

James McCarty Letters December 15, 1862 to December 26, 1863

Camp Sheridan December 15th 1862

Dear Grandfather I now take my pen in to inform you that I am well at present [sic] and hope these few lines may find you enjoying the same blessing we are Camp 5 or 6 miles from Nashville in the timber a half mile or more from the main road [sic] we have a very nice clean Camp we have been moved into the 11th division under General Sheridan [sic] they are all new troops in his division but our Brigade we are kept pretty close to our quarters we are ordered to drill 3 or 4 times a day and have 3 or 4 roll calls a day it is a pretty lonesome place here [sic] our preacher has been ordered to a general hospital so we have no Chaplain at all in our regiment we have got a new lieutenant in our company his name is Isaac [sic] W Chatfield he got his commission yesterday we have not had any fighting lately but I don't [sic] know how soon we may be called into action we are in front now so I expect when the army gets ready to move we may not move far before we meet the enemy but they run so often that we don't [sic] get to fight them much it appears to be very quiet along the line at present [sic] the enemy are reported to be on strong force in front but they don't [sic] bother us much o grandfather how do you like war and how do you stand the times o wouldn't [sic] you like to see us out in line of battle bayonets fixed and shining with heads up with a keen look and anxious to pitch right into the enemy I tell you grandfather we are the boys that can fight or drill or stand guard you ought to just see us when we come out on dress parade with [sic] our new dress coats on and guns a shiny o they look so pretty I tell you it looks like war we have been [sic] in service over 16 months our time will soon have half our time served we may get our discharge before our time is up but I don't [sic] expect to get my discharge much before unless the Rebels kill me or I die there [sic] is not much news to write to you we have pretty hard living hard crackers and bacon the weather [sic] is tolerable warm down here We have not had much snow as yet how is the weather [sic] at West Creek write to me grandfather and tell me how you are getting along direct your letter to James S McCarty Company E 27th Regiment Illinois [sic] Colonel F A Harrington Nashville Tennessee [sic] the regiment is pretty healthy at present [sic] there is not a man in the regimental hospital our new tents came to our regiment but the Colonel would not take them for his regiment they were [sic] made of drilling they made light so we could carry them they are in two pieces [sic] one tent for every two men each man is calculated [sic] to carry half of a tent besides his knapsack with a blanket and a shirt or two and a pair of drawers socks and overcoat Canteen haversack and cartridge box with 20 rounds and gun besides so you see it is a big load to carry and march 15 or 20 miles a day o soldiers [sic] life is a hard life to lead but I hope it will be all for the good of our country give my love to grandmother and Aunt Ann and all the rest of the family my love to you write soon No

more at present [sic] but still remains your loving grandson give my love and best respects to all inquiring friends James S. McCarty to George McKaig

Camp Near Murfreesboro Tennessee [sic] January 13th 1863

Dear father I now sit down to answer your kind good letter that I received this morning I am well at present [sic] and hope this letter may find you enjoying the same great blessing I have had some awful hard times since I last wrote [illegible] glad to hear that you have such splendid good times father I dont [sic] think you know much about soldiering in reality being most all the time in a big city where you have full and plenty and never been through a battle well I have been in [illegible] came out of the longest Battle ever fought in the west on Friday [sic] the 26th of December [sic] we where [sic] ordered to pack up and be ready to march early with three days rations in our haversack our march was towards Nashville 10 miles distant when we get within a few miles of Nashville our skirmishers came in contact [sic] with the enemy and a sharp skirmish ensued 4 Companies [sic] only of our Regiment where [sic] in it a but the enemy where soon repulsed and 2 pieces of artillery captured and a few priseners [sic] well when we put the enemy to flight we pushed in onto Nashville and marched on a few miles beyond the town we camped [sic] for the night through the day it rained and we where wet nearly through but we wher [sic] marched on the picket line where [sic] not allowed any fire and ordered to lie close by our guns well we lie down on the cold wet ground to sleep the best we could I lie down without anything but the canopy of the heavens to cover me Saturday [sic] we where [sic] in the march again Cold and wet in the afternoon it rained awful hard and we where [sic] marched through cornfields and timber and on the pike trough [sic] mud and water till we where [sic] nearly soaked through near night we went into camp when we had struck arms and ordered to break ranks such another running I hardly ever did see nearly evry [sic] man running for rails to build fires Sunday we lay in camp resting drying our clothes blankets and cleaning up our guns Monday Morning we where [sic] up bright and early and ready to march we marched over the roughest road that I ever saw we where [sic] til after dark traveling about 12 or 13 miles when we have traveled 27 in nearly the same time we camped [sic] at night within 5 miles of Murfreesboro where the rebels where [sic] the rebels where [sic] reported to have a large force Tuesday [sic] morning we where [sic] up and on hand to march on to the enemy and give them a few Lincoln pills we marched about 2 miles when the skirmishers commenced and heavy skirmishing where [sic] kept up all day the enemy holding there [sic] position 3 regiments of our Brigade where [sic] engaged that day 21st 42 and 22nd Illinois [sic] Volunteers [sic] our Regiment laying in reserve drawn up in line in an old wet muddy cornfield all day one of my friends of the 21st Regt was wounded in the rist [sic] slightly his name was Thomas Mason John Masons Son well at night we lay down in the old cornfield close by the fires that where [sic] made along the line I lie down with a few corn stalks and a little straw under me to rest with a

hungry belly our rations had about run out I had pretty near a handful of crumbs of hard crackers and a piece of meat to eat for [sic] my supper Wensday [sic] morning I had fresh beef without any salt or anything else to eat with it I thought that was soldering [sic] in the first degree what do you think about it early in the morning we where [sic] drawn up in line of battle and the fight [sic] commenced in earnest [sic] about 8 o'clock we where [sic] called into it as the enemy where [sic] coming around on our right flank and driving our men where [sic] on the right before them we where [sic] ordered in line and told to lie down and hold our fire until they got close to us so we let them come close when we just reloaded [sic] away with our fuses [sic] and such another roar of musketry I never did hear before that was kept up for about a half hour or hour and the artillery on both sides putting on the best licks well we lay there under fire until the enemy had got us surrounded on three sides when we where [sic] ordered to change our position to change front to rear on First Company left half wheel when we lie down and commenced firing [sic] away the shells just flying in every [sic] direction cutting off limbs and trees and knocking mens [sic] brains and dealing out death and destruction in general one shell struck a tree just in front of me and cut it off throwing splinters all around one large splinter taking me on the head but did not hurt me well we lay there under fire holding the enemy in check about 5 hours when we where [sic] ordered up and retreated about a mile a pretty good order when we where [sic] formed in to a line again we where [sic] soon drawn up in line of battle and ordered forward we had marched about 100 or 200 yards when the enemy let loose on us with heavy musketry we resisted a little while when we where [sic] ordered to retreat we went back formed in line of battle again and where [sic] ordered forward again this was in a small cedar grove along the edge of a large old field well forward we went with a determination of driving the rebels if possible some where [sic] mad and some cursing the Rebels at a hard rate [sic] we soon let in to them a heavy fire soon the [illegible] just a pouring it into them [illegible] of battle and stack arms soon some where [sic] out a straying over the Battle field hunting for troops I tell you you [sic] ought of seen the dead and wounded soldiers that lay strewn over the ground I tell you we layed [sic] out a good many out in the ground they just throwed away blankets haversack knapsacks guns and a great many of there [sic] things Some men in our Company went out over the field and picked up load of haversacks with cornbread and a few biscuit without any salt in it and bacon and fetched them to the boys and then such another grabbing time to get something to eat for we had nothing to eat all day but just beef with out any salt and this was late in the afternoon there was 6 wounded in Company E and 9 taken prisoner but none killed there was 8 killed and 7 wounded and our acting Brigadier general was killed and worst of all our Colonel F A Harrington was wounded he was shot through the mouth cutting a piece of his tongue of [sic] he has since died o it always almost brings tears to my eyes to think we lost such a good Colonel at night we got a little provision such as hard crackers and bacon Thursday morning we where [sic] called up long before daybreak and ordered to put out all the fires and be ready to fall in at a line and was an awful frosty cold morning to [sic] after daylight awhile we where [sic] ordered out to the edge of the grove and built

breastworks of rocks logs sand so forth rocks where [sic] plenty so we soon made a pretty good breastwork and got behind them and began to look for the secesh to come and attack us well some us anyhow wished they would come and try our works well we kept looking for them til about 2 oclock [sic] in the afternoon when we saw a regiment coming out of the timber on our left in front well when thay [sic] marches acrosos [sic] the field we laying low until they came within 2 or 3 hundred yards of us when the order was right wing ready fire and I tell you we made them skedaddle back to the timber in a hurry laying out a few of them and taking 65 prisoners so they put back and didnt [sic] come more to attack us old R P Rosecrans complimented us very highly for the good deed we done on Wednesday saying that we had saved the whole army from being cut to pieces and taken our losses estimated at 1000 killed and 5,500 wounded Besides a great many priseners [sic] I would not of [sic] missed being in the Battle fer [sic] considerable since I have Came out Safe I think I have seen soldiering and fighting in reality since I listed we have over 4 months pay acoming [sic] to us and have not mustered yet for we where [sic] fighting on muster day well we settled down in camp once more where I have a big tent to live in and a good bed to sleep and plenty of blankets to keep me warm and plenty to eat and not much to do but I dont [sic] expect to stay here long give my love to mary [sic] and Martha I thank you for your kind advice the battle lasted 5 days when the enemy evacuated leaving a great many of there [sic] wounded at Murfreesboro on our ppsesion [sic] well I belive [sic] I have written most of the important news about our regiment so I wile [sic] bring my letter to a close Write soon No more at presant [sic] but still remain you obedient Son James Swain McCarty Company E 27th Regt ills [sic] volenteers [sic] to Samuel McCarty

Camp near Murfreesboro

January 10th 1863

Dear Mother I now sit down to answer your kind letter that I received today I am well at presant [sic] and hope these few lines find you enjoying the same great blessing well dear Mother I am very glad to hear that you are so well provided for thru winter I have went through an awful scene since I last wrote to you friday [sic] the 26th of december [sic] we where [sic] retired to march with 3 days rations in our haversacks and 2 in the wagon we marched to within 3 miles of Nolinsville when our skirmishers came in contact with the enemy there the feds had a little fight and routed the enemy and we went on and marched on until after dark marching through mud and rain we where [sic] marched up on a great high hill for pickets and it was cold but we were not allowed any fire for fear the enemy would find out our positions so we lay down on the cold wet ground to sleep the best we could it rained nearly all night hard o it was a long night to [sic] the next morning we where [sic] forwarded on our journey towards murfreesboro [sic] that day we had considerable rain towards night it just poured down in torrents we where [sic] marched through cornfields and up hill and down hill at night when we

got into camp and stacked arms and ordered to break ranks you ought to of just seen the boys run for the fences such another rail carring [sic] I never saw before to make fire with next day we laid in camp trying to rest and get our clothes dry it was a right nice day Monday we had to march again over the roughest roads I ever saw we marched till after dark and Camp [sic] within 5 or 6 miles of Murfreesboro Next morning we was marched about 2 miles and then the fight commenced 3 regiments of our Brigade where [sic] in the fight that day but we did not get into it we laid in reserve that dy [sic] Thomas Mason of the 81st Regt got wounded in the wrist John Masons son Next day the old 27th had to try herself the enemy got us surrounded on the right on three sides then the work of destruction commenced the bullets did whiz and the shells did fly and burst I tell you the old 27th I thought surely was gone up but we where [sic] bound to fight our way out we had 2 as brave a Commander as need ever be so fight we must and fight we did our Acting Brigadier general was killed on the Battlefield and our Colonel G A Harrington where [sic] wounded in the mouth the ball passed through his mouth cutting his tounge [sic] partly off he has since died well we laid under fire about 4 or 5 hours poking in a few licks with our rifles we had none killed in our Company but had 6 wounded there was 9 killed in the regiment and 67 wounded I got struck with a splinter from a tree that was cut off with a shell on the head but was not hurt about 2 oclock [sic] we changed our position and went further to the left about a mile and was drawn up in line Soon we where [sic] ordered to foreward [sic] march we went about over 2 yards when the balls began to come thick and fast towards us soon the order came to retreat the enemy pushing us we retreated a few yards and where [sic] ordered to form a line of Battle and foreward [sic] march that made some of of [sic] us mad so we went into it with a charge the bullets a whistling in every direction but we went in a hooping and hollering pretty soon the rebs begin to run and then such another hollering and I scarcely ever see the man that was on my right in the ranks was wounded and the man behind me in the ranks where [sic] wouned [sic] so you can see the bullets came close to me but thank the good providence I came out safe and sound and well that night we lay on the Battlefield close by our camp

