

**[LETTER 1]**

[Envelope addressed to Mrs. J. R. Graton, Lawrence Kansas; Postmarked at Fort Scott, KS on Jan 12; 3 cent stamp; Hand written note: Received on Jan 14<sup>th</sup> 1863, dated Jan 10-/63]

Fort Scott Kansas Jan 10 1863

My Dear Wife

I received your affectionate letter last evening was very happy to hear from you and that you were well. I was surprised to hear that the man who owned that lot should ask so much, to give that amount is out of the question I would rather give Mr Hill \$1200.00 dollars for his. Mr. Burt should certainly know that there is but half a lot on which the Cincinatti House stands on and Mr Burt verry well knows that Hill sold the other half to the Lager Beer man for the other half. I should like Mr. Burt to negotiate with Hill for the south half of the lot. You can take what action you think best in regard to the lot next us The papers you enclosed here duly received but we h[XXX] got the Proclimation a head of yours. We have received an order to muster immediately, from General Curtis, we are also informed that we will be paid shortly. I have now 70 men want only 11 more to fill me up I have had enough to more than make my company full, some 15 or 16 I think. The Regt has lost by desertion some three hundred men or more Almost enough to make us a full Regiment. We were reviewed by General Blunt on the 8<sup>th</sup> and afterwards marched around the Public Square of Fort Scott for the first time which I presume was very galling to the feelings of many of the inhabitants, and also some of the Regulars. While we were marching round the Square one of the regular soldiers made some disrespectful remark

[page 2]

the niggars soldiers which Colonel Williams over heard and had some words with him. I have heard since that the soldier was put in the guard house and gaged for the offence by Maj Henning, so you see that the niggars are ahead now After the review General Blunt and Capt Morton took supper with Colonel Williams, Blunt made a short speech to the men in the evening in the course of which he stated the we drilled as well as any troops who had not been enlisted longer than we had But the beauty of it is that Blunt is giving to issue an order for every man we have recruited to return to the Regt, imediatley and requiring every officer, sheriff, justice of the peace to arrest them, and forbidding any persons to employ them. Lieut Sholes got his commission from Governor Robinson a few days since, a new years gift from him. We have sent to Carney for our commissions I do not know how long it will be before I can come home I would like to get some money first. I shall try to come home before we go south and straighten up my business. It may be in two or three weeks and possibly longer. I hope you will not be hurried with work so badly when see you again. I am glad that you health is so good. I wish I could get you some of our coffee. We have some 30 lbs on had extra that we have saved I have been selling it at 30 cts a lb and could sell it to you at that rate, and we have got about 2 bushels of beans a sack of flour and some rice on hand. I sell extra ration to get a Co. fund for the purpose of getting extra for the sick. Write soon I will write you a love letter next time Direct to Capt John K Graton 1<sup>st</sup> H. C. V. J K Graton

**[LETTER 2]**

[Envelope addressed to Mrs. J. K. Graton Lawrence Kansas; 3 cent stamp; postmark not readable]

Camp Henning, Ft. Scott, Mar 29/63

My Loving Wife

Your kind letter of the 24<sup>th</sup> was received last evening, and am happy to learn that we may anticipate meeting again soon, for although we quarrel every time we meet, I feel that the fickle flame of love is not wanning yet, and though I can not kiss and carress the one I love best as much as my heart desires, yet the strength of that love has not decreased. You may have other love as strong, but I have not, even for my blessed child. O Addie you can never know how much delight it gives my soul to press the loved one to my heart. I have not much news to write, except that all of the Kansas Regt's in the army of the Frontier except the 2<sup>nd</sup> are ordered here, also Allen's Battery, they will be in here tomorrow, it is supposed they come here to get an outfit and forage &c preparatory to start on another expedition, We do not hear anything decisive in regard to our movements yet. Williams has not got home yet though we hear he is in Levenworth, I do not think we will leave here before the first of May as there is no forage in the country below and we will have to wait for grass. We have been engaged on the fortifications the past week, are not through yet

[page 2]

I presume you have had enough of my nonsense so I gues I will quit, I had almost forgotten to state Mrs. Martin arrived here on Thursday evening. Choose some pleasant day to come in my love and then you will find it tiresome enough to ride so far Yours J. K. Graton

P.S. Since writing the above there has one of of my men come down with the measles I thought I would let you know, so as to act accordingly. It may be that Allie is so small that it would no affect her so much, Dr. Macy says that it would be safe for her in my tent if it should be pleasant weather, but I shall try to get board and room with some family for you From a relative of yours and Allie's

### [LETTER 3]

[Envelope addressed to Mrs. Adelaide H. Graton, Lawrence Kansas; Postmarked Fort Scott KAS on May 25; 3 cent stamp; Note on envelope: Received on May 28<sup>th</sup> 1863 from Capt. J. K. Graton, Camp Hooker, Baxter Springs Kansas, dated May 22]

Camp Hooker Baxter Springs Ks May 22/63

My Dear Wife

Your letter of April 30<sup>th</sup> was received on May 18<sup>th</sup> [XXXX], it came by a Train which is on its way to Phillip's command at Ft. Gibson. Frazer, Sutliff & Morrow and several other Lawrence men were in the train. There were about one hundred Sutler wagons going South also three haymakers but no pay for us yet. Adams thought however that the order for our payment would be at Ft. Scott on his return A party

of us boys got badly whipped on the afternoon of the 18<sup>th</sup>, a party of our men of about twenty five, and some 15 of the artillery boys mounted on their horses with 5 six mule wagons went to Sherwood Jasper County, Mo, about 15 miles from this place, to get corn. The officers in command were Maj Ward Cap Armstrong & Lieut Edgerton. They had just arrived at the place, and four out of five were engaged in loading corn, an of course were away from their guns wthey they surprised by a force of Bushwackers numbering some one hundred and fifty or two hundred men, coming from some timber opposite the house, and came upon them before many of them could get to their guns, and as a matter of course our men were used up. The Artill boys and our officers being mounted were able to get out of way, but the black boys being on foot had to take it and most of them were killed, they chased the mounted men some six miles, some of the Artilery horses giving out, two

[page 2]

of the Artillery men killed, As soon as we got new of the transaction Col. Williams started out five Companies and some cavalry that were escorting the train, and we went to see what could be made out of it, we started just at dusk and marched all night excepting two hours that we rested in, got to Sherwood at daylight. On coming to the sene of action we found 18 black boys laying where they were shot down the day before. We had in the night come upon the body of a white man belonging to the battery some four miles this side of Sherwood laying in the road striped to his drawers. On searching the house where corn was at, we found that the family left some time in the night taking with them most of their movable property, but yet leaving many things behind, we found two or three feather beds bolster bedsteads chair, some crockery, butter, flour mile salt books &c bacon after getting some dinner out of the materials left, we proceded to gather up all our dead. that we found, meantime our cavalry and piled them in the house, a hard pine one two stories high, meantime our cavalry had brought in an old man named Bishop a bushwacker who was recognized as being a released prisoner form Ft Lincoln he also had a new pair of Government shoes and his shirt was bloody. The Colonel had him marched into the house and shot, his body placed upon the pile and the house burned We burned some dozen houses, those that had families in them, gave them a few minutes to move out in, It is pretty hard, but war is serious business. After getting into camp we found that several of the black men had got in having been so fortunate as to get into the brush

[page 3]

several of the men had narrow escapes laying in the brush near the place nearly all night, some did not get in untill the second day. The result of the expedition is the loss of 13 black men killed 2 missing, 2 prisoners & 2 or 3 white soldiers killed, 3 prisoners, 5 or 6 horses lost, about 23 mules & harnesses lost, 5 wagons & equipments, and mostly the result of a want of foresight. There was a train came down form Ft Scott today but there were no letters for me this time, I expected one certain, supposing you would write often, It will not do for you to wait for my answers as it might be two months before you would get my answer, I write every chance I get In conducting affairs at home you must use your own judgment. I do not pretend to know anything in relation to your affairs. This is a very secluded spot do not get any news or learn anything that is going on at all, or at least untill sometime after the events have transpired I do not know that I have any other news that would be interesting to you Truly Yours J. K. Graton Direct you letters as heretofore, with the addition, Baxter Springs Via Ft Scott

**[LETTER 4]**

Ft. Blunt July 7<sup>th</sup> 1862

[MAJORITY OF LETTER NOT READABLE]

**[LETTER 5]**

[Envelope addressed to Captain John K. Graton, 1<sup>st</sup> Kansas C.V.I.; Postmarked Flint Mich.; 3 cent stamp]

Gibraltar, Wayne Co, Mich; Nov 15<sup>th</sup> 1863

My Dear Graton.

It is now over three weeks since I arrived in Old Michigan and during that time I have been mailing and hoping for a letter from you. Sat down once, while in Detroit, to write to you but finally concluded to wait a while longer, and see if I could not get a letter from you in order to know where to direct as you were moving around so much the last time I heard from you. That there was no knowing whether my letter would reach you or not, if I directed the same as I did my last, before leaving home. And today thought I would begin and write all that I had to say now, and then if I should receive one from you shortly, I would be prepared to send it earlier. I left Lawrence on the 17<sup>th</sup> of Oct in company with Mrs Jennings of Lawrence, we remained in Leavenworth until Tuesday the 20<sup>th</sup> waiting for Mr Winchell and old man Sholes, who were going as far as Chicago on my route. We left Leavenworth on Tuesday, not waiting longer for Mr Sholes who was sick. Took the boat for Weston, Mo., where we arrived at about 3. P.M. then took the cars for St. Joseph arrived about 8. P.M. put up at the Pacific House, a splendidly furnished hotel. Was quite sick for a while, but got over it after drinking a little tea and forcing down a few mouthfuls of food. Resumed the cars next morning before daylight and traveled all day without changing. Arrived at Palmyra about sunset, crossed the river by ferry and I took a sleeping car in the night train while the rest of my

[page 2]

party put up all night in one of the way-cars. I was not feeling well and knew that if I did not get some rest that I should probably be sick the next day. Met Mr Bullene of Lawrence on the cars at Palmyra and the next morning about an hour before reaching Chicago who should we meet but Dr Huson, about fifteen or twenty minutes before one of the car wheels broke. The jolt occasioned by the breakage was so great as to throw me forward in to the opposite seat with Allie in my arms. The train we were on was a little behind time and when we arrived in Chicago were just a little too late to make connection with the Michigan Central, was therefore obliged to wait until night, put up at the City Hotel, and, at dark, Mr Winchell saw me into the cars. Got my baggage rechecked, then bade all good-bye, as there we parted company. The rest of route was traveled alone. Arrived in Detroit about 7. A.M. Then the hardest part

of my trip came up on me, had to carry Allie on one arm and your satchel, heavily-loaded, a long distance through the rain and then the whole length of the depot, before I could find the Omnibus to take me to a hotel. As I did not know the address of my acquaintances, went to the Michigan Exchange, where I put up until I could look over the City Directory, found their address, and after having had breakfast and dinner, and completed my arrangements, I took a hack and hunted them up. There I remained getting some shopping and sewing done (as I did not want to get anything more than what I was absolutely obliged to, before leaving home, to bring us through) until last Tuesday when I took passage in the Ofive branch (Steamboat:) for this place, arrived, all safe that night, was calculating to keeping arrival a secret to the town people, until I should be able to go around and surprise them, but immediately on landing, a whole crowd of men, old neighbors, came upon me all at once. Some of them recognized me, and some did not and my arrival was made public all over town that night. Mrs Blakely, did not know

[page 3]

me when I came to her house, and would not at first believe when her son told her it was me. Said she did not expect ever to see me again. I found Kate, (of which you have undoubtedly heard me speak often.) not only married but with a fine boy, only a year old, and he is larger than Allie, not quite so tall, but larger, and about as heavy again, He is monstrous. Mr Blakely is in miserable health, most of the folks are changed a great deal, but some look just as they did the last time I saw them. The old place where we used to live, has been repaired, the gardens well tended, and it is now the prettiest place in the whole town. The people here are greatly depressed on account of the war. The report came out a few days ago that there were several rebel gun boats on the Lake, and their intention was to burn Sandusky City or Detroit, and some other places, but after some of our forces having overhauled some suspicious looking crafts, and found some loaded with wood, others stoves &c; the report has given place to laughter, and jokes upon the subject. I have met with a warm welcome from all old Friends, so far. There are a good many yet that I have not seen. -I cannot see why I cannot get letters from you oftener. I think the last letter I wrote you was just about a week before I left home. It was time for me to have letters due from you, when I left Lawrence, and as I left a request with Mr McCurdy to forward all letters coming to that office for me, and have already received on from my sister that He has sent on. I have been waiting, expecting a letter every day from you, but have so far been disappointed. **Genesee Co: Mich: Dec: 29<sup>th</sup> 1863** here have I waited until this time and all that I have got from you so far, is a short letter written on the 5<sup>th</sup> of Oct., before I left home giving me instructions in regard to your business there. That I was disappointed you must know. I hope I may be able to gain later intelligence from you soon. Well here I am in my birth-place, and death place of my poor mother amid the scenes and friends of my child-hood, but there is very little that looks familiar to me. I have

