Documents

HOLLIS CORRESPONDENCE

The manuscript copies of the letters printed below, except the one written in 1848, were obtained from Mrs. Wilson Short of Worthington, Indiana, through the good offices of Miss Lorena Cullison. The Civil War letters were accidentally discovered in an attic by Bobby ("Bob") Van Short and Jack Austin Short, two school boys, and brought to the attention of Miss Cullison, who is a teacher in the Worthington Public Schools. The old Hollis home in Worthington was purchased by the Short family in recent years. It was while the house was being remodeled preparatory to occupancy by the Short family that the two boys Bob and Jack Short found the letters. Bert Hollis, a son of the Thomas ("Tom") Hollis, to whom the letters of 1863-1866 were written, now lives in Worthington. Thomas Hollis was a younger brother of Joseph H. Hollis, Heber Hollis and Charles Hollis. Emma Hollis, a sister mentioned in several letters, was younger than the four brothers. She was a student at Indiana University at the time of the Civil War. No information relative to Frank W. Knowles, writer of several of the letters, save that contained in the correspondence has been found. His own statements indicate that he was from the vicinity of Boston, Massachusetts, and that he was stationed at Indianapolis for three months in the summer of 1863. There, he became acquainted with Thomas Hollis. While in Indiana, Knowles must have visited in the Hollis home at Worthington, as it is clear from his letters that he knew Tom’s sister Emma. Knowles and Tom Hollis saw service together at Knoxville, Tennessee, after their regiment was ordered South. Their later correspondence seems to have been simply an outcome of the friendship that grew up between the two men in 1863 while in East Tennessee.

The father of Emma Hollis and her brothers was the Rev. Humphrey Hollis, an Episcopalian minister. He and his wife were living at Worthington in the Civil War period. In his letter of December 7, 1862, from the Virginia front to Tom, Joe speaks of the father and mother as "getting old."

The last letter here published, written by Harrison N. Throop in 1848, has no connection with those that precede it in the series. The writer of this early letter was a preacher,
who was temporarily keeping the Junction House, a tavern, at Point Commerce, Indiana. Rev. Throop was the father of Julia Throop who became the wife of Thomas Hollis, the recipient of the letters of the Civil War period. The Throop letter of 1848 is a treasured possession of Bert Hollis of Worthington. Being a son of Thomas and Julia Throop Hollis, the present Mr. Hollis is a grandson of the Rev. Humphrey Hollis and also of the Rev. Harrison N. Throop.

[The Letters]

Sperryville
July 27th 1862

Dear Brother,

I take a few spare moments to write you a few lines. I would have written sooner only that we have had no mail for over a week and I do not know as you will get this for I hear that all of our mail is stopped at Washington but I will try and send you this short note hit or miss. We have not made any move here yet and how soon we will is a question. Our Cavairy have been doing some good work over on the Rail Road I suppose you have seen an account of it. The late order of Gen. Pope is causing the "Stay at Home Rebels" to feel very bad. It is a good thing and will go farther toward putting down the Rebellion than anything done for some time. I think that things are beginning to wind up, and, if I am not much mistaken, the War will end right here in Va. But there is much blood to be split yet before it closes. How is recruiting going on in your state? I hear that Ill has her quota full. I hope the boys will turn out to put down the Rebellion if we get our 300,000 men out we certainly will win the day. I fear that the war has been kept up longer than necessary, but I think the day is now passed and the Rebels will be dealt with the same as if they were a Foreign nation. I hope that it will soon close for if I am ever to get home it may be this fall. I have not been very well of late and when I am not well I do not like soldiering so well. You will have to excuse short-cut for I have to go.

Write soon
Your affe. Bro.,
J. H. Hollis

Chantilly, Va., Dec 7th 1862

Dear Brother,

I received your welcome letter of Nov. 27th upon yesterday and I

1 Sperryville, Virginia, just east of the Blue Ridge on the road from Luray to Warrenton.
2 This letter was from J. H. (Joe) Hollis to Thomas (Tom) Hollis, Thomas, who had seen some service in East Tennessee, before returning to his home at Worthington, Indiana, was younger than his brother Heber H. Joseph H., or Charles Hollis. After Civil War, Thomas Hollis was a druggist in Worthington for many years.
3 Chantilly is about thirty-five miles west of Washington, D.C., and ten miles northwest of Fairfax C. H., Virginia.
4 J. H. Hollis to Thomas Hollis.

was very glad to hear that you was always employed. it has been a good while since your last. I hope you will try and write a little oftener I see by your last letter that you have improved in your penmanship. I am glad to see it. I have not the patience to learn but I think I have improved in the last year. the moast of good penmen put on too many fub dubs for me I like to see a good plain hand like Father writes. But then I often think if people want to hear from me they will have to take it as I give it. I often write in a hurry for as a general thing if I begin to write a letter I have to leave two or three times to do something. Our camp was airmarked again last night but everything is quiet to-day. Last night was the coldest we have had it was a beautiful night the moon shone bright as day and the Stars looked as if they would burst from their sockets. The wind blew very hard until about 11 o'clock at night the Sun is out to-day but it is very windy. We have cut sod and built us chimneys and we are quite comfortable. They are to-day taking a list of all camp equipage, clothing, &c. &c. wanted by us that is a sign of moving. It is reported here that Burnside has burned Fredericksburg, but nothing reliable as yet there is also a rumor of Peace. It is said that they are making out the papers in Washington. I hope it will be only upon our own terms. We have fought them so long let us see it out. One side or the other will claim the victory and if it is a Compromise the South will always be putting upon the same form until it will be war again. I pray we may never enter into the other war of this kind. Tell Mother that I enquired for her friend Mrs. Baker of a young Lady that has lived here for years and knew her. She says that she Mrs. Baker went to the South shortly after the war broke out. She was Sessah, tell her I did not know before that she had any Sessah friends but so it is with Civil War Brother against Brother and Father against Son and Son against Son. I hope that our Southern friends will try and lay down their arms and come back into the good old Union and I will insure her to never sink, and I know that Uncle Sam will do as much for them and more than any one else. This has been a sad war. Not one half of it is yet told. Virginia will never be again what she was before the war, and it will be years before they can again fence it so it can be worked. Luckey is the man that has Stone fence in this State. Give my love to Father & Mother also to Sister Emma. I wrote to Father on the 5th. I hope he gets my letters all. You must write when you can. help Father and Mother all you can. They are getting old. Hoping to hear from you before long again I remain your affectionate Bro., Joe H. Hollis.

