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THE CIVIL WAR LETTERS

written by

JAMES MONROE STOOKEY

to his brother

DANIEL STOOKEY

1861-1865

59th Ill. Vol Inf
Capt. Co. E



PREPARED FROM THE ORIGINAL LETTERS BY
MARY ELIZABETH STOOKEY OWEN

THE CIVIL WAR LETTERS

I.

St. Louis Arsenal
Aug. 4th 1861

Dear Brother and Family

I am now soldering or acting soldier. I came in the arsenal on last Friday I was never in any kind business I liked so much as I like this. . but perhaps I may not like it so well after while but I think I had my mind fully made up before I undertook the soldier to like it all hazzards. I have not quite a full company yet but I think we will have it full within a week if you think we can get any up in your City I will give my orderly the privelege of coming up and Recruiting in your City my orderly is Jo Benson Goodner I suppose you are Slightly acquainted with him he is out at Belleville but is to come back this eve. I believe today is the Sabbath but you would not know it if you was here. I have just come from dinner perhaps you think there is danger of us starving if you think so I will just give you a bill of fare of our dinner which was bacon cabbage potatoes bread and coffee good enough for a queen. the boys make such a noise up here I can hardly tell what I am writing. I will have extra quarter after I get rightly fixed up Our quarters are up in the upstairs of a two story brick it is about 150 by 50 it is very cool and nice we have bunks like on a steamboat but nothing but the boards to sleep on for we have not drawed our blankets yet but I think we will draw them this week any t

I must bring this letter to a close as it is time to go on drill

Direct your letters to

Capt J M Stookey Com E

St Louis Arsenal

Col C H Frederic

9th Reg W.Z. Mo. Vol.

Explanations W Z stands for Washington Zouaves

II.

Camp on Lamine R
Dec 12th 1861

Dear Brother & Family

I am again seated in my tent to answer your letter which I received this morn. You state that when I wrote last I was in Syracuse. we left Springfield on the 9th of Nov and arrived in Syracuse on the eve of the 17th that was on our retreat from Springfield. We marched 140 miles in nine days some days marching as high as twenty two miles and others marching only eight but we marched every day The boys going out to Springfield stood the trip very well although every day there would be hundreds lying by the wayside waiting for the teams to come up and haul them. Some were actually sick others were footworn & others acting possum, while others with better pluck would pull of their shoes and take it barefoot over the rocks Charley Waggener & Joe Beaver both took it barefoot for several days going out, their feet were blistered and they had too much spunk to ride and several others of my company that you know not. As for our force march I consider it rather a mismanagement by our superiors. We were encamped in Humanville when we received orders to prepare one days Rations for a force march we received this order at about sundown but the cooks soon had the Rations in the haversacks in good condition at about Eight O Clock P M we wer in line ready for our trip we had all of our wagons loaded and they were also in line, and all that you could see of our camp was the brilliant fires that were burning all through camp which the cooks had just left. It was rather a dark night on the 1st of Nov that I speak of. At the command of our gallant young Col we all were on our onward march to a bloody seen as we then expected for we heard that Price was within almost hailing distance of Springfield and Fremonts picketts. We marched that night untill near one O Clock A M when we were halted on a large stream on the prarie with but very little wood there I rolled myself up in some Blankets but as it was a verry cold night I only slept a short time when I was awakened by cold then I got up and went to a fire near by and found several

officers and men in the same fix I was too cold to sleep I sat there by the fire untill I got so sleepy that I could not hold my eyes open any longer then I crawled in to a carriage the sutler has and slept untill Reville which was about four A M When we were all routed up to make a cup of Coffe which I soon drank and by day we were again ready to march. that is one of the most disagreeable nights I ever spent in my life. We then marched on through Bolivar and about 4 miles beyond Bolivar we were filed left into a Prarie and there halted and our Col called us up to the center of the Regt where he was and stated that we must now leave all of our baggage and Knapsacks on the prarie and push on as Fremont was already fighting. When the Col stated this to us he also said that we must cook two day's rations and examine all of our guns fil the boys cartridge boxes full of cartridges (they hold forty rounds) He looked very sober while he was talking to us and his lips quivered and for awhile all was very quiet and sober but that soon wore off and they were all as lively as ever. there was a cornfield at the place where we stopped our whole division was with us commanded by Maj Genl Pope we had 5 Regt of infantry & two batteries one of six and the other of four guns and the Iowa first Cavalry all with us which would make quite a show mooving through your city with our wagon train. We were all ready to march by 5 P. M. when we started and marched untill about 12 O Clock that night. it was not as cold as the night before and I stood the night a great deal better and slept very comfortable as we were marching along the road the boys that were getting very tired would come to me and say Capt I am too tired to go any further I would say go as far as you can and then lay down and rest awhile then come on sometimes I have left as high as ten & twelve on the road and they would come in through the night at all times some not arriving for hours after we had gone to sleep that night one of my men fell against the fence just as we were stacking the arms to go to bed he was rather a small man and it rather knocked the breath from him but I soon got the Dr and by next morn he was able to travel again by getting to ride part of the time but he soon recovered and got as healthy as ever. I must finish what I started about the

