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THE CIVIL WAR LETTERS

written by

JAMES MONROE STOOKEY

to his brother

DANIEL STOOKEY

1861-1865

59th Ill. Vol Inf
Capt. Co. E



PREPARED FROM THE ORIGINAL LETTERS BY
MARY ELIZABETH STOOKEY OWEN

THE CIVIL WAR LETTERS

I.

St. Louis Arsenal
Aug. 4th 1861

Dear Brother and Family

I am now soldering or acting soldier. I came in the arsenal on last Friday I was never in any kind business I liked so much as I like this. . but perhaps I may not like it so well after while but I think I had my mind fully made up before I undertook the soldier to like it all hazzards. I have not quite a full company yet but I think we will have it full within a week if you think we can get any up in your City I will give my orderly the privelege of coming up and Recruiting in your City my orderly is Jo Benson Goodner I suppose you are Slightly acquainted with him he is out at Belleville but is to come back this eve. I believe today is the Sabbath but you would not know it if you was here. I have just come from dinner perhaps you think there is danger of us starving if you think so I will just give you a bill of fare of our dinner which was bacon cabbage potatoes bread and coffee good enough for a queen. the boys make such a noise up here I can hardly tell what I am writing. I will have extra quarter after I get rightly fixed up Our quarters are up in the upstairs of a two story brick it is about 150 by 50 it is very cool and nice we have bunks like on a steamboat but nothing but the boards to sleep on for we have not drawed our blankets yet but I think we will draw them this week any t

I must bring this letter to a close as it is time to go on drill

Direct your letters to
 Capt J M Stookey Com E
 St Louis Arsenal
 Col C H Frederic
 9th Reg W.Z. Mo. Vol.

Explanations W Z stands for Washington Zouaves

II.

Camp on Lamine R
Dec 12th 1861

Dear Brother & Family

I am again seated in my tent to answer your letter which I received this morn. You state that when I wrote last I was in Syracuse. we left Springfield on the 9th of Nov and arrived in Syracuse on the eve of the 17th that was on our retreat from Springfield. We marched 140 miles in nine days some days marching as high as twenty two miles and others marching only eight but we marched every day The boys going out to Springfield stood the trip very well although every day there would be hundreds lying by the wayside waiting for the teams to come up and haul them. Some were actually sick others were footworn & others acting possum, while others with better pluck would pull off their shoes and take it barefoot over the rocks Charley Waggener & Joe Beaver both took it barefoot for several days going out, their feet were blistered and they had too much spunk to ride and several others of my company that you know not. As for our force march I consider it rather a mismanagement by our superiors. We were encamped in Humanville when we received orders to prepare one days Rations for a force march we received this order at about sundown but the cooks soon had the Rations in the haversacks in good condition at about Eight O Clock P M we wer in line ready for our trip we had all of our wagons loaded and they were also in line, and all that you could see of our camp was the brilliant fires that were burning all through camp which the cooks had just left. It was rather a dark night on the 1st of Nov that I speak of. At the command of our gallant young Col we all were on our onward march to a bloody seen as we then expected for we heard that Price was within almost hailing distance of Springfield and Fremonts picketts. We marched that night untill near one O Clock A M when we were halted on a large stream on the prarie with but very little wood there I rolled myself up in some Blankets but as it was a verry cold night I only slept a short time when I was awakened by cold then I got up and went to a fire near by and found several

officers and men in the same fix I was too cold to sleep I sat there by the fire untill I got so sleepy that I could not hold my eyes open any longer then I crawled in to a carriage the sutler has and slept untill Reville which was about four A M When we were all routed up to make a cup of Coffe which I soon drank and by day we were again ready to march. that is one of the most disagreeable nights I ever spent in my life. We then marched on through Bolivar and about 4 miles beyond Bolivar we were filed left into a Prarie and there halted and our Col called us up to the center of the Regt where he was and stated that we must now leave all of our baggage and Knapsacks on the prarie and push on as Fremont was already fighting. When the Col stated this to us he also said that we must cook two day's rations and examine all of our guns fil the boys cartridge boxes full of cartridges (they hold forty rounds) He looked very sober while he was talking to us and his lips quivered and for awhile all was very quiet and sober but that soon wore off and they were all as lively as ever. there was a cornfield at the place where we stopped our whole division was with us commanded by Maj Genl Pope we had 5 Regt of infantry & two batteries one of six and the other of four guns and the Iowa first Cavalry all with us which would make quite a show mooving through your city with our wagon train. We were all ready to march by 5 P. M. when we started and marched untill about 12 O Clock that night. it was not as cold as the night before and I stood the night a great deal better and slept very comfortable as we were marching along the road the boys that were getting very tired would come to me and say Capt I am too tired to go any further I would say go as far as you can and then lay down and rest awhile then come on sometimes I have left as high as ten & twelve on the road and they would come in through the night at all times some not arriving for hours after we had gone to sleep that night one of my men fell against the fence just as we were stacking the arms to go to bed he was rather a small man and it rather knocked the breath from him but I soon got the Dr and by next morn he was able to travel again by getting to ride part of the time but he soon recovered and got as healthy as ever. I must finish what I started about the

cornfield, we encamped near the first night we took feed for our horses from the field and used about a half mile of fence for firewood and the night that the boy hurt himself we burned near as much fence as we had that day. the next day we all wanted coffe but our camp and garrison equipage had all but a few kettles been left behind and we did not get our coffe nor get started untill about 7 or Eight O Clock A M. That day we marched untill we came to Wilsons creek without stopping with the exceptions of occasionally a few rests we crossed the creek that the battle was on but we were five miles from Springfield. the battle in August was west of Springfield about 10 miles I did not get time to go to the battleground. We stopped on the creek at near 5 O Clock P M there we halted and rested untill about dark when we were again ordered on to Springfield which we reached some time in the night with expectation of going into a battle the next day we were ordered into a strip of timber there we got some rails and made a good fire and went to sleep. Next morn we heard a band of music coming along the road that we had came in and some the boys went to see who it was when we found it to be Fremont on his return to St. Louis and we then first heard of his being superceded he had his body guard with him and also some Indians there was great many rumors running around camp then about Fremont being superceded just as he was going into one of the greatest battles that was ever fought but at the present you can hardly find a friend to Fremont in the whole western army they most all call him decessionists or a rebel. We laid in Springfield without our tents that night & two days and nights afterwards before they came up from where we left them on the praries. while we were there as I have mentioned before we had no camp equipage with us but about one camp Kettle to a company. we received nothing to eat but flour & fresh beef & salt that was all we could get. Now how do you think we baked bread with out ovens skillets or anything of the kind. we drawed flour some had no way to carry their flour from the commissinary wagons to their fires and would take their blankets that they used ever day and put it on and then catch hold of the corners forming a kind of a sack. but our Oderly

Jo Benson Goodner was a little more lucky and he got a barrel to carry his in then the boys took a board and carried their water in canteens and poured on the flour they would put on the board and mix up the dough then they would make a cake and cover it up in the ashes or roll a long roll around the rammer of their muskets which is iron and bake it over the fire and roast their beef in almost the same manner. I say we all the time, but I Albert and Lieut Knigh boarded at a Widow womans in town and fared very well but we slept with the men all night in the timber, but the fare may seem very rough but the boys did not seem to care for they would sing and laugh play pranks all day. but when our tents came we had more provision and fared well untill we started back on the ninth, for when we are on the march the boys never draw anything but meat (fresh beef) and most always flour sometimes though crackers and at night it takes the cooks of each mess nearly all night to cook their bread for the next days breakfast & dinner. One night (I must tell a joke on some of the boys) as we were on our march from Springfield we encamped on a large creek bottom and there was a good many Missouri possums (as the boys call the hogs here) running through the timber and some of the boys were rather hungry they came to me and asked me for my pistol to go and kill some possums I gave it to them making them promise to not let the Col or any one know that I knew that they were killing possum, so presently in they came with some fine skinned hams and ribs but the Genrl had heard the firing of the pistols as my company was not the only one engaged in the sport and they made rather much noise and he sent the Col to see what was up so the Col came along one of my company's fires and saw one of the boys picking a bone before the boy saw him so the Col asked him what he was eating he said hog then the Col enquired where he got it he said he bought it from another soldier in another Regt then the Col went into a tent where they had a ham but the boys saw him coming and shoved the ham out under the tent so the Col saw nothing and started around the tent and the boys saw him again and shoved it through into the tent again so the Col had to go without making any discovery We arrived

at Syracuse on the 17th as I stated before and expected to go to St. Louis as soon as we arrived, but we are sadly disappointed as we have returned about 8 miles west of Syracuse to camp on Lamine River near Oterville and expect to stay here all winter for we are now preparing to build our winter quarters. Our Col Kelton was promoted to an acting Brigadier and was in that office from the time we left Boonville on 13th of Oct up to the time we arrived at Syracuse and then he was ordered to St. Louis to act Adjutant General in Maj. Genrl Halleck staff but I believe he is still our Col but how long he will remain our Col I know not but he is the best officer in the world. I have 86 enlisted men in my company and about 70 fit for duty the others are none very dangerously sick I have not lost a man yet. We have Recd 3 months pay & I have sent \$300 or dollars home and on New Year's day I will draw \$260.00/ Dollars more for two months. None of your acquaintances are sick but all hearty and send you their best Respects. I weigh 147 lbs that ???? you I must close so good night J Roe Stookey to be continued next month

III.