Camp Brookes Station, Va., May 12th 1863

Dear Bro. Thos.,

I sent myself to write you a few lines this morning. I wrote to

5 Brookes Station was a small station on the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, a short distance northeast of the Reuttshattuck River.
6 J. H. Hollis to Thomas Hollis.
Father the other day telling about the Battle, &c &c. I suppose you have seen an account of it in the papers but it is beyond description the roar of artillery and musketry is [was] beyond anything you can imagine. How little people at Home know about war. Our camp is more gloomy than it ever yet was known to be. Our Col was wounded in the breast and passing into his arm. We will lose him. Our Lt-Col was wounded at Cross Keys and is not able to keep the field. He has resigned and our Capt has been appointed Provost Marshal, 17th District of Ohio. Two of our old Captains of Co. I & II I hear have resigned and many a man killed or wounded upon the battle field our ranks are thinned by this wicked Rebellion, everything looks so very dull. We had Corps drill yesterday and our Regt. turned out about what we had in one company when we left Camp Chase. One more fight and we are all gone. No more of the 25th will be left, but we all wish to see the Rebellion finished. The Rebels all had their canteens full of whiskey and Gun powder and they fought walking up to the very cannon mouth. But what a sin it is to put men into battle in that way where they are like demons. I pray God may turn their hearts and that they may see the folly of their ways. We are having fine weather now but when across the River [Rappahannock] we had a good share of rain. I wish I could get to come and see you but it is impossible. I have been trying to get leave to go to Washington for a few days, but it is not in the Books. I suppose we will soon move again and it is reported that General Hooker has again crossed the River. I think not, for a great many Regiments have left for the South their time having expired and I do not see why we should move before we get men to fill up the Regiments. I suppose you have seen a account of Gen Milroy’s Sword given by our Regiment. I have no news to tell you only that all again is quiet. Write soon and all of the news.

Your aff Bro,
J. H. Hollis

Frederick City, Md., July 13th 1863

Dear Brother,

I received last night five letters, one from you, one from Father, also one from Mother. Yours the 24th of June, Father’s the 28th, Mother’s July 6th, they all found me well. I have been with the Baggage train since on the march. I had no place assigned to me so I took up with the opportunity to ride here, or I would have to go afoot as they have taken my horse. I have done nothing since this Battry was in the Battle of Gettysburg. We had eight wounded, all from the old 11th but one they were all slight wounded but one he was shot through the abdomen. The Battry is now at South Mountain where I suppose there will soon be a Bloody Battle. Six hundred prisoners came in yesterday. They are getting badly whipped. Dix is re-enforcing Mead here with 110,000 men. We are some 25 miles from the Battlefield. We hear no news today as yet but some heavy firing in that direction. I wrote Father the 11th. I see by the papers that they are going into your state. Morgan and someone, I have forgotten who, everything looks like a speedy close to the war of which we are getting tired of but the late successes gives us new life. Providence seemed to favor us. We are having heavy rains which keeps up the River [Potomac] so that they [Confederates] cannot get back to Virginia. Everywhere our troops go the houses are turned into bake shops. The people of Penn are very particular about getting pay for the Rails and what the Soldiers destroy. They are a penurious set, charge enormous prices for everything. The people of Md, if we were to judge by actions, are the most loyal. There was three spies hung here on Tuesday last. They hung three days. We have got two more. One said before he swung he would of had all of our wagons captured if we had let him gone two hours longer. This is a very nice little place. We have the Baltimore Pike from here to the Battlefield so that we have good Roads to send supplies to the army. I heard from Joe 11 on Tuesday last. He was well. This is a very wet day & my paper is damp so that I cant write on it very well so you will have to excuse this poorly written letter. tell Father I will answer his letter in a few days. Also give them my love & accept a share.

From your afft. Brother
Heber

Direct: 11th N. Y. Batry
Reserve Arty
Army of Potomac

Camp Near Warrenton Junction 12
Sept. 9th 1863

Dear Brother,

Your kind letter of the 3d reached me this P. M. finding me well & all O. K. The Weather is dry. We need Rain very much. We are lying Still. Nothing doing. All eyes are turned towards Charleston. I hope she may soon fall. I had a letter from Bro Joe 13 on Sunday last. He was well & confident of Success. May God protect him. I do not think we will move until Charleston does fall for we have sent a great many troops down there. I wish we were among them but it may all be for the best.