Next morning we was up bright and early ready for the enemy if they should attack us the day that we run the rebs [sic] we went into the fight with nothing but fresh beef without salt so we went into the fight like ravenous wolves so it was life or death with us in the afternoon when the rebels run they just throwed blankets haversacks and nearly every thing [sic] else one of our men went over the field and brought in loads of haversacks nearly full of cornbread biscuits and bacon o you ought to seen us a grabing [sic] for something to eat our faces black and hands to [sic] with powder we looked like fighters I assure you at night we lay down on the cold ground in good spirits next morning we were ordered to build a line of defence [sic] of stones rails and so forth well we got them built and laid behind them and wishing for the enemy to come in the breast works where [sic] along the edge of a large field about 3 oclock we saw the rebels coming out of the timber in front of us a little to our left one Regiment came out only we let them come within 2 or 3 hundred yards of us then we poured fire on them and I tell you they did skedaddle for life o it was fun to see them run back where they

came from that is what was left of them [illegible line] where the enemy where [sic] fixed and you ought to of [sic] just seen the secesh come out of the holes where they where [sic] hid they just run and throwed up there [sic] hats and seemed to be very glad to get to come over to the union there was near 75 of them some of them wer [sic] killed but none of our men where [sic] hurt o how we did rejoice and wish the rebs [sic] would come on we just believed we could whip to our one Next day friday [sic] we did not get to fight any but there was heavy fighting on the left in the afternoon so we lay close by our breast works ready to fight them at any time but no fight for our regiment on that day we where [sic] ready but no fight for as on that day neither at night the enemy evacuated the Battle was a long one and a hard fought one it lasted 5 days we are in camp at presant [sic] but I dont [sic] know how long we may stay here our head generals [sic] report is we had 1,000 killed and 5,500 wounded it was an awful sight to see the dead and wounded strewn over the Battlefield Some with there [sic] brains shot out and scattered over the ground some of them with broken legs and arms and so on we have not had much cold freezing wether [sic] yet but plenty of rain I am glad to hear that there is some friends at west Creek that think enough of me to inquire about me let grandpa and ma and all the rest of them that wants to read a war letter an old soldiers [sic] letter of the 27th Regt illinois [sic] volenteers [sic] and just think of the hardships a soldier has to go through and what hard fighting to [sic] for our country but I think it is all for the best O I hoped and pray the good lord may preserve my life that I may meet you all once more on earth again I dont [sic] want you to worry about me mother leave me in the care of my heavenly father I still try to live a Christian life and trust in my heavenly father he has preserved my life so far and he is able still to preserve my life although the shells and bullets may fly thick and fast around me I have my health first rate I have been in the service over 17 months and been through one of the longest battles that had been fought in the west the Comander [sic] in Chief was old General W S Rosecrans near Murfreesburo [sic] he is as good a general as there is in the West he never lost a battle as yet I believe I am ready for another Battle but I fear we cant [sic] get provisions enough to take us along fire [sic] along time give my love and best respects to all inquiring friends Write soon I am glad to get such long letters from you any to get so much news you must not think hard of me if I dont [sic] answer your letters right away for when I receive you letter I may be on a march or in a fight I have not had a letter from father for a long time I dont [sic] know wether [sic] he has quit writing to me or not our Major is in command of our Regiment our Lieutenant Colonel being at home we have pretty shaby [sic] living but I am very hearty I have know [sic] doubt but the West Creek and East Creek boys was in a pretty hot place at fredricksburg [sic] but they was not in as long a battle as I was keep in good cheer Mother I hope I shall get home safe when my 3 years are out and then I can laugh and talk about what funny times and what hard times I had whilst I was a soldier a fighting for my country I was in the town of Murfreesburro [sic] yesterday it is a small town and a desolate one to [sic] most of the stores and churches are taken for hospitals there is lots of rebel wounded left there for the federals to take care of the Rebels have skedaddled for the south to make another stand I expect when we get provisions

enough we will start after them again and catch them somewhere else and whip them again or they learn that old Rosecrans is a fighter he bears that name Colonel Bradley is commanding our Brigade at the present [sic] I had a very dull Christmas I had an oyster supper at night I would like to spend a week at home first rate but it is impossible whilst I am so far away I try to be contented with the service my love to all especially to you and my brothers and sisters No more at present [sic] but still remains your kind loving and affectionate Son until death James S McCarty to Martha A McCarty

Camp Near Murfreesboro February 9th 1863

Dear Mother I now sit down to answer your kind letter that I received yesterday I am well at present [sic] and I hope this letter may find you enjoying the same blessing O how glad I was to hear from you to hear that you were [sic] well not been in any fight since I last wrote to you but have been very close to one so close that the shells and balls come within 50 yards of our regiment one day when we were [sic] out foraging but our regiment did not get engaged in the fight it was not a very heavy fight some artillery and infantry were [sic] engaged I am glad to hear that you are doing so well this winter well I am doing tolerable well I get plenty of hard crackers bacon beef and once in awhile a little flour we have got over 5 months pay due us now but we have not much prospect of getting pay very soon we have pretty plenty of clothing except socks wuch [sic] is very scarce well I have served half [sic] of my time out and 5 days on the other [illegible] o the time is passing off fast if I have my health as well as I have through the half that has gone I think I can stand it 3 years first rate but a soldiers [sic] life is a hard life to live and a more wicked place I never saw in my life money is so scarce that there is not much gambling a going on but a tremendous site [sic] of cursing [sic] and swaring [sic] but I trust hope pray I may not be lead astray although I have a great many trials troubles difficulties and wickedness to encounter I feel very thankful to you Mother for your kind advise [sic] I am glad that I have praying friends and a praying Mother and father I got a letter from Anne the other day o how I would like to see you and all my brothers and sisters but I cant [sic] sure that I will ever see you again on earth but I pray that the good lord may preserve my life health and strength and that I may meet you all again in providence I am glad to hear that she died happy poor girl she has got out of a world of trouble o how I would like to be there to [sic] Well I have not much news to write to you I am glad that you always send me such a big letter o I am so glad that you always tell me what the children are doing and something about the young folks to [sic] I like to hear from both old and young about west Creek Edmund Tomlin is well and doing pretty well he likes to hear from the East he is a pretty good fellow when you write me if you have any news concerning him tell me and I will tell him well we have been put through for the last week I tell you feraging [sic] making breastworks and standing picket it is awful wet and muddy down here it rains very often so we every once in awhile [sic] a cold spurt of weather too but it is not

steady cold we are still laying in camp near Murfreesboro and no prospects as yet of moving on to the enemy I guess we are again to stay in camp here this winter unless the enemy attack us which I dont [sic] think there is much danger of I was glad to hear that you dont [sic] worry about me providence will take care of me I expect Mellie is getting to be a pretty big girl o how I would love to see her and have her comb my hair with the corse [sic] comb dont [sic] be afraid to tell me about the young folks for I love to hear about them getting married and having such fine times well give my love and best regards [sic] to all inquiring friends I feel very glad that people thinks enough of me to inquire after me tell them I thank them very kindly for inquiring after my health well I feel so dull and lazy and not having a good chance to write not much news to write either I shant [sic] write you a very long letter this time give my love and best respects to grandpops folks direct to J S McCarty Company E 27th Regement [sic] illinois [sic] Volenteers [sic] Nashville Tennessee Write soon and tell me the news I expect things have changed considerable since I left home o I am sorry to hear that the church is so dead I hope it may come to life again I am glad to hear that the neckers so many of them are getting consecrated I hope they may hold out faithful until death well I believe I will bring my letter to a close you must excuse me for not writing any bigger letter for news is scarce at presant [sic] but I may have plenty the next time if I am alive No more at presant [sic] but still remains your kind loving and affectionate and obedient Son until death may the Lord keep us faithful JS McCarty to Martha A McCarty

Camp near Murfreesburro [sic] February 9 1863

Dear Brother I now sit down to write an answer to the letter that you sent me o am glad to hear that you are well and doing so well I am well at presant [sic] they must be agoing to make a small town up by Captain graces is gim [sic] godfrey at home now or is he agoing to sea yet what is Thomas godfrey doing these time is your schoolmaster a young man he must be a queer fellow I think give my love to all the boys and girls that think worth while [sic] to inquire about me o how I would like to see you the teacher must have a pretty small school I am glad to hear you say that you like to go to school I hope you may learn pretty smart this winter it is a good deal nicer agoing to school this cold weather than soldiering for we have so much hard marching to do and have to stand gaurd [sic] so much in the wet and cold I am glad that half my time is served when we are on a march it is no difference if its [sic] pouring down araining [sic] or freezing everything solid we have to lay down on the ground in the open air sometimes by a fire and sometimes no fire at all when we are on picket on the outpost we have to stand 2 hours at a time and we dare not have any fire and it is awful cold some nights too and it rains very often down here but here we are fast so we growl a little and bare [sic] it for that is the best I can do without I runaway wich [sic] I never will do if I have to stay 3 years in the service we see a good deal of fun since old Colonel

Roberts the man that was acting Brigadier general of our Brigade was killed we have had the easiest times since we have been in service we have no camp gaurd [sic] to stand at all now and we hant [sic] had to go a forageing [sic] but once in the last month that is our whole regiment ner [sic] we hant [sic] had to work but one day on the breastworks but we miss our poor Colonel harington [sic] I tell you poor fellow I fear he has gone to a worse world than this for he an awful wicked man but he was a first rate Colonel the man that is acting Colonel now is a granny he is a poor Conlern [sic] for a Colonel but I hant [sic] sure that he will get to be Colonel yet I would like to know what that young fellows [sic] name is and what he is doing there I excuse you for your bad writing for I can make it out very well I am glad to get a letter anyhow from home I like to hear from you and all the rest of my brothers and sisters What is Charley pit adoing [sic] these times does he have any notion of going to war yet or is he afraid he will get shot how old are you now Corbit and how tall are you and how much do you weigh how big is melly Can she read any yet o how I would like to have a round with the youngens [sic] I would tell them some funny tales and jokes too well I hope I shall get to see you all some day and if I live to get home again I will tell you of some of what big times when I was chasing the rebels around in Mississippi and in alabama [sic] Tennessee [sic] and Kentucky o wouldnt [sic] you like to run around and see the country with me you could get to see plenty of cotton and niggers and see and hear plenty of cannon I tell you but it is pretty hard to march 15 or 20 miles a day with a cartridge box with 200 rounds of amunition [sic] and a haversack with 2 days [sic] ration lantern and big gun besides well give my love to all inquiring friends direct to J S McCarty Company E 27th Reg Ills Vol Nashville Tennessee [sic] Well I believe I will bring my letter to a close so no more at presant [sic] But still remains your kind loving and affectionate Brother James S McCarty to William T C McCarty

