

Civil War Letters of William B. Gilliland

William B. Gilliland (b. ca. 1825) was a farmer from Aurora, Marshall County, Alabama. He served in Co. E, 22nd Alabama Infantry.

Aprile [sic] 24th 1863

Camp Buckner Near Talladega Ala

William B. Gilliland to Martha J. Gilliland

My Dear and Mutch [sic] beloved Companion it is alone through the kind dealings of Alimity [sic] god that I am blest withe [sic] the presant [sic] oppertunity [sic] of writing to you to let you no [sic] that I am in Resonabel [sic] helth [sic] and I hope when these few lines comes to hand that they may find you and the Children all well and doing well I have nothing Strainge [sic] to right [sic] to you at present Dear wife I want to Se [sic] you all very bad I want you all to do the best you all can for I think that I will come back Soon but I can tell when we are cooking our Rashions [sic] now for 2 days and we leave this plais [sic] at 7 Oclock [sic] in the morning to go to Tinisee [sic] I have some of my Kneighbors [sic] with me dear wife I will rite [sic] to you as soon as I get to where I have to stay then I want you to rite [sic] to me and let me no [sic] how you are all gitting [sic] a long Dear most dearly beloved wife and children I want you to remember me and Dear children I want you to mind what your mother sayes [sic] to you and be good children to one a nother [sic] till I come home agane [sic] and then I can tell you all about it bud I want you to forgive me for leaveing [sic] be fore you got back from mill but I want to Sea [sic] you verry [sic] bad but I dont [sic] no [sic] when I will git [sic] the chance but bee [sic] a good boy til [sic] I come home agane [sic] Marthy [sic] I want you to draw all of the money you can Dont [sic] write to me till you here [sic] from me agane [sic] So I must close for this time for it is late in the nite [sic] So I will close for this time by saying farewell to you all in Bands of love
Wm B gilliland [sic] to his beloved wife and litle [sic] children in love to all

[Addressed to]

Mrs Marthey J. Gilliland
Benitsville Ala
from Wm B. Gilliland

May the 1 1863 Shelbyville Tennisee [sic]

William B. Gilliland to Martha J. Gilliland A few lines to Marthy [sic] jane

I am in the tolerabel [sic] helth [sic] and I am tollarble [sic] well satisfide [sic] as mutch [sic] so as could be expected for me to be to be away from hom [sic] and exposed to all

of the privations of a camp life and I truly hope that this will reach your hand in due time and find you all well and doing well dear companion I do want to se [sic] you and the god blessed [sic] little children may god bless you all withe [sic] all the blessings boath [sic] spiritual and temporal that his all seaing [sic] eye Seas [sic] that you do stand in nead [sic] of to make you happy while in this world and in the world to come and bless you withe [sic] the best of helth [sic] til [sic] I come home a gan [sic] if ever I do I want you to rite [sic] as soon as you git [sic] this and let me how you are gitting [sic] along give me all of the nuse [sic] you can about every thing and how you are giting [sic] along withe [sic] your crop and I want you to let me no [sic] all about the children how thay [sic] are doing tell them that I want them to be good children and mind what you say to them tel [sic] little James to be a good boy Marthy [sic] I want you to kiss little frank for me bless his sweat [sic] little hart [sic] I dont [sic] no [sic] what I would give to sea [sic] you and him and sea [sic] you kiss him and kiss you my selfe [sic] I want the connection to rite [sic] to me I have not forgot them I want to no [sic] whether you have herd [sic] from John or not I cant [sic] here [sic] from him I found James nelums here he is well we are not in the same ridgement [sic] but I se [sic] him every day I have nothing interesting to rite [sic] to you so I will close by saying god bless you all direct your letters to Shelbyville Tennessee [sic] Wm B. Gilliland th22 Ala. Regt. Co. E in keer [sic] of Capt [sic] Mardica
Wm B Gilliland to Marthy [sic] J Gilliland and family in bonds of love fare well

