

THE CIVIL WAR LETTERS OF JAMES HARRISON GOODNOW

BACKGROUND AND INVENTORY

The Goodnow Papers (Manuscript division, US Library of Congress, Washington DC) include letters, military papers, personal writings and newspaper articles. This chronological inventory lists the 94 letters found in the Goodnow Papers.

Of these, 85 were written by James Harrison Goodnow to his wife Nancy Tanner (Lattimore) Goodnow and their young children, during his service in the 12th Indiana Volunteer Infantry (May 1862 to September 1864). Eight were sent by friends, relatives or military contacts before or during the Civil War. A single letter of 1897 from James to his son John was added by his second wife, Margaret (Williams) Goodnow.

Numbered items in the inventory are letters in the LOC Goodnow Papers collection. Letters written by James to military officials (a request for leave and a letter resigning his commission) found in the NARA pension file have been inserted for completeness but are not numbered.

To help readers navigate this compilation of James Goodnow's Civil War Letters, subheads within the text of the letters correlate with those in the Introduction. Individuals mentioned in greetings at the end of most of James Goodnow's letters are listed and their relationships explained in 'Family and Friends of James and Nancy Goodnow' at the end of the Introduction.

1. 12 Dec.1847, Indianapolis Indiana – Sam Goodnow of Madison, Indiana to his recently-married son James Harrison Goodnow
2. 7 Feb 1848, Butler Co. Ohio – Daniel Lattimore to his daughter Nancy Lattimore Goodnow and son-in-law James Goodnow, living at that time in Madison, IN [envelope]
3. 11 March 1857, Franklin [*probably Indiana*] – Jas. A. McKee, condolences on the death of Daniel Lattimore to Nancy Goodnow
4. 31 July 1862, Ind^s [*Indianapolis IN*] – First preserved letter from James to Nancy after his 27 May 1862 muster into the 12th Indiana Volunteer Infantry
5. 16 Aug 1862, Ind^s [*probably Indianapolis IN*] – James to Nancy
6. 21 Aug 1862, Camp Ashland near Lexington KY – James to Nancy
7. 28 Aug 1862, Camp near Richmond, 26 miles South of Lexington KY – James to Nancy
8. 29 Aug 1862, Richmond KY – James to Nancy
9. 9 Sept 1862, Richmond KY – James to Nancy
10. 27 Sept 1862, Camp Morton – James to Nancy
11. 28 Sept 1862, Indianapolis [*IN*] – James to Nancy
12. 30 Oct 1862, Indpls [*IN*] – James to Nancy
13. 8 Nov 1862, Indianapolis [*IN*] – James to Nancy; note to 13-year-old son Sam.
14. 20 Nov 1862, Indianapolis [*IN*] – James to Nancy
15. 20 Nov 1862, Indianapolis [*IN*] – James to Sam
16. 1 Dec 1862, In Camp Near Colerhama, Mississippi – James to Nancy
17. 8 Dec 1862, In Camp at Wyatt[e], MS – James to Nancy
18. 13 Dec 1862, Waterford MS – James to Nancy
19. 22 Dec 1862, In Camp on Tallahatchie River [*MS*] – James to Nancy
20. 1 Jan 1863, Greensburg IN – Mrs. C.G. Doane, Nancy's friend from Greensburg IN to Nancy.
21. 11 January 1863 Grand Junction TN – James to Nancy
22. 11 January 1863 [*Grand Junction TN*] – James to son Sam
23. 11 January 1863, Grand Junction TN – James to 8-year-old son Dan
24. 14 January 1863, Grand Junction TN – James to Nancy
25. 17 Jan 1863, Greensburg IN to Nancy from Mrs Lizzie Lathrop, a friend from Greensburg IN
26. 18 Jan 1863, Grand Junction TN – James to Nancy
27. 30 Jan 1863 [*no location given - probably Grand Junction*] – James to Nancy
28. 8 Feb 1863, Grand Junction, TN – James to Nancy
29. 20 Feb 1863, Grand Junction TN – James to son Sam
30. 20 Feb 1863, Grand Junction TN – James to son Dan
31. 20 Feb 1863, Grand Junction TN – James to 5-year-old son Johnny
32. 5 & 6 March 1863, Grand Junction TN – James to Nancy
33. 8 March 1863, Grand Junction TN – James to Nancy [*Ref: Aunt Charlotte Moore, Harlow Hern, "Grandfather"*]

34. 15 March 1863, In Camp at Nevills Station, Memphis and Charleston RailRoad, 19 miles East of Memphis [TN] – James to Nancy
35. 25 March 1863, Camp Neville TN – James to Nancy
36. 30 March 1863, Camp Neville TN – James to Nancy
37. 6 April 1863, Fort Loomis TN – James to son Sam,
38. 6 April 1863, Fort Loomis TN – James to sons Dan and Johnny
39. 18 April 1863, Fort Loomis near Colliersville TN – James to Nancy
40. 25 April 1863, In Camp near Colliersville TN – James to Nancy
41. 27 April 1863, In Camp near Colliersville TN – James to Nancy “Confidential”
42. 11 May 1863 [No location] – James to Nancy
43. 15 May 1863, Headquarters 12th Ind Vols, Fort Loomis TN – James to Nancy
44. 18 May 1863, Fort Loomis TN – James to Nancy
45. 25 May 1863, Colliersville TN – James to Nancy
46. 27 May 1863, Memphis TN – James to Nancy
47. 4 June 1863, Colliersville TN – James to Nancy
48. 8 June 1863, Memphis TN – James to Nancy
49. 13 June 1863, Snyder's Bluff [MS] on Yazoo River 13 miles above the mouth – James to Nancy
50. 14 June 1863, Murfreesboro TN – Wallis Lattimore (one of Nancy's brothers) to Nancy
51. 28 June 1863, Snyder's Bluff [MS] – James to Nancy
 - UNNUMBERED. 28 July 1863, HQ 12th Ind Vol Infty, Camp Sherman, MS – James to Lt. Col. John A. Rawlins, AA Gen'l, Dept of the Tennessee, re: leave. [From NARA pension file, James Goodnow]
52. 21 Sept 1863, On Board Steamer Continental – James to Nancy
53. 27 Sept 1863, Camp Sherman MS – James to Nancy
54. 10 Oct 1863, Memphis TN – James to Nancy
55. 20 Oct 1863, Burnsville MS – James to Nancy
56. 23 Oct 1863, Burnsville MS – James to Nancy
57. 25 Oct 1863, Burnsville MS – James to son Sam, short note to Nancy
58. 9 Nov 1863, Fayetteville TN – James to Nancy
59. 16 Nov 1863, Bridgeport TN [More likely Bridgeport AL] – James to Nancy
60. 12 Dec 1863, Athens TN – James to Nancy
61. 20 Dec 1863, Bridgeport AL – James to Nancy
62. 22 Dec 1863, Bridgeport AL – James to Nancy
63. 29 Dec 1863, Scottsboro, AL – James to Sam
64. 3 Jan 1864, Scottsboro AL – James to Nancy
65. 15 Jan 1864, Scottsboro AL – James to Nancy
66. 25 Jan 1864, Greensburg IN – Lizzie Lathrop to Nancy
67. 26 Jan 1864, Scottsboro AL – James to Nancy
68. 29 Jan 1864, Scottsboro AL – James to Nancy
69. 7 Feb 1864, Scottsboro, AL – James to Nancy
70. 29 Feb 1864, Cleveland TN – James to Nancy
71. 6 March 1864, Scottsboro AL – James to son Sam
72. 22 March 1864, Scottsboro AL – James to Nancy
73. 10 Feb 1864, Scottsboro, AL – James to Nancy
74. 18 Feb 1864, Cleveland TN – James to Nancy
75. 21 & 22 Feb 1864, Cleveland TN – James to Nancy
76. 28 March 1864, Scottsboro AL – James to Nancy
77. 31 March 1864, Scottsboro AL – James to Nancy
78. 3 April 1864, Scottsboro AL – James to Nancy
79. 13 April 1864, Scottsboro AL – James to Nancy.
80. 22 April 1864, Scottsboro AL – James to Nancy
81. 29 May 1864, In Field near Dallas GA – James to Nancy
82. 7 June 1864, Acworth GA – James to Nancy
83. 14 June 1864, Big Shanty GA – James to Nancy
84. 25 June 1864, Pendleton IN – Moses D. Gage, Chaplain, 12th Indiana Volunteers to Nancy
85. 2 July 1864, Kenesaw Mountain GA – James to Nancy
86. 5 July 1864, Camp 12th Ind Vols 19 miles SW of Marietta GA – James to Nancy
87. 11 July 1864, Near Chattahooche[e] River GA – James to Nancy
88. 1 August 1864, In Field 3 Miles West of Atlanta [GA] – James to Nancy
89. 6 Aug 1864, In the ditches 3 miles from Atlanta GA – James to Nancy
90. 9 Aug 1864, Marietta GA – James to Nancy
91. 14 Aug 1864, In Camp Four Miles West of Atlanta – James to Nancy
92. 21 Aug 1864, Near Atlanta GA – James to Nancy
93. 7 Sept 1864, East Point 6 Miles South of Atlanta [GA]– James to Nancy
 - UNNUMBERED. 8 Sept 1864, East Point GA – Lt. Col James Goodnow to Major General O.O. Howard, Commanding Dept and Army of the Tenn, resignation; accepted Sept, 15, 1864 [From NARA pension file for James Goodnow]
94. 3 July 1897, Excelsior MM – James to son John

Prologue

James Harrison Goodnow (1826-1908) and Nancy Lattimore (1829-1880) were married in Jennings County, Indiana on 30 November 1847. The first group of letters below includes those written between the time of their marriage and James' enlistment in the 12th Indiana.

1

[From James' Father Samuel Goodnow; envelope addressed to James Goodnow at Madison, Jefferson County, Indiana]

Indianapolis [IN] 12th Dec, 1847

Dear James,

Being unable to attend church today I devote a little time in writing to you. I arrived here safe, but by Monday morning found my ankle so lame and swelled that I have with difficulty been able to walk since. It is now getting some better and I think in a few days I shall be able to wear my boot again. I board with Dr. Sanders (an excellent house) with 13 or 14 other members at \$4.00 per week, which is the best I could do as all other good houses charge the same. But little business has been acted on as yet. The governor's bad health has prevented him from delivering his message this week. It will probably come in tomorrow, after which we shall be in the midst of business. I directed a regular file of the Journal to be sent to Charles for you. I have always sent papers to people in all parts of the county but the post office regulations now require the prepayment of postage on all papers not sent from the office of publication, so I think I shall send none – I forgot to give you a certificate before I left home but I suppose when I return it will be in time or perhaps it might be more satisfactory for you to go before someone else. James Craig acts for Monroe township. You will I doubt not endeavor to learn the children as much as possible and I am anxious that your efforts may be effectual. Try to impress John Lewis with the idea that this may be his last chance to improve and that without learning much more he will be a long way below par in the estimation of others. I hope that by encouraging him to constant study you will be able to help him along and I fully expect to find him vastly improved. I would be glad you would see that Mr. Vey delivers my share of the corn and I suppose that nothing but gentle means will be of any avail. He also owes me 4 bushels of clover seed which I suppose he will get out at Hudson's barn and if he does before I return you can receive it. I bought since I came here, Gibbons' Rome, Hallam's Middle Ages and Shakespeare at less than the Madison price.

I want to hear how the family all get along and how you succeed in the school and in getting ready to build etc –

But what I felt most anxious about and of which I expect you to tell me nothing, is the part you have to act in the new relation into which you have just entered. From the little acquaintance I have had with Nancy I have no doubt she will be all you have hoped, but she expects you to be industrious and that you will always treat her with kindness and affectionate regard and for want of the last consideration the best disposition may be changed. I do not believe you will ever treat her with harshness or unkindness, but if you should have those family jars so common in the world, it will be the greatest of afflictions to me. Tell Nancy that while I live I expect to entertain for her no feeling but good will and that you may be successful in the world is my most ardent wish.

SamL Goodnow

I suppose the session will not be longer than six weeks.

2

[From Nancy's Father Daniel Lattimore]

Butler County, Ohio Feb. 7th 1848

Dear Children,

While breakfast is preparing I take pen in hand to write you a short line. After leaving home I spent two weeks in Greensburg & we had a very good meeting there, 34 had united with the church before I left. And several others were indulging a hope of forgiveness who would unite very soon. The Pastor of the church at least 10 more. Many more were serious.

Since that time I have traveled and labored hard and accomplished but little visible good. I am just now in the midst of a protracted meeting of some interest. But there is a discussion on Universalism comes off today between a U. and a Campbellite which will divide the attention of the people—I am afraid I will get into the soup before it is all over. But if I do, I will get out again!

The weather now is extremely cold up here—my fingers are so stif *[sic]* I can hardly write.

James I wish you would go out and see your new Mother and see if she needs money or any thing else — I hope she has what she needs, but perhaps she may not have—she would take it kind in you to go out and see.

I hope you are both well; & doing well. I shall be glad to visit you in your own house when I get home or soon after. And I hope you will both say with Joshua, As for me and my house we will serve the Lord. This is of the very first importance—even in this life “Godliness has the promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. Oh yes it is the pearl of great price. The one Very needful—and if you set out house keeping without prayer I am afraid you will go on neglecting it. But this you surely will not do. Let me say then that now is the best time you will ever see to begin. A good beginning is a good thing. I hope to go home about from the 1st to the middle of March—perhaps not so soon—if I must ... as an agent I may as well do it heartily — Give my kind regards to Mr. and Mrs. Goodnow—to Dr. Butler and Sarah—and to Frank—when you go out to Vernon stay all night and as long next day as you can to get home.

I am quite sick this morning and have to preach in little over an hour — I must therefore close this brief note.

Both of you write to John — it may do him good — I am very anxious about him.

A hurried line to James and Nancy Goodnow from their

Affectionate father

Daniel Lattimore

3

[Apparently from a colleague of Daniel Lattimore, addressed to James Goodnow]

Franklin [IN?] March 11th 1857

Dear Friend,

I need no other apology for dropping [sic] you this line than the interest I feel in your welfare.

I can join with you in sympathy in the loss we have recently sustained. Such friends as Brother Lattimore was are few & far between. Yet the brightest gem in his character was his piety, and this above everything else we ought to copy.

The possession of true piety will be worth more than everything else to us. It is "the one thing needful" and "the pearl of great price." With this Lazarus the beggar was rich. The rich man, without it, was poor in despite of his riches.

At your period of life, occupying a responsible [sic] post as the head of a family, it becomes a matter of the greatest moment both personally and relatively that you possess this pearl. You are doubtless well aware that habits of thought and feeling become strongly fixed as life advances. Few can positively embrace religion after the Meridian of life has passed. The claims of religion being long resisted, the habit of resistance and deferring(?) becomes so entrenched as almost to defy removal. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the Leopard his spots. Then may they that have been long accustomed to do evil learn to do well" The above is a proverb (from the right place however) showing the difficulty of changing habits that are long fixed. You are passing into that period of life where dangers increase, I trust you possess a clean conscience for integrity and morality. But you know these are not faith and repentance toward God. Besides as the head of a growing promising little family you have much responsibility [sic]. Your dear children are rapidly forming character. And you under God are to do much in moulding their characters for two worlds. Oh what an interesting work is this. How far it transcends in importance every avocation in life. The honest pursuits of life are of course important, but then the training of precious immortal souls for this and for another state oh how interesting. I cannot tell you the pleasure it would afford me to know that you had a good hope in Christ. May the great Shepherd lead you into all truth. Respects to your dear wife.

Yours truly Jos A. McGhee

Civilians Becoming Soldiers: 1862

On 27 May 1862, James Harrison Goodnow enlisted in the 12th Indiana Volunteer Infantry. Mustered in as a Captain, he apparently recruited at least 12 local men to Company A. His letters home often included news of these soldiers to be related to their families in Vernon, or inquiries about their health after they returned home.

4

Inds [Likely Indianapolis, IN] July 31, 1862

Dear Nancy

I have had no time or opportunity to write you until now and have but little time yet. We have been in a perfect stew about our Lieutenants. Conner tried to get the men on his side—failing to do that he went to the Colonel and got him to say that Conner must be 1st Lieut—you may depend there was some swearing done over it. I got them reconciled however and yesterday they unanimously voted for me for Capt and George Wright for 2nd Lieut. R[e]jiley is thrown out and feels badly but submits like a man.

We are filling up slowly—will be filled against next Wednesday. The Col. sweetened Conner by promising to fill the Co. against then. I will then get my commission as Captain then and I will then try to come to see you for as long a time as possible. I am tolerably well. Kiss all the children for me and believe me when I tell you I am yours faithfully.

James Goodnow

5

Inds [Probably Indianapolis] Aug. 16 1862

Dear Nancy

I take the first spare moment since my return to drop you a line. I am well but very busy—the Reg't is filled to overflowing. Two companies and some fragments over. Capt Williams will be Lieut Col., Capt Kempton, Major. I will be Senior Captain, we are Co. D. I am to be Major. The first promotion could have been now had I insisted but thought I had better have more experience. We will probably stay here a week or two. I will write tomorrow.

James Goodnow

6

**Camp Ashland near Lexington, Ky
Aug. 21 1862**

Dear Nancy

I avail myself of my first opportunity for a good while to write you. We were occupied all day Saturday and Sunday and Monday making out our Rolls so that the company could be paid. The order came Saturday to make out a pay roll as soon as possible and bring the men up to the State House for their first months pay—we got through about 10 PM and marched the men up about 11, but the Pay Master had gone to bed. We were told then to go back and make out another Roll so the men could draw their bounty too and the Pay Master would come down Sunday and pay on both Rolls at once. Well I took the Company back, and got to bed about 1 o'clock. Sunday I put in making out the bounty Roll. The Pay Master did not make his appearance until late Monday evening, and the companies all had to be mustered in—that kept us up until 3 A.M. Tuesday morning and had in all this time only got the \$13 paid. The orders were positive that we must March at 12 midnight Monday night but Tuesday morning came and we did not take up our tents until 6 A.M. The bounty had not still been paid and the men were very sore about it. I was in command of the camp when the tents were struck Tuesday morning and I observed that after the balance of the tents were struck those of one company (Capt Rooker's) were not struck. I went over to see about it. The men crowded around me and swore that they would not move an inch until they got their bounty. I reasoned with them as well as I could but to very little purpose. I then turned to their officer and told him to see that every preparation was made to move immediately—if he valued his commission—how he managed it I don't know but I noticed the tents were all down in less than ten minutes.

Well we staid from 6 until 2 P.M. expecting every minute to get orders to move but about 11 A.M. the Pay Master came in and commenced paying the 16th, who were in the same Camp, their bounty and at 2 P.M. we were paid and in about an hour we were ordered to move out of Camp and form in line of battle in front on the common—our company being A led the way and the rest followed and in half an hour we were marching to the Union Depot with the understanding that we were to go to Louisville via the Jeff. R.R. but as soon as we all got on the train we started off on the Cincinnati Road and got to Cincinnati about 3 next morning. We lay on our arms in the street until 6 and then marched to the 4th St. Market House and were treated to a good breakfast by the Citizens. We crossed the River about 10 AM and after staying in Covington until near 3 in the afternoon took the car for this place. —We got to Lexington about 2 this morning. Stayed in the cars until after daylight were treated to breakfast by the Citizens— then formed in line again and marched out to camp about a mile out of town where we now are. You have no idea of how I am worried out I have had no sleep since Friday evening only as I could snatch a few minutes time. I have had all my own duties to perform and a good deal of Regimental duty in being Senior Captain and having no field officer a good deal of the time I have had command. I feel green in the business but do as I best can.

How do you get along—You have no idea of how I want to see you all but I don't think I can possibly see you soon. Write me as soon as you get this and tell me all about your situation. I am afraid you are getting out of money—tell me all about that. I will get no pay before the middle of Sept—ember and must make some provision for you. Tell Sam I want him to write to me. Tell Dan to learn to write quick and then write me a long letter—kiss Johnny and Bel for me. My respects to all who enquire for me.

Direct to Capt James Goodnow
12th Reg't Ind. Vols in Camp near Lexington, Ky. Care Col. Link

Your husband

James Goodnow

7

Camp Near Richmond 26 miles South of Lexington, Ky. Aug 28 1862

Dear Nancy

After near a week's silence I take advantage of a leisure hour to write you again. Word came to Lexington Friday last that the rebels were threatening this place. So three Regiments of us—12th & 66th Ind. & 95th Ohio all under command of Col. Link started for this place Saturday morning about 7 A.M. We also had 6 pieces of artillery. Our regiment led and my company led it so I was in the advance all the time. The day was very hot and we did not get to the Kentucky River (15 miles) until about 4 P. M. We waded the River (about knee deep) and ascended the hill on this side and against we got up we were very tired and foot sore—about one third of my company had fallen out and we were compelled to camp, being still near 10 miles from Richmond. My company was put in a field on the left to guard the artillery. We marched in and had just got our guns stacked and ready to get our suppers when the Adjutant came galloping up saying "turn out" that they were fighting in Richmond and we must go there that night. The boys got their guns in about a half a minute and we marched out into the Road, I having all I could do with them from breaking into a run. Well we marched about a mile, when we met a body of about 50

cavalry coming up full speed. They proved to be Metcalf's Cavalry and they informed us that Metcalf had taken his Regiment and 250 Tennesseans and attacked the rebels at Big hill 15 miles South of this place on the road to Cumberland Gap, that Metcalf had got badly whipped (truth) and they were all who were left of the reg't (a lie—there were about 150 killed, wounded and taken prisoner). Well the Col ordered us to move on and for me to take half of my company and flank out 200 yards to the right of the road and to give Wright the other half to flank on the left and for us to keep the woods and corn fields cleaned out as the Brigade advanced. So out we went over fences and through the corn and brush—double quick—for about 7 miles dropping a man here and there who would give out and fall into the road. When within two miles of Richmond we heard a great cheering along the line. Went into the road with six men who were left and heard that the rebels had sent a flag of truce into town giving the people an hour to move the noncombatants out of town as they meant to attack it then. The order was given throw everything away but guns and cartridge boxes and go double-quick and we threw away knapsacks, blankets and haversacks and went forward on a run. I got into town gathered up my company and was ready with the first. It was then about midnight. As the rebels did not make their appearance the Col. ordered the men to sleep on their arms in the street and ordered me to take my company a half mile out south on the road to the battle field and picket for the night. I went out divided my men and disposed of them behind fences on each side of the road and called for four volunteers to go a quarter of a mile ahead to give alarm in case the rebels approached. Tom Reiley had got a gun and left the wagons to go ahead with us and he stepped out first and three others followed. I sent them forward and lay down on the grass and was asleep in less than a minute. I woke up at day break and found we were still safe the rebels having retreated in the night. Since then I have been on picket one day, out foraging two days and the balance of the time have been drilling and getting all the rest I could. I am very well and enjoy the life first rate. Our teams have not yet come up and we have no tents and very few blankets and have to sleep in the open air on the ground. This goes hard with some of the men—we have 14 on the sick list but it does not hurt me in the least. All the men from town are well except Irby Wagner he has chills but is not dangerous. He is as tough as a pine knot—he is a noble boy.

Write every opportunity you have—kiss all the children for me—get Bel to kiss you for me. Give my love to your mother Sis Walter Dan Will Sharp's folks and respects to all enquiring friends generally.

Your Husband

James Goodnow

8

Richmond Ky Aug 29 1862

Dear Nancy,

I had a little money and supposing you might be nearly strapped I bought a check on Covington for \$25 which I enclose to you—it is just as good a check as Cincinnati and you can easily get it cashed by some of the merchants.

Nothing new since I wrote you yesterday. I had tooth ache all night last night and have it yet not so bad though. We have a hard time here No tents and not half enough to eat. These Kentuckians are willing we should fight for them, but don't seem very willing to feed us. Our Regiment curses Kentucky daily

and hourly. Gen Nelson our commander is a Kentuckian and a slaveholder and seems more afraid that we will hurt the people here than he is afraid of our starving.

There are about 150 of our regiment unfit for duty, most of them having Diarrhea and chills none dangerous—one man shot his fingers off while carelessly handling a loaded gun Wednesday night. No deaths or other accidents with us. Love to all.

James Goodnow

First Blood; Interval

The Battle of Richmond, Kentucky was fought on August 29 and 30, 1862. Confederate forces were victorious, capturing more than 4,000 Union troops including James Goodnow and much of the 12th Indiana Volunteers. The captured soldiers were exchanged in November 1862.

Richmond Ky
Sept. 9 1862

My dear Wife

I write you a line to tell you I am well and patiently waiting for the recovery of two or three of our boys before I return.

Abe Wagner and John Bard of Paris and a young man named Garard all of my company are still seriously wounded and unable to be removed. Abe and Garard will be well enough to go home next week. We have sent to Cinti for a train of Ambulances to remove our wounded within our lines. It will probably be here about the first of next week, when I will take the boys and go. Tell Abe's folks that his arm will be saved and that he is as plucky as ever. Abe is one of the best boys I ever saw. A real bright resolute boy. I got no wound except in my coat sleeve: It is slightly wounded but I think you can easily doctor that with a needle and thread. I am doing what I can for the wounded and am boarding with a very pleasant family. I am passing for an unmarried man here—how do you enjoy that—

Kiss the children for me and believe me when I say I want to see you all as soon as possible. My respects to all who may enquire for me.

James Goodnow

10

Camp Morton Sep 27 1862

Dear Nancy

I recd yours just now. I will attend to the matter you speak of when I come down—but really can't say when I can come. They are very particular about officers leaving camp—and I am very busy gathering men together – clothing them &c.

We drill five times per day and have guard “mounting” & various other duties beside so you may judge I have very little time to do business much less to leave.

Take good care of yourself and the children and write often and tell me what you need.

Yours, James Goodnow

11

Indianapolis Sep 28 1862

Dear Nancy,

I drop you a note this evening not that I have any thing in particular to say—but because I want you to send me my Sash. We are to have a grand Review Wednesday and all the commissioned officers are ordered to appear in full rig—with Sword and Sash. If I could be with you I would like for you to come up on that day, but I will have no time to be away from camp except during review. Be sure to send the Sash to me at Camp—Morning by express—unless you know of someone coming up by whom you can send it. When you write me direct to Indianapolis-Box 918. I ordered the Daily Journal sent to me at Vernon for six months- It is intended for you.

There is no news here in particular that I know of except that Capt. Butler and Lieut Draper and their company came here on Wednesday last—having returned from their Southern Campaign. They have been here ever since trying to get their pay rolls right. Butler told he expected he would want Sam longer. I told him it would be as you said, but I thought Sam could stay. Write often. Kiss Bel, tell Dan and John to be good boys.

James Goodnow

12

Indpls Oct 30 1862

Dear Nancy

In answer to your—what shall I call them—letters or complaints I will assure you that this is the second letter I have written you this week and have been as busy as I could be too. The letters must be lost in going from Camp to P.O. I will mail this myself and see if you get it then. I am very unwell. I have bilious diarrhea that refuses to let go—am very sick at my stomach the most of the time—but I can't leave to go home until after pay day. I am as busy as I can be getting up Pay Rolls and fixing up acct's. If I don't get better I will try to come home Saturday—

I thank you sincerely for the Shirts you sent me. I thought I had done so before—Please excuse the big *[ILLEGIBLE]*—

I have no time to write at length or would write more, Kiss the children for me and believe me

Yours

James Goodnow

P.S. Tell Sam I am very much pleased with his letters and want him to keep up the practice—and send word to Lt Conner that he had better come here tomorrow if possible. J.G.

13

Indianapolis Nov 8 1862

Dear Nancy

I drop you a line to day to tell you that I am well and that is nearly all I have to say. We are not exchanged—nor are we paid yet. We are promised pay within a few days—probably about the middle of next week. So you had better hold yourself in readiness to come up about Friday next—I will get Fin to let you have some money if you should need any before pay day. That Buckwheat you spoke of is all mine—I settled with Draper for it. Tell Charley to sell it and pay you for it.

Give my Respects to your Mother and regards to Dan and Sis.

Love to you and the children—write to-morrow.

Yours

Jas Goodnow

Dear Sam

I have been intending to write to you before now but have never had time. I have been very glad to see that you have manliness and resolution enough to do what you know is right. That is the way you must do if you want to succeed in the world. And I have confidence that you will when you think of it. Always try to do right—you must remember that your mother and my self had rather see you do well than make money for ourselves. That your good is all we look for. J. G.