Camp near Murfreesburro [sic] February 9th 1863

Dear Sister I now take the opportunity of answering your kind letter that I received with Mothers [sic] I am well at presant [sic] and hope these few lines may find you enjoying the same great blessing for I think it a great blessing we still are in camp near Murfreesburro [sic] we have changed our camping ground once since we went into camp after the battle for the camp where we where [sic] first was so low that it got so wet and muddy that we couldnt [sic] hardly get around at all so we moved about a quarter or a half of a mile on a higher dryer [sic] place so we have a pretty dry place to stay when it hant [sic] a raining it rains very often down here but we dont [sic] have much snow we live tolerable comfortable whilst in our tents but of late we have had to go on picket pretty often and I tell you it is awful disagreeable to stand picket and it a pouring down a raining I am glad to hear that you like to go to school and that you have such funny times try and learn to be a good writer and a good speller if you can you say that this term jeff [sic] and annabell [sic] are pretty mischeivous [sic] well I hope

they [sic] may enjoy themselves [sic] while young give my love to them and tell them I am glad to hear that they have not forgotten me yet you say the boys that went a soldiering are getting tired already [sic] Shaw they ought not to get tired already [sic] I have been in service over 18 months and I think if I am spared my life and health that I can stand it 2 years like a book although a soldier's [sic] life is a hard life to lead especially in the volunteer [sic] service where we have so much marching and fighting and much hard [sic] duty and so much exposure to [sic] it takes a man that has a good constitution to stand the hard knocks and fatigue that a soldier has to endure I am glad to hear that the boys are having such fine times a going to extra meetings o how I would like to be at home a little while to go to extra meetings with them the young men about west creek must be pretty scarce give my love and best respects to all that inquire about me and tell them I feel very glad that they inquire about me when you write again tell me if Aunt Retta has any beaux or not and whether [sic] Rachel McKaig is married or not tell me all you about the young man and girls that I am acquainted [sic] with [sic] o how is ole Mrs [sic] Wallace a getting along these [sic] who is living with her now how is Caroline Smith and Rhoda along these [sic] who is paying attention to them now who is working for Mr [sic] Smith now o if I live to get home how I will go it for a few weeks give my love to Tom Godfrey [sic] and July try and get a good pen when you write again I could read your letter pretty well I have not been in any battle since I last wrote to you but on Friday the 30th of January our Regiment went out with some other troops a foraging [sic] Soon after we got out as far as we were going the enemy attacked [sic] our troops but our Regiment were [sic] in the rear of the train so we did not get to fight any that day but some of the balls and shells came close to our Regiment next day our Regiment was on picket duty after that our Regiment was at work on breast works our men are fortifying [sic] Murfreesboro [sic] so if the enemy attacks us here there will be a bloody heavy fight I tell you but I don't [sic] think there is much chance there [sic] doing it I have over 5 months [sic] pay coming to me and no prospect of getting paid either very soon when I get my pay I will try and send some to you if I think it safe it has been so long since I got any money I am pretty well strapped the government is so poor that it don't [sic] furnish us boots so I buy my boots I bought a pair since I came in camp and I had to give 10 dollars for them in green backs for I didn't [sic] like to go wading around in the mud and water with shoes and on the same day I had to give 75 cts [sic] for a pair of socks or go bare foot for the government don't [sic] furnish us half enough of socks I got a good rubber blanket I drizzled [sic] it Well I excuse you for bad writing give my love to all inquiring friends keep a good share to yourself Write soon well I will bring my letter to a close so no more at present [sic] but still remains your affectionate and obedient [sic] Brother James S McCarty to Rachel L McCarty

Camp Sheffer March [illegible] 1863

Dear Mother I now sit down to answer your kind letter that I received last week I am well at present [sic] with both my legs and arms as yet I have not been in any more battles since I last wrote to you but I have been very close to me so close that I smelt [sic] powder I would of wrote an answer to you letter before but on the day that I received your letter we had a review in the afternoon and in the morning our line was attacked so our division was put out in a hurry and I tell you we had a good deal of doublequicking [sic] to do soon we where [sic] drawn up in line of battle and our artillery opened on them and the right wing of our regiment was left to support the battery and the left was thrown out as skirmishers and the cannon boomed away awhile O I tell you it sounded like ole [sic] times but we expected to have a big Battle right here at Murfreesburro [sic] sure enough but our artillery soon made the Rebels skedadle [sic] for thay [sic] had none to opperate [sic] on us at least they never opened it on us soon after the artillery stoped [sic] fireing [sic] Company E and F where [sic] sent out as skirmishers to see if the rascals had skedadilled [sic] for good or not o I tell you the old 27th was ready and willing for a fight with the old secsh [sic] for a great many of our regiment would sooner they would come and fight us instead of running all over the country hunting them up and fighting them yesterday our Brigade was on picket and there was a report that the enemy where [sic] agoing to attack us again this morning and they made some feint attack on our videtts [sic] before day I came on post just at daylight So I thought I would have the great pleasure of helping open the ball if they should come So I made myself ready to help give the butternuts a warm reception but I had to leave my post disappointed [sic] for they did not come but our Cavelry [sic] said they where [sic] outside of our lines a few miles 2 regiments and 2 pieces of artillery our picket have been moved back a long way so I suppose the enemy thought we had left Murfreesburro [sic] So they would come and see about it but they soon found the Yankees where [sic] still there and ready for a fight and so they soon skedadilled Murfreesburro [sic] is pretty well fortified now so if they fetch a heavy force determined to take the place I tell you it will be a harder battle than was ever fought in tennessee [sic] for old Rosecrans boys are fighters I tell you we have been tried especially the old 27th I tell you mother it dont frighten me to [sic] much to walk up before the cannon and the muskets for I have done it so often that I am getting pretty well used to it it sounds pretty natural to hear the old cannon belch forth the iron hail from its mouth 2 boys of our Company that where [sic] wounded in the last battle have returned to there [sic] Company Well dear mother I am glad that you have such happy times I hope it may continue o I am glad to hear that the work of religion is progressing so rapidly o how it would rejoice me to be there and attend the meetings o I hope and pray that I may be spared to come home again but I dont [sic] see any prospect a getting home before my time is up and that is a littles [sic] over 16 months yet o we are about to have a new Second Lieutenant we had another grand review today we where [sic] reviewed by old general Rosecrans himself o what a pretty sight it was to see the troops dressed up in there [sic] best and see a whole Company take a step at a time o I tell you the old 27th can do some splendid marching yet give my love and best respects to all inquiring friends wherever they are to be found Well I havent [sic] much news to write for we

havent [sic] been in any fight lately so I believe I will bring my letter to a close write soon o how glad I am always to get such good advise [sic] and such encouragement from a kind mother So no more at presant [sic] but still remains your affectionate and loving and praying Son James Swain McCarty to Martha Ann McCarty Good by

Headquarters 27th Illinois Vol infantry
Camp Sheffer, Tennessee
[illegible]

Whereas our Government is now engaged in a struggle [sic] for the perpetuation of every right dear to us as American citizens And require the united efforts of all good true and loyal men in its behalf and

Whereas we have beheld with feeling of infurious [sic] sadness and deep regret O spirit of opposition on the part of a portion of the people of the North to the Federal administration and also to the Authorities of the State of illinois [sic] in there [sic] efforts to supress [sic] the infamous rebellion wherefore

Resolved that we are today as ever before unconditionally [sic] and uncompromisingly for the union its peril and for upholding the president in his war measures for the maintenance [sic] of the Digtity [sic] of the Government and again unfurling the glorious emblem of our Nationulity [sic] over every city and town of the rebeldom

Resolved that having pledged ourselves to the Service of our Common Country in the hour of our National pride We have a right to expect and demand of the people of the state of illinois [sic] our friend and neighbor at home that they lay aside all pety [sic] and party animosites [sic] and come at once now to the resolve presenting a determined front to our enemyes [sic] at home as well as those under the command of the dark traitor Jeff Davis

Resolved that we as soldiers would as soon fight the enemies [sic] of our Country on the prairies of illinois [sic] as in the sunny South and that we hold ourselves ready to obey any order from the president to march into our own state with bayonet fixed to enforce the laws

Resolved that we are opposed to all proposition for a peace with traiters [sic] in arms that we are opposed to any compromise or any propositions other than those of loyalty and implicit obedience to the Constitution and the laws of our Country

Resolved that appreciate [sic] the oppositions manifested in some sections of the return of absentees and deserters from the army All such are unfaithful to there [sic] oath there [sic] Country and there [sic] companions in arms and any attempt to shield them from the penalty inflicted by the laws should and we believe will bring upon there [sic] simpathisers [sic] and protectors speedy and sure punishment And we heartly endorse

the measures taken for there [sic] forcible arrest and trial of all deserters and there [sic] aiders and abettors [sic] to the above resolutions there was no positively one descending [sic] voice I have the honor to be your humble servant

James S McCarty

Headquarters 27th Illinois Vol infantry
Camp Schafer, Tennessee [sic] April 3rd 1863
Handwritten version

Whereas Our Government is now engaged in a struggle [sic] for the perpetuation of every right Dear to us as American Citizzens [sic] And require the united efforts of all good true and Loyal men in its Behalf And

Whereas we have beheld with feeling of infurious [sic] sadness and deep regret o spirit of opposition on the part of a portion of the people of the North to the Federal administration and also to the Authoritie [sic] of the State of illinois [sic] in there [sic] efforts to suppress this infamous rebellion

Wherefore ReSolved [sic] that we are today as ever before unConditionaly [sic] and unCompromisingly [sic] for the union in its peril and for upholding the president in his war measures for the maintenance [sic] of the Digtity [sic] of the Government and again unfurling the glorious emblem of our Nationality over every City and town of Rebeldom

Resolved that having pledged ourselves to the Service of our Common Country in this hour of our National pride We have a right to expect and demand of the people of the state of illinois [sic] our friend and Neighbors at home that they lay aside all petty and party animositis [sic] and Come at once now to the resolve preSenting [sic] a determined front to our enemyes [sic] at home as well as those under the Command of the dark traitars [sic] Jeff Davis

Resolved that we as Soldiers would as soon fight the enemes [sic] of our Country on the prairies of illinoi [sic] as in the sunny South and that we hold ourselves ready to obey any orders from the president and march into our own state with bayonets fixed to enforce the Laws [sic]

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Endorse the measures taken for there [sic] forCible [sic] arrest and trial of all DeSerters
[sic] and there [sic] aiders and abettors [sic] to the above reSolution [sic] there was no
positively one DeSending [sic] Voice i [sic] have the honor to be your humble Servant
James S M^cCarty

