

Letters of Elijah T.P. Gibbons, 1861-1879

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Miss. Co. May the 14. 1861

My Dear cousin

I again take my pen in hand to write you a few lines although you don't seem to think enough of me to write I have received no letters not one from any of you since Christmas I want to hear from you very bad we have had a very wet spring the river is now rising at the rate of an inch an hour and at the top of the bank we cant do nothing most of the farmers are behind if the river dose come out this time there will be a great many of them that wont raise any thing the river has been out once before this spring

I will now turn my attention to the affairs of our once happy but now distracted and disrupted country I am very anxious to know what Md will do in this hour of trial whither she will go with her brothers of the south or submit to the tyrannical rule of that old kangaroo president Virginia the mother of states and of statesman thank god has at last thrown off the yoke of tyranny Tennessee & Arkansas has gone also north carolina I hope that Md will soon follow and add another bright star to the southern confederacy Missouri & Kentucky still holds on to the union they are awaiting to be kicked out the legislature of this state is now in session I cant say wither they will pass an ordinance of secession or not perhaps you will know by the time you read this I would send you a paper if I had one I seldom get any I am going to Columbus to morrow if I can get one I will send it to you I would be very glad if you would send me some fringes [?] and papers if they are old I suppose you are aware that Cairo is now the seat of war there is about 5,000 troops there they have seigerd several hundred kegs of powder & a large amount of balls & led ilanais [Illinois?] has also taken 25,000 stand of arms from the arsenal at st louis I herd it rumored to day they had taken 1700 men prisners I do not vouch for the truth of it I saw Noah while he was in Hickman he joined the Ky volentiers and is now in harpers ferry there is a company here numbering sixty for home protection I belong to it we drill once a week I am afraid it will fall through the people in southeast Mo are all for secession enough of war news for this time, give my respects to my relations & friend all that inquire for me the leeches in particular write soon nothing more at present

A.H. King

Hurrah for Rep davis

Versailles Ky Aug 18 1861

Dear nephew

You big boy I Rec^d your letter and was glad to hear from you all & that your Crops were good, the Crops here are Exlent, I Recd a letter from alexander H. King the same day that got yours he was stationed at Union Citty Tennessee, that is a little village on the Mississippi River aposit to Missouri & a few miles from the Kentucky line about 90 miles from the mouth of the ohio River & 500 miles from here, River [?], I am sorry that he went there & very sorry that he joined the army, I know that place well tha [they] are a bad lawless set & he is in bad company & a bad caus, when you write to him write this wise Alexander H. King
Hickman
Ky
Care of Cap^t Lauderdale

He says he can get his leters from there They have 1500 or 2000 Rebel Soldiers in ackamac va & severl went from Worcester County but I hope none were fool enough to go from Somerset but I see that the Devel is getting a strong hold on some of them – well your sister south as you call them have more impudence than the Devel himself, the red Devel Rebel is in heaven but he hadn't impudence enough to say it was lawfull but the later day Devels say is is lawfull to Rebel, to steal- to rob to plunder- to murder to Rob on land and sea – to take every thing that tha can lay their hands on & say it is lawfull tha commenced this war, tha Rised soldirs took many vesels- the mint & many in it & arsenals – guns- amunition forts & then marched their soldiers to take Washington citty & all the government had & say it is lawfull, them are bad kinflks You told me how you leaned but you didn't tel me how the others stood, be temperate all the while that tha were doing the mischief, government was still hoping that tha would get a shamed of them selves but tha here have no more shame than a gopher or a mad bull – to acknowlage Evry state a Right to secede would ruin the whol Country we shuld never have a government again & our government ought to be perpetuated just as it allways has been, & if the south wants negroes let them have them & if the north don't want them let them have none, & that is the Republican platform a few Devlish abolishment object but tha are few the secessionist deny that but I have Read their platform you may all think as you pleas but don't join any army or Company Keep clear of all of them

We have been trying to keep Kentuck quiet but the wreches have tried Evry way to get the war in Kentucky and I fear that tha will get us into it yet – tha are a miserable set & the Devil made them – missouri is in a deplorabl fix one half of the citizens fighting against the other half with a few northern & a few southern soldiers to help to make the mater wors the state is almost ruined thousands have lost all thier property & have to leave thier homes to save their lives & thousands half starved there is nothing doing here thousands are out of employment we have nothing at all to do & wont have until people can think that the war wont come here, the future looks gloomy in the Extreme, give my Respects to all friends and to mother Espacially – Read this to mother & them to Burton & Samuel & to all our connxion that would like to see it.

