

John W. LaRue (Joan Weaver's Great Great Grandfather) fought at Shiloh and became a Sergeant of the 29th Regiment of the Indiana Volunteers on August 27, 1861 for patriotism, valor, fidelity, and abilities. Col Woods appears to have been a friend and fellow soldier. John's brother, Thomas (Nick) LaRue mustered in 44th Indiana Infantry on March 21, 1864 and served around Chattanooga after the major battles. He died a year later, March 11, 1865, of pneumonia. The letters that reside in the pension files located in the National Archives in Washington, D.C. were retained in connection with the pension applications of Thomas' parents and placed on the genweb site by Barry LaRue, Joan's cousin. NOTE: These letters have had periods and beginning capitals for sentences added, but most spelling was left as written. Indistinct text or handwriting too difficult to decipher is represented by dashed lines.

**Col. Woods Residence
Feb. 20th 1862**

(LaRue family papers)

Sargt LaRue

Dear Sir

I pen these lines which will inform you of my health. My health is not as good as it was when you left. My throat is well. My cold and hoarseness stay with me yet. I am now taking medicine prescribed by an Ind. Dr. He says my kidneys are badly affected but he says he will remedy the thing in a few days. I would give any thing if I was well and with the wild cats. And I shall be in a few days whether well or not. I intend to start as soon as the cars run through to Bowling Green if I am able to carry my load to Mid depot. Mumfordsville (*Kentucky*) looks like a bulled cow since you left. Some of the shitizens are swearing about their Negroes leaving with the soldiers.

John if you get in battle before I get with you kill the generals first and make prisoners of the Privates.

Please write as soon as you get this and let me know where your are.

You all have my best wishes & prayers.

J. R.(?) Woods

**Camp 44th Ind. vols.
Chattanooga, Tenn
Feb. 8th, '64**

(LaRue family papers)

Respected brother (John W. LaRue) and sister (his wife Mariam)

Again I take up my pen to answer your most welcome letter which came at hand yesterday. I was glad to hear from you and sorry to hear that your leg is sore. Have been having a short spell of sickness of the lung feaver and was at the hospital one week and have again joined my company and getting up again. You will have to excuse me for not writing sooner and I will send this in fathers letter for I have not got many stamps. You must not take it as a insult. I will write again soon. Well John we are hard up for rations now but we will get rations tomorrow. The regiment went out on a raid thee other day and have got back again. They did not get to see any rebs but on their ---- train on the cares to knoxville the cares ran of from thee track and killed two of the boys and wounded 3. So they had bad luck. I was not with them to see it. We have very wet weather now and some snow. I expect the young folks has nice times there. I would like to bee there about a week. What a time I would have you bet.

Well never mind. There is a better time coming.

John I have got all the papers you sent me and I thank you very much for them and would bee glad for more. Send me the Angola (Indiana) paper. So I will close for this time. I remain every your brother.

T. L. Larue (Thomas/Nick) Write soon. Good night. Kiss the babies for me.

Camp Carrington
April 8th, '64

(National Archives & Steuben County, Indiana GenWeb site)

Respected friends/parents:

I seat myself down to pen you a few lines, but I have not much to write. We arrived here on the 6th and went down to ----. I expect to draw my pay to day and I am going to send it. Frank MacCartney and you can get it and I sent my clothes home by Bill Wicoff and you can get them.

Well, folks, I done well and can eat as much as the next one and feel nice. We are going to start for the regiment in a day or two and they are at Strawberry Plains. The 12th has gone through here and have gone to Nashville. We will see them in a few days.

You must tell Amine and Sylves I not come over there and they must not feel hard about it for I will make it all right. Tell John's folks I am all right and I will write to them in a few days, and Sylves and John Larue, too. And tell the girls I am well and wish them good luck. *(Sylvester LaRue was Thomas' oldest brother. Amine was Sylvester's wife Amine Vanderdecken Sage LaRue. The reference to "John's folks" is to John Herman Elliot who was married to Thomas oldest sister, Avis Naomi LaRue Elliot)*

We had mud coming down here it rains down here like ---. I am setting in my bunk writing. We have a good time here, you bet. I have got over my bad cold. We have bread, beef, pork, coffee and sugar. I have cooked some since I have been here and we are getting fat.

