

## James T Embree Letters

Murfreesboro Tenn [sic]

Jany 9th 1863

Dear Father

Your letter of the 27th is at hand. As to the Michel matter all I can say is that it is all properly settled as far as I had to do with it and if he sees proper to pay this Wheeler anything he can do so. Wheeler Knows what I have done and is trying to frighten Michel out of his money. You can see that he is Even ready to get his hand on so Small a Sum as five dollars. If he has authority – to collect of Michel he Should present it without pay from Michel. Wheeler is a scoundrel and had no authority in the matter or I should have paid him the money But I found that he had no right to have the money and therefore paid it to the proper office in New York. Donald I think has all the papers relating to the matter and if you will read Wheelers [sic] letters to me you will see he was trying to Steal the money from Michel. Michel is Still responsible on two other bonds to the people of New York but Wheeler has nothing to do with it.

Well we are through a severe battle and are now resting from a week of as hard and trying service as men Ever performed

Just as I had finished the last Sentence we had orders to move our camp and have moved about two miles but are still within two [crossed out] one mile from Murfreesboro. This is the tenth day of January. I wrote mary [sic] a letter giving her a Statement of our camp from the 26th Dec to the End of the fight which closed on the 2nd inst.

Our Army arrived within a third of a mile of the Enemys [sic] work on monday [sic] evening the 29th Dec about Sundown. The rebels were there Engaged burning a fine brick house with about a dozen niger [sic] quarters for the purpose of clearing the way for their artillery which they intended to play upon us. We had had considerable skirmishing all day driving the Enemys [sic] out posts and advance forces about six miles.

About night when it was geting [sic] dark we received orders for our division to cross Stone [sic] river and get into town. We started and came to the river (Which is a Small Stream fordable) When we arrived there with our brigade the 20th and 21st Brigades had crossed and the Enemy [illegible] a heavy fire of musketry on them and us in somuch [sic] that the 20th and 21st brigades recrossed the river and we fell back to our old position about a half mile in the rear in a cornfield. We left all our tents at Nashville and that night it rained all night and we had no fire for fear it would give the Enemy Knowledge of our position and tempt them to shell us On the next morning the rebels began to cast solid shot and Shells into our position but we held our places without answering their fire Except with two pieces of artillery

On our right about a mile off McCook was Engaged all day in quite a fight with the Enemy but with no material results

That Evening our regiment was moved to the front and placed in picket for the night without fire or tents and in a cold rain.

About 8 A'clock [sic] AM of the 31st the canonading [sic] became heavy on our right being in the right wing and center of the army. And in a short time that whole part of the Army was Engaged in a fierce contest. It was not long until all of that part of our army gave way and every division in perfect [illegible] back upon the turnpike road leading to Nashville. Their lines were at the [illegible] of the fight in something like a curve on the right of the road. The Extreme right of the army [illegible] about a half mile from the road and back toward Nashville with the left of the center of the army resting on the path next to Murfreesboro The Right of the Army to which we belonged was on the right of the pike and early perpendicular to it. So when the right and center were driven back they with us formed almost a right angle with the angle in the pike nearest Murfreesboro That is if the right and center could be sent to form a line at all. About the time this happened our brigade was called into line and held (ready to be moved), in an open field when the solid shot and Shell fell thick and fast around us. The men of the center right were running back among us. artillery was [illegible] with their guns, Caissons and limbers in wild confusion with fury and madness intent only upon saving themselves regardless of Consequences to others or the great American peoples. It was not long however until a place was formed for us. The Enemy brought his forces to bear upon our [illegible] Thinking that as the right and center were attacked he would have an easy task in whipping the [illegible line of text] in fact [illegible] but about an [illegible] of four thousand army. Our [illegible] was ordered to cover the rail road track and so was our whole brigade into a little wood. About such a place as the lot on the west of your [illegible word] I mean the line was about that thick.

