

## Weir\_James\_K\_letter

Letters from A Soldier of the American Civil War, Union Army

James K. Weir, Company B, 25th Illinois Volunteer Infantry

All the original letters were written in ink and the spelling and punctuation reproduced here is exactly the same as in the original letters. An example of one handwritten letter is on the reverse side of this sheet.

M 127

F.O. Bishop

25 S. Germantown Rd. Apt. 202

Chattanooga, Tennessee 37411

While he was in the Union Army, 25th Illinois Volunteers, Co. B., Infantry.

Killed at Marietta, Georgia, June 21, 1864.

Buried in National Cemetery, Marietta, Ga.

Grave #2310 with marble headstone.

October 8, 1861 from Otterville, Mo.

November 8, 1861 " St. Louis, Mo.

January 24, 1862 Rolla, Mo.

March 26, 1862 Keatsvill, Mo.

March 27, 1862 Keatsvill, MO.

April 12, 1862 Forsyth, Lang Co. Mo.

May 6, 1862 Salem, Arkansas

July 12, 1862 Jacinto, Miss.

October 1862 Dick's River, Ky.

Dec 4, 1862 Nashville, Tenn.

January 8, 1863 Murfreesborough, Tenn.

January 21, 1863 Murfreesboro, Tenn.

March 19, 1863 Murfreesboro, Tenn.

March 25, 1863 Murfreesboro, Tenn.

May 6, 1863 Murfreesboro, Tenn.

June 4, 1863 Murfreesboro, Tenn.

June 22, 1863 Manchester, Tenn.

July 6, 1863 Winchester, Tenn.

July 27, 1863 Winchester, Tenn.

August 14, 1863 Camp of the 25th Regt.

August 23, 1863 Camp of the 25th Regt.

November 4, 1863 Chattanooga, Tenn.

November 17, 1863 Chattanooga, Tenn.

December 8, 1863 Chattanooga, Tenn.

January 30 Letter from the Rossville Aid Society sent with a cake to Lieut. Weir

February 22, 1864 Knoxville, Tenn.

April 28, 1864 Cleveland, Tenn.

May 23, 1864 Cleveland, Tenn.

June 15, 1864 Four miles west of Marietta, Ga.

Nashville Tenn Dec 4th 1862

Dear Mother I received your letter telling of your visit to George Cristies I expected to hear of his being well of I have reiting [sic] several times lattely [sic] to you I have not writing Charley Cass for I never reaceve [sic] one from them I got a letter from Dab the other day he had plenty of work was all he aught to volunteer our regt took a long scout wee [sic] got back night before last wee [sic] traveled over one hundred miles captured a lot of horses 300 barells [sic] of flour and other things met with no accident the Captain Co A was shot dead by a drunk soldier who had bin arrested by him for disorderly conduct he has bin in prison cince [sic] Capt Clark was a brave man and well liked, wee [sic] had started with the intention of attacking some rebels who had crossed the river for the purpose of destroying the RR but wee [sic] did not see anything of them wee [sic] are now under Orders to march at 8 oclock in the morning wee [sic] go out on the rebels lines who are in force southe [sic] and east of this place I have to draw and issue clothing to the boys yet tonight so I wont [sic] write much wee [sic] have not bin [sic] paid yett [sic] I have not had a dollar in change for a long time could you get a house built on that land before spring or could it be rented, if their was a hoise [sic] on it if I get paid all up I might send money enough to finish that house I commenced for I don't know when I can get home, the weather is quite cold not enough to feise [sic] the river Tuesday I lay out on the open ground and it rained hard all night every rag was wet most of the boys done the same it made the boys wish themselves at home was all our health is better when wee [sic] fare like cattle than when wee [sic] are in camp in tents

If I was you I would not fret about the war nor anything else they boys says it all goes in three years (ours is the ninth Division Commd by Gen Jeff C Davis our Brigade is the 32 composed of 25 & 35 Illinois and 81 Indiana and 8th Kansas and the 8th Wisconsin Battery

The Brigade is commanded by Gen Goodruff he was taking prisoner once at Manasses gap he is a regular officer Rosecrans reviewed our divs a week go Sunday he thought a great deal of regt his staff made the finsed [sic] apearance [sic] I ever saw Davis Cettenden McCook Michell and several others was their