If you get the position as Hospital Steward you will find you have a good one, & it will be easier than to carry a musket. I had a letter

10 General George Gordon Meade was in command of the Union forces at Gettysburg. General Dix mentioned at the beginning of the sentence, was John A. Dix of New York.
11 J. H. Hollis, who was soon to be sent from Virginia with the forces that were to attempt to take Charleston, South Carolina.
12 A junction on the Orange and Alexandria Railroad eight miles from Warrenton. A spur railroad connected Warrenton with the O. & A. R. R.
13 Heber R. Hollis to Thomas Hollis.
14 J. H. Hollis, now with the Union forces before Charleston, S. C.
from Mother yesterday. She was rather poorly. Her side she thought was getting worse. I advised her to go to ——15 again & let Dr. Hubbard cure her. I told her she might have money if she needed it, but she thinks she ought not to take it. I laugh at her. She says I will need it when the war is over, but as long as I can spare her pain & make her comfortable I don't care if it takes all I can earn. She is welcome to it. She has earned it taking care of me in my younger days, but may God spare us as a Family that we may meet again on earth, if not let us be prepared to meet in the next world where there is no war. Live near to God, Dear Brother, & trust in Him. He will hear your prayers. You are now in the way of temptation. be careful, watch, and pray lest you enter the paths of wickedness. Pray for me & all of us and may God in His infinite goodness spare us to meet again, is the prayer of your Affectionate Brother Heber.

Direct Heber R. Hollis
114 N. Y. Battry
Artillery Reserve
Army of Potomac.

Department of the South
Folly Island, 16 S. C.
Sept. 9th 1863

Dear Brother,17

As it has been some time since I have heard from you and just receiving a letter from Father giving me your address, I will drop you a line and let you know I am yet in the land of the living but a good ways down in "Dixie". Little did I think of having the extreme pleasure of helping takeing the City of Charleston but so it is to be. We arrived here upon the 13th of August and have had the pleasure of helping take the great Fort Wagoner. Morris Island is all ours now, with it Ft. Wagoner, Ft. Gregg and Sumter. It is knocked into a pile of rubbish and brick. the Fort will be of no use to us, and there is many Forts yet to take before we get into the great City. They tell us that the people there in has no very kind feeling for the "Yanks", but we shall see before long. Gen. Gilmer never undertakes a thing without putting it through, and when he has taken one of the strongest Forts in the Country, what is the use in people saying that he can not take Charleston,18 the boys here are all in good spirits and are confident in their General. Now I want to ask you what are you doing down in Indiana keeping down Copperheads? I would like much to hear from you and know how you like a Soldier's life, but you will not see much Service, I don't suppose. I wish you all the luck in the world. Write and tell me all. We are having a fine time down here as a bath in the Salt water. The Mosquitoes will not let you get very much rest in day-time but we have Mosquitoe Bars for to sleep in under. We use very large Guns here, the kind that throw nail kags. I am of the opinion that the Southern gens do not like very well the kind of Shot that we throw into their forts. The little Monotors do their share. it is worth a good deal to a man to See the Sights here. I suppose the people of the North are all anxious to hear from here. How is the Copperheads in old Ind? They are getting worse in Ohio and will try hard to elect Val for Gov. but I do not believe they can do it. There is none of that kind of men here. They is two or three Negro Regts here. They make good Soldiers and save the white soldiers a good deal of hard work. They make a fine appearance on drill. I am in for the Black Soldier. I say bring them on. You must write when you can. I am [in] some hurry this morning So excuse short letter. Direct to Folly Island, S. C., Gordon's Division, Via Port Royal. I am as ever, your Aff Bro.,

J. H. Hollis

Camp Near Petersburg, Va., July 3d 1864

Dear Brother,19

Your favor of June 21st came to hand yesterday finding me in good health but not the best of spirits, for we had just got the news of our Cavalry meeting with such poor success on their way back after having accomplished so great an object, but we must expect some reverses, but this is a sad one for we are not so well off for Horses as we might be.

There is nothing new from our front. We still continue to throw a few shell into Petersburg, but it don't appear to be accomplishing a great deal. We are getting pretty well rested, however, a thing which when we came here was very much needed. The water we get is rather poor being a white clayey color. The country here is quite level. Dust, there is no end to. We stand very much in need of Rain which I hope we will get soon.

You are correct in thinking this is the roughest Campaign since the War. the like has never been seen but we now are having a rest & plenty to eat, so we have no cause for complaint. But the great Question is, how will it terminate. We have lost a great many men & Lee appears to meet us wherever we go. They (the Johnnies) have got splendid works & positions, which we cannot deny. It may be we can so hem them in that they will be obliged to evacuate, but this will take a long time & more men than we have at present.

If I were to have it my way, all the Armes that are now Idle should be manned. There is no use puttering any longer. If they want to put down the Rebellion let them call men enough at once & crush it, not daily along with a few thousand at the time. There is where the trouble has always been. We never had men enough. If in the start it had been six hundred thousand instead of seventy-five thousand, the War might of been stopped at once, but they let them get arms &

15 Heber R. Hollis to Thomas Hollis.
16 J. H. Hollis to Thomas Hollis.
17 Charleston was not evacuated by Confederates until Feb. 18, 1865, after General Sherman had severed all of the city's inland connections.

18 An Island along the coast south of Morris Island which is just south of Charleston harbor.
19 Heber R. Hollis to Thomas Hollis.
Recruits as fast as we would send men for them to kill off. No, I think Abraham might of put this War down before this. The Nomination of Abe & Johnson I will say nothing. I am a soldier & have nothing to say, but if it is for the best, I hope he may get it, if not I hope he won't. But time will tell. You know we are of different politics, & it is something I will not argue on.

