



Photo taken August 1861, Leesburg, Va.

**Thomas Clinton Lovett Hatcher
1839 – 1861**

*Citizen, Student, Soldier;
The Story of a Heroic Loudoun Youth*

-Kenneth M. Fleming

Special thanks:

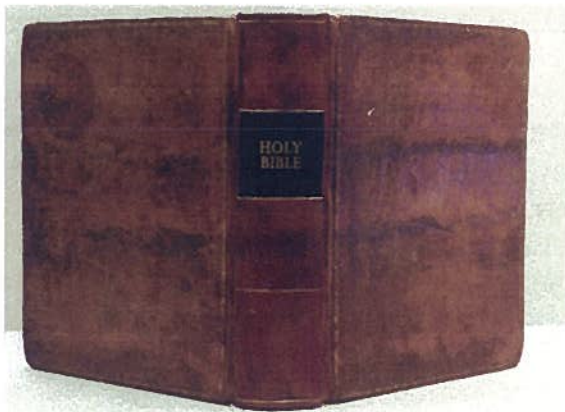
A very special thanks must be given to all the writers, researchers, historians and persons, who through their tireless work in research, their ability to recognize the importance of compiling historic documents and photographs and their dedication to Loudoun's past, have made this project possible. To the men and women, who take the time to record the events as they are happening and to those who continue to search, looking for these priceless hidden records, in all their many hiding places, a simple thank you, seems not enough.

The value of such historic works can never be over stated. In learning who we are, where we came from and how we got to where we are today, we must look back, to those who came before us and we must strive to understand the thoughts and actions that governed their daily lives. Only then can we ascertain the value of the people, the places and the things that have helped to shape and mold our County and our very lives today. Here to, by compiling and recording the persons and events of our past, we ignite in others, a desire to visit, see and learn. A most valued asset to any community, are those who visit, spend and go. It is through the very power of tourism, that we recognize the need to record and preserve those things which have not yet been preserved.

Smoke lay heavy across the small odd shaped open field. The breeze, if any, unable to lift or even carry the heavy gray cloud of death away. The smell of burnt sulfur burns deep into the nostrils, the throat, the lungs. Even the eyes themselves burn far beyond fragile mortal endurance, but endure, each man must. The noise of muskets firing in random shot and from well-orchestrated volleys of hundreds, deafens with this roaring sound from thousands all at once. The soul trembles, the body cringes or was it the very earth herself, the reaction to yet another deafening belch from nearby artillery. The high pitched shriek of flying, searing iron, explodes within our ranks, our front and rear and on each side, as well as overhead. Trees exploding, moaning, shards and splitters and shrapnel rain down upon men and field and forest floor. Above it all the Officers yelling orders all along the line and the mournful cries, oh, the screams of dying men. Here, amid this hell on earth, in utter thoughtless madness, our Officers begin to yell, "up men, up, prepare to make a charge!" Each man now prepares himself to leave the safety of the wooded gully. No one need be told, each man loads one final musket round. Amid the storm of shot and shell, just inside the grassy field we stand and form our ranks. With bayonets fixed and the order given, into that smoky haze we start, our glorious banner always leading, always out in front.

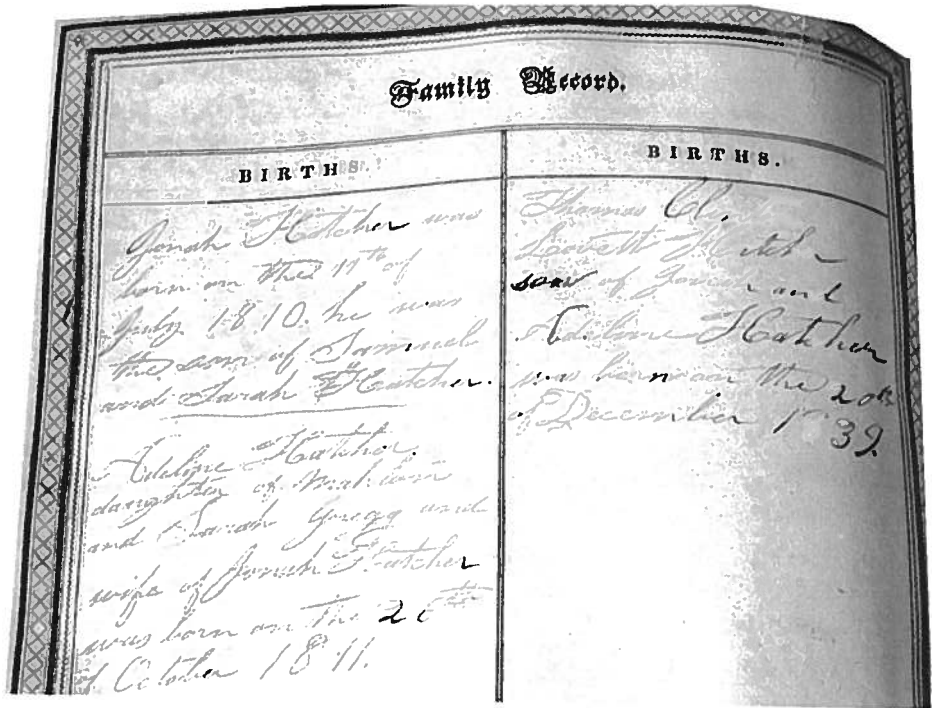
These words are meant only to create a mental image in the readers mind. Each reader's image will be different. For me, I am easily drawn to a small open field, barely ten acres in size and nestled within the woods along the Potomac River. This location today is chosen by many as their tranquil weekend getaway spot. But for the 3400 or more men who would meet there in October of 1861 the entire area would represent a living hell on earth. For many "Ball's Bluff" would be their first engagement and for far too many their last. For other more seasoned Veterans, it would be just another battle name painted on their flag. Often referred to as "a small affair", its lasting and somewhat painful memory would haunt many participants for the rest of their lives. This story however, is not about a battle; instead, it examines the short, amazing life of one participant, his courage, faith and his convictions and the impression he left on many battlefield participants and the citizens of Loudoun County.

Thomas Clinton Lovett Hatcher was born on the 20th day of December 1839. He was the only child born to Jonah and Adeline "Gregg" Hatcher. Clinton's father Jonah, the son of Samuel and Sarah Hatcher was born on the 11th day of June 1810. His mother Adeline, the daughter of Mahlon and Sarah "Gore" Gregg was born on the 26th of October 1811. Jonah and Adeline were married on the 22nd of August 1833.¹



Research shows that William Hatcher "1613-1680" was the first Hatcher in Clinton's direct family line to arrive in America, arriving sometime after 1636 from England to present day Henrico County, Virginia, most likely traveling by way of the James River. William and his

wife Marian had seven children and lived out their lives in Henrico. William's son Benjamin "1644-1727" and his wife Elizabeth had ten children and also lived out their lives in Henrico. Benjamin's son William "1704-1781" is said to have been born in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. William and his wife Ann had eight children; seven were born in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Sarah, their fourth child was born in Henrico County, perhaps during a family visit. Sometime after the birth of his last child in 1748, William moved his family to western Loudoun County, Virginia and settled in the area of Goose Creek, now called Lincoln. In 1757, the year that Loudoun County was formed from Fairfax County, William Hatcher sold a parcel of land to Issac Nichols, Jacob Janney and Thomas Clows to be used for the purpose of a "Meeting House and school and cemetery" at Goose Creek. This is one of the first deeds recorded in the Clerk's office of Loudoun County.²



HATCHER FAMILY BIBLE RECORD
 COURTESY THOMAS BALCH LIBRARY

William's son Thomas "1750-1818" and his wife Rebecca had nine children and lived out their lives in Loudoun County. Thomas purchased a small farm on today's state route 709, ("Sands Road") between the towns of Hamilton and Lincoln. Yardley Taylor's 1853 map list the property as "T. Hatcher's Heirs".³ Thomas's son Samuel "1776-1846" and his wife Sarah had five children and also lived out their lives in Loudoun County. Samuel's son Jonah "1810-1887" and his wife Adeline would have only one child, Thomas Clinton Lovett Hatcher "1839-1861".⁴ As the Hatcher family grew, so too did their land holdings. By the time the Yardley Taylor map had gone to press in Philadelphia, the Hatcher families had settled in and around the Purcellville, Hamilton and Lincoln areas.⁵ Close inspection of the Taylor map finds a total of three J. Hatchers listed in this triangular shaped area. Joshua Hatcher was located directly across from the Shelburne Glebe, which is located on modern day state route 729, between Lincoln and North Fork. James Hatcher was located off modern day state route 611 in the area between today's "New Guinea Bridge" and state Route 622 (Shoemaker School Rd.).⁶ Jonah Hatcher, the father of Clinton, purchased approximately 251 acres of farm land on August 10th, 1842 from Bushrod Taylor's commissioner on today's state route 611, approximately one mile south of Purcellville.⁷ On this land, Jonah would build a home and carve out a living and comfortable lifestyle

for his wife, Adeline and son Clinton. Clinton's actual birth place information has still not been found, although the search continues.

Like the Waterford area, the communities of Purcellville, Hamilton and Lincoln were heavily populated with families of the Quaker faith. A religious tradition, that began with the arrival of the first Hatcher family members, and continued with each successive generation. "The Religious Society of Friends" as they are formally known, had traditionally refused to participate in all wars since the early 1600's, based solely on their literal faith and belief in the commandment "*Thou shall not kill.*"⁸ By the late 1700's and early 1800's dissension within the Quaker faith began to spread. A theological debate had begun between two opposing factions, the Liberal Friends, also called "Hicksite Friends" and the Orthodox Friends. In the last quarter of the 1700's, views on slavery and slave ownership began to change as well. By the early 1800's these views began to make their way into the "Goose Creek Friends Meetings" in Lincoln and the "Fairfax Friends Meetings" in Waterford. Before the end of the first quarter of the 1800's, slave ownership meant "disownment" from the Society of Friends and by the end of the second quarter a general crack-down had begun on those who participated in the practice of simply hiring slaves from their owners, an offence, that if discovered, would result in some form of punishment or disownment.⁹

Very little is known about the youthful days of Clinton. However, based upon written records found to date, things around him were quickly changing. On the 10th day of August 1842, less than three years after his birth, Clinton's father Jonah purchased a large plot of land just south of Purcellville. From this purchase, Clinton's parents created a home and working farm and called it "Maplegrove".¹⁰ Along with his family, Jonah also brought with him to "Maplegrove" a free black male named Jas Thompson, who was around 11 years old and two slaves, a female approximately 34 years of age and a male approximately 30 years of age.¹¹ Even after the theological debates between the "Liberal Friends" and the "Orthodox Friends", Jonah continued to keep his slaves. Once the "Goose Creek Friends and the Fairfax Friends" adopted the no slave position, Jonah would have been given the option to release his slaves before he and his family were disowned from the Society of Friends. Records have not been found to indicate if Jonah was ever served official notice of disownment. He may have voluntarily left the Society of Friends or he may have received notice in person based on his decision to continue the ownership of his slaves.



"Maplegrove" photograph looking north toward Purcellville



The Jonah Hatcher Farm, circa 1917, from the barnyard looking east across the small stream.
Present day Rt. 611 is located on the skyline running with the distant tree line
Both photograph's of "Maple Grove" courtesy Mrs. Jane Hirst Bogle, Purcellville, Va.

Disownment from the "Society of Friends" occurred sometime before Clinton reached his fifth birthday, the actual date has not been found. Because Jonah was no longer welcome at "Goose Creek Meeting", owing to his unwillingness to adhere to strict Quaker beliefs, the family began attending services at Kettoctin Baptist Church. The earliest record of Hatcher family attendance at Kettoctin Baptist was recorded by the churches Clerk in "Minutes Book I", which states, "*April 1844 – Brother Jonah Hatcher reported an interview held with Brother Simon Matthews stating that*" Based on two additional recorded entries by the churches Clerk, the Hatcher family must have been valued members at Kettoctin Church. "*March 1850 – Brothers Jonah Hatcher, Burr Chamblin and Francis Rogers having received the highest number of votes were declared duly elected (deacons).*" And "*October 1850 – Brethren Hatcher and Frank Rogers appointed to raise funds with a view to purchasing a piece of ground adjoining the meeting house for the use of the Church.*"¹²

Records indicate that Clinton was a student in school at age 10.¹³ Based solely on the calculated total distance, the closest school for Clinton would have been "Oakdale" the Quaker School at Goose Creek. Friends and non-friends, rich and poor, and even some blacks attended Oakdale. Students attended Oakdale straight through the entire summer, stopping for only two weeks in the fall, during the wheat harvest, when there was work that even the smallest hands could do.¹⁴ Additional records indicate that Jonah's slave holdings had continued to rise during this same time period. By 1850 his recorded count had risen from two to five slaves.¹⁵ In ten more years that number would climb to eight.¹⁶ Financially Jonah had done quite well.

By the time Clinton had reached his mid to late teens, family lore and published accounts indicate that he had grown to be a young man of 6'7" stature with bright red hair. It was jokingly said that he was so tall "*he couldn't stand up straight out of doors*". Having completed school in Loudoun and having parents with strong financial means allowed Clinton the opportunity to pursue a college education. In 1856, at the age of only 16, Clinton left home to begin his college studies at Columbian College, in the Capital City of Washington. Conceived from the desires of President George Washington, to establish a national institution of higher learning, President James Monroe signed an Act of Congress on Feb. 9, 1821, that created the Columbian College, a private, nonsectarian institution in Washington City.¹⁷ For the next four years, due to the continuously growing political unrest across America, Clinton would live and study in what could only be described as a type of hornets' nest atmosphere. The 1860 school year, Clinton's senior year at Columbian, marked the beginning of one of America's darkest periods, for many, 1860 would be the most eventful and troublesome of their lives. Besides Clinton's enrollment records while at Columbian College, his name appears again on a document dated, April 12, 1860. Two months before his graduation, Clinton was elected to the "Committee of Arrangements and Celebration of the Enosinian Society". The Enosinian Society was established in 1822 by 15 students for the advancement of studies in advanced Philosophy and Literary Study, for the purpose of encouraging writing and public speaking.¹⁸ By his election to this committee, there can be no doubt that Clinton was a well-respected member of the Society. For Jonah and Adeline Hatcher, Wednesday June 27th, had to be a day of great pride. On this date beginning at 11:00 in the morning, the "class of 1860" graduation service began at the First Baptist Church of Washington which was located on 13th Street.

