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Civil War Letters

1861 to 1865

Written to My Mother



M. Ebenezer Wescott

Co. E. 17th Wis. Vol. Infy.

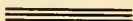
Civil War Letters

1861 to 1865

Written by a Boy in Blue to his Mother

By M. EBENEZER WESCOTT

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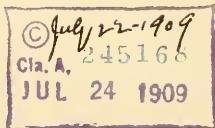
INTRODUCTORY

TO THE READERS OF THIS LITTLE BOOK:

THE letters published herein are copies of letters written to my mother during the civil war from January, 1861 to June, 1865, and the battles, marches and campaigns are described as seen at the time by a boy in his eighteenth year when he enlisted, and who participated in all the campaigns, battles and marches described herein.

The letters were carefully kept by my mother and she gave them back to me about seventeen years ago. The thought occurred to me a short time ago to have them published as they might be interesting reading to some as they are copies of letters written at the time and by a boy who ran away from school to enlist.

M. EBENEZER WESCOTT.



LETTER I.

Camp Randall, Madison, Wis., January 19, 1862.

Dear Mother:—

WE arrived here twelve o'clock Friday night, went to a hotel and got something to eat and stopped there until morning, when we went to the Capitol and were mustered into the United States service, and drew our uniforms, and now we are full fledged volunteer soldiers of Uncle Sam, and most of the Boys think now that they could whip the whole Southern Army, if they only had a chance.

I saw Guy Myers here; his regiment has gone to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas; he was sick in the hospital and was left behind. Guy was a little surprised to see Sam and me. Sam and myself are both well, and feel as big as the rest of the boys in our new uniforms.

I guess I will close this time, so will say Good Bye. Say, mother, as this is my first letter as a Soldier Boy put it away and keep it until I come home. Direct your letters to Camp Randall, Madison, Wisconsin, care of Captain McGowen. I do not know the letter of our Company yet; we will be in the 17th Regiment. Well Good Bye. Write soon.

Affectionately, your boy,

LETTER II.

Pittsburg Landing, Tenn., April 3, 1862.

Dear Mother:—

OUR regiment left St. Louis March 26 on the steamer Imperial and went down the Mississippi to Cairo, Illinois, then up the Ohio to the Tennessee, and from there up the river to what they call here Pittsburg Landing. Cannot see much of a landing, only one log house. However we are back from the Landing about three miles and fixing our camp. There are four other regiments in our brigade, the 16th Wisconsin, 4th Kentucky and the 20th Missouri, besides ours. General McArthur commands the brigade and General Grant commands the whole army. Say, mother, it begins to look more like business than it did while we were in camp up North and sometimes I wish I was up North now instead of here, but here I am and here I will stay, I suppose. Say, mother, I don't like old Captain McGowen at all; he is a cross old bear. I don't be-

lieve he has as much grit as Philly has and you know you can't set him on a mouse. You know how he barks at them and runs around. Well, that is our captain's style exactly and every time you meet him you have got to stand up straight and as stiff as a poker and salute him. It is not so with the other officers of the company. They are just as common and free as any of us and they are the ones that will stay with us I will bet when we get in a brush, if we ever do, and I guess we will. We can hear, once in a while, the pickets firing and occasionally a cannon shot. The report is that there is a large rebel army at Corinth, Mississippi, and what is only about 20 miles from here. Well, mother, I guess I'll stop this time. I am well. The rest of the boys that went from our neighborhood are well. Sam is all right. He and I bunk together. Good bye. Love to all the family. This letter is for all.

Your affectionate son.

LETTER III.

Pittsburg Landing, Tenn., April 13, 1862.

Dear Mother:—

SINCE I last wrote you we have been in a tight place, but got out of it all right. I cannot tell you a great deal about the battle except what happened near us. The sun never rose brighter than it did that Sunday morning, April 6th. We had got up and had roll call and some of the companies had had breakfast when we heard heavy firing on our left. Our brigade fell into line and had loaded their guns when the pickets were driven in, but they did not attack our part of the line for perhaps two hours. when they came on in a rush, but we were partly prepared for them and we held them off for a short time when the troops on our left fell back and we did the same. We fell back probably one half mile and formed another line and held them until about 10:00 o'clock when we fell back again a short distance and that is the way it went all day until about 5 o'clock in the afternoon, when we had been driven to within one half mile of the river. That was a bad position for the army. Just think of a deep river behind us and a victorious army in front of us. There were three things to do, surrender, swim the river or fight to the death. However, at that time, there was for some unknown cause, a lull in the fighting for the first time since early

morning and the time was put to good use on our side. All the artillery that could be got in position was placed on the high ground around the Landing, probably 50 or 60 pieces, with all the army that could be got in shape for support and then waited for the enemy. It was 6 o'clock or maybe a little after when they were seen advancing and coming from their right and left and firing as they advanced. They were about as far from us as our place is from the Colonel's. Then it was that our artillery thundered out its welcome and the infantry poured in its fire and at the same time they came so near to the river that two gun boats that were there opened their broadsides and for about half an hour that awful fire was kept up, then the Rebs fell back and the battle was over for that day at least and we had checked them. We had not swam the river, nor surrendered and were not all dead. We got reinforcements from Buell's army that night and the next morning Buell's fresh troops took the advance and we were in reserve. We did not have as much hard fighting as the first day but drove them steadily until about 2 o'clock, when they began to retreat and we had gained all the ground we had lost the day before, but oh! mother, the loss. We lost about 25. Our captain is gone somewhere, but I guess in some field hospital. He was not seen after we formed our first line of battle, but our other company officers are the stuff. Our 1st Lieutenant is a brick and as brave as a lion. John and Henry Thomas were both killed and Jack Case wounded. These are all that you know. Sam and I are both all right and well. Sam is on the skirmish line today and my turn comes tomorrow.

Guess I have written enough this time and if I should happen to get a Rebel bullet some time I will bid you all farewell.

Your affectionate son.

Direct your letter to Pittsburg Landing, Tenn. Vol. Inft.

LETTER IV.

Pittsburg Landing, Tenn., May 14, 1862.

Dear Mother:—

I WILL write you again today, although I have nothing of interest to write about. We are all well and able to eat our rations, especially Sam and myself. We can eat all we can get hold of and more, too, if we could get it. Well, we are marching toward Corinth, Miss., but at a snail's pace. We go about a mile, and then

form our line and stack arms and go to building breastworks. After we are all through and have a strong line built and the timber cut down in front of them for 40 or 50 rods we pull up and move again for a mile or so and do the same thing over again and have done so since we started toward Corinth. We have built six or seven such lines of works and I do not think we are more than 15 miles from the Landing. However, one thing is certain, if the enemy attacks us we will surely be ready for them. There was quite a lively brush yesterday but not on our part of the line. Our Captain has turned up. He was in one of the field hospitals and he has been awful sick, so he says. He goes with two canes. He run so fast that it made him lame. Hope he does not get over it soon and I am not the only one who hopes so either. The orderly sergeant has just been in and told us to be ready to move in an hour so that means to pack knapsacks and to get ready and we obey orders down here. There is no saying, let John or Jim or Pete or some other one go, but all grab a root and get a hump on yourself.

