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"YOURS FRATERNALLY UNTIL DEATH: "THE CIVIL WAR LETTERS OF THE BROTHERS LOVE

by Jennifer S. Mansfield

I

I was not aware that you had made so good a degree of progress in the knowledge of words the use of the pen and the correct use of language –

I hope you will make use of all your spare time for the improvement of your mind. Our first duty is to do that which is right towards our Creator and our fellow beings and the next duty is the improvement of the mind in the knowledge of the arts and sciences so that we may be able to render the labor we have to perform for the support of ourselves and the ability to help others casy and pleasant.¹

Late in October 1859, Cyrus W. Love, a twenty-nine year old school teacher, wrote these words to his youngest brother, Robert M. Love. Cyrus lived in the Freestone County, Texas, town of Fairfield and was engaged with his brother-in-law, John Karner, in the development of a Male and Female Academy.² Robert, age twelve, lived at the family home in "Tewokony Springs," now the little town of Tehuacana, in Limestone County. Also still living at home were younger brothers Sam, John, and James, and young sisters, Eliza T.G. Love and Tea (Tennessee Angeline Love).³

The excerpt above is taken from the first of a collection of letters held by Texas Christian University's Mary Couts Burnett Library, donated to the archive by a Fort Worth garage-sale shopper who purchased a locked strongbox and found the letters inside. Composed of over seventy letters written by Cyrus, Sam, John, and James Love to their parents, friends, sisters, and younger brother, the collection spans the war period from 1861 to 1864. As soldiers of the Trans-Mississippi department and Army of Tennessee, their communications offer personal insight into the thoughts and trials of Texan soldiers during the Civil War. The following is an introduction to the collection, with selections that reveal not only particulars of the period, but the personalities of these young soldiers.

The passage cited above certainly sounds like the philosophy of a school teacher; the remainder of Cyrus' letter tends more toward the personal and chatty than the didactic:

I was glad to learn as I did from your letter that you were all in good health – It seems to me that you are rather late in collecting your beeves if you intend driving to the New Orleans market. If you aimed to collect many beeves after the date of your letter [Oct. 20] you will hardly be able to get away from home until several days of Nov, are gone which will cause you to be as late as the first of Dec. getting them into market

Mr. Karner and Mr. Jos Philpott purchased some seventy or eighty head of brood mares not long back – they with several other gentlemen conjointly have purchased the Flying Dutchman and are now keeping him at Avant Prairie ...

I hope if you go to school that you will make a good use of your time by keeping out of bad company, studying hard and learning all you can - our schools are doing very well — there are seventy or eighty scholars in the female school and thirty-five or forty in the male school...

I write you this short letter Robert by candle light with a bad pen so you could not expect it well done ...

Happiness and good fortune to you and the balance of the family, Truly, Your brother, C.W. Love⁴

Listed simply as a farmer with eleven children in the Limestone County Census in 1850,⁵ Cyrus' father, James M. Love, had come to Texas with his wife, Terrissa A. Love, in 1836, settling in Robertson's Colony.⁶ James and Terrissa had either followed or accompanied James' father, Joseph Love, and brothers David and William, to settle in the town of Franklin. James later brought his family to Tehuacana, and built a blacksmith shop and log cabin that still stands as the inner support of a later pine-board, two-story structure in present-day Tehuacana.⁷ In their new community, the Loves became active in establishing the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in that part of the state.⁸

It is no wonder that Cyrus mentions the gathering of cattle for market and the purchase of brood mares and a racehorse sire. The prairie land of Robertson's Colony, from which Freestone and Limestone counties were carved, was well suited to pasture. One contemporary of Cyrus, struck by the beauty of this countryside while on march with his newly formed Confederate regiment from Marshall, Texas, to the Rio Grande, lauded "the tall waiving grass, the merry chirp of the Birds, the snow-white Lamb as it gambols around the Herd, and the wild frolicsome Colt ...", finally concluding that Limestone County must be "the most lovely part of the inhabited earth."⁹

Cyrus' subsequent letters reflect an awareness of and interest in the agricultural, geological, and economic particulars of the regions in which he was to travel. No subsequent letter, however, voices the cheery "Happiness and good fortune" of Cyrus' farewell to Robert, and the next communication finds him far from home, on his way east across the Mississippi River:

At Camp 15 miles East of Minden Clayborn Parrish La. Oct. 14th A.D. 1861 Jas. M. & T.A. Loves;

Dear parents:

I have been in the land of Cypress, Beach and Maple since I crossed the Red River. We are to night in 60 or 65 miles of Monroe. We are now to go to Memphis instead of Corinth and it is my belief that we will be ordered from there up into Kentucky ...

I have been in good health since I left home. We are all walking. Some do not stand it so well so far but they are getting better every day. I can walk about as well as the best of them. I have not ridden on horse or wagon more than 20 miles since I left Fairfield. We all rode on the cars about 18 miles out from Marshal...

There will be but a small crop of cotton gathered in this State (about such as will be gathered in Texas)... Nearly all the young men have gone from this section to the war...

We heard ... Galveston had given itself into the hands of the Federal forces without any sort of resistance but we can hardly believe this ...

I wish you would write to me at Memphis. Direct your letters to the Care of Capt W.L. Moody Co. Greggs Regiment. Be sure if you hear from the

boys to let me know what you have learned and let me know where they are gone. No more at present.

Yours truly till death C.W. Love¹⁰

It did not take long for Cyrus to respond to Governor Edward Clark's request for Confederate troops late in August 1861." By June of that year, prominent secessionist John Gregg of Fairfield had begun organizing troops. for which he had authority from the Confederate secretary of war. The regiment he raised became the Seventh Texas Infantry. In a company of ninety-five men organized in Fairfield by W.L. Moody, Cyrus became a foot soldier for the Confederacy as part of Gregg's regiment, Company G.¹² Gathering in Marshall, the regiment received orders from Richmond to make their way to Memphis, Tennessee.¹³ The cars he mentions riding were those along the twenty miles of newly built track of the Southern Pacific Railroad.¹⁴ The distressing report that Galveston had "given itself up without any sort of resistance" was erroneous, and Cyrus was wise not to believe it. However, the rumor foreshadows the actual surrender of Galveston to the blockading Federal fleet in October 1862. Cyrus' prediction in this letter regarding his regiment's movements proved to be correct; they were encamped at Hopkinsville, Kentucky, by November.