There is a scarcity of help here to as well as there. Ha! Ha! But you have done your share. I am glad to hear Charlie has escaped all right, but I fear there will have to be more drafting. While I sit writing we can hear the Boom of the Cannon of the Rebels. Our men try & rot do any firing on this day but are often obliged to. Tomorrow is the Fourth. how I do wish it was to be a glorious fourth as it was to our forefathers that we might have peace. Who knows but it may. I fear not, though, but let us pray for a speedy peace to our land. Well, dear Brother, I have four more letters to write so you will excuse me for this time I must write to Joe & — Write often for you have more time. I am very busy most of the time now, but I will not work Sunday unless obliged to. So I improve my writing & reading. You hear from me often by our folks, in fact when I write I mean it for all so don't be particular who I direct to. My love to all. Kiss Mother & Em for me. All write soon to Your Afft. Bro.,

Heber

Fort Mitchell, S. C. July 6th, 1864

Dear Brother,

I have been looking for a long time for a letter from you but I guess you will not write until I send you a few lines and to tell you the truth there is not much to write about. The expedition that left here has been heard from. They landed on James Island and have taken all but Fort Johnson on the Island. If they get that, Charleston will be one of the Cities that was. Our loss is reported to be very heavy but I hope it may prove less than report says. Our Regt being on picket duty we did not get to go, and it may all be for the best as the losses have been very great. In fact, our Regt has been very lucky. Since its re-inlistment we came to this Department from Virginia when at the same time troops were going from here to Virginia.

We are very pleasantly located but the weather is extremely hot. I would much prefer being farther North but I will have to be satisfied to remain where Uncle Sam sends me. I am very tired of Soldiering. A year or two ago I did think I would be a Soldier all my life,

but I find I am a great deal broken down and cannot stand exposure like I once could. I would have been better satisfied if I could have visited home when in Ohio. I shall get out if I can, if not, I shall remain and do my duty.

What a change has come over our country in the last few years!

There is many in our States that are disloyal to our Flag. There will be a heavy contest fought this fall for the Presidency and every loyal man should do all he can for his country and put down this Copperheadism. You can do touch, be on the side of right, and God will reward you.

Give my love to all, Father, Mother & Sister. Write when you can. Chas. does not write any to me and it has been a long time since I have heard from you. Hoping that this may find you all well, I am Aff your Brother,

J. H. Hollis

Head Quarters 3d Div. 9th Army Corps, Before Petersburg, Va., July 29th 1864

Friend Tom: By this time you think that I have quite forgotten you, and I acknowledge that you have good cause for thinking so, and have often wished that it could be otherwise, but "business has to come before pleasure" now.

I have, since my last writing, received three letters from you with much pleasure, and will now do the best I can towards answering them and also let you know what I have been doing all this time.

The last time I wrote you (lay that to a dose of "Spiritus Frumento" just taken) I was at Hd. Qrs. 2d Div.lying around at Annapolis with nothing to do but play euchre from morning till night. We were kept in this way until the 20th of April, when the Corps was organized into four Divisions, and the 3d assigned to Gen. Willcox. We were then ordered to prepare at once for the field and on April 20th we left Alexandria, the troops marching and the baggage going by water. On the 27th of April we left Alexandria and marched to Warrenton Junction via Fairfax Court House, Blackburn's Ford, and Bristoe Station, arriving on the 29th. May 4th we left the Junction [Warrenton] under orders to join the Army of the Potomac and marched across the Rappahanock and Rapidan to the Wilderness, where we were heavily engaged on the 6th, and Capt. Hutchins and Major Lyon of this staff wounded. May 7th we moved for Spotsylvania C. H. via Chancellorsville and on the 9th arrived at the NY River, crossed and became engaged with the enemy. We were about Spotsylvania, all the time changing position and engaged more or less until May 21st when we took up our line of march for the North Anna River, where we relieved a Div. of the 2d Corps at Ox Ford. There we lay until the 26th when we again moved to Hanover Town

27 Frank W. Knowles to Thomas Hollis.
28 The Wilderness campaign took place in the country south of the Rapidan and west of Fredericksburg.
across the Pamunkey River, made a reconnaissance, found the enemy and on the 20th & 31st attacked near Shady Grove Road driving the enemy some distance. On June 1st the enemy attacked us, but they were repulsed. During that engage, Lt. Brackett was slightly wounded in the knee and the Genl. had a very narrow escape, as a ball went through his coat, vest, and both shirts without touching him. Next day (June 2d) we started for Cold Harbor, but did not succeed in getting half way as the Rebs attacked us near Bethesda Church, and got a good thrashing for their trouble. We fought on the second & third and then went on to Cold Harbor, as the Johnnies left before daylight on the 4th. We were at Cold Harbor from the 5th to the 12th of June, during which time we built a large Redoubt on our front, and did some damage to the enemy, but on the evening of the 12th we commenced our march to the James, crossed on the 15th at Windmill Point, and moved here to the support of the 18th Corps. On the 17th and 18th we fought the hardest battle of this campaign. The General was wounded on the 18th by a piece of shell, in the leg, but would not leave the field. Another of our Staff whom you do not know, was slightly wounded on the 17th and one of the orderlies killed. Our Actg. Engineer Officer was killed at North Anna River, and the Capt. who took Maj. Lyon's place while he is on leave, was wounded on the 6th of this month.