Then we sent the rebels who made their [illegible] attack upon us [illegible line of text] in the [illegible line of text] were Killed which drew it We did not loose [sic] these guns however, the men were Sent and drew them away by hand. The remainder of our guns Kept up the fire. and one battery Especially which was about twenty steps behind our regiment Kept up a constant discharge. and after about an hour the rebel batteries were Silenced. During this contest there was one constant shower of solid shot. Shells and Shrapnell [sic] falling and busting all around and over us, shells burst within ten feet of me. and yet with all this our regiment had but two men wounded none Killed. The 26th [illegible] had two Killed and three wounded and the 100th Ill had one Killed which was all the loss we suffered. I find that artillery is much better to scare people with than to Kill them unless grape or cannister is used when they do terrible Execution. This was the [3 illegible words] fighting on the 2nd Jany. But as the day before the other two division compasing [sic] the right of our Army to wit Palmers and Van Cleeves divisions were thrown across the river on the Extreme left. And about 3½ A'clock [sic] PM of the 2nd Jany the rebels attacked them. Van Cleeves being in front was first attacked and

was driven back to the river We could see the rebels bringing up their Solid columns against them. and as our forces were falling back and the Enemy advancing and yelling with all their power it again looked as though the day was lost. and that we must be overwhelmed

But we fortunately were most Excellently purposed for this very thing. Some Say it was designed but I rather think it was an accident as I do not think Our troops were Expected to fall back

But however as it happened or was designed we had in position to sweep the very ground over which the pursuing rebels were compelled to pass in pursuit of our troops fifty two pieces of artillery. All of which were double shotted with grape and Cannister and poured their deadly contents into the rebel ranks with most terrible Effect. Palmers [sic] Division also at this time came up to the help of Van Cleeve and the rout of the rebels was completed. By this time it was night. And our brigade received orders to move in the direction of the place where we had fought the 31st Dec. towards a Small wood the same we had [illegible] in, which then was occupied by the rebel Skirmishers. The Brigade moved towards the [illegible] and sent out four companies one from each regiment as skirmishers to Engage the rebels.

It was then dark we had just sent our Skirmishers into the woods when we received orders to cross the river with the brigade to the place where the battle had been fought that Evening. And the forty second and the Brigade to which it belonged came up and advanced into the woods where we were about to go. That night about the time we started to cross the river it began to rain and rained hard all night and all next day and night. We got over the river and were marched backwards and forwards to find our position Stumblng [sic] over the dead and wounded in the dark and mud until about Eleven Aclock [sic] PM. At that time we were informed that we could go into a wood not far off and build fires in a low piece of ground and get supper and sleep until four Aclock [sic] in the morning when we were to take our position in an open cornfield as a reserve. We went to the wood built fires got supper and had just laid down in the rain when I received orders to take the 38th Regiment to the front line and fill up a gap in that line between Col Harkers [sic] Brigade and Gen Davis Division. So there was no sleep for us that night The remainder of the brigade slept all night I rather the line all slept in the rain and cold and to tell the truth I then and there became somewhat disgusted with the service, for I think the first time. I was so cold and tired that I thought I could stand it no longer and my Eyes were so sore I could with difficulty held them open

I at one time leaned against a stump and almost in an instant was asleep and dreamed that I was in some city [illegible] lived and had stoped [sic] at a Splendid hotel built of blue limestone had procured a good soft bed and was just in the act of turning back the bed covers preparatory to a good nights [sic] rest when all was ruined by the report of a gun fired in our front from the line of skirmishers. We were Kept in this position without fire until four Aclock [sic] P of the third. Our rations were out Except two crackers to each man which I gave them that morning. Just in our front were the skirmishers of our

line and those of the rebels or rather rebel sharp shooters whose balls were whizzing over our heads all day. Yet the line was not Engaged in the fight during the day. It Seems Strange to those who were never accustomed to it that men Should Ever become indifferent to bullits [sic]. Yet it is so. Those who have stood in battle and had thousands of balls to pass over and around them care nothing for two or three bullits [sic]. Our men all this day would slip away from their places and pass between our lines of skirmishers and those of the Enemy simply to get an arm full of fodder with the bare possibility of being allowed to sleep on it at night. the rebel sharp shooters firing at them all this time

