

## Elbridge G. Littlejohn Letters

Undated Letter Fragment

[beginning of letter is missing] do the best you can about this. Pork will be very high in this country. Some of the boys tried to buy a hog and they asked him eighteen cents a pound. Bacon, forty cents. Butter is worth one dollar and fifty cents a lb. in Knoxville. Does not this look like exorbitant prices? Soldiers are such blockheads that they will pay any price for anything they take a notion to.

I must begin to come to a close. I will send \$20.00 by Lieut. Trammel for him to get you a pr. of Cards. It is a mighty high price. I will also send you a Star which Benton had. I know you all will like to have it for a keepsake. Give my respects to all the friends. Martin and Garner send theirs also. I want you to write to me soon and often, at Chattanooga, Tenn. Remember me in your prayers to our God for his mercy and kindness towards us, and I will do the same for you. May heaven direct your footsteps, and bless our little baby is my prayer for your sake.

I remain your most affectionate husband, E. G. Littlejohn

P. S. If you can get a good coarse hat send it to me by Trammel. I can't get any hat here. E. G. L.

[Note at top of last page: I send you some indian [sic] pumpkin seed that I got in Kentucky. They are very fine. Let them get hard and then bake like potatoes.]

Camp near Manchester Ten. Decr. [sic] 6th 1862

Dear Sallie,

This morning I take pleasure in writing to you. I have nothing of importance to say to you, nothing having transpired, worthy of notice, since I wrote you before. The enemy have made no more new moves that I have heard of. After we left Loudon, we came to Bridgeport Ten on the Tennessee River. We staid [sic] there two or three days. This place is in Ala. and was in the possession of the "Feds" until the 1st Sept. They burned the rail road bridge across the river. Our men are building another. It will be completed in a short time. The cars are now to the river and then they ferry the soldiers across in a boat.

From Bridge Port [sic] we started across the mountains afoot. The mountains at the place where we crossed are quite smoothe, [sic] compared with the places that we crossed before. It is about twenty miles across, and after we reach the top, it is quite level, and a very poor country. We have been here about a week, and have had some

very bad weather since we came here. Two or three days of rain and some snow yesterday morning. But it did not snow long. The weather is very cold, indeed. We seldom have as cold weather in Texas as it is here. It has faired off this morning and promises to be a pretty day. I hope it will remain so for some time. We are not very far from the enemy. We received orders this morning to cook two days rations, ready to march at any time. I don't suppose we will move today, as the order says to keep two days cooked rations on hand. I guess we will march towards Murfreesboro, thirty miles distant. It is very likely we will get into an engagement near there, as our lines are near each other. I heard that there had been some fighting there but on a small scale. I think we are going to have a regular winter campaign. If we do, I dread it. Well, Sallie, how is little Bridgey coming on this morning? Is he growing any? and have you found a name for him? If you have not I recon [sic] you will call him after me, or any other name that will suit you. I am very anxious to see him and you particular [sic]. I have written to you several times lately. I have just had my ink knocked over and must quit writing. I have not Rcd. [sic] any from you for some time. I hope you will write soon and often. I have been well with the exception of a bad cold. But I am getting better now. Martin and Garner are well. I have some kind of a humor like the itch. I don't know whether it is that or not. Give my respects to your Pa, Ma, and all the family. Also to Dr. Goodman and wife. I will write again soon. Remember me in your prayers to God, and I will do the same for you. He has been merciful to me thus far. I hope to see you ere many more months roll around.

I remain your Loving husband, E. G. Littlejohn

Camp Reederville [sic], Tenn., Decr. [sic] 14th 1862

My dear wife and friends,

I take pleasure in writing to you all, this pleasant Sabbath morning. I have just finished eating breakfast and read a few chapters in the Bible. We had what we call a tolerable good breakfast: biscuit and fried beef steak. I fried the beef myself, and flatter myself that it is about as good as anyone could make at home with the same material. But, however, I would like very much to have had the pleasure of taking breakfast at your table this morning. I think I could have eaten with much better appetite than I did, though I eat very heartily anyhow. My appetite never fails me. That is one good thing. The worst of it is I sometimes want to eat when I have not got it. Our rations are corn meal, flour, beef, and enough bacon to grease the bottom of the skillet. We keep a little piece laying by to look at. We drew a little sugar and rice yesterday evening, and I hear that we will get some molasses this morning. But such as I have last mentioned, we don't get scarcely any, not as much as one man can eat. I guess you can form some vague idea how we live in camps. It is rough indeed, but I have got used to it now. We have always had the liberty of going out into the country to buy things until now. There

has been a stop put to that, since Col. Lock has been reinstated. Occasionally we can buy apples and pies, though at high rates. Since, I wrote before to you, which was about ten days ago, we have had some very cold weather; but it has turned warmer now. I think we will have rain before long, and we are in a bad fix for it; no tent, but an old fly. But we have done so far without any.