[page 4]

been warmly welcomed by all old friends, wherever I have been. I have not been able to hear from Lawrence until I wrote to Mr McCurdy, several weeks since, to see if I could obtain any news of you, from him, and to learn also of our business placed in his hands. He writes back that he has sold our cow for \$18.00, the double barreled shot-gun which you left with old man Brown to sell, and which I left with Mr McCurdy, he sold for the price you asked \$5.00. Our house he has rented to what he believes to be a good family for \$9.00 per month. He had written to Mr Scott in Illinois about a lot on Mass. Street, a few lots south of Morrow's lot, which he says he will buy for you, if he can. The Bridge is nearly

completed and expect the Rail Road to be finished any cars running early in Winter. He writes very encouragingly of Lawrence and its prospects. Says there are about as many houses rebuilt as were destroyed. The town is thriving finely, and its inhabitants feel quite secure from another invasion. I fear that may be their mistake again, as it so sadly proved itself to be before, but hope not. How did you spend Christmas? Aunt Julia had a roast turkey, and very nice dinner. I heard while in Fentonville, that Mrs Oliver, who came on to Detroit with her mother & Lydia, soon after the raid, was dead. I was probably in the city at the time of her death. But did not know anything of it. – You enquire what prospects there are of getting the money you had deposited in Mr Burt's safe. I went to Mr Riggs who was appointed Administrator, and he said that the books allowed it to us, and therefore it was safe, that he should prefer having money invested in the estate of George Burt, than any bank or safe west of Chicago, as he considered it much safer. Just before I came away, he made a claim against the estate for me, which he said was putting it into just as safe a position, as it could possibly be. The balance due you now is \$482.26. It is now fixed so that it can be drawn at anytime, in large or small sums, just as the case demands, by sending on a receipt to some disinterested party, have them present it, get it filled out, and have your money sent on to whatever address you wish. I had Hasky take up the money you sent up by Mr Hutchinson, he counted out \$100.00 for me to bring with me to meet my expenses with, and the balance, \$35.00. (I withdrew \$15.00 at the time I buried it to use at that time.) Hasky was to take up home and bury on his place; and if not called for before, to remove it to his lot in town,, when he went down there to live, It was the safest plan I could think of, as it was

[page 5]

not safe to be entrusted to any safe or other place of deposite, under the then existing state of circumstances, And I did not consider it safe to bring it away with me, as I did not dare to travel with that amount about me. I gave Mr McCurdy to understand where it was, in case he should need it to pay towards a lot, I was sick while in Detroit, two or three days, confined to my bed one night and nearly all of one day, had some sort of a Chill, which lasted from about 7 P.M. until 11 or 12 P.M. succeeded by a high fever, which lasted the forenoon of the second day after, and which was succeeded by sharp, quick pains darting through my body, rendering it impossible for me to keep in one position the greater share of the time. And Allie was quite sick for more than a week. I had her Ambrotype taken, while in Detroit, to send you, but will not send it until I can be more sure

[page 6]

of it's reaching you than I am at present, without knowing exactly where to send it. I may be able to hear from you 'ere long and you must write me all the news. Have you ever drawn more pay, since the first you received? And how much do you get per month? Have you been promoted yet? You were the ranking Captain, the last letter I received from you before I left home. What are your prospects for getting a furlough, to come on East with? I believe I shall have to close. It is getting both late & cold, and as I wish to have this ready to go the first time that Uncle Hawley goes to Flint, to send by him. I wish to finish it up tonight. When you write address your letters to Flint, Genesee Co. Michigan, Care of D. H. Seeley, box 120. Be sure and write as soon as possible and give all the news. I wish you could come home, and come on East, and then you could go on and pay your friends the long contemplated visit. Good night. Your loving wife, Addie H. Graton.

**[LETTER 6]**

[Envelope addressed to Mrs. Adelaide H. Graton, Flint, Genesee Co. Mich, Care of D. H. Seeley, Box 120; 5 cent stamp; Notation: Via Springfield, MO; Some of the notations on back of envelope: Rec'd Feb 20th, 1864, Answered Feb 21<sup>st</sup>, 1864]

Roseville Ark. Jan 27<sup>th</sup> 1864

My Dear Wife

I received your letter of the 1<sup>st</sup> inst Sunday evening 24<sup>th</sup> and very happy to hear of your safe arrival amongst your friends, I hope you may have as pleasant a visit as you anticipated. My last letter to you was not such a letter as a husband should write to his wife, but I was so disappointed to learn of your going away without first getting me a lot that I could not help it. If you will excuse me this time I will try not to do so again. I will not ask you to forgive me, because you have always had so much to forgive me. I telegraphed to Mr. McCurdy about the 8<sup>th</sup> of Dec when we were at Ft. Smith, in regard to the Morrow lot and he answered me by mail of the 19<sup>th</sup> stating that it slipped through his fingers and that Judge Thacher had bought it, Sands' has also bought Hill's lot, he also wrote in reference to the lot Fry's stable was on which is the one you refer to, but I have not the least idea of his getting it, If he had have bought Morrow's lot I would have put up a brick store on it this Spring that would have rented for forty of fifty dollars a month, which would have supported you nicely, paid later and perhaps have helped make me some capital to get into Businis on when the war is over, but the golden opportunity is lost, it makes me feel bad even now to

[page 2]

think of it. We were paid twice while at Fr. Smith, the first payment October 10<sup>th</sup> was for the two months of July and August. My pay for those two months was \$255 25/100, were again paid about the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nov, for the months of September and October. I then received 253 70/100 making for the four months \$508 95/100. Out of that sum I forwarded \$400 00/100 to Mr. McCurdy by George Lew, which he has acknowledged the receipt of, and ten dollars I gave to George Lew to pay for taking a young bay mare through to Haskey, George paid it over to Mr. McCurdy and he paid it to Haskey but did not state whether the horse went through all right or not, I also paid James Bradford fifty dollars and some odd cents keeping for my expenses about forty eight dollars. Government has paid me \$1219.00 during the past year and I have sent home \$1120 of it and about \$250.00 more due on last year to. There is very little prospect of my getting a furlough untill the war is over and if I should I could not be away longer than to go to Lawrence, it is next to impossible to get a leave of absence now even in case of sickness. In your letter ask in regard to my being Ranking Captain, promotion &c, in the first place Captain Martin who ranks me, resigned in June last and went home with thirty days leave of absence, but it was not accepted for the reason that he had not settled his account with Government or in other words he had not made out his returns, so he was twice ordered to report to the Regt to square his accounts, he did not report

[page 3]

untill the 1<sup>st</sup> of December, he then wished to be reinstated and has since had his case before a military commission, with what result has not yet transpired, I presume however he will be restored with loss of pay while absent without leave. My chance of promotion in this Regt I think is slim as I presume I lack some requisite qualifications which would recommend with superiors &c &c &c &c I like my present position very well, and one year has initiated me into its duties, so that I can perform all those pertaining to my position, which is I think, more than some officers in the service can say. Drilling is a small part of the work a Captain of a company has to do, I have to make out a Duplicate Return of Clothing and Quartermasters Stores every month one copy I keep and the other I send to the Chief Quartermaster at Washington D. C. the Ordnance Return is made out in triplicate once in three month one copy I keep the other two I send to the Ordnance Department Washington D. C. and these Returns have to be made very correctly or they will send them back, they require them folded 3 ½ inches wide and an officer told me that some of his Returns were sent back because they were folded a little wider than that and then I have a Muster and Three Pay Rolls to make out every two months, one of the Pay Rolls I keep and the others I send off, and I have to keep an account with each man of how clothing he draws, and its value, and if he loses a knapsack cartridge box or Gun I have to see that the value of it is stoped against his pay on the next Pay Roll &c. Dec 28<sup>th</sup> I was on guard yesterday and so wrote untill mid night Last evening when I started out to visit the Pickets

[page 4]

Unreadable

[page 5]

and then went to bed But I suppose you would like to know where and what kind of a place we are in. We are stationed in a place called Roseville, containing about a dozen houses, five of them being inhabited, it is situated on the Arkansas river forty miles below Ft Smith and eight below Ozark. We fare pretty well here getting plenty of fresh pork and beef butter some potatoes and we are making all the corn meal we want, I have had two bushels of the best sweet Potatoes since I have been her that I ever ate I think they are sweeter than those we get in Kansas Since we came here the 13<sup>th</sup> Dec, we have gathered and cribbed about 20,000 bushels of corn in the ear, and I think there is as much more not yet gathered, there were about five miles almost continuous corn fields the rebels had put in for their own use. Our troops at Ft Smith have gathered up all the forage within 40 miles around and now they are sending here for it. We have also been into the cotton business somewhat having collected about 150 bales, and these are about as many more ungined close about here. The person (Hutchinson) Government agent for collecting cotton in this district he has five gins running, gining out several bales per day, our men haul the Seed cotton and guard the gins, and he hires citizens to do the work. Every farm, of any size, around here has its cotton gin and grist mill run by horse power, they attach from four

[page 6]

to six horses or mules, and great big cotton press the screw made our of a tree, the threds of the screw about eight inches across, and the entire screw about fifteen feet long and a foot and a half in diameter, it is turned by two mules. January 31<sup>st</sup> We have had three quite hard showers in the past two days, with considerable hard thunder, the creeks are all on the rise as also the Arkansas river. We are wishing to have the Arkansas rise very much, as our supplies will come up the river then. There are three steamers

seventy miles below here now, waiting a sufficient rise to come up. I was going to write about the people here, and about my Tent & cooking arrangements &c in this letter but as I can get an opportunity to send it to Ft Smith in the morning I shall have to shorten it and reserve that matter for another. I should like to have you send your ambrotype at the same time you do Allie's if you can. Direct them and your letters to Roseville Arkansas via Springfield Mo, & Ft Smith Ark. I think I shall send a receipt to Mr. McCurdy for that money and let him get it so as to have the money all together Your Husband  
John R. Graton

**[LETTER 7]**

[Front of envelope addressed to Capt. John R. Graton, 1<sup>st</sup> Kansas C. V. I., Roseville, Arkansas via Springfield, MO. & Fort Smith Arkansas; Postmarked Flint Mich, Feb 24 1864]

Genesee, Mich Feb 21<sup>st</sup>/64

Dear John

A long expected letter was last night rec'd from you. I had made up my mind several days past to make one more attempt today, to try to reach you by letter. I had almost given up the hope of hearing from you again. But was rejoiced last night on receiving a letter addressed in your familiar handwriting, and more than that it was a good letter, and I thank you for the spirit in which it was written. I want to see you very much, and have wanted to for a long time. I feel very lonesome and homesick here. I can scarcely wait for spring to come as then if I do not go back, it will probably be more pleasant than now and perhaps time will pass faster. It seems as if I can not scarcely wait for the time to come when I shall be able to go back to Lawrence, no other place in which I have ever been seems so much like home to me, as that. – I do not feel very well today, in consequence of a bad cold and for some reason or other have not enjoyed as good health generally within the last two or three weeks as before (since my arrival here). Allie has seemed to enjoy pretty good health and on average, with the exception of bad colds occasionally and symptoms of worms. I gave her some medicine for worms the other day and in consequence of which she afterwards discharged a worm a finger and a half or more long, and it was alive too. I was horrified on seeing it. I felt confident that she must have worms troubling her at times, but did not expect to find them of such an extensive growth as that. Have given her some more medicine today. The other letter that you speak of, I have not yet rec'd. I have not had but one letter from you previous to the one rec'd last night, since two weeks or more before I left home, and that was written when you seemed not to know of any

[page 2]

intended departure from home dated Oct 5<sup>th</sup>. I wrote to you repeatedly asking your advice in regard to my coming away and telling you of my situation there. I should probably had started sooner than I did had it not been that I waited for your counsel, and not getting any, came to the conclusion that if I came at all, I had best to come before the rebels saved me the trouble, as many looked for them at almost any hour, and from warning symptoms we rec'd every little while, had good reason to believe that they intended fulfilling their threats, namely to come back and not leave a roof standing and moreover it was

getting to be cold weather and I thought I had best to make the journey before winter set in. You hope I may be enjoying my visit. I did at first, but the novelty has worn off and I am one of the most miserably homesick mortals you ever saw. I wish you would write and tell me what to do. When had I best go back to Lawrence? I do not think it advisable to go to housekeeping again, at least for a good while, as I not only sold nearly all of the household effects, but you know it is utterly impossible for me to get along with all the duties of housekeeping, and sewing, and more than that, to sum up all the expenses of washing & ironing, hired sewing, wood water, occasional hired help, groceries, and everything needed to keep the machine running. I think you would find it about as expensive in the end, if not much more so, then boarding. Besides boarding would take off so much of the continual pressing, care, and harassing anxiety one is subject to in housekeeping. I think I should prefer boarding in some private family there, than to go to the expense and trouble of housekeeping, and perhaps I may be enabled to do my own washing & ironing a portion of the time, if not all, as I have done it ever since I left Detroit, and if my health continues as good in the future as it has been most of the time since my arrival in Michigan. I hope to be able to attend to that. Oh dear John, I do want to see you very much. I would go miles on foot, if thereby I could meet you, and Allie says in answer to my inquiry, would Allie like to see Papa too? "yeah" (yes) Papa too" and asks in her [XXXXX] "gone? Papa gone? Papa sick?" She is beginning to connect words together and form sentences a little.

