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CIVIL WAR LETTERS OF COLONEL DAVID LANG

edited by BERTRAM H. GROENE*

DAVID LANG was born in Camden County, Georgia, in 1838, the oldest son among Robert and Margaret Lang's seven children.¹ Earlier his father had lived in Nassau County, Florida. After graduating from Georgia Military Academy in Marietta in 1857, Robert Lang returned to Florida with his family, settling near White Springs, where his son David became surveyor for Suwannee County.²

Florida seceded from the Union in January 1861, and immediately military units began forming across the peninsula. On April 2, 1861, David Lang enlisted for twelve months as a private in Captain Myers's troop of Gainesville Minutemen, later Company H of the 1st Florida Regiment.³ He was sworn in at Houston, a small railroad hamlet near White Springs.

The 1st Florida was initially stationed in Pensacola, and there it remained, observing Fort Pickens, for almost a year. While there, Lang rose in rank to first sergeant under General Patton Anderson. It was at Pensacola, also, that he probably engaged in his first battle. In the darkness of October 8 and the following morning, a Confederate force, including the 1st Florida, made a fruitless attack on the outposts of Fort Pickens which was held by a small Federal force.

In the spring of 1862 the 1st Florida began moving northward, and it was while it was passing through Montgomery, Alabama, on April 2, that Sergeant Lang's enlistment expired.

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1. U. S. Census Office, Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, original returns on microfilm, Camden County, Georgia, roll 62, Florida State Library, Tallahassee; Eighth Census, 1860, Suwannee County, Florida, roll 109, Florida State Library, Tallahassee.
2. Information furnished in an address delivered by David Lang, Jr. on Colonel David Lang's life to the David Lang Chapter, Sons of Confederate Veterans, Tallahassee, April 25, 1974. Copy in possession of the author.
3. Company Muster-in-roll, "David Lang," Florida Division of Archives, History and Records Management, Tallahassee.

He returned to Houston, probably via the Florida Atlantic and Gulf Central Railroad, where he raised a company of some 100 men from the nearby farms and villages of Spring Grove, Little River, and Houston. Lang was elected captain when the force was mustered into the Confederate Volunteer Service, May 15, 1862, as Company C, 8th Florida Regiment.⁴

In early July 1862, just as Robert E. Lee was raising the great siege of Richmond, the 8th arrived in Virginia. Within two months, beginning with the Battle of Second Manassas, the 8th, 5th, and 2nd Florida were joined together for the first time. Later they would be known as the "Perry Brigade" or the "Florida Brigade."⁵

Within only fourteen months David Lang rose from captain to colonel of the 8th Florida. He later commanded the Florida Brigade temporarily when either Generals E. A. Perry or Joseph Finegan were not present.⁶ In the spring of 1865, Lang had the melancholy duty of surrendering the shattered remnants of the Florida troops in the Army of Northern Virginia—fifty-four officers and 416 men from a military unit that once totaled well over 6,000 officers and men.⁷

With the arrival of peace, Lang married Mary Campbell of Cottage Hill, Virginia, and returned with her to Florida.⁸ Lang moved about the state as a civil engineer until 1885, when his old commander and close friend, E. A. Perry, became governor of Florida. Perry appointed Lang adjutant general of the state and major general of militia. After eight years in this office, Lang

4. Florida Board of State Institutions, *Soldiers of Florida in the Seminole Indian—Civil and Spanish-American Wars* (Tallahassee, 1903), 335-36.

5. Edward A. Perry was an attorney in Pensacola before the outbreak of the war. He organized Company A of the 2nd Florida, and eventually became its colonel in May 1862. He was promoted to brigadier general, August 1862, and named commander of the Florida Brigade. Clement A. Evans, ed., *Confederate Military History*, 12 vols. (Atlanta, 1899; facsimile edition, New York, 1962), XI, Florida section, 267. Ezra J. Warner, *Generals in Gray, Lives of the Confederate Commanders* (Baton Rouge, 1959), 235-36.

6. Brigadier General Joseph Finegan commanded the Confederate troops at the Battle of Olustee, February 1864. He replaced Perry as commander of the Florida Brigade. Warner, *Generals in Gray*, 88-89.

7. Editor's tally of troops surrendered at Appomattox. Florida Board of State Institutions, *Soldiers of Florida*, 79, 136, 189, 207, 219, 236.

8. Mary Quarrels Campbell, daughter of Dr. Joseph Campbell, was about eighteen years old at the time of her marriage to David Lang. She bore him two sons, Campbell and Joseph, before her death in 1889. David Lang, Jr., to author, May 5, 1972, May 8, 1974.

served eight more years as private secretary to Governor Henry L. Mitchell and Governor William D. Bloxham. In 1901 he was appointed cashier of the Florida State Hospital at Chattahoochee. He held this position until his death in 1917. He and his wife are buried in the old city cemetery in Tallahassee.⁹

Other than David Lang's few official reports, all that have survived in writing of his war-time experiences are fourteen letters to his "Dear Cousin Annie," Elizabeth Atkinson of Marietta, Georgia, written over a period of twenty-two months, beginning with September 7, 1862, up to July 18, 1864, just as the long siege of Petersburg was beginning.

David Lang was a well-educated and literate soldier who wrote in a clear, firm hand and in an expressive manner. At first his letters did not dwell excessively on the war, but they became more and more concerned with and attentive to troop movements and engagements as the war became more and more desperate. He was an unremitting rebel, with a continuing dislike of "the invaders of a Heaven gifted people." Lang's letters constitute one of the few contemporary personal accounts of the Florida troops in Virginia and the only existing record of a soldier's experiences in the 8th Florida Regiment.¹⁰ They are now in the possession of David Lang's great grandson, David Lang, Jr., of Tallahassee. Mr. Lang transcribed the letters verbatim and provided additional material on the history of Colonel Lang and his forebears. In the matter of spelling and punctuation, no alterations from the author's style have been made. These letters and the existing military records present the image of a loved and respected leader; and a brave soldier, whom his men would follow under trying and dangerous circumstances. Lang's selection to be Florida's major general of the postwar militia supports this view. He was one of Florida's notable citizen-soldiers.

9. David Lang, Jr.'s address, April 25, 1974.

10. Among other published accounts of Florida soldiers who served in Virginia, see Francis P. Fleming, *Memoir of Capt. C. Seton Fleming, of the Second Florida Infantry, C.S.A., Illustrative of the History of the Florida Troops in Virginia During the War Between the States* (Jacksonville, 1884); Knox Mellon, Jr., "A Florida Soldier In The Army of Northern Virginia: The Hosford Letters," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XLVI (January 1968), 243-71; Gilbert Wright, "Some Letters to His Parents by a Floridian in the Confederate Army," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XXXVI (April 1958), 353-72.

