

Camp on Stone River, Tenn.

Feb. 16, 1863

31

Dear Frank:

I just received your long looked for and much welcome letter bearing date Feb. 9th and you may be sure I was glad to hear from you once more. It has been about 2 weeks since I had a letter from you although I have written every opportunity. You must not delay writing and write long letters. You are getting stingy of paper or time and it is hard for me to tell which, but you must try and write longer letters if there is no news please mention all of our neighbors for I have no way of hearing from them only by letter. So try and fill a sheet full if it is one of these little sheets. Now don't take any offense at what I say and go and write a letter so long that it will take a whole day to read it, for that would be an awful punishment. Well enough of that. I will try and tell how the boys are. Hiram Castle is pretty bad off. He is at the Reg. Hospital. He was taken there Saturday. I just went in to see him. He is not as well as he was yesterday. He had been taking some medicine and it makes him feel worse. At present we are in hopes that he will get along soon and either get better or be discharged. His complaint seems to be the dysentery, which by the way is a general complaint in the Army. The boys all say that if they get so to shit a hard tird tho', the Doctor will discharge them immediately. You need not show this to everyone for they might think I was getting rather choice of my language but it is a fact that I have had it almost all of the time since we left Camp Sigle, and have grown fat on it of late and it is so with a good many and it kills a good many. Rance Robinson is no better. He is getting so that his nose is as wide as any of his face. To look his square in the face you can't see him at all, for his nose covers his whole face. Well he is hard up and no mistake. He has to walk with 2 canes. He has taken so much medicine that he has almost lost the use of hims limbs entirely. Melvin Sparks is better. At present he is a little out of his head I think and I rather guess he thinks to much about that young wife of his but he will get over that when he gets home. The boys are all looking forward to Spring when they think the war will be settled by that time, but I can't see where it is but I am in hopes that it will close soon, for it don't look any more to an end that it did when it commenced, but of course it is. Tell Father I wrote him a long letter only a short time ago and will write again soon. I am going to give you some of the prices of articles down her in old Tenn. They, that is the sutler, has got a few potatoes and he only asks \$4 per bushel and onions are the same. Butter is 70¢ per pound. Tobacco is worth about \$3 per pound and you should see how the boys do twist and turn to get a chew. They have been out of Money for a long time and they have borrowed and begged ever since they came to this State. These little sheets of paper that I write to you on costs 3 sheets for 5¢ and everything in proportion. But all I buy is paper and ink and stamps and I sell a good deal of that. By selling my rations of coffee, which is more than I can use when I get full rations. William and Ober Rice volunteered to go out foraging today. William will send a letter with this to Martha and George. He commenced it last night but got so sleepy that he quit and has not finished it yet, but will tonight, when he gets back. You say that you are at Fathers visiting. I wish I could be there with you to enjoy a social chat but I will improve the time when I do come. Well I can think of no more at present. Give my love to Father & Mother and Grandfather and the whole family and kiss the little boy for me. I must close for the present. Good bye. This from your affectionate husband,

Arza

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

February 22, 1863

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Dear Frank:

It is with pleasure I improve the present opportunity of answering your very welcome letter that I received yesterday bearing the date Feb. 15th. It has been some time since I got a letter from you until yesterday. I was very glad to hear that you keep good health which is one of the greatest blessings that we enjoy. You cannot imagine how well please I was to hear that Fathers eyes are getting better. I want him to get so that he can see us when we come home and he must be more careful and not expose himself for if they get worse again I am afraid that he will never get well again. You just tell John that I am as free from homesickness as I was when I enlisted and have the same confidence in putting down the rebellion, if they don't all make asses of themselves at the North and all get divided, but if I can judge anything of the feeling there by what I read in the papers, they are making goals of themselves but I hope not, for it does more to encourage the Rebs than anything else. Every paper we get gives some account of the division in the North. Now if they want us to gain anything they have got to give us their support and not encourage desertion or what is just as bad, encourage these lazy louts that never do any duty, only Hospital duty, which by the way is at least one half of this Reg. that we are in. And another thing, and that is getting taken prisoner and being paroled and then run off home and forget to come back. Don't give yourself any unnecessary uneasiness about my getting homesick for I am as free from that as anyone in this company. There is a prospect of our being paid off before long and I can't tell what to do with it, for I don't want to keep it with me and I don't like to send it by letter for fear of losing it and there is no express office here yet. But perhaps there will be before long. I don't want to keep any, only what I have lent. I suppose we shall get 4 months pay this time. I got a letter from Lute and I will send it to you so you can read it for yourself. Well I must tell you something of the health of the boys. Hiram Castle is still at the Reg. Hospital. He is not much better but I am in hopes that he will get better soon, for if he don't, he will never see home, for he is homesick and run down pretty low with the dysentery. I think the health of the Reg. is better than it was a while ago. Rance Robinson is going to get home I think. I have heard that the Brigade Surgeon came to see him and ordered his papers to be made out right off and have him sent home. If they don't they will have his carcass to send home for he is about as poor as any person that I ever saw and be around. He has to go with two canes and he can hardly go at that. We received orders to move camp yesterday, but at the time appointed to move, it began to rain as hard as it could pour down and the order was countermanded and today being Sunday it is all quiet. I don't think that we shall go a great way, only across the river to a better ground. There is no prospect of our moving forward but I can't tell anything about it myself. Melvin Sparks is getting better. You said you hope that we would not get any more bad habits. Now to tell you the truth, a private has no chance to learn any bad habits, only swearing, but that is bad enough. And some of them improve the opportunity to an alarming extent but there is no chance to indulge in drunkenness for the want of money and there is no liquor here, only what the government furnishes and the Officers get the most of that, and some of them use it to an alarming extent. Frank, I want you to keep what potatoes you have got until Spring for if I should come home I would want them to use and they will be worth more in the Spring than they are now. I wish I had them here for they would fetch \$4 per Bu. I have not eaten one since we left Louisville. You must write to Lute and tell him that I have answered his letter and want him to write often and keep up a correspondence for we want him to let us know how he gets along and tell Patience that I wrote the last letter to her since she wrote to me. I hope you and Lucinda will live together and let Mrs. Ross go to pot. I suppose if Uncle Sam had a few more of such soldiers that they would end the war in a few days. Well I must close for this time. Give my love to all and I am much obliged for the likeness that you sent. I suppose it favors its parents in an alarming degree. No more. Good bye. This from your affectionate husband