James Goodnow was promoted to Major, 12th Indiana Volunteer Infantry, effective 17 Nov. 1862.

14

Indianapolis Nov 20 1862

Dear Nancy

I have had no time to write you until now- I was told when we came to Inapls [*Indianapolis*] Tuesday that I was appointed Major of the Reg't—So the papers said—but up to yesterday evening we received no commissions and were told yesterday about noon by the Adjutant General that the announcement in the papers was premature. I went down to the State House yesterday evening however and got an order for our commissions and am now Major of the 12th. I don't know how well I will fill the place but will try to do honor to myself in the new position. I sent Bob Torbet down home today to buy a horse for me and have bought Saddle and other gear to-day. I sent a copy of my commission to you by Fin. I also sent by him Draper's order to Charley to pay you \$15. Fin will give you a due bill for \$18.50—he owes me and will send you the money pay day.

We are ordered to move from here to-morrow at 2 P.M. and will I understand go to Cairo and Memphis. I heard you were coming up to-morrow and am sorry I can't be here to see you. I could not make any arrangement for your coming because I could not learn anything certain about our movements and did not hear about our going to-morrow until late yesterday evening—and we received no marching orders

until to day. So you must not think I did not write before because I did not want to see you for I would be glad to see you once more. I want you to be of good cheer while I am gone for I feel sure I will return and if I should not and should die in the Service I think I could die in no better cause. I want you to look well after the children—I don't mean by this that I want you to provide plenty for them to eat for I know you will do that—but I want you to study their dispositions and govern them accordingly.

For instance Sam should be treated as a reasonable being. You must command yourself before you can command him. Dan is different—being impulsive and excitable and needs firm but gentle management. Johnny needs nothing for two or three years and just breaking in. You will be a better judge of Bel's disposition than I can be. I don't pretend to understand a girl or woman. Don't try to do too much work yourself and above all try to be even tempered. Don't for my sake give way to anger when things go wrong with you. And don't be angry with me for telling you plain truths.

I will write as often as I can and at as much length as possible. I want you to write to me twice a week regularly. Direct—until I advise you differently—to Major James Goodnow—12th Regt Ind Vols. via Cairo.

Give my love to your Mother and Sis and Dan. Kiss the children for me and believe as ever yours

James Goodnow

P.S. I will send my carpet sacks home to morrow. I will put every thing I don't want to take in it. Tell T.J. Reiley that he and Torbet can get transportation for themselves and for my horse by applying to the Q. M. of the 16th, or if they don't get here in time to go with the 16th to come with the first Reg^t afterward.

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15

Indianapolis Nov 20 1862

Dear Sam,

As I want that you and I should be regular correspondents during my absence—I will open the correspondence by writing you a few lines before I start.

We will take the Rail Road to-morrow for Cairo on our way to Memphis—at least it is said so. We will probably go by way of Terre Haute to Mattoon or Sandoval, Ill. Thence to Cairo by way of the Illinois Central Rail Road. You know the Terre Haute Alton and St Louis crosses the Chicago Branch of the Central at Mattoon—and the Main Road at Sandoval. We will, I think, be sent to Memphis to hold that place or Helena until the Valley of the Mississippi is cleared by General Grants Army. This is only conjecture on my part however, we may [*be*] sent out to fight immediately.

I want you to study to improve yourself while I am gone. You must always bear in mind that you have but a few years to study now. It will not be long before you will have to go out in the world to make your own way—and you will then be too busy to study and your success and usefulness will altogether depend on the way you employ your time now. I want you to bear this in mind constantly. Remember always that your Mother has a right to your help and that you can never do too much for her.

I want you to write to me once a week regularly and tell me everything that happens at home. I will try to answer all your letters—but if I should not—don't fail to write on that account.

James Goodnow

The Central Mississippi Campaign

The 12th Indiana Volunteer Regiment left Indianapolis for Memphis, Tenn. on 23 Nov 1862, and during December took part in Grant's Central Mississippi Campaign. It appears that James Goodnow and his company were not involved in the action of 20 December at Holly Springs, Mississippi, though others in the regiment clearly saw action and he seems to have expected attack all during December.

16

In Camp Near Colerhama Mississippi December 1st 1862

Dear Nancy

You will perceive by glancing at the map that we are about 50 miles S.E. of Memphis. We arrived at Memphis Monday night and lay aboard the Boat until near noon Tuesday when we were put in camp 2½ miles south of the city. We marched for this place about 2 P.M. Wednesday. We were attached to the 5th Brigade in the 3rd Division of Sherman's Army Corp. The Division is commanded by Brig. Gen. Lauman and the Brigade by Col. Moore of the 33rd Wisconsin—which Regiment is in our Brigade and the Colonel is the ranking officer which gives him command. General Sherman commands the three Divisions constituting a "Corps d'Armee" We started to reinforce General Grant whose army lies east of us some 8 or 9 miles near Holly Springs. We were ordered to guard the Division train and to march in the rear of it. We had a nice time Wednesday afternoon and night until 11 or 12 o'clock. Our train was long and went slowly at best and we found all the bridges either torn or burnt down after we got 4 miles out and we had to wait until the teams forded the streams and pushed up hill by hand as most of the hills were so steep the mules could not haul the wagons. Well, we worked on in that way until we came up to the camp. We then had to get our suppers and got to bed about 1 a.m. We started next day at 7 A.M. and were put in the advance of the Brigade and have had no teams to guard since. We got to Pigeon Roost Creek 7 miles north of this last Friday night. We lay by over Saturday and came to this place yesterday. We now constitute the right wing of General Grants army as I understand it, and our movements will be governed by those of the main army. I am told the Rebels are encamped on the Tallahatchie River about 15 miles south of us. I suppose we will have a movement of some kind soon—but can only guess when or in which direction it will be.

The country here is altogether different from my idea of it. Our road has run over a beautiful rolling and mostly fertile country. The soil is sandy and produces small grain, cotton and tobacco well. There is not much cotton grown now however as the Rebel powers prohibit its cultivation and they burnt almost all that was raised. The country on our march was on fire for miles on each side of us as we advanced. Jackson's Rebel Cavalry burnt all the cotton within our reach and I am ashamed to confess our soldiers burnt pretty much all the fences and outhouses immediately on the road. The order prohibiting burning and plundering was very strict and most of the officers tried to assist in enforcing it, but enough officers winked at the thing to disgrace us. The 12th Regiment is, I think, the most orderly and best disciplined Regiment in the Corps. I am proud of the reputation it has made and proud of being one of its officers. I am getting along very well—never had better health—Col. Williams has not caught up, and Lt Col Kempton is still in command and I am glad to say has not been tight since we left Cairo. He is a very good officer and he and I do very well together. I will write again as soon as I can. Write often and tell

Sam to write too. Tell Sam I trust he will do his duty as my representative. Give my love to all. Kiss the children for me and believe me.

Yours truly

James Goodnow

Direct to

Major Jas. Goodnow

12th Reg. Ind vol.

6th Brigade 3rd Division Shermans Corps.

Army of the Mississippi

via Cairo & Memphis

17

In Camp at Wyatt, Miss.

Dec. 8 1862

Dear Nancy

I have just time to say I am well and the health of the Reg^t is good. We are guarding a bridge here on the Tallahatchie River. We are having a good easy time—will probably stay some time.

Write—Love to all and yourself particularly.

Jas Goodnow

18

Waterford, Miss Dec. 13 1862

Dear Nancy

I have another opportunity to write you a few lines. We left Wyatt yesterday and marched 12 miles to this place which is on the Miss. Central R.R. and 8 miles South of Holly Springs. Grants Army is mostly South and lying at and near Oxford 14 miles from here and on this Road. We were at Wyatt[e] guarding a bridge across Tal1ahatchie River and on the Road leading South from Chulahoma and lay there almost perfectly idle from the 3rd inst. until yesterday when the R.R. having been repaired to this place there was no more use for the Road we were guarding and we were with the 27th Iowa moved here and ordered to report to the Commander at Holly Springs. The Col. has gone over there today and we will know what we have to do when he returns. The Col, Conner, Capt. Nelson and 3 or 4 other officers and about 110 men joined us day before yesterday at Wyatt. They left Indpls. on Monday after we did, but only came as far as Memphis. They were kept there about a week and sent back to Co1umbus, Ky. and thence by R.R. to Holly Springs. The Road from Memphis South over which we traveled is infested with Guerillas, and unsafe for parties of less than 100 armed men. Dr. Camfield and two or three others were about two miles in our rear on our second day from Memphis and were captured. The Doctor was set at liberty but the others were paroled. One of the Guerillas told the Doctor he had a good chance to shoot me from the woods the first night we were out but thought it was not safe. I am much obliged to him for refraining.

I have no means of knowing what we will do hereafter. It has seemed on two or three occasions since we left Memphis that we would be in battle in a few hours. Especially the day we left Chulahoma. We were wakened at midnight the night before by an orderly from Headquarters with orders to march at daylight next morning—with no wagons except enough to carry ammunition and to take our ambulances and one days rations in the men's haversacks. Well, we started a little after daylight directly toward the Rebel fortifications on the Tallahatchie. We were in the Second Brigade from the front and we could hear Cannon firing ahead all day after 10 A.M. We knew that was by our advance shelling the woods to drive the Rebel Pickets in but every man expected soon to come up to where they would not drive so easily, but after all we had no fight—the Rebels had evacuated their works and gone South and it is said have gone south 40 or 50 miles to Grenada. We have been lying still since guarding the road over which supplies came. The whole Army seems to be lying still waiting for provisions to come up.

Tell Sam I will write the next letter to him. And that I am expecting he is doing just right. Tell him to write—you have no idea how glad I would be to get a letter from home. Tell Will Sharp to write to me often. Write often yourself. Tell Dan and Johnny to be good boys and tell Dan to learn to write soon and then write a long letter. Tell Bel to be a good girl and I will bring her and Johnny something nice when I come home.

Give my regards to your Mother and Sis and Dan, and to all Friends. Tell Mr Dickson to write to me.

Direct to me. 12th Reg't Holly Springs

Yours ever, James Goodnow

19

In camp on Tallahatchie River [*Mississippi*]

Dec. 22 1862

My Dear Wife

Quarter Master McClelland was taken prisoner at Holly Springs on Saturday last and is paroled and will probably go home. I take the opportunity to drop you a line—I can only say a few words, as I understand a paroled man must carry no Military news. I am well and have enjoyed excellent health since we started. I weigh 12 or 15 pounds more than I did when we left Indpls. I like the Service, although we have some disagreeable things to contend with in our Reg't. I have not heard a word from home since Torbet and Kelly and Col. Williams came up. I would like exceedingly well to hear from you. I am very anxious about your welfare and that of the children. Take good care of yourself and of them for my sake—I don't know when I will be at home. In fact I make no calculations about it. I would like to see you all but could not honorably go home if I had leave, and no leaves of absence are given. Write often—Tell Sam to do the same. I got his letter for Torbet. Direct to 12th via Columbus.

James Goodnow

Winter Quarters, January-June 1863

The 12th Indiana spent January through June at Grand Junction and Colliersville, Tennessee, guarding the Memphis and Charleston Railroad.

20

[From Nancy's friend Mrs. Doane of Greensburg, Ind.]

Greensburg, Jan the 1st 1863

Dear Friend,

I will commence this letter by wishing you a Happy New Year. I have been thinking for some time of writing to you but I had neglected it so long I was almost ashamed to attempt it. I met Mrs Lathrop A few days since when she told me she had received a letter from you, and her children were both quite sick at the time she had been unable to answer it. I told her I would answer it as I owed you a letter and she could write when she had A better opportunity about the time her children got better. Mr Lathrop was taken with Hemorrhage of the lungs he was very bad night before last. I have not heard from him since—poor woman my heart aches for her, it had been so long since he had any of those spells—she began to think he would never have any more. It is about four years since he had any before. She has two very pretty children the little girl is very smart and interesting. Mrs Christie has two very fine children A girl and A boy. She was very sick after she had her last one. They thought for several months she would not recover, but she is quite well now. Mrs Siling is well I presume. I often see her passing. She has three little boys the youngest is walking. I do not know Mrs Luther has been verry sick. Mrs Bryce says she is getting better, Mrs Doane you will see is pretty well I thank you, at least she is able to write. I have just heard that Mr Lathrop is a little better today. Mr. Doane is now out of business—he is in verry poor health. I believe every one have their troubles. I do not know whether we will remain here longer than Spring or not. You must keep in good heart your Husband is under the same kind and watchful Providence on the Battle Field as he was by his own pleasant fireside so cheer up Dear Friend always look on the bright side of the picture. Why did you not come to Greensburg the time you thought of coming we looked for you and felt quite disappointed. I do hope you will come while we are living here there has been quite a change in the place or rather in the people since you lived here. They are getting verry gay and fashionable, quite cityfied. Your friends often inquire for you. Oh, how I wish you were living here or where I could see you often. I would like so much to see your little Household pet and Frank oh, I mean Dan. I wonder if he has forgotten me—kiss all the children for me. There is not much news to tell you. Emma is in Madison this winter her cousin Mary Westgate is to be married soon to a gentleman from Chicago. Charlie I suppose you have heard went as Drummer Boy in the 7th Indiana Regiment was gone about 8 months. He had fine health all the time he was gone. He is going to school in Rising Sun this Winter there is no one at home now but Mr. Doane myself and Willie it seems right lonesome. We have very poor schools here at present. They are building a fine Seminary here. I suppose when that is finished I think they will try and get good teachers. When did you hear from your Mother-in-law. I would like so much to see her give her a good buss for me when you see her. I heard not long since that Sis Chambers had an heir is it so. Where is Mrs Culbertson? How I would like to see her and have A chat about old times. Please answer this soon and I will try and answer it sooner, give my best respects to your Mother and Sister.

I remain your sincere Friend.

C.G.Doane

Mrs Nancy Goodnow

21

Grand Junction, Tennessee

January 11 1863

Dear Nancy

You may imagine my gratification on receiving letters from you of Dec 2nd, 6th, 9th, 14th & 19th last night. I also was glad to get two from Sam and three from Dan. We have had no mail until last night since leaving home, and I had nearly concluded I never would get a letter. I will first tell you what we have been doing since I wrote from Holly Springs and then will answer your letters. Well we remained in camp at Holly Springs doing very little except being mustered for pay Dec 31st (not paid yet though). I mustered the 40th Illinois and we were mustered by an officer of the 100th Ind. We left Holly Springs on Tuesday last 6th inst. Lt Col Kempton was left behind on a court of inquiry into the doings of the 109th Ills—which Regiment has been trying to get paroled it is said—and I had command of the Regiment (ours). Our Division (Denver's) had orders to march eastward on the Salem road. We marched to Salem about 16 miles north of east that day and encamped in a small bit of woods a little north of town. Salem is a small town—about the size of Dupont—but nearly deserted, and it looks desolate, as all the towns of Mississippi and Tennessee that I have seen look. We marched next day at 8 A.M. north and crossed Wolf Creek about 8 miles distant and encamped. Wolf Creek has about as much water as Misecatack, but like all the streams here it runs through a wide low marshy bottom and the stream seems to run in a ditch—narrow and deep. We went into camp in a range of hills about a half mile north of the creek, and staid until Friday morning, when our Division was divided, our Brigade (except the 40th Ills and a Battery (which were sent to Davis' mills about two miles west to guard the mills) moving north six miles to this place where we encamped, and got our tents up just in time to avoid a heavy rain. The other Brigade went to LaGrange 3 miles west of here. They are there yet and we are here. How long we will stay time will determine. The country through which we marched was mostly hilly and the soil is sandy. The soil of that part of Tennessee and Mississippi over which we marched is almost pure sand after about a foot below the surface and where gully begins to form you may be sure it will wash deep. This town is about the size of North-Vernon, and a good-deal such a place. It is at the crossing of the Memphis and Mobile & Ohio Roads, 50 miles east of Memphis and about the same distance west of Corinth. Col Kempton came up last night but goes to LaGrange where the court is to be held in future—tomorrow. Holly Springs was evacuated last evening and Grants whole army is on this Road. Now to answer some things in your letters. *[REMAINDER MISSING]*

22

January 11th 1863 [Grand Junction, Tennessee]

Dear Sam

I was very glad to get some mail from your mother and you. They came late last night but I did not go to bed until I had read them through—I am gratified to have you remember me and write to me so often. I feel here almost cut off from home and am afraid sometimes that you will all forget that I am out of the

family and neglect to write to me. I have not written to you because I have been very busy and have never known since we left Memphis just when we would have an opportunity of sending a mail until a half hour of the time of sending letters off. And then I had to put in all my time writing to your Mother—but I don't want you to think that because I did not write to you I have forgotten you or did not care for you. I think of you and your prospects always. I am sorry to think you were dismissed from school but cannot believe you were deserving of such harsh treatment. I don't think you would willfully go so far astray as to be unworthy to stay in a school. But I do think you should have promised to try to obey in future when asked. I want you to go to the teacher and say to him that I told you to ask him to take you back. Say to him that I told you to promise to try to obey in future—if he is a reasonable man that will be enough and if he does take you back, do your best to obey all the rules of the school.

Bob Torbet has been sick for some time—he was so unwell that we had to leave him behind when we left Holly Springs, but he came up with us yesterday. He wants to get a discharge, he may possibly get one. Bob does not like the Service much and I am afraid has got tired.

We hear by our letters received last night that the people of Indiana are tired of the war and want to compromise by giving the Rebels all they ask. I hope that is not so. We might as well go home as try to whip the Rebels—unless we are supported by the people and Government at home. This is not a war for dollars and cents, nor is it a war for territory, but it is to decide whether we are to be a free people and if the Union is dissolved I very much fear that we will not have a Republican form of government very long—but our people are blind and will not see it.

So I want you to write often and tell me all the news. Direct to me 12th Reg. vol. 1st Div. 13th Army Corps. Army of the Tennessee via Cairo

James Goodnow

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23

Grand Junction, Tennessee January 11th 1863
Master Daniel Goodnow

Dear Dan

I was glad to get three letters from you last night—and you wrote me three very good letters. If you will only learn to write a little plainer—you will soon do first rate. I hope you and Johnny had a pleasant Christmas and New Year. Did Saint Nicholas bring you anything—or did he conclude to not visit you until I came back. Well, Dan you ought to be out here and see our big armies. When we started from Memphis we took three roads out of the city and the army on each road was about three miles long—first the Cavalry went ahead. And then a regiment of infantry and then a Battery of four or five cannon and then infantry and then wagons and so on—and when we got about ten miles out we all joined together in a large bottom [*of*] a little stream and if you had been there you would have thought there was going to be a battle there was so much noise. The men cheered and yelled and the mules brayed loud enough to make you jump out of your boots.

But I am very glad you are not here and I am glad we have no fighting nor large armies at home—for wherever the large armies go here they drive the people away from home and take all they have to eat

and all their corn and then burn their houses and fences—and a great many little boys down here do not have enough to eat and often have no home.

Write to me every chance you have and tell Johnny to tell you what to say to me. Kiss Bel and tell her Pap sent her that.

James Goodnow

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24

Grand Junction, Tennessee

January 14th 1863

My Dear Wife

I avail myself of a few idle moments to drop you a few lines. I wrote you Sunday 11th from this place—and since then nothing particular has transpired but as you complain that I don't write enough I will write now to make up for my former shortcomings.

We have remained still since we came in on Friday except that we moved our camp about 30 yards to the rear in order to get back from the crest of the little hill on which we are encamped. We have 4 Regiments here in our Brigade and we are encamped one Regiment on each side of town. Our Regiment is east and about 1/4 mile from town. Immediately adjoining our left is a Section of a Battery (2 guns) in a small earthworks or fort they call it. It is on the crest of the hill and our camp is on the right of it about 100 yards and behind the brow of the hill so that in case of an attack we are screened by the rise in front. We have a good many little alarms as it is said the enemy's Cavalry is hanging round us waiting to catch us napping and then dash in on us. I have however got so used to these things that I pay no attention further than to keep a good look out.

I don't think they find us unprepared—let them come when they will and I have little fear of their coming unless they can surprise us. When we started from Memphis I confess the idea of going into an enemy's country where we might be shot from the bushes at any time made me a little nervous but I have got so used to going round the pickets and hearing alarms that I am becoming hardened—although I will not say I am any less afraid of a Rifle or Cannon than I ever was. My bravery, if I have any is not the result of constitutional indifference to danger but of desire to do my duty under all circumstances and I suppose I have the usual desire to stand well in the estimation of others.

I don't know however if the news from home that the so called "Democratic" Party is determined to have peace at any cost is true that any of us are doing much by staying here and exposing our lives and health. If we are not supported by those who remain at home we might as well come home ourselves. We can never end the war while the traitors at home are neutralizing all our efforts by encouraging the rebels as they are doing. I am becoming very despondent of late as to our success. I would have no fear of it if we were a united people—but I really believe that the leaders of the party in power in Indiana are working in concert with Jeff Davis & Co to bring about a dissolution of the Union and then attack the West and South West, to the South and then spread slavery over the whole of the new nation. If this is done we may bid farewell to all hope of our ever seeing a good government during your or my life. Anarchy must prevail and we will never feel the same sense of security as to life and property that we once felt.

I hope that I am mistaken in my gloomy forebodings but cannot think I am. We are having a very wet day. The rain pours down in torrents while I am writing and my stove has refused to burn today so that I am as you may judge having a pretty bad time. The climate here and where we have been since leaving Memphis is very good. We had one little spell of snow lasting two or three hours Dec 2nd, but with that exception have had uniform good weather. The days are warm and the nights cold and frosty. The weather is very similar to that we have in the last days of October with the exception that we have more rain here—but the rains don't make the roads here so muddy as they often are at home. The soil here is sandy and becomes dry within a day or two after a rain. The rainy weather does not affect us here as it would at home. We have all been as wet as we possibly could be on several occasions but there seems to be less sickness after we have been thoroughly washed off[[f]] than there ordinarily is. There is a good deal of fever among us just now though. Some twenty cases in the Regiment. I think that Reiley has been quite sick but is able to be up now and Bob Torbet has been unwell almost the whole time since he caught up with us.

Reiley and Torbet are both applying for a discharge and will probably get although I am not certain of it and you had better not tell their folks of it for fear they should fail. Capt. Rooker of Co E of our Regiment was discharged for ill health and Capt. Cubberly of Co C has just resigned for the same cause. The Adjutant tendered his resignation but it was not accepted by Gen. Denver, our Division Commander. A good many officers would resign if they could honorably but resigning in front of the enemy is not just the way to prove a man's bravery—and unfortunately the poor privates who came out with us on our promise to stay with and see to them have not the privilege of resigning.

I want you to write me often and don't write me such letters as yours of Dec. 2nd. I passed a sleepless, uncomfortable night after receiving that letter and really must acknowledge that you have had some cause to reproach me with want of confidence. Won't you take into account that I am since we lost our property very suspicious and easily excited and try to help me recover my former tone of mind—instead of viewing all my actions with jealousy and mistrust. That is the main cause—believe me of our troubles—Love to Sam and Dan and Johnny and Bel.

Your husband, James Goodnow
address me
2nd Brigade 1st Division
17th Army Corps. (instead of 13th) Army of the Tennessee

25
[From Mrs Lizzie Lathrop]
Greensburg, Ind
Jan 17th/63

Dear Friend

Again I had the pleasure of hearing from you and this time have the chance to write to you. Mrs Doane just sent your letter and as she answered my letter I will answer hers with pleasure.

We are all well again once more—both my little ones and my husband have been sick but are well now. Mr Lathrop is about as he was when you knew him. He was very well until the last few weeks. I hoped he had gained his health entirely—I think he will when the weather gets warm again.

Well, I think of so many things at once I don't know which to write about first. I will tell you about Mrs Hittle (as you wished to know of her) She has lost a little girl since you lived here and has a prospect again. Mrs Weaslers has two little boys one three and the other one a year old. Mag Jamison is married. She married a second cousin of ours, Sidney Lathrop. Sister Mag has another baby a little girl seven months old—ten days older than my little boy—pretty close race wasn't it. We arranged it very nicely don't you think we did. Roths have a boy and a girl.

Sisters health has been rather poor until the last two months. Mrs Siling was sick all last summer but is well again I believe. She has three boys. Mrs Forsythe has a little girl three years old in September. Just the age of my little Maggie. You knew Mrs Banner I believe. She died last fall a year and left two babies (twins) one day old and they lived to be nearly a year old and died in less than a week apart. I suppose you know Mrs Hood is a widow.

Uncle Robbins (Dr. Robbins) is dead been dead more than a year. Irvin is married and him and aunt live together—You know Sarah Paul she is married to a widower with eight children. Her sister Mrs Warriner is dead left three children—one a babe a few weeks old. You knew Mr Peter McCarg his widow married Mr Hendricks the next door to us. Mrs Hendricks has been dead two years.

That reminds me of Dr Craig's misfortunes—his wife that you knew lived only a year and a half after they were married. She left a little girl and he married again and a week or two ago his second wife died leaving two children one a babe. I feel so sorry for him, don't you.

Well, if I don't quit writing about other people I will have no place for ourselves. You do not know how much I want to see you and your children. What would I give to see Dannie come in and say "Mrs Lathrop your Pa's coming." don't you recollect [*sic*] how he used to do. He would open his big blue eyes so wonderingly when I would tell he [*sic*] he was not my Pa. But there is a merry little voice to call him that now. The first voice he hears is hers (I mean Dasie as we call her—but her name is Maggie Belle). The baby is so he can say Dad Dad and the poor child has no name yet so you will have to tell us one.

Dasie is unusually affectionate. This evening every few minutes she comes and says "Mama want to kiss you." The worst of it all is she thinks she can write better than I. I acknowledge I am doing miserably [*sic*] little good. She is half to blame for it, too. I can talk a great deal better so do come and see us do. I would be so glad to see you. I am so sorry for you in your loneliness. It is better than it might be, you know when he comes home you will love him all the more if such a thing could be...

Lee sends his best wishes to you and the children—Mrs Doane sends her love and says she will write soon. Sister would like to see you very much sends love. Dasie has love to Johny [*sic*] as says she most old enough to marry. [*sic*]

Goodbye

Your true friend Lizzie Lathrop

Write very soon I shall count the days till I get a letter from you. Give my best love to your children and kiss little Bel for me tell [*sic*] I love these little darlings.

26

Grand Junction Tenn January, 18th 1863

Dear Nancy

Capt D. P. Cubberly of Co. C of our Regt has resigned and is going home. I send a few lines by him. You must not expect much of a letter this time as I am on a Court Martial here and have only a moment in which to write. I am about as well as usual except that I have had some toothache. We had a heavy fall of rain last week. I believe it commenced the day I wrote last. It rained about two days about as hard as you ever saw rain fall—and that was succeeded by a heavy fall of snow. The snow is yet 3 or 4 inches deep. My feet have been cold the most of the time and an old jaw tooth has been giving me regular fits. We have been doing nothing since I last wrote but to try to keep warm and we have succeeded very poorly. Our men have tents but no fires in them—I have a stove in my tent. I with Col. Walcott of the 46th Ohio and Capt. Cloon of the 6th Iowa are appointed to sit on the loyalty of some of the Citizens of this Country who were captured by our Cavalry and brough[t] in. We have been in session two days and have never seen the prisoners nor have we much idea of what we are to do. We are having a good time though. We have the Parlor of the [ILLEGIBLE] Hotel here and enjoy ourselves sitting round the fire and talking politics etc.

Write me soon and tell me whether you have any money yet. I have never been paid yet and it is said now we will not be paid for some time that Government is strapped. I am strapped also that does not trouble me—but I don't know what you will do. I have not heard from you since I got that batch of letters and can only guess at your situation but am afraid it is bad. I wrote Walter to send you \$25. See if you can't borrow \$50 from Will Sharp[e] or Dr. Burt. I am earning money and their pay will be certain.

Write often as you can and write fully. Tell Sam to write me how he made it with the School teacher—give my love to the children & try to believe that I love you.