cornfield, we encamped near the first night we took feed for our horses from the field and used about a half mile of fence for firewood and the night that the boy hurt himself we burned near as much fence as we had that day. the next day we all wanted coffe but our camp and garrison equipage had all but a few kettles been left behind and we did not get our coffe nor get started untill about 7 or Eight O Clock A M. That day we marched untill we came to Wilsons creek without stopping with the exceptions of occasionally a few rests we crossed the creek that the battle was on but we were five miles from Springfield. the battle in August was west of Springfield about 10 miles I did not get time to go to the battleground. We stopped on the creek at near 5 O Clock P M there we halted and rested untill about dark when we were again ordered on to Springfield which we reached some time in the night with expectation of going into a battle the next day we were ordered into a strip of timber there we got some rails and made a good fire and went to sleep. Next morn we heard a band of music coming along the road that we had came in and some the boys went to see who it was when we found it to be Fremont on his return to St. Louis and we then first heard of his being superceded he had his body guard with him and also some Indians there was great many rumors running around camp then about Fremont being superceded just as he was going into one of the greatest battles that was ever fought but at the present you can hardly find a friend to Fremont in the whole western army they most all call him decessionists or a rebel. We laid in Springfield without our tents that night & two days and nights afterwards before they came up from where we left them on the praries. while we were there as I have mentioned before we had no camp equipage with us but about one camp Kettle to a company. we received nothing to eat but flour & fresh beef & salt that was all we could get. Now how do you think we baked bread with out ovens skillets or anything of the kind. we drawed flour some had no way to carry their flour from the commissinary wagons to their fires and would take their blankets that they used ever day and put it on and then catch hold of the corners forming a kind of a sack. but our Oderly

Jo Benson Goodner was a little more lucky and he got a barrel to carry his in then the boys took a board and carried their water in canteens and poured on the flour they would put on the board and mix up the dough then they would make a cake and cover it up in the ashes or roll a long roll around the rammer of their muskets which is iron and bake it over the fire and roast their beef in almost the same manner. I say we all the time, but I Albert and Lieut Knigh boarded at a Widow womans in town and fared very well but we slept with the men all night in the timber, but the fare may seem very rough but the boys did not seem to care for they would sing and laugh play pranks all day. but when our tents came we had more provision and fared well untill we started back on the ninth, for when we are on the march the boys never draw anything but meat (fresh beef) and most always flour sometimes though crackers and at night it takes the cooks of each mess nearly all night to cook their bread for the next days breakfast & dinner. One night (I must tell a joke on some of the boys) as we were on our march from Springfield we encamped on a large creek bottom and there was a good many Missouri possums (as the boys call the hogs here) running through the timber and some of the boys were rather hungry they came to me and asked me for my pistol to go and kill some possums I gave it to them making them promise to not let the Col or any one know that I knew that they were killing possum, so presently in they came with some fine skinned hams and ribs but the Genrl had heard the firing of the pistols as my company was not the only one engaged in the sport and they made rather much noise and he sent the Col to see what was up so the Col came along one of my company's fires and saw one of the boys picking a bone before the boy saw him so the Col asked him what he was eating he said hog then the Col enquired where he got it he said he bought it from another soldier in another Regt then the Col went into a tent where they had a ham but the boys saw him coming and shoved the ham out under the tent so the Col saw nothing and started around the tent and the boys saw him again and shoved it through into the tent again so the Col had to go without making any discovery We arrived