"The boys" that Cyrus was anxious to hear about were Sam, John, and James, who had also mustered into the army in September 1861. Their gathering place was Dallas,¹⁵ where they became part of the Sixth Texas Cavalry under Colonel B. Warren Stone. Muster records show Sam B. Love and John W. Love enlisted in Company I, then G, and James joined Company F. Muster cards indicate that they all joined at the same time and place, although they would become separated as is shown in subsequent letters. The following letter gives an account of their early days of enlistment. At this time, Sam was twenty-three, John nineteen, and James twenty-four years of age.¹⁶

Camp Beauregard Sept The 8. 61

Dear Sister I wrote you a few lines the other day but as I had but a very short time to write it I did not write but very little. Almost every one in camps have been sick within the last week though all are about well now – We marched from Camp Tarrant on last monday – the line of men in double file was about six hundred yards long. The regiment I think will be filled this week though no one knows when or where we will be ordered. There is about as many opinions as there is men – however there is a great deal of advantage in us being here for we are learning the cavalry drill very rapidly – there is a report here that six war steamers have left fortress Monroe with four thousand men on board if so Texas may look out.

There is no more news of importance. Pete & I went to see the Misses Fares this evening & enjoyed ourselves finely – they told us that they were going to take supper with us tomorrow evening. They also gave us a potatoe apiece as they did the evening after they supped with us before. I like them very mouch for the acquaintance I have with them.

I am intruding on the sleeping hours of a family & will have to bring this to a close and as I have no other word to send to Nannie give her my love. I hope these few lines will find you all enjoying good health so with these few lines I remain your brother

Sam

P.S Give my love to all the family S.B.L.17

Π

[Cyrus, probably December 1, 1861]

The weather has been of that changable character calculated to create colds – Our camp life is generally dull and monotonous but is some times relieved by exciting preparations for a march and at others by the presence of the ladies of Hopkinsville ...

I can now appreciate the rich and endearing blessings of a home, peace and plenty and if God will I will enjoy them again but not before the three years are out and possibly not then; certainly not then if my services should continue to be needed in the war.¹⁶

Writing to his young sister Terrissa, Cyrus described camp conditions and shared his experience of the war during the first hard winter, a period in which the Army of Tennessee suffered great losses of men to disease. Twenty-three men died of sickness from Cyrus' company alone. Gregg's regiment was stationed at Hopkinsville, Kentucky, and remained inactive for three months until ordered to reinforce the garrison at Fort Donelson.¹⁹ Cyrus' letters from this period are full of reports of illness, and his tone becomes increasingly depressed through the winter. Without questioning the Southern cause, the following excerpt from this period shows a disillusionment in some of the Southern citizens the boys had sworn to protect from the "dark invasion:"

I find some men as I pass along through this region of country particularly since we crossed the Mississippi who if they and their Interests were all that was to be defended I for one would do nothing but leave them to the Mercy of the Yankees...

The Love brothers' uncle, Andrew C. Love, and cousin, Andrew Jr., of Tennessee, are mentioned often in Cyrus' letters of this period. Andrew Love, "Gen & Staff AA Surgeon," was a doctor in Cyrus' regiment and Andrew Jr. a private.²⁰ Both narrowly escaped the siege and surrender of Fort Donelson, and Andrew Jr. died of illness soon afterwards. As far as current events went, Cyrus made it clear in a number of letters that he could not guarantee the truth of war information he heard; any news he had of relatives or friends of the family (especially the "Limestone Boys") he passed along.

> Camp Alcorn at Hopkinsville Ky. Nov 6th A.D. 1861 Jas. M. & T.A. Loves:

Dear Parents:

I wrote at Memphis but did not have an opportunity to mail the letter ...

We were hurried through in quick time from Memphis to this place traveling in open Stock Cars most of the time traveling both night and day in this condition sleeping as best we could on the cars living on molasses and bakers bread or hard bread the last of which is nothing more than a thin cake of flour baked hard ... there is at least one third of the Regiment that have bad colds but there is hardly a man who would be kept out of a fight if one should take place...

Terry Regiment²¹ is at Boling Green 50 or so miles from here one of his companies attacked two companies of the enemy and hardly left one of them to tell the tale (So report has it) and it is generally believed here – there is a strong enough force here now to cause Gen. Tilman²² to feel confident that he will be able to whip any number of the enemy that can come against

him. Two or three of our company were left at Clarksville sick and Uncle A.C.L.²³ was left in charge of them. They were getting well now and will be here soon \dots^{24}

[November 10, 1861]

We are today finishing the election of Officers of the Regiment²⁵ – Gregg is elected Col., Clough of Marshal Lieutenant Col. and I think Capt Granberry²⁶ of the Waco Rifles will be elected Major...

Geo. B is lying in foot of me now. He thinks it exceedingly doubtful whether he will get home again but if he does he says if he does he will bring one of these Mississippi Rifles. They are a fine gun. The Regiment are almost entirely armed and equipped – we are now ready for any thing that can come against us and the Almighty being with us we will whip any thing that does come.⁷⁷

[December²⁸ 1, 1861]

I have learned through letters to others that the clothing prepared for our company has been started to us.³⁹ They may get to us and they may not, but if they do not we stand a chance to suffer if the Winter should be cold as there is but little likely hood that the Government will be able to supply the soldiers with anything like enough of clothing to keep them comfortable.

Situated as I am here I can learn but very little of interest. Things of considerable importance might take place in a short distance of me and you would learn of it before I would – I am at all times anxious to get word from some of you to know how you are getting on and particularly to learn something from S.B. and J.W.L.'s¹⁰ where they are and what they are doing whether they are pleased with the place they are at...

When you write let me know whether father and Uncle David have sold their wool or not and what they got for it -I will write to you again soon.

Sam and John were involved in movements along the Arkansas/Missouri border at this time, and their regiment had joined Brigadier General Ben McCulloch's command. The following letters are written on the same continuous pages of paper, the first from Sam, and the second added by John – his first communication in the collection.