I cannot think of more to write. I have been to dinner and have got down to write again. Tell bitters to be a good girl and egg, too and to do all you can for father and mother and not let them work too hard. I would like to hear how mother and dad is. You will have to excuse this writing for this paper is poor as you see. Well I will have to close. My respects to you all. I am hoping this will find you all well. You need not write until I write again.

So, good bye. T. L. Larue

Chattanooga, Tenn
May 16th, '64

(National Archives & Steuben County, Indiana GenWeb site)

Friends and folks at home:

I seat my self down to give you a few lines in return to yours I received this morning. I was glad to hear from you and to hear that you were all well. That is what I like to here. Well, I am some sick with the Tennessee Quickstep. I guess I will get over it in a few days. I am in hopes this will find you well.

You said you wanted me to give you a history of my march. We started from Nashville and marched from 12/16 miles in a day and carried a large load. I marched to Stephenson and within 40 miles of this place I got away from them and got over the --- and came through. We had some mountains to climb. It made me some tired. I did not *(see)* one farmer on the route. I seen some men hired to Uncle Sam. Uncle Sam is putting in 100 acres of grain in one body. It looked nice I tell you. I will tell you about the fight our boys had at Ginggvald and --- --- ---. Sherman has got positions of them both. We have not got the full account of it yet. Orrange was there. He said there was 15,000 of prisoners taken there and Sherman is after the rest of them. He says it will be closed inside of a year. You can look for me inside of a year. I heard the copperheads was gaining in that part, tell them they had better keep cool. There is a good deal said about it here.

You tell Sylves and John had better stay at home and get them some --- and some blue pills that is if they had made -----on ---to ---. That's some of my history. I have not got any letters only the one I got from you. I guess they don't care for me. I can be as independent as they can. You bet that I can get along with out them if they don't want to write to me. You tell bitters that she must simmer down or I will thrash her. My respects to all and well wishes. I have got about that money in my last. Write as soon as you get this.

Direct to: Co. A, 44th Regiment Ind. Volunteers
Chattanooga, Tenn From your Son, T. L. Larue

Chattanooga, Tenn
June 15th, '64

(National Archives & Steuben County, Indiana GenWeb site)

Folks at home:

I seat myself down to write you a few lines in answer to yours received this morning. I was glad to hear that you are well. Your letter found me some ----- . I have had the ague some, but I will have it broke in a few days. I guess I feel some better now. We have got a good doctor when one is sick. He gets them everything they want. He gives us all kinds of ---- as good as we get at home. We have some ----- ---- --- here at this time. Now if you want to see me, I will send you my likeness so you can.

---- if you have not got it. It sounds as if you think you will never see me again. I am coming home when this war is over. You need not think I am going to die here. This is not my game. I would like to read a different letter from the last one you sent. If you can better it any, try it. You must not get mad at what I say.

Well, I can't think of much to write. We have not got any more news to write to you. The most of the boys are well. Mike and Jim and John Ryan and John Thompson are all well and tuf as bucks. They send their best of respects to you. Alonzo Sage is well, too. *(Alonzo Sage was the company musician and was Amine V. Sage's father)*

I will be in ---- a few days, so as to do ----- . I got a letter from Sylves and Amine and you and it was as big as Tribune. I like to get such letters. I got a letter from John and Mollie and one from John's folks, so I have got one all around. I would like to be at your house as soon as I can. You will have to excuse me for this time for I have had the ague and my hand trembles. I hope these few lines will reach you all well. Tell bitters that I could not read her letter. I guess she had a stick to write with. Something was the matter. I am glad to hear John gave you some ground to plant on. How is it about the fruit John Larue is to give you every fall. I think that he has done it selling out. Do the best you can, Dad, until I come home and we will make it pay then if nothing happens.

So, I will close. My respects to you all. So good day.

