

Liberty Warner Papers

Biographical Sketch

Liberty P. Warner, born May 11, 1842 in Mt. Blanchard, Ohio, was the eldest child of Henry Warner, a Methodist minister, and Jane Elizabeth Wright Warner. He served as a private in Company H of the 21st Regiment, Ohio Volunteer Infantry during the Civil War, having mustered in on September 19, 1861 at Findlay, Ohio, at Camp Vance. He was wounded and taken prisoner at the Battle of Stones River, paroled [sic], and then was killed September 20, 1862, at Snodgrass Hill during the Battle of Chickamauga. A younger brother, Elliot Martin, born January 23, 1844, also served during the war with Company B, 144th O.V.I. Two sisters, Eliza and Mary are also mentioned in the letters.

The Barber brothers (John, George, William, and James) were cousins of the Warners, their mother Herriet being the sister of Henry Warner. Another of Henry's siblings, George Lewis Warner, referred to in the letters as Uncle George, also served in the 144th O.V.I. with Elliott.

Scope and Content

The Liberty Warner Papers is a series of 40 Civil War era letters, written between 1861 and 1864. The collection includes typed transcripts and the original handwritten letters for the entire series of correspondence. Primarily by Liberty Warner, the sequence also includes two letters by his cousin, William Barber, informing the family of Liberty's death during the Battle of Chickamauga, a letter fragment from Milo Caton, the Captain of Company H, and four letters from Elliott M. Warner during his service with the 144th O.V.I.

Liberty Warner served with the 21st Regiment, Ohio Volunteer Infantry, Company H, from 1861 through 1863, when he was killed during the Battle of Chickamauga, at Snodgrass Hill, on Sept. 20. His correspondence presents a fairly complete series of communications from his entry into the army through to his death in the service. The early letters describe training and camp life, health conditions, food, and troop movements. As one of several young men from Tontogany, Ohio serving together, including four cousins, William, George, James, and John Barber, Warner makes constant reference to the activities of all mutual friends. An interesting feature of the letters is the use of drawings to illustrate camp life. One of the drawings includes a layout of their tent, complete with name and position of each bunk-mate.

As a typical soldier in the 21st O.V.I., Warner participated in the Battles of Stones River and Chickamauga. Wounded and captured at Stones River, Liberty was parolled [sic] and spent some time at a hospital in New Albany, Indiana before rejoining the 21st O.V.I. The letters from Milo Caton and William Barber refer to the action at Chickamauga.

The letters of Elliott Warner cover his activities in Company B, 144th O.V.I. (O.N.G.), including a description of Todd's Barracks, Camp Chase, life and duties at Camp Parolle [sic], Md., and a tour of the Capitol in Washington, D.C. The collection also includes three examples of fancy calligraphy executed by Elliott Warner.

The letters were originally transcribed by members of the family possessing the letters, with corrections or additions to the text made by Marilyn Levinson, Curator of Manuscripts at the Center for Archival Collections. When possible, the spelling of the original letters has been maintained, with punctuation added to provide clarity.

Lexington, Oct. 18, 1861

As I move along I find time to look about and see the country. (Remembering that I wrote to you but a few days since, I had neglected to state the condition and health of myself and comrads [sic]. But I am not sure you got my letter. I will tell you we are well and harty [sic]. There has been no deaths, few accidents, and but little sickness. I am always well, can stand marching with any of them. We marched 15 or 16 miles day before yesterday. Some of the boys complaned [sic] of sore feet, my own being all right. I sold my fine shirt and boots to a nigger and got a pair of stout government shoes, pants, blouse, overcoat, hat, underclothes. We feed principally on sea-crackers hard enough for sidewalk, at least they are hard. Plenty of side pork or beef sometimes ham, plenty of coffy [sic] brown and grind yourself. Whiskey will get into camp through the [illegible line] guardhouse is the penalty for getting drunk. Niggers are plenty as you could wish, nasty, dirty, greasy ragged things. I have enough of the colored folks down here. I would not care about them being any plentyer [sic] North than they are.

We are in the City of Lexington, about 100 miles south of Covington. We occupy the fairgrounds. A battery of 10 or 12 guns, I think they are 6 and 12 pounders, also occupy one side of the grounds on the left of us. 2 Reg. of Kentucky boys are stationed. Yesterday we visited the monument erected...

pretty good time and morning found us way down in old Kentuck. Every corner crossing we met sambos. About noon we found ourselves 70 miles from Tenessee [sic] line in Lexington. We stopped there 2 hours or more, rite [sic] by the Insane assilem [sic]. Of

[sic] to the right of us towered the stately monument over the dust of Henry Clay. Here we learned of a tragedy that occurred [sic] here a few days ago. A secessionist [sic] tried to poison [sic] some soldiers. He was arrested and as they were taking him to prison a butcher came along with his meat and inquired into the matter. When he learned cause, he sprang onto the secesher [sic] and cut his gullet from ear to ear. Hurrah for the Union butcher. We are now in Nicholasville, 40 or 50 miles from Tenise [sic]. Don't know where we go next. Please write.

Nicholasville, Jermain Co., Ky
21st Reg Co H, car [sic] of Captain Caton

Write soon as you get this

[ON LEFT MARGIN]

No more running of bridges, guards are set every 1/2 mile.

Undated Letter

[This letter has many lines that are jumbled with one another.

I am well. I have not had a sick day yet, excepting a little looseness of the bowel for a day or two. [Illegible line] very well and none of our men have been in the guard house excepting Elder Skinner, Junior. After leaving home we staid [sic] in Camp Vance for 4 or 5 days. The morning we started from Findlay on an old 4 [illegible words]. At the end of this road we took (Cory is the place we changed tracks) another track, changed engines and went like the wind. As we passed the citizen's towns everybody cheered and waved handkerchiefs. some [sic] towns the Irish and Dutch wimmen [sic] would come out and fling their dish soap much to our [illegible] out before us. We made no objection, [part of letter is jumbled up] so we filled our crops. In my travels from Camp Vance to Camp Denison I saw many fine farms, but the equal of our Wood County corne [sic] is not to be found. Some it is pretty large in the ear, but the stalk is small, 5 or 8 feet is the Findlay average.

Friday morning we arrived at Camp Denison. This is a very large camp. There are about 6 or 8 thousand men here and regiments passing through every day. [illegible line of text] and on Zuave [sic] Reg. We were thronged here with old Dutche [sic] and Irish wimmen [sic], crippled niggers, beggars [illegible line] all sorts foot races, boxing, wrestling, etc. The last named is shut down on as one man got his leg hurt by it. The best foot race I saw was between a man who had one leg taken off up close to his boddy [sic] and a sound [illegible] one-legged man. He made some flying leaps of his

old crutch. The boys jerk a good many cakes and pies from the grocers. see [sic] one fellow try it. On one day his pie treasury was an old [illegible] black Dutch woman into his greedy chops. Didn't he hurrah some though. It is a very common thing to see some soldier going it lickety split with a cake in his mouth and a Dutch or Irish specimen at his heels.

Here I happened to find that little Rose boy with the red mark on his face. He is a little smaller than I. Our arms are rifled muskets and shoote [sic] minnie balls. The 2 flanking company we tried our muskets at a target, 14 balls hit it. I happened to be one of the luckey [sic] ones to hit it. Thursday we started for Kentucky. We took the cars and went to Cincinatti [sic]. We got off of the cars we stopped there 3 hours. Meantime, the ladies brought out bread and butter, hot coffy [sic], water to fill our centeens [sic], etc. Some ladies took the soldiers home and gave them all the supper they could eat. [illegible] were off all night. We jogged on [end of letter]

[Near Hazel Green, Ky.]

Oct 29, 1861

Dear ones at home,

I received your letter yesterday, Oct. 28th, and you cannot tell how glad I was to hear from home. We are well. We have just stopped a few days after a long march of 7 days. We expect to go farther in a day or 2. The 2 Ohio Reg. had a fight a few days ago in Hazle [sic] Green. They routed the sesesh [sic], murdered 7, wounded some. 1 man on our side wounded. The officers and men think the war will be over by next spring, we'll be paid off and sent home. Some of the boys talk of getting home by Christmas, which I think is rather doubtful. It may, however, be as soon as we get into winter quarter or sometime during the winter we get home furlough, 2 weeks or so.