Well, mother, I will bid you good bye again, hoping that this will find you all well.

I am affectionately,

Your affectionate son.

LETTER V.

Corinth, Miss., June 5, 1862

Dear Parents:—

THE last letter I wrote you we were in Tennessee. Corinth was evacuated by the Johnnies on the night of May 29th and we marched in and now are in possession of their camps and the village of Corinth, but it was a victory, if one can call it so, without spoils, except broken wagons, gun carriages and spiked cannon and a few thousand stand of small arms.

I am not much of a military man, but it seems to me that the rebel army ought to have been driven out and half of them captured instead of being allowed to go the way they did. Our army had been reinforced since the battle of Shiloh with all Buell's army and a couple of divisions besides, and I think we have an army of one hundred thousand men and Halleck is in command. If General Grant had been in command instead of General

Halleck I will bet there would have been something doing and the rebs would not have got away so easy, but so long as General Halleck is in command I don't think we will get much hurt by rebel bullets, for I think the way we burrowed our way from Pittsburg Landing here that he is as much afraid of rebel bullets as we are. At the same time I think the boys would have liked to have had another chance at them with the army we had, if Halleck was in command, for Grant was second in command, then we had such generals as Buell, Sherman, Thomas and McClernard as corps commanders.

June 28, 1862.

I did not get time to finish this letter the day I began it. We have moved six miles and are now camped about one mile from Corinth. We are not doing anything but cleaning up the camp and drilling, so do not know anything about how long we will remain here, probably until General Halleck is sent somewhere else and General Grant is in command again. There is a good deal of sickness among the troops and it is on account of bad water. We have to go to the Tuscumbia river after water and that is several miles away. The water is hauled in wagons. Each company has a barrel and the team (6 mules) go twice a day and when we get the water it is not fit to drink. We have lost three men of our company by sickness but only one that "pa" knew and he was Pat Costello. George Porter and Ike Verbeck are sick now. You know them. Mother, you thought when I came away from home that I was so young that I could not stand the hardships. Well, the boys stand it better than the old men. Not one of the boys in our company has been sick as yet. Well, I will close this time. I am well, so are all the boys that went from our place. Give my love to all the family. Good bye.

Your affectionate son.

Direct to Corinth, Miss.

LETTER VI.

Corinth, Miss., October 15, 1862.

Dear Parents:—

YOUR letter received some time ago but could not answer any sooner. About that time we were having trouble with the enemy. It seems they wanted this place more than we did. On the morning of October 2nd our brigade with some other

troops started on a march. Of course we did not know where until about ten o'clock, when we were formed in line of battle and skirmishers sent out. We were then maybe four or five miles northwest of Corinth in what they call here the Chewalla road. About noon we could hear firing and in a little while the skirmishers were driven back and the rebel skirmishers ran right onto us in the thick woods. We gave them a couple of volleys and they in turn ran back in a hurry and of course ours followed them, but we fell back probably a mile and that was what we did the balance of the day and at night we were behind our outer line of breastworks. The next morning they attacked us again with a strong skirmish line and an occasional shot from their artillery until about three o'clock, when they made their attack in force and drove us back. I do not think that we had any more troops than two or three brigades in line and at dark we were inside of our breastworks at Corinth. During the night our troops were moving and taking their positions in line and getting ready for the morrow. At daylight, October 4th, the rebels opened a battery and began shelling our lines. Our batteries did not reply until about sunrise and then, well, you can imagine the rest, for about an hour or so, if you think you can. The rebels during the night had brought a battery up to within three or four hundred yards from Fort Robinet and when the cannonading had stopped, our men went out from the fort and hauled the guns inside of our lines by hand. The rebels had to leave them as their horses were about all killed. About eleven o'clock they made a charge on our lines, coming right up to them, but it was of no use; they had to retreat again and about two o'clock all was quiet along the whole line. This attack had been on the right of our line. Our position was the left center. Fort Robinet was about the center of the line. About four, or perhaps a little before, we could plainly see them forming their lines directly in front of the fort, three or four hundred yards away in the edge of the timber, and not a shot was fired. Soon they came, four lines deep, then our artillery opened, the infantry poured in their fire and they actually planted their flag on the fort, but for a few minutes only. A brigade of our troops came on the double quick on the charge. A hand to hand struggle made the enemy retreat and the Battle of Corinth is over. We followed them five days, took some prisoners, cannons, wagons, etc., and now are back in our camps again. One

killed and three missing of our company was all we lost. I do not know how many the regiment lost. I heard our first lieutenant say 16 killed in the regiment, 56 wounded and 12 missing. I am well and so is Sam. Maybe because Sam and I are alive and well you think when the bullets fly we run. Well you can make up your mind if we are well we will be found where the regiment is, if it is the hottest place in the line or running away.

I think I have written quite a letter, so will close. My love to all.

Your affectionate son.

LETTER VII.

Abbeville, Miss., Dec. 5, 1862.

Dear Parents:—

YOU see we are on the move again. We left Grand Junction Tenn., Nov. 15th and got here Dec. 1, after some little dispute with the enemy, but our arguments were the strongest and so we are here. We came along all right except a little skirmishing until we came to Tallahatchie river, a few miles south of Holly Springs, where the Rebs were strongly posted on the south side of the river and they said halt and we obey orders down here, especially when there is a river between them and us. The artillery on both sides did some firing and a little picket firing at long range. They stopped us several days when part of the troops after dark marched several miles up the river and threw a pontoon bridge across the river and crossing early in the morning without firing a shot and came down on their right flank and the game was up. They were completely outgeneraled. We are camped about 2 miles east of Abbeville. This is a nice looking country, plenty of cotton not yet picked, sweet potatoes not dug, and chickens not killed and we help ourselves to them, that is, sweet potatoes and chickens when we can get the chance. You can be sure of one thing, we will not be idle as much as we have been. General Grant is in command of the army again and that means something doing. Well, I guess this is all I can think of this time. Oh, yes, you wanted to know how long it took a letter to come here. The last letter I got from you was dated Nov. 16th and I got it Nov. 29th. We are well and feeling a great deal better than during the summer while at Corinth. It may be because the weather is colder and the water is a good deal better. Anyway we

feel better while on the march than laying in camp. Hoping this will find you all well, I am,

Your affectionate son.