We moved nearer the enemy; we are some fifteen miles East of Murfreesboro, and on the right wing of the army. It is said that Gens. Jo. Johnston and Lee are at Murfreesboro. Our Brigade [sic] has been drilling for two days past, in order to pass a review when Johnston comes around. They are looking for him every day to be around to see the troops. I am glad that we have fallen under his command, instead of Bragg's. I don't know how far we are from the enemy. I have heard that there was a fight towards Murfreesboro, a few days ago; but did not hear the result of it. Both parties have very large forces here. Our lines extend some fifteen or twenty miles. I think it very probable that we will not have any fight here at all, and we may have to stay at this place during the winter. I believe it always has been the case, where there are such large numbers collected, that there is not apt to be a fight. The Feds may evacuate Nashville this winter; and if they do, it will be in order to attack some other point. Old Andy Johnson says that the women and children are as good breast works as he wants to protect the City of Nashville; meaning by that, that he knows our men will not attack the city while the women and children are in it. He will not let them leave the city. They beg our men to attack the city anyhow, at all hazards. I have written you all the news about the army that I know. I can't get to see any papers, and therefore can't learn anything new; therefore I will speak of something else.

After we crossed Cumberland mountains, I stopped at a house to get my dinner, as I was very hungry and had nothing to eat; while conversing with the woman of the house she mentioned the name of Austell. I began to inquire about them and found that I was close by where Amos Austell lived. He had taken his wife back to her Mother's in Carolina, and had joined the army himself. He was taken prisoner at Fort Donelson last winter. A great many were released by taking the oath of allegiance, but Amos would not do that; He staid [sic] in prison until he was legally exchanged. He then came home – staid [sic] a short time, and then joined the Army again. I passed along in sight of his father's house; that is: Wm. Austell. I came very near going by and staying all night, but it was against orders to remain out of camps, and I was very tired. I think the Country is very poor where he lives. It don't look much better than the lands old Corinth. He lives on what is called Elk River.

Well, Sallie, you can't imagine how anxious I am geting [sic] to hear from you and the baby. I have not heard from you since I recd [sic] yours of the 23rd Oct. Almost two months. I can't think the fault is in you at all. But it is owing to the carelessness of Post Masters. How are you both geting [sic] along? Have you been well all the time. Tell Pamela and Mary I think they might have written to me before this time although I have

not written to them. They know my chance of writing and ought not to wait for me to write to them. When I write to you I intend it for the whole family.

Well, Christmas will be in, in a few days; and here I will be away here in Tennessee; far away from home and friends; and more that all far, far from my sweet bosom friend; the companion of my life, the sharer of my troubles, and once the participator of my pleasures: but, alas! why are we separated so; what unfriendly hand has occasioned all this; was it so fated from the Beginning, or has some unseen misfortune been the cause of all this woe and trouble? Oh, Sallie, Do you often think of these things? Yes I know you do; but let me my Dear One entreat you not to grieve at these unavoidable calamities, and not to repine at our separation. He, who holds in His hands the destinies of all men, and guides their footsteps through life, will likewise guide and protect us through life, if we but call upon Him. Therefore, My Dear Wife, let us look to him [sic] for our protection, and pray that we may meet again. Then let your prayers ascend to heaven and I believe they will be answered. I try to pray myself every night almost for our mutual safety and protection. But they seem to me to be mighty feeble. But I trust they will be answered. I hope this unjust war will soon terminate, so that we all can return to our friends, and once more enjoy their sweet society.

