1865-08-14, James B. to James M.

James Broderick Safford

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Camp 10th U.S. Cavalry
Near Athens Miss Jan 24 1865

My Dear Father,

When I last wrote you it was about a week ago when we were on BlueWallet he received orders to march to Huntsville Ala and rest for a week or so and then be ready for Another raid. He started and got this far 21 miles from Huntsville and were ordered tohalt and now the probability is that we will go back across the river and go to Eastport Ala near the Mississippi line, we are camped six miles from Athens and are waiting for Rations we have been out now for seven days, the Kill Hog and chickens and parch Corn and make Coffee out of parched Corn in fact we live off of the country. I'll tell you one thing I have heard I have heard 1200 for 50 c to 100 for a single cracker and I heard one man say he would give 50.00 for a hard tack (cracker) but we manage to get along by taking everything one can find it seems Citizens in an awful situation after taking the best bit of meat and Corn that they have, but I strive such a policy will tend to end the war a year sooner than to protect other Rebel Citizens as we have been doing. It makes
Union men of them they say they don't want any more War or any more Southern Annes. Came up here. The offer has been since I've left Franklin. San to every command to leave and yet every thing they can a command that had it been issued last Years ago the office could have been relieved immediately, but the policy has changed now and I am glad of it. I am almost desperate of clothing for such weather as we have here--Part of the time we are in Camp belly deep to our knees and then it will be froze hand for a day or two and then it will rain for a day or two. Such weather as this I have lost my flannel and have been weeny put over since. My boots are just giving out and such weather as there is through wet and mankind and they all at once. When one got to some place and stops I will need some boots put and a pair of gloves. The men in before to see the boys in a day or so but if we go back and go down the same I dont know when we will be down. I have had no letter or papers Yet. Keep writing I will get them in time. I write this from the top of the 3rd scaffold.
Camp 10th Ind Cavalry
Near Athens Ala Jan 4th 1865

My Dear Father

When I last wrote you it was about a week ago when we were on Blue Water. We received orders to march to Huntsville Ala and rest for a week or so and then be ready for another raid. We started and got this far 21 miles from Huntsville and were ordered to Halt and now the probability is that we will go back across Elk River and go to Eastport Ala near the Mississippi line. We are camped six miles from Athens and are waiting for Rations. We have been out now for seven days. We kill Hogs and chickens and parch corn and make coffee out of parched corn. In fact we live off of the country. I tell you we have suffered. I have heard Boys offer 50c + 100 for a single cracker and I heard one man say he would give $5.00 for a Hard Jack (cracker) but we manage to get along by taking every thing we can find. It leaves citizens in an awful situation often taking the last bit of meat and corn that they have. But I think such a policy will tend to end the war a year sooner than to protect these rebel citizens as we have been doing. It makes
Union men of then they say they don’t want any more War or any more southern armies coming up here – The order has been since we left Franklin Tenn to every command to forage and get every thing they can a command that had it and issued two years ago the office would have been relieved immediately but the policy has changed now and I am glad of it – I am almost destitute of clothing for such weather as we have had – part of the time we are in mud Belly deep to our Horses and there it will be froze hard for a day or two and then it will rain for a day or two such weather is awful

I have lost my gloves and have been wearing socks ever since my Boots are fast giving out with such weather as I have been through wet and muddy and frozen all at once – When we get to some place and stop I will need some Boots sock and a pair of gloves – We were in hopes to see our Boys in a day or so out if we go back and go down the line I don’t know when we will see them – I have had no letter or papers yet – Keep writing I will get them some time – I write every time we stop -- Your Off son  J. B. Safford