I want you to write as often as you can. James Burshstead sends his respects to Uncle James' family. In our mess we include J. Barstead, R. Buffum, C. Grundy, T. Custer, J. Bullis, Barbers 4 and self, all well and healthy. No deaths have occured [sic] in our Reg, but 1 in our Battery who died yesterday of fever. We are under Gen. Nelson at present. He is a great fat fellow.

This is a hard place. I have become fully disgruntled with the profanity and vulgarity of the soldiery and do not fall in with it all, not 1/2 as much as I did at home. Now I must say to you that flying reports are about, but you must not care for them, for we have had no fight nor do I know that we will have one.

Write soon.

Liberty P. Warner, Co H 21

[Lexington, Ky.]

Nov 29 or 30, 1861

After the fatiguing marches of old Kentuck we find a little rest just 5 miles south of Louisville Ky and rejoice in our good helth [sic]. I have got as touch [sic] as whalebone and do not expect sickness. We all stand the weather verry [sic] well. There has been no snow here yet. It is just spitting little once in a while. 10 minutes ago it spit snow, now it rains. I sit here in my tent thinking of you all so far away and makeing [sic] my pen talk to you the best I can. I do not know but you think I sleight [sic] you in not writing oftener, but such a country as Big Sandy Valley and Mountain don't afford material for such business and the soldier that marches 500 miles or more don't get time you know. Short stops in a place and no line of mail except that we furnish ourselves. And I have marched every step the Reg has, a thing that few in the Brigade can say. There is about 30 or 40 thousand troops here and if they get enough without us some say we go to Camp Denison. No more for a time.

70 thousand men here (that is within 40 miles of here) lots more coming. There are no less than a dozen or two of extra brass bands here. We have on hand ready to distribute lots of warm winter clothes. Now as you all a better chance to write to me than I have to write to you, write often.

[Camp Buell, Ky.]

Dec 1, 1861

We expect to be paid 2 months [sic] wages in a few days. Please let me know how you come on with your work and your need of money, tax, etc.

Write soon, write all of you. If I had but the chance when we were at Prestonburg I could have sent home lots of sesesh [sic] spoils of all descriptions.

It is a hard place here, for I suppose you know the scraping of the world are collected here. I for one keep clear of it.

Camp jefferson [sic]

Jan th [sic] 3rd 1862

Bacon creek

Hart County, Ky

Dear Aunt,

I now sit down to write a long neglected letter. We are all well except John. WB (William Barber) has been Sick but is better now. it [sic] is raining now and has been ever since yesterday. we [sic] are 8 miles from green river [sic] and 12 miles from the rebels [sic] pickets it [sic] is reported that Gen Buckner has burnt bowling green [sic] but I guess that it is not true. Jimmy stands the marches very well. Elliott, I want you should write, write all the news. I have not time to write much more, for I must get supper. Liza, you and Mary must write. Give my love to Grandmother and Aunt Sarah and reserve a large portion for yourself. Good by this time. Write soon. Direct to Camp Jefferson, Bacon Creek, Ky Co H, 21st Reg. I got a letter from father. They are all well.

I am sound sound [sic]. I have myself and my mess mates. Together we are a band of brothers, our 12. Since I have owned 3 revolvers and 1 watch, just like I was in my trades I made [illegible] and have [illegible] with a genuine Colt 6. We had a good set of holidays.

L. P. Warner

Camp Jefferson, Ky.

Jan 3, 1862

Dear Friends at home,

I received your letter of Nov 25 in due time and I was very glad to hear from you. I have written you more letters since, this making the 2nd and I am anxious to hear from you. I am stout and getting fatter than you ever saw me. My hide is near the color of a lemmon [sic] rine [sic]. We are at Camp Jefferson, 30 mi. from Elizabethtown, waiting to join old Buckner a slice if he dare make a stand. It is hard to tell whether he will or not. We have lots and lots of canon and howitzers to play on him.

Camp Jefferson Ky.

L. P. Warner

[Bacon Creek, Ky]

[Early Jan, 1862]

Dear Friends,

I received your letter Jan 8th. It found us all well. I have also received several papers and very glad I was to see them to [sic]. We are staying at the old camp and it is a heaven contrasted with the mountains. We heard of the glorious victory at Mill Springs, soon after it occurred [sic]. We were [sic] all glad to hear the news.

The boddy [sic] of Zollicoffer passed through here a few days ago on its way to Nashville, accompanied by his surgeon and 2 captains, all of them being blindfolded. The surgeon left his horse at the depot, also his gum coat. I was on picket at the depot the day after the old rebel [sic] passed [sic] through, so I had a look or two at the horse. He would make our Frank feel proud of his flesh the poorest day he ever saw. He was poor as a crow after 6 month sickness, on his back was a verry [sic] pretty saddle. The gum coat lost a good pair of scissors in the performance and if the surgeon on his return makes any inquiry, tell him they are in my napsack [sic]. I rather doubt his seeing coat, horse, or anything of the kind. The officers like horses verry [sic] much. I see the gum coat on a soldiers [sic] back a few days ago. There was bloody marks on the coat. A fellow has to keep his eyes skined [sic] or some of his benevolent brother soldiers will steal his verry [sic] eye-teeth out of his head. The Kentuckey [sic] pie vendors have to keep they [sic] stock pretty close. The soldiers thinks of his belly more than anything else and woe to the pie or pone that comes in his way. And I never saw the man who could get redress for a missing pie, but I have seen the officers laugh over it. The people are mostly sesesh [sic] here, so it is not so bad.

Camp Jefferson, Bacon Creek

Jan 10, 1862

Dear Brother,

I have written 2 or 3 letters since I have received any from home and I would be very glad to hear from you all. All of the Tontogany boys are well. Jake McComb was sick, but he is now well as ever. We have been resting some 4 or 5 weeks, about 8 or 9 miles

from Green River or 30 from Elizabethtown. The camp we are in is called Camp Jefferson and it is fixed out pretty comfortable. We received our new tents yesterday. They are well ditched around and we have plenty of straw inside. And we have plenty to eat. We draw rations of hard crackers, pickle pork, sugar, coffee, rice, salt, and occasionally [sic] potatoes, beans, vinegar, etc. When we were on the mountains we drew rations of milk when ever we come acrost [sic] any cows. We have not quite forgotten how to do it yet. I got a good dose of milk the last time I was on picket guard. The tents we roost in are cone shaped and are made of ducking. I will show you the positions of our tents (2 in a bunk, 12 in a mess). The Tontogany boys are in a mess together. I have laid off the tent as it is. the beds or bunks are occupied as follows, 1 and 2, Wm. Barber and Jake McComb, 3 and 4, John Barber and F. Burkhart, 5 and 6, L. Warner and James Barber, 7 and 8, Ike Van [Valkenberg] and Tom Custer, 9 and 10, Wm. Allen and James Burchstead, 11 and 12, George Barber and Christopher Grundy. A: gun rack, B: dish box, C: tools.

[image—hand drawn layout of interior of tent and hand drawn labelled pictures of gun rack, dish box, tools, and articles of clothing]

I do not know how long we stay shall stay here. It may be a good while we [sic] want to collect enough men to just take prisoner Buckner and his men. It seems that old England wants to try us once more and let them come we must just as well whip them now as any time we lick the sesesh [sic] this winter and the British next summer.

The boys Send their respects.

Write to Camp Jefferson, Bacon Creek, Kentucky
21 Reg OVUSA

Mother must keep up her spirits, for I am doing well, and write to me often. I sent 12\$ home by J. L. Curry. He sent it to his wife. Go there and get it if you have not done so all ready.