Thus far in my life, I must acknowledge that I have been blessed. While I have seen and heard of numbers of my old friends and associates falling around me, some by disease, and some by the deadly rifle, I am yet left. Providence has seen fit to keep me for some other purpose. Why should I not be thankful then to Him, Who has perservered [sic] me? And I have hope to believe that I will live to see this war closed, and peace made, when I can return to your arms, and enjoy the peace, which I have helped to win. Then let us bear up under these trials the best we can. I must close. If this is rubbed out you must excuse me, I have to write with a pencil from necessity. My best respects to your Pa and the family and to all others who may inquire after me.

And Sallie, may the best wishes of your Affectionate husband ever rest and abide with you forever is my prayer.

So farewell, E. G. Littlejohn

[Note at top of p. 4: Martin and Garner are well.]

Camp Reederville [sic], Dec 23rd 1862

My Dear Wife,

This evening I again address you a few lines to inform you of my health and my whereabouts. I am in fine health at this time, and have been so for some time. We are at the same camps that we were at when I wrote you before. How long we will remain here I am unable to say, but it is quite likely we will remain here some time from the

movements that are being made. Our commissaries are gathering in provisions quite extensively. All troops have been removed from here, with the exception of our division. I suppose they went to Mobile or some other point South. I have been hearing that the Yankees are evacuating Nashville; if that be the case it is for the purpose of attacking some other point more vulnerable. There are a great many Federal troops passing down the Miss. river [sic], and landing somewhere in the State. There is a vain, delusive idea got up among the boys in camps, that peace has already been made. Some one of them says he saw the order in a paper. But I really think he either read with the paper bottom side upward, or else he told a falsehood. How eager we are to snatch at such shadowy appearances. We grasp at the least hope. It is said that a drowning man will catch at floating straws. If I could only think that such was the case I would be rejoiced as much as anyone, but I dont [sic] think I am quite so weak minded as to be fed up on soft corn. Such news would be hailed with the greatest degree of pleasure by all. But, Alas! I am afraid that day of peace is far distant, that ere its dawn many a man will victim, either to the ravages of disease or by the shot of the deadly rifle. We are all eager to hope that we will not be the one; but none of us knows who be the one to survive the struggle.

Well, I have no other news to write you. We get no news in Camps. Isaac Martin received a letter from Sam Wallace. He said that your Pa's family was well; was all the news that interested me. As I had not heard from you all in a long time, not since 23rd Oct. I recd [sic] a letter from you and Pamela written soon after your confinement. Though it was of old date yet I was glad to get it. It was sent from Jackson, Miss. by John. He never wrote a word in it at all. I cant [sic] see what is the reason he dont [sic] write to me sometimes. I occasionally write to him. Since he has got to be a cavalryman, he does not think to write to me. When you write to him, tell him I would like to hear from him occasionally.

Well Sallie, we have just had an election for 3rd Lieut. in our co. T. H. Still, who was one of my messmates, was a candidate. We dont [sic] know the issue of the election yet. I hope Still will be elected, but I am fearful it will not be so. We have a poor set of company officers. I have no office, nor would I scarcely have one if it were offered me. They get a little more pay, and get shet [sic] of a little more duty than the private, but they get no more honor than a poor private. Both privates and company officers fare alike, when we are marching.

In the early part of the day, we had company and regiment drill. Gen Ector drilled us awhile and also Maj. Gen. McGowan. We are drilled about four or five hours each day, except Sunday. We are allowed one day out of every week to wash in. I am a poor hand to wash, but sometimes I have it to do. I washed yesterday two shirts and a pr. of drawers. I would always prefer to hire my washing done if I could get out to do it; but they dont [sic] allow us to leave camps. They charge 2 bits a garment, that is mighty high. Two young men started home yesterday. They live close to Jimtown [sic]. Their names are Harden and Reynolds. I would have sent you a letter by them, but I was on

picket guard Sunday and did not have time to write. I have not got a letter from you since I was at Loudon. I cant [sic] imagine the reason that none comes to hand. I surely think the fault does not lie in you. You may think I am neglectful in not writing to you, but I write as often as I can.

Wednesday Morning, 24th. Sallie, this morning I resume my pen to finish my letter. No news yet of importance. I read a paper last night in which I saw that the Lincoln Cabinet has all broken up and gone home, with the exception of Mr. Chase. Charles Sumner takes the place of Seward. This looks very much like squally times in the Northern Congress. I would to God they could never form another congress [sic]. Gen. John H. Morgan the hero of Ky. was married a week ago. I understand he is going to make another raid into Kentucky soon. I hope he may make the Yankees feel the courage of Southern arms.