Dear Sister Angie

Camp near Jacinto, Miss.
June 27th, 1862

I am seated in the shade this morn for the purpose of Answering your letter I received yesterday eve. I was lucky enough to receive five letters some though were very old. one from D. Stookey that is just two months old that has been after me all over Missouri. Yours was written the 17th of June & I think has come through very quick. I wrote you a letter on last Sabbath the 22nd which I do not suppose you have received yet. But as you have promised to write me every week I shall try to answer every one immediate on the receipt of yours. When I wrote on Sunday last we had orders to cook up two days rations and hold ourselves in readiness to march at a moments warning. (and now we have the same orders) we marched at 5 P M Sabbath the 22nd and went 15 miles on an easterly direction to Bivouac near Jacinto the county seat of Tishingo County which we reached at 11

O Clock at night and Bivouaced untill next day when I was ordered to go with my Co. on pickett Guard. We went out to the city of Jacinto and there was put on Provo Guard. we remained there in the courthouse the 23rd and 24th untill the eve of the 24th & then we returned to our camp which had been mooved 2 miles east of the city of Jacinto. there we remained the 24th 25th & 26th when our camp came up to us and we mooved a half mile and pitched tents and stayed over night. we had a very hard rain last night. I must close this as I must prepare to march. I have to inspect the company & see that thye have forty rounds of Cartridges in boxes and also three days rations. I do not know which way we will go or whether we will take our camp with us or not. I have a man Discharged by the name of Presley G. Edwards who is going home and I send this by him I must close give my love to all & keep up your weekly correspondence I am well so no more

J Roe Stookey

Capt E. Co. 59th Regt Ill Vols

IV.

Dear Brother and Family

Camp near Jacinto, Miss.

Sunday July 6th 1862

I am once more seated for the purpose of penning you a short but hasty letter. It has been two months and ten days since your letter was written that I received ten days ago which had been on the roads two months following me around through Missouri and at last found me in Mississippi. When I wrote you last I think we were camped near Forsyth, Mo. We marcjed from there to Batesville, Ark. & arrived there on 3rd day of May there we remained several days and then was ordered from there to Cape Girardeau distance 250 miles which we marched in 11 days & laid over one day in the time. that is ten Regiments of us now if you ever find any troops that can beat that marching you can put them down as good marchers but you had better have good authority before you believe all that soldiers say but I can give you good witness to my statement.

We left Cape Girardeau on the boat Ed Walsh on 22nd day of May a Regt to a boat had ten boats we arrived at Hamburg landing on 25th of May & went into camp there untill the 27th when we marched out on the line of Battle before Corinth & laid around there untill it was vacated. My Company was on Pickett the night that they vacated Corinth we could hear the cars whistling and backing around by the Rebels Hurraing and hallowing which we supposed was them receiving reinforcements but we soon found that they had vacated the impenetrable Corinth next day. Since then we have been following them around through Tihimingo Co & Liptah Co but have never had a fight yet. We were ordered the other day to bring 25000 men to Richmond but that order was countermanded. We were included in the number perhaps we will get to go yet. I only hope so for if we go there & get through we will have gone the rounds. We have orders now to march at 2 O Clock PM but the orders as usual does not say where we are going with two days cooked rations in haversacks & one cooked in wagons. Well Soldiering is hard business I will assure you something you can form no idea of untill you try it. but for all that I like the business better & better every day. Orderly J B Goodner is with Company A 3rd Illinois Cavalry & we left that Regt in Ark & have not heard from him since. I think if you hear from him he will say that he and I could get along very well together but there was other troubles in the way that we could not well get over. I was very sorry indeed to have him leave but he said he could not stay satisfied therefore I let him go I had it entirely in my power to let him go or stay but I thought perhaps he knew what was best for him. I saw him once after he went into the Cavalry he was well satisfied. I must bring this letter to a hasty close as I want to write a letter home as there is no telling when I will get a chance to write again. You say you think I have lost my best friends in Albert & Jo Bentson which I will admit, but I think I can safely say that there is no one in my company but that is my friend, & that can only be said by very few Captains. I had company this morn of guns & after it was over I went and told the Col to come to my company & see their guns he came up & said that was the best company

of guns he had seen & I had never told the boys that the Col would inspect their guns therefore the inspection by the Col was entirely a surprise to the boys. I was sorry to hear of the death of Capt Harvey. Write soon to your Brother
Roe

V.

Dear Brother & Family Camp near Iuka Aug 17th 1862

I am now in Iuka 25 or 30 miles East of Corinth on the Charleston & Memphis Railroad. I have been sick I was taken with the fever on 26th of July & had the fever all the time for ten days. I stayed in camp until the 2nd of August and then I went to Jacinto to a hotel and stayed there until the 9th of August and then started for Iuka and rode all night in a ambulance and arrived at Iuka on the morn of the 10th then a Lt from the 22nd 2nd Regt came and told me that Jack was in Corinth & was going to stay there until he heard where I was. I then got on the cars and went to Corinth but did not find him until next morn the 11th as he had been out to the 9th Illinois & stayed all night he & I then came to Iuka. he started home yesterday. I have been boarding at a private hous here in Iuka until yesterday Eve I came and reported for duty.

You say the last I wrote was from camp near Jacinto we went into camp there on the 4th of July & remained until the 4th of August with the exception of the 7th July Genl Asboth was slightly frightened about 7 miles from us and sent us word to come & reinforce him as he expected an attack we loaded our teams all up & sent the teams back from camp to 4 miles of Corinth. We marched to the road about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from camp and then received orders to march back to camp which we did, and laid without tents that night but next day the teams came back & we pitched tents & drilled & had schools in Tactics & regulations until 4th of August when our Brigade was ordered to March to Bay Springs (but I was sick and did not go with them) where they tore up a cotton mill & took some cotton & took some 20 prisoners

as there was a small squad of secesh there guarding the mill. Then our Brigade marched to this camp Iuka but it was so hot that they had a very hard time. Since our Brigade has been here we have taken nearly 300 bales of cotton also a lot of Negroes & fields of corn from the secesh and made no compensation to any, what do you think of that way of proceeding. I am glad to hear that recruiting is going on so fast in old Illinois I hear that Illinois will fill her quota without drafting. We have orders now to hold ourselves in readiness to march tomorrow afternoon at a minutes notice what direction I know not some day for Chattanooga but I do not profess to know. I say hurrah for L J Eyman Ed Eyman John Eyman & Georg Goodner I see that none of the old soldiers of the Mexican War can stay at home You will please let me know what Regt they go into tell L J Eyman if he will have me elected Lt Col of his Regt I will insure it soon to be a welldrilled Regt as I think I could drill a Batallion all right, where do they go to rendezvous

You say you have not heard from home for some time I received a letter yesterday eve from Angie the same time I received yours She said they were all well and that Charley Wagner had just arrived there he is at home recruiting sent from my Company. Jo Beaver received a letter from him today he said he had seven recruits his head quarters are to be in Carrollton Ills as tthat is near where the Lt lives that went home with him but he says that he got leave from him to go to Centreville for a few days. I think they will soon fill up our Regt we have a man from every Company on recruiting service. How old is your cattle and are you going to feed them this winter is the cattle business good now I suppose you can sell all fat cattle now to the U S contractors I am well at present give my love to all enquiring friends tell ED Lewis John or Georg to write to me when they get to soldiering so no more write soon to
Roe

VI.