at Syracuse on the 17th as I stated before and expected to go to St. Louis as soon as we arrived, but we are sadly disappointed as we have returned about 8 miles west of Syracuse to camp on Lamine River near Oterville and expect to stay here all winter for we are now preparing to build our winter quarters. Our Col Kelton was promoted to an acting Brigadier and was in that office from the time we left Boonville on 13th of Oct up to the time we arrived at Syracuse and then he was ordered to St. Louis to act Adjutant General in Maj. Genrl Halleck staff but I believe he is still our Col but how long he will remain our Col I know not but he is the best officer in the world. I have 86 enlisted men in my company and about 70 fit for duty the others are none very dangerously sick I have not lost a man yet. We have Recd 3 months pay & I have sent \$300 or dollars home and on New Year's day I will draw \$260.00/ Dollars more for two months. None of your acquaintances are sick but all hearty and send you their best Respects. I weigh 147 lbs that ???? you I must close so good night J Roe Stookey to be continued next month

III.

Dear Sister Angie

Camp near Jacinto, Miss.
June 27th, 1862

I am seated in the shade this morn for the purpose of Answering your letter I received yesterday eve. I was lucky enough to receive five letters some though were very old. one from D. Stookey that is just two months old that has been after me all over Missouri. Yours was written the 17th of June & I think has come through very quick. I wrote you a letter on last Sabbath the 22nd which I do not suppose you have received yet. But as you have promised to write me every week I shall try to answer every one immediate on the receipt of yours. When I wrote on Sunday last we had orders to cook up two days rations and hold ourselves in readiness to march at a moments warning. (and now we have the same orders) we marched at 5 P M Sabbath the 22nd and went 15 miles on an easterly direction to Bivouac near Jacinto the county seat of Tishingo County which we reached at 11

O Clock at night and Bivouaced untill next day when I was ordered to go with my Co. on pickett Guard. We went out to the city of Jacinto and there was put on Provo Guard. we remained there in the courthouse the 23rd and 24th untill the eve of the 24th & then we returned to our camp which had been mooved 2 miles east of the city of Jacinto. there we remained the 24th 25th & 26th when our camp came up to us and we mooved a half mile and pitched tents and stayed over night. we had a very hard rain last night. I must close this as I must prepare to march. I have to inspect the company & see that thye have forty rounds of Cartridges in boxes and also three days rations. I do not know which way we will go or whether we will take our camp with us or not. I have a man Discharged by the name of Presley G. Edwards who is going home and I send this by him I must close give my love to all & keep up your weekly correspondence I am well so no more

J Roe Stookey

Capt E. Co. 59th Regt Ill Vols

IV.

Dear Brother and Family

Camp near Jacinto, Miss.

Sunday July 6th 1862

I am once more seated for the purpose of penning you a short but hasty letter. It has been two months and ten days since your letter was written that I received ten days ago which had been on the roads two months following me around through Missouri and at last found me in Mississippi. When I wrote you last I think we were camped near Forsyth, Mo. We marcjed from there to Batesville, Ark. & arrived there on 3rd day of May there we remained several days and then was ordered from there to Cape Girardeau distance 250 miles which we marched in 11 days & laid over one day in the time. that is ten Regiments of us now if you ever find any troops that can beat that marching you can put them down as good marchers but you had better have good authority before you believe all that soldiers say but I can give you good witness to my statement.

We left Cape Girardeau on the boat Ed Walsh on 22nd day of May a Regt to a boat had ten boats we arrived at Hamburg landing on 25th of May & went into camp there untill the 27th when we marched out on the line of Battle before Corinth & laid around there untill it was vacated. My Company was on Pickett the night that they vacated Corinth we could hear the cars whistling and backing around by the Rebels Hurrahing and hallowing which we supposed was them receiving reinforcements but we soon found that they had vacated the impenetrable Corinth next day. Since then we have been following them around through Tihimingo Co & Liptah Co but have never had a fight yet. We were ordered the other day to bring 25000 men to Richmond but that order was countermanded. We were included in the number perhaps we will get to go yet. I only hope so for if we go there & get through we will have gone the rounds. We have orders now to march at 2 O Clock PM but the orders as usual does not say where we are going with two days cooked rations in haversacks & one cooked in wagons. Well Soldiering is hard business I will assure you something you can form no idea of untill you try it. but for all that I like the business better & better every day. Orderly J B Goodner is with Company A 3rd Illinois Cavalry & we left that Regt in Ark & have not heard from him since. I think if you hear from him he will say that he and I could get along very well together but there was other troubles in the way that we could not well get over. I was very sorry indeed to have him leave but he said he could not stay satisfied therefore I let him go I had it entirely in my power to let him go or stay but I thought perhaps he knew what was best for him. I saw him once after he went into the Cavalry he was well satisfied. I must bring this letter to a hasty close as I want to write a letter home as there is no telling when I will get a chance to write again. You say you think I have lost my best friends in Albert & Jo Bentson which I will admit, but I think I can safely say that there is no one in my company but that is my friend, & that can only be said by very few Captains. I had company this morn of guns & after it was over I went and told the Col to come to my company & see their guns he came up & said that was the best company