Well, I must speak of something else now. Have you named our boy yet. Thomas has suggested a name, and says if it suits all around to call it by that name, and if not let it alone. He suggest Zollicoffer, and says he was a great and noble patriot, who won for himself imperishable fame, and this great name cannot be marred now he is dead. And furthermore says if named after men of the present day, they may tarnish their great reputation by some misdemeanor. Pa says it does not matter much about the name and I am of the same opinion. So suit yourself and I will be satisfied. Is he growing much? I would like to see you and him very much. Tell Pa. [Pamelia] I'm very much obliged to her for her kind letters and will answer them soon. Also say to Mary that she must not jump off before I come back. I believe she said her beau had been home and gone back. I think I could guess if I were to try, who he was. Was it not a young M. D. I think this is a gloomy time to be pitching into such things, though there are some at it. This is my last sheet of paper, until I can get more. So if I do not write again soon, you may know the reason. I want to write to Pa and Thomas as soon as I can. They thought for a long time I was dead. You said you had got no letter from me since July. I can assure you that I have written quite a dozen to you since then. I must come to a close. Martin and Garner are both well and send their respects to your Pa's family. Give my best love to all the friends, my respects to Bicol also. Write soon to

Your ever faithful, Elbridge, at Murfreesboro.

[Note at top of page 2: Tomorrow is Christmas. I wish I had the pleasure of being where I was last Christmas, and could sit down to such a dinner. But our Dinner will be rough and scanty. We aim to have a few sweet cakes.]

[Note at top of page 3: Inclosed [sic] you will find a plug that come out of one of my teeth. I send it home for you to take care of until I return, if I ever do. Jim Hudson has come back to camps. He was taken prisoner in Kentucky.]

E.G.L.

Knoxville, Tenn., Jan. 12th, 1863

My Dear Wife and Friends,

This is Sunday morning and I feel like it was my duty to inform you all of my situation and condition, though I do not doubt that you will hear that I am wounded before this gets to you, as the other boys from the vicinity have been writing back to their friends. To keep you no longer in suspense I will just say to you that on the morning of 31st Decr. [sic] after laying in line of battle all night, being very cold and wet, without a particle of fire to warm our fingers and toes, we were ordered to advance about daylight, our whole division, composed of three brigades: Gen. McNair's on the right, ours in the centre [sic], and Gen. Rain's on the extreme left. We lay in sight of the Yankee camp fires. We soon came in sight of their skirmishers. The order to charge came down the lines with electric speed and onward we went dashing with a furious yell, against their well formed [sic] lines. They stood but a moment, and then they fled in disorder. But as they were running, they did not forget to shoot. I had shot my gun once, loaded again and was in a few steps of the spot where we took their flag, a minnie [sic] ball hit me on the right hip bone, and I think scaled off a little piece of the bone. The ball passed out through the fleshy part of my thigh behind. It is not a serious wound, but I assure you it hurt very badly. But while I was laying on the ground, not being able to get away by myself, a canister shot from our own guns hit me on the top of the head. I thought then I was gone, yet I was perfectly conscious of everything that was transpiring. I still continued to lie on the ground until our boys had driven them out of hearing. By that time I tried to scramble off. One of our regt. who was not hurt, assisted me part of the way, and then I met a litter. On this they took me to a house close by. I staid [sic] here all night until the next evening. I was then carried to a hospital where I staid [sic] three days, and then moved to this place. I suffered a good deal while on the cars. We were two days and nights in coming from Murfreesboro to Chattanooga. I am at a very good hospital. There are only five in the room with me, one of whom is Isaac Martin. He was not in a fight. He hurt his knee very badly before the fight and was not able to walk. He has been waiting on me very kindly since he has been with me. He had a chill night before last, but I hope he will not have any more. We get plenty to eat. My wounds are doing very well. But it will be a good long time before I am able again for duty. I have written to Pa the other day to come to see me and bring me some clothes. I lost all I had on the battlefield. If they will give me a furlough I am going home with Pa, if he comes. I think I will be able to hobble about on crutches in a week or two.

I cannot undertake to give you a full history of the fight now, but when I get able to write I will. I would have written to you before now, but did not have the chance. I have not recd [sic] a letter from you since Oct. I would like to see you and the baby very much.

I will write to you again in a few days. You must write to me at this place to Hospital No. 5.