Camp near Nashville Tenn
Nov 24th 1862

Direct to Capt J M Stookey 59th Ills Vols
9th division 3rd Brigade Army of the Cumberland
Nashville Tenn

Dear Brother & Family

It has been a long while since I have received any letter from you & I do not know whether it is my fault or yours but I think I have rwritten last but I shall now write again and then I will be shure to have you in my debt. It has been so long since I wrote to you that I do not know hardly where I was at the time I last wrote but I think at Iuka Miss. Since then we marched to this place & from here went to Louisville Ky by way of Mumfordsville where I suppose you heard of the capture of 4800 of our men by Genrl Bragg there. We skirmished a little with the enemy & then they travelled towards Louisville and we were in pursuit untill we came within 30 miles of Louisville then they turned to the right and we wnt on to Louisville as quick as possible there we remained for several days & then started again under Genrl Buell in pursuit of Genrl Bragg & after several days skirmishing we came up on to him at Perryville Ky & there fought the battle known now as Chaplin Hill. Our Regt was engaged from an hour by sun untill way after dark we was held as reserves all day and at this time in the eve we was sent in to reinforce Maj Genrl McCook's Corpse which was then giving away we went into a heavy fire and was soon surrounded & driven back but we fell back & formed again behind a rail fence & held out position there untill it grew so dark that the fireing entirely ceased. I suppose you have read a great many accounts of the fight than I can give so I will have to go the next day when we followed up the enemy but they had retreated through the night & we did not come on to them for several days and then only came up to their rear guard the evening we went into Lancaster Ky our Regt was in advance & we had quite a little skirmish with them but no one was hurt although there was considerable

firing both of Musketry & artillery. then we followed them on to Crabb Orchard in the Mts & then changed our direction and came here which was several days march & arrived here on 7th of this month & have been in camp here ever since.

The R R cars run from Louisville within 30 miles of here where there is a tunnell blown up by the rebels & not yet repaired the cars run from here also to the tunnell. The hands are busy at work at the road and it is supposed it will soon be finished. Yesterday Genrl Rosecrans reviewed our Division commanded by our old commander Brig Genrl Jeff C Davis. Davis command now is 12 Regts Infantry & 3 Batteries consisting of 18 guns we were all in line yesterday with ranks opened & then Genrl Rosecrans passed all along in front of our line with Genrl McCook Genrl Davis and all of their staffs & returned in rear of us all excepting Genrl Rosecrans & he rode in between the ranks and gave ever man a very scrutinizing look & if any was short any equipments such as haversacks he would ask them if they had any if so why they did not have them on or if had none he would tell them they must procure them. Rosecrans has a very good name with us-all What do you think of the exchanges of Burnside for McClellan & Rosecrans for Buell!

Nashville was entirely cut off from the states while we was up in Ky & our troops that were here had to live entirely off of the country & had no coffe or shugar. The Regt that Capt Challenor from Belleville was in was here & he resigned and is now at home he went home since our army arrived here. Potatoes here are \$2.50 to \$3.00 a bushel Butter 75 cts to 1.00 per pound shugar and coffee cannot be had excepting from the government & ever thing else of the cateable kind demands a very exhorbitant price. The State house here is one of the finest of the United States except the one at Ohio. Nashville has been a very flourishing place I suppose in good times it is situated on the south side of the Cumberland River. there is two bridges across the River one R R bridge where the teams and the Cars both cross on and one pontoon bridge for the teams and foot passengers. I suppose you have nothing much to do now & you could jump

on the Cars and soon come over and see me. I think it would be well worth any ones time to visit the army & get to see the grand old states of Ky & Tenn which are two great states. the people of Ky are the best people we have ever met with since we have been soldiering. they treated us like brothers almost. I shall ever remember the citizens of Ky I suppose I was one time within 50 miles of Uncle Abraham's & Birt & I was both anxious to get there but we did not succeed. The last letter I received from home it stated that Jack had sold out the stable property & had rented it out. what do you think he will get at next. I must bring this to a close by asking for a speedy answer give me the opinion of the people of Illinois on the war question & things in general so no more but as ever your brother
Roe

VII.

Dear Brother & Family

Camp Near Nashville Tenn

Dec 14th 1862

I am seated in camp by mess chest, for a dsek for the purpose of answering your knid letter which I received today bearing the date of Dec 6th 62. When I wrote my last we was on the north side of Nashville & on the other side of the river cumberland, but since then we have made two mooves first we marched through the city and went 4 miles south and went into camp between the Franklin pike & Granny Wjite pike but since then we have mooved camp three miles east & are now encamped between the Franklin pike and Nolinsville pike about six miles from town in a beautiful pasture of large trees and fine blue grass whihc is very green yet. I am writing in my tent without a fire and the door is open and I am sweating on my forehead, while you in your cold icy country are all locked in your houses by a large fire and nearly freezing at that.

Well Dan as for news there is very little. Some skirmishing most ever day with the picketts today the picketts on the Franklin pike had a skirmish we lost I believe some four wagons but this is only a rumor & I shall not vouch for its truthfulness. I am glad to hear that

Joe Benson is still on the land of the living & enjoying his cavalry life in Arkansas & that the rebels were badly whipped out I suppose Joe was not in that. I also see that Genrl Pemberton is going to form a junction with Genrl Bragg in Tennessee & I also suppose that he is going to make an attack on this place but if he does he will have a hard time getting Nashville with the Army we have here and the breastworks and forts we have built here. Col Black of the 37th Ills that was killed in the late fight in Arkansas was an army acquaintance of mine we were all in the same Brigade last winter & I have often seen him & he was a splendid officer he was first Maj of the Regt and was wounded at Pea Ridge.

As for speculation in confiscated property I know of no such speculations at least I have never seen such sales while we were in Mississippi but since then I have seen no such speculation here but there may be such speculations and we know nothing of it as I stay very close to my company and do not meddle myself about any such business but I think all such speculations are only lottery. As for out sutlers making a fortune I cannot exactly say but I think they are making a very good thing of it although they have lost some considerable by crediting the boys and also the rebels captured two wagons loaded & eight mules and horses in Mississippi No man thou is allowed to sell anything here except he is regularly commissioned as a sutler then he is not allowed to station his shops in no place but in their own Regts. As for Field Officers names I will give you a list Col P Sidney Post of Knoxville Ills is our Col now commanding 30th Brigade. I think he expects to be commissioned as a Brigadier soon and I think he is very deserving of a star he is a very intelligent man.

Our Lt Col is C H Frederic who now commands the Regt we all think a great deal more of him now than ever & if Col Post gets to be a Brigadier Lt Col will get to be Col of our Regt our Maj J C Winters is at present at home on a short furlough he is a very good man but not a very good Military man, though I think he will be our Lt Col should a vacancy occur then there would be a vacancy for a Maj and one of the old Cpts will get

it the ranking Capt is Capt Hale 2ond is Paine 3rd Stookey 4th Snyder there are the candidates and if it is left to a vote of the officers of the Regt I think the 3rd stands as good a chance as any but if it goes by promotion the 1st will get it according to rank. but as this is all mere speculation & we may all gwt killed off in next fight and never have any promotion but we shall all hope for the best. I suppose you are all attending church to night while I am engaged in writing. Our Chaplain has left us he resigned & we have no church now sometimes I go to hear others in other regiments As I have nothing much to write I will close give my love to all the Family I hope Caroline is well by this time. Sergt Charles Wagner has returned from home he has been recruiting since August but only got three recruits. Serg Joe Beaver has been detached witha pioneer core and is now Commissary Sergt My Sts are both enjoying good health as well as my self and all my company so good night J M Stookey

VIII

Dear Brother & Family Camp Near Murfreesboro Tenn
Jan 24th 1863

I am once more seated for the purpose of penning you a few lines in answer to yours written Jan 2ond 1863 which I received a few days ago. Well I have been in one more hard fight & come out safe. We laid in camp near Nashville until the 26th day of Dec 1863 when the whole army began the advance toward Murfreesboro. The right wing which we are in commanded by Maj Genrl McCook moved out on the Nolinsville pike Genrl Davis Division in advance Col Post Brigade in advance of the division & the 29th in advance of the Brigade our Regt was soon throwed out as skirmishes on both sides of the road and discovered the enemy after we had gone about 5 miles from camp & drove them with our skirmishes until drove them into Nolinsville where they were heavily reinforced & secreted themselves in the houses & Col Post then brought up the 5th Wisconsin Battery commanded by Capt Pinney & he opened on them with shell & cannister

which was soon answered by a rebel battery then Col Post formed his Brigade in line with the 59th on the left & Col Carlin threwed his Brigade into line on our right & we then moved and soon drove them from the town capturing one gun & several prisoners our loss was some six or eight killed & wounded their loss I know not how much it was. That morn we sent all our wagons tents & camp equipage to Nashville & had nothing with us except what we carried and that was a shelter tent each two & haversack with three days rations, and as the day was rainy day & night we had rather a hard time. Next morn the 27th the 59th was detailed as rear guard for the Division train rained all day some skirmishing in advance division arrived at Triune distance about 5 miles from camp & 20 miles from Nashville. Next morn 28th was a beautiful sabbath day & we laid still in bivouac all day drew three days more rations.