of guns he had seen & I had never told the boys that the Col would inspect their guns therefore the inspection by the Col was entirely a surprise to the boys. I was sorry to hear of the death of Capt Harvey. Write soon to your Brother
Roe

V.

Dear Brother & Family Camp near Iuka Aug 17th 1862

I am now in Iuka 25 or 30 miles East of Corinth on the Charleston & Memphis Railroad. I have been sick I was taken with the fever on 26th of July & had the fever all the time for ten days. I stayed in camp until the 2nd of August and then I went to Jacinto to a hotel and stayed there until the 9th of August and then started for Iuka and rode all night in a ambulance and arrived at Iuka on the morn of the 10th then a Lt from the 22nd 2nd Regt came and told me that Jack was in Corinth & was going to stay there until he heard where I was. I then got on the cars and went to Corinth but did not find him until next morn the 11th as he had been out to the 9th Illinois & stayed all night he & I then came to Iuka. he started home yesterday. I have been boarding at a private hous here in Iuka until yesterday Eve I came and reported for duty.

You say the last I wrote was from camp near Jacinto we went into camp there on the 4th of July & remained until the 4th of August with the exception of the 7th July Genl Asboth was slightly frightened about 7 miles from us and sent us word to come & reinforce him as he expected an attack we loaded our teams all up & sent the teams back from camp to 4 miles of Corinth. We marched to the road about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from camp and then received orders to march back to camp which we did, and laid without tents that night but next day the teams came back & we pitched tents & drilled & had schools in Tactics & regulations until 4th of August when our Brigade was ordered to March to Bay Springs (but I was sick and did not go with them) where they tore up a cotton mill & took some cotton & took some 20 prisoners

as there was a small squad of secesh there guarding the mill. Then our Brigade marched to this camp Iuka but it was so hot that they had a very hard time. Since our Brigade has been here we have taken nearly 300 bales of cotton also a lot of Negroes & fields of corn from the secesh and made no compensation to any, what do you think of that way of proceeding. I am glad to hear that recruiting is going on so fast in old Illinois I hear that Illinois will fill her quota without drafting. We have orders now to hold ourselves in readiness to march tomorrow afternoon at a minutes notice what direction I know not some day for Chattanooga but I do not profess to know. I say hurrah for L J Eyman Ed Eyman John Eyman & Georg Goodner I see that none of the old soldiers of the Mexican War can stay at home You will please let me know what Regt they go into tell L J Eyman if he will have me elected Lt Col of his Regt I will insure it soon to be a well drilled Regt as I think I could drill a Battalion all right, where do they go to rendezvous

You say you have not heard from home for some time I received a letter yesterday eve from Angie the same time I received yours She said they were all well and that Charley Wagner had just arrived there he is at home recruiting sent from my Company. Jo Beaver received a letter from him today he said he had seven recruits his head quarters are to be in Carrollton Ills as that is near where the Lt lives that went home with him but he says that he got leave from him to go to Centreville for a few days. I think they will soon fill up our Regt we have a man from every Company on recruiting service. How old is your cattle and are you going to feed them this winter is the cattle business good now I suppose you can sell all fat cattle now to the U S contractors I am well at present give my love to all enquiring friends tell ED Lewis John or Georg to write to me when they get to soldiering so no more write soon to
Roe

VI.

