

## Josiah R. Lewis Letter

### Murfreesborough [sic] Battle

On the morning of Dec 26th 1862 we broke camp at Nashville Tenn On the campaign for Murfreesborough [sic] Tenn we met the rebels at Laverne [sic] Tenn about fifteen miles out of Nashville and our Regiment being in advance was ordered to form lines draw Sabers and charge. We were confronted by Wheeler Cav Div We drove them out of Laverne [sic]

About four o'clock p.m. it was a cold and raining all the time we went into camp

About a mile east of Laverne [sic] cold and hungry and [illegible] through over rations all spoilt went to bed hungry, but that was a soldiers [sic] life this was my first experience in a soled [sic] battle Layed [sic] on our arms all night expecting to be attacked every minute the next morning about four o'clock boots and saddles sounded and without any breakfast was fighting all day until after dark and then went into Camp about the same place where we camped the night before During the day we had two men wounded Without anything to eat for 36 hours

Here let me state that during the day we found a plantation where everything seemed to be in abundance but we dared not lynch [sic] anything for we would have been arrested [sic] for it was strictly forbidden to forage but that night after we went into camp a few of us made a raid on this plantation and got chickens, flour, ham, and other stuff, went back to camp and made a fire and cooked our supper and when we had it on our table, (the table was a rubber poncho spread on the ground) I went and woke up the Captain and the Lieut [sic] asked him to come and have some supper. All of them did and the Captain having been an old soldier told us to pick up ever [sic] feather and every bone and burn them up for we would be called on in the morning and we done so and in the morning the planter called on us but found nothing. On the morning of the 28th we were aroused by a heavy Canonade [sic] in our front boots and Saddles sounded and in fifteen minutes we were in the fight good and hard We drove the rebs about three miles that day and at night, sat on our horses in line of battle all night In the morning of the 29th went into the fight about daylite [sic] and from that time until 11 o'clock p.m. it was one constant battle and nothing to eat. Layed [sic] on our arms all night with hitching strap tied to our arms so our horse could not get away On the morning of the 30th we drew hard tack and bacon and coffee in line of battle and fires were started all along the line and the regiment to cook our coffee and let me say here we just got in doors when we was ordered into battle but boys and girls a man can fight better on a full stomach. We drove the rebs about four miles that day and about four o'clock p.m. made a Saber charge where my horses head was shot off with a cannon ball and he fell crossways of the cotten [sic] rows and I fell between them and under him fastened fast So I pulled my boot off from trying to get from under him On the morning of Dec 31 I was sleeping when Boots and Saddles sounded The rebs turned the right wing to our center and we were ordered to draw sabers and charge and I want to here state that here where we

made sad have [sic] with the rebs we trenched them in such a position that our Cav could whip three shift. Our [illegible] went into whip and we did. We turned the tide of battle in about one half hour and they were getting out of our way just as fast as they could. Then after our lines were straightened out laid all day or balance of the day in line of battle. We then drawed [sic] rations [sic] had [sic] tack and bacon and coffee and sugar, and the night of Dec [missing] back to the rear and had a fair nights [sic] rest until about 3 o'clock a.m. Jan. 1 was ordered back to Laverne [sic] to give [illegible] John Morgan his medicine. We found him about 2 miles east of Laverne [sic] and put him and his command to flight and returned to the front. Along about 8 p.m. was ordered to the extreme front to stand picket in the line of battle and in the morning of Jan. 2 1863 about 5 o'clock a.m. the enemy massed their column 8 deep and charge to take battery and such moving down of men there were 24 picks besides 2 serge guns and just when they thought they had the battery the Quart. A rose up behind the batterys [sic] and poured into their rank such a deadly fire they wavered and then it was that a charge was sounded and on we charged. About 40,000 strong and they took breast works and the rebels never stopped until we had them 5 miles the other side of Stone [sic] river. This is just a small hatch of the battle of Murfreesborough [sic] but enough so you see what a soldier went through while charging down on the ground where the rebs had burned their dead, you could see the arms and legs sticking out of the ground where they had not time to burry [sic] them and our men after the capture of Stones river had to burry [sic] them. Now we lost in the battle of Stone [sic] river about 20,000 killed and wounded. It was a hard contested field. And I had many dearly loved Comrade [sic] who gave their lives at that battle and many a tear was shed when they came to put away their dead commandes [sic]. Now children, why is it that one old soldier should think so much of their commrades [sic] because they were baptized in blood, they stood shoulder to shoulder to put down this rebellion and give to posterity on [sic] of the grandist [sic] country that the sun has ever shone on and make it possible for you and me