Camp Shaffer near Murfreesburro [sic] tenns [sic] April 30th 1863

Dear Mother it is with the greatest pleasure immagineable [sic] that I now sit down to
answer you kind loving and good letter that I received not a half hour ago I am well at
presant [sic] o I enjoy excellent health I believe soldiering just agrees with me o I am
so glad to hear you say that you dont [sic] worry about me and father o that is right the
good Lord will take care of us I know if we only love and serve him in a right maner [sic]
I still trust in the all wise providence and I pray that we may meet one another in that
better world if we are not permitted to meet on earth again but trust and pray that we
may meet around the family alter [sic] at west creek where we can worship our dear
Blessed Savior in a social company and in peace where we will not be surround with
curseing [sic] and swearing like I am at the presant [sic] time for there is not a half
dozen Christians in our Company so you see I have not many Christians to comfort me
with there [sic] good advice so I call upon the ever willing and ever ready and merciful
providence to aid and assist me in my trial and afflictions that I have to endure night and
morning and the good advice that I receive from you o it rejoices me o I am so thankful
to the all wise providence that I have such a kind loving pious religion and praying
Mother and such loving kind praying Brothers and Sisters and friends o it nearly makes
tears come to my eyes to read your loving letters o how I would love to see you my
Dear Mother and help you along all I could in spiritual matters as well as worldly matter
but I dont [sic] expect to get to come home until my time is out wich [sic] is several
months yet for it would take me so long to go and come that I wouldnt [sic] have long
to stay after I got there and it would cost me a good deal to [sic] a year and 9 months of
my time only is out on the third of may [sic] which is close at hand now I tel [sic] you the
time is passing slowly away and I might lose the pleasure of being in a big fight if I
should be so lucky as to get a furlough so I believe it is best to stay with the Company if
they are wicked bad men I get awful aggravated with them often time for they plague
me so much and appear to hate me because I dont [sic] drink whiskey play cards swear
lie and steal like they and they say once in while in a kind of a slur no he wont [sic] drink
nor play cards for he is religious it makes me mad for a little while but I try and pass it
by and I pray the almighty may give me a kind loving and forgiving temper and if there
ever was a place that would try a Christians [sic] heart it is in the army I tell you for a
man cant [sic] hardly get out by himself at all for there is such an awful large army
camp [sic] here that the soldiers are shouting all around in every direction to day [sic]
the men are on picket all but a few that is sick wounded or havent [sic] got

accoutrements [sic] I was on guard [sic] last night we have not had any long march since I last wrote to you last so we have had tolerable easy times we have to drill some times and have a little police duty and fatigue duty but that hant [sic] much but we have to go on picket guard very often but that hant [sic] so bad now day for the weather is getting warmer and we dont [sic] have so much stormy weather as we did in March I am glad to see nice warm clear weather for it is so much more pleasanter we where [sic] mustered today for two months more pay but I dont [sic] know when we may receive it we may receive it tolerable soon if we stay here near Murfreesburro [sic] I think perhaps we may get to stay here or close by anyhow this summer for it is getting pretty well along towards summer now we are almost turned out of doors for we have to live in dog tents but they will do tolerable well to keep the dew off of a night and keep a little sun out in the day time but they are not much account in rainy stormy weather well it is awful dull times in the regiment now adays but the health of the regiment is very good about as good I guess as it has been whilst in service we havent [sic] had any fight since I last wrote to you nor I guess we wont [sic] have one soon neither unless we move onto them which I dont [sic] see much prospect of yet father has quit writing to me all together poor fellow he appears to have a hard time to get along in this world I get discouraged once in awhile but I get such encouraging letter that I soon get over it am all right again we have not got but one preacher to preach to a whole Brigade 4 regiments so he dont [sic] get much time to visit the Christians in the regiments Well news are scarce and times around here very dull so I belive [sic] I will soon have to bring my letter to a close our Captain Stout has got back and taken charge of the Company and portar [sic] has gone home on a furlough for 20 days o Stout is an awful wicked man and swears tremendous hard but he is not so awful hard on the boys after all give my love and best respects to all inquiring friends especially to Aunt Ann grand ma pa Aunt retts [sic] and the rest still keep in your dear son to come home again that you may embrace him in love in the family circle I pray for you all that the Lord may aid and assist you in all your troubles and trial through life No more at presant [sic] but still remains your kind loving and Christian Son until death James S McCarty to Martha A McCarty Good by

April Camp Shaffer near Murfreesburro [sic] 30th 1863

Dear Sister it is with pleusure [sic] that I now answer your letter I am always glad to hear from home to hear how are you all getting along Does etta [sic] Wallace and you have such nice times and play hide and hoot around the hay stacks like you used to o how I would like to play with you o wouldnt [sic] we have some big funny times and cut up some big monkey shines if I was to come home to stay never mind I hope and pray I may get to see you all again on earth if not I hope we may meet in a better world than this how is uncle Charleys Cersons litte [sic] a getting along these time and henry [sic] I expect henry [sic] is getting to be a pretty big boy by this time is jimmm [sic] wallace

as fat as he use [sic] to be and as full of his frolics I expect your pretty nice times now for the weather is getting warmer and you can go out and scratch around in the dirt and help your Mother fix the garden a little is melly [sic] as full of her capers as she used to be when I was at home does she like to comb hair as well o how I would like to sit in that old big rocking chair and have her to comb my hair for me Dear sister I am glad to hear that you will try and be a good girl that is right be a good girl and obey your father and mother and you will get along very well o wouldnt [sic] you like to see a camp of soldiers Sally and see our dog tents that we have to stay in o if you would come along by my tent I would run out and bark at you but I wouldnt [sic] bite o the soldiers look nice when they are on dress parade all in a straight line and dressed in there [sic] best I tell you and band a playing such nice music but when the cannons begin to roar it isnt [sic] so pleasent [sic] and the bullets come at a feller like hail it is not so funny do you think so Sally Well I believe I will bring my letter to a close for I havent [sic] much to write about I quit by giving my love to you and all the rest of my Brothers and Sisters so no more at presant [sic] but still remains your kind loving Brother James S McCarty to Sarah Elizebeth [sic] McCarty

May 8th 1863 Camp Shaffer

Dear Mother I am well at presant [sic] and I hope these few lines may find you enjoying the same great blessing I just got a photograph this forenoon of our dear beloved and departed Colonel F A Harrington it looks just like him I think and I didnt [sic] have to give but 35 cents for it so I thought I would get one and send it to you before it got dirty and soiled I will send a song to Aunt Retta to [sic] in this please give the song to Aunt Retta mother I dont [sic] expect an answer to this for I dont [sic] expect to write much for I was on picket yesterday and last night and it rained most all day and night and was cold to [sic] so we had an awful disagreeable time but I tell you our still lies still and I dont [sic] see much of a forward movement as yet please excuse me for not sending a lock of my hair for I forgot it until I get a letter in the office or base rather there is some report that Bragg is coming to give us a fight but I dont [sic] think there is much danger of his attacking us here for we are to [sic] strongly fortified and if he did it would just suit us for we would rather fight him here than to run after him all over Tennessee to get a fight out of him the soldiers appear to be in very good spirits and very healthy there is talk of us losing one of our old regiments there is talk of it being consolidated you needent [sic] bother to answer this I just send it to let you see our brave Colonel that fell at Stones river I tried to get more of them but I couldnt [sic] get but show it to grandpops folks and see what they think of him give my love to all inquiring friend my love to you and my dear Brothers and sister No more at presant [sic] but still remains your kind loving and affectionate Son James S McCarty to Martha A McCarty

Camp Shafer May 21 1863

Dear Mother I now sit down to answer your kind loving affectionate and good letter that I have just received and read I am well at presant [sic] and I enjoy splendid health I tell you I am getting along very well for a soldier nowadays it is awful hot and dry down here but we have very cool nights and no mosquitoes at all nor knats [sic] nor greenhead flies neither it is bad for you that you have such awful wet weather but it may be dry after awhile we are still campd [sic] on Stones river near Murfreesborro [sic] but I dont [sic] know how long we will get to stay here for there is a report a going in camp that Bragg has fell back and that our troops at least a portion of them are under marching orders already if bragg [sic] has fell back towards vicksburg [sic] I expect there will be pretty stirring times here before long we are willing to fight them but we dont [sic] like marching this dry hot dusty weather but if we must we are ready to push on and crush the rebellion [sic] out sooner the better we have a good deal of drilling too we have to drill twice a day 7 to 9 Oclock [sic] and 4 to 6 oclock [sic] in the evening we hate it awfully but we cant [sic] help it and we have a good deal of picket gaurd [sic] to stand to or walk rather for the orders are very strict on picket A sentinel has to walk his beat the whole two hours if he obeys orders but we have to do the best we can I hope there is a better day a coming o Mother do you get any papers called the harpers [sic] Weekly with pictures of the great Battles of the Potomac I told our second Lieutenant to write to harper [sic] to send a paper by that name for one year to Martha McCarty and he did it for I wonted [sic] you to see some of the sights of battle and the horrors of war but mother the picture of a battle is nothing like being in one and seeing it in reality to see the little 6.10 and 12 pounder bull dog alooking [sic] you right in the face and barking at you and the little bullets come a whistling by same as they where [sic] saying by But after we once get into it I tell you dont [sic] mind much we pay them back in the same kind of coin it is pretty tolerable quiet around Murfreesburro [sic] as far as I know at presant [sic] but if all is true that I hear you may look for stirring news in the next letter that I write that is if I am permitted to write another I am glad to hear you get along so well and that you are so lucky I hope the lot may soon be dry enough to plow and plant how it cheers me to hear from you and hear that there is so many that inquires about me o I am so glad to get a letter from you I always sit right down and write an answer to it if I can o it has such good cheering and comforting news in it I have had a pretty good chance to go to meeting of late and I improved it pretty well to [sic] I commenced reading the bible [sic] through about a month ago and I have it pretty near through o I read it a great deal and I find it a very good thing to [sic] o how it encourages me and going to meetings and hear the good Brethren pray o it helps me a good deal in this unfriendly world Dear Mother I have great many trials and difficulties to encounter in this unfriendly world but I go to my heavenly father for comfort and assistance and I know he is able and willing to help all those that ask him in faith beliving [sic] that put there [sic] trust in him I would love to assist you in the family prayers night and morning but it so I cant [sic] but I pray that my heavenly father may spare my life o that I may be permitted [sic] to join you once more in family prayer in the

family circle o what happy thought to think if I am not spared to see you again this side of a never ending eternity that I have a prospect of meeting you in that land where we will meet to part no more forever I have not much news to write so please excuse me for this short letter give my love and best respects to all inquiring friends Write soon and give me all the news for I dont [sic] have much news to write nowadays well I believe I will bring my letter to a close so no more at presant [sic] but still remains you kind loving affectionate and obedient [sic] Son May the good providence keep us faithful until death James S McCarty to Martha A McCarty

Camp Shaffer May 21st 1863

Dear Sister I now sit down to answer your little letter that you sent me I could just read it and that was pretty much all to [sic] for it was blotted so I think you might get change enough to buy paper and stamps the storekeepers must be pretty bad off if they cant [sic] change a five or even a ten dollar bill they can change a 20 or 50 dollar bill here in the Army we have a great deal different kind of weather down here to what you appear to have in the east for the weather is very dry and hot down here and the river is getting very low there is not a great deal of stirring news around that is reliable at the presant [sic] there is reports that we have to march before long but I dont [sic] know wether [sic] it is so or not there is some signs of a march or being attacked for all that was not able to march have been ordered to the rear to the convalescent camp one of our men by the name of John Medford that was taken prisoner at the battle of Stones river just got back to the Company today you say that the girls have a prayer meeting a Tuesday nights o how I would like to see you enjoying yourself with the rest of the girls we have some good meetings here now when we are in camp there is meeting Sunday at halfpast [sic] ten and halfpast [sic] six at night and prayer meeting a Tuesday [sic] night Wensday [sic] night and Friday [sic] night that is if the Brigade is in camp on those nights So I have better times and feel more encouraged to press on in the good cause that I have started in o dear sister continue to pray and hold out to the end never turn back but ever put your trust in god and you will come out all right at last I pray for you that the Lord may keep you faithful well you wrote me such a short letter that I believe I will write a short answer give my love and best respects to all and tell them that want to hear from me right bad to write to me and I will try and answer it if I am alive and well My love to you and all the rest of my dear brothers and sisters and mother No more at presant [sic] but still remains your kind loving Christian and soldier Brother James S McCarty to Rachel L McCarty