James Goodnow

27 [No location]

Friday Evening Jan. 30

...We have just got a mail and I have a line or two each from you and Sam—written Jan'y 18th. You still have no money. You have no idea how badly I feel about that. I can't go home to see to you—but I wrote Walter more than two weeks ago to let you have \$25. You should have it before now. You still write for me to come home—how can I do it—If I were to offer my resignation I would have to give a good reason before it would be accepted and I know of no good reason except one and that I do not like to give—I assign as a reason that the Commanding officer gets wild with drink and is therefore unsafe—but if I resign that does not let the men that I enlisted out and I don't like to have it said I could not endure as much as they do. So try to bear this separation bravely—and let us try to profit by the lesson it ought to teach us—that is to endeavor to enjoy each others society better when we are united again. I am spending as little money as possible out here. I assure you I am not wasting any means. I have now just about one dollar in cash. When that gives out—I don't know how to get any more until I am paid. I have been anxiously expecting pay for two weeks but none has come as yet. I see that money has been

provided to pay us—can't tell why it don't come to hand—but you may rest assured I will lose no time in sending you money when I do get it. If you could know I have grieved over your destitution you would think I had still some feeling left.

Tell Sam I will write him to-morrow and tell Will Sharp[e] I received his very welcome letter some days since & that I have been unwell or should have answered it ere now—I will write him a long letter in a few days. Tell your Mother I would like to see her again and that I hope she has good health—although you and Sam don't often mention her.

Tell Bel Sharp[e] and Mary Ann and Dan that I send them my best regards. Tell our Dan I am going to write him a long letter one of these days. And I want him to write to me every time he gets a chance—has he ever got the letter I did write him. My black boy “Red” asked me to whom I was writing it and when I told and also told him Dan had written to me and how young he was Said "Why dat boy's a Bully" Tell Johnny I am going to write a letter to him and Bel. I am going to write them a little letter. I am glad Sam is at work and hope you and he get along well together. Write oftener than you do—tell me all that is occurring at home. There is a lack of detail in your letters somehow—

Yours ever

James Goodnow

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28

Grand Junction Tenn Feb 8 1863

My dear Nancy

I promised in my letter to Sam and Dan that I would write to you yesterday—but I have so little of importance to write—there is so little of interest transpiring here that I put off writing for one day thinking that something might turn up within the twenty four hours that would be worth relating. But nothing unusual has occurred and I must write something or I know I will incur your displeasure.

Well in the first place we have had a particularly bad spell of weather here—first it snowed about the first of the month and after the snow had lain on the ground for three or four days—it began to melt and form mud and I think we have one of the nastiest, muddiest camps I ever saw. We made an attempt to have dress-parade yesterday evening and it would have made a dying man laugh to see us dragging ourselves round in the mud while attempting to go through the ceremony in some little Style. Our men stood in mud about ankle deep and when the command was given—"order arms"—instead of dropping their guns briskly to the earth they very carefully set the butts on their toes to keep them out of the mud. I dismissed them as soon as possible—and we will have no more dress parades until the mud dries.

We have received no pay yet and don't know certainly when the Paymaster will come round. I was told last week that we would certainly be paid in a few days. As soon as I can get my money I will send it to you. I am very anxious about you. I am afraid you are needing money badly. I wrote Walter immediately on the receipt of your first letter asking him to let you have \$25—and I wrote you that I had asked him to let you have the money, but I have not heard from him since—and you do not refer to it in any of your letters written since—how is it—I have a good sum due me now and you don't know how impatient I am about the delay in paying.

I care very little on my own account—but it seems to me I could be reconciled to our separation if yourself and the children were beyond the danger of immediate want. I still have \$1.75 in cash—that to be sure is borrowed—but I have loaned as much as I have borrowed. I am boarding with Capt Trotter. I boarded as long as I could with the Lt. Col—but there was so much drinking done around his tent by the Adjutant and him that I availed myself of an excuse and quit the first opportunity. I have a very pleasant time with Capt Trotter and we are sober all the time. We have bakers bread, coffee, sugar, bacon and molasses. We buy all these from the commissary at government contract price so that they don't cost as much as the same articles do at home at retail.

There is not much going on here except that we are getting our fort along finely. We have great confidence in it and our rifle pits. We think that with our fortifications to help us our 2500 men are a match for 10,000—and so they are if they fight with determination. I don't feel much uneasiness about the result of an attack on us if the rebels should make one—but I don't think they will attack us before the thing is decided at Vicksburg. They can't certainly spare the men from there now. This is my opinion. I know. I may easily be wrong though. I have in a great measure got over the nervousness and unpleasant feeling a person will have when first he goes into an enemy's country and I at first looked out anxiously for all signs of danger but I never slept more soundly in my life than I do now. In fact there is a certain fascination about this state of uncertainty and if it were not for being from home—and for some few unpleasant things connected with the management of the Regiment I believe I would enjoy myself extremely well. But to tell the truth there is too much whiskey used by the officers of our Regiment—and I do not enjoy the company of any man who is never companionable except he is half drunk. If I am to be killed in battle I will die sober—but I would not like to say that for every one here. I have said more on this subject than I ever did before—don't let it go any further.

I heard from Father's Sister Aunt Moore, who lives in Noble County Ind a few days since. Some of our men live in that county and she heard from them that I was here and sent me word by one of them who came out lately that she wanted me to write to her. So I wrote her a full sheet and told her all I knew. I wrote to John Chambers some time ago—have not received an answer yet—he seems to have lost his taste for writing since we settled our business. I have done my duty by visiting them and writing to them and will let the matter rest until further advice.

Tell Charley & Mary that I take the naming of their boy for me as quite a compliment and should I ever have the opportunity will return it. I would like very much to have Charley write to me. Give my respects and best regards to your Mother, Will Sharpe & Bel and Mary Ann & Dan & Kate—and Mr. & Mrs. Dickson. Tell Sam I wrote Dan and him a long letter day before yesterday. I want them to answer it immediately. Tell Sam to line Dan's paper so he will write straight. Tell Johnny and Bel I am going to write them a letter some of these days. As for you I hope you have forgiven anything wrong in my conduct toward you and only remember the more pleasant periods of our married life.

And believe I will endeavor to do my part toward obliterating all past difficulties.

As ever yours

James Goodnow

29 [29-31 are three letters to his three sons Sam, Dan and Johnny, included in the same mailing and written without a break but each formally addressed to one boy]

Grand Junction Tennessee

February 20 1863

Dear Sam

I think I owe you a letter and I will try to pay the debt to night. I rec'd a letter from your Mother dated 13th—yesterday—and was glad to learn from it that you were all well. I was also pleased to hear that you were still at work and satisfied. I want you to learn habits of industry and also to learn to not be ashamed of honest labor. You are perhaps not learning as much as you might at some other business—but that does not matter so much—if you learn to practice what you do know and at the same time make yourself strong and healthy, I will be well satisfied— and beside you have the satisfaction of knowing that you are earning your own livelihood, and that is an object. I want you to work there until you can get something better to do no matter if that something does not turn up for three or four months.

In the mean time do your best to please Mr. Leavitt and he may probably set you to keeping his books after awhile. It is very *[uncertain]* when I will be at home and I want you to act as though you had your own way in life to make. Be attentive to your business whatever that business may be; try to improve yourself always in your business and do not change your occupation unless you are very certain you can better yourself by the change. I want you to write to me frequently and tell your mind freely. Tell me all about what you are doing and all about your cares and troubles, and you may be sure I will always feel an interest in what ever interests or affects you.

We are still guarding this place. We are apparently as safe here as we would be at home. A few rebel guerilla bands are hovering round us but there are no large bodies of them near us. They are all mounted and being well acquainted with the country and having the sympathy and assistance of the people of the country—always manage to escape from all the parties we send in pursuit of them.

It has been very rainy here and very unhealthy for our men but yesterday and to day were bright sunny days and our men felt a good deal better. We hope to have clear weather now and if we do, we will all be well soon. You and your Mother write often. Tell your Mother I got the Harpers she sent me and I am very obliged to her for it.

Tell her to send that and the Atlantic regularly. I must fill the balance of the sheet with letters to Dan and Johnny. So good bye. You need not send any money. James Goodnow

30

Grand Junction February 20 1863

Dear Dan

I am going to write you a short letter so that you may know I have not forgotten you. I get a good many letters from you and I read them all through and am always sorry you do not write more. You must write as plain and straight as you can. Take pains with every letter and you will soon be able to write as well as any body. Your Mother says you saw and split all the wood. I don't say go in lemons, but I do say there are not many boys of your age can do that much.

Tell your Mother she ought to be proud of her boys—I am. Whenever you feel like quarreling with Johnny or Sam or you feel like crying don't you do it but just run out into the wood shed and saw a few sticks of wood and see if you don't get in a good humor before you get done. I want you to try that some time and write and tell me whether it is not a good way to get over a mad fit. Tell Mother you want to write a letter to me every time she writes and tell me every thing she forgets. Tell Grandmother and Mary Ann and Dan—how do you do—for me. Be a good boy till I see you again.

Yours respectfully

James Goodnow

31

Dear Johnny

I am going to write a few words to you. I know you are not large enough and old enough to read it but your Mother will read it to you. I have been wanting to see you for a long time but I am too far away to go home often but I hope I will get to come home some day soon and then we will have a big talk and I mean to bring you and Bel a lot of candy. Johnny—I want you to be the best little boy in Vernon while I am away and I don't want you to say any bad words—or cry much—I want you to be a man. Kiss Mother and Bel for me.

From your father

32

Grand Junction, Tenn.

March 5th 1863

My dear Nancy

After a silence of nearly a week I write you again. I have not written since Friday 27th Feby. and this is Thursday—I had to assist in mustering the regiment Saturday. Sunday March 1st I received your letter of 25th and I intended to answer it that evening—but after I had got ready to write I had company in my tent until bed time and had to give it up until Monday. Well Monday Reiley and Torbet persuaded me to go to Memphis to try to get their discharge papers out of the office there and they seemed so eager for it that I went. I did not return until to day—and while there I was busy and not well and put off writing until I would come back. I am here now safe and sound again and have set down to fill this sheet—or try to do so. I got the papers fixed up and the boys are to start home tomorrow and I will send this by them. I am well now but was quite sick while at Memphis. I managed to go about most of the time, though. I found a good many officers there belonging to Indiana regiments. They have a hospital for officers and it is pretty well filled with sick from Vicksburg.

I found Ive Newcount there and Dr. Warren your old Greensburg minister and Mr. Gatch had been there but started home the morning I arrived, and there were a good many then from the 16th, 54th and 67th regiments. Ive Newcount is quite sick with chronic diarrhea contracted at Vicksburg. He is able to sit up mostly, but is feeble and looks badly. He is trying to get leave of absence to go home. If he does not succeed I think he will try to resign. I don't know whether I told you in any of my former letters of

meeting Dr. Warren at Tallahatchie river. He is Chaplain of the 26th Missouri reg't and passed through our camp with it the day following the surrender of Holly Springs. I saw him and had him stop awhile with me. He is now at Memphis hospital—he is not very sick—but a good deal debilitated—and needing rest and a dry place to sleep for awhile. Mr Gatch is Chaplain of the 16th and was unwell also—but got leave and started home on Tuesday last and had not been gone more than an hour or two when his wife came to stay with him. She was very much disappointed at not seeing him and started home the same evening. She showed a praiseworthy perseverance and will I think find him yet.

I will finish this in the morning as it is bedtime...Friday March 6th. I was very sleepy last night so did not finish. We were to have a grand review to day—but it is raining this morning and it will not go off. We have had three days clear weather this week—a longer dry spell than we have had before since 1st Jan^y. I want you to tell Charley for me that we who are in the army look on all talk that sounds like opposition to the war as just so much encouragement to the rebels and every peace speech as equal to and the cause [of] the death of many men. The rebels will not fight long when they once are convinced that they have the united sentiment of the north to fight. We must have more men yet. We need to fill all the old regiments this Spring and then we want 200,000 more and there is no way to get the men but to enforce conscription and this act beside getting us the new men will stop men from deserting and going home. Our men go home and we hardly ever get them again because their friends then help to conceal them but now the folks at home know that for every deserter one man must be drafted and when they have to choose between going themselves and making those stay who are already in—friendship will as usual give way before self interest.

This is a bloody war and I know as well as anyone that there are a great many plausible arguments for peace but when rightly considered no man who is a man will refuse it his hearty support.

I have received no letter from you since Friday last and am beginning to get uneasy about it. Everyone else here has got one or more letters from home this week and I can't understand why I can't hear from you. I got the Atlantic for Feb^y. from you yesterday—much obliged—I have read that and Harper's for March so you need not send them for that month, but I want you to write regularly—you don't know how much I am disappointed when I fail to hear from you when I expect.

We have had no pay and I am afraid will not have soon. I have over \$600 due me now and if I could only get \$100, could get along on that—I hardly know what to do. See if you can't borrow \$50 from Will Sharpe until I get my pay. I can manage for myself if you can be provided for. Write as soon as you get this and let me know if you can get the money.

My love to the children—respects to all who inquire for me and believe me yours affectionately

James Goodnow

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33

Grand Junction Tennessee

March 8th 1863

Dear Nancy

I will begin this by apologizing for writing on a dirty sheet—paper is scarce with me to day. I received your letter of 1st to day—I think there must be some irregularity in the mail coming this way as well as in that

going your way—for I received a letter of 4th inst yesterday from Will Sharpe. But your letters are welcome come when they may. I began this letter on the 8th but after writing a few lines was called off and am writing Monday night 9th inst. I am sorry to hear you have been sick so much and glad to hear you are now getting better.

I am very well now. I am very sorry Sam is so refractory. You say the letter I wrote you had a bad effect on him—I did not intend he should see that letter. It was written for your eye only and if I had thought he would see it I would certainly have never written as I did—don't show him this part of this letter and I will write him a few lines.

We have been changing about a good deal since I wrote before. Denver's Division comprised twelve regiments of infantry in two brigades—a new brigade has been formed from them—making three. The 100th Ind and 15th Michigan have been put in the new (1st) Reg't. The Division is stretched out in the road between here and Memphis to Colliersville, nearly thirty miles, our Regiment and six pieces of artillery only remaining here. The 15th Michigan is here yet but will probably go away in a few days.

By the way I found a cousin in the 100th—his name is Harlow Hern Uncle William Hern's son from Lagrange County—Aunt Charlotte Moore who lives in Noble County wrote me—hearing I was in this regiment and told me he was here—and I went over and hunted him up. He is a very clever quiet young man he has a wife and two young children at home. Aunt Charlotte says one of her sons is in the 30th Ind. She says also that Grandfather Goodenough (that is the way they spell the name) died last Spring. That Grandmother is still alive but very feeble and that a good many of our kinfolks in York State are in the army.

We had quite an exciting time here last Saturday evening. About three o'clock we heard heavy firing in the direction of our pickets below Lagrange. We paid little attention to it at first— but it continued and seemed to increase until it seemed that two or three regiments were firing—just then orders came from Brigade head quarters for all the troops of the command to form in order of battle. We got in ranks all ready—expecting every minute to *[be]* ordered to and help them as the firing seemed to be getting heavier and it appeared plain that our men were having a hard time. After a half hour or so the firing ceased and in ten or fifteen minutes more word was sent us that it was only our three regiments of Cavalry firing off their pieces and there was no enemy—well that pleased us although we were a little bored about it too, for every man had made up his mind that a good chance for dying had come at last. And you know that when a man has made up his mind to be a hero such a sudden letting down is apt to make him feel somewhat ridiculous. Our men acted first rate—there was no nervousness that I could discover and every man seemed resolved to do his best. The Cavalry men had each a five shooting carbine and a navy revolver, making some ten shots that each man fired.

You ask me about my clothing. I answered all those questions in a letter I wrote you about two weeks since but answer them again now. I don't need anything except a couple of pairs of Socks. I wish I had them—I wear out very little clothing and don't need more than one change here. I have plenty of clothes and more would only be in my way. I received Harpers for Feb^y. and March and the Atlantic for Feb^y. Was glad to get them—please send them regularly—when you have money plenty not otherwise as I can better do without them than you can do without more necessary things. I have just got an order to take five companies of our regiment and foraging tomorrow. We have to start at 7 A.M. rather early for me—but I will try to get my breakfast against that time. I don't know which way we will go but it is quite a

relief from the monotony of camp life to go any way from here and I think I will enjoy the trip. Tell Dan I was pleased with his letter and want him to write as often as he can and to write as plain and nice as he can every time. I received a letter from Sis Chambers yesterday—no news. John does not write to me—I can't tell why, nor can I conceive why Charley don't write to me. If he knew how glad I would be to get a letter from him he surely would write.

Give my love to the children and respects to all who enquire for me.

Tell Dr. Burt I would like to have a letter from him. Believe me Yours sincerely James Goodnow

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34

In Camp at Neville's Station

Memphis and Charleston Rail Road

19 Miles East of Memphis [Tenn.] March 15 1863

Dear Nancy

I received Sam's letter of 8th inst yesterday and yours of 4th today. Our mails are very irregular as well as those going north. The irregularity in this instance however is attributable no doubt to the breaking down of the Rail Road—owing to heavy rains and floods—and then we moved from Grand Junction before the Road was repaired. We got orders on the 11th to get ready to move that day but did not leave until after dark next day and then we moved very slowly and got to Colliersville four miles East of this next morning. The train on which we came was partly composed of open cars and the most of our men had to ride on them or on the roof of the box cars and they suffered severely from cold. The officers rode in the box cars and I came near freezing there and have been sick since from a severe cold caught that night.

Our Brigade Head Quarters are at Colliersville and we got orders there to guard the Road between there and Germantown 8 miles west. So we came to this place which is about half-way and encamped and put two companies out west and one on the east. We relieved the 12th Wisconsin which moved on to Memphis. The men of that regiment told us hard stories about the Guerillas that infest the *[word missing]* on the South of us but we are inclined to think they were easily scared. They sent out a foraging train the morning of the day we came and three of the men were captured and pretty roughly handled—but from their own story they were stragglers and probably had been plundering on their own hook and deserved all they got. I have no pity for a robber if he should happen to be in the army—and to tell the truth some of our men and officers too are nothing better than robbers. The most of our men came out from patriotic motives but a good many were dishonest at home and their influence and example goes a long way in corrupting the honest Soldiers.

We are encamped in a nice grove on the Rail Road and the country round here is the finest I have seen since we came out. The Soil is very fertile and well adapted to raising Cotton and the farmers are all rich and what is singular in this country are nearly all at home. Nearly all the men and often nearly all the women and children were gone where we have been heretofore but they don't seem to have taken much part in the war around here—but their neutrality has not enabled them to keep their Slaves. Nearly all the negroes have left—the man on whose farm we are encamped lost thirty five in one batch a few days since. The darkeys are afraid of being sent South and so they leave while they can. The story we

have heard so often—that they are contented in slavery—is all gammon. I believe that very few of them appreciate the responsibilities of freedom and only a small number of them are able to take good care of themselves now—but they are not contented in Slavery. Since we of the North have helped to make them the shiftless besotted creatures that they are and we are paying the penalty for our share in the business and after this war is over will have to be taxed to take care of them until they learn to take care of themselves.

I am glad though that we began when we did to correct the great national mistake and sin of slavery and that we did not wait until it assumed such large proportions that it could not be suppressed. I am well satisfied that if we were to stop now and let Slavery take root and grow for twenty years that it would strangle our republican form of government. So you understand why I think there is no use of quitting until we conquer the South. I do wish though that this miserable war was ended—I am very tired of it. I have no natural inclination for it and detest the aristocratic tendency of army life. And I think there is no honor or glory attached to anything a man can do here except as he shows he is fighting for principle and that he had rather lose his life than see his country destroyed.

I am sorry to learn by Sam's letter that you were unwell when it was written. I sincerely [missed word] you are well before now. Tell Sam I hope he will do his part well and take all care off you that he can. Tell him I have confidence in him that he will do right and that he must not disappoint me. He must bear in mind that the happiness of yourself and children and the character of the children also depends on his conduct. If the other children see that he does his duty cheerfully they will learn to do so too— but if he is lazy and cross they will be lazy and cross too—and I am sure he would do anything rather than see them spoiled for their whole lives.

I got a letter from John Chambers yesterday. He writes no news of importance—they are all well and he is running on the Terre Haute and Indianapolis Road. He says he likes it a great deal better than where he was before—he can be at home every night now. Tell Will Sharpe I will answer his letter in a day or two. Give my love to your Mother and Sis and Dan. Tell Charley I have not got that letter from him yet. Tell Dan to write to me every chance he gets and try to write plain as he can. Tell Johnny I have not forgot him. Kiss Bel for me.

Yours as ever

James Goodnow

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35

Camp Neville Tennessee

March 25 1863

Dear Nancy

Lieut. Weatherinton is going to Memphis and I have just fifteen minutes to get this letter ready. So you must not expect anything extra. I am well—never enjoyed better health in my life. If I had enough to do, I would like the life well enough. I think though I am getting lazy—perhaps you will think the experience is not new to me—well I confess I am not fond of very much hard work—but I have not enough to do here positively. I have to keep a darkey—and I don't like to see him idle. So I make him keep my tent in order and black my boots etc.—and except the trouble in keeping at work (which is not small by the way) I have

very little left to do. We don't drill much. We have been building Stockades along the road. I was pretty busy a few days locating and laying them out—but that is done now.

I ride the length of our line every day and that keeps me from dying of ennui. There is no talk here of our removal and I think we will stay here some months. Gen Denver's Division guards the whole road from Memphis to Grand Junction. It will hardly be moved—it would be too much trouble to make the change and it is not likely we will be taken out of our Division. By the way Gen. Denver has resigned and Gen. Smith of Ohio takes his place. I am sorry for Gen. Denver's resignation—he is a good man. He is quite a large man—six feet high and heavily built, rather quiet in his manners—but very determined. I have some acquaintance with him and like him very much. I think he felt unjustly treated in not being promoted this winter, although he says he resigned on account of business matters.

As to your coming here Weatherinton has been wanting me to have you come with his wife—but I could not get you the money until pay day comes—and as it is uncertain when we will be paid and where we will be when paid I thought I would not say anything about it until I could say something definite—but if I can't come home when paid I would like very much to have you come and see me.

You need have no fear of dirt and lice. I have never seen a louse since I have been out and I don't think there is one in camp. As to dirt—well I will have to confess there is more of that here than at home but I change my clothes and wash myself completely at least once a week. So that as far as I am concerned I am no worse than at home—and if you come I would have you stay at a farm house. There are several within our lines. I don't much like the idea of your going into another house and I think if you move you will regret it—but you are the best judge of that. If you can't get along there and can find another house you had better move and try it. It would be a pretty good idea to trade with Alick. I would not give more than \$100 to boot anyhow.

I must close now—time is up— Write often. Give my love to all—Kiss the children for me.

Direct to 12th Ind. Vols. Colliersville, Tenn.

James Goodnow

36

Camp Neville Tennessee

March 30 1863

Dear Nancy

I write you a few lines to day, although I have hardly anything at all to write about. Every thing here is as dull as dull can be—in fact life in camp is a decided bore to me. We do very little—that is the officers do. I hardly think any of the men complain of want of exercise. But I have very little business on my hands—I have no particular command and with the exception of seeing to the pickets have scarcely anything to do and I get tired of being with the same set of men every day especially when they are most of them men who can't amuse themselves in any way but by drinking. I am mortified to confess it but a great many of our officers are never sober when they can get whiskey—and unfortunately they can almost always get it. We are so close to Memphis now that there is very little difficulty in getting a supply. Our present Quarter Master has no conscientious Scruples I am sorry to say and it is easy to send him down

on Government business when any whiskey is needed—between Col. Kempton and him there is no difficulty in managing the business.

Col. Kempton proposed that he and I should set up our tents together and have a partnership matter of eating and sleeping but I preferred to have my tent to myself. I don't want any drinking or drunkards about me.

April 1st

I have been busy and had no chance to finish until now and have but a minute to write—the mail is just going out. I am well today—no particular news except that we are on the look out for a dash of the enemy. We have heard that there is a body of them heading this way from Grenada—we are ready for them.

Mrs Trotter came on a few days ago. The Captain is overjoyed. I should not think she would enjoy her visit much though.

Major Hendricks from Madison, the Paymaster, wrote me yesterday we would be paid to March 1st in a few days. I am going to try for leave of absence when we get paid—not with much prospect of success though.

Love to yourself and children—Write often.

Yours ever

James Goodnow

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37 [37 and 38 are two letters included in the same mailing and written without a break but each formally addressed, the first to Sam, the second to Dan and Johnny]

Fort Loomis, Tennessee

April 6th 1863

Dear Sam

I received your letter of the 29th March yesterday--it was the first since the 25th. I am glad to hear you and the children are well—but very sorry that your mother is in such poor health. I am afraid you have made her do too much work—you ought to make all the fires and you and Dan ought to do nearly all her work for her. Your mother worked hard to take care of you when you were too small to take care of yourself and if she were not your mother you ought in common gratitude make up to her for what she has done for you. I want you to see to it hereafter that she has no more fires to make and that you and Dan get all her wood—milk her cow (I will put the milking on you) and work the garden and help her wash and besides this I want you to take all work off her hands that you can do.

I am afraid that you did not do right by leaving Mr. Leavitt. I expect the work was hard—but you ought never to quit anything until you have fairly tried it, and found you can't succeed at it. I want you to form a habit of doing everything you undertake to do—and of doing it well too. The difference between the men who are useful and respected and those who merely live in the world and are of little or no account to it, and for whom nobody cares for or respects—in short those that are called “trifling fellows” —just lies in the way they accomplish what they undertake to do. And I want you to always do everything that you begin—and do it well. You will find that everything worth doing is troublesome—that hard labor either of

body or mind is necessary to make money or to acquire knowledge. I am afraid you will try to find the easy way to do everything. And if you do fall into that habit you are certain never to be worth anything. Try to show me that my fears are groundless.

We are in the camp we called Neville but we have built a fort here and call it for Col. Loomis, the Brigade Commander. We have very little news—the guerillas come pretty close sometimes but we have had no trouble with them yet. We have two regiments of Cavalry close to us and they are out fighting them almost every day. The 7th Kansas (the jayhawkers) came in from a Scout yesterday and brought in Sixteen prisoners. The health of the regiment is very good now. There are about 10 in the hospital now. James Richardson a private of Co. A. died yesterday. He lived in Indianapolis. Mr. Stanton is sick with flux. He has been unwell almost all winter. I am afraid the poor man will never be well again. I have been doing my best to have him discharged but our Doctor will not consent to give any discharges. My health is very good and I have a very easy time here. I want you to write at least once a week—and fill the sheet always.

Your father

James Goodnow

38

Dear Dan and Johnny

I expect you little chaps would like to hear from me and I will write you a short letter to let you know I have not forgotten you. For although you are little fellows, I think as much of you as I do of Sam. I expect you are having a good time playing out of doors now that the weather has got fine. I want you to play and enjoy yourselves as much as you can—but you must not forget to be at home when your Mother wants you. You must do all the work you can. You can help your Mother in a great many ways. Johnny can take care of Bel—and Dan can get wood wash the dishes, feed the cow and do a hundred little things that won't be much trouble to him but will save Mother from getting tired. Tell your Mother we expect to be paid this week and I will send her some money then. Kiss Bel and your Mother for me—and be good boys.

James Goodnow

39

**Fort Loomis near Colliersville
Tennessee April 18th 1863**

Dear Nancy

I have just got your letter of 14th. I am glad to hear from you—but sorry to hear you are still unwell—I sincerely hope you will get better health when the weather becomes warmer and I want you to rest all you can and try to get well as soon as possible and I will just say to Sam that if he don't make all your fires and do all the work he can that he is a contemptible puppy and not worthy to be counted as one of the family. I received your letter of the 9th a few days since but I thought I would not answer it as you seemed out of humor when you wrote it. I perhaps do contradict myself when I write but do not always

like to be told of it. I did not suppose you would examine my letter so critically or I would have been more careful. I really have but little to do—but some days am busy most of the time and I suppose had one of the busy days when I wrote although I don't remember certainly.

I had a letter from Thos. Reiley yesterday. He says he is improving slowly—I hope he will recover his health entirely. Bob Torbet never writes to me although I sometimes hear of his writing to others in the regiment. He will hardly ever forgive me because I would not let him be a Lieutenant. Bob has no idea that he has any mental deficiencies although he freely admitted that his bodily health was not good—in fact he paraded his ailments until every body got sick of hearing him talk.

