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pp.

Camp Douglas - Ill. - July 24th, 1862

Dear Nellie:

MSS.

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P322

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002224

I am at last in camp. We started from Pontiac about three o'clock A.M. and arrived in camp before noon. I am now sitting in the barracks window with my back leaning against my bunk. The infantry are drilling in front. In the centre of the camp is a splendid parade ground. The soil is sandy, so that it doesn't get very muddy when it rains. Our company have not organized yet and I don't know when it will. Some say today or tomorrow, but it is uncertain. I slept last night on the soft side of a board, with two blankets under me. I didn't sleep the night before, so I went to bed early. I had just got asleep when I was awok by the discharge of a musket, instantly followed by the drums beating to arms. I sprang out on the floor and before I got my pants on four or five more shots were fired and the boys said the secesh had broke loos. In less than three minutes the hole camp was under arms. We manned our guns and awaited orders, after firing one gun to let the rest of the boys know we were ready. The secesh had attempted to scale the fence with ladders, when they were fired on by the sentinals. One sentry shot one and bayoneted two. One of them was on top of the fence and fell over. He has not been found but the blood was traced for some distance. There was twelve or fifteen shots fired in all. I must close as we have to drill. Write to

Samuel Patton
 Mellers Battery
 Camp Douglas
 Chicago
 Ill

adieu in haste your Samuel

002224

Filson Historical

P.S. after drills.

I think I shall like camp life better than I expected. Our rations, since I have been here, consist of bread, beef and coffee, but I think I shall get along very well, as I have a good appetite. If my letter is badly written, you must take into consideration that I never could write where there was a noise, while at present I am among fifty or a hundred men, all talking and half a dozen drums beating, not more than ten steps from me. There is three or four fellows here that I knew at Chatsworth. I saw John Cley yesterday. He is with the three months men. Our guns are brass rifled six pounders. They are highly polished and in the sunshine they look splendid. There is from one to two thousand men here. When on drill, they present a strong contrast to the ragged and filthy secesh.

Write soon Samuel Patton

Camp Douglas, Ill. - August 3d, 1862

Dear Nelly

Your letter of the 30th came to hand yesterday and I assure you it came like a ray of sunshine. I had been looking for it for some days and each time I went to the post office I had come back disappointed and had finally come to the conclusion that you were sick and had not gone to Michigan. The day before I got the letter I lay down in the shadow of a tree in one corner of the camp and dreamed you was dead and life seemed dreary enough and I longed for the battle that might end my unhappy life. When I awoke, the sun was shining in my face, hot enough to make a fellow dream he was in the place the preachers talk so much about. You said you still had the heart ache. I fear you look too much at the darkest side. I am afraid it will have a bad effect on your health. You must try and employ your time some way that will keep you from being so lonesome and if you don't feel well, be shure and consult a doctor. You said you thought you would not stay long in Michigan. When you come back, stop at Chicago. Inquire for the city railroad that leads to Camp Douglas. I think it is only a short distance from the Joliet Central depot, you can ride to Camp Douglas for five cents. Some of the cars do not come all the way but you must get in one does. When you get out of the car, come to the gate (or door) and inquire for me and tell them I belong to Millers Battery and that you want to see me and they will send for me. There is a small house, or rather shanty, on purpose for the boys to meet their friends in, when you will wait til I come and I will get a pass out if I can and go down town with you, but even if I should not get one, though they are very strict with us in that respect, some of the boys that have been here two months have only been out once, except when we go swimming and then we go in squads of twenty or thirty, under the care of an officer and don't stay out

more than about half an hour at a time. I think you had better wait til you come to Chicago before you get your likeness taken and I will get mine taken then too. I have got my uniform but have not got our arms yet and I dont want to get a pass til you come, for fear I could not get one then and I shant have enny money til we are mustered in and I dont know when that will be. I have written to father and to William but have not got an answer yet. We will elect our officers when we are mustered in. I dont think Miller is fit for a Captain, as he dont know ennything about the service. If we get an opportunity we will elect another man.

Camp Douglas - August 12, 1862

Well Nellie, I have just received your letter. We have been mustered in to the service of Uncle Sam. Today we will get our bounty. Cook County gives us sixty dollars. We did not have an opportunity to vote for our officers. The boys were very much disappointed. We have a splendid company of men. There has been twenty five or thirty discharged because they were not considered stout enough. The officers say they have rejected sixty or seventy since the company was full and as they had an opportunity to select from so many it would be their own fault if they didnt get good men. I dont know how long we will stay here. One of the officers told me it might be a week and it might be a month, but we wont know til we get orders to march. We have not got our horses and side arms yet. We also expect two more guns. You had better not stay too long in Michigan. We will not know when we are going till probably a day or two before we start. When I get my money I will send you some by express to Cold Water. I think we will get it tomorrow. I want you to get a nice hat when you come to

Chicago, if you dont before that time, you inquired when the cars come to Camp Douglas. Well, they come about every twenty minutes. You wont have long to wait. I received a letter from Brockman, dated Aug. 8th. He said he had rented our house to Wm H. Jones for your board. At least he had made a bargain to that effect, but if he would not take possession for two or three weeks he has been harvesting for since we left and has not collected much yet. I have received a letter from Wm. He is well. His letter was so miserably written I could scarcely read it. I think, as you say, when we get home again we will know how to enjoy it. When you write again I wish you would say when you expect to be here so I can get a pass. Fred Calvin promised to give me one when you came and I will have to speak for it the night before. I have had the dysentary pretty bad since I have been here, but I think I have got it stopped.

Camp Douglas, Ill Sept. 2d, 1862

Well, Nellie, I received your letter yesterday and was glad to hear from you, only your letter was not long enough, but I cant complain if you had a good excuse. I wrote to Henshaw yesterday, after I got your letter and told him what I thought of him in as plain language as could be used. If you ever rent the shop and house I wish you would do so as soon as possible, but be shure and make them pay the rent promptly and make them give you a written agreement similar to that given you by Wm Henshaw and when you get Henshaw out of the shop, get Brockman to sue him for both of the notes and the rent when the last note comes due and if he doesnt want to do it get the notes and sue them yourself and go to Maguire and tell him you want them put through as fast as the law will allow and if

necessary get someone to manage the suit for you, but I don't think it will be necessary. I wish you would get someone to have the weeds out of the hedge as soon as possible, as it will not be worth much if it is not kept perfectly clean, at least the first two years. The sooner it is done the better, but don't let them dig too much around close to the roots, but just a little on top. That morning you left, I got in first rate. The company was all going out to the grove to present swords to the officers, and me and that one of our company you saw in the cars waited till they came out and jumped into the ranks and got in much sooner. After the presentation of the swords, I had to go on guard the next day, but it was my regular time. Lieut. Spencer knew it but didn't say anything about it. The rebel prisoners are to be exchanged. One thousand of them are to start South today in the company of home-guards. I believe they will send some now every day. I don't think we will stay here longer than sometime next week and perhaps we may go sooner, but it is impossible to say when. I want you to write as soon as you get this for fear we will be gone when your letter comes. I will probably get my pictures tomorrow or next day and send to you. I have never received any letter from Ben's folks and William. I should like to know his address. We have got our sabres. Our horses have been here several days. We will probably get our hats this morning. We will likely drill today for the first time with the horses. The officers say they are looking for marching orders every day and won't give us any more passes, but I don't care as I did not expect any more myself. I sent you a Times of Aug. 28th. I had a Tribune but sent it to my father as it had a rather better puff in it.

The Times claims that we gave it three hearty Cheers, but they were not given with a very good will. They were called for by a rusty old democrat of the petty persuasion. I didn't join in the Cheers and most of those that did were ashamed of it few minutes after when they thought what kind of paper they had been cheering. The fact was they were so glad to get out of camp they did not think what they were cheering about, but I must close with haste

Samuel

P.S. The rebels are forming in line to march out and I want to see them go.

Camp Douglas, Ill - Sept. 29th, 1862

Dear Nellie - Our sojourn in Camp Douglas is nearly ended. This morning we were taken out as usual on the Prairie to drill. After we got out there we were drawn up in battery ready to fire when Lieut. Spencer took a paper out of his pocket stating that he had a telegraph dispatch to read to us. You can well imagine he had our undivided attention. He then read a dispatch stating that we should hold ourselves in readiness to receive marching orders at nine o'clock tonight. As soon as he had finished reading we gave three Cheers with all our might and the next moment our guns were thundering forth a welcome to the good news. After drill we came back to camp and five or six of us were detailed for picket duty, to guard the stables, to keep some of the teamsters from deserting. I stopped two which I believe was all that attempted to get out and I guess they were only trying to get out to get a drink. I have just got back. It is now about four o'clock

The Captain has some favorites that he always trying to use a little better than any body else. Last night he made a long speech to the boys, telling them that when a vacancy occurred among the non Commissioned officers, he would fill it with those who get into the guard house conducted themselves in the most soberly manner, but he could not advance those who got into the guard house or got drunk. He said the black book would be consulted before appointing officers. Well, there was a corporal promoted to a place occupied by a sergeant and they left his place vacant and this morning he appointed a perfect whisky sop to fill his place. This morning some of the boys were talking about the appointment and I said I would as leave have him as some others that held offices, but it was amusing after what the Captain said last night about going by the black book to appoint such a fellow as him. The Captain was standing just close behind me and heard all I said, but I didnt know it when I spoke. He went out and came back in a few minutes and called me out and told me that mans name was not on the black book and he did not want me to be casting inflections on the boys, and after talking to me some time I got tired of his gaw and told him it was not that man I was casting inflections on, but that it was himself I was casting inflections on for picking such a man after what he said last night. This seemed to cut him a little and he said cared nothing about that but he did not want me to talk in that manner. I told him I had been making fun of him and I had a perfect right to say what I thought and the boys would say what they thought and no one could hinder them. He finally went off and left me, probably thinking I was a pretty impudent customer.

After he was gone I told the boys what I said to him and had a good laugh about it. This afternoon one other of the boys told him what he thought about him and told him the time was coming when he would have revenge for all he had received at his hands. This man has tried to get a pass for more than a month and in the mean time his wife had died and been buried and he could not get to see her. This was some time ago. I wont put this in the office till we are nearly ready to start and perhaps I will know more about where we are going. I dont think we will be ready to go before tomorrow night or next day morning.

Your husband
Samuel

Thursday morning Sept. 25th

Well Nellie, our destination is Louisville, Kentucky. We leave here Saturday morning. It will take us probably two days and nights to get there. I will write soon as I can after I get there. We have the promise of our back pay before we leave, but I dont think we will get it. If we do we wont get any more very soon. There will be only one months pay coming to me if they count what I have received. That is the monthly pay I received in advance, or rather that I was to receive, but did not till two months after. The home guard are expecting to be paid off this week. I saw John Celer yesterday evening. He has been up north and just got back. He says that Blacksmith up there wont come unless he can get the shop for at least a year and I told him I wouldnt rent it for that length of time. If I get a months wages I will send you part of it, that is if they pay me more than three dollars and if they only pay me three dollars, they will

send you ten, but I dont think they will pay us now. At any rate you must try and have some so you can get what you want when you are sick. You must write to me often and let me know how you get along. If you board with thair I want you to have that bedroom down stairs and if you cant get it I would not board there. If Brooks gets the best chance he will think about you and has impudence enough to say almost anything to a woman if he thinks he dare. I wish he was not going to board there, but if you work it wright you can keep him at a respectable distance. When you get sick, if you cant write you must get some one to write for you, as I shall be anxious to hear from you and it will take a letter some time to reach me, but I must stop as I hear the bugle.

Samuel

Friday afternoon, I have not much time to write. We leave camp tomorrow morning at seven o'clock. We go to Michigan City and from there, by way of Indianapolis to Louisville. The Captain said last night at roll call that it would take about twenty four hours to go. We will likely get all loaded ready to start by ten or eleven o'clock. I saw John Martin here about a few minutes ago. He said he left Chatsworth last night. He is trying to join this company, the Illinois 65th regiment that was taken at Harpers Ferry by the Rebels and paroled. Hes just arrived here. In haste, your Samuel

Franklin, Tenn - March 31st, 1863

Dear Nellie

April is near at hand and we are still here. They are still at work on the fort. Some of the boys say that Gen. Granger said that it would take a year to finish it as it should be. The works are to be covered with sods and all the trees inside grubbed up. On the side next the creek there is so many rocks that they will have to have dirt to fix it. There was a car load of wheel barrows left here a few days ago. I should hate to use them when the weather gets hot, but artillery men dont often have to do such work. When finished the fort would be a pretty strong place if there was not a hill about a mile distant that overlooks it. This hill would be a nice place to shell the fort from and I think it may be used for that purpose some time if it is not fortified and garrisoned. For some time they have been inspecting the army, one company at a time. We was inspected last Saturday. The guns that we had when we came here were taken and put in the fort and we got 3 inch Rodman (four) and two twelve pounder Napoleon guns in their place. The reason assigned by Gen. Granger for doing so was that the James ammunition would not stand knocking around as well as what we have now. We had a few days previous returned a lot of shot and shell that had been damaged by carrying around so much. We have not tried the guns we have now, but expect to have an opportunity to shoot at a mark to ascertain their range. If they shoot as well as those we had we will be satisfied. The other day they were trying the guns in the fort and our old guns beat the 24 pdrs which are also rifled. Gen. Granger elevated the 24 pdrs to their utmost range and shot at a tree a considerable distance beyond the town, perhaps two miles or more, but the shot fell short, striking the ground before it reached the tree. He then tried one of our old ones and it shot clear over the tree. He then fired a shot at an old barn, about a mile and a half distant and missed it, the shell exploding a short distance from the building. One of our gunners then shot at it with the same gun and hit it in the centre.

After noon we had to go out to drill and I had to stop writing. If we don't soon make a forward movement I shall begin to despair of anything being done this summer, unless the rebels attack us. Some of the boys just now came from the 78th Illinois regiment and say that regiment was ordered to work on the intrenchments this morning and then the order was countermanded. It is reported that there will be nothing more done till Gen. Rosecrans comes. I cannot imagine what it is for. It certainly is not possible we are going to retreat. I may possibly find out more about it before I close this letter. There was one brigade left here a few days before. I don't know where they are gone, but they went in the direction of Nashville. This leaves us here with less than seven thousand men and one battery besides ours. A few days will probably unravel the mystery of the work being stopped on the fort. I have just been up to the fort. Those guns of ours that were put there have been sent away this afternoon. The remnant of the 85th Indiana regiment that was detailed to work them are still there. One of them told me that he heard that the guns had been sent to Murphysborough. He said that there was nothing done yesterday and that a few men went to work this morning, but were ordered to quit. It looks to me as though we were going to evacuate. If we were going forward the work I think would not have been stopped, but one thing I think is certain and that is there is not much prospect of a fight here if the enemy does come. The General must intend to retreat. It was reported in camp about ten or twelve days ago that Gen. Kranger said that we would get intelligence from Washington in about ten days that would gladden all of the soldiers hearts, but it has not come yet. I have not received any letter from you for some time, but perhaps your last one was gobbled up on the Nashville and Louisville Rail Road when the rebels took the train. It is said they got the soldiers mail.

April 1st. three o'clock P.M. - We had a regular officer to drill us today. He is the best I have seen. He put us through for about four hours, drilling us on the double quick. If we had been in battle he could not have

worked us much harder. It was, limer fire, limer up, change front, unlimber fire, limer up forward. He would form us in a column, start us at full gallop and order us to form in line, without any of the pieces coming to a halt. This he did in every manner that a line could be formed. Each time we had to unlimber and go through the motion of loading and firing after the line had been formed. He was evidently trying us to see what we could do when put to our best. He cursed some of the postillions at first, in pretty round terms, but did not find any fault at all with the cannoniers. He said after he got through that it was one of the best drilled Batteries he ever saw. The one most of our proficiency in drill to our second Lieutenant, one of whom formerly belonged to the Taylor's Battery and the other to Smith's Battery. Burton and Flusky are their names. Burton is the best. He has learned us a great deal on the manual of the Piece. Spencer has generally drilled us when we went out to drill with the horses, but I noticed that he introduced a number of reforms after Lieut. Burton came. They are not doing much on the fort today. There was a few men at work awhile this fore noon. I was up there since noon. I came away about two o'clock, but I think they had quit as I did not see any thing of them then.

April 2nd - Have just received your letter of March 21st. The reason I wanted a whole row of gooseberry bushes was because they would look better. I had thought of putting some raspberries across the east end of the garden. Would not like dwarf trees in the yard. I would rather have trees that would make a shade. I don't know whether to put a summer house in the yard or make a round pyramid and have it planted with flowers. It will be time enough to decide when I get home. I think the grape vine will make a good summer house as it will be in a more suitable place and better shaded than the place I marked.

After dark April 2nd - Some of the boys are playing cards and as we have an extra candle I thought I would take my share of light from it. I do not gamble. When I lose what little sense I have got perhaps I shall

commence, but I don't expect to before then, but Nellie, while I think of it, I wish you would send the deeds of our lots to Pontiac and get them recorded as soon as possible, as they are entire worthless to us until they are recorded. It will cost about two dollars, one dollar for each deed. Brockway or Maguire can tell you who to send them to. If they are not recorded the Company could sell the lots to someone else and if they got their deeds recorded first they could hold the lots in spite of us. They have commenced work on the fort again today. Gen. Gilbert started away this evening in the direction of Murphysborough. His body guard took two days rations with them. I don't think there would be many tears shed if he never should come back. The boys that were detailed from our battery from the 78th Dec. say that when Morgan was in Kentucky last winter Gilbert ordered them to attack Morgan who had five times as many men as they had and then he went to Louisville himself. A good story is told of him and one of Col. Frip's men. The regiment had their arms stacked and the man was guarding them when Gilbert came walking along and there was a calf walking a short distance ahead of him, when Gilbert came along the guard took no notice of him. When he turned around and asked the guard why he didn't salute him, "salute you" said the guard, who the hell are you? I am Gen. Gilbert sir, replied Gilbert, the old traitor, looking as savage as a meat axe. Oh! you are Gilbert are you? I thought it was an old butcher driving that calf along, said the guard and turning he walked his beat, taking no more notice of the old poop. Soldiers not under his command do not pretend to show him any respect and always insult him when they think they can do it with impunity. The Cavalry bring in some prisoners every day. They bring in thirty today. When I got your letter today, I thought it felt like there was a daguerotype in it and I opened it expecting to see

a picture of you and Minnie and you can imagine my disappointment when I found now but then you know I have got yours and I will wait patiently till we get paid and you can get an opportunity to get it taken. I was on guard last night and there was a brass band playing in the fort. It was just far enough away to sound well. It was a pleasant moon light night and the time of course passed pleasantly while they were playing. The band belongs to the 33rd Indiana Regiment. We have no brass band in our brigade Morning April 3rd. That fellow that married Mrs. Martin had the impudence to write to John about it. He gave me the letter to read this morning. The impudent scoundrel commences the letter with "Dear Friend". The letter covers a sheet of commercial note paper and is written as though they were on the best of terms and concludes with offering to attend to some of John's business in regard to his country. It is the coolest piece of impudence I ever saw. The fellow's name is Mathew Fading. I think John intends to kill him if he ever gets back to Chataworth. I think Fading is a natural fool. John sends his best regards to Barnum and all his folks. There was an order from Gen. Rosecrans read at roll call last night, stating that he had not been officially informed of the law for granting furloughs to soldiers and until he was he could not sign any except in cases of pressing necessity, when severe hardship would result from not getting out. I have not much time to write more as it is nearly time for drill. If you can get the hedge fixed do not allow part of the plants to grow taller than the rest. If they do, cut them off even, or rather, get it done and be sure and have the weeds kept out, as they wont do well unless kept clean. You had better let the trees go. Perhaps I will be home to plant them next spring. So good bye Nellie for the present. Write as often as you can and

Send long letters. Nothing does me as good as
a good long letter. From your husband
Samuel Patton

Franklin, Tenn - May 2d, 1863

Dear Nellie

The second anniversary of our marriage has passed. Two years, it does not seem so long. It actually seems longer since I enlisted than it does since we were married. It seems as though it were but yesterday we spoke the vows that united us for life, but what an interminable length of time seems to have elapsed since I tore myself away from all that made life happy, but if our national honor can be vindicated and our distracted country restored once more to peace and prosperity, we cannot regret the sacrifice we have made to secure it. Last evening the brass band of 33rd Indiana played some splendid pieces. It is one of the best brass bands I ever heard and I have heard some pretty good ones. In conclusion they played "Sweet Home" with the most touching pathos I ever heard. While they were playing I thought of their thinned ranks, their noble conduct at Thompsons Station when cowardice and treachery left them to contend with overwhelming numbers, of the half buried dead and upturned faces with their eyes torn out by bayonets as they appeared when we passed over the field a short time after the fight. You said in your last letter that you felt sad and lonesome and seemed to always carry a shadow around with you. You must try and not give way to such feelings. The more you do so, the worse they will haunt you. I know it is hard. I often feel so, but it will not do. I would be as glad to go home as you possibly could be to have me. I cant help getting homesick at times, but I find it

wont do to yield to the feeling. If I did I would be perfectly miserable all the time. If I could get a furlough I would go home, but that is impossible at present. I still have a faint hope that something will be done soon that will cause the rebels to feel the weight of Uncle Sam's heel, but it seems almost like hoping against hope. The North is strongest and the last dollar and the last man will win, but I would like to see it settled before it comes to that. It is almost hot enough here now to roast a northern man and what will it be a month from now. There is as yet no indication of anything being done here.

