

## Robert James Campbell Gailbreath Letters

Notes about People in the Letters

Joseph D. Gailbreath is a brother of Robert James Campbell Gailbreath.

R.H.T. Stratton - Robert H. Thomas Stratton married Elizabeth Gailbreath, sister to Robert.

Background Information given by Mrs. Haile, a relative of R J C Gailbreath

R.J. C. Gailbreath was a member of the Tennessee Legislature from Jackson County in 1855-1856. He enlisted in the Confederate Army at the beginning Of the Civil War, in 1861 for one year, and went out with the first Company from Jackson County, of which William Gore, a soldier of the Mexican War, was Captain.

He came home in 1862, re-enlisted and organized a Company of the 4th Tennessee Cavalry Regiment, of which he was Captain, and returned to active services. Robert James Campbell Gail breath was killed in the battle near Murfreesboro at the age of 33 years. His end came in the last fight, on the last day of the battle, last day of the year (December 31, 1862). He was shot in the right arm. When he was found wounded upon the battlefield, by the men of his Company, they offered to aid him, but his reply to them was, " leave me alone boys— take care of yourselves, or the Yankees will get you. Fill my canteen with water. " This they did and left him leaning against a tree.

He was later carried to a nearby farm house, where he died from loss of blood and gangrene. Hearing that he was wounded, his wife Maria, with a neighbor, Mrs. Mary Haile (wife of Joshua Haile), rode on horseback to Murfreesboro, hoping to find her husband. As they were nearing Murfreesboro they were captured by the Yankees, their horses taken from them and kept for one month, due to the town being under quarantine. They visited the homes and hospitals, assisted in anyway [sic] they could to care for the wounded soldiers. Mrs. Mary Haile one night found her son dead, stacked with other dead soldiers in the hallway along side the wall.

When the women were allowed to return home, the owner of the house where they had been staying, took them part of the way, as they succeeded in getting only one of their horses back.

The children of R.J. C. Gailbreath, when they saw their mother and Mrs. Mary Haile coming home late one afternoon, rejoiced and began calling, "Yonder comes Ma and Pa, yonder comes Ma and Pa, " (Only, Pa was a neighbor man with them.)

After Maria (sic) Gail breath returned home she received a letter from a man telling of R.J. C. Gailbreath's death. It said, "I will give your husband a decent burial as I am able, and later this spring if you want to move his body, you may do so," however, this was never done.

They addressed their letters to him as follows:

Capt. R.J. C. Gailbreath

Co. K., 8th Tenn. Reg.

Commanded by Col. A.S. Fulton

[image: photo of Robert James Campbell Gailbreath]

Camp Trousdale Ten. June 27th 1861

As information has been recevd. [sic] that a son of R J C Gailbrath a private in Cap Gores [sic] Company was run over by a waggon [sic] and badly or dangerously hurt, and it is the request of the said Gailbreath to visit his son - Leave of absence is granted to him for seven days

A B Botts

Officer in Comd

[illegible] Sutton

[illegible] 8 Reg't [sic] T.P.A

Approved for an absence of seven days only.

F K Zollicoffer.

Brig Gen

Comd

June 27, 1861

Nashville, Tn.

May 20th 1861

Dear Wife and Children,

This being Sunday, and getting a little leisure I will write you the news. We arrived here Thursday at 12 O'clock and after marching through the principle [sic] streets we went to the Fair Grounds and encamped. There is 8 of us in a mess, myself, Wm. A. Fox, B. B. Fox, Jno. [sic] Fox, Jones, W. Brown, David Cox and the boys are in fine health, have good tent, clothes and plenty to eat. We drill all the time under shelter on a plank floor, 400 feet round. We have not yet got uniforms except [illegible line of text] We had our uniforms nearly all made, but last night some rascal set the house afire and burnt them all up. I do not know when we will leave here. General headquarters is at Springfield in Robertson County 25 miles from here. The Governor says he will keep 3,000 men at

Nashville to defend the town and I think we will stay here, if we do as soon as I ascertain [sic] the fact I will come home and stay until after the Election on the 8th next month. The kindest of feeling exist amongst us. I have not drew any money yet but will in a few days and I will send it to you and the children. I want you to kiss the children for me and tell Thomas to make his speech for me. I have been requested by all the boys in the company to send word to their families that they are well, and doing as well as camp life will admit. We have but little respect for the Sabbath as we have been mustering all day and the shrill note of the fife and drum awaken the stillness of the woods. Our kin are all well - Give my love to our friends and tell all the christian [sic] people to pray for me. I will write more fully in my next. Write to me and address your letter to Nashville. If in the providence of God I should never see you more on earth will try to see you in Heaven. We [illegible line of text] both sides are preparing for war. We have about 50 acres of grounds covered with men and the yells and screams of the daring Tennesseans is terrific. When the inspection [rest is illegible]

Remaining yours until death

R. J.C. Gailbreath

School

Camp Trousdale

Sumner Co, Tennessee

June 12, 1861

Dear Maria and children There was a battle yesterday at Bethel Church Virginia, the southern states had 1200 troops and the Yankees had 3,000. There will be no more fighting at present nor until about the first of July or August. I have learned a good deal. It will not do to depend on friends in war. If those I recognized as friends had stood to their word and honor I would have been receiving \$150.00 a month instead of the pitiful sum of \$12.00. I can get the position or appointment of Quarter Master which pays about \$140.00 a month but it would deprive me the privilege of engaging in the battle, and some folks would say I did so to avoid the fighting issue, which I do not- Send my love to everyone.

Gailbreath

Camp Trousdale July 9th 1861

Dear Wife,

As there is a good many of the upper country people here - I have concluded to write you a few lines, inclosed [sic] you will find ten dollars, which you can use to the best advantage. I wrote to you by Tolbert to come down with Mrs. Fox, they arrived here yesterday. I think though that it will be the best policy not to come now until I see further, my impression is that we will either all come home or leave here soon. Wm. A. will start

home this evening and I will write more fully - I send this by John M. Gipson. Tell the children to be good babies and I will come to see you all again soon. I send Thomas a little gun by Calvin Smalling - tell him to be cautious and not hurt himself with it.

So Good by

Gailbreath

Camp Trousdale

July 11, 1861

Dear Son,

After mature deliberation I have concluded for you to come to me at Camp Trousdale. It is undoubtably the best school to which you could go. One other reason why I so request is that my position now requires my full attention both day and night and I need someone to attend to the minor matters.

There is one regiment left, Col. Hatton's. We think they have gone to Virginia. The orders are for us to live at a minutes [sic] warning. I trust in God that we may go to Missouri to defend innocent women and children who are being slaughtered by the wholesale. In the counties north of the Ozark Mountains the war is very hot. Benny McCulluch of Texian noteriety [sic] has captured 200 northern men.

Stick to the truth, let truth and honesty be your guiding star. Good by son.

R.J.C. Gailbreath

Camp Trusdale [sic]

Sumner county Tenn.

July 13, 1861

To: R. Stickney Gailbreath

Dear Daughter,

In obedience to my former promise I take this oppertunity [sic] to write you a few lines. I can inform you of my good health since I saw you and of the improved health of the whole army at this camp. The measils [sic] was the onley [sic] source of general sickness that prevailed to any considerable extent and it has considerably decreased Mrs [sic] Haile and Fox is still here, Mr [sic] Jas Eaton and P J Rawley has just arrived from Gainsboro they brought the very gratifying intelligence that you was all well. The prospect is now very flattering that a large portion of the Tennessee troops will be dismissed as the Provisional Army of the State has been transferred to the Confederate States of the South, and, The Government of Jeff Davis does not need them all but who

will be retained and who will be discharged I cannot tell, but I am of the opinion any of us is retained it will be Weatton's and our Regiments because we are the best drilled of any of the rest -I have been appointed by Gen. Zollicoffer to a Staff Office in this brigade of six Regiment the position pays me about ninety dollars per month and have but little to to [sic] do. I wrote to your ma by Jno. [sic] M. Gipson and sent her ten dollars in money tell your ma to take good care of you and Mark Fany and Thomas and to do the best she can and if I do not get to come home in a month or more I can send her enough money to do her some good I can send her 80 dollars per month.

Give my love to all your playmates lads and Tell Maria Campbell and Mrs [sic] Stouts little girl tell Tom and Fany to obey their Grand Ma and for Mark to be a good boy and when I come home again he shall come back with me tell Ma to make him some good strong clothes and put stripes on his breeches and brass buttons on his coat so he can come -If we stay hear [sic] I will come home in a few weeks. So as I have some business to attend to I must close.

Your father 'till Death

R.J. C. Gailbreath

P.s. Tell Fanny I will look for her letter soon.

Bristol, Sullivan County, Tennessee

July 27th, 1861

Dear Wife and Children

I again embrace the pleasure of writing to you and as ink is scarce, amongst us, you will pardon me for making this impression with pencil.

I can inform you, that I am in excellent health, as well as the other boys from your neighborhood.

We left Camp Trousdale on Sunday the 21st. Inst. and arrived here on Thursday the 25, making 4 days and nights travel by Railroad, passing through Nashville, Chattanooga, Knoxville, Greenville, Jonesboro, and other places of minor importance.

Crossing the Tennessee and other smaller Rivers, on Bridges, passing the Cumberland Mountains through a gap and tunnels and running under the Frowning brow of the Iron Mountains hundred of Miles amid the most delightful and Majestic like cenery [sic], The Eye of Man ever beheld, inspiring the beholder with a deep Reverence for the Infinite wisdom of him that made us and everything. Could it have been that Peace - lovely Peace, could have but covered our once happy Country - Could it so have been that our thoughts had not occasionally strayed from the cenery [sic] around us and found a resting place, The Hearth at Home, where our wives and Children with their sweet and lovely Faces and the many items of Interest that bound us to them.