[page 3]

Would you not like to see her? You seldom mention her in your letters and I fear that you do not love our little darling as you ought and she deserves. She is inclined to show a little self-will at times, just like any child, but she is a very good, generous hearted, affectionate and self sacrificing little girl of her age, and all wherever I have been unite in saying that she is one of the best and most obedient of children they ever say. – I hope you may continue to do well, and be prospered. – I will send Allie's likeness in Ohio, but mine I guess I shall have to take to Flint and have it burnished, as it is one that I had taken to put in a frame with glass over the face, and it would be necessary to remove the glass in order to send my mail. It is one that I had taken to hang up as a match picture to your's, but being a side view, thought I would take it out and have another taken front view, and so cannot send it yet, but as soon as I can get it attended to, will send it on. The one you claimed which was taken two or three weeks after our marriage, was taken away from me while w/Trilbraltar by Mrs Blakely, at the house where I was visiting. I told her it was your's and I could not let her have it, but she said she must have it, and if I really thought I would have some photographs taken, and could not possibly let her have that, that I might send her a photograph and she would let me have that one back. 6 oclock P.M. Allie has just passed another worm, just about the size of the first. – You have probably heard from Mr McCurdy 'ere' this, of his success in purchasing a lot for you, or rather ½ lot. I am glad for your sake, as well as my own, and I must confess it has relieved my mind very much. That he has at last secured a lot, and so well located too. I think it just as good a location, if not even better than the Morrow lot. It is just north the lot which Mr Allen's Tin & Hardware Store used to stand. The north half, as near as I can recollect, it is the vacant piece of land that used to lay adjoining the livery stable of Hurd & Reynold's on the south and which Norman Allen used to keep his shrubbery on, one season. It being so near the bridge and near where the Rail-Road depot will probably

[page 4]

stand. That I think, under present circumstances a better situation could hardly have been chosen. – I am well pleased with it, and hope you may be also. Oh dear I do wish you could get a furlough and come home. If you could not come any farther Lawrence, and if you should think it best, I would endeavor to meet you there, provided you could let me know in time to make my preparations, and return. – I visited my mother's and sister Adelici's graves yesterday, the first time since my return to Genesee on account of cold weather, mud and snow. I hope you will be enabled to return an answer to this soon. I should look anxiously for a reply, until it comes. So now you have a span of mares, eh? I am glad you have, they would make a nice team. I do not think of anything more to mention, before I send this, I will record it. It may be several days before I shall have an opportunity to send it to Flint, as we are ten miles from there, and only have our mail brought and sent, as some one happens to be going down. Good-bye for the present, Your Affectionate Wife, Addie H. Graton

P.S. Allie had been quite sick of more than a week when this Ambrotype was taken and was, as she looks, no doubt feeling miserable. I believe she must have a faint idea, or recollection of her father for every man that happens to come here, that has whiskers, she will rush right into their arms, and anyone that has not got whiskers, she is afraid of. – Write the very first opportunity you have for sending, and don't fail to tell me what you think best for me to do. – I brought away \$100.00 with me, besides what I realized from the sale of the furniture and as I was nearly destitute of clothing, that, and my traveling expenses, together with incidental expenses, has used it nearly all up, so that I have been obliged to send for \$50.00 to Mr. Riggs, but as I have purchased nearly all the winter clothing we shall require for the winter and sometime to come I hope. That I hope to get along more economically now. But I expect to begin paying my board pretty soon, as the place where I now am, let me board although they refuse to accept anything for board. I cannot impose upon their kindness much farther, as they have a large family and expect in a short time to have

[Along left column of page 1]

two or three more hired men, and then I shall probably go to some other place. Some of my father's relatives reside in Flint, and if they will receive me as a boarder, I will probably remain with them. If not, I shall have to do the next, best thing presents, As an Aunt in Flint is a widow with a moderate family, she may not wish to take a boarder. – God bless you. Good night. Addie

[On separate scrap of paper or possibly on back side of envelope]

Jan 1<sup>st</sup> 1864 I have gained in health some I think since I came East. I have actually done several small washings & ironings lately. Don't you think I have improved some. Allie seems to be in tolerable good health, has a bad cold.

### [LETTER 8]

[Envelope addressed to Mrs. Adelaide H. Graton, Flint, Genesee County, Michigan, Via Springfield & St Louis Mo; Care of D.H. Seely Esq Box 120; Postmarked Cassville Mo Mar 17; 3 cent stamp; Notes on back of envelope: Answered Arpil 3, 186[X], Captain John R. Graton; 1<sup>st</sup> C.V.T. Roseville Ark; via Springfield Mo & Ft. Smith, Arkansas]

Roseville Ark March 6<sup>th</sup> 1864

My Dear Wife

I received a letter from you last evening which was mailed at Flint on the 24<sup>th</sup> Feb, making much quicker time through than formerly, perhaps as the weather gets warmer that our mail will be more regular. There was a mail captured this side of Fayetteville, a short time since, and I began to fear that this letter might be on of them, but I was agreeably disappointed. I found Allie's picture in the letter, it was all right, you do not know how much pleasure it will give me to have it with me to look at when I get to thinking of home, you think because I do mention Allie's came in my letters that I do not love her as I ought, now I do not know what I should say, I know that she has just as good care taken of her as is possible to take of any one. It is seldom that the thought of my wife and child is out of my mind, I get to thinking so of them so much that it almost gives me the blues, and it seems so long before I shall be able to see you. It is simply impossible to get a furlough at the present time, and to wait two years, when our time will out, seems a long time to be kept away from ones wife and child. I am in hopes that the rebellion will be so nearly crushed this campaign, that they will be less stringent in regard to granting leaves of absence. I have no news to state in this letter, everything remains quite so far, there has been a rumor afloat that we would be ordered to Ft. Smith to work on the fortifications, and then again it is rumored that there will be a forward movement about the first of April, but it is

[page 2]

impossible to get at the truth of them, as to tell what we are to do. I like the location of my lot very well. I think you are mistaken in regard to its being the ground Norman Allen's shrubbery was on, it is according to my calculation the lot Hards Stable was on all accounts agree in indicting that Lawrence is increasing in importance, and it may be that, that lot will be the making of me yet. I shall take measures immediately to commence the erection of a store on it as soon as possible. According to the best of my calculation I must have about six hundred dollars in Lawrence, take out what you will want for present use, and I can safely calculate on five hundred and government is owing me five hundred more, which will make one thousand to commence on, and if I am prospered I can save another thousand this year, which will go pretty far putting up a store that will rent readily. I wrote to you sometime since, asking you to write to Augusta and offer her two hundred dollars for her share in the home lot, and that the deed be made in your name, you can write to her and when you receive her answer, write to Mr. McCurdy asking him to have a deed made out in your name and forwarded on to her, and when he receives the deed again all right, ask him to pay over the money to whom she may direct, I should like to have the bargain completed as soon as possible, as I may be able to build on it next year. I wrote an order to McCurdy sometime since to get that money of Rig's. All my funds will be place in Mr McCurdy's hands, and of course when you want any thing of that kind you will address your communications to him. I shall not dictate in regard to where you must board, you must use your own good judgment as regards that, only I wish you

[page 3]

board with good intelligent people, you have money so you will not be obliged to stay with unpleasant or vicious people. There have been five boats past here since yesterday morning, taking supplies to Ft Smith. In my last letter I was writing you a description of how I lived &c but did not finish fearing I

might want matter for my next letter. The officers of this Regt. got up a ball on New Years eve inviting the fair daughters of benighted Arkansas to participate in their revelry. It were needless to relate that your humble servent so far overcame his well founded prejudices as to honor the occasion with his presence. We had a considerable of a dance, danced all night till broad day light and went home with the galls in the morning. The female portion of the people of Arkansas are some at a spree I tell you at least those we had there that night were some, why, the dear creatures when we came to swing with our partners, the dear creatures, would drop their charming heads on one side and encircle a poor fellow with their arms and carry him round bodily to the poor fellow's great confusion. Of course we enjoyed the fun hugely. The women of Arkansas as a whole are about as poor a specimen of humanity, as I ever saw, It is stated, by those who pretend to know that there is not a virtuous woman in Ft. Smith, and all those I have seen, with one or two exceptions, either dip snuff, smoke or chew tobacke. Dr. Lewis has been quite sick for a couple days past but is some better. I believe George Wilder has come down and is in the store with him. I will not say that I should like to see you, because I couldn't if I should, besides "I know that you can feel what my aching heart would say" As I can send this early in the morning I will now close, so you must take care of yourself my dear for I am coming home again, good night. Truly  
Your Husband J R Graton

[page 4]

P.S. enclosed I send you a five dollar note taken off of a secessionist by one of my men after the fight at Honey Springs C. N. last July J.R.G.

**[LETTER 9]**

[Envelope addressed to Capt. John R. Graton, 1<sup>st</sup> Kansas C.V.I. Roseville, Arkansas; via Springfield, Mo & Fort Smith, Ark; 3 cent stamp]

Mundy, Genesee Co; Mich; April 10<sup>th</sup> 1864

My Dear John:

Yours of the 20<sup>th</sup> March is received and although glad to hear from you, am sorry to receive news of your removal farther off. I hope you may not fall into the hands of the enemy. I hear by the paper, that Qunatrill is south of the Red River. I wrote you just a week ago, and informed you in regard to the home-lot business. I have been down to Flint (5 miles from here) this past week, and got my ambrotype to send you but as you have probably moved ere this, do not think advisable to send it, until I receive an answer to this, so as to be sure of your receiving it. As not to send it until satisfied that this letter will reach you, and then perhaps it will be safe enough to send the likeness. I have intended having some of my own and Allies photographs taken, as a good many of my friends want them and have promised

[page 2]

theirs in return, but they are three dollars and 3.50 a dozen now, and so I shall have to postpone the matter, everything is very dear now. Eggs worth .20 cts per doz. butter 40 cts per pound, brown sugar from 20 to 22 cts, and very poor at that. maple sugar the same. wheat is worth 12 shillings per bushel

and potatoes, 10 shillings. I bought a gingham dress for myself this week, and had to pay \$4.40 for it. Calicoes are selling for .25 cents per yard, and the calicoes of now a days are most of them so poor, that I made up my mind that gingham would in the end be as cheap as calicoe, being much more available. – I am boarding with the family of one of my Uncles, for three dollars (\$3.00 dollars) per week. It has rained a great deal all the spring, and rains yet. The ponds are in a dreadful condition. I suppose things must be dreadful high in Kansas, judging from the prices here. – I do not think of any thing more to write now, praying the divine blessings of Heaven upon you. I remain Your Wife Addie H. Graton

**[LETTER 10]**

[Envelope addressed to Mrs Addard H. Graton, Flint, Genesse Co., Mich. (Box 120 care Ralph Taylor); Postmarked Memphis, Tenn; May 14

Little Rock Ark May 6<sup>th</sup> 1864  
Dear Wife:

Our army arrived at this place May 3d after a very severe march of seven days from Camden, Ark, we had a very severe fight with the enemy on the way the 2<sup>nd</sup> colored captured two pieces of cannon during the action, the enemy attacked us while crossing a small river called the Saline, we fought with and finally drove them away from the field, they did not trouble us any more during the trip. I have received two letters from you since I came here of the 4<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> of April respectively. [XXXX] Division have orders to march for Ft. Smith immediately, we shall start in the morning, so it will be safe for you, to address your letters to Ft. Smith as formerly, It will probably take ten or twelve day to reach

[page 2]

that point. I am in hopes that we will remain there long enough to get our papers made out at last if not long enough to rest a little. I wrote to you while at Camden Ark. but as the train it was sent with was all captured and the escort cut to pieces, I presume the letter was lost. I have not time to write much now, of the trip we have had thus far to this place but it has been an extremely rough one. I shall write more at length when I get more time Your Husband J. R. Graton

P.S. I should like to be informed of the amount of money you have drawn of Riggs and how much is remaining in his hands and whether he has yet turned it over to Mr. McCurdy &c It is only by being kept informed in regard to such matters that I shall be able to make the best disposition of my funds.  
J.R.G.

[Note on separate piece of paper: Rec'd from Capt. J.R. Graton 1<sup>st</sup> K.C.V.I. Gen'l Thayer's division Seventh Army Corps. Little Rock Ark; May 21<sup>st</sup> 1864 in Mundy, Mich dated May 6<sup>th</sup>, answered May 27<sup>th</sup> 1864]

**[LETTER 11]**

[Envelope addressed to Mrs. Adelaid H. Graton, Flint, Genessee County Mich; Care of D H Seely Box 120; Forwarded to Jonesville, Mich]

[On back of envelope: Rec'd in Jonesville Nov 1<sup>st</sup> 1864; Capt J R Graton  
[XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX] Fort Gibson, Cherokee Nation  
[XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX] Answered Nov 3<sup>rd</sup> 1864 in Jonesville]

Ft. Gibson C.N. Sept. 29<sup>th</sup> 1864

Dear Wife

It is a long time since I have had a letter from you, I think I received the last one sometime the first of July, since which I have receive nothing from you, not the first word from any source. We had so many mails captured lately that I presume your letters have miscarried. I have not been at Ft Smith since the 15<sup>th</sup> of Aug's't, came to this place with six companies of our Regt to escort train, at this place we were ordered to guard haymakers. The remaining four companies came here two weeks ago so that the Regt is all together once more. Col. Williams also brought along two other Regts of his Brigade, and a section of artillery, I do not know how long we will remain here although it is not impossible that we may remain here al winter. I am still in command of the Regt Maj Ward not having yet returned. Quite a sad affair happened for the Regt two weeks tomorrow. Co. "H" commanded by Lt. Sutherland, stationed about fifteen miles from this place, was surrounded by fifteen hundred Rebs. Under Gen. Gano, they made a gallant resistance but of course were overpowered. Lt. Sutherland was captured, the men were all killed except

[page 2]

a few that concealed themselves in a ravine untill dark and then crawled away. It will be a hard stroke for David's Mother, her other son, Reese, died at St Louis in hospital, last Winter. General Gano after his success, moved on up the Ft. Scott Road, to meet our train, evidently with the design of capturing it, it was reported that he had twenty eight hundred men and six pieces of cannon. I was convinced at once that he would get the train, as we had not more than five or six hundred men with the train and no cannon. Upon the arrival of Col. Williams we immediately started in pursuit, but were nearly two days behind. When we got within fifteen miles of Cabin Creek, our old Battle Ground, we learned sure enough that they enemy had taken the train and were advancing on the road to meet us we immediately formed line of battle and waited for them, they finally came in sight formed line of battle and moved down to meets, when they had got to about a mile of us, they halted and did not seem very anxious to attack, after waiting sometime Col. Williams to hasten the crisis ordered a few shots to be thrown from our rifled pieces at what appeared to be a rebel battery. The second shot from our guns struck right in front or theirs you had better believe there was some scampering to get away from there, they tried some shots at us but it was so far they could not reach us, while a few shots from our guns, completely broke up their lines, and they were glad to get behind some mounds near by.