Give my best love and respects to all your Pa's family and to other friends. I must close by asking you to remember me in your prayers to God and I will do the same for you.

I remain your most affection [sic] Husband, E. G. Littlejohn.

P.S. Jeff Rosson was shot in the arm but not badly. E.G.L.

Thickety [sic], So. Ca. Feby 4th 1863

My ever Dear and affectionate Sallie,

This cold morning I will endeavor to write you a few lines to inform you of my whereabouts and my condition, if perchance you shall ever receive it. I hope indeed, that you may get this letter as it appears that you have not received one from me in a long time. You must not attribute the fault to me; for I will assure you that I have written to you often.

Did you not get the letter I wrote you from Knoxville? I wrote you a letter from that place informing you of my situation. I am sure you have heard of the great Battle of Murfreesboro. Early on the morning of the 31st Decr. [sic] we marched in Battle line against the enemy. About sunrise the pickets of the foe fired on us, and before we had gone two hundred yards I was shot through the right hip. Dr. Nott, who came to see me yesterday, said the ball passed through the hip bone. After the Battle I was sent to Knoxville to the hospital, in which I stayed about two weeks. I then wrote word to Pa to come after me. It was some time before he got my letter. But as soon as he got my letter he started immediately after. I was mighty glad to see him, for I was fairing [sic] badly in the Hospital. I got a furlough for 30 days. Half of the time has already expired almost. But I have the privilege of staying at home until I get well, if ever I do. It will be a good while before I can even walk, let alone being able for duty. I expect, Sallie, that you are very uneasy about me, but I don't want you to be. I am at Home now where I can get all the attention I need. You must try to console yourself the best you can. If it were possible for me to do so I would surely come home as soon as I get able. But I can't tell whether I can get discharged on account of the hip or not. I would like to come the best in the world. I very often think of you and the Baby. I don't suppose there is any chance to cross the Miss. River now. If I were turned loose from the army I would try it anyhow. My anxiety is very great to be at Home [sic] for awhile [sic] at least, if not to stay all the time.

Last Monday your sister Becca and old Mrs. Reynolds came up to see me. They did not stay very long. They went home the same day they came. Becca's condition would not admit of her staying from home all night. You can guess what that is. She is looking for Mr. Reynolds home in a few days. She looks very well and her children are growing very well. Johnny, I think, favors Mary. You have heard that old man Reynolds was



dead. This old country looks very natural except in one respect. All the men are gone; which makes it look desolate.

I had a rough time going from Knoxville home. I was not able to help myself in the least. No one seemed to have any care for a wounded man. Pa had to pack me on his back some times because he could not find men who would help him to carry me. I had to sit up nearly all the way from Knoxville to Columbia. After I got there, I met up with one of my old schoolmates who got me a bed and put in the car. I shall always recollect him for his kindness. When I got to Uncle Kink's I was completely worn out by fatigue and so was Pa.

Well, Sallie, I have written you about all the news that I can hear of that would interest you. Pa is very unwell himself with a severe cold which he caught after he came home with me. There is snow on the ground now. There has been two snows here since I got home. Uncle Nathan is here now. Looks like he used to. Uncle Silas has been bad off with boils. Sam Smith has just gone back to Va. Thomas is in good health. I left Isaac Martin in the Hospital with something like erysipelas on his lame arm. Martin waited on me mighty good while he was able.

Well, I must begin to close. I don't think this letter will reach you but I will write it anyhow. I want you to answer often, for I am very anxious to hear from you. All the rest of the friends are well. I have not walked any since I was wounded. I suppose you call our boy after me. Well, that will do, I suppose, very well. Becca was telling me that she heard that you was geting [sic] to be very fleshy and large. Oh, how I wish I could see you. I will try to get a discharge when I go back to the army. It will be a good long time before I go back. I am more than anxious to see you and the baby. Pa is some better than he has been but is not well yet. Our connexion [sic] in Union are well so far as I know. Dr. Walker is dead. Also Felix. The latter got killed in Virginia. Thomas is very well.

I remain your affectionate husband, E. G. L.

Give my love to all the family.

