

William Roberts Stuckey Letters 42nd Indiana

Correspondence of William Roberts Stuckey

William Roberts Stuckey (ca. 1838-1864) was born in Indiana, son of John Stuckey, a blacksmith and a farmer. By 1850, John Stuckey had moved from Pennsylvania and Ohio into Indiana, and was living outside of Lynnville, Warrick county, near the Ohio River. (1850 Census, Warrick county, Hart twp., p. 381) William Stuckey married Helen Beeson between July 1860 when he was still listed as living with his father (1860 Census, Warrick, co., Hart twp., p. 81) and October 1861 when he wrote his first letter to his wife. Their daughter Viola was born no later than June 1862. In September 1861, William Stuckey, along with his older brothers John and Alexander, enrolled in "K" company, 42nd Indiana Volunteers. For the next three years, until his death in August 1864, he wrote to his wife almost weekly. These letters make up almost all of this collection, the exceptions being a few letters Stuckey wrote to his parents and Stuckey's brothers wrote to Helen.

In the first months of his enlistment, Stuckey pronounced himself "well contented" with army life (11-14-61) and boasted that "we are the best drilled regiment in the brigade and have the largist [sic] likliest [sic] and cleanest men of all" (12-6-61). But army life quickly lost its attraction. In November, the 42nd moved into Kentucky where it stayed until mid-February. Stuckey saw no action during this time, but he noticed the civilian hostility to the Union troops (11-13-61) and became aware of the danger from guerilla attack (12-29-61). In December, the first epidemic swept into the camp, striking down much of the regiment and claiming three lives a day (12-18-61). In early January, the soldiers began to complain of the lack of pay, and many talked of desertion. Stuckey admitted he had been a fool to volunteer (1-3-62). A month later, still unpaid, he had the last of his money stolen. At the same time, he spent a day in the guardhouse for talking back to an officer (2-3-62). Loneliness also began to appear. Although Stuckey claimed he was "not a home sick a tol [sic]" (2-3-62), he described his brother as "very home sick I think if he gets home and sleep with his wife a wek [sic] or two he would get well I am not so home sick as that" (2-7-62).

At the end of February, the 42nd moved south to Nashville, Tennessee where the soldiers were promptly struck by typhoid fever: "our regiment is all sick and in the hospitle [sic] there is not but one hundred men fit for Duty" (3-6-62). Stuckey was one of the hardest hit by the fever: "I have had the Typoid [sic] feaver [sic] and when the fever broke I took down in the back I have been billious [sic] every [sic] since and have had bad Diare [sic]" (3-26-62). Because of his weakened condition, he was sent to a hospital in Louisville. The trip was a difficult one:

we had a hard time on the boat we had to sleep on the flore [sic] and there wasent [sic] any thing sent with us to eat but som [sic] hard crackers and som [sic] old rusty meat and grean [sic] coffee and no way of cooking it... we had nothing for fore [sic] days but what we bought and paid our on [sic] money for (3-31-62).

Stuckey apparently spent much of the next two months on furlough at home trying to recover his health. At the end of June he rejoined the 42nd in Huntsville, Alabama, and was immediately assigned to the hospital because of his still debilitated condition (6-28-62). A week later he was on duty, although still weak, and he expected his regiment to be discharged from the army before the end of the year (7-7, 7-17-62).

In Alabama, Stuckey had a close look at slavery for the first time. He approved.

we have two Negros a cooking for our company and if we can get home this fall I intend to fetch two for to wait on you and two for to help me to work (8-15-62).

At the end of August, the 42nd moved north to Tennessee and Kentucky with Buell's army to cut off the Confederate invasion under Braxton Bragg. By mid-September, the long marches had taken their toll:

we have travailed till we have worn out our cloth out half of our Company is now without shouse [sic] and almost naked for other cloths [sic] (9-13-62).