June 1st Camp Shaffer 1863

Dear Mother it is great pleasure that I now sit down to answer your kind letter that I received a few minutes ago I am well at present [sic] and enjoying myself very well and have been since night before last night before last the orders came for to be ready to march with 3 days rations in our haversack and 4 in our knapsacks but we have not gone as yet but expecting to be called to face the enemy soon yesterday there was fighting in front and the 2nd Brigade of our division went out a little piece but returned again to there [sic] camp before night there is an appearance of a general move of this whole Army before long so by the time this letter reaches you I may be engaged in a deadly strife with the enemy or in death but my trust is in god I leave all to him and I know if I only serve him aright [sic] and obey his Commandments that he will take care of me if it is my destiny to fall and never to meet you on earth again I hope and pray that better world above where meeting and parting will be no more forever I was at meeting last night and they had a very good meeting there appears to be a great many that are tired of sin and are coming to Jesus we had prayer and speaking meeting and some of the young converts spoke and when the call was give [sic] for any that wanted to be especially remembered in prayer and wanted to lead a new life several came forward and gave the Chaplain there [sic] hand o how it rejoices me to see such a turning to the Lord if late I have been trying to lead a better life and have taken to reading the scriptures more and try to be more kind loving and forgiving to my wicked companions around me and I feel a great deal better by it and get along a great deal better with my fellow companions in arms o how it encourages me to get your good letters and read them I feel very well satisfied at present [sic] o how cheering to hear such good news if grant [sic] only takes Vicksburg and all the men and guns and we whip them out here I think the Southern Army of the west will be about gone up I dont [sic] much doubt but that we will have some very hard fighting to do before long if we move to the front unless the enemy have taken off a part of there [sic] force to reinforce pemberton [sic] at Vicksburg I believe we are just the boys to whip old Bragg we have the name of being a fighting Brigade and we still have the determination to fight whenever we are called on we are ready to march out to meet the foe at any time but we most awfully hate to pack 7 days rations but I guess we can stand it if we have to do there where [sic] pretty stirring times here yesterday troops where [sic] marching drums where [sic] beating and cannon where [sic] roaring in the distance it looked very much like war I tell you but I expect we will have more stirring times before long it is kind a strange that father dont [sic] write to you perhaps he is some where he has not the chance to write and perhaps the reason he dont [sic] send any money home he has not got paid off lately mother if you get out of money let me know whenever you are in need and if I have any I will divide with you we have over 3 months pay coming to us now but I dont [sic] expect we will get paid very soon for if there is a battle to be fought here soon we dont [sic] want it now I dont [sic] expect we will get it till after the battle I have money enough to last me 3 months yet anyhow well I believe I have wrote you about all the importance at present [sic] so I believe I will bring my letter to a close give my love and best respects to all inquiring friends o how I would love to see your fine preacher and hear your splendid presiding elder preach well I will bring my letter to a

close with love to you and all my Brothers and sisters still remains your kind loving and affectionate Son James S McCarty to Martha A McCarty

Camp Shaffer June 5th 1863

Dear Sister I now take my pen in hand to answer your kind letter that I received in mothers [sic] I am well at presant [sic] and hope these few lines may find you enjoying the same great blessing we are still encampt [sic] near Murfreesborro [sic] but I dont [sic] expect we will stay here long for we are under marching orders to be ready to march at a moments [sic] warning with 3 days rations in our haversacks and 4 days rations in our knapsacks the second Brigade went out a piece yesterday and I expected our Brigade would have to go next but we havent [sic] had to start yet but I heard a man say today that Colonel Bradley acting Brigadier general of the Brigade we would have to go out sue [sic] if we didnt [sic] go today we would have to go tommorrow [sic] So I suppose we will soon get to hear the bullitts [sic] whiz and the cannon roar again before long but we are ready to meet the foe at least most of us are whenever we are called on we have had very wet weather for a week past but it had been tolerable warm the soldiers are in pretty good spirits on the 24th of May one of our company a wicked young man belonging to the hospital was cook in the hospital he was carrying water up the river bank in the side next the camp and the butchers where [sic] shooting beeves on the other side and one of them missed the beef and shot the man right in the head close to the left eye his name was John K Camp this happened late in the afternoon and that night about midnight he was called into the other world he never spoke after he was shot o what a warning to those not prepared to die I pray the Lord he may keep me faithful and that I may be prepared to die whenever death may come pray for me my dear sister I pray for you that the Lord may keep you faithful no more at presant [sic] but still remains your kind loving Brother until death James S McCarty to Rachel F McCarty

Dear Brother I try to pen you a few lines in answer to the few you sent I am glad to hear you say that you get plenty of work but sorry to hear that you are afflicted with the toothache but Dear Brother that is not so bad as to have a leg or arm shot off and have to lay in the sick hospital for months at a time in pain and misery like a great many have to do and I dont [sic] know how soon I may be wounded or perhaps killed perhaps before this letter reaches you I may be laying on the cot in some hospital or else in the spirit world but I trust in god and whenever I am called from this world I pray I may go to a better land where there is no parting nor sorrow nor wars nor rumors of wars I am glad to hear that you have come home to help mother that is right be a good boy and help your kind loving mother all you can o how I would love to help her and work in the lot and garden O hope when my time is out to come home and see you all and help

mother work and got to meeting with you I am glad you have started out to serve the Lord still continue to serve the Lord and put your trust in him I do pray the Lord he may bring you up in the fear of the Lord give my love and best respects to all inquiring friends well I believe I will bring my letter being I have 2 more letters to answer for I got one from Anna today so no more at present [sic] but still remains your king and loving Brother James S McCarty to William Pitman C. McCarty

Cemetery Information

Baptist Cemetery [sic]

Wm McCarty

Aug 1865- 71- 5[illegible]

Wm Born May 3 1832 died Aug 1893

Elizabeth – Dec 23, 1833 – March 21 1897

Eldara 9-10

Samuel McCarty died July 27-1895 at age 77

Martha A. McCarty died Feb 12, 1895 age 72

26-27

Maurice died March 4, 1881 age 73

Clarissa died Feb 2 1860 age 67

Erma- N.J. T- Meth-

Ec 390

Ledia McCarty d. Jan 17 1863 age 1 yr

Ebenezer and Jane

Camp Shaffer June 21st 1863

Dear Sister I now take my pen in hand to answer your kind letter that I received with mothers [sic] your lines found me enjoying my health and strength as you hoped it would I enjoy excellent health and times I havent [sic] much to do and have the priviledge [sic] of going to meeting every night when not on gaurd [sic] duty which is o so very often my time is passing swiftly by I have got so use [sic] to the service that I like it very well and feel very well satisfied and encouraged we did not have to march out to meet the enemy as we expected so we are here in camp Shaffer when our turn

came we had to go out on picket to stay 6 days our division had got the Salem pike to gaurd [sic] A brigade goes out at a time and stays six days and our Brigade had to go out on the third turn there is only 3 brigades in our division so we do get to stay in camp 12 days and then go out on the Salem pike and stay 6 days the weather is pretty dry and warm down here there is no prospect of us having to march now I would like to see you and have a good time with you but I am so far away I hope I may see you all on earth again but if I am not permitted [sic] to meet you on earth again I hope and pray I may meet you all in heaven give my love to all of my inquiring friends and thank Lil Taylor for sending her love to me and all the rest that inquire after my welfare I pray for you my dear sister and I desire your prayers that I may prove faithful there is not much to write to you Write soon and give me all the news please excuse me for not writing more for there is not much to write well I believe I will bring my letter to a close so no more presant [sic] but my love to you still remains your Brother James S McCarty to R L McCarty

Dear Brother I now take my pen in hand to answer your letter that I received with mothers [sic] it found me enjoying excellant [sic] health as you hoped it would I am glad to hear that my letter that I wrote to my class mates was read to them and that the preacher spoke so much about it o how I would like to go to the Saturday night class again I hope I may be spared to go with you to the class there is not much news to write to you o how I would like to go down to the beach with you and help you catch eels and pick up crabs o if I could get you down on the beach how I would roll you in the sand we are campd [sic] close to Stone river not more than a quarter of a mile off so we can go down and wash off pretty often but it is not so nice as the beach it is an awful stony river and pretty shallow to [sic] you said fight on for my country well I insure [sic] you I will when I get a chance providence permitting there is not much prospect of a fight around here at presant [sic] I believe but I dont [sic] know how soon the rebels may fly in here and skare [sic] a few union soldiers but they better be a little careful how they fool around us for we are ready for them whenever they are a mind to come Just let them come on we would like to take out our fighting out here in breastworks and not have to chase them all over the Southern Confederacy For 9 months men has a great time getting mustered out they ought to enlist again anyhow when the Country is in such peril I think I would enlist if my time was out if the Country needed me as bad as it does then I am glad to hear that you have got your potatoes all in thats [sic] right work for mother and raise something to eat be a good boy I pray for you that the Lord may keep you faithful and that if we are not permitted that we may meet in heaven give my love and best respects to all of my inquiring friends My love to you and all the rest of my Brothers and Sisters Write soon still remains you loving Brother J S McCarty Wm McCarty