Had it not been for a thought of the Blood, Death, and carnage before us, of which I will write on another page, the trip would have been delightful.

No accident of a serious nature occurred until we were leaving Knoxville, when one of our Company, a Son of Joseph Law, by the name of Don F. in attempting to jump on the Train, fell under the Train cutting his leg smooth into [sic], just below the left knee. We carried him into the warehouse where the Seargant [sic] cut it off again just above the knee. I carried his foot and leg in my hand from the Railroad to the Warehouse, with a shoe and sock and a part of the Breeches leg on it - we left him there and his brother to wait on him, but learned this Morning that he has since died.

We are within a half a mile of the Virginia line, connecting with Washington County, in that State, where the State line crosses the Railroad - There is two Flagpoles, one on the Virginia and one on the Tennessee line, and since the decision of Tennessee, the two Flags have been tied together.

While I am writing, Colonel Newman's Regiment, among which is the Granville Company, has arrived here from old Camp Trousdale, and while they March through our Camps, with Marshall Music and a Warlike appearance.

I stopped to shake hands and to help the other boys to Holow, they are mighty glad to see us again.

Yesterday Evening we received orders to move to Lynchburg, Virginia, and as there was a scareity [sic] of Care there was only Seven Companies that got off, and we, with two other Companies was left - after they got up 15 Miles into Virginia, They got a Telegraph dispatch to come back and as they are just getting into Camps again, I must stop again, to tell them Howdy Do - We were as glad to see them as if they had been gone a week.

Last night Five of our Boys caught up with us, Bill among them - They looked like they could stand the Fight first rate

I have just been down to Town (Woodrow, Virginia) and read the Richmond Examiner, and give it to you, The Southerners had 50,000 men Commanded by Beauregard, Davis and Johnston - The Yankees had 65, 000 men Commanded by Scott, McDowell and Patterson. Fight commenced at 8 o'clock - Morning (Sunday) about the hour we left Camp Trousdale and lasted all day. The Southerners lost 500 killed and 1,500 Wounded - Then the Northern Men lost 21,000 killed and lost 1,000 prisoners - Our side took 63 Cannons, 1,000 Stands of Arms, 4 Wagons, Horses and provisions and etc. worth a Million of Dollars - Enough to Furnish the Southern Army 12 Months. From General details of the battle it was the Greatest Battle Fought since the Memorable [sic] Battle of Watterloo [sic] - If Jeff Davis had of had Ten Thousand Men more, who was Fresh and not exhausted, he says he Could have taken Washington a few miles of the Potomac River - Got old Scotts Carriage, and his walking stick and he run 40 miles, got

2 Members of the Yanks Congressmen as prisoners, in fact whipped them shamefully - For full particulars I refer you to the News Paper.

I do not know where we will go from here, It is rumored that we will go to Cumberland Gap, some say to Missouri. Governor Jackson of Missouri was here Yesterday in Company with Senator Atchinson - They both spoke - Jackson says that he can whip out the Yankees in Missouri if he had Guns - He has gone to Richmond to see Davis. The impression is here that he has gone there to get some of the Guns we got from the Yankees.

I cannot say now my Dear Family, when I will see you again, if ever, but should it be the Will of God to cut me off from you, rest assured that you shall never be disgraced by any Conduct on my part in this War, for you and my Country I am willing to do Battle and if fate be against me, let it be so Be [illegible] and for the Best, and but performing the Providences of God that this War is upon us, in other words, it is a Righteous War.

Take good care of your health, our sweet little Children, raise them up as they should go, and although the example, heretofore set by me to them has not been of that Moral Character they should have been, Yet I trust that their superior intelligence will enable them to observe and avoid my errors.

Since writing the above, we have orders to leave immediately for Richmond, and the Boys are bundeling [sic] up to start.

You need not write me until I write again. Give my love to your Mother, and all the Black Folks, and to your Friends.

Should Faith preserve me, I will see you in May next, if not sooner.

May Heaven will it so.

Farewell,

R.J. C. Gailbreath

Warm Springs Bath County, Va.

August 5th 1861

Dear Wife - as we have taken up and camped this evening a little while before night, I thought that I would give you a few lines to inform you of our whereabouts and where our present calculations intended us to be. I wrote to you from Bristol and also from Lynchburg and having given you the news up to the latter place. I will content myself with a brief [missing] of what has passed since we left Lynchburg. We travelled from Lynchburg to Staunton by [missing] Road. Stayed all night at Charlottesville [sic], the place where the Goolsby's and Strattons formerly lived, a very neat little village in Albemarle Co. I have learned that my old friend Hartwell was out 3 miles in the country but did not get to see him. The people all along the line of the R.R. treated us very kind.

At nearly ever [sic] stopping place on the road they have temporary tables fixed and when the locomotives whistle they come running with something for us to eat and when we eat and start frequently cry and pray for us. We arrived at Staunton in Augusta Co. on Friday 2nd August, in the morning where we commenced the soldier life indeed with our knapsacks, haversacks, canteens, cartridge boxes, guns etc etc. We roled [sic] out on foot for for[sic] the scene of battle - and to travel one hundred and ten miles. We have in company 22 four horse waggons [sic] loaded with cooking utensil provisions and tents, etc. We march from 10 to 15 miles per day always taking advantage of a well watered place for a camping Ground. We are now bound for a place called Lewisburg and from there to Greafton though we will only have to walk to a town called Huntersville on the other side of the Alleghany Mountains which is only twenty five miles from this place. This makes the fourth days [sic] travel on foot, the boys all stand it fine, with the exceptions of those who have been sick they have to ride in the waggons [sic] some. At Lynchburg we had to leave Marion Fox and T. C. Settles who were thought to be unable to stand the trip. B.A. Fox also stayed there to wait on his brother. We was overtaken at that place by some of our boys Wm G. Cox, Kirk Gipson, Billy [missing] and B. Thos. Roston/Poston. They was glad to see us, and I had the pleasure to read a letter from you and to hear of you, that you was well. There is a good many natural curiisities [sic] in this part of Gods [sic] world and gives much food for reflection and investigation. Where we stayed last night in this county on a little river where the road runs near a bluff is the Blowing Cave. A cave that blowes [sic] out a strong cold wind. Strong enough to blow out a lighted candle. I have not time nor space to give a full description of them all but will mention this place. This town is the county seat and a celebrated watering place, there is a Warm spring, the water warm as you would make it to wash dishes, There is three bathing houses attached to the fountain. One for men one for women and one for children, the largest will hold about 50 men - When we got here the keeper threw open his doors and gave us all a free bath, and you ought to have seen these rough and dusty Tennesseans pitching in like frogs, I went in but it was so warm I could not stand it long. It is thought here that we will not see any of the Northern forces untill [sic] we reach Lewisburg. Gen. Wise and his forces are at that place awaiting for reinforcements. All the regiments that were encamped at Camp Trousdale except Col. Parmers [sic] are here on the road for the same place, and some other Regiments from Mississippi and Virginia and North Carolina. We will have enough to annihilate any force that will or can be brought against us. I want you to be cheerful and not be uneasy as I think and feel like I would see you all again. You must do the best you can about farming. Tell Sam to sow a good turnip patch and fence it up, tell him to sow some wheat 7-8 or 10 bushell [sic] in the corn somewhere on the upper field and put it in good and at leasure [sic] days haul wood. As soon as I draw some money I will send it to you. Tell Mark I was sorry he did not get to see the encampment before I left and was still sorry to hear of his foot being sore but when I come back we will go to Nashville and go up and see old Camp Trousdale - tell them to be good children, and send them to school. Tell my neighbors and friends that I would write to them, but there is some dozen or more of the boys here that I have to write for when ever I get a pen in

my hand that I am always to [sic] tired that I have to quit and for them not to think it is because I have forgotten them or dislike them. As I have to close it getting dark and I have no candle - write to me often and mail them as I directed you in my Lynchburg letter but you need not direct them to any post office here - Just to me in Capt. Gores [sic] company 8th Regiment Tennessee Volunteer and write to me what my little boy baby says and what he is doing. Give my love to all our friends and tell them to defend the women and children of old Tennessee and if the press is too hard send for us - Give my love to your Mother and all the black ones and Especially Aunt Violet.

Farewell I will write again soon

R.J.C. Gailbreath

Undated Letter

Note: This letter was written on watermarked paper and was not dated.]

As it seems I can not write it all on my large sheet, David kindly tendered me this piece to finish, as he has more than he can spoil with his pencil. And for fear we might differ on the facts, we are writing home [missing] about the war policy. We have got into a difficulty. I have got over on the other side of the fence, yet I believe the fence is the only thing between us. I could write with better patience, but the old devil of a preacher we have along with us, a chaplin [sic], is a blundering way down in camp, trying to preach and sing and make so much fuss that he bothers us very much. This is the first time he has attempted to preach since we left Camp Trousdale, and if he does no better than he did then he had better quit or shoulder a gun one or the other, for the boys are talking about driving him back home. They don't like to see him strolling along with nothing to carry, getting \$90 a month and doing nothing. They think he had better be at home, and let his \$90 be put to their \$11. I hope these lines will be received by you in good health and spirits. We hear so much news here about the excitement in Jackson County I fear you are uneasy and dissatisfied. When I do believe it is all [missing] kept [sic] it up there for effect and nothing else. I hope that these men who keep up a different sermon and lies for a trade, who thereby cause poor women and children to see trouble, I fear - if they don't intend to do anything for the cause of the South will soon discover that they are a cause rather than a blessing to their neighborhood and country in which they live and cease their damaging course. They desire to fall back under any protest for heaven's sake, and the sake of those who are in the service of their country they will not - ought not to lay around home and manufacture falsehood and scare the women and children left you might say in a state of widowhood and without the protection of husband or a father - I hope and trust that there is none such in my neighborhood, but if any there be, may God's severest judgement be visited upon them for this crying inhumanity. I want you to pay no attention to it. Be composed and fear no danger. If you discover any apprehensions [sic] or fear anoying [sic] the children or black ones banish it from them and encourage them not to fear for there is no danger