L. P. Warner

Jan 18, 1862

Bowling Green taken not a man lost

Dear friends at home,

We are all well. We started from Bacon Creek rather unexpectedly. We started from Bacon Creek Feb 6 or 7, we stopped at Green River 4 days and from there proceeded [sic] to Bowling Green. When we had got within 17 or 18 miles of town we heard that the rebbels [sic] were leaveing [sic] as fast as possible. Our artillery was ordered to the front and after putting their horses to the gallop 6 or 7 miles of the way, arrived in time to see the enemy about to leave with stores aboard 5 trains. We planted a battery of 6 rifle steel guns, and gave them 75 rounds of shell. The shell set fire to the ware and engine houses, disabled a locomotive and killed 5 rangers. The rebbels [sic] then set fire to the wood in the tender, thus burning the heavily loaded train to ashes. The property destroyed was imense [sic], 10 locomotives, 10,000 stand of arms, army stores of all discription [sic]. Probably the destruction could not be covered by \$200,000.

The fortifications are almost impregnable, being 8 in number, all situated on the summit of high hills and so planted as to work together. The one I have endeavored to give you an idea of, the only one I have visited. The one on an adjoining hill is said to be 10 miles as large and many times as strong.

L. P. Warner

AA: Magazines B: Cistern

C: Cemetery ground gate

D: Gate in back ground

EEEE: Palisades in background

F: Mound protecting gateway

The numbers denote places for canon [sic]

Monday 19 Jan

At Green River a man died that belonged in our mess. He lived near Ann Bullises when at home.

The rebbels [sic] got of all their canon [sic] except one aboard [sic] the burnt train. If the rebbels [sic] can't stand here, they never can any place else. We lost a man a few days ago. Excuse my poor grammar and scribbling. Poor pen, poor everything.

February 8/62

L. P. Warner

Sunday Jan 26, 1862

Bacon Creek, Camp Jefferson

Dear friends at home,

Sunday morning finds us all well as usual. I received your letter by mail 2 weeks ago. Also have sent by Doct. [sic] Squires about last Wednesday or Thursday. We are at Camp Jefferson yet and I do not know that we shall leave for some time. They want to be fixing things up about camp a little to [sic] nice to leaveing [sic] them very soon. Some of the boys imagine [sic] we stay here until spring, maybe so, maybe not. If we do leave, we go no farther than Green River. You see we are in the dark on all such points. The news boys come up from Louisville and sell us reading matter. Today we were [sic] reviewed for third time by General Mitchell, today being a brigade review. The one before was a divisional [sic] and reviewed by Generals Buell, Mitchel, Sill, and aids. Such things are so common here that it is nothing at all any more. Rather nice at first, but the shine soon wears [sic] off.

These sharp nosed, sandy headed, gander legged Kentuckians [sic] whose ambition is a log house, dirty young ones, 6 to 15 in number, a wife [sic] as motly [sic] as a pot pie, that even makes all their pies to sell and own 1 she-nigger, these think it verry [sic] nice, yes verry [sic] nice, to get a chance to sell sole leather pies, dog pones to vend, and all they know is to ask 2 to 3 times as much as anything is worth. But the boys beat them at times. They do not know a 5 dollar bill from a 5 cent rag. Our Tontogany box arrived 2 or 3 weeks ago. I found there a fine pair of stockings, a pair of mittens, etc. Much thanks for them.

To [sic] days ago we received new muskets. Co. H and Co. C being on either side of the colors were supplied with better muskets than others. The flanking Companys [sic], A and B, use Enfield rifles.

Elliott, you and the girls must write often. You must all write a piece in each letter, all all [sic] write. Father, mother, brother, sisters.

L. P. Warner, Bacon Creek, Camp Jefferson, Ky.

All letters are forwarded to us, so it is no matter where you write to, I get them anyway.

[image: handwritten picture of a man with the caption: Poor soldier as seen in our tent]

Camp Van Buren [Murfreeseboro]

March 29, 1862

Dear friends at home,

I received your two very acceptable letters within 3 or 4 days of one another. They found us all well and in a pleasant camp 30 miles from Nashville and near a little town called Murfreesborough [sic]. We are at work on some of the burnt bridges destroyed by the Texas Rangers. These bring up the rear of the rebbel [sic] army. They burn or otherwise destroy everything that could be of any possible use to us. They lurk continually about the country, thieving about and watching the chance to slip in to our camp and spye [sic]. They picked into a Reg. of Dutch who ware [sic] out on picket about 6 weeks ago, but they left a pile dead men behind them. After they got enough, they came back under a flag of truce and had the satisfaction of packing a couple of wagon loads of dead Rangers, their Col. with the rest. Their brave Col. came to his death in the following manner. He spied on a lone Dutchman coming in and thinking him an easy booty started after him on the gallop. On coming up with him he struck and hit not the Dutchman but his gun, his sabre [sic] breaking in the performance. Bayonet spoke up then, and the Col. quit this country for a warmer.

I passed the ground, it was strewed with dead horses. Their present Col. is as brave as a lion. He managed to get a pass from Gen. Mitchell and has been in every Reg. in the division, but he cannot come it again.

Our cavelry [sic] bring prisoners every day or two.

And I, while I am away down here in Tinisee [sic], I often think of my friends and home and rejoice to think of the time when I shall once more be a citizen and know that peace reigns and I believe that time fast approaching. Victory crowns our battles.

Affectionate,

Liberty P. Warner
Son and Brother

Direct your letters anywhere, I will get them.

March 29, 1862

Friend Foote,

I received your very acceptable letter a few days ago. It found me enjoying very excellent health. The weather is getting quite warm and spring has fully set in. The trees are beginning to put forth their leaves and blossoms. The grass is sprung up high to allow the cattle and horses considerable feed. A good many of our horses are very thin, so the little grass comes very acceptable to them. We have light bread now, so we have a grand time as well as the horses.

Yours,
L. P. Warner
Write soon.

Camp Van Buren, Murfreesboro

April 3, 1862

Dear Friends,

We are all well and have just completed the bridges here and expect to move 25 miles down the R Road tomorrow. Today we got paid of [sic] again.

And I send Pa \$25, H. Warner.

\$25.00 Liberty Warner

I wrote you a letter containing all the news 6 days or mor [sic] ago. Hot as harvest.

[Camp Taylor, Huntsville]

Apr. 19, 1862

Dear friends,

It is with pleasure that I peruse this nice big letter, so lately from home, dated April 14. It finds us all well. George is at Murfreesborough [sic], Tenn., but is not sick or dead. When we started from town, the Capt. told all that could not stand the force [sic]

marches we ware [sic] about to make to report to the surgeon and stay behind. So you see, we are all alive yet. You must never be alarmed because you do not hear from us often. Half of our letters never go through. I have written 2-3 letters to 1 that I have received.

After leaveing [sic] Murfreesborough [sic], Tenn. we marched from thence to Shelbyville and laid up there 3 days. Orders then were given to march 28 miles to a little village and in that village that night I stood guard. [illegible – tape damage] immediatly [sic] for and arrived at Huntsville, Alabamma [sic] the 2nd day. We stoped [sic] the sesesh [sic] migration verry [sic] quick. We captured 17 locomotives, 40 carrs [sic] (this being a central point accounts for the number of locomotives), and 200 sesesh [sic] soldiers. Col. Norton has been proclaimed provose [sic] martial of Huntsville, and the 21st Reg. as guard of the same. Gen. Mitchell has gone on and had a fight with the rebbels [sic], beating them (the rebbels [sic]) badly. The 21st will niether [sic] see Corinth nor battle without we are attacked [sic].

Our boys are fighting at Corinth like bulldogs. The slaughter is great on both sides. The news of victory sounds beautiful on the ear of a soldier. It makes him think of a good time comeing [sic]. Alabamma [sic] is a beautiful country. The forests are all clothed in green and a beautiful summer is already broke upon us. We pick greens and get onions, so we have a change of diet. I caught about 100 fish out of a little run close by our [illegible – tape damage] with fish and the land with niggers. Every planter owns from 5 to 6 to 100, the plantations contane [sic] from 200 to 9 or 10 hundred and some of them thousands of acres, the houses are splendid, but far apart. The people are all putting in corn instead of cotton, or rather, they have put it in.