LETTER VIII.

Memphis, Tenn., January 10, 1863.

Dear Parents:—

YOU will see that we have been on the march again. We broke camp at Abbeville, Miss., a few days after I wrote you and marched 8 miles south of Oxford, Miss., when we were halted and turned back toward Holly Springs. The rebel cavalry had got on the railroad in our rear and had torn up the track and captured Holly Springs and a lot of our hard tack, beans, etc., and they (beans and hardtack) are a very necessary article with us. When we got there the Johnnies had gone north in the direction of Grand Junction, Tenn., and there was an immense amount of rations stored there and we immediately started for that place, 42 miles away. We started about three in the morning and at sun down stacked our arms in Grand Junction. We beat the Rebs, they having had to take a round about course, thereby saving a vast amount of rations. We remained there several days, the whole army having come back from Oxford. We then came to this place and are camped in the outskirts of the city. I suppose it must have been General Grant's intention to capture Vicksburg when he started south through Mississippi, but the rebels were too busy on his line of communication, or, as the boys say, on his cracker line. We hear it reported that we are going down the river on the boats and try a campaign against Vicksburg in another direction.

This is about all I can write this time. We are well. It is quite cold here. There are about two or three inches of snow on the ground; fell yesterday and last night, but will probably not last long. Direct your letters here and if we have moved they will follow us. My love to all the family. Good bye.

Your affectionate son.

LETTER IX.

Melliken's Bend, La., Feb. 7, 1863.

Dear Parents:—

YOU see we have been on the move again. We left Memphis the 18th of January, took the steamboats and came to this place. We were four days on the river. We are camped on the west side of the river opposite the mouth of the Yazoo and at the present time employed in repairing an old levee. The water in the river is very high and running through the breaks in the levee and we are trying to fix them up. The country is as level as a floor and when the water breaks through the levee it floods the whole country. We have had to move camp twice since we came here on account of the water.

Well, mother, what do you think? We have not seen Sam or his uncle since we left Memphis. It is now three weeks that he has been gone. If he has deserted I think it is all on account of that old uncle of his. Sam would never have done that if he had not been influenced by him. If his folks ask you anything about him you will have to tell them, or they may have heard from him. The last I saw of him was when we broke camp at Memphis. He and his uncle got leave from the captain to go ahead as they said they wanted to get their pictures taken and that was the last seen of them. We were on the boat a day and a half before we started and they had plenty of time. I am sorry that Sam should do such a thing and I know his uncle was the cause of it. If I knew I would be killed in the next battle we are in I would not do that. Did I ever tell you that our captain resigned and went home. The first Lieutenant is in command of the company now and he is as fine and brave an Irish lad as ever buckled on a sword or faced an enemy. The only trouble with him is that he likes a little "eye water" now and then, but they can't get much of that down here.

Our gunboats go down the river a little way and engage the rebel batteries at Vicksburg nearly every day. It is not over ten or twelve miles, I should think, by the sound of the guns.

Well, I guess this is enough for this time. I am well and feeling fine, never felt better in my life. When you write send me a few stamps. Love to all the family and friends.

Yours affectionately,

LETTER X.

Carthage, La., April 30, 1863.

Dear Parents:—

I RECEIVED your letter about ten days ago but we had moved camp twice since that time and by the looks of things I do not think we will be here long. We are below Vicksburg, probably 25 or 30 miles. We left Lake Providence the 23rd, and came back to Melliken's Bend. Left all our tents and came here. Have been here two days. Can't tell why, but I guess our quiet camp life is at an end for the present at least. The bugle has just sounded fall in and that means stop writing.

May 2nd—Well, we did not go far; moved camp about four miles, but there is going to be something done soon. There were several gunboats and transports run past the batteries at Vicksburg some time ago and now we can hear the gunboats shelling the batteries at Grand Gulf and we are about half way between the two places. Grand Gulf is about forty miles below Vicksburg on the same side of the river. We are about two miles from the river. There has been a good many troops marching past our camp today, all going south or in the direction of Grand Gulf and we are liable to be on the go any minute. Sam has not put in an appearance yet. Our first Lieutenant has received his commission as Captain and the second Lieutenant is now first and the orderly sergeant, second lieutenant. All good fellows. Our captain has just been around and said, "Boys, be ready to march tomorrow morning in heavy marching order with four days rations." That means to draw rations this afternoon so I guess I will stop writing now. One of the boys asked the captain where we were going and he said swim the river for all he knew and I guess that was very near the truth. Cannot tell when you will hear from me again, but will write as soon as we are in a place where I can. Love to all. Good bye.

Your affectionate son.

LETTER XI.

Vicksburg, Miss, May 27, 1863.

Dear Parents:—

WE left our camp near Carthage, La., the next day after I wrote to you and marched down below Grand Gulf, crossed the river on boats that had run past the batteries at Vicksburg and Grand Gulf, took a small place

called Port Gibson and then turned back up the river in the direction of Grand Gulf, which place had been evacuated as soon as Grant's troops had crossed the river. We remained there until the 8th when we started north in the direction of Vicksburg. We struck the railroad between Vicksburg and Jackson on the 13th and turned east the next afternoon; came up to the Rebel works at Jackson and before dark had whipped Johnson and were in the capitol city of Mississippi. We stayed there until the next afternoon, then started in the direction of Vicksburg, marched all night and about 1 o'clock in the afternoon came up to Pemberton's army at Champion Hills and before four o'clock had whipped him, besides taking thirty pieces of artillery and about four thousand prisoners, crossed the Black River the next day and marched straight for Vicksburg; came up to the Rebel works about ten o'clock in the forenoon of the 19th and about two o'clock made a charge, but had run against a snag and were driven back. Made another charge the 22nd with no better success, and now I guess we will have to starve them out. Our loss was two killed and eight wounded in our company. Boadman Paddock and Dan McLean were killed and Frank Luscombe was wounded and has had his leg taken off just above the knee. The rest of the boys you do not know. I came out all right. Maybe you think because I was not killed or wounded I skipped out. Well you just ask the Captain. He is coming home. He got a ball through the calf of his leg and he promised me he would come and see you as soon as he was well enough. I do not think we are more than half a mile from the Rebel works and our rifle pits are still nearer. The gun boats, field batteries and the men in the rifle pits are firing all the time and we can hear the whistle of the Minie ball and bursting of shell all the time. There is not a minute in the day or night but what we are in danger more or less. Where our regiment lies we are somewhat protected, as we are in a ravine, but we do not seem to think of the danger until it is passed. We are to have inspection of arms in an hour or so and I will close.