What has been done here since the engagements of the 17th and 18th ult. is contraband news, but you will probably hear from us very soon, if I can be any judge of the "signs of the times."

I have been kept so busy as it was possible to be since we have been here in copying the records of the Division, which had to be kept on paper during the previous active part of the campaign, besides that I had the back returns to make up and altogether they have taken me a great deal of time to write private letters, hardly a chance to keep the folks at home posted. Yesterday I succeeded in getting a clerk to help me, and now hope to have a little more time to myself. My records are all written up except my "Letters Received" and in that I have only a half a month's work to copy.

I was very glad to hear of your good luck on your trip over the mountains and safe arrival home. We often wondered how "Tom was getting along" during your trip. Your letter of April 10th came along about a month after yours & the last one. Well, I was greatly glad to hear of your sister thinks that I am never intending to answer her letter, but I shall, just as soon as I can get accounts straightened out and the work again in running order. Until that time comes, I have to write all my letters about this time (midnight) and it is rather difficult to write a decent letter after being steadily at work all day. This one is sufficient proof of that. Now I suppose you would like to know what has become of the horses. Well, Tobo is clerking in Knoxville at Hd. Qrs. 3d Division 29d Corps, getting along well and having a good time. George Hall is a saddler with the Train, Charley Walsmsby and Jimmy are out of the Service but Jimmy is still with the captain having brought his horse on for

him when he came back from the "leave," that he got on account of his wound. John is still driving team in the 2d Division, I believe. Tony got drunk the morning that we left Annapolis and stole a horse, was arrested, and as his time is now out, I don't know where he is. Charley Kern took care of the General's horses until he went home. Charley Chase is still at Corps Hd.Qrs., and as jolly as ever.

We have a young fellow from Boston, a friend of the Doctor's and a member of the 56th Mass., a new Regt. He occasionally gets me a bottle of Spiritus Pernodii and then we draw a ration once in a while. The Sanitary is here and there are more Butlers than there were in the Tennessee Campaign. It has been awful hot and dry ever since we have been here, in fact, we have only had two days of rain since the 26th of May, so you can imagine how we are getting along in that line. Rations are plenty as they always are in the Army of the Potomac. Soft bread every other day, beans, potatoes, onions, cabbages, beets, turnips, fresh beef, salt beef, hard tack, sugar, coffee, tea, and whiskey. Then the Sanitary Commission let us have a few pickels, &c. occasionally. Well, my letter is being spun into a yarn, and as we are expecting a row here in about three hours, I suppose I had better get a little sleep before I get awakened at 3 A.M. Give my kind regards to your sister Em (for short).

And believe me your true friend,

Frank W. Knowles

Write soon to the address of: Care of Brig. Genl. O. B. Willcox
Hd.Qrs. 3d Div. 9th Army Corps
Army of the Potomac

Head Quarters 3d Div. 9th A. Corps
Blacks Station Va. August 24th 1864

Tom, yours of the 14th was received this morning and not knowing "what a day may bring forth" to prevent my writing, I think that I will answer it immediately.

Since my last, our quiet good times have been somewhat disturbed. The night I wrote you July 29th I was up until about 2½ o'clock and then after a short nap got up at 4 A.M. on the 30th just as the General and staff rode off. At 20 minutes of 5 o'clock the mine under the rebel fort was exploded, which was a signal for the artillery to open, and such a roar as run along the line I never before heard. This, with the 1st and 2nd Div. charged on the breach caused by the explosion, and carried the line on each side of the fort for a short distance but after that, no advantage was gained. Our 4th Div. (Nige) came up, and attempted a charge but rushed back in confusion, and at 3 P.M. we retired to our own line. During the engagement I was at an Earthwork on the left of the line and had a splendid view of the fight. I would like very much to have you see this campaign, just to show you a little of what war really is. In our famous Tennessee Campaign we only saw marching and short rations, which is the worst side of the picture. That reminds me of

*Knowles to Thomas Hollis.
Tebo who wished me to give you his respects and ask you to write; his address is:

Tebo Schwinden Jr.
Head Quarters 14th Div. 23 Army Corps
Knoxville
Box 179 East Tennessee

and he can tell you much better than I where he is and what he is doing.

After the Engagement of the 30th ult, we lay quiet for a few days and then Hancock with the 22nd Corps was sent off to Deep Bottom on our right, where the Enemy's attention was engaged when, on the 18th, Warren with his 5th Corps was suddenly pushed off on the left to this place where they tore up the Rail Road and raised old nick generally. On the morning of the 19th at 3 o'clock this Div. marched and on the 19th and 20th helped to whip the Rebels most beautifully when they tried to regain their lost ground.

Richmond papers of yesterday seem to feel very desponding. They report 5 generals killed or taken prisoners.

It is beginning to rain, and I must put up my paper as I don't feel like getting wet and have nothing but a fly to write under. Will finish at the first opportunity.

Hd Qtrs 1st Div 9th A Corps
Near Peebles House Va Oct 9th 1864

I promised to finish at the first opportunity after the above was written, and that time has come. The day after the first part of this letter was written I had the misfortune to break the silver clasp on my teeth, and accordingly, have obtained a Surgeon's Certificate from Dr. O'Connell, I applied for and obtained a furlough of 30 days. I should have sent this before I went, but the fight with the 2nd Corps happened on Aug. 25th and our Div. had to pack up and go to their support, and not get the desk out again until about 15 minutes before I started for City Point on the 26th of August. After spending three weeks very pleasantly at home I came back arriving at the Weldon R. R. on the 20th of September. In my absence the Divisions of this Corps have been changed making three Divisions and numbering this one the 1st in stead of 3rd theretofore. Soon after my arrival, that is a few days, we got orders to be ready to move and on Sept. 30th we moved to this place, took two lines of works and established a line of our own. Yesterday the whole Corps went out about two miles on a reconnoissance in force, to feel of the enemy and met with but little resistance.

