

Private Thomas K. Bush (1845-1901)
His War Time Letters



Private Thomas K. Bush
Company "C", 28th Illinois Regiment

Preserved among Bush family papers is a packet of original letters written during the Civil War by Private Thomas K. Bush (1845-1901) to his parents Mrs. and Mrs. Palemon Cage Bush in Winchester, Scott County, Illinois. The letters were written by a 15 year old boy who served in Company "C" in the 28th Illinois Regiment. Thomas enlisted at Camp Butler on August 15, 1861 and within two weeks was shipped out to St. Louis, Missouri.

This War touched every family on both sides in horrific ways. Thomas' older brother, William Bush had enlisted on May 25, 1861 in Company "K" of the 14th Illinois Regiment. He was dead three months later on August 27, 1861. One can only imagine the dread and fear felt by Palemon and Eliza for their younger son, Thomas. He enlisted just eleven days before his older brother's death and he was only 15 years old.

Palemon C. Bush had already lost two children when very young from his first marriage. Another daughter, Mary Jane Bush (Mrs. John Garland), from his first marriage died in 1857 at age 17 during childbirth. Palemon's last surviving child from his first marriage, Elizabeth J. Bush (Mrs. Thomas Humble), died the year after his son William in 1862. She also died as a result of childbirth. Life was hard and cruel for men and women during that time.

The War touched nearly every family. Brothers and cousins fought together and sometimes against one another. Palemon C. Bush's brother, Judge William Bush had remained in Missouri. His son, Robert L. Bush served as Captain in the Union Army in Company "H" of the 23rd Missouri Regiment, USA. Palemon's other brother, Dr. John B. Bush was residing in Arkansas when war erupted. He named his son for his brother Palemon. Dr. Palemon Cage Bush (1829-1908) served as a Surgeon under General Cabell in the Confederate Army. And finally, Palemon's youngest brother, Dr. Reuben Rowland Bush was still living in Kentucky. His son, John W. Bush served as a Captain in the 48th Kentucky Infantry, USA. Certainly there were other Bush cousins not listed here who fought on both sides of the War.

Company "C" of the 28th Illinois Regiment was made up of recruits from Scott County. Thomas' letters mention numerous other young men from his hometown of Winchester and the surrounding area. Some returned home after the War but many others did not. Military records for the Company show that it lost 9 officers and 97 enlisted men in combat. Astonishingly, disease was the real enemy and took another 2 officers and 182 enlisted men.

Thomas Bush's enlistment papers for August 15, 1861 show that he was 15 years old and only 5'2" tall when he enlisted. Probably because of his young age and small size he was put into the Company Band where he played the fife and drum. During this War, the company band played an important roll. Drummers beat out a cadence as troops were marched from one location to another. Drummers also played as troops went into battle and the company flag flew high leading the way. Long evenings around the company's fires were often eased with song and music. One of Thomas' letters says that the Rebels had stolen his drum. The skills Thomas learned in war as a musician would shape his vocation when the war ended. Thomas left the military in 1868 and started a band. The Bush Brothers Band toured the Illinois area playing concerts. Thomas also played with the Empire Minstrels and John Phillip Sousa when he was nearby.

Young Thomas wrote home to his mother early in the war requesting that she should have him sent home. He appears to have expected to only stay a month or two in the army. Things didn't go as he planned and the war lasted many more years. Thomas served in the United States Army for 7 years.

Thomas' letters are reprinted here exactly as he wrote them and demonstrate his particular spelling and grammar. Notice that as time passes, his letters reflect a more mature man and curiously, his spelling and grammar also improve. It's interesting to note his failure to capitalize the first person pronoun "I" throughout most of his letters.

Camp Holt, Kentucky was one of the first camps Company "C" occupied after they left Illinois and then Missouri.. Note that Thomas has only been serving some 6 weeks and he is already feeling the effects of the impure water and poor sanitary conditions. Dysentery and disease were more dangerous than the Southern enemy.