I am getting on here pretty much as usual. We have no excitement of consequence among us. We are occasionally called into line on account of firing among the pickets but it always turns out to be a false alarm. Some unfortunate mule or stray cow is always to blame for the disturbance. We are getting pretty well over our nervousness about firing and the last time we had an alarm I did not wake up. We keep a sharp look-out though as we have no present intention of being made prisoners again if we can help it. We received orders yesterday to send our pay rolls to Memphis to have the pay computed—we sent the Chaplain down with them to day and when the amounts due each individual are counted up it will be only a days work to pay us. I think we may look for a Paymaster soon. I am sorry you expect me home as I think it very uncertain when I come. I can't go until I am paid—and not then I am afraid—until Col. Williams returns as it would leave the regiment with only one Field Officer. I will come as soon as I can get leave but the leave is very uncertain. Rest assured of one thing that I want to see you all badly. We are very despondent here about the bad news from Charleston and we are afraid Grant will never take Vicksburg—altogether we think things don't look very promising this Spring. The great struggle is to come yet evidently and who will live to see the end of it. It is fortunate for us that no one can answer that question. The Conscripts should have been sent to us before now. I am very much afraid that the rebels will push on us boldly before we get our reenforcements—and the armies being so nearly even in numbers in the South West they may with their generalship beat us after all. This is doubtless the dark side of the subject—but we have nothing to expect of our leaders but blunders and with one or two honorable exceptions our Generals seem only to be in the way of the armies they command. But I will hope for the best and will at all events try to do my own duty.

We have had two deaths in Co A since I wrote last. Mr Stanton died Monday morning last and Robert McClary a young man from Scott County died yesterday. I felt a great deal of pity for poor Stanton. He was not very energetic, but honorable and attentive to his duty. His brother is a Pay Master in the army—he came out from Memphis to see about three weeks since and wanted badly to get Albert out of the service. He said if he could get him discharged he *would* make him a clerk in his office with a salary of \$75 per month, but we could not get him off. A letter came from his wife the day he was buried, telling to be of good heart—that she was doing well and the war would be over soon and they would be so happy together when he got home. I took care of his effects and wrote her an account of his death. My health is uncommonly good—I am getting fleshy. I weighed 185 pounds this morning. I think there is not much disease. I have better health in the Service than ever before.

Don't stop writing and don't look for me until you see me. Give my respects to any who may enquire for me. My love to the children and my especial love to you.

Your Husband

James Goodnow

40

**In Camp near Colliersville
Tennessee April 25 1863**

Dear Nancy

A Gentleman from Indiana who has been here on a visit has concluded to return this morning and I will get him to take a letter as it will go to you more directly than if sent by mail. We are still at the old place and are as peaceable as heart could wish. We have seen no enemy yet and are beginning to conclude we never will under which we will endeavor to manifest due resignation. Our moving from Grand Junction kept us out of an expedition that went from there and Lagrange to Tallahatchie River. A force went from Memphis at the same time and encountered the Rebels on Coldwater River about 15 miles South of us last Sunday. Our men were repulsed but sent for reenforcements and cleaned the rebel camp out Monday morning—taking report says 500 prisoners, and any quantity of horses mules provisions &etc. We heard the cannonading plainly Sunday and Monday. The success of this expedition insures peace on this Road for some time.

Gen. Wm S. Smith our Division General command[ed] the expedition from Lagrange. He returned day before yesterday with his infantry but send his cavalry on to Oxford and it reported they are to cooperate with other forces that are now marching from Helena—and there is to be a raid made on the Road from Vicksburg to Chattanooga.

The prospect here is a good deal brightened by the success of these expeditions and we also have good reports from Vicksburg—but they may be untrue. I am well and enjoying myself as well as I ever expected I could in the Service. I am getting tolerably proficient in the drill and the business seems more natural to me.

Our line officers are very clever Gentlemen but we have a great deal of trouble with the Lt Colonel. He is always or nearly always drunk when he can get whiskey and very disagreeable when drunk. He has very little judgment when sober and when he is drunk he is perfectly wild. He has nearly killed himself by drinking—and I hope he will finish the job up. You at home have no idea of the power a commanding officer in the field and of how much he can annoy and persecute men. He is inordinately vain and has no true gentlemanly feeling and consequently is just a mean dog.

Don't let this go any farther than to yourself for an officer is not allowed to talk about a superior officer and it would get me into trouble. I would not mind that he knew my opinion of him but I don't want to give him any occasion to injure me. He thinks I am too friendly with the Line officers and is jealous and would do anything against me in his power. I will beat him yet though for all his power and meanness.

I have received no letter from you for a week and am getting uneasy. I received the Atlantic a few days since—thank you for sending it. Give my respects to your mother & her folks & Kate & Will Sharpe & Charley's folks and Dr. Burt. Tell Sam to be a good boy. Tell Dan & him they must write to me. Kiss Johnny & Bel for me and believe me I am yours Sincerely

James Goodnow

No pay yet.

41

**In Camp near Colliersville
Tennessee April 27 1863**

My Dear Wife §Confidential§

I have just finished reading your welcome letter of 19th and hasten to reply as well as I can. I am sorry your health is not improving and to show you that this is no mere formal expression of sympathy I have been for some time anxiously looking forward to the time when I might return and prove to you by a life of devotion to you that I never was estranged from you, as you so pertinaciously imagine. I am anxious to let you see that I have thought seriously of the causes that led to our late estrangement, and am resolved to do all that in me lies toward that perfect unity of feeling that should always exist between husband and wife.

It is very hard for me to confess that I have been in the wrong but I do confess it. I should have shown more confidence. But I want you to understand distinctly that the cause of all my wrong doing lay in the deadness and apathy of feeling that followed our misfortunes at Greensburg. I never have had and never will again have the buoyancy of mind I had before that. Even now when the different life I lead has in a measure given a new current to my thoughts and also hardened in some degree the sensitiveness on that subject that has been the bane of my life for over four years. I cannot that think of Greensburg without an involuntary shudder. Will you not then make allowance for the past when I tell you that I see where I have done wrong and that I have fully resolved that I will not allow that dark shadow to cloud our existence any longer—I love you as my wife and love you dearly and have no feeling toward you except that of perfect confidence and love. I am not given to make much display of my feelings as you well know—and perhaps am not demonstrative enough but my experience has been such as has led me to distrust loud professions and perhaps in my endeavor to stand straight on that subject have leaned a little back— As to my not writing enough I think I have written as often as you—and I know I have written longer letters. I have not written this time for several days and did not intend to write until about Wednesday or Thursday next, partly because I hoped to be able to send you some money then and partly because there are some matters going on the Reg't that I wished to acquaint you with but did not want to mention until I could talk more freely than I can now. But I received your letter today and the tone of it was so despondent that I thought I must write anyhow—I will write again in a few days. I am very well and the health of the Regiment is good—I went out foraging today taking ten wagons and two companies of men. We loaded all the wagons with corn and told the owner he would get his pay when he proved his loyalty—he looked like he would rather have the Cash. Love to yourself and the children.

Yours

James Goodnow

42

May 11th 1863 [No location]

My dear Wife,

I have only time to say I am well and will write tomorrow and will send you some money by express.

I send Fifty dollars \$50 for Mr. Randall—I am afraid to send more for fear the Boat may be captured and I can get the money insured when I send it by express.

Write—Love to all.

James Goodnow

43

**Head Quarters 12th Ind Vols
Fort Loomis Tenn May 15/63**

My dear Wife

I head my letter Fort Loomis but you must not infer from that that we have moved our quarters. We are still encamped four miles west of Colliersville and nineteen east of Memphis. I received your letter of 10th yesterday and am very glad to hear your health is improving. I had almost concluded that you were going into consumption and I think you had better be careful of your health and do as little work as possible. Just here I want say to Sam that if he has done as I have been told—has made no fires for you and staid out of nights—that in my opinion he had better hire himself out and make his own living for I don't think he promises to pay for his raising. I am mortified and grieved to think that while I am here exposing my life and health to support him and the rest of you he has so little manliness about him as to shirk his plain duty. Say to him I want him to write to me and tell me truly how it is. I want him to tell me what he does down town of nights and if he has any excuse to offer I want to hear it.

I have been in command here since May 6th—Lt Col. Kempton suddenly took a fancy that he had tuberculosis or some other heavy named disease—and he got Dr Lomax to certify that it was necessary to save his life that he should have leave of absence so he was allowed leave for twenty days and went home on it with the intention as he said of getting it extended up there. I hope he will never return even if he should have to die. For a more contemptible whelp never disgraced the army. He has tried his best to make every body believe [*that*] he owned the Regiment and that everything it had done could or would do was altogether owing to him, when in truth he is a perfect ignoramus and a most infernal liar beside. Charges are now preferred against him—and if he ever comes back the officers are determined he shall be dismissed and they will accomplish his dismissal for he has repeatedly been guilty of conduct that ought to disgrace any man—but enough of the miserable fellow.

I was busy for several days after he left straightening things up and the Paymaster came on the 9th and staid until the 12th and I had no time to attend to anything but pay while he was here. And then since I have been busy cleaning up and putting things in order among other things I had to do. A Citizen or Planter as he calls himself who lives just outside of the guard lines had got to keeping whiskey and he had a lot of our officers at his every night and some of them were drunk all the time. I sent the gentleman an order that any citizen who sold or gave intoxicating liquors to any officer, soldier or camp

follower would be sent outside at once. Some of the officers and the citizen got very mad about it. One of the Lieutenants said it was a d-d mean trick. This same Lieutenant had been drunk repeatedly while on duty and I knew if he was charged with it he would be dismissed. So I have given him this week to make a written apology for being drunk while on duty and for speaking disrespectfully of a superior officer and have told him that if he did not apologize in writing and fully that I would bring charges against him and have him tried by Court Martial. He has not apologized yet—but if he does not I will keep my word with him. The citizen is quiet as a lamb but I tell you he hates me and would show it if he dared—but I don't care I have done nothing but my duty. And the Regiment sustains me and so does the Brigade Commander and I would do the same thing again even if no one sustained me. Whiskey has been the bane of our Regiment and it is destroying hundreds down here daily and while I have the power I will not compromise with it. I would despise myself if I were weak enough to do so. A great many men who were sober when they left home to join the army will even if they live through this war fill drunkards graves at home. I could name a good many that you and I both know but that would be unnecessary. You may rest assured that I am teetotally opposed to drinking—more so now even than when I left home. We have some officers who are excellent, moral men and some few who are actively religious—and we have two or three who are carried away by their love of drink until they have lost all shame and a good many who go with the crowd—so that it rests with the Commander to say whether the Regiment shall be sober or not. We are having a quiet sober time of it now and I hope it will always be so. You have no idea of how much difference it makes in the discipline of the Regiment.

Our Sutlers Bachman of Madison and a man named Burgess of Indianapolis have always been in the habit of bringing whiskey or wine when they go to Memphis after a stock and we would have a big drunk while it lasted. They went down this morning and they are not allowed to buy anything except that which the Regimental Commander Certifies is necessary. They brought their bill of goods necessary for my signature among other things was Blackberry wine for Medicine. I just drew the pen across that—much to the disgust of several gentlemen.

Our Regiment is still scattered along the Road from the 17 to 23 mile posts—we have seven companies here and three up and down the road. The health of the men is excellent. The Doctor told me this morning he had only fourteen who were unfit for duty—that is only about two per cent of the entire number present. All the Jennings County men are well except Irby Wagner who has flux—he is not dangerous however.

I sent you \$50 by W.H. Randall on the 11th and I sent \$280 more by express yesterday. I only drew 31/2 months pay as Major and I have to go to Memphis to get my Captains pay. I hardly know when I will get to go for it however. Capt. Conner is there now—every officer in the Regiment needs to go there badly and they are all pressing their claims for leave but only two or three can go at once.

I will write again in a few days. Give my love to all. Kiss the children for me and believe me as ever yours. Write often as you can—I would like to get a letter every day—

James Goodnow

44

Fort Loomis Tenn May 18/63

My dear Wife

Capt Bachman has given up his position as Sutler of the Regiment and is going home tomorrow and I avail myself of the opportunity to drop you a line. Col. Williams came since I last wrote you and we are now under his command. You may be sure I rejoice greatly over this for the responsibility of command weighed heavily on me and I was very glad to turn it over—I could not in conscience allow things to go on as they had been doing and I was fighting some bad practice or other during the whole time I administered affairs and that was no pleasant occupation. The officers would not willingly give up what they called their privileges and I would not allow their exercise to the prejudice of good order and discipline and the consequence I had a personal difficulty with one or two of them. But I was right and I had the power and I used it—and would do so again—and I just made one man apologize and then had no more trouble. I am not telling you this to boast of myself for I hope I am not so vain as to try to make myself of more importance than I deserve, but I want first to tell you unreservedly of my thoughts and feelings and in the second place to account for the short letters I sent you—to show you that I was so busy that I really had not time to write. I would begin to write you—thinking I would write a long letter—and I would not write a half dozen lines before someone would come in and interrupt me and this would happen so often that I would give it up in despair, but now I feel more like my former self and have more time to think of home and you.

I really don't know what to do with Sam—the boy needs a master I do not doubt and I wish I were there to attend to his case, but you know I can't get out of this thing easily even if I thought it right to do so. I mean to try to get leave of absence to go home as soon as I possibly can but that is very uncertain. If I can go home I will try to settle the gentleman—even if I have to bring him with me when I return.

We have very little news here. There *[are]* some rebels, nobody seems to know how many, South of us some ten or twelve miles on Coldwater river. We were stirred up yesterday by a despatch from Head Quarters "to be on the look out—the rebels were advancing in force" but we have got used to such alarms that we did not mind it. The rebel General Chalmers has from 1500 to 3500 men who keep moving about South of and parallel to this road, seemingly with no other object in view than to keep us stirred up from Memphis to Grand Junction and if that is their object they succeed admirably for our commanders do little but send despatches up and down the road "to keep a sharp look out—Chalmers is coming." We hear today that Grant is fighting at Vicksburg. I do hope he will take that place before long, but I know when it is taken it will be at the cost of a great many lives. We have heard nothing lately from Hooker's army—I am very much afraid we got badly whipped in that movement of his.

I want you to be sure to write often and fully. Tell me whether you got the money I sent you (\$330). Why don't Sam write to me sometimes—and what has come over Dan that he never writes any more. My Love to you and the children and my best regards to all friends there.

James Goodnow

45 *[To Nancy:]*

**Head-Quarters, 1st Brigade, 1st Division, 16th Army Corps
Collierville, Tenn., May 25th 1863**

After a silence of several days I write you a few lines to inform you that I am still extant. I received yours of 17th on the 21st when McClelland joined us. I was very glad to hear you were all well for I have been very uneasy about your health. I have been fearful you were consumptive and almost had a notion to resign and come home to be with you and the children—for if you were in such bad health that you were unable to see to yourself and the children properly I could not be satisfied to stay away. I think in that case my duty to you and them would be of greater importance than that I owe to the country but I infer from your letter that your health has improved and McClelland said you seemed in good health so I have been a good deal easier since.

I am very much obliged for the socks and sugar. I was needing the socks badly. We moved to this place yesterday. We got orders about midnight before to move at once and get here against daylight. We had to bring in the companies that were out and that took a great deal of time so we did not get started until after daylight arriving here about 6. We lay in the sun in Town until noon and were then taken into camp about a half mile north and in the woods—where we are now. No one knows the object of this moving—but it evidently is to concentrate us. All four of the Brigades in this Division are drawn together at their Brigade Head Quarters. Our Brigade composed of the 26th Ills, the 100th Ind. the 70th Ills. are here with the exception of the 90th Ills and it will be here today. In addition to the force I named we have also the 4th Ind. Battery and an Illinois Cavalry Regiment, but I don't think the Cavalry is permanently attached to us. Beside our Brigade, the 4th Brigade is concentrated at Germantown 9 miles west of us and the 3rd Brigade at Moscow 15 miles east of us and the 2nd at Lagrange 27 miles east of us. So you see we have quite an army in our Division alone and as it is so concentrated as to be unable to guard the whole road as heretofore some move is contemplated evidently. No one knows what the move is, but I guess that we will help Rosecrans in some way, either by moving east to Corinth or by going by way of the River to join his army. The news is that Grant has either taken Vicksburg or got in his grasp so he will get it and all the disposable force the Rebels have will no doubt be concentrated now to overwhelm Rosecrans and I have no idea Gen. Grant is so blind as not to see it. Rosecrans can be sufficiently reinforced by simply giving up the Road from Memphis to Corinth and sending the forces thus relieved to his assistance and as Vicksburg has gone up I can see no use of our holding this Road but enough of guessing—I am glad of the change for I am tired to death of lying round camp and guarding Rail Roads. Guarding is about as dangerous as active service in the field and has no variety and it makes soldiers so lazy that they soon become careless and lose all military pride—and if we stay on guard much longer I am going to resign and get out of the business. Our Regiment is very healthy and there is absolutely nothing new going on in it. My health has not been very good for some time but I think I only need more exercise to come right again.

Write often as you can and direct until further advised to 12th Regt. Ind. Vols 1st Division 16th Army Corps. My respects to all who enquire. My love to you particularly and my love to the children.

James Goodnow

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46

Memphis May 27 1863

My dear Wife

I received yours of the 21st yesterday and am sorry to hear that you are still unwell. It seems you are never well, I wish you could get your health once more and I think you will have to do as you did once before—just hire a girl to do your work and keep her until you get well.

I came to Memphis yesterday to settle up and get my pay as captain. I claim pay from the date of my muster into Service which was May 27/62 (just one year ago) and I only received pay from Aug. 1st making a difference of two months and four days—about \$270. I also have pay due from Oct. 31st when I was paid at Indianapolis to Nov 19th when I was promoted. I tried to get it all together here but it has to be referred to the Pay Master General and it will be some time before I hear of it again I suppose. I am going to get everything done that I want to do in Memphis before I go back to the Reg't. I am getting my coat scoured today—and tomorrow will get some photograph likenesses of myself taken and send them to you, but a word in your ear—don't show them to any of the ladies for fear of making discord in some happy family. It just occurs to me that you will say pshaw when you read this.

I have to buy about \$40 worth of clothes while here. Everything I had was so dirty that I looked—if possible—worse than Reub Weastwell and you know I always had a great regard for my personal appearance. So I had to resuit up.

We have partially got over the scare we were in when I wrote last but we are drawn together in Brigades—yet and I think we will march soon—it is impossible to tell where. I would like first rate for you to come down but I would be uneasy about you if you were here and I guess you had better not come. Mrs Trotter is still here. She is either a heroine or a goose. The distinction is so small sometimes between the two that it is hard to tell to which class to assign some people. I think however that in this case the goose is slightly ahead. I hear you say pshaw again.

That which I referred to in one of my former letters as something going on in the Regiment was the trouble with Col. Kempton. Grave charges have been made out against him and he will be tried by court martial when he returns. Charges of drunkenness while on duty, conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman, oppression and of using Government property. Enough to dismiss him in disgrace—as he should be dismissed. He is not worthy to hold any office and it is time he was sent home to stay and the officers of the Regiment are determined he shall be punished as he deserves. I say amen to it. Tell McClellands folks he is well but grumbles because they don't write to him. Weatherington says he writes to his wife twice a week. I am well as usual. I want to see you all but don't know when I will have an opportunity. Goodbye dearest—kiss the children for me—tell Sam he must write.

James Goodnow

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47

Colliersville, Tenn June 4th 1863

Dear Nancy

I have been waiting some time to hear from you before I would write but I concluded this morning I would write anyhow. We have orders to be ready to move—and as our destination is unknown it is uncertain when I will have an opportunity to write again—So will write as much as I have time to write.

I came back from Memphis the day after I wrote you last and have had very good health since. I sat for my likeness while there and was to have a dozen photographic copies taken and was to send for them. When I sent the Artist told the man I sent by that I had not set still and he had not taken a good likeness. So I am out there. I will however try it again as soon as I can. I think our Brigade is going to Memphis and if we do go there I will have it tried again.

We were drawn together at this place nearly two weeks since, evidently in anticipation of the necessity of moving us soon, and I was not surprised when we got orders last night to be ready to move. We have everything prepared so we can move in a half hour and are waiting for the order to go.

The uncertainty as to where we will go is troubling a good many—but it does not trouble me for I have got to see that it does no good to fret about anything in the army and I don't know that I have any choice as to where we shall go. I am more troubled about not getting to go home for I want badly to see you and the children once more but I will not fret about that even.

I just now got a letter from Sam and Dan of May 28th. I am glad to hear you are well—but Sam says you were washing when he wrote so I expect to hear by the next letter that you are sick. I wonder if you will ever have the nerve to rest yourself until you get well. It takes nerve and determination to do it and I am afraid you will never have enough of the article to succeed. I know you think that it costs too much to hire the washing—but does it cost as much as a doctors Bill and is it right to ruin your health for fifty cents a week. I value my health at a good deal more money than that. But you are of course a better judge of your own value than I can possibly be. Seriously I want you to hire your work done—all of it and I am sure your nervousness comes more from over work than from any trouble. I wanted to come home and see about getting you a house and hiring some girl or woman to stay with you until I return and as I will not be home soon probably I want you to get a good girl right away and keep her one year or longer if you need her. I must close now. I will however say first that Col Kempton came back on the first of the month and was immediately put in arrest by Col Williams. He has gone to Lagrange today in charge of an officer to get a certificate from the Division Medical Director on which to base his resignation. He sees that the charges against him are too strong for him. Let him go. Tell Sam and Dan I was glad to get their letter even if it was a good while coming. My respects to all who enquire. Kiss the children and accept my warmest love for yourself.

James Goodnow

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Campaign 1863: Vicksburg

Official records say that the 12th Indiana Volunteer Infantry was ordered to Vicksburg, Mississippi on 9 June 1863. On 2 July, James was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel. After Vicksburg fell, he received home leave until the end of September.

48

Memphis June 8 63

My dear Wife

After a pretty weary march since yesterday morning, including some resting by the way, we are here and on the Steamer Belle Memphis and will probably start for Vicksburg or some other Southern Port some

time tomorrow. Our whole Division of 14 Infantry Regiments of it are going together. The 12th, 97th, 99th and 106th Ind. are in it. I will write this nearly full, but not close it until within a few minutes of starting so that I may give you the latest news before leaving. We have been lying still at Colliersville for two weeks and not knowing whether we would go away or not and have been so long in suspense that we feel relieved when we start even to Vicksburg.

I suppose you will be uneasy about my going down there, thinking I am going into danger, but I don't think you need feel any more apprehension than when we were on the Road, for while we were there we were in danger of being killed by bushwhackers or on some scouting party and you would hardly have heard of it. But the Vicksburg fight is a No1 affair and if a man is killed in that he gets his name in the papers—although it will probably be spelled wrong. I will write to you as often as I can and let you know how I am getting along and I shall expect you and Sam together to write regularly to me. I am sorry I could not have time to get my likeness taken this time—but I have no time to do anything at all now. All is bustle and confusion and I have no chance to leave the Boat for more than a few minutes at a time. I sold my horse the other day—he was broken down and I could not ride him more than three or four miles before he would give out. I got \$125 for him and bought another for \$175—that is all right. I expect you will think I am extravagant in buying such a horse, but he just suited me and has been in the Service until he has got used to firearms and no amount of shooting around him will scare him, in fact he seems to enjoy the fun.

Tuesday morning 9th inst

6 A.M.

We will start within an hour and I must send this up Town. I have no more news. My love to you and to the children and all who enquire.

James Goodnow

49

**Snyder's Bluff on Yazoo River
13 miles above the mouth**

My dear Wife

I was overjoyed to receive two letters one of 2nd and one of 5th. I had almost concluded that I was to get no more letters from you, as it had been so long since I had heard from you. The last one I had before this was dated May 29th. Well we are in the Vicksburg Army, and I am glad of it. You will think this strange no doubt but I have been so tired of lying round camp and hearing of other men participating in the stirring events of the day that I with the others of the Regiment welcomed the order to move. We are not in the fight at present and probably will not be unless Johnston should try to raise the siege. We are part of the Haine's Bluff army that is set down here and fortifying itself to keep Joseph out and see that Gen Grant has fair play. It is twelve miles from the mouth of the Yazoo and we are twelve miles up the River but the Mississippi makes a short bend to the East and we are nearer the city than we were when we entered this River. It is only about ten miles across to the city and about eight to Grants Head Quarters. We hear the thunder of Grants Cannon continually. Our whole Regiment was put out on picket the night we landed here and I slept on a high hill about a mile back from the river and it seemed to me

that it was almost one continual roar. It made me slightly nervous I confess and I did not sleep any until nearly one o'clock. We got to Youngs Point which is just opposite the mouth of the Yazoo about 2 A.M. Thursday. We staid there until after day light and then started up this river. After running about eight miles we landed at Chickasaw Bayou, the place where Sherman landed last winter. It is now the point where Grant lands his supplies. There is quite a force there although I don't know how many men. I saw Col Lucas of the 16th while there. He said he had been in all the fights round Vicksburg and had been wounded three times slightly. He said the rebels had about 17,000 men in their works round the city but they could not use them or their artillery on account of our Sharp Shooters. He thought we would have the place in a few days. Indeed the whole army is perfectly certain Vicksburg will be ours soon although it is holding out bravely—and it is said the men, women and children are being killed by hundreds in its streets.

We staid at Chickasaw Landing about two hours and were ordered to report at Haine's Bluff. We went on up there and found quite an army there before us. We got orders there to land at this place, about two miles below. We dropped down here and landed about 2 P.M. and lay in the sun (which is as hot as fire here) until nearly 5 P.M. and then marched up on the hill about a half mile back and went into camp, that is we broke ranks and sat down in the weeds, for our things did not come up until next morning. We had hardly sat down until we were ordered on picket and staid out until 3 P.M. next day. We got our tents up that evening and put in yesterday, putting up brush arbors to keep the sun off us. We were ordered out this morning to work on the fortifications and worked there until 1 P.M. We then came into camp where we are now, but have to go out again at 4 and work until 8.

This Bluff is the first hill that comes to the river above its mouth and is about 150 feet above the water. It however is only the first of a succession of hills with deep valleys between that extend across South East to Black River, and it is said that the only road by which Johnson can come into the rear of Vicksburg, except that crossing Black River from Jackson Mud, [is] down through our camp and on the crest of the hill on which we are camped. So you will comprehend that we occupy a rather important position. Gen. Grant understands this and he has us busily engaged fortifying and if the rebels will wait a week we can keep the whole rebel army out. I don't believe they will attack us here. For imperfectly fortified as we are, the force we have here without counting on any assistance can easily keep 50,000 men out. The rebels had fortified toward the river and all we have to do is to fortify in the rear and up the river. The rebels should have done this and we would have had a hard time to get them out of here, but when Grant came up they had to get out. Well I have about used my time up and will have to go to work again. It is very warm here and rather unpleasant in the middle of the day, but I think we will soon get used to it and I hope we will be healthy. At any rate I mean to be contented, and will put up with anything to see Vicksburg taken.

Love to the young ones and yourself. Write often—I got Harper's today much obliged.

James Goodnow

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50 [To Nancy from her brother, Wallis (Walter O.) Lattimore]

Murfreesboro Tenn

June 14th 1863

Dear Sister Nancy

I have no doubt you will be surprised at receiving a letter from me, but why should you be! I claim the right as well as Fin or any other. Fin was over here yesterday afternoon and showed me a number of letters from home and among them one from you. I am very sorry Nancy that you have so poor an opinion of me. Indeed you are mistaken in supposing that I bear you any ill-will. I knew that you and Dan were not friendly toward each other but I never thought much of it, for I knew that Mother and Sis felt toward you as a Mother and Sister should and I never thought but that you would pass over Dan's bad feelings as *[illegible]* that he would soon feel ashamed of. When I was at home last I tried to make you feel that I was your friend and I am sorry that anything has happened since to cause you to think differently. In truth—I never imagined you would take what I said about your not liking Lizzi so seriously. Lizzi had written to me how much she liked you all and *[illegible]* of liking dinner with you. I did not suppose she would have cared much for you, or that you would have invited her to dinner, if you had felt any dislike to her. Why I made this *[illegible]* it is hard to tell. You know people often say things they can give no reason for. And what was in the other letter was nothing against you or yours. I do not care if you see it. It was about you, but I hardly think it would make you angry. And Nancy, Dan has never written me any thing whatever against you. He does not mention your name or if he does it is in connection with something that has no reference to any personal feelings.