I sent home \$25 dollars Liut [sic] Curry. I suppose you are very scarce of money in that part of the world. There is some Confederate trash here, but it's poor stuff, poor paper, mere daub of a tipe [sic]. Some of it has the bust motif of Jeff Davis, our first president.

This sheet is one that I picked up, but I have no other just now. The paper is poor, the writing is worse, and my thoughts I string out on the paper as they come to hand.

Brother Elliott, your letters always come like friends in time of need. I am always very anxious to see the letter backed with your familliar [sic] handwriting. When that comes I drop everything and perus [sic] its most welcome contents. Since I left you I have seen great many sights, some of the [sic] pleaseing [sic] and some of the other class. The army is very exciteing [sic] place a first, but after as many hardships as we have seen, nothing can excite much, without it be a letter from home. I had rather [end of letter]

Athens, Al., May 30, 1862

Dear Friends,

After waiting a long time in vain for an answer to my last letter, I have concluded that it did not go through or yours was somehow miscarried on the long route in coming [sic] through to me.

We are, however, all enjoying good health. We expect our boys that were taken prisoner will be with us in a few days. They are in Nashville at present.

May the 26th we left Huntsville and for the first time since we came from Covington to Nicholasville got a carr [sic] ride of 30 miles or thereabouts down to Athens, All. We found the town and the country about it in a sad plight. 2 of our Dutch regiments picked into the stores and plundered them of every thing they wanted and finished up by smashing up the rest.

Parts of the Divition [sic] skirmish now and then withe [sic] enemy, but nothing of any consequence has transpired yet. And what is more, I do not know that there is any chance for it, although we would jump at the chance of getting a hack at them. The sesech [sic] cavelry [sic] keeps fooling around. They will get in a bumblebees' nest yet some of these days. Our boys would have no mercy on them at all in any case they should get them in their powers.

We are beginning to get tired of this thing. It has hung on until we are now in fighting order and now we want to fight. We feel as if we had hung around the table some time and now we want to eat. If there is any fighting, we are ready. We have loaded our guns to [sic] long and we want to kill the wreches [sic] that gorrillo [sic] about through the country and make such enormous costs by keeping up the rebellion. There is talk of taking some men out of the Regiment and mounting them on horses to persue [sic] those cowardly thieves.

The people are getting rather scarce of grub in these parts. Corn doger [sic] made up with water is the staple. Some of the rich has cows that supply them with milk, also plenty of meat. We visit the larders and milk the cows at times. (We are on picket and the boys are chasing [sic] the cows around for milk now). We draged [sic] a small porker in out of the dew this afternoon by way of passtime [sic] and eattime [sic] together. We was a pig when we got him, but we skinned him and changed his name to possom [sic].

When we are hungry, if we cannot get rations, we eter [sic] speak for a turkey or some other baste. At times we go visiting to some rich nigger grocer and present our case. They sometimes object, but the sight of our shineing [sic] beyonets [sic] argue the case. In fact, a bold face and a revolver at the side always wins the grub. After finishing our meal, a cool "muched [sic] obliged" takes the conceit out of them. After their feeling for the holfs [sic], if everything goes on right, I think these sett [sic] of black 21ers will see Ohio before long.

My love to all. Write soon. Write Nashville or any other place. I suppose I have grown a good and since I left home. 140 is my weight at present. It was for a time 150.

Liberty P. Warner, Athens, All.

Partial Undated Letter

[missing text] see one of cows than Gen. Mitchell or Buell. The Gens. I could only see but if anyway close [illegible – tape damage] I would play a milking game, I try it on sesesh [sic] cows sometime. It is extremely dangerous for a 21ster to go in to a crocery [sic], the stuff laying around naturally sticks to their fingers and the grocer wakes up to find things stept [sic] out, no one knows where, it haveing [sic] gone down read lane if eatable. You must soon and let me know all about things on the farm, as I think more of things connected there than anyplace else.

Your brother, L. P. Warner

Undated Letter to Friend Foote

Your kind letter came with the rest, Sunday 19. I am sitting in my tent this morning, thinking myself luckey [sic] in being off duty as it is raining a steady stream this morning. The rain don't hurt me any, only it is a little unpleasant to soak and no dry clothes to put on. We have a verry [sic] pretty camp here and a prospect of staying on it here sometime. We have possession of a central point [illegible – tape damage] that goes through to Nashville be great importance to ourselves and enemies. Our reg. has been chosen as an especial guard to keep things right in town, also to guard our prisoners. The rebbels [sic] are passing through this town in squads, having deserted the rebbels [sic] at Corinth and are on their way home. They say it is the turning point in the war, the place they expect to make a terrible struggle.

L. P. Warner

Cousin John sends his respects to you all.

Liberty P. Warner to friends at home.

Elk River, Tenn.

[Early July, 1862]

Dear Parents, Brothers and Sisters,

I have for the last two months enjoyed good health and easy times in our pleasant little fort on the banks of the Elk River. There is two companys [sic] of us here and no camp guard is placed around us to keep us from walking out as far as the pickets. If wish to go farther, we can get a pass from Liut [sic] Curry and go anywhere with impunity as the sesesh [sic] are pretty well fritened [sic] out of heart. Some have come to the conclusion [sic] that we are no worse than their own men, as the latter burnt their cotton, whereas if they swear allegiance to us we protect them and their property.

Our Co. was to work at the tunnel 2 or 3 days clearing up the R Road track in order to allow our provition [sic] train a passage through without going over the bluff. The tunnel is cut through sollid [sic] rock and distance 30 rods or more and runs under a high bluff.

While we were at work here I captured a sesesh [sic] shotgun. It is a fine English twist and was carried by the Scott cavelry [sic] and has been hard used. The barrels are about 2 feet long and it had in ether [sic] barrel 25 buckshot. These are the most formidable wepon [sic] used at a short distance I know of. They will kill and mame [sic] a nomber [sic] at one shot. I have packed the gun in Currys [sic] box and I expect you will see it for long.

Genl. Mitchell was here a few days ago and spoke to us a few minutes. The old fellow praises us a good deal for good conduct. He has gone to Washington. I think likely we shall go east befor [sic] long if Richmond is not taken before long. We are the boys for them. If we had been at Corinth when our old starry at the head of the whole, the rebbels [sic] would never got out of it without a fight. The mechanics who planted the siege guns at Corinth are working on a bridge at this place. They say we had a 1000 canon [sic] pointed at the town.

Liberty P. Warner

[Athens, Ala.]

July 14, 1862

Dear friends at home,

Today is the sabbath. We left our pleasant little fort on the banks of Elk River and we are now with our Reg. once more at Athens and as there is no services of any kind in camp we are lounging about in our tent, drowning of the heat and being no ways sorry we are not on duty today.

The excitement and anxiety to hear the news from Richmond is very great. As soon as the newsboy shows himself on the platform of the car he is immediately besieged by soldiers and citizens, half crazy to hear the results of battle. Even Sambo will inquire "what ye aw [sic] guine [sic] to do".

In this country big black stinking Sambo grows in all his glory. It is here this beloved, industrious, troden [sic] down in the dust humanity toils all day long (that is if he has a driver behind him) and gets nothing but pork bread and whatever he raises in his little garden and hen coop (without he can steal from some other nigger or his master).

When we were at work in the tunnel, we pressed in about 40 niggers and we could accomplish but little with them. You have to keep on the lookout as they will mosey off into some shady place and lay down. Nigger heaven is a place where they can dance and lay in the shade all day.

Liberty P. Warner

Nashville, Tenn. Nov 12, 1862

Dear Uncle, Aunt and Cousins,

It is a good while I have had an opportunity to write home. I was very sorry to hear of the death of cousin Hattie. It makes a sad and gloomy day with us. I am well. Our Reg. has got order to forage and to go, but on a foraging, so I must close. I will write again soon. Give my love to all.

L. P. Warner

Dear Mother,

I sent you my likeness about 2 months ago. If you got it, or not let me know. I will send another if you did not get it.