Frederick, Md. Sept 7th, 1862

Dear Annie

I was very much pleased to receive your letter which reached me while I was on the battlefield of 31st awaiting orders to join the terrible conflict which was raging in front of us & notwithstanding the tumult which was gradually enveloping us.¹¹ I assure you your letter was carefully and pleasantly read, yet I was sorry to hear of Uncle's illness and hope his apprehensions with regard to typhoid fever are groundless.

I presume it would be useless for me to attempt to give you any information as to the late battle, as you have doubtless received full particulars ere this by the newspapers. Suffice it to say that Yankee-doodle was most "elegantly baten." This paper & this ink are among the spoils of the camp of the 9th N. Y. Regiment. I have carried it in my pocket until it is nearly worn out. I have some envelopes taken there which are very fancy and of various devices & patterns. I have seen one with the *black flag* on it, which had passed through the U. S. mails. After the battle we followed the Yankees far enough to learn the general direction of their retreat & then by a series of forced marches we succeeded in crossing the Potomac near Leesburg unmolested & reached here this morning. I have not visited the city yet, but learn from those men who have that the citizens receive them most kindly & entertain them sumptuously free of charge, which said entertainment is just at this time what we soldiers most need for we have not fared sumptuously on these rapid marches, in fact, the hard fare & harder marching has reduced my company to about twenty five men. The remainder had been left along the line of our march to recruit their health. We have met no opposition since the battle, but I presume the enemy is gathering forces for a grand strike somewhere. It is reported among us today, but I do not know how truthful, that the citizens of Baltimore were fighting among themselves, the unionist were attempting to remove the federal sick & wounded and destroy federal property to

11. The "battlefield of the 31st," refers to the close of the Battle of Second Manassas, August 28-September 1, 1862, the first great battle in which Lang participated. The 8th and 5th Florida comprised part of Roger A. Pryor's Brigade, Wilcox's Division, Longstreet's Corps, Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. U. S. War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 70 vols. (Washington, 1880-1901), Series I, XII, part 2, 547. Hereinafter cited as ORA.

prevent its falling into our possession and the secessionist were trying to prevent it. If no serious obstacle opposes we will be in Baltimore in three days more.

9 P.M.

I have just finished making one hundred & fifteen biscuits, without grease or soda, & Henry Hall is baking them for our next ten days rations. Since coming to Virginia we officers are not allowed to buy any more from government commissary than is issued to a private, & being on the frontier no one will _____ a slave here as cook so we have to draw our rations and cook them just the other men do. Just imagine me sitting upon the ground, in my shirt sleeves & barefooted, writing upon my knee by the light of the fire that is cooking my bread, writing to a young lady. What a fine sketch for Harpers Weekly.

Annie, are any of my old acquaintances in Marietta now, any young ladies who were on the carpet years ago? It seems but a short time since I left Marietta & yet it has been more than five years. As I will have to rise early tomorrow perhaps to march all day, I must now seek some repose. Please give my love to all and tell Uncle & Aunt if I should be so unlucky as to get wounded, I shall certainly remember their kind invitation. Annie, this is a real camp letter, hastily conceived & hurriedly written, and you must receive & excuse it as such. Remember me as ever. Your cousin

David

Fredericksburg, Va.¹²

Jany 3rd, 1863

Dear Cousin

Yours per Capt Milladge accompanying your much prized Christmas gift was promptly delivered by Capt. Millidge on the 26th inst. whilst I was in Richmond, ostensibly for the benefit of my health, but in reality to spend Christmas.¹³ In the late battle of Fredericksburg I was unlucky enough to get a blow upon the

12. Four months passed between this rambling communication and the first letter. During this period Lang participated in the capture of Harper's Ferry and fought in the Battles of Blackford's Ford, South Mountain, Crampton's Gap, Antietum, and Fredericksburg. ORA I: XIX, Part 1, 810, 812. Returning to Virginia, the 2nd, 5th, and 8th Florida were organized as Perry's Brigade.

13. John Millidge, Jr., Nelson's Georgia Battery, 2nd Army Corps, Army of Northern Virginia. ORA I: XXIX, Part I, 403, 821.

head, from a mass of bricks and mortar knocked from the wall of a house by a cannon ball. And to that circumstance I owe my visit to Richmond, I am very sick from the blow for eight or ten days, the Surgeon thought I was in danger of congestion of the brain, but thanks to a thick skull I am again able for duty, though troubled some with dizziness, the result of the concussion. On my return from Richmond, I met with very distressing news, news from home. A letter awaited me with tidings of Father's death. The hand of affliction has fallen heavily upon our family in the last two years. Jack, Misty, and Neely, and now Father, have been taken from us.¹⁴ Poor Mother, I know. She is terribly distressed and I fear the effect upon her health. I am anxious, yet dread to hear from home. I am very sorry now that I did not attempt to get leave to go home after the late battle, for though I could not have been home in time to see Father, yet it would have been some consolation and comfort to mother and the girls. They are fortunate in having Dr. Hicks at home with them. He is a noble fellow, and I have the consolation to know that though I too should be snatched by death away from there, that my place as son and brother would be more than filled by him.

We are just receiving confirmation of the news of Bragg's great victory in Tennessee, and hopes of an early peace are running high in camps this morning.¹⁵ Yet I confess I cannot see in this great victory any cause to hope for peace soon. It is only a defeat of one hundred thousand, and they have one million men in arms against. If twelve months bring peace I shall be satisfied but in that time thousands of brave southern men must be sacrificed upon the altar of freedom.

Please give my love to Uncle Alex, Aunt Mary, and the children and always remember me affectionately as Your Cousin, P.S. Excuse the haste in which this has been written and the

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14. David Lang's two young brothers and a sister all died within two weeks. John Lang, age fourteen, died July 10, 1861; Milton Lang, twelve, died July 5, 1861; and Helen Lang, five years old, died June 27, 1861. His father died in 1862 at the age of fifty-seven. Cemetery records, Swift Creek Methodist Church, Facil, Florida. Data furnished by David Lang, Jr.
 15. Lang here refers to the Battle of Murfreesboro (Stone's River), fought December 31, 1862-January 3, 1863. Contrary to Confederate opinion at the time, it proved not to be a "great victory." Vincent J. Esposito, ed., *The West Point Atlas of the Civil War*, 2 vols. (New York, 1962), I, 83.

paper upon which it is written as 'tis all that I have or can get here.