Camp Shaffer June 21 AD 1863

Dear Mother it is with the greatest pleasure imageable [sic] that I now take my pen in hand to answer your kind loving interesting letter that I received this afternoon o how glad I am always to hear from you to hear that you are well and doing well I am well and feel very much encouraged to press on in the service of my blessed Savior as well as for my Country We are in Camp Shaffer yet we have been out on the Salem pike 6 days as Brigade picket and just got in yesterday we did not have to march as we expected the enemy was just feeling our position I guess and they soon drew [sic] off and let us alone it is very quiet around Murfreesboro at the present [sic] the boys as far as I know appear to be in good spirits and in pretty good health on Sunday the 14th of June J Shockensee Company A private was killed instantly he was lying in his tent asleep close by a tremendous big tree when a very large limb about 40 feet high gave way and fell across his breast and head killing him instantly o how sudden he never awaked out of sleep until he was called into the other world he was a noted gambler very wicked man and only 21 year old this month o what a solemn thought I was in my tent at the same time just awakeing [sic] out of sleep when the limb fell it fell close by my tent but the good providence protected me from danger the work of religion is going on gloriously in our Brigade on Saturday the 13th of June there where [sic] 13 baptized in our Brigade and today the 21st there was 16 baptized on Stone river old Brother Raymond the Chaplain of the 59th regiment Ill has all the baptizing to do the good meetings still continue on we have had meetings for 4 weeks or more every night and sometimes in the daytime Brother Raymond is all the Chaplain that belongs to the Brigade o I feel happy and feel blessed of late and feel a stronger desire to follow my blessed redeemer O I feel thankful to my Lord that he permits me to enjoy so many blessings o Mother you know not how much good your kind loving and intelligent [sic] advice does me o how thankful I am to have a Christian Mother to encourage me in this vile sinful degraded world and to comfort and support me by her advice through my troubles trials and afflictions [sic] of this world but best of all my trust and comfort is in Christ whenever I get downhearted his courage or in trouble I can call on my Blessed Savior who ever ready and willing to bless those that call on him in faith believing nothing doubting I feel very well satisfied and I enjoy excellant [sic] health and I feel very much increase of the love of god to my soul I pray god he may keep me faithful and that if I am not spared to see you face to face on earth again that I may meet you and all the rest of my friends and relations in glory I am glad to hear that there is so many that inquire about me and I am glad that my old friends at home havent [sic] forgotten me I hope to see them again on earth tell them mother I have not forgotten them but that I still think of them and pray for them that the good Lord may keep them faithful give them all that inquire about me my love and best respects as a soldier for Jesus and my country to [sic] and that I desire an intrest [sic] in there [sic] prayers o how I would love to be home a little while and help you hoe potatoes beans but I am to [sic] far away to come to see your pretty garden and corn lot I am glad to hear that father has sent you some money and that he is still alive and well we have near 4

month wages due us now and I dont [sic] think they will pay us until the four months is due I hope not anyhow poor Charley I am sorry to hear that he was poisoned [sic] I hope he may soon get over it we have very easy times now we dont [sic] have much marching to do nor other duty either and can go to meeting every night and stay till it is out and not be put on extra duty for missing roll call o how I appreciate such priviledges [sic] and love them give my love to gradpaps [sic] folks and all the rest Well I belive [sic] I will my letter to a close for the presant [sic] Write soon we are not under marching orders at presant [sic] No more at presant [sic] but still remains kind loving affectionate James S McCarty M A McCarty my love to your B and Sisters

Camp [sic] at the [illegible] of the [illegible] tennessee [sic]
July 17th 1863

Dear Mother it is with great pleasure that I now take my pencil in hand to answer your kind interesting letter that I received night before last we left Camp Shaffer June 22 and we have been on the march ever since chasing old Bragg laying still for only a few days at all place we have the hardest march I think that we ever had since we have been in service we had to wade 3 streams waist deep one day and several small ones all the way along our division got along so far without having a big battle [illegible] we expected the first day our Regiment a part of it was enjoyed but the secesh was ready to fight we expected to have the a big battle at Tullahoma but old Bragg was afraid of Rosey so he skidaddled [sic] to the mountains but our army followed him and drove him clear to the tennessee [sic] river I am well and have been all along the trip and feel very much encouraged and contented the boys appear to be in very good spirits and anxious to bring this war to an end I expect as soon as the Commander can get provisions enough up we will strike out again for old Bragg we are waiting for provisions we where [sic] on half rations for several days but we are drawing full rations of bread again we are on top of the Cumberland mountains the roads are very bad and muddy if I dont [sic] write to you for some time again dont [sic] worry about me for I have enough to carry without carrying paper ink and envelopes o I dont [sic] know when we will ever get stationed in camp again I have not got any ink nor cant [sic] get any at presant [sic] so please excuse me for such poor writing I thank rachel [sic] for writing to me but I believe I cant [sic] answer hers this time for paper is so scarce and I have such a poor chance to write it is awful hard marching up these mountains this hot weather and we have a tremendous lot of rain so I hope to soon get stationed again but there is no prospect for old Bragg is such a fast runner we just have to put down to it to keep up with him give my love to all inquiring friends my 2 years will be up the third of next month and I think if the war goes on as it is now it will all be settled up in another year I will just write you a short letter to let you know that I am still alive and well and still trying to serve my Blessed Lord I hope to be spared to see you again in earth how I would of liked to a gone a fishing with you on the 4th I was on laying at Cowens [sic] Station

resting on the 4th a soldiers [sic] life is a hard life I think those 9 months men ought to enlist again well believe I will bring my letter to a close I will try to wrote you a better letter when we get into camp providence permitting my love to all my brothers and Sisters and to you Write soon still remains your loving Son James S McCarty to Mrs [sic] Martha A McCarty Write soon

Bridgeport Alabama August 7th 1863

Dear Mother I now sit down to answer your letter that brought me such sad new I received you letter today and was glad to hear from you but very sorry to hear of the loss of my dear brother o if I only could of seen him before he was lain in his long resting place but I was so unfortunate that I could not get to see him I hope and pray I may meet him and all the rest of you in that better land where parting is not known I am well and hope these lines may find you enjoying the same great blessing we are at Alabama on the tennessee [sic] river it is a very good place for a camp except the water is so unhandy we are campd [sic] on a large hill and every time we go for water or go to the river we have to go and come up this big hill wich [sic] is a very hard job I tell you all is very quiet here the rebels are just on the other side of the river but they dont [sic] disturb us there is no signs of old Rosecrans going any farther for some time I think perhaps we can get to stay in camp a month or to [sic] they are having the camp fixed up very nice they have brush sheds fixed up over our tents for shade for it is very hot here now and pretty dry we have very busy times a fixing up the camp and standing gaurd [sic] the cars come here most every day now so I think we will certainly get enough to eat yesterday morn and noon our Company had just crackers and coffee to eat but in the afternoon we killed a couple of shoats and had them cooked for supper I would love to be as close home as father is I would soon get to see you I am thinking but my time is passing off very fast I am on my last year and pray the good Lord may spare my life and my parents and my brothers and sisters that I may see them it is dreadful to loose [sic] a dear Brother but the Lords [sic] will be done not mine I will try and be resigned to his will I am striving in my weak way to serve my blessed master and to make heaven my home although I have a great many trials temptations and difficulties to encounter in this unfriendly world but the Lords [sic] aid is sufficient to overcome [sic] them if I will only do my masters [sic] will and be faithful to my trust and live a whole hearted Christian and come to him aright he will assist me in overcoming all of them I know the way the war is going on at the presant [sic] I think this war will soon come to a close I am not tired nor dissatisfied with a soldiers [sic] life but I would like to pay you all a visit and I cannot do it whilst I am so far away from home and I dont [sic] expect to get any nearer home until my time is about expired for if any thing [sic] we are getting farther away all the time there is not much news of importance of what is going on around here I believe I have told you about all the news of importance I will send you five dollars it is a small sum but I hope it will do you some good if I was home I

would try and help you more but I have to look out for myself and every thing [sic] we buy we have to pay such an enormous prices for them that it takes near everything we make and all the money I get I get honestly I dont [sic] get it gambling like a great many of my comrades do give my love and best respects to all inquiring friends do not mourn for your dear son the good lord had taken him to himself I trust and he will be a great deal happier there than he would in this troblesome [sic] world do not worry about me the Lord will take care of me Write soon and give me all the news I trust there will not such sad news in the next being I wrote Rachel a letter a short time ago I will not answer hers or the little sheet I got no more at presant [sic] but still remains your kind loving affectionate Son and soldier boy James S McCarty Martha A McCarty

Bridgeport Alabama August 23rd 1863

Dear Mother I now sit down to write you a few lines to let you know that I am alive and well at presant [sic] we are campd [sic] at Bridgeport yet but we do not know how long we will stay here we have sent back our knapsacks to the rear I will send you 25 dollars to get tombstones for my dear departed brother I would of sent it before but I was so forgetful that I did not think about it until day before yesterday but I hope it is not too late yet get 2 nice ones with a verse on one of them Mother and if the 25 dollars dont [sic] pay for them why let me know and I will try to spare a few dollars more get them Dearest Mother it went very hard with me to hear of the sudden death of my dearly beloved Brother but so it is death cuts down all both great and small I feel that I want to do something towards the fixing up of the remains of my dear brother and I want something to show where his remains lay in the old Churchyard so if I am so highly favored by divine providence as to live to get home again I can see where his last resting place is get a nice verse put on the stone I will try and stand the cost if you will only let me know what the cost let this be an answer to your letter that I expect is on the way now as soon as you receive this letter write and let me know if you received the 25 dollars o how I would like to see you all I pray that I may meet you all on earth again if not I pray I may meet you one and all and my dear Brothers that have gone before in that better land above where greif [sic] sorrow and parting is never known o how I would love to be in that world now along side [sic] of my dear brothers singing in everlasting praises to my blessed Master well there not a great deal of important news for me to write about at presant [sic] except the Rebs [sic] are deserting and coming over to our side almost daily not only but a few officers come over once in awhile [sic] well I believe I will bring my letter to a close perhaps we will have to march shortly from this place and it may be a long time before you hear from me again if ever but how soneever [sic] write as soon as you get this give my love and best respects to all inquiring friends My love to you and Brothers and sisters so no more at presant [sic] but still remains your ever affectionate loving and kind son until death James S McCarty to Martha A McCarty

Camp Roberts August 29th 1863

Dear Sister I now sit down to answer your long looked for letter that you sent me I received it yesterday whilst I was out in the woods cutting timber I am well at present [sic] and hope these lines may find you enjoying the same great blessing I enjoy excellent health and am very well satisfied I like soldiering [sic] tolerable well our time is passing off pretty fast the governor of illinois [sic] I heard was trying to get our furlough time allowed us with [sic] if we do our time will be out in april [sic] next and some of the boys are in good spirits thinking they will get there [sic] furlough time allowed them we are still at Bridgeport we sent our knapsacks back to Stevenson but we sent back for our blankets so we sleep very comfortable a nights the weather has been very cool since wensday [sic] last our picket guard [sic] is very light now having only to go on guard [sic] every 8th day that is picket guard [sic] and there is not much other guard [sic] duty to do the Rebels dont [sic] bother us much now a days so we have pretty peaceable times here now o but I get awful lonesome and dull and tired of alaying [sic] around here I tell how I would love to go a visiting once in a while around west creek and go the beach with the party I expect you had a fine time down on pearcey [sic] with your beau if em [sic] carson [sic] is married when you get this tell her I wish her a long life and a happy one who is that Mary J Wallace where did she come from where does Mary E Hoffman live now and who goes to see her I am to hear that the girls think enough of me to send there [sic] love to me tell Theba McKaig I send my love to her and I thank her for sending her love to me who is Mary J Wallaces [sic] man where does he belong What business had he to take mary [sic] E Hoffman in the water I wish you would let the girls alone here after especially my old gal if he please for me my dear sister try and get a smart decent and nice young man if you have any try and get well acquainted with Isah Hoffmann and find out weather [sic] he is may account before you tie the knot or any other man my dear sister tell me honestly do you have enough money to keep you agoing tell me honestly if you think I pay you inough [sic] wages dont [sic] be afraid to tell me come right out with it it just between you and me its [sic] just our business I will send you five dollars more in this letter I think likely if we stay here we will get payed [sic] off again soon if not I believe I will have money enough to run me through how does the corn crop look and the potatoes I tell you we dont [sic] get many potatoes here but plenty of hard crackers and meat I hope I shall live to see you all again and enjoy the comforts of life with you again Dear sister you requested me to pray for you I do very frequently and I still desire your prayers I am very glad to hear that you are still trying to live faithful and make your way to heaven I pray if we are not permitted [sic] to meet again on earth that we may meet in heaven give my love to my dear classmates tell them that I still remember them in my prayers and that I request there [sic] prayers for me give my love and best respects to all inquiring friends Write soon dear sister for I will be anxious to hear wether [sic] you got the five dollars or not my love to father mother and all Brothers and sisters put your trust in god and try to

live faithful well I believe I will bring my letter to a close no more at present [sic] but still remain your kind loving affectionate Brother until death James S McCarty to Rachel L McCarty