Two of Davis [sic] Division were wounded while at this business but it did not seem to be a caution to the others. About three Aclock [sic] PM of this day some of the boys found that there was a good supply of good meat at a house standing between the lines and it was but a Short time until our regiment had an abundant supply of good meat which was very acceptable [illegible]

The rebels attacked them but the men did not falter although one of their number was shot down. They brought off about 2000 pounds of Excellent meat and plenty reigned in our regiment once more. Notwithstanding our rations were short at times no one suffered much on that account as it was so managed that about this time or Shortly after all was gone a small Supply was had and thus we Kept Ekeing [sic] it out all week. the trouble was we had no fire to cook and most of the meat was Eaten raw which however is common at all [illegible] as may Eat it raw rather than cooked.

About four Aclock [sic] PM we were moved back about 100 yards to the second line a little below the hill and the 3rd Ky regiment took our place. We there built fires cooked supper and feasted. About dark a severe fight took place on the other side the river at the Same place we fought the 31st Dec. It was a severe contest and our troops composed as I [illegible] heard, in part, [illegible] East Tennessee regiments drove the rebels our of their works routed them and Ended the contest at Murfreesboro. The 42nd was not in this fight they having been driven from the [illegible] the punous [sic] [illegible] and Lt Col Shackleton taken prisoner. We hastened to the fight with great anxiety, and about ten Aclock [sic] went to bed on the wet ground and in a heavy shower having previously been required to put out the fires.

The heavy rains had swollen the river and it was feared we could not recross if we delayed and therefore we could not run the risk of a defeat.

Therefore at 12 Aclock [sic] at night we were ordered to fall in and march across the river which we did leaving all our ground on that side the river to the Enemy if they saw proper to occupy it.

We were moved in rear of the whole army on or near the road to Nashville and for sometime we Supposed were were [sic] on the retreat. We remained in the position when at this time and rested Thursday At the very time we wee crossing the river to [crossed out] on that night and marching from the Enemy they were making all hast [sic]

possible to get away from us. On the next day our forces occupied the town and pursued the rear of the Enemy taking considerable number of prisoners. I [illegible] learn where the rebels have gone but suppose beyond the Tennessee river Many will no doubt complain because Rosecrans did not [illegible] upon the Enemy while they were leaving Murfreesboro but it will be those only who Know nothing of armies or battles and whose judgment is of no Nature. The night was cloudy and the wind made such noise nothing of their movements could be heard or seen. And that might have remained unchanged until all had gone.

Our Division was the only one that gave no ground during the whole battle. And it is universally acknowledged that the division saved the fight.

I do not think we had over thirty-five thousand men who fought in the battle. that is who came with guns and used them: but if teamsters hospital nurses and other men detached as Special Service were counted there were nearly fifty five thousand men on our side. It is astonishing that So many men Skulk away from the battle. Not less than seven or eight thousand of our army were hiding among the [illegible] and woods on thursday [sic] of the fight and on friday [sic] about six thousand were rounded up and sent to their regiments. Yet these cowards will when they go home brag of having been in the battle. A part of Genl Rosecrans staff hid themselves in a hole under a cotton press. But now the battle is over these fellows are all up ready for their rations and complaining because the paymaster dont [sic] come right along and pay them. Every regiment had such men

I think our loss about twelve thousand Killed wounded and captured, but cannot of course write with certainty. The dead of both armies lay very thick on the field and the town and number of hospitals are filled with wounded

[illegible name] is Slightly wounded but not [illegible] to hurt him a mere scratch. This is as much [sic] you will [illegible rest of line]

I send list Killed and wounded It is badly written and the spelling not good but I have no time to write it over.

It was written by the adjutant and if you see proper and [illegible] if you can have it printed

Description battle Murfreesboro in letter from Lt. Col. James T Embree to [illegible] Embree

Killed and Wounded in the 58th Indiana Volunteers on December 31, 1862

Report of Killed and Wounded in 58th Reg Ind Vols in an engagement with the Rebels near Murfreesboro Tenn on the 31st of Decr [sic] 1862

[Note: The information is found in 4 columns: Company, Name, Rank and what happened to the soldier. It will be transcribed in line form by the various companies.]