Dave

Orange C. H. Va. Jany 18th 1863

Dear Cousin,

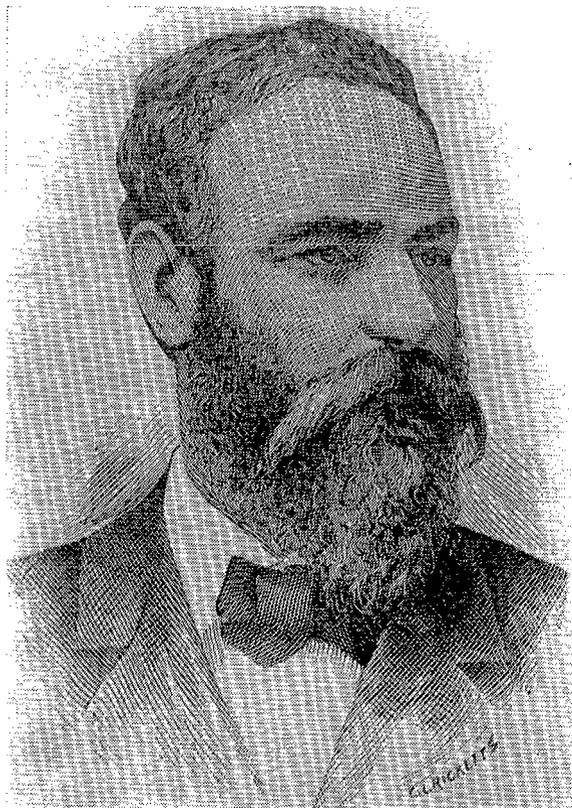
Although today is not Sunday, and I have not just finished "the indulgence of the rare luxury," alluded to in my last, yet it is a rainy day. I am necessarily confined indoors and my neighbors are for the same reason prevented from boring me with their stereotyped remarks upon the "state of the country," "the shortness of the meat ration" "the first probable move of the enemy next spring" &c. &c, therefore I propose to employ a part of the period of my exemption from dull company, not in entertaining or even in attempting to entertain you with my pen, but rather in making a pretext for expecting a continuation of your letters, one of the few sources of pleasure to me while penned up here amid the snows and bogs of a dull Virginia winter. "A dull Virginia winter," how strangely contradictory of all former ideas of a winter in the "Old dominion." Yet it has become strictly true. There is no time nor inclination now, for the thousand and one sports and amusements, once indulged in, prior to the advent of the much abused & greatly deprecated "most cruel war." Virginia's noble sons are upon the "war path," the quiet cheerfulness of their demeanor, as they toil weary, cold and hungry over rugged mountain path and frozen stream, attesting the earnestness with which they have engaged in this matchless struggle of a Heaven gifted people for liberty, while her lovely maidens are bending every energy of body and mind to aid, to comfort and to cheer their resolute defenders. Forgotten are the foxchase, the dinner-party and the merry jingle of the sleighbells. The gay sportsman chases now, the larger, yet scarcely more noble game from the "Faderland" and "Green Erin" – the wealthy planters well-stocked storeroom is transferred to the "hungry commissaries," and that which formerly was destined to tickle the dainty palates of luxury, now boils and bubbles in the mess-kettle and imparts life and strength to the "lean and hungry rebel," while the pampered steed which pranced beneath the inspiring bells now tugs wearily at the traces of man's horrible engine of destruction. But why dwell in bitterness upon the gay



Major General David Lang of the Florida militia

Courtesy of State Photographic Archives, Robert Manning Strozier Library, Florida State University, Tallahassee.

Groene: Civil War Letters of Colonel David Lang



Edward Aylsworth Perry (left) and Joseph T. Finegan (right), from illustrations in the P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida, Gainesville.

scenes that are gone. Fain longing and regrets can not bring them again to us. Let us rather turn with renewed energy to the stern realities of the present, and the glorious work which is before us, seize our weapons and pray to a just God to move our arms while we carry out a nation's independence and restore peace and its thousand blessings to our distracted country.

You ask me Annie, what pursuit I intend following when peace is restored: That is a subject upon which I have spent much thought, but made no decision. All my cogitations being interrupted by the memory of the old lady's receipt for cooking, or rather for preparing a hare – *First catch your hare*. Peace is not here yet, dear Cousin, and when it comes, who can tell where I may be? One thing, only, have I determined upon when peace comes, and finds me alive. That is, – *to marry*, accompanied, of course, by the *necessary proviso*. "If I can find &c." – Remember me with much love to Uncle, Aunt, Lilla, Br _____ and Roane, and believe me as ever,

Your Cousin
Dave

Camp near Fredericksburg
Feb'y, 18th 1863

Dear Cousin

A letter from Sue this evening informs me that you have never received my letter in response to yours by Capt. Milledge, and that you very naturally complain of my neglect to notice the receipt of your letter and the pretty little Christmas gift which accompanied it. Capt. Milledge faithfully discharged his promise and delivered his charge on the 26th December in Richmond where I then was by reason of an injury received in the battle at this place.¹⁶ On my return to camp a few days afterwards I made haste to respond to your highly esteemed favour & to thank you for the beautiful token of remembrance which you had so kindly sent me. I regret very much that you did not receive my letter, as it has left me open to a charge of neglect & ingratitude, than which I hope to convince you, nothing could be farther from my intentions. 'Tis so seldom that a letter from my friends breaks the monotonous routine of humdrum camp life, that I am par-

16. At Fredericksburg, Lang commanded the 8th for the first time in battle and was wounded. Florida Board of State Institutions, *Soldiers of Florida*, 336.

ticularly careful to do everything to increase the frequency of the visits from these pleasant little messengers and to avoid anything which would tend to make them less frequent. Permit me again to thank you for your kind remembrance and to assure you that your very pleasant and cheerful letters, which are a source of much pleasure to me, shall never be prized less highly & never neglected.

We are under marching orders for tomorrow and I do not know when another opportunity to write may present itself, hence I write this hastily to night, for with tomorrow's light, (the sun we do not expect to see) we must be up and away. We are particularly unfortunate as regards the weather. A day's hard snowing, has been followed by what bids fair to be a week's raining and this with the melting of the snow makes the mud & water ankle deep over the whole country, which affords anything but pleasant anticipations to infantry, under orders for marching, they know not where.

Sue writes me that Col. E. N. Atkinson who was reported killed in the late battle at this point has come to light among the wounded prisoners.¹⁷ I am truly glad to hear that he has been so lucky. I have never yet had the pleasure of meeting any of the 26th Geo. since being in Virginia. Being in different army corps our camps are always eight or ten miles distant, and I have not hitherto had the privilege of a horse & could not visit at that distance. Another Cousin of mine, Geo. Thomas, was left for dead upon the battlefield of Sharpsburg, but has since returned to Rebeldom convalescent. I was thought to be dead for sometime in the battle here. A mass of brick knocked from a wall struck me on the side of the head and neck, knocked me down & covered my head & shoulders. Being badly stunned I lay like dead for a time, & my comrades thought I was instantly killed, but fortunately before they left, I showed signs of life when they pulled me from under the bricks & brought me off, and thanks to a hard head, a good constitution and a kind Providence I am yet an efficient soldier.

