

Socrates Carver Letters

HEAD QUARTERS,
Co. 37th Reg. Indiana Vol. Infantry
Camp Chattanooga Oct 16, 1863

Kind Mother:

This is a very dreary day; the weather has been rainy for several days and quite cool.

My health is not the best in the world but I haven't much to complain of. My lungs have caused me some uneasiness but I am a great deal better in that respect than I have been. I intend taking better care of myself for the future.

I have a good tent a good bed and very good living for the Army to afford in its isolated condition. The troops have been a little scarce of provision; but have plenty now. The roads are getting bad and I fear that our trains can't keep us supplied until the railroad is completed which is being done as fast as possible. I understand that the bridge across the Tenn. River is nearly completed; there is one other bridge to be built and the road is in running order. O! what a shout of welcome will greet the first train that comes puffing into Chattanooga. But let her come.

Our Quarter Master was captured on the 2nd of this month and I was appointed on the 5th to act in his place.

John is in command of the Company; he started on the 14th for Stevenson, as train guard and will be gone for 7 or 8 days - his health is good. The health of the troops is generally good.

The rebels are still in front of us but dare not attack us in our fortifications. Our pickets and theirs are in sight of each other - exchange papers every day - are quite sociable - there is no firing at each other. Many of them are deserting, and I hope they may continue doing so as long as there is one left!

I will send you my photograph which I have had taken since I came here. If you will keep it in the cellar I think the rats will not trouble the apples half so much as the original would if you were to put him in. I'll write agin [sic] Give my love to Father and the "chilins" [sic]. My love to you Mother.

Socrates Carver
Lieut [sic] 37th Ind. Vols

[written on right margin of first page] Tell Jeff and Ben to write me a letter and I will give 'em [sic] a quarter.

Direct to 3rd Brigade 1st Division instead of 2nd Div.

As we have been transferred to Rouseau's 1st Division and Starkweather's (3rd) Brigade
S.C.

Stone [sic] Creek July 17th 1863

I seat myself once more to write you a few lines to let you know that I am still in the land of the living [illegible] good health and I really hope these few lines will find you the same. I received a few lines from you several days ago you wanted to know the reason why I have not written before, well one reason was after I received your letter, I heard that you was coming home on a visit and I thought I would wait and have the great pleasure of talking with you personally, but we were all deprived of that great pleasure. Shep you must not think I have forgotten you because I have not written before, for I have not. I often think of you and the many happy hours we have spent together. I do hope this war will come to an end soon and all my friends be permitted to return to their homes, it was quite exciting times, here last Saturday and Sunday, John Morgan was within a mile of Vernon last Saturday night with an army of 1,000, you better believe it was stirring times. Citizens from every direction rushed forward to help defend the town, but Morgan didn't make an attack, they tore up the railroad some between North Vernon and Hardenbough and stole as many horses as he wanted, then, started for [illegible]. About the last I heard from him he was the other side of Cincinnatti [sic], there is an army after him but don't know whether they will ketch [sic] him or not but hope so any way, it is almost bed time so I will have to bid you good night. Saturday forenoon I will try and finish my letter, Shep presume you would like to know what I am busying myself about now days, well I have been working at most all kinds of work this spring. I helped the Boys about the wheat we finished drawing it in last Thursday, and I have been pulling flax. The Boys are giving to commence cutting hay next week. I expect I will have to help them for hands are very scarce, and we have got to weight of wool to spin this fall. So you see we have plenty to do to keep us busy, but Mother is here to help us, and ain't [sic] I glad don't know how we ever got along without her as long as we did.

We have not heard from Philandeo for some time, the last we heard from him they were at Tryune [sic] Tenn [sic] his health was not very good. Ethan received a letter from Jesse Heatin this week his Reg Div [sic] is at Visksburgh [sic].

Mary Revse has been at your Fathers visiting. She came down two weeks ago today. She and Caroline came here week ago Wednesday and stayed all night, we had a first rate visit. I expect you have had blackberries some time down there, they have just commenced getting ripe here. I went out last evening and picked most six quarts. Mother has got dinner ready, how I wish you was here to take dinner with us. I will lay my writing aside until after dinner.

I will now finish my scribbling. Ethan was going to write some to you and send with this but he has no time they want to haul the oats and the flax in the barn, this afternoon, then when they get that done we are all going over to the Burgh. Mr [sic] Swincher preaches tomorrow at Hardenbough, so does Mr. Brochway. Brochway preaches at the School house at the same hour they used to when their mealtimes come together. Brockway would preach in the afternoon but they don't seem to unite in their religious discourses anymore, that is if it is religion. Mr. Miller don't preach at Hardenbough anymore he said he could not preach for us any more on account of the folks being so

divided he still preaches at North Vernon, he preached Mr. Cleveland's [sic] funeral last month we all attended. Well Shep guess I will have to come to a close as my paper is pretty near filled up. Mother sends her love and best wishes to you. Hoping to hear from you soon. Your affectionate Cousin Mollie Day

Oh yes Shep I thank you very much for the ring you sent me, I have worn it ever since I received it. I think it a very nice present.

[image: photo of Socrates Carver in his Union uniform]

[at top of writing paper: image of eagle in a circle with a farm countryside around it]