While at home I had a chance to see some few young ladies, but from some cause, I do not feel so much interest in the sex—except in some cases—as I did before I left home. Perhaps it is on account of being for so long a time deprived entirely of their society. The Dr. Richards (Now Capt. Richards) and Brackett are still here. Capt. Hutchins, having never fully recovered from his wound in the thigh on May 6th, has gone home again on leave. Geo. Hall came up from the train and made me a short call today. He is the same old Hall. The men in Veteran's Regiments who did not recant are getting mustered out now, and that makes the Vets. mad. Thanks for those stamps which you sent me, for they came in very good time.

Please excuse the looks of this for it was all written in a hurry and has been folded more than a month.

Give my kind regards to your sister. The exigencies of the service will not permit me to write private letters very often, and that is my reason for not having written the 22nd Corps as long.

I remain Your friend,
Frank

Head Qrs 1st Div. 9th A. C. Jan. 6th 1865

Friend Tom,

One of the clerks is away on furlough but I think that be catching leisure moments I may be able to get a letter written before the mail goes out tonight. I think the General should be sent to Indianapolis again (and take me with him) to keep those buttens, copperheads, &c., in their proper places. I don't know what has become of Tebo—I wrote him before I went home on furlough, and have not heard a word from him since. Think he must have left Knoxville and not received my letter. Have you got an answer yet?

About that correspondent. I have not seen a letter yet. Did you find it hard work to get a young lady who would write to a strange soldier?

You asked me how I was to spend Christmas and I will tell you. Of course you know it was Sunday. On that day we do no work except to appoint the officer of the Day, therefore we spent the morning loafing, after a durner of cold boiled pork (salt), hard tack, and coffee we spent the afternoon in the same useful (?) employment. Just before dark Major Hutchins went out visiting and left me as A. A. Genl, to stay in his tent until he returned. There I found an interesting book and passed the evening in reading. I have not had so blue a day since I have been in the Army as that was.

New Year's Day was a little better. On New Year's Eve the clerks in the other office got 3 canteens of whiskey and about midnight raised the old Nick and when I went in and tried to stop them, they wanted me to have a dance. We (in the A. A. G. O.) sat up until 2 o'clock, and got up a fife piece of pensmanship. (It was not written with a quill, and I don't wish you to consider this a sample) which we scrolled and fixed up with birds, eagles, &c. &c. and laid it on Major Hutchins' table before he got up in the morning.

We had determined that we would not have so poor a dinner, as that on Christmas, and had accordingly got flour, apples, raisins, &c. &c. and had two gigantic dumplings (it took two copper kettles to boil them in) and as there was no wine, had a whiskey sauce instead. I thought I was temperance man enough, but one of the clerks was so extremely temperate that he had to have some sauce made especially

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31 It will be noticed that a long period (over seven weeks) passed between the writing of the first and second portions of this letter.

32 Knowles to Thomas Hollis.
for him, that had no whiskey in it. I have not had anything so
strong for three months, except some which Maj. Hutchins sent in
Christmas Eve from a demijohn that was sent him by some friends in
New York, and again two drinks New Year's Eve. Don't you think
I shall come out all right?

Is your sister at college now? I hope she does not get hold of
any of my letters, for they are a strange mixed up mess of stuff.
The boxes which should have been here a week ago came along
last night, and we have accordingly been having a New Year's din-
ter today.

I don't think I have told you of the change in rank of several of
this staff. O. B. W. is now Bvt. Maj. Genl. Richards a Bvt.
Major as also Capt. Hutchins, and Brackett is not only a Bvt. Capt.
but also a Capt. by Commission in the 57th Mass.

Geo. Hall is still in the land of the living and about the same as
ever.

Do you ever go to Indianapolis? If you do, and will call at No. 1
Alvords Block on Penn. St., you will find a Miss Webster who will
at any time be glad to hear any thing from Knowles or tell you any-
thing she may have heard concerning him. I believe that I gave you
a note to carry to her when you left us in Tenn. One year ago tonight
Genl Grant spent at our Head Qrs. near Maynardville.45 How many
things have happened since then, and how those who were then to-
gether are now separated. But I must not be getting sentimental.
It is 9 o'clock P. M. and I have done better than 1 expected in catching
moments to write. I have now got to get up an order convening a
court martial, and must be at work so as to get to bed.

I remain yours truly,

Frank W. Knowles
Direct: Frank W. Knowles
Head Qrs. 1st Div. 9th A. Corps
Army of the Potomac

Head Qrs.
1st Div. 9th A. Corps
March 5th 1865

Friend Tom,46

Yours of the 22d ult. came to hand in due season, and as you
wished me to write soon I will improve this first opportunity.

Am glad to hear that young ladies like my penmanship, though
I cannot remember writing to any of them. However, should be
very happy to have an opportunity of seeing a specimen from them
with a few words of encouragement and a name and address. Do you
think any of those fair 'demoiselles' would condescend to do me
this favor?

I didn't know that I was writing to a "pup", and "can't see it"
yet. Perhaps that is because the afternoon is almost gone, and "day-
light now is fading fast away".

