

B. L. BATES
4113 S. PENINSULA DR.
DAYTONA BEACH, FLA.

1862

An interesting letter from mother's uncle John
who died in or near Louisville, Ky. during the war.
Also a letter from Grandma Sickels probably to
her sisters in N.Y. states. The Aaron Sickels who went
down for John's body was a brother to Grandpa Sickels
~~not a blood relative of John's~~

Civil war letter

Page #1

Louisville Oct 10th 1862

Dear Bro & Sister

As I am away
down here in Dixie I thought
perhaps you would like to hear from
me. I rec^d a letter from you not
long since, you sent it to Elsie & Sarah
sent it to me, or Durfee gave it to me
in Fentonville as I was on my way
from Saginaw to Detroit. Well I was truly
surprised at the spirit of your letter
I supposed you was more of a Union
woman than that all comes to. You said
that you was really in hopes that you
~~was really in hopes that you had not a Bro~~
that would Enlist as a soldier. now Eliza
you know that we have a war upon us
& an awful thing it is too. well there has some
one got to go & fight if they do not enlist
they surely will be drafted. & I made up my
mind that I never be a drafted soldier. ^{there}
~~is not one half the honor as to volunteer~~

Louisville Oct 10th 1862

Dear Bro & Sister

As I am away down here in Dixie I thought perhaps you would like to hear from me. I r'cd a letter from you not long since you sent it to Elsie & Sarah sent it to me, or Durfee gave it to me in Fentonville as I was on my way from Saginaw to Detroit. Well I was surely surprised at the spirit of your letter. I supposed you was more of a Union woman than that all comes to. You said that you was really in hopes that you was really in hopes that you had not a Bro that would enlist as a soldier. Now Eliza you know that we have a war upon us & an awful thing it is to. Well there has some one got to go & fight if they do not enlist they surely will be drafted & I made up my mind that I never be a drafted soldier there is not one half the honor as to volunteer.

I did not Enlist because I thought
that a soldiers life was an easy one
I knew that a Soldiers life was a hard
one I knew the many privation with
which a Soldier had to put up with, and
I left a comfortable home with plenty
to eat drink & wear an Aged Mother and
as good a wife as any man had the
good fortune to get. O Eliza I believe
She is the best woman in the world She has
got such a good disposition always good natured
& kind I left all of these to go and fight
because I thought it my Duty to go & I should
think that my Sisters would feel proud to think
that they had a Brother that was willing
to fight & bleed for his (and your) countrys
flag, & it must & shall wave. Well we left
Camp Saginaw 3 weeks ago last Thursday
arrived at Detroit in the evening, they had
supper prepared there for us we partook very
harty of the same after which we went on board
the Morning Star bound for Cleveland, we arrived
at that place the next morning about 10 o'clock
took the cars there for Cincinnati we got to Columbus

I did not enlist because I thought that a
soldier's life was an easy one. I knew that
a soldier's life was a harsh one. I knew the
many privation with which a soldier had
to put up with, and I left a comfortable
home with plenty to eat drink & wear, an
aged mother and as good a wife as any
man ever had the good fortune to get.
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the world. She has got such a good
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after which we went on board the Morning
Star bound for Cleveland. We arrived at
that place the next morning about 9
o'clock, took the cars there for Cincinnati.
We got to Columbus ...

about 6 P.M. that is a beautiful
place we stayed there But a few
moments. Kept on moving Bound for Cincinnati
We arrived at that place some time in the night
I was asleep but we stayed in the Cars untill
about 8 o'clock then we was marched up town & rec'd
our Catrages, as we was getting in the land of rebels
they thought it best for us to prepare for the same
well then we wer marched down to the market where
they had a good breakfast prepared for us the most
of them men ate hearty although they wer
prety near tired out. Well after Breakfast
was over we got aboard of the Cars Bound for
Jefferson Ville Ind (opposit to this place)
at which place we arrived Sunday morning
about 4 o'clock. We stayed on that side of
the river untill Tuesday Night about 12 o'clock
when we had orders to travel for Old Kentucky
& in ten minutes every man had his Knapsack strung
& musket shouldered & in a line of Battle at that time
Old Bragg was expected on this place with 50,000
men. But with intentions to burn the city the
women & children had left the city & most of the goods
had been moved out. the Government had sent in here