I am officer of the Day today and must cut my letter short. I want you to write to me—regularly if you can. And I will write every week to you—if you desire it. Now Nancy do not think that I have any hard feelings toward you whatever. Write soon as you can. I will write more about matters and things next time.

Your Bro—

Wallis Lattimore
Direct to
1st Bat-19th U.S. Inf.
Rousseau's Div.
Army of the Cumberland

51

Snyder's Bluff [*Mississippi*] June 28 1863

Dear Nancy

I only have time to drop you a line to tell you I am well and no battle fought here yet and Vicksburg is not taken. The Sutler is going to Memphis and will start in a few minutes, but you say write when I can. I am in here to day to move our camp to the place where my last letter was written. The prospect is we will stay here until Vicksburg is taken or until Johnson drives us out. We want him to try it for we think we can whip him far easier than on ground of his own choosing. Tell McClellands folks he is well and Mr. Waters and Weatherinton and Conner and Irby Wagner are well—Hage Wagner is unwell but not dangerous sick. I had no letter from you since one dated 11th. My love to you and the young ones. My respects to all friends.

James Goodnow

Have Will Sharp to get Horatio Newcomb to see about my claim for promotion

[Letter held at National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in James Goodnow pension file (no collection number). On 28 July, Lt. Col. James Goodnow requested home leave due to his wife's ill health. He remained on leave until 25 Sept. 1863.]

HeadQuarters 12th Ind Vol Infty

Camp Sherman, Miss, July 28, 1863

Lt Col John A Rawlins, AA Gen'l, Dept of the Tennessee

Sir

I would respectfully ask for a leave of absence from the Department for such length of time as may be deemed compatible with the interest of the Service, for the following reason.

My wife is an invalid and has the care of a family of small children, and it is necessary that I should be at home for a time to provide for their future comfort. I would also state that during my absence at least one Field Officer will be left with the Regiment.

Respectfully

James Goodnow

Lt Col 12th Ind Vol Infty

52

On Board Steamer Continental

September 21 1863

My dear Nancy

I am writing this about 11 A.M. and we are still 25 or 30 miles above Memphis. I staid at Indianapolis until Wednesday thinking that the Governor would be at home and I wanted to see him before I came away but I heard Wednesday morning that he had not returned and that it was uncertain when he would be home. So I started on the 2 P.M. train and went to Terre Haute intending to stop over there until 10 A.M. next day. I found the folks all well there. John Chambers started to Indianapolis at 2 next morning and returned at 10 and I suffered myself to be persuaded to stay until 11 next night. They are fixing up their new house and expect to move in it in a few weeks. The house is old fashioned but large and comfortable and the lot is very nicely planted with shrubbery and fruit trees. They will live comfortably there. Several told me that John could get \$1000 more than he gave for the property. He is not sparing money in furnishing it I tell you. Whi1e I was there a bill came in for new carpets for over \$160—confidentially I am somewhat astonished to see the amount of money he spends on \$80 per month. Their ordinary living must cost 60 or 70, and how he gets so much money is beyond my comprehension. Another of the conductors on that road is building near John and his house will cost \$4000 or over. Isn't it a good thing to be a conductor... Don't show this to anyone.

I started from Terre Haute at 11:30 Thursday night and got to Maltoon about 3 next morning and staid there until 8 and then started for Cairo and got in there about 8 that evening. This boat was at the landing ready to start and the most of us got aboard and left Cairo about 9 that night and we have put in time running awhile and then getting on a sand bar and working sometimes a half day to get off and

tying up every night until today Monday and are not to Memphis yet—I intend when we get to Memphis to *[get]* a lighter boat to make the remainder of the trip on.

I have been unwell almost all the time since leaving home and my eyes are very weak yet. I hope to *[be]* better soon though. I find a good many officers and soldiers going back to their Regiments and have plenty of company. Gen. Grant issued an order awhile ago prohibiting the sale of liquor on boats and the barkeeper on this boat is not selling anything but mineral water and cigars and tobacco and the consequence is that nobody aboard is drunk and it is a great deal more pleasant than where there is so much drinking going on.

Take good care of yourself and the children. Tell them all Sam, Dan, Johnny and Bel that I want them to remember me. I will not write any more until I get to Memphis where I will have to mail this.

Memphis 4 PM got here at 2 PM. We start at 5 to Vicksburgh. Met Col Williams, Capt. Trotter and others of our Reg't here. They are on their way home. I send this by Capt. Trotter.

Goodbye

Jas Goodnow

53

Camp Sherman Miss Sep 27 1863

My dear Wife

I write you from camp once more. I left Memphis Tuesday morning on the same boat on which I had come thus far from Cairo. We got to Helena that day about 3 P.M. and lay over until Wednesday morning. I got a pretty good opportunity to see the Town. It is a little larger than Vernon and lies between the River and the hills which rise some two hundred feet above the water and are over a fourth of a mile back. It is like all the Southern towns—nearly deserted and if it were not for the presence of the Soldiers would be almost deserted. A few families are at home however. I was told that Sebastian a former Senator from Arkansas was living there still and I was told that a two story brick house just at the foot of the hill was the former residence of Gen. Hindman. There were quite a number of soldiers there, white ones and those of "African descent" too. We left Helena Wednesday morning and ran all day at good speed and without stopping, for the water below there is deep. We passed Napoleon about 2 PM that day. It was almost entirely deserted. It is you know at the mouth of Arkansas River. It is very low ground and there certainly would never have been any town built there if it had not been for the junction of the two rivers and as it is it looks like an abortion. We steamed ahead at a rapid pace all day and night and just at daylight got to Lake Providence seventy five miles above Vicksburg when by some mistake the boat got out of the channel and got aground on a sand bar and seemed likely to stay there for some time. The Westmoreland passed about noon and some twenty of us hailed her and got aboard and went on our way leaving the others behind with the Continental and for any thing I know they are on that bar yet. We got into Vicksburg about 2 next morning, and I went up in town after breakfast and found four of our teams that had come in after forage. I took passage with them and got here in the evening Friday 25th the day on which my time had expired. I got notice that night to get the Regiment ready to march and we have shipped all our extra baggage to the Rail Road for Vicksburg and sent our sick men (about 100) to the same place and we will probably go there ourselves tomorrow. I suppose we

will go to Memphis again—and thence to Corinth and thence ___. All well who come from Vernon and vicinity, except Walter Carson and Doc Sutton—they are not seriously unwell. I will write from Memphis anyhow if not before. Direct to 12th Reg't, 1st Brigade, 4th Div. 15th A.C. via Memphis. My love to you and the children, and Charleys and your mothers and Will Sharpe's folks and respects to all friends. No letter from you yet.

Your Husband

James Goodnow

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Campaign 1863: Chattanooga

After James' return from leave, the 12th Indiana was posted to Tennessee. There, they joined Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's army for more than two months of marching, guarding and fighting that left the regiment battered and exhausted.

54

Memphis

Oct 10 1863

My dear Wife

We left Camp Sherman on Monday Evening after I got to the Reg't. We left about dark and marched five miles and bivouaced for the night. It began to rain directly we had camped and rained slowly all night. We roused early and marched five miles farther and stopped nearly two hours for breakfast. We got to the picket lines back of Vicksburg about 1 P.M. Nothing of interest occurring on the road. We were detained here about three hours waiting for instructions. We finally marched to the river and eight of our Companies and an Illinois Battery put aboard the steamer "Westmoreland." The other two companies were put aboard Col Loomis' Boat "Emma No 2" and our mules and wagons were put aboard the same boat. You see we were well divided. We were loading until 4 PM Wednesday when we started for this place, we being the third division of our Corps that had started up. We got to Youngs Point a little after dark and lay there until eight AM next day taking on fuel. We came forty miles or perhaps fifty that day arriving at Gaines' Point about 7 P.M. at which place we landed Adj't Gen'l Thomas who had come up on our Boat. I had an introduction to him and he told me a good deal about what he was doing. He says he is going to take every able bodied negro man and make a soldier of him and he leases the plantations abandoned by the rebel planters to loyal men and the lessees hire the women and very old or very young men. In that way they all make their living. We had our band out to play for him and when he landed we fired eleven rounds of artillery in his honor and I tell you it tickled the old man. We got to Griffiths landing, 130 miles from Vicksburg, about 4 PM Friday and there wooded again and laid up until Monday evening waiting for the balance of our Division to overtake us. It was rumored that the Rebels had sent a force over from Granada to intercept us at Cypress Bend (twenty miles below Napoleon) and I suppose it was thought we might all be needed when we got there. We passed Cypress Bend about noon Tuesday but saw no Rebels. We got to Helena Wednesday morning. Wooded and coaled then there again and started Thursday morning again arriving here about midnight. I was taken sick with Bilious Fever Tuesday night and have been quite unwell. I had to turn the command over to the Major at Helena and have taken no charge of it since I came to the Officers Hospital yesterday (Friday) morning. I

am so near well that I will go on duty Monday again. You will no doubt think the letter I wrote you Sep. 27th from Camp Sherman was a long time a traveling. There was no boat coming up ahead of us and I carried it in my pocket and mailed it here yesterday. So this will reach within a day or two of it. I intended writing to you while on the way from Helena up but was unable and I want you to be good enough to believe that I would have written sooner if there had been any chance to send the letter. We will probably start for Corinth tomorrow or next day. Sherman will collect a respectable army there and march South Eastwardly and flank Braggs position. That is my guess anyhow. If I am not able to ride through with the Regiment I will go by rail to Corinth and meet it there.

Have word sent to Jim Mayfield to make my boots up and send them to me by express. Let him direct to this place "to follow the Regiment."

I got your letter of 3rd and Harpers for Oct yesterday and I got yours and Sam's of 25 & 27th Sep today and I got yours of 18th Septr. while at Vicksburg. I am sorry you have been sick. What shall I say of your jealous disposition that degrades you and me too but that I will bear your charges with all the composure I can. I will observe however that I think your sickness was caused partly by your worrying over imaginary grievances. Tell McClelland his certificate was rec^d in due time. I am very sorry to hear of his sickness I had hoped he would be with us before now. The men from Vernon are well. I am glad to hear Fin and Walter and Sam McKeehan are safe. My love to you now and forever. Give my love to the children, your Mothers and Sharpe's and Charley's folks.

Write soon Your husband

James Goodnow

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55

Burnsville Miss Oct 20 1863

My dear Wife

I have been on the march since writing my last letter which is my excuse for not writing before. I was in the Officers Hospital sick when I wrote on the 10th. The Regt started East on the Memphis & Charleston Road that same morning. Sunday Evening reports came in that the Brigade had got into a fight at Colliersville and I got my discharge from the Hospital that night and started to overtake our Regt. I could not get out of Memphis until Tuesday morning when I took the train at 7 in the morning. On coming at Colliersville I learned that Genl Sherman and the 13th Regulars got to Colliersville about 10 AM Sunday morning and that the Rebels had attacked the place just as he got there. He sent back to hurry our Brigade up but the 13th regulars and the 66th Ind which was stationed there had whipped the Rebels before they came up. Our Brigade staid there that night and started at noon Monday in pursuit. They went about 15 miles South of the Rail Road and came on the Road at Lagrange Wednesday evening without having done anything but burn a little town on their march. I went to Lagrange Tuesday and fell in with the Regiment when it came up and have been with it and in command of it since, Col Williams not having returned. We were from Thursday morning until Saturday night marching to Corinth 27 miles, nothing of importance happening to us on the road. We had to lie out in a very heavy rain storm Saturday night at Corinth and all got very wet and cold and a good many have been sick since. Corinth is very strongly fortified, the works made by the Rebels still remaining and we have built two heavy forts

on the north side of town this season. We crossed the Hatchie River at Pocahontas and saw where the battle had been fought near that place. You remember that Price attacked Rosecrans at Corinth about a year ago and Rosecrans whipped him. This battle on the Hatchie at Pocahontas was fought while we were pursuing Prices' retreating army. Rosecrans overtook them a few miles this side of Pocahontas whipped them and ran them across Hatchie River and through the town. The trees are nearly all marked with bullets, which is the only sign of the battle left. We came into Corinth on the same road by which Price attacked it.

Our army or part of it went out two miles to meet him and there are numerous signs of a severe battle having been fought there. Our men were worsted there and retreated into town at night and the Rebels followed them in and got in among our forts and batteries and got a good thrashing and that army has never been good for much since. That is the same army with some additions that Grant took at Vicksburg. We left Corinth at 11 AM Sunday morning and marched about 6 miles. Yesterday we marched about 5 or 6 more and got to this place which is a small RR Station and the word today is we will have to stay here about a week to guard the Rail Road. The most of Sherman's Corps has gone ahead to luka [*Mississippi*] and beyond. luka is 7 miles East of us on the Road. I hear that the Road is opened to Bear Creek 15 miles beyond luka and our advance is bridging the Creek. Just what we are going to do and where we are going I am unable to say but it looks as though we were to open the Memphis & Charleston Road through to Bridgeport and either guard it or go on and join Rosecrans. I don't think we are intended to reinforce Rosecrans immediately or we would go faster.

We have already been over 20 days on the Road and bid fair to be 40 days more. My health is not very good yet but is better than when I left Memphis. I will soon be entirely well again. All the Vernon men are well except Hage Wagner. He is pretty sick with camp diarrhea. He is not dangerous. Mr Waters requests you to say to Mrs Waters that he is well but too busy to write. He will write as soon as he gets time. Our Regiment got a heavy mail day before yesterday but nary [a] letter for me. I have not heard from you since the letter you sent by Lieut Conner. I suppose you have written but the letters have miscarried in some way. It would however be much more pleasant to get the letters. Tell Sam I am very glad to hear he is so good a boy since I left and I want him to continue in well doing. I want him to write to me and let me know how he is getting on with his studies. Tell Dan he must write too. I want to see how he is improving in writing. Tell Johnny he must learn to write so he can send me letters and I want him to be a good boy too. Kiss Bel for me and tell her she must not forget me again. Give my regards to your mother and Sis and Dan and Charley's folks and Will Sharpe's. I must close. The mail is going out in a few minutes. Direct via Memphis. Try to have Mayfield send my boots as soon as possible. Goodbye dear Nancy write often Take good care of your health for my sake.

Your aff Husband

James Goodnow

56

Burnsville Miss Oct 23/63

Dear Nancy

I write you a line to send by Mr. Neill State Agent who is going to Indianapolis and will mail this there. I am wet and cold having been out all day in a cold rain and do not feel like writing much so you must be content with a short letter and I will write more fully in a day or two—perhaps tomorrow.

My health is not very good yet. I am disposed to be chilly and don't feel well generally. Nothing serious ails me however and I will be well soon I hope. I am just sick enough to feel disagreeably and that is all. We are still at this place and our Brigade will stay here a few days I think and then be moved forward to luka 7 miles further. Gen Osterhaus' Division the 1st of our Corps is nearly to Tuscumbia [Alabama] 40 miles ahead. They had a fight day before yesterday and lost 15 or 20 killed and had 30 or 40 wounded—among the killed was Col. Torrence of the 30th Iowa. We in our Division have had no fighting so far and have seen no signs of rebels. My love to you and the children. I got yours and Sam's of 11th—was very glad to hear from you. Try to get McClelland to bring my boots.

Goodbye

James Goodnow

57

Burnsville, Miss.

Oct 25th 1863

Dear Sam

I believe I will write to you this time. I believe I owe you a letter. I suppose you know the way we came here and that this is a village on the Memphis and Charleston Rail Road. This place is 117 miles east from Memphis and 14 east from Corinth and it is over 200 miles from here to Chattanooga. It took us ten days to come from Memphis here and you can judge how long we will be in getting to Chattanooga even if the rebels do not oppose our march as they will probably do, and beside that we have to reopen the Road all the way from luka 7 miles ahead of us. I don't think however we will get as far as Chattanooga as it will take all of our Corps to guard the Road after it is opened. Perhaps we may have to open the Road and other troops may be sent in to guard after it is opened. I am very certain that if we don't take good care we will have trouble like that at Holly Springs last winter for we have an active enemy watching us. It is not safe to go out side of our picket lines here, there being so many guerillas prowling around. Two men of our Brigade were captured yesterday by them.

Almost all the men around here have been conscripted and put in the Rebel Army and a great many are in Roddy's command which breaks up in small squads when necessary and they infest the country every where. It is only the strong Sesesh Soldiers that prowl round in this manner, the disaffected conscripts (and there are a good many of them I am told) being kept together and watched. Our health is pretty good now: our men were quite unhealthy when we left Memphis but the March has done them good. Hage Wagner and Walter Carson are unwell yet but neither of them is dangerous I think. My own health is rather poor yet. I am feeling very much like ague all the time but I keep up and intend to unless I get worse. I guess we will leave this place tomorrow and go forward, that is to say eastward. It is said we will have to take ten days rations which indicates that we will go to Tuscumbia or Florence before stopping. It is a matter of indifference to me where we go. I have long since learned that the best way is to go where I am sent without grumbling or taking care on myself about it.

You and your Mother must write me more frequently. Your Mother wrote one letter on the 3rd, the next on the 11th and I received one to day written on the 16th and you partly filled the one of the 11th. Don't you think that shows a slight remissness—I think it does myself. I look every mail for a letter from home and you don't know how much I am disappointed when I don't receive one. This you will take as a mere hint. I will scold if you don't do better in future. I am glad to hear you are doing well at School and your Mother praises your conduct at home. I have always had confidence in you knowing that you would do right when you reflected on your duty and I am proud indeed to know that my confidence is well founded. I had a great deal rather a misfortune would happen to me than have you or any of the other children go wrong and I want you always to bear in mind that the future comfort and peace of mind of your mother and myself depend on your good conduct. I am not afraid of your doing a mean or wrong action while you bear this in mind.

Tell Dan to be a good boy for me and Johnny and Bel must be good children—tell them I say so. Tell your Uncle Will and your Uncle Charley that they might find time to write to me occasionally if they tried. Tell your Grandmother I hope she will be well soon. Goodbye Write Often.

James Goodnow

Dear Nancy

I rec'd your letter of 11th inst today. I hope you will get your health soon again. You can't imagine how much I wish you may be well and do well and I do hope this war will close soon that I may be with you again.

Your affectionate Husband

James Goodnow

58

Fayetteville Tennessee

November 9th 1863

My dear Wife

I suppose you think I am lost from my not writing before now and in fact I thought so myself awhile. But I will give you a brief history of our march since my last letter and that will explain my long silence. My last letter was written at Burnsville, Miss. about the 25 or 26th of October I believe. We left Burnsville the 27th and marched to luka coming there late that night. We went from there to Eastport on the Tennessee River and eight miles north of luka. We crossed the river next day and started for Florence, Ala. the day after, Oct 30th. We got to Florence (25 miles) on the 31st and mustered for pay that night. The next day Sunday Nov. 1st we started in this direction. We got as far as Rogersville intending to cross Elk River near that place and go through Athens to Stevenson but found the River too full to ford and having no boats Gen. Sherman marched us up the River keeping within a mile or two of it all the way to this place. We crossed it here yesterday. There is a nice stone bridge across the river here—the nicest one I ever saw. We are now about 25 miles NW of Decherd [*Tennessee*] and nearly 40 miles from Stevenson. It is said we are to join Hooker, to do which we will go through Winchester and Jasper to the

river, cross it near prospect Mountain and join him there. There is a wagon train to go to Decherd in the morning for supplies and I have hopes of being able to send this to the Rail Road in that way. We are to start to Winchester in the morning. My health has been steadily improving and I am now nearly well. I thought while we were at Burnsville that I would be seriously sick but the march has nearly cured me and I can eat as much as anyone now and I think that is a good symptom. I have had no letter from you since I wrote last and I hope there are several on the road to me and I will get them all at once. I heard from Lieut Conner that Mr Scofield had hung himself—is that so? I don't see what cause he had to commit suicide. He seemed to be prospering and to be well contented. I hope you have started my boots to me for I am nearly barefoot. You may pay Mayfield for them. I will send you some money the first opportunity. I suppose you are not particularly needing it however. My best love to you, give my love to the children. Tell them I think of you all often and hope you are getting along well. My love to Charley's and Will Sharpe's folks and your mother and her folks. My regards to everyone generally.

Your aff Husband

James Goodnow

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59

Bridgeport Tenn Nov 16th 63 [*James' detailed description of their march suggests this letter was more likely written from Bridgeport Alabama*]

Dear Nancy

We have been on the march all the time since I wrote you. My last was written from Fayetteville on the 9th I believe. We left there on the 10th and after two days march over very rough stony roads arrived at Dechard Station on the Nashville & Chattanooga Road. We left Dechard on the morning of the 12th and came south down the Rail Road toward Stevenson [*Alabama*]. After marching five miles we struck the mountains and made about three miles more over the rockiest roughest road I ever saw. We camped that night right in the road, because there was no other ground smooth enough to lie down on. I was officer of the Day and had to ride round and set pickets after night and I think it was the roughest service I ever did. We got off the mountain into the valley of Crow Creek next day about noon. The rail road and dirt road both follow this valley down to Stevenson. The Rail Road is tunneled through the highest part of the Mountain. The tunnel is about a half mile long and about 200 feet below the top. We got to Anderson [*Alabama*] that night. It is a Station ten miles above Stevenson. We went next day to within a mile of Stevenson and came from there here yesterday. We got in here about 3 P.M. and went into camp and have now a little rest but will not stay long—we have just got orders to be ready to march. I suppose we will go nearer Chattanooga, probably to clear the river and road to that place. I understand the Rebels yet hold about two miles of Lookout Mountain—that part next Chattanooga. I hear cannonading in that direction this morning, and think it likely we will have a lively time unless the rebels leave before we get there. We are now I think about thirty miles below Chattanooga. Our men have stood the march remarkably well. I believe five have died since we left Memphis and they were all sick when we started. One man of Co. A died at luka—his name was Wm Steele and he lived near Lawersville and was a son-in-law of old Billy Roberts out there. I don't know whether you know him or not. Doc Sutton was left at luka very sick and I am afraid is dead by this time. He looked like he could not live more than a few days when I last saw him. Hage Wagner was brought along. I thought for several days

[omission] but he is getting well fast—he would have died if he had not had an unusual amount of grit. I am entirely well again although I have had a hard time of it. I have been sick all the time and hardly able for duty. I am beginning to think I have a good constitution or I would not have got well with the rough treatment of my case.

I was gratified last night by the rec^t of two letters—one from Sam written Oct 28th and of Nov 1st from you. I am always glad to hear from you, and particularly so this time because we have so long been without hearing from home. We never heard a thing from the outer world from the time we left luka until we got to Dechard, where we got a few letters and a newspaper. I was a good deal amused with Sam's account of his teacher and with your counter statement. You and he evidently look at the matter from different points of view. But I think Sam is wrong—he must submit himself to the school discipline and do it cheerfully. He must learn sometime that he can't have his own way always, and he may as well learn it now as later in life when it will be harder still.

If you haven't got that wood from Dowd yet, you had better send Sam to see him and tell him you are needing it and I am certain he will bring it to you. I have always found him honest. As to Muley, I don't think I can find her for you. I would do so and cheerfully if I could.

You frequently complain that I don't write as often as I might and you always bring in Waters as an example for me to follow. Mr. Waters got a letter last night from his wife in which she complains that he don't write as often as I do—that you get two letters at once and that he would do well to take pattern from me—curious isn't it. You and Mrs Waters had better meet and settle the matter. I will always write when I can and I don't want you to quit writing to me when you don't get letters regularly from me. Don't be uneasy about me for I will try to take good care of myself always. My best love to you my dear wife. And tell Sam I will answer his letter as soon as I can. Tell him from me he must go to school and obey and live up to the rules. Tell Dan he has not written to me since I was at home and I don't like it. Tell Johnny to be a good boy and learn to write as soon as he can so he can write me a letter. Kiss Bel for me and tell her to be a good girl. Give my regards to your Mothers folks and Will Sharp's and Charley's and to any who enquire for me.

Your aff Husband

James Goodnow

60

Athens Tennessee Dec 12th 1863

Dear Nancy

I suppose you think I have been very negligent that I have not written before but I think you will admit my excuse that I have had no opportunity to write when you read the account of our doings since Nov 17th last.

We left Bridgeport on the 17th with no baggage along and crossed the river and marched for Trenton, Ga. at which place we arrived after a fatiguing march over the mountains on the evening of [ILLEGIBLE]. [Trenton is in] the valley between Sand Mountain and Look Out Mountain and on the north side of Look Out—which Mountain rises from the river, which [turns] about four miles below Chattanooga in a south

easterly direction for nearly twenty miles. The valley [runs] south west into Alabama. Well— we moved up and down the valley building a great number of fires every night and using every means to make the rebels believe we had a very large force. We finally moved down to Wauhatchie [*Tennessee*] (Hooker's Head Quarters) in the same valley and within four miles of the river on the 22nd and were there ordered to leave knapsacks and supply the men with four days rations and one hundred rounds of ammunition each, as we were going on an important expedition. We got the ammunition but the rations were not to be had, and we were ordered to go ahead and we would get the rations that night. We proceeded down the valley and crossed the river that night on a pontoon bridge at the famous Brown's Ferry. [ILLEGIBLE] of the night attack on and capture of the place by the Brigade to which the 6th Ind. belongs. We continued on up the river and camped about midnight about two or three miles above and on the opposite side of the river from Chattanooga, which place you know is on the South side of the river. We lay still waiting for rations until late at night of the 23rd when we got a small supply. We started across the river early next morning (24th). Our whole Corps except Osterhaus' Division the 1st crossed here. The First Division could not cross at Brown's Ferry on account of the breaking of the pontoon bridge. We had Jeff. C. Davis Division of the 14th AC instead. Our cross was made at a point just below where Missionary Ridge comes to the river and at the mouth of Chickamauga Creek. We all got across about 12 or 1 o'clock and started straight for our end of the ridge. This ridge or row of hills commences at the river some three or four miles above Chattanooga and runs in a semicircle around and in front of Town and about the same distance at all points. The Rebel right lay on the point in front of us, the center in front and South of Town and the left on Look Out Mountain four miles below town. So you see there was quite a long line of battle. The Rail Road to Atlanta is tunneled through a depression in the Ridge about two miles from our crossing place, the rail road coming from town and skirting the base of the mountain for some distance before going through—between our crossing and the tunnel lay first a strip of woods and then some corn-fields extending to the Rail Road. We kept up the river and within about a half mile of it until we came to the north eastern point of the ridge. After considerable skirmishing we got possession of the top of the hill and planted a battery. The rebs had a battery about a half mile further on—between our position and theirs ran a deep ravine cutting across the hill and just behind their battery was the tunnel. Our regiment camped that night at the foot of the hill and judging from the ease with which we effected a lodgment we expected the rebs to evacuate without further fighting. In fact old soldiers are always incredulous as to the probability of a fight. They never believe there is going to be much of a battle until they are right into it.

Our Brigade got into line next morning about 8 o'clock with orders to swing round against the rail road and feel for the enemy and support Corse's Brigade which was to storm the rebel battery. We were not to bring on a general engagement. We got across the woods and to the fence at the edge of the corn field about 10 A.M. and suddenly became conscious that the rebels were there and intended to fight. We came in sight of four batteries and within about a half mile of them and they greeted our appearance with a storm of shells. Our men were ordered to lie down and the Field Officers dismounted without ceremony and sought shelter behind trees. Our Adjutant and Major were behind a tree that was struck and the Adjutant had his skull fractured by a fragment of the shell. Quarter Master McClelland was struck in the foot by a ball that was rolling leisurely along but it had force enough to hurt him severely. A piece of a shell also cut through Lieut Weatherinton's hat and grazed his head, stunning him badly. Several men were wounded here. After lying here for a few minutes we were ordered to move

forward, which we did under heavy artillery fire and under the fire of a brigade of rebels that occupied the field in front of us.

We went on though, double quick, and made the rebels scamper over the rail road and up the hill. We halted about 150 yards short of the rail road and lay down in the open field and lay there until 3 P.M., the batteries playing on us and the sharp shooters firing on us from the hill side. In the mean time Corse charged the battery which was in plain sight of us and after two hours hard fighting was repulsed and we were ordered to withdraw which we did in good order and got back to camp at 4 P.M.