I hope you have enjoyed yourself abundantly during your long visit to Columbus, Macon and Scottsboro. Although I can not hope to participate in enjoyments of any kind while this

17. Edmund M. Atkinson, commander of the 26th Georgia Regiment.

horrible war lasts yet it always pleases me to know that my friends are passing their time pleasantly. Please give my love to Uncle, Aunt, the children, and to John when you write and remember me ever as

Your cousin
David Lang

Hamilton Crossing, Va.
March 15th 1863

Dear Cousin

Your letter of the 28th ult. has been received and I am pleased to hear of your pleasant visit & more pleasant return to family and friends at home. My pleasure, though I must confess, is prompted in some degree by selfishness, as you promise now that you have returned to the quiet & peacefulness of home that our correspondance shall suffer no interruption. You say your "poor little present was not worth many thanks." Permit me here to differ with you. 'Tis not the intrinsic value of such that we soldiers prize, but the sweet assurance that we are not forgotten, which these little presents bring, is the standard by which we estimate their value and by this standard, yours is priceless.

You ask what of peace. Would that I could write favourably of an early peace, but I can not; indeed I fear that yours of war and bloodshed are yet before us. Not that I doubt the ability of our army to hold its own against the invader or even to advance its lines if properly supported by the people. But from all parts of our country where the despoiling invader has never been, where the people know nothing or comparatively of the horrors & wretchedness of the war, come tidings of an overwhelming confidence in early peace and that the planters are going to plant largely of cotten and tobacco. Nothing is so disheartening to the soldier, to the poor man who has left a large & almost helpless family to risk life & lime in the cause of independence, to see those who are permitted to remain out of the army for the purpose of raising provisions, embark in the thoughtless, heartless and most unpatriotic enterprise of planting large cotten & tobacco crops when the country is almost on the verge of famine. Well does the poor soldier know that when a scarcity of provisions occurs, that his dear helpless ones will be the first to suffer, and when it come(s) to this, the army composed of poor men,

can not be kept together and the horrors of the French Revolution, the cry of "Bread or Blood" will be renewed & reciracted (sic) with tenfold fury in our own country. A fearful weight of responsibility is resting upon the farmers of the Confederate States. With them rests the fate of our army. If we are not fed and if our soldier's family are not fed, we cannot fight and subjugation and all its attendant horrors are ours. In short, the cotten and tobacco planters, if reports are true, are about to strike the most deadly blow that has yet been struck at our independence. May an overruling Providence shield us from the blow. I am glad to see Gov. Brown appreciate the danger & is making efforts toward off the blow. We are now having very tolerable weather, the roads are drying very fast and we expect soon to have to meet the enemy again upon the yet bloody field of Fredericksburg, as they make a continual boast of their strength and eagerness for a renewal of hostilities. Just this moment I have received orders to prepare my Regt. at once to march, and report _____ to meet the enemy who are concentrating troops above us on the River.¹⁸ So I must quit, I give my love to all, Uncle, Aunt and the children.

Affectionately your cousin,
David Lang

Fredericksburg, Va. April 19th 1863

Dear Cousin

Failures to receive any letters from the past fortnight, reminds me that I, too, am in arrears with some of my correspondents, and that you are among the number, and fearing that I might lose a valued correspondence by longer delay I devote a portion of this beautiful Sabbath morning to my correspondent. Of course you are not surprised that I should write you on the Sabbath. Next to my religious duties I regard my correspondence with relatives and friends as most sacred, for surely nothing exerts a greater influence over the soldier, either for good or evil than his home correspondence, and when that influence is exerted for good, nothing short of a direct confliction with duty should interrupt the correspondence. And what time, more appropriate to the soldier, than the holy sabbath morning, for holding sweet communion with the purer beings of home life.

18. Rappahannock River.

How many brave hearts are saddened by bad, or cheered by good tidings from the loved ones at home upon the eve of battle. And may not the result of battles and the fate of the country rest upon these little messengers of weal or woe?

An instance has arisen in the army of a soldier's being shot for desertion, caused by an unfortunate letter full of complaints, received from his wife.

Unfortunately most of my letters recently have brought me bad news. The last one I received from home contained news of the death of Cousin Lizzie Thomas, of which, I presume you heard before I did.

I am glad to know that the enemy had withdrawn his negro troops from Florida.¹⁹ While they remained in the state I was in continually uneasiness in regard to the success of their expedition as I had but very little confidence in the officers commanding in that department. Sue wrote me that everybody was expecting to quit the country until the Geo. Regulars were ordered down there, when they all felt perfectly safe.

We have not yet had any fighting since the Fredericksburg fight, but the cavalry have skirmishes every few days about ten miles above us on the Rappahannock. Everything is now in readiness for fighting at a moments notice. The cartridge boxes are all full and every man is required to keep three days rations constantly provided. The army is not anxious to fight merely for the sake of fighting, but they know, that is, the soldiers know that more fighting has to be done before the war can be closed and being tired of war they are willing to have the fighting commenced and finished at once. I hear many express the willingness to make an "every day" business of the war and fight it out to its close before stopping.

I had a message from Col. Atkinson this morning. He has

19. Jacksonville was occupied for the third time by Federal troops on March 10, 1863, and was evacuated on March 31, 1863. The 1st South Carolina Brigade, made up in part of the all-black 1st and 2nd Regiments of Infantry, were among the occupying troops. D. Hunter to S. F. DuPont, March 6, 1863, ORA I:XIV, 421; R. Saxton to E. M. Stanton, March 6, 1863, ORA I:XIV, 423; G. T. Beauregard to James A. Seddon, March 30, 1863, ORA I:XIV, 850. For more on the Union occupations of Jacksonville, see Richard A. Martin, "Defeat in Victory: Yankee Experience in Early Civil War Jacksonville," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, LIII (July 1974), 1-32; "The *New York Times* Views Civil War Jacksonville," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, LIII (April 1975), 409-27.

just returned to the army and is in camp, near Hamilton's Crossing, about five miles from our present encampment. "Report" says he wished to marry while at home, but his affianced would not agree to the consummation of the happy event until the close of the war, which proves her to be a girl of rare good sense. Many girls are very foolishly, (I think) marrying soldiers, going home on thirty days furlough, some of whom are virtually widows the moment they lose sight of their husband returning to the army. Since I began this letter I have received and just read a letter from Addie. As usual it brings more bad news, it tells me that a favorite cousin (Willis McCall) has fallen by his own hand. Temporary insanity caused by some unpleasant news he had heard is assigned as the cause of his committing the terrible act. He was a young man of rare good sense & I have often heard him speak in unmeasured terms of the crime of self-destruction & he certainly must have been laboring under a fit of mental aberration. I hope when I write again it may be after a glorious victory which shall be the harbinger of a speedy peace. Please give my love to all, & think of me always as your affectionate

Cousin, David

Near Fredericksburg, Va. May 16th 1863

Dear Cousin,

Your letter of the _____ inst., reached me yesterday and as I have not written to you since the last engagements here, I will do so at once even though I run the risk of becoming tedious by writing too often.