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burn the city the women & children had left
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The Government had sent in here ...

a few days previous about 45,000 troops
& Old Bragg heard of it some way, & changed his
course & went farther east of here out around Frankfort
Well as I was going to say Tuesday night we came over
here marched about one mile through town & was ordered
to halt stack arms & retire for the night. it was
by the side of the road on which Bragg would have
to pass to come in to the city & we expected to hear
of his approach every minute. But as it hapened
we stoped on a brick yard & I found 10 or 15 good
soft ones & horazontalized my perpendicularity
& the next thing I knew the Southern sun was
shining brightly in my face I arose went about
half a mile washed my-self went back to camp
took my haver-sack, sat down on the ground took out
a hard cracker & a piece of raw meat & of course had
a good Breakfast. Well about noon every thing
was in a hurly burly the Brigade ordered to fall in
to a line of battle. well about that time some of
the boys played sick they thought we was going to have
a battle sure. But we stood there awhile & then we
marched about 60 rds on a very nice piece of ground
Stayed there untill Saturday noon & then came up
on this side of the city about two miles from
where we was. we got here about dark, & 4 companies of
us was sent up South a mile & a half on picket duty
& the balance of the regt stayed here in the road all night
the next morning (Sunday) we came back here & stood
in the road all day & it rained quite hard all day
But we wer nothing but soldiers. the Officers had a good
dry place of course. & you may rest assured that I did too
but the most of the men stood in the rain all day in some
6 inches deep it looked rather tuff for them.
Well about dark we was marched out one side of the
road to another Bricks yard all wet & without tents
& camped for the night the regt stayed there
untill one week ago yesterday when they all that was

... a few days previous about 75,000 troops & Old Bragg
heard of it some way & changed his course & went farther
east of here out around Frankfort. Well as I was going to
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Well about dark we was marched out one side of the road
to another brick yard all wet & without tents & camped for
the night. The regt [regiment] stayed there untill one week
ago yesterday when they all that was ...

able to travel was ordered to take 6 days rations & prepare to march but there was quite a good many sick on account of lying on the cold wet ground. There was three detailed from our company to guard the camp good & as many from each company well we have all stayed here untill today waiting for our teams to return for our goods but they dont come & to day the Lieut took the goods to the wear houses & took all the men that wer able to walk & started for Frankfort in persute of the regt there was 10 or 15 left here that wer unable to go we are at private houses & have the best of care. I got started to go with them but they advise me to come back & stay with the rest of the boys but if I ever wanted to go any where it was with the boys to the regt there is three here that belong to our company they are not very sick but not able to travail. I feel almost entirely well but I am very weak yet

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I have had the Camp Diarrhoea ever
since I first came into the army,
well then when I come to lay out on the ground
nights in the rain I caught the worst cold
that I ever had & when the reg^t left here
I felt pretty hard up. & the Capt told me
that I had better stay here with the rest of
the Boys untill we was sent for some of them
have got well & have gon to day. after the reg^t
left I had a high fever for thre days & my
lungs wer very sore. I employed A doctor from
the City he cured my fever but he said
that he or any one else could ^{not} cure the diarrhoea
in this climate So you see to take my sickness
all-around it has made me reather weak
although I feel almost entirely well now I dont
suppose I could stand it to walk a great way in a
day. Where our reg^t is or how far from here
I dont know any thing about it. When we
shall go or how I cant tell But I presume
there will be some way provided for us.
I have got a first rate place to stop here
they dont charge much & are very kind to us
they do all they can for our comfort

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doctor from the city he cured my fever
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climate. So you see to take my
sickness all arround it has made me
rather weak although I feel almost
entirely well now I don't suppose I
could stand it to walk a great ways in a
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They have got one gun boat here in the river & canon planted along the shore to salt the rebels if they come here

I understand that they have a great
Battle out East here near Frankfort
there has some of the wounded been brought
here today I dont know whether our regt
was in the muss or not but I reckon not
But I dont believe they would run a great way
to get rid of fighting, for they are all spoiling
for a fight. We have just as good a regt
as there is in the field, & the Cincinnati
folkes said they wer the most Gentlemanly folkes
that had ever passed through there
Well Cincinnati is a very beautiful place
although we didnt have much chance to
look around, the Ohio river is a beautiful
Stream although it did not look much larger
than the maple it is very low now the lowest
that it was ever known to be, there is
one place about one mile below here that
a man can walk across very well Boats dont
run much now. We have a pontoon Bridge
across the river that will admit 8 men
to walk a breast, they could run a large army
over there in a short time but with a very
few shots with the canon they could spoil it