On 29th started on the march again our Bri gade in advance excepting some Cavalry we took the dirt road leading from Triune across to the Murfreesboro pike which we reached by night distance 10 miles. Cavalry in our advance had very hard fighting our lines were all formed that evening in connection with the Army which we that evening formed a junction with. Next day 30th we commencing advancing in line of battle our Brigade was formed on the extreme right of the army the 74th & 75th Illinois in advance & 22nd & 59th as reserve. Our Regt was detailed to guard our Battery 5th Wis, & we therefore followed its movements all day.

The fighting become tolerable general all along the lines bu 2 O Clock PM excepting in our front & we was not engaged untill late in eve & then our Battery opened on them but with veru little effect as we were in a very thick cedar forest & could see nothing. Our Regt was lying down on the right of the Battery. about this time a rebel Battery opened on to us giving us rather a cross fire but Genrl Johnson moved up his Division & formed on our right & opened his Batteries on the rebels and soon silenced their Battery, but by this time came on to us and we laid on our arms in line of Battle all night. next morn the 31st as soon as it was light enough they

begun firing on our skirmishers & made a heavy attack on our right driving Genrl Johnson before them before he had his Batteries in readiness. then that caused us to throw our whole line into position on the advance so then we had no reserve & we had hardly got our lines formed in an open field before we could plainly see the rebels moving up on us. We then formed on the left of the Battery & 22 2nd on the right of the Battery & opened on to them and as soon as they come within range we opened on to them but their lines were too strong for us & our fire only checked them momentarily & they still kept advancing & we received the order to fall back the battery lost all the horses from one gun & all but two from another the gun that had no horses was left on the field & our Regt helped to pull the others off of the field we was driven back about two miles forming several times and firing into the enemy untill we were relieved by other regiments & we left the field for that day untill late in the eve we was again formed into lines and laid on our arms all night. That day's fight was terrible all along the lines all day was one continuous roar of canon & musketry the hardest days fight of the war I suppose. Next day the 1st we laid along on the lines canon could be heard at intervals all day. On 2nd about two hours before dark they made a heavy attack on our center & left & drove the first lines but when the boys that were in reserve saw them coming they raised with a yell & hurled them like chaff in the wind but darkness stoped our pursuing them much that day. next 3rd we laid on our arms with some skirmishing. On 4th learned of the evacuation and moved back into camp where we laid several days & then moved into this camp where we have remained ever since. The casualties of our Regt was about 80 killed wounded & prisoners seven killed in all. My Company lost none killed two prisoners & some six only slightly wounded. I had been acting as Maj ever since the 25th untill a few days ago. My horse was twiew shot & I was compelled to let him go he has since died None of the boys were touched that you knew I must close this for the mail soon starts give my love to all & write soon

Capt James M Stookey
E Co 59th Ills Inftry

The baggage & company bank(?) of all the Officers was started up to us on the 30th & rebel Genrl Wheeler's Cavalry got into it & burned the whole train of 200 wagons & so all the officers of our division lost all their clothing except what they had on

IX.

Dear Brother & Family Camp Near Murfreesboro Tenn
April 17th 1863

I received your letter bearing date of April 12th 1863 on the 15th which had made a very quick trip & I now embrace the present opportunity of answering it although I am sorry to say I have nothing of importance to write. We have done nothing lately but drill & do pickett duty. We have been lying around Murfreesboro ever since the fight except a few scouts we have been on. This is the longest we have ever laid in one place since we have been in the service. We have eat very little idle raions for Uncle Sam. We have the Pay Masters now they are paying in our Division for the months of January & February but have not got to our Regt yet, but I suppose will begin next week that seems to be the report now. We have very pleasant weather now it is beginning to become in the midle of the day rather uncomfortably hot.

Ever one that writes to me lately wants to know how I am or how Jack suseded in having me appointed as Provo Marshall. I can say that Jack sent a recommend forward for me strongly endorsed by Belleville men & also by State Officers at Springfield to Hon Lyman Trumbull & he endorsed it & forwarded it to President Lincoln & wrote to Uncle Sam of his proceedings & further stated that he thought that would receive the appointment. But further than that I have heard nothing. I think it rather doubtful whether I will receive that appointment or not & further I am not very particular as I have a very good position here and very well satisfied with it, & understand my business perfectly & if I should receive the other appointment I should have to learn the duties appertaining to

that Office. Which I suppose are rather laborious. But I think I would soon make the Copper heads think they had a Picayune Butler No 2 to deal with. I will assure you that I would not have very much Sympathy for them. I have fought Rebels too long to be very Sympathetic.

My Orderly D F Korhammer has received a comission as Second Lt of Co 2 of the 59th which I was very glad to see him get as he has been a faithful & good soldier since he has been in the service. He is rather a good scholar & a beautiful pensman & has always done all of my company writing. You will let Jo Benson Goodner know of this next time you write as he and D F Korhammer was particular friends Charles Wagner is now Orderly Sergeant of the Company & makes a very good Orderly. I supposed you was in Decatur by this time but I see by your letter that you have not moved yet. Do you think you will like to live in Decatur as well as in Bloomington? Or are you changing because it is more convenient to your farm and you can do better financially? I think the the latter is the case. I saw a D M a few days ago from Decatur who belongs to the 21st Illinois he had been home on a leave and saw Uncle Sam in Decatur & he told him to be sure and call on me and tell me that he had swa Uncle Sam his name was Jones. He stated that ever thing was advancing in prices and that money was plenty. And that all the houses were filled with Families & he said were he had known most ever one he was now most an entire Stranger. I see you give some prices that seem to be very exhorbitant. I am very sorry to hear of the ill health of the Eyman Family, & of Jin Eyman's misfortune You seem to think that Genrl Bragg will try Rosey again if he does try him at this place, he will be the worst whipped man he ever was & his Army will be of the same fix we want no better fun than to whip Bragg here with Rosey as commander. The capture of Charleston is among the thing that is to be & I see that our Ironclads have concluded that they cannot take it with what Fleet they have. Vicksburg seems to be too hard for Genrl Grant & I fear will neve be taken. You have given me a list of prices I will furnish you a list of prices here Potatoes 5 Dollar per bushel Eggs 50 etc per Dozen

Butter 75 cts per lb can peaches in quart cans \$1.50 cts per can other can fruit the same applies small four for a quarter Whiskey done up in bottles \$1.50cts per pint Lager Beer 10 cts per glass & scarce at that every thing else in proportion I have a pr boots I gave 12 Dollars for pr pants 15 Dollars for coat 33 Dollars for Shoulder Straps not extravagant 8 Dollars that's the way the money goes pop goes the Weasel I must close good night

Roe Stookey

X.

Dear Brother & Family

Headquarters 59th Ills
Camp Near Winchester Tenn
July 14th/ 63

I received your welcome letter a few days ago and am now seated for the purpose of answering it. I had supposed that I had answered it & am very certain yet that I did and the letter was lost some place. I will now give you a short account of our trip here as you will see from the heading of this that we have changed our home. We left Murfreesboro on the morning of the 24th of June & marched out on Shelbyville pike. Johnson's Division in advance of us and Sheridans in front of them that constitutes the whole of McCook's Corpse on Shelbyville pike. But when we got six miles out, Johnson's Division & Davis Division took a road to the left leaving the road to Sheridan. We did not find any Enemy untill we came into Liberty Gap & there Johnson's Division had some very hard skirmishing, but drove the rebels without Davis' assistance. On 25th we did not moove forward very fast but Johnson held the advance untill late in the evening when the rebels made an attack on him & Our Division went up to their assistance. Our Brigade was deployed in line in a open wheat field but was not engaged although some rebel shell and solid shot went whizzing over close enough to warn us that we were in Danger, but Luckily enough for us none of our Brigade was hurt. That night we advanced in line about half mile and occupied a hill which Carlin's Brigade had driven the rebels from. first day's march 13 miles second 3 miles On the 26th we had orders not to advance but

hold our position. That day there was a cracking of Musketry kept up by our skirmishers on both sides. They would talk & laugh and yell all kinds of Way's at each other that day but nothing transpired of importance some few skirmishers wounded none in our Regt.