Camp Washington Ark Dec the 5th 1861 Dear father as Mr. Scharp is going to start home in the morning I thought I would write you a few lines to let you know how we are getting on ... I wrote from Camp Evans on the 15th of last month. We were then camped near the line of Mo – the next day after I wrote an order come for us to march within two hours to Springfield. We were ready at the allotted time & soon on the march. The fourth day about 10 O'clock we marched into the town but we found nobody there to oppose us - Gen Mcullough sent out a scouting party to find out what they could about the enemy - we [the scouts] started without anything to cat & just as a heavy rain commenced falling & marched very fast till near night & camped. Next morning we marched 6 or 8 miles & took some Union men but turned them loose... Next morning early we were on the march for a town by the name of lebanon 55 miles from Spr. ... we over took 12 moving waggons & searched them for guns and found 15 or 16 guns. They were moving North. We searched 50 or 60 wagons during the day & found about 50 guns - We threw all away but two minnie rifles & 2 shot guns. When we got to Lebanon the citizens of the town give us dinner & we turned back for Spr - & marched about 10 miles & camped. That night was the second that I stood guard during the scout & about 10 O'Clock it commenced raining and rained till 12 & then it commenced blowing from the north & the way it was cold was not a little...

Pa Sam finished his letter. I thought I would say a few words partly to let the people of our country together with yourself know that i could write a short letter yet. In a few days I will write a general history of our trip.³¹ All that I write for now is that I want something to cat. I wish you could send me some butter, a dozen or so of eggs, tie about a peck of sweet milk up in a sack, a hat full of sausages when you kill hogs. Pa I never hooked a hog in my life until I come up here. I have been compelled to kill them up here. We always took them from union men when we could get them – yes I forgot send me a loaf of light bread made of shorts. I want to have a big toast a bit of the sweet milk butter & light bread.

I have not been in good health for several weeks I had the Flue about 8 weeks ago & have had the diarhea ever since or nearly so. We have good clothing. We have 3 good pair of pants 4 coats good boots though I believe our socks are about to run out. Send me a chew of tobacco & a pocket knife & all will be regular. Tell ma and the family good evening for me. I haven't been drunk since I left. Now wont you send me the butter.

Good bye for to night John

NB Pa when you send your letters direct them Ft. Smith Cap Ross Com Col Stones. Regiment McCulloch Brigade – Then we will get them by a direct express from there to our camps.

J.W.Ĺ.³²

As the winter of 1861 - 1862 wore on, Cyrus had more and more comments about the particulars and personalities of Confederate army life:

[December 18,1861]

Two or three of the men of our Regmt have been found asleep on their posts – Genl Clark had the different Regmts of Infantry 5 in number in general review day before yesterday. At the end of review he said on account of the men not having been informed fully as to their duties he would spare them but that after that time the man who went to sleep on post should certainly be Shot (I hope he has scared those fully who are inclined to sleep)...³³

[January 8, 1862]

We have been very badly treated by the chief physician of this brigade. He has neglected the sick in a most wanton manner rarely ever seeing any of them himself and has not had the Hospitals kept clean at all. They smell exceedingly bad and in the old hospital there have to his and everyone elses knowledge been a great number of body lice which he has taken no pains to have destroyed. They have had hardly any medicine here until today. This however may have been to our advantage. This chief physicians name is Lile and from his language and actions it seems to have been his cheif object to show his power and authority at the Hospitals by rudely treating all the sick men he might happen to see and by insulting with sirly language threats of arrest and the publication of notices at the doors of the Hospitals - That no commissioned officer should go in except at certain hours of the day and not then unless they had first got the presence of a physician who belonged to the Medical Staff to conduct them about the rooms - Some of these commissioned officers however have concluded not to bear with him any longer - Some of them have cursed the whole concern General, Medical Staff and all, others have intimated things of a serious character to Dr Lisle and one that I know of sais if Lisle will just speak cross to him he'll kill him in an instant. He was insulted by him two or three times and once in circumstances which he will not easily forgive. Many of them say they would rather kill him than an enemy from the Lincoln Government.³⁴

Written during the same period, the following letter contains an account of Sam's first experience with battle, as well as an expression of his concern for Cyrus. The "battle of Chewstinella [Chustenalah]," which Sam describes, was an engagement in Indian Territory (now Oklahoma) in which Confederate forces met a large force of Creek and other Indians supported by Federal troops. The Indians were led by Creek Chief Ho-po-eith-le-yo-ho-la; after a fierce battle on December 26, 1861, the Chief's forces were defeated.³⁵

Camp Washington Jany the³⁶ 1862

Dear Sister Yours of the 29th of Dec. came to hand to day & I proceed to answer it immediately.

I was very sorry to hear of the sickness of Capt. Moody's Company³⁷ and very sorry to hear of the death of so many of the boys – but it is the fate of war & the adge is true that disease takes off more than the Sword – for there has more than 40 of this Regt died of disease while there has'nt been but 5 killed and 12 or 15 wounded in our late battle on the head waters of the Vertigres [Verdigris] River – called the battle of Chewstinella ... I want you to write me how to direct a letter to Cy.

After cooking 4 days provision on the night of the 25 Dec {I made biscuit for near 3 hours without stopping} we set out on the morning of the 26th {while one of the coldest northers I ever felt came full in our faces} to see if we could find the enemy ... and after traveling about 12 miles we crossed a large creck and directly after we saw a large smoke – Some said Indians while others laughed at the idea myself among the latter and soon after we saw the smoke I took a biscuit & piece of pork out of my pocket and after dividing it with my file partner. We commenced eating and laughing at the idea of getting into a battle for just as we commenced eating the order was given to cap our guns. But our skepticism did not last long for we had'nt gone more than 20 yds before we heard a gun fire toward the van of the army and then 3 or 4 and then 15 or 20 and directly about 300 or 400 along a line of something near 3/4 of a mile. After that my friend said Sam that sounds like battle...

Col Griffith was ordered to the right – to dismount and charge the hill on foot while Col's Lane and McEntosh'es Regt's charged gallantly on horse back while we charged through a creek about 1 1/2 in water and ice and the same in mud – but when we got to the top of the bank on the opposite side from where we started our Col saw that we would not get into the fight on foot so he took the responsibility of ordering us back to our horses. So we charged through the creek again and got back to our horses but we were so exhausted that we could hardly mount our horses but when we did we made them git faster for the other Regts had got the start of us and were likely to gain the laurels of the day. But by moving to the right and charging another hill we got the lead and killed about as many as Col Greer's & Youngs and more than the Arkansawyers did ...

One thing I forgot to mention – that while we were forming the Indians were barking like a dog howling like a wolf & yelling and gobbling like a turkey ...