Your affectionate son.

LETTER XII.

Camp near Vicksburg, Miss., June 20, 1863.

Dear Parents:—

YOUR letter received. Glad to hear from you. We are still in the same position as when I last wrote you, except our rifle pits are nearer the enemy's position.

We advance a little nearer almost every night. In some places our rifle pits and theirs are not more than six or eight rods apart, and in the day time we dare not show our heads above the ground; neither do the Johnnies. We have bags of sand on top our pits, with a little space between the sacks of about two inches, just large enough to put the muzzle of our guns through, and we watch, and if a Johnny shows his head, he gets a salute, P. D. Q., and the same with us, and you better believe we are mighty careful and they are just as careful about showing their heads as we are. But at night we sometimes have a picnic. After dark we frequently hear the following dialogue: "Hello, Yank." "Well, Johnny, what do you want?" "When is Grant going to march into Vicksburg?" "When you get your last mule and dog eat up. How long will it take you to do that?" "Can't tell, we have lots of them yet." "Say, Yank, we will meet you half way and let us have a friendly chat." "All right, you won't shoot, will you?" "No, but we will bring our guns with us." "All right—we will do the same." "All right, come on." "All right, march."

There are usually six or eight of us together, and two or three will meet them half way between the rifle pits, and sometimes talk for two hours. They are just as sociable and friendly as if we were brothers. They always want some coffee and we give them some, if we have it, and we generally have some, and when we part they will never shoot until they say, "Hello, Yank! You in your hole yet?" We answer, "Yes." "All right then." Maybe they blaze away a dozen shots or more and we do the same. What do you think of that?

Frank and Mike Clark were both slightly wounded a few days ago in the rifle pits. Mike got a furrow plowed on the side of his head, nearly three inches long, just enough to make it bleed nicely, and Frank got a good mark across his breast, about four inches, but no bones were broken. They were both mighty close calls—closer than I want a Rebel bullet to come to me. I think I have written enough

this time. I am feeling well, except when I hear the bullets whistle. Then the cold chills creep up my back, and as we hear them all the time, I must be chilly all the time. I will close for this time. Love to all.

Yours affectionately.

LETTER XIII.

Vicksburg, Miss., July 7, 1863.

Dear Mother:—

I SUPPOSE you have heard of the surrender of this place before this time. Well, our dispute over this place is settled at last and we won out. We marched into the City of Vicksburg, the Rebel Gibraltar of the West, at ten o'clock, July 4th, and it was the most pleasant and interesting march we ever took. Short and sweet. There was no firing after about nine o'clock on the morning of the third, and at nine on the morning of the fourth the Rebels marched outside of their breastworks, stacked their arms and laid their colors across them then marched back again. We had guards in line. They marched up and took possession of their arms, and we formed our line and marched into the city to the music of more than three hundred cannon, beside fife and drums and brass bands.

It was the finest Fourth of July celebration I ever attended and will probably never attend another equal to it. We are at present camped about a mile from the city, a little northeast. The Rebels have not been paroled yet, and when we sit down to eat we have just as many of them at our mess as there are of ourselves. They are jolly good fellows and are just as glad Vicksburg has surrendered as we are, and if they are they must feel mighty good.

We captured about three hundred cannon and thirty thousand prisoners. General Grant is the hero of the day down here now, but I don't think he could have accomplished much if it had not been for the men in the ranks. He planned the moves and we, the boys that carried the muskets, did the work. Oh, mother! I tell you it is a grand day; we are really proud of ourselves. We feel just as big as the generals do, if they do wear shoulder straps and swords and we carry the muskets.

Well, guess I will close. I am well and feeling fine—no more chills now—the cause of them is all gone. Funny how a soldier can be cured of chills without medicine. My love to all. Write soon.

Direct to Vicksburg and if we are gone the letters will follow. Good
bye.

Affectionately your son.

LETTER XIV.

Natchez, Miss., July 20, 1863.

Dear Mother:—

WE left Vicksburg July 13th and came to this place. There were no Rebel troops here except a few Cavalry Scouts and they made themselves scarce in short order. We are the first Union Soldiers ever here and the people, especially the women, were nearly scared to death, but they soon found out that we were not a band of brigands or robbers come there to plunder them or kill them and they soon got over their fear. But you take them (the women) that are Rebel Secesh and if they have not the tongue I miss my guess and they know how to use it too and it takes them a very short time to tell what they think of the Yankees, as they call all Union Soldiers down here; it makes no difference if he is an Irishman or Dutchman; if he is a Union Soldier he is a Yank all the same.

Our Regiment has been mounted and we are now scouting over the country looking after cotton, etc. We found two thousand bales on one plantation yesterday and our teams are now hauling it in. It was marked on the bales C. S. A. That means that it belonged to the Rebel Government, but I guess Uncle Sam will have something to say who it belongs to now.

This is the nicest looking country I have seen since we have been South. There is a lot of fruit here, watermelons, sweet potatoes and everything else good to eat, but of course we do not take any of it, except that it happens to be in our way and we make it convenient to have it in our way, See? I am well and feeling fine. I will close now with love to all. Direct letters here. Write soon. Good bye.

Affectionately yours.

LETTER XV.

Natchez, Miss., August 20, 1863.

Dear Mother:—

YOUR letter received; and very glad to hear from you and that you were well; also that the crops were good. Well, mother, Sam came back to the company last Thursday. but no uncle with him.

The boys were all glad to see him and to have him back again. I do not think they will do anything with him as he came back of his own accord and he is doing his duty again. If they were going to punish him he would have been placed under guard in the guard house, so I think his being away will be overlooked.

We are still mounted and having the best time we have had since being in the service; hope it will continue. There was a negro came to our first Lieutenant a few days ago and told him where there was a big herd of cattle feeding about twenty five miles from here, down the river. Three companies of our regiment went and drove the whole bunch to Natchez; they were Texas steers and in fine condition for beef and our Uncle Sam has plenty of use for such captures. I do not know how many there were but if I was to guess I would say five hundred head and maybe more.

We have not seen or heard a Rebel soldier since we left Vicksburg except some of the prisoners from Port Hudson who came this way on their way home. We are having a fine time and are all well. Hope we can stay here until the war is over, but I think no such luck could come our way. This will have to do this time.

I will tell you about Sam before I close. He has been in Tennessee, about twenty-five miles from Memphis all the time, working on a plantation, but says it got so warm he could not remain any longer. The Rebel Cavalry were after him to enlist in their army. Finally he told them he would but would have to go to Memphis first. When he got there he went to the Provost Marshall and took the oath of allegiance, went to the Capitol of the state and said he wanted to enlist and go to our Regiment and that is the way he got back without being placed under guard. Write soon; it is good to get letters from home. Good bye. Yours affectionately.