After graduation, Clinton most likely returned home with his parents. The August 27th, 1860 U.S. Censes listed Clinton (TCL Hatcher) as being in the family home and not a student.¹⁹ The length of time in which he stayed at home is also not known. From statements made in a letter written by Clinton to Mary Anna Sibert on May 18th, 1861, it is clear that he had made an extended trip to various locations around Virginia. He would meet Miss. Sibert during this extended travel period and would later document, in a series of ten letters to her, happenings in Loudoun during the first year of the war.²⁰ By September 1860 the country was spinning out of control and would soon begin to fly apart. Adding to the ill feelings of the Southern citizen, on Tuesday, November 6th Abraham Lincoln won the 1860 Presidential election, even though he carried no southern states. The year ended on a sour note for the Union with South Carolina seceding on the 20th of December. In short order the New Year would look even worse than the old year. Starting on January 9th Mississippi would secession, followed on the 10th with Florida, the 11th with Alabama, the 19th with Georgia and finally on the 26th with Louisiana. On March 2nd Texas also left the Union, bringing the number of states that wished to govern themselves to seven. On Tuesday March the 4th, the sixteenth President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, was inaugurated beneath the portico of the unfinished Capital.²¹

Sometime between the Census report of August 27th, 1860 and the inauguration reception a couple days after the March 4th, 1861 inauguration, Clinton returned to Washington City. Based on written statements made by him and others, his return may have been for additional studies at Columbian College, although no official records have been found to substantiate this belief. Although he disagreed with Lincoln's politics and positions, Clinton and George Wise together attended the inauguration reception at the White House. While entering the reception, Clinton's unique stature and bright red hair managed to catch President Lincoln's attention. "The Sunday Star" of Washington first published an account of the incident on March 9, 1861. The second printing, an "eyewitness" account, was picked up by the "Mirror" of Leesburg, Virginia on the 16th of June, 1887 from a Richmond, Virginia newspaper.²² (Article to the right)

Clinton's final act in Washington City occurred sometime between March 9th and April 12th, the day Confederate artillery opened fire on Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, South Carolina. In what may have been an act of defiance or patriotic devotion to his home state, Clinton and a friend, J.C. Salsby brought attention to themselves one more time while at Columbian College. In an article published in 1904, a classmate of Clinton's, Confederate Captain T. W. T. Richards tells an interesting tale about the adventures of Clinton during his college years.²³ (Article below) This single act marks the only time a Confederate Flag has ever flown atop a public building in Washington.

"Referring to Clinton Hatcher, I may mention an incident that occurred just before the firing on Sumter. We were students at Columbian College, on Fourteenth Street, Washington, D.C. One night Hatcher and J.C. Salsby, of Mississippi, ran up a Confederate flag on the mast over the college building. The flag floated there for several hours in plain view of the capitol building and the President's mansion, before it was discovered by the college officers, when Dr. Samson, the President of the College, removed it. It is doubtless the only time a Confederate flag ever floated over a public building in the Federal capital. Hatcher was a brave and fearless soldier, and had his life been spared would have won distinction in the cause for which he so early died."

6/16/87 Mirror

LINCOLN-HATCHER.

An Incident Before the War.

From the Richmond State of Friday.

"I was at the first reception President Lincoln gave," said Hon. George D. Wine, who was, with others in THE STATE office to-day, talking about the war, "and I will tell you an incident which came directly under my observation. It was in 1861. Being in Washington on the day of the reception in company with a tall and handsome man by the name of Hatcher, whose home was in Loudoun county, Va., we determined to attend the reception. Hatcher was at least six feet five inches tall and was elegantly proportioned. While on our way to the reception Hatcher asked, 'Are you going to shake hands with Lincoln?' 'Why not?' I replied. 'What are you going there for?' Well, I am not going to shake hands with him," said Hatcher. It was the custom for the marshal to introduce the visitors to the President and when I reached Mr. Lincoln, the marshal who was well acquainted with me, said, 'Mr. President, this is Mr. Wise, of Virginia. The President had a few words to say and gave me a cordial handshake. I was ahead of Hatcher and I thought I would look back to see if he was going to keep his word about not shaking hands with Lincoln. As I looked back I saw Hatcher deliberately pass the President holding his hands behind him. He passed on by without taking the slightest notice of the President. Mr. Lincoln saw him, and turning to the marshal asked, 'Who is that tall man that has just passed me?' 'It is Mr. Hatcher, of Virginia.' 'Ask Mr. Hatcher to come back,' said Mr. Lincoln. 'Tell him I wish to see him.' The marshal overlooked Mr. Hatcher, and told him what the President had said. Hatcher went back and President Lincoln extended his hand to him. Hatcher accepted the President's hand, and then Mr. Lincoln asked, 'How tall are you, Mr. Hatcher?' 'I am six feet five inches,' he replied. 'Well,' said Mr. Lincoln, with a smile, 'I believe you top me a few inches.'— 'And what do you reckon,' continued Mr. Wise; 'Lincoln and Hatcher actually stood back to back and measured, and Hatcher was at least a half a head taller. When they parted Hatcher had a better opinion of Lincoln than he had before, but he did all he could to help the southern cause. Hatcher was a brave soldier, a handsome man, and was killed by a Federal bullet at Ball's Bluff.'

The first flash from Confederate Artillery meant the country was now at war. In his response, Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers to put down the rebellion, and he looked to Virginia and her young men to help do the job. On April 17th, five days after the first artillery shot was fired on Fort Sumter and just three days after its evacuation by Union forces, Virginia seceded from the Union. Many Columbian students would leave the College to join the Confederate Army. Later, because the college buildings were nearly empty during the war, the Federal government would use them for badly needed hospital space and barracks.²⁴ Back home at "Maplegrove", Clinton wrote his first letter to Mary Anna Sibert. Through his pen, we have been given a wealth of knowledge, a glimpse into the mind of a twenty-one year old man during the 1860's, the customs of the day, proper etiquette and activities in and around the Loudoun community.

*Miss Mary A. Sibert
Mt. Solon
Augusta Co.
Va.*

May 18th 61

Maplegrove

Miss Mary:

It is with the utmost diffidence that I commence a letter to you so soon after forming your acquaintance without first having asked your permission. But Chum is in Page and I have no correspondent in Augusta to give me news from you; emboldened therefore by having heard you say; first; that when you received a letter from a friend you always answered it, and secondly that you considered me one of your friends, which two propositions combined in the form of a syllogism necessitate the conclusion that you would answer my letter. I have concluded to write, and trust to this very indirect promise. I think the conclusion which I have drawn is clearly demonstrable by any rules of logic from Aristotle to Whitley and hope you will not violate even this indirect promise. I think I heard you say some time ago that you agreed with me in thinking the prevalent prejudice against ladies and gentlemen corresponding with each other, both unreasonable and injurious; and that it was the part of wisdom to disregard it. I hope therefore that although I am asking a great favor of you, you will not consider it too great a one to devote an hour occasionally to writing a letter to me. I own it is hardly fair, for you will have usually have long boring letters to read without either correction or order in the arrangement, while I cannot fail to be very much improved as well as interested by corresponding with one who has gained so young, a literary reputation.

I had the pleasure of meeting your cousins in Luray and spent an hour or two very pleasantly in their company. In Rappahannock I called on a gentleman whom I had met only once before with the intention of staying all night but he insisted so on my remaining longer that I found it impossible to escape for nearly three days. H. B. He had a very pleasant daughter. I stopped then a day in Warrenton and saw two of my lady friends from Washington, both very strong southerners, and several gentlemen in the army from

Alexandria with whom I was acquainted. Of course the time passed pleasantly and I was sorry that as my visit had already been protracted two weeks beyond my first calculation, duty bade me hurry on. I arrived at home on Wednesday about noon much to the joy of Pa & Ma and myself too in fact, for I had been away so long that I was beginning to wish for the quiet pleasures of home once more.

Day before yesterday I went to Leesburg to get me a copy of Gilliam's tactics but could not find one in the place and heard a gentleman say that he bought a week ago the last copy in Richmond so I sent by a friend of mine who is smuggling military stores from Baltimore for the south. I hope the abolitionists will not catch him and I will have my Gilliam by next Thursday previous to that time I shall prosecute as fast as possible the study of Hardee which I shall commence to-day.

I believe Virginia has now nearly as many men in the field as she needs but we are talking here of organizing a company to act at present as a home guard and to be called out when our services are needed. I have had the offer since my return of the captaincy of the militia but have not yet accepted. I think I shall write to Gov. Letcher this morning to know whether he will arm such a company, at once, as I mentioned above and if so commence enrolling at once. Has Mr. Sibert gotten any of his pistols made yet? I want one very much. I can neither beg, buy, borrow, nor steal a colt's revolver now.

I have several letters of several weeks' standing to answer this morning. I hope you will therefore excuse this hurried letter and write very soon a long one in return; to your true friend

Clinton

Direct to J. C. L. Hatcher Purcellville Loudoun Co. Va.

P. S. Please excuse the middle star on the envelope; but it was made with too dull a knife to make the shape and outline very accurate C.²⁵

In his second letter also written from home, he tells of his activities and travels while still at Maplegrove, receiving his mother's consent, his desire to serve Virginia, the loss of Alexandria and his thoughts and feelings about Miss Mary. Although the letters written to Clinton have not been found, his response to Mary tells us of her thoughts on the impending war and his participation.

*May 29th 1861
Maplegrove*

Miss Mary:

Your very, very welcome letter came to hand on the evening of the day before yesterday and deserves my heartiest thanks. I was rejoiced at your punctuality and am endeavoring to imitate your example by writing at the earliest possible hour. I received your letter too late on Monday evening to permit of my answering it that day and yesterday I started to Harper's Ferry about six O'clock and returned about eight or nine last night. So you see

it has been really impossible for me to write sooner. The length of your letter was if possible even more gratifying and though I may not be able, when I am encumbered by military duties, to attempt any successful emulation in that respect, yet I must exhort you in the language of the bible (now don't look so astonished. I read it sometimes) "not to grow weary in well-doing." I have always since my earliest remembrance had an especial admiration for long letters and when I have time am rather fond of writing them. I have at last succeeded in getting Ma's consent to my joining the army and my name is down on the role of a rifle company which will organize tomorrow and will probably be in camp by the first of next week. I am beginning to feel "as savage as a meat axe" and am afraid before I am in the army long, if I am not shot I will get to eating Yankee stake for breakfast.

I must confess I do not think your reasoning on the subject of my going to war, entirely logical. I think now that Virginia is invaded, it is becoming that every true Virginian should shoulder his rifle and march to the rescue. I should have enlisted sooner but disliked to go without the consent of my Parents and now that they have very reluctantly consented I am preparing to hurry on as fast as possible.

I had the pleasure of casting the first vote of my life last Thursday and was happy to give it in so good a cause as that of ratifying the ordinance of Secession. Our county gave 902 majority in favor of the Ordinance. We have several abolitionists here round us but I can't get any one to help me hang them. I wish I could.

Is Chum dead, or has he enlisted in the army? I have only received one short note from him since I came home and if he is not dead he had better be before I see him again.

I spent about four or five hours at Harper's Ferry yesterday. It is almost impossible to find any one you want to see. I tried to find the Augusta Rifles Capt. Grinman, but could not. I had to enquire of about fifty persons before I could even find out where the Cadets were stationed.

You need not have the slightest apprehension of my being disappointed in your letters; if they are anything like the one which I am making a desperate attempt to answer, I would consider myself an ugly fellow with dreadfully poor taste if I did not appreciate them.

You ask me what I think of Carlisle. I think about as well of him as of Scott; he is worse than Seward because a Virginian and a thousand times worse than Lincoln because poor fellow he don't know any better. Nature has not been unusually bountiful to him with regard to brains. By the way the Republicans attempted another of their base stratagems in Alexandria. I heard from my cousin a day or two since, who was in the army there he said that on the morning the city was taken the ships which brought the troops down sent a boat on shore with a flag of truce and gave them until nine O'clock to evacuate the city promising not to enter the place until that time then as soon as the messenger returned they commenced landing and attempted to surprise our troops and take them prisoners. But fortunately they were on the alert and all of them escaped except one Fairfax Company. Such another cowardly and direct breach of faith is not recorded in the history of civilized nations.

I feel unusually dull this morning, but it is useless to tell you that for you must have long since discovered from this disconnected and tiresome letter that I am either, either unusually or usually boring. Tell Miss Ella I was looking at her "ambrotype" last Sunday in church, my cousin admired it very much; indeed I am afraid he will fall in love with it which would certainly be quite unfortunate as she is engaged. (I hope her sister is not). I

will answer your question also. I do very often think of her sister. I have treasured [illeg.] the cockade for though it will not be needed to make me think of you, yet in future years when I am forgotten it will minister consolation by reminding me of the time when once you agreed to accept my friendship and promised sometimes to think of me. But you know the greatest of Poets has said "Woman thy vows are traced in sand." Although my letter is not quite so long as yours I must close, as I have to make preparations for leaving. By the time you write again I shall probably be in camp in Leesburg so please direct to that place, and write me another long letter very soon. I hope you will. I am conscious of not being exceedingly deserving but hope you will be accommodating nevertheless.