Write agen [sic] your eflectionate [sic] son

James K Weir

Co B 25 regt Ill Vol

Nashvill Tenn

Camp Near Murfreesborough Tenn

January 8th 1863

Dear Mother I am about as glad as I ever was in my life to find myself alive for I have gone through the hardest time wee [sic] have ever had wee [sic] left Nashville on the 25th of December with three days rations and our knapsacks also our shelter tents and cooking utensils on Saturday wee [sic] had our first skirmish but wee [sic] had none kiled [sic] on Sunday wee rested on Monday the fight commencd [sic] agan [sic] our cavalry engaged and had two Majors killed wee [sic] wer [sic] out on picket and ly [sic] in the rain wee [sic] was then five miles from Murfresboro wee [sic] contined [sic] our march next day the battle going on on [sic] our right wee [sic] reached the field that night and did not take our things of on wensday [sic] wee [sic] marched in line of battle and took of our knapsacks in a cotton field our regt lost several men wee [sic] took possession of some woods that night which was very cold the rebels firing at us all the time their campfires was close to us wee [sic] wer [sic] not allowed a fire so wee [sic] kept walking wee [sic] had nothing but crackers to eat early on Thursday morning the rebels attacked the lines with Great force and almost destroyed Johnsons Division Johnson was surprised so reported the rebels fell and left and it gave way then came our tourn wee [sic] stood it a while then gave back here came the rebbles [sic] yeling [sic] like Indians wee [sic] rallied and drove them back and wee [sic] gave back and retook our tround [sic] three times in the night wee [sic] had gone and brought in our knapsack and layed them by a fence where wee [sic] lay on our arms their was a cornfield betwen [sic] us and the rebels and they had to run across that before they could reach us they had crosed over our clothes three times and had not disturbed them by this time their was a great many kiled [sic] wounded lying in the woods here our Colonel was kiled [sic] also Daniel Dale and John Burley our Captain was shop in the arm wee [sic] had several wounded the last time wee [sic] run them off and I did not think they would bother us agan [sic] but we saw the brigade on the right fallen bach [sic] and the firing came nearer and directly it was one sheet of flame and smoke on our right so wee [sic] had to run to save ourselves from being cut of I did not know what the truble [sic] was till wee [sic] come in to the cotton field I had gave out in thr [sic] runing [sic] for life I thought everything was lost I thought it was a stampede and a Manassas affair the rebbles [sic] followed close and threw shot and shell at us till wee [sic] into the timber where our lines formed agan [sic] our division left the field and Gen Critenden forces took it and the battle continued till late at the nois [sic] of musketry [sic] was tremendous. Wee [sic] did not recover the ground so the rebbles [sic] got all our clothes and took a good many prisoners they drove our lines so as to take possession of the road and had captured a host of pisoner [sic] and waggons our cavalray [sic] which has done first rate during this battle hashed in and recaptured and took over three hundred of their prisoners that night wee [sic] was not allowed a fire and had nothing to eat and I spent New Years eve in a hole in the rocks where three of us had the smalest [sic] kind

of a fire wee [sic] could hear all kinds of ciscourg [sic] news wee [sic] worked on a breastwork on Neyears [sic] day and hev [sic] little and did not sleep any it was so cold the wounded sufered [sic] greatly I would have gave them anything but I had nothing but a thin coat, the battle was still ragin [sic] on friday [sic] our General caled [sic] us out to help Woods division which was presed [sic] they were on the left and great many of his men was runing [sic] away wee [sic] stoped [sic] some of them we formed and started and had to wade the river three times it over knee deep wee [sic] had to ren about two miles it was muddy [sic] and quite darke [sic] but wee [sic] got their while the fight was ragin wee [sic] had to charge right up to a battery shell and grape flew all around us the rebbels [sic] Left in a hury [sic] this ground was covered with slain wee [sic] lay in our wett [sic] clothes but I had sent some of the boys back to take blankets from the rebbels [sic] who wer [sic] kiled [sic] so wet as I was I had my first sleep for several nights some of the boys found plenty to eat in the rebbell [sic] haversacks on saturday [sic] wee drew provisions and wee [sic] done very weel [sic] though it rained continuely [sic] wee [sic] lay all day and left in the night it kept raining so it was about to cut of our reatreat [sic] so wee [sic] waded back and rested a day or two and last night came into this camp it was bout twelve oclock when wee [sic] pased [sic] through Town every was still the rebel loss has bin [sic] awful the battle lasted eight days I think they ran their wounded of on the cars I am very sory [sic] on Daniel Dale acount [sic] he had never bin [sic] sick and was a good soldier during the fight when wee [sic] was retreating [sic] I stoped [sic] at a tree Dan fired left I stoped [sic] to get a closer shot I never saw him again he was buried close to where fell our regt lost in all 119 our company lost 8 one bulit [sic] grased [sic] by face was all