Arza

Murfreesboro
March 5th, 1863

33

Dear Frank:

I have ~~not~~^{just} been blessed by what do you suppose? Why, 4 letters all at once, two from you and one from Amanda and one from Grandfather. One of yours was dated Jan. 25th and the other one Feb. 22nd. which by the way, is a long nice letter. You may be sure that I had a good time of reading the news from home. I was pleased to hear that you were all so well at home. I have been sick for a number of days but am getting better fast. I had a genuine attack of the Lung Fever but thanks to a kind providence I think it is broken now. The Doctor allowed me to doctor my own way and I used cold water, all that I wanted, and the result is I am so as to be around and will be able for duty in a few days if I have good luck and don't get any fall back. I shall be all right. I have some cough but I keep a towel on my stomach and that is helping me right along. It is rather lonesome here at present because the whole Brigade is gone away. They took 4 days rations, 2 in their haversacks and 2 in the wagon. It is doubtful when they will be in. There is none left in camp but such as I and they are not much company. It is more lonesome when anyone is sick than when they are able to do duty. Well, I must tell you about the health of the boys. Hiram Castle is very sick. He was removed to a private house, day before yesterday. The Dr. said that there was no other hopes of him and that might save him. He is a very sick man and he stands but a slim chance of getting well at all. He has a man to take care of him, and he has a nice bed-room with a good bed and fire-place in it. He has got so poor that his own folks could hardly recognize him at present, but I hope he may get well, for it would be a hard blow for his mother if he should die. Well, Rance started for home yesterday. He got his discharge and was not slow to leave. I sent \$20 to you by him and William sent \$24 to Father, all in one package and you will get it and use it to the best advantage. I suppose it will take all of that to make you comfortable in dress. You can get what you think proper with it and I shall be satisfied. We did not get as much as we expected, not two months pay. I got \$20.65 so you see that I did not keep a great deal on hand, but I have enough to last quite a while, if I am saving, and I think I know how to be. I am very sorry that Hiram's boy was born so soon. It looks bad, but of course it is all right or it would have lived to bless its happy parent. John McMann has just been in. He is not very well. He brought the news that our forces had been whipped out at Vicksburg with the loss of 20 thousand but I hope not, for that would be a hard blow for us. I got a letter from Patience the day after I was taken sick and have lost it or I would send it to you. I was not able to take any sense of it, but the folks were all well as usual. She wanted you to write and she insinuated that if you did not do so that she should not write again very soon. You talk about the boy a good deal. Well, I suppose he is a nice little fellow. Now about his name. You can call him anything but Arza and it will suit me. Harry is a pretty name and it suits me very well, especially as it is the name of my Capt! But nevermind the name, but get his likeness when it gets warm enough and send that to me so that I can see what he looks like. There is a chance for a few to go home on a furlough and perhaps I might come but it is for so short a time that it is hardly worth while and the parting would be worse than at first. So I don't think much of it. When I come home I want to come to stay, not to stay overnight and leave in the morning. I would like a lump of wax on a chip. I suppose your sugar is all gone by this time. If it is, when you go to keeping house you had better buy 50 lbs. at a time. Well I must stop for today. Hoping that God will bless and prosper you until my return. Give my love to all of our folks. I remain your affectionate husband,

Arza

Murfreesboro, Tennessee

March 8th, 1863

35

Dear Frank:

It is with pleasure that I once more sit down to answer your kind letter bearing date March 1st, which I received last night, and you may be sure it was read with pleasure. I am sorry that you and little Harry have such a bad cold but you must take good care of yourself and the little one, for my sake, for you know that I cannot help you. I wish I could, but perhaps I will be there before many months and then I will do all that I can to help you. It is Sunday and it is awful lonesome for the Boys, that is. The regiment went out with 4 days rations and today is the 5th day and I have not heard anything from them yet, but I am in hopes that they will be in before night. There is a thousand camp rumors but there is no dependence to be placed in any of them. I hope that they will be allright when they come in. This is the first time that the Reg. has been out and left me behind, but I was not able to hardly walk when they went out, but I am getting well fast. I am so as to be around in the camp. I had a pretty severe attack of the Lung Fever but the Dr. broke the fever and the boys put the cold water on until I could breath quite easy. The Dr. told me to keep on using the water until I was well. Now about home affairs. You say you are going to keeping house. That will suit me if it does you. I want you to do as you think best for you and the way that you will take the most comfort. I suppose you have got provisions enough for the summer, all but sugar, and that won't cost you much. Please write how many potatoes you have got and you have never told what you have done with the pork. You must not go into the House until it is warm enough so that you will not get cold. Now this letter that you wrote was a real family letter and I want you to write just such every time. You must not take offense at what I said about your not writing longer letters, for I know that you write very often, but I want you to mention all the neighbors and how they get along. I am glad that you are going to have Sarah Baldwin live so near this summer, for she is good company. I suppose that you will keep the old cow this summer for that will be a great help to little Harry and you both. You spoke about a good many going sailing. I suppose that they are exempt from the draft if they are sailors. Well, let them get out of it if they can. I don't blame them but someone has got to come and it don't matter such who. I hope that they will fetch enough this time. I got that conscript law that Father sent. I think that will make some of them squirm but if they put it in force it will be a quick way of filling up the Ranks. Oh Frank, tell John's folks that Hira is no better. I must heard from him this morning. They can't stop the dysentery on him yet and he is pretty low. Frank, I sent \$20 to you by Rance. Probably he will be there before you get this letter, and I want you to use all you want for your comfort and little Harrys and keep the balance until you want it. It is just as safe in your hands as it is lent out. If you want to buy any furniture you can do so or not, just as you think proper. Well I must bring this to a close for the present, by bidding you a good bye. Give my love to all of the friends and kiss little Harry for me. You want me to be steady. I am as steady as an old family clock. Be more at present. God bless you and protect you. This from you affectionate husband,

A⁴ca

March 14, 1863

36

Dear Frank:

It is with pleasure I once more resume the pen to communicate with you. I have delayed writing longer than I should, if I had not wanted to get a letter from you, but I have looked in vain for one for a week and another thing, I wanted to hear from William before writing, but I have not heard anything of them since they left, yet, and I begin to feel somewhat anxious, but there is no use of that for they are just as safe as we are here, I suppose. You may be sure it is lonesome here in camp, for there is only the sick left. There is only 6 left in our Co. I am getting better. I consider myself well as far as bodily health is concerned, but am a little weak yet, but shall be able for duty in a very few days. Hiram Castle is thought to be a little better but not much. He is in a critical condition yet, but I hope he will get better soon. Melvin Sparks is lame with the rheumatism, so that he can hardly get out of the tent. I must tell you what a time we had moving camp. We were ordered last Monday to strike tents and load them, for they expected an attack and we struck tents and loaded them all onto the wagons and got onto them (that is all that was not able to walk) and we sat there waiting orders until dark and no orders came. We went and made our beds where our tents had been, for the night, and it was pretty cold, but we are used to sleeping out of doors in the cold. But about 3 o'clock it commenced to rain and it rained awful hard. Well we stood it as well as we could until there came an order for us to go to Nashville, all that could go. We were examined by the Dr. and he thought I could go, for we were going on the cars. Well, we all started and I went about $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile and the Dr. saw that I was about done over and he told me to go back and I told him I wished he had of told me before and he said that he thought he would try me. Well, I got a ride back in an ambulance but I was just about done over when I got back. We were allowed to pitch a tent and we just got it up and back they all came that started for Nashville. They got part way to town and they were ordered back, for they had no transportation for them. Day before yesterday they ordered us to clean up and pitch all the tents, for the Reg. was coming in, but we have not seen anything of them yet. So we are just as we were before the Reg. left and probably shall be until they come in. There was one of our company came up yesterday from Nashville that was at the Hospital and he saw Tip before he started and he said he was pretty well and he thought he would be up to the Reg. before long. I hope so, for I want to see him again. Well, I can think of no more news at present to write. I suppose Rance Robinson is at home before now and enjoying himself. Please write whether he has got there or not, in your next. I would like to be there long enough to get some wax on a chip and then come back, but you must eat enough for me, and yourself too. I was hopes I should be there in sagaring, but I shan't this spring. But if they bring out those conscripts in double quick, they may put an end to the ~~xxx~~ war this summer. I suppose that that law makes some of the men tremble back there, don't it. Well it is no worse for them and it will make it easier for all, to have a large force in the field. That law just suits the soldiers, if they will only fill the ranks of the old Regiments and not get up new ones. An old Reg. is worth 2 new ones and a man to go into an old Reg. will learn quicker than if he went into a new one. Well, I must bring this to a close for this time. Please give my love to all and to Fathers folks, especially, and keep a good X share for yourself and give little Harry a good squeeze for me. I will pay you when I come home by squeezing you. Write soon and mention everybody that I know and tell me how they are getting along. No more this time, so good bye. This from your afft. husband

Apsa

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

March 20, 1863

37

Dear Frank:

I just received a letter from you and as I had a little leisure for the 1st time for a week I thought I would answer this immediately. You have got the start of me one letter so I will have to write and answer 2 at once. The reason that I did not write immediately was that I had just wrote that day and put it into the mail box and I thought I would wait 2 or 3 days and ever since that we have been doing something so that I could not write until now. I am very sorry to hear that you have such a bad cold but you must take good care of yourself and get well so as to take good care of the baby, of he has the whooping cough. but I am in hopes that he will not have it while he is so young. I am very glad to hear that Mr. & Mrs. Ross have gotten back to Crockery once more, but I am very sorry to hear that his foot still troubles him so bad. Well, I will tell you about our health. If you could have seen the dinner that we eat you would think we would all be sick. We bought some flour and made a mass of biscuits and had biscuit and butter and fresh beef, but they would hardly come up to some of them that you used to make. I would give some money for them now, but I can eat hard tack and Bacon until this little fuss is over and then won't I enjoy the little home. I don't want you to think that I am homesick, if I write anything about home, for I am not any more so than any other boy in this little army. They all want to get home and so do I, but not bad enough to worry about it. If the conscript the conscript law fetches them out and fill our Reg. up I would like to drill some of them right as smart, but I am afraid that the President won't call them out. We moved camp day before yesterday and have come almost into town. We are about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from Murfreesboro and we have taken in our Pickets a good deal, so that we don't have to do so much Picketing. The troops are all drawn into a smaller compass. I cannot give the reason for it but I suppose old Rosy could if he chose to make know his plans, but he don't publish his plans before he executes them. You must take good care of little Harry. If he has the whooping cough you had better get some molasses and give him all you can get him to take. Milk & molasses are very loosening. ~~fringonxixxixxixxixxix~~ I know you will do the best you can. Well I tell you the boys are having a good time. Melvin Sparks and one of the Dutch boys have just got each of them a box of good things such as Butter and cake and dried fruit and I suppose that they will live for awhile. I would like a box but it costs a good deal and if we should have to march I should have to leave it, for I could not carry it with me. I went out and helped to bring Hiram Castle in yesterday when we took our pickets in. It left him outside and we were afraid that the Rebs would come and take him and the nurse so we went after him. He is better, or seems to be, today. I was afraid his ride would hurt him but I guess it did not. I think if he gets able to ride he will be discharged and be sent home. There was one poor fellow got an honorable discharge a few hours ago. I want to have you tell me where Hank Morse is. I have not heard from him in a long time. You must write to Lute often. I have got perfectly well and in good spirits. While I am sick I want to be at home, but I can stand it pretty well when I am well. I sent you \$25 by express and if you get it I want you to keep what you don't use, so that when I come home I can have some to use. You had better take good care of it and keep it with you all the time. I sent \$20 by R. Ross. Well I must stop for this time. Give my love to all and tell father I will write soon. The weather is as warm as May and peach trees are all in bloom. No more at present, so good bye for this time and God bless you. This from your affectionate husband

Arna

March 23, 1863

38

Dear Frank:

I just received 2 letters bearing date 14th & 16th and you may be sure I read them with pleasure and you have gratified me by writing a long letter. You did extremely well this time, although I have no fault to find with any of your letters. I am glad to hear that you are well but am afraid that little Harry will have the whooping cough, but I hope not. You say that Father calls you a Secesh. Now I hope he has no reason for it, for I don't want you to get any such notions into your head, for I am a stronger union man than when I enlisted, but sometimes am afraid that we will not be able to conquer them on account of the Copperheads at the North, but rather than see a dishonorable settlement. You wrote that Charley Jennings had been arrested. I am heartily glad of it for every man that deserts leaves more for us to do. I hope that they will catch every one that is mean enough to run away, and put him into the regular service for 5 years. I have no sympathy with a man that will desert. You wanted to know whether I wanted your likeness with the babys or not. Of course I want it. I wish you could have been here today. There was a grand review by Gen. Rosecrans himself. You have no idea of what an array is until you have seen one. Just in our division there is enough men to reach 2 miles in four ranks, and the artillery is a great sight. The Rebs are getting real saucy. They attacked our pickets and kept up a pretty brisk fire for several hours. At last we were ordered out in line of battle and our Artillery soon made them skedaddle, but there was one poor fellow brought in, shot right in the eye and I don't know how many more were wounded or killed. You spoke about selling some of the cows. I would like to have them all sold, if cattle are high. All but the steers and one cow, but if they are not worth a fair price, I want to have Father keep them until I get home, but I shan't want but one team and one cow if I should get home now. Now I don't want you to scrimp yourself to save money any more than if I was there. I wrote in my other letter that I had sent \$25 more by express and I am in hopes you will get that and I shall keep doing so as often as Uncle Sam lets me have money. Now about that freak of nature, I want you to understand that I am a nice young man, so never fear. Well I must close. Give my love to all of Father's folks and Rosess, also. I almost envy Ross his happiness, but never mind, there is better times coming. Good Bye from your affectionate ol man. William is picking gray-backs off his shirt and writing between times.

Well Frank, I thought I had filled this sheet but come to fold it, I find it is not, and so will try and fill it with some nonsense. You sent a prescription for Hiram Castle. His dysentery is about stopped and all he needs is strength and if he had something nourishing, but that is almost out of the question. He will be at home as soon as he is able to ride. You are of the same opinion of myself about my coming home on a furlough. I don't want to come without I can stay for I know that the first parting would be nothing to what it would be to leave the second time, for I am afraid you would tease me to stay. But if I ever do come home on leave I will come back, if I should live. I hear from Tip every little while and I hear that he is well. Melvin Sparks is pretty hard up. He has got the Rheumatism and he is awful poor. The rest of the boys except Joel Bond are well. He has got a good deal of fever. I want you to tell me who is elected in town this Spring. I have some interest in that town yet. You need not fret about Eber running away. It is not very easy to get away from here. I believe he would stand in another battle. Write the prices of provisions. It is awful high here and they say that there is a good many that are actually in a suffering condition. Well, it is bedtime and I will bid you good night. I will dream of you and home.

Arza

On picket near Salem, Tenn.

March 28, 1863

39

Dear Frank:

It is with pleasure that I take the present opportunity of addressing a few lines to let you know how we are getting along. We are on Picket and will be for 2 days yet. We have been on 3 days already but the weather is warm and pleasant and the woods begin to look quite green, but we had a hard rain last night. I don't know the object of this picketing here, but I suppose that it is to give the forces in town good notice of the approach of the enemy. They have failed to appear along our lines. I have been looking for a letter 2 or 3 days but have failed to get it. I begin to feel somewhat uneasy about that money I expressed, but that will not do any good, but I hope that you will get it for I have to work too hard to lose the money. We have been told that we were to be paid two months more but that is doubtful, but if we do I shall send it all home for it is more safe there than it is with me. Some of the boys have lost their money already. I have not seen Hiram since I came out on picket but the day that we came out he was a little better, He thought, but he is very low. If he gets well enough to ride he is going to be sent home either on a furlough or discharge. I don't believe that he will ever be able to do duty again while he stays here. William and the rest of the boys that you are acquainted with are all well. You must excuse me for not writing a full sheet but I have no chance of getting any more and I thought this would be acceptable. I want to see some of them conscripts coming out here for I should like to show some of them how to soldier. We want to have our Reg. filled up to about 800 or 1000 and then we won't have so much duty to do. William and I wrote you a letter about 5 or 6 days ago and William wanted to have you send us some dried fruit by the Captain, if it was convenient, but if not, why you need not trouble about it. If you do send anything, send some Horse Radish for that will be first rate on meat and we can't get any such thing here. I suppose that you have all the sugar that you can eat by this time. It is quite warm and the grass and trees look quite green. It rained last night awful hard. There was a few wet hides here, but a soldier gets used to that so that it does not trouble him a great deal. Well, I must bid you good bye for this time. Write often and I will do the same. Give my love to all and kiss little Harry for me. No more for this time. This from your affectionate husband,

Arza

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

April 2, 1863

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Dear Frank:

I received your kind letter day before yesterday dated 23rd but neglected to answer it until today on account of having written one while on picket. You need not worry about me sleeping on the ground for it does not have any effect at all on me. I can lie right down on the ground if it rains ever so hard, and not take cold. I have waked in the morning and found myself right in the water. If anyone had told me that I could stand such hardships when I was at home, I would not have believed it. I am sorry to hear that little Harry has got the whooping cough but I am in hopes that he will be spared to us. You wanted to know what Brigade we were in. We are in Sheridans Division (the 3rd) and 1st Brigade, commanded by Col. Sherman of Illinois, and to the 20th Army Corps which is commanded by Maj. Gen. McCook. Gen. Sheridan is a perfect tiger. He is a fighting man every inch. There is not much fighting right here, but the Rebs skirmished a little to bother us, but nothing serious. I will try and tell you how the boys are. Hiram I think is getting better and probably will go home before long. Melvin Sparks is pretty hard up. He is awful poor. I don't know what ails him but he has some disease that is pulling him right down. Our best and largest healthiest men are the first to give out. Joel Bond is sick but is getting better. I begin to feel somewhat anxious about the money that I expressed but am in hopes that you will get it so I can hear from it the next letter. There is talk that we are to be paid off again soon. There is 3 months due now. If they do, I shall send you about \$25 more. If we are paid in time to send it by Hiram Castle I shall do so. Now for a little business. I suppose that it comes pretty hard for Mr. Taylor to pay you money and if he is doing business for Lucinda and she has to pay him the money and she had just as lief turn it on what I owe her, I will give her an order on him. Please let me know in your next what the prospect is and I will be very much obliged. I just as lief have that pay my debts as anything else and I think it will come hard for him to let you have money. There is a rumor here that the old 3rd Reg. is coming here. I should like to see some of them. You wrote that they were all siling out there this season. You did not tell what vessel they were going on. I sup oee that will exempt them from conscript. I hear from ^{Sile} every few days. They say that he is well. I don't see why he don't come to the Reg. It would make a good deal of difference with me, for there is only one more Corporal in the Co. besides me that is able for duty and if he would come it would make a great difference. There is not a Sgt. in the Co. now but Hiram and he is sick. Our Co. has run down lately. We have 4 men that have lost their speech and are well other ways. I hope the Capt. will come back soon. Oh Frank, I want you to get somebody to set out them fruit trees just as soon as the ground is fit and have them set out on the dry knoll in the back of the lot. It won't take more than 1/2 day to do it. You spoke about selling some of the cattle. I don't care anything in particular about selling them if I can have them as good as I left them, but if cows are high and Father had as lief let them go, I don't care. I don't want to winter them myself if I should come home this summer. I shan't keep only the steers and 1 or 2 cows. You can do as you see fit about keeping the calves. Now I liked this letter because you mentioned everyone almost. That is what I want, is to hear from everyone in the neighborhood. Well I must close for this time. Give my love to all. Everyone in our circle of acquaintance. No more at present, so good bye, from you affectionate husband,