whatever. Take good care of our children. Teach them to know the right and not to fear to do right - and if fortune should frown on me and I never see you nor them, they will make their way through life respectable under this principal. [sic] On the other hand, if fortune smiles on me, I want to see you all together as you were when I left you - I have no fears of dying unless I get sick, and not much fear of that now provided I get good winter quarters for I have never had better health in my life. I have not been sick a day since I left Camp Trousdale. I have been fattening every day, and have grown too fat for comfort, and it is quite irksom [sic] for me to get about. My clothes is all getting too small and if I keep on at this rate I will weigh 200 pounds by Christmas. There is only one other man in camp who has health equal ling me, that is D. M. Haile. He is as fat as a bear, and as big and black as myself, or Jerry either, and gets along as easy as an old shoe, and takes everything as it comes. Speaking of Jerry, you must think to give my respects to Jerry. I promised to write Jerry and will do so in a day or so, for Jerry is as good as a friend as any to me. Give my love to Uncle Josh and Aunt Mary, James G. Campbell and family, John Stout and family, T. J. Draper and family Jones Flatt and all who you may see. Write to me all the news about [missing] and how you are all getting along about provisions such as salt, coffee, sugar, etc. etc. Tell Sam to fix up the crib good and gather the corn early and take good care of corn, wheat, oats, etc. for it will all bring money after a while. Do not suffer for anything. Make your wants known and have it anyhow, for I know there is a plenty there in the county if they will divide it right. Tell brother T. J. that W. A. is in fine health and sassy as a three year old. Cousin T. G. Settle, who was lost at Lynchburg sick came in last night. He has got nearly well. Give my love to your mother. Tell her to take good care of herself and to pray for me - that I would be glad to see her. Tell all the black ones I remember them, and Violet particularly. Tell her not to die till I come home - tell Sam to stay close about home and be a good servant. Tell Thomas and Governor to be good boys and keep grandma plenty of wood and chips and not to fight each other. As it is near dinnertime and we are going to have [missing] as the Confederate Congress has gave us engaged in the army the franking priviidge [sic] the boys are availing themselves of that prividledge [sic]. Yet you will have to pay the postage there -this is done so that if the letter should fall into the hands of the enemy or be sent wrong or fail to arrive, or taken out, that the soldier don't lose nothing and by endorsing his name on the back of the letter will ensure its passage. write to his wife and I will close.

R.J.C. Gailbreath

Camp near Edray Pocahontas Co.

August 25, 1861

Dear Wife and Children, As this is Sunday and the most lonesome but pleasant day of the week, me and my friend D. M. Haile have stolen out from the fuss and rattle of the camp to a shade in the grove to scribble down on paper the news of the times, etc., that we are in pocession [sic] of or can get in this part of God's rural Virginia. And as the [missing] of writing is scarce, have taken down a little signpost for a lapboard on which to write. A signpost that stands on the side of the road in this county to point the

wayfaring traveler to his place of destination is of more importance than one would think, and therefore when we get done we intend to set it up again.

With this introduction I will proceed to inform you of the good health of our company, with the exception of Rufus Gaines, Mounce Gore and Pleasant Riley - these three boys have been sick ever since we came to Marlin's Bottom on the Greenbrier River, and when we moved out here we left them at private houses and we have news from them every day. They are very sick yet, and some doubt of

their recovery. I saw our surgeon and physician this morning, and he is of the opinion that they are [sic] three will never recover and I have just now heard that they have gotten to the place where Riley is to cut off his leg - the fever located in his right leg and has mortified and I fear the poor fellow will never live to see his wife and children anymore. Yet you need not say anything about it as it will perhaps cause his wife unnecessary trouble as she will hear it soon enough to be sad enough. The balance of the boys are all getting along fine.

I received your letter by Matthew Rogers which gave me great satisfaction to hear of you and the children, and I was [missing] you did not write more. I have [missing] of your letters one [missing] week since I have been in Virginia, but I cannot hear whether you have received them or not. I would be very glad to hear from you and the children often and the only way I can hear from you is for you to write, one every week, and put it in the post office and keep them coming on. I gave you directions in those I have written on how to direct them, but for fear that you have failed to get them and may get this then I will again do so. Direct them to me in Capt. Gore's company Col. Fulton's 8th Regiment Tennessee Volunteers in Virginia, and it will be sent on by the postmaster to whatever point we may be ordered.

John Brown and young Mounce got into camps last night. We was glad to hear from you all and glad to see them. The only information they could give me that you were all well, had made good crops - this though not enough in detail was some gratification. I have now lived perhaps longer than most men my age, as some author, whose name I forget once remarked- that he pray to God he might outlive all his enemies. My long life seems to be the reason I have outlived all my friends, for whichever member of the company receives a letter or two from different persons at home, it was my lot not to receive a letter or read a syllable from anyone. Yet I was always not troubled to decipher their hieroglyphics or their fulminations [sic] I shall most certainly not trouble them with the drippings of my pen nor pencil.

The news here is no doubt like it is in Tennessee, all of a doubtful character. We hear this thing and then that and rumor upon rumor, and I shall cull the most reasonable and give it to you. We are in about 70 miles of the encampment of the enemy and from what little truth I can gather from the friendly neighbors here there is no considerable number of them in this portion of Virginia. There are however, in a portion here there is a great many people still opposed to the war, yet are friendly, and treat us clever, yet we do not

let them pass about much. We keep out picket guards and scouting parties for ten miles around a [missing 3 words] We are on the Huntersville road 44 miles [missing] side of that town and 15 miles from Huntersville. We are 12 miles this side of headquarters at the Big Springs guarding the road so that provisions and munitions wagons may pass safely from the depot at Millboro to headquarters. Everything is scarce in the country. The soldiers have passed through here so much that everything in the line of eatables has been consumed. We got enough to live on but not of the best kind of variety. One of the little rivers between us and our provisions got past fording and we were scared a day or two, but dry weather has come again, and the wagons are coming ahead now. For three days our mess 8 men drew for dinner, supper, and breakfast a pint cup of flour per meal, [illegible] without salt. The article of salt is very scarce. It is worth \$20 per bushel and can't be got in the neighborhood.

Me and Bart Fox and Bill Fox went out and hired yesterday to cut oats at a dollar a day and worked half a day each for bacon, salt, and butter. We had a fine time indeed, we took our time about cradleing [sic] oats while the other two tied up [missing]. Six o'clock we march for the camps then, two miles distance, with this load as our honest earnings, to wit, W. A. Fox, [missing] sack with six pounds bacon and one-half agllon salt, B.A. Fox, one [missing] bucket and one and one half pounds butter, R.J. C. G., one gallon bucket full buttermilk with [missing]. We entered camp remembering the Lord' s curse upon Adam that by the sweat of his brow he should live. This however we do not do so because we loved our country particularly but simply because we have no money, and did not like to steal.

The boys are all in fine spirits, the Yankees are all retreating from before us, and it is thought by next month they will be all gone. I don't think we will have any fighting to do here. We cannot stay here in the winter, this is a cold country and so mountainous we cannot get provisions here throughout the winter. So we will leave here in six weeks for home or somewhere else. Snow here, as I am informed by the inhabitants, falls in September, frequently lays on the ground all the time until the middle of April to the depth of three or four feet. If we do not go back to Tennessee we will go to the Ohio River and then to Kentucky. Soon Col. Fulton says that if we have to go into winter quarters he will send us all home, that our time will be out so early in the spring that it would be useless for us to remain in the service as we could do but little good from the first of April till the middle of May.

I want you to write to me often. I never have heard whether you got out your wheat, how much was made, and etc. I learned that we will draw money the first of September. If we do and I can get an opportunity I will send you all but a little. If you cannot sell any wheat or corn to pay your taxes and get your winter shoes you must let Sam have out all he can to get their shoes. I will draw over a hundred and fifty dollars, but whether to send it or not I don't know - I don't know how it will be. But I intend, if living, to come home for Christmas anyhow to see you and the children. I got by a few words by a Mr. McDaniel of our regiment today from Thomas L. Clements. He is a volunteer in a

Mississippi [sic] regiment. I hope I will get to see him. He left him at Lynchburg. McDaniel said he was an old gray headed man, and talked a heap, and said he was a brother in law of mine, inquired a great deal about me and that he lived in Mississippi, and I think it must be Tad. I am watching for him every day.

Our officers made an attempt as we were coming from Staunton to rather oppress us a little but singly [sic] failed. I mean the superior officers. After they got several double stilled cursings, [sic] a Lt. Col. Moore nearly losing his life in the hands of a private from Jackson County, Flynn's Creek, they dried it up.

R.J. C. Gailbreath

Camp at Marlins Bottom

Oct 1st 1861

To: R.S. Gail breath

Dear Daughter

In obedience [sic] to your request in your very interesting little letter dated the eleventh of Sept I have accepted this favorable opportunity [sic] of answering yours, it would be however of much more pleasure to be with you and tell you what I will write but as such is beyond my power at present I must content myself with that pleasure it affords me to write you since my absence from my sweet little children now about three months it has been a continual source of reflection in regard to your present and future welfare not knowing what would be my ultimate destiny during these perilous times and situated as have been for the last two months, in danger of losing life every day and sometimes every hour subject to the inclemency [sic] of the weather the hardship of a life in camp in a rough and mountainous country, when men are hunted in the woods as we hunt squirrels, at home. all these things combined made me more solitious [sic] than one can imagine especially one of your age but I have confided in the promise of him who has promised to be a friend to the little children and more especially to those who have been denied the care and council and protection of parents yes I have in him and believe that through his kindness we will be permitted to see each other again so far as your worldly comforts are concerned I must recomend [sic] you to be industrious [sic] frugal and obedient to your mother and grandmother while she lives she is now getting into her dotge [sic] a ripe old age has had

a good deal to do with this world and is much your superior in experiance [sic] yet I know that things are unpleasant to her is the hight [sic] of paste [sic] time with a little girl of your age yet you must sacrifice these little amusements that pear [sic] trifling to her she is the only grandparent you have, and is near to you, your mothers [sic] mother, mine are all gone, if it was Gods [sic] will to return one of them to earth I would delight to administer to their wants and pleasure and neccesities [sic], but such is not the case and I mention these things believing it would be a source of pleasure to you to be kind

to your mother grandmother brothers sister and all those with whom you associate believing that kindness is a part of your nature.