Company A

Chas C. Whiting, 1st Lt, Wounded dangerously [crossed out] Severely

Wm McGary, Sergt [sic], Killed

Elias Skelton, Private, Killed

Alfred B Endicott, Private, Killed

Joseph Reavis, Private, Killed

Albert Trafzer, Private, Killed

[Note: The following soldiers (from Drysdal to Hay) are all Privates and have Wounded Dangerously [crossed out] Severly [sic] written after their names.]

Jas B Drysdal

Joseph N. Davis

George Willis

George Burchfield

Wiley Knowles

Joseph [crossed out] Jesse Knowles

Moses C. Witherspoon

Sylvester Minuis

Henry Beck

John Crow

Stephen V Hay

Abner Bryant, Corpl [sic], Wounded Slightly

Wm S. Reavis, Corpl [sic], Wounded Slightly

G. T. Hutchinson, private, Wounded Slightly

Jas. S. Blythe, Private, Taken Prisoner by the Enemy

Company B

James Curry, Private, Wounded Severely

Redwin Smith, Private, Wounded Slightly

Enoch J. Lowe, Private, Wounded Slightly

James Cochran, Private, Wounded Slightly

Green B Yager, Private, Wounded Slightly

John Vanwagner, Private, Killed

Company C

Wm H Downey, Captain, Wounded Severely "Shot in the neck"

Pleasant N Spain, O. Sergt [sic], Wounded Severely

John Johnson, Corpl [sic], Wounded Severely

Ezekiel Hadlock, Corpl [sic], Wounded Severely

Simpson Dye, Corpl [sic], Wounded Severely

George W Alvis, Private, Missing [sic] and supposed to be dead

David Hoke, Private, Wounded Severely

John F. Phillips, Private, Wounded Severely

Harrison Wright, Private, Wounded Severely

Albert Woods, Private, Wounded Slightly

John Crosier, Private, Wounded Slightly

John Fox, Private, Missing [sic]

James H. Hall, Private, Killed

Robert Chew, Private, Killed

Sibern Roberts, Private, Killed

Henry Twitty, Private, Killed

Company D

Henry Curl, Private, Killed

Abraham Jones, Private, Killed

George Whitman, 1st Lt, Wounded Slightly in arm

Darius C. Baret, O. Sergt [sic], Wounded Severely in the leg

Wm Mumford, Sergt [sic], Wounded Slightly in the arm

Willis Coleman, Sergt [sic], Wounded Slightly in the arm

David J Davis, Sergt [sic], Wounded Slightly in the Back

Daniel Vanwinke, Corp, Wounded Slightly in the arm

Alexander Cochrum, Corp, Wounded Slightly in the Shoulder

Thos Duncan, Private, Wounded Severely in leg  
Jonson Wheeler, Private, Wounded Slightly in leg  
James Anderson, Private, Wounded Slightly in arm

Company E

Francis B. Blackford, 2nd Lt, Killed  
John T. Norman, O. Sergt [sic], Wounded Slightly  
Zachriah Pierce, Private, Wounded Slightly  
Samuel Hunt, Private, Wounded Slightly  
Louis Engleman, Private, Wounded Slightly  
Harbin Huse, Private, Wounded Slightly  
Elijah Black, Private, Wounded Slightly

Company F

Lycircus Mason, O. Sergt [sic], Wounded Slightly in Shoulder  
Hugh I Barnet, Sergt, Wounded Slightly in hip  
John W Emmerson, Corpl [sic], Wounded Slightly in Thigh  
Calvin Bench, Private, Wounded Slightly in arm  
John Brownlee, Private, Wounded Slightly in arm  
Leland Cleveland, Private, Wounded Slightly  
Richard E Embree, Private, Wounded Slightly in Thigh  
Henry McCoy, Private Wounded Mortally Since died  
Wm T Landers, Private, Wounded Slightly in arm  
Robert Honeycut, Teamster, Taken Prisoner  
John Richardson, Teamster, Taken Prisoner