45 A town In East Tennessee, about 23 miles north of Knoxville.

46 Knowles to Thomas Hollis.
will probably not be able to get a letter from him very soon. Excuse this paper, it is the first that came to hand. Gen. Grant has gone on with the Army. When I write again I hope to be able to say that the C. S. A. is gone under. Gen. Potter is badly wounded. You will remember that we relieved him from command of the Corps at Strawberry Plains. My paper is full and I have no more spare time.

I remain Yours Truly,

Frank W. Knowles

Head Qrs. 1st Div. 9th A. Corps
Washington, D. C.,
May 14, 1865

Friend Tom, your letter, before me, is dated April 25th, and here I am answering on the 14th of May—Well, I consider that almost worthy of a Court Martial for "neglect of duty." Just prefer charges and it will be an easy matter to have me tried, as there are twenty-five courts martial now in session in this city.

Let me see, I wrote you last from the city of Petersburg.—What a change there has been since I left the Friend House in front of Petersburg to go into the city on the morning of the 3d. of April. First came the chase and capture of Lee, and then, while rejoicing was at its height, came the news of the nation's great loss. I suppose it was all for the best, but if it was, it was also for the best to string up those who are now having their trial down to the arsenal. This Division, after stopping two days in Petersburg, went out on the South Side Rail Road and did guard duty until April 20th when the corps left the front and came to this city. The Dept. of Washington has been divided into Districts, Genl. Parke commands the 1st and Genl. Wilcox the 2d as also the Division—The A. A. G.'s. Office of the Division is in the City, and the rest of the Offices are out with the Division, so your humble servant is a bummer in the renowned city of red tape.

You speak of the death of Genl. Potter. He was very severely wounded in the groin, but the last I heard from him, he was doing well. Capt. Hutchins is still in New York, but we hope to have him back with us before long. There was an operation performed, and he came very nearly not living through it, as he had a slight attack of the lockjaw. None of the staff have been injured in the late engagements, and they are all doing their best for a good time now—

There has been a general rejoicing today over Jeff Davis' capture, the news of which came last night.

The Chronicle of this morning began the first report of the great trial. There will be much of interest in the reports, though we shall probably not get the full particulars of the trial until they are published by the War Department.

There is a bummer in here talking to Brackett, and I can't get my wits together to write.

Give my kind regards to your sister.

I remain,

Yours,

Frank W. K.

Direct
Frank W. Knowles
Head Qrs. 1st Div. 9th A. Corps
Washington, D. C.

No. 24 Essex St.
Charlestown, Mass.

Sunday, July 30th 1865

Friend Tom:

Your letter has not been very promptly answered for two reasons: first, because it was directed to Washington and did not reach there before I left, and consequently was not received until quite late; and secondly, because my coming home after so long an absence has made me feel much more like spending my time in talking than writing.

On the 8th ult. the 64th Mass. Vols. was mustered out and ordered to Readville—the state rendezvous—I, with six others of my company who had been detailed as clerks got separate transportation on an order from Corps Hqrs., and came home on our own hook. Charlie Chase was one of the party. You will remember him as the Hosp. Steward of the Corps when you was with us in Tenn. We started twenty-four hours later than the reg, but passed them in New York and came on home where we arrived on Saturday evening (the 10th). On Monday our old comrades who had been discharged during the three years, got up a reception and dinner for my company, and on the next day the whole regiment was received in Worcester, after which we were dismissed to meet again and be paid off on the 22d of June.

After we were paid off I looked around for work and obtained a situation, on the 3d inst., as asst. book keeper in a dry goods house in Boston. Have been constantly at work since that date and feel a little run down under the confinement, but like it very well thus far.

Tuesday Evening—

I was called away Sunday evening, and as we went out serenading last evening, my letter is two days old. When my company went away [to war] we had a glee club of about twelve voices, and the four that have reached home in safety have an occasional sing to remember old scenes by.

I suppose that by this time your brother has been mustered out. I hope so at least.

I have not heard a word from Tebo and don't know whether

Knowles wrote this letter on the back of a sheet made up of three beautifully printed and engraved blank bills of exchange. The sheet is 9½ x 15 inches.

Knowles to Thomas Hollis.

A soldier's characteristic of Washington in 1865.
he is alive or dead. I think that he must have been with Sherman, but when that army was reviewed I saw nothing of his Battery.

If you ever should be traveling in this direction, I should be much pleased to have you give me a call. I am such a stay-at-home kind of fellow that I never expect to get even as far west as Indiana again.

My supper is ready and I must leave. There is no news to write just now. Everybody has been to see Gen. Grant who has been here for the past two days. He went down to Portland this morning.

Remember me to your sister.

Yours truly,
Frank

Boston, October 23d 1865

Tom.

Your last came to hand in due season, and I was very glad to hear of your present prosperity and future prospects, and to know, from that, that soldiers are not considered to be a demoralized set of vagabonds as a great many here seem to think. It is almost impossible now for a young man to get a good and lucrative position who has passed his three years in the army.

I know several young men who have tried to obtain employment, both here and in New York, to whom the answer has been, "We don't employ soldiers." 66

I am getting along about as usual. Last week I was laid up for a few days and tried hard to have a fever, but a good constitution, with the help of a Dr., brought me through and enabled me to come to work this morning as usual.

The trade in dry goods is getting a little dull as the season advances, and I expect that soon we shall have a little more spare time in the store.