It has been a source of much pleasure to hear of your studious habit read much make yourself familiar [sic] with books good books and bestow an equal amount of attention to the interest of your little brothers and sister for much of your own happiness depends on their welfare and although you are their senior in age and education let me advise you to bestow somewhat to the good council of your oldest brother William M. he is near your own age and will necessarily be with and mingle more will [sic] outside affairs of the world than prudence or neccesaty [sic] would allow you to do therefore he may be competent to advise and acquaint you with important and useful information such perhaps you might otherwise remain ignorant of yet at the same time to [sic] much reliance in his better judgement might lead to two errors one that he might arrogate to [sic] much another that he might be oversighted in his judgement of these you must be your own judge of, and at the same time he should not forget to obey your good advise [sic] as well as the more mature council of his mother and those with whom he mixes that are his seniors in age and experiance [sic] as to Fanny and Thomas, they are to [sic] small to [sic] young to appreciate the affairs of the world and must await their time to them be kind and generous be not to [sic] hasty to condemn them for their little accidents and mishaps and for their wrongs - use kindness rather than harsh means to reprove them – give my love to all your playmates to your grandmother mother and all the children to Granny Violet and all the rest of the black ones, I will write to your mother to day or to morrow [sic] We have not moved since I wrote last to your mother this leaves me in good health with a prayer that it will find you all well.

Your Father

R.J. C. Gail breath

Huntersville, Virginia

Oct. 6th. 1861

Dear Maria,

This being Sunday and the most lonesome of a 11 to us, as will be to you I suppose, although Sunday is not much observed here, as we have just now got done washing our clothes, and not having had any soap for a good while, you may reasonably suppose we had quite a heavy washing and my fingers is very sore from rubing [sic].

Since writing to you from Edry, the letter you last wrote to me was in Ames. I have written three others - one I sent by a free Negro man by the name of Hill, the second one I sent you by Holland Denton, the third one I sent to you by William Picket, and since that time I have sent a letter to Stickney by my friend, Wm. G. Cox, who has been discharged from any futher [sic] service in the army on account of his bad health. He promised me when he left to visit you and give you all the news from this quarter. If he should fail to do so, I would be glad you could go and see him, he is a

very nice young man and could tell you more than I could write to you in the limits of a letter.

Nothing of importance has occurred [sic] since Cox left here only we have moved some ten miles - being now about 5 miles east of Huntersville, in the direction of the Camp of General Jackson on Cheat Mountain. This above mentioned, at the pike we expect to encamp a while and if we are needed by Jackson we will go to his assistance, if not, perhaps back to Staunton.

Jackson and the enemy had a battle on Thursday the 3rd. Inst. the particulars of which I have been unable to learn except that our forces were victorious. Jackson having killed about 600 of them with a loss of only about 40 on our side. This is the current report here and is generally believed to be true. There is no news from Wise except to the effect that General Lee has been re-enforced by forces from Lynchburg to 20,000 men and that he was in hot pursuit of General Rosencranse [sic] and that the latter was fleeing in much confusion. All of which I hope is true. Much interest is felt here in regard to the state of affairs in our sister state, Kentucky, and we are awaiting anxiously to hear the news of a general battle between her secession and union fellow citizens. [sic] As the last hope of a peaceable secession of that state is now a matter of impossibility. We are getting along here about as usual. Some times we have something to eat and some time nothing at all. Only what we steal or press into the service of our Country.

The boys call this going to commissary Sharp. Well commissary Sharp is only an imaginary name used when we hook anything to eat. Sometime we get a calf, sometime a sheap, [sic] hog or chickens and if none of them are to be found they call upon geese, which after boiling all day and then baking at night eats tolerable well. We got no coffee nor sugar, we use parched corn for coffee and it drinks very sorry,

The health of our Regiment is very good as also is our company. Yet there is a great many deaths here among the soldiers at Huntersville, Warm Springs and Bath Alum. They die daily in great number. It is raining and I will close till tomorrow.

Oct. 8th - It having rained all day yesterday and we having to move back to Huntersville, I have waited until this morning to conclude my letter. Yesterday we moved back within sight of Huntersville, or the boys did as I was out in the country they left me, but I caught up about dark. It was raining very hard and I was at an old farmers [sic] house, who had plenty of good fruit and his wife a real old Virginia lady prepared a very nice dinner and myself and four others of our Regiment took dinner, the charge being nothing as the old man is a good Southern man and kind to the soldiers. Yet there is a great many Union men here and we never know when we are among them. It is thought that we will stay for some time and will commence fortifying at this place. If we do we will stay here until cold weather, which will not be very long.

Our Regiment got a heavy lot of letters last night from home, bringing quite important and interesting news from Kentucky. If they should get to fighting in Kentucky there is no doubt [sic] but that we will be ordered there for the balance [sic] of our term of service, which would be very agreeable to us all as we had rather be there than here so that we could get plenty to eat if no more. We have had nothing to eat for two days except flour bread and rice soup and I don't know when we will get anything more, still we live fat and have fine health and are very well satisfied believing it to be the best that can be done for us and

"Mounted on hope's celestial wings

We await a better day"

And while waiting for a better day I sometimes find myself appealing thus -

"Tune, Tune, your lyre O muse

And help me to sing the beauties

of North Western Va. "

But the muse refuses to sing and in answer to my appeal, declared that,

"No mortal bard on Earth could sing

But Orpheus. For Orpheus lute was strung

With Poets news. Whose golden touch could

soften steel or stone.

I would be very glad to see you and the children but I cannot tell when I will have the pleasure of doing so. But I hope that it will not be long. I have suffered a great deal of uneasiness about my family for fear that you could not get such things as you might need, and then if such should be the case I should reflect on no one but myself for I have foolishly thrown away enough to furnish them through life.

I have been anxious for you to write me all the particulars [sic] of how you have been getting along. I have feared you would not write all the facts. I know everything in the country is very high and money is very scarce there, and unless you have some help I don't know how to advise you to get along. I don't know of anybody left at home, who will be able to assist you but those who have their hands full of their own relatives [sic] wives to attend to and assist. We have not drawn any money yet and I do not know when we will get any, but I hope we will get some soon, for we are needing it badly. If I should be so fortunate as to get some I will send to you. I don't know how you will manage about getting your winter shoes and your pork, salt and etc. I suppose however that their [sic] will be pork enough to supply the demand if it is high. You can see Collins, or some of those men who allways [sic] have pork to sell and I think they would let you have some. When you write to me again I want you to write your prospects and

who will be likely to have pork to sell and I will write to them. I expect you could buy shoes of Adam S. Hufhins at Highland, he is a clever man and will be disposed to accomodate [sic] you. You can promise them the money as soon as I get home. And I intend to come home between this time and Christmas.

Tell Stickney I will write her more the next time, that I was in a hurry and that my paper was very scarce, and in fact the times is so dull here there is nothing to write about. We just lay around camp from morning till night, talking about home and something to eat and what we intend to do when we fight the Yanks and what we will do when we get back home and etc. Tell Mark that I will write him a good letter the next time I write and he must learn to write so that he can answer it, that he must be a good boy and when not at work to learn his books. I see from some of the letters received that Mrs. Nancy Cox is going to teach school at the Lick. I was very glad to hear it and want the children to go every day they can. Tell Thomas that as he is too little to go to school that he must learn his speech I sent him and then learn it to Governor and him and Governor must make good fires and keep off the buggers. Tell Fannie she must go to school when it is not too cold and [missing] fast. Give my love to your mother, tell her I would be glad to see her again. You say nothing about her health in your letter. I have not seen or heard a word more about Pad since I last wrote to you. Your kinfolks here are all well except Cap Myres, he is at the Bath Alum Springs. The Huddleston boys from Livingston are very clever men and are very friendly. They send their love to you and your mother. My mess sends their love to you all.

Bart, Bill and all the Fox boys are well, D. M. and W. G, Haile and Bill A. is in fine health and are writing home today,

Give my love to all my friends and especially to James Draper, Esq. as I see he remembered me in a letter to R. A. Cox Tell my neighbors and friends, if there be any such left to write to me and remember me to all the black ones. Tell Grany to take good care of herself and if the Yankees get too close to her to let me know and I will come home. Tell Sam to be a good old darky and take good care of everything and as I have not drank anything for a good while he must lay in a good jug full for Christmas and I will try and come out and help him drink to [sic]. Maybe it would interest him to know the price of whisky and tobacco, whisky 100 cents per cent, tobacco 23 cents per chew, and scrape at that and as we have no money these articles are beautiful scarce. Tell Jim Campbell that I have a letter out and dried for him, but have failed to ship it so far, but will try to get it off in a few days. Tell Mrs. Stout that her brothers are both well and harty. [sic]

You must write to me soon and write all the news you can think of and write a heap, all you can think of, kiss all the children

Remaining yours truly,

R.J.C. Gailbreath

Huntersville, Va.