And we would consequently lost more. Please write soon. Let me know whether Elliott is drafted or not. Keep up your spirits and better days will come. We are trying to do our best toward killing off the rebbels [sic]. John Barber sends his respects to you all.

From your son,

Liberty Warner

We expect to leave here before long. You can direct your letters to this place as well as the 7th Brigade for the present.

Nashville Nov. 13, 1862

Dear friends at home,

I have just received the long wished for letter and with it the sad intelegence [sic] of the death of Hattie. The loss is a great one, yes it is the absence of one of our number [sic]...forever. It is the first visit of death in our midst. We must all die sooner or later and we may be thankful we have been undivided so many years. I feel hartily [sic] sad that I can never againe [sic] behold the face of the dear one that is no more. I would not wish her back into this world of sorrow and sin. She is much better off. This was not altogether unexpect [sic] to me. I have often thought of it while out on picket or other guard and at other times when alone. I thout [sic] of her delicate constitution and feared she would not survive. A letter that George received from his sister, Harriet Van, made me almost certain of it, etc.

My self and cousins are all well and have plenty to eat and wear. Our regiment has been laying at Nashville about 3 months or thereabouts and we have been shut out from the world as you may say, the R Road line being intercepted by the enemy. Our only mode of subsistence was to forage, and occasionally commence our scout at 11 o'clock in the night and maybe have a skirmish. I have been in 3 skirmishes and have never fired a gun. We have always had some flank movement to perform on double quick time (on the run), which is the hardest of all. I tell you the rattle of musketry and boom of canon [sic] sounds musical. We tried our 36 lb. steel on them a few days ago. The intruders was a foraging party belonging to Forest. Our being transfered [sic] from our old 9th Brigade to the 7th shinned [sic] us out of the fight in Kentucky. The regiment

that held our old position lost 21 killed and near 100 wounded. Our regiment is larger than it was...[end of letter]

[Nashville, Tenn.]

Wednesday, Nov. 21, 1862

Dear Aunt,

It has been nearly three months since we have been shut out from the world, as it were. We got some letters today, but they were old ones, but we did not care for that. The boys are all well except myself. I have been unwell for some time. I feel better now and am able to do my duty. The battery boys are well.

The rebels attacked us last week with seven peices [sic] of artillery and four regiments of infantry. They skirmished nearly all day. Our loss was 2 killed and several wounded. We expect to march before long.

I was sorry to hear of the death of Hattie. I did not think she would live a great while when I saw her last, but we must all die sometime. I would like to see you all once more, alive and well.

I have not much time to write now. I will write more next time. I must write to Aunt Sarah and the girls. Give my love to Eliza and Mary and all the rest. No more this time.

From your aff. [sic] nephew,
George W. Barber
My love to all.

Nashville

Nov. 30, 1862

Dear Friends,

I have just received your letter of the 21st, which found us all well. George is well and cooking for the Captain and Lieutenants. John is detached from the Regiment as a pioneer of the Brigade. He camps near us however, so we see one another as often as we feel disposed.

Our new recruits arrived about a week ago and there being about 120, one hundred and twenty, it helped us a considerable. Yesterday when we were out on Brigade inspection the old General (Genl. Negley) wanted to know of Col. Neibling where he got his Brigade. We had a general review a few days ago consisting of all the forces at Nashville. Genl. RosanCranz [sic] rode along our collemns [sic] and looked as smileing [sic] as a 5 year old boy over a first penny.

Rosincrans [sic] is a good old fellow, I can tell you. Buell is an old rascal and should have been shot. We would no more dare to go into battle with his men than nothing. He would be shot down as quick as a rebbel [sic], that shows what we think of Old Buell, as the soldiers call him. It is no use of keeping an officer in the field that is despised by his men. If an officer is brave, his men will be brave, but if the leader is cowardly, especialy [sic] when leading raw troops into battle, he will disgrace the men as well as himself. The way things are going on shows a lack somewhere. This lack is not in the men, but in the officers. If I was shure [sic] we would not get through in 2 years, I would joine [sic] the regular cavelry [sic], the Genls. [sic] bodyguard, etc.

That likeness you got I sent about two months ago. Give my best respects to Grandmother. Dear Grandmother, I have not forgotten her.

I would like to see you all very much, but there is no chance of forlough [sic] at all, so I have to wait untill [sic] we get through. I believe that whenever the war does end, it will be all at once. One side or the other will give over all at once, the sooner the better for the country.

Nashville shows the effects of the war. She has her pay for her traitering [sic]. The men are most all gone to war and the women make their liveing [sic] any way they can. Nashville is a verry [sic] Soddom [sic], it is a abomination. The soldiers tore down some of the devilsheds [sic] for brestworks [sic], thus putting them to use.

L. P. W.

In your letter you was very kind to ask if I had plenty of clotheing [sic] and even offered to send me boots. Thank you, I have a good pair of boots, plenty of all. I should be verry [sic] happy to step in and take supper with you, but I must wait a while.

Dear brother,

Your welcome handwriting always comes with the rest. It always looks so charming. I tell you, when I get back we must a good old talk. You see, I have been through the mill. I know what I did not know before. It is fun to talk, but, but... I would like to see you verry [sic] much. I should like to see how much you have grown. I weigh from 150 to 160. What do you think of that. In your next letter tell me how heavy you are. I want to see how we correspond in that line. I am tough, but not muscular. Write soon. Let me know everything. Anything is interesting to me.

L. P. Warner

Camp Hamilton, Nashville

Dec 15, 1862

Dear friends,

After a few more days at Nashville we have moved out sixty miles toward Murfreesboro, where we lie awaiting further orders. We are all glorying the enjoyment of health and only need the smiles of those at home to make us happy indeed. We have a very pleasant camp here, close to this cane brake. It affords plenty of sport for the soldiers in the line of bird hunting. About an hour before sun set clouds of robbins [sic] may be seen coming from every direction toward the cane brake, where they take up quarters for the night. As soon as it comes dark the boys slip the guard and with torch and shelalah [sic] they charge on the devoted red breast, who stare at the torch untill [sic] they are nocked [sic] of [sic] of the cane. Our mess had a pot pie of some 3 or 4 dozen of this species of songster (great dish that).

We have just received a lot of draftees, and they are in for 9 months, so they get out of the service sometime before we, the old twenty onesters [sic], as we call ourselves. Hoorah for the new roll 21sters. With our recruits came a fine stand of colors and a banner, besides a couple of small flags, one red the other blue for line guides (all of silk). Our regiment makes a line of battle about 40 rods.

Did Reuben VanTassel ever write home that he took 5 prisoners and a stand of colors at Lavergne. The boys have the story here that he did write such things home. It may be just a report amongst the boys, but if he did write such a thing he wrote and [sic] untruth. Because you see, I was there myself and know all about it. When you write let us know. You see, Co. H was on the run all the time trying to flank the rebbels [sic] and he nor anyone else had such a chance as that in Co. H. There has been some talk of

compromise and armistice, but I don't believe anything untill [sic] I see it myself. If there should happen to be an armistice for 6 months or a compromise and peace declared, why I expect I might get home by some of these days, but the way things are going on seem rather to predict a year or more or in other words, I expect to serve my term out. I send herein closed receipt 20\$ and more before long if the paymaster comes soon.

Love to all the friends.

Liberty P. Warner

Write soon

[RIGHT MARGIN]

Elliott write, girls write, all all write.

New Albany, [Ind.]

Hospital No. 6

Jan 31, 1863

I received your kind letter of the 28th last night and I was verry [sic] glad to hear from once more. It is the first I have received for two months or more. I was verry [sic] sorry to hear that Mary was unwell and I hope that she will soon be better. I am getting along finely, my wound is nearly well, also the mumps that I had mixed in. I have a very comfortable place here, plenty to eat, to wear, and good lodging. The eating part is the most essential with us soldiers. I cannot tell why we have not had a furlough given us. Soldiers [sic] matters are so newmerous [sic] that only few of them are properly [sic] attended to. I do [not] know whether our parolle [sic] will be recognized or not. The rebbels [sic] were in such a hurry that they did not parolle [sic] us, but had the officers in charge (swear) take oath that they would have it properly [sic] attend to.

