

Dr. Jeremiah Lyford Letters

Brickton Ill
January 12th 1863

Dr Jeremiah Lyford

Dear Sir

I this morning rec a letter from Sergeant Henry G. Mencham Co I 88 Regt Ill Vol written in front of Murfreesboro [sic] Tenn [sic] Jany [sic] 4th 1863, he wishes me to write you that your son was instantly killed by a shot through the head in the battle of Friday. he mentions that most of your sons [sic] things were back in his knapsack and that he would see to them and also write you soon, and give you all particular. Mencham only mentioned a few items, did not give any particular. there was only one other killed in that Co. a fine young man from his place. I tender to you and your family our sympathy in this your affliction and traitshi [sic] times and day is not far distant when this wicked rebellion shall be broken, but alas chose [sic] who have shed their blood upon the battle field cannot be recalled

Yours Truly
John J Lockwood

Chicago Jan 15th 1863

To Dr J. H. Lyford
Dear Sir,

We have red'd [sic] a letter from my brother Capt. J. J. Spalding, written since the battle of Murfreesboro in which he says "orderly Lergt Lyford was killed, send such word to Dr J. H. Lyford of Port Byron, Ills".

We prayerfully tender our deepest sympathies to the bereaved friends, May the richest consolations be theirs

Very respectfully be

E. F. Spalding

Drenton, Ill. April 21, 1863

My Dear Mrs. Lyford;

We are strangers, and yet, a common sorrow makes me feel that we are friends. Your noble Son fell in battle, the legitamate [sic] way for a Soldier to die. We were much shocked to see his name among the list of the brave ones who were killed at “Stone [sic] River,” and felt to lament and sympathise [sic] with you in the irreparable loss. But little did we think then, how soon it would be our portion to bear a like bereavement. You may not know, that your Sons [sic] friend, and fellow soldier, my beloved brother Henry, has followed him to Eternity. He died in Hospital at Murfreesboro, April 1st, surviving your son but three months and one day.

I think it seems worse to have a friend die in that way—than in battle. They suffer longer, and feel the want of home, comforts and associations. Still you have much cause for thankfulness. We received a Tel’h, [sic] dispatch telling of his illness and whereabouts. My brother Robert immediately started down, and was with him for some days previous to his death, and brought his remains home for burial, looking very natural and lifelike, this was indeed a great comfort, one which was probably denied you. We were not very well prepared for the sad news (if it is possible so to be prepared) for Robert had written that his disease, Typhoid fever, was doing well, and when he should be sufficiently recovered, was to come home on a “sick furlough.” But Diptheria [sic] appeared and he only lived two days. All our delightful anticipations of seeing him at home, and alive, were crushed.

You can truly appreciate our affliction, and we are enabled now fully to sympathise [sic] in yours. Was Eugene your youngest son? And had he sisters? Henry was my widowed Mother’s youngest born, upon whom she depended most, on whom our hopes and affections centered in no common degree. May we, and all who are in like manner afflicted, be sustained, and made better by these great trials.

I was at Brickton last summer, when your son came to enlist, and also saw him several times in Camp. He looked too frail for a soldier, but said he could endure a good deal, and thought his energies, and life if need be, should be devoted to the support of the Government.

He and Henry seemed so earnest and full of ardor and patriotism and talked so hopefully, that I did not feel that it was possible for them to be taken so soon.

After the terrible battle at Murfreesboro—Henry wrote us, sadly, of the loss Co “I” had sustained, said “two are gone from our Co.—Mr. Lyford and Fred’k [sic] Holton, no two would be more missed from our number, and yet probably no two so well prepared to go.”

Oh, the misery and woe that is abroad on our land. When will it cease? We of this generation cannot outlive it.

Among my brothers [sic] papers we find a package of letters which I will enclose—judging your feelings by ours—we think you will wish them forwarded.

Mother desires me to say that she has felt for you in your trouble, but knows how now to do so more fully. If you or any of your family should come near us at any time, we should like much to see you.

I do not know how these letters came in my brothers [sic] possession—all I can do is to send them to you.

With much Sympathy
I am your Truly
Augusta Mencham

Newspaper Article

LETTER FROM CAPT. WILLIAMS.
CAMP 2 MILES SOUTH OF
MURFREESBORO, JAN. 9. 1863.