Oct. 20th 1861

Dear Wife,

Having availed myself of every opportunity to keep you informed of the [missing] movements of this portion of the army and of my various whereabouts, the many changes with so much repetition the same thing over and over so much that I feared that it might become irksome and read with little or no interest by you or my neighbors and I have endeavored to study up something that would be enticing to somebody and that in all probability might induce somebody to write to me but situated as I am in this secluded spot where the light of civilization and [3 illegible words] has [2 illegible words] not dawned. It is a moral impossibility [sic] to gather enough material for a common Grocery Speech and there is consequently but two subjects left for me to explicate upon - one is a description of the war and its incidents and another would be a long and fine spun love letter. Indeed it might look like nonsense for people of our age to go to love letter writing so far - and at such distance as we live apart. There being some danger of the letter miscarring [sic] and opened as a dead letter - to avoid this I would have to adopt some strange and fictitious [sic] name. Then you would read it to somebody and they would laugh at us unless you should notice the words at the head of my letter marked Private - and then you would have to pay the postage on my letter and that would be a departure from the established custom of all loving correspondents. But having written several from here for the boys and read several they have received I have a mind to venture one anyhow. If I thought you would answer it and put a heap of love in it like some I see here I would so I will wait to hear wheather [sic] you will promise to give me specimen of your love letter writing - write a great long one and then I can see the [missing] in it as [missing] Loving says everybody has a [missing]. But as I am in a very good humor this evening being in fine health and getting plenty to eat I hope you will pardon me for the jockular [sic] manner in which I write this, I said I was in good humor. Yes we have just been eating dinner and guess what we had for to eat - We had rice boiled beef and bacon and cabbage - pone flour bread baked [missing] baked irish [sic] potatoes stewed chicken and Irish potatoes, cabage [sic] soup, coffee and good water — all these is enough say you to make anybody glad - but you will no doubt feel better satisfied when I tell you that we have just drew provisions for three days rations and tell you what all we got flour, rice, sugar, coffee, vinegar, bacon, beef, soap, candles etc. and then to make the fair [sic] still better it was announced that the pay man was in Huntersville and would pay us some money soon. Such is life in North Western Virginia -it is all ways [sic] a feast or a famine. We will live as fat as bears for a week and then for a month we will have to stole [sic] or starve. Yet we have lived much better since we got back to this place than we did at Edry or at the big Springs. Everything here goes on about as usual no enemy to fight and if there was any to my honest opinion we would be so managed as to be keped [sic] out of it - this is the advantage we have by being under brave officers. So much the better for privates for if

they should have a battle and one half of them get killed it would be Col. this and Col. that had done it all and poor privates who had become a dog (in their opinion) would lay unnoticed upon the ground. So the contest at this camp is between the officers and their own men. The officers on one side are straining every nerve to punish their own men and the men are trying by every imaginable device to Run the Blockade on the officers so the contest is quite a spirited one and the contest much in doubt. Like old Kentuck [sic] I stand Neutral trusting that my neutrality may not result so fatally to me as it did to Kentucky. The late news from Kentucky has created quite an unusual excitement here in camp. Officers and men openly declare that when ever the first blow is struck between Ky and Tennessee they intend to go right or wrong. Speeches are made nightly appealing to our proper authorites [sic] to send us back to Kentucky and the wild enthisiam [sic] manifested by the soldiers is an evidence that they intend to share the Honor and Glory of defending their own wives and children and their native state to whom they are connected with by all the ties that bind a patriotic heart to his Country. There is no war news of much interest. There has been no important engagements in Virginia since I last wrote to you. There was a reported battle on the Potomac near Washington but it needs conformation. A Battle was fought on the cost [sic] of North Carolina a few days ago near Pamlico sound in which our troops was victorious. Generals Wise and Floyd are still in pursuit of Rosencrantzs [sic] in the Kanawha Valley. It is however thought that they will be unable to engage him this winter. Jackson and Rust is still holding their positions at Cheat Mountain. Every thing is at a dead standstill and the times are very dull. Passes are interdicted and we can not get out the guard lines. So we are pened [sic] up here - as dirty and ragged as a parcel of free negroes. We sleep on straw and cover with our blankets but these cold frosty nights we get mighty cold before day- the weather is getting pretty cool. It has snowed twice one on the 3rd and 11th Oct. and a heap of white frosty chestnuts is in full blast and there is a heap of them fine large chestnuts. I received a very interesting letter from Billy Gailbreath dated 2nd Oct. through it I learn that you was all well. This was the only news I have had from you in nearly two months. I have thought several times that I would complain at you for not writing. If you write I do not get them and if you do not write you ought to do so every once and awhile anyhow. There is no body else there that writes to me and the only way I get the news is to go around and borrow the letters that comes to the other hoys which you know is very unplesant [sic] . But I will continue to write when ever I can get paper and ink. If you write I fear you back them wrong - so I [sic] will give you full directions. Back them to me in 8th Reg. Ten. Vols. Company K. Care of Col. Fulton in Va.- and I will be sure to get them. As this is Sunday and quite a lonesome day I would like to be at home with you and the children to enjoy the pleasures of the company of my family one more Sabath [sic] day. I fancy I can see you all stiring [sic] around as usual - but the distance is too far to travel so I will have to content with the company of our boys in camp. I believe I have wrote to you not to send me any clothes - but for fear that you do not get the letter I will tell you again - not to send me any as I have as. many as I want here and beware of persons who comes along representing themselves as agents to gather up clothes and money for

Volunteers. As I understand there is men that are doing so as a speculation and every body should be fully satisfied before they entrust clothing to strangers I dont [sic] know when we will leave here nor where we will go to, it is thought by the best informed that we will go to Ky. Give my love to all my friends. Tell Stickney to write to me again, tell Mark I will write one to him the next letter I write, tell Fanny to learn to write quick and write to me. Tell Tom, Billy says he is mighty smart boy and I was glad to hear it and for him to be a good boy till I come home. Give my love to your Mother - I would be glad to see her today but cannot - tell all the black ones I remember them.

Write to me

Farewell

R. J. C. Gailbreath

Camp near Lewisburg, Greenbriar Co. Va.

November 19, 1861

Dear Frank, I have come to the conclusion that my former friends whose names use to be "Legion" had either died or had forgotten that the union was dissolved [sic] and that the north and south instead of exercising that brotherly love and seeming affection for each other ae they were want to do in days passed [sic] and gone are now two distinct governments and two great beligerent [sic] powers, now composing arms for the mastery. The latter contending for the great principles of individual and state sovereignty. The former for a consolidation of these quota rights. I will take great pleasure in telling you the whole story of war when I get home, in detail. A great deal of the story calculated will make you feel sorrowful and sad yet there is a fine sprinkle of the amusing and a heap of good fun intermingled so upon the whole it is not so bad as it might have been but you know how it is when the boys have always had plenty to eat and wear. There was a while that it took the patience of Job to have stood it without morning but we live very well now and the "hard road to travel" I hope is all past and gone. We are all in high glee with no one to molest or make us afraid. We left Huntersville on Sunday the 10th and set out to refront [sic] ourselves to General Floyd on Cotton Hill, a distance of 150 miles but nothing of interest occured [sic] however. Thursday our two regiments from Donaldsons [sic] brigade arrived at Lewisburg (Col. Savages [sic] regiment is along), the county seat of Greenbriar County. The Greenbriar River not being navigable is situated 30 miles from Jackson River Depot the terminus of the Virginia Central Rail Road, 15 miles from Meadow Bluff the head quarters of General Wise army and 25 miles from the big Sewal 'Mountains. Here we halted a while to wait the arrival of our clothing sent to us from our relatives and friends at home. They will be here tomorrow and then we will resume our journey. We understand that the enemy 20, 000 strong is now pushing on Floyd who has only a force of 4,500 besides 1,500 cavalry and that we are greatly needed. Floyd has retreated back to Raleigh and is now fighting and anxiously awaiting our arrival. If this is the case, in a few days we

will see the Elephant in all her glory and with the trial we had at Cheat Mountain I have no fear but our boys will fully sustain the reputation of our noble state. The boys are keen for the fray and many regrets the delay. All we want is a fair chance.

Gailbreath

Camp near Lewisburg, Greenbriar County, Va.

Dec. 3, 1861

Dear Wife, This contest is now the center of attraction, the whole world is now awaiting the results with intense [sic] interest. What the result will be the God of us all only knows yet we hope and trust that victory is ours. We know and feel that we are right. We know that our God always favors what is right and believe that he will stand by us and nerve our arms for the conflict. We have the superior number unless the enemy is reinforced yet they have the advantage in position, but we have the advantage in courage and skill, so we expect a victory. Our regiment and especially our company are anxious for the fray and seem impatient, awaiting orders to march upon them. This point is as far as we can take our camp and equipment, leaving them here we will only go with our guns and ammunition [sic] and no doubt many a noble heart [sic] now buoyant with hope and love of life will never see their temporary homes (the camp) again but will be left cold and lifeless on that bloody field, but by arrangement [sic] of the great one, no body [sic] knows who is to be the victims at the slaughter house - caused by Northern Malice and Blindness. Yet amid the uncertain changes of war I hope and trust that it may be allotted [sic] to me to live and return to the bosom of my family and friends but should fortune's fickle wheel turn against me I shall here say I submit without a murmur regretting [sic] the unhappy condition of my country, the country in which my lot has been cast and whose destiny I can not control [sic] - Sometime while roving around through the neighboring mountains here I find myself studying [sic] the past history of my country - beginning at the birth of liberty and following her progress step by step from her infant condition, up to her growth as one of the most powerful [sic] nations on the face of the earth, her citizens were protected where ever the stars and stripes were wont to wave, that flag proud emblem of the once greatness and Glory - but now departed, the constitution of which that flag was the speaking breathing representation has been so [illegible rest of sentence] - and when I look over the large farms and field where once was heard the busy hum of industry now laid waste and inhabited by crickets (the people having fled the country) the fencing all gone, burnt up by the soldiers or made crops lays in muddy parts of roads, I cannot help but weep when I bethink myself and come down to the real condition in which we are now placed and then to the cause, and I am irresistable [sic] brought to the conclusion that it has been by improper voting of the real people and the rottenness [sic] of corrupted politicians. They however (the people) have now discovered the error and I hope in time to save the ark of our political liberty, and I do hope we may yet live to see the end of this beginning all though may not live to enjoy it ourself yet the gratitude of generations yet to come will be enough to pacify the ambitions of the most of us.

