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## Letter to David from Aaron Gatchell, 1865

**Aaron Gatchell** 

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orio

Petersburg, Va.
April 18, 1365

OF BUILDING LAND SINCE

on the confirmation of the confirmation of

I am thankful and happy that I am well and able to inform you that many changes have taken place since I last wrote to you. We, the Cavalry, have had Desperate fighting during our last or present Campaign. > We started on the 29th of March from our winter quarters on left front of Petersburg, having been joined by Sherridan's Cavalry from the Valley. We went direct to Dinwiddie C.H. (Court House) where a short distance beyond our Brigade the 3rd at once dismounted and engaged the enemy, they being protected from a mounted Charge by the thick pine woods and underbrush. We drove theenemy half a mile and across a small creek. We came to a halt near the edge of the water and formed in line of Battle. After forming, we had orders to lie down, being pretty well protected by a thick growth of pines. It was now 3 o'clock p.m. that there was very little firing from either side, the two Armies, both being hid from view by the thick woods, engaged in jesting and asking each other questions, throwing out slurs and being but a short distance apart but completely hid from each other's gaze. About 4:00 p.m. the Rebs composed of Fickets Division charged us enmass. We held our position until we, the 13th, was entirely out of ammunition. At this critical juncture, the enemy was close upon us and we fell back to the C.H., the enemy being close upon our heels. When they came to the top of the hill in the open field, another Brigade being mounted charged the enemy, driving them back across the Creek. It was now dark. This was on the 31st day of March. On the following ray, we engaged the enemy with stronger force, driving them across Whiteoak Roads. Everything favored our rapid advance from thence until Lee's Surrender. The infantry joining us on the right were composed of the 5th, 2nd, and part of the 6th and 24th Corps. Petersburg was evacuated. We next heard of the fall of kichmond and the occupation of it by the Union forces under Gen. Weitzel. Now from the general appearance of things, Lee seemed to be falling back either upon Danville or Lynchburg, but Sherridan by continued marches cut off his retreat, and he was compelled to surrender. This was all glorious news for us, but in return we lost some noble men and faithful soldiers. Co.B 13th lost Captain, wounded 1st Lt., killed 2nd Sargt., wounded 3rd Sargt., killed two corporals, wounded privates, killed one, wounded five, among them Al Mc-Fadden, Wm. Mansfield. I think this is all except 2 or 3 prisoners. > To add to our sorrow is the assassination of our Noble President who had for so many months busied himself in procuring peace throughout the United States, which was just beginning to dawn on our fairland. Also the attempt to kill Secretary Seward and his son, which was narrowly escaped, both of them being seriously wounded. > We can't tell what we are to do next. Some say we are to be furloughed on half pay. Some that we are to go to Sherman, and others that we are bound for the Rocky Mountains. So it's impossible to know how it will be, but I

Penershare, Va.

think I will be home by fall at farthest if not finally in some other manner. I won't stay away more than a year at a time. I must close but I am not half done. White soon. Give me all the news.

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Mank this is at marks 201, 5, prisoners To add to our Lovers the assassination of our Noble In don't who had for someny months busied his sign Theiring peace Throughout the fly bed States which was And & beginning & down on our furtands also to attempt to kill Suraling Seward. and his son with was Nathony escaped Roth of them bent Seriously woundeds a count tell with not we to do next be a Say we are to infurlinghed on half par Some that we art to go to Shower and others that we are bound for Know how it will be but I think I will be home by fall at farthest if not finaly in Some other mannel. I wont Stay way more their a year at a Nime I must close but I am not half done write Soon give me all the news from your Brother Yaron, Latchel address ( B. 15th ON.C. 3. Brigade 2. Division 66 Teter Surg Prigmia

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from your brother, Aaron Gatchell

address Co.B. 13th O.V.C. 3rd Brigade 2nd Division C.C. Petersburg, Virginia

I sincerely hope this may find you all well.
A.N.G.

This hand.

Camp of 13th Regt. O.V. Cav'y,

Petersburg, VA. April 18th of 1865

David, dear brother,

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(Original letter donated to Special Collections Department, James E. Morrow Library, Marshall University, Huntington, WV 25701, June 1978.

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