"Camp Holt, Kentucky

October 7, 1861

Dear father,

i take my pen in hand to write you a few lines. last Tuesday our regiment left Birdspoint and went across the river in Kentucky. It is opposite Birdspoint. the place we are in now is a very sickly place. it has been wet here about all the time. The other regiment that was here when ours came a man said that belonged that there wasnt thirty out of each company that is fit for duty. i have been sickever since i have been in camp Holt but i am better today. i wish you would try and get me discharged for i could come home alone. get Mr. Knapp to see about it, for i told you when i left home that i would like to stay a month or two. i asked mother when I left home to get me discharged if she could and i would come home. there is seven or eight in our company sick. now there is a great many in the regiment sick. we think we will stay here all winter. the col of the regiment has come. he is from the forteenth. he was lieutenant col there. the forteenth wanted him to stay with them. give my love to all the rest of the family. excuse my bad writing for my hand trembled so by being sick. write oftener than you do. i have had a letter from the family since lieutenant Ebey came back.

Thomas Bush"

"Camp Holt, Kentucky

November 9, 1861

Dear father,

Mr Ebey got here yesterday morning and i got your letter. there has been a big battle fought the day before yesterday that is a great many killed at Belmont twenty miles below this place on the Mosur side. our regiment and the 7th did not get there in time for the fight. they said that if we had got there we could have taken the place. we had gone about 12 miles and could have there muskets besides there cannons. at night we had to retreat back to keep from being cut off. John Ebeys son William was shot on the battlefield. they laid him down and put logs around him and covered him over with their coats and blankets. it is an awful sight to go to Cairo and see the wounded in the hospital. i could tell you more about it. Mr Hill has not got here yet. if you have not sent the comfort and blanket you had better not because they would be hard to carry if we had to march. we are busy building our log houses. we are drawing blue suits. i have quit fife and went to drumming and have been ever since i have been in this camp. it is getting late and i will have to close. give my respects to all the family. write as soon as you can.

Thomas K. Bush"

By December of 1861, Thomas letters indicate that he is adjusting better to military life. He responds to a recent request from his mother for a lock of his hair. It was common for mothers and wives to wear a lock of a loved one's hair in a locket while they were away. Eliza Bush must have expressed her concerns about Thomas drinking whiskey and "cussing". He is now 16 years old and assures her that he is not drinking nor cussing.

"Fort Holt, Kentucky

December 18, 1861

Dear mother,

i have the opportunity to write you a letter. i am well at present and in good spirits. all the boys seem lively. i cant send you a lock of my hair yet. i had one of the boys to cut it to short but when it gets longer i will send you some.

i have not tasted a drop of whiskey since i left home but a few days ago i was very unwell. one of the boys gave me a little. i felt i needed it a long time before i would touch it. i don't use profane language for i want to do right. last Sunday we had meeting in the chaplin's house. after the chaplin was done preaching he invited one of the religious soldiers up to speak and he made a very sensible speech. i am in the mess with the non commission officers. we have a nice large stove in our house. right on the opposite side of our house we have a large room which we are going to make a kitchen. it is all done but the floor. i would like to come home and see you once more. i think after the battle at Clumbas if we don't get killed. i think we can get to come home. i will close my writing. write soon and let me know how you are getting along.

From your son,
Thomas Bush"

The next letter was written just a week or so after the last. Thomas talks about Mr. and Mrs. Rimby, Scott County neighbors who are in the camp cooking for the troops. It seems strange today that neighbors and family would travel to the camps and help care for the troops. The residents of nearby towns would also ride out to nearby hillsides and watch the battles in action. Christmas has past between Thomas' last two letters but he does not mention it. Perhaps the shirt and gloves his mother sent were Christmas gifts to him.

"Fort Holt, Kentucky

December 29, 1861

Dear father,

i take my pen in hand to write you a few words. Mrs. Rimby is down here she sends her respects to you both. she said she would of wrote to you but she had not the time. she and mr. Rimby is cooking for us and we have good meals and we have a splendid kitchen for them to cook in.

i have got the shirt you sent with Mrs. Rimby. i want you to tell me in your next letter how much you paid for the largest pair of gloves you sent me. they are too big for me and i can sell them or send them to you. i think there is 8 thousand men in Cairo and on Bird's Point, six in Fort Holt the 28th and the 7th regiment, and two companies of cavalry, and a few pieces of artillery. i don't want to be uneasy about me for i am well at present and Mrs. Rimby knows how i am getting along. she expects to write when she has the time. write soon for you have the time and i will do the same.

