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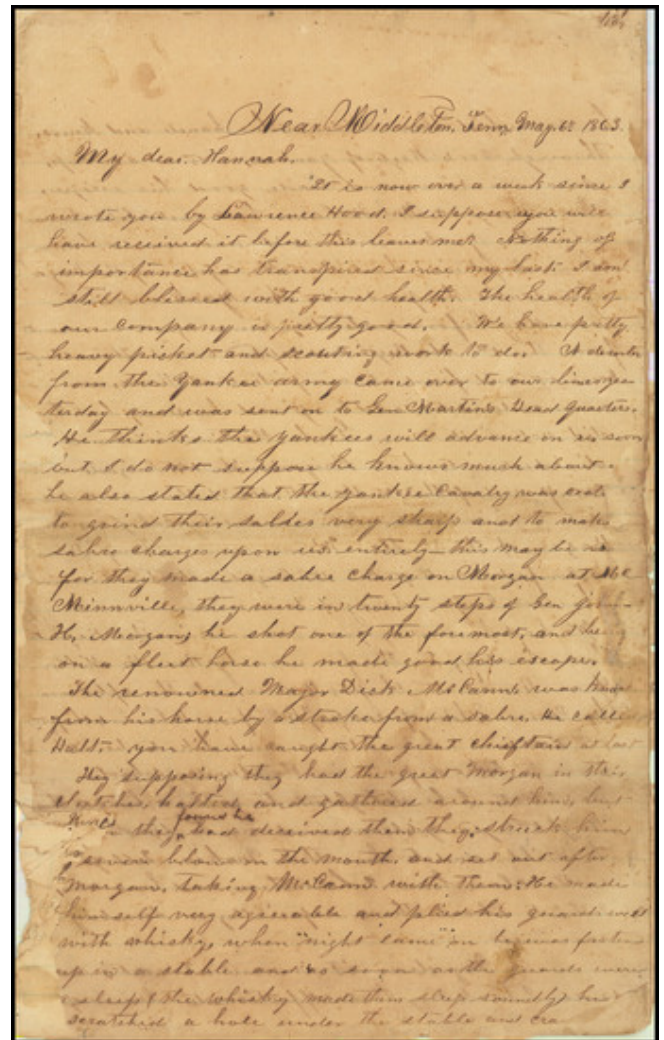
7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500  
blr@raremaps.com

**(Confederate Civil War Manuscript Journal - Anti-War Sentiment) [Letters from a  
Confederate Soldier to his Wife]**

**Stock#:** 83374  
**Map Maker:** Harrison  
**Date:** 1863  
**Place:** Middleton, Tennessee; Alabama;  
Georgia.  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 7.25 x 12 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



**Description:**

***Eyewitness Civil War Manuscript by a Confederate Soldier in the Army of Tennessee at a Pivotal Moment in the War***

***"The wealthy have decidedly the advantage in this war. It is waged chiefly for their benefit and yet, strange to say, they are the most eager ones to get out of it or rather they make use of their money to seduce poor men into it and so get their own precious bodies out of it."***



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A richly detailed Civil War manuscript account by E. T. Harrison (likely Elijah T. Harrison), a cavalry soldier in General Joseph Wheeler's Corps, Army of Tennessee, including descriptions of troop movements and camp life during an important turning point in the war. The setting here is the Middle Tennessee campaign during the summer of 1863, ultimately resulting in the Confederate retreat from Tennessee in the wake of the battles of Chickamauga and Chattanooga. Harrison, of Co. D, Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade, Martin's Division (Brigadier General William T. Martin) mixes insightful descriptions of events in the war with intimate personal thoughts intended for his wife and family.

The manuscript entries, on sheets that seem to have originally been a part of a manuscript journal, are written in the form of letters from Harrison to his wife Hannah. While it is possible that these letters are retained copies of individual letters Harrison sent to his wife, given the vagaries of wartime mail during periods of troop movement it seems more likely that these are original letters collected by Harrison with the intention of posting them at a later date.

The author of these letters was very likely Elijah T. Harrison, a private listed in muster rolls as a member of Company D, 8th Regiment, Confederate Cavalry.

The twelve letters cover the period from May 6, 1863, to September 11, 1863, and describe the thoughts and concerns of a regular Confederate soldier in one of the key periods of the conflict, as the Union Army gained momentum in the strategically important position in Tennessee. In addition to the vivid descriptions of camp life and troop movements, Harrison describes his capture by Union soldiers and subsequent experiences in captivity and eventual release.

The first letters are written in a Confederate camp near Middleton, Tennessee, with later letters from Columbia, Tennessee, then from the Tennessee River in Morgan County, Alabama, then Trenton, Dade County, Georgia, and finally from a place called Lacy's Spring near Whitesburg, Alabama.