Yours &c Hiram Scott

Write soon

Versailles Ky Aug 10 1862

Dear nephew

I rec^d your letter a few weeks ago, I would have written sooner but I had nothing to write we are in the midst of war but you know that, our country is in a bad fix, you know that, them Devils mad a raid thr here, tha stold all tha could get hold of tha steal the best Hores & then steal as tha go & when pursued tha run off, but that game is nearly out, we will soon have an Efficient State force well mounted who will be able to ketch the theves & hang them then tha will quit stealing, I suppose you have seen accounts of severl little fights at our neighbouring towns, gorgetown, Cyntheand & mountsterling –the wheat crops here were good the oat crop tolerable & the corn crop will be good but nothing doing except the farming, carpentering is dead till the war is over, there was several new houses to be built & several to be Repaired [?] but all h ave quit all trades have stoped, the mechanicks are unemployed and many laybourers doing nothing & I suppose it will get worse insted of beter, but I guess the sun will keep its cours notwithstanding the rebellion

Give my Respects to mother and all the connections & acquaintances – write to me, the others wont write & you must write often we are all well

Yours [?] Hiram Scott

Why don't you send me a prencess an paper I would like to have one every now & then

Please Read this to mother

Versailles Ky Nov 16 1862

Dear mother

I have not had a letter from you for a long time & tha all have quite writing except thomas, I Rec^d a letter from him him Recently but all the others mite write ocazionly & none of them will send me a princess ann paper, thomas said he would write after the draft I don't know when the draft is to be drawn, it has been drawn in Worcester and tha found the Somerset Enrollment papers in the preachers yard last week & if tha have not drawn tha soon will – tel them to write to me & send me a somerset paper as soon as the drawing takes place – hoping tha may Escape the draft – well we are all well & doing as well as we can these war times, the crop were all tolerable good this year but when the Rebels came in here tha stold & destroyed much of it tha came in here as you know about the first of September staid 6 weeks till Buel flogged them at perryvill and tha Run off, we had 25000 of them about our little town same time tha burned a great quantity of fence to cook with, tha took a Deal of Corn – wheat – cattle – Horses – Clothing & any thing els tha wanted, sometimes tha paid something but their money is worthless tha stold all the potatoes & aples & many turkys bee stands &c but Buel took from them a deal of their stolen plunder before tha got to the mountains tha left 220 sick here & many Evry where tha were at well we have a plenty left to do us & to spare but there is nothing doing those that work for others are unemployed – the farmers are doing as well as Ever and Evry one about here has plenty but in the large City, the working class are bad the Wards are farming & the Rebels stold a third of their corn & all their potatoes & apples & sutch a hongry durty lousey set I never saw my wife & children send their best Respects to all & to you in particular, tha pay a visit to your picture very often & you must consider it a visit to you self Amelia is about 13 Adalyn 11 Alexander 6 John 2 tha are all smart enough but Johny is the smartest boy I ever saw he knows knows Evry thing as well as a big boy he talks plain & correct & sings apart of Evry song that the others sing I enquired of the Rebel officers for Alexander King but tha new nothing of him, let me know when you hear from him – we have had a long dry spel, water is very scarce in many places – we had a snow 5 inch deep in October but avery nice fall my Respects to all & Espacialy yourself

Yours &c &c

Hiram Scott

Versailles Ky Oct 2 1864

Dear Nephew

I rec^d your leter a few weeks ago & I have written 2 leters in 2 weeks one direct to you for mother & one to B C Gibbons to your care – please to write as soon as the Draft is Over & let me know the result & if the other two leters came &c

The Wards have not heard from their sister for several years, tha have written often & get no answer, I told them to write a small leter & I would send it to you in my leter & I thought you would make it reach them – please to send it to them any way you think best & surest – Our quota was filled with darkies & we had no draft in our County, Woodford is the only County in the State that had more negroes than white folks, I thought that Somerset County Md had filled her quota with darkies from the reports in the papers & I think so yet if tha count right

H Scott

With an envelope addressed to: Mr. E. T. P. Gibbons Prencessann Somerset County MD

Decem the 11 869

Dear Friend

I take my pen in hand to drop you a few lines to let you know that I have not forgotten you I [unintelligible] your letter and was glad to hear from you and that you had not forgotten your old friend I wold be glad to see you and tell you how I enjoied my visit to the citty I went to see Sarah and she was doing well and sent her love to you and said she was going to wright to you as soon as she cold I most appoligise for her [unintelligible] it is so late when she hets home that she does not get in time for any thing I should have written to you sooner but I am looking for the girls so I see they had not come yet. I do not expect they ever will Eligh I shall look for you afer Christmas and if you don't come I shall blow[?] out your light that is if I can you had better come [cannot make sense of the rest]