From your son,
Thomas K. Bush"

Thomas' letters also reveal that soldiers were dependent on their families back home to send basic necessities like warm clothing, blankets and even postage stamps. The tone of his letters becomes more somber as the war continues. He is obviously maturing with the sights and experiences of war. Life is not easy in the camps and often lacks basic necessities. Letters and news from home were very important to the soldiers in the field.

"Fort Holt, Kentucky

January 9, 1862

Dear Mother,

I am well at present. Mr. Gail came here yesterday and Mrs. Haselet. we have got marching orders in Cairo and these two points. we don't know where we are going or when. the day before yesterday three gunboats and two tugboats went the Mississippi but do not do anything i believe.

i received a letter from George Markille. I am out of postage stamps and there ain't any in Cairo and i can't write without you send some and if you do send them right away. about five will do me till we get some more. i must close my letter it is getting late. Write soon.

From your son,
Thomas Bush"

Company "C" saw action at the Battle of Shiloh early in April of 1862. The Union Army wanted to destroy the Confederate rails near Corinth, Mississippi. Believing the Rebels to be some distance away and no immediate threat, Union troops failed to set up defenses. They were totally surprised and pushed back up river by Confederate forces. This was also known as the Battle of Pittsburg Landing. Thomas' next letter was written just 2 days after Shiloh. Many of Scott County's men were lost in that battle and some of their names are listed following Thomas' letter. I am not sure just what the term elephant means in Thomas' next letter. Combat?

"April 8, 1862

Pittsburg Landing, Tennessee

Dear father,

I am alive and well. I have received no letters since I wrote last. We have just had a battle here. The rebels attacked us Sunday morning and lasted till Monday evening. On Sunday the rebels drove us back. General Buel's force got here in the evening then we drove them back on Monday. The 28th fought hard. The dead is lying all around our camp. Our picket was fired on this morning. They have been bringing up the dead today. The 28th lost a great many men. There were three men out of our company we are sitting was killed. The names of them that was killed is Sargent Dyer, Timothy Daily and John Sherman.

Leutenant Ebey is wounded in the breast and a great many others. George Markille said he wanted to stay down here till he seen the elephant but if he had stayed he would have seen all the elephant he wanted too. I will write again when I hear more about the fight. I forgot to tell you that Cap. Bagerd was wounded and thought to be taken prisoner. Fletcher Ebey, Louis Hankins, John Plainer and Mr. Teal is killed. All fought in the 14th regiment. I will now close my letter. Write soon as you can.

From Thomas Bush

Please send me a few stamps. The rebel stock mine besides my drum and some other things. John Balsey said tell you he was alive and well."

Thomas Bush's letters refer to the action at Pittsburg Landing (Battle of Shiloh) and mention some of his fellow soldiers from Winchester. These were not only names on a muster roll or a neighbor mentioned in a fellow soldier's wartime letters. They were men with mothers, wives and children and with stories of their own. Following is some information on them:

Sergeant William P. Dyer enlisted on 8/16/1861 in Company "C". He was killed at Shiloh on 4/6/1862. The 1860 Scott County Census lists him in Glasgow where he worked as a store clerk. He was 19 years old in 1860 and from Tennessee.

Timothy Daley enlisted on 8/16/1861 from Winchester as a Private. He was killed at Shiloh on 4/6/1862.

John Sherman also enlisted on that day and was also killed at Shiloh on 4/6/1862.

Fletcher Ebey served in Company "K" 14th Illinois Regiment with William Bush. He was killed at Shiloh on 4/6/1862. Fletcher was 23 years old when he died. He was the son of George and Matilda Ebey of Winchester. The Ebey was a family of potters from Ohio and listed on the 1860 Scott County census. Fletcher's older brother, George W. Ebey was born in 1834. He married Theodocia Balsey on April 2, 1861. She was the sister of John Balsey, Thomas Bush's good friend. George Ebey served as a Lieutenant in Company "C" with Thomas Bush.