[page 3]

night coming on and our men being very much exhausted from hard marching without rest, and the enemy being Cavalry and our force Infantry, prevented us pursuing the advantage thus gained. The next

morning they had got the train beyond our reach. I wish you would write as soon as you get this, all that has transpired during the last three months, as I have received none of your letters in that period. Have you heard from Augusta in regard to the lot &c, and did you get my letter stating that I had forwarded \$1300.00 dollars to Mr. McCurdy &c &c I will not say how much I should like to see you and Allie because it would do not good. I am very anxious to have the draft procede vigourously so as to have this business finished up then there will be some chance for us to get home to stay I hope. You may direct your letters to Ft. Gibson C.N. via Ft. Scott, as this is the most open rout and least liable to interruption. Hoping to hear from you soon I remain Your Husband John R. Graton

**[LETTER 12]**

[Envelope addressed to Capt. John R. Graton, Co. C, 1<sup>st</sup> Kansas Col Vol Infantry, General Thayer's Division of Seventh Army Corps, Fort Smith, Arkansas; Postmarked Jonesville Mich]

Jonesville Mich. Oct 24<sup>th</sup> 1864

My Dear Husband:

John, According to promise, I seat myself to write you again, although but a few days have elapsed since I last wrote you. I have already written two or three letters since the receipt of your last, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October dated Aug. 30<sup>th</sup> 1864. I hope you may get them safely. I have some Photographs taken of Allie and myself, and if I thought I could get them to you by mail, I would send them in a letter but while the chances are so uncertain, I think I had better not try to send them, but keep them until the mail route is relieved from some of the danger infesting it. How much I wish my dear Husband were permitted to be with his family. Little Allie says almost every day, "I'se doin to dite to Papa to tome home and see me." She has just been at my elbow, inspecting my letter, and asking if I was "ditin to Papa?" I told her yes, and

[page 2]

asked her what she was going to say to Papa, when she said, "I say Papa's down souse fightin "Webal's." And now has seated herself with pencil and paper, saying she is "doin to dite to poor Papa, tome home and see me". So you will know what the enclosed paper contains, if the writing is not a very superior style of penmanship in which it is written. So you must excuse the style of execution as you know she is but a new beginner in the art of writing. – We came pretty near losing our little girl a short time since. She is company with a little girl of two years of age. (child of Mr Birbeck with whom I am boarding) got out of the yard, where I had sent Allie for exercise, and fresh air, and Ann, the other child, ( who is a perfect little runaway) after having climbed up and opened the gate, led off down street, Allie following. They had not been gone but a few minutes, when we missed them and started in pursuit. Mrs Birbeck's sister, my Uncle and his daughter Clara, and quite a number of others assisting us, but there being many different ways to go, and not starting in the right one at first, gave them the advantage of the time that we were hunting for them in an opposite directions. The search continued

[page 3]

for nearly two hours, and when at last they were found, it was by a party of school girls, who found them nearly or quite one mile from home, they had been farther away, as Ann had lost her shaker which was found beyond where they were. I had almost begun to despair, when my heart was rejoiced by the cry "they are found, they are found". Some of the party had made up their minds to have the bells ring, and have the town aroused, and a general search instituted, but fortunately they were found first in time to avoid resorting to such measures. It was pretty well spread over town, however, as it was, and created considerable excitement. My room is situated in the back part of the house, and when Allie, tired of being confined in my room (as that is my sitting room as well as sleeping apartment, and we are seldom out of it except to meals) goes out to play, I have to lay aside my work, and sit in the cold parlor, or else am out in the yard every few minutes to assure myself that she is there, and it takes all the time she is out, to watch. We have caught them several times since their runaway, just starting off

[page 4]

on another jaunt. If Allie were out alone, I should feel safe enough about her, as I have always been very particular with her in regard to going into the street, and never, wherever I have been allowed her when playing with other children, and importuned to let her go into the road, never would consent to it, fearful that it might engender the habit of going out, being run over, lost &c, but just as soon as she goes into the yard to play then Miss Ann is on hand too. But I have threatened to tie Allie up, if she goes outside the gate again without my consent, and the last time they played together in the yard, (I was on watch unbeknown to them.) and Ann opened the gate, waited a while for Allie to come, and then went down the path on the outside of the yard and, opposite where Allie stood by the fence, and passed leaves and one thing and another back and forth to and from her, when getting hold of Allie's doll, (a rag-baby) she marched off across the street, quite leisurely, and looking back, in hopes I suppose, that Allie would follow but she did not offer to go, but stood still and cried for her 'dolly.' Although I was pleased to see her remembrance of what I told her, I dare not trust her out with Ann alone. What do you think of doing, when you get out of the Service? Do you think of setting up a store in Lawrence, and working at your trade again? Do you think it will be safe enough from invasion, to risk building there, and going into business again? They are having great times in Missouri with Price's rebels, and Guerrillas. And they are not but a short distance from the Kansas border. Should our forces, who have been sent to attend to them, be whipped, then it will undoubtedly be all over with Kansas, as well as Missouri. I wish you would write, John, just as often as you can, whether

[In left column and across the top of page 1]

you have an opportunity to send as often as have for writing, or rest, and when you do get a chance to send, the you will have the more to send, or in other words, do as you say Ruth used to do, have a number of different dates in your letters. The most of your letters are so short, they are not very satisfying to me. Do write as often, and as much as you can. I can not rest contented to wait for you to come home, and the poor consolation of a long looked for and anxiously expected letter, does not go far towards satisfying the lonely homesick feelings I am so often a prey to especially when the letters are so short. I have been intending to write to Hasky & Ruth for a long time but have so much else to do, in trying to catch up with my sewing &c, that I have not yet had time. Write Addie H. Graton

[upside down on top of page 3]

Is Dr. Lewis yet in your Regt and is Lt Col Rowles there yet? Do you know anything about his wife, is she in Lawrence yet? and how do they prosper? Do write as soon as possible.

[upside down on top of page 2]

Come home, if you can possibly get a leave of absence, it seems such a long, long time, [XXX] to wait for your time to expire.

[upside down on top of page 4]

Direct to Jonesville, Hillsdale Co: Mich, Care of Isaac B. Taylor

**[LETTER 13]**

[Envelope addressed to Mrs. Adelaide H. Graton, Jonesville, Hillsdale Co., Michigan; 3 cent stamp; Notes on envelope: Rec'd in Jonesville, Mich Dec 18<sup>th</sup> 1864 from Capt. John R. Graton, 1<sup>st</sup> Kansas Col Vol Inf, Commanding Regt, dated Nov 13<sup>th</sup> 1864, Fort Smith, Ark; Answered Dec [X]7<sup>th</sup> 1864, sent him photograph of myself in reply]

Ft Smith Ark Nov 13<sup>th</sup> 1864

My Dear Wife

I received your precious letters of Oct 2<sup>nd</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> inst a few days since, and still find that I have a true hearted wife yet. It has been so long since I had heard from you that it seemed almost as though I had no wife. You can rest assured your letters however brief will always be very welcom. I should be very happy to see my little girl once again, you may give her a kiss each night for me. I would like to see my little girl grow up with those graces which makes woman irresistible. You write in regard to sending the money Mr. McCurdy has in charge, to you, and investing it in Govt. bonds &c. It does not impress me favorably. What money I have I shall invest in or about Lawrence. At any rate, Mr. McC. can invest the money in Government Funds as easily and far more safely than you could, when I have concluded that that is the most desirable of investment. If the money has been received by you, you will take measures to return it at once to Mr McCurdy. You will of course draw on Mr. McCurdy for such amounts as maybe necessary to meet your current expenses. I do not wish you to consider what I have just written to you as in any manner reproving you for sending for the money, I can [XXXXXXXX] of

[page 2]

the motive which actuated you in so doing, but I have faith to believe that Mr McCurdy will take such steps as will insure its safety. We left Ft Gibson C.N. on the 20<sup>th</sup> Oct, have been at this post ever since. I presume you may have heard of one of our companies being cut up while at Gibson, Co "H" was surrounded while guarding a hay party, by the same force which captured the Ft Scott Train some fifteen hundred strong, most of the Co. were killed. Lt Sutherland, its commander was captured. The Rebs have taken him to Tyler Texas. Kansas had just had a narrow escape, but Thank God the danger is past,

Price's force the stragling remnant of it, crossed the Arkansas River thirty miles above this place about four days ago, Gen Curtis' & Blunt followed them to the River, Gen. Blunt and Staff are here now, they leave for Kansas today. I think it will be safe to send those photographs after this, perhaps it would not be best to send them in the same Letter, I am still command'g the Regiment, I have other matter to get off by this mail, so shall have to bid you good by Your Husband J.R. Graton

**[LETTER 14]**

[Envelope addressed to Mrs Adelaide H Graton, Jonesville, Hillsdale Co., Mich, Care of Isaac B. Taylor Esq; Notes on the envelope: Relating to "back Pay" Also-letter from agent in Wyandotte, Ks calling for his "discharge papers" inclosed within with a copy taken from a "Copy of the Discharge" also within.]

[Back of envelope: Rec'd in Jonesville Dec 13<sup>th</sup> 1864 from Capt J. R. Graton, 1<sup>st</sup> Kan. C.V.I. Fort Smith Ark dated Nov 27<sup>th</sup> 1864; Answered Dec 14<sup>th</sup> 1864, sent in answer, a Photograph of Allie]

Ft. Smith Ark. Nov. 27<sup>th</sup> 1864

Dear Wife:

Your letter of Oct 24<sup>th</sup> and Nov 3d are at hand, received several days since, got them both by the same mail, the last one got through very quickly. I think our communications will be more regular now, than they have been heretofore. The news in regard to the elections so far as heard from are very cheering. News as a general thing gets pretty old by the time it reaches us, usually from two to four weeks. You think that the prices are very high where you are, but just compare them with the prices here, for instance board at \$15.00 per week, flour at \$60.00 per barrel, pork at 25 cts per lb coffee & sugar \$1.00 per lb, saleratus when last heard from was worth from \$1 to \$5.00 per lb, apples \$1.00 per dozen, and other things about the same rate. I buy at the commissary my provisions and of course get such as they have, at St. Louis wholsale prices. Our bill of fare is getting quite slim, we have flour beef coffee rice, beans and bacon, and I did succede in getting five lbs of sugar, the other day, my diet for the last four weeks has been simply bread coffee and meat. My health has been quite good so far, but my mouth has been getting sore for several days I think it is a touch of the scurvey, and is occaisioned by a lack of fruits and vegetables. I have not had a plenty of fruit and vegetables since I have been in the army. I should enjoy

[page 2]

a good generous, fruit and vegatable, diet once more very much. I see by the Lawrence papers the Miss Lydia, is married at last, to Kingsbury, and Kad, to a Miss Benson, Henry Benson's sister, you may have heard of these occurrences before, I presume you keep well posted in Kansas news, Kansas is safe from invasion thank heaven, General's Curtis & Blunt chased Price clear to the Arkansas River. Price crossed about thirty miles above this place, Col. Crawford is elected Governor of Kansas by a home vote of 2000, he is Col of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Nigger, Thacher got into bad company, I would not vote for Jesus Christ on that ticket. The 1<sup>st</sup> Nigger is out of luck this year, a week ago yesterday Capt's Thrasher and Welch, Lt. Macy and four or five others were run onto by a party of about sixty rebs, and it is supposed that they are either killed or captured, it is uncertain which, a fellow by the name of Jones out run and got away

from them. Capt. Welch and Lt. Macy were both wounded at Poisin Springs, and were just from home. Lt Macy belongs to my Co. and has lately been married. Lt Col. Bowles lays around home yet, has gone into the Tanning business. Reports say that he lays around home to watch it. He is reported absent without leave, and Williams is using every extention to get him dismissed the service. Bowles has been away from the Regt. for over a year now, and draws \$165.00 every month, sleeps with his wife & some one else does his work. Maj Ward when last heard from was sick at Ft. Scott. It is just five months today since he left, and I took command of the Regt. I see that someone else has started a gun shop in Lawrence. I presume that there will be no chance for me when I get back