From,

T. L. Larue

Chattanooga Tenn.
July 18th '64

(LaRue family papers)

Much respected brother and sister *(John W. LaRue and his wife Mariam)*

I once more take the present oportunity to seat my self to answer your welcomed letter wich came at hand to day. I was glad to hear from you and to hear that you was well. Your letter found me not very well. I have got jaundess and it makes me sick but I will get over it in afew days so I can get up and (dust?). You tell John if he don't write to he will get it when I come home. I have not heard from for along time but I will get one in afew days I guess. And tell (sil?) I have written to her but have not got any answer. I guess she is mad. The boys are all well and hartey and this is the best nuse. Hugh Wood is here but I have not seen him. He had better come and see me or I will give him fits. You tell them girls to wait a little while and they will then bee contented if not supplied with masters.

You keep (oda?) fat so I see how much she has grown. We have not got our pay yet but we will in afew days. I can't think of much to write so you will have to excuse me John. You must have lots of aples when I come home and some more of them mince pies for I am goin to eat you all out of house and home for I have become a great eater. So no more at this time. I remain your brother.

T. L. LaRue to John W. Larue and Mollie Larue, Sadleson Larue, *(Jane)* Larue
U.S. America Good Day

Chattanooga, Tenn
August 10th, '64

(National Archives & Steuben County, Indiana GenWeb site)

Respected Father and Mother:

I again take the present opportunity of writing you a few lines to let you know that I am well and enjoying the best of health. But I must not brag, for I may be taken sick at any time. But you will see I am well. I thought I would send you my frame. Annie wants one of my pictures. You can give her any one. You have Amine's. To Joe, she wanted one and I personalized her one.

Well, Dad, I can't send you any money this time for I did not draw any bounty and had only 32 dollars come to me and I had been sick some and had to have something that I could eat and it costed like --- and I thought I had better keep some for if I should happen to sicken again but I hope not to be.

I can send you a good pile next payday. It will not be long. Maybe six weeks. So you will have it by the time you want to use it. I lent some of my money \$20 dollars bounty for ten percent so next payday I can send you a nice pile for I will have 40 dollars bounty and two months pay...16 dollars per month. Everything costs so when anyone gets sick I suppose you have --- ---.

We have wet weather here. Some of the nastiest rains here I ever saw. You must tell me all about Joe. How she learns. So I shall have to close for this time. Write as often as you can and I will do the same.

This from your son,

T. L. Larue

Good day parents at home...never forgotten.

Joe, simmer down and I will send you my likeness some day. Be a good girl

Chattanooga, Tenn
Sept 15th, 1864

(National Archives & Steuben County, Indiana GenWeb site)

Respected Parents:

I received a letter from you today and was glad to hear from you for it has been so long since I have got any from you.

Well, in the first place, you said you was well. I am glad of that. Well I am in the same fix. I am getting as fat as a foal and feel as well as a --- rabbet. The boys are all well. I got 4 letters today. One from Sylves and one from John Larue and one from never mind. Well the railroad has been out so we could not get letters. They have to carry the mail on wagons from Murfreesboro to Nashville. That is 80 miles. Old Wheeler is playing hob.

Well, you will get the word before this reaches you. The word is now that we will have to leave this place. Some say we will come home to vote, but I guess that is not true. I don't know where we will go yet. Maybe we will go to Atlanta. I can't tell. If we come home to vote, you must have lots to eat, for I have got to be a big eater. We have lots to eat...fresh fish and potatoes, beef, pork, coffee, tea, sugar and sand lite bread. So you see we have the best. Come down and see our --- for we have lots to eat.

You tell Joe that I will send her something. I have sent you some books, Joe, to read. You will say they are good, too and they are. and they are --- the --- they all say so --- --- southern folks say it to be the truth. I should like to come home on a furlough this winter, but I thought I better stay here until I come to stay. If I had of come home I should of got you up a nice pile of wood. I wanted to come home for while, Dad. I am 21 years old now but I shall not be if I come home. I never shall see you suffer at all and as long as you and me can agree I shall stay with you that is one thing sure.

Chattanooga, Tenn
September 21, 1864

(National Archives & Steuben County, Indiana GenWeb site)

Well, Dad and Marm:

I thought I would write you a few lines again to let you know that I am well and harty and hoping this may find you well. You wanted me to write every week. Well I am going to do so, although I have not got any from you to answer, but I thought I would write to you anyhow.