Franklin, Tenn - May 6th, 1863

Dear Nellie

We are ordered forward at last. It is getting daylight. We leave in a few minutes. The teams are hitching up. Enclosed I send twenty dollars, which makes seventy I have sent. I had a letter from William yesterday. He's well and has got six months pay. I will write as soon as I have an opportunity.
Good bye

Samuel

Franklin, Tenn, May 8th, 1863

Dear Nellie

I suppose you will open your eyes when you see this dated at Franklin, that is. If you got my last letter stating that we were ordered forward, well, that morning we got orders a little after twelve o'clock to pack up every thing and be ready to move forward at four o'clock. We all

thought we were going for good, but when we started we found it was only our division that was moving; but thinking we were merely the advance and that the rest would soon follow. We moved on in good spirits, when about a mile and a half out we saw troops and baggage wagons moving forward on another road. This seemed to confirm our previous opinion particularly as there was a large ammunition train with us. Soon after, however, the head of the column turned to the left through a strip of woods and we of course followed. This movement puzzled us all, officers as well as men, but imagine our chagrin and disappointment when the infantry were ordered to stack their guns and we to park ours. I need not say that this movement elicited curses, not very loud, but awful deep. It had been raining all morning and this did not diminish in the least the ill humor of the boys. We got our dog tents up, peeled some bark for a floor and were soon making ourselves as comfortable as our disappointment would admit of. Our present position is one of the most abominable that could have been selected for fighting, though it makes a pleasant camp ground. If the enemy should attack us they would have all the advantage they could desire. It is rumored that we are going back to camp in a few days. The main part of the force are where they have been heretofore, what is the meaning of this movement I cannot tell, but the boys say (with contemptuous curl of the lip) that it is strategy. We heard yesterday that a desperate battle had been fought in Virginia and that Hooker had defeated Lee and then it was partly contradicted. We have nothing reliable yet on which to base an opinion, but await further news with intense anxiety. We will probably hear in a day or two if he succeeds in capturing Gen. Lee's army. It will be a severe blow to the rebellion, but I dare

not hope, it is too good news to be true. I will write again in a few days, when perhaps I will have more to write about, when certainty, either good or bad, will take the place of suspense.
Your Samuel

Franklin, Tenn - May 10, 1863
(Letter to Brother-in-Law)

Well, Sam, I received your letter a few days ago, but have been unable to find time to answer it till now. You stated that you had got your pay and did not know what to do with it. I can easily tell you what I would do with it, if I was in your place. I would try and secure that other forty acres of land. You can probably get it as easily now as any other time and I think you should strain every nerve to get it while you can and then you won't be fooling away your money, but will have something to show for the time you have spent eating hard tack. I think you was very foolish for giving Ben money to buy a steer to mate old Bright. You should have known him better, but still I can't imagine what you want with a yoke of cattle, while you are in the army. We received six months pay a short time ago. I have sent seventy dollars home in letters. When Nellie wrote last, she had received thirty of it. I sent twenty or ten dollars at a time. I wrote her not to lend any of it. A man might as well give money away as lend it on the Prairie. Your kind offer to send me some money was fully appreciated, but I have got my pay. I of course do not need it. The army here is doing nothing, but cutting down timber and digging fortifications. You said in your letter that you wished you was in our Battery. I think you are better where you are, as I think we may have some hot work to do this summer. Nellie stated in her letter that she had received the twenty dollars you sent home in a letter. We get the Lewisville papers here next day after they are printed. Cincinnati papers two and Chicago papers three days after they are printed. The news from the Rappahannock has been rather unfavorable for a couple of days, but a telegraph dispatch received at Gen. Granger's head quarters here today states that "Richmond is taken", but this news is too good to be true. Write often to your friends and brother
Samuel Patton

Franklin, Tenn. May 12th, 1863

Dear Nellie,

We are again in our old camp and have been here several days. It is nearly sundown. It is too hot in the middle of the day to write or do any thing else with any kind of comfort. I am sitting under a peach tree on an ammunition box. There is a great many large peach trees here. They all are loaded with fruit about as large as the end of my thumb. They are growing verry fast. I went into that garden I told you about in a previous letter to get some gooseberries yesterday. There is a gard in it now. He ordered me to leave, but being some distance off, I of course did not hear him, but kept on picking as fast as I could, till he came up, when I had to leave, but I managed to get enough for a taste. I cooked them in a tin cup and sweetened them and (whether you believe it or not) I tell you they did not taste verry bad. The gard told me his orders were not to let any one into the garden without permission from the owner. It is my opinion that the man who owns it is one of those persons who wish to keep on the right side of both parties. Such persons remind me of the fellow who, wishing to cross a dangerous foot bridge, prayed to the "Good Lord" that he might get over safe and then as he placed his foot on the bridge exclaimed "the Devil aint a verry bad man either." We have heard nothing of a decisive character since wrote last. The accounts from Hookers army I think are favorable. We heard he had been defeated and then a telegraph dispatch of a different character was received at head quarters and we were told that they "had received good news from Gen. Hooker", but next day the papers gave a confirmme account of his defeat and retreat across the Rapahanoc. Then a telegraph dispatch received at head quarters Sunday the tenth a.m. stated that "Richmond was taken". The papers next day also announced that the "National Flag was floating over the Rebel Capital", but the papers today say nothing

further about it, so we still remain in uncertainty, tho I am inclined to believe it, as we had an army within a days march of the place and most of the rebels available fore were undoubtedly either fighting Gen. Hooker or marching to reinforce Lee, and if such was the case, Richmond would not be very hard to take, but at any rate, Gen. Lee must be in a bad fix, with his communication cut off from Richmond and Hooker pressing him in front as last accounts state he is, but you will probably know by the time you get this and I will probably know about as soon as you do, but the ball is in motion and I look forward with hope.

Morning May 13th - As twilight faded into darkness last evening I quit writing, but now resume the pen to finish my letter. We went over to town yesterday morning to get some boards to make bunks of, as we had lost those we had, by moving out. While over in town, John Martin and me climbed in at the window of a deserted mansion and helped our selves to a lot of books and magazines, which we found there, so we will have plenty of reading matter for a while. We can get Chicago papers here two or three days after they are printed. They cost ten cents apiece. There was four 8 inch howitzers came here last week. They are intended for shooting shell and cannister. I believe they are expecting four Parrot siege guns this week. The parrot guns are rifled and are considered the best for long range shooting. Three of them and one of the howitzers I believe are to be placed on a high hill on our left. The train has arrived. The news is still provoking by contradictory, but I still hope for the best. I shall soon begin to look for those pictures of you and Minnie. I received a letter from father a few days ago. They are well. They complain of your never answering their letters. Caroline wrote some time ago. She said she had never heard from you since they sent Fathers likeness and did not know whether you had received it or not, but I must close my letter, so good bye for the present.

your husband,
Samuel Patton

Franklin, Tenn - May 17th, 1863

Dear Nellie

I received a good long letter from you yesterday. I received one from Wm day before. He was well. I got it next day after it was written. Gen Granger has ordered sixty families to leave Franklin and go south of our lines. They will have to go within a day or two. He is blowing up the foundation of some large brick building along the river next to our camp. They come down with a crash. I think it is his intention to burn the town, if the rebels attack us again. It is said Gen Rosecrans has men at work on fortifications all along the line since Gen Hooker's defeat in Virginia. Much as they attempt to smooth it over, Hooker evidently got soundly thrashed. When did you ever hear of a defeat in Virginia that was not at first reported as a great victory. The rebels may mass their forces and make an attack on "the Dog Rosecrans"; but if they do, I think they will find he is a good Purp to fight. The batteries were all out shooting at a target yesterday. The 9th Ohio has been boasted of by a great many, as the best there was here, Gilbert and his staff doing all they could to discredit ours before they had ever seen us fire a shot. The chief of Gilbert's staff told the Captain of the 18th Ohio Battery that our Battery was not worth anything, but shot all over creation and could not hit anything. The 9th and 18th have been out shooting a few days ago but I don't know what kind of shooting they done, as I was not there to see. Yesterday the 9th Ohio first fired two rounds at the target which was about three quarters of a mile distant, and then moved out and let us take their place. Some fellows who were looking on said "all the good shooting has been done now, but then the 9th Ohio has been out the longest, and ought to be the best," but Gen. Granger evidently did not think it very good, if we could judge anything by his looks. Our first round mad the group of officers who were looking on, grin and

when we fired our second round Gen. Granger and his staff claped their hands and chered us. The shells bursting at and taring up the ground all around the target. Crew Gilbert joined in the applause. Gen. Granger said "give me the first Illinois yet." Our Battery is generally called the first Illinois here, as our guidon is marked 1st. Ill. and the batteries from other states are not lettered in Regiments as those from Illinois, but are merely numbered, which is a great deal more convenient. The 18th Ohio fired two rounds after we got through. They did better than the 9th, but not so good as our battery. I will have to quit writing for the present as there is a large pile on the plac I am sitting on and it dont feel very good. I am glad the warm weather makes "Minnie" grow. If it was as warm there as it is here perhaps she would grow as fast as the fellow vines that grew so fast he could hear them creeping along the ground

Your Samuel

Truine, Tenn - June 2d, 1863

Dear Nellie

It is getting dark and I have no candle, so I cant write much. We are camped here for the night. We go forward in the morning. Nearly all the force that was at Franklin is with us, besides those that were here. Rosecrans is evidently massing his forces. We will probably move on Shelbyville ~~like this morning~~ immediately. It is reported that we are to stay on the Shelbyville pike tomorrow morning. It is getting too dark to write, so good bye for the present

Your husband

Samuel Patton

Trinne, Tenn - June 18, 1863

Dear Nellie

We are still here and I dont think we will leave till Vicksburgh is taken. Grant seems to have a tough job there, but I think he is equal to it. Will, Nellie, we are no longer under old Gilbert. He has left at last, and is now a Captain in the 10th regulars. He has lost his Stars and is now only a Captain. In future, when he marches, instead of riding with about thirty cavalry men at his heels, he will have to walk. His Chief of Staff (the scamp that ordered me to be tied up for killing a hog at Spring Hill) is sent to Nashville, under arrest for forgery. You need not think these facts please me at all. I dont think either of them have counted the tears that were shed for them when they departed. We are now in Gen. Bairds Division of Gen. Rosecrans reserve Corps. The Corps is under Gen. Gordon Grangers command. William will be in the 3rd Division of this Corps, I understand that the 129th has been ordered to Laverne, but I fear it will be very difficult for me to get to see him, as they wont be inside of our pickets. Laverne, I believe, is about four miles from here. I have not felt very well for several days, but feel better this morning. It is reported that the rebels Gen. Forest was killed at Spring Hill a few days ago. It was reported that he was moving on this place with a large force of cavalry, mounted infantry and artillery. Some deserters who left before he was killed state that his men had eight days rations and when they stoped at Spring Hill he told them that he was going to take this place. There was eleven Regiments of cavalry reviewed here yesterday. I wish the war was over and I was back home again. The time was when I think soldiering would have suited me very well, but now, when I have a home and such a home as I have (or once had) but from which I am now an exile, I cannot help longing for the day

when we will meet again. When I look at the slow progress of the war and the chances of getting home before the expiration of my term of my enlistment and the possibility (if not probability) of never getting home at all, my heart almost sinks at the prospect. Still, events may take such a turn this summer that we may get home next winter or next spring, but we cannot read the future and must wait for the time to make its own revelations, but I dont feel any worse about it than I expected to when I left home. When I enlisted I had weighed well the consequences of the step I was taking. I foresaw the weary hours I must pass before I could enjoy the home, then so dear to me, but I thought of the fearful consequences that must follow if this cursed rebellion should be allowed to succeed. When I enlisted you know it was the most gloomy hour of our National existence. Our armies had been driven back, and the Presidents call for "three hundred thousand more" men seemed to fall unheeded upon the ears of the nation, it seemed as if the light of patriotism was fast fading away. I looked at the gloomy prospect and thought that whatever others might do, I could not stand and idle spectator of my Country's ruin, but Nellie, it requires but little courage to face the shot and shell of the enemy, compared with what it requires for me to tear myself away from all that was dear to me on earth, but the people at last seemed to wake from their lethargy and the call for more men was made with a response worthy of the American people and now I think the rebellion is slowly, but I hope, shurely sinking under the weight of Uncle Sam's heel. I received your letter of June 7th a few days ago. William Jones has never answered my letter, I have written to several persons, but all, or nearly all of them seem to have forgotten to answer them, but I dont want any one to write me if they dont want to. Afternoon - Well, I did not get my letter done in time for the mail and so must keep it until

tomorrow. Perhaps you would like to know the reason, well it was this. I saw a cow a short distance off and taking my tin cup and some salt, I started in pursuit of some milk, but I soon found that game was played out. She would smell at the salt and then go away. The fact was she had seen too many soldiers and been salted too often and consequently had no relish for salt, but I was not going to give it up that way. I tried to get her to stand still, but she would do no such thing, but kept walking around picking up a mouthful of grass wherever it suited her best, so I walked along side of her and when she stopped to take a bite I would milk a stream or two. After following the old cow around in this manner for about an hour I got my cup nearly full of milk, when unluckily for me I held on to the teat a little too long when she was going to step and got more than half of my milk spilled, but you know I am not in the habit of giving up for trifles, so I kept on as before, only I was considerably more careful how I held my cup and at last got it full of milk. We had rice for dinner and as I told you once before, we scarcely ever eat it, but today I mixed mine with milk and put a little sugar in it. Well, I shant undertake to tell you how good it was, as language never was framed to describe the satisfaction adequately I experienced in eating it. Perhaps I acted the hog a little and possibly more than a little, at any rate, when I quit I did not feel as though I could eat any more. I believe I have not tasted milk before in nine or ten months. I dont know as I used to think when at home that rice and milk was so good, but circumstances alter cases. When you write direct to

Battery M -
First Ill. Art. 2d Brigade, 1st Division
Reserve Corps
Army of the Cumberland

Shelbyville, Tenn - July 13th, 1863

Dear Nellie

We got along first rate since we came here. We get fresh bread most of the time. We can get good fresh butter for from twenty to thirty cts. per pound. There is no end to the black berries, which we have abundant time to pick. Milk is still pretty dear, being twenty cts. per quart. Pies sell at fifteen cts. apiece. When the rebels were here, pies sold at three dollars apiece. The extraordinary cheapness of provisions has played sad havoc with my postage stamps, but I suppose we will be paid soon again, but if we dont, I dont care, as I can get along very well and if I have no money to spend now I will have more when I get home, which I hope will be no very distant day. I may not get home this fall, but I feel very confident that I will be home before next spring. The war matters seem to be progressing now, if Gen Mead succeeds in capturing the rebel army where he has got them now, it will virtually end the war in a month afterward. I dont think any of the leaders of the rebellion can be found in the country. The last account we had from Gen Mead's Army stated that he had taken thirty thousand prisoners and cut off the retreat of the rebel army, and also that the potomac was very high and Lee had no bridges to take his army across on. Gen Rosecrans is waiting for supplies to come up when, I suppose he will again commence offensive operations, tho I dont think he will advance any farther than Chattanooga, till Gen Grants and Banks bring up their line to the western boundary of Georgia. Gen Rosecrans is at present collecting all the horses he can get to mount his infantry on. From all appearances the war is going to be brought

to a close before another year has commenced. I think next New Years day will find the stars and stripes waving over our entire country and the "Southern Confederacy" be a thing of the past.

July 15th - Nellie, when I commenced writing this letter, I had a counter to write on, but have no longer any such convenience, as we are now camped on the bank of Duck River, about half or three qtrs. of a mile from town. Yesterday I went out and got a lot of apples and brought them in and sold them for 80 cts, but I find I cant get stamps, even if I have money, as there is none to get, but I got a lb. of butter for twenty five cents, a quart of sweet milk for ten cts and half a dozen apples, dumplings which cost me ten cents more. I had some Shugar with which I mad "dip" of the milk and had a splendid dinner. The rebels had a brick oven in a building in the rear of the one we occupied and when they left they had not time to tare it down, so our cook used it to bake pies and dumplings in and that is the way we got our dumplings, but we must do without them now, or get them of the citizens, but they are getting to sell them more reasonable. Yesterday I saw half pies (turnovers) sold for five cents apiece. I suppose they thought it pretty hard to come down from secesh prices to those they sell things for now but there is only occasionally one who will tak rebel money at all and they tak it only at an emense discount. Since we have been here the Marshall's office has been thronged with citizens and deserters from the rebel Army, anxious to take the oath of alligence Over four hundred took the oath on Saturday and sties they come. At one time twenty five rebel deserters with the Captain of their company rode into town and took the oath (Congress from Tenn. members, Mr. Gentry, a member of the rebel

a rebel, has taken the oath of alligence here.) though it is fair to presume that it will not be taken with such alacrity through out the entire state, but the strongest secesh cant long fail to see that the rebellion is about played out, and will join the strongest side for the sake of saving their property. I dont think it will be a great while before Tenn. makes an attempt to get back into the Union. There is a report that Louisiana has asked to be permitted to come back, but the news needs confirmation, but if Gen. Mead captures Gen. Lee's Army it will be only madness for them to fight any longer and even if he only drives them back it will be but giving treason one more breath, as its end I think is ashuredly drawing near. It is said that Bragg in his retreat from here kept most of the Tenn. troops in his front, to keep them from deserting, but many of them even then escaped, Rebel soldiers that wont take the oath, but prefer imprisonment, say that if left to a vote of the people, this difficulty would soon be ended. It is reported that since the surrender of Vicksburgh on the ninth, Gen. Grant has sent a part of his force in pursuit of Gen. Johnson. When Port Hudson is taken, there will be troops enough in the southwest to "lick up the Southern Confederacy like salt," as Grant says about Johnson. If you get that curtain I sent you, out of Gen. Bragg's carriage, I want you to let me know. Those things you were going to send me by Law, I dont think will ever reach me, as I understand that the 3rd Division is still in Nashville and wont be likely to be much nearer than it is now, at least very soon. I was sorry to learn that William was sick but I hope it is nothing very serious. I hope neither of us will have to stay in the army much longer. O how I long for the time when we will all meet once more, when I can see my Nellie once more and see my Minnie for the first time. It is now nearly a year since I enlisted. Lacks only

a couple of days. What a long weary year it has been, but the future looks bright and the happy day may be even nearer than we anticipate, when we can enjoy our home once more, but I must bring my letter to a close, hoping that through the blessing of God we may all enjoy good health.