Our loss was—one officer Capt. Aveline of Co B killed and seven wounded, viz the Adj't & Q.M. and Capt Beeson of C and Capt Bowman of Co D all badly hurt. Capt Houston of Co G and Lieut Weatherinton Co A and Lieut Hart of Co H were slightly wounded.

Nine enlisted men killed and 53 wounded and our Brigade had near 400 killed, wounded and missing. I escaped without a hurt of any kind for which I am very thankful. We started early next morning in pursuit of Bragg who retreated during the night. You know he was defeated on his left and in the center, he having reenforced his right to resist our attack, and so weakened his left and center that they were easily broken. We passed by Chickamauga Station and on to Grayville 20 miles on the road to Atlanta when we stopped one day and tore up the road and burned the bridges and started in the direction of Knoxville Sunday Nov 29th. We went on to Cleveland, the junction of the Dalton & Knoxville and Chattanooga and Knoxville roads. Stayed there a half day to tear up the road toward Dalton, then to Maryville in East Tennessee, within 20 miles of Knoxville where we met messengers from Gen. Burnside with the intelligence that Longstreet was retreating toward Virginia. The 4th AC went on to Knoxville and our Corps and the 11th Corps returned to this place where we are awaiting news from some Cavalry movement that is going on. We will probably go back to Chattanooga where I hope we will rest awhile and refit for we are all nearly worn out and nearly naked and somewhat lousy for we have had no change of clothes since leaving Bridgeport. I also want to get a mail. I have had no letter since one dated 8th Nov. and you may be sure I want to hear from you. My love to you and the children and respects to all who enquire for me.

Your aff Husband

James Goodnow

[Noted on page 1, above address] My health is good now. All from Vernon well.

Chattanooga Dec. 18th I have carried this in my pocket until now having had no chance to mail it. On our way to Bridgeport again. Will write from there.

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61

Bridgeport, Alabama

Dec. 20th 1863

My dear Wife

I am here once more having come in from Chattanooga last night. I wrote you from Athens on the 13th and mailed the letter at Chattanooga on the 18th and you will probably get this letter about as soon as that. We left Athens on the 14th and came back through Charleston, Cleveland and etc. to Chattanooga

getting there on the evening of the 17th and encamped on our battle ground of Nov. 25th. We had bad rainy weather on the march and nothing to eat except what we foraged from the country through which we passed. The good people of East Tennessee will long remember our visit for two reasons—first because we delivered them from Rebel oppression and secondly from the fact that we took all their provisions and live stock and in many instances their wearing apparel and bed quilts, blankets, knives and forks, spoons and any other articles they happened to have on hand. The presence of even a friendly army is the greatest curse that can happen to the inhabitants.

There was a good reason for our foraging for something to eat for we were started off in a hurry to relieve Burnside and had no rations to take with us and some men had no blankets and I did not blame them for taking covering under which to sleep, but the trouble is that when men are allowed to forage on their own account they always take everything they get their hands on and they soon become a mere thieving mob. Our Generals had finally to stop it. They should never have allowed any man to take any thing himself but should have organized foraging parties under command of proper officers and supplied the men in that way. We have done so much marching that nearly all our clothes are worn out. The shoes especially nearly all gave out and a great many men had to march barefoot for the last few days. It was very hard on them but there was no help for it. We could get no clothing at Chattanooga and the barefoot men were put on boats there and came here by water. We are getting a supply of clothing today and the poor fellows will be more comfortable.

We had an opportunity to go over the battle ground and I tell you we were glad to see it again. A battle field is always an interesting spot and especially so to one who was in the battle. The ground on which our Regiment lay was scooped out in about a hundred places by shells. Some had exploded and made very large holes and some had struck, ricocheted, scooping out a hole perhaps a foot deep and five or six feet long. The shells would bounce and go perhaps a half mile further before exploding. I found a great deal of torn clothing and a good many bloody spots where men had been hit and in one place I found a large quantity of brains. It was an awful sight. I went up on the hill where 2nd Brigade of our Division had tried to take the rebel works by storm. That place looked worse than our battle field. Trees were shot through by cannon balls and full of bullets and the bushes were cut off for 8 or 10 rods each way as cleanly as though they had been mowed. I found a good many hats and other articles of clothing with bullet holes in them and all of them bloody and there were three dead rebels lying in the bushes still unburied. I don't think we ought to talk any more about the rebels leaving our dead unburied at Chickamauga. The ground was filled with graves too. I came away sick of seeing battle fields, and almost resolved never to visit one again.

I got leave of absence next morning and went in and found Fin and Walter and staid with Fin that day and night. Walter was with us most of the time. Fin has charge of two wards in No. 4 Hospital. He has been there since the Missionary Ridge Battle and he says he will probably stay in the Hospital for the balance of his time. He looks older and more unhealthy than when we saw him last. He coughs a good deal. He will have to be very careful of his health this winter. Fin is a good hearted fellow and has good abilities and I think he is doing well where he is. He seems to be well respected by the Doctors where he is. He applied for leave of absence a few days since and they told him he should go home as soon as the press of work is over. I think he will be at home in a month or so.

Walter has raised a good sized pair of whiskers and he looks a good deal older and more steady. He looks a good deal like Alick. He has charge of a train running from Chattanooga to Kelly's Landing twenty

five miles down the river. He told me he was offered the situation of mustering officer of the 3rd Division of our corps. I told him he had better take it and he agreed to do so. He didn't know when he would go home. I came from there on a boat. I left at noon and got here about 7 PM. The Regiment had got in about dark. We are in camp here for the present but will probably move soon. The talk is that we will go to Huntsville. I found six letters here from you and Sam and Dan and one from Johnny. I was rejoiced to get them as I had not had a letter from you since the one brought by McClelland. I will write oftener in future and make my letters like Mr. Waters or as interesting as I can. Tell McClelland I hope he will be well soon. My love to you and the children and your Mother's folks and my regards to all friends.

Your aff Husband

James Goodnow

62

Bridgport Ala
Dec 22nd 1863

My dear Nancy

I send enclosed \$300 and you will find a package of \$40 (Forty dollars) for Mrs Waters. I think I may fairly claim that my letter is more interesting than Water's this time—please own it and oblige. I rec'd a letter from you and Sam of 13th yesterday. I am glad to hear you are all getting along well. I will write Sam a long letter tomorrow. I owe it to him. Tell Charley I am glad to hear he is doing well. I am sorry to hear of Mary's sickness—I hope she is well now. Tell Charley I think hard of him that he don't write to me as he promised. I am in good health and all the men from our county are well. Send word to or tell Q.M. McClelland that I want him to write me how he is doing. Tell him I hope he is improving. We are to leave this for Huntsville or that vicinity in two or three days.

Love to you and children

Goodbye

James Goodnow

63

Scottsboro, Alabama
Dec. 29th 1863

Dear Sam

I have not written home since the 22nd when I wrote from Bridgeport, because we left Bridgeport on the 24th and did not arrive here until the evening of the 26th and our baggage did not arrive until next day—too late for me to write and I was on duty as officer of the day yesterday and had no time to write.

I got a letter from you and your mother yesterday dated 22nd and as I have neglected heretofore to acknowledge the receipt of any magazines, I take this opportunity to say that I have received them regularly and am very thankful for them too. And you may tell your mother I got my socks and they

came in the right place for I had worn one pair on the march from Chattanooga and Knoxville and back—for a little over a month and they were gone up when I got to Chattanooga. I am very much obliged to you and your Mother for your care for my comfort. I gather from those letters that you are all about as well as usual and getting along about in the usual way. I believe you don't say so directly though.

I believe that you don't usually come directly to the point though. Your Mother has written several times asking what you had better do when this term of School is out. My opinion is soon expressed. You had better go to School another term at least and finish up your philosophy and Latin and you had better study Geography, too and read History at home. I want your Mother to buy you Gibbon's "Decline and fall of the Roman Empire" and I want you to read that through carefully this winter. I have two reasons for wishing you to go to school and not go out from home now. The first is that you have not in my opinion entirely finished your education yet—and the second is that your mother could not get along if you were to go away from home this winter. I think you will admit that both my reasons are good ones. Another thing—I don't want you to read a novel or tale this winter and I am sure you will not if you know it is my wish that you do not. Nor do I wish you to associate with any man or boy, woman or girl who is not perfectly honest and respectable. Be civil to everyone but associate with very few and be particular who those few are. And I want you to make yourself agreeable at home. Study what you can do to make your mother and the children comfortable. I want you to begin now to form the habit of thinking of the rights and happiness of others in all you do. No man can be useful or happy who studies his own gratification alone. Try to be cheerful and contented always and if you will try you will soon be so in fact. I do not mean by all this advice to insinuate that you need it worse than others—but I know that every boy of your age should be careful in forming his habits for those you form now will naturally affect your character in all your future life. Above all things, however, be honest in everything you do, for a man may be agreeable and if he is not honest in word and deed he will never be of any account in the world.

We left Bridgeport on the 24th and got to Stevenson that evening. Our Division lay there over Christmas because the 1st and 3rd Divisions were on the road ahead of us and moving very slowly and we could not have gone far if we had started that day. We did not have a very Merry Christmas and we had no turkey or pumpkin pie. We dined on Crackers, Side meat and Coffee. A very healthy dinner but it did not consist of as many vanities as we would have wished for. I could not help wishing to be at home during the holidays if only for the sake of a change of diet. I forgot to say that while we were at Bridgeport I got acquainted with Sam Bradford, Cousin Susan Hern's husband. He is a very clever man. He is Quarter-Master of the 44th Ind. and makes a good Quarter-Master I judge. He and [I] went up town one day and had a pretty good dinner at the moderate cost of seventy-five cents each. Tell your Mother that he and [I] made arrangements for Sue to come down after New Years Day and stay some time with her. Tell her Sue don't like your Aunt Clara any better than she does I guess. I think she left your Uncle John's on account of some falling out but Mr. Bradford told me that as a great secret. I rather think Sue does about as she pleases.

We came from Stevens [*Alabama*] on here on the 26th marching in the rain all day. The men marched on the railroad and got here just at dark (20 miles). The roads are so muddy that the wagons have not all got in yet—this place is on the Memphis and Charleston Railroad and is a very small rail road town. The County (Jackson) has sent 28 companies to the Rebel Army and there are very few men left. The women I have seen are bitter Seseshers. One told me that Greenbacks were worthless. She said Old Abe knew it

and refused to take them for his salary. I am in good health I almost forgot to say. My Love to all of you. Give my regards to your Grandmothers folks and your Uncle Will's and your Uncle Charley's.

Write regularly

Your aff. Father

James Goodnow

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Winter Quarters: January-May 1864

The regiment's winter rest was interrupted by several excursions into action. In March James and Nancy met for a brief time in Louisville, Kentucky.

64

Scottsboro, Alabama

January 3rd 1864

My Dear Nancy

I write 1864 for the first time today and it seems awkward. It also reminds me that time is passing away. I went into the Service in 1862 and I can hardly believe that I have been away from home so long. I will soon have served two years of my time and looking backward it hardly seems six months. I conclude from that that I must like the Service better than I had thought and that I must attribute my occasional fits of discontent to caprice. I believe I am easily dissatisfied and I must learn to be better and more easily satisfied with whatever condition of life in which I may be placed. I am telling you this and it is for your eye only. I am aware that my aversion to explaining myself and talking about myself is a great fault and if I could be more open and unreserved I would make more friends but it is a fault of my nature and I can't correct it. I am in the habit of judging others by their actions and not by their professions and expect others to judge me in the same way. That I know is not the way the world judges but it is my way and I suppose always will be my way. Won't you always judge me from my actions?

Well, we, that is our Division have got pretty well settled down here. The officers have all got their tents up and Stoves in them or chimneys built and the men have mostly got log huts built and their tents stretched over them for a roof. I have got a tent up and have a good floor in it and a chimney built and am writing in as warm a room as that in which you are sitting.

While we were on the march I had to live with four or five others and with a gang of servants huddled round our fire and could never have any privacy or anything I could call my own. And now I have my tent to myself with one servant to wait on me and am as snug and comfortable as I want to be with the exception that I am not with you and the children. I am afraid though that this will not last long, for I am told we will have to move soon, probably to Huntsville or in that neighborhood, and if so we will have to do all our fixing up over again. I wish the powers that rule would let us stay here until the active season opens. Cold weather began here about the time we arrived and it has been very cold for three or four days. Ice has formed two inches thick which is uncommon here.

Our camp is at the foot of the mountain on the north side of and seven miles from the Tennessee River and just above us the mountain juts out toward the River. So we are well protected from the wind

coming from either North or East. It has been so muddy the most of the time since we came that I have had no opportunity to go around and see the country but I am told the land is good between us and the river and well cultivated. The people are nearly all rebels, this county having sent 28 companies to the rebel army and only two to ours. Those who are left at home are very spiteful, especially the women, but they are all candid enough to acknowledge that their cause looks unpromising. I got my dinner the day we arrived here at a house about two miles from here on the road to Stevenson. The man was a bitter Secessionist but talked very guardedly for awhile but we got into an argument on the subject and he got excited enough to say what he really thought on the subject, and when he did get started he gave us what the boys call "Hail Columbia." He said that it had all along been understood by the leaders in the North that all the negros should be set free and the South brought in complete subjection and that any Southern man of spunk would fight of course. I told him we had intended at first [not?] to free the niggers but we had made up our minds now that it must be done to cripple the rebellion and we would and could whip any and everybody that opposed it. Well, he said he guessed we could whip them and they would have to submit. Two or three of his darkeys were standing by and listening with a great deal of interest and when he acknowledged we could whip the South the darkeys broke out in a loud laugh, and he got so mad he looked as though he could whip them to death. I am glad I have lived to see some of them [*secessionist Southerners*] cowed down, and hope to live to see their spirit completely broken. We are having a good time here in the way of settling up old accounts with officers. A Court Martial and Military Commission are both in session, and they are raking up everything that has happened within the last three months. Col. Williams is on the Court Martial and I am in command of the Regiment now. I suppose you know that I have applied to be commissioned as Colonel of the new Regiment. There I don't know that I have the least chance of success but I got a No 1 recommendation from Col. Williams and from the Brigade Commanders and I thought I would apply anyhow. I would like to have it because of the higher rank and because I had rather have an independent command than be in my present position. I don't hope to get it however. I received your long welcome letter of the 27th Dec. I hope you and the children will continue to improve until you get well. Tell Charley I will give him the quarter he claims if he will write me a letter of from two to four pages. I suppose however he has forgotten how to write and am counting on keeping the quarter. I sent you \$340 - \$300 for you and \$40 for Mrs Waters on the 22nd Dec. I suppose you got it—please say so if you did. I have not got my boots yet. I have written again to Memphis about them.

My love to you and the children. My regards to all the friends. If you find this disconnected attribute it to interruptions by persons calling in while I was writing. I will not apologize for the handwriting.

I got the magazines Send them on in future.

Your aff. Husband

James Goodnow

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65

Scottsboro, Alabama

January 15th 1864

My dear Wife

I received a letter from Sam yesterday dated 6th inst. and I will write you in reply as I believe I am indebted to you for more letters than to him and it is all in the family anyhow.

Well I have very little news to tell you. We are all well with very few exceptions, there being not more than a half dozen sick men in the Regiment now. We have all got pretty hardy is one reason of our good health and another reason is that we know how to take care of ourselves better than we did last winter. We were careless about building good quarters then and took comparatively little trouble to fix up, and when cold and rainy weather came we were always taking cold and getting sick from exposure and I have no doubt this carelessness was a cause of a great deal of the sickness and death in the Regiment while we were at Grand Junction.

We have since learned that health and comfort are worth working for and we have houses about as comfortable as we are used to at home. The men are cheerful too and well satisfied with the Service. As a proof of this full three fourths of the Regiment would have reenlisted as veterans if they could but we had not served long enough. Col. Loomis has gone home with his Regiment and Col. Williams is in command of the Brigade and the three Regiments left have charge of the Rail Road from Stevenson to this place, about twenty miles.

The 90th Ills. is stationed four miles this side of Stevenson and the 100th Indiana has been sent to Bellefonte about six miles east of this, and we are to stay here. There are only two Regiments left in each of the other two Brigades—they are still here and I don't know where they will go. Division Head Quarters are here yet and so are Corps Hd Qrs but I understand that Genl. Logan who commands the Corps will move to Huntsville in a few days.

We seem to be perfectly safe here, as we never hear of any rebels on this side of the river and I heard today that they had evacuated Decatur, which lies you know on the South Side. I hope it is true as it saves us the necessity of fighting for it and I am not particularly in favor of fighting if the object can be accomplished without it. We will probably get more supplies when the Nashville and Decatur Road is opened. We are getting plenty of everything but meat now. We only get half rations of pork though and the commissary is ordered to make up the balance due us in beef—but the cattle we can get in the country are so poor that the boys don't want the beef. We are doing very well however and we are having a pretty good time. I have felt all the time since we came here that I was having a much needed rest. My horse too seems to enjoy the rest quite as much as I do. By the way I believe I never told you I had bought another horse. My horse was about worn out with his long march and his back had got so sore when we got back to Bridgeport that I was compelled to buy another. I bought one from Col. Stoughton of the 100th Indiana. I gave \$125 for him. I have now \$300 invested in horseflesh. Bill the original hoss has got fat again and his back has got well and Jack (hoss No.2) feels his oats (corn rather—we can't get oats or hay here) so sensibly, that it is with fear and trembling that I ride him. He is very spirited and when I ride him he goes prancing and jumping along in a way you would not approve at all.

Sam says in his letter that you were "mad as a rail" when you heard of my applying for Colonel of that new regiment. I think Sam must have slandered you for I will cheerfully testify that you never get mad—unless you are provoked—or vexed. I hope you are not mad now anyhow. Sam says he didn't get my letter. For fear he has not got it yet I want you to tell him that I say to him— he must go to school this winter. Tell Dan I hope he is learning to write. I can't say however as I never see his handwriting any more. Tell Johnny to PRINT me a letter. Kiss Bel for me and let her kiss you and charge to my account.

Your Aff. Husband

James Goodnow

66 [From Nancy's Greensburg friend, Lizzie Lathrop]

Greensburg, Ind.

Jan. 25th 64

My Dear Friend

You have thought ere this that I was a long time answering your dear kind letter, but I assure you it was not willingly done. The force of circumstances prevented my writing before. You do not know how pleased I was to get your letter and better pleased when I read that there was a possibility of again seeing you. We are all well at this time but I do not know how long I can say so. Lee is in as good health or better as when you saw him last. Our little boy is all we have left now.

You are a mother and have passed through the same fiery trial and know all those words contain. Oh! I cannot tell you how Changed our once happy home is since my darling little girl left us for a home in Heaven. She was the light of the house. I wish you could have only known her. She was not quite four years old and know as much as most children at six and seven. I have been told often that she was too smart to live. A Lady told me just yesterday that "she was a wonder to everybody she knew so much for her age." She was such a little beauty besides—made her a favorite with everybody. It seems to me I never can be happy again as I once was. Our little Louis is great comfort to us but does not take her place. If I was to write what I think of most I should not write of anything but her. You can measure my feelings by your own having experienced the same great loss. . . . I have been very busy for a week or two giving my aid in getting up a Fair which takes place (or commences) Thursday of this week. Were you ever on a committee. If you was you know the trouble of it. I should like so much for you to come this week if it could have been so, but in waiting I can have you all to myself. Oh: I can hardly wait to see you—I know you will be sure and come if you wish to see me so much as I do you. I want you to Come without fail and come next month for we have sold our house and have to give it up by the 1st of March and we do not know whether we will keep house or not this summer if we can get a house to suit. I would much prefer to do my own cooking. We have been living in this House since before you went away. We think of building a house this summer if it does not cost too much, everything costs two or three times what it once did. Lee has but all of the store and is doing business alone now and he has to confine himself so close I think if we were to build a house that would be an excuse for being out of the store some more than he is at any rate.

Sister Mag's children have had Whooping cough all winter—nearly all the children in Town have had it but Lou—and he has been where it was often but never took it.

I think when you get this you will not be able to read it but I can tell you the rest when you come to see me. So that you know I am looking for you is all that is needful. Lee says tell Mrs Goodnoe that we will not take any excuses for not coming [sic]. Oh, if you should disappoint us I do not know what I will do. Write to me what day and hour you will come and I will meet you at the cars,

Yours with Love

L. Lathrop

Mrs. Doane is at Madison visiting.

I did not know whether you had heard of Mrs Siling loosing [*sic*] all three of her children this last summer (from the 20th June till about the 1st of August) with Scarlet fever. One of them the first one died the same day our little darling did. She had the same sickness. There was a great many cases and deaths from it here last summer. One death this week said to be that and I heard again it was Spotted fever a dreadful disease that I never heard of till last winter.

Mr. Siling has gone south on business and she is at her Fathers now. I think their home must be desolate and drear their little ones all gone. How they live I do not know.

Good Night

Lizzie

You must pardon my pencil. Lee failed to bring me ink and I was determined to write tonight. Kiss the children for me and bring them all with you. Oh how can I wait to see you all.

Be sure and write to me when you come so that I can meet you.

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67

Scottsboro Ala

Jan^y 26th 1864

My dear Nancy

Your letter of 21st came yesterday and I will answer today. I intended to write last night but had been out all day and was very tired. I have concluded to devote this letter mostly to answering questions. You complain in your last that I never answer any questions you ask me, so I will try to recall to memory every query you have propounded since I left home. You I believe first wished to know how I was provided with socks—I have done pretty well until now, but have only one pair that is whole. If you can send me a pair or two please do so. As to clothes I have not bought anything new except a blue overcoat and two pairs of drawers. I have ordered a new coat and one pair pants from Staub—my old ones are getting shabby.

Question No 3 Do you get the magazines—Answer Yes always—and I am now looking anxiously for the January Atlantic and February Atlantic and Harper. I don't get much to read here and I read the Atlantic and try to understand it too. I must confess however that it takes a man of uncommon sense to appreciate some of its articles. Harpers don't make so much pretension and furnishes excellent light reading. I have a good deal of leisure time on my hands and have to put it in at reading or loafing as the roads have been too bad to ride about much. Col. Williams and myself and a correspondent of the New York Herald who is with us—went out yesterday to call on Col. Cobb, a former Representative in Congress from this District. He lives about six miles from Camp. We found him living in plain farmer style and making no particular pretension although he is evidently a man of consideration here. He is six feet three inches in height and very slender. He looks very much like your Uncle John. He is very sociable and fond of talking about his experience as a public man. He says he represented the District for fourteen years without intermission and was a member and a year to serve when the state seceded and he was

ordered to vacate his seat. He is well acquainted with Mckee, Dunn and with all our prominent politicians—in fact he knows a good many of them better than I do. We staid to dinner and had a very pleasant visit. The old man (he is about 55) says he is and always has been a strong union man and is in hopes we will wind the war up next summer—although he says it is doubtful, as he thinks the rebs will fight hard.

We have had delightful weather for the last two weeks. It has been dry and as warm as May at home. The roads have dried up pretty well and I mean to go about more than I have been doing. You may judge of the pleasantness of the weather when I tell you that I am writing with my tent open—the fire place cold and I am in my shirt sleeves and rather warm still.

I will give you an idea of our life by describing one day's duty to you. Reveille sounds about daylight when the roll is called. Breakfast at 7 AM, when we have another roll call—we call the roll again at 9 AM and at noon and at 3 P.M. We have dress parade at 4^{1/2} P.M. when the roll is called again. We have still another roll call at 7 P.M. and "taps" are sounded at 8 P.M. when every body must be still and lights are extinguished. We have roll calls so frequently to keep the men from going out in the country and committing depredations as they are too apt to do unless they are watched. I see my sheet is full—I think I have succeeded in writing a full letter of no particular interest this time. My love—you first, the children next and all friends afterward.

James Goodnow

This is a very rambling epistle—I have been interrupted at least fifty times while writing and have just time to seal it before the mail goes so you must take it as it is.

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68

Scottsboro Alabama

Jan^y 29th 1864

My dear Wife

Lieut. A. S. Conner having had his resignation accepted leaves this evening for home and I will get him to carry a few lines to you.

I have very little to write about this time. I am well and so are all the men from Jennings as far as I know. We are beginning to have considerable sickness in the Regiment. We are camped in a rather low place and our camp is muddy and the water is not very good. The weather is very changeable too, and all these causes combined are making several cases of fever, and some of them will prove fatal too I am afraid. We have buried two men since we came here. It is a sad thing to have to bury the poor fellows so far from home and friends and it is especially a sad thing to see men die here—men who have passed through battle untouched. We do not somehow feel that a man killed in battle is lost to us. We rather feel that he is one of us still and that he and the honor attached to his name are ours. We always know where the men killed in battle are buried and consider each grave so filled as one of our marks of honor. But a Soldier dying of disease is generally buried in some obscure spot and few if any remember his resting place. I suppose this will make no difference in the end—that each grave will be found on the Last Day—but if I have to die in the service I want my last breath to pass on some great battle field.

I received Sam's letter of 13th yesterday—he gives the agreeable news that you are well again—or as he irreverently expresses it, "Mother has no conniptions now." Just say confidentially to him that I have expressed the opinion that he is very smart—in his own opinion. I am always glad to get his letters—but I don't want any more of that kind of display of talent.

I received a letter from you of 10th inst. You say that you will not invite Sue Bradford to visit you. Well I would like it if you would—I think you would be pleased with her. I remember her as rather a strong minded but very honest and pleasant too. You would not object to a woman that she was somewhat inclined to have her own way would you—

I received a very plain letter from Will Sharpe a few days since—he told me he had heard I had written to Jim Vawter asking him to do what he could for me in the way of getting the promotion I have been seeking. He said if that were the case he never wanted me to ask him for a favor again for I would not get—he said he had no confidence in anyone who would have anything to do with such a fellow. With all due deference my opinion is he made a donkey of himself. I write to any one I wish to correspond with and have yet to learn that a man who stays at home can with any propriety accuse another who is in the field of being disloyal. I wrote him my opinion of the matter. I told him that I would tell him what I did write to Vawter—not because he had a right to know but because he had always been a friend and I on that account wished to stand well in his estimation. If he apologizes for the manner in which he wrote me I will be satisfied but if he does not I will not lay myself under any further obligation to him. Write often—My love to you and the children.

Your aff husband

James Goodnow

69

Scottsboro Alabama

February 7th 1864

My dear Wife

I suppose you think strange that I have not written for so long a time. I believe my last letter was dated about Jan 27th. On Friday night 30 Jan^y I was awakened about midnight and ordered to get the regiment ready to march at day-light and had so much to do that I had no opportunity to write before we started. I told Mr Waters to write before we started to his wife and tell her we had gone and without giving me time to write and to ask her to let you know. I learn by a letter received from you since I returned yesterday that you are at Terre Haute and were when Mr. Waters wrote. Consequently you have hardly had an explanation of my silence.

We started at 9 AM Saturday Jan^y 31st and marched to the Tennessee River, crossing it about 3 PM on a pontoon bridge at Larkin's Ferry about eight miles from here. Four regiments went from our Division—ours and the 97th Ind. and the 40th and 103rd Illinois, Col. Williams being in command of them. Our detachment crossed the River and camped two miles beyond and lay there over Sunday, two Brigades of the 2nd Division (Morgan L. Smith's) being nine miles in advance of us. We moved on Monday morning at 8 o'clock and a Brigade from the 1st Division (Osterhaus') following us. The expedition as you see consisted of four Brigades of infantry and we had beside this about one full regiment of cavalry. Our

Wagons, ambulances and all the artillery were ordered to stay at the river as the roads were too muddy to move wheeled vehicles. This left us but poorly supplied with ammunition as men can only carry fifty rounds in their boxes and they couldn't carry it on their persons for every pocket and vacant space was filled with rations. They had to carry supplies for five days after leaving the river.

Well we started off, Genl Morgan L. Smith commanding the expedition and after marching about thirty miles in a South Easterly direction and over Sand Mountain arrived at Lebanon, De Kalb Co. Ala. on Tuesday Feb 3rd. Lebanon is in the famous Lookout valley, about thirty five miles South West of Trenton where we went, you remember, just before the battle of Missionary Ridge, and it is within fifty miles of Rome, Ga. We staid in the valley overnight and Genl Smith went on toward Rome with the Cavalry to reconnoiter and to burn some saltpeter works down there somewhere.

