

George D. Converse Letters 1864-1865

Background Information

George was a resident of Fowlerville, Michigan, and served in Company D, 9th Michigan Infantry, during the Civil War. The following are letters to his family describing his military service. Most of the letters were written at Chattanooga, Tennessee, where the regiment was in camp.

Chatenoga [sic], Tenn.

Nov. 8, 1864

Dear father and mother

I now sit down with my portfolio in my lap am well, for the sircumstance [sic] that we are in. We have nothing but cloth tents to stay in and it rains [sic], there is 5 of us in one tent and when we cant [sic] lay down we sit up and we [illegible] we cant [sic] keep the jokes agoing [sic] it is rather dull but when it rains then we joke the harder and make the best we can of it. to day [sic] is election and the boys are hurraing and voting for old Abe. Daniel is wel [sic] we stood the march first rate. I rode one day on the cars. got letter, was glad to hear from Almira and Charley and all. father [sic] paid dets [sic]. I don't [sic] know how long we shal [sic] stay here, there is some talk that we shal [sic] go to Nashville and some say that we will go to noxville [sic] but don't [sic] think anyone knows where we will go yet. Daniel thinks best not to send box untill [sic] we find out where we stop for the winter. We can get butter and chees [sic] and cake and pies here but it costs prety [sic] wel [sic]. We draw soft bread in the place of hard tack and so we get along prety [sic] well at present. have not rot [sic] as often as I ought etc [sic] there has ben [sic] such a time about the railroad that we did not know whether the leters [sic] went through or not but we have got back now where we can get leters [sic] oftener and I will try to rite [sic] oftener. Albert Benjamin and Albert Drum are here and well. young [sic] man in our company has been sick in the hospital, just came to the regt [sic], asked him if his name was ron [sic] gladent [sic], it was he remembered me when I told him that my name was Converse. his [sic] folks live near Coruna Shiawasa Co. Post office adres [sic] was at Coruna Shiawasa Co. Mich. have [sic] a testament [sic] and will read it. wants [sic] news from home.

Chattanooga

Nov. 9 1864

Mother and father

Daniel and I rote [sic] a letter to Lewis Daniel is a going up the river today to cut logs for to build shanties with. I don't [sic] no [sic] how many is agoing [sic] but I should think that there was about a 100 of them. There was 500 and 6 votes cast yesterday in our

regiment and only 6 of them was for me lelon [sic] and the rest for lincon [sic]. the [sic] [illegible] Michigan batery [sic] is here and they number 70 men and they all went for lincon [sic] the 22 regiment went 3 to 1 for lincon [sic] so you see that the most of the boys are for old Abe. They are drilling the new recruits that has come to our regiment. Father I like the traid [sic] that you made with Mr. Wetherell don't [sic] traid [sic] of little Gim, want him when I come home.

Mother you wanted to know whether Daniel and I ever take any part in the games in camp. We never have yet and you may rest asured [sic] that we never will. I never have told you how I like soldiering. I like it furst [sic] rate when it is fare [sic] weather, when it is rainy and bad it is not so pleasant. We have enough to eat and drink but our place for sleeping is not so good when it is wet but we have robes blankets so we get along without geting [sic] much wet. Tell Charles Chase that horriss [sic] is here been sick with the measles Tell Mrss. [sic] Chase that Warde is well. We are camped on the bank of the Tennesee [sic] river. pleasant [sic] place. We can see the steem [sic] boats go up and down the river every day and can look down on the town and see the cars comein [sic] and where it gets fare [sic] weather again I think that we will enjoy our selves.

from your son G.D [illegible]

G.D. Converse Co. D. Mich. Inf. Chattanog [sic] Tenn.

Harriet have Alonzo bury potatoes for winter

Chattanooga [sic], Tenn.

Nov. 18, 1864

Dar father and mother

I am detached from the regiment now my camp is about 50 rods from the regiment. I am up to Daniels [sic] camp. Daniel is on guard today. the [sic] detachment that I belong to is guarding the prisoners and the regiment is doing headquarter guard. Daniel well and enjoys himself. together [sic] often. had [sic] photographs taken last Mon. will send one. got [sic] 7 one to Harriet and Angeline and Lew and Jane and ransome [sic] and Almira. Regt. been paid off went to town and had supper. bought [sic] gloves.

Direct to Co. D. 9 Mich Chatanooga [sic], Tenn.

Chattanooga Dec. 6, 1864

Dear friends

should [sic] have riten [sic] to you before but the rebs have ben [sic] making another rade [sic] on the rail road and it was not safe to send letters, got letter from Harriet and Almira.