Well, we have not left here yet, but we will soon I expect. I don't know whether we will or not. We will know in 4 or 5 days about it. If we come home we will stay about 40 days, I guess. So I can help you some if we come, but don't make any calculations on it for you may be disappointed.

Well, Dad, I like it very well down here. You ought to see some of our little hills, 'specially Lookout Mountain. It is a grand sight. I am going tomorrow to see something else pleasing to the eye if it is to be seen.

Well, Dad, leather is up high, that's true, but you can make something at shoemaking if you figger right. Dad, who has to pay you for the farm? If John has got to pay you, it is all right, but if Burk has to pay you will have to close the mortgage I am afraid, but make him toe up to the mark to make yourself safe on money.

Well, I shall have to close for this time. I will write every week. Don't write until I tell you to for we may leave soon.

I remain your son,

T. L. Larue

Good day to Dad and Marm

Chattanooga Tenn.
October 1164

(LaRue family papers)

Respected brother and sister

Again I take my pen in my hand to let you know that I am well and harty and may this find you the same. I received a letter from you yesterday. I was much pleased to hear from you. We got back to this place on the (14th?) of this month. We started the 27th of last month for Nashville and on the way our Colonel got killed. He fell between the cares and cut on leg of close up to his body and cut the other foot off. It was done in the night. The brakeman give the alarm and the cares stoped and I was the second one to him. We put him on the cares and went on. Well when we got to Nashville they give us horses and then we started after ole Forest (*Nathan Bedford Forrest?*). We went as high as 45 miles in a day. We went within 20 miles of pitsburg landing and got in a brush with a few of his men and killed 10 of his men and of ours got the same in return but not any of our regiment got hurt. He got across the (*Tennessee*) river and then he was safe. Well then we started back and took thing(s) we saw from a horse down to chickens. We was out 12 days and only had 4 days rations with us. Well you see we had to live on meat alone. We came around by Athans (al there we turned one?) our horses over got on the cares and came back to this place. You see we had a good time of it. It just agreed with me. John I am hevier than I ever was before. You can look for me home when this war is over. I was sorry to hear that father got hurt. John if he wants any thing done you do it and when I come home I will make it all wright with you if he does not. But I am sure he will. Well I guess I have told you all. I am getting so I hate to write any more. You can see I am by the looks of my writing. You must excuse me for not doing better.

I will do better next time.

I will send my likeness in these parts so you can see if I look like that of old. Well about the draft it suits me except Carie he is not fit to go nor his dad not aught to leave but the rest I say let them rip. They are sound for it. Jeff Warner will think railroad or five dolers if Ab Kirk come

down here where we can see him we will make soap of him or any other copperhead. Well that will do. You must write often and direct as before. My respects to you and dora. Slap her for me. Give my respects to dad richardson's folks. So no more from

Johnt Larue or Sadleson
to John and Mollie Larue
Good day. Write soon.

Chattanooga, Tenn
October 20th, 1864

(National Archives & Steuben County, Indiana GenWeb site)

Respected Father and Mother:

Again I take my pen in hand to inform you of my health. I am well and harty and tuf and I hope this may find you the same. I have not heard from you in a long time, but I live in hopes of hearing from you soon. I have not had a letter in three weeks or more. I saw some of the drafted men. Only one that I knew. That was Charles Burger. He told me that Andrew had gone back to Kendallville and Rory Richardson was left at Indianapolis. I am very sorry to hear that Andrew was drafted, but it can't be helped.

Well, Dad and Mom, I am tuffer than I ever was before. It just agrees with me. I expected it would kill me but it did not. I guess we will stay here all winter now. We have fixed up our tents and made us a good fireplace and so you see we live like kings. We have not got any pay yet, but we expect it every day and when I get it I will send it to Frank ---- so you can get it there. I expect you want as much as I can send. I will send you all I get so you can help yourself as you want to.

You must send Joe to school every day you can and when I come home I can hear her read in the third grade and I will fetch her something nice. I will get my likeness taken so you can see if I gain in flesh. I guess I will stop my foolishness now. I should like to come home now to vote, but that is played out now.

