

[Civil War letter from Jo Ann Barber, a direct descendant of Nathaniel Carmichael Barber. Nathaniel C. Barber was the brother of Mollie Barber (mother of Nathaniel Barber Hall)]

I thought this letter from my gr-gr grandfather might be of some interest to some of you civil war history buffs out there. It gives a little insight into what it was like in Alabama toward the close of the war. It was written April 5, 1865 by my g-g grandfather, Nathaniel Carmichael Barber, to his son Nathaniel James Barber, who was serving as a Pvt. with the 61st Alabama Infantry Regiment. Nathaniel James was probably fighting somewhere around Richmond or Appomattox, as he was mustered out of service at Appomattox, in April of 1865. Nathaniel James also had one older brother, Malcom Lorenzo Barber, a Captain in Co. C, 14th Alabama Infantry, and two brothers-in-law, William Joshua Crook, with the 37th Alabama Infantry. and Tom Stevens with the 14th Alabama Inf.

Some insight into the letter writer, as well as one of the people he mentions in the letter: Nathaniel Carmichael Barber was a surveyor for the government after the Creek Indian Treaty of March 24th, 1832, which first brought him to Alabama. He was also an ordained minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He was an established farmer, owning a large track of land along the Oseligee Creek, and a slave owner. Having about 9 slaves. The other person he mentions is Imlah Erastus Barber (his youngest son and my G-grandfather). The letter is as follows:

Chambers County, Alabama

April 5, 1865

Nathaniel Barber

Dear Son I write you a few lines by J. Swint to let you hear from home. We are all well at this time with the exception of Simmie. She is not well. We have not gotten any letters from you since the thenth of February but we heard by B. Foster and others that you were sick in the hospital which caused us a great deal of trouble.

We want to hear from you very much if these lines should reach you do try to let us hear from you soon as possible. I have nothing of much importance to write to you. We are some note than half done planting corn our wheat was greatly injured by the freezes and is ver thin. Malcom is down in youfaka (Eufaula?) attending to the conscript through there. We have not heard from for six or seven weeks.

Mr. Crook and T. Stephens is in North Carolina under Johnston fighting Sherman, we have not heard from them in some time. Imlah will soon have to go to State Service. It is reported that Salma has been taken by the yankies the people are expecting a rade through this part of the country

Provisions are scarce and dear. Corn is worth ten dollars per bushel bacon four dollars per pound.

Well Nathaniel if you cannot get a furlough to come home or may not be able to come, try to be satisfied and do your duty as a soldier and put your trust in God who is able to save you from all harm and at last save you in heaven where wars and fighting are unknown. Write us soon and as often as you can. So I close your loving father as ever,

Nathaniel C. Barber

N.B. your mother sends you one skein of sowing thread.