Your husband Samuel Patton

Shelbyville, Tenn - July 22^d, 1863

Dear Nellie

We are still camped where we were when I wrote last, on the banks of the Duck River, except that we have moved our tents a short distance from where they were, into a more shady place. Our camp is on a grassy ridge, a short distance from the river and is a very pleasant locality. The place where we first put our tents was not as nice as where they are now, besides being exposed to the sun most of the day. We can go in swimming whenever we choose, go picking black berries and then cook and eat them when we get back, lay down in the grass in the shade, or sit on the pile of corn sacks and discuss the probabilities of getting home soon. In fact we have about the best times we have had since we have been in the service, to the enjoyment of which the prospect of getting home soon adds not a little. We get fresh bread from the bakers every day, but beyond this I can't boast much of government rations, as we are furnished with pork and beans captured from the rebels. The beans taste musty and the pork is alive, though it has went through the process of being salted and smoked. Yesterday we had secesh coffee, but the boys would not drink it. It is ground

and it is probably made of burned Peas, or some such trash, but as long as we can get good bread we can get along, as there is plenty of black berries, and the People begin to bring in ripe apples, which they sell very reasonable and peaches will soon be ripe, so, as long as we have a little money of our own we can get along first rate, at any rate I don't feel disposed to grumble, if I can only get good bread and butter, even if I have to buy the butter myself. I received three ledgers a few days ago, which you sent me. I have got the two letters from you since I came back here, one dated June 18th and the other June 28th. The mail comes here now regular every day. The sutlers don't have as good a time here now as they used to when they could charge their own price for everything. It does me good to see these miserable, unprincipled "Army Beeches" whose only ambition was to get the soldiers money from him by extortion, standing around their deserted tents. Their "long faces" constituting the greater part of their stature and their lower jaws almost dragging on the ground. It does any of the boys as much good to steal from one of them as it would from a secesh. Yesterday one of our boys was buying some eggs from a citizen who wanted twenty cts. a dozen for them and told him they had been selling for fifteen cts. A sutler who was standing near remarked that he need not grumble at twenty cts. as he had seen him pay forty cts. a dozen for them. Yes, replied the soldier, when I had to buy them of you, and two thirds of them were rotten at that. He then invited the sutler to attend to his own business adding a few remarks not very complimentary to the character and patriotism of "Army Beeches". The sutler had no more to say about the price of eggs. When you write again I would like to know where William is. I have lost track of him all together. The last I heard from his Regiment was

before the army moved and I don't know where it is now. I have not seen or heard anything of it on the march, though I suppose it is in the third Division of this Corps. I don't know what Brigade it belongs to and the Brigades of the same Division may be stationed a long distance apart. They are raising Nigger troops here. I understand they have got between one and two hundred enlisted. It seems that Gen. Lee is getting back towards Richmond and Gen. Meade is on his track. Though Gen. Meade's victory is not as complete as at first reported I think Lee has got the worst of the fight. He has at least been foiled in his plans of invading the North. It is rumored that Charleston is taken. If this is true the rebellion is certainly on its "last legs" but even if it is not, since the fall of Vicksburg and Port Hudson and the demoralization of Bragg's army and its retreat or rather flight from Tenn. the immense armies now at liberty to move forward in the west can soon wipe out both Charleston and Mobile when there would be nothing to prevent their march on Richmond and if the Armies of the Nation were assembled around that nest of treason, a single volley from the Artillery alone would sweep it out of existence and if the Infantry and Cavalry were permitted to empty their cartridge boxes on the place where it stood, it would be buried beneath a pile of lead. The war cannot last much longer, when the large rebel Armies are whipped. They may break up into guerrilla parties, but our Infantry will be mounted and the rascals hunted down like murderers and receive no quarter when taken and when they find that death is the penalty for bush wacking they will be glad to return to their homes and ask protection from the government. They have tried so long and so hard to overthrow, but the majority will not go that far, but when they find their cause grown desperate they will hasten to

return to their allegiance for the purpose of saving their property. The leaders, I think will leave the country unless the government by a Criminal clemency offers them pardon and I think it would not only be criminal but unwise as it would be only offering a premium to future Conspirators who would think that they might also deluge the land with blood, enrich themselves and when they could no longer pursue their wicked course receive pardon from the government and sit down and enjoy their ill gotten wealth, unmolested. I dislike Seward's policy, I think it short sighted and foolish. I would say fight them! fight them!! fight them!!! Keep fighting them, "tread the wine press if need be till the traitors' blood flows, even to the horses' bridles"

Afternoon 22d - Well, I have just had a good dose of bread and milk. Unfortunately I happened not to have any black berries, but I did very well as it was. Perhaps you would like to know where I got it, as my money is very scarce and I believe I told you that an order had been read to us when we came here, stating that if any one was caught foraging here, he should be shot. Well, this evening I was taking a walk, when I discovered a lot of cows out towards the pickets and out of sight of the camp and met an Infantry fellow with a canteen full of milk. I did not ask him any questions and he did not tell me any lies, but I turned about and went back to camp and got my canteen. There was a fellow named James Rollins laying in a tent next to mine, asleep. Rollins had went with me from Pontiac and enlisted when I did. I went over to his tent, gave him a kick and told him to get up and go along with me. He asked me where I was going. I told him it was none of his business, but pointed to his canteen and asked if that was his. The fellow who was in the tent with him looked up but said nothing, probably thinking it was none of his business

either, Rollins got up, took his canteen and followed a short distance behind me, til we got over the hill, when I told him what I had found. We then went along til we came to the cows, where we found a couple more fellows on the same errand. We selected a cow and one of us watched for Citizens Officers and Niggers, while the other milked. As soon as we got our canteens filled, we went down to the river and held them in the water til the milk got cold, when we returned to camp without being discovered. There is not much danger of privates reporting on each other, as it is considered the meanest business they can engage in and by doing so, even if so disposed, they will get the ill will of all their comrades, but Niggers will blab for the sake of gaining favor with the officers. One of them once reported three of our boys for stealing hay from Gen. Gilbert and got them tied up to a tree one night in the rain. The same Nigger one dark night, not long after dragged himself out of a mud hole, complaining of a sore head and bruised shins. I wish the black whelps were all in Africa once more. They will be a curse to our country as long as they are in it, whether free or in slavery, but if they must stay it would be better for us to keep them as they were, but as that is impossible without imprinting a stain on the Nation that can never be eradicated, I say, get rid of them, send them off as fast as possible, no matter what it costs. It will be cheap at almost any price. I go for sending every man, woman and child out of the country who has a drop of Nigger blood in their veins, whether they want to go or not. As far as freeing Niggers is concerned, I would not place myself as a target to be shot at one moment to free all the Niggers on earth.

I would make an effort to get rid of them as I would to get rid of Lice or any kind of vermine Not because I love them, but because I

consider them a nuisance and want to get rid of them. We have just heard that nearly all of Morgans force has been captured and also a rumor that Morgan himself was captured while attempting to make his escape disguised as a cooper. I hope it is true, as he has been a hard customer. I think it is about time for me to get another letter from you. I am anxious to know how Nannie gets along. As you said, she had been sick when you wrote last. Write often. Time passes more pleasantly when I get letters from you frequently. The confiscation act is being enforced here with relentless vigor.

Your Husband - Samuel Patton

Shelbyville, Tenn. August 2d, 1863

Dear Nellie

The paymaster has got around one more, as you will see by the contents of this letter. Enclosed I send ten dollars. We have been paid for two months. I received your letter of July 19th a few days ago. I also got one from Thayer, dated about the same time. I have answered his letter. I wrote to him about getting those tyles for the cellar drain before the roads get muddy this fall. I dont want to have it put down til I get back and then I can see to it. I want to have it done to suit me when it is done. I intent to try and fix the joints out side of the garden, so they wont leak and let water in from the out side. If it does I dont think it will carry all the water off and will keep the cellar wet part of the time. I did not say anything to Thayer about what he owes us. I dont like to ask people for money when they know I dont need it. I dont want you to ask him for it unless you need it. He is hard up and dont like to be dunned any better than I used to. He used to pay verry well and more than once has discommoded himself to accomodate me. Look how long I kept Brockway out of his pay when he knew I was paying money to

other people. You might get his note if you like, leaving out one dollar, which is due on the tye, which I owed Law and which I am to pay him, but dont dunn him if you can help it. It is nearly dark and I dont know whether I will have time to write any in the morning before the mail goes out and I want to send this as soon as possible as I dont know what moment we may be ordered forward again, though we may not go at all but it is best to be prepared as old Rose dont give many moments warning when he wants his men to move. Aug. 3rd - Well Nellie it is evening again and my letter is still unfinished. This morning we received orders to be ready to move out at 7 o'clock to be received by Gen. Rosecrans. We were received on the opposite side of the town from where our camp is situated. Gen. Rosecrans is about six feet in height and well proportioned, weighs probably about

Shelbyville, Tenn - Aug. 11th, 1863

Dear Nellie

The time has passed very slowly since I received your last letter stating that you and Minnie were both sick. I have been very anxious to hear from you, but every day when the mail comes it only brings me disappointment, instead of a letter from you. I received a letter from William yesterday. He says Law lost those things you sent by him. William has the blues some about his land. He says there has not been any broke on it this season and he does not know what to do unless he pays a payment in money. He says Roden wants to buy it and he seems rather inclined to sell it to him, but I shall advise him not to. If he sells that I think he will be very sorry for it. I dont think he will have as good an opportunity again to get a piece of land. It is a good piece and if I could I would rather help him a little than have him sell it. If he sells it I think he will not have another

such chance to pay for land. He says Law has got a letter from home stating that another blacksmith who took Wm Hinshaws place has died. He said he could not remember his name, but thought it was something like Whitney. I have been thinking it might be Wheaton. I think Chatsworth is getting to be a bad place for blacksmiths. Has that old "Dutchman" got his blacksmith shop going yet. I think you said some time ago that he was going to have one. I still think that the prospect is good for us all to get home soon, though perhaps not before Christmas, but that time will soon come. I think the rebellion is drawing its last breath. The fall of Fort Sumpter first kindled the flame of patriotism in the North. I think its second fall will crush the last hope of the traitors. Richmond is not of as much importance as Charleston. I hope this pest house of treason will soon be laid in ashes. There should be not one stone of it left upon another and I wish the arch traitors themselves could be burned alive in it. An example should be made of the leaders of this rebellion and no punishment is too severe for them. I think another such months work as was done in July would scatter the miserable remnant of the rebellion to the four winds of Heaven and then "Home Sweet Home" would spring from every heart and swell on every lip. O that the time may come soon. What a glad shout would be sent up from thousands of throats. The camps would ring with the joyful sound and answering echoes from the soldiers far off homes would repeat the glorious news. Nellie, keep in good spirits. I think the time is fast approaching and will soon be here. The work goes bravely on. The armies of the Republic are thoroughly organized and commanded by able generals. The mighty "Anaconda" is contracting its folds with a force that no power in rebellion is able to resist. It is my firm conviction that old Jeff and his traitor crew would at this moment be glad to get safely out of the Country. I think that now their greatest anxiety is for their personal safety. It is nearly mail time and I must close my letter. I hope

this may find you and Minnie enjoying better health than when you wrote last. Though absent you are constantly present in my mind.

Your husband - Samuel Patton

Shelbyville, Tenn. - Dec. 22^d 1863

Dear Nellie

It seems like a long time since I received your last letter. I was just thinking that it must be near two weeks, but on examination I found it was only a week, but still I would like to hear from you oftener, when you are both sick, tho I cant complain for I know you have had your hands full, even if neither of you have been worse, but if you have you must certainly have a hard time. I wish I could get home to see you, but it is impossible. Several persons have tried to get furlows on various pretents, but without success. Gen. Rosecrans seems determined to keep all his men as long as there is a prospect of having any use for them, but still this, if it does seem hard, looks as though he was going to do something soon. There is only two sections of our Battery and one Reg. of Infantry here now. The left section has gone to Wartrace. The have moved to the opposite side of the Town from where we were when I wrote to you last. Our present position is not so convenient as the one we left. We have to bring our water about half a mile. The weather is extremely hot and if it does not prevent, it must greatly retard a forward movement, as it would be almost impossible to carry on verry active operations when the weather is so excessively hot. I promised in my last to give my reasons for not fearing a war with France and England. In the first place they have to get their grain from Russia and America and hungry soldiers cant fight much. A war between the allied powers and Russia will be almost shure to take place unless they back down

and let Russia alone and if America waits til a war is actually begun, our government need have no fears but that all our demands will be complied with, unless they are too extravagant, as it would be but little better than suicide for them to go to war with the only two Nations that can supply them with bread. Such a war would overturn both the governments of England and France in less than two years and besides this, look what an army we could turn loose on Canada and still spare men enough to help the Mexicans drive the French out of that country. While it would require all the force they could raise to fight Russia, while both Russia and America, being grain growing and manufacturing countries would scarcely feel the war compared with what they would be compelled to suffer, but if they are mad enough to fight us both, they will be compelled to submit to a humiliating peace and leaving America master of this continent north of the peninsula. We'll be compelled to give Russia whatever she asks, but if they dont go to war with Russia there is some danger of us having a scratch with them, though I think the danger is not verry great. It is not much use for me to write about anything else as I cant help thinking about you and Minnie. I begin to fear that when a letter does come it will contain bad news. I think you would write sooner if all was going well, but if not, you should let me know and if you cant write get some one to write a few lines for you. I am afraid you have overtaxed your strength so much that you will be sick and perhaps worse than you was before, but Nellie, you must try and keep your courage up. Old Abe has an Army and Naval force thundering away at Charleston, which I think must fall before verry long and the rebels so far from being able to raise more troops are loosing many of those they have by desertion. Dear Nellie, I think the time will soon come when we can enjoy our own home once more together

Sunday morning Aug. 23d - Well Nellie, last night after dark I received your letter of Aug 12th you may imagine with what eagerness I tore open the letter and my happiness on learning that you were both well, or nearly so. It mad me feel more like some body. The house and yard may look bad enough, but I dont care, so you and Nannie are well. The can soon fix things up again when I get back again. I think the hole in the bottom of the well would never have filled up has been stoped for a good while. If it had not been the well would never have filled up with surface water, but I dont want the hole made much larger than it was before, if they clean the well out, as I intend to make the well a little larger some day if I get able to have it walled up with bricks. I have thought of a way that I can make it larger without much work and if the hole in the bottom is made much larger I cant stop it to keep the water out while I am building the wall up. The boards that are in it will rot in another year or two and I must fix it right before then or it will cave in. If they do anything to it, tell them not to make the hole any larger in the bottom. You should employ some one to fix the fence around the yard and garden and put up cheap gates or the currant and goose berry bushes will be destroyed and the yard be rooted up again. It may as well be done first as last. You have never said any thing about getting the last money which I sent to you. I sent you twenty dollars three or four weeks ago or about that time, but you have never said any thing about getting it. I sent it in two letters, ten dollars in each one. I think it strange that all my other letters should go safe through and they should not. If you do get them I want you to let me know. I think twenty dollars is considerable to lose, when so hard earned. I can hardly ever tell by your letters what letters of mine you get. You scarcely ever say what date they are. We got paid about the time William did and you said he sent money home

The plastering in the house can be washed down and then a coat of glue water put on it and then painted which I think will be better than paper it in the hall and kitchen, as paper will come off and look mean in the kitchen. you had better try and get those teeth taken care of. The doctor might give you something to kill the nerve and then you can go to Onarga or some place where there is a good dentist and get them filled right, but be sure and have the nerve killed before you get them fixed, but get it done and well done before it is too late and oblige your husband
Samuel Patton

Shelbyville, Tenn - Sept. 2d 1863

Dear Nellie

I received your letter of Aug. 24th last evening. I wish you would always tell me what date the letters are that you get and then I would know what ones you have got. I think it verry singular that you have never got that last twenty dollars that I sent to you. I sent ten of it in the letter I wrote in answer of the one I received from you stating that you was sick. I can fully appreciate your feelings in being compelled to live with people that you dislike. I talk up with my own experience for the last year but hope it will be different with both of us after a while. There is a new Gen. named Steadman in command of our division now, in place of Gen. Baird, who has been ordered to report to Gen. Thomas in the front. He had been home for a short time and his place had been temporarily occupied by a whiskey bloated of the most detestable character. During his administration "fancy women" were extensively imported, they first going to burn and receiving a personal examination and receiving his seal, which they have since transfered to a number of the boys. But I dont pity them much. If they had kept out of the fire they would not have got burned. There is a report in camp that Gen.

Rosecrans has been mortally wounded at Chatanooga, but I hope it is not true. There could hardly be a man put in his place that the men would have as much confidence in as they have in him. To use a rebels own words "he never makes any mistakes". If some generals had been in charge of this army when it moved forward before, we would have had a hard battle at this place, as the rebels had a continuous line of fortifications for nine miles along the river, or rather with the flanks resting on the river. It was a strong position for a large army, but old Rosa outgeneraled Bragg and made him leave it. Had Bragg stayed here, he, with his whole army would have been made prisoners. So much for having a man in command of an army who understands his business. Such a general often accomplishes great objects and saves thousands of lives. When men know they have such a commander they move with confidence and when placed in a position of danger will hold it, feeling confident that they are not going to be caught in a trap and gobbled up or cut to pieces. The death of Rosecrans would be a loss not easily repaired. I hope it is not true, but we will be likely to know by tomorrow. The demoralizing effect of Braggs retreat from this place has not yet been entirely erased and at Chatanooga the enemy will stand a worse chance than they did here unless they have been largely reinforced, which I think not very probable. The clothing and equipments left scattered for miles along the banks of Duck River by these ragged wretches cannot be easily replaced. Nothing but the continual heavy rains which retarded the march of our army, till its provisions were exhausted saved Braggs army from capture. At any rate it is said that after Bragg had left here and found that Rosecrans was likely to get to Chatanooga first, he rode up to one of his officers and said "we will have to turn back, our retreat is cut off."

Turn back, said the officer, that would be certain capture, our only chance is to go ahead. They did go ahead and reached Chatanooga first, only because the rations of our army gave out. Every man had ten days rations with him, which would have lasted till they got to Chatanooga, had they not been delayed by stormy weather and bad roads. You said in your last letter that you was thinking the time very long till I would get home. You should not get yourself in a habit of thinking that I will get home soon, for you may be greatly disappointed when the time comes, though it is my opinion that I will get home by Christmas. Still, it is by no means certain and if you allow yourself to think that I will come though certain and I would have to stay longer, the time will not only seem long, but the disappointment would be great, though think so. I know that it is very uncertain and dont allow myself to build "air castles" in anticipation of it, actually coming to pass. I am glad to learn that Minnie still grows better. I hope she will soon be entirely well.

Chatanooga - Sep. 23^d 1863

It is after dark. I received yours of the 13th this evening. We was in the hottest of the fight on Sunday the 20th. The enemy have received heavy reinforcements from Richmond. That is the reason they beat us. We are in line of battle, waiting for them to attack us. Skirmishing is almost constant. If they attack us here I think we can give them a hard battle. I have an opportunity to send this by a man going to Nashville. I am sorry for Minnie. You must keep a brave heart. I feel deeply for you. My candle is almost burnt out. Good bye my dear Nellie and Minnie. If I should fall in the coming battle, I hope we may all meet in a better world where sorrow never comes.
Your affectionate husband J. Patton

Chatanooga, Tenn. - Oct. 6th 1863

Dear Nellie

I received your letter of Sept. 22nd day before yesterday containing the sad news of Minnie's death. Your letters of Sep. 6th and 13th had led me to expect it and if it had been possible I would have went home, but I could not have went if all my friends had been dying, but even if I could have went, it would have been too late, as I did not know of her danger till your letter of the 13th was received after the battle of Chickamauga and she was dead then. I afterward received your letter of the 6th. How I wish I could have seen her, but I think it is wrong to complain. God knows best how to direct events. I know you must feel verry bad and cant help but miss her verry much, when you have nothing to occupy your mind. When you was watching over our dying Minnie I was laying on the ground wrapped in my blanket asleep, dreaming of home, but how different was the scene my fancy pictured from that transpiring there. I thought I had fixed the mello-deon and was playing on it, while you was beside me with Minnie in your arms and she was crowing and clapping her little hands, delighted with the sound. When I awoke, chilled through with the cold and went to the fire, where lay some poor fellows we had brought in on the caisson, waiting for death to releas them from their sufferings. I went to the caisson for something and found it covered with clotted blood. I thought how different was my dream from the stern reality, but little did I think that death had visited the home, which in my dreams had seemed so happy, but
Dear Nellie, we must not give way under misfortune. Tho our Minnie is dead to us, she is in a happier world and is no longer suffering

pain. Nellie, you must not brood over trouble too much. It will injure your health and may bring on disease that will result in death, which would be almost suicide. How sad, how terribly lonely it would be for me, after being absent so long, to return and find my Nellie gone, but I do not wish to contemplate such a future, but let us hope that the hand which has borne us safely thus far may grant us a happy meeting soon, to enjoy the blessings we have endured so much to secure. Things here are about as they were when I wrote last. There was artillery skirmishing yesterday, all along the line, but all is quiet today. It is said that there is a large reinforcement near at hand. The rebellion is making its last desperate struggle. Time only can tell how it will terminate. Perhaps by the time you get this, the battle that is to decide whether the rebellion is to die immediately or have still another lease of life will be fought. Our Brigade may possibly not be engaged and if reinforcements have arrived I think it wont, but even if it should, let us hope for the best and not meet trouble half way but still there may no battle be fought here. Those who were wounded in the late battle get furloughs to go home. I expect to send this letter north of the Ohio river with one of our boys who was wounded. I think, if mailed there, you will get it sooner.