*I am most truly, Your sincere friend,
Clinton²⁶*

On May 8th, the 8th Virginia Infantry Regiment was accepted into state service. On June 19th, Captain Grayson's company, the "Blue Mountain Boys", who had enlisted at Bloomfield, became company F, of the 8th Virginia Infantry. The regiment assembled at the old Fair Grounds on the western outskirts of Leesburg, in the general area of where the Loudoun Country Day School on Fairview Street had once stood. It was in the area of the Fair Grounds that the 8th Virginia set up camp, where it would train and drill, when not on duty guarding the Potomac River crossings. These were the duties they performed throughout the entire month of June and into early July, while at this camp.²⁷ Clinton identifies their first camp as "Mason" and one additional reference to Camp Mason has been found. A lone newspaper clipping stated that on August 12th, the Loudoun Cavalry gathered at Camp Mason to draft a "Tribute of Respect" for Cumberland George Orrison who had been killed at Point of Rocks.²⁸ In his letter to Mary dated June 21st, Clinton goes into great detail about life in camp, his hopes of meeting the Yankees and the future uniform of his regiment. He shares his feelings with Mary about those who will not join the army, and he attempts to explore the feelings Mary has for him.

*June 21st 1861
Camp Mason*

Miss Mary:

I received your letter on the evening of the day before yesterday and have been so busy ever since that although it deserved a more speedy answer it has been really impossible for me to write.

We are now as you see from the place of date in camp at Leesburg. Col. Hunton said he would be up in an hour to muster us regularly into service and I have concluded to employ the interval in writing you a hasty epistle. I am sitting flat on the ground with the paper resting on a very rough hand trunk which is the best substitute for an "escritoire" which I have been able to find. The novelty has not yet worn off of this manner of life and although considerably unpleasant I only amuse myself with its hardships and am perfectly satisfied. Last night there was so much noise that I found it impossible to sleep much with a soft pair of boot heels under my head. I think it quite probable that I shall be sergeant of the guard tonight. Our fare is splendid except that the coffee is so hot that it

takes all the skin off of our mouths, the butter (what little we get) is old enough to vote, the beef is tougher than sole leather and the bread is hard and stale. I knew before I came into camp exactly what I would be compelled to endure and as it is in the cause of my country I am determined not to become dissatisfied and shall do all I can to keep others in good spirits. We expect a regiment here from the Junction to-day as there are 1500 Yankees just across the river. Since I last wrote to you I have been riding nearly all the time trying to get more recruits for our company. Last Monday night I rode all night and until Noon on Tuesday I do hope the Yankees will cross the river soon for they will keep us here for some time drilling and unless the Abolitionists come over to us we will not get a shot at them. My gun has a splendid bayonet and I hope to have an opportunity to use it.

You seem to think that your writing on the affairs of our nation may be disagreeable to me. I can assure you it is not. I like to hear your opinions on every subject. Indeed among the many things which I have calculated upon to wear off the gloom of a monotonous military, or rather camp, life your letters so long and interesting have been put down for no small share.

You ask about our uniform it is to be grey, trimmed entirely with blue. Our company is as I believe I told you called the "Blue Mountain Boys".

As I have been going round recruiting, the cowardice of some of our Virginia boys has made me wish I could swing them all to a limb. Any man who would not risk his life to defend such ladies as we have in the Old Dominion does not deserve the name of a Virginian.

I am truly glad to hear that I am not yet forgotten by you; and I can assure you that in my waking dreams a form seen but three times often passes before my gaze.

I am really sorry you did not answer my other question and I shall insist on a fulfillment of your promise to answer it in your next. I was told several times while I was in Augusta that you were a noted flirt and universally considered perfectly heartless; yet such reports sometimes arise without much foundation and I hope this is false.

I do really think, as you say, candidly that some ladies "can be trusted" but I do not know that fact, Most that I have had an opportunity to know well were only to be trusted sometimes. And constancy is certainly the exception and far from being anything like the general rule.

I should like very much to see that love letter of which you spoke and will send it to me will promise to look "as solemn as a mule" (to use a favorite simile of a friend of mine now at Pensacola) all the time I am reading it.

I never had the pleasure of receiving a real love letter in my life and have seldom seen the "rare airs".

I received a long letter from Chum last week, after a terribly long silence. He spoke of returning to Augusta and joining the army. I wish he would come and join us.

The drum has just beaten "to arms" and I must close this letter which I am almost ashamed to send. But I hope you will make the necessary allowances and write me a long answer very soon.

I remain as ever, most truly your sincere friend
Clinton²⁹

The next letter to Mary, dated July 7th, speaks more to Clinton's philosophy on the female gender. He talks about the discomforts of life in camp and his desire to go to battle. He tells Miss Mary of an accident that he has had and of his being sick a couple days. He shares his thoughts on Virginians who chose to fight for the Union and his strategy on how to fight the war.

July 7th 61
Camp Mason

Dear Miss Mary:

About a week ago I stuck a bowie knife about an inch into my leg; the muscles have been so sore ever since as to render me unfit for duty. Yesterday I was sick all day, and you may judge of the feelings of pleasure and gratitude with which I received and perused your long, kind letter which came to hand about an hour ago.

I am now sitting flat on the ground under the shade of a large oak to the rear of our camp with a sentinel pacing backwards & forwards in front of me; and the paper resting on a box lid in my lap, trying in some degree to requite your kindness or at least by displaying proper feelings of gratitude to encourage you, that you may "not grow weary in well doing". There what a sentence! Please don't criticize my letters amidst the bustle and confusion of a camp it is impossible to compose, composedly & indeed it is very difficult for me to write at all.

I received a letter from Chum last night which I answered very hastily writing him six pages of this size.

I also wrote a six page letter this morning to a friend of mine in Washington who I hear wants to get over to join us. I directed him if he thought there was danger of his letter being opened to answer me in cipher. I can read any cipher I have ever yet seen without the key if it is divided into words.

But notwithstanding that I have written so much as to be already tired I will try and write you as long a letter as you will have the patience to read.

We are now stationed two miles from Leesburg, with no straw in our tents or even in our bed ticks and have to use bricks for pillows, and I have had to sleep one night with a pair of wet boots on. I had of course quite a sore throat the next morning but am over it now. I have been quite unwell yesterday and to-day, but if there should be any prospect for a fight I will be well in ten minutes. Some of our men have gone over to Maryland this morning to reconnoiter. If I had been well enough to march I could have gone along. I will be well enough in a few days any way. We are only a mile or two from the river and can hear the Federal drums beat every morning. I hope we will soon be still nearer. I was just starting to town a few days ago when news came that the enemy were crossing, we were ordered to our arms, sick and well, and received twenty rounds of cartridges but the dispatch was false and we were all disappointed.

I expect your brother has met the enemy before this, I wish I was up there. I am so much afraid we will be kept here idly in our camp while others do the fighting. I would give all

that I possess for the pleasure of marching into Washington at the point of a bayonet. I have just heard of one of my classmates, a Virginian by birth who is now in Lincoln's army. If I see him once a ball from my musket or revolver will settle it if I am not killed first. Nothing would do me so much good as to take the life of such a traitor to his State. I have been very anxious to get down to the river ever since I heard that the Washington Volunteers were stationed near us. I want to meet them more than the misguided fanatics who have been taught from infancy to hate the very name of a Southerner. We have an artillerist here who has been all through their camp and gotten off safely every time. He says he can whip any six men in Lincoln's army.

Well I will bore you no more with military subjects, as I can find others more interesting to myself.

When I was told that you were a flirt I thought none the less of you for I have long since found out that the world seldom judges correctly, and learned to form opinions always for myself. When I form a favorable opinion of any one, what I hear to their detriment, "passes by me as the idle wind which I respect not". I am sometimes rather impulsive and form opinions and attachments without taking the time or pains to examine the reasons for them, yet in the end the opinions seldom prove untrue or the attachments of short duration.

Excuse one more political allusion. You asked if I thought the South should take Washington. In my humble opinion the Confederate Army should march into Maryland as soon as possible as long as we act only on the defensive we cannot compel them to grant us a peace. If Maryland sympathizes with us she would wish us to march in and relieve her of the Northern robbers, she cannot be neutral now and if she sympathizes with the North and belongs to the United States, that power has made war on us and we have a right to invade any portion of her territory. If we should attack Washington in all human probability they would destroy the public property there and leave one thing less in the way of a settlement. We must whip them before they will do us justice.

It makes not the slightest difference whether you tell Chum of our Correspondence or not; he is a friend whom I would trust to any extent and I believe is a firm friend of yours. I do wish he was over here in our company.

The persons who told me you were a flirt had no idea I am sure of slandering you, but of course I could not mention their names, as they did not give me the privilege. But that is your reputation all through Augusta.

The reason of my thinking the ladies changeable and deceptive is not that I have been flirted with or even trifled with but I have been so deceived in ladies characters by judging them from their parlor manners and besides I have been intimately acquainted with so many and known how often they changed their minds, that now I am perfectly convinced that inconstancy is the general rule; while candor and constancy are rare exceptions. Yet I am thankful that there are such glorious exceptions.

I had almost forgotten to apologize for writing to you on Sunday, but here we have no Sunday or day of rest except when it rains, all days are alike here. We have no preaching and the men are suffered to go to Church only half a dozen at a time.

But to return to the former subject, I have never yet been in love. I am afraid to bestow my affections on any lady for fear she may not be willing to requite them with an undivided heart. I might give you a description of the lady I admire most, but fear to do

so. Besides I have tried your patience sufficiently already and must bid you adieu for a week. I do wish I could see you once more, it is so much better than having to write. Hoping that you will continue to answer as punctually as formerly.

*I remain as ever most sincerely, your firm friend,
Clinton³⁰*

In this, his fifth letter to Miss Mary, written July 27th, Clinton gives his brief account of the First Battle of Manassas and the role the 8th Virginia Infantry played in this Confederate Victory. His description appears to be an accurate account of the 8th Virginia's activities at the battle when compared with other historical reference sources. Ordered back to Leesburg, leaving Manassas on the 24th, at the end of two full days of marching, Colonel Hunton had this to say, "*We stopped on the south side of Goose Creek at Ball's Mill. I named my camp 'Camp Berkeley'. This was in compliment of four brothers*"³¹ Writing from Camp Berkeley, Clinton again expresses his desire to fight the Yankees, bayonet in hand and once again hints to Mary about his feelings for her.

*July 27th 1861
Camp Berkeley*

Dear Miss Mary:

Your, as usually, most welcome letter was received on yesterday morning and read with unusual pleasure. We had just returned the evening before from Manassas Junction, tired and low spirited, so your letter was quite useful to cheer me up. On Thursday before last we left our camp near Leesburg and marched down within about six miles of the Junction; here we were kept in a continual state of alarm, we had to stand or march in the sun all day and then sleep on our arms all night without either tents or even blankets and were usually aroused several times during the night by alarms and compelled to stand in line of battle until our scouts could be thrown out and ascertain that no enemy were near. We had about half enough of stale bread & cold fat meat to eat not near half enough muddy water to drink. We had become so accustomed to false alarms that on Sunday when they drew us up in line of battle behind a hill, I had not the slightest idea that we would get a sight of the enemy. About nine O'clock we were formed as a reserve behind some small trees and underbrush which served to hide us without offering us the least protection. Shot, shell and minnie balls fell round us like hail but still we were kept in line of battle exposed to their fire without being able to return a shot until about one O'clock when Gen. Beauregard rode up. We gave him three good hearty cheers and then turning to Col. Hunton he said "Colonel had your regiment without a moments delay to the thickest part of the battle." We came through the woods in dreadful disorder on account of the density of the undergrowth, but as we emerged we gave a shout, so loud and terrific that the two regiments of Yankees who had been placed there to oppose us broke and ran. We then marched to the relief of the extreme left wing. As we came up we met the South Carolinians and Alabamians in full retreat, they said that the day was lost

and that all our men were in confusion and retreating, but still we marched steadily on notwithstanding the storm of grape, canister, shell and minnie balls which were flying round; when within about three or four hundred yards of the enemies right wing we halted and took the enemies fire without being able to return a shot until the South Carolinians and Alabamians formed behind us, then we charged with a shout. The enemy seeing men charging with such alacrity when they thought their victory complete and our ranks in remediless confusion became frightened and ran away. We took the house which defended their right wing and then stormed and captured the battery which had been pouring shell and shot into our ranks, but the enemy fled so soon that the fire which we sent after them did little execution. After the battle was over we started about sunset and marched eight miles to Manassas Junction in quick time before we could get anything to eat or drink. About ten minutes before we were ordered into the battle two of our men took all the canteens of the company and started after water, they were unable on their return to find our regiment, so we had to fight all day and then march eight miles without any thing either to eat or drink. Our company escaped almost miraculously without even a man hurt, but the left wing of our regiment, behind which an Alabama ensign was carrying his flag, his regiment having all retreated, was cut to pieces dreadfully. Seventeen of the men in one of our companies fell the first fire.

Gen. Beauregard complimented our Regiment very much, thanked our Col. for the gallant conduct of his command and said that we had turned the tide of battle and gained the victory when the South Carolinians and Alabamians were retreating.

I have not attempted to give an account of the battle but only to let you know as briefly as possible something of the part we took in it. I expect even this has wearied you nearly to death by this time and so I will drop that subject. I am so heartily tired of it I know as you can be, for I can't get a crowd of fellows here now to talk of anything else but the battle of Sunday.