I have been so fortunate this time as to escape injury entirely, much to my surprise. My regiment was not, however so hotly engaged this battle as it has been in the other previous battles, which may in some degree account for my safety.²⁰ We did more marching this time than usual. Being in a small Brigade we were made usefull in filling up gaps & vacant places in the line & in strengthening weak points. On the 29th & 30th we occupied our old position the first battle of Dec. last,²¹ and had no fighting, on the 1st we were marched five miles up the river & were manouvered back & forth on Gen. Lee's extreme right, all that day & night, & also on the 2nd, without being engaged until

20. Battle of Chancellorsville, May 1-5, 1863.

21. Battle of Fredricksburg, December 11-15, 1862.

near night on the 2nd when our pickets engaged the enemy in his defences but failed to draw him out. After dark we changed positions from extreme right to centre, bivouaced that night, and on the 5th, a beautiful Sabbath morning, we marched about three miles to get into positions & immediately charged the enemy in his defences, which consisted of breastworks of logs & earth with the timber, (which was here very thick) felled in front forming an abattis, varying from fifty to two hundred yards in width. Over this fallen timber & the breastwork our men quickly went, shouting & yelling. The enemy did not injure us much while charging, but they fell back into some thick woods under cover of a hill where they made another stand, from which we had some difficulty in driving them, but we continued to advance through this woods driving them before us but losing many men until they were driven into their second line of defences. Gen. Lee having Hooker now penned up so that Gen. Jackson's corps could keep him in check, withdrew our division (Gen Anderson's) & Gen. McLaw's division to drive Sedgewick back. We marched twelve or fifteen miles back to Fredericksburg & formed our line of battle about four o'clock P.M. when the line was moved forward and the enemy having made a feeble show of resistance hastily began recrossing the river, and by daylight next morning had succeeded in withdrawing his army beyond the river, not however without great loss from being shelled while crossing on pontoons. Now we had to march ten miles back to where we had to face Hooker again. This marching was accomplished in one of the heaviest rainstorms that I ever saw. Next morning it was discovered that Hooker had taken advantage of the storm and darkness to get himself out of a very bad scrape, and we thereupon returned to camps. Owing to the hardships & exposure of the seven days marching & fighting many of us have since been sick, and I am still unwell. My regiment lost in the battles 11 killed and 56 wounded. I had only 240 in the fight.²² I have not seen or heard from Col. Atkinson since the battle but presume he is safe. I started to visit him a few days before the battle, but failed to find him & have been so unwell since that I could not leave camps I would be much pleased to visit Marietta this summer, but have no hope of doing so, un-

22. Colonel Lang commanded the 8th at Chancellorsville, May 1-5, 1863. Florida Board of State Institutions, *Soldiers of Florida*, 336.

less wounded. Please give my love to Uncle, Aunt and the children and remember me as your affectionate Cousin,

David Lang

Hagerstown July 9th [1863]

Dear Cousin,

We have fought another great battle, in which thousands were slain on both sides, and by the interposition of Divine Providence I am still alive and unhurt.²³ The fighting began at New Salem near Gettysburg between Pender's & Heth's division of A. P. Hills Corps, and the 3rd (Federal) Army Corps, on the 1st July: our Division (Anderson's) being in the rear of the Corps was not engaged the 1st day, on the 2nd our whole army was brought up and attacked the enemy in his stronghold on the mountain side behind Gettysburg, Longstreet on our right, A. P. Hill in the centre and Ewell on the left. Longstreet was the last to get into position which he did about 3 P. M. and immediately the attack began. About 5 P. M. we were ordered to charge the enemys positions, and away we dashed across an open field 1½ miles wide every foot of which was swept by the enemys artillery and musketry. Coming up with their infantry we drove them back in disorder to their breastworks on the heights, capturing a large number of cannon. After arriving just under the enemys stronghold they threw forward a heavy column of infantry on our right which was not properly supported and succeeded in turning the right of Wilcox's Brigade (which was on our right) and thus forced us to fall back and leave all that we had gained. Thus ended the second days fighting. On the morning of the 3rd all of our artillery was placed in position, and at a given signal concentrated their fire upon the enemys strong position. The cannonading was terrific. More than 300 cannon were being discharged as fast as they could be loaded & fired, and the noise was so great that one could not carry on conversation with his nearest neighbor.²⁴ After this had continued for near two

23. Since Lang's last letter of May 16, the Florida Brigade had marched into Maryland again with the Army of Northern Virginia and then into Pennsylvania and had fought in the Battle of Gettysburg, July 1-3, 1863, to which Lang alludes here. Lang commanded the Florida Brigade throughout this battle because General Perry had contracted typhoid fever. Lang's report of the battle is in Evans, *Confederate Military History*, XI, Florida section, 150-53.

24. There were 248 Confederate and 320 Union cannon in all engaged in the Battle of Gettysburg. Lang's Brigade of Anderson's Corps lay just

hours, another charge was ordered. This charge was made in the centre by Pickett's division. They went in, in splendid order but were unable to carry the position and fell back badly cut up. As soon as they had retired, our brigade & Gen. Wilcox's, together numbering about 1200, men were ordered to charge the same position from which this whole division had just been repulsed. Our men went into it gallantly to within a short distance of the enemy's entrenchments when they were again outflanked & compelled to retire. Our loss was tremendous, of the whole number (700) which I carried in I now have 220 for duty.²⁵ The remainder are killed, wounded and captured. This ended the 3rd days fighting in the centre. On the 4th nothing more than skirmishing took place along our front, but it was discovered early in the day that the enemy were leaving their position. Having used up all of our artillery amunition we could not follow the enemy, but were obliged to return here to connect with our amunition train. now we have a bountiful supply of amunition. Gen. Lee will no doubt make another forward movement, but what point he will next strike and where the next great battle will be fought, is still a mystery. I have not seen Col. Atkinson since the battle but learn that he escaped unhurt. I saw Capt. Milledge yesterday he was unhurt, & told me that he did not lose a man or horse in the two days he was engaged.