Now I want you to tell me how you get along. Tell Joe to be a good girl and not get in love with them little boys from town. Tell Edge to write and John Larue. I guess I have to close for now.

Your friend and son,

T. L. Larue

Write soon. Good day.

Send me the Angola papers if you will.

Camp. 44th Regiment, Indiana Volunteers
Chattanooga, Tenn.
December 25th, 1864

*(National Archives & Steuben County,
Indiana GenWeb site)*

Respected Father and Mother and little sister:

Again I take up my pen for the first time in a long time on account of the ole Mr. Hood. *(Confederate General John B. Hood)* He has cut the railroad and more then that showed fight but he got enough of that. He cut off our supplies so we have lived on five pieces of bread and a half pound of beef per day, so you see we live slim at present, but the boys feel good. After all, I never was healthier in my life.

I am tuff and harty and I hope this may find you the same. I got 2 letters from you today. I was glad to hear from you. The letters was old. Boathe was mailed the 29th of last month. The mail was fetched on wagons from Nashville to Murfreesboro and there it came on the ---. Well, folks, we are guarding the prison in town. Once we expected old Hood would attack this place, but he did not. I shall not tell you all for you will get it in the papers before this gets to you.

I am sorry the boys will not help you, but you can get along I guess until I come home and then we will not ask nothing of them. I should like to be there to help you, but if you knows how it is as well as I do it will not be long and then I can come home again, but I am not sick of it at all but I would like to be there to help you.

Today is Christmas and I expect you had a good time. Well, our Captain got a pail full of whiskey and treated the boys and some got pretty blew.

Well, Father, I want you to give me the directions to Uncle Jacob Hoose. I want to give him some and little mark and give me the directions to Uncle Aggy Larue and to Luther's folks.

(Luther Hill was his brother-in-law)

So I shall have to close for this time and give my respects to Joe and tell her to write to me again and write soon and offer some more.

This from your son,

T. L. Larue

Good day, write soon. This to Joe: Tell her I will send her something when I can. Tell her to be a good girl and go to school and learn.

**Camp. 44th Regiment, Indiana Volunteers
Chattanooga, Tenn
Jan 9th, 1865**

*(National Archives & Steuben County, Indiana
GenWeb site)*

Respected parents:

Again I pick up my pen to write you a few lines to let you know that I am well and harty and hope this may reach you the same. I have not heard from you in a long time except by the way of W. McCaslin. He has got back hear again. I have not heard from John larue folks nor from Sylves for over six weeks. I guess they want to spare the stamps and paper. If they want I will send them some soon.

We are still on half rations and live like kings. They say we get full rations the 10th of this month. I hope so for I want to sit down and eat a full meal on something that will do some good. But I have not starved yet and shall not as long as I can get at it. It does cost lots, I must live.

It rains almost every day and we have lots of mud and some snow. I expect you have --- sleighing. Well, dad, I think you have done as well as you can do for there is enough room I guess. Well do the best you can and I will do the same. We will be paid off in a few weeks. The paymaster is here now. We may get pay in a few days. I will send all that I can for I will have to keep about 5 or 6 dollars for myself for tobacco and some if I should happen to be sick. I shall clear about 7 dollars. I can't help you some, you see.

I have no news to tell, only the boys are well and -- -- ---. Some spend all of there money at once and more if they can get it. Well, egg, you tell them folks that mind your business to mind their own. ----you tell Joe that I can't find any little things for to send to her. I will send her something someday. I sent --- --- some pictures. I have not got any letters from you in two weeks but must close.

From your son,

T. L. Larue

Write soon.

February 24, 1865

(LaRue family papers)

Dear Brother (*Thomas/Nick*)

It is with much pleasure that I write you a few lines to inform you that we are on the land and among the living. We are all far and near in good health.

And Nick your little curly headed Tessa is on her (toes) and enjoying herself finely. She belongs the church. You can not better your self. You may bet as sure as I tell you. Nick Tillie does not like it very well because you write to Tessa

I saw Libby Torney. She was up here last week. She told me that she had written letters to you but she has not got an answer yet. Nick she is as handsome as a picture. She is very small well built very intelligent and Black eyes and hair but I think Tessa has got the right kind of disposition.