A month later, at Perrysville, Kentucky, Stuckey fought in his first engagement (10-19-62), and at the end of the year, found himself in the Battle of Murfreesboro:

they opened the atact [sic] with three batterys [sic] one in front and two was playing on us at a crossfire the cannons was so close to us we could here [sic] the Rebels [sic] Commanders cursing the gunners and telling them to aim Low for the d d [sic] yankys [sic] is laying Down... we was laying behind cliffs of rocks I almost wished I was a mole and if I was I would have crauled [sic] in the ground we was ordered to retreat when we raised up the dam [sic] Deviles [sic] was within a few rods of us we run like Hell for a while the cannon balles [sic] flying around us like hail and there was three Regt of Rebels firing as fast as they could and who will you say was the cause of me getting out safe I think I can safely [say] it was by good running that [I] got out (1-20-63)

As the 42nd Indiana was preparing its winter camp near Murfreesboro, Stuckey was quickly losing interest in the Union cause (1-26-63), particularly now that he was fighting to free the slaves (2-1-63). In fact, he was to do little fighting at all for the next six months as the regiment remained encamped until June. Stuckey spent most of his time building fortifications and occasionally serving on guard duty.

In his spare time he read many novels (4-15-63) and tried to get his wife to send him apples which could be sold for a large profit in camp. (3-25-63). But hard labor and novels did not keep Stuckey from longing for home:

I wish I was at home with you to pass away in pleasure those beautiful bamy [sic] morning of Spring I hope that before the Elaps [sic] of Summer I will Enjoy the Sweet confort [sic] of my loving Wife When I look over the past 18 months it looks blank I have sackrifised [sic] all that was near and Dear to me and what have I Ganed [sic] (3-22-63)

Stuckey expected to be home in the coming months because of the frequent rumors that the men would all receive furloughs. But by April, he began to suspect that the promised furlough was a ruse by the high command:

we hear no more talk about geting [sic] furlous [sic] I think it was only to keep the boys in good cheer a Little Longer it stoped [sic] the Deserting a great Deal (4-7-63)

While encamped at Murfreesboro, Stuckey began to learn of problems at home. In mid-May he wrote that he had heard reports that solders' [sic] "Women was playing on them by Leting [sic] preechers [sic] Doctors and dam [sic] Cowards fool around them" (5-15-63). A month later, he became more specific, telling her that he had received word that she had frequently been seen riding with a preacher (6-21-63). Helen Stuckey apparently denied the charge, and began to pressure William to find a way home. In reply, he told her of the impossibility of a furlough now that the regiment was on the march, and in retaliation to her rumored past conduct, added:

As for geting [sic] home for Twenty or Thirty dollars just to sleep with a woman is plaid [sic] out I can get to sleep with them without going two miles from camp and with less than half the money and I never miss an opportunity (8-20-63).

By July, 1863 the 42nd Indiana was on the march again, moving into northern Alabama in August, and engaging in the Battle of Chickamauga in late September (9-25, 10-3-63). After Chickamauga, the Union army was penned into Chattanooga, living on short rations. Here Stuckey met his first Confederate soldiers:

we was on picket on fryday [sic] last and I stood in ten steps of a rebel picket I swaped [sic] coffee for corn bread with him the officers give us strict orders not to speak to Each other but we watched and when the officers wasent [sic] about then we had a good time telling the hardships we had endured while we have been in the Service (10-27-63).

The Union army broke out of Chattanooga at the Battle of Lookout Mountain (11-26, 12-1-63). Immediately afterward, the men of the 42nd began to be pressured to re-enlist as a veteran regiment. Through November and December, Stuckey repeatedly assured his wife that he would not re-enlist under any circumstances. As late as January 3, 1864, he wrote:

all the boys is going in the service for three years longer but I will assure you that will never point my gun at another Rebel while I am in the Service... I have no doubt you would like to see me but not so bad as to have me to re-enlis [sic] for three years longer no I love you to [sic] well to stay five years from you (1-3- [64]).

Stuckey re-enlisted the same month. He told his wife that he would almost certainly not have to spend any more time in the army than he would have without re-enlisting, that the regiment would probably spend the next year in Indiana, and that by re-enlisting he would receive a long furlough (1-22-64). He was right only on the last point.