Area

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

April 12, 1863

41

Dear Frank:

Yesterday I was on picket and the mail came out there and to my joy I got a letter. I feel somewhat anxious to hear while the babe is sick. I was afraid that the money that I sent was lost but I see by the letter that you got it and I am glad for \$23 don't grow on every bush. I am glad to hear that Father's eyes are so well. They must be a great deal better if he can do as much as to move Lucinda, but he must be very careful or he will be worse again. I am glad to hear that you have got another letter from Lut. I had almost given up of ever hearing from him again. He has never answered the last one that I wrote to him ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ But you must not neglect to write to him and Patience often. You have more time than I do I think, although I don't know but I have the most time, but we are pretty busy. We have to drill from 9 until 11 o'clock and 2 until 4 and we have our own washing and guns to keep clean. You spoke about me writing how many heifers I have got. There is 3 heifers that are 3 years old this Spring that Father was to keep for the use of them, besides the old cow he was to keep the steers and the old cow on my hay and the rest on his own and consequently I should not feel right in taking them from him in the Spring without paying him, but if you should have a good chance to sell any of them and get the money or some improvements on the place, and he had as lief endorse their keeping on his note, I would be perfectly willing but you know that when I left there that I could neither sell nor let them at that time. You had ought to have \$20 for any of them at this time of the year. I suppose they are worth more than when I left. I think that if you don't raise the old cows calf that you had better send by someone and buy a little pig and raise it. The milk from one cow is enough if Father has got any. You had better get one of him that is if they are of a good breed. Don't get one of anybody but a good one, if you have to pay double. The keeping of the cows, all but the old one, don't cost me anything and I had about as soon have a cow as a mare note, for it is a risky time at present. We are expecting to be paid off in a few days now. Dan & Charley & Hank have been over here all day, it is Sunday, as there is not much to do on Sundays unless we are on picket. The boys was paid yesterday and as Dan used to say, they are going to live again. There is lots of boys that keep all of their money and spend it for things to live on. I will give you something of an idea of what it costs to buy things here. Potatoes are \$6 per bu. as the sutler calls them. That is 10¢ per pound, and apples are 3 for a quarter or \$1 per dozen, and butter can't be had at any price. Dried apples are 25¢ per pound, eggs are 60¢ per dozen and milk, what little can be had, is 25¢ per qt, and buttermilk is 20¢ per qt. The boys buy little cans of fruit put up like Bruce's peaches and they have to pay \$1 for a can that will hold a pint. These sutlers take the money faster than any two merchants in Michigan. I have just got a paper from New York. It costs 63¢ where it is sent to a soldier and I subscribed and it has come. It is the N. Y. Times. So there is no use of sending papers here for they are not very apt to come until they are old. There has been quite a stir amongst the officers. Our Lt. Smith has been promoted. Oh Tip Hunter has got to the Reg. and is pretty well. Well, I will have to bring this to a close by bidding you good bye and God bless you. Give my love to all of father's folks and all our friends, so good bye, from your affectionate husband,

Arza

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

April 17, 1863

42

Dear Frank:

It is with pleasure I sit to answer your of the 8th. It has been some time since I got a letter and I had become very anxious to hear from you. I was afraid you were sick but I am glad to hear that you are well and that the babe is no worse. I feel a good deal of anxiety for him, but I know he is in good hands. I would like to be there so as to help you take care of him. It seems that since Charley Jennings came to that place he has furnished the town with something exciting. I don't know but it is right for 2 or 3 to pound one, but I hardly think it is. I think they will get some fighting that will not be so agreeable as pounding an old man. You have not told me whether Mrs. Ross had moved or not. If she has I suppose you are some lonesome but you must make the best of it. I don't think that it will be any better for her to live up there than with you. You stated that there was a battle expected here everyday but we fail to see it. I don't think they will attack us. If they do, they will meet with a warm reception for we have a few men and some big guns planted in the forts around this town and old Rosy means to hold this place and he is the man that can do it, if anyone can. I must tell you about our division Commander having a sword presented to him. It is the most beautiful thing I ever saw. The sword is a pretty blade and then there is a steel scabbard and a gold scabbard that belong to it. The gold one is the prettiest thing I ever saw. There is a diamond set into the hilt of the sword that cost \$200 and then the initials of his name are set with diamonds and then the hilt is leather, all covered with gold and the scabbard cost as much as 4 or 5 hundred dollars. Then there was a set of Silver and Gold dishes presented with it, one wine pitcher cost \$200 and then there was a service that was solid silver laid with Gold and he had a saddle and bridle and spurs. The saddle was just as nice if not nicer than Gen. Rosecrans. The spurs are of solid Gold and quite heavy. The rings in the bits are Gold. The whole cost I have heard was \$3000 and was presented by the Officers of the division. Probably you will see an account of it in the papers. He is a good General and a perfect tiger to fight. He went as Colonel of the 2nd Mich. Cavalry and now he is a Major General. His name is Phillip H. Sheridan. The Officers all went over to his headquarters the day that it was presented and some of them got beastly drunk. There are a great many men that are ruining themselves by drinking here. The privates can't get much but the officers can, and there is too much drank for the good of the cause. Well, I will have to close. We are expecting our pay every day. The weather is very warm days, but nights are cool. The wood are all leaved out. Give my love to all of our folks. The health of the Reg. is good. Oh, Hiram has gone home. He started day before yesterday. This from your old man,