John Balsey was Thomas Bush's long time friend and companion. He served as a Private in Company "F" 61st Illinois Infantry, enlisting on 2/15/1862. Military records indicate that he was taken prisoner in Missouri in 1865. The postwar 1870 Scott County, Illinois Census lists him as living in his mother's household. Her name was Eliza Balsley (sp?). In the same household were her other children. George Balsley age 28 of PA; John Balsley age 24 of PA; Fannie Balsley age 19 of PA; Sarah Balsley age 18 of PA and William Balsley age 16 also of PA. Also living in this household was Thomas Bush, age 24. All the men in the house were employed as painters.

John W. Balsley married Sarah Haigh on 9/25/1871 in Scott County. John and his wife Sarah were the witnesses when Thomas Bush married Idellah McEvers on April 15, 1878 in Winchester. The 1900 Scott County Census lists John Balsey from Pennsylvania, age 52 employed as a mail clerk for the railroad. It also lists his wife Sarah from England, aged 48 years. Two sons, Edmond and William were also listed. The Balsleys were listed immediately next to Bishop Vincent from Iowa, age 56, a farmer and his wife, Henrietta. Bishop Vincent will be discussed later and was a friend of Thomas Bush's. "Bish" wrote Thomas an interesting letter in 1891 when he was living in Missouri.

The Winchester, Scott County, Illinois 1910 census listed John Balsley at age 62. He and his parents were all from Pennsylvania. He was still employed as a mail clerk for the railroad. His wife Sarah age 57 years, from England was listed and her sister Florence Mayer age 52. Balsley's son Edward, age 38; and his wife, Cora, age 34 and their two children, Josephine age 6 and John age 4 were living with them.

Bishop M. Vincent served in Company "C", enlisting on 2/15/1864 from Winchester. The 1860 Winchester, Scott County Census shows him living in his mother's household. C.H. Vincent was a tailoress aged 54 years from Delaware. Bishop was 17 in 1860 and born in Illinois. In 1860 he was employed as a tobacconist. He is found again on the 1900 Scott County Census with his wife, Henrietta. No children are listed with them in 1900. "Bish" Vincent is the author of the final letter in this series. He wrote to Thomas late in his life. The letter mostly discussed the state of veteran's pensions and reminisced about old comrades.

Company "C" next saw action at the Siege of Corinth, Mississippi between April 29, 1862 and May 30. Again the aim was the destruction of rail lines there which intersected both North and South and East and West. It was a vital supply line for Confederate troops which lacked adequate railroads. Neither side was eager to engage the other. Instead both sides allowed dysentery and disease to do the dirty work of battle. The water supplies for both sides were contaminated. Thomas's letters reflect on this condition several times. It must have been a common and frequent problem.

"Boliver, Tennessee

September 28, 1862

Dear Father,

i take my pen in hand to let you know that i am well. i received your letter the other day datted the 7th of September. it is the 1st letter that has been directed to Boliver. it is a cloudy and lonnesum looking day. it is reported that there is 40 thousand rebels marching on this place but i guess it is camp news. there is so many reports we never know when to believe them.

a few days ago the 1st brigade started to go to LaGrange or somewhere. near there was about 15 thousand rebels met us. they tried to get around us and keep us from retreating back. we had to go double quick for about 6 miles. we came all the way back to Boliver that day. the next day the rebels came within 6 miles of this place to attack us. we was up at 3 o'clock the next morning ready for a fight but the rebels went back. i expect you have heard about it before this time. dont be discouraged you must not think we are whiped yet. the rebels is not whipping us here in the west. i suppose you have herd of the battle that General Grant had with Privenear Corrinth. it is getting late and i will bring my letter to a close. James Gale sends his regards and to tell you he is well. givemy regards to the neighbors.

Thomas Bush"

From Corinth, Company "C" moved toward Bolivar, Tennessee where they were stationed in September. December 1862 took the Company to Vicksburg, Mississippi, the main Confederate stronghold on the Mississippi River. They remained here until July of 1863. Company "C" was given a furlough which lasted from May 18th until July 8, 1864. They would later spend time in Louisiana. Finally they were sent to Texas in 1865. Thomas K. Bush was mustered out from Brownsville, Texas in 1868 and returned home to Winchester.

"Memphis, Tenn

April 13, 1863

Dear Parents,

I set down to drop you a few lines as Mr. Eby is going to start home in a little while. I am well and in good health. The boys are all well. We are looking for James Gale and the rest of the furlough boys back. As soon as they get back, two more of the boys is coming home. We drew four months pay last Saturday. I will send some home with the next boys that goes.