Oct. 8th - Well, Nellie, the rebel cavalry has cut off and destroyed a portion of our supply train and we are again on half rations. We drew full rations of meat and hard tack for a few days, but have to return to half rations once more. We had been on half rations for near three weeks. The hard tack we drew last was nearly half rotten and the balance so moldy that we can scarcely eat them, besides being full of maggots and brown worms about an inch long. The sutler of the 113th Ohio, who has been selling ches, at a dollar

a pound and other things in proportion, has been ordered to leave camp. Yesterday I stole a couple of small bottles of gun lock oil from him and sold it for 10 cts. and got half a dozen "Figger" biscuits, which did for my supper and breakfast and I have one left yet. The settler is going to leave today. Last night his two niggers stole a large piece of nice ham for them and the old "camp snake" to eat on the road going home. When they got into their wagon, I and one of my comrades, who had been watching them, waited till they were asleep and then went and stole it. It is a very nice large piece and I think it will last us about a week. They took it into the wagon with them, but we listened where they set down the kettle and as soon as they were asleep, I climbed in and got it and this morning we divided it between us. It is reported that the other day (the 4th), when the artillery skirmish was in progress, the rebels were fighting among themselves and only opened fire on our lines to drown the noise of their own fight. We heard distant firing towards the gap in Lookout Mountain, but thought that it was between the rebels, who hold the gap and a force of our men said to be coming in that direction, from Bridgeport. The fight seems to have been between the eastern and western troops. Prisoners taken at Chicamauga say that the eastern and western troops can't agree, the eastern troops calling Bragg's men d-d Butternuts, while they call us d-d Yankees and tell the Butternuts to keep back in the rear and they will whip us. It is said that two of their western generals were put under arrest and the men mutinied. There is a report that six hundred of them came in yesterday with their arms and gave themselves up. It is thought that the enemy are moving off. John Martin, who belongs to the centre section, which is posted about a mile from here, says that a

portion of the rebel camp, which they could see from their positions, has been removed. I don't know how extensive the mutiny was in the rebel camp, but if it was very extensive it won't be very safe for them to stay here very long. The rebel leaders seem to think if they can't take Chattanooga that their cause is nearly hopeless. Had they succeeded in cutting off the retreat of Gen. Rosecrans' army from Chickamauga and reaching Chattanooga first it would have given them all the territory south of the Ohio river that we had taken from them and left us about where we was when the war began, but having failed in that their only resource is to retake it if they can and I think they can only do this by a flank movement that will cut our communication, but if our army is reinforced as it should be on the flanks, this will be hard to do, and if they commence fighting among themselves, they are just beyond redemption, but we could form a more accurate opinion if we knew the extent of the disturbance among themselves. Jeff Davis has said that he will snatch Tenn. from the abolitionists if it takes all the armies of the Confederacy to do it, and Gen. Lee, their best general, said some time before Rosecrans got Chattanooga that if Bragg could not hold it there was no use for him to fight any more in Virginia. When you write again, send me a few stamps, if you can, as I am nearly out. I hope we will soon have plenty of meat and hard tack again, but if living on half rations will do any good, I shan't grumble. I would be willing to go hungry for sometime if the rebels would keep fighting among themselves, but I think we could fight better if we had plenty to eat. The weather here is very comfortable through the day, but the nights are very cold. I saw a man today from Bridgeport, he says there is about 25,000 men there from the Potomac besides

Some probably about half a Corps along the rail road between there and Nashville. He says the rebels burned four hundred and thirty seven wagons loaded with supplies. A man who was with him counted them, and also that they killed a great many mules and that our men had dragged five hundred dead mules off the mountain road, besides others that were killed else where. A despatch has been received that the enemy have cut the Nashville and Chatanooga rail road. This has been done by the rebel Cavalry.

Oct. 9th 1863. As there is no prospect yet of sending this north, I suppose I may as well keep on writing till I get an opportunity to send it. There is evidently large reinforcements on our flanks. The rebel pickets who are near enough to talk to our pickets said yesterday, well you d-d Yankees sons of bitches, you are getting in our rear again. The pickets on different parts of the line frequently converse with each other. One day one of the rebel pickets inquired of ours if they had any coffee and was informed they had and invited over to get some. The rebel picket obtained permission of his Captain to come over and after drinking a cup told his Captain that the coffee was first rate and he guessed he would stay and have another cup. He wished to know what we would do with them if a regiment was to come in and give themselves up. Our men told him that they would be paroled and allowed to go north, or go home if their homes were north of our lines and having finished his coffee he went back apparently well satisfied. The 20th and 21st Army Corps are being consolidated and will be called the 9th Army Corps. It is said that our two Brigades (the first and second of the first division) are to be consolidated and the 18th Ohio Battery left with them, while ours will be put in the 9th Army Corps, which lost most of its Art. in the Chickamauga fight, but this is

merely a rumor, but if the 1st Brigade and ours is put together, they will make a very small one as they are only a shadow of what they were before the battle. There is not more men in ours than would make one regiment. It will not very well for Rosecrans to move forward very far, if he could until the rail road is fixed as far as this place and a good supply of rations brought here. In fact he will have to establish a good base of supply here before he can do much. There is a large bridge to be built between here and Bridgeport before the cars can run through. The bridge is to be brought from Cincinnati ready framed and can soon be put up when our army once gets possession of the ground again, which I hope won't be long. I am afraid that our defeat at Chickamauga will keep me in the army longer than I anticipated, unless the rebels get discouraged at their failure to take this place, which is of vital importance to them. Had they succeeded in getting it, they think it would have secured their independence.

Saturday Oct. 10th. Yesterday I got an old camp kettle and made a gratin and stole some corn, broiled it to make it soft and when it dried enough I grate it and made a couple of cakes, one for my dinner and one for my supper. I mixed them with salt and water. They were pretty heavy but were a great deal better than nothing. Some more of the men went and did likewise, but the gtr. master found out and put a guard over the corn which belonged to the mule driver. We have some corn for our horses, but it is shelled and we cant grate it. Last night I went about a mile to a division gtr. masters corn pile and stole about twenty ears. We wont starve if we can get corn to grate as we can make mush of it as well as "pone" as the Kentuckians used to call the miserable corn bread they used to bring to camp to sell to us.

Evening 10th They are going to turn over the guns

we have at present and get Parrots in place of them. The Parrot guns are considered the best for long range. We have at present four twelve pdr. Napoleons and two Rodmans (ten pdrs) Gen. Rosecrans is reorganizing his army as fast as possible. As soon as I find out what they are going to do with us, I will let you know. As we are now we have neither men nor horses enough to work the battery. We had twelve horses killed in the battle. There was more of them wounded, but not all so bad but we can use them soon.

Sunday Oct. 10th. Well Nellie I dont see as there is any prospect of the men who were wounded starting home very soon, so I will finish and put my letter in the mail and you may get it some time. The rebs tried to cross the river a few miles below here yesterday, but were repulsed.

good bye for the present
Samuel Pattow

Chattanooga, Tenn. - Nov 27th 1863.

Dear Nellie

I cannot get a copy of Minnie's picture. The artists say it is too dim and that it is hard to take a copy of a good one even, so guess I will send you the original. I hate to part with it, but I would hate still worse to lose it all together, as we are likely to be on the move soon and it is hard to take care of such things on the march. We received orders last evening to be ready to start for Knoxville early this morning, but they were countermanded, but we are liable to be ordered away at any moment. There is a large force of cavalry and infantry in pursuit of the enemy who have retreated across the Chickamauga creek and burned the bridges. The pioneer Corps went out yesterday

I heard cannonading in the direction of the old battle ground of Chickamauga this morning. I dont think Gen. Grant will give the enemy much rest till he drives them from the south west or captures them. Our corps lost considerable in storming Missionary ridge. I have not time to write more now, but will give you a description of the fight, or what I saw of it as soon as possible. Our battery was not engaged at close quarters like we were at Chickamauga, but shelled the enemy over the heads of the Infantry, from the breast works. Enclosed I send ten dollars more, making twenty I have sent, so goodbye for the present.

Your husband Samuel Pattow

In camp on the right bank of the Holstein river - Jan. 6th 1864

Dear Nellie

I believe the mail leaves camp this evening, so I will try and send you a few lines again. We are still near the same place we were when I wrote last time. We have only moved a short distance to a place where wood is more convenient. We heard this morning that Gen. Longstreet had attempted a few days ago to force his way through Pull's gap but was repulsed. We heard firing a few days ago but didnt know what it was about. What truth there is in the story, I am unable to say. Some of our boys who recently came from ~~the~~ Chattanooga say that on the road they frequently met squads of Gen. Hardee's men coming into our lines. They had read Old Abe's proclamation and said it had a favorable effect on the Tennessee and Georgia troops. It is said that Longstreet's men

are rapidly deserting also. I think if the war is not over by next spring it will be owing to the bad weather, but if the rebel army dont all desert before that time, as soon as the weather will permit I think Grant will soon settle the hash with them. I have lost all hope of anything being done by the army of the Potomac. Ever since the war commenced those two armies have done nothing but vibrate like a pendulum between Richmond and Washington. I think western troops will yet have to take Richmond from the rear, if the rebel soldiers dont all desert. Grant is said to be here, but I havent seen him. The train of wagons bringing our tents has not arrived yet. We dont get our rations very regular, sometimes we get nearly enough and at others but little, but as long as we can get corn we can have enough. We have long ago learned not to be very particular about the quality, the quantity being considered of more importance. Men who have picked up grains of corn that had been tramped in the mud and felt, where mules had been fed and then parch it and eat it, are not likely so soon to become very great epicures. I was very much amused a few days ago by two young Niggers fighting. They were about fourteen years of age and about the same size. They caught each other by the shoulders and for ten or fifteen minutes continued to butt each other like a couple of Billy goats, while the boys, highly pleased with the performance encouraged and kept them at it til they were both nearly exhausted, their heads, however apparently having received but little damage although they had been pummeled enough to have reduced anything but a Niggers head to a jelly. You said in one of your letters that Silas Brooks had been in Chattanooga. What company and what regiment is he in? Dont forget to have trees planted in the

yard next spring, whenever the ground is fit to dig. You had better have the holes dug so that you can plant them quick after you get them and wont have to let them lay unplanted if the weather should be unfavorable. When you get the trees, and the dirt by laying in piles beside the holes will be dryer and better to pack around the trees. You will have to dip the water on if there is any in the holes when you plant as we did when we planted the others. You can then have it packed around the trees without making a mortar of it. I want them planted in this manner as I am satisfied that they grow better and besides you wont have to run the risk of planting them in the mud, or at least not so much. Dont neglect to have all the holes dug before you send for the trees and have them dug large enough. Have you money enough to get them. I will try and send you some more if I can get an opportunity when I think it wont be running too much risk. At present I think the mail too uncertain as there is no regular mail agent, but we have to send our letters with different individuals and whenever we can get an opportunity, I have twenty dollars yet of my last pay. I dont think we will be paid very soon again as the army is so much scattered. Try and save money enough to fix the yard, if you can. The trees should be planted as soon as possible in March. Get the best, without regard to cost. We must have our home look as well as possible. A beautiful home is second only to a happy one and I hope to have them both combined in ours. My back does not hurt me as much, except when I stoop. I can work very well when standing up straight if I dont have to lift much, but working stooped down soon rises me up. Working on the fortifications at Chattanooga went pretty hard, but I did not say anything about it as the boys would think I was only

trying to get rid of work, I did think it would wear off but it dont appear to get any better. I think when I hurt my back was at Chicamauga when the enemy were trying to drive us down the hill or take our guns. Our only hope was in killing them as fast as they came and at that time there was but little probability of us living a great while, so we did not spare our strength, but we improved our tone. We often fired without sponging the gun and had to hold it when it was fired to keep it from recoiling down the hill, so that we could fire quick

Your husband Samuel Patton

In camp on the Holston River, Tenn - Jan. 11th 1864

Dear Fannie

I was afforded the pleasure of receiving a letter from you yesterday, dated Dec. 20th. I guess you did not see me Christmas. In regards to good things here we fare sumptuously here as the boys say on "corn meal and chaff" but then it fills up. Perhaps you would like to know how we manage, when we dont have enough. Well, for instance, my rations dont hold out. I just take a bag, go to head quarters when they are shueeing corn to the teams and get corn for two or four horses and then go away, leaving the commissary under the impression that I am a postillion. The postillions, when there rations are short draw for more horses than they have. Thus you see we get enough, such as it is. In fact, we are all getting fat, like pigs. We have nothing to do but eat corn and sleep. We are camped in the woods, so we can keep a good big fire all the time. At night we sit and go to sleep. When anyone "freezes out" he gets up, warms himself and then larp down again to take another snooze. I cant say that we have verry many luxuries, but we make the best of what we

do have. We, however, consider corn meal and salt the most important items in the culinary department, while our robes of rage might excite the envy of a prince if he only knew as well how we appreciated them as we do. Our knapsacks and tents have not arrived yet and I dont know as they ever will. Flags of truce - apparently on the sly, frequently come in from Longstreet's men. We, of course do not know what this means, but it is generally surmised that they are sent by rebel officers commanding companies and regiments, to ascertain the truth in regard to Lincoln's proclamation and I obtain some assurance that the pardon will really be granted, and possibly to make some arrangements about deserting with their commands. We may be mistaken, but it is generally believed that Longstreet's army is on the eve of a general mutiny, but time will soon tell. The weather is still cold and the ground frozen. I got that letter containing a list of your expenses. I think you had better rent Williams land to Charles Evans on the terms he offers. I think it a verry good offer. I think you had better get some cotton wood trees and plant about twenty feet apart along the south end of Wms land, allowing room for the road. If you cant get cotton wood get maple like those largest ones of ours. When you get the trees for the yard cotton wood will grow the fastest and I think will be the best and if Wm dont like it when he comes home, I will pay for them and run the risk of selling them to some one else. Perhaps you could get Evans to plant them. If you can, he will probably do it cheap for the sake of the money, if he is going to get married. If it costs too much you had better not do it, as he wont have verry much money to spare when he gets back. I think Wm is real mean for wearing Williams clothes out, but then I dont think you had better say anything about it and if you write to Wm it wont do any good and will only make ben mad at you, while he still will continue to wear them, and I should not like to make him angry after they have done

so much for you. I think Wm will get to know Ben by the time he gets back. They say bought suit is the best, but I think he is buying some very dear. I guess Ben will pay for the clothes when he pays for the land. I think William threw away about four hundred dollars when he let him have his bounty. If the land is in his name it will never do him any good, while if he had got another forty he could have sold it for four or five hundred dollars, but then, helping his sister was his object in that I suppose, and he would have done well to stop there without leaving so much of his business in his hands. In regard to the shop rent, you will have to allow that Blacksmith for the amount he expends in necessary repairs on the shop, but I don't want to lay out any more money on it than can be helped. I want to build a better one as soon as I can afford it. I have broken my gold pen, as you can see by the writing. It cost me one dollar and a half. I was offered two dollars for it a day or two ago. I wish I had sold it, but it is too late now. Write often. I have still some hopes of getting home in the spring, but it will depend a great deal on the effect of Lincoln's proclamation. I think we will be home some time next summer at any rate, so good bye for the present. I have been counting the cost of those trees for William's place and find that the trees, with express charges will cost nearly twenty besides the work, so you had better not get them. I just thought of it while writing. I did not think they would cost so much. I would have said nothing about it. It would also cost considerable to plant them when he got home. He can do it much cheaper himself, when he has nothing else to do. I think they are very plenty on the Ill. river

Your husband - Samuel.

Knoxville, Tenn - Jan. 27th 1864

Dear Fannie

I hasten to send you a few lines this morning, as I may not have another opportunity very soon, as there is a probability of our communication being cut off. Last Friday morning we crossed the Holstein river and moved out about four miles. Next day we went as far as Panbridge, where we arrived after dark, as we came in in the evening we heard skirmishing on our left. Next morning we received about a half a pint of corn meal as rations for two days. We lay here all day Sunday. Towards evening heavy skirmishing commenced immediately in front of us and every thing seemed to indicate that there would be a general engagement on Monday. A part of our force had crossed the Broad river on a bridge made of mule wagons, a part of the rebel force being on that side of the river. At dark a retreat was ordered and we marched all night and reached Strawberry plains about noon Monday. The road was a perfect bed of mortar which was as sticky as wax, while a drenching rain made the march still more uncomfortable. Next morning we received about a quart of a pound of flour for two days rations. We started here till Wednesday morning when being unable to get feed for our horses, they having been without feed for three days, the country having been entirely stripped of forage. We abandoned our caissons and put all of the horses on the guns and came back to this place, reaching here about sundown. Yesterday our men burned the bridge at Strawberry plains to keep the enemy from crossing the river on it. It is said that Longstreet has been heavily reinforced from Richmond. If this is true they will greatly outnumber us, as there is not a very large force here. What I fear most is that they will

cut our communications and starve us out, at present we are on less than quarter rations, a pint of corn meal being all that is allowed one man for five days. After dark, as I was passing a house, where the partly opened curtains of the windows, revealed a cozy parlor within, while the family seemed to be enjoying the comforts of home, I could not help feeling the contrast between their condition and ours, who, dirty, half naked and sometimes half starved, were unable to get even a dog tent to shelter us from the storm. To say the least, I envied them, while I thought how little they knew and perhaps cared less what we had to endure. It was fortunate that I sent Minnie's picture home when I did, as it would probably been lost if I had left it in my knapsack. Our tents and baggage is still at Chattanooga and I see no prospect of ever getting them. We heard that they had been sent to us, but they were not in the train that came up. We have now been nearly two months without tents. The last letter I received from you was dated Dec. 20th 1863. When you get the trees planted in the yard, you had better plant nice early apple trees in place of the peach trees you dug up. I don't think we had better plant any peach trees. They won't look very well and I fear won't do very well.

Your husband - Sam Patton

P.S. The rear guard destroyed our caissons to keep them out of the hands of the rebels.

Loudon Tenn. - Feb. 1st 1864

Dear Nellie

Your letters of Christmas and New years came to me yesterday. I opened one of them and seeing a photograph in it, I could not wait to take the

letter out as it stuck to the envelope, but pulled the picture out. Well, you may well imagine how glad I was to get it, though I think it is about the poorest photograph I ever saw. I think the person that took it did not understand her business very well. A photograph when well taken makes a very nice picture. I am sorry you have given any of them to be put in albums. I hate to have any one have such a poor picture of you. I think it is the roughest picture of the kind I ever saw. It makes you look as though pitted with small pox when you look far at it. If you have not given them away yet, I wish you would not. I think your dress takes well. I fear you are fretting yourself too much. You must try to keep in as good heart as possible. You know I told you in my last letter that some of us had been trying to get into a rich old fellows cellar, but couldn't unlock the door. I told the boys that I would make a key to unlock it if any of them could get the impression of it on something. To steal the key would not do as they would suspect that we had taken it and fasten the door some other way. The night we left before we left Knoxville John Martin came to me after I had gone to bed and told me that he had seen one of the riggers come up from the cellar and lay the key on the kitchen table, when he picked up a piece of mud, made an errand into the kitchen and leaned the hand that had the mud in it on the key as though he did not know it was there while he inquired something of the wench to draw their attention from what he was doing. He then came to me with the piece of mud and I soon made a wire key to fit the impression on it and then we went into the cellar and got a couple of hams and some potatoes. Next day (the 19th of Jan) we started for this place. A few days of sunshine had materially improved the roads and we had quite a pleasant march, tho it rained a little

the second day. We reached here and crossed the river in two days. There is no bridge here. We crossed on flats. The large rail road bridge at this place was burned soon after the battle of Mission ridge. We have marching orders. We recross the river tonight. It is supposed we are going back to Knoxville in haste.