On 27th we commenced rather a retrograde moove by going back to the Manchester pike and coming into the rear of the main part of the Army. But we did not begin this untill we found that the rebels had all disappeared in our front during the night. We arrived at Beachs Grove about sun down & went into camp Dis marched 15 miles On 28th we started off again early and arrived at Manchester at 12 O clock at night Distance 12 miles. I must stop now and say that we had rain ever day since we left Murfreesboro & the ground was as soft as it is in the spring after the frost first leaves the fields, & as we had considerable train we had very hard times getting them through, & perhaps you imagine we felt any ways nice after being thoughorly drenched ever day & very short rations & the broad canopy of the heavens for our roof at night & hard marches with heavy loads occasionally out a wagon that was mired in mud, but as I happen to be assisting our Lt Col in command of the Regt I have a fine sorrell horse which carries me over the mud very lightly But the rprivates they have the hard times but I heard no complaints.

29th & 30th we remained in bivouac near Manchester. On 1st of July we started for the rebel string hold Tullahoma not knowing that it had been evacuated untill we got nearly there. We came in on the road that was commanded by one of their strongest forts & slashed timber for mile in front & each side all around the town almost. They had the town Fortified on all sides & some very strong forts but for some cause they evacuated without giving us fight which I can assure you pleased us very much. I suppose the reason they evacuated the place was fearing we would surround them & capture the whole Army by regular approaches the same as Grant had Vicksburg. Dis from Manchester to Tullahoma 12 miles. On 2ond we marched on in pursuit of rebels our Brigade was in rear of the train Sheridans Division was in advance

& had some considerable skirmishing at Elk River, where the rebels burned the RR bridge. We have the cars running now to Elk River & the bridge will be completed by Sunday & the cars come to here. We bivouaced on night of 20nd at Elk River Dis 10 miles next morning we marched in here and have been here ever since. Dis 4 miles. During all this time we have had rain ever day. On account of rain our trains did not do as expected & we were very short of rations & have not got any too plenty yet. At Tullahoma we captured all the rebels tents 4 siege guns & some corn meal & what else I am not able to say. On account Bad weather we run over & burned rails so much that we destroyed all the crops & stole all chickens & robbed all smoke houses & I suppose the citizens now are nearly starving. We are now situated in a valley in sight of Cumberland Mts in a nice little village of 3000 inhabitants before the war now about 1000. I hope this letter will meet with better success than my last I wrote. So for the present I will close give my love to all the family
yours respectfully J Roe Stookey

XI.

Dear Brother & Family

Headquarters 59th Ills Vols
Camp Blue Springs Tenn
April 20th 1864

It is just one month ago to day since I received notification that the Regt would be at St. Louis and that I left on morning train for St Louis without even haveing time to bid any of my Friends "Good Bye" except our own Family that was at home. When I arrived at St. Louis I found tha Regt had got there that night about midnight and were all waiting then to get aboard the steamer Jennie Deans that was going to take us to Nashville I went aboard found the Officers all that were not on duty enjoying the comforts of a huge hot stove in the cabin. I gave all a hearty shake of the hand introduced them to Jack, and we soon enlarged the circle by two. Col Post soon came up to me and introduced me to his Sister Miss Bunce & Miss Disbrow ladies he had with him taking as far as he could comfortably. I had several gay times with

them before they left the Regt. On the 20th of March by noon the Jeannie Deans was carrying the 59th smoothly down the father of Waters bound for Dixie all with rather a sad heart as ever moment the distance between us and our home friends increased. All passed off very smoothly landed at Cairo Paducah & Ft Donnelson each place either to load or unload some freight. Jack left us at Cairo and started for home. He arrived at Clarksville Tenn on the night of the 22nd and next morning was informed by the Capt of the boat that he could proceed no farther as his boat was too large to cross the shoals and we were then sixty miles from Nashville. So we disembarked there and found comfortable barracks for the men in an old Tobbacco warehouse, and the Officers the majority found lodgings at Moores Hotel. Clarksville has been a place of 3000 inhabitants in times of peace.

We remained at Clarksville untill noon on the 25th when we embarked on the Emperor a very light draft boat, at about 11 that night we reached the foot of the shoals and agreeable to Contract the man had to get off and March around the shoals which by the way fell to me to be the Commander, I sent out a detachment of boys under command of a Sergeant to bring me in a guide, the first one they found, They soon returned with two boys mounted on a mule. And we were again started on the march this part the boys did not admire much as they could not think their weight would make much difference to the load of the boat. We arrived at the landing above the shoals where the boat was to take us on by 3 A M and had to bivouac there untill 1 P M when the boat arrived. They had some trouble in coming over the shoals but suffered no damage.

We arrived at Nashville that evening the 26th of March, and put the men in Soldiers home and the Officers put up at City Hotel part of them. We remained there untill the 31st of March at noon when we started off on foot for this place only one wagon to the Regt haveing sent most of our baggage by R.R. And on the 15th of this month we arrived safe here which is five miles from Cleavland & 25 from Chattanooga and on Knoxville & Chattanooga RR. We marched ever day with the excep-

tion we laid over in Chattanooga. The ladies left for the north the same day we left Nashville. Since our arrival here we have been busy fixing camps and making returns we had behind from the time we started home on Furlough but if we have a few weeks quiet in camp we will soon be all right. I read to day Genl U S Grants report of his succession of victories around Chattanooga which I consider very good and truthful. He rubs Genl Granger very hard and he is now relieved of his command and I suppose will undergo a trial and I am in hopes they will use him rough It is late & I must close give my love to all the family & Friends
 Roe Direct 59th Ills Vols
 3 Brig 1st Division 4th A C
 Dept Cumberland

XII.

Dear Brother & Family Headquarters 80th Ills Vols
 Inftry Bivouac on Chattahoochee
 River Ga July 7" 1864

I have had your letter for some time bearing date May 15th, 1864 but as you I suppose know we have been marching fighting and building earthworks. On the 3rd of May we left Blue Springs Tenn that is the whole Army. And marched the 3 & 4 the front skirmished some but we were not engaged. (The 5 & 6 in bivouac at Catoosa Springs Ga Southern watering place and has been a gay place eighteen different kinds of water. On 7 on march fought all day took Tunnell hill our Brigade done no fighting but laid at night near or in front of Buzzard roost S Rockyface Mountain which the rebels held an impregnable position. The skirmished around there with our Corps (the 4") and showed as bold a front as possible the 8 9 10 11 12 while the army flanked the position to our right passing through Snaky creek gap and threatening Resacca Ga & rebel rear and communication. And on the morning of the 13 we found they had gone and left their strong position in our possession we pushed through the gap after them meeting their rear guard and skirmished immediately after passing through Dalton Ga driving them until night capturing some prisoners made 15 miles & bivouaced for the night. On 14 marched up and fought our

way into a position in front Resacca Ga under heavy artillery fire Two Brogades of our Division driven back by rebs. But Genrl Hooker fell on to the advancing fox and soon hurled them back with severe loss to rebs. On 15 the whole Army in line around Resacca right resting on Oustanala River and left on acrofs the RR cannonading heavy all day in afternoon Genrl Hookers corps made a charge taking four guns riffle pits some prisoner and small arms that ended the day. On 16" first orders we received was to march out as the rebs had gone from Pasacca which we found true they burned RR bridge acrofs the Oustanala River. I suppose seventy five long but our train came in by 10 AM and the bridge corps said they would have the bridge done in 48 hours but I believe it took them 144 hours we mad eight miles with some skirmishing and bivouaced for the night. On 17" 18 & 19 fought our way along the RR through Calhoun, Adairsville Kingston & on the evening of the 19" took Cafsville distance made in the three days 28 miles our lofs in our Regt very light the rebs built rail works ever few miles to resist our advance but these we would charge and take with little lofs. 20" 21 & 21" Army laid still near Cafsville Ga On 23" the Army started with twenty days rations and left the RR to our left with the intention of flanking the rebs out of the Altoona hills. the 23" 24" 25 made 35 miles over hills and skirmished nearly all the time in eve of the 25" came up on the rebel works and Army their left resting on Dallas Ga and their right in direction of RR. We got our Army into line and cannoaded skirmished and built works until June the 5" when in morning we found the rebs had gone rained most ever day laid still the 5" of June On march the 6" made nine miles & bivouaced for the night laid there the 7" 8" & 9" within three miles of Seworth(?) Ga where our trains came ever day.