She is a motherly girl, Nothing rong about her Tessa will make a wife for a farmer and Libby will make a wife for some boddy that has got plenty of money. Tessa keeps your letters that she gets from you very sacred. She does not tell all she knows. She does not let everybody see her letter. Nick Libby would feel very bad if you should stop writing to her

Nick I am trying to build now. I have Bought an acre of land in town or East of town a little. I shall still work at my trade. We have plenty of work to do now and we have got a hand hired to work in the shop by the name of Charles Burk.

Nick if (i) was in your place I would try and come home if you do have to (play) off some. If you don't you never will get home. Do as the rest of them does. Nick I will tell you the best thing to complain of is the rheumatism or the sore eyes. There is many of them that does it. Keep rubbing your eyes until you get them sore but keep it to your self. Again Nick complain of your knee paining you and still continue to complain and don't give it up. There can nobody detect you. Give up doing duty all together. Don't do one bit. You may as well have furlough as all the rest. Do as I tell you. After you complain a little while then apply for a furlough. Don't give it up until you get one and come home then. Hugh Wood will report for you. He has reported for soldiers 3 or 4 months. Come home if you can and think you can. Good night. all is well at home. We sent them boots by mail. Look for them.

John W. LaRue and Mollie Write soon.

**Jefferson General Hosp Ward 18
January 29th 1865**

(LaRue family papers)

My Own Dear Sister

Yours of the 18th was duly received and I will say that I was more than glad to get it and to hear that all is well at home. I wish that I were. I think I will be before long. I have had a pretty hard time of it. I would be so glad to come home and see the loved ones there. But you must not be disappointed if I do not. I want to come bad enough, but we soldiers cannot always to as we want to. I would like some post stamps and if you have more Money that you know what to do with just send me a little. I could use a little to a pretty good advantage.

I wish that I could drive Trim & Coly now, but I guess I could not manage them. I am glad that you think of me at home. I should feel bad did you not. I got a letter from Teresa the other day. And last night I got one from Cilla. But you can't write to often to suit me. The time seems so long laying in bed all of the time. But there is one thing to comfort me. That is I keep warm in bed and it is bitter cold here now, colder than it is in Michigan I'll bet – tell John I would like to have him come down and see me. I think I could get a furlough if I had some one to intercede for me.

I will have to bid you good night remember me kindly to all my friends and accept love for your self. Write soon Soon as ever

Your Loving Brother (dearest as before) Carry Richerdson

Camp 44th Ind. Volunteers
Chattanooga, Tenn
Feb 17th, '65

(National Archives & Steuben County, Indiana GenWeb site)

Respected Father and Mother and little sister:

I seat myself to pen you a few lines to let you know that I am still on the gain and getting tuf again and able to eat my rations and I hope this may reach you the same.

I suppose you are tired of waiting for this to come. You must excuse me and I will try and do better. Well I have just got supper and the dishes washed and now you would laugh to see me at it. I had a good supper of beans, squash and beef, bread, coffee and sugar. Was that not good? Yes.

Well, folks, we expect to march before long to Huntsville, Alabama. I hope this is so for I want to get out of the mud. It is about 2 feet deep and it rains about every other day, but today it is very pleasant. I suppose your sleighing is gone. I should like to have been there about one month to give you a visit.

Oh, yes. My --- drew 4 boxes of --- and they went very good. I tell you Governor Morton sent them to us. The Regiment drew all they wanted. I have not got them boots yet, but I am looking for them. I am in hopes they will come soon.

Well, you tell Joe I will send her my likeness when I draw pay and you must be a good girl and I will fetch her a nice present when I come home. There is some talk of peace now. If that be the case, I shall get a chance to come home, but I am not very much confident in it, after all.

Well, dad, I expect you are working yourself to death. Am sorry to hear that you have to work so hard. You should not work so if I was there, you can bet on it. I shall, after this, do something for you. Well, I shall have to close for this time. My best respects to all. Write soon and often.

Good night. From,

T. L. Larue

To my folks:

Tell Joe to write to me. Give my respects to John and Mollie.