Your husband Samuel Patton
I enclose ten dollars

Loudon, Tenn. - Feb. 9th 1864

Well Nellie I have just received your letter of Jan. 24th. You seem to have the blues and I cant blame you for it, bad news will make any one have the blues, but you must try and keep in as good spirits as possible. I wish the war was over so I could get home once more. I often feel homesick, but it does no good and I try to think of something else. I received a Chicago Tribune of the 20th a short time ago and today I got one of the 28th. I dont know who sends them, but they are verry acceptable and no one can better appreciate the worth of a newspaper than we can and besides it makes a fellow feel as though there was some people that cared a little for his comfort. To be compelled to lounge around day after day with nothing to read I think is severe enough punishment for any mortal. Newspapers here two or three weeks old sell for ten cts. apiece and I have paid fifteen cts. for one three weeks old when we was beyond Knoxville. There is nothing of importance transpiring in front that I know of. Persons from Knoxville say that the rebels are within three miles of that place, but I guess it is only small scouting parties. We are verry comfortably situated here now, having got little shanties

built of boards and covered with our dog tents and a fire place in one end, large enough to cook in. I wish we could find some pork some where and I think if I knew where there was some it would be verry apt to get stolen. We get some sole leather beef, but we cant fry it as we have no grease and when broiled it is not good, in fact the cattle when killed are so poor they can hardly walk, but then we get enough to eat, such as it is and we have not always been that well off. The weather has been rather cool here lately, though it is not what would be called cold weather in Feb. The weather here is never near as cold as in Feb. The coldest weather we have had was just after new years. I think you are indeed experiencing the dark side of life, but a long continued discord renders the chord into which it resolves. sound more sweetly. It is so with life. After long continued hardships and trouble we can more fully enjoy peace and happiness. Two steamboats run regularly between Chattanooga and this place. They are loaded principally with hard tack. We get no soap yet, but have been anxiously watching the boats for an opportunity to steal some, but as yet have been unable to get any. I dont think the boats bring any up. I stole some sugar last night out of a barrel that had the head knocked in, but there was so many guards around that I could not get much, all of the boys, or nearly all of them will steal when off guard, but when on guard they are held responsible. I received a lot of stamps, I think sixteen in all, but think they were in more letters than two. The six I received in your last letter makes 22 besides two 2 cts. stamps. I wish you would send me a package of buff envelopes. Put a small thread through each edge of the package and tie it to keep them from being pulled out. Then put a wrapper on it like a newspaper, open at both ends

I have seen a package come that way, with only newspaper postage, that is two cts. envelopes cost two cts. a piece or fifty cts. per package here
your Samuel

Feb. 10th 1864

Well Nellie I have just been looking at a picture or rather a series of pictures of the taking of Lookout Mountain, in Harpers Weekly. They, in many respects resemble the scene, but the crest of the mountain looks significant compared with its real proportions. Instead of a heap mass of rocks with perpendicular sides, reaching one hundred or one hundred and fifty feet above the heads of the combatants, it represents the crest of the mountain as an insignificant pile of craggy rocks in one place with ladder (on the morning of the 20th) reaching near the top, when the fight commenced, or at least while it once was in progress and during the taking of the enemys works at "the white house" the top of the mountain or rather the ledge was distinctly seen from our position at Chattanooga but as the day advanced, the side of the mountain more than half way down was hid from our view. From the white house a rifle pit or breast work extends down nearly to the foot of the mountain. After our men took this the enemy made a stand in the woods beyond. The white house is on the slope of the mountain next Chattanooga. A train said to consist of five hundred wagons arrived from Chattanooga today. They have commenced to cross the river. I dont know if any of our things are with it or not as it will take some time to get all in. I hope it has as I left my knapsack there with some of your letters in it and my portfolio which cost me one dollar and a half in Lewisville, beside that case you made for me to keep needles

thread etc. in. I sent minnies picture home just in time. If I had left it in my knapsack I fear we might have never have seen it again. The train that has just arrived is said to be loaded principally with ammunition and baggage. This would seem to indicate that we are at least not going back any farther. All the rations brought here on the boats are immediately sent to Knoxville by Rail Road and they say that the cars will run from Chattanooga to this place in a few days. If they do they will bring rations pretty fast using both the river and Rail Road. The roads have got pretty good again, so that wagon trains can move verry easily, but if good weather continues any great length of time it will be verry different from last winter this time, for it rained almost constantly last Feb. but if a movement could be made against Longstreet now I think we could wipe him out, but we must have more than a few days rations on hand when we do go. While we was at Knoxville they were buisily engaged in killing and packing pork. I dont think any verry extensive movement will be made till the veterans get back, as a great many of the men in the old regiments have joined the veterans and gone home on a furlough, thus materially weakening the army and they cant get back much before April, by which time we will be better prepared to move. A little delay can be verry advantageously improved by our generals.
Good bye for the present

your husband Samuel

Roudon, Tenn, 3 March, 1864

Well Pig- dont you think I am^a clever fellow to call you pig- I dont think any person else calls you such a nice name, so you ought to be verry much pleased, arnt you, say now, arnt you. I spect you will say yes, so I will just go on and tell you the news. In the

first place, I have got my ugliness taken. What do you think of my looks after soldering a year and a half. They say that if a hog is half starved for a while and then gets plenty of corn, he will get fat quick. What do you think about it. Dont you think your hog has? What do you think of the picture any way? The boys say it looks as though I would steal. I wish I could send myself home as easily as I can my shadow. If I could, I would get into the next mail and be off at once, but perhaps uncle Sam will get through with me after a while and then I guess somebody wont hurry any faster than steam can take him. O, if only I could get home this spring, but I cant and there is no use talking about it, but perhaps I may this summer. I think old Jeff's Kingdom is melting away. Wont it cut the big feeling southern aristocracy to have to come under military rule and have a nigger refuse to let them go any where they choose. They will think it is even worse than to have northern mud sills over them, when niggers they have been used to flogging receive them with the peculiar condescension and importance they always assume. When niggers with fixed bayonets suddenly arrest them and forbid them to proceed unless they have permission from the proper authority. I just imagine I can see niggers doing provost guard duty in some secesh town and "halting" their former masters and forbidding them to go anywhere they wish. Wont "Cuffy" put on some style then. I cant say that I am a very particular friend to the nigger. At any rate, I would not like to stand one moment in a shower of bullets for the entire race of them, particularly if they come as fast as they did in one or two places that I have been, but I always did love reveng. It seems to be a part of my nature. I cant help it and dont want to either. Well, I was going to tell you the latest news here and I have been doing so at a great rate, havent I. Well, I dont know as there is much to tell, except that Longstreet was going toward Richmond as fast as his legs could carry him and that his men

thought that they were going to reinforce Lee, according to a rebel deserter I was talking to yesterday, and was about seventy miles beyond Strawberry plains

Louden, Tenn, - March 10th 1864

Dear Fannie

I received your letter of Feb. 26th and 27th today and was somewhat surprised at your request for me to write an article on some religious subject and send it to you, but I cant bring myself to believe that originated with you, but was suggested by someone else. If it did originate with you I dont think you took a second thought before you made the request, because I dont think you would want me to add to my numerous sins that of mocking religion, though I heartily despise those who pretend to be so very righteous and are not. I respect true religion and those who I think possess it, but Fannie, in what do you think true religion consist. Is it made up of outward shows, or is it the secret prayer that is most acceptable to God. Does he advise us to pray on the corners of the streets and in public places, or do we not rather read that we should pray in secret and he that seeth in secret will reward us openly. Now, Fannie, dont you think you used to possess as much religion when you prayed in secret as when you knelt at the methodist mourners bench before a large and promiscuous crowd of people. In the first place let us investigate the cause that brought you there. It is an acknowledged law of nature of nature that when a continuous pressure of a stronger force is brought to bear on a weaker, the weaker must inevitably give way. Now, let me ask you, was it the spontaneous action of your own mind that took you to that mourners bench or was it the continued pressure of a stronger mind brought to bear on yours through the medium of eloquence, that took you there. Would you have went there but for that continued pressure added perhaps

to that of others. Now, what is eloquence but a knowledge of human nature, combined with the art of framing words in such a manner and uttering them in such a style as to assuage the weaker points of that nature and lead weaker minds than his own "Captive at his will." Now, when at mourning bench, was you in reality, worshipping the Most High, or doing homage to a man who had studied human nature and knew how to exercise the power such knowledge conferred and was even then secretly gloating over the evidence of his own superiority. Who were this man's first converts. Were they persons of brilliant intellect? A glance at the catalogue of names given in your letter affords a sufficient answer. I don't know them all, but I do know some of them. You say that you do not agree with me in my estimate of Preachers, but think as a general thing that they are the "best men as well as the most devoted Christians we have." Now, Nellie, I will give you some facts that have come under my observation since I enlisted. When we first came out nearly every Regiment had its Chaplain, but when hardships and danger began to increase, their numbers as rapidly began to decrease, till at the battle of Chicamauga there seemed to be but one left in our division to minister to the wants of the wounded and dying, though he conducted himself in a manner that won the respect and admiration of his men, but where had the rest all gone. One thing was certain. They were not there and when their names were mentioned, do you think it could be with respect. In this case, which was the rule and which the exception. If the soldiers had deserted their posts in the hour of danger and skulked off home on some pretext, as the chaplain did, what would have become of our country. If sinners can face hardships, danger and death, why do these "our best men and most devoted Christians" fly at the approach of hardships and danger. Since then we have been transferred to

another Division, but if there is a chaplain in the entire Division I never heard of him. Wellie, though I respect religion, I cannot help looking on these miserable wretches with a feeling of unmitigated contempt. I think there is a few good men that are Preachers, but I think it is the exception, not the rule, while the majority of them are the very dregs of creation. If you wish to join the Church, choose for your self, consult your own conscience and don't allow some one to persuade you what to do. Dear Nellie, you seem blandly determined to not look at the dark, or rather black side of human nature, but to view it as it endeavors to make itself appear. I don't pretend to assume that I am naturally and quicker at discernment, or even as quick at coming to a conclusion as you are, but I have had opportunities to look behind the scenes, which you have not and probably never will have. I never frown at view unless it amounts to something that will injure some one, without their knowledge, or where they are unable to protect themselves and then I would prefer to warn the victim of danger, rather than have the perpetrator know that I disapprove his course, unless it was necessary to act otherwise to prevent its accomplishment. In this manner I can get at a persons real motives and the more I see, I must say the less I think of human nature. If I was going to select a real worthy man, I would nineteen times out of twenty, select a man that the women would hardly speak to. In the army is a good place to study human nature, but even at home, when men get into the crowd that they think they can do so with safety, they will boast of their exploits. I have seen so many men, who at first I thought to be perfect models of uprightness and afterwards discovered that in reality, how low they were, that I always of late years look with distrust on every person till I know them to be upright. The more pretentious a man makes of being good, the more I distrust him. Wellie, if there is any thing in this letter that sounds harsh, believe me it is not so designed.

Nellie, I feel like writing tonight and everything is quiet, so I believe I will write a few more lines. When I spoke of those Christian advocates I did not mean to hurt your feelings, but I don't like them and it seems as though you have been drawn in and are being borne forward by a current of influence that you are powerless to resist. I know that you have had a great deal of trouble and I think it is mainly owing to that that you have suffered yourself to be influenced so much by the Methodists, but Nellie, I do wish you had not went to that mourners bench. It is an institution that never inspired me with any other feeling but disgust. I don't wish to describe my feelings on learning that my own Nellie had been there, but as I said, I attribute it to the sad trials you have passed through. I think you had as much religion before you went there as after you came away, and I think your religion was of a better and purer kind than those that make such a great pretention.

I don't think much of the religion produced by the hot house culture of a protracted meeting. Troops are concentrating, I think, for a movement in some direction. I think most likely in the direction of Atlanta. It is said that quite a large Cavalry force has been ordered to report to Granger and Woods Division of our Corps has been ordered here.

your Samuel

P. S. I have just received that package of paper you sent me

(See letter following March 19, 1864 for proper sequence)

Rouder, Tenn - March 19th 1864

Dear Nellie

I s'pect I may as well write you a few lines as I have nothing else to do and I don't know as I can pass the time more agreeably. Still, I don't know as I have very much to write that will interest you generally. When I have considerable news to write I don't have much

time to write and when I have time to write there is nothing worth writing about, but still I take comfort in writing to you and feel assured that even if my letter is not very interesting you won't grumble about it. I can't very well write a letter and have it make up in length what it lacks in depth, still when I have nothing of importance to write I can spin out a longer letter to you on nothing than I can to any one else. I suppose it arises from an impression that you are endowed with an unusual amount of patience. I can't account for it on any other grounds, unless it be that I like to scribble to you even if I have nothing to say. I understand that "old whiskey tub" has applied for another furlough. There was four of the men went home about a week ago on thirty days furlough, according to a late order. One man in twenty can go home on furlough at a time. Only four of our company can go at a time. When those who are gone get back I think it will be nearly time for active operations to commence, so that old "tub of guts" can be absent when there is any danger to encounter. Now I do hate such men, but there is too many such wearing shoulder straps in the army. I presume he will also pretend to be recruiting as he did when he went home before the battle of Chicamauga and stayed as long as he had a mind to. It is no use for a private to ask him for a furlough unless he wants to get insulted, except it be some low lived wretch like himself. How I would like to see his head shaved and see him drummed out of camp. Well Nellie, I have just been down to the photograph tent near Gen. Gordon Granger's head quarters and got his photograph. I paid half a dollar for it. They had a lot of them and they looked so natural that I thought I would get one and send you, to let you see what the man looks like that commanded us at Chicamauga and still commands us. But for his quick eye discerning the intention of the rebel General to mass his force, crush the already exhausted troops of Gen. Thomas and gain the road leading to through the gap toward Chatanooga, the Army of

the Cumberland would have ceased to exist, Chattanooga would have been lost and Bragg's victorious army would have marched without resistance to the Ohio river, but a double quick march through an almost suffocating cloud of dust in less than an hour brought us to the gorge where the enemy had out flanked Thomas and almost reached the road. Had we been a few minutes later, all would have been lost, but Grant bringing us with out orders, arrived just in time to check them and drive them back up the hill and hold it till the rest of the army had passed.

Your husband Samuel Patton

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London, Tenn - March 15, 1864

Dear Nellie

I received your letter of March 25 two or three days ago, also that package of paper you sent me. We have been quite busy for the last two or three days. We was ordered to the south side of the river, where the rest of the Company were camped, so we had to fix up new shanties and build new chimneys, but we are again comfortably fixed up. There is no news of much importance here now that I know of. When I wrote you last, appearances seemed to indicate that we would soon have something to do, but I don't think any move of importance will take place till the veterans get back and the new troops get into the field. Recruits are coming in pretty fast and have been for a number of days. I was somewhat amused a day or two ago while passing a house. A young lady, evidently about eighteen years of age, tolerably well dressed and with the requisite amount of powder on her face and a little girl about twelve years old stood beside the road, evidently waiting for something, but I soon noticed that they were watching me, but having no particular business to

transact with them that I knew of, I was passing along without pretending to notice them, when the smallest one stepped up to me and accosted me with "say mistw, give me a chew of tobacco" and when I informed her that I did not use tobacco, they both turned and went into the house, looking very much disappointed. I thought, what is it a southern lady wont do for tobacco. I have heard the boys tell about them asking for tobacco, but I never heard of them beging it by the road side before.

Morning March 16th - It is pretty cold this morning. When it gets cold here it does so very suddenly. I see by the papers that Gen. Grant has got his commission as Lieut. Gen. It makes one feel as though we had a more competent man at the helm. We can feel as though we will not be drifting at the mercy of events as we have been doing when all that has been gained by our Generals when labouring under disadvantages allowed to accumulate around them by the imbecility of a man like Gen. Hallock. I don't think much of these parlor Generals. I think the reason that the army of the potomac has been unsuccessful is owing to its position so near Washington. Every General, with the exception of McClellin, who has commanded that army has been tied hand and foot by that imbecile old foggy, but it will be different now. Grant knows when and how to strike and I feel shure that old Abe will let him do as he thinks best. I look forward with renewed confidence to the coming campaign. I think now when the tug of battle does come there will be a "long pull, a strong pull and a pull all together" or in other words, Grant will commence by having competent men placed in the responsible places and then I think he will strike at all points at once and not allow the rebels to mass their troops against any given point and when he does commence he will fight them and wont make a chills play of it. It may be a month or two, or even longer, before active operations commence. But when once commenced the rebellion will feel the full weight of the national army. If my conjectures are correct, next fourth of July will dawn on a nation that can breathe more freely. I don't think that one

defeat will make the rebs relinquish the contest entirely, though it will be likely to leave them in a hopeless condition, but now that we are at it, I want to see the gov. well done. Bad as I want to get home I had rather stay even longer than the time I enlisted for than to get home now and have a peace packed up with traitors. I want to see them well whipped and the leaders all hung. I want to see an example made of them. You said something in one of your letters about being a nurse in a hospital, I should be sorry to have you go to any such place. A hospital is no place for any woman.

Your other half - your Daniel

March 21st 1864 - Loudon, Tenn

Dear Nellie

I received your letter of March 16th yesterday, also a Chicago Tribune of March 10th. You said something about having the house painted. I don't think we can afford to have it done now. If I ever get home I will need all the money we can get to start in business again. I started once with nothing to start on and don't care about trying a similar experiment again. It is almost impossible to get along without some capital and the more a person has the better. I think if you do hire any person to paint the house, he will do it in a hurry and won't half brush the paint in and the rain will soon wash it off. When I get able to have it done, perhaps I will be at home and can do it some time when I have nothing else to do. When you get the trees planted in the yard, see that it is well done. Since we came here from Knoxville I have sent you three ten dollar bills and one five. Have you received them all. As yet you have only acknowledged the receipt of two tens and the five. Have you got the other ten yet? The work on the Lattice Rail Road bridge across the river at this place progresses very slowly. There is not very many men at work on it, but they have a steam saw mill nearby.

ready to run. This will be a great help to them as they have had to rip a great deal of their timber by hand. They have not got one span of the bridge completed yet. If they don't get along faster in the future than they have heretofore it will take them nearly all summer to finish it. Part of the men who were engaged some time ago building the trussel bridge have returned and are going to finish that job so that the men who are working at the lattice bridge can have it to work on. When the latter is finished the trussel work will be taken down. The men who were engaged on it have been building bridges on the Chisamauga Creek between Chattanooga and Ringold. They have built four bridges since they went from here. They say that Ringold is in communication by rail road with Chattanooga. They say that our posts are only a short distance beyond Ringold, which place is about eighteen miles south of Chattanooga. We once had a skirmish with the enemy at Ringold. The veteran regiments still continue to return. Their ranks generally are not very well filled. They don't average over four or five hundred men to the regiment. Did you see Col. Wolford's speech. I think the Kentuckians attach too much importance to themselves. I think if Kentucky had seceded it would have been just about as well for the Government. First they wanted to be neutral, just although there could be a half way ground between Patriotism and treason. Then they consented to be loyal, but have always seemed to think (like a spoiled child) that they should be humored in every thing, but this last move by the governor of the State, backed by Col. Wolford and others. I think will bring down on them a stinging rebuke such as they deserve.

Your husband Daniel Patton

Loudon, Tenn - April 3^d 1864

Dear Nellie

I received your letter of March 19th a day or two ago, but I have not had time to answer it till now. I don't wonder that it took you two weeks to make up your mind to

Kneel down at a Methodist mourners bench amid their groans and groans, but I do wonder that you ever mad up your mind to take such a step. I recollect when I was a boy that persons who desired the prayers of the Church were requested to remain after the congregation had been dismissed and if they were willing and if they were considered fit to join the names of those who did were read out afterward before the entire congregation and I think that was a more proper way of "coming out before the World" than to make so much parade about it as is mad at the mourners bench. The object seems to be to get them there under the impulse of the moment and gratify the vanity of the preacher. That is the reason I think that the Methodists always have so many backsliders. They occasionally get a real convert or seem to, but in such cases I think it will generally be found that this class had religion before and dont owe their conversion to the protracted meeting, while on the other hand, they get any number of dough heads, many of whom make a practice of "getting religion" at every protracted meeting and having a powwow made over them by the delighted preacher who always counts them as so many converts ~~themselves~~ that he has made, no matter how often they have been galvanized before. In your letter announcing the course you had taken, you gave a list of the persons who had been converted. I have been acquainted with only part of them, Mr. & Mrs. Drake, Mr. & Mrs. Polk and Lil Van. Now I ask you whether you candidly think that any of these persons can lay claim to a very great amount of judgement. Would you wish to be guided by their advice in a case where good sound sense was required. Dont you think them weak minded and likely to be guided in the wrong as the right direction. In regard to prayer meetings, I never thought they should be very public. When Christ held a prayer meeting he retired with his Disciples and there hid from the eyes of the world, communed with the Father and how higher can any person go for an example to be guided by. When addressing the Throne of God, what benefit

is it to mortals to hear your words or to see you at your devotions. A teacher or Preacher may do with propriety what would be altogether out of place in a hearer. They have Christ for an example. Let them as far as they are able imitate that example. How many sever from it and make examples that are no where to be found in the Chart that is to be their guide. Though a sinner myself, my instincts recoil when I think of the mummeries I have seen practiced at protracted meetings under the name of Religion, but one thing I wish to say to you and that is, be guided by your own conscience and dont let my opinions or that of any other persons be your guide in an affair of such vital importance. You say you always prefer looking at both sides of every thing and I think that is the only the bright side of every thing. In this I differ with you. I prefer looking at both sides of every thing and I think that it is the only way to form correct opinions and I had rather know the true character of a person than to believe them to be better than they are. Do you think, for instance it would be very good policy for a man to be seen in company with a prostitute or a lady in the company of a libertine merely because those persons could assume pleasing manners. Do you think because such lady or gentleman was unwilling to look at the dark side of such persons characters that their own reputations would not suffer by it. I suppose in doing business a man should consider every person honest till he found him out to be otherwise. How long would it take for him to lose all that he had. How long would it take him to credit out a large capital to people who would for the sake of getting what they wanted promise to pay in a short time and when they had been accomodated would either not pay at all or would wait till they got ready, unless compelled to by the law. You know that I have had some experience in this kind of business and from ~~Hamville~~ it seems to be with all the care I could take had a great deal of trouble to get my money. Those who wish to have the pleasure of looking only at the bright side of human nature can do so if they choose, but I prefer looking at every side of it. In short, I want to see it as it is and

then can shape my course accordingly. I told you some time ago that I thought "old swill tub" was going to try to get a furlough, but while on a drunken spree a few days ago he let the cat of the bag. He is trying to resign. Whether his resignation will be accepted or not, remains to be seen. He evidently fears there will be some hot work before very long and has conscientious scruples about exposing himself to a shower of bullets. If he resigns, the Lieut. who commanded us at Chicamauga will be our Captain. His name is Thomas Burton. He dont get drunk. I understand that Gen. Steadman who commanded our division under Gen. Granger at Chicamauga, will take command of this division, now that Gen. Sheridan is gone, he has had command of the post of Chattanooga for some time. He used to call this his Battery after the battle of Chicamauga and I believe in some of the reports it was called "Steadmans Battery". We have got our things from Chattanooga at last, but my blanket that I left there was missing. I will have to lose it. I am charged three dollars for it. Two spans of the bridge at this place is completed. The rest of the trussel work is nearly done. They have a sawmill in operation and they get along faster than they did at first. Gen. Sherman only stoped here about an hour and went on to Knoxville. The weather is wet and disagreeable. I think it very strange that you dont get the last ten dollars that I sent you. I have sent thirty four dollars in all since we came here from Knoxville. It seems to me that I sent the last ten to Brockway for you, but am not certain. If he gets it he will give it to you. you need not say anything about it. He may think you suspect him of dishonesty. Good bye for the present. Samuel

Charleston, Tenn - April 29th 1864

Dear Nellie
(I think this letter was dated wrong
should be 1865, according to context)

I have not received any letters from you since I wrote

last, but as you are so far from a post office, I cant expect letters from you as regular as if you were at Chatsworth. The papers teem with execrations on the course Sherman is pursuing with Johnson. I can hardly believe what is said of him, but if the truth, the undisguised truth has been told about this matter, he must either have been drunk or crazy. He certainly could not have been in full possession of his mental faculties or he would not have made such an arrangement with the rebel general. If, as represented he has left a road open for the retreat of Davis and Johnson. They have most assuredly before this time availed themselves of it, for they are not the men to let such an opportunity pass unimproved, but I still hope - tho seemingly against hope - that the affair has been misrepresented. I understand that vigorous measures have been taken to intercept Johnsons retreat though I fear at too late a period.