Stuckey's visit home seemed to strengthen his marriage, and in the process, to make army life even more unbearable. Shortly after returning to his regiment, he wrote:

I would give all I am worth and you know thats [sic] mutch [sic] if I was at home to stay with you for Ever I have an ashurance [sic] that I can get out of the Service and I intend get out if I can (3-14-64).

By the time he reached Nashville, he had devised his plan for getting a discharge:

I will inshur [sic] you that I will be at home in fore [sic] months I have the ashurance [sic] that I will have the assistance of Liut. [sic] Johnson in getting out of the service I have procured medicine sificient [sic] to reduce me to almost nothing in a few days I also have the good will of doctor McGines (3-19-64).

By the end of April, Stuckey was too sick to be on duty, and expected to be discharged shortly (4-28-64). But when the regiment moved out of camp early in May as part of Sherman's advance into Georgia, Stuckey was sent to a Nashville hospital where, without his medicine, he began to recover his health. While there, he was offered a job as a hospital orderly which he could keep for the rest of the war, but his desire to return home was so strong that he preferred to return to his regiment where, he believed, he could receive an early discharge (5-12-64).

Stuckey rejoined the 42nd Indiana by mid-May, and in the following weeks repeatedly vowed that he would not place himself in danger. Even after returning from six days on the skirmish line, he wrote "I am confident I will not go in a battle I have not so far got in danger and I dont [sic] indend [sic] to" (6-3-64). As it became increasingly clear that a discharge was not imminent, Stuckey began to consider getting a commission in a black regiment (6-28, 7-4-64).

there is a great many felows [sic] that has got commitions [sic] in the colored Regiments as has sent for ther [sic] Wives and will have a fine Time... I could go back to Chattanooga rent a house or move in some Empty one get my hundred and Thirty Dollars live at home with you and have a general good Time (7-4-64)

A few days later, he wrote that he had given up the idea of applying for a commission, as he expected to be home soon. (7-7-64). On July 23, Stuckey wrote his wife that he had been slightly wounded in a skirmish near Atlanta, the first time he had been injured in battle. On August 7 he was killed.

In the last letters in the collection, two of Stuckey's relatives in the army wrote to Helen to express their regrets at William's death (8-20, 11-10-64). They spoke bitterly of their family and neighbors in Warrick county who had preferred the Confederate cause to the Union, and had constantly denied the value of the soldiers' sacrifices. Alexander Stuckey also of the 42nd, Indiana contrasted their behavior to that of his brother:

they wrote letters to me abusing the principles for which I have staked my life so often and for which Brother lost his. Could those who preaches treason have been by his side

to have heard him say (I die, happy, I lay my life down for my country, and in a good cause). (8-20-64).

Camp on the March Oct the 19th [Note: 1862]

Dear love I have the pleasure of writing to you once more I am best of health considering circumstances [sic] and I hope that these few lines may find you all enjoying good health I received from you a letter dated Sept 28 and one from your mother on the 2d I was glad to here [sic] from you once more it was the first time that I had heard from you for one month I have not wrote asa [sic] mutch [sic] as I would have liked to tho [sic] we have been marching for the last two mounth [sic] we have had a fight Since we left Louisville it is called the battle of Perryville Alexander and I went threw [sic] the battle Safe and unhurt the Loss of our Company in Killed one Oliver Busenham Wounded 8 tho [sic] Slitly [sic] we are 4 miles on the other Side of Craborchert tho [sic] expect to leave here to day Some thinks that we will go in camp I hope they may we are one hundred and five miles from Louisville our company is reduced to about twenty five men we have not Slept under tents for since we left Huntsville while we was in the fight I lost my blanket and haversack I captured a Secesh haversack it don [sic] me till I draud [sic] one I have don [sic] without one ever Since our regiment was fired upon first was the last out of the field I was in the hottest [sic] of the battle all the time Oliver was Killed by my side as we retreated up a hill he was Struck with a ball in the back he fell and ask me to help him but there was no place to Stop and help wounded men the Secesh was in all over that ground in few minutes the rebles [sic] treted [sic] him with respect our dead they stript [sic] of there [sic] shoes and blankets and other close [sic] I had your Portrait in my Shot Pouch a bullet Struck it Severing it from one end to the other I never seen your likeness agan [sic] tho [sic] I feel lost without it I hope that it will not be long till I can See your lovly [sic] face once more never to part until Death Tell your mother that I was glad to here [sic] from and that I will answer her letter as soon as I get time I send best respects to all Send your letters to Louisville Ky 42 reg Excuse me for the presant [sic] Write Soon