We have circumstances of an exciting character occurring here daily. The other morning an old man came galloping into camp very much excited with his horse in a lather of sweat inquiring for Colonel Fulton, he went to his tent and reported that the Yankees had killed two cavalry men and stole one negro and took two horses from his neighborhood and wanted men to go and take the scamps - Fulton ordered a posse of men consisting of 25 privates and 1 Capt. (Capt. Bryant) - being anxious to see the Elephant, myself, R. A. Cox and Grundy Denton of our company soon obtained leave to go - with musket, pistol, large knives [sic], haversack and all the cold victuals [sic] we had left from breakfast and 26 pounds of ammunition in cartridge box we let off in pursuit [sic] of the enemy. We went to the old man's house and distant from camp where the mischief was said to be done, but being somewhat at a loss to find the track we went on travelling [sic] 10 miles from there without seeing any trace of the Yankees or any horse being tired. We took upon the William's River in the County of Nicholas, here we cooked the ballance [sic] of our provisions and stayed all night some standing watch while the others slept [sic]. Giving up the chase as a dull one we all went back home in the morning tired and hungry and disappointed [sic] by not seeing a Yankee. While on the way down to Nicholas we got into a lot of cattle on Stoney Mountain some four hundred in number. They thought we had come to give them salt and took after us with about one hundred bells - made a terrific noise running through the bushes jingling the bells, for a time they threatened to be more danger than the Yankees, after following us for about 3 miles and finding we had no salt they quit us, and we went on our way rejoicing at William's River. We all went fishing and caught some mountain trout, a speckled [sic] fish without scales. Tell Mark they was the nicest fish I ever saw, here too for the first time I saw the Raven a bird some larger than a crow and very black and making an awfull [sic] noise - day before yester [sic] Col. Marry's Reg. - was ordered out on a Scouting Tour and after going 13 miles stoped [sic] - sent on Capt. Field and his company - Capt. Field engaged a company of Yankee and killed 3 himself and got one man his guide wounded they returned yesterday and Col. Hattons Reg: went next and while I write, I hear their drums and they are just getting back - last night they meet [sic] 2000 of the enemy but neither party fired owing to strick [sic] orders not to shoot. They got after them however and ran them back - they say the Yankees came up playing the tune of "Dixie's land" and Hattons [sic] men did not like it and striking up the tune of "Wait For The Waggon [sic] and We Will All Take a Ride, " then the Yankees left as on Twenty One feet. It is our time to go in the morning -we will start at 6 1/2 o'clock to stay 48 hours, what we will see or do I am not able to say. If anything occurs of interest I will keep you posted up. Tell Stickney I have thought of writing her for some time but have no [missing] to say anything much to her in this letter - only that I commend her moral and intelectual [sic] culture to her mother, tell her to be industrious and obedient [sic], to love and obey you and her Grandma - to respect those who are her superiors in age more especially their opinions and to remember her Creator in the days of her youth. The like advice I will give in short to the other children. Tell my little baby to be a good boy and that I am not dead but will come to see him after a while.

Wm. and Marus Keath says to tell Mrs. Stout that they are both well and will write soon. Mathew says tell his folks that he got here safe and is well [missing] - to my neighbors give my best love and respect - would love to be remembered by them and spared to come back home and live by and with them. Give my love to our kind old mother, and that I was glad to hear that she was well - her son Thomas L. Clements is here somewhere in Va. but I have not seen him yet, but hope I will. Eliza Upchurch's son James Jones is here and well. Bill A. is as Fat and sassy as a bear and gets along fine. Dave and Tom Haile is well Tom is engaged writing a letter now I don't know who too [sic]. Since waiting all night to close my letter, waiting the return of Col. Hattons [sic] Regiment but it has not returned yet. Col. Fobes [sic] Regiment got orders to march this morning. When the boys in his Reg. got the news you would have thought all the demons that are jailed in pandemonium had been turned loose from their yells and screams. At their leave we stood on the neighboring hill and saluted them with 3 rounds of vociferous applause, and we soon saw them out of sight on the road toward the enemy of our rights - this Regiment (Fobes) is composed of several companys [sic] of Kentuckians and they seem as eager for a fight as we do - We are know [sic] only two Regiments left here - the rest having gone towards HuttonsVille. We are awaiting ever movement for orders to march.

I learn that Hattons [sic] men sent down last night at midnight for provisions several Waggon [sic] loads of beef and flour left before day this morning. I have just now heard that Col. Savage Reg. is coming on from Marlins Bottom on double quick times and will be hear [sic] tonight. From all the circumstances and from what I can glean from the surface of events transpiring around me I think the long expected day of battle is near at hand - this opinion is so general among the boys that the wildest enthusiasm prevails - alltho [sic] the rain pours down allmost [sic] in torrents, yet the boys are scattered about the streets [two missing words] discussing the probable [missing] of each other. You must not be uneasy or suffer yourself to be troubled. I feel as confident that I shall live and return home as I have written this letter - perhaps it would have been more prudent of me to have passed in silence the real conditions of affairs but believing that you would be anxious to hear and had courage sufficient to [rest of line is illegible] the result of the engagement as soon as it is over and learn I intend to come home and rest a while. If I should [missing] be unfortunate and never see you anymore I only can say to you to do the best you can and that while you live I trust that through the kindness and christian [sic] charity of those with whom you may live will sustain you aided by your own effort and believe that the great protector who has promised to befriend the widdow [sic] and orphans [missing] will preserve you I can not close this letter without earnestly requesting you to attend to the one important item of educating your children - by all means keep them at study when you can spare their services - try to keep them safe from danger and they will soon be large enough to support and maintain you should I never return home. With the hope you will all be well upon the receipt of this letter. I will close I must also urge the request that you write to me weekly. I do not get letters from any body [sic] but you and it affords me a greater pleasure to read one you do not

believe how glad I feel to get one. Hoping that you and your kind mother will not forget me in your prayers - and that they may be answered by my preservation I close.

Farewell

R.J. C. Gailbreath

Beaufort Island, S.C.

December 18, 1861

Dear Wife,

This being the first leisure day I have had since we left Dublin Depot, having been on the road every [sic] since. I will attempt to give you a synopsis of our trip together with the latest and most important news. I will however say that I wrote a letter to Mark the day before we left Dublin for Charleston, and sent it by a Mr. Briggs of the Celina Company with the request that he leave it at the home of Joshua Haile in compliance [missing] will have received it by this time. But to our trip. We left Dublin Tuesday 10th Dec, reached Petersburg that night - distance 104 miles. Early next morning we took the express for Wilmington, North Carolina, reaching that point the same night at ten o'clock, distance 240 miles. Here we had to cross the Cape Fear River, which at this point is very wide, being only 30 miles from the Atlantic Ocean. It was indeed a splendid scene, an army crossing a wide river at night, when the moon shedded [sic] its gentle rays over the broad expanse of water - the stillness of night vanished before the tumult of the army. The mingled voices of soldiers together with an occasional command made night hideous. Soon however we was across and again aboard the iron horse. We was off for Charleston with some delay at Florence. We reached Charleston Sunday morning the 15th, distance 732 miles. We traveled clear across the state of tar and turpentine, the land poor, but covered with fine cotton farms and negroes. And from the quantity of tar and turpentine at the various depots along the road, the people are industrious - exhibited much kindness to us, giving us as many sweet potatoes and eatables as we could eat, and sometimes they would give the boys caps, and even money.

There is too some fine towns and cities in old North Carolina. Wilmington, for instance, is a fine seaport town, but owing to the blockade her ships are lying idle in her harbour. [sic] But the landing is finely fortified, with the largest cannon I have yet seen - But to South Carolina and Charleston. The hotbed of revolution and the mother of secession. This is a fine state, and the quantity of cotton, the fine cotton farms, the immense crowd of Negroes that would flock to the roadside to see us pass. I will not attempt a description, and the generosity of her people is too great to mention. Suffice it to say, if you want to see a soldier loved, worshiped, or adored, go to South Carolina.

Here they do not allow a soldier to buy a thing if they know what he wants.

At Charleston soon Sunday morning I get out in company with two or three of our boys to see the Elephants about town - the first thing was to see the burnt part of the city. You will see an account in the papers. This was a distressing scene - about ten acres square in the very heart of the city in ashes, and the distressed people hovering around their former homes made desolate by the destructive element of fire, smoke still issuing from the ruined pile - the tumbling in of burnt walls. The mighty throng made by visitors might naturally revert back to the destruction of Sodom, but ample provisions are now made for the unfortunate.

Next we went to take a view of the Atlantic Ocean, that mighty world of water, over at the wharf. The mighty sheet was spread to the limited gaze of our natural vision and as far the eye could reach, nothing but water [missing] small neck of land with here and there a white sail interrupted our view.

Incidentally, in front of us stood a huge building about two miles from land on a small bar, with the Confederate flag flying. I inquired of an old foggy [sic] standing by what that was. Castle

Pincky [sic] said he, where they keep Yankee prisoners. Further on about three and a half miles independently stood the mighty Sumter, at whose massive walls was fired the first gun of Southern independence, from whose Gallax now boldly floats the "Stars and Bars" together with the "Blue Palmetto". Away off to the right is Fort Dodson and the iron battery, to the left is an old fort, Moultrie, twin sister to Sumter, and who assisted each other in her reduction. The morning being rather smokey, we could not see the blockading squadron, but learned they played out some seven or ten miles. We returned to the Depot, the "Wayside Soldiers Relief Society" prepared us some breakfast, as did they also dinner, they having accommodations [sic] sufficient to feed 900 at a time. This is a good institution [sic], and is [missing] of the confrontation of Charleston.