Wee [sic] are in McCook Army corps first Division Jeff C Davis Commanding the Division 3rd Brigade Col Woodruff, Comdg

I think wee [sic] will start for Chatanooga in a few days hope I wont [sic] have another such a time

I have not had a letter for sometime don't know when I can sen [sic] th [sic]

Write soon

Your Efectinate [sic] son

James K Weir

Co B 25th regt Ill Vol

Murfreesborough, Tenn

Some of the men was so scared they ran cleare [sic] to Nashvill 27 miles I think they are in Jail now

Camp near Murfreesboro, Tennessee

January 21th 1863

Dear Cassy I don't get anymore letters so I believe I will write a few all wee [sic] have to do now is to attend roll call four times a day and that is tiresome it rains most of the time, I have not saw the official report of the Battle and you know about as much as wee [sic] do our loss is caled [sic] eight thousand which I think is more than the actual loss the rebbels [sic] lost more for they left as many as wee [sic] had and they took of a great many by railroad

Our loss will sho [sic] you what hard time wee [sic] had all our regts lost some.

Tom Swan was over the other day he looks as usual thinks he has to stay three years

He thinks lots of his mule team mighty glad he was not around when Wheeler rebble [sic] took our train I guess ill [sic] go and cee [sic] him tomorrow

I reaceived [sic] a letter from Net and Eliza think a great deal of Champaign their new house I some everything in stile Net thinks they will do well Net anticapates [sic] a great time when I get back Liza thinks they will do well, wee [sic] hear all kind of news bad and indeferent [sic], the rebbels [sic] pickets are 15 miles off don't know when wee [sic] will move hope wee [sic] will move soon, winter is very mild here it has not frose [sic] hard enough to beare [sic] a wagon up they are repairing the railroad to this place don't know when wee [sic] will be paid off I will try and send all home tell David S there is a fine chance to keep back in the army

I have not heard from you cince [sic] August

Try and write soon

Your brother

James K Weir

Co B 25th regt, Ill Vol

Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Murfreesboro, Tenn

March 19th 63

Dear Father I send by Adams Express to you to Davvill seventy Dollars \$70.00 I don't have much time to write I wrote to Mother what I wanted done with it if you think that is best do it, I think paying of them notes is best it saves interest

Wee [sic] leave here today or tomorrow bragg is reported advancing in great force he will get thrashed if he comes up here and fights

Your Son James K Weir

Company B 25th regt

Ill Volunteers

Murfreesboro Tenn

The money will be kept till you call for it

You went away in 61 18/25

The 1861 October the first Tax 18/25

1862 April 1st the paid Tax 18/25

October 1 the paid Tax 18/25

1863 April 1 paid Tax 18/25

Paid Geessy the store keeper 23 dolers [sic]

and your land Tax was eight Dol

one Hunder [sic] and 2 doller [sic]

paid 65 Dollars on the not

one Hundred and 68 Dollars

the first money you sent was

30

40

70

23

Camp at Murfreesboro Tennessee

March 25th, 63

Charley I got your letter while on Picket it is the first I have had from you for six months it was very graphic, if you cannot cross the creek I would not gather Toms corn in marching when we [sic] come to a river we [sic] cross it if it costs a mule, we have stirring [sic] times now the rebels [sic] are around our lines all the time, now and then they lose a man, I haven't [sic] shot at one since [sic] the battle, I don't know whether we [sic] will have a big fight or not at [sic] this place we [sic] are close to our fortifications [sic] Capt. Wall has got back,, peach trees are in blossom the woods begin to look green, but their ain't [sic] a rail [sic] left around here for ten miles the houses go next The soldiers have killed [sic] all the hogs the cavalry [sic] have taken the horses and no cattle it is a good chance to farm without [sic] fencing, Gen McCook had his Hd Quarters close to the finest farm house you ever saw fine orchard gardens and nice fencing now all is gone but the house the roads here are all pikes some good ones but they are getting used up, I sent Father 70.00 dollars I took a receipt for it I spect [sic] it is in Danvill now at [sic] Adams Express Office tell Father he can take a bust on part of it I paid no expersage on it