I was on guard last night and am to [sic] sleepy to think of much to rite [sic]. I suppose that Daniel has rote [sic] all the news, there was a prisoner shot in the prison the other

night for disobeying orders, the sentinel reproved him three times and then shot. they [sic] are some of them very stubborn but I have not had any trouble with them yet. I have to guard them at work every time that I am on garde [sic] but I have not had any trouble with them yet. there [sic] is about 200 prisoners here now and they are a rusty set of fellows [sic]. The [sic] boys of our company are well. Cecil Parsons ben [sic] over here. Albert Drum is well as is Albert Benjamin. tell [sic] Almira that Mr. Dunele belongs to company k and he is well. Ward well and [illegible] will send sweet pumpkin seeds. make [sic] pies. I will write a few lines to Herbet, wondering if he will teach, wants to know about Jim (horse) I hear something that would scare herbet [sic] and Jim both if they were here and could see it, it is a large steem [sic] boat coming down the river and it whistles loud and they look very nice coming down the river with their flag on and all painted up nice.

G. [illegible] C.

Chattanooga Jan. 2, 1865

Dear friends

Daniel is on guard today. Resieved [sic] letters from home. the [sic] reason that I have not ritten [sic] before this is because the road has ben [sic] cut and there did no [illegible] run through I suppose that you have hurd [sic] of the battles that has bin [sic] fought near Nashville and that the rebs got floged [sic] prety [sic] wel [sic] and have got to cut back home again. There has some of the boys come back from their furlough and said that there was the news that the [illegible] was in the fight and was most all lost but that is false for they have not left Chattanooga since they got back from Atlanta. there [sic] was troops sent from here the 16 and 44 negro regiment and the 16 and 20 Ohio was sent and some artillery, the negroes done the picket duty untill [sic] they were sent off and our boys has to take their place but they are a coming back now and our regiment will then be relieved and then they onte [sic] have so much guarding to do and then we can have better times and when we get full rations we will get fat. Full rations is something that I have not seen since I have ben [sic] down here. When we was to Atlanta we have only got three quarters rations and since we got back here we have not drawd [sic] only ½ rations but I think now we will soon get our rations again and then we will be all hunk. We hear that there is another draft a coming off the 15 of Jan. that will make some more runing [sic] for some of them down there in Mich. but I hope that it will catch some of them that run before dont [sic] you. Write and tell what they are doing about the draft and if they are any of them talking about inlisting [sic] I think that is the best way to get rid of it.

You told me in your leter [sic] that you had some of [illegible] for supper but we have lots of beef here but it is so poor that it cant [sic] whine but it has to doe [sic] at present untill [sic] the pork and bacon comes in from the north. give [sic] us plenty of letters and we will live through it and come out all rite [sic].

prety [sic] cold here, snow freezes very hard knights [sic]. wish [sic] happy New Year.

G.D.C. to Mother and Father Converse

Chattanooga Tennessee [sic]

Jan. 24, 1865

Mr. and Mrss. [sic] Chase

Dear friends

wants [sic] news find out where James Laroe is if he is dead or a live [sic]. I want to write to him.

It was rite [sic] smart cold last nite [sic] Ward. Froze so hard that the mal [sic] will hold up six mules and a wagon, rained and snowed. boys [sic] all well, they have got read [sic] of picket duty now and they don't [sic] have to go on guard but every 3 days and then drill the rest of the time, they had rather do that than go on picket. I still remain at the jail. there [sic] was 18 wiming [sic] brought in the other knight [sic] and was sent to Nashville yesterday. I did not have to stand guard over them as I did over the others that was brought to Captain Wiggins [sic]. There has not anything ben [sic] said about pay yet. If Father can send me 10 dollars I should like it and when we do get pay I can send it back. there [sic] is such a runner that the regiment has resieved [sic] marching orders but we cant [sic] tell anything about what we here [sic]. We hear so much I dont [sic] think of any thing more to write this time

from George D. Converse to Mr. and Mrss [sic] Chase.

Chattanooga Tenn. Feb. 5, 1865

Dear Father and Mother

has a cold. James Larowe has got back to the Regiment he is not very tough yet but he is gaining. He said that he left Coon Haymor and Pohny Olds in Detroit and they were going to their regiments. looking [sic] for box.

there [sic] is such a report that we are going to Nashville in a few days the Colonels [sic] Headquarters has gone they went day before yesterday but when the regiment will g [sic] is more than we can tell. Daniel well, getting fat as a hog. etc. Albert Benjamin is very well. expecting [sic] like nesses [sic]

I almost forgot to tell you about my little shanty. I and another boy has built us one alone it is just large enough for us and we have a bed and fire place in it and when one of us is on guard the other gets diner [sic] and we have gay times but I had rather be with Dniel for it seems more like home then.

from George D. Converse to

Mother and Father.

resieved [sic] all them postage stamps