Shelby villy [sic] Tennessee May the 17th 1863

William Gilliland to Martha J. Gilliland

My Dear and dearly beloved Companion it is alone through the kind protection and mercy of all mity [sic] god that I am blest withe [sic] the privelege [sic] of riting [sic] to you to let you no that miself [sic] and mack Donald is as well as common at this time and I truly hope these few lines may find you and the dear children and the connection all well and doing well I can say to you that I have bin [sic] verry [sic] sick withe [sic] something like the flux but I am up and about and able to do duty I feel weak and bad I have something like the gravel that hurts me verry [sic] bad at times but I am giting [sic] along better than I expected I think that I am doing fine and as well satisfide [sic] here as I cold [sic] be any whare [sic] to be in this trubble [sic] som [sic] war and exposed to all of the privations of a camp life I dont [sic] think that this war will last verry [sic] long for all of the men that I have heard talk a bout it is tierd [sic] of it now and they are deserting and leaveing [sic] here every day mor[illegible] my Dear and mutch [sic] wife I can not express the love that I have for you and the loving little children in a letter for you twine a round mi [sic] hart [sic] in love my dear little children I want you to be good to your mother and minde [sic] what She Says to you and be good children and be good to one another and good to your aunt lithy [sic] and to every boddy [sic] and love your creator and pray to him and ask him to bless you and me withe [sic] every nedy [sic] blessing bouth [sic] temporal and spiritual that his all seaing [sic] eye Seas [sic] that we do stand nead [sic] of to prepare us in life for living death for dying. Marthy [sic] I want you to rite [sic] to me as soon as you git this withe [sic] out fail for I want to here [sic] from you so bad that I dont [sic] no [sic] what to do I have rite [sic] too [sic] letters before

this and I have got no answer rite [sic] and be shure [sic] all the nuse [sic] you can and tel [sic] Wm Webb and Stepen [sic] and Louis and washing Harris all to rite [sic] to me and give all of the nuse [sic] they can about every thing [illegible] I saw James Pellums this morning he is as well as common and sends his love and best respects to you all thomas [sic] Smith is her [sic] and well he says that Jasper Webb left to go home and got to a private house in lincorn [sic] county and thare [sic] died mi [sic] be loved wife I can Say to you that I do want to See you and my dear little cildren [sic] the worst I ever did in my life o when I think of you and them and think of the Situation that we are now plased [sic] in and the distance that we are apart it grieves my hart [sic] but I do hope and trust and pray that we will be permitted to Se [sic] each others [sic] fond fases [sic] one tim [sic] more in this life and that before long I want you to rite [sic] to me and let me no [sic] how you are gitting [sic] along and how you are makeing [sic] out for Something to eat and how your Stirs [sic] is doing and how you are gitting [sic] along withe [sic] your crop how your Stirs [sic] works and how your cows is doing and how your wheat looks and I want you give me all of the nuse [sic] you can about the connection and all about every thing you can Dear wife I want you to git [sic] Some of the boys put them big puncheons over the well in the place of that oald [sic] plank for fear it brakes [sic] and lets some of you fall in and I want you to have the well cleand [sic] out and I want to no [sic] whether you have heard from John Webb and John Walker or not and what my [illegible] is doing I must quit I will close by saying may god bless you all farewell for this time in love

Wm B. Gilliland To Marthy [sic] Jane Gilliland and friends in bonds of love

A few lines to father mother and W[illegible]

I drop you these few lines to let you no [sic] that I am in common health at this time and I truly hope these few will find you the happy Sherers [sic] of the Same like blessing for which we should be Thankful dear father and mother I want you to pray for me and mi [sic] famly [sic] and tel [sic] all the old frends [sic] to pray for me
To John Webb Wm B Gilliland Jane Webb in bonds of love

Camp Near Shelbyville

Tennisee [sic] May 30th 1863

William B. Gilliland to Martha J. Gilliland

Dear Wife and Children it is through the mercies of god I am permitted [sic] to take my pen in hand to in form you that I am in Tolerabel [sic] helth [sic] at this time and I hope when these few lines comes to hand that they may find you all enjoying [sic] the best of helth [sic] I have bin [sic] very Sick last week and a part of the week before but I am now abel [sic] for duty I want you to rite [sic] to me how you and bud is geting a long with your Stears [sic] and crop how they perform I received your kind leter [sic] bareing [sic] dait [sic] the 18 instant which gave me grait [sic] satisfaction to here [sic] from you and to here [sic] you all was well and doing the saim [sic] I recived [sic] your letter the 26 it come in 8 days I want you to rite [sic] often as you can I will now give you the situation and the description of Soaldiers [sic] fair [sic] as fare [sic] as I have tride [sic] it wi [sic] are in the bend of duck river one Mile below Shelbyville in the shadyest [sic]