**Campaigns and locations:** Harpers Ferry, Rover Tenn, Double Spring, Duck River, Somerville, GA, Camp Middleton, Tenn.

**People mentioned:** General Braxton Bragg, Stonewall Jackson ("Stone Wall"), General Van Dorn, General Kirby Smith, General Banks, General Joseph Wheeler, and others.

**An excellent firsthand snapshot of life during the Civil War by a thoughtful Confederate soldier at a key moment in the war.**

**Following are excerpts from the letters:**



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May 6, 1863: A deserter from the Yankees cavalry was ordered to grind their sabres very sharp and to make sabre charged upon us. entirely - this may be so for they made a sabre charge on Morgan at McMinnville, they were in twenty steps of General John H. Morgan; he shot one of the foremost, and being on a fleet horse he made good his escape. The renowned Major Dick McCann was knocked from his horse by a stroke from a sabre; he called 'Halt. You have caught the great chieftain at last.' They supposing they had the great Morgan in their clutches, halted and gathered around him, but [?] they found he had deceived them they struck him a severe blow on the mouth and set out after Morgan, taking McCann with them. He made himself very agreeable and plied his guards well with whiskey, when night came on he was fastened up in a stable and as soon as the guards were asleep (the whiskey made them sleep soundly) he scratched a hole under the stable and he crawled three miles on his hands and knees through 3 or 4 regiments of Yankees, into a swamp, swam a river and made good his escape.... General Martin's Division is divided into two brigades; the 1st brigade is composed of the 1st Alabama, 51st Alabama, 3rd Alabama and 8th Confederate Regiment and commanded by Colonel James Hagan of the 3rd Alabama. **We are now in Company "D" 8th Confederate Regiment Cavalry 1st brigade, Martin's division, Wheeler's corps Army of Tennessee.**

May 7, 1863: Oh! A lovely loving thoughtful industrious wife like you are, is worth more than rubies her worth is past finding out, my love and esteem for you dear, Hannah, increases every day.

May 12, 1863: My dear I am so proud that you did not pack up and run off to the hills when you thought the Yankees were coming, but stood your ground as becomes the wife of a Confederate Soldier... Those two pretty sweet violets made me think a great deal of the sunny clime of our "flowery Dixie" I see a beautiful flower up here called the "Peony" it is as large as a bowl and as red as blood... I have no war news, save that we have whipped the Yankees in Virginia - Stone Wall Jackson is dead - General Van Dorn is dead - General Kirby Smith has whipped General Banks in Louisiana. The officers of our Regiment that were captured at Rover Tennessee have been exchanged, Bill Gibson, Duff Caskerell and all.

May 14, 1863: Mr. Frank Ingram got shot in the hand last Sunday while he was out grazing his horse, he was by himself ... He has gone to the hospital and I have no doubt will be at home soon. Some men are lucky to get home; but I'd rather wait a while than to have my flesh lacerated by a bullet or to be captured by the detestable Yankees ... I expect that Joseph Atkinson will get him a substitute before long. He is corresponding with a gentleman on the subject. **The wealthy have decidedly the advantage in this war. It is waged chiefly for their benefit and yet, strange to say, they are the most eager ones to get out of it or rather they make use of their money to**



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***seduce poor men into it and so get their own precious bodies out of it. [Emphasis added.]***

**(Harrison complains about the practice of purchasing substitutes for army service, suggesting the rich slaveowners should also fight in the field. This is a most revealing comment given the context of Southern social hierarchy where rich slaveowners could avoid military service by paying for substitutes)** May 18, 1863: *I tell you my dear, I have been thinking about matters and things and I am fast coming to the conclusion that this substitute business is being carried to excess. If a man is able to be a good substitute he ought to be conscripted and again this war is waged for the benefits of the rich more than anyone else and yet they are the ones who are moving heaven and earth to get their own precious selves out of danger. I hold this doctrine to be true, that if their interest is not worth their own exertions to defend, why should we who have no negro property or but little, still continue the conflict. I would hate most awfully to see the Yankee success now; but if the slave holder will not come boldly up to the "mark" and contend for their rights I say we the non-slave holding portion of the army and those who have but a small portion of this species of property ought to memorialize the president to stop this disastrous war. I am for the rich, who are within the conscripted age doing their share of the fighting. The poor man loves home and ease and the pleasures of his family full as well as the rich.*

**(Interactions between Confederate prisoners and the Black men who fed them in a Union prison camp)** June 12, 1863: *On the 22nd of May just at daylight the Yankees broke in to our camps. I tell you there was a scene of confusion that one does not often see in a life time. We had to run, Johnny Baldwin ran against a tree with me and knocked me off and before I could get into the bushes a number of the "blue coats" were upon me and I was forced to surrender. I was treated much better than expected. At Louisville Kentucky we were searched and our money, pocket knives, tin cups and gray blankets were taken from us and we were fed by "Big black n-----s." They fed us out of their hands and if any of the boys crossed them, they would curse them. Several Confederate prisoners have been hand cuffed for cursing the negroes. We were promised that our money should all be sent on, so when we came to Petersburg, Virginia, the envelopes were opened and not a third of the money was there. ... They took \$46 from me and I received \$21. Some got mustang bills, others counterfeits and other shinplasters on Arkansas and Missouri. From Middleton I was carried to Murfreesboro thence to Nashville, Tennessee, thence to Louisville Kentucky thence to Seymour City, Indiana, thence to Dayton, Ohio, thence to Cincinnati, Ohio, thence to Columbus, Ohio, thence to Bellaire, Ohio, thence to Harper's Ferry, thence to Baltimore, Maryland.*

