

Absalom Kleckner Letters

Dear wife Dec 25, 1862

Note: one day before the Union Army started toward the Rebel Army at Murfreesboro]

I now sit down to write you a few lines in answer to your letter of the 10th and which I received yesterday the 24th while I was on picket. It was a welcome visitor. It found me well and hearty. I hope when these few lines find their way to my dear one they will find you the same. I was glad to hear that our receipts got home safe. I was uneasy about them for awhile but all is right about them now. You said you did not know where John got so much money to send home. We only got 3 months pay. I will tell you he did not send any home the last payment before this. He lent \$30 to some of the boys until this payday. He sent 6 months pay this time, that is the reason he had so much.

I sent you 3 months pay which amounted to \$50. John sent 6 months pay which was \$60. Now who sent the most money. I dont [sic] think there was a man in our company sent as much money home as I did. I lent \$5 more today. I get 8 dollars for it next payday. Now I will tell you why Till gave his money. When we got our money he said he was agoing [sic] to spend every cent of it. I told him he had better send Pap some money for they have had a hard time of it there this fall and he stood need of all the money he could get. I told him I was going to let him have all the money I had to spare. He then told me he would let me have 20 dollars if I wanted it. I thought I had better take it for if I did not he would spend it. I took the money and got a receipt to send home while I was writing a letter to send with the receipt. Walters came and brought him a pair of boots. I then told him he had better let me give Pap them 20 dollars of his. He then told me I should let him have it. Now when you draw your money, I want you to give him what Till gave me. You can tell him how you got the money. They cant [sic] blame you for it or me. I done all I could to get him to send it to Pap, but I could not get him to say he would send it to him. I want you to let him have what money I sent to you. If he wants it, when you draw your money you can go and see him whether he wants it or not. If he does, let him have it. You can take a note for it. If he dont [sic] want it you can do what you think best with it. You wanted to know what I sent that back for. I was afraid some one might get hold of it and read it and make a fuss about it. I thought the safest plan would be to send it back. I had no reason to disbelieve one word of it. I always believe all you write to me. I almost forgot this is Christmas. There is nothing going on here today. It is the lonesomest [sic] Christmas ever I seen. I wish I had something to send you for Christmas gift, but I have nothing to send. I will send you some money in this letter and you can get one for yourself. I will have to quit writing for this time for it is getting so dark I can hardly see. Excuse me for this time. No more but remain your true husband. Good bye.

Abb E. Kleckner to E. F. Kleckner

[Note: The last letter of the collection written by Abb, six days before he was killed at the Battle of Stones River on December 31, 1862. The following letter was written four days later by his bride of six months, Elizabeth Leonard Kleckner.]

Dearest dear Sabbath afternoon 4 oclock [sic] Jan 4th, 1863

I now sit down to write but who is it I am writing to. Is it a live husband or is it a dead husband. God knows, but I dont [sic] know. I hope you are alive. I have a little hope on which to build while writing this letter and that is this. I have asked God for months past to protect my dear husband and to shield you from the bullets providing you were called into a battle. He has promised me the desire of my heart, this is my hope. I know he has answered my prayers in other days, why not now. I know not whether you were in the Battle of Murfreesboro or not. Dispatches have come but not very satisfactory to me. Dispatches say or mention officers that were killed belonging to Rosecrans [sic] Army. O how I dread to hear the true report. I expect I would feel worse if I knew you were killed, but my dear one, I feel from the bottom of my heart today. I hope these few lines will find you still at Nashville alive and well. I am well today. I have got well of the cold I had when I wrote last. I am all right again.

Pap has had a big time with his teeth, he caught cold in his face or jaw. His face swelled all over so bad. I dont [sic] think you would have known him. The day we butchered he was not able to help. He was in bed part of the time. Silas and Joe Pickett done all but salting the meat away. Pap done that himself. We butchered the 2nd, we finished yesterday the 3rd. It rained both days and both nights. It rained all forenoon today, poured down, but has cleared off now and the sun is shining and getting cold. The mud is almost knee deep to a horse. Last Tuesday, 30th, it snowed all day as hard as it could poured down right on mud and water. The next morning the snow was near 4 inches deep again. The next day eve the snow was all gone again so you grip there is some mud here now. I went down to see your folks yesterday after supper. I tell you they are having a time there this winter. Your mother was getting better although not able to sit up out of bed. Day before yesterday she took worse and had a very bad spell.

Yesterday forenoon she had another bad spell. She has been very costive ever since she got sick but now worse than before. She has to take physic and when it moves her bowels she told me last night it seemed to her the passage was growed [sic] nearly up, then when the bowels moved it would go to that tight place and there it would stop. Then she says she has such awful pains through her it nearly kills her. She is very low but while there is life there is hope. In the last letter I told you Narr was not well. She did not get any better but grew worse. The first of last week she was taken down bad. She is out of her head most of the time. She knew me last night. She got so deaf that when they talked to her they talk as if they were talking to someone at the barn. The doc says her fever is the sinking typhus fever, the lowest grade of that fever. The rest of them are well. Fred's wife is still at your Paps; she helps Amy do the work. Fred is still at the hospital at Lexington. Will has not come yet, neither does he write any. Your mother thinks he certainly will come before many days but I dont [sic] know where their hope is for he never said he was coming so soon. I have not been to see Barb since you went

away. News came yesterday that Sam Swihart is dead and buried. Joel, George and Eli volunteered. Joel, after he went to camp, got sick. Sam went and took care of him till he was able to come home on furlough after which Sam took the camp diaree [sic] and has since died. George is sick and in the hospital. Now 3 or 4 more of old Mats [sic] family are down with the same disease. I grieve that is all the death I know that has happened since I wrote last. Ken and Mary Wiseley run off the other day to Michigan to get married. Mary is 17 and Ken 18. Last Monday I washed and knit a sock. Tuesday I knit one, Wednesday I commenced the first one of a pair at 10 oclock [sic] and before 9 at night I had the last one of the pair done. If I had commenced at 5 in the morning I could have knit 3 socks. I was 11 hours knitting that pair and milked 2 cows and fed them in the 11 hours.

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Barrel and then slopped in the night. They awoke and heard something in the kitchen, calling to Dudgeons [missing] John Dudgeon, he got a light and went in and behold it was his old whiskey. I had no air holes and you know how it would sound coming out of the barrel. I wish they had bored a hole in the end of the barrel with a gimlet then it would all run out before he would have heard it. Well, love, I believe I have told you all the news for this time. It is now going on ten. The rest have all gone to bed. I am out in the kitchen writing. I wish you was here to sleep with me tonight. 6 months ago this day I took you to marry. I hope you will be home before 6 months more. Some think the war will soon be over. I hope it will, the Lord grant it. Be a good boy and come home as soon as you can. I would send you a paper if I thought you would get it. No more but ever remain your loving and true wife. Aunt Martha and children are well. That's all. Write soon. Good night, love. Sweet sleep to you.

E.F. Kleckner to my only and best friend A. E. Kleckner