhaps you have answered and letter may be laying some place along the road.

When I wrote to you last, I was in Atlanta, but as you will see by the heading of this I am in Nashville now. Perhaps a few words by way of explanation would not be out of the way before proceeding further. I was detailed as a clerk in the Commissary Dept. on the 24th of last May and remained in that capacity with the main body of the army until the 9th of Nov. I would not have come back then but shortly after the battle of Jonesboro I took the Fever and Ague (Malaria). I thought if we remained in Atlanta any length of time I would get well, but I did not get much better until we started out after Hood again. The weather set in wet and I got worse. I left the army at Kingston, Ga. and came back to Nashville and went to the hospital. I was not there long until I got the Fever broke. I came here and did not know where my Regt. was, but found out afterwards that what few had not been discharged and gone home were quartered here doing Post duty, guarding the trains thru' on the Chatahooga & Columbia roads. After getting well, I returned to the Regt. as it was impossible to get back to my old situation - all communication between us and Sherman being cut off for the present. We are having fine times here, however, with a very good prospect of remaining here for some length of time. The Rebel Gen. Hood has taken it into

his head to have Nashville and in fact is fool enough to think that he can coerce the state of Tenn. into the Confederacy again. Gen. Thomas is in command of all the forces here and finding that Hood was determined to try the taking of Nashville again, he fell back from Pulaski to Columbia. After making a little show of resistance there, he ordered Gen. Schofield to fall back to Franklin - which that Gen. did in good state and without the loss of any of his Train, which Forrest and Wheeler with their 12,000 cavalry tried so hard to destroy. The Rebs charged 4 different times and with 4 columns of men, but they did not succeed in any single instance. Gen. Schofield's official despatch to Gen. Thomas states that the Rebs have lost in the engagement between 5 and 6000 men, while our loss is not one tenth of that number. I believe that our forces fell back to Brentwood yesterday. It is not the intention of Gen. Thomas to fight than a fair field fight if he can get them to attack us here in our works. Our forces are equal to Hood's in both numbers and efficiency, but the victory would be more ~~humiliating~~ decisive and complete if he should attack us here in the strongest hold we have in the Confederacy. Every person here, citizen and soldier, feels as safe as if there were no enemy within a hundred miles.

Guess I had better close for the present. Give my love to all and keep a portion for yourself. Write on receipt of this and let me know everything and more. Farewell for the present. I remain as ever your cousin

S.A. McLellani

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