We were glad to get off with our boat anyway. They burnt three steamboats right under our noses. I tell you it made the Yankey blood boil to see it. Just to see the land pirates running over the boat and stealing what they could lay their hands on. If we had any furloughs we would have free transportation.

Elliott, go to Mrs. Currys and see if there is not a shotgun there for me. Curry sent it in his box. The barrells [sic] are an English twist about 2 feet long. See pg. 4 [DRAWING]

I want to see you all very much, but I have to content myself and live in hope. I often think of you. Each member of the family rises before my eyes (and little Hattie with the rest.)

Oh, the scenes of blood that I have seen. I wish that they could cease, not that I fear it, but is so hardens a person, a dead man seems no more than a dead sheep or a log of wood.

I sent home a treasury note some six weeks ago or more, but not haveing [sic] any stamps I put it on soldiers [sic] letter. If you did not get, it is in the dead letter office. The money is not lost if the note is. The agent has a corresponding paper or note. (It was sent near Nashville).

Liberty P. Warner

Write soon.

The barrell [sic] has two little dents near the muzzle made in cutting it off. Also 2 keys to hold the stock to the barrells [sic].

The punch in my pate

[image – hand drawn picture of a shotgun]

[image – hand drawn image that says: The punch in my pate]

[New Albany, Ind.

Hospital no. 6

Early Feb., 1863]

O, that letter of last nights sent me to bed to dream of home. It was a very pleasant supper to go to rest on. The bed I have just got up from this morning is a bunk with a straw tick covered with 3 double blankets. It is as good a bed as I could ask for. I breakfasted on breat [sic], milk, and rice, with plenty of sugar on the latter.

Well, mother, those rebs did would not rob me. If they had, it not have been much. They might have taken my overcoat or my cap, but they did not. I found out that those who were spunky and talked right up to them got along the best. It did not take them long to steal all of our provition [sic]. I have plenty of clothes to keep me warm and expect a chance to draw more before long.

I suppose that the box the Tontogany people sent to the company came to it since the battle. I have seen nothing of the same. I do not know of anything you could send me without it be a postage stamp. I have but one left.

Mother need not be afraid that I shall think she asks to [sic] many questions. The more the better. I was verry [sic] glad that Pa let me know all about the stock. I love to hear how all hands are comeing [sic] on, from the horses to the biddies. I wunder [sic] if old Spot can kick as well as ever, or if that was forgotten when his tormenters left. Well, I suppose the stock on the farm are growing nisely [sic]. I should love to see them and take a stroole [sic] over the farm and note the changes.

I should like to take another lesson in farming. It would go hard at first, but I would come to it in the end. In my travels and marches I have seen all kinds of land, but suits me better than our own.

I have not raised that mustache yet that I was greasing and coaxing to come out. It appears to be just as smooth there as when I was a yearling. They are not all braves who sport mustaches. For instance, there was a verry [sic] large pair owned in our company. About the time the lead and iron began to fly, a pair of legs carried those mustaches towards Nashville with a velocity [sic] that was remarkable. (He was not a Tontogany boy).

I wrote you a few lines day before yesterday. I was in a great sputter to get a letter. Last night it came.

Write as soon as you get this and we will keep up conversation in spite of the miles between us.

Son and brother
Liberty Warner

New Albany, Hospital no. 6

Feb 8, 1863

Dear friends at home,

I am still at the old place and ready to go back to the Regiment againe [sic] as soon as discharged from Wheeler's Brigade (that is the name the boys have given to those who were captured by Wheeler)

My wound is all healed up, but a small spot which is scabed [sic] over. The Dr. was saying he thought chances would be given all wounded men to get home. How soon he did not know.

I wrote you a letter and sent as soon as I got yours of 28th. I have as yet received no answer. Please write letters often while I can get them so fresh from home, because I may go to the Regt. at any time, where it is a miracle to get anything from home in less than 15 or 20 days.

Write soon and let me have all the news. Anything from home is news to me.

It would just suit me to steal in on to you unawares and give you a surprise. It might come around, so you know.

Liberty P. Warner

New Albany, Feb 10, 1863

I have just received a magnificent sheet from home. It was just the kind to suit a soldier who has not seen home for a long time. All the fault I have to find is that the girls did not have anything to say. Now, I tell you what it is I want both of you girls, you Eliza and you Mary, to write some in the next letter. Those are strict orders and must be obeyed. It would frigten [sic] you very much if I was to get a corporal and a file of men after you, so beware of the guardhouse, girls. Lib, as the boys call him, is not quite the petulant boy you used to have about home, if I do say it. So you need not be afraid to write to me. Elliot little bits are delicious. Give us a good epistle next time, I mean a longer one. let me know what is going on all over the farm. I suppose you have some good times. Let me know everything that is going on. How does old dog flourish [sic], fond of souse as ever. I suppose he would say bow-wow to the blue jackets. I suppose I have stretched [sic] up some since I saw you and I am probly [sic] heavier. While we were at Nashville I

did at one time manage to tremble the scale on 160. I suppose I am about 155 now. I don't pretend to be as muscular as I was at home, but my constitution is good and I am never sick.

Now I will tell you how I got that gun I sent you while we at Elk R. We went out to a leading sesesher [sic] plantation of about 150 nigs strong, for the purpose of seeing if he had any horses on his premises that belonged to Scotts [sic] rebbel [sic] cavelry [sic]. In the meantime, the Liut [sic] went in to the house and got this gun, which had been left there by Scott's men. It was loaded for Yankees when we got it. It had 21 buckshotts [sic] in each barrel and behind them a plentiful charge of powder. At another time I captured a gun, which I changed for this and it delivered at Tontogany. You see the gun cost me nothing. If the sesesh [sic] at home conclude to kick up a row, you will have to gather up the old guns and charge on them. The old 21 know how to that. If you could have seen them you would have said so. I remember when we were by a fence, the rebs came up 2 or 3 columes [sic] deep, screaching [sic] and yelping like nigger hounds. We rested our guns across the fense [sic] and made them yell another tune. I was as cool as a cucumber and took steady aim at the cloud of flash and smoke. I beleive [sic] some of my lead same [sic] near enough for them to hear it whistle, if nothing farther.

Good night, more in the morning

LW

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

March 27, 1863

Dear friends at home,

We are all well and hearty as any one could ask to be. We are at the old camp and have nothing to do but drill and stand picket and camp guard.

(Seven days later)

Since the above was written we have changed our camp and we have been ditching and putting our new grounds in order. We were out on review a few days ago. Gen. Rosecrans and 6 or 7 other major generals rode along our lines. The old General gallantly raised his hat to each regiment as they presented arms. He told Col. Neibling we must have Stones River printed on our colors, for we had as good a right to it as any regiment. The Col. says we must have Iva Creek, Levergne [sic] and Stones R all

printed on our flag. We have been in no fight a bravly [sic]. You must never believe anything untill [sic] you see it. I don't believe anything nowadays. Reports are all gratis and are consequently too cheep [sic] to be good for anything. Report in camp circulation says the 2nd and 3rd divisions will garrison this place. (We are in the 2nd division)

I received those three letters and several papers since I came back, also a lot of old dated letters. The papers are very exceptable [sic] pass-time reading. News boys are in camp every morning with Nashville, Louisville, and Cincinnatti [sic] papers.

We can not get any furlough yet. If there is chances given, I will come home on furlough as soon as it comes by turn, several are ahead of me.

P.S. I know nothing of those rails you spoke of.

Write soon.

L. P. Warner

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

June 1, 1863

We are all well, with the exception of George, who is a little indisposed at present, but is able to be about and will be harty [sic] in a few days. Nothing of importance has happened here of late. Everything is still. Little skirmishes occur once in a while and sometimes twice, but they amount to nothing. Rebbel [sic] deserters come into our lines every few days in two or threes together, but I think they are growing less. I have just returned from town and am most pleasantly surprised to receive a letter from you. But you are not ahead of me, for this will be on the way in a half hour.