[page 3]

so that I may have to go into some other business. I wish that business with Augusta could be fixed up. I prefer living in a house of my own. You remark in one place about one half of the rent of the house being over due. If paying two thirds the price of a thing, only entitles one to one half the proceeds coming from the same, why then your Arithmetic must be a different one from what I studied. You wrote a considerable about boarding, now every time I see it, it impresses me unfavorably. I suppose you will like to board with me. If not I shall not restrict you to any particular place. I should like to see you and my little Girl very much, but do not think I shall be able to get a way untill my time is out. I should like also to get to Lawrence once more, to fix up my business in some shape, and to get something to eat once more. But it is a long tedious journey about three hundred miles to Lawrence, so that I should dislike the trip even if I should get permission to go. We have received notice within a few days that Capt Earle and Lt. Reynard both of whom have resigned, that they had been mustered as 2<sup>nd</sup> Lts to date from Aug 5<sup>th</sup> 1862 and mustered out to date January 12<sup>th</sup> 1863, thus giving them about five months more pay. I am going to make application to be mustered back to date Aug 27<sup>th</sup> 62 the at which I joined the Regt, which would give me four months and a half more pay as Lt. I have just received a copey of an order from the Secretary of War to Maj Gen. Curtis directing him to relieve Lt. Col. Bowles from duty in his department, and order him to rejoin his Regiment in the field. Since the Regt got back form Gibson we have been very busy building winter quarters. I send out all the teams I can get hold of almost every day with 30 or 40 men, and tear down houses and bring in

[page 4]

the roofing and floor boards to build quarters of. All the country around here is deserted and farms abandoned. The people of these States get richly repaid for secedeing. I am now messing alone, and have one of my boys cook for me it costs me about \$3.50 per week. We are having very pleasant weather now, warm enough to do without fires most of the time. Mrs. De Woolf the woman that had her throat cut in Lawrence is here, she pretends to be the wife of a Col Stevenson of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Arkansas Regt. She traveled with us all a round on the Camden trip last Summer. I think she has been following the army nearly all the time since she left Lawrence. I was going to finish this letter at my leasure this evening but just at dusk I received an Order to get the Regt. ready to escort a Forage Train, and to take along seven days rations, we are ready tomorrow morning at 8 o clock, Forage is scarce and we have to go a long distance. If the weather is good we may have a pleasant trip but the weather is very changeable at this time of year. I have no time to write more and must close. You must live up to the resolutions you have formed in regard to writing. Your Husband John R. Graton

**[LETTER 15]**

[Envelope addressed to Mrs. Adelaid H. Graton, Jonesville, Hillsdale Co., Mich, Care of J.B. Taylor; 3 cent stamp; postmarked sometime in Jan]

[Back of envelope: Rec'd from Capt J R Graton, 1<sup>st</sup> Kansas Col. Vol. Infantry, Fort Smith Ark. dated Jan 5 1865- rec'd Jan 18<sup>th</sup> 1865 in Jonesville Mich. Answered Jan 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> 1865; sent Jan 25<sup>th</sup> 1865 To Ft. Smith Ark. via Ft. Scott Kansas]

Ft. Smith Ark Jan 5<sup>th</sup> 1865

My Dear Wife

I arrived in camp on the 27<sup>th</sup> last after an absance of fifteen days, found two letters awaiting me from you, with your's and Allies photographs, one in each. You do not know how much good they will do me, now when I am lonesome and get to thinking of Wife and home I can get those photographs and I have my loved ones before me. My last letter I wrote just on the eve of starting on a foraging expedition, we had a train of about forty wagons to load, and went out about forty miles north of this place, to get the forage, to a place called Cane Hill. The inhabitants are the best educated of any I have seen in Arkansas. There has been at one time a Colledge and a Female Semenary in the place but both have been burned. The women notwithstanding their intelgence are all bitter Rebels. Our boys found plenty of apples, and lived on them and pork for several days. I think we must have killed and eaten about three hundred hogs on this trip. We were gone on the Cane Hill trip ten days, and withall had a very good time. Upon our return, we were in camp just four days, and not hardly got straightened round when we were ordered out again, and were gone, as before stated, fifteen days. We went down the river this time seventy five miles, to get the freight of a boat which had sunk. Christmas eve we camped in Clarksville

[page 2]

I quartered at the house of strong Rebel family, slept in a bed that night the only time I undressed while out. The family had once been wealthy as appeared by the carpeted floors spring bottomed chairs, and marble topped stands, but they are and have reaped the fruit of secession, the town was plundered by about fifty Mountain Feds a few days before we got there who had carried off every thing they wanted. The house I stayed at was honered by a call from them, with others, as was evidenced by the contents of beaurau drawers being strewed about the floors, looking glasses broken &c. We are now making preparations to evacuate this place, all the sick and Hospital Stores have been sent down the River to Little Rock, and I suppose we will follow shortly. We are now waiting for a train from Ft Scott which is at Gibson now and will be down he in the course of a week, if it does we will get away in about a week more. I have got one year to serve from the 13<sup>th</sup> day of this month, the time is counted from the date of muster into the service, it will pass quickly. It is impossible for me to tell at this date what I shall do when my term of service expires. I shall endeavour to engage in some business which will produce a good living for my family. The meaning of your boarding with me is this, I expect to hire a good stout black woman to do the work, so that you will not have to work. I know that you would much rather

have a home of your own than to board with strangers and be subject to their prying curiosity and when you have visitors or the children make a noise, no one has a right to complain. I received a letter from Mr. McCurdy on the 28<sup>th</sup> inst.

[page 3]

I have been making enquiries in regard to property on the North side of the river opposite Lawrence, he states that land is worth 1.50 per acre, I think I shall invest a few hundred on that side near the Depot as I think it must increase largely in value. Perhaps I shall yet build my house on that side. I should think the land would raise good sweet potatoes and garden sauce. I received a letter from Haskey sometime since, he had been at Leavenworth at work in the machinshop was getting \$20.00 per week, but was at home the time he wrote, troubled with the liver complaint, he says Henry is thinking of getting married. Maj. Ward returned the 29<sup>th</sup> inst, after an absence of six months, and of course relieved me from the command of the Regt, of which I am very glad. The weather has been very mild for the past few days, having the appearance of spring, and is much warmer than last year at this time, there has been no snow here as yet. There are indications of a forward movement, of the troops in this department, shortly if there is we will probably go to I drew my stationery to day for this quarter. I get five quires of paper fifty envelopes a stick of sealing wax a piece of red tape two bottles of ink a pen holder and twenty pens, each quarter. I almost forgot to say that if your present boarding place does not suit you, get another one, do not let a few cents or dollars make you miserable, hire some one to carry your wood &c. I want you to get the most agreeable place to board for you and Allie you can find, I want to find a good healthy wife and child with whom to enjoy myself when I get home, you mind what I say. Your Husband J.R. Graton

[page 4]

P.S. Address your letters as heretofore, they will reach me Yours John R. Graton

### [LETTER 16]

[Envelope addressed to Mrs. Adelaid H. Graton, Jonesville Mich; Care of J.B. Taylor, Esq; Postmarked Jan 19, Fort Smith, Ark.; Several "countersigns" mentioned in letter]

[Back of envelope: Rec'd in Jonesville, Mich Feb 1st 1865 from Capt. J.R. Graton 1<sup>st</sup> K.C.V.I., Fort Smith Ark. dated Jan 15-16 1865; Answered Feb 5<sup>th</sup> 1865 Jonesville Mich' Directed Little Rock Ark.]

Ft Smith Ark Jan 15<sup>th</sup> 1865

My Dear Wife

It is now two weeks since I have had a letter from you. I think you have written me so many letters and received no answers to them that you have gotten discouraged and quit writing. I shall try to write oftener than I have done, if we are allowed to remain in our winter quarters a part of the This colored Brigade has had the largest share of the duty to do at the Post, this summer. We do not evacuate this

Post as fast as we expected, we thought we were almost gone but it turned out otherwise. The order to evacuate this place was countermanded by the President, at the solicitation of the people of Arkansas, and reached this place a few days ago. The troops would have all been glad to have been able to get away from here. We have never been able to get more than half rations since coming here. But I hear the boats whistle now, it may be that we have a supply of rations on hand. I learn that there are four of them, just got in. A fine time of the year for boating is it not, the middle of Winter. The weather has been very pleasant for the past few days, thawing by day and freezing at night. I have been on duty to day, as Brigade

[page 2]

Officer of the Day. I will enclose a couple of countersigns those I had to day, one from Division Hd Qs and one from Brigade Hd Qs so that you can see what we have to deal with. They are usually sent out to camp, enclosed in an envelope, by a mounted orderly. Col Williams has six orderlies, all of them black. I look at my pictures often particularly when I get lonesome and thinking of home. But those pictures do not suit me very much I am not used to seeing those cheeks looking so thin and hollow. I am thinking the climate does not agree with you, or else something must be the matter with you, more than you more than you have told me about. Do you not think you would enjoy yourself more in Lawrence than you do now? I am afraid that you and Allie will stay away from Kansas so long that you will have to get acclimated again when you return and perhaps have the ague a year or so when you do return, have you never thought of that!

Jan 16<sup>th</sup> 1865

I did not finish my letter last evening, thinking I, would adopt your suggestion and try to write a long letter. But I do not think I shall succede even this time. The boats last evening brought us marching orders. This Brigade marches for Little Rock to morrow at 12 o'clock. You can address your next letter to me, to Little Rock, we shall probably get to Little Rock as soon as your letter does. I shall not have time to write

[page 3]

more to night as I have got some papers to make out yet tonight and a great deal to do before we start. I shall write when we get to Little Rock if we make any stay. Take care of your health, health before money. Your Husband John R. Graton

### [LETTER 17]

[Envelope addressed to Mrs. Adelaide H. Graton, Jonesville Mich.; Care of J.B. Taylor Esq.; 3 cent stamp; postmarked Little Rock, Ark, Mar 6 '65]

[Back of envelope: Capt. John R. Graton, Co "C" 79<sup>th</sup> U.S.C.I., Little Rock Arkansas. Dated March 5<sup>th</sup> 1865; Rec'd March 15 1865 at [XXXX] Packers, Jonesville, Mich; Answered March 20<sup>th</sup> 1865 Jonesville]

Little Rock Arkansas March 5 1865

My Dear Wife

I received your letter of Jan 22<sup>nd</sup> some weeks ago. It was about a week later coming to hand than the one of yours dated Feb 5<sup>th</sup>. It came by the way of Ft. Smith I think and came down the River. The river is very high now there having been a great deal of rain recently, and they are taking advantage of the rise to forward large quantities of supplies to that place. There has been quite a revolution at Ft. Smith since we came away. All of the Kansas Troops have been sent away and replaced by others. The Kansas Troop were to near home, they had too good a chance to steal. We are here yet, doing prequel and fatigue duty. There is no appearance of any movement in this department at the present. I for one am not sorry to lay for a while. I think I have done my share of hard marching. I think this Regt must have marched over Twelve hundred miles since a year ago this time, besides helping to build three or four miles of fortifications. We are anxiously looking for the paymaster about this time, it is now eight months since we [XXXXX] paid and you

[page 2]

may believe that a little money would be very convenient. The best news I have is in regard to the passage by Congress of the bill increasing the commutation price of Officers rations to 50cts making an increase of \$24.00 per month, and I think the same bill provides strikes of the 5 per ct. tax heretofore levied on Officers, this to take effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> of March. This is a step in the right direction, & dollars is not much more than fifty cents used to be. And then again almost any counter jumper can get as much as a Commissioned Officer does without half the risk and exposure. This bill will make my monthly pay amount to about \$150.00, or \$1800.00 per year. I should have to sell a great many goods to make that sum, should I not. I have not heard from Lawrence for a long time, I think I shall write in a few days. I should have written before but have been very busy making out Muster Rolls. We have not made much head way building quarters as yet have made some shakes a few cook houses and that is all. It will take us all summer at this rate. You must kiss Allie for me every night, Your Husband John R. Graton  
P.S. Address your letter Co "C" 79 U,S,C,I

**[LETTER 18]**

[Envelope addressed to Adelaide H. Graton, Jonesville, Mich; Care of J.B. Taylor Esq; 3 cent stamp; postmarked Little Rock Ark, March 14 '65]

[Back of envelope: Recd in Jonesville Mich March 21<sup>st</sup> 1865 from Capt John R. Graton Co. C, 79<sup>th</sup> U.S.C.I. Little Rock Arkansas dated March 12 1865; Answered March 26<sup>th</sup> 1865 Jonesville Mich]

Camp 79<sup>th</sup> U.S.C.I.  
Little rock Ark March 12<sup>th</sup> 65

My Dear Wife

I will try to write you a short letter this evening. I do not feel very well thu, and have not much news to write either. It gets to be rather monotonous in camp where you do not get the news every day and there is not a plenty of reading matter. Camp life then confines itself to very narrow bounderies: it is either camp duty or fatigue duty. For instance I was Brigade Officer of the Day yesterday being relieved this morning at 7 o clock tomorrow morning at 6 o clock I take charge of a fatigue party of 125 men to work on Fortifications, and the next day I shall have to work hard making up returns and so it goes. We were very much surprised and gratified by the appearance of Captain Armstrong of Co. "D" just from Tyler Texas via New Orleans. He of course has a great many things to tell of about his travels down South and Prison life. Lts Sutherland and Hitchcock were both well when he left. It is thought they will both be exchanged shortly. The rebs have six of Co. "H" prisoners, captured at the same time Lt. Sutherland