After dinner we moved out one and a half miles from the city, crossing the Ash River through a bridge one mile long. Here we rested Monday. We visited the city and walked down. Tuesday we received orders for this place on the Charleston and Savannah Railroads, and I believe the name of this town is Coosawhatchie, 65 miles from Charleston, and 40 miles from Savannah, 12 miles from Port Royal, and about the same distance from a squad of Yankees said to be 30,000 in no. Arrived here last night and found a good many soldiers here. learned our force is about 20,000 and will be increased about 5,000 more in a few days. Col. Savage's regiment will be up today. Gene Lewis, our commander, same who was with us at Valley Mountain, on our Huntersville route. I learn that he is determined to attack the enemy in a few days, and as we are called veterans, having been in the service seven months, he intends to give us the honor of bringing on the fight, by letting us at them first. Then we can see who has the most sand in their craw.

The climate here is quite different from northwest Virginia and we have but little use for clothes or fire, the wood is however very scarce, and water very bad, and I fear we will not know as good health here as we had in Virginia. I am as fat as used. I weigh 173 lbs., clothes all very tight, but when they split, I sew them up and go ahead. Maj. Botts is going home tomorrow and I would come myself, but for a reason I will explain hereafter. The boys are all well and in fine spirits. Bill A. is in fine health, and getting on well.

We drew today \$33 each. This is all I can get as the state of Tennessee owes me for my service prior to being mustered in the service of the Confederate States, but we will get the balance the 31st of this month as we was not [illegible] of the Confederate [illegible] till 31st July. As Maj. Botts is going home I send you \$ [missing] with which to do the best you can. As to your home matter, I scarcely know what to tell you to do, only to go ahead and do the best you can. I will be at home in a week or so. Your husband till death.

R. J.C. Gailbreath

Give my love to your mother, and all the friends, and tell the black ones there [sic] love for me. Direct your letters as before to Beaufort, South Carolina. R.J. C.

Port Royal Ferry S.C.

Feb 3, 1862

Dear Wife,

We are now encamped upon the battle field of first encounter - our advance guard is 1½ miles further on the road. We stand at the Ferry and the Yankees are on the other side. We are about 500 yards apart. We talk to them occassionally [sic] and they shoot at us but have not hit any of us yet - they shoot to [sic] high - our company stands at this post and we releave [sic] each other every 24 hours a squad of 8 men and one Lt. at a time. We do not sleep any during the night and the Lieutenant stands every third night. I have just come off duty this morning and feel very dull. I do not know how long we will stay here but I hope we will go to Kentucky to avenge the blood of our slaughtered countrymen. The defeat of Zollercoffee I fear will lead to the invasion of Overton and Jackson county, and that everything we have will be lost. I learned that Gen. Beanegard [sic] has been ordered there with 30 Regiment Infantry. There is but little prospect for fighting here we are scattered all along the coast guarding the different landings so that these citizens can have out their corn and cotton and catch runaway Negroes.

Gilbreath

Stony Creek S.C.

Feb. 20, 1862

Dear Wife,

The disastrous news from Fort Donaldson and Nashville has been received in camp. I was within 10 minutes of starting home today. If I live I will be at home in 15 days. I have to stand picket duty for 10 days as soon as I get back to camp. If you are pressed by the enemy my opinion is that cannon or DeKa1b co. is the safest place in Tn.

Gailbreath

Chattanooga, Tenn.

March 12, 1862

Dear Wife,

I just got here this morning. We had a misserable [sic] bad trip of it, it rained and there was mud and high waters. We will start for Savanah in the morning. The time is quite exciting here, we have had one of the most bloody battles ever was fought in the world, at Corrinth [sic] Mississippi the fight commenced on Sunday and continued untill [sic] Monday night. We gained a decided victory. We took 8,000 prisoners 80 cannon, 10,000 stands of small arms and killed an enormous amount while the loss on our side was very great and both sides are reinforcing very strong. It is thought that another battle will shortly insue [sic] more terrific that [sic] the one just closed. Give my love to all.

R. J.C. Gailbreath

Corinth, Mississippi

April 24th. 1862

Dear wife and children

I wrote to you from Chattanooga, by Wm Strodes, I hope you received it. It was but a small bit, but it was the best I could do then.

I met our Brigade at Atlanta, Georgia, Ordered to Star point. We arrived here yesterday all sound and well, had a long and tedious trip with a very serious railroad accident on the cars at Newburn, Ga. Our train ran off the tract, bursting up 11 cars, killed I man in a Ft. Huggins car and wounding 26 others, killed 6 horses. I was not hurt. Huddleston Bryant, Bishop Walker, T. G. Settle, of our company was hurt slightly, but are well and with us.

We have a fine prospect for another greater battle. A synopsis of what I wrote you from Chattanooga. Our victory was not as complete as it should have been on the 6 and 7th.

of this Inst. and the forces of both sides are here to decide the great question, whether we are slaves, or freemen.

Among our acquaintances who were killed, was J. R. Tolbert, Rodney Burke, (son of Wm. C. Burke) Andrew Sloan, Shepherd Kirby, and little Billy Quarles, was wounded, but not serious.

I do not know whether I shall live to see you and my children any more, I hope I shall, I am in fine health and spirits and if I am not killed I will come home by 1st. June. Our company, most of them will rejoin by transfer, as I think it impossible for them to reorganise. [sic]

I have a heap to talk to you about that I did not think of when I was with you and regret my neglect on that point, but you will excuse me when you know that poor weak human nature allows us with the formal hopes that life will never end. I was much troubled when at home about the conditions of the country but in better spirits now and can receive the question more calm, and cooly [sic]. If we whip them Tennessee is ours, if not, no one can tell the results.

It may be my fortune to fall, but if I do - I intend now that you nor my children shall not be disgraced by this action.

Uncle Jack, John Stout, the McClain boys and all our friends in Murray's and Stanton's Reg. are well. Give our children good advise [sic], teach them the right and the courage to do right, take good care of yourself, give my love to your mother and cousin Polly, Dr. Fink, and all you know to be my friends. I hope your mother has regained her health I want to see her again. Give my love to Sam, Verbt and Mary and all the rest of the black ones. Kiss Thomas, Fanny, Mark and Stickney.

Be of good cheer and all will work well I hope.

Pray for me.

Your husband till death,

(Gailbreath)

Corinth, Miss.

April 27th 1862

Dear Wife

I again have an oppertunity [sic] of writing you a few lines per my friend Leut. [sic] J H L Brown - who will Staer [sic] for home tomorrow. I wrote to you a few days' since per Young Phar is. I am in good hopes you will recev [sic] it. I have nothing new to write we are all in good health, and living principle upon excitement which is consequent upon the close

proximity of two very large armies. We are only 10 miles apart with about 10,000 men on picket every day, and skirmishing going on all the time today Sunday as it is the bloody work has been going on all day, we got the best of this days [sic] work as we took 50 priseners [sic] Killed 20 and captured 18 horses and two pices [sic] of Cannon, we do not know what a day may bring forth - and when we lay down at night we don't know whether we will rest until morning or not. We live under marching Orders - Keep 5 days' rations cook on hand. It is reported here today we have retaken Tuscumbia, Decatur and Huntsville [sic], but I do not know whether true or not. the report of the Yankees having taken New Orleans is untrue. You will perhaps have learned that Congress, has passed, what is termed the conscrip [sic] act retains 12 months volunteers in the service for two years longer over the age of 18 and under 35, allowing us the 50\$ bounty 60 days furlough and 40 days after our terms expire in which to reorganize. I have not room to explain all the provisions of the act, nor am I ready to pass full Judgement upon it - it is true it reaches all those who have not inlisted [sic] and holds them for three years. Yet I think the law does those who have served 12 mo. greate [sic] injustice -But I would hate to say or do anything that would in the least prejudice the interest of our Country at this criticle [sic] juncture - perhaps it is for the best, as there will be between 50 and 60 thousands troops whose terms will expire in the next month and if they should all leave at once the minions of A Lincoln would sweep our remaining army as chaff - as the provisions of the bill does not reach me, if living I intend to come home when my term is up - I do not know what course I will then persue [sic] I would be mighty glad to hear from you all it seems like I had been from you longer than before. You must not fail if you hear of any oppertunity [sic] to write to me. Col Murrays' and Stantons [sic] men with whom we are acquainted are all well Col Stanton arrived here yesterday.