Cyrus had his first experience in battle when Gregg's regiment was called to support Confederate troops beseiged at Fort Donelson on February 15. As he explains, he was wounded early in the fight and was fortunate enough to leave the field of battle. For that reason he was not taken prisoner, as was most of his regiment when the fort was surrendered by the Confederates on February 16.

> Franklin Co Tnn March the 15th 1862 John & Elizabeth Karner:

Dear brother and sister:

I have written to no one in smartly more than a Month – today is a Month since I was wounded at Donaldson \dots

I did not wish to write until I was able to say that I was improving – My wound is nearly well but the disease it caused in my liver lungs and body generally is not out of me yet and I am very weak, not able to walk but a few hundred yards at a time without rest. I am improving though very fast and will no doubt by the favor of Providence be able to join the army in time for the next big fight ...

I do not know at this time what part of the army I will join. I think however at this time that I will join Col Wharton's Texas Cavalry³⁸ for the sake of being with the Texans and more particularly to be with some persons that I know – but I do not know that I will do this as the Cavalry Service is much harder and not so effective in a fight as the infantry ...

The enemy is no doubt gloating over what they did at Donaldson but they have no cause to glory if they would only admit the facts in the case...

The reasons why I am here and not a prisoner with the other boys is just this. I was wounded about 11 O'c in the morning (Saturday Morning on the 15th Febr) and the wounded were all taken aboard of the boats to be taken to Nashville. The boats started up the river about sundown just as the fight began again in the evening - We were taken on up to Nashville where every thing was in great confusion Nashville having been given up to the enemy. We got to Nashville late Sunday night. In the morning the Surgeons told us that the wounded who were able to report themselves to R.R. conductors would get free passes to their homes until they got well. I took passport with a young man by the name of Robt Grey expecting to go with him to his fathers down in Alabama but my wound had not been dressed at all and was doing badly so that I was compelled to stop at Tullahoma in this county and have it dressed. I then came here to Mr. Pettys 5 miles from Tullahoma where I have been treated as kindly as if I had had my pockets full of money of which I had none until about two weeks ago. A Dr. Ripits agent for the State of Texas for the relief of soldiers gave me a \$20.00 Confederate bond -

Nothing more now. I will write again when I join the army –

Yours & etc. C.W. Love³⁹

Cyrus had to flee Tullahoma, but in doing so found several soldiers from Lincstone county, men of Gregg's Regiment who had been too sick to take part in the Donelson fight. He reports walking the crossties over twenty-eight miles of railroad track carrying his twenty-pound knapsack from Tullahoma to Corinth. Once he got to Confederate camps at Corinth, "as I was not able to do active service I felt very gloomy and bad at the prospect of being sent to any regmt regardless of the consequences to me but as good fortune had it I was but a little time in finding the boys with whom I am now staying."⁴⁰

Sam also travelled to Corinth. After capturing a Union battery at the Battle of Elkhorn on March 7, 1862 (a battle Sam reported but did not take part in), the 6th Texas Cavalry was dismounted and sent east of the Mississippi.⁴¹ At this time John was sent to Texas to procure fresh horses for the regiment.

Having seen a good bit of fighting, Sam drew some conclusions about the war and its implications. In a letter dated April 27 and posted from Memphis, he writes:

I believe it is the determination of all to fight them as long as there is any of us living so that if they get it they will get a Depopulated Country... There is one thing I wish to say. It is this the people of Texas as well as all the other States ought to prepare for the worst or in other words they ought to organize into companies and Regts one and all for the purpose of repelling an invasion for I believe it is the policy of the Northern Government to take possession of all the Southern States and they by doing so will possibly weaken there forces so much that we can invade. But to prevent them from getting entire possession it would be well to be prepared to receive them at home.⁴²

By May 11 Sam appears to have gained a cheerier (or at least less nihilistic) attitude, reporting that he had had news of Cyrus, and that "it is the opinion of almost every body that the war will not last longer than this year..."⁴³ Of the Confederate Conscription Law,⁴⁴ he writes:

We are in for two years longer if the war does not terminate sooner. I did intend to come home this coming winter but the conscript law will not allow any one to leave. So we all volunteered again and I reckon it is well enough that the act was past and became a law. The worst feature that I see in it is this — it is a tyrannical law and is consequently a bad precedent but I think the necessities of the cause required that something should be done.⁴⁶

Cyrus, in the meantime, had joined Terry's Texas Rangers, now under the command of Captain John A. Wharton since the fall of B.F. Terry in December 1861. This regiment, the 8th Texas Cavalry (Cyrus joined them in spite of his misgivings about infantry being superior in a fight), had fought alongside Sam's and John's 6th Texas Cavalry at the battles of Chustenalah and Elkhorn. Still recovering from his wound and unable to take part in the Battle of Shiloh, but close enough to hear the cannon, Cyrus later accompanied Terry's Texas Rangers from Corinth to Chattanooga and was involved through May and early June in skirmishes around Winchester and Huntsville, Alabama, along the Tennessee River.⁴⁶

It is not revealed in their letters whether the brothers came in physical contact with each other, although they certainly came very close. In a letter dated June 14, 1862, Cyrus reports:

S.B.L. sent me his pistol – I learned also that J.W.L. had gone with the horses – Sam was well about two or three weeks ago when the balance of the rgmt left for this place – I understand that Sam and John will if they are permitted to live until they can do so get transfers and join this Regmt – I hope they may be able to do so. I do not know but suppose Jas is with [Tyus] in Arkansas. I guess it is almost impossible for us all to get together – but I hope the Almighty will save our lives through the war until the Southern Confederacy is fully established and at peace with all the other nations of the world on good and honorable terms and let us all meet together with you again. Yet if it is the will of the Deity that we should die in defence of our cause I hope we may be permitted to meet again beyond the confines of time...⁴⁷

On July 15, Cyrus took part in the capture of Murfreesboro, Tennessee, with his regiment placed in a brigade under the command of Nathan Bedford Forrest. In an undated letter that appears to be from this period posted from Shelbyville, Cyrus tells of skirmishes in and around the town:

We have been picketing until the last two or three days on the pike leading from Shelbyville to Nashville ...

The Yankee army is no doubt concentrated at Murfresboro with the intention of making a move in some direction but none of us know which way...

Rosencrantz has ordered that the citizens about Murfres shall not raise crops this year and to prevent it has destroyed their farming utensils. About Murfresboro the fences are nearly all burned and also a good many houses — he has taken all the forage and provisions from the citizens and the richest men at Murfresboro are now under the necessity of going to the Yankee Comissaries for their daily provisions.