[page 2]

was, at Ft. Gibson. So you see the Johnnies have improved their manners somewhat. Although I would rather they would improve still more before I was compelled to cultiv[XXX] their acquaintance. I have not had any letters from you for some time and I cannot think what it means. You have been so regular in you correspondence lately, that if I fail to get letters from you about so often I at once think you must be sick, or something have happened. I am happy to learn that our little girl proves to have a tallent for the fine Arts, and it will be my greatest pleasure to have them cultivated when she becomes of a proper age. I expect she will become quite a pattern of propriety under her mother's [XXXXXXXXXX] tuition. But formost she must lay the foundation of good constitution, and to do that she should have plenty of out door exercise, and no mental stimulus for the first six or seven years of her life. If your present quarters do not suit you and Allie do not stay at them but procure other, do not let a little difference of expence deter you. Neither do I wish you to work so assiduously. I had much rather you would try lay in a good stock of health for future use; Your Husband John R. Graton

### [LETTER 19]

[Envelope addressed to Mrs Adelaide H. Graton Jonesville Mich, Care of J.B. Taylor Esq; 3 cent stamp; Postmarked Mar 20 65 Little Rock Ark]

[Back of envelope: Recd in Jonesville Mich March 28<sup>th</sup> 1865 from Capt John R. Graton Co. C 79<sup>th</sup> U.S.C.I. Little Rock Ark. dated March 19 1865; Answered April 9<sup>th</sup> 1865 Jonesville Mich]

Little Rock Ark March 19<sup>th</sup> 1865

My Dear Wife

I received your letter of 26<sup>th</sup> Feb. a few days since. It was a very disconsolate letter written under a considerable depression of spirits, I should judge. I hope you and Allie are not so bad as you represent. I want the chief object you have in view to be the improvement of yours and Allie's health, you very well know that the happiness of married life depends in a great measure, upon the healthfulness of the parties. I am yet messing alone, have one of my boys named John Thomas Speaker, about 17 years old, to cook for me. We can get potatoes, sour krout, pickles, flour, dried apples codfish mackerel bacon,

salt beef & pork coffe rice, sugar, hominy, beans, tea molasses at the commissary, but no fresh meat of any kind, flour is 5 ½ cts lb. dried apple 12 ½ cts lb, potatoes \$1.50 bushell , Sor, molassess, 9 ½ cts gal, Brown Sugar, 25 cts lb, codfish, 7 cts lb, &c. I use gravey thickened with flour, instead of butter. How do you think you should like such fare? I have not been paid since the First of July last, and have eight months pay due. My purse is getting very low, I have borrowed fifty dollars since the middle of December last, and it

[page 2]

is almost gone, It is wrong to keep us out of our pay so long. I do not like to keep the amount of money with me that would be required to meet my expenses so long a period, and as a consequence am short. But fortunately I am boss on my boys when I get out, some of them always have money, I have got men who will have between three and five hundred dollars when they are discharged next January, which they will save while they have been in service. The officers of this Regt and the Second, non Eighty Third U.S.C.I. had quite an interesting gam of ball this afternoon. They challenged our Officers, but to their mortification got badly whiped. Very appropriate amusement for the Sabbath Day was it not. Your church going people would think it a horrid practice I suppose. I wonder if my wife & little girl go to church ever. I think you must have forgotten to enlighten on the subject. It is uterly impossible for me to tell what business I shall engage in when I am discharged, untill I get a chance to look around some and find a good opening. And then I may decide to serve longer, before that time, I do not know as I can get into any business where I can do better. Your Husband John R. Graton

[Top of page 2:] P.S. The peach trees are in full blossom

## [LETTER 20]

[Envelope addressed to Capt John R. Graton, 79<sup>th</sup> U.S.C.I., Little Rock, Arkansas; Postmarked Jonesville, Mich; 3 cent stamp; Notes on envelope: Important Augustus serious illness when Eunice was born & her death; High prices in Colorado]

Jonesville Michigan April 9<sup>th</sup> 1865

Dear John

Yours of March 19<sup>th</sup> 1865 was rec'd a number of days since, but this is the first opportunity I have had for answering it. I was disappointed in not receiving another from you this last week, hope to get one soon. We are having quite a snow storm just now, and the most of people have begun making gardens too. I have rec'd a letter from Augusta, at last. She had received one a short time before writing, from a very severe fit of sickness, which well nigh proved to be her last. She was "confined" with a daughter which was born after after two days and one nights sufferings. She then, being so completely exhausted, sunk into a state of unconsciousness, and her attendants had to work over her, employing every means in their power for hours before succeeding in restoring her to sensibility. Three or four days passed off, when she was taken with the child bed & mountain fever combined, which dried up her milk in one night, but the Doctor succeeded in breaking it up; three or four more days passed off, and "Inflammation of the womb" sets in; the Doctor said there would be no hopes for her unless he could check it, which he

at last succeeded in doing, and in addition to the [XXXX] she had the jaunders. She was left in a very low condition, from which she did not recover sufficient to sit up any for nearly six weeks. Her Baby had to be fed on cows milk; it was a puny, weakly little thing, had fits when only six weeks old, but they left it and they begun to have some hopes of raising her, when she was taken so much worse, and at last, Death put an end to her sufferings, on the very day she turned three months old. She did not weigh quite five pounds, clothes and all, the day she died. Poor Augusta! She is almost heart broken. She sent me a Photograph of herself &

[page 2]

baby (the baby in her lap) Poor girl, she is but a miserable shadow of what she once was, and the baby looks so pitiful. It makes my heart ache when I look at them. The Baby was eight weeks and one day old, when the photograph was taken. Augusta wants to sell her share in the Home property, but did not know who to send her Power of Attorney to, as she heard from Sarah Lewis last fall that Mr. McCurdy had gone east. I told her of his return in my reply. She says "of course she would like to have all that it is worth. She says her sickness and all the expenses attending it, cost at least \$500.00 in gold dust or \$1000.00 in greenbacks, they being worth only \$00.50 on the dollar, in dust. It takes a long time for letter to go and come (she writes that they all have to go round by way of California) and whatever instructions you have to give in regard to that business, perhaps you had best give them to Mr McCurdy at once, so that should she happen to send the Power of Attorney the matter can be attended to without any unnecessary delay. They have a great scarcity of fruit there and provisions enormously high. Flour (now very low) \$16.00 & \$18.00 per sack, has been as high as \$30.00. Fresh pork, \$1.00 per lb. Brown sugar the same, Potatoes at the rate of \$21.60 per bushel, Eggs \$1.50 per doz. Butter \$1.75 per lb, calico .90 per yd. Common cooking stoves as high as \$100.00 to \$200.00, the very cheapest \$100.00, & Rocking chairs not to be had for scarcity any price. I asked Mr McCurdy in my last, if there was any Gun Smith in Lawrence now. I rec'd his reply and a draft on N.G. for fifty dollars for which I had sent, last night; in which he says there has been two there for sometime, but they do not keep any stock on hand to interfere with you, should you choose to go into that business again. I do not get any news from Ruth & Haskey as yet. Do you ever hear from them now or "[XXXXXX] & Henry? Allie's health still continues poor, and my own is almost as usual. She fell while out to play nearly a week ago, and striking against a wheel barrow, cut a small but deep hole in her forehead, it must have been clear to the bone. I was frightened but it seems to be healing up nicely now. It will probably leave a scar at least for a while. I applied Arnica which I found very beneficial in keeping down

[page 3]

inflammation. The two youngest boys of the family in which I am now boarding had a party night before last, and had an excellent time of it, a room in the second story adjoining my own, was used to dance in. It was the first dancing Allie ever saw. She being up the earlier part of the evening and enjoyed the scene finely. Well John- What do you think of the present war prospects? Don't you think there is a likelihood of you getting out of the service now, before next January? I sent you an Atlantic Monthly a short time ago, which I hope you have rec'd before this. I hope you will send me letters often, John, and keep me posted in regard to your movements, and intentions. Direct same as before.  
Your Wife Addie H. Graton

**[LETTER 21]**

[Envelope addressed to Mrs Adelaide H. Graton, Jonesville Mich, Care of J.B. Taylor Esq; Postmarked Little Rock, Ark on Apr 18 '65; 3 cent stamp]

[Notes on back of envelope: Rec'd in Jonesville Mich April 24<sup>th</sup> 1865 from Capt John R. Graton 79<sup>th</sup> U.S.C.I. Little Rock Arkansas dated April 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> 1865 containing Photograph of himself. Ans April 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> 1865]

Little Rock Arkan Apr 16<sup>th</sup> 1865

My Dear Wife

I shall try to write you a few lines this evening although I do not feel very much like doing so. We have been on review to day, an crossed the river to do so, It took us nearly all day besides being about five miles to the ground. It may be very nice for those that go to see the show, but it is far from being a pleasure to those reviewed.

April 17<sup>th</sup> 1865

Dear Wife. I had gotten thus far last evening when I felt so tired and dull that I concluded to got to bed, and finish my letter to you this morning. I had not more than got awake before I heard a heavy explosion and after a short space another and yet another and soon all the bells in Little Rock were tolling. I then remarked to some of my men who were standing around, that there must must be some prominent personage dead, thinking it might be Secretary Seward as we heard a few days since that he was very sick. But in a few minuets an orderly came around with the dreadful news that Abraham Lincoln was Dead, assassinated in the City of Washington. I was perfectly astounded, and I feel as our surgeon says that every person in the United States will feel that they have lost a Father. And I think that no man since Washington's day has gone to his grave more universally & sincerely regretted by the people.

[page 2]

We have no other news of importance except the evacuation of Richmond and subsequent surrender of Lee's Army, which you may well immagin was source of great rejoicing. In the clasic language of the Poet we may now reasonably expect to see the beginning of the end, and that soon. I do not think that Mr Lincoln's death will retard operations at all our Armies are now in the position of the boy who got a going and could not stop. The day of judgement is near at hand and will not be long delayed. We have been paid eight months pay since I last wrote to you. I shall send Eight hundred dollars of my pay to Mr McCurdy in a few days, besides some that my boys have given to me to keep for them. When I do send it I shall write to you immediately in regard to it, I have not heard from Lawrence for a long time. I shall write soon to Haskey and also Mr. McCurdy. In compliance of your oft repeated request I enclose to you a photograph of my ugly phiz, I think you may feel proud of your good looking husband. I have grown old considerable fast since I left home two years ago, my hair is quite plentifully sprinkled with grey, and I feel older in every respect. It may be that a part of it is owing to laziness, It may interest you to know that I go to bed when I please, that is when I not on duty, and get up when I please, that is some time after the sun is up. Bad habit is it not, to get into. Kiss my little girl for me. Your Husband John R. Graton

**[LETTER 22]**

[Envelope addressed to Mrs. Adelaid H. Graton Jonesville Mich, Care of J.B. Taylor Esq.; Postmarked Little Rock, Ark, May 1, 1865; 3 cent stamp]

[Notes on back of envelope: Rec'd in Jonesville Mich May 5<sup>th</sup> 1865 from Capt John R. Graton, 79<sup>th</sup> U.S.C.I. Little Rock, Arkansas dated April 30<sup>th</sup> 1865; Answered May 14<sup>th</sup> 1865 Jonesville Mich]

Little Rock Ark April 30<sup>th</sup> 1865

Dear Wife

I received your letter of Apr 10<sup>th</sup> just after mailing my last to you. Your letter was penned with affectionat interest, as they are always. The thoughts of you and my little girl are always upmost in my mind, and how often I have longed to see you both, even wer it but for a short time. But I console myself with the reflection that there are but a few short months when, if we all live, I shall fly on the wing of the wind to the arms of my loved ones. Since writing my last letter, I have forwarded to your address a history of the Regt. &c which I presume you have received before this time. Nicely framed it will look well hung up in our sitting room. So Augusta has experienced some of the pains and joy of maternity? Well I hope it will make her a wiser if not better woman. On the receipt of your letter I immediately wrote to Mr. McCurdy informing him that Mrs. Black would probably forward to him a power of Attorney to transfer real estate &c and authorizing him to pay over the amount agreed on, with instructions to take the deed in your name. When we get the place in possession, I shall feel like making some improvements on it, yet I do not know as I could well do so untill I get home so as to attend to it myself. I should like differently arranged house to live in, but I suppose it would not pay to repair the old one! It probably would be cheaper to build new, I suppose I might buy another lot and move the old house on to it, and fix it up to rent.