Feby. 7th. My wounds are still improving fast. I will be able in another week to get out of the house on my crutches. I am looking for Dr. Nott today. We have had snow all the week. Whatever you do don't be uneasy. Console yourself. Give my respects to all your Pa's folks. You must remember me in your prayers. I remain your true,

E. G. Littlejohn

Thickety [sic] Creek, Spartanburg Dist. So. Ca. March 4th 1863

My Dear Sallie and Friends,

My expectations of geting [sic] any news from any of you are all gone. I did expect to get some news from you when I got home but nothing has come to me yet. I have written you twice since I have been wounded and I surely think you must have recd [sic] one of the letters because I hear the other people geting [sic] letters from that side of the river, and I can't imagine why I don't get one.

I hope you have heard that I have got back once more to my parental home, where I have met with good attention. I wrote to you from Knoxville, when I was in the Hospt. [sic] I was not certain that the letter would get to you. I suppose you have heard from men who have come from the rgt. [sic] what my situation was. There was an old man with the rgt. [sic] by the name of Carter from Rusk Co. who was going home after the fight, who, I suppose, carried letters for the boys of our company. Pa got home with me the 1st day of Feb. I had a fatiguing trip. My wounds have been improving very well since I got home. It is quite sore this morning owing to the circumstances that a piece of bone is working out, which they occasionally do. The place where the ball came out of my hip is doing very well. It is nearly ready to heal over. The other is very sore. The wound on my head is not geting [sic] well fast. There is a big thick scab on it. As to my health etc every other way, I am doing finely. I am very hearty.

There is a great contrast in the appearance of this country now and what it was when I left here; I mean in reference to the male part of society. None here except the old men and boys.

The boys also from sixteen to eighteen have been ordered to organize to be ready to leave when called for. This looks like draining the country. I have no particular news to write you. There are a great many poor wounded men in our country now. A great many have died. Uncle John's John has been wounded in the foot, he is not able for duty. He went to his regt. when he got so he could walk, and they gave him a furlough for sixty days. I understand he is very lame. When able to ride in the buggy, I am going to see all our Union folks and stay with them some time. Nancy Goudelock went to N.C. to see Wm. He is first Lieut. Goodman Jefferies passed here a few days since and stopped to see me a little while. I think his wife hired a substitute and sent to him, or else he would not have been at home. He says his Pa has been very unwell since he went after John when he got wounded. But says that he is better now. I have been looking for the girls up to see me, and I understand they were coming when the weather got better, but they have not come yet. Nor has Hannah and Mandeville been up yet, owing, I suppose, to the inclemency of the weather. There is no one to visit much, except women. They always catch me with my breeches off as I can not wear them on account of their hurting my wounds. I go in my drawers all the time. Aunt Caty has made me a pair of new pants. I had but one old pair.

Becca and old Mrs. Reynolds came up to see me the day after I got home. She had not heard that I was wounded, until I got home. Mr. R. came home from Charlestone [sic] on furlow [sic] two or three weeks ago but I understand he was going to start back last

Monday. I think he ought to have been allowed the liberty of staying longer as his wife's situation is such as to require him, in my judgment.

Several of the boys have been from Va. on furlow [sic], their business being to hunt up those men who came home on leave of absence and would not go back when their time was out. Among those who came were Mr. Lyle, Smith Lipscomb, and several others. They took a good many back, and some, whom they had to take by force, putting [sic] them under guard. Mr. Lyle returned yesterday. He was wounded on the top of the head similar to the wound I got. Smith Lipscomb was also wounded in the left cheek. The ball is still in his head. His brother Elic was shot through the right shoulder, but he has also gone back. I heard from Bill Rowland and Elic a few days ago. Both were well and hearty. Bill was very anxious to get off home but missed his chance in drawing for furlow [sic]. It is said that he and Miss M over the creek, keeps up a regular correspondence yet. She has got one letter from him since I have been at home. We heard from Thomas a day or two ago. He was in very good health at the time he wrote. He has enjoyed himself very well since he went back to camps. He sent to us to send him a box of provisions by some one [sic] passing. I hate to hear of his being hungry and no chance to get it; for I recon [sic] I know what it is to have an empty belly, or stomach rather. I have experienced as much of that as anybody of my age; and none knows how to appreciate good food but those who have suffered for the want of it. Thomas has been appointed Clerk of the Company, which excuses him from all duty. It is thought by some that their Division [sic] will come to Charleston; if it does, if I get well, I want to go down and see the boys. Thomas stayed at home about five months. The health of our army is said to be fine at this time. Bill Rowland has escaped well. He has been out nearly two years and never has been touched by a ball. The Col.'s John (Jefferies) also stands it finely. Nearly all of the other boys, who are not dead and are of your acquaintance, have been wounded. Old Mr. Blanton has lost three boys, I think. The Blanton name has suffered severely. I heard Dr. Nott say some thirteen our [sic] fourteen had died and been killed together. Sam Smith is Capt. now and is in very bad health; so much so that Thomas thinks he will have to resign and come home. I met him going back to Va. as I came home. He looked tolerable well, I thought. Poor Jim Rowland is gone, too. He was killed in Maryland. I understood he was first wounded and while endeavoring to crawl away he was shot again through the body, which killed him instantly. Our men had to yield up the battlefield and all of our wounded and dead fell into the hands of the enemy. I don't suppose the poor fellow, as well as many others, was buried at all. I heard that Bill said he did not have the chance to throw even a handful of dirt upon him. This often occurs where one brother can't relieve the wants or bury the other when dead.