grove of beech poplar and hickory [sic] a Butyfalas [sic] plais [sic] for a camp I think I
cold [sic] get a long with the duty of a soaldier [sic] if I cold [sic] keep well and cold [sic]
get a plenty to eat but we have the porst [sic]beef her [sic] to eat you ever sean [sic] in
Your life we are alowed [sic] 1 pound of it per day and 1 ¼ lb [sic] corn meal Some
times we git [sic]1 days rashins [sic] of flour it only lasts 2 meals when we get Bacon we
only get ½ lb to the man a day we get rise [sic] and peas once and a while I want you to
make all you can of corn and potatoes and tobaco [sic] and when you have eny [sic]
thing to sell So you must excuse me for this time So no more at present but remains
yours truly untill [sic] deathe [sic]
To Martha Gilliland W. B. Gilliland

Camp Near Shelbyville Tenn, [sic] June the 14th 1863

William B. Gilliland to Martha J. Gilliland

My dear and Mutch [sic] beloved wife and little childring [sic] and connection all it is
alone through the murcy [sic] and kind protection of allmity [sic] god that I am blest withe
[sic] the presant [sic] oppertunity [sic] of droping [sic] you a few lines in order to let you
no [sic] that mi [sic] self and Mcdonald is as well as common to day and I truly hope
these few lines may reach your hand in due time and find you all the happy sherers [sic]
of the same good blessing for which we should be thankful to the grate [sic] giver of all
good my dear wife I can say to you that I received your kind letter dated May the 18th
which give me grate [sic] satisfaction to here [sic] from you one time more and to here
[sic] that you was well but I was sorrow to here [sic] that mother has bin [sic] sick
but I am in hopes that god will restor [sic] hur [sic] to perfect helth [sic] a gane [sic]
Marthy [sic] I can say to you that I do want to sea [sic] you and the dear little children
the worst I ever did in mi [sic] life May god bless you and them with the best of helth
[sic] til [sic] I come home a gane [sic] is my prare [sic] dear wif [sic] I can Say to you that
I am glad to here [sic] that you are gitting [sic] a long withe [sic] your crop so well and
that you was makeing [sic] out verry [sic] well for Something to eat for I was a ferd [sic]
you could not manage the Stears [sic] it has relieved mi [sic] mind a grate [sic] deal to
here [sic] that your wheat looked well and that you was gitting [sic] a long every way as
well as what you are and I am in hopes that you will continue to do well til [sic] I come
home a gane [sic] if I am [illegible] to come home a gane [sic] I think I will git [sic] to
come before verry [sic]long but I dont [sic] no [sic] when nor how that will be I some
times think that this un just war will have to close soon then a gane [sic] I think it will last
some time yet I want you to make all you can of every thing that will do to eat Sutch [sic]
]as corn and peas and potatoes and everything bud make all of the tobacco you can for
it is worth too [sic] dollars pr plug bud I am glad to here [sic] that you are a good boy
and that you are doing all that you can to keep your mother in good hart [sic] about me
that is rite [sic]

[This page may not be from the same letter]

you rote [sic] to me you wanted to know how I was making out for Close [sic] I dont [sic]
want you to make me eny [sic] Close [sic] for I have to draw my Close [sic] So you may
rest continted [sic] a bout that I dont [sic] want you to make eny [sic] close [sic] at all
you rote [sic] to me you wanted to know what we got to eat we get 1 half pound of Bulk

pork to the man a day and 1 pint of corn meal and of beef we get 1 pound of that a day in the plais [sic] of Pork when we draw flour we get 1 pound and ¼ of a pound to the man we draw somedays 1 mess of peas a week and 1 mess of Rise [sic] the Saim [sic] that is our rashins [sic] in full you can See how Rich we live here in the armey [sic] it is hard living here but we make out we have to by some Times a litel [sic] meal to have bred [sic] to eat now I will give you the description of produse [sic] Buter [sic] is worth 2 dollars a pound Milk is worth 50 cts a quart out in the cuntry [sic] chickens is worth from 2 to 3 dollars a peas [sic] Turkeys is worth from 3 to 5 dollars a peas [sic]