My feelings while in the battle were hardly unpleasant. I believe I would soon become fond of the excitement at least I rather hope I shall be in one bayonet charge before I leave the service. Besides wanting to stick my bayonet in a Yankee I wish to see if I can feel as cool when marching on the steel as I did while the balls were whistling round me. I never felt the whole day as if there was a possibility of a ball's striking me. I had a kind of presentiment that I would not be killed.

Please excuse my writing with a lead pencil and putting you to so much trouble to read it but pens and ink have gone out of fashion in camp and are "[unclear: vavae ares]," here. I am very sorry that Chum did not come on and join our company. I want to see him very much. M^e Donald's legion, consisting of some of the bravest and best men in our county left for the neighborhood of Staunton a few days ago to check the advance of the enemy from the west. I don't know where we will go next, but would not be surprised any morning to receive orders to march either to Maryland or Washington "via" Alexandria. But I have already promised to stop talking about the war.

You say you "do not expect I care much whether I have your esteem or not". Indeed you are very much mistaken. I would consider it a misfortune of unusual severity & If I lost that esteem by any misconduct of my own I could never forgive myself for the act. Do not hesitate to write as frank and candid letters as you can, they need no apology. I like your free and open style; but for my part I dare not write half that I think and feel. I am sorry

that our acquaintance has really been so brief and especially that you remember that fact, for my part it seems to me that I have known you almost always. I should be perfectly delighted if the varied fortunes of my ever changing life could once more bring me up at Mt. Solon. I love that sweet little village and more I ---- will not say. I have been interrupted several times for roll calls and drills while writing this hasty letter and now I must close for the nine O'clock drill. Please write me another of your long interesting letters very soon and believe me ever to be your devoted and unchanging friend

Clinton

P. S. I expect to write to Chum to day.³²

The sixth letter written to Miss Mary was also written while at Camp Berkeley. Mostly filled with small talk, this letter does mention the arrival of General Evans and his Brigade of Mississippians to Loudoun County, a couple of whom he is acquainted with from his school days in Washington City. This letter also tells of the theft of his hand gun when he was sick and staying at the Leesburg Hotel.

*Aug 14th 61
Camp Berkeley*

Dear Miss Mary:

I received your very welcome and interesting letter day before yesterday, but I am sure you will excuse this delay for I assure you it was entirely unavoidable. I went to Leesburg on Sunday expecting our regiment to follow the next morning but on account of the rains they were unable to cross the creek. My paper and envelops were all in my knapsack and there were none at all in town for sale. But a few hours ago I again returned to camp and your letter has been the first thing to claim my attention after my arrival. I am really very much obliged to you for writing me such long kind letters; it is such a relief to the monotony of camp life to receive letters from one who writes so well and is so kind a friend as to waste her time in raising the drooping spirits of a soldier.

I think from your letter that you must have misunderstood my allusions to the battle. I was in the fight of Sunday the 21st ult. and it was that of which I spoke. I had not heard that the Augusta troops were in the battle. I thought that all of Gen. Johnson's force arrived too late for the fight. We have all of Gen. Evans Brigade here now consisting of three Mississippi Regiments besides our Virginia one. I expect more force will be sent up here before long and we will be ordered to cross the river and march on to Washington. I hope to dine there at Gautier's soon. Won't you come down? I expected to have made a desperate effort to see you once more about this time if it had not been for the war, but it has broken into all of my calculations.

I have been a little unwell for several days, indeed for about a week. Since I have been

staying at the Hotel in Leesburg some fellow has stolen my pistol. I wish I could only find the man who has it.

I met a Mississippian the other morning in the regiment who had given out on the march, and as he got in the carriage with me to ride I recognized him to be one of Judge Ferry's sons whom I had met at Georgetown college. One of the old Columbian students is also in our brigade from Mississippi. It is so pleasant to meet old acquaintances in that way out in the army.

I am very sorry that Chum did not conclude to come on and join our company, my cousin and I have just had a private tent made for ourselves and would be very happy to share it with him.

I have no very intimate friend in this regiment and would like so much to have Sam's company. But I suppose he is doing more good for his country by manufacturing bombs and if so, I ought not to wish to take him away from that employment. I have not heard from him for a long, long time although I wrote him four pages of foolscap about the time I last wrote to you.

I do wish with all my heart I could have been with you in your ride, besides being fond of horseback riding, I am sure it would have been impossible for me not to have enjoyed myself exceedingly in your company. Indeed, I want to see you very much. I shall be tempted never to spare a Yankee for interfering so much with my plans and arrangements for this summer.

I think my photograph on the "Noble Six" is very good. I would give much to look at one of yours now as good. There is not a single ambrotypist in Loudon now, is not that dreadful? Are there any in Augusta? I have never had a very good ambrotype taken to leave at home even and now if I should get killed it would be unfortunate. I am still compelled to write with a lead pencil and rather a dim one too but I hope you will excuse it without any apology especially as I am endeavoring to write you a long letter. On account of the irregularity of the Virginia mails it is impossible for me to write to you and receive your letters as often as I would wish to, so the only resource is to write long letters every time.

Our company are out on Battalion drill now but I do not feel well enough to be with them; and I prefer writing to you to being out with the numerous ladies who have come here from the adjacent county to look at the dress parade.

The Mississippians have just come out for Battalion drill, their Col. is on horseback, something quite unusual with us. Our Cols. of the infantry always appear on foot. I suppose their Col. is like Napoleon, the present Emperor, who appears much better on horseback than on foot on account of his long body and short limbs.

The men have just been drawing comparisons between the line of battle marching of our regiment and the 13th Mississippian. Our regiment really beats them awfully. In fact we have been drilling over rocks and hills so long that now our men are getting to be quite soldier like.

I expect now that the officers see how well we drill we will be pushed into battle as soon as possible, at least I hope so. I would like to be in one bayonet charge. I can then know whether I kill a Yankee or not. I think I should feel better after I knew that my bayonet had been the means of ridding the earth of one of the cowards.

If you see Sam Forrer soon please tell him to write me a long letter. I received a short note from him about a month ago which is the only time I have heard from him for nearly two months.

I heard yesterday that our forces had crossed into Md at Mathias Point and Aquia Creek and were advancing on Washington; if so I expect we will advance soon in this direction. I hope we will have M^cDonald's Legion with us. I have great faith in their efficiency and wished very much that they had been on hand the day of the battle to follow the Yankees into Washington. They are daring fellows. Please excuse my hurried and disconnected letter and write me another of your long, interesting ones very soon.

*I remain as ever, your truest and most unchanging friend,
Clinton³³*

For the historian, the following letter written by Clinton to Miss Mary is a master piece of words. The details and descriptions, which he gives of his surroundings and life in camp, clearly show life in war torn Loudoun County. This letter speaks about the tortures of Sunday Drill, camp accommodations and artillery action along the Potomac. He tells of the arrival of the Richmond Howitzers and their placement and of an ambrotypist who came to Leesburg during the week of August 18th. It was during this visit that Clinton had his photograph taken, the only known photograph ever made. Today, the location of the original photograph is unknown.

*Aug. 26th
Camp Johnson*

Dear Miss Mary:

Your long and interesting letter was received yesterday evening and perused with the greatest pleasure. Indeed I do owe you many thanks for your punctuality in writing and for your long letters; they assist very much to relieve the monotony of camp life, but even that reason for appreciating them is small when compared with that of cultivating the friendship of one whom I love so much, though a recent acquaintance. But "time is measured by heart throbs not by figures on a dial".

I am sorry that I am compelled to write with a pencil. I know that in going so far it must become very dim, but it is almost impossible to procure ink and pens which will write, so that it has become an almost universal custom in the army--and I believe with soldiers at other places to write with a pencil.

We are now encamped about six miles from Leesburg, eight from home and about half that from the enemy. At present we are living next door to a cornfield and of course live very well, as the owner is a patriotic Southerner and has given us full permission to pull and eat. Besides this my cousin and myself have a nice little box in one corner of our tent which is usually plentifully supplied with provisions from home. So you see as we have a private tent, made at home for us we live quite pleasantly and do not stand so much in

and of your sympathies as you supposed. All this is very fine but I can't tell how long it will last we were ordered this morning to pack our knapsacks and be ready to march at a moment's warning, so by to-morrow we may be down on the river without either tent or bed other than one blanket. We have one company of howitzers attached to our Brigade, two of the pieces are here with our regiment and the other two have been down on the river for the last three days during which time they have fired upwards of a hundred rounds and killed a good many of the Yankees. One field officer was seen to fall dead after a fire on yesterday. When we cannot get provisions from home our fare is so bad that it is almost impossible to eat it unless near starvation. We can get enough grease by skimming the coffee to oil our boots, and the bread is much worse than the coffee. War is unpleasant, we all wish it over, but nevertheless I have seen very few soldiers who will not volunteer again when the time of their enlistment has expired.

You ask if I do not think a just God will forgive those who kill the enemies of the South. I believe we need no forgiveness for ridding the earth of such as in defiance of justice and religion attempt to [illeg.] the chains of slavery upon our glorious country. I think I could say like Pendleton after pointing his guns, "God have mercy on their sinful souls, and may this volley kill a thousand; fire boys". Indeed I long to begin the march to Washington. Thousands of Marylanders would flock to our standard if once we could cross the river. That ever brave little state has already sent over many to assist in the defense of Virginia's Soil and when fighting in their own land in defense of their homes how many more might we expect to join us. Kentucky alone has [unclear: deceive] me and acted the coward. The degenerate sons have disgraced their illustrious sires; may they soon repent and turn. Tennessee the old "volunteer state" has not changed and the Yankees will find that her sons are as brave now as when in Mexico the retreating [illeg.] formed behind them. But I fear I shall weary even you with writing about the war; few persons would have had the patience to read even this much.

We heard not long since from our Orderly Sergeant, who was taken prisoner in the battle of Manassas, he is confined in the capitol and treaded very kindly.

I know you cannot wish more heartily than I do that I could be in Augusta once more. I know, with you for a guide and companion, I could never weary of rambling over that beautiful county. I am devoted to horseback riding and then with such company--it really makes me dissatisfied with camp life to think of its depriving me of such pleasure as that. But Bobby Burns says that "man was made to mourn" and the best way to obviate the necessity of always wearing a long face is to learn to bear disappointments with resignation.

I received a letter from Chum a day or two after I last wrote to you and wrote him a long one in return.

The evening you last wrote I was not on duty. I do not remember the dreams of that night but I can assure you that among my sleeping and waking fancies no form, oftener ads joy to the picture, than that of a lady in Mt. Solon. Two nights after you wrote I was on duty. I was very unwell and it was a dark, rainy night. No soft moon smiled on me, as I relieved the weary sentinels, to remind me of an absent dear one; but the dismal pattering of the rain accorded with the dull aching of my head and the despondency of my spirits. Then I could hardly believe any one cared for me, even now I cannot imagine any one dreaming of me.

You say that "you would freely die to save the life of one soldier". Who is that happy one? I will not tell. Confide in me. Does Georgia number him among her brave sons? From wherever he may hail he is the most fortunate of men. There is the drum for Battalion drill and Dress Parade so you must excuse me for two hours.

Well Dress Parade is over at last and although supper is ready, it has not enough attraction to make me postpone any longer the conclusion of my little "chat" with you. The Battalion Drill is the hardest thing we have here, and as left guide of the company I have to notice all the time as the Major has an especial spite against me and is always trying to find some fault if possible. One of my great objections to camp life is the total disregard of Sunday. In fact our Sunday drills are generally the hardest for then we have so many visitors that the officers try to show off and nearly kill us in the attempt. You speak of the difference between Northern and Southern treatment of private citizens. This is especially marked in our Regiment, we are encamped at present in a union neighborhood, where most of the inhabitants are abolitionists and yet although secessionists have been robbed and driven from their homes only a few miles from here we take not a cent's worth without offering the cash for it.