Afternoon - I was interrupted while writing this morning by the announcement that Gen. Johnson had surrendered and I thought I would postpone my letter til I heard more about it. The mail brought official confirmation of the news and added that old Jeff has again attempted to obtain permission to leave the Country, never again to return, but the paper did not state whether the request was granted or not, but I presume it was not. He seems to be losing his plumeage and dont strut so grandly as he did some time ago. How it must grind his naturally arrogant spirit to be compelled thus to beg permission to "leave his Country for his Country good." Whatever of his dignity ever pertained to his character, at once vanishes when he is brought face to face the punishment his crimes so richly deserves. How quickly his tone changes to the minor key when he has no longer a human wall bristling with bayonets between him and danger. Poor pitiful wretch I would like to see him when he swimp. Todays paper says Booths body has been put where it will never be seen by mortal eye again. I am glad that he did not escape. I hope the conspirators will all be captured, and receive the punishment they deserve. I enclose a scrap that I cut from the Louisville Journal. It is pretty good I think. The war is winding up as rapidly as any one

can expect. We may get home before our time is out, but as yet I don't indulge in any very extravagant expectations. At any rate three months will soon pass and then you can look for me home once more.

Your husband Samuel Patton

In camp near Aquith Georgia - June 7th 1864

Dear Nellie

I believe the mail goes out this evening so I will write you a few lines. Our Corps came here yesterday. We will probably remain here a day or two. The train is expected to come within five miles of this place tonight.

We are about thirty miles from Atlanta. Our advance is said to be at Marietta about fifteen miles south on the Rail Road, but I don't know how true it is. In fact I know but little about our present position, but I think if we have not got between the enemy and the Rail Road we have come so near it that the

Rebs. will have to work, if they get in a position to delay us much. Before we get to Atlanta. It is my impression that our troops are moving so as to kind of wedge

them off from Atlanta and unless they moved sooner than we found it out they will have to travel a much longer road than our troops, but they can move faster than we can as they have nothing to fear in their front while we must feel our way, but I think Gen. Sherman has out generalled Johnson so far and I think he will keep doing so, but if you read the papers you will know more of the army movements than I can tell you. All I know is what I see. Camp stories are not worth

listening to and we get no news lately. I paid ten cts for a Chattanooga paper today and there is not a single word of news in it. There is no other papers comes here now and they are not allowed to publish army news till it is a couple of weeks old. I wish I could get a late

Cincinnati or Chicago paper, but all we have to do here is to obey orders, but as long as we know we are driving the enemy we take it for granted that all is going well

I suppose when we get the news there will be a large lot of it either good or bad. I have not seen or heard from the dear yet and don't expect to very soon as I suppose they are not very near here. I wrote to father today. It is the first letter I have written to him for some time. I hate to write when I get no answer to my letters. I told him that neither of us had received any answers to our letters for a long time. The Post Office where they used to get their letters has been stopped. Letters to them must now be directed to Medina C. H. Medina Ohio. I think the last letters I wrote I directed in that way but am not certain. I am still getting better but don't gain strength very fast. I think the present campaign if successful will pretty near finish the rebellion. I would like to know how Grant is getting on in Virginia, but suppose I must wait a while longer before I find out and in the mean time we must attend to our share of the job. In the last battle our section was alone. The other two was about $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from us. They had a hot place but whiped out two rebel batteries. There is three or four of our Company supposed to be taken prisoners. We can't find out for certain yet. Good bye Nellie for the present
Your Samuel

In the field near Marietta, Ga June 24th 1864

Dear Nellie

The Rebs are making a stubborn fight here. While I write there is comparative quiet on this part of the line, broken only occasionally by the discharge of a cannon or stray shot from the Pickets, but the heavy fighting is generally done in the afternoon. Recently we have had very severe duty to perform. During the present month it has rained almost constantly and we have had to fight all day and work nearly all night in the rain and mud. I have not done anything for two or three days, being completely worn out. I kept at work as long as I was able to do anything at all, but I have never felt like myself since I got that dose of poison and for several days before I quit I felt my health gradually giving way under the hardships I had to endure, but we were short of men and had to fight in daytime and work at night in the rain and mud.

I have frequently had to do two and sometimes three men's work when under a hot fire, while the rain poured down in torrents and the mud was so deep it was hard to wade through it besides having to work our guns with half a squad of Cannoniers. I held out as long as I could, but had to give up at last, I am still with the battery but have to sit on at look at the rest working, being scarcely able to walk. Our Company is getting pretty near used up. The Postillions have to help work the guns. I hated to give up when there was so much to do and I could do no more. Others, who appeared stronger and more able to work than I was, gave out sooner than I did. I have the rheumatism in my shoulder. My back is so lame I can scarcely move. My bones ache, the cords in my limbs ache and feel so weak I can scarcely use them. In fact I am completely used up but it has quit raining at last and I think the rainy season is over and I will have a better chance to take care of myself than if it was constantly raining. I think it is only a kind of rheumatism that I have, as I have a good appetite and don't feel sick in the least. Perhaps it may soon wear off. Rheumatism don't generally stay with me long at a time. I have not seen William for some time. He was detailed to guard the wagon train, so I don't think he has been in any battle since I saw him last. I have not received a letter from you for some time. The last two I got was dated May 27th and June 5th and 16th. The rebels captured a Rail Road train lately and perhaps they got one of your letters. Try and keep in good spirits Nellie. I think the war will soon be over and then we may enjoy our home one more together. Wm said when I saw him last that Law had give out when we was at Kingston and been left behind. One of the boys detailed from a Wisconsin Battery in to ours was telling me yesterday what a nice place he had at home and in the course of conversation told me of a good berry bush (gooseberry) that he had got from a Peatchman. He says the berry is the largest he ever saw and promised me one if we should get home safe. His address is Richard Vanslyke, Lake Mills, Jefferson County, Wisconsin. I send the address so we wont forget it

Your Samuel

In the field near Marietta, Georgia June 26th 1864

Dear Nellie

The mail came in yesterday but there was no letter for me. I am not any better than I was when I wrote the 24th. I have a shade made of bushes to stay under and as long as the weather is fine I think I can keep more comfortable here than in a field hospital. We have a doctor now. We have not had one for almost a year. He is to attend to the two batteries of this Division. Before, we had to go wherever we could find medical attendance. I got some medicine from him yesterday. This hot weather is very hard on our wounded. They are dying off very fast. The Rebels must fare even worse as they cannot take as good care of them as we can of ours. It is said that the Rebels are sending their sick and wounded to the west to be taken care of and that they are dying off like sheep. Occasionally a Company or Regiment comes in and gives them selves up, while others I think will fight to the last. Those who come in say the Army is greatly demoralized and is only kept together by the severest discipline and when they fight they get gun powder and whiskey. One of our company was killed this morning. He was shot through the heart. Another died at the hospital. There is but little firing on this part of the line now. It has been remarkably quiet for several days. At present I can hear distant cannonading on our right. The lines have been gradually moving in that direction for several days. Day before yesterday I was told on what I consider good authority that a pontoon train was sent to the right which rests on or near the river. I think there must have been and probably still is some important movements in progress. I cant account for such long and continued quiet in any other way. Our right is said to command the Rail Road in the rebel rear. Our front is toward the east. I think unless our Armies meet with a decided reverse the heavy fighting will soon be over. Our Doctor has not got his medicine case yet, so I have not got any medicine today yet. It wont be here til tomorrow night. I dont think it is exactly like rheumatism. I feel more as though I had taken some drug and had taken cold and it had

settled in my bones and muscles, but I am to walk around some and it is not so bad as if I was confined to my bunk. When I got that poison, we was on the march and I could not get my medicine till the next day. I think if I could have got some before it had time to get through my system, I might be able to do duty now, but we had no doctor and I went to one that was just behind the Battery but he had his things packed up and was too lazy to open them to give me any medicine, though my face was swelled up till my eyes were nearly closed and my lungs were ^{stuffed} so much that I could scarcely breathe. He took me to get into an ambulance and keep in the shade as much as possible. Next day I got some medicine but it was too late for it to do me much good and I have not been well since and the hardships I have endured in the past few weeks has reduced my health to its present state. The Doctor has come around again as he did yesterday with medicine done up in papers in his pockets and I have just got some more.

Your Samuel

Chattanooga, Tenn Dec. 3rd 1864

Dear Nellie

I have delayed writing for several days on account of communications with the North being interrupted, but I understand that the mail came in last evening, so I will write you a few lines. The last letter I wrote to you I did tell you where or how to direct your letters. I wrote in somewhat of a hurry and did not think of it till after the letter was sent away, so while I think of it I will tell you. Direct to Battery M, 1st Inf. Arty, Chattanooga, Tenn. We are no longer in the 7th Corps, but are detailed for garrison duty here and in all probability will remain here till our term of service expires. There was three others came here from the Hospitals about the same time I did and we went to work and chopped a load of wood which we traded at a saw mill for slabs and built a first rate shabang. We drove four posts in the

ground, one for each corner and straightened the edges of the slabs and nailed them on flat side in and covered the shanty with our Buss Tents. The plastered cracks between the slabs and ~~mailed~~ with mud and built a fire place on one side. We have our bunks in one end, one above another which leaves us lots of room to move around in. We stole some boards to make a door and table of and made stools to sit on of pieces of slab. The boys all have good shabangs, the best they ever had. That is, the most convenient and comfortable, though they may not look quite so nice on the outside as some that were made here last fall of nicely grained doors and coloured glass windows, but a shabang built of slabs looks very well for a soldiers den. We get soft bread here, though the quantity is rather limited. The government allows us one lb. of soft bread per day, but the Commissary and Bakers have to steal about five ounces out of it, which makes the allowance rather small and since the cars stopped running our bread was cut down to one half that amount, though I dont think there was any necessity for it as there is certainly a large supply of rations here, but I suppose we will get the usual allowance again as the cars have commenced running again. One night I and the fellow that bunks with me went down town and stole a sack of flour, but it proved to be spoiled so we through it in to the River and stole some corn and traded it off for corn meal. We got a lb. of soda and expect to get some vinegar today, so we can have corn bread to make up the deficiency of Baker Bread. Since I came back we have got all the onions we could use from the Sanitary Commission and yesterday we got a barrel of sour crout from the same place. I suppose they have a large quantity on hand and must do something with it.

Chattanooga, Tenn Dec. 21st 1864

Dear Nellie

We have not received any mail yet since I wrote last and consequently I have not heard from home ^{at} least over a month

since I

ago. I wrote a letter some time ago, but could not send it on account of communications being cut off. We have got fixed very comfortably here, but I will have to leave at least for a while. I don't know where I am going but suppose it is up the river. Some time ago twelve of our Co. were detailed to go up the river to Harrison's Landing and now nine more of us are detailed to go some where, perhaps to the same place. There is no communications yet with Nashville, but I think there soon will be, as we have heard that old Thomas has defeated Hood and the latter is going south, having found the climate around Nashville to be rather unhealthy for his Army. I will put this letter in the same envelope with the one I wrote some time ago and could not send away. We are still on half rations or what they call half rations, but in reality about one third, as we get no rice or beans and get swindled on our bread. I have got along tolerable well however by stealing corn, but this don't taste as good as it would if we had some grease to put with it. We don't get any pork now at all, but get beef or something they call by that name. We drew rations yesterday for the balance of this month. I put all of my eleven days rations of hard tack in that haversack I had at home with me, but if we go up the river I think there will be a better chance to steal than there is here. Tell Joan that her bread lasted me till I got to Nashville and her butter till I got here. I use that little flask you gave me to keep pepper in. The jelly I finished at Lewisville and the cookery I used along the road. I don't see any earthly use for keeping us on half rations as there seems to be plenty here, but then I don't mind it as long as the Rebs are getting whipped. I would go on half rations the rest of my term if it would help along any with the war, but at the same time if there was any thing to steal I would try to get my share. I cannot send this letter today, but will leave it with Fred to send as soon as the mail goes through. We will probably leave the company today or early tomorrow morning. I will write again the first

opportunity. Direct your letters to Battery M, First Ill Arty. Chattanooga, Tenn. I probably won't get them very soon but it is the only way and I will get them some time if they don't come regular now
Your Samuel

Chattanooga, Tenn Dec. 25th 1864

Dear Nellie

I have just received your letter of Dec. 4th and a Presbyterian. I wish when you send me any papers you would send cheap papers. I want something that contains the latest news and the greatest quantity of it. We can't get much here but Religious papers and there is plenty of them throwing around camp all the time. When I got back from Nashville and read Jane Devy's letter, I had to laugh. It was old maidish in the extreme formal, starched up, stiff a perfect straight jacket on paper. When a person writes a letter I like to see it done in about the same style they would talk, but you need not mind telling her all I have said, but still she had no business to ask me if she did not want to know. I sent you a letter a few days ago, stating that I, with some others of the Company had been detailed to go up the river, but we have not gone yet owing to want of transportation. The mail came in from Nashville yesterday for the first time in about a month. It was not all distributed till this morning. I am glad to hear that your health is still improving. You must be your own judge about being able to teach school. I think employment of some kind will be beneficial if not carried to excess. Lying around indulging in the blues would undermine any constitution. You should avoid too much confinement. There is a medium for everything. Excess should be avoided. Too much exercise at one time is as injurious as too much rest. But it is Christmas today and I believe I wrote you a letter last Christmas, but we are not freezing around half naked as we were then and we have good shabango to stay in now and then we had none. We are still supposed to be on half

rations but the big loaf of corn bread on the shelf that we baked this morning for our Christmas dinner don't look much like Starvin and for my part I don't mean to go hungry in a place where I know there is plenty if I can get an opportunity to steal any thing to eat. I stole a large dutch oven from some government employes one night, which we use to bake our corn bread in. We mix it with salt and water and put soda and vinegar in it to make it raise. If we only had some grease we could get along first rate. We bake it and eat it cold. It is noon now and I guess I will stop writing for the present. We will have cold corn bread and coffee for dinner. How would you like to dine with us.

Your husband Samuel Patton

After dinner - Well I guess I will write a few more lines. I see by a paper that the President has called for 300,000 more men. I am glad of it. When I was at home every one seemed to be so much afraid of the draft that I am glad to learn that there is to be another. I want them to find out what it is to be a soldier. I guess they will find some differences between camp and home life, even if they don't have to serve on a campaign. It is not very cold here yet, except a few days at a time, though it is quite cool at night. We have plenty of house flies yet, so you may know that we don't have very cold weather. We are about one hundred miles farther south than we was last winter, but when we do have cold weather here, we feel it more than we would farther north where the cold weather is more regular. I think the Rebels army in the west is nearly used up and hope it will soon be quite. They have not much to depend on now, but Lees Army at Richmond and I think wont have any. I think about all the heavy fighting in the west has been done and with Sherman in Savannah, Thomas will recapture northern Georgia and the whole southwest will be at our mercy.

Goodbye for the present
Samuel

Chattanooga, Tenn. - Jan 1st 1865

Dear Nellie

Another year is numbered with the past. A retrospective glance brings scenes vividly to memory that in other days would have sent a cold chiver through my veins and even now seem like a wild dream, or some thrilling romance that might be the product of a fevered brain. First comes the East Tenn. campaign, ushering in the last New Year with its hunger, cold, forced marches over frozen or muddy roads, almost destitute of shoes or clothing. Sleeping at night without tent or blankets, drawing supplies from an almost famished country devastated by hostile armies till it appeared like a Desert on which the remaining evidences of civilization only cast a deeper gloom. Next, our short respite from privations and arduous duties which none could better appreciate than we did while remaining at Loudon. Then the Georgia Campaign under Gen. Sherman when day after day and week after week the roar of battle continued without intermission and night as well as day was devoted to the work of death and if nature-worn out by constant toil and exposure sought repose it was like sleeping on the bunk of Eternity, perhaps to be awoke from a sweet dream by the scream of some huge messenger of death as it swept by on its dreadful errand, or at best only woke to face the grim monster so much dreaded by all and reflect that perhaps he has slept his last sleep, except the one "that knows no awakening." When death and human misery in its most revolting forms constantly met the eye and no one knew what moment he would be launched into another world. Then I cast a last look at Kennesaw where the strife was still raging and the din of battle died away in the distance as the cars bore me off to the hospital. Then my hospital experience. Then my furlough home and return to the army and half rations. That day when I left home, when the cars moved off and I had nothing to do but compare the comforts of home with the

thankless drudgery and dangers of a soldiers life to which I was returning, I felt the contrast most keenly and thought how little those who were at home absorbed in money making thought, appreciate or cared what sacrifices others were making to secure the privileges they themselves enjoyed. All did I say, No, not all. There were a few, a very few bright exceptions that shone in strong contrast with the general selfish indifference of some and the covert hostility of others who would rather sell their liberty for money, enter into a compact with treason and bow in meek submission to the mandates of all the bands of traitors who have deluged our land with blood and sent thousands of our best and bravest men to rest beneath the sod or leave their bones to bleach on the battle field and who would conclude a

Camp of Battery "M." 1st Ill. Artillery
Chattanooga, Tenn Jan 3^d 1865

humiliating peace with these vile wretches and that when we have them almost conquered, rather than risk their lives in defense of their country. I had the blues for a day or two but I finally succeeded in shaking them off and tried to forget the present in anticipating of the future. Since I came back time has seemed to pass very rapidly. It is now two weeks since we were detailed to go up the river but we are still waiting for transportation. I understand we are to go to Kingston, a place about half way to Knoxville and near the river. Next morning after we was detailed, we went down and reported at Headquarters and were ordered to hold our selves in readiness to go at any time and since then we have not had to do any duty here though the other boys have to stand guard one day and night and next day have to drill twice, next day go to the woods and chop wood, next day drill and the next stand guard again while we dont have to go even to roll call or do anything, in fact are as independent as it is possible for a soldier to be. Since we came here all the Arty. in the place, our Co. included, had to draw muskets and drill in the

forenoon with them and afternoon in Arty. drill, so that we have to be both Arty. and Infantry (the same as heavy Arty.) When we go up the river we will take our muskets and forty rounds of ammunition with us. On the first of this month we drew ten days half rations again, but we get along very well as two of us went down the other night and stole a sack of corn out of the Government warehouse and took it to the mill and got it ground. There was about two bushels of it so there was about a bushel came to me as my share and as there is but two of us to eat it it will last some time. I think if we go up the river we will fare a great deal better than if we stay here. We will probably have an opportunity to forage some and that will help a great deal. At present we eat our two days rations of bread at two meals.