Write agan [sic] when you cant find anything to write about I like to receive [sic] letters esspeshly [sic] when their is nothing in them, the rain had not aught to bother you if you had to lay out in the pound night after night you might complain I have laid many [sic] nights by laying down three rails on the ground and then lay myself doen [sic] and sleep [sic] while the hardest kind of rain storm was reging [sic] so I did not roll off into the mud it was all right you must get up earlyer [sic]

Your brother James K, Weir



Camp Near Murfreesboro Tenn  
May 6th 1863

Charley

Received your letter the other day it was a slight improvement on your other, but I could not make out whether you write it home or in Danvill or whether Cassy had got back or not, you are doing very well plowing corn will be high for sometime to come you aught to raise as much as posible [sic] but I would not keep so many cattle with you can raise more feed

I esspect [sic] my place has gone to smash but don't care much Jake Gundy wants to trade his 80 for it his joins Fathers how would it pay to trade it If I had Jakes I think I could trade it to Bill Kent for the 80 north of the House, Tell me what difference is between mind and Gundys

I went to a horse race yesterday down on the parade ground the 4th US Cavelry [sic] is camped here and they got up a race for five 500.00 dollars but one horse did not runoover [sic] 50 yards when he flew the track and lost the money the most fun was in the mule racing they wer [sic] equal to the donkey races you read about, the 4th cavalry [sic] is a bragg regt and thrashes the rebbels [sic] when ever they fight

The fortyfycations [sic] are still building and I believe equals any in the US if Hoocker drives the confederates [sic] out of Virg they will come here, their is no talk of us moving skirmishing is going on every day on the lines it is very cold now I like to frose [sic] on picket the other night it had bin [sic] raining. Cotton is just comming [sic] up.

I went out on the Battle feild [sic] the other day with a party of men the fix up the graves of our men who was killed the ground looked nattural [sic] it was the first time I had bin [sic] on it cince [sic] wee [sic] was drove off, our Regt has twelve in one grave they died on the feild [sic] more have died from the effects, wee [sic] built a nice fence of cedar around the grave Dan Dale is the only one wee [sic] have buried their John Burly was buried at the hospital and I could not find his grave he was buried with a great many others in one grave their is news of importance

Write soon, your Brother

James K Weir Co B,  
25th Regt Ill Vol  
Murfreesboro Tenn

Camp Near Murfreesboro Tenn

June 4th 1863

Dear Mother I received your letter several days ago but having not much to write, wee [sic] are exspecting [sic] to march every minut [sic] with seven days rations I thing wee [sic] will go south we will be likely to have some fighting, Grant is doing great things at Vickburg I believe he will capture everything yet though it will cost a good many lives, but the fighting aught to be done as soon as possible for it becomes very sickly down their after august the rebbels [sic] will have to draw their lines in after this for our cavelry [sic] can ride all through their country when once through [sic] their picket lines as soon as they are obliged to guard all their railroads and bridges like we do it will beave then less men to fight

Their is more men guarding works in Ten KY then Rosecrans has to fight, so I don't think the rebbels [sic] will out number us in many more fights

I got a letter from Dan the other day they wer [sic] all well I don't cee what Father wants to keep in debt for you sed last year that you did not raise feed enough and I don't think it will pay to buy both if you can get to sell that school land sell it for if the fence goes down and the breaking goes back to grass it wont [sic] be worth more than wild land, the land in this state will average 50 dollars an acre right about here it is worth 100 Dollars but now there is nothing left but the house a very costly brick, it looks like a prarie [sic] farm no fence or archard [sic] all gone for firewood

Wee [sic] are in the 20th army Corps 1st Division 3d Brigade

Maj Genl Mc K Cook Comndg

The health is very good now this army is in good condition for the operation the deaths in the new Regts is more than duple [sic] ours I don't think their is a new Regt but what has had more men die in eight months than the old regt has in two years