LETTER XVI.

Natchez, Miss., Sept. 16, 1863.

Dear Mother:—

WE have been on a scout over in Louisiana and were gone eight days. There were two regiments of infantry and two pieces of artillery with us; the first day out we captured a rebel picket post—four prisoners, and they told where there was a fort on the Tensas river, held by two hund-

red men. We started to take it; had to cross the Tensas river, which delayed us nearly a day. The fort was on the river about twenty-five miles from where we crossed, on the same side, and we started for it; had a little skirmish on the way and two of our Company were slightly wounded with buckshot. When we got to the fort the Rebs had left and we took possession, dismounted the cannon and rolled them down the bank into the river, burned everything in the fort that would burn and took the back trail and are now in our camp again.

Sam's horse fell down one night and in some way his (Sam's) arm was hurt. He is carrying it in a sling now. It is quite badly hurt, but the doctor says there are no bones broken, so he will probably be around in a week or so. He says, tell his folks he is well, except his arm, and will write as soon as it gets so he can.

I like this place a great deal better than Vicksburg; there is not so much music here, especially the kind that gives a fellow the chills. I think I have written about all I can think of this time. Give my love to all the friends. Write soon.

Your affectionate son.

LETTER XVII.

Vicksburg, Miss., October 25, 1863.

Dear Mother:—

YOU will see by the heading of this letter that Natchez and us have parted company. We left there two weeks ago and are now doing provost duty here. We are not mounted now; we left our horses at Natchez and some of the boys think we will be mounted again, but I don't believe we will, although I hope so.

The weather is cold and rainy now and very disagreeable. Hope we will not be here long, but we know nothing except go where we are told to and come when we are called. We are on duty every other day and night. There are not many troops here now and what troops are here are building fortifications all the time, and they are building them a good deal nearer the city than were the Rebel works.

There is no news here now. When we are on duty we tramp the streets about three together, simply policemen, nothing more or less, except we carry our guns and they are always loaded ready for use. Well, I will bid you good bye. Write soon. Affectionately.

LETTER XVIII.

Vicksburg, Miss., February 13, 1864.

Dear Mother:—

IN my last letter I wrote you that our Regiment had about all re-enlisted; also our Company, but I had not. Well the pressure was too strong and I went with the rest of the boys and will see the play through. I did not intend to re-enlist, but one of the boys and I got into an argument over it and he said I was getting a little scared. I told him I was not afraid of him at least. He says, "Maybe you want to try me on." Well, one word brought on another and finally we got at it and when we got through he says, "Bully Boy, I dare you to re-enlist." Says I "I will not take the dare" and made a bee line for the Captain's tent and signed the enlistment roll.

We are to get four hundred dollars bounty and a thirty day furlough. We expect to start home about the first of March. I may not write again before I come home. Sam has re-enlisted; also all the boys from our neighborhood. We are all well. You need not write again. Will probably see you all in three or four weeks. The Captain said we would leave here the first week in March. Give my love to all and I will bid you good bye until I see you.

Affectionately yours.

LETTER XIX.

Cairo, Ill., April 24, 1864.

Dear Mother:—

WE arrived here last night and it has rained ever since we came and is raining now. It seems a little hard now to lay on the ground and eat hard tack and drink black coffee. It is a little different from what we have had the past thirty days, sleeping in good beds and sitting down to a table loaded with everything good to eat and lots of it, but such is the life of a soldier and we all know what a soldier had to put up with before we re-inlisted for two years longer.

There is no news here of any interest. We do not know where we are going nor how long we will stay, but I don't think we will stay long and there is a rumor in camp that we are going to join Sherman's Army and I guess that is nearly right, for I saw in a paper this morning that the remainder of our corps, the 17th Army Corps,

was with him at Chattanooga. If such is the case we will have plenty to do, as Sherman is not the boy to remain idle.

I am well. Will close now. Write soon and direct here. Good bye.

Affectionately your Soldier Boy.

LETTER XX.

Huntsville, Alabama, May 20, 1864.

Dear Mother:—

YOU will see that my guess about our joining Sherman's Army was about right. We left Cairo a few days after I wrote you, took the boats up the Ohio to Tennessee, then up that river to a little place called Clifton, marched from there to Athens, Alabama, stayed there two or three days, then marched to this place; cannot tell how long we will stay here. Got here this morning about ten o'clock and it is now three.

You wanted to know how we got our mail. Well the Chaplain is supposed to be the Post Master of the Regiment and we take the letters to his tent when he has one. If he has none we hand the letters to him. If there is no stamps on them the Colonel of the Regiment writes on them, "Soldiers Letter" and signs his name and they go without a stamp, but the three cents must be paid when the letter is taken from the office at destination.

I am well. Sam was left in the hospital at Mound City, Illinois, with fever and ague. We have no tents with us; we have not slept under tents since we left home. Our roof is the blue sky, providing it is not raining, then the roof is somewhat leaky and we are liable to get a little damp. I guess this will do for this time and will say good bye. Write soon.

Affectionately yours.

LETTER XXI.

Decatur, Ala., May 27, 1864.

Dear Mother:—

IAM feeling (as they say down here) right smart. I got three letters from you the 25th and was well pleased, as they were the first letters I have had since I came back.

We left Huntsville the same day I got the letters and marched to this place. It was a race between Rhody's Rebel troops and us who would get here first and we won out, thereby saving our

pontoon bridge across the Tennessee river at Decatur. Sam came back to the Company the day we left Huntsville. He is not feeling very strong yet but does not shake any more and probably will be all right in a few days. The balance of our division (three brigades) joined us at Huntsville so we have several thousand men and three or four batteries together. We will, no doubt, be on the move again soon. The next you hear from me we will probably be with Sherman.

I will now bid you good bye. Write soon; letters do us good.

Your Boy in Blue.

LETTER XXII.

Ackworth, Ga., June 9, 1864.

Dear Mother:—

WE left Decatur May 29th and marched to this place; got here yesterday. We have marched over three hundred miles since we left Cairo and have joined the balance of our corps. We are in the 17th Army Corps, Army of the Tennessee, commanded by General J. B. McPherson.

There are three armies here—Army of the Ohio, General Thomas in command, Army of the Cumberland, General Schofield, Army of the Tennessee, General McPherson, all under the command of General Sherman and General Kilpatrick commands the cavalry. We are not far from the enemy's line, as we can distinctly hear the picket firing. There will probably be something doing here as Sherman has already driven Johnson forty or fifty miles and Atlanta is the objective point, about forty miles away, on the south side of the Chattahoochee river and a range of mountains to get over, besides Johnson's Army, and Johnson's Army is the worst thing we have; if he would only step one side there would be no trouble going to Atlanta, but he says "No," and the dispute will have to be settled another way, a very hard and costly way. Our position at the present time is the left flank of Sherman's Army, on the east side of the railroad running from Chattanooga to Atlanta.

