

Letter from a Confederate Soldier (incomplete), 1862 (page 1 of 4)

John DeBell
Gordonsville, Orange County
August 20th 1862,
My dear Wife
I received your letter dated July 4th on the 14th July and have since rec^d one from you & M. dated May 29th. I have had several letters from you, and would have answered them but since I rec^d the last I have had no opportunity to get an answer to you, besides I have been very busy, you can imagine how much I have had to do when I tell you that all of old Stonewall's army passed through this place on their way to attack the young Napoleon in his rear, and that I had to do all the work of the office, as 'Brower' was absent sick, he is now well, Oh haven't we whipped them? and is not all the good news I have heretofore promised you more than been fulfilled? the young Napoleon has now changed his Base to the Rappahannock I think it more than likely it will soon get too warm for him there & he will be compelled to change again, I suppose the next time to Washington City.
You have heard all about the Battles at Richmond I know, but you have yet to hear of the almost impossible acts of bravery & daring performed by our brave 'Boys' the Lord never shone upon such an Army, I suppose too before this reaches you, you will hear all about the Battle of Cedar Run, at that fight we had only

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8000. Now engaged, Old Stone Wall was too hard for them a gain, Notwithstanding they had two divisions. Men being 20,000. Their loss was very heavy full 2000. Men was 100 killed & 500 or 600 wounded we took two splendid Napoleon Guns, 1500 small arms & 12 loads Ammunition & drove them 3 miles. we took Genl. Perce, & thirty other officers & 300 men Prisoners. There is hardly a day now that a Yankee or two, sometimes 12 or 15. don't come in and give themselves up. The Army has left Richmond at least the bulk of it and is now between you & my self. I can see before you get this the big fight will be fought the largest of the War. I know it will. If the Yankee will stand their ground, but of that I am not so sure I think they will fall back to the Potomac then I will have the pleasure of seeing all that is dear to me on this earth again. I fully intended coming home, before this but about the time I intended starting Pope got in the way and as you know I was never very partial to the Pope I concluded not to encroach upon his living. Everything seems favorable now & I think you may expect to see me before long. The 8th Regt Paupers through & the 17th two I saw all the Boys. Alfred looks quite well, was in the Williamsburg fight, most of the Boys look first rate, the Fairfax Rifles has lost but two killed & three who have died from sickness now of them your acquaintances, all that were taken Prisoners have returned, Billy Barnes, went to his regiment the next

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day after he was exchanged at though he was allowed
a furlough - he saw there was a chance of a fight
and hurried up - what a contrast between him
& his Bro Jack! Let me tell you that the People
and army, think no more ^{that they will be} whipped now
than they do that the Sky will fall, I think we
can kill & take the Prisoners, about as fast as
they can recruit, and that when they get the
colors we will have killed & Paroled just about
as many, I saw Jack yesterday he is looking very
well is at the same Business yet, J.P.M. is with
him and well - I have been sick - but am
very well now was only about 3 days - and
even if I had been home would not have you
been able but it was several weeks before I got entirely
well, I am fatter now than I have been for some time
how do you do, I hope you and all have been well
you spoke of Annus by being well I had not
heard there was any thing the matter with it
let me know in your next all about it, and
do for good wife sake write a long letter tell me
all about home what you have been doing &
how you spend your time, if you are farming?
& how much you get for Butter? how the cattle been
taken & my cats? has Charly left? and the Negroes
generally? and tell me all about Yankee rule & so on
in short tell me every thing worth about 6 pages if you
don't I must like it - now I know you will do it

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tell me. I saw W.P. the other day but as I
 did not get his letter of 19th May until lately I said
 but little about the Hogs, he says he is very much
 obliged for the trouble she has been at to save some of
 his things and that there will be no difficulty about
 the Hogs, he hopes to be home soon I will then
 arrange it.)-

I wish you would buy me some clothes for this
 winter if you can raise the funds, I will need
 them very much I also want a good pair Boots & g.
 don't fail to get these things & have them made ready
 for me, you had better lay in a good supply
 of ~~clothes~~ for your self & children don't be
 afraid of getting too many get Tea coffee &
 Sugar, Satt. & all such things as far as your
 money goes, I will send you some money
 have been trying to get your money but the
 S^{rs} Kauts don't have much every thing is enormous
 ly high here, it costs me a great deal to live
 can't save half my wages, but I would give
 every thing & more if I had it to prove successful

I know when I said to write to you to keep in good
 spirits you thought I was too sanguine but I
 am no more so now than then I wish as I felt
 that the result is certain though it may be far
 a head yet, we have a large and daily increas

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