Arza

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

April 20, 1863

43

Dear Frank:

I just received another saloome letter from you and I thought although I had written only 3 days ago that I would answer it immediately, for there is no drill today. We just came in from Picket and we never drill the day after we come in, and we are to be paid this afternoon I think. We ware on Picket right close by the old battlefield and the stench is awful. There is horses without number and men that have been over the ground say that there is Rebs there that are not buried yet and some that are buried are not put in deep enough to prevent them from smelling. I am sorry to hear that little Harry has such a hard time of it but I should think that he stood it pretty well if the hand that you sent is a pattern of his. I hope that Wheeler will not be sick long for I don't know what Father will do without him. You state that Ross has gone but you did not say whether he had gone to join his Reg. or to Washington. I am sorry to hear that Lucinda has lost that land. It is too bad. I don't believe that they can keep it from her but I don't know anything about the circumstances. You wrote to know what to do about selling the steers. I don't want them sold yet, for if I do get home before Winter I would much rather keep them and they will grow all Summer and I don't think that cattle are going to be any lower for sometime to come. You wanted to know how much I owed Lucinda. I think it is about \$50 and I have written to have you pay her \$20 or \$25, and I want father to pay the rest of it. The note that I hold against him is due before that that is against me. I probably shall send you about \$20 more this pay day. I wish you would write what the prospect is of Mr. Taylor's paying you anything. I thought that he would be right upto his word and I think he will pay it yet sometime. You have not written what the result of the election was yet and I rather feel some interest in town matters. Frank, I want to have that piece of ground seeded down and perhaps Father can get the seed of Mr. Taylor. If he can, have him do it. I hope that Father will be able to put that ground into crops for it will help us a great deal. Well, I can't think of much to write today and so I will wait awhile and perhaps something new will turn up so that I can fill this.

Tuesday Morning, April 21st.

Well, I thought I would try and close up this letter this morning. We were paid yesterday and I will enclose \$5 to you and I will try and go to the express Office today and send you some more. William is not going to send any right off. I would not let everyone know how much money I had in my hands for you must recollect that you are alone. I suppose that that money that we lent to Frank Carpenter is due, but I guess you had better let him keep it a year. I suppose there is no such thing as hiring a man this season. If I could, for a reasonable rate, I would get some logging and choypin done, but I hear that wages are high and help scarce. Well I can't think of much this morning. William is writing a letter to George & Martha and is going to send it too, by this letter. Frank Garrison has recovered his voice again. I have not seen Dan and the other boys for some time but the last time I did, they were awful homesick. Seph Brown is playing off, I think, for a discharge. Tip is well and so are the rest of the boys. Give my love to all our friends and take good care of yourself and little Harry. No more this time so good bye. This from your affectionate husband,

A. J. S.

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

April 26, 1863

44

Dear Frank:

After waiting in vain until after the mail came, and no letter, I thought I would not let so favorable an opportunity slip by without improving it. Although there is no news of any importance, it was rumored last night in camp, that the Kentucky and Tennessee troops are all cooing into our lines. It is too good to be true, but I hope it is so, but there is always all kinds of camp rumors with no sort of a foundation. If it was so, I should think that the Southern Confederacy was about played out and I hope it is, but we must wait and see the end with patience. The boys are all well and in good spirits. I am well except a slight cold, but it is getting better fast and the warm weather is favorable for colds. I think by what we hear that it is more sickly there than at this place. I am afraid the next letter that I get will bring bad news but I hope not. Silo got a letter since I did and that stated that little Arsa was no better, but I am in hopes that he will be spared to all of us for he would be sadly missed. It will put Father back a good deal if Wheeler is sick long, for he is the mainstay at present in the family. I hope our little boy will not get the Diphtheria for it is a very dangerous disease. It seems as though they had all the diseases that the human family was heir to in that town. I wrote you a letter about 4 or 5 days ago and enclosed \$10 to you and I shall enclose \$5 in this and I am in hopes that you will get it. I thought that it was about as safe to send a little at a time as to send by express for they will not insure from this place. I have not seen Dan or Charley for some time but I guess they are well. They are homesick, boiled down and Seph is dreadful bad but he don't show it in his face. I think he would like to take his discharge if they would offer it to him. This is a poor place for boys that are any way childish. We are ordered to be ready for Divine service at 4 o'clock. We have not had a Chaplain in our Reg. for 5 months. I would like to be there to go to meeting with you and I hope it will not be long before we will be there. I must not write so, for I will hear again that I am homesick, but I feel lonesome Sundays unless I get a letter from you, but I shall try tomorrow if it is not delayed. I have written to Lute again and I hope he will answer that one. Where did he say he was the last he wrote to you? Now I wish to tell you something you must be very careful about your money and keep it pretty close, for there are people in the world mean enough to rob you of every cent. You need not tell them that I have sent you any of the last. You had better get some of Father's folks to stay with you nights, for it is close by and will be but little trouble. I want you to use what money you want for your comfort, and keep the rest until I come. I don't want you to lend any more but I guess we had better let Frank keep what he has got for a year because you won't need it and I think the security is good. Please let me know how much your note is against him and what amount you have on hand, in your next. Well, I must close. Give my love to Father & Mother and Grandfather and all the children, please. And keep what you think you can bear for yourself, and the little one. Write often and all the news. No more at present. Good bye for this once. From your affectionate husband, Arsa

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

March 23, 1863

45

Dear Sister Frank:

After so long a delay I will write you a few lines. The reason I have for not writing before, if I have any reason, is because Arza writes pretty often and the most of his letters are written to you. But I must write once and a while. We are both very well at present. Hiram Castle does not change much either way. I think it is rather a doubtful case with him to get well. Joel Bond was taken sick last night. He is quite sick. There is no use of our trying to tell what ails him, for the Dr. does not tell what ails anyone here. The Dr. says that Hiram Castle shall have his discharge just as soon as he is able to write. The Rebs think we are gone from here so they are picking away at our pickets every little while. They pitched on our pickets Saturday and they hung on for about 3 hours. They began to fire pretty sharp and we had to go out to the front but they left before we got out to where they were. If they think we are all gone and pitch onto us, they will be mistaken. They will find the children and old folks are at home if the boys are all gone. I heard they had orderd Rosy to surrender the town, but before he surrenders it will cost the Rebs one man for every dollars worth that they get. Well Frank I'll tell you what it is. I had rather they would fight us here rather than to be obliged to follow them off and fight them on their own grounds. But I'll tell you, I had rather not fight them fellows at all, for they are so careless with guns, for they will sometimes aim them right at a fellow. We had a General Review today. I just wish you could have seen it. It was splendid. Old Rosy rode along and every green looking officer he see, he would stop and talk to them. He wanted us when the new conscripts get here, to learn the m how to live and work. We can learn them the work part but the live we don't learn. I expect soon to see Charley & Hiram and some of the others down here beofre long. We need them all. While we was out on that scout, we did not have a fight as you heard. That is, our Division did not, but there was another Division had a little brush with them before we got to hem and they killed and wounded and took 1313 men from us. The 19th Mich. was most all taken. You say you heard we lost one man, but there is quite a difference between one and 1313 I think. Well Frank, I will have to beg a little from home. I'll tell you what Arza and I want you and the rest of the folks to send us when Capt. Albee comes, if he will, see to it, and that is a little dried Fruit or berries of any description. If you have anything to spare and another thing is if we had some Horse Radish grated up, and put in a can or other thing and put a little vinegar on it. It would be so nice to eat on our meat, but do try not try to send anything unless someone is coming right here. I got a pound of peach peelings and dried fruit today. They was cheap for this place, they only cost a quarter of a dollar. We cannot get them very often. Well Frank, I have got to stop writing for this time, for it is bed time. Kiss the little boy for me. Poor Jane Jennings, what luck.. Well I will close my letter for this time. My love to you and all enquiring friends, from your brother,

Wm. H. Bartholomew

March 24th

We are all about the same old sixpence, this morning. Hiram is about the same. Tell Johns folks to write to him often, for it makes him feel so much better when he gets a letter. I have not got one for 5 weeks. Frank, you must not worry about Arza so much for it will make you sick if you do. The peach trees are all in blossom. It is very nice weather now. I suppose you have had warm sugar to eat before now. I wish you would eat some for me.

Murphreesborough, Tenn.

Jan. 5, 1863

Dear Frank:

It is with heartfelt thankfulness that I take time to drop a line once more to let you know that I have been spared to write you another letter. I have been through one of awefullest scenes that can be imagined. We met the enemy in a general engagement last Wednesday. I will not try to tell you anything about how long we fought but we were under fire about 5 days. One day was skirmishing and one day we were in it from daylight until dark and when we came off at night we had of our Regiment 85 men, but ~~many~~ a good many of them run away and did not come back for 3 or 4 days and some have not come. William and myself came off without a scratch but I can't see how it was, for I never heard such a perfect crash of balls. They were as thick as hail and the shot and shell cut the trees down like grass. It is a sight that I hope to be spared from ever witnessing again. We lost our Captain about 10 o'clock in the morning. He was wounded in the arm and it came out his shoulder, and I am afraid he is a prisoner. We don't know where he was taken. One of the boys helped him into an ambulance and that was the last we have heard of him. You will probably get the details of the battle before you get this from me. I tell you we were pretty well whipped in the forenoon, but in the afternoon we drove them a little, but it was one of the hardest battles of this war. There were some that you were acquainted with that were killed that I can think of. Charley Dickinson is missing but I don't know whether he was killed or wounded. The Rebels drove us in all the time until noon so that all that we left the Rebels got. Yesterday the Secesh left the River but where they have gone is more than I know. I have no doubt they will turn up again in some new place. I can tel you they can fight awfully. We have nothing to brag of in this battle. I think they killed more of us than we did of them. Some men of our company and prisoners have gone just now to bury the dead. We did not get ~~paper~~ ~~possession~~ possession of the field until yesterday so we had no occasion of taking them off until today. William behaved first rate in the fight, at least as well as any. The regiment were ordered to retreat in the morning. The first fire we got they were right on our right before we knew it and they drove the whole brigade and ~~us~~ of course we were obliged to fall back, and we did fall back to a fence and behind ~~them~~ their right. Well we had to leave that place and they got us into a swamp and fired in from front and rear and piled our men in there in heaps. Sile and Lew was left in Louisville in the hospital and High Castle was full of fight and came off without being hurt except in the boot leg. I got a ball through my blanket but it did not hurt me any. You must excuse for writing on such paper but it is all I have for we have left our knapsacks behind and all that were in them and they have not come up yet. No more at present, but do you write often.

Your affectionate husband

Arza

Dear Frank:

It is with pleasure that I take the present opportunity of writing you a few lines once more after a few days delay, but I think you will excuse me for it has been rather exciting times for the last 2 weeks. I wrote you a few lines last Sunday or Monday, I forget which, just to let you know that we were alive. I could not write much for the want of paper, but I thought it would be welcome. We left Nashville 2 weeks last Friday for Murfreesboro and we came up to the enemy's pickets about noon and had some skirmishing all that day until we came to Nashville where we had a pretty sharp little fight, but they kept up a running fight until Saturday night when they left us to rest over Sunday, which we improved to the best advantage, drying our clothes, for it rained all day Saturday and Saturday night and we had not tents at all. It is strange to see how the men can stand it to sleep on the ground with only a blanket over them and it raining as hard as it can pour down. I have lain down on the ground and it was dry and when I got up in the morning there would be a pool of water where I lay, but I never was so free from a cold at this time of the year as at present, and all of the boys are the same. We have been furnished with tents since the Battle was over, and so we are right at home again. The weather is quite warm at present, with some rain. Well, I will try and tell you something of the little fuss we had out here. We left our camp where we stayed over Sunday, early on Monday morning for the scene of action, but we failed to discover anything that day. The next day we had not fairly got underway before we heard the skirmishers firing away pretty smartly, and Co. G was deployed to the right as flankers, until it became too hot and then we were formed in line of battle, in the edge of the wood where we supported a battery that sent a few shells over ~~the~~ to the enemy to feel of him, but he did not see fit to respond with artillery. At last we advanced about half a mile and 2 Regiments of our Brigade were advance about 10 rods ahead of us and opened fire on the enemy, when we were ordered to lie flat on our faces, which by the way, was quite pleasant, for we lay in a cotton field and the mud ankle deep and the weather quite cold. So you can see that we did not have a very warm time of it that day (Tuesday). But on Wednesday we just had time to swallow a little breakfast when the Rebels opened the Ball in good earnest about a half mile to our right and took a Battery and drove our men right back and the first we knew, the Regiment that we supported gave away and run right through our ranks and broke us all to pieces. When we got formed again and gave them one volley, they had us almost surrounded so that we were ordered to fall back and then the way that they poured lead into the 21st was beautiful to behold, at least in their eyes. Well, we fell back about 20 rods to a fence and every man went in on his own account and fired to the best advantage, but at last the order came to fall back again, and we fell back and formed in until there was not men enough to form a company. I can tel you that the Rebels had us about as tight as need be. Our Division was completely surrounded and cut to pieces but thanks to General Rosecrans, he came in time to save us from being killed or taken prisoner. I hope never to see such an time again. Every man fought on his own hook. They drove us into a swamp and surrounded the swamp and poured in shot and shell from both sides. Oh, it was awful to see the trees falling and horses running without riders. If you could just see the woods you would say that a man could not get out alive, for every tree had from 1 to 20 ball holes in it. The timber was all cut to pieces. Well I must stop for the present for dinner is ready and we have a potpie made of mutton and I don't want to lose a meal. Later - Evening- Well I have just got a letter dated the 21st so I will call this an answer to that. William just got a letter from Tip. He was a little bitter and so was Lew. Wm. is as cool in battle as an old veteran but I will say nothing of myself. Let others tell how I acted but I was no more scared than I am at present, but I did not know how it would go with the 21st, but I would have taken a shilling for the Reg. about noon, for they had us pretty tight. We lost about 150 in killed, wounded and missing. We have about 200 in the Reg. at present. Our Capt. is with us. He was wounded and taken prisoner but they had to leave so quick that they did not have time to parole him. He is going home to recruit for the Reg. I expect until he gets well. I must bid you goodbye for the present. I am very sorry to hear that you and the baby is unwell. You must take care of yourself and the baby. Give my love to all the friends and call the

Letter to Arza Bartholomew

Holly Springs, Miss.

Jan. 8, 1863

46

Dear Brother:

I received yours about 4 weeks ago and was very glad to hear from you. You will not think it strange in not getting an answer before this when I tell you that we had marching orders that night and the next morning we had to march. We marched south 60 miles and stayed there 2 weeks and back to Holly Springs yesterday. But that was not all the difficulty. The communications were cut off between you and me as you have probably heard of before now. So I think I am excusable this time at least. I received a letter from Frank about the same time and I shall answer it today. Frank said if you come home she was going to call her boy after me and if you never come home she should call it Arzie. I hope she will not have to call it Arzie, under these considerations although it is hard telling what there is in store for us. My health is first rate at this present time and I hope this will find you enjoying the same blessing, for such I count it, to any man who is in the United States service, for they have to endure all kinds of hardships as you already know. When our communication was cut off we had to live on half rations 4 days and the next 5 days on $\frac{1}{2}$ rations and ever since that $\frac{1}{2}$ rations. We expect full rations now pretty soon. The cars run to us now. We have seen some pretty hard times, and should have been harder if we had not been Provost Guards. That give us a little liberty. My Company was detached from the Reg. about 3 months ago and have been on Provost duty ever since. When Frank wrote to me the last time she sent me your likeness. She did not send hers. She said she would wait and see if I got yours. I think yours looks as natural as any one could expect, dressed in soldier's clothes. It is raining here today and it makes me feel lonesome, although we are in a comfortable house which Provost Guards are allowed, with a nice writing desk which we stole from the Seminary and a nice stool to sit on. Tell Tip & Rance to write to me and give my love to them. Tell them I hope that they may forever, in spite of the Rebels. I had a letter from Patience a short time ago. She was well and the rest, except Father and he was some better than he had been. I heard that there has been some pretty hard fighting in your part of the country, which makes me anxious to hear from you. If you seen the 25th Michigan, enquire for Richard Andrews and Charles Coleman. I saw Bert Albert and he told me he thought they were in that, although he did not know what Co. they were in, so I don't know how to direct you. If you should see them, tel them where to write and tell them to write to me. Give my love to William and tell him to be a good boy and kill all of the Rebels he can. The boys had a pretty smart fight here a short time ago. One regiment was left here to guard the railroad and 10,000 Secesh came in & took them prisoners and paroled them and burnt a part of the town and destroyed a large supply of provisions and clothing and left. But our cavalry caught some of them. The 108th Illinois volunteers, all but one Company, have stacked their arms and say they did not come to fight to free the Niggers and they are all under Guard. We have not been paid for 6 months. I will stop writing now for I do not know as you will get this. Good bye for this time.

Geo. L. Daniels
Co. F, 53rd Reg. Illinois Volunteers
1st Brigade, 4th Division

Letter to Frank Bartholomew from her brother-in-law, William

47

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Jan. 23, 1863

Dear Sister Frank:

As Arza is writing I will write a few lines. You seem to think that I rather slight you by not writing oftener to you. The reason I do not write oftener is because Arza writes so often to you, that there is no news to write. We are both well and fat as hogs. I am sorry to hear your health is not better this winter. I am afraid you worry yourself about us too much. Frank, do not worry. I think we will come through this war allright, yet. ~~xxxxxx~~ We have been in another hard battle and there was not a ball touched me this time. You have heard before this who was wounded. We live tiptop since we got here. Tip and Lew are both in Nashville sick. It is a hard place to be sick here. I was down to Murfreesboro about a week ago and saw was in the hospital. I tell you it is rather a hard sight to see the poor boys lay there wounded and cannot hardly help themselves if they want to turn over in bed. They have the best of care that can be taken of them. Our regiment is running down the worst way. There is not but 1 Captain here in the Regt. They are all resigning every day. I heard that our Major got his papers this morning for his discharge. He sent in his resignation about 2 weeks ago. I do not know but I shall resign before long. Tell Dennis I want him to take care of the girls until I get back. I want you to name that boy of yours before you write again, so I will know what to call him, so I can write to him too. Well, I will have to stop my nonsense for this time. Frank, now write often for we feel anxious to hear from home. I have not got any letter from home since we was to Nashville.

Good bye,

From your affectionate brother

Wm. Bartholomew