William R. Stuckey

Camp Gillet December the 20

Dear Wife I take pleasure in riting [sic] these few lind [sic] to inform you that I am [illegible word crossed out] well at presant [sic] and I hope that you are enjoying the same We left henderson [sic] on wedensday [sic] last and arrived here on sunday [sic] the first We had a cold time the mud was over our Shoes for hundred yards at a time [sic] and Some times the hills towering above the treetops after we arrived here it Snowed and got verry [sic] cold the Snow is going of [sic] today Slowly and the Sun is Shining I would like to hear from you and know whether you are well or not and to hear from Father and Mother and want you to tell them to write Father can imagine what Sort of a time we See now as he has been tried the Measles is in our regiment now and in the other regiments most all Sort of disease is raging none of our boys has died yet there is one thing more I have to Say to you let them that is contented at home Stay

there for the Soldiers [sic] life is a hard one ther [sic] is about 8 or 10 thousand men here now and we are looking for more here all the time

Wm Stucky To Hellen Stuckey

Undated Letter

Dear friends it is a duty that all men Should obey and observe that to write to friends now as you dont [sic] write to me iwill [sic] to you and inform you that we are both well and hope that these few lines may find you enjoying the pleasure of life and living happy I would lik [sic] to hear from all of the connection and from John and know what he is doing and whether he is Sick or not I did not think he was verry [sic] dangerous when he left henderson [sic] If you See Kit teill [sic] his that Alex is well and is getting fat and has not bein [sic] Sick Since She was to See him there is a fight in contemplation [illegible] an attact [sic] on bowlengreen [sic] is expected Buckner has about forty thousand troops there I have no more time to write So ibid [sic] farewell John Stuckey,

Wm Stuckey

Camp Near Murfreesborou [sic] Tenn.

Jan the 8th 1863

Dear Wife I agan [sic] have the pleasure of Sending you a few lines to Let you no [sic] that we are yet a live and well through many [illegible] and hope these may find you and Viola ar [sic] enjoying good health the great battle of Murfreesborou [sic] was fought and we won an inpershible [sic] Victory we was in the fight on wenSday [sic], Fryday [sic] and on Fryday [sic] night we was orderd [sic] out on pickets and a Saturday we was atacted [sic] only in the morning there was three batteries playing on us and alarg [sic] force of infantry and cavalry the BatteryS [sic] was within one hundred yards we could here [sic] the rebles [sic] Commandere [sic] cursing the gunners telling them to aim low the dam [sic] yankeys [sic] was [crossed out] is laying down we was laying behind a brestworks [sic] of Stone with bumes [sic] bursted [sic] all round us and the Solid Shot ploud [sic] the earth for rods round the loss was non [sic] killed but Several wounded we was ordrd [sic] to rally on the railrode [sic] by Shanklin we did So but the enemy had ganed [sic] the ground and we had to retreat the best we could. Shanklin surrendered himself Lt. Teammahan and ten privats [sic] the loss of our regt [sic] was Seventeen Killed Sixty three wounded misSen [sic] in all one hundred and thirty odd the Killed, in Co. K Warrick H Clifford and Rinaldo Edwards poor boys fell early in the action when firing like men wounded Jasper M Martin Alvis Ashley Franklin H Ross George Thompson John Colman T.M. Neves and Lieut [sic] T.M. Knowles there is Several returned to deuty [sic] Willes Brown run and only Fired his gun but twist [sic] he was Seen the next day about to [sic] miles from the battle grown [sic] and never have been Seen Since I will write again soon and give you the detail I Lost a good pen that I give two Dollars fifty cents and found a revolver that is worth twenty five dollars I will Send it to you by Killpatrick [sic] when I he goes home the Loss of our men was heavy we now

occupy the town the enemy has retreated [sic] it is Suppose [sic] they will make a Stand at Taler House thirty miles distance tell father I com [sic] out Safe never was hurt neither was [illegible] I Send my best respects to all hoping to here [sic] from you Soon I received two Letters from you to day