June 18, 1863: *On the evening of May 21st we were all ordered to fire off our guns, both in the 1st Alabama and the 8th Confederate Regiments (cavalry). On the morning of May 22 just at day light*



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*our camps were aroused by the firing guns. The yelling of men and the thundering of horses hooves over in the 1st Alabama Camps. Unmistakable evidence that they were surprised by the Yankees.*

*June 27, 1863: We left Middleton last Tuesday morning. We came very near running into the Yankees, after we had stopped to camp a courier came to Major Wright with a dispatch to carry the "bloody 8th" back as quick as possible. We galloped about 8 miles without halting, but the Yankees had withdrawn... General Wheeler has been seen all sawing about with all his cavalry ever since we were separated and we cannot find out what he is up to. Joe Atkinson has just brought him a good horse and goes back to the regiment this morning. We have the greatest wheat crops up here that I ever saw. Some people think that the Yankees intended to destroy them and that our men are going to protect them.*

*July 8, 1863: I wrote you last from Columbia Tennessee. **We set off on a retreat from Tennessee the next day.** It was all the time, the Yankees are just ahead or off a few miles ready to flank us. It was a state of continual excitement and all the while there was not one armed Yankee near us. Remember it is the wagon train I am speaking of. For the regiment has been up in the front fighting like "Turks"... I heard they had a severe fight at Shelbyville Tennessee, and that our men were worsted. The 8th Confederate severely cut up. It is reported that all the officers of Company "D" were captured, except Lieutenant Summerville. I cannot vouch for the truth of this report... Several of the boys will leave in the morning for the Brigade if they can find it. The wagons leave in the morning for Rome Georgia (so it is said) General Bragg has crossed the Tennessee River and burned down the bridge. He is on his way to Knoxville Tennessee. The Yankees thought to play him a Yankee trick by showing fight in front and running a large force round by Knoxville and thus fall upon his rear, but Bragg is wide awake.*

*August 18, 1863: We heard some awful tales of the doings of the deserters. They have committed several outrages in "Murphy's Valley" they stripped the clothes and shoes off one man's children; they cut the skirts off a lady's saddle. They shot at and wounded two preachers. They swear they will kill out all the leading Secesh Men. There are many loose kind of women in these mountains. They have had one dancing frolic and there is to be another one tomorrow night... How I do miss you and the children. I want to be at home worse than ever. My mind is constantly wandering back to the loves, the delights and the pleasures of home, sweet home.*

**(False alarms of Yankees and drunk officers)** Sept. 11, 1863: *My dear Hannah, we are on the road between Warrenton and Gadsden 16 miles from the latter place... We have heard frightful tales about the great number of Yankees in Will's Valley and about Gadsden. We learned last night that*



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*were none neither had there been any in those localities. We were all put in a great confusion a short time since by a report of a citizen that a thousand Yankees had crossed the Tennessee River and were close upon us. The Colonel sent out scouts who scouted all over the county and could see none nor hear of any. It seems that one Yankee had crossed the river in a skiff and was captured. The old citizen was passing along and hearing of the capture and seeing some women washing, supposed their white clothes to be covered wagons. He whirled and fled and reported everywhere that a thousand Yankees were across the river for he saw their wagon train, hence the excitement. Our wagons were loaded and our horses saddled ready to leave at a minutes warning. We expected to have to fight the Yankees on Alabama soil, but by 9 o'clock we were ordered to unload the wagons and to unsaddle our horses for there were no Yankees to "pester" us. We have many of these false alarms. Nearly every "Big" officer and most of the lieutenants in our Regiment are constantly under the influence of Brandy and the most of the privates get "light" whenever they can obtain the spirits. They will give 10 dollars per quart for the nasty, stinking stuff pricier than for anything else. It is alarming to see how fast and to what extent the evil habit of using ardent spirits is growing. It is fast destroying the youth, the hope of our confederacy... We have no regular way of getting on, from the simple fact that our officers are drunk so often.*

**Detailed Condition:**

Folio. Unbound sheets, with remnants of stitching suggesting removal from a larger journal volume of ruled paper. Uniformly age-toned. First sheet with old damp staining. Gutter margin of first sheet with chipping and tearing resulting in paper losses affecting a few words. Remaining leaves exhibit similar but less severe chipping in lower gutter edge, resulting in additional scattered word losses. 24 pages of neat and legible manuscript text on both sides of sheets.