[Rest of letter missing]

June the 26th 1863

Camp near Shelbyville Tenn [sic]

William B. Gilliland to Martha J. Gilliland

Dear Wife and children it is with the graitist [sic] of pleasure that I Seat my Self to drop you a few lines to let you know that I am in comin [sic] helth [sic] at present and I hope when these few Lines comes to hand they may find you injoying [sic] the graitst [sic] of helth [sic] I received your kind which gave me grait [sic] satisfaction to here [sic] from you and to here [sic] you was all well and all of the connection was well I recived [sic] yours of the 11 of June which was the 2 leter [sic] I have receive from you I am glad to here [sic] you are geting [sic] a long so well with your crop and that your wheet [sic] is good and you got it took keer [sic] of I am glad to here bud is geting [sic] a long with his cop and stears [sic] bud I want you to go it and do all you can and try to mak [sic] all you can to eat for your Mother and sisters and litel [sic] Brother and for me a gainst [sic] I come home My dear children I want you all to be good Children and mind your mother untill [sic] I come home I think through the merseys [sic] of god I Shall be permitted [sic] to get home after a while but I do not know when I have Seen James Nelums this morning he is as well as comin [sic] and Sends his love and respects to you and the connection all and wants you all to rite [sic] to him I Saw Cravin haris [sic] here and he wants Washington to rite [sic] to him he is in the 26 Ala Regt in Company I he was well and so fat I did not know him and passed him by as a straing [sic] I also Seen Franklin On[illegible] the other day he was in tolerabel [sic] helth [sic] I have rote [sic] to the boys at war trais [sic] to know if they had herd [sic] from H.J. Gilliland and I have not got eny [sic] answer from them and when you rite [sic] to me a gain if you have herd [sic] eny [sic] thing a bout him I want you to rite [sic] for I want to here [sic] from him Tell W. C. Webb to not think hard of me nor none of the Connection for not riting [sic] a seperate [sic] leter [sic] to him a bout Jasper I have not herd [sic] eny [sic] thing more than you have all redy [sic] received for the old man that told us a bout him has forgot the mans name where Jasper died at and we aint [sic] find out eny [sic] more a bout him unless it Shold [sic] be by chance thes [sic] things is hard but gods will mus [sic] be done and let us not complain I want to Se [sic] you all very bad you statid [sic] in your leter [sic] that the children was all taking on a bout me I dont [sic] want them to do that at all for there is no use in that [crossed out] that nor I dont [sic] want you my dear to think long of my

absence for if its gods [sic] holy will I will soon return home and may his will be done with us all and may we be resined [sic] to his will we are expecting a fight here we are fixin [sic] for it ever [sic] day a thorowing [sic] up Brest [sic] works I dont [sic] know when we will fite [sic] but it is thaw [sic] we will fite [sic] Shortly we have a heep [sic] of very hevvy [sic] duty to perform such gard [sic] and working on Brest [sic] works I am a detail 1 day to the Brest [sic] works and the next day I go on guard we get a plenty of Bred [sic] to eat now we have no rite [sic] to grumble a bout our rashins [sic] such as it is and we aut [sic] to feel thankfull [sic] that it is no worse with us than it is I feel thankful that it is no worse I will say to you wheet [sic] crops is very good here corn crops what I have seen looks fine it is raining and has bin [sic] 2 days we have had a heep [sic] of rain here all this month My dear Wife and children I caint [sic] rite [sic] to you how bad I do want to Se [sic] you all and I hope I will be sparn [sic] and you all blessed and I shall be enabld [sic] to get home soon I want all of the connection to remimber [sic] me in there [sic] preas [sic] and I want to Se [sic] them all and I want them to rite [sic] to me Simeon McDonald is riting [sic] this for me he is as well as comin [sic] we are in the saim [sic] Mes [sic] I want you all to do the best you can I must come to a close for this time by daying [sic] I sill Remain yours in Bonds of love untill [sic] death
Wm B Gilliland To Wife and Children

Friends I want you to rite [sic] to me and not fail Rite [sic] all of the nuse [sic] you can and how ever thing is going So Farewell for this time