*that purpose
for that purpose
on the river
the gun
they have got
and they have got*

I understand that they have a great Battle out East here near Frankfort. There has some of the wounded been brought here today. I don't know whether our regt was in the muss or not but I reckon not. But I don't believe they would run a great ways to get rid of fighting for they are all spoiling for a fight. We have just as good a regt as there is in the field, & the Cincinnati folkes said they wer the most Gentlemanly folkes that had ever passed through there. Well Cincinnati is a very beautiful place although we didn't have much chance to look around. The Ohio river is a beautiful stream although it did not look much larger than the maple. It is very low now the lowest that it was ever known to be. There is one place about one mile below here that a man can walk across very well. Boats don't run much now. We have a pontoon Bridge across the river that will admit 75 (?) men to walk a breast. They could run a large army over there in a short time but with a very few shots with the canon they could spoil it and they have got the guns planted on the other side for that purpose. They have got one gun boat here on the river & canon planted all along the shore to salt the rebels if they come here.

Louisville is a very large & Beautiful city
it reaches 3 or four miles along the river
& as many or more back from the river
the Streets are all Ornimented with beautiful
Shade trees indiginous to the Southern
Climate they look very nice. the people here
are about $\frac{2}{3}$ re^l Union we can see Stars and
Stripes all over town but I presume if the
secesh army was here you could see the Stars
and Bars as plenty. But the rebel army wont
come here very soon. Bragg sent word for
the women & children to leave here for he
was going to burn the city you ought to
have seen the pale faces they wer a scart set
of people for a few days Such ^h hubbub as there
was here for 3 days & nights the Street wer
full of teams moving people out horses runaway
& men wer fighting & Soldiers wer drunk
& thier Officers too if the private Soldier
could have his way this Cussed war would not
last long But officers that are getting big
wages will prolong it as long as possible. that is
just the way the thing is & folkes begin to see it
& they begin to talk about it here too
you just go through Town here & you can
count 500 men with Shoulder Straps
it looks Bad they are fairly Stealing Uncle Sams
money. the people of Kentuck would like to
see this war Brought to a close & I guess the Soldiers
would shout for joy at the declaration of Peace and
who would not well I'll tell you

Louisville is a very large & Beautiful city. It reaches 3 or four miles along the river & as many or more back from the river. The streets are all ornimented with beautiful shade trees indiginous to the Southern Clime. They look very nice. The people here are about $\frac{2}{3}$ re^l Union. We can see Stars and Stripes all over town but I presume if the Secesh army was here you could see the Stars and Bars as plenty. But the rebel army won't come here very soon. Bragg sent word for the women & children to leave here for he was going to burn the city. You ought to have seen the pale faces they wer a scart sea of people for a few days. Such hubbub as there was here for 3 days & nights the streets wer full of teams moving people out, horses runaway, & men wer fighting & soldiers wer drunk & thier officers too. If the private soldier could have his way this cussed war wouldnot last long. But officers that are getting big wages will prolong it as long as possible. That is just the way the thing is & folkes begin to see it & they begin to talk about it here too. You just go through town here & you can count 500 men with shoulder straps [officers?]. It looks bad they are fairly steeling Uncle Sams money. The people of Kentuck would like to see this war brought to a close & I guess the soldiers would shout for joy at the declaration of Peace and who would not. Well I'll (?) tell you ...