Camp Roberts August 29th 1863

Dear Brother I now sit down to write you a few lines in answer to the ones you sent me I am well and glad to hear that you was well I was very glad to hear you had come home with the intention to stay and comfort poor mother thats [sic] right my dear Brother take good care of her and I hope I shall live to get home to help you I am glad you are striving to serve your blessed master still strive and never get tired nor weary until the prize is one [sic] well there is not much agoing on here at the present [sic] it looks some like as if we where [sic] going to cross the river here sometimes before long we where [sic] in the timber getting out logs for something either bridges or boats we dont [sic] know wich [sic] and some pontoons came up last night I was very glad to get a letter from you I hope you will write again soon and tell me all the news how you are getting along and all about it no more at present [sic] my love to you still remain your kind Brother James S McCarty to George E McCarty

Baptism Notice

To all Whom it May Concern

Greetings

This may certify that that the heaven Bro James McCarty Co. E 27th Ill Vol After a thorough acquaintance, with the reason of his Hope in Christ. On profession of faith, was baptised [sic] by me in the Tennessee River at Bridgeport, Alabama on the 28th day of August 1863

I do therefore hereby most bondially [sic] commend him to the fellowship and watch love of any church of our Lord Jesus Christ in gospel order believing him to have "passed from death to life" and praying the Great Head of the Church make him a sure yoke fellow in the Kingdom and patience of Jesus

Yours in the best of bonds

Lewis Raymond

Chaplain 51st Ill Vol

and member of the Baptist Church

Camp Roberts, Bridgeport Ala. August 29th 1863

[illegible heading]

Dear Mother it is with pleasure that I now sit to answer your kind letter that I received this morning way down here in georgia [sic] I am well at presant [sic] and I hope these few lines may find you enjoying the same great blessing o how glad I was to hear from you again and such a kind and interesting loving letter as I received we are on the march again after old Bragg but he has given us the slip again as usual we left Bridgeport on the 2nd of Sept for to get in the rear of Bragg at Chattanooga but when we got in the rear of him he skedaddled so our force got the place without a fight something we did not expect we have had some awful hard marching I tell you marching up and down the mountains the Country is very mountainous here we went out of Alabama and into Northern georgia [sic] into Alabama and then into georgia [sic] again where we rested a day and then started back again on the back track we are still falling back but we have track we are still follow stopped again to rest today we had an awful hard days [sic] march yesterday and nothing to eat but hard crackers I had nothing but wormy buggy crackers for 2 days hear [sic] this morning when the bugle blowed [sic] to fall in the boys commenced holliering [sic] sowbelly [sic] all over the brigade and was very slow about getting in to ranks so the orders soon came to break ranks and we have drawed [sic] meat for 2 days now but when we will ever get any more is hard telling o how I wish I could get somewhere where I could get all I could eat and that which was fit to eat once more I have had a hard row to hoe and great many hardships to endure but I hope I shale [sic] come out all right again o how it comforts me to get letters from you and to hear how many inquiring friends I still have back there at old west [sic] Creek I was very glad to hear that you had received the 25 dollars it is very warm weather and awful dry and dusty the roads are almost enough to smother a body to travel on them the dust is so awful thick but we have to go it for we are sworn to serve our Country and we cant [sic] get out if it without deserting wich [sic] I wont [sic] do I will die first the mountains are about a mile and a mile and a quarter high and very steep at that but we would not mind it so much if we could get enough to eat I was very glad to receive a letter from emory [sic] and from Sally I havent [sic] got time to answer there [sic] letter for there is signs of us having to move again this afternoon and it is pretty near noon now I hope they will write to me whenever they feel like it if I dont [sic] answer for I love to hear the news and to get letters from them I hope to see you one and all again on earth again but if I am not permitted to see you all on earth again I pray I may meet you in heaven I have to march Sundays and all so I dont [sic] get to go to meeting much nowdays [sic] but I still go to god in secret prayer night and morning for help and comfort but I have a great many trials and temptations to endure upon earth here in the army I trust the grace of god is sufficient to over come [sic] them all give my love and best respects to all inquiring friends o shall have to bring my letter to a close and prepare to march again write soon dont [sic] be worried nor afraid if you dont [sic] hear from me again for a long time for I dont [sic] know how long we will be out on the

march so no more at present [sic] my love to you and all brothers and sisters still remains your loving Son

James McCarty

Martha A McCarty

Camp near Chattanooga October 17th 1863

Dear Mother I now sit down to answer your kind and interesting letter that I just received a few moments ago I am still alive and well through the mercies of a kind providence you supposed I would be in the Battle near Chattanooga the Battle commenced 9 or 10 miles out from Chattanooga but the enemy having an overwhelming force we were [sic] repulsed the 3rd day of the fight and had to pull back near Chattanooga and the enemy still pressing us hard on the night of the 4th days [sic] fight we had to fall back to Chattanooga the whole of old Roseys [sic] Army where we had to go to entrenching as fast as we could and build forts which [sic] is going on yet and it is 4 weeks tomorrow 18th since our line had to pull back the enemy are very quiet and have been for a long time but I expect they are planning [sic] some scheme to get our rear I sent you a Nashville daily union that had an account of the Battle but not very true on so I got a Cincinnati [sic] daily [sic] commercial which [sic] had a very true account of the Battle I belong to that brave general Sheridans [sic] division 3rd Brigade I hope you will get the commercial so you can see how we had to fight against superior [sic] numbers I expect there will be another awful bloody battle fought there when old Rosey [sic] gets reinforcements [sic] which [sic] are on the way and some of them I guess close by the enemy are within 3 miles of this place with a tremendous force so I expect it will be an awful hard fight to drive them away but the men are in good spirits as you might expect and feel confident if we get an equal number we can whip the Rebs [sic] our Company the 21st have been consolidated and is now called the 4th Army Corp under Major General Gordon Granger We have plenty of bread now for a few days but not enough of meat and half rations of sugar and coffee which [sic] comprises our living it is hard but we have to bear it and work a good deal to [sic] on fortifications oh how I would love to board at a good place for about 3 months but we cant [sic] buy much if anything here in way of provisions so we have to make out the best we can we have had 3 days and 3 nights steady [sic] rain here this week so it is very muddy I am very glad to hear that the corn is good and the truck is nice I hope you may live comfortable and nice this coming winter but I expect to have a horrible time this winter if I live but if I die I hope and pray I may to a better world on high I was glad to hear that you had got Corbit's tombstones and that you money enough to get them I have not joined the Baptist Church at all Mother I still hold to the methodist [sic] doctrine but I go to most any church here in the Army for we dont [sic] get to go to church whenever we want to here I read the bible over and studied [sic] up on the mode of Baptism the way our Savior was baptized and

I thought it was right to be immersed but I had no notion of joining the Baptist I thought it would not make any difference to the members of the methodist [sic] church wick [sic] way I was baptized although I know mode is sprinkling read the 3rd chapter 16th verse of Matthew I still am striving to serve my blessed master in my weak way I hope and pray I may meet you one and all in that better land above where meeting and parting is no more I have great many trials and afflictions here but my trust is in god I got a letter from Anna this week she was well give my love and best respect to all inquiring friends tell me something about Aunt Ann grandpaps [sic] sister how is she getting along what is the reason retta [sic] dont [sic] write I havent [sic] heard from her for a long time dont [sic] be disappointed if you dont [sic] hear from me again for a long time for I dont [sic] know how soon we will have to march again I still remember you in my prayers and am glad you do the same my love to you and all my brothers and sisters No more at presant [sic] but still remain your kind loving affectionate soldier son James S McCarty to Martha A. McCarty Write soon if you please dear mother

Camp Robert Bridgeport, alabama [sic]
Sept 1st 1863

Dear Mother I am well at presant [sic] and in good spirits I feel frustrate we are at Bridgeport it is very busey [sic] times here the engineers are puting [sic] up a bridge across the river the cavalry had been within 12 miles of Chatanooga on their side of the river and was not fired at I guess the rebs [sic] have got scared out and have commenced a retreat there is no more prospect of us moving away from here than they was when I last wrote to you so we may stay here a month yet for all I know it very bad here and agueish [sic] but there is not many sick in the hospital sick mother I was baptized on the 23rd of august [sic] and I got my certificate and I will send it to you for safe keeping until I come home if ever I do for I think I shall need it I hope you think hard of me for getting baptized for I thought it was right to do so and I want to try to do right and make heaven my home at last I read the bible through 2 in less than 3 months so I thought it was right to be immersed give my love to all inquiring friends to brothers and sisters keep the certificate for me please keep a good share of love no more at presant [sic] but still remain your loving son

James S McCarty to Martha A McCarty

Camp Chattanooga October 26th 1863

dear Brother I now take my pen in hand to answer your letter of the 11th wick [sic] I just received last night whilst on picket duty I was very glad to hear from you and to hear that you was enjoying good health your letter found me enjoying very good health but

with only half of a cracker in my haversack for my supper No meat at all so you see we have a hard life to live we get only half rations most the time of bread and coffee and sugar and not full rations of meat wich [sic] is all we have to live on we have no way of getting grub here except with wagons and the roads are tremendous bad for there has been so much rain for the past few weeks the rebs [sic] have us pened [sic] up here so close that we cant [sic] forage enough even for the mules and horses we can have a look at the Butternuts whenever we go out on picket for there [sic] picket line is not more than a quarter of a mile from ours and we have to go on picket every other day grub or no grub if well old rosey [sic] had benn [sic] called away from here the report is that old general grant [sic] is going to take command of this army they say he is here now but I have not seen him yet general G granger [sic] is commanding our corp [sic] now old McCook has been relieved of the command I have not been through another battle but I expect soon as reinforcements gets up we will try to drive the rebs [sic] away from here and get possession [sic] of the railroad that runs to this place wich [sic] if they dont [sic] get possession [sic] of before long I think we will about starve here together or have to evacuate I am very glad to hear that you are all doing so well at home I hope and pray that I may soon meet you all on earth again if not permitted to I pray that I may meet you in heaven where hardships is never known give my love to all inquiring friends write soon again and tell me all the news still remains your kind loving Brother James S McCarty to G E McCarty

I now begin to answer your letter dear sister that I received with emorys [sic] I was glad to hear that you was well I am still alive and well and still trying to serve my blessed Savior although I have a great many afflictions and hardships and temptations here to endure but I trust that there is a better day a coming I hope to meet you all on earth again but if not I hope and pray I may meet you in heaven I am sorry that you and mother have so much outdoors work to do I would like to be there to do it myself but I cant [sic] be there and fight for my country too I am glad to hear that you have so plenty of every thing [sic] I wish I had to [sic] but so it is I have to nearly starve and work and stand picket in the bargain the prospects look very gloomy now of being any better times any way soon I tell you the weather is pretty cool here and we have a great deal of rain wich [sic] makes it very disagreeable and muddy [sic] tell Mother I thank her for the ballet [sic] she sent me and for the few lines she wrote me o I am so glad always to hear from home especially from mother the mail comes very irregular and no rail road to bring it on so it takes a long while to get a letter here from home dont [sic] think hard of me if I dont [sic] answer your letters right away for I am on picket every other day and perhaps have fatigue duty to do when I come off so you see I dont [sic] have much time to write whilst things are in such a fix as they are now direct to Company E 27th Reg Ills Vol Infantry Chattanooga tennessee [sic] give my love to all Brothers and sisters and mother and all inquiring friends my love to you write soon still remains your loving Brother James S McCarty to Rachel L McCarty