I will not have time to write anymore. I will send a longer letter by the boys that comes home. You need not write anymore till I answer the letter Ginny brings.

Your son,
T K Bush"

In the following letter Thomas writes that he has been recently hospitalized with an illness. It's appears to be dysentery, again. The letter also says that he apparently has recently been on furlough back home. And, once again, Thomas requests more postage stamps from home.

"Camp in the rear of Vicksburg Mississippi

June 18, 1863

Dear Parents,

I received your kind letter this morning and I set down to tempt to answer it. I know you would like to have an answer. I have been very sick since I left home. But I am getting better. My hand is so nervous that I can scarcely write. My sickness only lasted a few days. It was the bilious fever and headache. There is a good many getting sick with the fever but they soon get better. A great many of our regiment is on picket today. They keep up a noise shooting all the rebels. It is a good deal like when we were advancing on Corinth. We have rifle pits dug for our boys to stand picket in. There has been none of our boys hurt yet. There was one died out of our company with sickness. By the name of Charles Cochran. We left Grand Gulf on the tenth of this month. We left the place evacuated.

I will close my letter. Excuse bad spelling and other mistakes. I wish you would please send me some postage stamps. Am not out yet but can't get none more here. I will write again before I get an answer to this and I wish you would do the same. I have had but one letter since I left home.

So good bye give my compliments to all.

Your son,
Thos Bush"

Two months later, Thomas is back in Missouri and talks about the Company band. He complains about the lack of food and the fact that the troops often must go out and purchase additional meals for themselves. He is still in the hospital. The apparent food shortage may be more for those hospitalized rather than the troops in the field. Thomas is nearly seventeen years old when he writes this letter. Note how his writing proficiency has improved and his maturity. It is the last known letter to survive. He will spend another 5 years in the Army.

"Jefferson Barracks, Missouri

August 12, 1863

Dear Parents,

Your letter of the 9th came to hand a little while ago. I was glad to hear from you and that the things is getting along fine with plenty of rain. We are getting plenty now. It rains most every day here. I am well and getting stronger all the time. I was out in the country yesterday and got my dinner. We don't get near enough to eat here. We buy half what we eat. We spend more money getting something to eat here than any other place we have ever been. When I came here I had \$41 dollars and now I have only 13teen.

I am going to leave this hospital pretty soon. I seen one of the band last evening here. He said the old sergeant that is in charge wanted the drummers and fifer to play the call here. I will do that or else come home on a French furlough and stay a week and go back to the regiment. Well I will not talk about hospital affairs any more. Tommy Metzler said Tom Hersey had a flesh wound in his leg but not dangerous. He was expecting him here on the first boat.

I was looking in the morning papers over the list of the dead and seen Arch Raglanss name of Co C 28 Ill. That died coming up on the boat. I have nothing more of importance to tell you so I will close. Write as often as you can. No more at present.

Your son
Thomas Bush"

Lastly, a transcription of a letter written almost 25 years after the war from Thomas Bush's old friend Bishop Vincent. The two men had served together in the War. What is obvious in Bish's letter is the strong and lasting bond formed between the veterans. What is also very obvious was the lasting and sad effects the War had on it's veterans following the war. There appears to be some trouble with veterans getting pensions for their service. The tone of Bish's letter infers that Thomas had written him and was having trouble getting a pension for some disability from the war. Thomas died 10 years later in Jacksonville State Hospital. All these letters along with Thomas' original enlistment and discharge papers were together in a bundle. Perhaps he had used them in trying to prove his service and obtain a pension. Thomas' letters indicate he had suffered often from dysentery and he was hospitalized for a while.

"Bish" offers his sympathies to Thomas on the recent death of Thomas' mother, Eliza Thorpe Bush. She died at age 68 on December 11, 1890 in Winchester. Thomas' father, Palemon Cage Bush was a carpenter in Winchester. He died at age 70 on May 13, 1875 in Winchester.