We heard of a heavy force of Rebels coming against us and sent word back that we would probably be attacked that night. So we had to sleep on our arms and keep one eye open and we all got up at 4 AM and stood in line until daylight waiting for the attack to come—but it did not come. We got word again about 9 that morning that Wheeler and all his force would attack us in two hours sure and that the rebs were surrounding us. They didn't come though and we started back about noon. The rebs skirmished with our rear until we got out of the valley, but they did not interrupt us after we got on the mountain again. We marched leisurely back getting to the River Friday 5th inst. We staid there until yesterday when we came back to this place. I do not see that we accomplished anything by the trip—But Genl Logan says we drew a large force away from Genl Sherman who is operating below and that we did all that was desired or expected. We have just got an order for our Regiment and the 97th & 99th Ind. and the 103rd Ill. to be ready to march again at a moments notice. Col. Dickeman of the 103rd Ill. is to command the detachment. I think we will go to Chattanooga this time. We will probably start in the morning. You see by this that things are moving here again. My health has been excellent during the trip and I enjoyed myself finely—I had got very tired of lying still and was very glad to get the order to move. The men are in better health too—I don't think it good for us to lie still long at a time and will be glad when Spring opens. I would have sent for you before now but thought it uncertain how long we might stay here. I got your letter from Terre Haute and one from Sam about the same date. I got Jan^y Atlantic too. My love to you and the children—Mother, John's folks. Tell John to write.

James Goodnow

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70

Scottsboro Alabama

Feb 10th 1864

Dear Nancy

I generally do not write to you except in answer to a letter from you and as I have no idea of when your last was written (it has been several days since I received it and it was not dated) I had concluded to wait further developments before writing but I received orders at 9 tonight to be ready at daylight tomorrow to go to Chattanooga and as I may not have another opportunity soon, I will write a line hastily to let you know that I am well. I had about concluded that we would not move soon and was this evening debating with myself as to the propriety of asking you to come and see me and had about concluded to write tomorrow and ask you to come—but this move knocks it in the head. I have no idea how long we will be

gone. I have an idea though that we are to stay at Chattanooga until the danger at Knoxville is past. There is no news of importance here. I believe I told you in my last that Capt Conner had sent his resignation in. It has gone up to Gen. Sherman's HdQrs and so has Lieut Hart's. I am going to try to get out of this Regiment myself by resignation if I can't be transferred to the 122nd. I won't stay any longer than I can help where a man's capacity is gauged by the quart-wine measure. In other words our Colonel is a drunkard and I don't want to serve under him. I can't get along well with him if I don't drink and by my actions approve of his conduct and I will not do that. As I write at 10 o'clock he is on a visit in the regiment and is as drunk and noisy as any fool drunken man can be. I don't want you to repeat this or let anybody know of it. I am not in the habit of writing or speaking this plainly of affairs here but I am provoked beyond endurance tonight.

Goodbye my dear

J. G.

71

Cleveland Tennessee

February 18th 1864

My dear Wife

My last letter was written from Scottsboro and on the 10th I believe. Since then we have been marching and I have had no opportunity to write until now.

Four Regiments from our Division—the 103rd Ills., the 97th & 99th & 12th Ind., all under command of Col. Dickeman of the 103rd Ills., left Scottsboro early on the 11th and marched to Stevenson that day. We went to Bridgport next day and reported there. Two Regiments, the 93rd Ills & the 111th Iowa, were added to our Brigade there and we were ordered to march to Chattanooga. We went through in two days arriving on the 14th. A Brigade of four Regiments from Osterhaus' Division at Huntsville and a Brigade from our 3rd Division of the same size joined us at Chattanooga and the whole Detachment was put under command of Gen. Mathias of the 3rd Division 15th AC. We lay at Chattanooga one day during which it rained incessantly and we were about as miserable as men need be. Chattanooga is still a mean place and a town that no person would like to live in, but it is vastly improved since we were there before. The cars are running and the place looks a great deal more lively. I understand Walter was there but I did not get to see him. I was very busy all day getting shoes and other supplies for the Regiment and could not get time to hunt him up. Several men are here that I knew—Capt Stineback among others—he borrowed \$5 of me about eighteen months since which I had forgotten, but he came up to me as we were marching through and paid me. Tom McGannon's wife came on a few days before we got there and went down to Kelly's Ferry where Tom was—she was still there. We left Chattanooga on the 16th and after two days march arrived here yesterday evening. We marched over about the same road that we went on before but the roads are good now and the march was rather pleasant.

The prospect is that we will stay here a while as troops are needed here—but you know every thing is uncertain in time of war. We are camped a half mile south of town in a very pretty pine grove and I had as lief stay here awhile. We are all in excellent health now. I received a letter of the 3rd from you written at Terre Haute and one of the 7th written at home. I received them both while at Chattanooga. You

complain in both that you had no letters. I suppose you know by this time that the reason I did not write was that we were on a Scout for more than a week. I will write you more fully in a day or two. I am in a hurry just now as I have a good deal to see to. I forgot to thank you for sending the photograph. The likenesses of you and Bel are very good. Tell Charley I have not written to anyone who didn't write me first unless on business. My love to you and young ones. My respects to all friends.

Your aff Husband

James Goodnow

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72

Cleveland Tennessee

February 21st 1864

My dear Wife

I have just received two letters from you—one dated 11th and the other 15th inst. I gather from them that you are all about as well as usual—and if one thing more than another consoles me in my protracted absence from home it is the feeling of ease as to your and the children's health and comfort that I always have—I know and appreciate the thousand little troubles you have. The trouble in getting Sam up in the morning and in keeping the young ones in order and the little house-keeping trials that I might relieve you of if I were there—and I appreciate too your uneasiness about me and your vexation when you didn't get letters regularly. But you have your usual health, the company of the children and the society of your kinfolks and money enough to live well, so that I don't see but you are about as well situated as any soldier's wife can be. I would like to be with you and will be as soon as circumstances will allow. But I can't come home now I know and I reconcile myself to the situation. I know that the profession of war in time of war is a dangerous one and that I have no certain lease of life—but if I am killed I could not die in a better cause and thousands of men who are as good as or better than I am have risked their lives and are doing it now—while they are no more interested in the preservation of the country than I am. So while I am as afraid of death as any one, I must continue in the service as long as I can or while I am needed.

And here let me tell you of my chances for being made Colonel of the new Regiment and how I feel about it. I have never regarded my chance as very good from the fact that there are always a great many aspirants for promotion and I expected that some one who had influential friends at home or some man who had better opportunities to distinguish himself would come in between me and the appointment most likely, and consequently I have not suffered myself to think much about it. Although I would like extremely well to have the place—because it would show that the Governor thought me worthy and it would give me higher rank and last but not least would give me an independent position where I could carry out my own views in regard to governing a Regiment—an opportunity I have never had as yet, although I have often had command. But it was always as temporary commander that I acted and always necessarily with deference to the views of the real commander although I often thought my own ideas the best. But I have learned long since that I can't have everything I want and shall not be much disappointed if I don't get this appointment—and I don't want you to feel disappointed either and if you do feel disappointed don't show it to your friend Mrs Waters or any of her class. I don't have much respect for her or her husband either. He is not an honest man and she is a tattler and would be glad to

see you humiliated because I hold a higher rank than he does. Don't trust her with anything you don't want told. I have heard of a great many things being told about Vernon that Waters told his wife a great many things he should not have told her and that she should have never repeated. And if I wanted anything published I would tell Waters and let him publish it through his wife. I despise such people. As to the story about all our officers being under arrest, I suppose that came to you from her. I have been in command of the regiment since January 10th and have put but one officer under arrest and he apologized next morning and I released him. I don't want to get a name of that kind at home as I know I don't deserve it.

You scold a good deal (I had nearly said a good deal too much) because you don't get enough letters from me. I wrote you just before we started on the Scout to Lebanon and wrote twice after we came back (within about a week) before we started on this trip. And since then have had not opportunity to write until we landed here (on the 17th). This is the second letter I have written since then. Now haven't I done as well as could be expected? I think so. Your pattern correspondent Mr. Waters (I'll give you ten cents if you will never mention his name again in the same way) has never once left camp since we went to Scottsboro and there was no earthly reason why he should not write regularly. As to his loving his wife so well—I think he does love her pretty well—when he is away from home. I am heartily sick and tired of having his name and his example set up before me in every letter I get from you and I am afraid I will be strongly tempted to profanity if I don't get a letter in which his name is left out. I do suppose I love you as well as a man ought to love his wife but I don't like to be scolded into saying so.

I have had no letter from Sam lately—I suppose he don't write because I have not written to him. Make my excuses to him and say that I have had no opportunity. I will write my next letter to him and I want him to write me regularly. I would like for him to go to a commercial college next summer if you can arrange it.

We have just received orders to be ready to march at a moments notice. So I expect we will be on the road again tomorrow. I don't know where we are to go but think we will move toward Dalton on a reconnaissance perhaps. So you may again be without letters from me for awhile—don't get impatient if you are. I will write as often as I can. I will stop now and leave a little space to fill just as we start.

Monday Feb 22nd 1864

We have not got orders to move yet and as there is some doubt whether we will go soon I will finish this and send it by the Chaplain who has orders to go to Scottsboro today and bring up the mail for the Brigade. Nothing new has transpired since yesterday except that a Brigade of the 4th Corps that was camped here moved out toward Dalton this morning early. Whether it is part of the grand programme or only an isolated movement I am not able to say. I have now written you a long letter which will I hope make up for my previous delinquency. I doubt whether it would not be just as good if a little shorter.

Receive renewed protestations of my regard for you and give my love to the children and my regards to all friends.

Write regularly.

Believe me

Your aff Husband

James Goodnow

73

Cleveland, Tenn.

Feb. 29th 1864

My dear Wife

Our Reg't just returned from a trip to Dalton, or to that vicinity more properly, and as we had some fighting there I suppose you will be uneasy until you hear that I am safe as I am most certainly. This is our muster day and I am mustering officers for the Reg't so I am very busy. You must excuse me if this is very short and I will take the first opportunity to write fully. We were gone six days and heard a good deal of shooting and saw some rebels and some of them shot at us too but we got back with all the men we started with for all which we are very thankful.

Your aff Husband

James Goodnow

74

Scottsboro, Alabama

March 6th 1864

Dear Sam

I promised in my last that I would write my next letter to you and now having an opportunity for the first time for two weeks I sit down to fulfill my promise—I wrote to your Mother on the 22nd Feb^y that we had had marching orders but I inclined to believe that we would not leave Cleveland after all. I wrote this about noon that day, and at 7 that night we got orders to march at 5 next morning and report to Gen. Cruft at Red Clay—a station on the Dalton Road and about twelve miles from Cleveland. Our Brigade was all of the 15th corps that marched on the trip. It was composed of the 32nd Mo, 93rd Ills, 103rd Ills, 97th, 99th and 12th Ind, all under command of Col. Dickeman of the 103rd Ills. The remaining eight regiments from the 15th AC staid at Cleveland. We reported at Red Clay about noon and found Gen. Cruft there with two Brigades from the 4th AC. We stopped for dinner and all marched toward Ringgold, Ga and got within three miles of that place and formed with the army from Chattanooga about 11 at night having marched about 22 miles that day. The Chattanooga army consisted of Gens Davis, Johnson and Bairds Division and our whole force was about 15,000 men. Gen Davis with his and Johnsons Divisions moved down on the west or right side of the Rail Road and Baird and Cruft moved down on the east side, our Brigade being in reserve on our side of the road. We moved about three miles down next day and Crufts Brigade moved about three miles ahead of us and the right wing moved down about six miles and took Tunnel Hill that day (24th). Our Brigade started at 3 next morning and marched about six miles toward Dalton, passing through Crufts Brigades. We halted and stacked arms a little after sunrise and built fires and were making ourselves comfortable and thinking the Rebels had evacuated Dalton—when the cavalry ahead of us suddenly came on the enemy, and a sharp skirmish followed within a half mile of us. We got into line in a hurry and awaited orders, and Cruft's Brigade came past in about fifteen minutes, passing to the front on the run. They formed line about a quarter of a mile ahead of us, with a reserve

line between us and them. We all moved forward about 9 A.M. and the front line soon became heavily engaged.

Our line closed up on them slowly and had got within about one hundred and fifty yards when the rebels broke and scampered off and our boys cheered loud enough to be heard almost to Dalton. We halted only long enough to form our lines in good order when we started forward again, and after going about three hundred yards the front line got into another good sized fight and drove the rebs again. And so we went on for about two miles marching in battle line all the time and up and down hill and through the woods and brush constantly until we came to a very high hill on the left of the valley in which the main body of the rebels lay. It was now about noon and our part of the program was done, we having gone as far as we could until Davis came up on the right. Our line extended across this high hill on top of which the 4th Ind. Battery was planted and to the right across the valley of which I spoke and up the side of Rocky face mountain which lay on the other side of the valley and it extended about a half a mile to the left across another valley leading toward Dalton—and Wilder's mounted Infantry, under command of Col. Long, lay to the left of that and occupied another valley. We thus had the Rebels enclosed on our side and Davis was to come up the Rail Road from Chattanooga and take the gap in Rocky faced Mountain through which the Road runs and then we would have them in a trap, for they would have no way to get out except to retreat toward Dalton and if they did that, the valley down which they must go was so narrow that we could have killed or captured the greater portion of them. The plan was a good one but it failed because Davis didn't have enough men to take the gap, and after awhile it became apparent that the rebs had more men than we and the best thing for us to do was to go back. So we marched out about 9 that night—quietly and soberly, but in good order—and went nearly to Ringgold and went to bed about 1 the next morning feeling very much as though Dalton was not evacuated yet.

Our Brigade was under a great deal of artillery fire that day and a good many bullets passed by on their way to the rear but fortunately no one of us was hurt. Our Regiment was moved around and sent to support of weak points at least twenty times, and I cannot understand how we escaped so well but suppose these things are ordered by Providence. I am very grateful that I escaped—for I hardly expected it. We formed line of battle next day and waited for the enemy to come out and attack us as we supposed he would but he did not come nearer than within skirmishing distance of our pickets and soon retired and moved in and joined on the main body within a mile of Ringgold about 12 at night—and our Brigade started for Cleveland at 1 P.M. the next day (27th) When we arrived on the 28th we lay in Cleveland over the 29th and mustered for pay. And started for this place March 1st and arrived here without anything in particular happening to us yesterday evening. We marched about 250 miles on this trip and had no tents and no baggage except our blankets and we were tired, dirty and ragged when we came in. I received yours of March 1st yesterday, also one from your mother dated Feb. 28th. I am glad to hear you are getting on with your studies so well. Give my love to your Mother. Tell Dan I asked you why he never wrote to me anymore and I want Johnny to print me a short letter. Kiss Bel for me.

Write regularly

Your aff Father

James Goodnow

Scottsboro March 22 1864

Dear Nancy

I arrived at Nashville at 6 PM the day I left you but the Chattanooga train had left and I had to wait until 4 ^{1/2} PM next day before I got off for Stevenson. Nothing in particular happened to me at Nashville. I went to a private boarding house and staid at the remarkably cheap rate (for Nashville) of \$2 per day. We did not get to Stevenson until 8 AM Sunday morning and were very tired of our ride and very sleepy. The cars were so crowded that lying down was quite out of the question, and you know it is impossible to sleep sitting up. Our being so slow made us too late for the Huntsville train—it having started about half an hour before we got in. There were quite a number of officers going down, and no accommodations for us in Stevenson except at the Soldiers Home, a kind of a one horse boarding house that was taken possession of by the Government and fitted up in the commonest kind of style. There is a separate table for officers where they serve up rations, such as the Government furnishes, and they have what they call beds too for officers but I had rather take a blanket and lie on the floor than sleep in one of them for they are hard affairs and look like they might be lousy too. Fortunately we did not have to use the beds for the Superintendent of the Road had some business at Huntsville that evening and took a locomotive and one box car and we all crowded on and I got to Scottsboro about 5 P.M.

I found things here pretty much as when I left, that is there was nothing going on except drinking and that being confined to a few officers was not of public interest, except when the said officers made a public exhibition of themselves, which they sometimes did and sometimes do yet—in order I suppose to set a good example and keep up their authority over and influence with the men—

I put in yesterday trading horses. I found my bay horse going back rather than improving and as it is evident I can't ride him soon I struck up a trade with the Division Quarter-Master and got a good mare from him in place of my bay horse. This will be my excuse for not writing you yesterday. It began to snow last night at 9 o'clock and kept it up all night and still snowing as I write at 11 this morning. A good deal of the snow has melted as it fell but there are about six inches of snow on the ground yet. It looks very dreary this morning and the appearance of things generally gives me the blues. I believe I am a good deal dissatisfied but I guess it comes from home-sickness. I believe I feel worse and want to see you more than if I had not seen you at all at Louisville, but I well know I must not indulge this feeling and will soon get over it I hope. I don't like the surroundings here very much and that helps make me dissatisfied but I will get settled down again in a few days. Take good care of yourself my dear for my sake and remember I love you dearly, always. Tell Sam I want him to get up and make the fires, and I don't want to hear again that he don't do it. Tell Dan & Johnny to be good boys. Kiss Bel for me. I found out just now that I had been writing on two sheets of paper. I had them together and didn't know it. As you would have some difficulty in connecting the pages I have numbered them. Give my regards to your Mother, Dan & Sis, Will Sharp[e] and Bel, Charley and Mary. Tell Will I owe him a letter and will write to him in a day or two. Tell Charly if he don't write to me soon I will have to write to him first.

Goodbye Dear Nancy

Your aff Husband

James Goodnow

76

Scottsboro Mar 28/64

My dear Nancy

I suppose you will think I should have written sooner, but I was waiting to get a letter from you and intending to answer it, and I had very little to write about too. I got a letter on the 25th from Sam written on the 21st in which he said you had got home but were sick and unable to get to house-keeping. I supposed I would get one from you today, telling me you had got well—or better—as I suppose you merely had a return of ague. Instead of a letter from you I received one from Sam today dated 24th in which he says you have been very sick and unable to go home but he thinks you are getting a little better and that you are taking medicine for hysteria. I can't understand what is the matter with you and I am very uneasy. Won't you write me yourself as soon as you are able and tell me all about it. I take it for granted that you have been unable to write or you would have written yourself on your arrival at home. I will be very uneasy until I hear from you.

We are all going on in the usual way here. I read a great deal and play checkers a good deal and ride out every day and eat and drink and sleep and that is about all I do. I don't think Uncle Sam is making much of a speculation out of me just now, but I am doing as much as anyone. I am getting very tired of this way of living and will be glad when we get an order to move. No one seems to know when the order will come, but I think the signs are that a movement will be made within a month or six weeks. The 17th Corps is on its way here and as we have more men here now than are needed to guard this Road we will certainly move forward when everything is ready. I think that the 17th & 15th Corps will be joined together and form the right wing of the army when it moves on Atlanta, whenever that move is made, but we will need a great many more mules and horses than we have before we can move far, and Rome will probably be our destination. I think I can see a long delay ahead. It is about one hundred miles from here to that place and through a country that will afford little or no means of living for men or animals, and we will be obliged to carry with us at least two weeks supplies. Our present supply of mules cant haul our ammuniton and their forage for five days. Gen Sherman passed through yesterday. He is making a tour of inspection around the lines. I understood he let fall some words signifying that he intended to move but didn't say when. My love to you and the children and regards to your mother and Dan and Sis and Kate, and Will's and Charley's folks. Write soon.

Your affectionate Husband

James Goodnow

77

**Scottsboro, Ala.
March 31 1864**

My dear Wife

Your welcome letter of 27th has just been received and I am so much rejoiced to hear that you are getting well that I sit down immediately on reading it to congratulate you on your recovery. I had been

very uneasy about you as Sam had written twice since you went home and you not once and I inferred from that that you were unable to write and must be very sick. I have nothing of importance to tell you. We are all well or at least I am and everybody you know here. We have some sickness but very little comparatively. We have had two or three deaths since I saw you, mostly from chronic diseases. The weather has been quite cold but is now pleasant and Springlike and the farmers are fencing preparatory to putting a crop in. Weatherinton has not heard from his tendering of resignation yet. I suppose the reason is that Sherman has been moving his office to Nashville and McPherson the Department Commander has not fairly begun business yet.

I really can't think of anything else to write now but will write again in a day or two. My love to you dear Nancy and to the children and regards to all friends.

James Goodnow

78

Scottsboro, Ala.

April 3rd 1864

My dear Nancy

Lieut Weatherinton has had his resignation accepted and starts home today and will carry this to you. I have very little to write but would not let the opportunity pass without a line at least to let you know I am well and to remind you of me.

There is nothing transpiring here and this waiting without anything to do and having no object in view except to pass off time is the unpleasant part of Soldiering, to me at least. I want to be at home, and if I had any good reason to offer would send in my resignation today. But unfortunately my health is good and if I were to offer as a reason that I don't like the way the Colonel drinks and carries on—I would get a fuss on my hands and would be told that is no reason for resigning as I can bring charges against him if he does anything in violation of the regulations. I will not bring charges against him though, because he is a very good man with that single exception and always treats me well and beside that it would destroy discipline in the Regiment and would give occasion for the remark that I was trying to get him out of my way so I might be promoted. I don't see that I can do anything but take things patiently and hope that matters will take a better shape some day.

My situation is unpleasant though—both the other Field Officers drink and like to associate with men of their own kind and while I am very friendly with Col. Williams and he with me, we associate very little. I don't like the other man and would not associate with him under any circumstances. So I am under the necessity of finding my friends and intimates among the Line officers of the Regiment or among officers outside of it. I am friendly with most of our company officers and with a good many others and have no lack of Society but I would be a good deal better satisfied if I could associate with those that my duty requires me to be with most. I could associate with them if I would adopt their habits, but I cannot do that and so I seem to stand alone at Head Quarters.

We have no orders to move yet but are fitting up our teams to be ready and the prospect is that we will not lie here very long. While no one appears to know anything certain about what will be done in this Department this Spring the opinion is general that we will move simultaneously with the Eastern army.

It is taken for granted that the Rebels will not be allowed to concentrate in Virginia as they would certainly do if we lay still while the army of the Potomac moved. I think there will be a force left on this Road when the movement is made, and the Road will have to be guarded all summer and we may be left, but that is very uncertain and I am expecting that we will go forward—and I had rather do it than lie here. I am getting impatient for the army to go forward and finish the thing up. I think we are strong enough to bring the war to a close this summer and I do hope we will be able to close it out in time to come home against Christmas. I suppose however that Gen Grant knows what he is about and will move as soon as everything is ready.

I received Harpers and the Atlantic for April yesterday. As far as I have examined them they are very good. The House and Home papers are excellent and so is the Schoolmasters story. The History of the Creek War is interesting too, and peculiarly so to me for I have seen a good deal of the country it describes. I have told Weatherinton that if he telegraphs for his wife to meet him at Louisville—as he talks of doing—that Sam will come down with her. I suppose Samuel will have no objection to taking the trip if his expenses are paid and it will be quite an accommodation to Mrs W. He wants her to meet him there and buy some furniture with which to go to housekeeping and I suppose thinks it will be pleasant to see her where they can be to themselves. We found it pleasant didn't we? Very much to my surprise I find I have been able to fill this sheet and I will close by expressing my love for you in particular and also for the children. My best regards to your Mother, Fin, Sis and Dan and Charley and Will's folks—

Your affectionate Husband James Goodnow

79

Scottsboro April 13th 64

My dear Nancy

My life here is so monotonous that I find very little of interest to write about and you must accept this as an excuse when I don't write often enough—as you think. I think of you often and if I were to write as often as I think of home you would get twenty letters per day—but when I write I always want to fill the sheet and you know that is a serious undertaking, considering the want of news and the size of the paper. I am sorry to hear by your last letter that you are sick again. I wish you could get your health again. I think pleasant Spring weather will restore you.

I am well now but I have been quite unwell for a few days. I had a touch of Bilious Fever and then Neuralgia and felt pretty uncomfortable, but I am better since day before yesterday and will have my usual good health in a few days. I have had so little sickness since I have been in the army that I had almost got to believe that I was a proof against disease. I suppose this little touch was sent to remind me that I am mortal—and I acknowledge that I am.

I had a little difficulty with Capt Trotter yesterday. I heard when I returned from Louisville that during my absence he had accused me of living off the men's rations while we were on the march to Dalton. I knew it was not true and concluded to pass it by without notice and did so until yesterday, when he repeated the offense and upon being told of it I called on the gentleman and told him likewise what I intended to do about it and also gave him my opinion of him as being a meddling fool and no gentleman. I wanted to make a fuss with him so as to get him dismissed as I could have done, but didn't like to do it in cold

blood. But he denies having said it and said that if I had ever lived off the men he didn't know it and wound up by declaring that he had always been a good friend of mine and felt very much grieved that I could believe that he would talk in that way. I had to take his word in the matter although I knew he was lying, for he has had a grudge at me for some time because I did not give him what he considered his place on the march to Dalton and he is just narrow minded enough to hold spite about a little thing like that. I will have a settlement with him yet if I am not mistaken. He thought he could be revenged on me by hurting my reputation without my knowing it and was not manly enough to face the consequences.

I am getting tired of this idle life and wish we were moving, or were doing something. After we get started out on a march the officers and men are more sober as they have very little opportunity to get whiskey, but while we are lying still it seems impossible to prevent drunkenness and all the evils attending it. And beside this consideration there is something about a movement especially against an enemy that is exciting and fascinating.

I have not got my new coat and pants yet. Staub sent the Chaplain a Valise and suit of clothes and packed my clothes in the valise too. He sent it by express about the 25th of last month but it has never come and I am afraid it is lost.

Now my dear I hope this will find you well again—at least if my wishes will make you well it will find you in good health. Give my love to the children and my regards to all and believe me

Your affectionate Husband

James Goodnow

P.S. Please send me a few postage stamps.

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80

Scottsboro April 22 1864

My dear Nancy

I received Sam's letter of 17th this morning and was glad to get it although it informed me that you were so much offended at me that you would not write. This is a great state of affairs truly. Have you nothing or nobody else to be angry with and have you concluded to try your hand on me. I don't really know what I have done that you should be in a bad humor with me. My letters may have been delayed on the road but that is not my fault, and secondly I don't think you have lost a great deal in not getting them for they are barren of interest. Seriously though I have always written every five days and often in two or three day so I believe it is five or six days since I wrote before but I have been quite unwell and did not feel equal to the task of writing a long letter and I knew you would scold if I wrote a few lines only.

I am now hardly able to be out of bed and was quite sick yesterday and last night. I have a slight fever the whole time which makes me feel very uncomfortable. I think I have Bilious fever probably and under these circumstances I don't think you ought to be angry if I don't write as often as I would if well. You will say that you didn't know I was sick or you would not have been out of humor with me. This is your great fault that you don't wait for me to explain but get angry first—thus saying impliedly that you will always believe me to be in the wrong until I prove myself innocent. I would get better treatment than that if I were arraigned for crime against the laws and before a court of Justice. There where all would

be strangers or indifferent to me they would suppose me innocent until the contrary was proved. I think I have a right to expect as least as much from you—haven't I? I wrote to Charley and Will Sharp[e] a few days since and told them to show you the letters and I was writing to you in this way. Let us drop this subject now, my dear with an appeal to you to believe that I am trying to act for the best always. We will avoid a fruitful source of difficulty in this way.

There is very little news here. Col. Williams and Major Baldwin are at Nashville on a ten days leave having what they consider a good time I suppose. We are putting in time here...drilling a little and having an occasional review, but time hangs heavily on our hands—on mine at least. I am very tired of the life. We are to have a grand Review tomorrow. Gen Logan is to review us accompanied by Gen Osterhaus, Gen Morgan L. Smith and others. I suppose we will have a grand time and a good many officers will get very drunk. We don't seem to be any nearer a move than we were a month since. Although we have got it into our heads that we will make the real advance this Spring. It is supposed here that Grant is pretending to concentrate against Richmond and thus drawing the Rebel Armies in that direction while the object is to strike them here when the proper time comes. I don't pretend to know but this is very probable. The season here is very backward. So much so that there will not be grass enough to do our horses and mules much good for a month and this backwardness of the Spring must of course have something to do with our long period of inaction. So many Veteran Regiments being at home has something to do with it no doubt. Mr Waters and Irby Wagner and all the men from Jennings County are well. Try to find out if Walter Carson is at home. He has been away from us since before Christmas. He was at Nashville in Hospital the last I heard of him.