On the 7" I was assigned to the command of the 80th Ills Inftry in our Brigade there. Field officers are all in Libby prison Richmond Va but since I have seen an account of their being sent to Charleston ScC to be put under our own fire. On 10" of June we started on march again. My Regt in advance of Brigade met the rebs ibn four miles and found them on Lost Mountain and in be-

hind works. Skirmished there 10th 11th 12th 13th & 14th and occasion cannonading this is the place one of the Batteries of our Division killed Lt Genl Polk. On 15th found the rebs had left during the previous night but by skirmishing through the woods we found they had only gone about a mile behind the works and we got up in front of their works again and went to work fighting and making works laid there the 16th on 17th found the rebs gone again and we on pursuit found them within a mile's skirmishing & cannonading behind works built works and fought there the 18th. On 19th in morning find the rebel ditches evacuated again and Yanks in pursuit drove them to the Kennesaw Mt. there found them in force strongly fortified their lines oo in rear of their lines is Marietta Ga here fought charged and cannonaded until the morning of the 3rd of July when we found that the rebels had gone and we started on pursuit & skirmishing all day through Marietta Ga and made six miles and found the rebs again in position behind works. On morning of the 4th of July all seemed very quiet untill noon then we were ordered to make a charge all along the line to take the rebels first works The 80th was on the left of the Brigade and in front line of our Brigade and we had to charge over a cornfield where the corn was two feet high nearly a half mile this we did under heavy fire of Artillery and Infantry and carried the rebs first works capturing some rebs and killing some the 59th was in this charge on the right of the Brigade four Regts in front line. Genl Sherman watched our Brigade charge and complimented it highly lofs on the 4th in 80th 16 killed and wounded Henry James Kelley among the dead and 21 wounded out of 232 taken into the fight in 59th 3 killed among the wounded was Lt David F Rorhammër that used to be my Orderly Sergt that is all I suppose you know Dabid not dangerous in side but gone to hospital. On 5th found the rebs gone and came to this position our corps on left of line and on Chattahoochee River no rebs in our front to disturb us our right is on the river also and the rebs also form their line inside of our on North side of the river I suppose when we get rested up we will start and cros the river and flank them out of this position we are now 8 miles from Atlanta Ga. The lofs from the Army since the 3rd day of May 1864

and Macon RR which I suppose the rebs can not run their trains on now as we are within canon shot range therefore they have no RR to get out on, and only an open space from Macon and Atlanta Road to the Atlanta and Decatur Road the distance you can measure on you map. We have very good earth works all around our front and I suppose Sherman's intention is to keep lapping around them and if they will stay long enough finally to get them surrounded but that is only a vain hope we have as it is a very difficult matter to surround an army but if we succeed we will make a big haul when they surrender. This campaign has been a series of skirmishes and battles the rebs would halt and form a line of works then we would have to skirmish up within musket range of their works and build works under heavy fire of Artillery and small arms. The losses of the armies both of rebel and ours have been very large since this campaign begun but I know the rebel loss is the greatest. Genl McPherson was killed on the 22nd of July when his three corps the 15" 16" & 17" had a very hard fight here getting into position. Total union loss in wounded killed and missing three thousand five hundred (3500) and ten (10) pieces of Artillery Rebel loss prisoner's captures 3200 known dead of the enemy in front of the 15" 16" and one Division of the 17 Corps 2142 The other division of the 17 Corps repulsed six assaults of the enemy before it fell back which will swell the loss in killed to at least 3000 after the fight we held the field then figures are official also captures (18) stands of colors and (5000) stand of Arms. On the 20" of July the 20" Corps One Division of the 4" Corps and part of the 14" Corps was engaged. Total union loss in killed wounded and missing 1733. In front of the 20" Corps there were put out of the fight (6000) rebels. 563 were buried by our own men rebs permitted to bury 250 additional themselves. 2 Division 4" Corps reported seven assaults of the enemy and slight loss to themselves which must swell the rebel loss beyond 6000. Prisoners captures 300 and seven stands of colors. No report has been received from the part taken by the 14" AC this is all Official Today finishes my first three years, when I went into the services I had no idea that I would be in service in /64. You say wheat crop is good Oats excellent and

corn looks promising. What is the price of Wheat Oats and corn and what do you suppose corn will be worth this winter. I have some young horses at home I don't like to sell and they tell me they have been offered \$200 for my two year old and think I had better sell as corn is going to be very dear this winter what say you. Money is no object I got more than I know what to do with and U S owes me \$900.00. Jack dont write to me. I was assigned to command of 80 Ills on the 7th of June they had Lt Col out of the 75th Comdg them at that time but the Brig Commander and Lt Col had some words and Brig Commander relieved him and put me in command and I have been with them ever since they are in smae Brigade with 59th Their Field Officers and most of the line Officers were captured on the raid with Col Streight in spring of /63 and are still in prison. Our fourth was celebrated with a fight Our Brigade charged and carried rebel Riffle pits and built works there charged over an open cornfield 80th 59th Ills 3rd Ind and 77 (?) were in fro line I lost in 80th 15 wounded and two killed and 59th lost 3 killed and fifteen wounded Henry James Kelley of Ev E was killed Lt David Korhammer was slightly wounded and is getting well. Capt Knight is back sick Lt Wagner has not come up since he got his leg broke in Centreville Lt Gooding is hearty and Comdg Company. Company is all OK. I must refuse your invitation to the melons Washington news is old but good it assists the recruiting We are all getting along hugely although occasionally aroused by a rebel shell write soon love to family Roe

XV.

Dear Brother & Family

Headquarters 80th Ills
Camp Near Atlanta Ga
August 25 1864

I received your letter bearing date Aug 16th on the 24th was very glad to hear to you as I had heard from home and they said you was sick. I suppose you will have a letter before this reaches you answering all your questions. But I will answer some again for fear you don't receive my last. Land to speculate on is the kind I want, or money invested in bonds which ever you think best. Uncle Sam

had one thousand Dollars (1000.00) of mine when I left home from Furlough. Perhaps he has it invested for me if so all right if not I suppose he can furnish it to you without any inconvenience But if he should need it let him keep it. As for being a stranger in 80" and wavy from home you are slightly mistaken as it was made up in our district and I knew a great many of the boys at home. The Adj't and I are old Shurtleff schoolmates. The 59th Ills has been transferred to the 2nd Brigade 3 Division 4th C so Col Post can take command of that Brigade. When they left both the Col & Lt Col tried to get me relieved and the officers of the 80th tried to keep me so did Genrl Grose commanding our Brigade The Col's of the 59th applied to Genrl Stanley comndg 4th AC to have me and all the men of the 59th send back to our Regt. Genrl Grode heard of it and wished to keep me, therefore he went to Genr Stanley and had the order made out relieving all the 59th in this Brigade except me who (Genrl Stanley said) should remain in command of 80th until their Field Officers were exchanged and returned to the Regt. The Lt Col and Maj is all they have and are exchanged and at home, but I understand are both sick and perhaps some time before they arrive here. Your discouraging news is all a hoax the day's that you mention there was no fighting that I know of more than usual. But one thing certain Beauregard is not here. And Hood is still in command and we have whippd him severly every fight since he has taken command. His lofs is treble our's since he took command. we know this as we have buried nearlt treble their dead that we have of our own. Rebel reinforcements are very scarce. Kilpatrick our Cavalry Genrl has made once round Atlanta he says we only lack about four mile having Genrl Hood surrounded. Our lines are supposed to be twelve miles long We are all very confident of capturing him if he stays long enough and he cant now get out without giving us a fight in open field or where we will have the advantage, and then we will give him a good threshing. We could take care of him and 20,000 reinforcements should he receive them. You speak of State fair and sanitary fair at Decatur I would like to attend both, but I think I shall defer it. You speak of soldiers living well from proceeds of sanitary

Fair. they do in hospitals but the boy's in ditches never get our rotten teeth filled. Our position here is same as when I last wrote excepting our position on the right has been extended to the right some distance we have been very quiet in our 4th AC but we have good prospects of a move now which I suppose will come of tonight. George Goodner I have not seen. I must close love to family and friends as ever

Your Brother Roe

XVI.