Jan. 2^d - I learned yesterday that no mail had come in and thought I would wait til it was distributed and see whether I got a letter before I closed this and we received it today about ten o'clock. It contained your letter of Dec. 11th, mailed on the 16th. I think you had not read the papers much or you would have known that Hood held possession of the Nashville Rail Road and consequently no letters could get through either way. We had no communications with the North for about a month. There was a man here this evening sent from Ill. by Adjutant Gen. Fuller to inquire into the Sanitary stores manner of distribution. He did not go to the Officers, but came to the Privates to know whether we had ever received any Sanitary goods or not and the boys all told him that they considered it a humbug. He said Ill. had given largely to the Sanitary cause and they wanted to know whether the soldiers had received it or not and requested that a person in the Co. be selected to make a statement of what we had received, if anything and also what our impression was in regard to the Sanitary Commission. One of the boys told him that the men generally considered it a humbug and he requested that all who held that opinion about it to hold up their right hands and I believe every man in the Company held up his hand. He said he had been around to a great number of Regiments from Ill. and that seemed to be

the general feeling among the soldiers. When he first came he talked privately with some of the boys, evidently not wishing to attract the attention of the officers till he had ascertained the feeling among the men, but finally one of the boys suggested that the bugle should blow the assembly, which was done and was the first intimation the Officers had of what was going on. They looked pretty blue, but dare not say anything as they heard the man state to us who had sent him and what his business was. This proceeding may lead to an investigation that will cut their supply of luxuries rather short. Goodbye

Your husband Samuel Patton

Poplar Creek Jan. 19th 1865

Well Nellie, I commenced a letter a few days ago, but did not finish it, as I was not certain when the raft would leave, but guess it is going down tomorrow, or rather is going to start. I don't know how long it will take it to get there. I have been doing some pretty big stealing since I commenced that letter the other day. There is an old secesh lives about a mile from here that feeds his Niggers last few years. They had been fattening a lot of hogs and he promised them half of the pork when it was killed, but instead of letting them have it he locked it up in his smoke house and refused to let them have it. There was about seventy hogs in all and some of them verry heavy ones. We heard of this proceeding and concluded we would go into the pork trade. So, night before last I and two more of our detachment went to his smoke house to inspect his pork. I went to work to pick the lock, while the other two lay down in a fence corner to wait the result of my experiments. I had been at work some time without much prospect of success when the door of a nigger cabin close at hand opened and some one came out. This caused me to suspend operations for a few moments and was just about to commence again when I heard footsteps some where, as though some one was creeping up to me in a stealthy manner and fearing I might get flanked I concluded to reconnoiter, leaving

the door. I moved cautiously around the smoke house and in the darkness could dimly discern two persons close behind the building. Not knowing whether they were trying to kidnap me or were on the same errand as myself, I concluded to move off as quietly as possible, but they had discovered me about the same time that I saw them and they followed me in such a cautious manner that I concluded that they were thieves, as well as myself and I halted when they called to me in an under tone to come back. When I did so and discovered that they were soldiers from other batteries belonging to the gang of men we had come with from Chattanooga. They joined my other two comrades in the fence corner and I proceeded with my work on the door. After about an hours work I got the door nearly open, but there was an old plain bit nailed on the door post that I could neither get the bolt past nor pry it off with the tools I had with me, when one of the boys that came last, came up and told me he would go get the niggers from one of the cabins. He said he had been there this day to reconnoiter and the niggers, two wenches and some children posted him up about the smoke house and its contents and said they wanted some of the meat if he got in. When we got an axe we soon got the plain bit pryed off and went in. I had some matches and they had a piece of candle, so we took our pick of the meat, which was piled up like cordwood inside. I got one of the largest sides of pork I think I ever saw. It must have weighed near a hundred lbs. I carried it off a short distance, cut a hole in it, put a stick through it and put it on my back and found by leaning forward and letting it lean against my back, I could carry it verry well, so I left it and went back and got a ham to put on the other end of the stick to partly balance it, thus making a pretty heavy load, but I got along with it by stopping to rest verry frequently, though I can't say that it did my back any good to carry such a load. The rest of the boys got as much as I did and took some to the niggers and they put it under the floor of the cabin. There was a barrel about half full of sorgum. It only had a lid on, so we could have got it verry easily if we had been able to carry it or had some thing to carry it in, but as it was we had to be content with the meat

after we got home we felt too tired to go back or we would have had a camp kettle full of molasses. He hid the meat out in the woods. Next day the Lieut. and some of the men were up at the old secesh's house and found him moving his meat into his house and he told them there had been about a thousand lbs. of it stole the night before. The Lieut. asked him if he thought any of us stole it and he said he did not know. He had tracked the salt in two different directions for some distance, but could not tell where it had went. The way we fooled them, we went in two different directions till the salt was all shook off and then we all steered for home. Our quarters were all searched yesterday, but they couldn't find any meat. The Lieut. had to own up that he was beat, beat. Good bye

Samuel

Chattanooga, Tenn Feb. 5th 1865

Dear Nellie

I am well and had a good dinner. We had a first rate "pone" for dinner. They pretend to be giving us full rations now but we don't have more than enough bread for two meals per day, so we either have to steal or go slightly hungry, now so there is agreeable to a person enjoying good health and consequently a good appetite. Yesterday we went "reconnoitering" and found at the depot some sacks of corn piled up near one of the large doors. The doors were made of rough boards and there was cracks between some of them. I made a spout of sheet iron and made it sharp at one end so it would cut a hole in a corn sack and last night five of us went down to see what we could do in the corn trap. I got four sacks. I was to get the corn and the rest were to carry it home. There is fire in our shawang now. Well, we went down and I and one of the boys sat down on the door sill as if we were just sitting there to have a chat, while we had a bag between us, covered the capes of our overcoats, while the corn was running through the little spout, into the bag. In this way we filled two bags or rather put as much into them as one man could

carry to our camp, a distance of about a mile. One fellow, a recruit, who had been boasting a great deal about the brave things he had done in New Mexico, fighting the Texans the best troops in the rebel army got frightened for fear we would get "gobbed" and cleared out, taking his empty bag with him and when he went to fill the other bag, found we had not brought it. The fellow thought I had it and thought he had tramp it, so I filled a haversack that I had and we had to come away only having secured two sacks of corn instead of four as we intended. The fellow that run away feels rather cheap today. He was telling one of the boys how "we" got the corn. "He" said I, interrupting him, you did not help. You run away for fear you would get gobbed. This rather dried up his bragging and I told him what I thought of his pluck. The boys call him the "big brave" now. Today I and one of the boys went into the Co. guard house for something and one of the boys named Rollins fastened us in, but I got the door open and got out so quick that he went in to see how I got the door unfastened and some of the boys fastened him in and kept him there till he began to get out and said he would have to take lessons of me. The boys had fastened the door better than when I was in it as they did when Rollins was in and I told them they might fasten it as they did when Rollins was in and I would get out inside of a minute. They did and when I got in they told me they had me now, but I picked up a thin piece of iron, bent it to suit my purpose and got the fastenings loose without them knowing how I did it and was out in less than half a minute. Good bye

Your Samuel

Morning Feb. 6th 1865

Well Nellie I thought I would write a few lines this morning before the mail goes out. There has been some rumors of peace Commissioners, but I don't think it will amount to anything. I don't think much of the idea of treating with Jeff Davis. I think if our government treats for peace with the arch traitor it lowers itself and loses its dignity, while if it concludes peace with him it loses half that has been gained by the war and that

too, when the rebellion is gasping its last. I go in for unconditional surrender to the Government, that is what we have been fighting for and I don't like to see it thrown away on the very eve of its accomplishment. Give me such peace commissioners as Grant, Sherman, Sheridan and Thomas. Furnish them with the means to enforce their peace arguments in their own way and we will have a lasting peace and one that we need not be ashamed of, but never treat with the men who were the authors of that bloody war. You said you had received Martha's photograph and that she was not very good looking. If she is so very homely, she must have changed a great deal since I saw her last. She was a great deal better looking than Caroline, though neither were any great beauties.

Your husband Samuel Patton

Chattanooga, Tenn - Feb. 15th 1865

Dear Nellie

I received your letter of Jan. 29th yesterday. I had just been on the detail to help get a raft of logs for wood for the Company. There is some men detailed every week or ten days to get wood for the Company. It is got about eight or ten miles up the river. Nearly all the wood that was near enough to be hauled by mule team has been used up, so we have to bring our wood down the river or on the rail road now. I don't see any prospect of getting our pay yet. The weather has been very fine for the past week, but it commenced snowing yesterday noon, or rather sleeting and the ground is covered with ice this morning. There is nothing of importance transpiring here now. I believe most of the troops that belonged to the Army of the Cumberland have been sent to other departments, as but little apprehension need be felt in regard to Hood's old Army. I think it must be pretty near played out. I received several Chicago papers from you lately, but they were three or four weeks old and consequently the

news was out of date. I don't think it is worth while to send any more, as it takes them so long to get here, while some of the boys get them direct from Chicago and then they come in about a week. I have just been vaccinated. He was told at roll call that the Dr. had some good matter and those that had not been vaccinated could get it done, so I thought I would try it. I have been exposed to the Small pox several times since I have been in the Army and did not know but I might be exposed to it once too often for my own good. When I was coming down the river on that raft that we run over the dams two or three weeks ago, the first house I came to after landing from a piece of the raft was one where they had the small pox, but I very fortunately did not catch it though. I went to the door and stepped inside of it, but did not learn that they had the small pox till after I left the house. The reason I did not stay longer was because I was hunting an augur and they said they had none and I was in considerable of a hurry. That, I believe, was the fifth time I had been exposed to it. Once, in our own Company when two of our boys had it at Shelbyville, once on the Battle Field of Mission Ridge when I stopped to see whether a rebel was dead or wounded and found he had the small pox, once at Loudon, once on the cars and this last time. But I must say good bye for the present

Your husband Samuel Patton

Chattanooga, Tenn Feb. 19th

Dear Nellie

I received your letter of Feb. 5th last evening. It was a good long one. I was provoked by the Palk's conduct. He promised positively to pay that as soon as he got paid for a certain job he was doing for some one. He said nothing to me about having employed any one to dig the ditch. That was a deliberate lie, manufactured by him to get rid of paying the debt. Like some others he probably thought he could swindle me out of it with impunity as I was absent. He talked very

patriotic when I was home. He has now given a pretty fair specimen of his patriotism. I think Ben Barnum must have gone crazy to think of taking his family to Missouri to have them butchered by the guerrillas. A man might take care of himself there but I would look on a man as but little better than a murderer who would take his family to such a place. I have traveled some in Missouri and I would not take the best farm in the state as a gift and live on it. Land in the northern part of the state is good, but they have no water except what they catch when it rains. They have neither wells or springs and they cant have any. I saw one place where the North Missouri Rail Road Co. were drilling for water, but had went near three hundred feet without finding any signs of it. The Southern part of the state is rough, rocky and poor. In regard to news, the only item of importance is that all the men that can be spared are being mounted to make a raid some where I saw a statement in the papers a short time ago that Gen. Thomas was going to make a big raid into Alabama and Georgia, but did not believe it till I saw the preparations making to put it into execution. They dont generally allow such things to be published and that made me think there was a "nigger in the fence" some where. Troops coming from Nashville recently say they only get half rations of bread there now. We get what they call full rations here constituting about enough for two meals per day, provided we buy or steal some thing for the third. It is getting to be pretty hard work to steal here now. Every thing is so closely guarded. Our Coffee is of a verry inferior quality I think they must boil it and get all the strength out of it to make essence of coffee and then dry it and ishew it to us if it was of a reasonable good quality. There is no prospect yet of being paid. Tak notice that the wire I put on that willow is kept on. If it comes off, fasten it on a limb as I did, so that it wont cut the body of the tree

Your Samuel

Chattanooga, Tenn - Feb. 25th 1865

Dear Nellie

I received your letter of the 12th a few days ago, but as I had just written to you I thought I would defer answering it for a few days. I suppose the ladies around Chatsworth will be verry much disappointed when they found out that they have been deceived about the cause of your improved appearance. It is raining verry hard today and has rained for several days. Our tent leaks on one side today. I have got on the dry side. It never leaked much before but the rain beats verry hard on one side and that seems to be the cause. Some of the boys who were up the river when we stole that old rebels pork, said it was all returned to him. The fellow that agreed to stay up and ferry us across the creek, but did not do it but went to bed and thus got us into a scrape, hid some of the meat for him and me, as we messed together, but when I had to come away I felt provoked to think he was going to have it all after acting so mean with us, but the boys said that the dogs found it and he did not get a bite of it. This piece of news of course pleased me. While I was up there I took some needles to the blacksmiths forge and made them as hard as I could and then broke them in pieces. There was an old Sgt. there who had charge of the working party who had mad himself particularly obnoxious to us by his meddling propensities and I had told him one day that he was breeding a scab on his nose and he would get it placed there if he did not mind his own buisness and the boys said that after I left they heard him talking with some of his friends about me pounding up the needles. It seemed that he thought I had been fixing the needles to poison him with and he was afraid to eat anything for several days after I left for fear he would get the pounded needles in his grub. They said after we left the Corporal who had informed on us was afraid they

would kill him or throw him in the river and they had considerable fun about it. I believe we were about the only old soldiers that was up there. Most of the rest were recruits and they seemed to think we were pretty hard customers. What few other old soldiers there was in the gang, were not any better than we were and the recruits seemed to think we were a regular gang of land pirates. The birthday of Washington and the capture of Charleston and retaking of Fort Sumpter were celebrated here by the firing of cannon, ring of bells and a chorus of about thirty locomotive whistles. You can form a faint idea of the effect of the latter, by holding down about that number of keys on the melodion at once and working the bellows. Some of the boys said they saw six train loads of soldiers going towards Knoxville. They seem to be moving all available troops from this department. I think we will soon hear of Richmond being evacuated or captured unless the rebels can master force enough to arrest the advance of Sherman. If they cannot do that, they have no alternative but to evacuate Richmond and every day they remain there will render their condition more precarious. I think even now all the rail roads that would be of use in transporting his army to a new field of operations where he could strike a blow on some weakly garrisoned post and gain an advantage before they would meet a force strong enough to oppose, have been out or are in eminent danger, so that when Lee leaves Richmond he will leave with Grant harassing his rear. The only way he can prolong the struggle, even for a short time, unless he can check Sherman, will be to abandon Richmond and with his army stripped for a forced march leave the rebel capital and attempt a raid into the North, or try to reach at district in the South that has not already been drained of the requisite means of subsisting an army. But if they cannot check Sherman without weakening Richmond the Confederacy has but to choose between dying

suddenly and lingering out a few more days of miserable and hopeless existence

Your husband Samuel Patton

Chattanooga, Tenn. March 11th 1865

Dear Felleo

I have just received your letter Feb. 23rd. It is the first I have received for some time. I am very glad to hear that your health is so good. I could not believe when I was home that you had the consumption and if you had I don't think your health would have improved so much. I think you had better let Mrs. Dvors know that she is mistaken about you. I think that is the reason she don't want to stay in the house. She thinks if she does she will have to take care of you and they may take a notion to leave any way and if they do and you should happen to be sick or out of employment, you would hate to go to stay with Joan after refusing to let them have the house. I think you had better relieve Mrs. Dvors uneasiness than run the risk of a change of tenants, or perhaps have the house stand idle besides running the risk of being without a home to go to in case of sickness or want of employment. I am glad you did not let Ben have the house as you say it looks bad enough now with out a lot a children exerting their skill to make it look even worse. I don't think you get all of the letters I write. Besides you must take into consideration that after I came here first there was no communication with the North for about a month and then I was sent up the river on detail and was gone about another month, during which time I had no opportunity to either get or send letters and recently the cars have been stopped running between here and Nashville by a number of bridges being washed away by the high water and you can easily imagine how little satisfaction it affords me to write letters when I know they will have to remain for an indefinite period in the Post Office at this place. Always, when I have an opportunity to send letters I write as often as once a week. I spoke to Mr. Adler about publishing that communication regarding the experience of this company with the Sanitary Commission. I told him that you had been requested to

publish it, but you did not feel at liberty to do so without his consent. He said you could use your own pleasure about it. If you do get it published you will have to copy it off on large letter paper, leaving the other side blank. On the next page I will write the substance of a statement which you can modify to suit your taste:

At the request of some friends I send you the following for publication, a manuscript copy of which was sent to me by my Husband. It will doubtless be interesting to many who have been contributing largely to the Sanitary Commission, particularly those who have friends in "Hullers Battery". This statement was made to an Agent sent by the Authorities of the State of Ill. to inquire into the efficiency of the U. S. Sanitary Commission in the Army of the Cumberland. A. Adler, a private, was selected to make this statement, which was unanimously approved by the Company.

6x If you do send it to the paper you spoke of you had better not any one know it until it appears in the paper, as they may not publish it, which would expose you to ridicule. I understand that the quarter master of this department has been put under arrest, but I have not heard what charges have been made against him, but hope they will put him through, or rather wish they would. I don't have much hope of it as the Officers are nearly all scoundrels and will do any thing almost to screen each other from justice and he will probably be tried by a court martial composed of Officers belonging to his own clique, as that is the way they do things in the Army.

Your Husband Samuel Patton

Chattanooga, Tenn March 17, 1865

Well, Nellie I missed sending my letter this morning, so I guess I will write a few lines more and send you. I don't know what to advise you about reading that document of Adler for publication, so I simply give you the facts in the case for you to arrange to suit your own taste. If you take a notion to have it published of course it would not do to get it published without the knowledge and consent of the author and as it was made to an Agent sent by the State of Ill. to inquire into

the matter there is yet a possibility though not a probability of it being published as there were probably a number of similar reports made to the same Agent. This Agent was, I believe by Gen. Fuller then Adjutant General of Ill., but I understand he has been superseded by some one else and his successor may not take any interest in the matter. In fact it may be to his interest to smooth the matter over, but this is merely conjecture. This same piece may have been published and none of us has seen it, but I leave the matter to your judgement. I spoke in the first part of this letter about the manner we have been furnished rations lately. I understand that the department quarter master who was recently arrested, has been cashiered and dishonorably discharged from the service. On the tenth we drew five days but only received quarter rations of meat, but yesterday evening the Captain said there was orders to give us additional half rations of meat in all. I hope the arrest of the scoundrel who has been trying to starve us that he might sell our rations will have a salutary effect on his successor. If we only got what the Government allows us we would have more than we could eat. I shall look for an improvement in quality if not in quantity of the next rations we draw, heretofore our coffee has possessed but little more strength than coffee grounds that have been boiled once. Who is the Mrs. Free who has got the mellophon and where does she live? Was she in Chatworth when I was home or has she come since and what does he do for a living, or is he teaching music only. I have no fears of the mellophon getting spoiled for that is already done, besides there is scarcely any two kays in it that are in tune. I believe I will bring my letter to a close or you will get tired reading it, so good bye for the present

Your Husband Samuel Patton

Cleveland Tenn March 24th 1865

Dear Nellie

I suppose you think it is time I would write you another

letter and I suppose it is, but I could not write sooner. We received orders on the 16th to come to this place, but didn't start till the 19th. On the 17th I, with four others of our company visited Lookout Mountain. The day was clear and pleasant. We passed over the battle field where Hooker "fought above the clouds" and ascended the summit ledge through a fissure in the rock. This ledge, though properly speaking it is not a ledge, but one vast sand stone rock, stretches many miles to the southward and in many places is over two hundred feet in height. The northern extremity of this ledge, formerly called Signal rock, but now Hooker's rock, over looks Chattanooga and Moccasin point. The latter lays on the opposite side of the river, which winds around it, forming a strip of land in the shape of a moccasin, the toe of which points toward the end of Lookout and is only separated from the mountain by the river. Far away to the north and west stretches the range of mountains of which Lookout forms a part, while to the eastward stretches a beautiful undulating landscape bounded in the dim distance by ranges of mountains, the farthest of which presented such faint outlines as to be scarcely discernable to the naked eye. We walked along the top of the ledge, occasionally amusing ourselves by dropping stones down on the burgards as they soared far below. This phrase may seem paradoxical, but nevertheless serves to express my meaning. In front of us was Mission ridge, now looking so peaceful, but once the scene of sanguinary conflict. Farther to the right was the gap, leading to the battle field of Chickamauga, which the enemy made such desperate efforts to get possession of on the 20th of Sep. 1863, but was prevented by the stubborn bravery of Gen. Thomas, who when over powered by numbers and nearly surrounded by the enemy was so opportunely reinforced by Branger, moving to his support without orders. The very highest parts of the mountain are watered by numerous springs of the purest water forming streams of water that in many places form beautiful cascades in their descent to the valleys so far below. We thought we would enjoy a bath in this high region but no sooner had we plunged into the stream than we were compelled to seek the shore. If you had ever taken

a bath in ice water, you might form some idea of the sensation we experienced, but if you probably never have I leave that part for you to imagine. There is a small village on the top of the mountain called Sumnerville composed principally of hotels, but now used for hospital purposes. We left Chattanooga on the 19th, but did not get into our quarters here till yesterday evening. The shabangs are very good ones, but have been kept as dirty as hog pens by the recruits that occupied them when we came. This would be a very agreeable location but for the clouds of sand that constantly blind our eyes. We are camped within about two or three hundred yards of the place we occupied before we started on the Georgia campaign last May. Then we were camped in a grassy hollow, but now we occupy a bare knoll. Nearly all of the 4th Corps has been transferred to East Tennessee.

