

Murfreesboro, Tenn.
Camp Bradly, Mar. 15th, 1863

Dear Brother,

Your letter, I received on my return home from our 11 day's journey southward after the Rebs. I was expecting to hear from some of you. My health is still good. I am happy today.

It appears you boys differ some, on the Nigger question. If you thought as little of them as I do, you would not think it worth your while saying anything about them.

I hope in the end you are all War Democrats, neither Abolitionists nor Copperheads, but go in for prosecuting the war to the very last. No compromise. No, the Union as it was, and then such other measures as we see fit to adopt for the good of our Country.

I will tell you the opinion of a great many of the soldiers in the field. We think the extreme parties of the North are doing an injury to us. The Copperheads, by sympathizing and persuading the South to hold out against us as long as possible, and the other extreme, by trying to enforce measures upon the South that are swelling their ranks by the dozens, in place of diminishing them.

I say: You white-necked gentry, who wear tight boots and fine clothes, of the North; that have an easy carriage to ride in, and a soft place to lay your weary limbs, if need be; a shelter from the storm, and all the protection of civil life which a man would wish to enjoy:

Come into the Army, and play soldier awhile. Travel all day with sore feet and chafed limbs, and weary and worn out, lay down on the ground for a night's rest. And at 4 O.C. in the morning, cook your salt-bacon on a stick over a fire, and at the sound of the bugle, march again through mud and rain.

I trow you would be for the Union, and let politics alone.

You would have let the Nigger question alone (knowing it would breed a disturbance) until the Union is restored. (As the Rev. Mr. Branlow, of Tenn. says, let it—slavery—alone, and it will stink itself away.)

And then banish the Black Race from our soil, or colonize him and learn him something.

Now boys, as far as having the Negro free, and to live with him, I am further from being an Abolitionist than I ever was before. These are the words of Rob Bradshaw, and it don't fall much short of my own: the Emancipation Proclamation is good in its place, but now is no time for it. The Union, then the Proclamation and Nigger question.

But it won't be for me to write altogether on politics. But I hope you won't change your opinions, but go in with the great Party of the N.Y. and Penn., for putting down the Rebellion at once.

I am still trying to live a moral life, and abstain from all Evil. Your likenesses I received, and was very much pleased with them. They afford me much pleasure.

Give my love to all,
As ever, Your Brother,
E. L. Tabler

Write again, and don't be bashful.

Please tell the friends of Platwill, I wish them to write, as they have the best opportunity.

1998 Transcription by William E. Henry of a Civil War Letter
(all bold underlining added by transcriber)

THE LETTER IS WRITTEN IN INK, AND IN AN ELEGANT PENMANSHIP

**THE STATIONERY IS A SINGLE SHEET OF PAPER, APPROXIMATELY 8"X 10",
FOLDED ONCE, TO PRODUCE AN 8"X 5" WRITING SURFACE.
THE PAPER IS LINED IN BLUE THROUGHOUT AND EMBOSSED WITH THE WORDS:
"HOLYOKE CO."**

PAGE ONE

"Murfreesboro Tenn."

"Camp Bradly Mar. 15th, 1863"

"Dear Brother

your Letter I
received on My return Home from
Our 11.D.s journey Southward after
the Rebs. I. was expecting to hear
from some of you. My Health
Is still good I. am happy to day.
It appears you Boys Differ some on
the Nigger question. if you thought
as little of Them as I. do you would
not think it worth your while saying
any thing about Them.
I. hope in the end your ar All War
Democrats, neither Abolitionists nor
Copper Heads. but go in for
Prosecuting the War to the very
last. No compromise. No, the
Union as it was. and then such
other Measures as We see fit to
adopt for the good of Our Country.

PAGE TWO

I will tell you the opinion of a
great Many of the Soldiers in the
Field. We think the Extreme Partys
of the North are doing an injury to
Us. The Copperheads by Sympathizing
and persuading the South to hold
out against Us. as long as possible,
and the other extreme by trying to
enforce Measures upon the South
that are swelling Their Rank by
Dozens. in the place of diminishing them.
I say, you White Necked Gentry Who
ware tight Boots & fine Clothes of
the North. that have an easy Carriage
to Ride in, and a soft place to
lay your weary Limbs, if need be.
A Shelter from the Storm, and All
the Protections of Civil Life which
a Man would wish to enjoy.
Come into the Army & play Soldier
awhile. Travel all day with sore
Feet & chafed Limbs. and weary &
worn out Lay down on the Ground

PAGE THREE

for a Night's rest, and at 4 O.C.
in the Morning Cook your salt Bacon
on a stick over a Fire. and at
the sound of the Bugle, March again
through Mud & Rain. I trow you
would be for the Union, and let
Politics alone. you would have let
the Nigger question alone (knowing it
would bread a disturbance) until
the Union is Restored. (as the Rev.
Mr. Branlow of Tenn. says, let it -- slavery -- alone
and it will stink itself away)
and then Banish the Black Race
from Our soil, or Colonize Him &
learn Him something. Now Boys as far
as having the Negro free & to live with him, I
am further from being an Abolition than
I ever was before. These are the word
of Rob Bradshaw, and it dont fall
much short of My own. the Emancipation
Proclamation is good in its place. but now
is no time for It. the Union then the
Proclamtion, & Nigger question.

PAGE FOUR

but it wont be four me
to Write altogether on Politics
but I hope you wont change your
opinions but go in with the great
Party of the Ny.. & Penn.. for putting
down the Rebellion at once.

I am still trying to live a
Morrel Life. and abstain from
all Evil.
Your Likesnesses I received
& was very much pleased with
Them. They afford Me much pleasure.

give My Love to All,
as ever your Brother
E.L. Tabler

Write again & dont be bashful.
please tell the Friend of Platwill. I wish them to Write
as They have the best opportunity.”