Yours forever W.R. Stuckey

Dear Camp near [illegible] Tenn [sic] January the 20th 63

My Darling [illegible] [3 illegible words] of writing a [illegible] lines to let you know that I am in Tolerable good health and hope these may find you and viola [sic] and all our friends at home enjoying the best of health we have had a very hard time Since you I wrote you the last letter we went on a Scout on the 13th and arrived here back on the 16th the hardships we Seen is indescribable [sic] we went up to a Little Town nine miles from here and then was within three miles of a rebels [sic] Camp and we Supposed [sic] that it was only a Brigade of Cavalry our Regt only consisten [sic] of one hunderd [sic] and Sixty Seven then we lay on our armes [sic] all night and the next morning we fell back to Salem five miles from this place where we lay for two days in the rain and mud and Since that time I have been very poorly having a very bad coal [sic] I received your letter of the 27th and was glad to here [sic] from you and would have wrote to you sooner but my a head hurt So that I was almost bline [sic] So you must Excuse me for not writing Sooner I Suppose [sic] you have heard more about the Battle than I can inform you of if the Dead is Buried it is of late there was Secesh on the field last Saturds Day [sic] for I seen them I went to See Franklin Ross and Jasper M Martin and to carry there [sic] Knapsacks to them I was glad to See them as well as they was they are tolerable bad wounded tho [sic] not dangerously I was Sorry to see Frank leave the Field as he is my old faverite [sic] friend and feel as nigh to each other as brothers he is wounded in the Shoulder and Martin in the bowles [sic] and arm bouth [sic] no doubt will recover but never will be fit for deuty [sic] there is fore [sic] missen [sic] but three we have never heard from S T Tyner Wm A Keith and Amos Barker all fough [sic] well and it is suposed [sic] they are taken prisioners [sic] while Willes Brown is absenet [sic] he was Seen run of the field and was Seen the next day and Seen at Nashville he is but little though [sic] of in Company K. I tell you he is the damest [sic] Coward I ever Seen dam [sic] the Secesh they fight like hell we Dident [sic] mak [sic] any thing of them in the long run for they whiped [sic] us like hell the first day on wedensday [sic] to [sic] we made them smell thunder after that we dident [sic] gain as big a victory as you will here [sic] our loss is great and no one is able to give a corect [sic] account the Sufferings of the boys is to [sic] bad to discribe [sic] we lay for three days laying on our [illegible] belly in the mud and rain [sic] without any thing to Eat our Suffering was great you would hardly beliaive [sic] me if I would tell you that I eat the flesh of a horse tho [sic] I wasent [sic] the only one tho [sic] thousand beside me eat of it I thought it was a good meat as ever I eat but I often Shurder [sic] when I think abut it there was three horses Killed in a few rods of our Regt they was hardly Don [sic] Kicken [sic] when the boys comenced [sic] Skininging [sic] and eating we was Sent out on picket on Saturday [sic] after the battle of wedensday [sic] we run the Rebles [sic] out of a Strip of woods we