Chattanooga Tennessee

Nov 21st 1863

Dear Mother it is with pleasure that I take my pen in hand to answer your kind letter that I received this forenoon I was sorry to hear that you where [sic] not well and that you had that dreadful disease nueralagia [sic] in the head I hope these lines may find you enjoying good health I have my health first rate but I feel kind a bad today we are still laying in camp at Chattnooga and I dont [sic] think there is much danger of us moving on to the enemy in our front for some time yet for provision is rather scarce to make much of a move I am glad to hear that you have plenty of potatoes corn and flour I hope you may always have plenty I would love to share the good things with you but it is imposible [sic] but I hope and pray we may meet on earth again Some of the officers think we will get our furlough time allowed us wich [sic] if we do will make our time soon out Some of the regiment are enlisting again but I think I will wait until I serve my time out here before I enlist again that is if I am spared my life till I do get out of this we have not had much cold weather here but some few awful cold frosty nights Some few of the things that we sent back to Nashville from Murfreesburro [sic] last spring have been brought up and I happened to be one of the lucky ones I got my overcoat wich [sic] was all that I sent back so I think if I had a good pair of socks and drawers I would be pretty comfortably dressed Socks are very scarce here at presant [sic] but I hope thay [sic] will soon have a lot on here we had orders yesterday to be ready to march at 6 oClock [sic] with 2 days cooked rations but we didnt [sic] have to go and we was very glad of it Well I believe I will bring my letter to a close my love to you and all my brothers and sisters still remain you kind loving and obedient son James S McCarty to Martha McCarty

Dear Brother I now take my pen in hand to answer your letter that I received with the rest I am always glad to hear from you and to hear of you all getting along so well there is not much going on around at the presant [sic] our men keep throwing a few shells over to the rebs [sic] once in a while and some rebel deserters come over into our lines once in a while 2 deserters from our army where [sic] shot on the 13th of November it was an awful sight to see men set on there [sic] coffin and be shot to death I tell you but according to Military law it had to be done on the 15th of this month there was a man had his head shaved and his uniform stripped from him 2 other men where [sic] drummed along the whole length of the line with a big board on there [sic] back with the crime marked on it in big letters one was coward the other deserter they are straitening [sic] up things here or at least trying to old U S Grant is in command of us now so I expect he will try to straiten [sic] us up and get us ready for the spring campagne [sic] the rebels have moved up there [sic] picket line towards ours till I dont [sic] think we stand more than 2 or 300 yards aparts [sic] so you see we have a good chance to look at each other when on picket guard I feel kind a unwell today so I

believe I wont [sic] write much excuse my poor letter I hope to write a better one next time if permitted to live to receive another give my love and best wishes to all inquiring friend I have been waiting to receive a letter from Thomas Taylor ever since I been here I dont [sic] know what is the matter Write soon no more at presant [sic] but still remain you kind loving Brother James A McCarty to George E McCarty

Chattanooga Tenn

Dec the 2nd 63

Friend I am requested to rite [sic] a few lines to you for James he is wounded throug [sic] the right arm between the shoulder and elbow it is purty [sic] bad but he is no dangerous he is in the hospital I was down to see him today he has very good care taken of his and he told me that he had not got no one to rite [sic] to you and I offered my service and he said that he would be glad if I could rite [sic] you a few lines he was wounded on the 25th of last month in the battle at this place just as we had gained the top of Missionary rige [sic] I was wounded just a few minutes before he was but I am not hurt much I will be able to go to my Reg in a week I belong to the same Co that he does our Reg has gone to Knoxville to reinforce Burnsidess it will be gone two or three weeks it may not come back at all they left there [sic] camp all standing and I am in the camp with to [sic] or three other boys that is slightly wounded I can not tell you where to send a letter so as James could get it and I think it best for you not to rite [sic] until you hear from him again for he will be sent up north as soon as is convenient he told me to tell you not to worry yourself about him for he is was doing fine I will see him every few day as long as we both stay here I expect you have heard of the great victory gain here at this place for it is a good one I dont [sic] think James is in anyways dangerous and if he gets so I will rite [sic] to you if we stay here to geather [sic] beleave [sic] I have told you all that he wanted me to no more

from James S McCarty to his Mother riten [sic] by E M Gomlin

Chattanooga Tenn

Dec the 7th 4 oclock [sic] P M 1863

Friend I now take up my pen in hand to rite [sic] you a few lines for James I was down to see him this afternoon and he said that he wish me to rite [sic] to you again he is in the same hospital yet his wound is doing very well the bone is not hurt and he is well cared for considering whare [sic] he is he has had the erasipales [sic] for to [sic] or three days it has broke out on his back but it is not very bad he said that he did not no [sic] what to say about you riting [sic] to him but concluded that you had better rite [sic] one any how [sic] and send it to the Co for we think that the Regament [sic] will be back

here before he is sent away and if he is here he will get it and if he is sent away the letter will be taken care of untill we no [sic] where he is I have heard that our Reg is now at Knoxville and will not be back here before the last of this month but it is only camp news some of the boys have been sent north but James will not be set to go for some time yet things here are just the same as they was when I rote [sic] to you before as for my self I tried to chop some wood last evening and it set my brest [sic] to paining me for to [sic] or three hours but I am well other ways James said that you must not worry about him for he is doing the best he can and that is all that is required of us no more this time E M Gomlin ritten [sic] for James S McCarty to his Mother

CHATTANOOGA TENNESSEE

DEC THE 16th 1863

I have just saw James and he wished me to rite [sic] a few lines for him and he said that he thought that he would be able to rite [sic] to you himself in a week more his wound looks to be nearly well he has been quite sick with the aresipator [sic] but it is check now and is nearly well of it but it has left him quite week [sic] he was up and walking a round [sic] the room today but did not offer to go down stairs he said that he does not think that he will be sent away now but he thinks that he will be able to come to his Co when it gets back here we expect them soon now and he said for you to send his letter to the Co just as you did before the battle he sends his love to you all if you should see my sister Mrs [sic] Wilson tell her that I am well but do not put yourself to any trouble on my account my wound had got so near well that I must say it is well one of the boys that belong to our Co has died from the affect [sic] of his wound since the battle his name was S Newbury all the rest is doing very well and all have good care taken of them James was boasting of his cumfortable [sic] room and his good care to day thare [sic] is no news in Camp today ritten [sic] for J S McCarty to his mother by E M Gomlin CO. B 17th Ills Vol Chattanooga Tenn

Hospital No 3 Chattanooga Dec 26th 1863

Dear Mother it is with pleasure that I now sit down to write you a few lines to let you know how I am getting along I am well of the erysipelas and my wound I think will soon be well to [sic] I am so I can walk around but I am kind a week [sic] yet it was a month last night since I came here I feel pretty well at present I expect the doctors mebbly [sic] will send me to Nashville before long till I get fully able for camp duty at least I hope they will I would love to see you first rate O I hope before many months providence permitting I will see you face to face our regiment is now in knoxvill [sic] tennessee [sic] except a few wounded that where [sic] left here at Chattanooga I would love to here [sic] from you awful well but I dont [sic] know where to tell you to direct your letter for I dont [sic] know wether [sic] I will be here long enough for a letter to get here for I dont

[sic] know how soon they may move me some where [sic] else I got your letter with the crumb of pound cake in it and was glad to hear from you and I would of answered it before but my hand was most to [sic] trembly so I thought I would wait until I got a little stronger it is a little weak yet you see by my writing but I guess you can make it out we have some pretty cold weather here although it is in disea [sic] I have very grub at the presant [sic] o how I would love to be at home a couple of months till I could get stout again but my time is so short and it is such a long ways home that I dont [sic] think it would much use to take a furlough if I could get one I wish you would tell Anna McCarty when you write to her that I lost her directions and I did not no [sic] where to send a letter to her and that is the reason that I did not answer her last letter that she sent me tell Uncle Charley pit [sic] and wife I wish them a long life and a happy one together and hope they may do well I hope soon providence permitting [sic] to be settled so I can tell you where to write to so I can hear from you I hope you may get along all right this winter it appears to be very quiet here at Chattanooga there is not much news a going as I can hear yesterday we where [sic] treated to apples and last night we where [sic] again to two apples and lager beer but I could not go the lager the cars are not running here yet so there is not much chance to buy any good things give my love and best respects to grand pa ma and all the rest of the family and to all inquiring friends my love to you and all Brothers and Sisters so I believe I will close for the presant [sic] Still remains your kind loving affectionate Son James S McCarty a Union soldier to Martha A McCarty

Letter fragment

[illegible] lines to you I am well at presant [sic] and hope are to [sic] I want you to rit [sic] to me and tell me all the nus [sic] is at west [sic] creek [sic] thar [sic] not much agoing on at germontown [sic] for it is a dul [sic] place out here thar [sic] is not much to be see a [illegible] thar [sic] is plenty of [illegible] excuse me I did sending this before after I [illegible] fell and hurt my arm [illegible] and it is much better so you rit [sic] sum [sic] soon as for hit worth for that I can say god by Wm P C McCarty

COL. HARRINGTON

27TH REGIMENT ILLINOIS VOLUNTEERS.

KILLED AT STONE [sic] RIVER, WEDNESDAY DEC. 31ST, 1862.

COMPOSED BY

JOHN SHEEHY, Co. G., 42nd Ill. Vols

Air: ---Caroline of Edinburghtown.

Come now, brave boys! I pray you'll give attention for a while,
And I will sing a verse or two, the time to beguile,

Concerning gallant Harrington, that hero true and bold.
But now his brilliant course is run; he in the grave lies cold.

He was as true a soldier as ever drew a sword;
Feared he was by his enemies, and by his boys adored!
He was the man to lead a charge as often he had done,
But he is gone, fair freedom's son, the noble Harrington!

The 27th, who never yet was backward in the fight,
That hero bold they followed on with hearts both brave and light.
He was their noble Colonel, and well deserved the name,
For nobly did he stand by them on many a field of fame!

On Stone [sic] River's bloody field, where cannon loud did roar;
Where many a hero fought, and bled and fell, to rise no more;
Bright fame did weave a laurel-wreath for the 27th boys!
That day they proved an honor to themselves and Illinois!

To see brave Harrington that day upon his noble steed,
Through fire and smoke his gallant boys he cheered by word and deed.
With clarion voice he cried: "Brave boys, do as you've done before!
Those rebel legions we'll subdue and peace we'll soon restore!"

Bravely fought those gallant boys that eventful day,
Though sorely pressed on every side, they scorned to give way,
'Till a fatal rebel shot it laid their heroic leader low,
While from his wounds his precious blood in gushing streams did flow.

His fall was witnessed by us all with anguish sore and deep,
On Stone [sic] River's bloody shore to take his last long sleep.
To see that gallant hero there lie sweltering in his gore!
Farewell! farewell! brave Harrington, you'll lead your boys no more!

Though sorely grieved and hemmed around after their leader's fall,
Still to avenge the hero's death, it was resolved by all.
And faithfully their word was kept and nobly carried out!
The rebels did experience it and fled in utter rout!

And now, brave boys, the fight is o'er; the victory we've won,
And many a home made desolate, the loved ones now are gone:
They died for liberty and truth and never did they yield;
Their deeds we'll long remember, on Stone [sic] River's bloody field!

And now, farewell to Harrington, that hero true and brave!
He loved our flag and for its sake now fills a soldier's grave.
May his memory be cherished by his brave, heroic boys!
And may they continue as they've been: true sons of Illinois!