Camp near Nashville Tenn
Nov 24th 1862

Direct to Capt J M Stookey 59th Ills Vols
9th division 3rd Brigade Army of the Cumberland
Nashville Tenn

Dear Brother & Family

It has been a long while since I have received any letter from you & I do not know whether it is my fault or yours but I think I have written last but I shall now write again and then I will be shure to have you in my debt. It has been so long since I wrote to you that I do not know hardly where I was at the time I last wrote but I think at Iuka Miss. Since then we marched to this place & from here went to Louisville Ky by way of Mumfordsville where I suppose you heard of the capture of 4800 of our men by Genrl Bragg there. We skirmished a little with the enemy & then they travelled towards Louisville and we were in pursuit untill we came within 30 miles of Louisville then they turned to the right and we went on to Louisville as quick as possible there we remained for several days & then started again under Genrl Buell in pursuit of Genrl Bragg & after several days skirmishing we came up on to him at Perryville Ky & there fought the battle known now as Chaplin Hill. Our Regt was engaged from an hour by sun untill way after dark we was held as reserves all day and at this time in the eve we was sent in to reinforce Maj Genrl McCook's Corpse which was then giving away we went into a heavy fire and was soon surrounded & driven back but we fell back & formed again behind a rail fence & held out position there untill it grew so dark that the fireing entirely ceased. I suppose you have read a great many accounts of the fight than I can give so I will have to go the next day when we followed up the enemy but they had retreated through the night & we did not come on to them for several days and then only came up to their rear guard the evening we went into Lancaster Ky our Regt was in advance & we had quite a little skirmish with them but no one was hurt although there was considerable

firing both of Musketry & artillery. then we followed them on to Crabb Orchard in the Mts & then changed our direction and came here which was several days march & arrived here on 7th of this month & have been in camp here ever since.

The R R cars run from Louisville within 30 miles of here where there is a tunnell blown up by the rebels & not yet repaired the cars run from here also to the tunnell. The hands are busy at work at the road and it is supposed it will soon be finished. Yesterday Genrl Rosecrans reviewed our Division commanded by our old commander Brig Genrl Jeff C Davis. Davis command now is 12 Regts Infantry & 3 Batteries consisting of 18 guns we were all in line yesterday with ranks opened & then Genrl Rosecrans passed all along in front of our line with Genrl McCook Genrl Davis and all of their staffs & returned in rear of us all excepting Genrl Rosecrans & he rode in between the ranks and gave ever man a very scrutinizing look & if any was short any equipments such as haversacks he would ask them if they had any if so why they did not have them on or if had none he would tell them they must procure them. Rosecrans has a very good name with us-all What do you think of the exchanges of Burnside for McClellan & Rosecrans for Buell!

Nashville was entirely cut off from the states while we was up in Ky & our troops that were here had to live entirely off of the country & had no coffe or shugar. The Regt that Capt Challenor from Belleville was in was here & he resigned and is now at home he went home since our army arrived here. Potatoes here are \$2.50 to \$3.00 a bushel Butter 75 cts to 1.00 per pound shugar and coffee cannot be had excepting from the government & ever thing else of the cateable kind demands a very exhorbitant price. The State house here is one of the finest of the United States except the one at Ohio. Nashville has been a very flourishing place I suppose in good times it is situated on the south side of the Cumberland River. there is two bridges across the River one R R bridge where the teams and the Cars both cross on and one pontoon bridge for the teams and foot passengers. I suppose you have nothing much to do now & you could jump

on the Cars and soon come over and see me. I think it would be well worth any ones time to visit the army & get to see the grand old states of Ky & Tenn which are two great states. the people of Ky are the best people we have ever met with since we have been soldiering. they treated us like brothers almost. I shall ever remember the citizens of Ky I suppose I was one time within 50 miles of Uncle Abraham's & Birt & I was both anxious to get there but we did not succeed. The last letter I received from home it stated that Jack had sold out the stable property & had rented it out. what do you think he will get at next. I must bring this to a close by asking for a speedy answer give me the opinion of the people of Illinois on the war question & things in general so no more but as ever your brother
Roe

VII.