Remember me with much love to Uncle, Aunt and all of my Cousins, and believe me as ever your Affectionate Cousin

Dave

Culpeper C. H. Va. Aug. 1st 1863

Dear Cousin Annie,

Since the battle of Gettysburg I have written you once, but as I now have plenty of leisure I will risk wearying you with another scrawl. I do not remember where I wrote from last, but believe it was at Hagerstown. Since then we have had rather hard

to the left of Longstreet's Corps which contained 159 guns. These were preparing the way for General George Pickett's charge on the afternoon of July 3, 1863. Francis Trevelyan Miller, ed., *The Photographic History of the Civil War*, 10 vols. (New York, 1912), V, 71; Esposito, *West Point Atlas of the Civil War*, map 98.

25. This little-known attack by Wilcox's and Lang's undermanned commands against the great odds that had just repulsed General Pickett's 12,000 veterans must, in this editor's opinion, constitute one of the great tragic moments in the war.

times even for Virginia soldiers. Leaving Hagerstown we came about two miles towards the old Antietam battle ground and confronted the enemy in line of battle but, Gen. Meade was evidently afraid to dash his gallant & victorious soldiers of freedom, against that single line of ragged, halfstarved, barefooted, badly whipped and totally demoralized rebels, as we lay there patiently for three days awaiting and anxiously inviting an attack from the "best army the world ever saw" which was lying idly within easy cannon range of us, on the heights beyond the Antietam Creek. He no doubt thinking we would attack him there, where he would have nothing to do but lie safely behind breastworks and shoot us as fast as we came, like he did at Gettysburg. Having exhausted his patience and not being able to force his courage up to the charging point, he on the third day began moving off towards Harpers Ferry, and that night Gen. Lee withdrew his army to this side of the Potomac. It rained almost incessantly that whole night, which was the darkest I ever saw, we were all night marching five miles through mud eight and ten inches deep and the men were so badly tired down and worn out that numbers of them laid down by the roadside fell asleep and were captured by the enemy's cavalry next day. After crossing the river we remained one day on this bank, and the next day we marched to Bunker Hill in Berkely County where we remained four days and then continued our march to this point in order to intercept the enemy who were trying to march ahead of us to Richmond. Foiled here, they have continued on down the Rappahannock to Fredericksburg, where I expect the next great battle will be fought. There we have the best position, our men will fight better, from having defeated the enemy twice before on that ground, and the Yankees will fight to a disadvantage from having been twice defeated there. July 1863 has been as unfortunate a month for us, as July 1862 was for the Yankees, but I trust that this summer's campaign will set us all right again. If the militia will take care of garrisoned places near home, and send us all the soldiers from those places to meet the invader, all will yet be well before another twelve-month passes away.

Our Brigade (Perry's) suffered terribly in the fights at Gettysburg. I carried in near 700 men and lost 455 in two assaults upon the enemy's mountain fastnesses, and now since having convalescents from home and hospital for two weeks we can muster

but little more than 300 guns for duty. The 2nd Fla. Regt. has but 65 men for duty. There have been rumours of sending the brigade to Florida to recruit, but I have no hope of such luck, & indeed if our army here is to be weakened by it I have no wish to go. At the same time I believe it would be but justice to bring those holiday soldiers from there, for awhile and allow us to take their places until we could fill our ranks.

While passing through Winchester I visited the family with whom I staid whilst I was wounded last fall, and they appeared to be as delighted to see me as though I was a part of the family. I felt very sad at parting from them, knowing that the Yankees would soon be among them again, and they have been treated so badly. Two young ladies of my acquaintance were arrested on the street by order of Gen. Milroy, marched between a file of soldiers with fixed bayonets and actually imprisoned four hours in the common guard house; and this for the heinous offence of having the rebel flag *painted on the inside of the cuffs of their gauntlets*.²⁶ I pray that no more of our country may fall into the possession of these human fiends.

I have recently met several of my schoolmates while at the Geo. Mil. Inst. and have gathered from them a good many items of interest occurring since my departure from Marietta. I presume that I would hardly meet a familiar face upon the streets of Marietta now, if I were to visit it. Most of my old acquaintances have moved, I learn, to Atlanta and Macon, and their places have been filled by refugees from the frontier. I saw Col. Atkinson and Capt. Milledge after the battle they both escaped unhurt. Edmond went much farther into Penn. than the main body of the army²⁷ The brigade to which he belongs (Gordon's) went as far as the Susquehannah River and would have crossed but the militia who were posted there to defend the town, Wrightsville, fled across the bridge & then burned it before they could be overtaken. Edmond captured a fine horse of which he is very proud. I had a letter from Addie yesterday. They had not heard from me since the battle and were still very uneasy about me, although I wrote them by the first opportunity. The mails are never less than nine days on the route from home here. When (?) we are

26. Major General Robert H. Milroy, commander of the U.S. 2nd Division, 8th Army Corps.

27. "Edmond" refers to Colonel Edmund N. Atkinson, 26th Georgia.

ordered home to recruit I will make a digression by the way of Marietta if possible.

Please give my love to all, Uncle, Aunt, and the children and to John when you write to him next.

As ever, affectionately Your Cousin

Dave.

Orange C. H. Va. Sept. 13th 1863

Dear Cousin Annie,

I do not know whether you or I wrote last, but I do know that it has been a long time since I have had a letter from you and that prompts me to make this infliction this beautiful Sabbath morning. We had last night after several days of gloomy, cloudy weather, a very heavy rain and this morning is bright and beautiful. All nature seems to be refreshed by the bath. We had a great quantity of dust before and now, as is usual in this country of mud & dust, we have oceans of mud.

Since I wrote you last we have had some grand sights in the way of military reviews. First, each division of A. P. Hill's corps was reviewed. Then a few days afterward Ewell's Corps was reviewed, and on the day before yesterday Hill's whole corps was reviewed by Gen. Lee. The country here is so broken and the fields so small that we could not be reviewed in one line, consequently the corps was formed in three lines, each about one mile in length, Gen. Longstreets Corps having been ordered to Gen. Bragg's assistance we are deprived of the pleasure of seeing his troops on review. I hope we shall hear glorious news from Gen. Bragg in a very short time. That army owes the country at least one decided victory, and now is the best time that it could come. Edmond, Gen. Thomas and Dr. Gilko [?] were present at our review on Friday. They are all in excellent health and spirits. Dr. Gilko [?] is apparently a very amiable and clever gentleman. Have you ever seen him? I hear that he is to be our kinsman soon. Addie is on a visit to Georgia now, and she writes me that Cousin Isaac is married and that George, Henry and Rich. Lang are all expecting to marry soon. Rich's engagement does not appear to give general satisfaction among his relatives. They think he should have made a better selection. Addie thinks Cousin Isaac's lady is a very nice girl, but that she has very much the being of a petted and spoiled child. Which is all very well, as an