Our regiment, or 7 companys [sic] of it, have changed arms again. We have got Colts five repeating rifles. The other companies will have either carbines or Henry rifles. With either of these rifles we can do tremendous execution. If we had been provided with these arms before the battle, we could have piled the ground with sesesh [sic] worse than we did with our single shuters [sic], although they worked admirable. We expect to get horses soon. If we do, we will have revolvers and sabres [sic] (won't we eat then). This brigade is considered to be one of the first class and I suppose it is equal [sic] if not superior. Col. Miller, who commands the brigade, says it fought equal [sic] to anything known since the war and it is consideration of these things we are supplied with such arms. It is an honor to us to be thus distinguished. The whole army is bettered armed

than it was at the time of the fight and if we get at it againe [sic], we will make something come. Rosencrans will review our division tomorrow. I always like to see his smileing [sic] face when he rides along the lines, as we are drawn up in line of battle.

Well Elliot, I suppose you have grown a considerable and probably changed a good deal in your appearance and I would like to see for myself if it could be so. But it seems to me that when I have served out my time and probably not before that time can I do so. I have grown some taller since you saw me and the day after I was of age weighed 153 lbs. Last fall when we were at Nashville I weighed 160 lbs. All the boys in the company have stretched up amazingly, all but George who is bound to be a titman anyhow.

I would not be surprised if we moved before long. Things look so to me, although I may be mistaken [sic].

L. Warner

Give my love to grandma. Tell her I have not forgotten her if I have not written. I suppose grandpa is in Ky. by this time.

Murfreesboro, Tenn

June 10, 1863

Dear friends at home,

As I have nothing else to do, I will just write a few lines by way of keeping up conversation. I pass the time the best and easiest way possible, sometimes I read a while, then stroll about a while, then take a lazy sleep of a couple of hours. Probably by that time I may suddenly be brought to my senses by the cook yelling dinner or the drums beating drills or dress parade as the case may be. The monotony [sic] was broken a few days ago by breaking a fellows [sic] neck on the scaffolds. Such things are getting common, a couple have to rid the earth of themselves today and two more on Friday go through the same performance. Part are soldiers and part citizens. I don't care anything about the citizens, but I hate to see a soldier stretch hemp or be shot. The more citizens are killed, the less sneaks and gorillos [sic] we will be bothered with later.

Today is rainy and sunshine by spells. We drilled this forenoon on skirmishing a while. An Irishman named Joe Todd was brought here handcuffed a few days ago. He was

one of the men taken prisoner [sic] the same time George was, and when exchanged and started for the Regiment, he slipped [sic] out and came back to Tontogany. He says passed by our house several times and saw Pa and Elliott work in the field. Probly [sic] Elliott remembers the fellow that treated Henderson and myself to the bar one night when we were beating those drums in Tontogany. His appearance is about as proposing at present as it was then, one eye black, his back covered with an old ragged citizens [sic] coat. The only think I begrudge him is the sight.

We have the orders to keep 3 days rations in our haversacks ready to march at any time. That time is very uncertain. It has been an [sic] standing order some time. If Bragg sends part of his force toward Vicksburg, he may look out for a few of us, as we may visit him. If you could see me laying on my bunk with this paper on an old novel, you would say, lazy fellow. Soldier life is hard and lazy both. Duty is duty and lay on the bunk is just the opposite thing. Well, I will have to go to work and get the dirt and rust of [sic] my gun. These take lots of cleaning.

Eiliza and Mary, I would like to hear of your once in a while at least, whereas I hardly hear from you at all. Don't be afraid to say a word. If you find it difficult reading this pencilling [sic], let me know and I will use a pen and ink hereafter.

L. P. Warner

[Elk River, Tenn.]

July 3rd, 1863

Today we are laying on the road side on the banks of the Elk R. We have been driving the Rebs since we left Murfreesboro, which is about 12 days ago or more. Our advance are skirmishing more or less every day. Negleys [sic] Divition [sic] has been engaged in no fight of any account, McCooks and Crittendons [sic] each have done considerable fighting. They have taken good many prisoners [sic] and killed many rebs.

I received your letter last night and a welcome one it was. I was glad to hear that everything is going off nicely at home. I should like to see it with my own eyes and I hope the next 3rd of July to be with you. Tomorrow is the 4th of July, 1863 and still war. I fear it will take us a long time to subdue the South. They are a hot-blooded people and on their own ground.

When we come to a suspicious looking place, we have to plant artillery and shell it, so to be shure [sic] that no masqued [sic] battery is in the road. Report says all remiments

[sic] that reenlisted (3 months regs) within 30 days after discharge will be discharged 3 months before their time is up. I think the furlough is clipped o[sic] ff the 3 years (so much for report)

We are 6 or 7 miles south of Talihoma [sic] and about 45 m from Murfreesboro. I think the rebs will run to Chattanooga [sic]. When once we get them started, it takes some time to stop them. I hope we will have good luck and take part of the rear prisoners. We crossed the river this morning, and I am sitting on a log and my gun and rig at my feet.

July 4th

This is the morning of the 4th. I was on picket last night and came off post at sunrise. Tis a beautiful morning and a beautiful landscape, the vast plain and lofty hills in the distance. The cavelry [sic] are starting out again this morning and I expect we will start in a few minutes. One of our field pieces fired a morning roll out here boys and get your grub a little before sunrise. I do not expect too much for today...

Independence day wares [sic] on and it is noon. We have not pulled up stakes or rather started on the march yet. Jim and I have just finished a cup of applesauce and it is time to go on post again (on the lookout)...the boys are thinking or talking of former 4th of Julies when they were at home. All seem merry as can be, only wishing for a little extra quality sort of grub.

After writing the preceding, we marched about 5 miles and are camped in a fine grove. Probably we will stay here a few days. Several national salutes were fired by our several batterys [sic] and a salute of a few shells presented to a band of flying rebbers [sic]. I suppose I heard rather more cononading [sic] than you did, had a finer view of the chane [sic] of mountainous bluffs, eat less and am about 6 times as dirty. Marching makes dirty soldiers. The next thing will be to wash up and clean myself and then comes my gun. It must be kept in order if the rest goes to rack... Every farmer in the South is doing his best to raise a large amount of corn and wheat, thousands of bushels of fine grain have been tramped in the ground, fed to the mules, and otherwise destroyed by us on this march and not a likely steer, calf, hog, goose, hen, or anything else in the eating line can be found in within 3 miles of one of our stopping places after we have left. Our boys sweep the country clean of everything, both Reb and grub. All of the male niggers fall with us. The niggers all seem to have notice of our comeing [sic] long beforehand. When is about up, they run away and hide in the mountains till we come along, then they come forth, grinning and showing their ivory. You never saw any such specimens of black humanity North as may be seen here with feet like flat bowls.

L. P. Warner

[image: hand drawn picture of a fort labelled with numbers and letters]

Decherd Station

July 29, 1863

Dear friends,

I received your very welcome letter of the 21st inst. I was very glad to hear that you were all well, but sorry to hear that death has taken one so near. Death must sooner or later claim one and all of us, it matters not whether in the army or at home. When we have run the course the Almighty has assigned us, we must leave earth for other shores.

We are camped down as usual and have nothing but our usual camp, and picket duties and occational [sic] forage, etc. This is a little different from marching, where the Regt has to march in a close mass, ready to face an enemy on any side and the sun shining down on us hot enough to roast us. We hear nothing of the rebs in this quarter any more. They are all driven far south. They were greatly demoralised [sic]. The greater share are ready to desert whenever a chance presents itself.

Well, I hope they have got as well scared or half as well in the east as here.

I would like to help you eat some of your good things. Crackers, coffy [sic] and meat is our grub here. If you want potatoes or any thing of that kind, you can get a handkerchief full for \$1.00 or 5 for 25 cts [sic]. Nice is it not verry [sic]. Just let my eyes rest for one minute on a sesesh [sic] apple tree or potatoe [sic] pach [sic] and some of them.....