Dear Brother & Family
Headquarters 80th Ill Vol Camp near Atlanta Ga Sept
18th 1864

I received your letter of Sept 5 on yesterday evening. It finds me camped quietly with the remainder of Gen'l Shermans grand army around the captured city of Atlanta. My last was written on the 25th and on that night Gen'l Shermans army marched from their ditches swinging around the west side of Atlanta, all excepting the 20th AC which fell back to the river, there to guard our cracker line. We marched till two o'clock that night, then bivouaced for the night. Next morning the 26th, the rebels found the Yankees gone and immediately reported to Rebeldom that the Yankees had been compelled to raise the siege of Atlanta and fall back for grub and to protect our communication which Gen'l Forrest was then making grand havoc with. And also, we had detached one corps to threaten their communication which Gen'l Hood had sent two corps to gobble it in. Upon the strength of all this good news, all the rebel ladies south came upon their trains with their baskets of sanitary to give food and army a picnic. Now I shall return to the Yankee army and show you what they were doing.

Marched 10 miles, skirmished a little in our rear during the day. On the 27th marched five miles, had plenty of green corn and sheep meat to eat. My regt was on picket duty that night but found very little opposition to our advance. On the 28th made the Montgomery railroad five miles below Rough & Ready and ten below Atlanta. This we destroyed by tearing it up and making two piles of ties

far enough apart to lay the ends of railing on their make a big fire under the center of the railing of Rails and pile some ties on the top. Then when the railing got red hot, they would bend almost double, in that way rendering them entirely uselefs and burning the most of the ties.

On the 29th still destroying RR all day

On the 30th made amrch of five miles in direction Macon RR Met no opposition. On the 31st skirmished with enemy, some lofs. None in 80th. Marched 6 miles, struck the Macon RR and bivouaced for the night. On 1st Sept we begun to destroy RR in the same manner as we did the Montgomery. Destroyed 10 miles. In the evening came on one corps of Rebels. Our 14th AC commanded by Genr'l Jeff C. Davis charged them, capturing ten pieces artillery & 1700 prisoners. The Brogade the 80th belongs to was in the charge but too far to the left to reap any benefits or suffer any lofs. That night rebels skedadled and we marched into Jonesboro. On the 2d at 10 Genr'l Slocum with 20th AC marched into Atlanta finding they had destroyed 8 locomotives, 80 carloads of ammunition and shell. We followed them to Lovejoys made a charge but found a heavy force there. I lost two killed and four wounded in the charge. Laid ther after building works until the 5th when we withdrew after dark and marched back to Atlanta, which place we arrived on the 8th. Have been here ever since. I find I have become very lengthy and now must turn to your letters and asnwer all inquiries. As for the land investment I suppose you buy for the best, we expect to be paid soon, then perhaps I may have a few hundred surplus again and will send to you by way of Belleville. I see St Clair is crowding you with visits. I have heard nothing of Angie & Ma moving to Alton. What is J .B G. going to do since he has been mustered out? Tell me, how is your fair also all about the investment. Love to you and family and all enquiring friends, I remain as ever your most affectionate Bro. Roe
P.S. Direct 59 Ill VV Inftry "" Brig 3 Div 4th AC Dept Cumberland. Our Regt has been changed into that Brig as Col Post has command of Brig. The Lt. Col and Maj of 80th have been exchanged and I expect them back every day. Then I will return to 59th. All OK. fat and saucy. Roe

XVII.

Dear Bro and Family

Headquarters 59th Ill VV Inf. Camp near Huntsville Ala
March 13th 1865

I received your letter of Feb 19th a few dyas since. We are quietly camped around Huntsville yet but expect to move this week. The 4th corps ids going to Knoxville, Tenn, I think to watch Lee if he should leave Richmond and strike for east Tennessee. We are having fine weather excepting the rain occasionally. Rivers are very high here, carrying away all our temporary bridges and therefore have our RR communications cut off for some time. But it is in running order now. We will go thru to Knoxville on the cars, all excepting our wagons which will be guarded through by some brigade. I understand that will be a brigade from the 1st Division.

Your 149 Ills is now in our Department and we expect to see it soon. I say hurrah for your assisting in filling tyour quotas but not in favor of the big bounties. I say draft first every time. You tax by making bounties. us soldiers that have been in the field ever since the war begun to save some men that have never done anything. Also our mothers and fathers that have all their sons in service have to help pay the tax. And when we come out who have stood the hard knocks, we received nothing. And now to pay us, we have to be taxed to pay men for one year that come in on the eleventh hour. *Grofs injustice.*

Jack and I have good health. Do with my money just as you please. I will be satisfied. I remember the baby but I had forgotten its name if it had any when I was home. Jack is very well satisfied with his new position.

I can recommend the country around Otterville, Sedalia, Tinton, Syracuse Mo. as being splendid and about such climate as St Clair Co. Ills. It is only about 25 miles from Booneville, Mo. Also Springfield and between Springfield and Otterville Mo. The mail is being made up so I will close. Love to all the children and yourself and Caroline. Jack sends his love to all.

J. Roe Stookey
Major 59th Ill VV Inftry

it the ranking Capt is Capt Hale 2nd is Paine 3rd Stookey 4th Snyder there are the candidates and if it is left to a vote of the officers of the Regt I think the 3rd stands as good a chance as any but if it goes by promotion the 1st will get it according to rank. but as this is all mere speculation & we may all gwt killed off in next fight and never have any promotion but we shall all hope for the best. I suppose you are all attending church to night while I am engaged in writing. Our Chaplain has left us he resigned & we have no church now sometimes I go to hear others in other regiments As I have nothing much to write I will close give my love to all the Family I hope Caroline is well by this time. Sergt Charles Wagner has returned from home he has been recruiting since August but only got three recruits. Serg Joe Beaver has been detached witha pioneer core and is now Commissary Sergt My Sts are both enjoying good health as well as my self and all my company so good night J M Stookey

VIII.

Dear Brother & Family Camp Near Murfreesboro Tenn
Jan 24th 1863

I am once more seated for the purpose of penning you a few lines in answer to yours written Jan 2nd 1863 which I received a few days ago. Well I have been in one more hard fight & come out safe. We laid in camp near Nashville until the 26th day of Dec 1863 when the whole army began the advance toward Murfreesboro. The right wing which we are in commanded by Maj Genrl McCook moved out on the Nolinsville pike Genrl Davis Division in advance Col Post Brigade in advance of the division & the 29th in advance of the Brigade our Regt was soon throwed out as skirmishes on both sides of the road and discovered the enemy after we had gone about 5 miles from camp & drove them with our skirmishes until drove them into Nolinsville where they were heavily reinforced & secreted themselves in the houses & Col Post then brought up the 5th Wisconsin Battery commanded by Capt Pinney & he opened on them with shell & cannister

which was soon answered by a rebel battery then Col Post formed his Brigade in line with the 59th on the left & Col Carlin threwed his Brigade into line on our right & we then moved and soon drove them from the town capturing one gun & several prisoners our loss was some six or eight killed & wounded their loss I know not how much it was. That morn we sent all our wagons tents & camp equipage to Nashville & had nothing with us except what we carried and that was a shelter tent each two & haversack with three days rations, and as the day was rainy day & night we had rather a hard time. Next morn the 27th the 59th was detailed as rear guard for the Division train rained all day some skirmishing in advance division arrived at Triune distance about 5 miles from camp & 20 miles from Nashville. Next morn 28th was a beautiful sabbath day & we laid still in bivouac all day drew three days more rations.

On 29th started on the march again our Bri gade in advance excepting some Cavalry we took the dirt road leading from Triune across to the Murfreesboro pike which we reached by night distance 10 miles. Cavalry in our advance had very hard fighting our lines were all formed that evening in connection with the Army which we that evening formed a junction with. Next day 30th we commencing advancing in line of battle our Brigade was formed on the extreme right of the army the 74th & 75th Illinois in advance & 22ond & 59th as reserve. Our Regt was detailed to guard our Battery 9th Wis, & we therefore followed its movements all day.