“Old man’s darling” as she is. Edmond asserts that he is not engaged, that his “affaire matrimonel” has been broken off, but I do not know whether to believe him. He speaks so carelessly of it. How I am gossiping! One would think after reading the above lines that I was an old maid, the village gossip of some country town instead of a soldier in the field. But human nature is the same in the peaceful village and on the turbid field, and anything is eagerly sought for as recreation which withdraws the mind even for a few moments from the contemplation of the monstrous treadmill existence which we lead here. There are a large number of young ladies in and around this little village and I have made the acquaintance of a few, just for the sake of recreation. The residence of James Madison, Montpelier, is situated five miles from here. It is now owned by a Mr. Carson, a citizen of New York, an Irishman and formerly a *porter* at one of the hotels there. I visited it a few days since and was much pleased with my visit. It is a most beautiful place and it is a shame that Virginians and particularly the descendants of Madison who live near here should have permitted the place to pass into the possession of a foreigner. The family burial ground is on the place and over the grave of the illustrious president is erected a plain marble shaft upon which is the simple inscription “Madison” with the dates of his birth and death.

Occasionally we have a picnic here in the army but have not attended any of them yet being prevented heretofore by some previous engagements. The picnics are given by the officers of the brigades, usually at some vacant countryseat in the neighborhood. Per contra. There is a great revival of religion going on throughout the army. Our chaplains preach three times a day to large congregations and we can perceive a manifest improvement in the moral condition of the men. I think it is making good soldiers of some very trifling material.

I know I have wearied you out of all patience by this scrawl. Please give my love to all, Uncle, Aunt and all the children.

Your Cousin
David Lang.

Camp near Orange C. H. Va. November 11th 1863

Dear Annie,

When I returned from my recent visit home I found one of

your ever welcome letters awaiting my perusal, but my pleasure was greatly subdued, almost turned to sorrow in reading it because I knew that while I read you were weeping over the broken family circle, that one of your treasures here below had been transferred above. I can and do deeply sympathise with you, dear cousin, in this sad bereavement, for I too well know what it is to lose a near and dear relative and friend. Since I left home, less than three years since, a kind and loving father, two dear little brothers and a sweet, angel faced little sister have been added to my ties in Heaven. God grant that our broken family circles may be reunited in that better world above, when we finish our pilgrimage here below.

I regreted very much that I was debarred by the length of my leave of absence from making a visit to Marietta. I was allowed but thirty days in which to make my visit and twelve days of that short period had slipped away before I reached home. I returned here just in time to miss the exciting events of Gen. Lee's late chase of Gen. Meade, though I have to acknowledge now being a party to a chase in which the pursuer was pursued, and after a month's absence from this point our army finds itself occupying its old line of defense in which we have great confidence. Meade can pursue us no further until he drives fifty thousand as good soldiers as ever fired a gun from their own chosen position which they have strongly fortified. Although not a party in the late battle at Rappahannock Bridge, yet I was on picket near the battle ground and witnessed a part of the conflict.²⁸ Hay's Louisiana Brigade and a part of Hoke's North Carolina Brigade were on picket duty on the north side of the river and in an earthwork covering the approach to a pontoon bridge which we had across the river. This earthwork mounted four guns, field pieces. The enemy massed a heavy force of infantry in the woods fronting this battery and threw column after column of the drunken wretches upon this point until our men had exhausted their ammunition and the ground in front of the ford was strewn with Yankee carcasses. Then it was that they entered our breastworks, carried the fort by storm and seized the bridge, the only means of escape and thus cutting off the retreat of our

28. This battle took place November 7, 1863. *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, 4 vols. (New York, 1888), IV, Part I, 85.

men and capturing nearly the whole force. All who escaped did so by swimming and fording the river and many were killed in the river. It is thought that Gen. Lee was not expecting Meade to advance so soon & was not entirely prepared for him. Certain it is that if he was surprised, he was not confused. He immediately withdrew his army to another position four miles nearer Culpeper C. H. and there held the enemy at bay until his waggon train was safe this side of the Rapidan and then quickly withdrew to this, his chosen position. Here we will spend the winter unless Meade chooses to try the Fredericksburg route again which he will have to do very soon if at all this winter. We have had one slight fall of snow, with daily prospects of more, since our return here. Col. Young of whom you spoke in your last was for three years a class-mate of mine. He has recently been promoted to the rank of Brigadier General.²⁹ I saw him a few days since at a review (by Gen. Lee) of the cavalry corps. He commands Gen. Wade Hampton's old brigade, said to be one of the best brigades in the army and he is highly commended for his dashing gallantry. Please give my love to Uncle, Aunt and the children, and remember ever as Your affectionate Cousin,

Dave.

Camp near Orange C. H. April 27th 1864

Dear Annie,

I was surprised yesterday by your very pleasant letter of the 18th instant and "in accordance with instructions" therein contained, I, as a dutiful and loyal soldier ever should, am improving my first opportunity to write again, indulging the hope that you will not be too busy to write again to me before we leave this land of post offices and regular mail communications. It had been so long since a letter had passed between us that I had forgotten whether you or I had written last and would have written again but being a most devoted "lovier" during the time I could think and speak and write of nothing else than the lovely object of my infatuation which of course would not interest one who I am sure must be the idol of many aspiring "starred and barred" heroes of the army of Tennessee. For this reason I deferred writing until such time as I could withdraw my mind for a sufficient length of time from the charms of my "inamorata."

29. Pierce Manning Butler Young.

Fortunately your letter has reached me simultaneously with her departure for home, and but for this lucky coincidence I should have been inconsolable and the fearful tragedy of "Villikens and his Dinah" might have been re-enacted upon the banks of the Rapidan. But she has gone, and though not "out of mind when out of sight" yet the bonds of the magic spell are somewhat relaxed and I can, now and then, think of other things and persons. First and chief among these other things and persons, comes the thought of my cousin Annie, and I hasten to place myself under her treatment "for advice and prescription" to cure this dreadful malady. What do you advise, Cousin Annie? Would you attempt the eradication of the cause by employing antagonistic agents? Or would you rely upon the old adage and prescription, "the hair of the animal cures the bite"; and make a renewed application of the disturbing principles? I am at a loss how to treat the case, though as a matter of course, favor the latter treatment. But, enough of this trifling levity. The times and circumstances suggest graver and more important subjects for thought— the time and place of the next great battle and the results thereof, both actual and prospective? There appears to be a diversity of opinion as to the first of these, but upon the latter I believe all parties agree that the immediate result will be a decisive victory to the confederate cause, and the prospective result a speedy peace. God grant that public expectation may for this one time be realized. Whether this expected great battle will be fought here or at Chattanooga is a subject of most anxious speculation here, though I have no doubt that a great battle will be fought *here* and that very soon. What concerns me most, as *Lucius Hardee* would say, is the unpleasant doubt as to whether I will survive it. I have today visited our signal station, on Clarke's Mountain, which overlooks the encampment of the enemy, and find that they have got, if not a large army, they at least have a distressingly large encampment. If rebels occupied it I should estimate their number at two hundred thousand at least, but the Yankees, I think, do not exceed one hundred thousand and a rumour has just reached us that Grant has taken personal command of the army at Tennessee, which would appear to indicate the purpose to make an advance there simul-

taneous with the one here.³⁰ Please remember me with much love to Uncle, Aunt & all my cousins, and do not forget,