Col. Danforth, Dear Sir: - On the morning of the 26th of December, our wing of the Cumberland army (the right) advanced along the Nolansville Pike, (it being understood the centre [sic] and left were advancing on the Murfreesboro Pike) skirmishing with the enemy, until we arrived at Nolansville, 14 miles, where we encamped for the night. The next morning we advanced to Tryune [sic], 6 miles, and encamped. The next morning, took a cross road towards Murfreesboro Pike and took a position about three miles to the right of Murfreesboro.

At daylight we were attacked by a heavy force of the enemy, and were driven back about 1 1/2 miles. During this retreat we lost the most of our men. This was the 31st.—The whole right wing was driven back. Our regiment lost 149 men, in killed, wounded and missing.

My company (F) lost:

Killed - Privates, Moses S. Beaver, of Zuma; and Elijah Youlin, of Hampton.

Wounded. - Ord'ly [sic] Serg't [sic] James F. Copp, of Rock Island, in the arm; Serg't [sic] Jerrie S. Prescott, of Rock Island, shoulder; Privates, Joseph Gover, of Hampton, shoulder; H.S. [missing text], Coal Valley, leg.

Missing—Ser't [sic] Jos. Cushman, Corp. Jason Wallace, Musician Walter Huff, Privates Jos. Babbitt, James Perkins, Russell Huntly, Wash. Cox, Curtis B. Knox, William Chamberlain, Addison Weaver, Reuben L. Kelly, Henry Couch, Wm. Golden.

Total—2 killed, 5 wounded, 13 missing.

Wm. Golden has been heard from; in Nashville, unhurt, - a cowardly skedaddler [sic]. The balance are undoubtedly prisoners.

The letter carrier has called for this letter and I must close.

I am unhurt.

I consider this battle a hard one, but the result indecisive. We must fight again to make it tell with effect.

We captured nothing worth mentioning. - My opinion is we lost more killed, wounded and prisoners, than the enemy. They captured the most artillery.

I will write again more at my leisure.

Yours truly, W. D. Williams.

P.S.—I have been in command of the regiment since Jan. 1st, L't. [sic] Col. Hotchkiss having been sick. He has recovered and will resume command to morrow [sic]. Our major, W. J. Hall, is a prisoner, and I am acting lieutenant colonel.

In haste,

W. D. W.

[For the Rock Island Argus.]

DEATH OF EUGENE A. LYFORD.
I. O. G. T., PORT BYRON LODGE,
Jan. 13, 1863.

The following proceedings were had in relation to the death of Bro. EUGENE A. LYFORD:

We have heretofore mourned a WHITSON, a DUNN, a SANDERS and a TAYLOR, that sacrificed their lives for their country, and now our talented young brother and friend, Eugene A. Lyford is added to the list. He died upon the battle field at Murfreesboro' in the late battle. He was no ordinary person; though but twenty-one years of age, his standing and usefulness in the church, in the Sabbath school, and the position he had gained in his collegiate studies, all foreshadowed that he would not only be a useful and prominent member of society, but also that he would have taken a high rank in whatever position he had chosen, either the bar or the pulpit, having frequently officiated in the latter, young as he was, had he been spared. He was, indeed, one that any family or community might be proud of, and like many more of our patriotic and noble sons, left many friends and all the endearments of home, waving all the bright prospects of the future to go forth to vindicate the laws of our country. He has gloriously fallen upon the field of battle 'ere he knew whether his blood is to help cement and hold together the Union for which he died, or whether he yielded up his life for naught, and that anarchy and ruin are yet to pervade this once happy land.

Another household is made desolate, and again we mourn the loss of a brave brother and friend, fallen in consequence of the wickedness and unhallowed ambition of the leaders of this rebellion; but we all mourn with a hope that he, like our late lamented brother TAYLOR, was prepared to die. It matters not to them whether their spirits winged their way to a peaceful heaven from the battle field or from among weeping friends at home. - All honor to their patriotism, and peace to their memories.

Resolved, That in memory of our late brother we wear the usual badge of mourning for thirty days, and these proceedings be placed on file, and a copy of the same sent to the papers at Rock Island for publication.

FRED. HOLLISTER, W. C. T.