The fighting become tolerable general all along the lines bu 2 O Clock PM excepting in our front & we was not engaged untill late in eve & then our Battery opened on them but with veru little effect as we were in a very thick cedar forest & could see nothing. Our Regt was lying down on the right of the Battery, about this time a rebel Battery opened on to us giving us rather a cross fire but Genrl Johnson moved up his Division & formed on our right & opened his Batteries on the rebels and soon silenced their Battery, but by this time came on to us and we laid on our arms in line of Battle all night. next morn the 31st as soon as it was light enough they

begun firing on our skirmishers & made a heavy attack on our right driving Genl Johnson before them before he had his Batteries in readiness. then that caused us to throw our whole line into position on the advance so then we had no reserve & we had hardly got our lines formed in an open field before we could plainly see the rebels moving up on us. We then formed on the left of the Battery & 22 2nd on the right of the Battery & opened on to them and as soon as they come within range we opened on to them but their lines were too strong for us & our fire only checked them momentarily & they still kept advancing & we received the order to fall back the battery lost all the horses from one gun & all but two from another the gun that had no horses was left on the field & our Regt helped to pull the others off of the field we was driven back about two miles forming several times and firing into the enemy untill we were relieved by other regiments & we left the field for that day untill late in the eve we was again formed into lines and laid on our arms all night. That day's fight was terrible all along the lines all day was one continuous roar of canon & musketry the hardest days fight of the war I suppose. Next day the 1st we laid along on the lines canon could be heard at intervals all day. On 2ond about two hours before dark they made a heavy attack on our center & left & drove the first lines but when the boys that were in reserve saw them coming they raised with a yell & hurled them like chaff in the wind but darkness stoped our pursuing them much that day. next 3rd we laid on our arms with some skirmishing. On 4th learned of the evacuation and moved back into camp where we laid several days & then moved into this camp where we have remained ever since. The casualties of our Regt was about 80 killed wounded & prisoners seven killed in all. My Company lost none killed two prisoners & some six only slightly wounded. I had been acting as Maj ever since the 25th untill a few days ago. My horse was twicw shot & I was compelled to let him go he has since died None of the boys were touched that you knew I must close this for the mail soon starts give my love to all & write soon

Capt James M Stookey
E Co 59th Ills Inftry

that Office. Which I suppose are rather laborious. But I think I would soon make the Copper heads think they had a Picayune Butler No 2 to deal with. I will assure you that I would not have very much Sympathy for them. I have fought Rebels too long to be very Sympathetic.

My Orderly D F Korhammer has received a comission as Second Lt of Co 2 of the 59th which I was very glad to see him get as he has been a faithful & good soldier since he has been in the service. He is rather a good scholar & a beautiful pensman & has always done all of my company writing. You will let Jo Benson Goodner know of this next time you write as he and D F Korhammer was particular friends Charles Wagner is now Orderly Sergeant of the Company & makes a very good Orderly. I supposed you was in Decatur by this time but I see by your letter that you have not moved yet. Do you think you will like to live in Decatur as well as in Bloomington? Or are you changing because it is more convenient to your farm and you can do better financially? I think the the latter is the case. I saw a D M a few days ago from Decatur who belongs to the 21st Illinois he had been home on a leave and saw Uncle Sam in Decatur & he told him to be sure and call on me and tell me that he had swa Uncle Sam his name was Jones. He stated that ever thing was advancing in prices and that money was plenty. And that all the houses were filled with Families & he said were he had known most ever one he was now most an entire Stranger. I see you give some prices that seem to be very exhorbitant. I am very sorry to hear of the ill health of the Eyman Family, & of Jin Eyman's misfortune You seem to think that Genrl Bragg will try Rosey again if he does try him at this place, he will be the worst whipped man he ever was & his Army will be of the same fix we want no better fun than to whip Bragg here with Rosey as commander. The capture of Charleston is among the thing that is to be & I see that our Ironclads have concluded that they cannot take it with what Fleet they have. Vicksburg seems to be too hard for Genrl Grant & I fear will neve be taken. You have given me a list of prices I will furnish you a list of prices here Potatoes 5 Dollar per bushel Eggs 50 ctc per Dozen

Butter 75 cts per lb can peaches in quart cans \$1.50 cts per can other can fruit the same applies small four for a quarter Whiskey done up in bottles \$1.50cts per pint Lager Beer 10 cts per glass & scarce at that every thing else in proportion I have a pr boots I gave 12 Dollars for pr pants 15 Dollars for coat 33 Dollars for Shoulder Straps not extravagant 8 Dollars that's the way the money goes pop goes the Weasel I must close good night

Roe Stookey

X.

Dear Brother & Family

Headquarters 59th Ills
Camp Near Winchester Tenn
July 14th/ 63

I received your welcome letter a few days ago and am now seated for the purpose of answering it. I had supposed that I had answered it & am very certain yet that I did and the letter was lost some place. I will now give you a short account of our trip here as you will see from the heading of this that we have changed our home. We left Murfreesboro on the morning of the 24th of June & marched out on Shelbyville pike. Johnson's Division in advance of us and Sheridans in front of them that constitutes the whole of McCook's Corpse on Shelbyville pike. But when we got six miles out, Johnson's Division & Davis Division took a road to the left leaving the road to Sheridan. We did not find any Enemy untill we came into Liberty Gap & there Johnson's Division had some very hard skirmishing, but drove the rebels without Davis' assistance. On 25th we did not moove forward very fast but Johnson held the advance untill late in the evening when the rebels made an attack on him & Our Division went up to their assistance. Our Brigade was deployed in line in a open wheat field but was not engaged although some rebel shell and solid shot went whizzing over close enough to warn us that we were in Danger, but Luckily enough for us none of our Brigade was hurt. That night we advanced in line about half mile and occupied a hill which Carlin's Brigade had driven the rebels from. first day's march 13 miles second 3 miles On the 26th we had orders not to advance but

hold our position. That day there was a cracking of Musketry kept up by our skirmishers on both sides. They would talk & laugh and yell all kinds of Way's at each other that day but nothing transpired of importance some few skirmishers wounded none in our Regt.

On 27th we commenced rather a retrograde moove by going back to the Manchester pike and comeing into the rear of the main part of the Army. But we did not begin this untill we found that the rebels had all disappeared in our front during the night. We arrived at Beachs Grove about sun down & went into camp Dis marched 15 miles On 28th we started off again early and arrived at Manchester at 12 O clock at night Distance 12 miles. I must stop now and say that we had rain ever day since we left Murfreesboro & the ground was as soft as it is in the spring after the frost first leaves the fields, & as we had considerable train we had very hard times getting them through, & perhaps you imagine we felt any ways nice after being thoughorly drenched ever day & very short rations & the broad canopy of the heavens for our roof at night & hard marches with heavy loads occasionally out a wagon that was mired in mud, but as I happen to be assisting our Lt Col in command of the Regt I have a fine sorrell horse which carries me over the mud very lightly But the rprivates they have the hard times but I heard no complaints.

29th & 30th we remained in bivouac near Manchester. On 1st of July we started for the rebel string hold Tullahoma not knowing that it had been evacuated untill we got nearly there. We came in on the road that was commanded by one of their strongest forts & slashed timber for mile in front & each side all around the town almost. They had the town Fortified on all sides & some very strong forts but for some cause they evacuated without giving us fight which I can assure you pleased us very much. I suppose the reason they evacuated the place was fearing we would surround them & capture the whole Army by regular approaches the same as Grant had Vicksburg. Dis from Manchester to Tullahoma 12 miles. On 2ond we marched on in pursuit of rebels our Brigade was in rear of the train Sheridans Division was in advance

& had some considerable skirmishing at Elk River, where the rebels burned the RR bridge. We have the cars running now to Elk River & the bridge will be completed by Sunday & the cars come to here. We bivouaced on night of 20nd at Elk River Dis 10 miles next morning we marched in here and have been here ever since. Dis 4 miles. During all this time we have had rain ever day. On account of rain our trains did not do as expected & we were very short of rations & have not got any too plenty yet. At Tullahoma we captured all the rebels tents 4 siege-guns & some corn meal & what else I am not able to say. On account Bad weather we run over & burned rails so much that we destroyed all the crops & stole all chickens & robbed all smoke houses & I suppose the citizens now are nearly starving. We are now situated in a valley in sight of Cumberland Mts in a nice little village of 3000 inhabitants before the war now about 1000. I hope this letter will meet with better success than my last I wrote. So for the present I will close give my love to all the family
yours respectfully J Roe Stookey

XI.

Dear Brother & Family

Headquarters 59th Ills Vols
Camp Blue Springs Tenn
April 20th 1864

It is just one month ago to day since I received notification that the Regt would be at St. Louis and that I left on morning train for St Louis without even haveing time to bid any of my Friends "Good Bye" except our own Family that was at home. When I arrived at St. Louis I found tha Regt had got there that night about midnight and were all waiting then to get aboard the steamer Jennie Deans that was going to take us to Nashville I went aboard found the Officers all that were not on duty enjoying the comforts of a huge hot stove in the cabin. I gave all a hearty shake of the hand introduced them to Jack, and we soon enlarged the circle by two. Col Post soon came up to me and introduced me to his Sister Miss Bunce & Miss Disbrow ladies he had with him taking as far as he could comfortably. I had several gay times with