The difference between my three past winters and the present one is much greater than I expected, and even now a greatcoat is a comfort in my walks over the bridge morning and evening.

I should be much pleased to accept your invitation for me to visit you if I could so arrange matters as to go, but for the present business must come before pleasure. Nevertheless, should I ever pass that way, Worthington will no doubt have an opportunity to open her arms.

There is not very much of anything going on here at present. The places of amusement seem to be doing a thriving business, and we certainly have nothing to complain of in the way of numbers, for there are ten (10) different theatres, minstrel troops, &c. &c. now in full blast in the city. Maggie Mitchell is the chief attraction at the present.

There I must close for one of the clerks is going to dinner, and I must take his place.

66 These comments have a familiar ring to people who heard veterans talk following demobilization in 1918-1919.

Hollis Correspondence

Give my regards to your sister, and "kiss the baby" for Yours,

Frank W. K.

Boston, July 2d 1866

Friend Tom.

July has brought with it some splendid weather, and therefore everyone seems to be in good humor this morning, altho' trade is getting into its dull season, and people are leaving for the country. If nothing prevents, I shall leave here next week for a two weeks stay at Cape Cod.

Everything has been going quietly with me this season. My evenings are spent mostly in singing, either at some friend's house, or serenading some fair damsel. I always think of Indiana about the 4th of July and recall the pleasant three months spent there in '63—It does not seem three years since I left Indianapolis for Camp Nelson where we were to wait for the "Div. of Re-enforcement Army of the Ohio." 44

In this month's "Atlantic Monthly" a captain of my Regiment gives an account of the seige of Knoxville which will no doubt be as interesting to you as it was to me. 44

My leisure is limited, therefore this must follow suit. 44

Address according to heading.

Yours,

Frank

[A Letter of 1848]

Point Commerce, 44 Is, March 12th, 1848.

Dear Cousin, 44

Mrs. Thropp has been urging me for several weeks to write to you, and in compliance with her repeated importunities to-day, I have concluded to spend a portion of this lovely Sabbath Evening in conversing with you upon paper. Epistolary writing has become quite a task of late, mainly to be attributed, no doubt, to the confining nature of my present business, and its influence upon my health, which has suffered materially of late. Indeed if it were not from sheer necessity, I would abandon it, and follow a more healthful and intellectual pursuit, and one more congenial to my taste, and inclination. But we are in a good degree creatures of circumstances, or if you prefer the term

44 The letterhead indicates that Knowles was employed by the firm of Hoag, Brown, & Taylor, successors to Kilmoth & Co., importers and dealers in American, British, French and German Dry Goods, 290 & 301 Washington Street, and 22 Temple Place, Boston.


44 Knowles was still working for the dry goods firm of Hoag, Brown and Taylor.

44 As far as known, this short letter was the last written to Thomas Hollis by Knowles.

44 Point Commerce is located just north of Worthington on the opposite bank of the River, where it flows into the West Fork of White River.

44 Harrison N. Thropp to his cousin, John T. Thropp of Portland, Indiana. As stated in the foreword, a daughter of Harrison N. Thropp, Julia Thropp, became the wife of Thomas Hollis who received the Civil War letters from his brothers Joseph H. and Heber Hollis, and Frank W. Knowles.
of Providences: impelled, it may be, in a direction we would not pursue and compelled to forego our dearest wishes and most ardent desires—doubtless for our good, our spiritual, if not our temporal well-being.

But the lessons of instruction, thus imparted, are often disagreeable and unwelcome & we would fain seek to evade the Providential infliction when a contrary course might prove minous in the extreme.

Well, John, we are Tavern-Keeping. We took possession of the Junction House, on the 1st day of November last, and have had a very considerable share of Custom, taking the location and the season of the year into the account.

But it adds very materially to the weight of my cares and bears more heavily still upon Mrs. Throop. We are, however, not discouraged, inasmuch as we hope to make it in some degree profitable. Our expenses are very heavy, with all the care and economy we can use but we rather think we shall be able to make something by the operation. I have made one discovery since in the business of Tavern Keeping, viz. that it is not a situation calculated in its nature to assist in the cultivation of personal piety and devotional exercises. I trust, however, that it may not cause me to decline (much farther, at least,) in my religious enjoyments or to back slide altogether from the Christian Course I have thus long been striving to pursue.

Religion is still at a very low ebb at this place and the dawning of a better day to us is not yet visible; but we still pray with all the faith we can muster for that season of refreshment the Church so much needs. May God hasten the day! And bless the Church abundantly in all her burdens!

I have not heard from Father's family lately; they were well when I last heard.

We were much gratified at your visit last Fall, notwithstanding our crowded situation at the time; and it would afford us much more gratification now, as we are better prepared to receive and entertain you comfortably.

There will be a letting on our Canal from Terre Haute to this place on the 24th May next; suppose you come out, John, make a bid for a job and bring your family with you?

Give my love to all the Relations individually especially to Cousin Sarah.

Mrs. Throop requests to be remembered kindly to Sarah and yourself and to your very pleasant and agreeable family and is quite anxious to cultivate a further acquaintance.

Yours Truly

H. N. Throop

P. S. James Edward wished to know if I had written any thing to Uncle John about him, and upon being informed, that I had not, he seemed rather displeased. James in improving some, but cannot walk without crutches. I sent to N. York & purchased an Electric Magnetic Machine for him and he is now under its influence. We have some hope it will be beneficial to him. Wallace, Isabel, and the babe are well. Good night! John T. Throop Esq.

Yours

Harrison