"Deer Creek Monroe County, Missouri

July 5, 1891

Dear Old Friend and Comrade,

Yours of the 28th of last month came here duly unto hand a few days ago finding me much pleased to here from you once more. I had about given up hereing from you anymore. I sometimes would think you were not at home. And had almost began to think you had passed over with the silent majority. But your letter dispelled my imaginations. And you are still on the Land of the Living where I hope you may be permitted to remain for several years to come. I was somewhat surprised at hereing of your mothers death as I had understood she died several years ago. How I got the idea I now cant tell. I can answer you, I can Sympathize with you to the fullest extent for I have passed through the same Experience. But such things must occur in the course of our Lives. However Sad it is when we think of it that the Old must die and the young may die.

The paper you spoke of sending me I never received. I saw the Announcement of Hatch Kings death in the National Tribune. I tellyou the old fellows are passing away very fast. Did you know Sam Shireman was dead? He died about two years ago last Nov I think. I received a letter from a Co. F man at Winfield Kansas by the name of Frank Bull. (Do you remember any such man) wanting my affidavit in a Pension case. I could not do him any good for I did not remember him as he was not in the Co. where we were consolidated. I might have known him when I saw him but don't remember his name. Well, Mr. Bull had went to see Sam and found out my address from Sams wife and he wrote me stating Sams death. Sam left no family. I have given a great many affidavits to the Boys, some I have heard from afterwards some I have not. I never heard from Sam Shireman after I sent my Statement to him. John Derrisk and Old West did me the same trick. But I never refused but one man an Affidavit. And I could do him no good and I did not want to do him any Harm, so I withheld my Evidence. Poor Bill Hoots. I don't know when I

had ever thought of him before. I am very sorry to here of his sad Affliction and I hope he will soon recover. I guess Old Mr Rimbrey begins to look very old which he must be getting along in years. Do you remember the Salve he made at Fort Holt, KY when we all had the illis Marriage as the boys called it. When you see him remember me to him with kindness and Fraternal Comradship.

I would love so much to visit Winchester and see what few of the old Co there is there. It would be to me a regular Love feast. I sometimes get to studying about those fellow members of Co C and I just get so full I cant talk. I don't know wheather all the fellows feel like I do or not but I tell you Tommy there is a feeling that I cant account for neither do I try to conceal it for I am not ashamed of my own and the grand old company and Rights record. Yes Tommy you receive two discharges one when you reinlisted and one when you were mustered out and paid off. Either one will show all that is necessary on the Law as Every Soldier serving 90 days should be entitled to the benefits of said Law and all Evidence that will be required is as to your Physical Condition now. As the law is as I understand it is for those who ever have become old and broken down by disease and Exposure since the time of their service. If you made application for injuries received in the Line of Duty then you would have to furnish Evidence to substantiate your claim.

Now if there is anything I can do for you I am at your service. I remember you being laid up at Fort Holt but don't remember what the disease was. I remember Leiut. Ebey and Merchant had you sleep in their quarters where Tommy Metzler could nurse you and if you have any Evidence I think we can fix you up. Poor Old Tom Kersey he has found a home in the Soldiers home. What has become of his family that's just Awful. Just to think about it. Tom had as Bright Prospects when he came home as any one of the Boys and his father gave him a good send off and now he is in the Soldiers Home. But we may have to land there, there is no telling if I do know it will be a nice Place to End my days.

When you see Jim Warren give him my kind regards and tell him I was rather uneasy about his Politicks when I heard he had been Elected County Judge of Scott Co knowing it was overwhelmingly Democratic but I am glad too here he stands on the Indelible Principles of Republicanism. Well Tommy I will have to close for fear of waning your Patience. Remember me with the kindest regards to your family. Hoping to here from you soon. I am as ever your true friend and Comrad.

Bish M. Vincent

Monroe Co. MO

P.S Tommy. Since I eat my dinner I found a copy of the law Act June 2nd 90 which will give you all the rights required in your case. Read Sec 2 of the Law and you will find you are entitled to from 6 to 12 dollars per month. I want to see every man who has served faithfully 30 days receive a pension. Did John Clayveles widow ever get married the second time? Who is postmaster now in Winchester? Do you know anything of Geo Hanback he used to live in Glasgow. Old Ben Lewis do you know anything of him? So many I often think of I would like to see all of them.