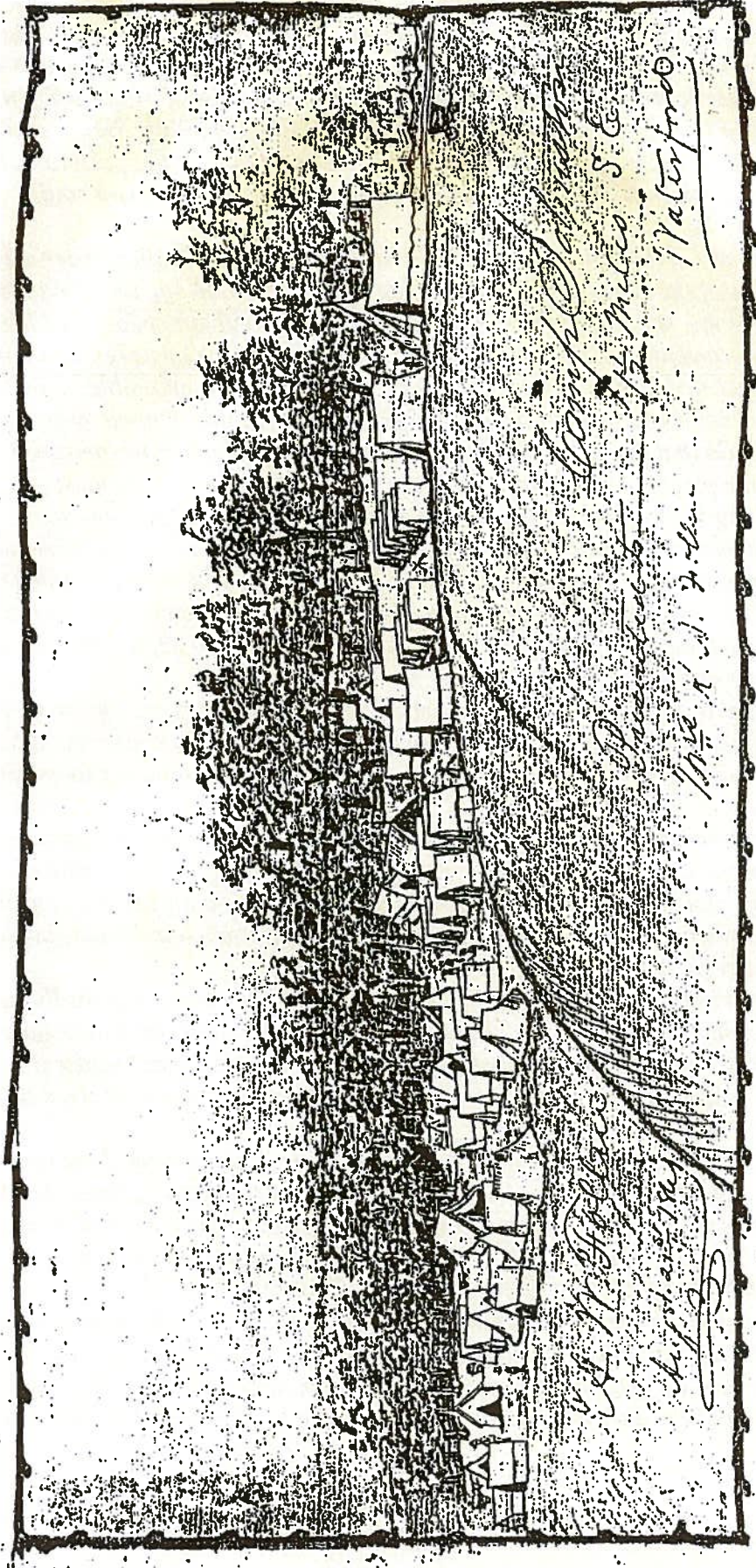
I shall write to you as often as possible that is if I do not think I could weary you. And please remember at the same time that nothing can give me greater pleasure than receiving your kind long letters as frequently as possible. An ambrotypist came to Leesburg last week and I was able to get a picture to leave with Ma if I am killed. I have been wishing for some time to get a good one for her and although this is not very good it will serve to recall to her mind how I looked as a soldier. Now you see I have written you the longest letter I have mailed for a long time and written punctually too, So you will greatly oblige me by following my good example.

*And believe me ever to be your most devoted and unchanging friend,
Clinton ³⁴*

There is little military or community news in the eighth letter that Clinton writes to Miss Mary. He does speak briefly about tightening conditions in camp and about his thoughts and desires to march on Maryland and Washington in hopes of finding "several renegade southerners". However, the majority of this letter is devoted to his growing love for his pen pal, Miss Mary Sibert.

*Sept. 13th 1861
Camp Johnson*

*Dear Miss Mary,
I have been absent from camp for nearly two weeks on business for the company and on my return yesterday morning found one of your long, interesting letters awaiting me. I do not know how you can ever doubt that they are acceptable to me. I may sometimes fail to answer in a manner which will show the appreciation of them which I really feel but the fault would be in myself did I not appreciate them most highly. I had heard of your*



Camp Johnston, located one and one half miles southeast of Waterford, in Loudoun County, Virginia as seen through the eyes of 2nd Lieutenant Arthur W. Follin, Co. H, 8th Va. Infantry and as described by Clinton in his letter dated August 26th, 1861. Drawn by Lt. Follin on August 21st, just 45 days before his death on October 4th, 1861 from typhoid fever while at home on furlough and presented to Mrs. K.A. Follin.³⁵ One of the tents in this drawing is the specially made tent for Thomas and Clinton Hatcher that he mentions in the same letter. From the research papers of John E. Divine, courtesy John W. Rowles, Gladstone, Virginia.

intelligence and many merits before I ever saw you and though my expectations were high they were not at all disappointed when I knew you. I hate flattery above all things and rarely compliment any one no matter how much they may deserve it for fear that they may misunderstand me, but I think you know me too well to think that I would stoop to flattery and therefore I have ventured to express my thoughts so candidly. Please don't misunderstand me. I felt quite complimented at your missing a ride on the Lake to write to me and can assure you that your letters always prove as acceptable as you could possibly wish them to be.

I am glad to hear that you think of me and I can assure you that it will often cheer me amidst the hardships of the camp. I can never be happy without someone to sympathize with me and care for me, some congenial spirit that I can love with an ardor of which less impulsive temperaments can never conceive. You are very much mistaken about my enjoying myself better here than I would in Augusta, that would be impossible; many of the fairest castles which I had built in the air and there are few, indeed none over which I mourn so much as I do that my visit to Mount Solon must be indefinitely postponed. I really envy Chum the pleasure he enjoys of seeing you even occasionally. It must necessarily be so long before I can see you again that perhaps before that time some more fortunate one may before that, have secured your heart and what is worse because more hopeless have secured your hand. But you are tired and may be even disgusted with this [unclear: strain]. I was at Warrenton among other places last [unclear: week] and as that brought me nearer you I could hardly resist the temptation to neglect the business on which I had come and go on to Augusta.

Do not think from the tone of my letters that I am low spirited, far from it. I made up my mind when I joined the army that the only way for me to survive the [unclear: campaign] was to be always lively. I keep busy all the time and do not suffer myself ever to get the blues.

The camp laws are unusually strict now, we cannot pass the sentinels at all without a written permit from the Col. One of our men was arrested yesterday within a mile of camp by the cavalry and taken to headquarters, so you see we are confined very strictly. Then we can't get anything to read here. You can't imagine how much it delights me to get a long sweet letter from some valued friend.

I hope we will march into Maryland soon. I want to be doing something besides living on stale bread and tough meat and drilling all the time; besides we will need winter quarters before long and I had rather winter in Washington than in any other place under the sun. I want too to get a shot at several renegade southerners I know there; one of them an old class-mate of mine.

We have plenty of peaches here now but unfortunately can't get any cream. I ate nearly enough peaches & cream to kill [illeg.] yesterday morning before leaving home. By the way one of the Mississippians died at our house last Sunday from the effects of eating too much dinner. I have no fear of being killed in that way. I ate twenty one peaches day before yesterday while I was driving three miles. N. B. I hooked them.

I do not think it selfish to desire the undivided love of one, we are exactly alike in that respect; few persons are capable of bestowing such affection as I would prize and if I could only gain the love on one I would bestow on her such affection as few have ever even imagined. But in these days of dissimulation and patience falling in love or rather

loving (which is something more substantial) is a dangerous step. Such affection bestowed upon a flirt will render the bestower miserable for his whole future life. How much would I have rejoiced to have been your companion in that boat ride, for though inexperienced in nautical affairs, I could have aided perhaps with the strength of my arm and then I know with such company I could not but enjoy a boat ride even of infinite length. I cannot but hope that when this war is past we may yet sail on the lake together and freely confide in each other our thoughts on the past and our plans for the future. But I fear I have already said too much and would try to change the subject to someone which might suit your taste more but that the tapping of the drum for Battalion drill admonishes me to close.

I know you will excuse all the many imperfections of this hasty epistle and write me a long letter very soon; a frank kind letter which will cheer my weary hours with many thanks for past kindnesses and as many hopes for like favors in the future. I remain as ever, most devotedly and unchangingly,

*Your truest friend,
Clinton³⁶*

Again, in this, the ninth letter written to Mary Sibert, Clinton talks little of military or community news. He mentions briefly a search for Federal troops reportedly on the Virginia side of the river and of a small exchange of gun shots between members of one company and the enemy back and forth across the river. Had there been doubts in Mary's mind at any time as to Clinton's love for her, this letter would have laid them all to rest.

*Sept 24th 1861
Camp Johnson*

Dear Miss Mary:

Your very long and interesting letter arrived yesterday evening and was perused with the greatest pleasure. I have several correspondents but no other, who can spare the time rather or has the inclination to write me such long and interesting epistles. You need not fear that I ever can become wearied with a correspondence which gives me so much pleasure without being the slightest inconvenience, for I do not consider it a trouble to write to you no matter how often a letter may be due you. My actions also prove this for I think I always answer your letters at the earliest possible moment after receiving them. Camp is rather duller than usual this week. Last Friday night the pickets brought in the report that several hundred Yanks had crossed the river and were encamped within about eight miles of this place; we were aroused about two O'clock and two hundred of us marched off in search of them. We walked about eighteen miles; half of it in the rain and saw not a trace of the federals. We have orders now to have our knapsacks packed and be ready to march at a moment's warning; but I think it quite probable that we will be left to protect Loudon for some time yet.

I hope we will not be left behind when the attack is made on Washington, for I would not miss marching in there for anything in the world, but I had rather remain here until they are ready to commence fighting at once. My cousin and I went on a pear-stealing expedition yesterday evening and managed to get about half a bushel, so green that you can hardly keep from whistling after eating one or two. But anything is good in camp. Oh! How I wish you could have wings if you would favor the 8th Regiment with a visit, of all my dear friends there is none, I would welcome with such pure, heartfelt joy, none in whose company the hours would pass so delightfully, as a fair inhabitant of Mount Solon. I would give so much to be in your company now even for a short time; to see you and freely tell all I think and feel. I fear to write all; to tell you how the image of one seen but three times, has lingered round my waking fancies, added sweetness to my dreams, and driven away the gloom which would inevitably have hung round one leading a life so indolent, and seemingly employed to so little purpose. But I must not proceed. I am almost certain that I possess your friendship and I fear to lose even it, which I prize so much by straining for more. I think I am already tolerably well acquainted with you; you possess a depth of feeling and comprehensiveness of thought of which many persons can form no conception and fortunate, doubly fortunate is he, whose love shall wake a responsive echo in your heart. You misunderstood my letter if you thought I doubted your friendship. I believe that the human race is naturally inconstant and the female portion especially so, but there are many high and noble exceptions to this general rule and I am firmly convinced that you are one. My heart is not so invulnerable, as you think, to Cupid's darts. I like the "free and sociable" way in which you write and although our acquaintance has been short I think we are far from being strangers. But to answer your question: Candidly, I do not think you are a flirt, I hope you are not. I may have "misconstrued your sentiments," but have never thought you capable of "hypocrisy": what I most fear is that I may have misconstrued them in the vain hope that you cared more for me than you really do. How I would enjoy the realization of your picture of the sail on the lake. It would be the happiest moment of my life, to hear the secrets of your heart, all of them. I would bid you love one did I not fear you would think I commanded impossibilities; one who would be willing to devote his life to securing your happiness, and consecrate every physical and mental energy to the accomplishment of your wishes. Indeed I can never become "disgusted with your sentimental strains." I could never tire with reading such letters as yours. [unclear: Yora] or Forrer, one misunderstood my message in his last; your note or rather sentence, in the corner of his letter admitted two constructions and I preferred construing it differently from the way you explained and only asked if I might. There was nothing in it to give offence in any way. I have heard nothing of Hon. John M. Botts for a long time. He is a man I never admired much. I always feared his devotion to the interests of the South was very small. I heard when I was in Augusta of the bouquet which you presented him and wondered how you would like the principles, which he was then advocating. The letter which he wrote to President Lincoln was unworthy of a Southerner. I was very sorry to hear of the loss of our North Carolina forts, they were especially valuable to us as a refuge for our privateers, but in the end it may be an advantage to our cause, for it is arousing the brave sons of the old tar state and she will send thousands of volunteers into service now who would otherwise have remained idly at home, thinking the seat of war too far removed for them to offer their services. Did you learn the name of that College friend of mine with

whom your brother met? I have a great many college mates in the army and some very dear friends. I wish paper was not so scarce and I would write to some of them, but it is a precious article in the army. One of our companies went down to the river yesterday and exchanged about a dozen rounds with the enemy. None of our men were hurt and they hope they did some execution among the federals as they were within musket range. I would not mind having a slight wound if I could only be taken to the Mossy Creek hospital. I am sure I should never think of pain if I could have your kind and tender attentions. I envy those soldiers who will be near you and hear your sweet voice speak words of comfort. But I am afraid I shall weary you this time for although I do not write so many pages as you, my mammoth sheet almost makes up the difference, and then my style, interrupted as I am every minute by some of our numerous visitors, is so much more tiresome than your free and natural manner of writing. But I know that you will overlook all my defects. Otherwise my letter should be committed at once to the flames. I have not heard from Chum now for some time, I hope I shall receive another letter soon. Please write me another of your long and interesting letters very soon. I ask no more interesting than your last. Is Miss Bettie Forrer at home now? She is a very nice young lady.

I remain as ever, most devotedly and unchangingly
Your true friend
Clinton³⁷

In the tenth letter, the last existing letter written to Mary Sibert by Clinton, he talks about the rumored report of moving the Eighth Virginia Regiment into Longstreet's Brigade. As well, he told Mary of the brigade's reputation and his desire to go and fight. More stirring, than his description of military maneuvers going on around him, are the chosen words he uses to describe his growing love for her. With the skill of an accomplished poet and pen in hand, Clinton professes his love to Mary, each word carefully chosen and softly spoken from his heart. In closing, he asks Mary, "tell me all, even the worst." His question posed, could she ever love him, "impatiently" he would wait for her reply!

October 8th 1861
Camp Johnson

Dear Miss Mary:

Your very welcome letter was received from the courier yesterday and although he may have borne dispatches of more importance to the Southern Confederacy, yet I am certain that none contained half so much to interest the recipients as did that fair missive. I was afraid at first that you would finally grow weary of writing such long letters to one who could offer so poor a return for them and it rejoices me exceedingly every time I receive another practical assurance that such is not, yet at least, the case.