I am feeling fine. Sam is getting stronger, so he is on duty now. The rest of the boys from our neighborhood are well. I will close by bidding you all an affectionate good bye.

Your affectionate son.

LETTER XXIII.

On the Banks of the Chattahoochee River, Ga., July 6, 1864.

Dear Mother:—

I AM still on top of the ground and able to eat my rations any and all the time. We are several miles further south than when I last wrote to you. There was some severe fighting in some parts of the line for several days when we drove them from their first line of works at the foot of the Kennesaw Mountain then on June 27th Sherman attacked Kennesaw on the north and west of our corps, attacked on the extreme right of the Rebel army and Kennesaw was on their left. Our attack was intended only as a feint. We attacked early in the forenoon to draw the attention of the Rebels that way, when the main attack was to be made on their left. The attack was made, but not successful. We remained in our position all day, then at night moved back to the position we had in the morning. On the night of July 2nd we left our place and marched all night and took a position on the extreme right of our army and in the rear of the Rebel left flank, formed our line of battle, stacked arms and if you ever saw any dirt fly it was there. In less than an hour we had covered our front with a good substantial breast work, thereby turning Johnson's left flank and he fell back several miles and took a strong position on the Chattahoochee and the line of Kennesaw was won. The whole army advanced and took a position facing Johnson's on the river near what they call Smyrna Camp Meeting Ground, our position at this time being on the right of the army. I saw Sanford Reese a few days ago. He is in the 66th Ohio. Sam and I are well and the rest of the boys also.

This will have to do this time. Write soon. When any of us get a letter all the boys want to hear it read. They all hear my letters, except one I get sometimes. I let Sam read part of that one and sometimes I don't. See! Well, I will say good bye again.

Your affectionate son.

LETTER XXIV.

Camp Near Atlanta, Ga., July 24, 1864.

Dear Mother:—

SINCE I wrote you we have been busy. We left our position on the right near Smyrna Camping Ground July 7th after dark, marched all night and the next day and crossed the Chattahoochee July 9th, twenty-five miles from where we

started. Remained there a few days. When the whole army of the Tennessee crossed we fortified our position, thereby gaining a strong position on Johnson's right flank. We had no fighting whatever in coming here. We could hear heavy firing on our right for two or three hours July 20th, but were not engaged. That was the battle of Peach Tree Creek. That night we started again, struck the railroad east of Atlanta at Decatur in the morning. There we left our knap sacks and marched directly toward Atlanta; about two in the afternoon we formed our line of battle and advanced about half a mile. When we came up to the advance Rebel works the order to charge was given and in less than fifteen minutes the Rebs were on the run, but we lost more men in those fifteen minutes than we did at Shiloh. There will be mourning in Farmington when the sad news reaches there. Billy Hockman, Nicholas Harris, Cullen Frisby, Wellington Steward, were killed. John and George Holt and Eugene Calaghan wounded and David Waller missing. Several others were wounded but you do not know them.

We advanced about a mile further that night and took a position in the old Rebel line of works, they having retreated to another line nearer Atlanta. On the morning of July 22nd about 9 o'clock we heard a few shots directly in our rear and in less than five minutes the Rebs were sending in volley after volley. During the night they had marched around our left flank and had struck the 16th Corps that was marching along the road to take a position on our left. Of course there was some trouble for a little while, but they soon got things in shape and checked them, then sent some of Logan's troops to help and they were soon in shape to hold them in check and when the 16th Corps got in line again they soon made short work of it. They then attacked our corps, but we were behind breastworks with batteries in position and ready for them. They came almost up to our works several times and finally about four o'clock gave up. We were supporting a battery and behind good breast works. We did not lose a man that day out of our company. I do not see how men could charge such a battery as we had there behind strong works and plenty of support. They treble shotted those guns and just simply mowed them down.

Mother, I will see those poor fellows lying dead and wounded as long as I live; it makes the tears come to my eyes while I am writ-

ing. General McPherson was killed early in the fight and General Logan took command.

I guess I have written enough this time. Sam and I are well, but God knows how long we will be. We don't. Give my love to all friends and I will again bid you farewell.

Your Loving Boy.

LETTER XXV.

Camp near Atlanta, Ga., Aug. 11th, 1864.

Dear Mother:—

I AM a little out of temper this morning as this is the first time we have been off duty for five days and nights. We have been on the skirmish line during the day time and building breastworks at night. The last time I wrote you we were on the left of the army, east of Atlanta, now we are on the right flank, west of Atlanta. We left our position on the left on the night of July 27th, made an all night march and at daylight formed our line of battle on the extreme right. About sunrise ten of our company, I one of the ten, were detailed to go with Company K on the skirmish line. We had not advanced more than two or three hundred yards when we were fired upon by the Rebel skirmishers in thick woods. We turned the fire. They ran and we after them, about half a mile. then come to a large open field and they were nearly across the field, going for keeps. We kept right after them and when they got into the woods on the other side they turned and fired into us. We turned and ran back to the woods on our side of the field. We remained in that position until about two o'clock, when they began to advance and we could see their line of battle in the woods behind them, advancing in grand style. We gave them a volley, then fell back to where our men were in line. Between the time between morning and two o'clock our men had built a substantial breastwork and had felled the timber in their front for fifty yards or more, making it impossible for troops to cross and keep in formation. The Rebel skirmish line came as far as the fallen timber and fired a few shots, but their line of battle did not come, but moved to our right and struck Logan's corps and Scott's division of our corps and the 16th Corps, and it was five o'clock before they stopped fighting, but the Rebels gained nothing; our boys were expecting them, and they

did not drive our boys one inch. They retreated back to Atlanta, leaving their dead and wounded on the field.

There is a little church here which they call Ezra Church and call this fight the Battle of Ezra Church. We lost no men as we were not in the thickest of the fight. I was over on the battle field the next day, when our men were burying the Rebel dead. Their loss in killed must have been heavy, as the ground was literally covered with them. It makes me shudder to see so many brave men lying dead after the battle is over.

Well, I guess I have written enough for once. We are all well and are having lots of work to do. We build one line of works, then leave them, advance a little and build another and so on. We are getting nearer Atlanta all the time, and I suppose the next thing Sherman will make some move on their railroads, then more trouble and that will be nothing new down here. I will close now, and again bid you good bye. Write soon.

Lovingly your boy.

LETTER XXVI.

In Camp at Atlanta, Ga., Sept. 12th, 1864.