In my letter pr Pharris I forgot to mention the death of Marion Keith, him and Jim Meadows had a dificulty [sic] in South Carolina while I was at home - and Meadows shot him through the arm with his muskit [sic] from which he died in about 12 hours. I never have inquired into the particulars of the affray but guess that whisky was the offender. Meadows has not been tried yet. Tell Uncle Sam to manage and so [sic] the best he can and make all the corn he can - to plow wet or dry and feed his teams good and not let them get poor this year. Give my love to yr [sic] mother, Cousin Polly and all the black ones. tell all the children to be good children and mind their books and I will bring them a pretty - as some of the boys' Families might be anxious to know what they done with our boys' for coming home without leave, you can tell them they done simple nothing - Tell Mrs. Stout that John and her Bro. Wm. is well - and all the neighbors that their boys' and kinfolks are generally well. I gave you a list of our acquaintances who was killed in the late battle in my other letter but for fear that you do not get it I will do so again, Maj . I R Tolbert, E S Kirby — Andrew Swan and Rodney Burkes Unkel [sic] Jerry sends his love to you and all the children - hoping to see you again I remain

Yours till Death

R.J. C. Gailbreath

Discharge Letter

1st Army Corps

Army of the Mississippi Corinth May 25th 1862

R.J.C. Gailbreath 2d Lieut [sic] Company K Eighth Regiment Tennessee Volenteers [sic] not having been reelected to office in the reorganization of the Regiment and his successor having passed the Board of Examiners and ordered on duty is hereby honorably discharged from service as 2d Lieutenant in the CSA

By Command of

Maj Genl Cheatham

[illegible]

A.A.A. General

Camp near Nolensville Williamson Co. Tenn [sic] Dec. 1st 1862

Dear Wife

Having an oppertumty [sic] of sending you a few lines by a friend and being rather a leasure [sic] time with me I thought that I would spend a few moments in writing to you and the children. There is nothing however of much importance to write at presant. [sic] We are in close contact with the enemy and skirmish every day the day after I arrived here (Wednesday) we had a sharp little engagement with them near Brentwood The Yankees cut off our squad or rather got between us and our camps -- but we faught [sic] out without injury to man or horse rather a miracle. Yesterday we had an other [sic] skirmish almost amounting to a battle but none of my boys were hurt. Matt Allards [sic] horse was killed under, but he saved himself The boys faught [sic] finly [sic] and done much honor to themselves. I have been uneasy about your health every [sic] since I left home and am very anxious to hear from you I hope that your health has fully recovered by this time. During my absence from the command some right clever gentleman Reported me as sending or taking those boys of my company that went home with me and since my arrival Brig General has had me arrested - I have demanded a trial - but have had none yet. I suppose they will treat me as they did Col Murray Keep me arrested about a month and then release me We are about 18 miles from Nashville I do not know when the Big fight will come off but from all the signs it will not be long If we lay siege to Nashville we may be here two or three months. If so I will come and see you again

If there is any body coming here with a waggon [sic] I want you to send me my trunk I need it awfull [sic] bad I cannot keep any thing for the want of one I have lost now at least fifty dollars worth of clothing. but do not send it by any body that will loose [sic] it or sell it and keep the money and sware [sic] he lost it I have but little confidence in any body these days Give my love to all those who may be so curious as to inquire about me. Tell the children to be good children and learn their books and when I come home again I will bring them something pretty. Give my love to your mother and to Cousin Polly and also to all the black

ones. tell Granny Violet that I am sorry I did not get to see her what I when I was at home but hope she may live until I come home again You must do the best you can for yourself and take care of your health - Stay by the fire and not expose yourself We are living very well here get plenty to eat and feed on As my friend is in a hurry I must close Write soon and every oppetunity [sic] Tell FJG and Stickny to write also Yours until Death

RJ.C. Gailbreath

Nolensville, Williamson County, Tenn.

December 18, 1862

[Note: This is the last letter his wife received.]

Dear Wife and Children,

As I have another opportunity to write, I gladly embrace it. I received yours from Thomas Haile, and was much gratified to learn that you were all well and especially to hear that your health had improved. Newton Moore and Vance Brooks came up yesterday but brought no news of consequence. Mrs. R. A. Cox came down with Vance, but I 've not seen her yet as she is yet in the country. I have nothing that I suppose will be of any interest to you with regard to the war. Since writing you before I have had the misfortune to lose one of my boys, James Ragland was taken prisoner by the Yankees near Brentwood on the Franklin Turnpike on the eleventh day of this month. He in company with a private in Captain Carter 's Company (during a heavy skirmish with the enemy) was sent to make observations on a hill to see if the enemy was approaching in that direction. When they rose the hill the enemy was already in possession of the road and they was compelled to fall back through a field which was found to be fenced with rock in the rear. They then left their horses and took it afoot through a cornfield but being pressed so hard they took refuge in a house nearby when the Yankees surrounded the house and compelled them to surrender. The last mentioned facts I obtained from a woman who lived at the house where they was taken the next day. I

supposed he will be paroled and go home and stay there until exchanged. I want you to go and see his wife and explain and inform her of all the facts in the case as I suppose she would be greatly troubled about it. I expect she is at her father's, Thomas Upchurch. Also send word to William M. Ragland, I would write to him, but will wait till I get home until I get some further information relating to his son. We are here still within a stone's throw of the Yankees, and have heavy skirmishes with them every day. We are supported more by General Butler's division infantry. Last night there was cannonading [sic] all night, dark as it was. I have no idea when the big fight will come, but we look for it soon, which will decide the fate of Tennessee this winter. I trust we will be able to realize a decided victory. I have not been tried yet nor will not as the General has ordered me discharged from arrest. I suppose it would be wrong to punish as good a soldier as me. I have understood that it was reported there that I was to be shot. I suppose that a woman of your sagacity and intelligence knew how much confidence to give such rumors. I doubt the Diety [sic] ever intended for an innocent man to die that way. Consequently hanging or shooting by the hands of justice is no terror for me. You need not pay any attention to these rumors set afloat by these little hot spurs and spirits that occasionally infest the country. You wrote that you were weaving me some pants. I want you to send them down by some safe hand, for I shall need them. Somebody was kind enough to steal all my clothes, socks and all, and it is hardly worthwhile to get [missing] unless I had [missing], for when I pull off my clothes it is the night time, first time I ever see them. I have instructed Lt. Cox to have me a pair of heavy boots made by some good bootmaker. It may be he will not come back as soon as I may need them, but as he could only get ten days furlough, I suppose he will come as soon as they will be made. I want Billy Lee to go to Joe Locke's and get two gr. writing paper for me - I will enclose [missing] from Joe to his wife for it. Mrs. Stout can tell you where she lives. I have procured from Col. Murray the appointment of Seller for this regiment and enclose to William the appointment. I want him to be sure and come. I will furnish him the money to commence with by the first of January. There is more money to be made at that business than any other. He will have to get a horse now to come down here with and I will send or fetch it back. If he can do no better, he will have to ride yours unless it is too heavy in foal. Tell Tom J. to assist him in getting one, for I cannot do without him. I saw Mrs. Cox today, she has been in camps to see us. I was glad to see her indeed. She said she tried to get you to come. Send me some tobacco sure, as it is awful hard to get. Lt. Cox will arrange it so William Lee can have a horse to ride. Tell him to come down and try it awhile and if he don't like it he can quit. Let bring the writing paper, some socks, and my boots if he comes. If Lt. Cox does not come back in ten days he says he will send his father, and Will Lee can come with him. If not, come by way of Alexandria, Murfreesboro to Nolensville. Inquire for General Wharton's brigade of calvary, Murray's Regiment.

["for Lt. Cox" written near the address, also the name "W.C. Cannon"]

PRISONERS PAROLE.

I, R. J. C. Gilbreath Captain, of Company [illegible] 4th Tenn. Cav. Regiment, of the so-called Confederate States Army; captured at the battle of Stones River, Tennessee, solemnly swear before Almighty God, the Sovereign Judge, that I will not bear arms against the United States Government, nor help, aid or assist either directly or indirectly, any person or persons in making war against the same, until regularly exchanged as a prisoner of war.

Subscribed and sworn to before me, at Murfreesboro, Tenn. January 4, 1863.

R.J.C. Gailbreath X his mark

Elias Cospers [illegible]

PROVOST MARSHAL. Gen

[illegible] Army Corps.

January 9th [date is not certain] 1863

Dear Brother and Sister

I am here I remain here under the protection of a federal officer until yesterday until I had my arm amputated. My shirts and drawers are all wore out I have no way Sending home for Clothes at present

And I want you to come in as soon as you get this Letter and you can find Me on the Murfreesboro Pike and 4 miles from Murfreesboro at Thomas Horad five miles this side of town.

R. J.C. Gailbreath

Cherry Flat Near Murfreesboro 11th January 1863

R. H. T. Stratton and others

Capt. R.J. C. Gail breath is here at the hospital five miles from Murfreesboro on the Nashville Pike severely wounded and is very anxious that some of his friends in Nashville should come and see him and if possible remove him to Nashville. I write at his solicitation and hope some of his friends will come without delay as it is impossible for him to receive the attention his situation requires amidst so large a number of wounded as are here.

Respectfully

Thomas Hord

P.S. I have read the above to the Captain and he requests me to add a postscript saying for God's sake act promptly as his suffering is extreme.

Thos. Hurd

To: R.H.T. Stratton

William M. Cook

Mrs. Martha Ann Goolsby

or Joseph D. Gail breath

Nashville, Tennessee

Nashville Pike five miles from Murfreesboro

January 12th 1863

Mr. Stratton

I wrote to you and others yesterday at the request of captain R.J. C. Gailbreath who is here severely wounded urging some of his friends to come for him as soon as possible as he is suffering extremely and cannot get the letter to a surgeon to send to the [illegible line of text] ville but meeting an opportunity of writing to you by a citizen of Nashville who will either see you or leave the letter at your house I write again this morning hoping you will certainly get one letter or the other this evening and come to his relief immediately as a day or two's delay may cost him his life. I do what I can for him but that is but little as my house is a hospital and I am dependent for nearly everything on the hospital supplies myself.

In haste Respectfully

Thomas Hord

P.S. I directed the letter I wrote yesterday to you, Will Cook, Mrs. Martha Ann Goolby and Joseph D. Gailbreath

[on outside of envelope: Since writing the within the Captain is dead. I will have him buried where his remains can be found by his friends.]

CITIZEN'S PASS

No. 5933

Head-Quarters 14th Army Corps.

DEPARTMENT OF THE CUMBERLAND

Provost Marshal General's Office Murfreesboro Feby 9 1863.

Pass Mrs Mary Hail and

Mrs Galbraith to Alexandria

Via Lailoases or Liberty Pike

[illegible]

By order of MAJ. GEN.W.S. ROSECRANS

Elias Casper

[illegible initials] Capt [sic] [illegible] Provost Marshal General