Dave

Line of Battle near Cold Harbor, Va.
June 7th 1864

Dear Annie,

Your last letter was received a short time after we started upon this unprecedented campaign, this thirty six days of almost continuous fighting and the excitement and bustle and confusion incident thereto has prevented me from writing to you again before this time. We are now for the first time in more than a month enjoying the luxury of a days rest, yet not a days *quiet*, for while I write this the popping of musketry and the occasional boom of a cannon reminds us that "Grant the Giant" still keeps up the cry "Fe, Fo Fum etc.," though blood enough he has already had God knows. What blood has been shed since he commenced his On to Richmond would float a man of war. Our brigades, that is Finegan's & Perry, had been in the front lines until the men were completely exhausted with continual watching and fighting, and last night we were relieved by Wright's Ga. Brigade in order that we might recuperate our exhausted energies for the next grand onslaught which will probably come in a few days.³¹ We have been holding a ridge which is considered the key to our position and against which the enemy have made their most desperate assaults. At one time when held by Breckenridge's division the enemy carried a small part of the work but we fortunately were near enough to drive them out almost before they had gained possession, since that time they have kept up a continuous fire by sharpshooters from morning till night upon every man that shows himself along our line. This is occasionally varied by a furious bombardment from some field artillery and mortars and between the three the troops

30. This last letter was written eight days before the first great encounter between Lee and Grant, the Wilderness, May 5-7, 1864. Grant had not taken personal command of the army in Tennessee, as Lang had heard, but directed Meade's Army of the Potomac and was just about to attack Lee.

31. The Florida Brigade had just participated in the Second Battle of Cold Harbor, June 3, 1865. The "Grand onslaught" Colonel Lang expected never came for Grant abandoned Cold Harbor to cross the James River and lay siege to Petersburg, south of Richmond,

are so much worried that twenty four hours in there is enough to exhaust them. It is reported that Grant is now moving off toward his left flank, that is down the Chickahominy. It is generally believed that his loss has been numerous, though I think the reports are greatly exaggerated.³² Yet he has lost sufficiently to affect the spirits of his troops. Those captured now speak less hopefully of capturing Richmond than they did at the opening of the campaign and many declare that their men won't fight much longer, which when taken in connection with the fact of the feebleness of the charges recently made wear an air of strong probability. Many of the prisoners captured in their latest assaults were under the "majic influence of old rye." I fear that Sherman, Hooker etc. will worry Gen. Johnston back to the Chatahoochee and that your home will fall into the hands of the enemy as I learn by our papers this morning that the Yankee army was at Acworth on Sunday. I have not seen Edmond since the campaign began, but hear that he escaped injury up to the 20th ultimo. Reed is here in the 6th Fla. Battalion of Fanigan's Brigade. He has been here nearly two weeks and I heard nothing of it until an hour or two since when he called on me. He appears to be very well satisfied and in good health. Please remember with love to all.

In haste, I am as ever Your Cousin,

Dave.

Petersburg; Va. July 18th [1864]

I was much pleased dear Cousin to receive your letter of the 30th June this evening and to know that you had all safely established yourselves in your new home. Still I can but feel very sad that you have been compelled to leave your home, knowing that since it has fallen into the possession of the enemy it will be so badly used that you will not recognise it as the same home you left when you see it again.³³ Indeed I feel very sad to know that old Georgia is doomed to suffer as I have seen and am every day seeing Virginia suffer. I have just returned from a ride in town where the enemy's fire has been principally directed. Their fire

32. The Union losses at Cold Harbor were not exaggerated. In less than one hour Grant lost over 7,000 men, the Confederates, 1,500. Esposito, *West Point Atlas of the Civil War*, I, 136.

33. "Cousin" Annie Atkinson's home was in Marietta, Georgia, which fell to Sherman's troops in mid-June 1864.

has not been confined to that part of the city in which the workshops, foundries etc. are located, but they have thrown their shells with devilish malignity into the most private and secluded parts of the city where they knew that none but non-combatants women and children were. These they have succeeded in driving from the town nevertheless they keep up their shelling for four or five hours every day, smashing up things generally, but strange to say, but very few fires have resulted from their shelling, and but one or two buildings have been burned since we came here one month ago. We have been receiving some very cheering accounts of an expedition sent into Maryland under Gen. Early, but we have just learned that he has recrossed the Potomac without capturing either Washington or Baltimore. I do not know whether the object of the expedition was the capture of either of those cities, but the impression prevails among us here, as well as the Yankees, that he only intended to collect supplies of cattle, horses etc. and at the same time create a diversion of the enemy's plans by threatening those places and thus forcing Grant to send away a part of his army from this point for their protection. This being his object, his campaign has been a success; otherwise it has failed!³⁴ Certain it is however that the Yankees throughout Maryland, Pennsylvania and New York were badly frightened. Edmund's regiment is with the expedition, hence I have heard nothing from him since it left here about the 10th of June. Reed was taken sick and sent to hospital in Richmond about four or five weeks ago and I have been unable to hear anything from him since. You made inquiries sometime ago about some officer in Bushrod Johnson's division but I am sorry to say that I had destroyed your letter and forgotten his name so that I have been unable to comply with your request, although I have frequently been near and with Johnson's division.³⁵ He is now however some distance from us, we being on the extreme right and he on the left of our line of battle. I have not heard from home since the 4th of June so you see you are

34. Lang's appraisal of General Early's motives for the attack on Washington is generally in agreement with that of modern historians. Douglas Southall Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command*, 3 vols. (New York, 1942-44), III, 564-65.

35. Major General Bushrod Johnson took part in the defense of Petersburg, Virginia, against Benjamin Butler's forces. His troops bore much of the bitter trench fighting that followed during the siege of that city. Warner, *Generals in Gray*, 157-58.

not the only one of Sue's correspondents who have cause to complain of her delinquencies in letter writing though I attribute my failures to hear from home more to the breaking up of our communications than to negligence at home. We are now suffering from the effects of a most distressing and unprecedented drouth. There has not been rain enough to lay the dust here in more than a month and the crops are literally drying up while the dust is almost suffocating.

Remember me with much love to all,

Affectionately
Dave