Camp of 22a ala Regt near Chattanooga Tenn [sic] July 25/63

William B. Gilliland to Martha J. Gilliland

Mi [sic] dear companion I seat miself [sic] this morning too [sic] adress [sic] you a few lines which will inform you that I am well at this time hopeing [sic] this will find you and the children all well and doing well I rcvd [sic] your kind letter of the 10 of this inst [sic] which was a greate [sic] satisfaction to me to here [sic] from you I have but little to write at this time we air [sic] doing vary [sic] well considering the hard ness of things the rations air [sic] short you wanted to know how I got a long on the march well I stood it mity [sic] well tho [sic] it was a hard march and many give [illegible] the march and done with out rations a good deal of the time but now we air [sic] gitting [sic] Enough to make out on the health of the soldiers is vary [sic] good here at this time you say you want to see me vary [sic] bad and this I dont [sic] doupt [sic] but I dont [sic] suppose [sic] you want to see me eny [sic] worse than I do you and wish it was so that I could git [sic] a fur low to go home to spend a few days with you but I dont [sic] so no chance now but I will try that I will come as soon as I can you said something a bout coming to see me [illegible] but I rather you would not come all tho [sic] I Want to see you so bad this is no place for a woman you said you wanted me to come home to eat Butter with you but as I cant [sic] come if you have it to spair [sic] I wood [sic] be glad you would send me som [sic] by Brother H P Gilliland if he comes this way tel [sic] him I want him to come by and stay a day or 2 with me and I would like for you to send me a pair of socks if you can conveniently but dont [sic] put your self to no trouble a bout it I saw neloms this morning he was well as comon [sic] I was sorry to here [sic] of your

Mothers [sic] sickness but I hope her health will be restord [sic] in a short time write as often as you can and let me know how you is gitting [sic] a long nothing mor [sic] at present your husband as ever until Death Wm B Gilliland

[illegible] Picket Line Aug the 30th, 1863

Near Chatanooga [sic]

William B. Gilliland to Martha J. Gilliland

Dear and affectionate Wife it is a gain through the merseys [sic] of god I am permitted [sic] to Seat my Self to drop you a few lines to let you know that I am well and I am in as good helth [sic] as I have bin [sic] in Some time and when these few lines comes to hand I hope they may find you and the Children and all of the connection well I have nothing very good to Right [sic] to you at present we are on one Side of the river and the yankeys [sic] on the other They have bin [sic] Shelling Chatanooga [sic] Severl [sic] times they have killed 3 men and wounded one litel [sic] girl and shot one or 2 shells through the hosspitel [sic] we aint [sic] [illegible] of them oppisit [sic] ou[illegible] her but they are firing on our pickits [sic] a bove [sic] and below us once and a while but they dont [sic] do eny [sic] harm to our picket the report is there is a Briggaid [sic] of yankeys [sic] at Trenton some 18 Miles South of us on the Saim [sic] Side of the river we are and the rumer [sic] is they are crossing the river a bove [sic] but I dont [sic] know whether they are crossing up [illegible] er [sic] not I dont [sic] know whether we will have a fite [sic] here or not it is the Jinerl [sic] opinion [crossed out] that we wont [sic] fite [sic] here the men Say if they have to go in to a batel [sic] they wont [sic] fite [sic] for they Say it wont [sic] be eny [sic] use for we are all redy [sic] whiped [sic] the men is leaving here jus a bout as fast as they come in or a litel [sic] faster My Dear Children you all express you want to Se [sic] me so bad but I know you dont [sic] want to Se [sic] me eny [sic] worse than I do you I think through the merseys [sic] of I shall be enabeled [sic] to Se [sic] you all a again in a short time for I think this thing will Shoreley [sic] com [sic] to a close for it looks like that we caint [sic] stand it much longer my dear I received the Biscuit and pies and buter [sic] and money you sent me by Simeon and I was very glad to get it and all so to here [sic] from you all once more and to here [sic] you was all well and to here [sic] the connection was all well but was Sory [sic] to here [sic] that Mother Webb had a nother [sic] one of them bad risings I hope that peas [sic] on earth once more may bee [sic] restored both Nationaly [sic] and privatly [sic] and that god will Smile on us as a nation once more if it can comport to his hevanly [sic] and devine [sic] will is my prare [sic] for Christ Sake James Nelums is not well at this time but he was beter [sic] yesterday than he has bin [sic] he was in his Quarters I think he will be abel [sic] for duty in a day or too Mack has got here and is on duty with me he does not know what they will do with him yet but I dont [sic] think they will punish him if they do I dont [sic] think they got the weigh [sic] ever [sic] thing was and the weigh [sic] he come back I was glad to her [sic] from you brother Steven and to here [sic] was a going to rite [sic] me and the other boys a good leter [sic] I want you to comply with that. My dear Wife I want to se [sic] you the worst kind and you must excuse me for my short leter