was attacked [sic] early in the morning with a heavy force of Rebels [sic] they opened [sic] the attack [sic] with their [sic] batteries [sic] one in front and two were playing on us at a crossfire the Cannons were so close to us we could hear [sic] the Rebels [sic] Commanders cursing the gunners and telling them to aim low for the d d [sic] Yankees [sic] is laying Down frequently they would say give them Hell we were laying behind cliffs of rocks I almost wished I was a mole and if I was I would have crawled [sic] in the ground we were ordered [sic] to retreat when we [illegible] up raised up the dam [sic] Devels [sic] was within a few rods of us we ran like Hell for a while the cannon balls [sic] flying around us like hail and there was three Regt of Rebels [sic] firing [sic] as fast as they could and who will you say was the cause of me getting [sic] out Safe I think I can safely say it was by good running [sic] that got out of that morning's [sic] fight we lost [sic] several [sic] good men that morning besides [sic] a good many wounded I do not [sic] believe [sic] that there has ever been such a battle fought in America [sic] as the battle of Murfreesboro [sic] as for your writing to Levi and Eli is none [sic] of my or any body else's business [sic] I would like you to write how Levi liked Soldering [sic] you said that you had the mair [sic] keeping her it was the first I new [sic] that Susanah had given her up She said in her last letter that she wanted to keep her all winter and I wrote to her that she might and if she needs [sic] the mair [sic] I want her to have the mair [sic] you write to who you please [sic] I'll [sic] not cry I would be glad to hear [sic] from Eli and Levi myself we will be paid off in a few days I will send you the money in the place of Father if your father wishes to come [sic] to see us they can come [sic] with all ease and if they come [sic] send me a hat and pair of boots I wrote to father to send me a pair of boots and he has not

Murfreesboro [sic] Tenn [sic] Jan the 26th 1863

My Darling Wife again [sic] have I the pleasure of writing a few lines to inform you that I am well and hope you and all there are enjoying good health I have not received any letter from you for some [sic] time though [sic] hope to hear [sic] from you soon our mail is very irregular [sic] we get no letters and it is uncertain when we will get any mail I expected to write yesterday but we had to go out on a foreign [sic] expedition [sic] we left here at five M and went twelve miles towards the enemy we had a large train with us and as it rained hard the day previous the roads were tolerable bad we got in camp at nine o'clock [sic] at night I feel very sore [sic] this morning I was the tierdest [sic] yesterday evening I ever was in my life I tell you that I wished the war would come [sic] to a speedy [sic] close and didn't [sic] care how they [illegible] it so they will let me go home and if I ever get back home with you again [sic] it will take something more than a caul [sic] for volunteers to get me to leave home hope you will be [sic] satisfied [sic] until [sic] I return and I hope that may be soon for I am getting [sic] tired of the war and would rather get home with you and Viola the hardships of our Soldering [sic] is great and I will be glad when this war will cease [sic] and I don't [sic] care how it is settled [sic] the great mass of the Solders [sic] is tierd [sic] over [sic] this war there was a vote taken on some [sic] resolution [sic] this morning asked [sic] the Legislature of Ind to support [sic] the president and the Governor [sic] in all their [sic] measures [sic] and to vote money

fore [sic] the Suport [sic] of the Goverment [sic] and to force a vigers [sic] prosicution
[sic] of the war I am a compromiseen [sic] man and all ways have been and I think that
if all the big men at Washington had been wher [sic] I was at Peryvill [sic] and this last
battle they would been Keen to compromise this dam [sic] war I dont [sic] beleave [sic]
that there will be another battle fough [sic] by this Arme[y] [sic] I am Strong in the beleaf
[sic] that there be a compromise before Spring I think that we will be paid off in a few
days tho [sic] the way they are going to pay for our close [sic] we will not have as mutch
[sic] money as I though [sic] I would tho [sic] if I pay for my clothing know this time I will
not have to pay it the next payday we have musterd [sic] for pay Last week I will Send
you the money and you can do what you think best with it has ben [sic] raining for Som
[sic] time and the Frogs is Singen [sic] Sweetly and all nature Looks Like Spring and it
makes me feel Like I ought to bee [sic] at home and I am in favor [crossed out] hops
[sic] I Soon will be I Supos [sic] you have heard all about the fight as Willes brown has
returned home from the Battle field he noes [sic] nothing about it fo [sic] he run after
fireing [sic] his gun but twice you need not beleave [sic] any thing he Says for he dont
[sic] no [sic] a thing about it if your Father wants to see a Battle Field he can See one
by coming here I would Like to go over the field with him it would pay him for all his
troble [sic] and the Site of a battle is not Everywhere to be found not Such as this one is
larg [sic] trees cut down by the cannons I would be glad to have him com [sic] and See
things [crossed out] us and to See the amount of troops here I Send all my best
respects hoping to here [sic] from you soon when you write write to the first Division
Second Brigade 42d Regt Ind vol Company in care of Captain James Masters I will
conclude by Saying I remain yours forever tell your father to write to me