Truly yours
Bish

Oh yes. Do you take the Tribune if not you want to take it so you can keep posted on the Pension Ruleings. It will pay you big. If you don't take it and can't get a copy let me know I will send you one.

Below are some of the men mentioned in Thomas' letters and what little information could be found on them.

Thomas Metzler
Thomas Hershey
Mr. Hill
Benjamin F. Lewis

Hezekiah Rimby enlisted on 8/15/1861 and served as a Corporal. He was discharged on 8/26/1864. In one of Thomas' letters he states that Mrs. Rimby was in camp and had set up a kitchen where she cooked for the troops.

James M. Gale of Winchester enlisted as a Corporal on 8/16/1861 and was later promoted to a Second Lieutenant. He was listed on the 1860 Winchester Census being 20 years old and a clerk

born in Illinois. He was residing with his parents A.G. Gale, a 49 year old carpenter from Vermont and his wife, Nancy age 43 from Tennessee.

Alexander Heazlit enlisted 8/16/1861 from Winchester and served as a Private. Thomas' letters mention his mother, Mrs. Haselet.

George Markille was listed on the 1860 Scott County census at age 14 and born in Illinois. He was living with his parents Thomas age 41 a machinist from Kentucky and mother Mary, age 33 from Ohio.

Charles H. Cochoran (Cochran) enlisted as a Private on 4/16/1861.

Archibald E. Raglan was a Private from Winchester, enlisting on 8/16/1861. He died at Winchester on 9/3/1863.

Hatch King served with Company "O" of the 28th Regiment from Winchester.

Samuel H. Shireman of Company "C" was Samuel Sherman. He was found in the 1860 Scott County Census at age 20 from Pennsylvania. He was living with his father Daniel age 50, a farmer from Pennsylvania and mother Ann, age 44 also from Pennsylvania.

Frank Bull

John Derrisk enlisted 8/16/1861 in Company "C" and was discharged 2/15/1864.

William Hoots was a Private in Company "C" enlisting on 8/16/1861 and discharged on 8/26/1864.

Thomas V. Kearsy of Winchester served in Company "C" from 8/16/1861 until 2/15/1864. The 1860 Winchester Census lists him as age 19 and born in Illinois. He was living with his parents, Thomas Kearsy, Sr. age 56 and a merchant from Delaware and his wife, Margaret A. age 35 from Illinois.

James A. Warren served as a Private in Company "C" enlisting on 8/16/1861. He was wounded on 10/5/1862. Bishop Vincent's letter refers to James becoming a Judge in Scott County.

George T. Hanback of Glasgow enlisted on 8/16/1861 and was discharged on 2/15/1864. He married Nancy York on 7/29/1866 in Scott County. George's name appears on an advertisement for the Bush Brothers Band of which he was a member. George was the son of Archibald and Margaret Hanback who were listed on the 1860 Glasgow, Scott County census. In 1860 Archibald was 43 years old and a farmer from Kentucky. His wife Margaret was 36 years old and from Kentucky, as well. The Census lists their children as George age 18 and born in Illinois and his siblings Samuel (13), Harvey (10), Edward (8), Ira (7) and William (6).

Private Thomas K. Bush was born on September 17, 1845 in Winchester and died at the Jacksonville State Hospital on November 21, 1901. His body was shipped back to Winchester where he was buried next to his father, mother, brothers William and Charles and wife in the Winchester Cemetery. Thomas enlisted on August 15, 1861 in Company "C" of the 28th Illinois Regiment when he was fifteen years old. He re-enlisted and served until March 15, 1868 when he was discharged from Brownsville, Texas.

Thomas Bush's wartime letters are printed here for the enlightenment and enjoyment of others and may not be used for any other purpose nor may they be reprinted in any form. This submitter hopes that descendants of Thomas' comrades and neighbors who were mentioned in his letters will find this text informative. In 1861 Scott County was a rural community with several small towns including Winchester and Glasgow. Scott County lost 290 of its youngest and best men serving in Company "C" alone. There were many others serving in other Regiments who did not return either. The effects on their surviving families and the community as a whole were devastating and would last many, many years.

Submitted by Linda Buzzard Schlenker, great great granddaughter of Private Thomas K. Bush in September 2006. Comments and responses about this submission are welcomed. Please contact at foxhill@ngsassociates.com.