Company G

Noah Miller, Private, Killed  
Robert J Brown, Sergt [sic], Wounded Severely in Stomach  
Henry Brenton, Private, Wounded Severely in Thigh  
Milton Holder, Private, Wounded Slightly in Head  
Perry Amos, Private, Wounded Slightly in wrist

John A Borders, Private, Wounded Severely in Shoulder

Harrison Whaley, Private, Wounded Slightly in Hand

Comodore Coonrod, private, Mising [sic]

Company H

Andrew Cunningham, Private, Killed

Joseph L Newman, Private, Killed

William Adams, 2nd Lt, Wounded Slightly

John H Groves, Corpl [sic], Dangerously Wounded

James Woods, Corpl [sic], Wounded Slightly

Wm M Kendall, Private, Wounded Slightly

Company I

Alexander McDonald, Corp, Killed

Franklin Twitty, Private, Killed

Wm L Shaw, Sergt [sic], Wounded Slightly in leg

George W Ent, Corp, Wounded Severely in leg and Back

Vanburen Mead, Corp, Wounded Slightly in Head

George W Martin, Corp, Wounded Slightly in Hip

George Van, Corp, Wounded Slightly in face

Samuel Blair, Private, Wounded Slightly in groin

Wm H Dodes, Private, Wounded Slightly in face

Josiah Miley, Private, Wounded Slightly in chin

Thos J Smith, Private, Wounded Slightly in left Hip

Francis Smith, Private, Wounded Slightly in left wrist

Louis F Collin, Private, Wounded Slightly in hand and hip

Uriah Sitzer, Private, Wounded Slightly in finger

George Williamson, Private, Wounded Slightly in face and hand

Joab Mead, private, left arm broken

Company K

Alfred Goodman, Private, Killed

G. W. Wilder, Sergt [sic], Wounded Severely in leg

J. B. Miller, Sergt [sic], Wounded Severely in Nose and Jaw

Alfred Poe, Private, Wounded Severely in Head

Wm H. Young, private, Wounded Slightly in Shoulder

Jas Bohanon, Private, Wounded Slightly in Hip

Samuel Wilder, Teamster, Taken Prisoner

Murfreesboro Tenn [sic]

Jany 16th 1863

Dear Mary

Pa arrived safely at our camp on Tuesday Evning [sic] the 10th He had a slight spell of the sick head ache the next day but is now well and is with Frank at the 42nd Regt.

On the 14th it began to rain and rain very hard 24 hours and closed with a snow; it is now quite cold for this climate Our camp was completely flooded with water but my tent being in a Knole [sic] did not get wet The rivers will now be in good boating stage. And we can give up the rail road which will give us a [illegible] addition to our strength in the army [illegible] The army is in great spirits and condition here but there is no prospect of fighting soon

Things look worse at [illegible] than here Both parties are acting scandalously in the legislature and I am [2 illegible words] thoroughly convinced that the dayes [sic] of revolution at home of which I wrote you Sometime ago is Eminent [sic] We must prepare ourselves for these things and meet them as we can

It will be of no avail to despound [sic] and get the blue clouds over them come what may But one thing we ought to do We ought to prepare for it while we can. And I now wish to caution you that if this thing comes, and we are out of money we and our little children will most surely suffer. I therefore wish you to save all you can to a fine cut price. Make your old clothes go as far as possible to be comfortable and deacint [sic] Patch the children clothes and make old clothes into new ones for them. In short save the last penny for them for I tell you that if this thing comes our houses land and other property will not furnish us Even a meals victuals. Let me caution you to Stay at home with your children and make no Expenses except what you are compelled to make. Dont [sic] encourage yourself to feel bad over these things but meet them as you should it may be our fortune or our [illegible] let us make the best of it we can and be prepared If this thing comes two or three thousand dollars will be but a scanty sum to last us until it is all over. Save all you can.