Do not look for me until you see and know I am at the house.48

During these summer months, Sam was stationed with Brigadier General Charles Phifer's⁴⁹ brigade in Mississippi. Although Sam expressed a keen interest in securing transfers for himself and John into Cyrus' regiment, it does not appear that he succeeded. August 11 he wrote from Tupelo complaining that the regiment had been unmounted for some time: "we have been run near to killing almost ever since we have been Infantry." He states, perhaps wishfully, that the officers think they would make better cavalry than infantry – better than the present cavalry.

The good boots that John spoke of in December appear to have worn out: Sam sends his father S40.00 with the request, "if it is possible for you to get a pr. of boots made by Brooks at Corsicana I wish you would do it."⁵⁰ In a following letter, also dated August 11, he requests an overcoat, shirts, socks, and overshirts for himself and John, but also shares the heartening news that his regiment will once again mount:

Gen. [Sterling] Price has given Col. [L.S.] Ross permission to mount this Regt. again if the men are willing to risk loosing their horses on their way from Texas which they were willing to do without a dissenting voice and the men are to start in a few days {three or four at farthest}.³¹

During this period of relative inactivity, Sam's letters speak again of "the ladies," reveal some anxiety about his family at home, and express a few more startling observations regarding the war:

There is not the least reason now why the foreign powers should not acknolledge our Independence. Now they will either have to do it or acknolledge the <u>real</u> reason that they have not done it before. The reason in the opinion of here is that they wanted us to fight as long as possible or until we had weakened each other so much that they could come in and bag the whole of both parties...¹⁷

Waiting and skirmishing ended for Sam when his regiment joined Confederate forces against Buell yet again in the Battle of Corinth, Mississippi, on October 3-4, 1862. In an unsigned letter dated October 14 and posted from Holly Springs, Mississippi, Sam⁵³ tells of the battle: Dear Father & Mother

It is with the most Sincere thanks to god for preserving my Life in the terrible battle that we have just pased through that I attempt to write you a few lines...

In the first place – after we had rested two or three days at Saltillo on our retreat from Iuka we Started by the way of Riply for the purpose of forming a junction with Lovell and VanDorn to attack Corinth in the rear.

After marching six days the battle opened on Friday the 3d. about 5 miles from town and about 9. O'clock...

We were about 1/2 a mile from [the enemy's batteries, about 1/4 mile in front of their entrenchments] when the charge commenced. We started at a double quick and directly after we started both of the batteries commenced throwing grape and canister Shot by the bu. but it did not Stop us untill we had driven all the gunners and Infantry from both of the batteries but we could not hold it or bring it off. The reason we could not hold it was we were not strong enough to fight the Supports that was brought against us for we had no support atall. The reason we did not bring them off Spike⁵⁴ them or brake them down was all the horses were killed we had no Spikes to Spike them nor axes to brake them down. But we did not do all this without a Sacrifice of life as well as wounded. Of the latter was J. B. Prendergast. He was wounded by a piece of Shell when we were in about 100 yds of the battery that done it. <u>He fell charging</u> as fast as he could run...

There was nothing of importance done the next morning except Some heavy firing of artilery which done no mischief until 10 O'Clock when the order for the attack along the whole line was given. Now comes the hard fighting. The enemy had brest works with post holes for the Infantry and artilery and ditches in the rear of them making all within very secure and besides that they had an abatis of fallen timber in their front about 300 vds in width. The artilery commenced throwing grape & canister shot as soon as we come in Sight and when we got into the edge of the fallen timber the Inf. commenced fireing but we Still advanced on them and commenced fireing about 150 yds. We kept it up and Still advanced untill we drove them from their works took their artilery and planted our banners on the Breast works. But you can imagine our mortification when we Saw a colomn advancing to the Suport of the Feds. about twelve deep. Then we turned to see if we had any Support and there was none to be seen. The result was we had to give up all that we had taken at a Sacrifice of the life of some of our best boys besides a great many wounded ...

In a following letter, Sam informed his family that "we were in an enemy's entrenchments with 3 or 4 to one against us and no support. It was a badly managed affair on the part of our Commanding Gen. Van Dorn."⁵⁵ Sam also told of an exchange with Federal soldiers burying Confederate dead:

[the Federal soldiers] said that they were burying them and that they were burying them decently for said that men like them deserve it. When they come to our boys the first thing they said was well boys have you got Sober. They say we were all drunk for they say no Sober men would undertake to do what we done...⁵⁶

In an accompanying letter, John let his family know that he had reached Sam and his regiment with the horses, and that

Sam is in good health & has the appearance of a good soldier. He has been in several fights since he come over the river. The last fight [Corinth] he was in was a very serious one. There was 14 wounded & 3 killed out of our Co. Sam had a hole shot through his cap...⁵⁷

[March 25, 1863 : Cyrus Love]

We now have Roll Call five times a day whether in camp or on the march. Any man missing roll call three times in succession without leave of absence from a Brigade or Major General is to be put in irons sent to the rear of the army, his horse and arms to be taken from him and he put into the nearest Infantry rcgt from his State. And other instances where they are absent without leave for a few days they are to be considered deserters and shot accordingly.⁵⁸

Cyrus had spent the winter with the 8th Texas Cavalry, now referred to as Wharton's Brigade, in what has been called a "shadow war" in Kentucky and Tennessee.⁵⁹ Union troops had advanced into that region starting with the victories at forts Henry and Donelson, then Shiloh and Corinth. In October, Cyrus' unit made a stand a Perryville with heavy losses on both sides while Bragg attempted to join his widely scattered forces in that region. The maneuver succeeded, and Bragg started toward the Cumberland Gap, leaving cavalry units, including Wharton's, to protect his rear and retard the onward march of Federal forces.⁶⁰

In a letter dated December 20 and posted from Franklin County, Tennessee, Cyrus refered to the winter months of traveling and skirmishing as a "long and apparently useless trip."⁶¹ Another member of Wharton's Brigade reported that the soldiers "had to form line and skirmish several times a day ... For more than a week there was no order to unsaddle."⁶² Cyrus' mention of disciplinary actions taken against potential deserters reflected a growing problem in the Confederate army. Unwarrented absentees had been a source of concern from the beginning of the war, and absenteeism and downright desertion increased steadily, especially after the Conscription Act compelled volunteers to re-enlist.⁶³

Even during this dreary winter, writing from a "camp 20 miles north of Grenada,"⁶⁴ Sam commented on the local Southern Belles:

Bettie it [may] amuse as well as interest you to have seen the Ladies of Tenn. In marching through that portion of the country we had on our Fed. overcoats that we captured at H.S. [Holly Springs] and they always thought we were Feds until we told them better or they found out themselves for it was very hard to to fool them long. They would then open their doors and come out on the streets and get as close to us as they could without getting in the way of our horses and some would Shout while others would laugh ... Some would run and bring everything they had cooked for us to eat while they would put every body on the premises to cooking more.