B

it is a lot of Methodist Preachers
^{and north too} here that want to see the thing kept
up so they can have some thing to howl
about they commenced the War & I wish
every one of them had to shoulder a musket
& go into the field & fight it out
the most of them in the Southern States are
the worst Secesh we have. I will tell you
who are Secesh in this Town or what
I have been told by Union men
they are the Preachers & the rich men.
well let um rip. It is getting late
& you will pleas excuse me from writing
any more you know I have no news to
write & that is the reason I have written what
I have. I presume it will not be very
interesting to you but perhaps I can do better
next time. I rec'd a good long letter
from Kate & the little Boy today
the first word from home since I left Saginaw
I tell you it done me a heap of good

... it is a lot of Methodist Preachers here and north too that want to see the thing kept up so they can have some thing to howl about. They commenced the War & I wish every one of them had to shoulder a musket & go into the field & fight it out. The most of them in the Southern States are the worst Secesh we have. I will tell you who are Secesh in this Town or what I have been told by Union men. They are the Preachers & the rich men. Well let um rip (?). It is getting late & you will pleas excuse me from writing any more. You know I have no news to write & that is the reason I have written what I have. I presume it will not be very interesting to you but perhaps I can do better next time. I r'cd a good long letter from Kate & the little Boy today, the first word from home since I left Saginaw. I tell you it done me a heap of good.

I presume I have written over 50 pages
since last Sunday, should ^{nt} you think I would
be tired well I am. When I was telling you the
Sacrifice I made when I left home I must
acknowledge I forgot my Dear little Boy
he is certainly a very fine little fellow
& not so very small either he weighed 8 lbs 2 oz
when he was Born & he laughed when he
was just one week old we call him
John, Montrewel I didnt like the John
of it But Kate did & so I

I was at Cousin Walters not long since
Stayed 3 days Lote & Maile ^{Moss} came there
& thier two Boys had a good visit I guess
they are pretty Poore I see Walter give them
a lot of meat & stuff to take home.

That was about one week after Uncle Harvy died

Every thing is very high here. Hay \$60 per ton
wood \$4.00 cord Sheeting 25 cts calico 20 cts

Butter 50 cts coffee 25 sugar 16 to 18 tea 1.2 & Eggs 38
#127 tobacco (Rich I keep my box yet) I should think

is was high time that to begin to cry for
Peace

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you think I would be tired? Well I
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Dear little Boy. He is certainly a
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when he was just one week old.
We call him John Montrewel (?). I
didn't like the John of it But Kate
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50 cts, coffee 25, sugar 16 to 18, tea
1.2 (??) eggs 38, tobacco \$1.25 (Rich
I keep my box yet). I should think is
[it] was high time to cry for peace.

Wm Lackels is our Capt he is a very
fine man the Boys all like him
I am Sargent get \$4.00 pr m But that
is no object for I could get as much at home
but perhaps I could save more here. I dont
know as I can though if I am sick all
the time I have to buy some little notions
now & then & when I am in camp I like
a piece of pie now & then But I dont
use much of my money for such things
I sent home to Kate \$45.00 which made
me short but I borrowed a little of the Boys
when the regt left. Kate say they take
of sending a box of provisions here to the Boys
& she says if they do that I had better look out
or she will send me some thing, well I should
not feel very bad about it I tell you

Well since I commenced writing to night
I have written 17 pages to Kate 4 to Hiram
4 to Mother & this makes 11 to you
making in all 36 pages & there dont
any of it amount to much so I will
quit scribbling

Wm Lackels is our Capt. He is a
very fine man. The Boys all like
him. I am Sargent get \$17.00 pr
m but that is no object for I
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don't know as I can though if I
am sicke all the time. I have to
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But I don't use much of my
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There is some other thing that I
should like to write but I guess I
will wait until next time I am
going to write Amanda to morrow & maby
I will send a line or two to Henry Cobb Esq
of Northvill Michigan I presume you
have heard of him. Pleas give my love
to David & Adelia. Tell them that I am
trying to keep out of all bad company
& I do not participate at all in the
wicked sports & games that I see before my
eyes every day. There is drinking card playing
& every thing of the kind but I do not
go into any such thing. I promised Kate
when I left her that I would be a true
Soldier I am trying to be one. Tell them
to Pray for me that I may one day
after wars & tumults I shall cease
& Peace declared. return to my family
& friends & see all of your happy faces again
write soon & direct to Co A 23 regt

Mich Inft Army of the Ohio Louisville Ky

My love to all enquireing friends to
Aunt Elen especualy

Respectfully yours

John T. Cobb the Soldier

R.B.J.

There is some other thing that I should
like to write but I guess I will wait until
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Army of the Ohio Louisville KY.

My love to all enquireing friends to Aunt
Elen especualy

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