Good by Letha

Elmira New York

Jan 2nd 18,65

Dear Cousin

I have waited long & anxiously for a letter from you I received yours of Dec 6th and answered it immediately but have received no answer. I also received one from Mary Anne & one from Peter Parsons I answered each of them but have received no replys I scarsely know what to make of it you all are certainly very negligent or else you don't care about troubling yourselves about answering my letters, and as for Sydney I have not received a line from him yet although I have repeatedly written to him.. Now you know that I am not the person to intrude myself or my letters upon any body unwilling to receive them if I know it since I last wrote to you I have been tranferred to this place. I hope soon to receive a letter from you and others of my friends direct to Serg^t A. H. King Elmira NY Ward No. 42

[On the reverse: Mr. Hyrum Scott]

1865 Versailles Jan 30

Dear Nephew

I recd your leter some time since & was glad to hear that you all escaped the Draft & that all were well except that little boy who had his thigh broken, tel me how he is, I have Received 2 leters from A H King, I rote him one ile rite again soon & he says that he has not Recived but one leter from home since he has been a prisoner we have had a hard winter Rain & snow & freeze continually since winter set in these are fast times Corn \$1,00 – wheat \$2,00 pork 15 cts – bacon 26 cts – wood \$1,00 a cord – coal 55 cts a bushel – whiskey \$4,00 a galan I wish it was 40 – potatoes \$2,00 a bushel – onions \$3, &c &c the gurillas are thick again, we could soon kill them off but tha claim to be Confederate Soldiers & if we kill them, them Devils over yonder would Retaliate, but their time is drawing to a close very fast we are all wel the Wards are well All send their Respect to you all & mother especially tel mother that one of Edward Braughttons sons came to see me last fall there were 5 boys & 1 girl tha were doing pretty well in Mississippi but the war has bourn hard on them tha all have families write t me & tel me where you all are & what all are doing & all about the Country & the folks, tel all of your Uncles & father & Samuel all to write to me, postage is cheap & will be high after awhile you didnt tel me where aunt Nelly Clays children were I cant think of anthing that would interes you, my hand is could & ile close

Yours &c &c Hiram Scott

Prison Camp New York

March 12th 65

My Dear Cousin

It was with joyous feelings I received your letter this morning you cannot imagine neither can I describe the pleasure it affords me to read letters from you. You spoke of a marriage tell me in your next if it was Wm Joneses brother and Whitinton Powells daughter that was married they are the only ones by that name that I can think of you asked me if money would be of use to me It would indeed and I thank you for your kind offer but you need send me none as I expect to be exchanged in the course of a month I could buy anything I wanted with green backs here but Confederate is worth nothing.

If you can conveniently I would be glad if you would send me a Box of eatables you can send them by express I don't wish you to put yourself to any trouble.

Tell me in your next the reason that my relations & friends don't write to me Sydney in particular I would like very much to receive a letter from them all. Tell me what has become of Tom Cannon & Ike in fact I would like to know all about all my old acquaintances. Please tell me whether your father has been paid or not & whether there is anything in Mr. Costors hands or not.

Present my kindest regards to Uncle & Aunt & all the family also my Brothers & sisters & all my relations & friends I hope some of them will write to me

Your Cousin

A.H. King

Locustville Aug 21st 1865

Monday Evening

Dear friend,

Yours of 2nd arrived safe at hand and found me well and enjoying good health and hope when this reaches you it may find you the same. Dear friend forgive for my neglect and I will try to do my duty here after I have not much new to tell you at this present time, nothing more than I am enjoying myself very well with the Young ladies & took my lady to a socialion yesterday and you may just believe I had a splendid ride I suppose Bonewill has gone to Indiana has he what has he gone there for. Is he sailing or at trade there.

So Elijah I have been so busily since you wrote to me that I have not had time to write to you before I now am hurried to go to bed and I have not much longer to say an thing else as what I am saying is no prophet to no one

I will close by say excuse my short letter and bad writing as I am in a hurry

W D Tunnell sends his respects to you and say he is still in the same old business

Bily Copes is married and now enjoying married life

From your very

Respectively

T.C. Kellam

May 30 th

Dear Sir i seat my self this afternoon in form you that i received your letter and was glad to hear that you had got safe at home and foun your fathers family all well we are all well as common and i hope these few lines will fin you the same i have nothing new to write the nabours are all well and sends these best respects to you the girls most especially Margaret and Missouriia sends there best respects to you

i want you to write to me soon you must come and see us

The nex letter i write to you i hope i shall have more time

Missouria goes to shool every day

Nothing more at present but remain your most affectionate friend

Eligah gibbins