Cleveland, Tenn. March 30th 1865

Dear Nellie

I spect I may as well write you a line this morning as we have got a table to write on, a window to furnish light and everything fixed up tolerably comfortable. It rained last night and we found our shabang did not leak, which piece of knowledge is very gratifying, but I had a nice time getting glass for our window. I got it out of the Government bakery in town. This was a pretty ticklish job as I had to cut the putty with my knife and it made considerable noise and the men slept inside that worked there, but I succeeded at last in getting four panes and returning to camp, when I found that the boys in the shabang had all given me up as an inmate of the guard house. I was on guard that night and had been called for guard and one of the boys had gone on guard in my place, to prevent the officers from finding out that I was gone. Most of the troops here are "yearlings". Our old division, the second division of the 4th Corps has been passing through here on the cars for several days and yesterday evening an officer of the "yearlings" got into a

fuss with one of them and struck him. When his comrades followed the officer to head quarters, throwing stones at him all the way and abusing him in the most approved manner. After they returned to the train, the officer came back with some guards to arrest them, when they commenced abusing them in such an outrageous manner as to attract the attention of their commanding officer, who came out and told the yeardlin officer and his guards that they "had got into bad company and the sooner they left the better it would be for them" and the yeardlins had to leave amid the shouts of the old boys who enjoyed the sport amazingly. I guess that officer wont meddle with old soldiers verry soon again. They are not verry good subjects for "eight hundred dollar men" to run over. I was somewhat amazed by a story I heard yesterday and will relate it to you. Adler, who is a Jew, was in our shabbang when some one made the remark that "he did not know where he could go and not find any Jews". Adler replied "you can go to hell" as much as to say there was none there. Besides the inference that the fellow was a candidate for that place. He then related an anecdote of a Jew and a Catholic Priest. The priest told the Jew that he dreamed the night before that he was in Heaven and St. Peter took him around to show him the place. The first door he came to St. Peter told him led to the Jews Heaven and he said he heard a great noise inside such as the Jews make in their Synagogs. The next place he came to he could hear some noise inside, but not near so much as there was in the place where the Jews were. This, St. Peter told him, was the Protestant Heaven. He then took him to the door of what he said was the Catholic Heaven and every thing there was so quiet he could not help contrasting it with the other two places which were so noisy, particularly the one where the Jews were. The Jew then replied that he also had a dream last night and it was similar to that of the Priest, except that St. Peter took him into the different apartments instead of merely showing him where they were as he had the Priest and the reason there was such a great noise in the Jews Heaven was

because there was so many there and more were constantly coming in and it was crowding to make room for them that created so much noise. He said St. Peter then took him into the Protestant Heaven and the reason there was not so much noise there was because there was but few in it and they were merely walking around for exercise. Next, St. Peter took him to the Catholic Heaven and when they came to the door all seemed quiet within just as the Priest had represented, but on entering found that the reason it was so quiet was because there was no body there. Did you ever tell Jayne Sawyer what I said about her letter? Perhaps if you did they thought they would take revenge on me by charging me for my board or perhaps they thought they would commence in time to get the pay for the trouble they anticipated a few months hence. I wonder if they dont think you are verry imprudent to take a school under such circumstances or have they found out their mistake yet. But I must close as it is nearly mail time
your Samuel

Cleveland, Tenn April 6th 1865

Dear Nellie

I have not received any letter from you for some time, but presume it is not your fault, as you are not very near to a Post Office. We fired a national salute on the thurs in honor of the taking of Richmond and Petersburg. I think the last scene of this great drama is now enacting and the curtain will soon descend. I am anxiously looking for farther developments of the combinations around Richmond as well as particulars as well as of what has already transpired. The latest accounts we had though somewhat confused estimated that the captures were at twenty thousand prisoners, 28 locomotives and about 150 passenger and freight cars. These will enable Grant to follow up his success with vigor and keep up communication with his base at Richmond as it wont probably take long to repair the Rail Road. I have had a verry sore throat for several days but it is getting better. In other respects, my health is verry good. There is a

rumour of the paymaster coming, but I can trace it to a very reliable source. By the first of next month there will be a year's pay due me. Four months however, will be at thirteen dollars a month. When you go to Chatworth next time I wish you would get Mrs. Free to give you a lot of the defective Bep. in the melodeon and when I come home I will bring some with me to replace them. I think at the rate U. S. currency is increasing in value that by the time we get out of service one dollar in green backs will buy as much as two now. We have to drill four hours every day, but the boys don't take much interest in it. All they are looking for is the time when they will cease to be dogs and get to be men once more. Spring has set in at last and the fields and trees look green once more. Have you not got any money at all to get what you want. Why don't they pay you for your last term of school, or can't they get the money to do it with. I hate to have you wearing such old clothes, but I don't see how I can help it as I can't get any money till they see fit to pay us. It seems as if soldiers were a class of people that every person takes delight in swindling. Nothing seems too mean for people to do to them. I never had a very high opinion of human nature, but since I have been a soldier I have learned that it is the sum of all that is mean and detestable, knowing that soldiers cannot help themselves. Both the officers and the Government and the men at home seem only intent on wringing every cent from them they can get no matter how dishonest the means to be employed in doing it.

Your husband Samuel Patton

Cleveland, Tenn. April 15th 1865

Dear Nellie

We have received a telegram announcing the death of President Lincoln by the hand of an assassin. In the Army the current indignation runs deep, coming as it does on the heels of such an exhibition of clemency as Lee's Army was the recipient of. It stirs the deepest feelings of which the human heart is susceptible. We be to Johnson's army if Sherman's troops hear of this before he surrenders, as he will undoubtedly have to do if he wants to offer battle. Let this news be read to them on the

eve of an engagement, as important news sometimes is, and they will sweep Johnson's army from the face of the Earth, while Lee's for quarter will fall on the ears of men, unheeded, as relentless as the Angel of death himself. The dispatch states that Seward was stabbed in the neck, but that there was no arteries cut, so there may be a possibility of his recovery, but Lincoln, who was shot through the head, died this morning at twenty minutes past seven. This sad affair gives us a President that I have but little confidence in, but still hope for the best. The man that will get drunk on the day of his inauguration can have but little respect for himself and less for his Country. I know how little dependence is to be placed in a drunken officer on the field of battle and what can we expect from such a character at the helm of state. Like a drunken Pilot taking charge of a ship that has nearly weathered the storm and is at last steering clear of the breakers, he may yet let it drift on the rocks that loom up to the leeward, when a steady hand and clear head would have guided safely beyond the reach of danger. The most inveterate enemy of the South could not have dealt a more deadly blow to the rebellious States than the assassins of Lincoln has done. When the South lays prostrate at the feet of her conquerors begging for mercy, only to lop off the hand that offers it, what can we think of the judgement that prompted such an act, and who could blame the North if the South were swept by the red hand of extermination in retaliation for this outrage. Instead of the clemency of Lincoln, the vengeance of Andrew Johnson will be meted out to them, who himself once driven from his home by rebel tyranny will be now likely to deal out to the leaders of the rebellion the punishment they so richly deserve.

Charleston, Tenn. April 20th

Dear Nellie I commenced on the 19th to write you a letter but delayed finishing it till the rail road to Nashville would be in running order again, a number of bridges having been swept away by the recent high waters. The

Charleston May 3^d 1865

Dear Nellie

I received yesterday your letters of March 22 and April 13th

one of them contains 3 stamps. Day before I received one containing a one dollar bill which comes just in time, as I had just wrote a letter to you on my last sheet of paper and besides was short of rations and there is no chance to steal around here. I begin to think most of the 1862 troops will be discharged in June and am living in hopes that we will be fortunate enough to be included in the lot, tho there is no doubt in my mind that those who have been in ~~active~~ ^{active} service this winter will be discharged before those who have been doing garrison duty. If there is any preference, show they certainly should have it, but everything is so uncertain in the army that we never know what is to be done with us until it has been done. If they should commence to discharge now it would be nearly two months before they would all get home. They will probably first discharge those who are in hospitals and don't need any further medical attention. That order ^{having been} already issued, next they will probably discharge the 167 men who have been in active service during the winter. Then our turn will come, so that at best we will not get home before some time in June. I base my opinion on the late order of the War Department to the Chiefs of Subsistence "not to purchase any more provisions than enough with what is already on hand to supply the army in the field to the first of June. The one year men and veterans will be probably kept longer. If not until their term has expired. You spoke in one of your letters of taking a school for another term. I don't think you had better do it as I will probably be home by the first of Aug, if not sooner. I believe the law reads that those who were mustered into the service before the middle of a month shall be discharged on the first of that month, while those who were mustered in not till after the middle of the month shall be mustered out on the first of the next month and as we were mustered in on the 12th of August I think we will be mustered out on the first. That is if we have to serve our time out, but hardly think we will. You might try and see if you can trade our stove to Fecker for a "vulcan air tight" of a smaller pattern, or for some kind of a coal stove that has the fire in front and that we won't have to take the lids off to put coal in. You will probably have to pay the difference in money as he will probably not want to

trade even, unless you take a very small one, but I don't think we need a very large stove. The one we have is a great deal larger than is necessary.

Morning 4th I received another letter from you yesterday dated April 23rd. I seem to be in a streak of luck getting letters lately. This makes four letters in three days. The Brigade of one year men who were posted at Cleveland and this place have gone to Dalton and perhaps beyond. We turned over our extra ammunition yesterday, but there is but little probability of us having to use even what we have, as this is I believe included in the territory surrendered by Johnson to Sherman. I think they are going to open the Atlanta road again this summer, so they will make these "yearlings" earn some of their bounty money. "Oed Butts" (our Captain) was Chief of Artillery in the brigade and we did not know but he would go with them, but I guess he won't as he has received no order to that effect yet. In fact, I don't know whether there is any arty. in the Brigade or not, but rather incline to the belief that there is not. We have very good times here. We only come on guard about once a week and have but little other duty to perform and as a general thing do just about as we please. Most of the boys get the citizens to cook their rations and board with them. There is two women and a little girl lives in a house near the fort, built for them by the Arty. men that were here before we came. They cook for eleven of us. I did not go there the first few days, but they took my rations down the last time we drew. They cook our rations for what they eat them selves and then take in washing. They are Refugees from near Atlanta, Georgia. They make excellent light bread which is something the Tenn. women can't do. We save more in this way than what they eat amounts to, as the baker don't get any stealing out of it.

Your Samuel

Charleston, Tenn May 17th 1865

Dear Nellie

I spect you will think this is a small piece of paper to

commence to write a letter on, but it is all I have at present and I suppose if I write you a sweet one, you wont grumble but then you never was much addicted to that practice anyway. I suppose we will be home some time in June and then I can use my tongue instead of my pen and not withstanding that is supposed to be an unwruly member you may possibly prefer it to the slower process of writing. The war is over and old Jeff was found seeking the last ditch under his wifes clothes, which by the way was a queer place for him to expect to find it I think. The Captain received an order a few days ago to report how many men were in the Company whose time would expire in August how many in July and how many veterans and how many recruits he had. This report was sent to Nashville and will be acted on I suppose as soon as its turn comes. I think we will leave here as soon as we here from it which will probably be by the first of June. I have not received any letter from you very lately. I answered the last one I received. I look every day for letters, but dont get any. Perhaps they will all come at once as they did the last time. You need not direct any more letters here as we will probably be away before they can get here after you get this. I have been writing more poetry, something after the style of the "Clowns Lament" that I sent you some time ago. My last piece is entitled "The Office Seeker" I sent it down to Cleveland a day or two ago. I understand the boys are going to get it printed in the same form as the Clowns Lament. I will send you a copy when it comes out. Good bye for the present

Your husband Carmel

Charleston, Tenn. May 30th 1865

Nice Nellie I have managed to get some more paper. I sold some files I had and got one dollar and a half which will probably have to do me till my time is out. The prospects of our getting out before that time are too much like the meap to inspire much confidence in their reality. The report sent to Gen. Thomas will have to be sent to Washington along with other of a similar nature when

the war department will decide what organizations will get out and what will remain. Still there is a possibility if not a probability that we will get out some time in June. Still I have ceased to look with much confidence on the prospect of such an event. I dont think you get all of my letters or if you do I dont get all of yours. At any rate there is some that I have written that I have received no answer to. I wrote to you some time ago to get Mrs. Free to give you a list of the defective kemp in the mellophon and send the list to me and when I went home I would take some with me to replace them. I could get them either in Springfield or Chicago and we will probably be sent to one place or the other place to be mustered out when the order finally comes. I received your letter of May 8th a few days ago, but couldnt answer it as I had no paper to write on and did not like to beg any as all the boys are a hard up as I am. The Government dont issue us full rations, or rather the quartermaster doesnt. I presume he thinks his occupation of swindling soldiers out of their rations and selling them will soon be gone and he will ply is faithfully while the opportunity lasts. At first when we came here we did not steal any, but it is a poor time for a thief to reform when he has not enough to eat, so we backslide and as is usual in such cases become worse than before. You said that Jimmy had written to me, but I guess he did not direct the letter right. At any rate I never received it. You never told me whether you had made arrangements to have his land worked or not. It would be better even to pay some man to work it besides giving him all he could raise, tho that I dont think is necessary as the crop will pay a man for working it, though I dont think it will do much more. I left uncultivated this season it will be worse than if it had never been broke. You must hold Osburn to the bargain he made with William about the forty acres north of it as it is the best half of the eighty and Jimmy can pay for it easy enough if he tries and eighty acres will just make him a nice farm. We have got a pet toad in our Chevang. Just now it hopped into the hat embers in the fire place and if you ever saw a toad dance a jig you can form some idea of his toadshup movements while exploring that unpleasant locality. They say a burnt child dreads a fire. I guess a burnt toad will

be careful not to get in the hot ashes again. Talking of pits reminds me of a pit cat the boys have down at Cleveland and a few nights ago she had kittens in one of the boys tanks but I guess our pit toad wont play that game on us.

You will probably wonder what amusement the boys can derive as a general thing from such a pit. Well, they spit tobacco juice in his eyes and do many other barbarous things that dont probably afford as much amusement to the toad, as to his tormentors, but that is his lookout. If he dont enjoy the amusement, he has no business to stay in such company. I went out the other day hunting mulberries and got as many as I could eat. There is plenty of them here and they are nice and ripe now. This is a great country for wild fruit of almost every kind. Mulberries, Blackberries, Wild Cherries, Pawpaws, grapes of different varieties, some of very large size and Persimmons grow in the greatest abundance. All that is wanting to make this the greatest fruit country in the world is a little Northern enterprise. The peach and apple trees are literally loaded with fruit but the people here have not ambition enough to graft or procure good fruit trees and let them grow like Bramble bushes, taking no care of them at all. There was four stamps in your letter of the 8th. I hardly know whether it will be worth while for you to write any more letters to me or not as it is so uncertain how long we will remain here and it seems to take letters nearly three weeks to come from home here and if it takes my letters that long to reach you, it is not awfully likely that we will be here in that time and if we are not I would never get the letter. If you do write dont put any money or stamps in the letters as the probabilities are that I wont get them. Still if we dont leave I would like to hear from you

Samuel

Charleston, Tenn June 3^d 1865

Dear Nellie

I received your letter of May 21st a few days ago, but as I had just written to you I thought I would defer answering for a

while. I see by yesterdays paper that Kerry Smith has surrendered. The trans Mississippi department so that there will be no need of sending a large army there. This greatly increases my hope of getting out sooner than the expiration of our term of enlistment. The troops that would have been sent to Texas or a portion of them can be added as garrisons in this department and thus relieve the 162 men who are more entitled to an early discharge than any others now in the service. There has no order been received yet relating to our discharge that I know of. There was a report some time ago that all would be discharged immediately whose term of service expired previous to the first of Oct. but I believe it only related to those in hospitals who needed no future medical attendance, but that is no indication that those in the field will be discharged. There is a report that the Army of the Cumberland will be paid soon, but I dont think we will get paid til we are mustered out. Old "Swiss Lub" told one of the boys who was down at Cleveland yesterday that we would "positively be paid the coming week" but he has recently taken a new contract of lying and it takes a greater stretch of credulity than any of us can attain to believe any thing he says. There is some of the boys whose time is out on the 12th of June. He pretends that he has been trying to get them discharged and that Thomas said they could not be mustered out til the 11th of August when the balance of the company goes out, but they think he only wants to keep them til he can take all the company home together and make a show of himself. They have got a lawyer, an ex Col. of a Tenn. regiment to attend to the matter for them. He says he can get them out and that old Cap could if he wanted to. These men were mustered in by a U. S. mustering officer before I enlisted. I hope they will succeed. I would like to see them beat the old scoundrel. President Johnson long expected amnesty proclamation has appeared at last, but I dont see much amnesty about it. It reads more like the sentence of condemned criminals than any thing else. Parson Brownlow has also issued a proclamation, the real essence of which is to "treat as friends those who have been unwilling instruments in the hands of

the rebels, that it is right that the rest of the Secesh should suffer for the wrongs inflicted on Union men, but that it should be done in a lawful manner in a civil court and that they should be made to pay every cent that they had caused Union men to lose." He then pictured the miseries inflicted on Union families by their tyranny and persecutions and then adds - in substance though not so many words - "that they must not lynch and murder them, but if they did he could not help it." These two proclamations one from their Governor and the other from the President of the United States have caused great delight among the real substantial Union men of Tenn, while I guess the rebels begin to think they have murdered their best friends and begin to view Lincoln's character in a different light, since they have felt the weight of Johnson's heel. The Union men have already commenced to arrest those who were engaged conscripting for the rebel Government, while many have sued the leading rebel citizens for large amounts as damage for losses sustained in consequence of their persecutions. I was amused the other day at one of the boys who was telling his experience while on a scouting expedition in the country. He said he stopped at a house where there was two pretty good looking women, that is for this country - and one of them had a young child in her arms. He said he asked her if that wasnt her child and where her husband was and she said she "never had any". He then said that she said it was, but said "cant a woman have a child without a husband?" He then asked her if that was all the children she had, when she replied that she had six. Then he asked her where they were and she said their dadies had taken them away. He then inquired if they did not all belong to the same man and she said "no, they all had different dadies. She then heard a boy come whistling up through the woods and he asked her whose boy that was and she said that was her sisters boy. In a few minutes the boy came in and he was about half nigger. That, he said was enough for him so he left. I guess I wont

write any more this time so goodbye for the present.
your Samuel

Your last letter came a great deal quicker than any I have got lately. You may as well keep on writing for there is no telling when we will get home. You need not look for me until you see me coming.

Charleston, Tenn June 26th 1865

Dear Nellie

I received your welcome letter of June 11th several days ago and now shall attempt to answer it as there appears to be no prospect of getting home very soon my self. We might have been home at least two or three weeks ago if the drunken old scoundrel who calls himself Captain had not been trying to keep us back. I cant find words to express my detestation of him and consequently shant attempt it. You need not begin to look for me home till you hear we are coming for it will take two or three weeks after we leave here before we get home. You need not look for me by the fourth of July as it will be impossible to get home by that time, even if we would start now. Even after we get to Chicago we will be detained some time before we get paid off and then I will have to stay a day or so to get some things I want. I will have to get a new bellow vice and in fact an entire new set of blacksmith tools or steel to make them, which will cost me in all about seventy dollars thanks to the swindling Henshaw tribe. I will also try to get some paper in Chicago to paper the house with as well as some other things that we will need worst and then by the time I get some iron and coal to go to work with my money will be about all gone, but then if I get home safe and sound it will be a great deal more than a great many others will do. Old "Buti" has been telling the boys for some time that they would start home in a "day or two" but the time seems as far distant now as ever. It is still "in a day or two" and the time never comes. My arm has got entirely well. My health is good now. Goodbye for the

present. I will write again soon if we dont start home.
your other half Samuel

Charleston, Tenn July 4th 1865

Dear Nellie

The fourth of July has come and there is still no prospect of us getting home. If there is one portion of Hell Hater than the rest I hope our commander will be consigned to that particular spot. "While little devils dance with glee and lock the door and lose the key." I believe if I was to find the old scoundrel laying dead, some where I would not bury him, but would leave his carcass for the buzzards to feed on. Men who enlisted long after we did have been home nearly a month and still there is no prospect of us going. Yesterday he went past here on the cars as drunk as a brute and the boys were all wishing that he would fall off and get killed and there is some of them of them I think would be kind hearted enough to help him a little if they could do it without being found out. He had been up to Riceville and got one of his drunken chums to go back to Cleveland with him and I suppose they are having a big drunk there today. There is no longer the shadow of a doubt that he is trying to keep the battery in as long as he possibly can and while he is getting big wages and has nothing to do but drink whiskey he can still lay out his spite on the boys. We fired a national salute this morning at sunrise. There is nothing of importance transpiring here now. Last night we went out into the country and broke into a Spring House and stole some milk and butter and had a very good breakfast this morning. The last letter I believe I got from you was dated June 11th. I have put off writing to you from day to day. I think I could tell you something more definite about when we would get out but at present I see no prospect that looks at all cheering. After noon, One of the boys who was down at Cleveland has just returned and he said old Cap. was so drunk he could not get on his horse. He says some of the boys have

wrote to the Governor of Ill. about being kept in so much longer than we should be. The men all hate him, they thre, and they dont say anything. He is fast losing what few friends he ever did have Samuel

Charleston, Tenn July 11, 1865

Dear Nellie

I suppose you are tyard looking for me and not seeing me come. It seems that "old gits" is keeping us til the last moment, but he cant keep us much longer. I believe all of the artillery has been mustered out along this road except us and he cant keep us always. He has sent away his final report stating that we are entitled to be mustered out on the 11th of August. This he had to do one month before our time was out or have his pay stoped. When this has time to get around we will probably get orders to report for muster out at Nashville or Chicago, but I dont think we will be home much before the expiration of our term. We are trying to take things as comfortably as possible, tho it is provoking to be kept so much longer than we should have been and all on account of one mans contrariness, but the old scoundrel I think will find out when the boys get from under his thumb that they will not be so docile as he probably immagines. He has but few friends if any in the company. Yesterday we killed a pig and last night stole a lot of potatoes, so we are pretty well provided with rations. There is four of us cooks together. We can get plenty of ripe apples, tho not of the best quality. July 12th - I thought I would not finish my letter until today and perhaps I might have something more definite to write, but there is no news at all. The weather here is quite rainy now and is not so hot as it was a short time ago when the mercury stood at 105 in the shade. I have not received any letter from you since I wrote last. I suppose you are almost getting discouraged waiting for us to be discharged, but it is no use. You may as well quit thinking about it til you

Fear we are coming. For one thing is certain, "old
guts" will keep us just as long as he can. He is
scarcely ever sober, but I hate to think on the
subject, for it only provokes me and don't do any
good
-your Samuel

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