

CIVIL WAR LETTERS OF JASON S. CLARK

Written during his service in the Union Army
Company G, 10th Regiment, Michigan Infantry

1862-Feb-02	Flint, Michigan
1862-07-24	Camp Denison, OH
1862-08-11	Camp Denison, OH
1862-09-01	Camp Denison, OH
1862-12-14	Nashville, TN
1863-04-06	Nashville, TN
1863-04-08	Nashville, TN
1864-04-28	Murfreesboro, TN
1865-06-16	Camp News, Washington, D.C.

Flint(, Michigan), Sunday, Feb. 2, 1862

Good afternoon Sister Evaline,

I am quite well today and I hope these few lines will find you the same. I have not forgotten you, dear sister, nor ever shall I though separated far from each other. The remembrance of other days come rushing on my mind. The dear old times when we as a family could meet together in the time of our sunny childhood when we played by the side of the bubbling brook. But those times are passed and gone. The remembrance of which bring a tear unbidden to my eyes.

We expect to be mustered in Monday next. When you write tell me if our folks have got them things yet that I sent to Mr. Smith, 4 mi. north of Almont and half a mi. west.

Give my love to Mina and Louisa and to Peter.

Except the same for yourself.

From Corporal S. J. Clark

To Evaline Churchill

Thou are gone kind dear brother
Far from thy youthful home
And the hearthstone now seems lonely
Without thy noble form

Guide Oh gently guide, dear Savior,
That dear brother far away
While the cannon roar around him
And mid dangers he may roam
Safely Lord, do bring him home.

Camp Denison, Ohio
July 24, 1862

Dear brother and sister,

It is through the blessings of an all wise God that I am permitted to pen these lines to you. It is a sorrowing time. Disease is raging in our regiment. Thomas has gone and poor Walter has fallen on the field of battle. Truly it is a time of trouble. Our boys are scattered all the way from Carolina to here, in different hospitals. There is a lot now in this ward that is nearly gone. There were three died out of one company here at this hospital and I heard of four of our regiment dying at Cincinnati and I don't know how many more.

The boys write that there is but 75 men in the regiment fit for duty. Disease and the doctors kill more in an army than the rebels.

I have wondered a good deal since I got my reason back again why they didn't kill me before I got away from there. I had a sore mouth and my teeth was all loose for two months after I left the regimental hospital from the effects of calomel that I took there. When I was burning up with the fever they would pour the quinine and brandy down me. We are not much better off here as far as doctoring goes but I have got so I know enough not to take their medicine. My health is not improving very fast. I have taken so much poison medicine that it is all through my system. I am in the same situation that I was the time I took Dr. Beardsley's poison. I am not quite so poor as I was. I am bloated up some but don't gain strength much. I can crawl around some.

I went out a black berrying this forenoon and got enough for my dinner and supper. I suppose I stir around too much for my own good but I am so tired of the hospital and so lonesome. It has been three months the 1st of July that I have been in the hospital and away from the boys.

Cyrus is here with me. If it wasn't for him I should have no one to mate with. He is getting pretty hard up. He has got the jaundice and liver complaint.

I should like to come and make you a visit now you are in your new house but I must wait patiently for my lot is not so hard as hundreds of others.

How I should like to be to the prayer meetings. I think I could enjoy them now if I was there.

Tell Nelson and Louisa that I have not forgotten them yet and tell them to write to me. I should like to get a letter every day but I must bring my letter to a close for the mail will be taken to the post office at five o'clock. I expect a letter tonight.

It is just half past four. When you write tell me the news. Write soon from your affectionate brother. J. S. Clark

Farewell for the present to my brother and sister and Mr. and Mrs. Churchill.

Direct to Jason S. Clark
 Military Hospital
 Camp Denison, Ward 14
 Ohio

Give my love to all the friends. A kiss for you and Loren, dear sister. Pray for me when it is well with you. Farewell, Farewell.

Military Hospital
Camp Denison, Ohio
August 11, 1862

Good evening dear Brother and Sister,

I take my pen to answer your letter which I received this morning. I was very glad to receive it and would have got it sooner but it lay in the office and was advertised. It is the first that I have had from you. I got one from Mary that was directed in care of Dr. Hoge, 4th ward. I got one from Mary last Saturday and from George and Caroline and have received several from Susan.

You must have written some letters that I never got for I heard that there was 4 or 5 to the regiment when I left Hamburg Landing. I have written back to the regiment for my descriptive roll so that I could get some pay but have not received them yet. Though I am not in any special need for money just now for I drew \$26 the 15th of June and I had four dollars then, making me \$30. I sent Mother a gold dollar and have \$22 left. So you can see how much money I have spent in two months. I have bought a good deal of milk and some butter and eggs. Every thing was very high down south. Butter 40¢ a pound, eggs 30¢ a dozen, milk from 15 to 20 cents a quart and cheese you would get about 2 or 3 bites for a dime. So you can have some idea how the poor soldiers money goes. When he can not eat such stuff as is provided for him. But it is some better here.