It is currently reported here that we are soon to be attached to Longstreet's Brigade, which you know is in the very vanguard of our army. They have been down nearly to Alexandria and are still the advanced Brigade. If I was certain that a battle would take place very soon I would like very much for the "eighth" to be placed under Longstreet as he is a brave man and will be one of the first to commence fighting, but if we are only to be wearied out with marching and picket duty I had much rather remain here in Loudon until we cross into Maryland. The news from Jno. is glorious and if we could only get over into Maryland, Beauregard might soon dictate his terms of peace with his cannons leveled at Philadelphia. For my part I should like Boston once to hear the roar of our artillery, it would tame the fiery spirits of some fanatical leaders. But I am tired of writing on a subject which I hear discussed so incessantly therefore I will change the current to a theme which interests me infinitely more than all else on earth your own dear (pardon me) self

You bid me write all I feel, yet I cannot summon courage to tell what I have never told before. I fear--everything. Yet I have already told you in effect all I would say; my last letter must have conveyed all to your mind; Can you bid me hope? I know I have no right to infer anything from what you have said previous to this; it is true you have expressed friendship for me but friendship is cold and formal, and I fear you can give nothing more. Oh! If I could only hold your hand and look into those eyes which have lit the darkest hours of our separation you could then no longer doubt with what feelings I regard you, you would then know how much I love. I confess I have dared to hope, from the free and confiding style of your letters that perhaps you could reciprocate my affections, but if I have misconstrued your manner and from false premises formed wrong conclusions please do not blame me, my wishes may have biased my judgment, but if so I deserve sympathy rather than censure. I shall in that event try to love you more as a sister, and be a friend to the one, who more fortunate than myself, shall gain your hand and priceless love. So far life has been to me a happy dream my wishes have been realized, I have succeeded in my undertakings and fortune has smiled upon me. In school and college I never thought of failing and thought the highest rank only worthy my exertions, but everyone must learn to bear disappointments, and if I must endure this, although the sorest of my life, I will try to nerve myself for the sad task. Being alone in the world, having no sister in whom to confide and upon whom to lavish the tender affections of my nature, and no brother whose helping hand could smooth the path of life, I have always longed for someone to love, to trust with every secret of my heart one who would seem almost a part of my existence. Although not usually considered sentimental, I do not think love to be a fairy legend of the Poet's brain, but a powerful, enduring passion which binds the heart to that of another, firmly and forever. Such is the love I would offer. Can you receive and requite it? You ask who it is I would [unclear: bide] you love and encourage me with the assurance that you "could not be so cruel as to deny him all the deep devotion of your fond heart." But you have just said the one you love must be "embellished with the charms of refinement nobleness and goodness." Oh! that the one of whom I spoke could pass that hard ordeal, then it is I, I would bid you love but I feel that the aspirant for that greatest of all earthly prizes if weighed in the balance would be found wanting. I am certain you have long ago become weary of the subject about which I have been writing, and which my inexperienced pen has rendered so uninteresting. It is indeed a novel undertaking with me to describe the secret attractions and impulses of my

heart, feelings never before experienced. But I know you will make sufficient apologies to your own mind for a letter which is from the heart and not the intellect. Please do not neglect to answer all these things in your next for you have no idea how eagerly and impatiently I shall await an answer. You need not fear of wearying me no matter how much you may write on that subject or indeed on any other. The greatest pleasure of my life is in the free and unrestrained communion with kindred spirits, and thoughts and feelings are always more welcome, whose sympathizing emotions are fare dearer than all on earth besides.

Oh! If I could only be free once more and go to the spot, to which my thoughts ever tend, I could be supremely happy, now I cannot help like Moore's lover sighing for the placid "Lake, and the light canoe of my dear". To be your companion in those boat rides and mountain strolls, to be your escort when you ride and sit beside you when no one else is near and tell you all I feel, all the depth of my affection for you, that would be the ultimatum of happiness, my imagination can paint nothing which nearer realizes my idea of the "Sumum bonum", the greatest good of all on earth.

But I must close, I have already wearied you I fear and must not try your patience too far. Please write to me at once a long, confiding letter; tell me all, even the worst. I shall wait so impatiently for your next letter, but I know you will be punctual, you always are.

*Please think sometimes of one who always remembers you, and most truly your devoted,
Clinton*³⁸

It is doubtful that Clinton ever received the answer he so "impatiently" awaited. On the morning of October 21st, Clinton and his regiment went into action along the bluffs that over looked the Potomac River, just two miles northeast of Leesburg. In an all-day struggle, they fought to rid Virginia's soil of an invading army. Back and forth the struggle ensued until the men of the Eighth began to run dangerously low on ammunition. As late afternoon began to yield to early evening, Colonel Hunton gathered up and re-distributed one round of ammunition to each man.

In what would prove to be the beginning phase of the last and final Confederate charge that day, soldiers of the Bloody 8th, with bayonet's fixed, charged the center of the field. Hatcher gripping the flagstaff tightly, raised the colors and with a defiant shout upon his lips, "Come on Boys, let's give them one more charge!"³⁹ led this portion of the human wave that drove the already faltering Union forces over the rim of the bluff. At this very moment, a Union counterattack, organized and led by Captain William Bartlett of the 20th Massachusetts was also heading up the rise to the top of the bluff. In a letter to his mother, Capt. Bartlett later wrote,

"I called for Company I for one last rally. Everyman that was left sprang forward and also about six men (all who were left) of Captain Dreher's company and ten men of Company H under Lieutenant Hallowell, all of whom followed me up the rise. As we reached the top, I found Little [Lt. Abbott] by my side. We came upon two fresh companies of the enemy which had just come out of the woods; they had their flag with them. Both sides were so surprised at seeing each other - they at seeing us coming up with this handful of men, we at seeing these two new companies

drawn up in perfect order - that each side forgot to fire. And we stood looking at each other (not a gun being fired) for some twenty seconds, and then they let fly their volley at the same time we did. If bullets had rained before, they came in sheets now. It is surprising that anyone could escape being hit. We were driven back again. I had to order sharply one or two of my brave fellows before they would go back. Everything was lost now.”⁴⁰

This would be the charge that would complete the second dramatic Confederate victory in as many engagements on Virginia soil, a charge that would end with men of the southern army firing down from the top of the bluff as soldiers from the Union Army threw their rifles into the Potomac and swam for their lives.

Such are the victories that soldiers savored for a lifetime. Clinton would have been proud standing atop that bluff, watching the invaders flee from the shores of his beloved Virginia. He would have taken a small measure of satisfaction in knowing he had held true to his duty. True to both his faith and his honor, he had charged the field and led his regiment to victory.

Sadly, Clinton was not standing on the bluff, nor would he ever see the day's final victory. Somewhere amid the roar of battle, the mayhem and confusion, something struck him in the chest, something sudden and hard that drove the sound of battle from his ears. Still clutching his flagstaff, the heroic young man lay dead, a single gunshot through his heart.⁴¹

Local newspapers hurriedly began to set their type, while word spread quickly throughout the county about the great “Confederate Victory.” From trembling lips, the deadly cost of victory also began to circulate as well as rumors and stories of seen and unseen acts of battlefield deeds and heroism. The exact chain of events will never be known. Based upon rituals and customs of the time, it would have occurred to some degree as follows. Sometime late that night, a persistent knock at the door would have awakened Jonah and Adeline, the bad news had arrived. Early the following morning, Jonah would have hitched a team of horses; and he, a close family friend or neighbor and perhaps one slave, would have headed off for Leesburg. Clinton's body, most likely already removed to Leesburg, would have been loaded into Jonah's wagon for the short trip home. Once at home, his body would be bathed and dressed in his finest suit of clothes. As was customary at the time, Clinton would be laid out in the family's parlor or in a bedroom where a twenty-four hour around the clock vigil would be kept. In keeping with all rituals, candles burned throughout the room while flowers were constantly brought in, not only as a gift of remembrance, but to mask the odor of his decaying corpse. Neighbors would arrive with food and offer help and condolences while visiting with the family to pay their last respects. Traditionally the wake would have carried on for up to four days until the funeral and burial service were held at the Ketocin Baptist Church. Clinton's wake may have been shorter in duration than most, due in part to the open chest wound that he received during the battle. An additional consideration for Jonah would be to not allow his wife's birthday, October 26th, to also be the date their only child was laid to rest.

On Tuesday October 22nd a local Leesburg paper, the Washingtonian, went to press with a story by an unknown author entitled, "*Description of the Battle By a Southern Lady.*" In the brief story the author stated that Confederate losses were "about 30 killed" but names only "*Clinton Hatcher and Donahue of Loudoun County and the son of Governor Pettus of Mississippi*". The article was picked up by the Richmond Enquirer, who also ran the story in their paper where it was picked by the New York Times who also published it on page 2 of their November 3rd edition.⁴² Clinton's obituary even appeared in a Tennessee newspaper the week following his death.

On December 24th, Christmas Eve, Thaddeus Hatcher, a merchant from the town of Hamilton and cousin to Clinton Hatcher, sat down and wrote a letter. This letter written to Miss Mary Sibert was in response to a previous correspondence sent by Mary. He tells her of his efforts to have her tribute published in the local paper and promises to send her copies when it is finally done. Finally, he gives her the particulars concerning Clinton's death then promises to plant the rose at her request.

December 24th 1861

Miss Mary A. Sibert

On the 15th of the present month I received a note from you containing a tribute of respect to my much lamented cousin Clinton Hatcher with a request to have it published in one of the Leesburg papers which request I complied with so far as I was able.

I took it to the Editor of the Washingtonian and he gave me a promise to have it published in the next issue of his paper but it failed to appear for reasons entirely unknown to me.

I will see him before the next issue and learn the cause of it being delayed and will forward the copies desired immediately after its appearance.

You asked for particulars concerning his death.

I will give them so far as I know them. He fought like a hero all day with his company and in the evening in making a charge on the enemy he rushed on and became separated from his company and fell in with the Hillsborough Border Guards where he did good service until just at dark when my Brother who fought with him during the day and was then detailed to bring off our captured Mountain Howitzers saw him and Clinton waved his hat to him and cheered him on.

The fight was just closing and Clinton going on to the river bank, when within thirty yards of the bluffs the enemy discharged one more and the last volley when Clinton fell with a ball shot through his heart.

His last words were come on Boys let's give them one more charge. He fought fearlessly and well, but poor fellow, I fear he was too rash.

I sometimes think if he had have had less courage he would not have been killed.

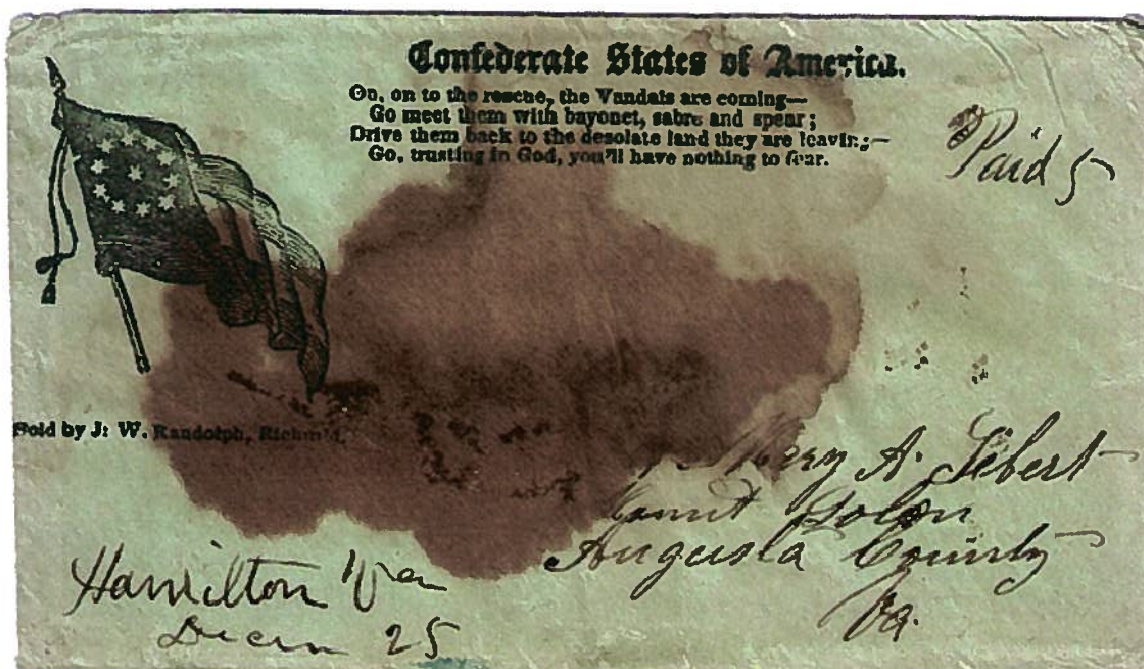
He thought it his duty to defend to the uttermost his native country and in so doing sacrificed his life.

Poor Clinton, He sleeps his last sleep long happy sleep May he rest in peace I will plant the rose as you requested.

Your sympathetic friend

Thaddeus A. Hatcher

P. S. Your letter was directed 8th Reg. Va. Vol. and forwarded to Centerville and as I was not in the service it had to be returned to Leesburg before I received it. My office is Hamilton Loudoun Co. Va.⁴³



This envelope carried the particulars concerning the death of Clinton Hatcher to his sweetheart Mary Anna Sibert back in Mt. Solon, Virginia. The envelope, mailed December 25th, 1861, remains the only known existing Confederate patriotic cover mailed from Hamilton, Va.