[page 2]

We have just mustered for pay again. We muster every two months for pay but do not always get. I am in hopes that now Uncle Samuel has decided to curtail his expenses, that we will be able to get our pay oftener. We are already experiencing the good results of the late reduction in the price of Gold, in declined prices of commissary stores consequent there upon. About two weeks ago I bought ten lbs of very poor quality of Brown Sugar and paid 24 cts a lb, yesterday I bought a nice article of Light Hospital Brown Sugar for 13 ½ cts, other provisions are declining but not as so great a proportion as sugar. We have got our quarters nearly done. The line officers houses are 12 by 18 ft, and a kitchen 9 feet square on the back side. The house is divided into two rooms, making a bedroom 8 by 12 ft, and an office 10 by 12 ft, with a door in front and rear. The houses are built of shakes cut three ft long nailed to post set in the ground. Quartermasters Dept. furnishes us with lumber enough to make the doors and a part of the floor, I have not got my house done yet, it sets about twenty ft East of a very large oak tree which shades the house from 2 to 5 P.M., most beautifully. My house is the most desirably located of any house in the camp. But I am afraid I shall not be allowed to enjoy it long, as there are indications of a forward movement. Genl Blunt is here now on his way to take command at Ft. Smith, he says he is to

have a force of eight thousand cavalry. And he says it is no secret that there is an expedition fitting out for Texas. It is thought there will be two columns operating against Texas at different points, either column to be strong enough to cope successfully with any force the enemy can bring to bear. I suppose one of the columns

[page 3]

will rendezvous at this place or at Ft. Smith. I do not know whether we are to go or not. It has been rumored in camp for some days past that we were to be ordered to Ft. Smith again, but rumor has proved untrue thus far. I should like to see my girls very much, I have quite a curiosity to know how Allie will conduct herself when she first sees me. It will take her some time to get acquainted with me, will it not? Or do you suppose there is a hint of magnetism which would draw her to me more readily than to a stranger. It seems as though you were the only friend I have, as you are the only regular correspondent I have got. Does it seem curious that a friendship can exist between a man and woman once utter strangers, which will outlast that of blood relationship, but so it is. Mothers Brothers and Sisters may forget you, when away, but a wife will supply the place of them all. It rained quite hard last evening, and cleared of the day, so this evening it is quite cool. The trees are all leaved out grass is up and whippoorwills singing. This is a very pleasant time of the year in this part of the country, but when the days get a little longer look out. I have written quite a long letter for me, so I think I will close. Try and take care of your health for my sake. Good night my Wife Your Husband John R. Graton

**[LETTER 23]**

[Envelope addressed to Mrs. Adelaide H. Graton, Jonesville Mich, Care of J.B. Taylor Esq; 3 cent stamp, postmark not legible except "ARK" and "65"; Notes on envelope: Rec'd May 23<sup>rd</sup> Jonesville Mich from Capt J R Graton 79<sup>th</sup> U.S.C.I. Little Rock Ark dated May 13 1865 Ans May 28<sup>th</sup> 1865 Jonesville Mich]

Little Rock Ark. May 13<sup>th</sup> 1865

My Dear Wife

Your letter of the 25<sup>th</sup> Apr was received on the 6<sup>th</sup> inst. In the afternoon of the 6<sup>th</sup> we received an order to be ready to march at 7 o'clock with four days rations, which is the reason I have not answered your letter before this date. On the evening of 6<sup>th</sup> seven companies of this Regt. moved down to the river and embarked on the steamboat Rose Hambleton, and there found sixty of the 4<sup>th</sup> Arkansas Cav. Who were to go with us. The expedition was under command of Lt. Col. Ward. We left Little Rock about 10 o'clock P.M. for a scout down the river. I slept soundly on the cabin floor wrapped up in my Great Coat my head on my haversack and pistol for a pillow. Shortly after daylight morning of the 7<sup>th</sup> arrived at Pine Bluff, forty miles by land and one hundred miles by water from this place. Stopped at Pine Bluff between 3 and 4 hours took on board a guide &c, and again started down the river. The afternoon of this day we met one boat and four steam tugs on their way up to Little Rock. The tugs were towing two barges each, loaded with horses and wagons. I understood that it was a part of the transportation of the 4<sup>th</sup> Army Corps. We arrived

[page 2]

at a Dr. Prices plantation about one hundred miles below Pine Bluff where we tied up for the night. There were a couple of fancy women on board the boat from Little Rock. Lt Sholes made himself quite intimate with one of them this afternoon, walking with her on the hurrican deck &c. This evening, all the Officers but myself were playing cards for the drinks and cigars, which as cigars and drinks cost 25 cts each, is an expensive operation. I took a state room this night did not sleep well, the bed was too soft.

May 8<sup>th</sup>

After breakfast I was ordered out on a scout, taking with me my own company and two others, and about forty Calvary making one hundred and forty men all together. I had gone but a short distance when on crossing a bayoa the log on which I was, broke and let me in the water up to my arms, and then I did not tuch bottom. I managed to get out quite readily by catching hold of some floating sticks &c, after getting myself and revolver thouroughly wet. ( I think you would have laughfed heartily had you have seen me) Upon looking at my watch I found that some water had go into the machinery and stoped it. I blew the water out and held it in the sun a few minutes to dry it and it has gone as usual since. I took a circuit around and came to the boat after traveling some five or six miles, over a very wet and muddy road. This country had been flooded very recently from a big rise in the river. There are levees thrown up on the banks of the river in front of nearly every plantation in this part of the country to prevent the high water flooding the farms. I got back to the boat

[page 3]

at about Eleven o clock when we immediately droped down the river some ten miles and again landded. An other scout was sent out and the cavalry this time caught a man by the name of King runing for the bush, he had just been eating dinner. He was taken a few rods from the boat and shot by order of Col. Ward. We then steamed up the river a few miles and lay to overnight at a place called Douglas landing. Lt. Col Ward and Lt. Sholes and two passengers on the boat set up all night gambling. The other officers played cards for the drinks untill ten or eleven o clock.

May 9<sup>th</sup>

Started up stream on the return. About 9 o clock put off the cavalry who had a brisk run up the river bank for about ten miles killing one or two bushwhackers. In the afternoon of this day met a scout from Pine Bluff under command of Maj Davis. Three companies of Bushwhackers had just come to him for the purposes of surrendering. They were to procede to Pine Bluff to do so. Arrived at Pine Bluff at 10 P.M. The parties before mentioned gambled untill after one o clock A.M.

May 10<sup>th</sup>

Started for Little Rock about 10 o clock A.M. nothing of worthy of note transpired. Stoped in the afternoon and killed three beaver to take to camp with us. The parties before mentioned again gambled all night even up the time of getting off the boat at daylight in the morning. We arrived at Little Rock a little after one A.M. but did not disembark untill after daylight. I have given you a tolerably complete history of our expedition

[page 4]

in order that you may get an idea of how such things are managed. Wife's do not know the risk they run when their Husbands go to the Army. They have more to fear from cards, whiskey and strumpets than

the bullets of the enemy. The husband may die an honorable death on the field of battle, but if addicted to the former he not only injures himself, but he dishonors his Wife his children and his friends. In reply to your question, so earnestly asked, I would state that my habits and opinions were formed before I came into the Army, or even before I married you. There are not many Officers in the Army that save any thing, out of their pay. Every thing an Officer has to buy is so very expensive that it does not take long to use up a hundred [XXX] [XXX] dollars. But for my part I intend to save something out of my salary, to commence business with when I get out of the Service. Three or Four thousand dollars will come very handy then whereas I could spend a large per cent of in putting on style away down in this out of the way God forsaken country if I were so disposed. We have a fellow by name of Hurd who has just returned from [XXXXXXXXXX] on furlough, he knows Col Spicer, and says Spicer did not save anything while in the Army, and is as backward as ever about paying his debts. Mr Hurd says Lawrence is one of the prettiest towns in Kansas. [XXXX] Your Husband John R. Graton

[upside down on top of page 4] Do you not think I have out done myself this time

**[LETTER 24]**

[Envelope addressed to Mrs. Adelaide H. Graton, Jonesville Mich but forwarded to West Webster, Monroe Co, New York, Attn: John McLaren; 3 cent stamp, postmarked Little Rock Ark '65]

[Notes on back of envelope: Rec'd in West Webster NY July 6<sup>th</sup> 1865 from Capt. John R. Graton Co. C 79<sup>th</sup> U.S.C.I. Little Rock Arkansas dated June 25<sup>th</sup> 1865 – Answered 15<sup>th</sup> July 1865 in West Webster, Monroe Co, N.Y.; sent July 19<sup>th</sup> 1865]

Little Rock Ark. June 25<sup>th</sup> 1865

My Dear Wife

I have been looking for a letter from you for several days but have been disappointed thus far. I think it is partly owing to the fact that you may not have received one or two of the letters which I have recently written to you. I think I wrote one or two letters to you about a month ago on which I did not put postage stamps, happening to be out at the time, and not being aware at the time of a change in the law and I presume they have been sent directly to the dead letter office. Well my dear Addie I have crossed the Rubicon, as the old saying is, I made out and forwarded an application on the 20<sup>th</sup> inst requesting permission to appear before the board, convened for the purpose of examining Officers who wished to remain in the Military Service of the U.S. and of which board Brevet Maj. Genl. Salomon is President, for examination, Stating that I wished to remain in the Military Service of the U.S. also giving a brief account of my services since entering the Army, my age and place of residence. I forwarded the application through the prescribed channells, which I think was well endorsed at Regt. and Brigade Hd Qtrs. The 22<sup>nd</sup> I received a notification from the Recorder of the Board stating that I was requested to attend it the next day at 10 o clock A.M. The 23<sup>rd</sup> I presented myself before the board and after a very brief examination was very politely informed that they would recommend me to remain in the

[page 2]

Service of the U.S. My Dear Girl, I should have consulted you in regard to this important measure if I could have had time to do so. I was unable to decide for several days what course to pursue, but hapening to meet Lt. Col. Fair a member of the board who informed me that the board would not probably sit more than two weeks longer, it having been convened already about two weeks, directed me to make my application at once, with the result as you have seen. And my Dear Wife one thing which influenced me, is the fact, as you well know that I have not sufficient funds to put me up a business house a dwelling house, and also have a capital with which to commence business. I shall probably have about three thousand dollars cash next January. Well to commence business I should need that amount at least for the business, which would require me to rent a shop and still live in the old house. And then again, the pay of Captain amounted to about fifteen hundred dollars a year before it was increased last winter, and to which I think it will be reduced as soon as Congress meet again. Well a man has to do a considerable business and it employs some capital to make fifteen hundred dollars clear of the expense of Shop rent and clerk hire. An Officer does not have to pay rent for quarters and is allowed a plenty of wood for heating and cooking purposes and transportation for seven hundred pounds when changing stations. Now the war is over the troops will probably be stationed at posts a great part of the time, which will make it perfectly safe and prudent for you to be with me for a part of the year at a time. The winter season, at least, it will not be so very unpleasant to stay in this

[page 3]

Southern Country as soon as it gets quietted down and the people get to raising something, so that we can get vegetables &c to supply our tables with. I have soldiered now almost three years and have got so that I understand the business portion of it pretty well, and can perform my duty in that respect, promptly and satisfactorily. At the last monthly inspection I was reported as having the best company in the Regt. I do not know what they will do with me as most of the Regt goes out next January, but probably I shall be put into some consolidated outfit. We have not got away from this place yet and it does not look as though we were to at present. The weather has been extremely hot for a few days past, but there was a heavy shower to the North West of here last night, and to day it is much more comfortable. A couple of the boys belonging to Co. "H" committed a horrible murder one day this week. They enticed an old man, a Jew, out into the woods with them saying they had some hard money hid there which they wished to exchange with him for Green Backs, when they got him to the place they wished to, one of them killed the old man and the other as he supposed killed the boy who was along and they then robed the old man taking some four hundred dollars from him. But the boy was not killed and soon came to and has since identified both the murderers, who have been arrested. When the murderers were being taken to the guard house in town as they were crossing the bridge, one of them jumped overboard, having an eighteen pound ball fastened to him, and immediately sunk and has not been seen since. The other

[page 4]

will undoubtedly be shot or hung. I have written quite a lengthy letter this time do not you think so? I hope this letter will find you and Allie both well, and busily engaged in laying up a good stock of health for future use. You cannot immagin how much I wish to see you and my little darling. How often and how constantly I am thinking of you and the happiness it will be to me to meet you both again. The time seems to pass very slowly when thinking of the time when I shall lay your head upon my bosom again.  
Your Husband John R. Graton

**[LETTER 25]**

[Envelope addressed to Mrs. Adelaide H. Graton, West Webster Monroe Co New York, Care of John McLaren Esq; Two three cent stamps; Postmarked Little Rock Ark Jul 17 '65]

[Note on back of envelope: Recd in West Webster N.Y. July 23<sup>rd</sup> 1865 from Capt J.R. Graton 79<sup>th</sup> U.S.C.I. Little Rock Arkansas dated July 8<sup>th</sup> 1865, Enclosed in same melainotype of John R. Graton. Answered Aug 11<sup>th</sup> 1865 West Webster Monroe Co., N.Y.]