I witnessed a scene somewhat similar to this on the evacuation of Murfreesboro by our troops. I had been in the hospital there a day or two when a young man was brought in and died near me. (We all had to lie on our blankets on the floor.) He was mortally wounded, being shot through the bowels. His brother had not seen him since he was wounded, which had been done two days. When his brother found him life was almost gone, fast ebbing away; he spoke to him a few words and then died. He did not live ten

minutes after his brother found him. He tried to get a box made to bury him in but could not. He lay there two days and nights in the hospital, and when we all left he was still in the hospital. It is more than likely that he was lying in the hospital when the Yankees took possession.

Well, Sallie, we have had a rarity with us today. Who do you girls think it was? Well, I'll tell you. It was old Uncle John Wilkins and Aunt Tempy. Uncle Jack has been down the country with a drove of horses and is on his way home. He says he is going home tonight, though it is late. He has been from home six weeks – made a thousand dollars on his stock. He bought two old horses from Uncle John Jefferies for \$140 and sold them for \$250. He is going to start Monday week to Va. to see the boys – to carry them some clothes and something to eat. Wm. has been in seventeen battles – been hit by two balls but not hurt. The old man is full of life and talks a good deal about marrying. He says he told his daughter, Sarah, that either she or he one must marry; because she had to stay alone too much. Sallie told him he might, she would not, for the present. He, Aunt Lis, and Sallie staid [sic] at Pa's all night last fall. He looks very well and says the rest were well when he heard from them last. He tried to buy my horse from me, that Pa has given me, offered me \$200. in cash for him, as much as he is worth, I reckon. But I did not want to sell it from Pa at this time, as he needs him to work this year. (I wish you had him, Sallie). As I said Aunt Tempy was here also, spent the day with us. She is as well as when you were here. She has been to see me twice. She says she would be very glad to see you all. Sends her respects to all the family. She recd [sic] a letter from Wm. Rowland last week. Says she is very lonesome. Uncle Jack Wilkins saw Wm. Goudelock in Columbia on his way home. I suppose on furlow [sic]. So upon the whole, this day has passed off much more agreeable than some do. I am fond of company in my present condition; but we do not have a great deal of it. I get very lonesome being alone pretty much all the time in the day. Pa is out in the plantation, Ma about in the kitchen, and the children out at play. If I could but be at home now I could amuse myself playing with little Bridgie. You don't know how I want to see him.

Friday morning, 6th. Well, Sallie, I guess before you get done reading this scrawl you will be very tired; so much so that you'll think I have but little to do and plenty of paper to waste. It is true I have not much to do, in fact nothing, but to read and write. For I get so lonely being by myself so much that I spend a good deal of my time in writing to my friends. As to paper, I have plenty such as it is. But peradventure you do get overcome in reading of it, you must lay it down, 'till you get rested.

No news this morning at all. I have just been looking over some old letters this morning and among them I found one from your own dear self that you wrote to Pa after I left home. I amuse myself sometimes by collecting the old letters that you have written to them and read them over. It brings many sad reflections to my mind when I look over the pages where your gentle hand has once traced the lines that expressed so much sorrow and grief. What do you suppose are my feelings when I look at these tender expressions. Ah, none but those who have felt what I have can have the remotest idea.