Dear Mother:—

IF I should undertake to tell you how our boys feel, I think I would make a failure, so I will say, "Glory, we are in Atlanta," and stop. I must tell you though what little we did in the final move.

The whole Army of the Tennessee, 15th, 16th and 17th corps, left their position after dark on August 29th and marched all night and the next day, not far from noon, we struck the railroad from Atlanta to Montgomery, twenty five miles south of Atlanta, stacked our arms, built a slight breastwork, then went after the railroad. The boys all got on one side and turned it bottom side up for ten miles, then pried off the ties, piled them up, set them on fire and laid the rails across them. When the rails were hot, four men at each end would grab a rail and run for a tree and twist it around the tree. After our work was done here we got some dinner, and at dark started for their only remaining railroad, marched all night and at about ten o'clock in the forenoon got within about a mile or a little farther in plain sight of Janesborough. but the Rebs had beat us there,

having come from Atlanta, and we halted. There was some skirmishing while the troops were getting in position. There were some other troops that joined with Logan throwing us out of line. We fell back about a mile, took another road leading south, coming in on Logan's right flank and the Rebel left flank. They attacked Logan while we were on the move, and he just threshed the deuce out of them. We got to our new position about sundown, after all was quiet, and that night the Rebels left and fell back ten or twelve miles to Lovejoy. The next day, about ten o'clock in the morning, we heard the Rebels had evacuated Atlanta. We then marched back to Atlanta and are now in camp a mile or so southeast of the city and we are just as proud of ourselves as we were when Vicksburg surrendered.

There was scarcely a day from the time we joined the army, the 9th of June until September 2nd, but what we were under fire, more or less, and we are all glad it is over for a little while.

We are all feeling fine. I will close now. Love to all. Good bye. Write soon.

Your big soldier boy.

LETTER XXVII.

Gaylesville, Alabama, October 21st. 1864.

Dear Mother:—

I GUESS you will think we jump from one place to another in quick time. Well, we do. Sometime during the last days of last month the Rebs crossed the Chattahooche river and started north and we pulled up stakes and started after them, and have been following them for three weeks, and by the way it looks I don't think Sherman wants to catch up with them, for we have not marched fast, in fact, have been marching very slow, and have been here a couple of days and doing nothing except trying to find something to eat, and we generally find it if it is in the country.

I have nothing much to write about now. Sam and I are well and able to eat all we can get our hands on and then some. This is a pretty short letter, but will have to do this time, so good bye.

Your affectionate son.

LETTER XXVIII.

Marietta, Ga., Nov. 10th, 1864.

Dear Mother:—

YOU see we have made another move. Have been here a week working tearing up the railroad that runs from here to Chattanooga. The rails are loaded on cars and taken north and everybody is at a loss to understand the reason, but I expect there is a man here by the name of Billy Sherman that could explain if he wanted to.

We got our pay yesterday. Our chaplain is going home and I am going to put \$190 in this letter and send by him and when he gets north he will express it to you. We are well, but cannot tell when you will hear from me again. There is something in the wind, but don't know anything more about it than you do. I will again bid you good bye. You can write and your letters will find us some time. Once more, good bye.

Your affectionate son.

LETTER XXIX.

Camp near Savannah, Ga., Dec. 18th, 1864.

Dear Mother:—

ONCE more we are where we can inform our friends of our welfare, and I will take the first chance we have had in six weeks. Sam and I are both well and as tough as pine knots. I wish I could give you a good description of our march from Atlanta to this place, but it would be almost impossible for me to do so, but I will write you a little about it.

We left our camp at Marietta November 13th, marched through Atlanta on the 15th and marched south until we struck the railroad running from Macon to Augusta at a place called Gordon. There we commenced to tear it up, burn the ties, heat the rails and twist them around trees. Our corps followed the railroad from there to Millen, nearly 200 miles, tore it up and burned all the bridges. At Millen there was a junction, one branch to Augusta, the other to Savannah. We tore up the junction, burned the depot and five large buildings that were used for prisoners; that was about all the extra work we did, except marching. We are now south of Savannah, three or four miles. Savannah is completely invested by Sherman's

army and we may have quite a siege here. General Hardee is in command of the Rebels. There is skirmish firing and cannonading now all the time and it looks as though we might have some fighting to do before we march in to the city. We are very well supplied with rations now, as we are in communication with the fleet by way of Ossabow Sound. When we were marching from Atlanta here we had no fighting at all. The cavalry had some disputes, but we never fired a shot, that is, our regiment. The 15th corps had a little brush near Macon on the first part of the march and that was about all the fighting done, except by the cavalry.

I will have to stop now as the orderly sergeant has just been here and told me to get ready to go with the teams to King's Bridge for rations, ten miles away, so will bid you good bye. Write soon.

Your affectionate son.

LETTER XXX.

Beaufort, South Carolina, Jan. 11th, 1865.

Dear Mother:—

WE just stay in one place long enough to get some clothes, draw rations and then dig out for some other place. The Rebels evacuated Savannah on the night of December 20th. They crossed the Savannah river and made their escape by the Union Causeway into South Carolina and we marched in the next day. We stayed there a few days, then marched to Ossabow Sound and took the boats and came here. So you see I have had a ride on the ocean. We have been here several days and it is a good place to stay, for when the tide goes out we can go down on the beach and pick up oysters by the bushel, and if we are too lazy to pick them up, we can go and buy them already taken out of the shell for ten cents a pint. So, taking the rations we get from Uncle Sam, together with the oysters, we are living on the top shelf, but I am afraid it will not last long. There is only our corps here and I don't believe we came here for fun or to eat oysters.

The next time you hear from me we may be four hundred miles from here. It is about ten months since I was home on a furlough and we have not been two weeks in camp any one time, and have marched nearly, if not quite, two thousand miles and fought a number of hard battles, and I don't think we will be idle long. I would like

to stay here, at the same time the troops are in better health while on the march than in camp, and staying in camp will never bring us home again, so the quicker we are on the move again the better and the sooner. We will meet Grant's army at Richmond, and I believe that is our destination.

I have written enough this time. We are well and tough, and I bet we can accomplish anything any other army of the same size in the world can do. I will close and again bid you good bye. I got three letters from you yesterday, one dated in November and two in December. Sam read them and he was just as pleased as I was. Good bye. Write soon. Your letters will follow us.

Your affectionate son.

LETTER XXXI.

Fayetteville, North Carolina, March 11th, 1865.