Little Rock Ark July 16<sup>th</sup> 1865

Dear Wife

Your letter of 25<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> of June was received a few days since. I was getting quite anxious in regard to you, it had been so long since I had received a letter from you. I received a letter from Mr McCurdy sometime since in which he states that I have \$1514 dollars Deposited with him, which would leave, after paying Henry & Augusta \$1055. I have forwarded to Mr McCurdy by Lt. Sutherland about Ten Days ago \$1650, a part of it being money which some of my boys have left with me for safe keeping. I calculate that if I do not have any bad luck that I shall have next Jan \$3000, cash. According to Haskey's statement I could build my store by borrowing about 1500. Lt. Sholes has just returned from Lawrence after a thirty seven days leave, He gives a flattering account of the prospects of Lawrence. The Eldridge House is going ahead finely, the workmen being engaged on the second story. It is being built nearly on the same plan as the old one, Stores in the 1st Story. Lt. Sholes says the stores are allready rented, and rent paid for one year in advance. I think he says they rent for \$1500 a year. If I could have the same luck I could build without any trouble. Lt. Sholes says that Mr McCurdy wishes to see me in regard to building

[page 2]

soon, so that I may take it into my head to try to get a leave of absence as soon as some of our officers get back who are away now, to go to Lawrence and attend to it. I had made up my mind not to ask for a leave this Fall as our time is so near out, now about six months but as I am to remain in the Service it may be, that I shall not get home in Jan, and it might be a paying investment for me to go home before that time. I presume I shall get that three months extra pay, you speak of, sometime, it amounts to \$150 in my case. I think there is some doubt about my being mustered back. I made an application to the Adjutant General, Washington D.C. to be mustered back, but he returned me answer that I could not be mustered, as my appointment was not from proper authority. There are several of the Officers in the same fix as myself in regard to this back pay. Williams has gone to Kansas on leave, and I understand he will try to this matter straightened by the help of Lane. So my little girl wants her Farther to come and see her. Tell her, her Farther wants to see his little girl once more, very much. He thinks about his little girl and big girl every day. Allie and her Farther would have great sprees together wouldn't they. Do you think Allie would hate her Farther as you once prophesied? What kind of an idea can such a

little girl have of her farther. I hope you will not go to making a drug shop of yourself and Allie. I think the less medicines a person takes the better. Out door exercise

[page 3]

bathing &c are much better in my opinion. But I suppose you keep in such a constant stew about your washing, ironing, or making your clothes &c that you do not have time to attend to those things and are worn out and half sick all the time. Fruits and vegetables are tolerably plenty this season though pretty high, and there have been a great many blackberries and Huckleberries. I had a piece of Huckleberry pie for dinner. The Huckleberry and Blueberry pies I have eaten this Summer are the first I have eaten since leaving Mass. I have a woman to cook for me now. I pay her five dollars a month just to cook for me. Enclosed I send you a Melineotype of your humble servant. I think you will have a collection of pictures if I keep on. It does not look just I do now as I have had my hair cut very short since it was taken. My hair is only about a half an inch long, all over my head, and you can immagin I look quite funny. I cannot advise you what to do in regard to getting furniture &c &c as I do not know what will be done with me. If I am retained in the Service I shall have you come and live with me winters, and send you North during the hot weather. I think if I have to board you out another season I will send you east and let board with some of my relatives. Well I have written a pretty long letter this time so I gues I will close. Your Husband John R. Graton

**[LETTER 26]**

[Envelope addressed to Capt. John R. Graton 79<sup>th</sup> U.S.C.I. Little Rock Arkansas; 3 cent stamp Postmarked Jonesville Mich, May '65---Envelope does not appear to go with letter. Letter is dated Aug 20<sup>th</sup> 1865 and is written from West Webster, NY]

West Webster Monroe Co N.Y. Aug 20<sup>th</sup> 1865

Dear John

Yours of July 30<sup>th</sup> was rec'd in due season.....September 28<sup>th</sup> 1865 As you will percieve by the two dates to this quite a long period must have elapsed since I first began. When I first began I was interrupted and could not find time to continue for several days and as I was looking for a letter from you every day I concluded to wait and answer both together. Since that time my time has for a season been pretty well take up in quite a different manner Grand Ma after a short but serious illness died. She was over Eighty five. I took quite an active part in the necessary arrangements at home besides going to town (eight miles) to make purchases for both the corpse and mourners. Uncle John Aunt Rilla Cousin Will Kate & myself followed as chief mourners with a numerous band of distant relatives following. Her last end was very easy. We did not think she could be dying until about half an

[page 2]

hour before she died and as I stood with my hand upon her head as she breathed her last. I knew that she was gone but could scarcely realize that she had more than fallen asleep. I am sorry you have been



and grasey Windows broke & cracked the Front Door has been broken to pieces and is stuck together with tacks and nails, both roofs leak. The top part of porch has been torn down and probably burned, the fence is down in several places, And there is a barn built within Sixteen feet of the house, just across the ally, which makes it imperative that the house be moved to the front of the lot, I do not care to go to the expense while the house is in it present hands and to rent a house almost out of the question. Hasky has built him a house out south of Koss' on Ohio St, talking of selling asks fifteen hundred dollars. I should not be surprised at his selling any day. I forgot to mention that the square house just north of ours was sold a few days ago for five hundred dollars, so that you see my offer to Augusta was not far from right. I will make the farther offer of \$225.00 dollars. You may write to her, and also send me her address in case you do not come here yourself. You can see the facts in the case, and decide yourself in regard to wheather you come or stay. If you do not have to pay board it would perhaps be better to stay in a pecuniaray and comfortable point of view, But if you defray board it would not make so much difference

[page 3]

If you do come write to me and mail it as soon as you get to Mich. And I will try to have things as comfortable as possible under the circumstances. I am staying with Hasky at present but do not know how long I shall, as he may sell at any moment. Your best way will be to call on Mr. McCurdy at Simpsons Bank. They will tell you whare to go to. The boxes you had best send by Merchants Despatch of Great Western Despatch, as the Express Cos charge very high rates, or perhaps you can bring them along with you as cheaply, I have been here a little over two weeks have not done anything as yet. Hoping to hear from you soon. I remain Your Husband John R. Graton

**[LETTER 28]**

[Envelope addressed to Mrs. Adelaid H. Graton, West Webster Monroe Co., New York, Care of J.B. McLaren Esq; 3 cent stamp, postmark not legible]

[Notes on back of envelope: Rec'd in West Webster N.Y. Dec 26<sup>th</sup> 1865 from Capt John R. Graton, Lawrence Kansas, dated Dec 17<sup>th</sup> 1865; Ans. Feb 2<sup>nd</sup> 1866 Webster, Monroe Co., N.Y.]

Lawrence Kansas December 17<sup>th</sup> 1865

My Dear Wife

I received your letter of Dec 2<sup>nd</sup> about the middle of the week but did not feel like answering it untill today. I have not seen Mr. McCurdy yet and so have not informed him of the receipt of the Draft by you. I am in my old business again Have gone in Partnership with a Dutchman by the name of Joedicke. I have put \$1200.00 in the business. Trade is pretty good, employ one hand besides ourselves. I commenced three weeks ago. I am boarding with Hasky. I like your idea in regard to the house well, but do you know that Augusta could hold half of everything on the lot unless it was first legally divided. There is an old building on my lot on Mass St. 18 x 24 feet which I have bought since I

came back paid \$300.00 for it. It rents now for \$25.00 per month it might be moved off and would make a second rate house if it was fixed up, I suppose. If I should build I certainly should have to hire Money. Money is worth

[page 2]

12 per cent of \$120 Dollars for \$1000.00 a year Building Material is very high. Hasky has built him a house on Ohio St. West of the Park he paid \$200 dollars for two lots and has put up a house 14 x 24 ft, 1-1/2 Story high with a kitchen 10 x 19 ft Cellar & Well which cost him \$1000 dollars. And he has got only one room & Bedroom plastered yet, the kitchen & upstairs are not lathed or Plastered yet. He calculates it would cost about \$200 dollars to finish it. When I got home I had about \$3000 Dollars, since then I have bought that building Pd \$300.00 I invested in trade, 1200.00 Pd Ridenour & Bohm \$23.12, sent you \$75.00 Making \$1600 disbursed by me. Dr Huson I have not paid yet I suppose I owe \$50, \$100 dollars, you 50 Dollars, more to get house with, Taxes & Grading my Mas. lot will be about \$100, more which will make two hundred or \$250.00 say nothing of clothing for my self which I need badly. Call \$1850.00 & Buying stove chairs table, mattresses Bedstead Rocking Chairs &c &c &c at the very lowest 150.00. I should then have \$1000.00 to build or fix up a house to live in, put up store on my Mass. Lot. I merely write this to show you about how we shall stand in the Spring. It may vary a little from this either way. In regard to the bearua I suppose we shall have to have one at any rate, and to determine it cheapness where you are, Find out how much one would weigh and the expense per lb. to get it here and multiply together, add to first

[page 3]

and subtract the total amount from the cost of the same quality here say \$23.00 dollars one like ours, and you can soon tell wheather to buy on East or here, And so with other things which are heavy in comparrison to value. In regard to your staying in New York I think it would be advantageous for you to do so, for several reasons. Although I should like very much to have you and Allie with me, but I do not think I could make you at all comfortable this Winter, without going to a great deal of expense. If we do well this winter and the prospects are good for the reason I may go on to N.Y.C. to buy goods in the Spring in that case we may visit our friends in Mass. You may send along a plan of what you want in the shape of a house, but I cannot promise as yet, to build. I will send along the money by the time you will need it. Of course if you do not come back this winter you will not want it so soon. In my last I forgot to mention the condition I found things up stairs at the house. The Gun Stocks I could not find any thing of them. The things were out of the showcase and strewn about the chamber floor and many of them missing. The showcase doors are both broken off and one of them gone entirely and both of those thick top glasses are broken out & I found one of the Guns at the Gunsmiths, it had been sold by a Nigger. The Books are in a fine fix. The rats had knawed a hole in the top of that big

[page 4]

trunk and of course the contents are in a fine condition. I have not looked it over much but I do not think it has been opened or any thing taken out of it. Some of my Books & Papers in the trunk are badly knawed & others destroyed. The things I left in that house have been the same as totally destroyed, which were they in as good condition as when I left would be worth at least \$150. It would cost nearly double to replace those things now. But it is of no use to cry over spilt milk. They might have been

burned and more property with them. But it seems a pity to have things so destroyed. There is another small box with a few things in which I think belong to Augusta. Eliza Thacher is keeping Martha, has kept her for a long time. Martha has a calf. ----- I think you must have been in haste as you do not say a word about Allie, so I suppose she must be well. What do you do with her when you go to donation parties, take her along? I have written quite a long letter for me, taking into consideration the fact that I do not feel very well today. I am somewhat billious and have been taking quinine. Kiss Allie for me  
Your Husband J.R. Graton

**[LETTER 29]**

[Envelope addressed to Mrs. Adelaid H. Graton, West Webster Monroe Co., NY, Care of J.B. McLaren Esq.; Postmark not readable]

[Notes on back of envelope: Rec'd Feb 28<sup>th</sup> 1866 in West Webster Monroe Co., N.Y. from Capt. J.R. Graton dated Feb 18<sup>th</sup> 66 – Lawrence Kansas. Containing draft for \$50.00; Answered March 3<sup>rd</sup> 1866 West Webster, Monroe Co., N.J. asking for draft of \$100.00; Wrote again March 19<sup>th</sup> '66 inclosing receipt for goods shipped by Railway, for Lawrence, Kan., Mar 17<sup>th</sup> 1866]

Lawrence Kansas Feb 18<sup>th</sup> 1866

Dear Wife

Your long looked for letter was rec'd a few days ago. I could not immagin why you were so long in writing, thought you must be sick or something the matter. We are getting along pretty well. Business is very dull at present. Ruth has not been very well for sometime has had to get her washing done, which is something unusual with her. She says it is all she is able to do to get her work done from day to day. The children have all been sick more or less the winter. One of Jeff Conway's little boys came in the shop to buy a gun, he had a couple of Gun locks a pr of Dbl Triggers and a couple of springs which I recognised as mine and took them away from him. They were worth about four dollars . I think we shall have to try to live in the house this summer at least. I do not know but you had best offer Augusta to give or take \$250.00 and in case she buys we will then get another lot and build a small house. I do not see that the lot could be divided very well as the part that had the house on would be the most valuable, and I

[page 2]

have no idea she would take the half without the house and the house could not be well divided. I received a commission from the War Dept for 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. In the 81<sup>st</sup> Cold Regt stationed in Louisiana sometime since. I did not accept it as I was in business and again the Dept are mustering out Troops so fast that I was afraid the Regt would not remain in the Service long enough to pay me for the trouble and expense of getting to it. Enclosed I send you a Draft for fifty Dollars. I should like to have this take you home if possible. Write and let me know when to look for you and I will try to have the house vacated &c by that time. I do not think I shall be able to go East this Spring. We have talked of extending our business this Spring but have not determined on anything as yet. I have thought some of

building on my lot but its situation is not the best in the City and is not worth as much by a thousand dollars as one farther south. And I do not know about spending any more money upon it. I have either got to get another lot or still rent, either of which cost enormously. Taxes are very high. The house & lot, valued at Four hundred dollars, I paid \$20.00 tax on it. My lot was taxed forty dollars. I gues you will see by the above that I have

[page 3]

got the Blues very considerably. But I must confess that I cannot see anything more than a living before me. High taxes high rents high expenses everything high there is not hardly any one in the place but what have made double what I have the past three years. I am attending a commercial school this winter, availing myself an opportunity which I have never before possessed. We hear that Mother talks of coming out to live with Ruth. It seems she did not like the idea of Henry's getting married, and does not live with him. You ask about the condition of my cloths –you have got me there. Ruth thinks they are rather seedy. I expect I shall have to spruce up when my wife gets home. I look forward to our reunion with much pleasure after so long a seperation now within a few days of three years. [Missing section of letter] When I just got home last fall Anne & Oscar looked every day for cousin Allie, about the time you were expected. Do not wait so long before writing. Your Husband John R. Graton