Dear Brother & Family

Camp Near Nashville Tenn

Dec 14th 1862

I am seated in camp by mess chest, for a dsek for the purpose of answering your knid letter which I received today bearing the date of Dec 6th 62. When I wrote my last we was on the north side of Nashville & on the other side of the river cumberland, but since then we have made two mooves first we marched through the city and went 4 miles south and went into camp between the Franklin pike & Granny Wjite pike but since then we have mooved camp three miles east & are now encamped between the Franklin pike and Nolinsville pike about six miles from town in a beautiful pasture of large trees and fine blue grass whihc is very green yet. I am writing in my tent without a fire and the door is open and I am sweating on my forehead, while you in your cold icy country are all locked in your houses by a large fire and nearly freezing at that.

Well Dan as for news there is very little. Some skirmishing most ever day with the picketts today the picketts on the Franklin pike had a skirmish we lost I believe some four wagons but this is only a rumor & I shall not vouch for its truthfulness. I am glad to hear that

Joe Benson is still on the land of the living & enjoying his cavalry life in Arkansas & that the rebels were badly whipped out I suppose Joe was not in that. I also see that Genrl Pemberton is going to form a junction with Genrl Bragg in Tennessee & I also suppose that he is going to make an attack on this place but if he does he will have a hard time getting Nashville with the Army we have here and the breastworks and forts we have built here. Col Black of the 37th Ills that was killed in the late fight in Arkansas was an army acquaintance of mine we were all in the same Brigade last winter & I have often seen him & he was a splendid officer he was first Maj of the Regt and was wounded at Pea Ridge.

As for speculation in confiscated property I know of no such speculations at least I have never seen such sales while we were in Mississippi but since then I have seen no such speculation here but there may be such speculations and we know nothing of it as I stay very close to my company and do not meddle myself about any such business but I think all such speculations are only lottery. As for out sutlers making a fortune I cannot exactly say but I think they are making a very good thing of it although they have lost some considerable by crediting the boys and also the rebels captured two wagons loaded & eight mules and horses in Mississippi No man thou is allowed to sell anything here except he is regularly commissioned as a sutler then he is not allowed to station his shops in no place but in their own Regts. As for Field Officers names I will give you a list Col P Sidney Post of Knoxville Ills is our Col now commanding 30th Brigade. I think he expects to be commissioned as a Brigadier soon and I think he is very deserving of a star he is a very intelligent man.

Our Lt Col is C H Frederic who now commands the Regt we all think a great deal more of him now than ever & if Col Post gets to be a Brigadier Lt Col will get to be Col of our Regt our Maj J C Winters is at present at home on a short furlough he is a very good man but not a very good Military man, though I think he will be our Lt Col should a vacancy occur then there would be a vacancy for a Maj and one of the old Cpts will get

it the ranking Capt is Capt Hale 2ond is Paine 3rd Stookey 4th Snyder there are the candidates and if it is left to a vote of the officers of the Regt I think the 3rd stands as good a chance as any but if it goes by promotion the 1st will get it according to rank. but as this is all mere speculation & we may all gwt killed off in next fight and never have any promotion but we shall all hope for the best. I suppose you are all attending church to night while I am engaged in writing. Our Chaplain has left us he resigned & we have no church now sometimes I go to hear others in other regiments As I have nothing much to write I will close give my love to all the Family I hope Caroline is well by this time. Sergt Charles Wagner has returned from home he has been recruiting since August but only got three recruits. Serg Joe Beaver has been detached witha pioneer core and is now Commissary Sergt My Sts are both enjoying good health as well as my self and all my company so good night J M Stookey

VIII

Dear Brother & Family Camp Near Murfreesboro Tenn
Jan 24th 1863

I am once more seated for the purpose of penning you a few lines in answer to yours written Jan 2ond 1863 which I received a few days ago. Well I have been in one more hard fight & come out safe. We laid in camp near Nashville until the 26th day of Dec 1863 when the whole army began the advance toward Murfreesboro. The right wing which we are in commanded by Maj Genrl McCook moved out on the Nolinsville pike Genrl Davis Division in advance Col Post Brigade in advance of the division & the 29th in advance of the Brigade our Regt was soon throwed out as skirmishes on both sides of the road and discovered the enemy after we had gone about 5 miles from camp & drove them with our skirmishes until drove them into Nolinsville where they were heavily reinforced & secreted themselves in the houses & Col Post then brought up the 5th Wisconsin Battery commanded by Capt Pinney & he opened on them with shell & cannister

which was soon answered by a rebel battery then Col Post formed his Brigade in line with the 59th on the left & Col Carlin threwed his Brigade into line on our right & we then moved and soon drove them from the town capturing one gun & several prisoners our loss was some six or eight killed & wounded their loss I know not how much it was. That morn we sent all our wagons tents & camp equipage to Nashville & had nothing with us except what we carried and that was a shelter tent each two & haversack with three days rations, and as the day was rainy day & night we had rather a hard time. Next morn the 27th the 59th was detailed as rear guard for the Division train rained all day some skirmishing in advance division arrived at Triune distance about 5 miles from camp & 20 miles from Nashville. Next morn 28th was a beautiful sabbath day & we laid still in bivouac all day drew three days more rations.