I got a quart of milk for 5¢. Cheese for 10¢ a pound. There is plenty of ripe peaches and apples here now but it takes money to buy them.

But I suppose you want to know how I am getting along. I am some better than I was when I wrote before. Am so as to be up and around and am quite comfortable. I go to the station which is about a quarter of a mile every day and sometimes twice. Last Saturday Cyrus and I went to Miamiville, a distance of 1 mile, but on account of the guards stationed on the bridge we had to go 2 miles to get there and one mile back. Making 3 miles march in a half day. It was a little too much for us. I don't know what Geo. Canfield meant by saying that I was coming on the next train. For I have not been examined yet.

I have not seen Joh Pomeroy since Sat. night. He was over to my ward to bring me a letter that he got in his sister Ann from Mary.

I have not found Homer Smith yet. I went to the 4th Ward but he was not there.

It is past 10:00 o'clock and I must stop scribbling and go to bed for I want to take this letter to the office in the morning.

Give my love to all the friends. Send this letter to Mary and if you think it worth the transportation. No more at the present.

Good-bye a kiss for you and Loren.

To Eveline and Peter I remain your brother
Trusting in God

Jason S. Clark

Camp Denison, Ohio
Sept. the 1st, 1862

Good Morning Dear Brother and sister,

How are you? I should like to call in this morning and see you but haven't time, so I will send you a letter to let you know that I am able to be around and eat my usual allowance of beef and potatoes, provided I can get as much as I want, and very often it is not more than half cooked. It was the case this morning.

It would be amusing to you to see us at mealtimes. Such a scrabbling. It reminds me of a drove of hogs about half starved. When you throw a basket of corn among them. The biggest ones is the best fellows. But I have got so I can hold my own pretty well.

But I think it is a down right shame to use us as they do and then to see it come out in the Cincinnati papers that the soldiers get everything they want to eat; such as beef, potatoes, bread, butter, eggs, sugar, molasses, coffee, tea, rice, and more things than I can remember. But if it comes here we don't get it. It is devoured by the big bugs. But I don't want to make a long complaint, only to let you know the truth for I suppose we get as much as we deserve but I don't want the people of Ohio to have the praise of doing so much and so well by the sick soldiers when they don't do it. I have no news to write.

I heard two sermons yesterday. I enjoyed myself pretty well.

Got my likeness taken last week and sent it home. Probably you will get a chance to see it. I forgot to tell you that I have lost the most part of my hair and what I have left is coming out very fast. It was caused by the fever I suppose. I received your letter in due time and was glad to hear from you and to hear that you was well. Give my best respects to Kendell and Nelson. Tell them that I was glad to hear from them, and that I will write them a letter when I get some news to write. Cyrus sends his best respects to you. Give my love to all inquiring friends and except the same yourself. I have written to Stephen and Angeling. I expect an answer this week and one from Susan tonight.

I suppose I ought to write Mary a letter today but you can send this to her and it will answer the same purpose. I will write to her next time. I will stop this scribbling for the present. I remain your brother the same old sixpence.

P.S. Evaline here is a small token of affection you can wear it and remember the giver a kiss for you and Loren. Goodby S.J.C.

Nashville, Tennessee
Sun., Dec. 14th, 1862

Dear Brother and Sister,

I sit down to write you a few lines to let you know that I am well and I hope that these few lines will find you the same but I think that you owe a letter yet. But I was so lonesome this morning that I thought I must write to someone this morning. And I don't get many letters now a days and we are on duty so much that I have little time to write or think.

We have been on picket and out foraging almost everyday but today is a day of rest and we have the privilege of resting today. For one I am thankful.

We was out on a foraging expedition yesterday and we didn't get in camp till 11 o'clock at night. I can tell you that I was tired, hungry and footsore and we expect to go on picket tomorrow. But a soldiers life is different from any other life. We can't tell one hour what orders we will get the next.

We don't get much news here. The most we know is what is going on in our own division. I think if the war was over I would be quite willing to give up soldiering and come home but I am determined to serve my time out honorably if my life is spared however unpleasant it may be to me.

I suppose you have got an addition to your family. A little son and Louisa wrote to me that she was a going to call it Jason, if I was willing. Well, as far as that matters it would not be at all disagreeable to me to have it named after me. For I presume it will be a smart little fellow and make a right smart man.

I am getting as tough as ever and I am in hopes that my health will be spared so that I shall be permitted to return (home) to my friends and ().

I am not much afraid of being shot unless they shoot a good deal better than they have yet at me. I have been shot at twice on picket. The balls came close enough that I could hear them whistle and that was about all.

I should like to know how the prayer meetings come on and if they keep the young folks prayer meetings yet. Give my best respects to Mrs. Palmer and Mrs. Pearsons and to your brother's folks. I must write Susan a letter today so I shall have to close. Hoping that the Lord will spare all our lives to meet again and if not on earth in heaven where we will enjoy each others society forever. Write as soon as you receive this. No more at present. Goodby. From your absent brother. Jason S. Clark. To Peter and Eveline.