Courtesy K. M. Fleming collection

The smoke had not yet settled over the battlefield and already stories and rumors were beginning to spread. Writing to her son in Missouri on November 30th, Susan Q. Curlette of Waverley, near Piedmont Station, (now Delaplane) wrote;

*“ . . . We have had an awful battle at Leesburg – said to be the most brilliant achievement of the South – General Evans, our commander, in which the notorious General Baker was killed by young Hatcher of Loudoun, an only child, but poor fellow, it cost him his brave young life. . . . ”*⁴⁴

For many years after the war, Clinton would continue to receive the credit for the death of Colonel Edward D. Baker. In September 1898, Judge C.C. Cummings formally of the 17th Mississippi Volunteer Infantry wrote the first article to appear on the Battle of Ball’s Bluff for the “Confederate Veteran” magazine. In his article Judge Cummings had this to say regarding the death of Colonel Baker;

*“ . . . soon after landing, while tugging at a field piece to get it into position. Private Hatcher, of Hunton’s Eighth Virginia Regiment, ran out of the line and fired the fatal shot ”*⁴⁵

In the February 1902 issue, T.J. Young, formally of the Eighth Virginia Infantry wrote an article for the “Confederate Veteran” magazine responding to correct a story published in the September 1901 issue. Mr. Young wrote in part;

*“ . . . It was claimed at the time that a young man named Clinton Hatcher, who belonged to the Eighth Virginia, killed Col. Baker. This is as near a correct account as I can give of this battle from memory. . . . ”*⁴⁶

Judge C.C. Cummings also wrote a response to the same article that was published in the February 1902 issue of “Confederate Veteran” magazine. Again he gives Clinton the credit for killing Colonel Baker. Judge Cummings stated in part;

*“ . . . I never heard of Col. Burt’s hand-to-hand conflict with Col. Baker on the Federal side, but the current credit as then given to the slayer of Col. Baker was to Private Hatcher, of Hunton’s Regiment. . . . ”*⁴⁷

Besides Clinton, there are at least two other individuals that have been given credit for killing Colonel Baker. The second person named was Colonel Erasmus R. Burt formally of the 18th Mississippi Infantry. In the article written for the September 1901 issue of “Confederate Veteran” magazine, an unnamed author tells a story as he recalls of the hand-to-hand combat on the battlefield at Ball’s Bluff. This would be the same article that provoked Judge Cummings and T.J. Young to write their response letters in the February 1902 magazine issue. The writer stated;

*“ . . . He (Baker) and Col. Burt had a hand-to-hand conflict on the field of battle, and Col. Burt killed him. . . . ”*⁴⁸

Colonel Elijah V. White, formally of the 35th Battalion of Virginia Cavalry quickly responded to the hand-to-hand conflict story that appeared in the previous month’s issue.

In the November 1901 issue of "Confederate Veteran" magazine, Colonel White stated in his response that,

*" . . . I was as close to Col. Burt when he was mortally wounded as two men can well be on horseback. We were in the immediate rear of his regiment, the Eighteenth Mississippi. . . "*⁴⁹

and later in the same article;

*" . . . He turned to me, as two of his men were taking him from his horse, and said; [Go tell Col. Tennifer (Jenifer) that I am wounded, and will have to leave the field.] . . . "*⁵⁰

Witnessing the destructive volley that struck Colonel Burt and his regiment, knowing the whereabouts of the Colonel before the volley and that he had been removed from the field of battle after the volley was all Elijah White needed to set the record straight. He had no doubts; Colonel Burt had not been the slayer of Colonel Baker.

The third and last individual to receive written credit for the death of Colonel Baker was John Fitzgerald. In the January 1902 issue of "Confederate Veteran" magazine, J.T. Eason, formally of the 17th Mississippi Volunteer Infantry Company I, stated the following;

*" . . . A Federal Colonel, Adjutant Baker, was killed by John Fitzgerald, an Irishman of my company, while carrying a dispatch from Gen. Stone, asking him if he needed more troops. Fitzgerald picked up the envelope containing this inquiry, and after the battle gave it to me, and I, thinking it might be of importance, handed it Col. Featherstone.(sic) Now, when the United States Congress began the investigation of this "disaster" Gen. Stone was under arrest, and this dispatch, I was informed, was sent by Gen. Beauregard under flag of truce to the Federal Commander. . . . "*⁵¹

Being unable to find a physical description of John Fitzgerald leads to many more unanswered questions. How tall was Fitzgerald, what color was his hair, did he have facial hair and how was he dressed that day during the battle? Colonel Baker was killed on the southeastern side of the open field at approximately 4:30 in the afternoon. At the time of Baker's death, the men of the 8th Virginia Infantry were located more to the western - northwestern side of the open field. The 17th Mississippi Infantry was in the battle before the approximate time of Colonel Baker's death and were engaged in heavy fighting on the southeastern, southern and southwestern sides of the open field during the battle. And finally, it was not until sometime between 5:30 and 5:45 in the afternoon before the 8th Virginia Infantry made their bayonet charge. Clinton was unlikely to have been in the area of where Colonel Baker was killed until well beyond the approximate time of Baker's death.

One additional rumor involving Clinton Hatcher surfaced in early 1904. In the January issue of the "Confederate Veteran" magazine, Thomas (T.W.T.) Richards formally of the 8th Virginia Infantry and later Company G, 43rd Battalion of Virginia Cavalry (Mosby's Men) wrote of what he saw during the final minutes of the battle, just shortly before darkness settled in.

*“ . . . It was getting dark. As we stood there Calvert looked down the incline of the bluff and saw a column advancing in line of battle. He called out: “There come the Yankees,” I looked and saw the column, but in their center and front was the tall and unmistakable form of Clinton Hatcher, one of our regiment, and the soldier accredited in one of your former articles with the killing of Col. Baker. He was six feet seven inches tall, and I knew him well, as we were both students at Columbian College, Washington, D.C., when the war began. I said to Calvert: “They are not Yankees, for there is Clinton Hatcher among them.” We continued our examination of the guns, when the advancing column fired at us. I started on a run to my regiment, about two hundred yards back, which I reached and reported what I had seen. We were order forward, and met this Federal column just at the top of the hill, when there was most terrific fighting for a few minutes. The Federals again fell back to the bank of the river. This was the last fight. After the battle I was walking over this part of the field, when I saw the form of a very tall soldier lying on the ground with his face upward. I stooped down, and saw at once that it was Clinton Hatcher. A Mississippian told me that in the early part of the fight he was captured, and that the Federals also captured a tall Virginian, and in the last charge they put himself and this Virginian in front of their column. . . . ”*⁵²

Unbelievably, Mr. Richards’s recollection of the first reported “human shield story” from either side during the Civil War did not receive a single response. However, the letter Mary Anna Sibert received from Thaddeus Hatcher detailing the events leading up to Clinton’s death raise serious doubt to Mr. Richard’s human shield account, in particular;

*“ . . . in the evening in making a charge on the enemy he rushed on and became separated from his company and fell in with the Hillsborough Border Guards where he did good service until just at dark when my Brother who fought with him during the day and was then detailed to bring off our captured Mountain Howitzers saw him and Clinton waved his hat to him and cheered him on ”*⁵³

No matter what conditions might have existed on the battlefield at any given time, Thaddeus’ brother, Thomas, who was Clinton’s first cousin and tent mate, would have recognized him easily. If Clinton waved and yelled at Thomas while leading the final Confederate bayonet charge, then it would have been impossible for him to have been in front of any Union line leading them, moments before his death. Additionally, in the August 1902 issue of “Confederate Veteran” magazine, fifteen months before Thomas Richards “human shield story”, Judge C.C. Cummings formally of the 17th Mississippi Infantry sent in an article for publication, Speaking of the final charge, he writes;

*“ . . . We barely had time to dress our lines in solid array ready with pieces poised for the last advance when there suddenly debouched from an oblique ravine in our front a line of blue, twenty-one in number, headed by a tall, fine looking captain, whose name we found to be Shaw, of the Fifteenth or Twentieth Massachusetts (not remembering as to number), a six footer and a two-hundred-pounder, magnificent-looking man ”*⁵⁴

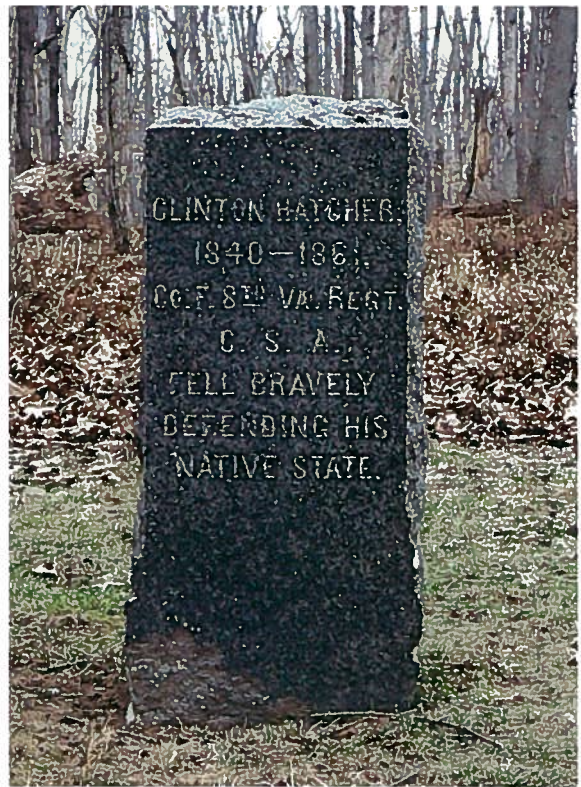
The conclusions to be drawn from this and other written materials that may exist on Clinton and the Battle of Ball’s Bluff are simply this; this early battle was the stage for mass confusion; the noise, the smoke, the blood, the approaching darkness were all contributing factors. It is apparent that there was more than one tall man on the field that day and likely more than one with red or even facial hair. Clinton clearly did not do it all.

Clinton's World Today

Finally, no history of Clinton Hatcher could be complete without the following information. As today's visitor walks the protected grounds of the battlefield, now owned by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, they will come upon the National Cemetery where James Allen and 53 other unknown Union soldiers are buried. Directly to the west of the National Cemetery, stands a lone granite monument bearing the inscription "Clinton Hatcher". For many years visitors have wondered why a single Confederate soldier was buried on the battlefield. The fact is he was never buried there.

"Legend has it"

At the turn of the century, a group of Union veterans, who had served in the 20th Massachusetts Infantry during the battle, returned to the scene of their baptism to battle. Their guide that day was a local Confederate Veteran and a participant of the battle, Colonel Elijah White. Sometime near the end of the tour, they were asked if they would like to place a monument to their fellow comrades on the field at Ball's Bluff, to which they replied, the cemetery was monument enough. When asked about the flag bearer they had seen leading the final charge that fateful day, Colonel White told them of Hatcher's sacrifice. Being moved by his display of courage and honor to duty, upon their return to Massachusetts, the Veterans had a monument stone cut from Massachusetts granite, inscribed and sent to the Veterans of Loudoun to be placed at the spot on which he fell. Such was the spirit of reunification after the American Civil War. Today, the marker stands on the battlefield as a tribute to a brave fallen soldier and the symbol of a nation reunited.⁵⁵



Balls Bluff Battlefield Marker
Leesburg, Virginia

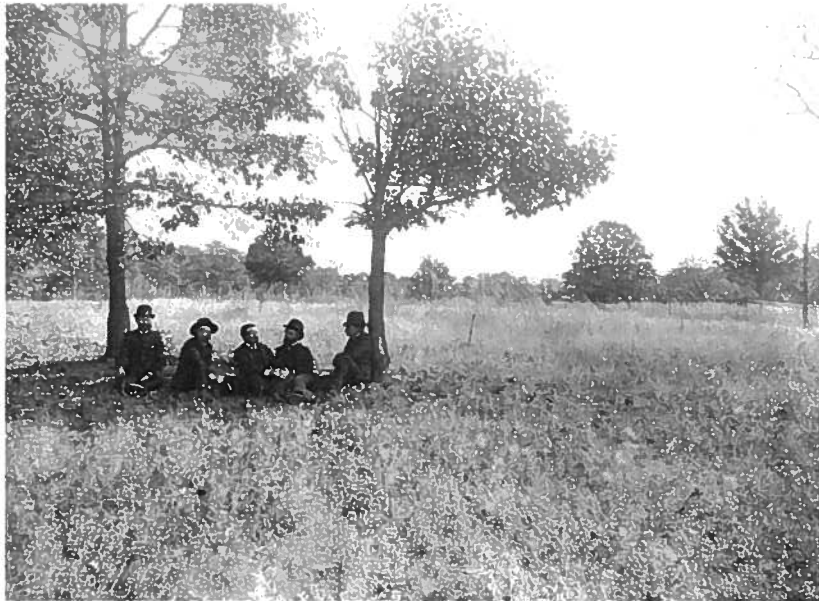
There are those who say this story is just that, a story and that no documentation has been found to prove or disprove how or when the monument appeared. Legend says the monument arrived in Leesburg by rail, addressed to Clinton Hatcher Camp, United Confederate Veterans between the time of the "1900" Elijah White Veterans tour but before the May 28, 1908 Confederate Soldier Monument dedication service on the Courthouse lawn. The Veterans are said to have had the stone installed, most likely by

members of the Sons, but again no records have been found in existing camp notes or minutes. There are few if any, who have studied the battle that believe the monument, marks the spot where Clinton fell. Instead, it is generally agreed that it was set within the originally maintained area that surrounds the cemetery, in the corner closest to the spot where Clinton fell. If the monument had been ordered by the citizens of the Loudoun community, they most likely would have ordered gray granite from Georgia or granite from another southern state. Surely the information on it would have been correct. The existing monument's information is not; Clinton's year of birth was 1839, not the 1840 which has been inscribed on the stone. Perhaps the most telling evidence to the origin of the monument to date is not what has been found in written record, but rather, what has been learned through hands on experience. Much light has been shed on the Hatcher monument from a chance encounter on the battlefield and from written correspondence with two very different individuals, one the owner of a monument restoration company and the other a third generation monument and marker supplying company. Without hesitation both individuals identified the monument's stone type as "Black Quincy Granite" and both advised that it was no longer available.