Dear Mother:—

ONCE more out of the wilderness I will write you a few lines, as I suppose you are somewhat anxious to hear from me. We are all well and able to eat everything and anything we can get our hands on. We got to this place yesterday—and we had a pretty tough time of it. I will tell you some of the places we came through, then you can take a map and follow our course. After we left Beaufort we marched through Barnesville, Orangeburg, Columbia, Camden and Cheraw, South Carolina, and from Cheraw to this place. We have marched miles through swamps with water from our ankles to our hips and if we found a dry place large enough to lay down on at night we were mighty lucky, but the boys don't grumble. We have been in water to our knees for miles at a time and the boys singing the "Star Spangled Banner," "John Brown's Body," and "We Will Hang Jeff Davis to a Sour Apple Tree," etc., all feeling good and jolly, some singing, some cheering and some swearing, especially when they would step in a hole and fall down and get wet all over; then the air would be blue for a time.

We are all beginning to think the end is near. Have met with no opposition to amount to anything since we left Beaufort. Government rations, except sugar and coffee, have not been very plentiful, but we made up all we could from the country, and everything in the line of provisions we just helped ourselves to.

Guess I will stop writing now. The next time you hear from me may be at Petersburg or Richmond, so do not worry if you do not hear from me again in three months. I do not know whether we will be here long enough to get mail or not—the fact is, we don't know anything at all.

I will now bid you good bye. Love to all and write soon.

Your affectionate son.

LETTER XXXII.

Goldsboro, North Carolina, April 9th, 1865.

Dear Mother:—

DID you know by what you have always told me that I was twenty-one years old last Tuesday. Just think, when I enlisted I was seventeen, now I am twenty-one. It does not seem nearly four years that I have been in the army, but it is so all the same.

We got here a few days ago and there were lots of soldiers here from Terry's and Schofield's armies. They came from Wilmington to meet Sherman's army. There is great rejoicing here. We have just heard of the capture of Richmond and Petersburg, with a large number of prisoners and guns. I think they are getting near the end of their rope. The sooner the better.

I hope that we will stay here long enough to draw clothing, for we surely need it. Some of the boys are barefooted, some are dressed entirely with Rebel clothes, and we have a little sawed-off Irishman in our company who is wearing a long linen coat and high plug hat. It is as good as a circus to see him.

I got a letter from you day before yesterday, dated January 28th, saying you were going to send me some stockings and some other things. Don't do it. We are not in one place long enough. We are liable to leave here any day. They have got Lee's and Johnson's armies on the run and I am sure Grant and Sherman will not let them have any rest, but keep right after them, so don't send me anything, unless you might send me a good hunk of bread and butter, if you think it would come throug all right and some one else would not get it before I did.

Just as I thought, the orderly sergeant has just been around and said, "Be ready to march tomorrow at five o'clock." Sam and

I are well, so are all the boys from our neighborhood.

My love to all and I will again bid you good bye. Write soon.

Affectionately your son.

LETTER XXXIII.

Richmond, Va., May 11, 1865.

Dear Mother:—

WE left Goldsboro the next day and marched to Raleigh and there heard of the surrender of Lee and his army; also the assassination of President Lincoln. We were there several days, started again after Johnson, marched one day, then marched back to Raleigh, Johnson having surrendered to Sherman, practically ending the war. We then started on the last march for Washington and home. If you ever saw a lot of jolly fellows it was the morning we left Raleigh on the home stretch. We arrived here yesterday and are camped on the south side of the James river, opposite Richmond. We are laying up today.

Sam and a number of the boys have gone over the river to Richmond, but I am in camp. The truth of the matter is, I am not feeling well. I am nearly done up, but I am in hopes I will feel better in a day or so.

I am not going to write much this time, I am going to lay down and take a rest, so will bid you good bye.

Affectionately your son.

LETTER XXXIV.

Washington, D. C., June 10th, 1865.

Dear Mother:—

NOW do not be frightened if I tell you I am in the Carver hospital in this city, but am a great deal better than when I came here. I was not well when we left Richmond, but would not give up and kept in the ranks until after the Grand Review, the 22nd and 23rd of May, then I could not keep up any longer and went to the regimental hospital and on May 28th was brought here, and when I was brought here I was about all in, I tell you.

I am a great deal better now and the doctor says I will be able to go home soon. Our regiment has gone to Louisville, Kentucky.

Some of the boys came in to see me when the regiment went past the hospital. They went yesterday. The boys here in the hospital are well cared for, everything is done for their comfort that can be. As soon as the doctor will let me, I am going to come home. He said he thought I would be well enough to go in a week or ten days, so now I will bid you good bye. Love to all.

Your affectionate son.

LETTER XXXV.

Mora, Minn., May 1st, 1909.

Dear Readers:—

AS this will be the last of my letters a few words added will not be amiss. I got a transfer from the hospital in Washington to the hospital in Madison, Wisconsin, reported to Dr E. B. Wolcott, at Milwaukee, who at that time was surgeon general of the state. He gave me leave of absence and I went home and under a mother's care was soon myself again. Our regiment was ordered to Madison to be mustered out the latter part of July. I reported again to Dr. Wolcott, who gave me orders to report to our regimental doctor. I did so and was mustered out of the United States service July 28th, 1865, at Madison, Wisconsin.

Now, a word about Sam. Samuel McClement was my schoolmate. His father's and my father's farms joined. We both left school together, January 15th, 1862, and enlisted. We bunked together, slept under the same blanket, drank from the same canteen and read each others' letters. He was eight months my senior, an excellent soldier, brave to rashness, and a jolly, big-hearted Irish boy. A couple of years after the war he married, went to Iowa and settled on a farm. The last time I heard from him was about eight years ago. He was then in poor health and has probably answered the last roll call ere this.

Now, friends, hoping these letters have been read with a little interest, by some at least, I will bid you all good bye.

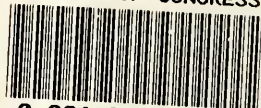
Very respectfully yours,

—M. EBENEZER WESCOTT.

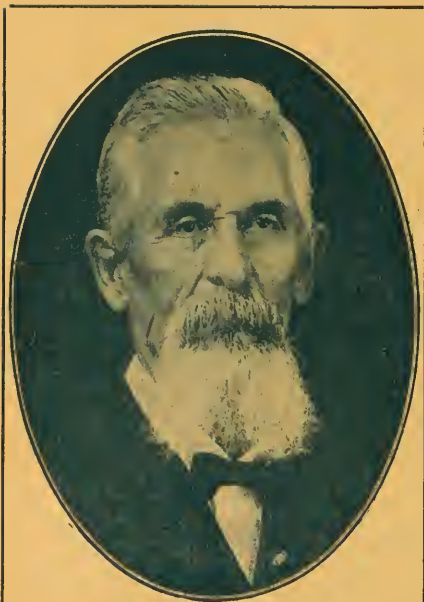
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