I wrote you a few lines 3 or 4 days ago, also sent a treasury note of \$50. I send in this sheet \$10.

L. P. Warner

May 21st, 1863

Dear friends at home,

I received you [sic] very welcome letter of the 5th inst. yesterday. It found us all in good health and excellent spirits. I had just returned from town. The houses look bad and are

scarred up by the soldiers. Murfreesboro was a nice place when we passed those few weeks here one year ago. There is scarcely a building to be seen between this place and Nashville. All are in ashes. If any person wishes to behold the horrors of war, he only has to look at the town of Murfreesboro and its surroundings. Deserters from the rebbel [sic] army come into our lines almost daily. They are hard looking customers, dirty, ragged, illfavored [sic] fellows. The uniform worn by their chaps is just like grandfather's yellow homespun coat. I would say they were originally of the same material, but they are generally painted with dirt and the sacred soil is set in the cloth with grease.

I suppose you are working away after the old stile [sic] and would like to be with you if the rascally rebbels [sic] were whipt [sic], but I know it is much better for all of the old soldiers to stand to the front, because they are more used to the climate and the rebbels [sic] to [sic]. I myself having to be one of that class (one of the old stock the boys call it). I am willing to carry my rifle and cartrige [sic] box for sometime [sic] to come. There exists a decided aristocracy among the soldiers; No. 1 old stock, no. 2 recruit, no. 3 is supposed to be several noches [sic] below and is supposed to be forced in to the service. This is the draft. I must stop now for the drums are beating for brigade drill.

Well, drill is over and I am in my tent once more. Tadoo [sic] has beat and Jim is on the bunk making all sorts of noises to amuse himself. I have just read to Jim the last paragraph. He says just tell them I send my spectacles. I was verry [sic] glad to hear Grandpa had got home once more. I wish I could see him and the rest of you to. Grandpa, I have seen the Elephant several times, sometimes he looked dreadful cross, but I fed him on a lead a while. That made him sick to his stomach and also gave him the hint to vamoose. When I was listening to your own experience in war-like service, I little thought that I would ever see contests so fearce [sic]. When you come in to line of battle and see the enemy 5 or 6 columns deep advancing on your single column and single reserve, you invaredly [sic] think some one [sic] might get hurt. Ouch, ouch, quit your pinching. And when you see men and horses piled up, you think some foolish boy has cut his finger or got the nose bleed.

My love to Grandpa, Grandma, and all the rest of you.

L. P. Warner
your son and brother

Write soon
Write sisters, write to me
(Silence)

I wonder if Leroy Droot is raising flax to make a rope for his own love sick neck or the copperhead papereens [sic].

Decherd, Tenn. Aug 17, 1863

Dear friends,

We are all well and ready to move forward, which I expect we will do in a day or two. I suppose we will move into Eastern Tennessee in order to keep the enemy from obtaining supplies of provitions [sic] from that region. There is no opposition the rebs can offer this side of Chattanooga and in all probability we will carry everything before us without much fighting until we get into Georgia. When we move against the enemy we expect to drive them, because we have never been beaten yet, they on the contrary having been beaten in every contest are broken spirited.

Great inducements are held out to vetron [sic] soldiers that reinlist [sic] or enlist for 3 years more when they have served 2 years of the former enlistment. I expect a good many of the 21st Regiment will enlist in Cavelry [sic] as soon as 2 years have expired, they think so now at least. I think I will serve out the old term of enlistment and then if war continues I will try heavy artillery or gun boat service a year or so. Our drafted men have got their discharges this morning and will be enrout for home today or tomorrow. They never amounted to a great deal anyhow. One fellow got a couple of teeth broken off by a glancing shot at Stone [sic] River and he appeared to the company a few days ago for the first time since the battle...

We are drawing bread now and it gives a little better than the hard crackers. The boys dive into the cornfield and the way the roasting ears will step out is a caution to all who wish to raise corn for bread. Some of the fields are guarded, but most of the soldiers are experienced hands at such work and know how to take advance of the times and a vigilant it must be indeed to efectively [sic] guard anything on the line of provition [sic]. The weather is some hot, but a breeze is constantly blowing and we do not suffer from it.

So ends my letter. No news to write. I think more of the news from home than all of this army display. Send it along. Send me a few lines, each of you. These are addressed to all.

My love to all,

L. P. Warner

Write some and let me hav [sic] the news

[Late 1863]

your son was wounded...
the Chicago battery by a ...
a shell thrown by the ene...
not a rebel within 200 y...
at the time your son be...
fight most gallantly...
a soldier and a brave...

Yours,
Milo Caton
21st Reg.

Chattanooga Oct 3rd, 1863

Dear Uncle Henry,

It falls to me to write to you the sad news of the death of your son Liberty. He was killed in the battle of Sunday on the 20th Sept. He died while nobly defending the old flag. He was shot in the breast and died almost instantly. I hope that you will excuse me for not writing before. I wrote one letter and I don't whether it went or not. I don't know whether this will go for some time. Two of my brothers was wounded. Jimmy was wounded in the foot pretty bad. John was wounded in the leg. They was both taken prisoners and paroled. Jimmy has been brought in and we are down to town to see if we can find him. James Burkstead was killed. Our Capt. was taken prisoner and almost all of our regt [sic] was either killed, wounded, or taken prisoner. Our comp. went into the fight with 47 men and come out with 14 men, but the enemy outnumbered us 2 to 1 and we was forced to this place. We are fortifying all the time, day and night. The rebels are in sight all the time. They have made two or three night attacks, but were repulsed.

Such a battle I never saw as the battle on Sunday. An incessant roar of artillery and musketry from 10 o'clock till after dark. We have only got one Capt. and five lieutenants in the regt [sic] right now.

William Barber

Dear Aunt,

You think hard of me for not writing before, because we was so busy and expecting an attack every hour in the day. Liberty was a good soldier, always done his duty without a word of complaint. I tell you we miss him. It is so lonesome here with the boys all gone, but we all must bear up as well as we can. George is here, but has awful sore eyes.

Dear cousins,

We all mourn with you for the loss of your brother, for he was beloved by all the company and all who knew him. There was a letter come here for him and I opened it. Well cousins, I must bring my scribbling to a close. Give my love to all. Please excuse this hasty letter, for I am in a hurry.

From your absent cousin
Wm. Barber

Chattanooga Dec 7th, 1863

Dear Uncle,

I received yours of the 18th and was glad to hear from you. I should have written before, but we was so busy that I could not find time to write. Our brigade was not in the fight, but we had to lay out in the rifle pits for a reserve and then when the battle was over we went out on a scout on Lookout Mt., but we did not find any rebs there. They thought it was time to light out. We could see the fighting from where we was. It was a splendid sight to see our boys a charging up the ridge and the rebs a playing it into our boys. It seemed as though the whole top of the ridge was on fire. The rebs fought desperate. They stuck to their guns till our boys was within 10 feet of their guns and then started to run, but found they was flanked. They had nothing else to do but to surrender. We got thirty six guns on top of the ridge, besides lots of new clothing.

Mary, I hope you will excuse me for I have sore fingers, so that it hurts to write. Next time I will write just a little one to you.

About Liberty's things. He did not have any except and [sic] overcoat, which the lieutenant sold and he said he would send the money to you. Liberty had some

accounts standing out in the regiment, but I could not find out anything about them. His clothing fell into the hands of the enemy. No more at present.

Wm. H. Barber

Dear Aunt,

I will try and answer your kind letters. I wished that I could have written before, but I could not. Better late than never as the saying is. I did not see Liberty after he was shot, but he never spoke that he was shot. I do not know whether he was buried or not. After we had been in the battle some time, he came up to me and said that he felt like "Going into them now" (meaning the rebs) and that is the last I saw of him. We got separated after the first charge. At times Liberty would appear calm and thoughtful and at others gay and happy.

The weather here is pretty cold. It snowed a very little the other day. The boats run up to this place now, so that we have a plenty in the grub line. There was a while that we was on quarter rations, but we will get plenty now. No more at present. Give my love to all.

Yours until death.

Wm. Barber