“ . . . Monument company people have to know how to recognize the different kinds of granite. Reason being they frequently receive orders to match old stones on family plots. Customers often want their new stone to match Granddad's stone “EXACTLY” – same granite, same style monument, same style lettering ” ⁵⁶

“ . . . The company will have no problem matching the same style monument and lettering. However, matching the same kind of granite is another story. Some granite, like “Black Quincy Granite” found only in Quincy, Massachusetts, are no longer available, the vein having run out in the early 1900's. If the old stones are “Black Quincy”, the company will have to explain to the customer that it is no longer available. They'll offer their best and closest substitute instead. . . ” ⁵⁷

If the aging Union Veterans did in fact order and send this granite monument to Loudoun's Confederate Veterans to honor Clinton Hatcher, then it would place a lasting piece of Massachusetts on the field of honor. It now stands guard over 54 resting Union souls on this calm and quite peaceful Battlefield.



Twenty-five years after the battle. Veterans of the Fifteenth Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry revisited the Ball's Bluff battlefield in 1886. Cemetery cap stones are visible in the back ground (right hand side, middle). It is believed that they sent the memorial stone for Clinton Hatcher, for placement on the battlefield, after their 1900 guided tour.

“ . . . Veterans from granite producing states deliberately used the granite from their state. They were putting a piece of their home state on the field to honor their comrades who never came home. Veterans from non-granite producing states, like Ohio, most likely used granite from sister northern states. That way, at least they could say the stone came from the North.

*The Hatcher stone is a piece of Massachusetts. Makes perfect sense it was placed there by Veterans from the 20th and 15th Massachusetts. ”*⁵⁸

Clinton's Alma mater

The Civil War transformed Washington City into a growing urban center. During the war most students left to join the Confederacy, and the college's buildings were used as a hospital and barracks. Walt Whitman was among the war volunteers on the campus. In 1873 Columbian College changed its name to Columbian University and moved to a location at 15th and L Streets. It began offering doctoral degrees and admitted its first women. Columbian University became The George Washington University in 1904 under an agreement with the George Washington Memorial Association. In 1912, the University began the move to its present location in Foggy Bottom.⁵⁹

The United Confederate Veterans, Camp # 8, Loudoun County, Va.

In 1889, Confederate Veterans across the country came together and formed the United Confederate Veterans organization. Each group that gathered together was called a “camp” and was assigned a number by the National Camp in the order in which they joined the National Organization. Each local camp was to choose a name for its camp for faster recognition and as a way of honoring someone or something important to that particular community. The eighth camp to join the National Organization was from Leesburg, Virginia. Without hesitation its members choose to register under the name of Clinton Hatcher Camp in honor of Loudoun's local hero. Camp 8 could have chosen any number of famous names such as Lee, Jackson, Early, Stuart, Mosby, etc, but it did not. It chose to honor Clinton Hatcher for the acts of heroism he displayed at Ball's Bluff.

The United Sons of Confederate Veterans, Camp #21, Loudoun County, Va.

In 1896, male descendants of aging Confederate Veterans joined together to form the Sons of Confederate Veterans. The SCV is the direct heir of the United Confederate Veterans, and the oldest hereditary organization for male descendants of Confederate soldiers. Organized at Richmond, Virginia, the SCV continues to serve as a historical, patriotic, and non-political organization dedicated to ensuring that a true history of the 1861-1865 period is preserved. The Loudoun County camp was the twenty-first camp to join the National Organization; its members also choose, just as their aging fathers had chosen, to honor Clinton Hatcher as their local hero and camp's namesake.

Centennial Remembrance, 1961 – 1965

During the centennial remembrance of the American Civil War, Fitzhugh Turner published an article in the local paper titled, "A hero 100 Years Ago, Lincoln and the Loudoun Youth". In it, Turner retold the story of the back to back contest at the White House reception between Lincoln and Hatcher.⁶⁰ He also gives some basic Hatcher facts and information; one item is incorrect. His story tells of Clinton's fate on the battlefield and his burial there, near the small National Cemetery. Clinton's body was never buried on the battlefield.

A Hero 100 Years Ago

Lincoln and the Loudoun Youth

By Fitzhugh Turner

A hundred years ago last week in friendly fashion, a giant of a Loudoun County young man shook hands at Washington with the nation's new President, Abraham Lincoln. Seven months later, the same Loudoun man died a hero at Ball's Bluff, one of the County's first to be felled by the bullets of Mr. Lincoln's Northern troops.

This bit of Loudoun history came to light this week, when the "Sunday Star" in Washington published excerpts from its files of March 9, 1861. At the White House a few days after his inauguration, President Lincoln (with Mrs. Lincoln) was holding a reception for the public, as was custom in former years, and people showed up by the thousands.

"Mr. Lincoln had occasion to acknowledge himself beaten in height," according to "The Star's" contemporary account. "He noticed a gentleman passing him of such proportions that he stopped him, saying he allowed no one taller than himself to pass him unchallenged. The tall 'un proved to be a Mr. Hatcher from Loudoun County, Va., and he looms up to the extent of 6 feet 7 inches."

The youth who towered three inches above the 6-foot-4-inch Lincoln was Clinton Hatcher,

member of an old Loudoun family. According to Joseph V. Nichols, Loudoun historian and a cousin, Hatcher, at the time of the inauguration, was generally in sympathy with the Loudoun belief that North-South difficulties could be resolved in peace. This would explain his attendance at the White House reception.

Later, when President Lincoln called up troops, Loudoun sentiment generally changed, and young Hatcher enlisted in the Southern cause. He joined the distinguished 8th Virginia Regiment and volunteered as a flag-bearer. Since flag-bearers of any size were prime targets in the War Between the States, and since his height made him stand out anyway, his choice of duty demonstrated considerable courage.

Young Hatcher fell at Ball's Bluff on October 21, 1861, and was buried there. Set apart today from the anonymous Union graves in the national cemetery near Leesburg is his tombstone, pictured above.

When the war was over, and the Southern veterans organized, they remembered Clinton Hatcher's heroism.

The now-inactive Sons of Confederate Veterans in Loudoun County took his name, and for years doings of the Clinton Hatcher Camp were recorded in the local press.

The matter of comparative height was always on President Lincoln's mind. To the embarrassment of officials, according to "The Star," he often got acquainted, ~~sometimes passed~~ by, to stand back to back with him to measure. Mr. Lincoln was fond of a joke about a Frenchman whose legs were so short, he said, that the seat of his trousers wiped out his footprints when he walked in the snow.

Of Clinton Hatcher, Mr. Nichols says there was a similar family saying: "He was so tall he couldn't stand up straight out of doors."

The Lincoln meeting is a legend of Loudoun's Hatcher family today. Thomas J. Hatcher and Miss Caroline Hatcher of Purcellville remember the story as related by their father, the late Joshua Pancoast Hatcher, who was Clinton's cousin. President Lincoln told Clinton Hatcher, they recalled, that he never allowed a taller man to pass him without shaking hands.

Ketocin Baptist Church

Ketocin Baptist Church is nestled along the base of the Short Hill Mountains, on the banks of the South Fork Catoctin Creek. The property is located at the intersection of Alder School Rd. (Rt. 711) and Ketocin Church Rd. (Rt. 716), roughly two miles northwest of Purcellville. The current historic church structure, built in 1854 from fieldstone and handmade brick, stands as a manmade monument to Loudoun's history and its people. Here in a setting just off the beaten path, surrounded by ancient Oaks and tall Pines and nearly untouched by time or man, shadowed by the churches west wall and protected by a fortress of rustic fieldstone, rest the earthy remains of a young Virginia Patriot, his mother and his father.



Nearly unchanged by time, historic Ketocin Baptist Church circa 1854. The Hatcher Family plot is located behind the stonewall to the left.

The Jonah Hatcher Farm

The last living family member in Clinton's immediate family was his father, Jonah. With his death in 1887, the farm passed to Guilford Gregg, a family member from his mother, Adeline's side of the family. This transition is recorded in Will book 3 H, page 235. Guilford Gregg would retain ownership of the property until 1905, when it would be sold to John T. Hirst. This transaction is recorded in book 8 A, page 158. John T. Hirst would retain ownership of the property until 1986, when it would be sold to Wade & Slater. This transaction is recorded in book 908, page 1352. Wade & Slater, most likely land speculators, would retain ownership of the property until 1993, when Wade would become the single owner. This transaction is recorded in book 1227, page 1778. Wade would retain the property until



1999, when he would sell a 40.99 acre portion of the property to the Town of Purcellville. This transaction is recorded in book 1660, page 1492.⁶¹ This purchase would spell the end of the Jonah Hatcher farm. Today, the house and all but one of the outbuildings that were located on the east side of the small creek are gone. The only remaining structural reminder of the homestead is a small stone springhouse. The Town of Purcellville's Basham Simms Waste Water Treatment Facility is now located on that area of the property. The remaining farm structures on the west side of the creek, stand only as neglected ruins, and a record to long ago better days. The once fertile farm fields of the Jonah Hatcher farm are now a part of the massive subdivision known as "Hirst Farm".

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Additional Assistance

Becky J. Fleming, wife and UDC member; for her research and computer skills and her enormous gift of patience: Wynne Saffer, SCV; Research and guidance: Mary Fishback, Thomas Balch Library; research assistance: John W. Rowles, SCV; John Divine's research papers: Jerry Michael and Lea Coryell research assistance:

Manuscripts and Letters

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Otho Coryell (Deceased) Sheffield Monuments, Chagrin Falls, Ohio / Coryell Cemetery Lettering Service, Chagrin Falls, Ohio and Richmond, Virginia. Special thanks to Lea Coryell, Lovettsville, Virginia. Written correspondences from March 27, 2007 through February 20, 2011 from Lea Coryell to the author

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Cover photo: Thomas Clinton Lovett Hatcher, 20 December, 1839 – 21 October 1861. Killed in action at Balls Bluff, Leesburg, Va. - photo taken between 14 August and 26 August, 1861 in Leesburg, Va. / Image taken from United Confederate Veterans poster circa. 1889, Cleaned and reworked by Becky J. Fleming

Hatcher Family Bible – Photo's courtesy Jill Deiss, Cat Tail Run Hand Bookbinding, Winchester, Va. Bible property of Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, Va.

Jonah Hatcher Farm photographs courtesy of Mrs. Jane Hirst Bogle, Purcellville, Virginia.

Camp Johnson drawn by 2nd Lieutenant Arthur W. Follin, Co. H, 8th Virginia Infantry on August 21st, 1861. From the extensive research paper collection of John E. Divine, courtesy John W. Rowles Gladstone, Virginia. (photocopy)

Patriotic Cover / Envelope courtesy K.M. Fleming collection, photograph and computer graphics supplied by Becky J. Fleming, photo taken February 2007

Battlefield Monument photograph taken February 2007 / courtesy Becky J. Fleming

Veterans of the Fifteenth Massachusetts Infantry revisit Ball's Bluff – Photograph taken in 1886, Photo courtesy of George Tabb, Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority

Ketocin Baptist Church, Purcellville, Virginia; Photograph taken 2006 / courtesy Becky J. Fleming

Stone springhouse photograph taken February 2007 / courtesy Becky J. Fleming

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- Thomas Hatcher DOB -1588 – England, DOD Nov. 1683 – Careby Manor, Lincolnshire, England
Married: Catherine Reede – 1612 – Lincolnshire, England - DOB 1595 / England, DOD 1630
(place unknown) (1 Child)
- William Hatcher DOB – 1-14-1613 – England, DOD 4-1-1680 – Henrico, Virginia, USA. Married
Alice Emerton – 1636 - Lincolnshire, England - DOB 1615 / Lincolnshire, England, DOD 1636
Varina, Henrico, Virginia, USA. (Question DOD for Alice Emerton) (0 Children)
Re-married: Marian Newporte – 12-27-1632 – Ogbourne St. George, Wiltshire, England,
DOB 1615 – Lincolnshire, England - DOD 1646 – Turkey Island, Henrico, Virginia,
USA (7 Children) (Birth , Death and Marriage dates this entry questionable)
- Benjamin Hatcher DOB – 1644 - Henrico, Virginia – DOD 4-12-1727 – Henrico, Virginia. Married
Elizabeth Greenhaugh – 6-1680 – Henrico, Virginia – DOB 1645 – Henrico, Virginia. DOD 5-5-1740
Henrico, Virginia. (10 Children)
- William Hatcher DOB – 1704 - Bucks, Pennsylvania, DOD 5-14-1781, Goose Creek, Loudoun, Virginia.
Married Ann Van Sant – 11-13-1727, Burlington, New Jersey. DOB 1705, Dale Henrico, Virginia.
DOD 1779, Loudoun Virginia (8 Children)
- Thomas Hatcher DOB 1-15-1755, Bucks, Pennsylvania. – DOD 6-8-1818, Goose Creek, Loudoun,
Virginia. Married Rebecca Nichols, 4-14-1773, Loudoun, Virginia. DOB 9-14-1749, Goose Creek,
Loudoun, Virginia. DOD 1828, Goose Creek, Loudoun, Virginia. (9 Children)
- Samuel Hatcher DOB 2-18-1776, Goose Creek, Loudoun, Virginia. DOD 8-20-1846, Goose Creek,
Loudoun, Virginia. Married Sarah Reeder 12-8-1802 Goose Creek, Loudoun, Virginia. DOB 1780,
Loudoun Co. Virginia. DOD 8-8-1815, Loudoun Co. Virginia. (5 Children)
- Jonah Hatcher DOB 7-11-1810, Goose Creek, Loudoun, Virginia. DOD 4-1-1887, Loudoun Co. Virginia.
Married Adeline Gregg on 8-22-1833, Loudoun Co. Virginia. DOB 1811, Loudoun, Virginia. DOD
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