I do'nt think I ever saw any people as highly elated in my life. They were perfectly beside themselves with joy. But there was one draw-back to the enjoyment of the Soldiers. It was because we new we could not Stay there for we were not Strong enough and the thought that all those pretty girls had to be left to the tender mercies of the Feds. put a damper on our enjoyment. But I hope it will not be long before we can drive the hireling hosts of the north to their homes and never be interrupted by them more when all can live in peace at home ... The only letters in the Brothers Loves collection from James Love⁶⁵ date from this winter. He was stationed at Little Rock, and his regiment had taken part in the defense of Arkansas Post when it was attacked from the Arkansas River by Federal transports and gunboats in January 1863. The following communication indicates that James had not taken part in that fight. The limited correspondence from James-two letters, apparently posted simultaneously-gives little insight into this man's experiences and feelings about the service. The fact that he was war weary at this point is clear, however, in his request for a substitute and his expression of anxiety regarding persons at home:

I should like to have Bob come and stay in my Place awhile. It is impossible for a man to get a furlough unless he is a favorite of the officers or he will honey them and the reason for my wanting Bob to come is my horse has been sick and is now so Poor that he is not fit to use... If he should come I do not want him to stay more than one or too months...

Tell Ellen that I am trying to conduct myself as near right as Possible. I have not learned to Swear nor drink. There is not three men in camp but What does Both.⁶⁶

The second letter, addressed to 'Dick', is even more revealing⁶⁷:

We are having a rough time of it here. It has rained or snowed all the time. I have not been in a fight yet nor do I want to be...

I wish I was with you. We would have a good time of it. When are you coming up here? Bring Bob with you and I will return with you. Bring a bottle of the old Mans winc and a plug of tobacco. Bring me something that is fit to eat for we do not get any thing that is fit to eat. We had poor beef and bread with a little sugar. After this is said all is said. Oh for such times as we have seen together. Don't tell the old Lady how we are faring it may trouble her.

Come up here dick and bring me a letter from Ellen. I have never heard from her since I left home. If you cant come write to me and tell me something about my people. I am troubled about Ellen she was sick when I left...⁵⁶

Very few mentions are made of James in his brothers' letters, and the collection contains no further communications from him. In a letter posted June 12, Cyrus reported with one simple sentence, "James is dead."⁶⁹

The 'Bob' whom James had wanted to take his place may have been youngest brother Robert Love (although Robert is not refered to as Bob in any other correspondence); letters which discuss Robert make it clear that he was anxious to join the war at this time:

[June 28, 1863 : Sam]

If Robt is determined to come in to the service before he is of age he might wait until I can come home (if I ever do) for I will come this fall if I ever get a furlough & then I could have got him into a place where he could have done well – & Tea. I want to know whether you get it or not as soon as you have an opportunity of writing to me – & by all all means tell Robt to stay at home until fall – for if I repeat what I have already wrote to him that the service is something he knows nothing atall about & it does seem to me that he ought to have confidence enough in me to take my advice – and advantage of the experience that 3 years of hard service has given me. But if he will not do it let him go & do as he will.^{∞} Robert eventually joined the Confederate army, enlisting in the 6th Texas Cavalry, Company G, presumably to fight alongside Sam and John in Ross' Brigade. A passage in Webb's *Handbook of Texas*⁷¹ contradicts itself in saying that he was born in 1847, volunteered at the age of seventeen, and then served "throughout the war." In spirit, perhaps; both the letter cited above and simple math show us that it was probably 1864 before he enlisted.

Perhaps in later years Robert found it politically expedient to inflate his Confederate career. After becoming deputy sheriff of Limestone County in 1872, he filled a number of public offices, including sheriff and United States marshal. He finally made it to Austin as state comptroller in 1900, but his political career ended along with his life when a disgruntled ex-employee assassinated him on June 30, 1903. No letters from Robert M. Love are included in this collection, although there is an original copy of the *Dallas Morning News* front page announcing his murder.⁷² His body was laid to rest in the Tehuacana cernetery, alongside his mother, father, and brothers, and is honored there with an historical marker.

John lived through the war to become sheriff of Limestone County with Robert as his deputy. Near the close of the Reconstruction period in 1873, he and Robert had cause to take up arms once again in behalf of constitutional rights. Contesting the election of Richard Coke to the office of governor, incumbent Edmond J. Davis issued prohibitory orders against the convening of the Fourteenth Legislature. John and Robert stood with pistols bared at the foot and head of the stairs of the State Capitol and protected the members of the legislature as they went up to the second floor, enabling them to organize and administer the oath of office to Coke.⁷³

According to the *Dallas Morning News* article in 1903, the Love family had "a singular line of fatality among them." In 1873 the boys' father, James M. Love, was killed "from ambush" as he served as sheriff of Limestone County.⁷⁴ John, in the same office the next year, was killed by escaped prisoners as he transported them from Shreveport to Limestone. Probate minutes held at the county courthouse in Groesbeck show that it took his brother, Sam B. Love, seven years to settle John's estate in behalf his orphaned daughter, Maud.⁷⁵

Sam passed away at the age of seventy-four in Fort Worth, Texas, where descendants of the brothers live today. Rumors persist in Tehuacana that he was active in Confederate Veteran's organizations, frequented the nearby Confederate Veteran's Reunion Campground, and was a ladies man well into his senior years.⁷⁶

Cyrus remained with the 8th Texas Cavalry through the spring and summer of 1863. His letters give descriptions of the Battle of Murfreesboro and other engagements. The collection contains no letters from Cyrus after August 20, 1863. In a recounting of "Wheelers Great Raid" in October, the memoirs of fellow soldier L.B. Giles contain this epitaph: "Love, of Company C, was killed."⁷⁷ In his last letter home,⁷⁸ Cyrus, the educator turned soldier, told of recent skirmishes, asked about Sam and John, invoked the will of the Deity, and closed: "Tell Jenny, Alice, Mary, Lizzie and Johy K. to be good children and study hard."