[sic] So I must Come to a close by saying I Remain your affectionate Husband untill [sic] death

W. B. Gilliland. To M. J. Gilliland in bonds of Love

This february [sic] they 2th 1865

Camp of this 58th ala regt at holly [illegible] near

Mobeal [sic] ala on the Bay

Franklin Gilliland to Martha J. Gilliland

my Dear and Much Beloved Sister Marthy [sic] J Gilliland and Childrin [sic] one and all Sarah Jane a [illegible] and John and littel [sic] James Jane and frank all as one Marthy [sic] thank god I am this Morning blest with they [sic] presant [sic] oportunity [sic] of droping [sic] you a few lins [sic] Which leavs [sic] me Well Marthy [sic] I trust to god that thase [sic] lines may soon reach you and find you and all they Childrin [sic] all Well and doing Well Marthy [sic] [illegible] the relation [illegible] then [illegible] you that [illegible] [illegible] Boys is hear [sic] at Mobeal [sic] and we are all well Marthy [sic] I can say to you that I want to see you and they childrin [sic] they [sic] Worst in the world tho [sic] I am away hear [sic] in this [illegible] [illegible] I cant [sic] tell When I Will hav [sic] they [sic] [illegible] to com [sic] to see you all but marthy [sic] I [illegible] hop [sic] I wont [sic] Bee [sic] long till we Will hav [sic] they pleasure of seeing each other a gain Marthy [sic] I no [sic] that you and yore [sic] littel [sic] childrin [sic] seas [sic] a lonsom [sic] and desolat [sic] time tho [sic] I hope that god Will bee [sic] with you in yore [sic] lonsom [sic] [illegible] of troubel [sic] and that he may spar [sic] you to live and bless you all with good health and strength and Bless you all With [illegible] they [sic] worthy [sic] Blessing that his all seeing eye seas [sic] that you stand in need of While in this life Marthy [sic] I hope that god Will spare you to live to rase [sic] yore [sic] littel [sic] infant Childrin [sic] god Bless them all I prey [sic] marthy [sic] tell they [sic] childrin [sic] that I love you all and wishes you all Well and to do Well marthy [sic] tell all they [sic] childrin [sic] to be god childrin [sic] and try to prepar [sic] to meat [sic] their father in heaven Where parting will bee [sic] no more Marthy [sic] I Want you to excuse me for not riting [sic] to you for we hav [sic] bin [sic] Marching and fiting [sic] nearly all the time [rest mising] I hant [sic] got a letter from lisabeth in a long time marthy [sic] I dont [sic] Want you and they [sic] childrin [sic] to forget me and I want you to rite [sic] to me and let me no [sic] how you air [sic] gitting [sic] a long I am very ancious [sic] to hear from you all marthy [sic] they is a grait [sic] talk of pease [sic] hear [sic] at mobeal [sic] now tho [sic] I cant [sic] tell when we will hav [sic] pease [sic] tho [sic] I hope it wont [sic] bee [sic] long till pease [sic] will bee [sic] made Martha I think that I will git [sic] a ferlow [sic] to com [sic] home in a few days We air [sic] camp [sic] rite [sic] on they [sic] edg [sic] of they [sic] mobeal [sic] Bay and We can see the yankees [sic] gun boats evry [sic] day I Will close rite [sic] soon Direct yore [sic] letters to me in Co. H. 58th ala regthoaltsclaws [sic] Bregade [sic] mobeal [sic] ala.

H.F. Gilliland to Martha Jane Gilliland and all they [sic] childrin [sic] in lov [sic] to all franklin Gilliland to all