My love to you and to the children and kindest regards to all friends.

Your affectionate Husband

James Goodnow

The Atlanta Campaign: May-July 1864

For the 12th Indiana Volunteer Infantry, the Atlanta campaign included battles at Resaca, Dallas, New Hope Church, Allatoona Hills, Marietta, Kennesaw Mountain, Brush Mountain, Nickajack Creek and Chattahoochee River. The Battle of Atlanta (22 July), inaugurated the siege of the city. Lt. Col. Goodnow was in command of the regiment for most of this campaign; Col. Reuben Williams was returned from battalion around 3 August and resumed command at that time.

81

In Field near Dallas Ga.

May 29th 1864

My dear Wife

We are just notified that a very small package of mail can be sent to Chattanooga today and I take advantage of the opportunity to let you know that I am still above ground and able likewise to eat my rations regularly. We started from Kingston on the 23rd and crossed the Etowah river about two miles west of town over a nice wagon bridge that the Rebs had neglected to burn and came almost directly South to this place, meeting with no impediment on the way and nothing unusual transpiring. We got

here night before last just after dark. Our Brigade had been in the rear and had charge of the train and consequently did not get up as soon as the balance of the Corps and when we did come up found our Army confronting the Rebels who seem to be making a stand here. Our Brigade with the exception of the 90th Ills which was left with the train was put in position on the extreme right of the line and at right angles with it, the line of battle facing S.E. or nearly East and our Brigade facing West of South—our duty being to keep the enemy from going round behind the line. We made a pretty good line of rifle pits night before last just behind an open field and about twenty yards back in the woods. We did nothing yesterday but skirmish a little until about 4 in the evening when the Rebs came out at us yelling in their usual style and charged on us along the whole line of the 15th and 16th Corps. They came out in the field in front of our Regiment and drove the Skirmishers in and started for our woods not seeming to know that we had any breast works here—some of them got within fifty yards of us before they discovered us and when we opened on them it was laughable to witness their surprise. They tried to cover themselves behind stumps and logs and their officers tried to form them and bring them up but it was of no use—they wouldn't come and they broke in confusion and went back faster than they came, hardly stopping to fire a shot at us. The whole thing was over in fifteen or twenty minutes and the result was that we had three men slightly wounded while we killed and wounded fifty or sixty of them. It was the first time our men had had a chance to fight behind breast works and they enjoyed it hugely. I could not for the life of me keep them from getting on top of the breast works and shooting or none of them need have been hurt. It is said the rebs lost 3000 men by their charges and were repulsed every where. We are lying in our works today and nothing but Skirmishing is going on. The thing is not over yet evidently. Don't feel uneasy about me for I feel under the protection of the same Providence here that I would have to depend on for the preserving of my life if at home.

My love to you my dear and all the children.

Your aff Husband

James Goodnow

82

Acworth Georgia

June 7th 1864

My dear Wife

I have another to write today, although I don't suppose the letter will reach you very soon—but I will write anyhow and trust to luck. I believe I wrote last on the 29th the day after the Rebs charged our ditches near Dallas. We had orders to move out of our works that same night (29th) and go about six or seven miles to the left and toward the Rail Road, Sherman's object seeming to be the moving of the whole army eastward. We started very cautiously about 9 at night, leaving our Skirmishers to hold the line and keep up appearances. We were on the extreme right and moved first in the rear of and parallel with the line held by the other Divisions of our Corps. We—that is our Brigade—had got moved about half a mile and the Brigade next on our left was just getting ready to move when the Rebels attacked our whole line and we were ordered to back to our ditches double-quick, which we did and got into position as quick as possible. We got back in the nick of time for our Skirmishers were all driven in except four or five who were firing rapidly and making so much noise that the Rebs were afraid to come on them too

fast and they returned as soon as we got up and our part in the row was over, but they kept it up at intervals on our left until 2 next morning. We did not try moving again until Wednesday morning June 1st when we went out at daylight and moved off to the eastward without opposition. We marched about seven miles and relieved Hooker's Corps (20th). We found them behind breast works on the crest of a hill and the Rebs on the brow of the next hill about 125 yards distant. We went in and occupied the works and Hooker came up this way flanking the Rebs. We staid there four days keeping up a constant Skirmishing all the time and were up in line four or five times each day and night thinking the Rebs were attacking us but the gentlemen had no intention of doing that although they tried hard to keep us in a constant state of alarm and being so close our Skirmishers and theirs fixed with great accuracy and a man couldn't show his head without being shot at. We had one man killed here and four or five wounded.

The Rebs decamped during the night of the 4th leaving a Skirmish line out to deceive us—but we went over and took that in, our Regt taking some 30 or 40 prisoners. We went over into their works early in the morning and found these men and they surrendered without resistance. The Rebels had a very strong position and we could not have driven them out by a direct assault without great loss of life. Gen Sherman did better—he flanked their position and they had to retreat and they can't now make another stand this side of Atlanta if I understand the position. We came here, leaving on the 5th about noon and getting here about noon yesterday—a distance of 14 miles. I saw Will Shrewsbury day before yesterday and he told me the particulars of Sam McKeehan's death. The 4th Corps to which Sam belonged was driving the enemy back through the hills, which are covered with a thick undergrowth of oak and gum bushes—so thick that a man would not be visible at a distance of five steps in a great many places, and the Rebels gave way for more than a mile and allowed our own men to come within 30 or 40 yards of their rifle pits when they opened with grape and canister and also with a heavy line of infantry. The fire was so heavy that it was impossible for our men to advance but they stood their ground and fought an hour and a half and were finally compelled to retreat leaving their dead and wounded in the enemy's hands. Sam was shot through the neck and died almost immediately. Capt Dick Conner was killed too and three other officers of the 6th. I saw Harvey Hartwell this morning. The 22nd is lying about a half mile from us. Harve looks well. I telegraphed you yesterday that myself and all men in 12th from Jennings were unhurt. I hope you have got the telegram before this. I got two letters from you last night dated 22nd and & 26th or rather the last was from Sam and he said you were too unwell to write. I sincerely hope your sickness was light and that you are well now. My health has been pretty good, I am very tired. I find that lying under fire for 8 or 10 days as we did is very apt to worry and exhaust a man. Mr. Waters is in good health and so are all the men from our county. We have had about 70 killed and wounded but none from Jennings. My love to you and the young ones, & Your mother's folks and Will's & Charley's & to Fin.

Your Aff Husband James Goodnow

83

Big Shanty, Georgia

June 14th 1864

My dear Wife

I owe you an apology for not writing sooner. I believe I wrote last on the 8th but yours of 5th [is] also six days later than the one written last before it. So I know you can't conveniently say anything to me for being negligent. We left Acworth in the morning of the 10th and came to this place five miles further down the Rail Road getting here about 10 A.M. There is a long range of mountains ten miles below here, ranging from the river on the east (as I am told) and running south westwardly across the Rail Road and I don't know how much further—a good many miles probably. The Rail Road runs through a gap in this mountain just below us and Johnston has taken position on this hill and seems determined to stop us here or at least bother us all he can. Well it began to rain just as we got in sight of the place and we went into line of battle in the rain on the first range of hills North of the rebs, and we fortified our position in the rain and it rained night and day until last night making four days continuous wet weather and it was cold too, making our situation about as uncomfortable as you can imagine. It is dry today though and we are moved to the rear in reserve and are enjoying our season of rest in a manner that only those who have been tried as we have can appreciate and I am using my first leisure moments in writing to you.

Mc Pherson's command which embraces three Divisions of our Corps, two of the 16th and two of the 17th is on the left extending about two miles to the left of the Rail Road and probably a mile to the right of it. Our Corps being on the Road, Osterhaus' Division is in front of us and facing the enemy and Morgan L. Smiths Division on the left of him and our Division is in reserve for both of them. Thomas' Army, that of the Cumberland, is on our right and Schofield's command on the right of him. We are doing very little—in fact nothing at all is going on except a little Skirmishing with an occasional cannon shot. Something will be done soon though no doubt and I think Sherman means to flank them again as he did twice before. Just how he will do it though we none of us see. We have implicit confidence however in his ability to out general them and we are ready to do our best to accomplish any thing he may order us to do. We have had no one hurt in this Regiment since I last wrote. A good many, myself among the number, are aguishly inclined though. Col. Williams has commanded the Brigade and I have commanded the Regiment since May 1st, Col. Loomis having resigned and gone home.

As to your question about my preparation for death—I hope that I am in the right way, although the habits of years are hard to break through and I know that if I have under gone a change it is only in part and I can only hope and wish that I am on the road that I now know to be the right one. I find that trying makes the path plainer and I mean with the help of that Grace without which I can do nothing to continue in the way I have begun. This is for your eye alone. My love to you my dear and I hope to hear soon you are well again. Give my love to each one of the children and my regards to all. I forgot to say I saw Walter yesterday—he was well.

Your aff Husband

James Goodnow

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84 [From Regimental Chaplain Moses D. Gage]

Pendleton [Indiana], June 25th 1864

Mrs Nancy Goodnow,
Vernon Ind.

On leaving my regiment on the 9th inst. I promised Col. Goodnow that I would write you while at home, which I have neglected to do till this time. He was safe and well at that time, but you have probably heard from him at a later date. Lieut. Waters was also well and all the Vernon boys were safe.

On reaching Chattanooga I found Col. Goodnow's missing clothing which I brought home with me and intended to carry back to him. If you have anything to send to him, either letters or other articles I will cheerfully convey them to him on my return. I shall leave for the regiment on the morning of the 5th of July and stop over one train at Columbus, where I expect to preach at night and meet the friends of our brave boys. I shall not have time to go to Vernon also, much as I would like to do so. But if any of the friends wish to send letters to the regiment and will send them to Columbus in care of J.E. Hart, Editor of the Union I will take charge of them. Perhaps some friend could come up and meet me there, as I shall spend part of the day at Columbus going down on the morning train from Indianapolis.

Very truly Yours

M.D. Gage

Chaplain 12th Ind Vols

85

Kenesaw Mountain, Ga.

July 2, 1864

My dear Wife

I have only time to write a line before the mail closes. We have been lying in the rifle pits in front and next the mountains for six days—have had three men killed and four wounded in that time. No one you know however. I am well and so are all from our town and county.

I just received yours of the 25th June. Glad to hear from you. Let Sam work for McClellan if he wants him.

My love to you and children. Respects to all who inquire.

Your aff husband

Jas Goodnow

86

Camp 12th Ind Vols. 19 miles S.W. of Marietta [Georgia]

July 5th 1864

My dear Wife

I suppose you will see from our location that we have moved from the position occupied by us when I last wrote on the 2nd. We were ordered to move to our right on the night of the 2nd as Sherman was concentrating his army on the enemy's left with a design to outflank him, but he accomplished the object without using our division and about midnight our order of march was countermanded. At daylight next morning a couple of deserters came in to our skirmish line and reported that the Rebs had left the mountain. The skirmish was advanced immediately and went to the top of the mountain without

opposition. They could see Marietta from the summit and the Rebs were in plain view marching out of town. Our Brigade, or rather the skirmishers belonging to it, captured near 100 stragglers and deserters before returning to camp. We moved out for Marietta about 9 that morning, and after marching four miles around the mountain came into the suburbs and encamped there until about 9 yesterday morning when we started again and marched 12 miles, S.W. for 7 miles and then 5 miles nearly East, getting here about 4 P.M. It was very hot and we marched steadily with very little rest and when we came in there were not more than 125 men to stack arms and the remainder had dropped out from heat and exhaustion. They all came up during the night however. We got up within about 2 miles of a line of our men that were fighting when we came in and the fight was pretty brisk until dark but the rebs are gone this morning. They probably were a rear guard keeping us back until their army could cross *[the river]*. I think their army is mostly across this morning. I hear no firing along the line and I think Sherman would press them if they were in reach.

The rebs were pretty badly used up this time and show plain signs of demoralization and the signs are plainer every time the[y] have to fall back. I think our Corps must have picked up 600 or 800 stragglers and almost every one of them had been in since the war broke out but they said they were tired and beside thought they had no chance to succeed. They all concur in saying that if Johnston gives up Atlanta that the most of his army will leave him. We are now about 5 miles in front of the position occupied by our extreme right before the Rebs evacuated but our right wing had driven them back to this place, which was the cause of their evacuating, as we were getting so close to the River that they feared for their rear. Marietta is a very pretty little city of 5000 or 6000 inhabitants. It is well built and preserved. It is full of shade trees and at a little distance looks more like a grove than a town.

I have a strong hope now that we will soon get Atlanta. Although it is best not to be too sanguine for you know "Man proposes and God disposes." We are having a very fatiguing campaign—not to speak of the fighting of which we have had enough to satisfy my appetite for blood. We have been out on this campaign 66 days and have been under fire 18 of them—most of the time in the ditches too where we had to lie close and we got dirty and tired.

I am well as usual and so are all with us that you know. Mr. Lee got his appointment as Q. M. yesterday and I appointed Irby Wagner Commissary Sergeant. No more news—we have just got orders to move and I must close.

My love to you and the children.

Goodbye

Your aff Husband

James Goodnow

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87

Near Chattahoochi[e] River Ga

July 11th 1864

My dear Wife

Your and Sam's very welcome letters of 3rd inst. have just been received and read with pleasure. It has seemed a long time since I have heard from you as I had no letter since June 23rd. I wrote you July 3rd from Marietta. Since when we came to the extreme right of our line, and thence toward the River we got within about two miles of the River on the 5th where we found the Rebs in position on the South side of Nickajack Creek and strongly fortified. The Creek runs nearly South and empties into the River just opposite the right of our position and about eight miles below the Rail Road. We entrenched on the north side of the Creek and skirmished and fought with our artillery until the night of the 9th when the Rebs retreated across the river in our front and we shooting across the river at them now. The rumor is though that our left has crossed the River in force. If this is true they will probably leave us to-night. Well we have done pretty well so far but we are still eight miles from Atlanta and I don't think the campaign will close before we get that place. I can't tell when we will get there—not before August 1st probably. I have had another little spell of sickness and went to the Hospital three days since and, after taking some quinine and blue mass, felt well enough to come back to the Regiment this morning. I am not well yet but am improving and hope to be well soon. I must close as the mail is going out. Take good care of yourself for my sake. My love to the children. Regards to all who enquire for me.

Your aff Husband

James Goodnow

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In Field 3 miles West of Atlanta

August 1st 1864

My Dear Wife

I have a little leisure this morning and will improve the opportunity to write you. I will first give you a more detailed account of our movement on the 27th July and of our battle on the 28th. We left our position on the east of Atlanta at 2 in the morning of the 27th and the whole army of the Tennessee moved to the extreme right that day. The 16th & 17th Corps. took position and fortified that night. The 15th Corps did not take position but bivouacked in the rear of the 16th Corps, and we moved at day light on the 28th to get position on the right of the 16th Corps. We first marched to right and rear and then moved to the front, moving very carefully and skirmishing all the time. We got up to a range of hills immediately on the right of the 16th Corps. about 9 A.M. After a sharp skirmish we took possession of it. Our men began immediately to make a barricade of logs and dug the earth with their bayonets and threw it over with their tin plates and with their hands and in an hour we had a pretty good defense against pieces of bursting shells and musket balls. In our brigade we had but one regiment on the line (the 26th Ills.) Our regiment lay behind it about thirty yards and the 90th Ills about the same distance behind us. Our regiment furnished the skirmishers in our brigade front. I sent Co. "D" in command of Lieut. Waters, the Co. having no officer of its own with it. We had been on the hill about an hour the Rebs shelling us vigorously all the time, when the skirmishers sent in word that the enemy was forming in our front to attack us and in a few minutes the skirmishers were driven in, and Lieut. Waters was killed while coming in. In a very few moments the fight began. The rebs came in three lines and although our fire was very destructive and their men fell fast they seemed determined to drive us and came within 30 steps before we could check them and when they did break and run a great many hid behind

stumps and trees on the declivity in front us and kept up a scattering fire from there. They made five distance trial charges like this before they gave it up and we were in the fight almost straight along until nearly 5 PM. Two companies were on the front line and on the left of the 26th to connect it properly with the line, and when the 26th got their guns dirty with continual firing I put the rest of the regiment in with them and let part of their men retire and rest and clean their guns. So our men were all on the front line at least two hours. Our loss was small because the enemy fired up hill at us and over our little breast work and the most of the bullets went over our heads.

I am very sorry on account of Lieut Waters death and sympathize deeply with poor Mrs Waters. I wrote her on the 29th. I addressed the letter to you. I hope you will get it in due time and send it to her immediately. I escaped without a scratch. I think I have been exceedingly fortunate and am exceedingly thankful for escaping thus far. I read yours of 24th yesterday—am glad you are all well. I got Harpers in due time. In answer to your question—I hope although my hope is humble that I am on the right road. I try and will try my best to obtain the great prize but my whole life here-to-fore has been so much at variance with the requirements of God's law that I find it very difficult to get the proper start in the new direction and I am frequently very much discouraged—but I try to hope that I am beginning to go in the right way. I think I am willing to come to Christ as humbly as a child would and ask him to save me and I think I believe in Him as the only means of Salvation, but my old habits of doubting trouble me exceedingly. But God helping me I mean to try to be a good Christian. My love to you my dear and believe me very sincere in it. Give my love to all the children. Tell Sam I want him to be good to you and the children and to set them a good example. Tell him and Dan to write to me often. Kiss Johnny and Bel for me. Give my kindest regards to your Mother and Sis & Dan & Will's folks & Charleys & Dr. Burt's family & to all friends.

Your aff Husband

James Goodnow

The End of the Atlanta Campaign: August-September 1864

The siege of Atlanta wore on until its end in the decisive battle at Jonesboro 31 August–1 September 1864. The 12th Indiana was not in the field for this battle, having been detailed to the rear to guard trains.

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In the ditches 3 miles from Atlanta Aug 6th 1864

My dear Wife

From under the surface of the earth, that is sitting in a ditch with an old newspaper for a desk I send you greeting. We have just had a most terrible artillery duel and the guns have fired and the shells exploded faster than I could count—but no one hurt in our regiment. This thing of lying under a heavy cannonading is certainly among the tribulations in a soldiers life. Atlanta is not ours yet and I confess my incapacity to tell when it will be ours. I don't see that we make much progress toward taking the place.

I am not very sick—only enough to make me weak and light-headed. I will go out the Teams tomorrow—if able—and gather up Mr Water's things and I will look up his papers and accounts and settle his business as well as I can. I think she will have to get his back pay herself. She had better employ a Lawyer to attend to it for her.

I must come to a conclusion as the mail is ready to go out nearly.

Don't be uneasy about me as I am not dangerously sick at all.

My love to you and children.

Your Aff Husband

James Goodnow

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My dear Wife

I got a temporary leave yesterday to come here to get some clothing as my wearing apparel was greatly dilapidated. I have succeeded in getting a pair of Government blue pants and I also bought a vest from a Sutler. I needed worst of all a blouse but could not get one. My coat is very ragged but I will have to make it do a while longer. I don't care about wearing my new coat while we are in the ditches as I would spoil it in a day or two.

There is no certain prospect of our closing this campaign soon although when I left the front yesterday there were some signs that an evacuation was going on. But we have learned by sad experience that these signs are often delusive. We need rest badly as our army is tired out and we need to rest long enough to reorganize. A great many of our regiments are commanded by captains—having lost all their Field Officers and a Captain who is in temporary command only cannot make a regiment as effective as it would otherwise be. As an instance the 2nd Brigade of our Division has seven regiments and only four Field Officers for duty and that is about the proportion throughout the army. We have been singularly fortunate in that respect while we have lost one third of our men and line officers none of the Field Officers have been hurt. We are still lying in the ditches on the front line, having advanced our lines nearly a mile since the battle of the 28th. I am in about my usual health although I am very lean, and I don't think I would weigh much more than one hundred and fifty pounds. I am not really well any of the time but when I think of how many poor fellows have been killed and disabled I think I have good cause to be grateful that I have escaped so well.

Our Brigade was broken up the other day and Col. Williams returned to the regiment. I think it served him right as he was drunk a great deal of the time, and most of the time wholly unfit for duty in my opinion. I hope he will take warning and quit his ways. I have about concluded to quit as soon as this campaign is over. I can't serve under Williams and keep my self respect.

I am a sober man and show very little countenance to a man who is a drunkard. And while the Col. and I get along pretty well together, he knows I have no respect for him and he feels sore about it—and often makes things disagreeable to me. I am going to return to the regiment today where I hope to find a letter from you. Write often. Your letters are always welcome—accept my warmest love. Give my love to

the children & regards to your mother & Fin—tell him I owe him a letter that I will pay soon. Give my regards to Charley's folks & Will's.

Your aff Husband

James Goodnow

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In Camp Four Miles West of Atlanta

Aug 14th 1864

My dear Wife,

I write from nearly the same position in which our Regiment was when I last wrote. We advanced nearly half a mile on the 9th and no change since then. I got back from Marietta on the evening of the 9th and found the Regiment had just moved in. We had our Hospital Steward, a man named Martin from Fort-Wayne, killed dead by a bullet through the head that day and one man wounded. Since then we have had only two men hurt, one of them very slight. I have been unwell since the 10th and have done as little duty as I could possibly get off with. I have what they call Remittent Fever.

We had 3 men killed and 3 wounded in a little charge we made on the 2nd inst. None from our county.

I am well as usual and doing as usual—received yours of 1st inst today. I was very glad to get it. I must close as it is mail time—

Love to you my dear wife and give my love to the children. Tell me in your next how you get money enough to live on. I have \$1300 due me but don't get a cent. I am anxious about you, more than about myself.

Your aff Husband

James Goodnow

92

Near Atlanta Aug 21st 64

My dear Wife

Your letter of 17th is just read. I am glad to learn from it that you are all well except Sam and Dan and I suppose they are not seriously sick. I would like very much to be at home to see you all and advise you what to do about taking the Parsonage, but I think it very uncertain when I will be at home, for this place is not taken yet nor does the end seem near and no officer need talk about going home on leave while an active campaign is in progress. And if a man were to offer a resignation now he would probably be dismissed in disgrace. I still intend to offer my resignation as soon as there is a probability that it will be accepted. I am still unwell and have been unable for duty for ten days. My complaint is a torpid liver and general debility. I am not dangerously sick though nor sick enough to base a resignation thereupon, but I don't believe I will be able to do much while warm weather lasts.

We are still in the ditches neither advancing nor retreating but just lying still. We shoot at the rebels when they show themselves and they shoot at us when they see us. We get about one man hurt per day in our Regiment and the other regiments lose about the same way. Our poor fellows are nearly worn out. We have been constantly on duty for 112 days and a great deal of that time under fire and when not under fire they were digging a great deal of the time. And now our friends would hardly know us, we are poor and look care worn and very dirty. The men who have gone through this campaign creditably deserve all honor from their country. I don't understand all that is going on but I can't help believing the Virginia Campaign as almost a complete failure. The rebels are not cooped up at all as I can see and how Gen Grant expects to make them fight on his ground is more than I can see—and it is absurd to talk about their surrendering to him as things are now. And we here are a little the same fix that Grant is. We can't assault their works with any prospect of taking them—and our only chance of getting them out of here seems to be by flanking them on our right and taking or threatening the Macon Rail Road, –but the Rebs seem to understand this and they extend their lines as fast as we do. Maybe we can outstretch them and if we do they will have to go further south.

Tell Charley I hope he will be drafted and do good service for his country. Give my regards to his folks and to Fin. My love to all the children and my especial love to you.

Your affectionate Husband

James Goodnow

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East Point 6 Miles South of Atlanta
September 7th 1864

My dear Wife

You are doubtless surprised and uneasy because I have not written for so long a time. The reason why is I have had no opportunity since I wrote last (Aug 25th) until now. We evacuated our position near Atlanta on the night of the 26th and marched round our extreme right and struck the Montgomery Rail Road 16 miles S West of Atlanta. We stopped here one day, destroying the Road and waiting for the remainder of the army to come up. The whole army with the exception of the 20th Corps (which fell back to where the Chattanooga Road crosses the River) joined us and we pushed on for Jonesboro a Station on the Macon Road 23 miles SE of Atlanta. Our Regiment was detailed on the 27th for Train Guard and was in the rear from thence, but the Army of the Tennessee led and took position within a half mile of the Road on the evening of the 30th. Hood seems to have mistaken the movement for a Raid and he sent 15 or 20,000 men under Hardee to oppose it. Hardee took position in front of the Rail Road and charged our Corps on the 31st but was repulsed. On the 1st of September the 4th and 14th Corps crossed the Rail Road on our left and attacked the Rebels on their right flank and drove them out of two lines of entrenchments and captured about 1500 prisoners and eighteen cannon.

The arrangement was for the 17th corps to cross the Rail Road on our right and attack the Rebel left flank, but they did not get into position until night and the Rebs seeing they were about to be surrounded got out during the night and went South. Our forces pursued them early next morning and they made a stand four miles further down the Road and the balance of their force evacuated Atlanta

and made a circuit round us to the East and joined them. The teams were then ordered up here and we came with them and the army has withdrawn and will be here tomorrow. It will probably remain in and around Atlanta long enough to refit and be paid. It is said that the Army of the Tennessee will go into camp here while the Army of the Cumberland occupies Atlanta, while that of the Ohio will camp at Decatur. In the mean time and while we are stopping here I am going to offer my resignation and come home if possible. I am in better health now but I am afraid I can't stand another campaign and think I ought to quit while I can and if I can. I did not get any news from you from Aug 25th until yesterday when I got three letters of Aug. 22, 25th & 28th also Harpers for September. Don't look too strong for me for I don't know whether my resignation will be accepted—rest assured I will come home if I can. My best love to you and give my love to the children and my regards to your mother & Fin & Sis & Dan & Charley's & Wills folks.

Your aff Husband

James Goodnow

[Letter held in National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Lt. Col James Goodnow Pension File James Goodnow's resignation of his commission with the 12th Indiana Volunteers was accepted effective 15 September 1864.]

**HeadQuarters 12th Regiment Indiana Infantry
East Point GA. 8th Sept 1864**

Lieut Colonel William T. Clark A.A. Gen'l
To Major General O.O. Howard
Commanding Dept and Army of the Tenn

Sir –

I would most respectfully tender my resignation as Lieut Colonel of the 12th Regiment Indiana Infantry Volunteers for the following reasons Viz:

I have a family of four young children none of them old enough to care for themselves and my wife being a confirmed invalid and unable to care for them properly my presence at home is absolutely necessary.

My health has been bad for the last two months and I do not think that I would be able to endure the hardship and fatigues of another campaign.

I certify that I was last paid May, Thurston US Paymaster to include 31st Dec. '63.

That I have not been absent without proper authority since last payment.

That I am not indebted to the Q.M. Dept in any amount whatever.

That I am indebted to the Commisary [*sic*] Dept. in the amount of \$12.35.

That there are no charges against me in any manner affecting my pay.

I am very respectfully

Epilogue

Only one letter in the Goodnow Papers Collection dates from after James Goodnow's military service. He wrote to his son, John Finley Goodnow, when John was in Washington DC awaiting confirmation as US Consul to Shanghai, China.

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Excelsior, July 3 1897

D^r John

I suppose you at present have very little time to devote to outside Business. If you have time I wish you would see if you can't get my Pension Claim hurried up. It is No 1189.216, rec^t of which was acknowledged May 7 last. I also have a claim for back pay in the hands of Henry A. Hayward – Solicitor, Lock Box F, E Capitol Station. I wish you would see him and get any information you can. It is in the auditors Department. My desire for the P.O. here is great remember unless you can give me something better over there. I have watched your fight there with great interest. Washburn is evidently waiting to name a Consul himself and has a political debt to pay too. I think *[you]* will certainly beat him. I am sure I hope so. I telegraphed for the Gov was *[coming?]*. He told me it was his and Nelson's fight and he would pitch in whe *[when he]* got there. Please write as soon as the matter is settled (a telegram would be better)—with best wishes for your success.

Yrs affly

James Goodnow