William K Stuckey

To Helen D. Stuckey

Mr [sic] William R Stuckey [sic]

Nashville Tenn [sic]

Division 2 brigade

42 Reg Ind Vol

Co K

In care of Capt [sic] Jas C Masters

Mr [sic] William R Stuckey

Louisa A. Beeson

Murfreesboro [sic] Tennessee [sic] Feb the 1st 63

Dear Love agan [sic] I take up my pen to Send you afew [sic] words by the way of letter
I wrote you afew [sic] lines last night and as I got another letter Since I must write agan
[sic] I need not tell you that I was glad to here [sic] from you for Such will be your

opinion I no [sic] I was glad to here [sic] that all was well but very Sorry to here [sic] that Granvill was Dead tho [sic] how many thousand do I See Dye [sic] health is very bad in the regiment George Thompson is Sick but is geting [sic] better I hope he will Soon be well you Said you was Sending a pair of pants and Socks and a comfort the later will be of no use to me I have plenty of Socks and if the pants is not Blue they will not let me ware [sic] them I Sent to Father to Send me a pair of Boots but he has not don [sic] it and I dont [sic] care a dam [sic] if he does or not and for him coming here I no [sic] he will not I have never looked for him I write to you often and if you dont [sic] get the letters it is not the cause that they are not written [sic] for I write often your Mother Said that Mary waid [sic] about two hundred I think if She had a man with her Like myself She would weigh full three hundred tell Mary Flack when I get home She may have the first boy tho [sic] I will have to tend on another Girl ocasionally [sic] there is plenty of girls in Tennise [sic] and pretty lases [sic] they are I Send my best respects to all tell the children I would like to See them I got acquainted with a cousin at on the battle field his name is John Morris anoble [sic] harted [sic] fellow [sic] [illegible] write Soon and often I have not herd [sic] from Eli for Some time yours trouly [sic] Wm R Stuckey

Murfeesboro Tenn [sic] Feb the first 63

Dear Lovly [sic] Hellen

I have the pleasure ov [sic] writing a few lines to inform you that I am yet alive and well hoping you are Enjoying the Same I received your letter of the Seventh and was glad to here [sic] fro you also that you was well I am looking for a letter Every Day I hope to here [sic] from you soon there is no danger of an atact [sic] here tho [sic] we are throwing up brestworks [sic] here there is Som [sic] talk of us going back to Nashville to garrison that place I hope we may Roussau [sic] is left us and and [sic] General Granger is in command of our Division there is a great Difference between those to [sic] men we will take General Roussau [sic] in ours all Day he is the man I was glad to here [sic] that the mair [sic] was fat and looked fine but can you tell me if She with fole [sic] or not when I was a Boy She was all my ride I would give a heap to See her when I think how oft She has carried me a Sharking and how good She has been to me I think that I couldnt [sic] trust [illegible] too good and if ever I get home I will trust her all right and I hope how Soon I may be there I see in the papers that the black ones in Washingt [sic] is playing hell a mazing [sic] I will never go in another battle under the presant [sic] administration as long as they are Determing [sic] to free the Slaves the broots [sic] of other men that is the reason that we havent [sic] Conquerd [sic] the South long Since I have conversed with able and Smart Reble [sic] officers they are all willing to be governed by the constitution but they are not willing to be Governed by Such abolitionist as is in the north or is in the new Englin [sic] States I will bring my letter to a close and hope to here [sic] from you Soon yours forever

William R Stuckey

William

William

William

William

Mr [sic] William