I oftentimes, when I am alone, think to myself: Does Sallie think of me as often as she used to? Does she look upon the things that once were mine and say to herself, Poor Bridgie's? Does she frequent the places where we spent the fleeing moments in pleasure and mirth and think of me? Oh, yes, I know she does. She looks with sadness upon everything that was mine. Methinks I can almost see the gentle tear trickling down your tender cheeks, as you turn some stragling [sic] thought upon the far-off absent but not-forgotten-one. I cannot persuade myself that I am forgotten, I would not for the world. I know a heart so pure, so true, and so unblemished could not be guilty of such. But it seems that the fates are against us – seems that we are doomed to know little of each other's welfare. Almost six long months have gone by on their onward march since I recd [sic] one line from you. It may be, as many have passed since you heard from me. But for all these reverses of fortune I still write, and will continue to do so, so long as I think there may be a chance for a letter to reach you. But, Sallie, I would say that you have one thing more to console you than I. In my absence you have a little Bridgie, with whom, no doubt, you spend many pleasant moments. But one thing let me remind you of and enjoy it upon you. If in the course of nature, it should be my lot to perish away from home, and never to see that small emblem of myself, the infant which you may now be holding in your arms, I want you to bring it up right, teach it to walk in the paths of virtue and uprightness; train its youthful mind to understand the great principles of Christianity; let it know that its Father was one who left home, friends, and all that was most dear to the heart of man, to assist in gaining the precious boon of Liberty, which we hope to bequeath to young Posterity; and tell him that I died with a reputation as untarnished, as resplendent as the morning sun. And tell him, for the sake of one who was unknown to him, to revere and respect his mother, to stay with her. But Oh, I hope that Deity, in His goodness, will spare me and I return home to the loved absent ones. I have a great desire to come home again. I could enjoy your presence when there, but it seems if I were there now I could enjoy it so much more. I will know how to appreciate home now, if I am spared to get back. Time, with its ravishing wheel, has not blotted out from my memory, the recollections of the little cottage that stood amid the forest gloom, with no inmates to awake the long silence that has reigned sole monarch since I left; but perhaps the timid mouse that now and then launches forth from the paternal mansion in the crack, to seek for better quarters. The well, the kitchen, and even the forest trees, all are bright in my mind. But should I get home, I will not be as before. Then I was cheerful and active, go where I please and as I pleased. But now 'tis different with me. If I go, it must be with a hop, or it may be upon false legs (crutches). Such, you see then, is the lot of man. Sometimes in prosperity, but oftener in adversity. When he is in the enjoyment of the former he becomes forgetful of his Creator; but the latter often brings Him to his mind, and he says within himself, O Vanity of Vanities; O perverse man, who in prosperity forgets his duty to God and to man, Wilt thou never see the error of thy ways? I have been visited with a serious affliction. Who can tell but what it was the hand of Providence that guided the fatal balls so that they should spare my life for some more useful purpose, and also to remind me of my duty to Him? We know our lives are at the disposal of Providence. But I have gone too far in my speculations

and reveries already, therefore I must stop to say a few words more, and then come to a close. I have not written this to make you sad at all.

Everything here indicates hard times. Everything is very scarce. There is scarcely corn enough in the country to prevent starvation. Wheat crops look very sorrily, and if that crop should fail, famine and starvation will certainly ensue. Every article to be sold is put up at the most exorbitant prices. I don't suppose wheat could be bought for \$5.00 a bushel. Corn has sold for \$2175. Milk cows \$100. Oxen by the yoke, \$250 and everything else in proportion.

I can't think that everything is so high in Texas. I saw a letter from your brother John which he wrote to Rebecca. I have written him one since. Jack Littlejohn's wife has a boy. He did not remain at home more than two or three days after he was married. Pretty quick work, don't you call it.

I can't say anything about the management of our farm. Say to your Pa that I'm forever in debt to him for his kindness in seeing to our little affairs. Tell him to write to me. Tell all the girls also. I know they are not so busy but what they can take time to write me a letter apiece. I have never seen Mollie yet. She does not visit us. Her old man is gone to the army. I got a letter from Martin the other day from Knoxville. He was about well.

So I must come to a close. Give my respects to all the neighbors and friends, Mr. Wallace and wife, also Mr. Bays and wife, and to Dr. Goodman's family.

And give my love to all your Pa's family and to Bicol, and accept a full share of the unfailing

Love of your true,

Elbridge