NOTES

¹Letter 1, October 30, 1859; Cyrus W. Love to Robert M. Love. The entire known Letters of the Brothers Loves collection is held by Mary Couts Burnett Library Special Collections, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas. Transcriptions were done by Jennifer Mansfield, June -August 1997, and are held by the library on PC disc. All references to these letters will be by their chronological number given at the time of transcription with date, author, and addressee, as shown above.

An effort has been made to preserve the original tone and flavor of the letters; consequently, spelling has not been altered except in obvious cases in which the author doubted her reading of the writers' handwriting. Punctuation in the form of periods for sentence separation and paragraphing has been added to aid clarity of expression. Use of ... indicates an edit of the originals, as does []. Any other punctuation indicated in this paper represents that of the original letters. It is suggested that interested parties view the original letters.

²Freestone County Historical Commission, *History of Freestone County, Texas*, Vol. I, p. 16. (Hillsboro, 1978).

'Letters are addressed variously to Elizabeth Karner, known to be the brothers' sister and wife of John Karner; E.T. G. Love, who appears to have been called Terissa; Tea, believed to be youngest Love sister, Tennessee Angeline; Lizzy: Bettie; and simply "Sister" or "Sisters." Whether Lizzy and Bettie could have been alternate names given to the sisters listed above is not known; it is possible that they were cousins or friends. Only Mary Elizabeth (Love-Karner), Eliza T.G., and Tennessee Angeline are listed in the family Bible and in other family records. Records of Jule and Jas Floyd, present (1998) owners of Love Springs property in Tehuacana, Texas.

*Letter 1, October 30, 1859; Cyrus W. Love to Robert M. Love.

⁵Mrs. V.K. Carpenter, ed., 1850 Census Limestone County, Texas (Huntsville, 1909).

^oH. Steele, A History of Limestone County, Texas 1833 - 1960 (Hillsboro, 1960) p. 4: also McLean, Papers Concerning Robertson's Colony in Texas (Arlington, 1982), Vol. 9, p.238,

'Records of Jule and Jas Floyd, present (1998) owners of Love Springs property in Tchuacana, Texas.

^{*}Tehuacana Anniversary Celebration 1990 History Committee, Tehuacana : A Collection of Recollections ... (Mexia, 1990).

^oW.W. Heartsill, Bell I. Wiley, ed., Fourteen hundred and 91 days in the Confederate Army: A journal kept by W.W. Heartsill for four years, one month and one day (Jackson, Tenn., 1954), p.16.

"Letter 6, October 14, 1861; Cyrus Love to Jas. M. and T.A. Loves.

¹¹Edward Clark, Proclamation to the People of Texas. State of Texas, Austin, August 26, 1861, various sources, including: Wright & Simpson, eds., Texas in the War 1861-1865. (Hillsboro, 1965). Plate 70.

¹²Freestone County Historical Commission, *History of Freestone County, Texas*, (Hillsboro, 1978), Vol. I, p. 18. Also, Janet B. Hewett, cd., *The Roster of the Confederate Soldiers*. (Wilmington, NC, 1996).

¹⁰Freestone County Historical Commission, *History of Freestone County, Texas*, (Hillsboro, 1978), Vol. I, p. 18. Also, Letter 6, October 14, 1861; Cyrus Love to Jas. M. and T.A. Loves.

⁴B.P. Gallaway, ed., The Dark Corner of the Confederacy: Accounts of Civil War Texas as Told by Contemporaries, (Dubuque, 1968). p. 37.

"Muster cards of 6th Texas Cavalry. Microfilms held at The Harold B. Simpson Confederate Research Center, Hill College, Hillsboro, TX.

¹⁶As few letters from James survive in this collection and he is rarely mentioned in the letters of his brothers, the particulars of his CSA involvement are mysterious. In mode of speech and writing, he appears younger than John, yet family records suggest that he was twenty-four years old by 1861. This information is contradicted by muster cards dated September 1861 for Colonel Stone's regiment (see previous note) which show a James Love, twenty yrs., and a John Love, twenty-five yrs. The idea that James enlisted at this time and place is further confused by Cyrus' letter of [presumably - see note III, 1] December 1st, 1861: "I thought three of us were enough to be out at one time and James should have staid at home and not have gone to Galveston." The issue of James' identity is addressed in more detail in Section II of this paper.

"Letter 4, September 8, 1861; Sam Love to Sister.

¹⁸Letter 3, September 1 [December 1], 1861; Cyrus Love to Miss E.T.G. Love. It appears from the content of this letter that Cyrus' date is incorrect. Probably the letter was written on December 1, which would account for its references to regimental activities and other letters. It is also logical that a mistake could have been made in just one element of the date, the abbreviated month.

³Preestone County Historical Commission, *History of Freestone County, Texas*, (Hillsboro, 1978), Vol. I, p. 19.

²⁰Janet B. Hewett, ed., The Roster of the Confederate Soldiers. (Wilmington, NC, 1996).

²¹Terry's Texas Rangers, the 8th Texas Cavalry Regiment.

²²Confederate General Lloyd Tilghman. Cyrus spells Tilghman's name correctly in the next letter.

²³Andrew C. Love, Confederate surgeon.

²⁴Letter 9, November 6, 1861; Cyrus Love to Jas. M. and T.A. Loves.

²⁴Although he mentions the election of officers in his company, Cyrus does not suggest that he himself won any rank of honor. According to Confederate rosters, however, it appears that he won the rank of sergeant while in the Seventh Infantry. Janet B. Hewett, ed., *The Roster of the Confederate Soldiers* (Wilmington, NC, 1996).

 $^{26}\mbox{Hiram}$ B. Granbury, later to become general; his company is remembered as the Waco Guards.

²⁷Letter 10, November 10, 1861; Cyrus Love to Jas. M. and T.A. Loves.

²⁸Letter 3, September 1 [December 1], 1861; Cyrus Loveto Miss E.T.G. Lovc. See note 18.

²⁹It is noted in *History of Freestone County, Texas* that Moody's company was one of only two formed in Freestone County for which money was allotted from the county court, a sum of \$800.50. An agent of the court was sent to the penitentiary to "receive such cloth and clothing from the state as might be Freestone's portion for her soldiers."