Direct to Jason S. Clark Co. G 10th Regiment Michigan Inft.
Nashville, Tennessee.

P. S. I would send my love to the girls but I suppose they have forgotten me.

Nashville, Tennessee
April 6, 1863

My dear brother and sister,

It is with pleasure that I now take my pen to answer your kind letter which I received tonight. I was happy to hear from you and to hear you enjoyed as good health as you do. My health is good at this time. General good health prevails throughout this part of the army but the sickly season is fast approaching and we may look for a great deal of sickness and frequent deaths especially among the soldiers.

I hope that another campaign will end this war for I am tired of it. Tired of the way a soldier has to live and am tired of hearing of nothing but war. Now do not think me homesick or anything of the kind for I am not but I would like to come home and make a visit this spring but I never want to come home to stay until the war is over and peace restored to our once happy nation. Then and only then will I be willing to lay down my musket for to lead a quiet and peaceful life. For now is a time for brave hearts and strong arms. It is a time to try men's souls. You can see now who is men and who are those that have the appearance of being men but only wanted one degree to make them devils. And that degree they pass when they join the copperhead democracy. I suppose that you will think that this is strong language but is as near the truth as you can get. For what is meaner than a traitor to his country. I always had a kind of pity mingled with contempt for the southern secesh for they are very ignorant but my feelings toward the copperheads is one of unutterable contempt without any pity. I could see them pull hemp without shedding a tear. Let traitors die but the union must be preserved. May the stars and stripes never cease to float over this U. S. And I expect to be a soldier until the glorious old banner does wave over every part of land in the union or else find a soldiers grave in the land of war and strife amidst the roaring of cannon and the blasting of steel. And if that should be the case I shall die feeling that I have done what I could to preserve the country that our forfathers fought so hard for to gain.

Geo. Banfield was here to see me yesterday and John Pomeroy. Geo. got back to the regm't last Fri. He looks quite well.

I am going downtown to-morrow and expect to get six photographs for the man agreed to have them ready for me. Then I am going to send you one in this letter if I get them.

I can think of nothing more to write so I will stop scribbling for to-night.

Give my love to all the friends and except the same for yourself and a kiss for Evaline and the children.

I Ever Remain
Your affectionate Brother
Corporal Jason S. Clark
To my brother Peter
and sister Evaline
Mr. and Mrs. Churchill

April 8, 1863

Good Morning to you all.

We have just got into camp from the capital and will have to go back as soon as we get our breakfast.

I send you two pictures. They are not very good but are better than none. Give one to George Edgerton.

Write soon and oblige you brother.

Jason Clark
Goodby

April 28, 1864
Murfreesboro, Tenn.
Camp 10th Regm't Mich V.V.P

Dear Brother and Sister,-

I now find myself seated after the day's march is over to write a few lines to you to inform you that my health is good but my feet are some sore. We have been 3 days marching from Nashville to this place. A distance of 30 miles. The weather is very hot and we have to carry our knapsacks and tents which makes a pretty good load but we can't march over 10 or 12 miles a day. I suppose the reason they moved us from Nashville to Chattanooga is because they want to use all the cars for transporting provisions and ammunion through as fast as they can.

Cyrus has just come over from the fort to see us. He looks quite healthy, the best I ever saw him since he came south. He didn't know that grandfather was dead. Almost the first words was "How is father's folks?" He feels very bad and says he don't think he ever shall go back there again. The trees are all green and everything looks very nice down here now. The blossoms are falling off from the fruit trees.

I am seated on a nice hill. A few rods below me is a beautiful spring. On my left stretching far away in the distance are beautiful hills that are so green that the scene is very grand indeed. Directly in front of me is the city of Murfreesboro with its crowded population of almost entire colored people. Cyrus is waiting for me to go with him to the fort. So I will close. Give my love to Louisa and Mina and all the rest of the friends. Tell them all to write when they can get time.

Except my love and best wishes
From your brother
J. S. Clark

Address J. S. Clark, Co. G
 10 Reg't Mich V.V.P.
 Chattanooga, Tenn.

Address Cyrus W. Carpenter
 Fort Rosecrans
 Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Camp News, Washington, D. C.
June the 16th, 1865

My dear brother Peter and sister Evaline,

Through the blessings of an all wise God my life has been spared to the present time and I now take my pen to inform you that I am well and hope you are the same.

I received a letter from Susan and mother last night and they told me that Peter had got home but didn't say whether on furlough or discharged. I should like to be home now firstrate. I am so lonesome that I hardly know what to do with myself. We signed the payrolls sometime ago for 8 months pay but there is no sign of getting any while we stay here. But we will not stay here much longer. The talk is that we are going to Louisville, Ky. Whether we will get pay there is more than I can tell.