You Seem to think I am not satisfied here. But this you are mistaken. I would it is true give much to have the trouble settled and us at home in a quiet country but as things

are I am now doing as I should do, and have no idea of leaving the army at present I do not know what I may do as things develop themselves.

I want more cheerful letters from you. Your letters are about all that gives me trouble. I cannot of course be happy when you in Every letter tell me you are un happy. I have in Every letter told you that things with us could not be changed, and you ought to accommodate yourself to the [illegible] circumstances and try to render us all as happy as possible. Dont [sic] write to me any more when you have a fit of the blues [illegible] you but write cheerful letter, and I will have nothing to complain of.

When I write to of facts Either as they are in the army or at home you seem to take up the idea that I am dissatisfied and unhappy. This you might not to think for I am not suffer myself to give way under Such things when it would instead of doing me good render me miserable. It is true that I regret the condition that our Whole people are in but that is nothing more than such at home is and I am in no worse condition here than I would in that aspect be if I were at home. If I say we are on the Eve of revolution in the west and take up the idea that I am sitting mopeing [sic] and disponding here about it for it is not so. It is nothing now than have looked for since my boyhood and if it was not come now it will before many years. And all we have to do is to prepare for it We can be in a tolerable condition for it. All you have to do is to follow the advice I give you and we will be in as good a condition as we can get ourselves in

I tell you nothing but money will be of avail to us then: therefore save all you can. And Especially all gold and silver that comes into your hands. Keep your own Eye constantly over your children

Do not I pray you leave them in charge of others for that is an imposition on the people to whom they are trusted and a great wrong to the children They are [illegible] to your constant care. Dont [sic] think of comeing [sic] out to the army under any circumstances. But let your home and children be your care.

Yours affectionately

James T Embree

Murfreesboro Tenn [sic]

Feby 10th 1863

Dear Mary

I received your letter by Capt [sic] Cochrun last night just after returning to camp from a foraging trip. The Small change came in good play as I had no mony [s[c] whatever. And change is exceedingly scarce. You speak of a Slander about Mrs [sic] S. Such a report has been circulating here for sometime but I dont [sic] believe that there is a Shadow of truth in it. As to keeping the cow for Elisha you will of course do so if he likes the milk and will furnish food for her in such quantity as you think right. I dont [sic] wish to deprive him of a thing so good for him for the main reason that it costs a little. Let him

have what he wants of it. As to your teeth I wish you to do as you think best. Get such teeth as you think will be best. I am Sorry that you have to loose [sic] your natural teeth and would advise you to Save all you can of them I wish you to have teeth of Some Kind at all Events. I do not wish you to go to Dr [illegible] for them as it would cost you more than the cost at home Even if the Dr made them for nothing. And I should feel like I had imposed on him if I should Suffer him to do so.

I Suppose Dr Hurd is a good dentist but I know him to be a very bad and dissolute man or at least he was considered so a year or two ago. As to Settling with Mr [sic] Ross you can do so if he wishes it. I suppose we owe him Enough or more than Enough to pay his note. If we owe him anything I Suppose he wants the money if so pay him.

If our old cow is still so mean as She was I Expect you had better have her sold Nat Finch stayed with me last night and is well. Frank has gone to Nashville with his regiment to guard a provision train He is well too. So many of our Genls and Colonels are absent that I now have to command the troops of this brigade whenever they went our foraging. I was out yesterday and got our hundred wagon loads of Sorn oats and fodder

We can get plenty by going about seven miles from town and crossing Stone [sic] River. There is no bridge over the river and the men have to be taken over on the wagons. I went out a few days ago but could not cross the river it was too high and only got about forty loads as there is but little on this side the river.

We send out our thousand infantry and six pieces of artillery on such trips.

We could hear of the rebels within a few miles of us but they did not attack us.

We are building some very strong forts here and will in a short time have the place very strongly fortified. Tell Lutie that he must take good care of himself and get [illegible]. Write oftener.

Your affection[illegible]

[end of letter]