³⁰Sam B. and John W. Loves

"If John ever wrote a "general history" of his trip, we have no record of it.

²Letter 13, December 5, 1861; Sam Love and John Love to Jas. M. and T.A. Love.

³³Letter 16, December 18, 1861; Cyrus Love to Jas. M. and T.A. Love.

³⁴Letter 18, January 8, 1862; Cyrus Love to Tea Love.

³⁵In his report of the incident, Confederate Colonel James McIntosh noted that the Texas regiment "breasted itself for the highest point of the hill, and rushed over its rugged side with the insatiable force of a tornado" *Confederate Military History*, Extended Edition, (Wilmington, NC, 1989), Vol. XV, p. 240.

³⁶Letter 17, January 1862: Sam Love to Betty (sister) and Lou. On the original, Sam left a space for the day after the month abbreviation, as if he were going to ask somebody for the date but never did. It has been placed in this order in the collection according to its content.

³⁷Cyrus' company.

*Formerly Terry's Texas Rangers, the 8th Texas Cavalry Regiment.

³⁹Letter 23, March 15, 1862; Cyrus Love to John and Elizabeth Karner.

⁴⁰Letter 25, April 1, 1862; Cyrus Love to Jas. M. and T.A. Love.

"Col. H.M. Henderson, Texas in the Confederacy (San Antonio, 1955).

⁴²Letter 26, April 27, 1862: Sam Love to Jas. M. and T.A. Love.

"Letter 28, May 11, 1862: unsigned. This letter, by virtue of penmanship and content, appears to be a letter from Sam.

"In 1862 the Confederacy passed the first national conscription law in American history, and reactions in Texas ranged from resignation to outrage. The implications of the act do not appear to have escaped Sam, and his account of his regiment reenlisting is commonly recorded among soldier letters of the period. F. Pruitt, "We've got to fight or die:' Early Texas reaction to the Confederate draft, 1862," *East Texas Historical Association Journal*, 1998, No. 1.

45Letter 28, May 11, 1862; unsigned.

46Letters 30, 32

"Letter 30, June 14, 1862; Cyrus Love to Jas. M. and T.A. Love.

**Letter ??; Cyrus to parents. The transcriber did not, at the time of her initial work, have the confidence to order this letter in with a numeral. It exists in the collection with the label ??.

"Cyrus notes Sam's station in Letter ??; Phifer, also listed as Phyfer, is mentioned in *Rebellion Record* in a letter from Sterling Price to Secretary of War James A. Seddon detailing the CSA's actions at Corinth. Frank Moore, ed., (New York, 1977), Vol. 10, p. 640.

⁵⁰Letter 36, August 11, 1862; Sam Love to Jas. M. and T.A. Love.

"Letter 37, August 11, 1862; Sam Love to Tca Love.

⁵²Letter 41, September 8 and 9, 1862; Sam Love to Sister.

³³Letter 43. October 14, 1862; unsigned to parents. By handwriting and content, this certainly seems like a letter from Sam.

⁵⁴To spike a cannon meant to disable it by driving a spike or large nail into the vent.

"Letter 44, October 20, 1862; Sam Love to Sister.

⁵⁶Letter 44, October 20, 1862; Sam Love to Sister.

⁵⁹Letter 45, October 20, 1862; John Love to Father.

⁵⁸Letter 57, March 25, 1863; Cyrus Love to Jas. M. and T.A. Love.

³⁰B.F. Cooling, Forts Henry and Donelson: The Key to the Confederate Heartland (Knoxville, 1987).

⁶⁰Leonidas B. Giles, Terry's Texas Rangers (Memoirs published by author, 1911).

"Letter 50, December 20, 1862; Cyrus Love to Jas. M. and T.A. Loves.

⁶²Leonidas B. Giles, Terry's Texas Rangers (Memoirs published by author, 1911).

⁴³Bell Irvin Wiley, *The Life of Johnny Reb: The Common Soldier of the Confederacy* (Baton Rouge, 1978).

"Letter 51, January 12, 1863; Sam Love to Bettie Love.

⁶⁷There were a number of James' in the Love family, and it is possible that these letters were not written by Jas. A. Love, son of Jas. M. Love. However, its inclusion by the original collector of the letters (presumed) as well as its content allow this reader a reasonable assertion that they were. A James Love is listed in the Roster of Confederate Soldiers (see note III, 6. of this paper) as having joined the 6th Texas Cavalry. Co. F, and a James Andrew Love as having joined the 20th Texas Cavalry, Co. G. The writer of these two letters identifies his unit as "McKies squadron Texas Rangers." It appears that McKie's Texas Cavalry Squadron was a unit of several detached companies of Morgan's Texas Cavalry Battalion which operated almost continuously on detached service. M. J. Wright & H.B. Simpson, eds., *Texas in the War 1861-1865* (Hillsboro, 1965).

⁶⁰Letter 52, Jan. 24, 1863; Jas. A Love to Father.

"Letter 53, Jan. 24, 1863; Jas. A Love to Dick.

^{es}It is unknown who Ellen was, but James' concern for her was well founded. On March 16 (Letter 57), Sam commented on a report of her death: "I was very sorry to hear of Ellens death though I was not surprised for she was very sickly. If I was half as good as Ellen I would not fear to die for I believe she was one of the best Women I ever saw."

⁶⁹Letter 61, June 12, 1863: Cyrus Love to Jas. M. and T.A. Love.

⁷⁰Letter 63, June 28, 1863; Sam Love to Tea Love.

"Walter P. Webb, ed., The New Handbook of Texas (Austin, 1952).

²⁷Dallas Morning News, Wednesday, July 1, 1903, p. 1. Headline : "Controller Love Killed." ²⁷Walter P. Webb, ed.. The New Handbook of Texus (Austin, 1952).

¹⁴Dallas Morning News, Wednesday July 1, 1903, p.1. Headline : "Controller Love Killed."

³⁵Probate Court Minutes Vol. B, pg. 380. Case number 156, 1874-1881. Groesbeck County Courtbouse.

⁷⁶Records of Jule and Jas Floyd, present (1998) owners of Love Springs property in Tchuacana, Texas, and Limestone County natives.

³⁷Leonidas B. Giles, *Terry's Texas Rangers* (Memoirs published by author, 1911), p. 67. ⁷⁸Letter 69, August 20, 1863; Cyrus Love to Jas. M. and T.A. Love.