On 29th started on the march again our Bri gade in advance excepting some Cavalry we took the dirt road leading from Triune across to the Murfreesboro pike which we reached by night distance 10 miles. Cavalry in our advance had very hard fighting our lines were all formed that evening in connection with the Army which we that evening formed a junction with. Next day 30th we commencing advancing in line of battle our Brigade was formed on the extreme right of the army the 74th & 75th Illinois in advance & 22nd & 59th as reserve. Our Regt was detailed to guard our Battery 5th Wis, & we therefore followed its movements all day.

The fighting become tolerable general all along the lines bu 2 O Clock PM excepting in our front & we was not engaged untill late in eve & then our Battery opened on them but with veru little effect as we were in a very thick cedar forest & could see nothing. Our Regt was lying down on the right of the Battery. about this time a rebel Battery opened on to us giving us rather a cross fire but Genrl Johnson moved up his Division & formed on our right & opened his Batteries on the rebels and soon silenced their Battery, but by this time came on to us and we laid on our arms in line of Battle all night. next morn the 31st as soon as it was light enough they

begun firing on our skirmishers & made a heavy attack on our right driving Genrl Johnson before them before he had his Batteries in readiness. then that caused us to throw our whole line into position on the advance so then we had no reserve & we had hardly got our lines formed in an open field before we could plainly see the rebels moving up on us. We then formed on the left of the Battery & 22 2nd on the right of the Battery & opened on to them and as soon as they come within range we opened on to them but their lines were too strong for us & our fire only checked them momentarily & they still kept advancing & we received the order to fall back the battery lost all the horses from one gun & all but two from another the gun that had no horses was left on the field & our Regt helped to pull the others off of the field we was driven back about two miles forming several times and firing into the enemy untill we were relieved by other regiments & we left the field for that day untill late in the eve we was again formed into lines and laid on our arms all night. That day's fight was terrible all along the lines all day was one continuous roar of canon & musketry the hardest days fight of the war I suppose. Next day the 1st we laid along on the lines canon could be heard at intervals all day. On 2nd about two hours before dark they made a heavy attack on our center & left & drove the first lines but when the boys that were in reserve saw them coming they raised with a yell & hurled them like chaff in the wind but darkness stoped our pursuing them much that day. next 3rd we laid on our arms with some skirmishing. On 4th learned of the evacuation and moved back into camp where we laid several days & then moved into this camp where we have remained ever since. The casualties of our Regt was about 80 killed wounded & prisoners seven killed in all. My Company lost none killed two prisoners & some six only slightly wounded. I had been acting as Maj ever since the 25th untill a few days ago. My horse was twiew shot & I was compelled to let him go he has since died None of the boys were touched that you knew I must close this for the mail soon starts give my love to all & write soon

Capt James M Stookey
E Co 59th Ills Inftry

The baggage & company bank(?) of all the Officers was started up to us on the 30th & rebel Genrl Wheeler's Cavalry got into it & burned the whole train of 200 wagons & so all the officers of our division lost all their clothing except what they had on

IX.

Dear Brother & Family Camp Near Murfreesboro Tenn
April 17th 1863

I received your letter bearing date of April 12th 1863 on the 15th which had made a very quick trip & I now embrace the present opportunity of answering it although I am sorry to say I have nothing of importance to write. We have done nothing lately but drill & do pickett duty. We have been lying around Murfreesboro ever since the fight except a few scouts we have been on. This is the longest we have ever laid in one place since we have been in the service. We have eat very little idle raions for Uncle Sam. We have the Pay Masters now they are paying in our Division for the months of January & February but have not got to our Regt yet, but I suppose will begin next week that seems to be the report now. We have very pleasant weather now it is beginning to become in the midle of the day rather uncomfortably hot.

Ever one that writes to me lately wants to know how I am or how Jack sused in having me appointed as Provo Marshall. I can say that Jack sent a recommend forward for me strongly endorsed by Belleville men & also by State Officers at Springfield to Hon Lyman Trumbull & he endorsed it & forwarded it to President Lincoln & wrote to Uncle Sam of his proceedings & further stated that he thought that would receive the appointment. But further than that I have heard nothing. I think it rather doubtful whether I will receive that appointment or not & further I am not very particular as I have a very good position here and very well satisfied with it, & understand my business perfectly & if I should receive the other appointment I should have to learn the duties appertaining to

that Office. Which I suppose are rather laborious. But I think I would soon make the Copper heads think they had a Picayune Butler No 2 to deal with. I will assure you that I would not have very much Sympathy for them. I have fought Rebels too long to be very Sympathetic.

My Orderly D F Korhammer has received a comission as Second Lt of Co 2 of the 59th which I was very glad to see him get as he has been a faithful & good soldier since he has been in the service. He is rather a good scholar & a beautiful pensman & has always done all of my company writing. You will let Jo Benson Goodner know of this next time you write as he and D F Korhammer was particular friends Charles Wagner is now Orderly Sergeant of the Company & makes a very good Orderly. I supposed you was in Decatur by this time but I see by your letter that you have not moved yet. Do you think you will like to live in Decatur as well as in Bloomington? Or are you changing because it is more convenient to your farm and you can do better financially? I think the the latter is the case. I saw a D M a few days ago from Decatur who belongs to the 21st Illinois he had been home on a leave and saw Uncle Sam in Decatur & he told him to be sure and call on me and tell me that he had swa Uncle Sam his name was Jones. He stated that ever thing was advancing in prices and that money was plenty. And that all the houses were filled with Families & he said were he had known most ever one he was now most an entire Stranger. I see you give some prices that seem to be very exhorbitant. I am very sorry to hear of the ill health of the Eyman Family, & of Jin Eyman's misfortune You seem to think that Genrl Bragg will try Rosey again if he does try him at this place, he will be the worst whipped man he ever was & his Army will be of the same fix we want no better fun than to whip Bragg here with Rosey as commander. The capture of Charleston is among the thing that is to be & I see that our Ironclads have concluded that they cannot take it with what Fleet they have. Vicksburg seems to be too hard for Genrl Grant & I fear will neve be taken. You have given me a list of prices I will furnish you a list of prices here Potatoes 5 Dollar per bushel Eggs 50 etc per Dozen

Butter 75 cts per lb can peaches in quart cans \$1.50 cts per can other can fruit the same applies small four for a quarter Whiskey done up in bottles \$1.50cts per pint Lager Beer 10 cts per glass & scarce at that every thing else in proportion I have a pr boots I gave 12 Dollars for pr pants 15 Dollars for coat 33 Dollars for Shoulder Straps not extravagant 8 Dollars that's the way the money goes pop goes the Weasel I must close good night

Roe Stookey

X.

Dear Brother & Family

Headquarters 59th Ills
Camp Near Winchester Tenn
July 14th/ 63

I received your welcome letter a few days ago and am now seated for the purpose of answering it. I had supposed that I had answered it & am very certain yet that I did and the letter was lost some place. I will now give you a short account of our trip here as you will see from the heading of this that we have changed our home. We left Murfreesboro on the morning of the 24th of June & marched out on Shelbyville pike. Johnson's Division in advance of us and Sheridans in front of them that constitutes the whole of McCook's Corpse on Shelbyville pike. But when we got six miles out, Johnson's Division & Davis Division took a road to the left leaving the road to Sheridan. We did not find any Enemy untill we came into Liberty Gap & there Johnson's Division had some very hard skirmishing, but drove the rebels without Davis' assistance. On 25th we did not moove forward very fast but Johnson held the advance untill late in the evening when the rebels made an attack on him & Our Division went up to their assistance. Our Brigade was deployed in line in a open wheat field but was not engaged although some rebel shell and solid shot went whizzing over close enough to warn us that we were in Danger, but Luckily enough for us none of our Brigade was hurt. That night we advanced in line about half mile and occupied a hill which Carlin's Brigade had driven the rebels from. first day's march 13 miles second 3 miles On the 26th we had orders not to advance but