

MUSCATINE AND THE CIVIL WAR

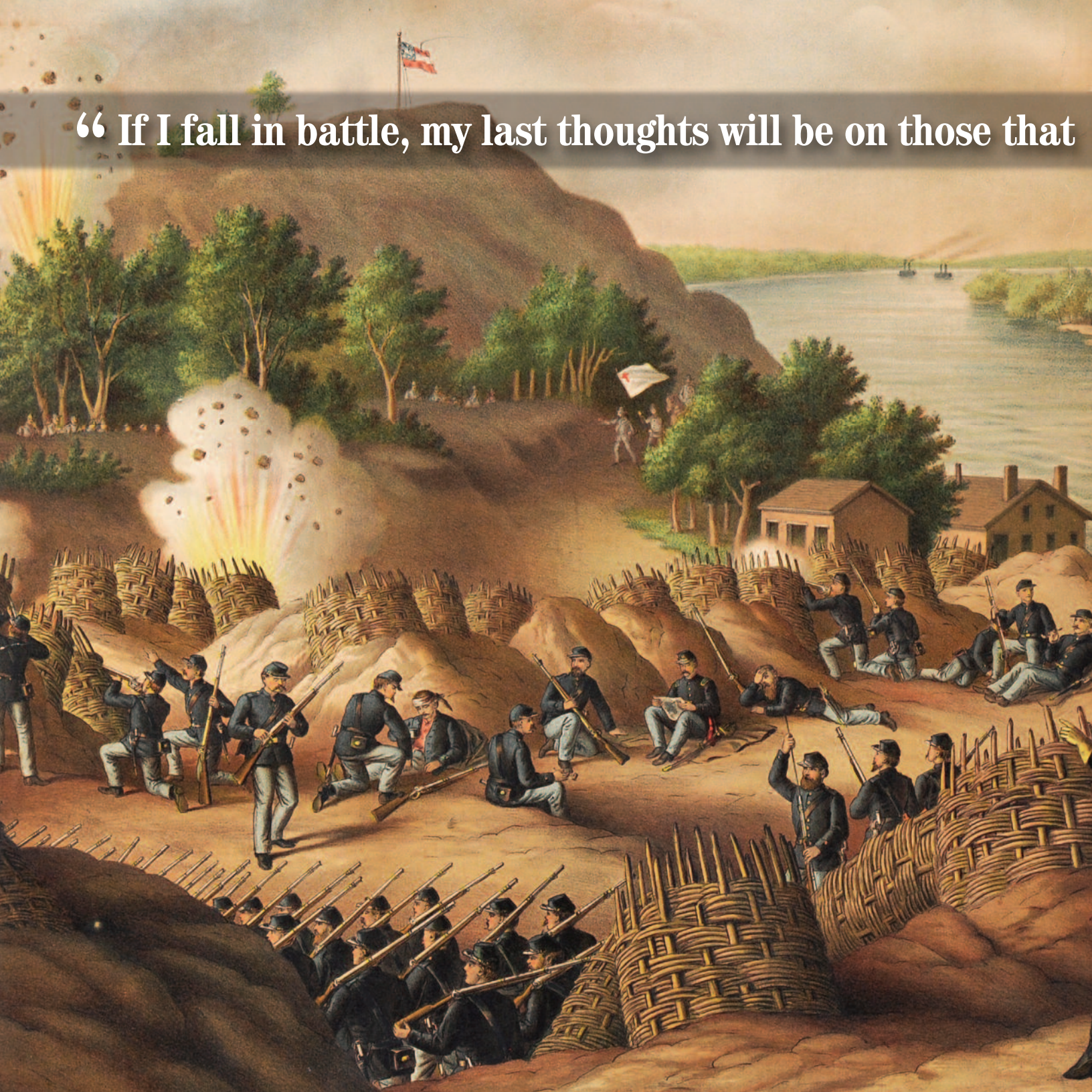


A SESQUICENTENNIAL COMMEMORATION



that they had been driven out with
distance it was about nine o'clock
battled and we there entered to
the terms and make the best we
the night without blankets or any
spread on the ground so we laid down
wet as it was and laid their until we
startled muddling the next morning
back to our camp through the
place nearly up to our knees and I
guy looking out when we
the next day but odd
of march that day we march
we miles towards to the
tent and stayed a couple
day we were ordered to
and we marched about six
out to day is sunday and it
to day whether it will get
not know we are now within
forth and they say eig
t night a part
duded one of their
we back and captured
of prisoners I can say
of prisoners I can say

“If I fall in battle, my last thoughts will be on those that



I have left behind. ”

— Danl J. Parvin



At the onset of the Civil War in 1861 Muscatine men hurried to enlist, the County sending more volunteers to the conflict than any other in the state. That same year, young Shelby Norman of Muscatine was mortally wounded at the Battle of Wilson's Creek, the first Iowan to be killed in action on a Civil War battlefield.

There are few ways to better grasp what occurred during the American Civil War than by living the experience through the words of those who were there. The following pages contain excerpts from several of the 117 letters in the collection of the Muscatine Art Center written by soldier Daniel J. Parvin to his wife and family in Muscatine, Iowa. The letters begin in 1861, shortly after Parvin enlisted as a private in the Union Army, and continue through October 1864 after he was seriously wounded during the siege of Atlanta. There are several additional items relating to Muscatine soldiers Cornelius Cadle III, Charles T. Ruger and Charles Knoblauch. Along with those of Daniel Parvin, their recollections, comments, and memories allow us an intimate glimpse into a soldier's world.

The catalogue is illustrated with artifacts and art work from the Art Center's permanent collection. We gratefully acknowledge the donors of these historically significant object that help to illuminate Muscatine's important role in this epic conflict.

I would like to thank the HNI Charitable Foundation for their generous support for the publication of *Muscatine and the Civil War: A Sesquicentennial Commemoration*. I would also like to recognize the entire staff of the Muscatine Art Center, and in particular Registrar Virginia Cooper, photographers Randy Richmond, Beth Van Zandt and designer Mike Shield for their tireless efforts in creating this catalogue.

— Barbara Christensen
Director, Muscatine Art Center

February 3, 1862

California,

Moniteau County, Missouri

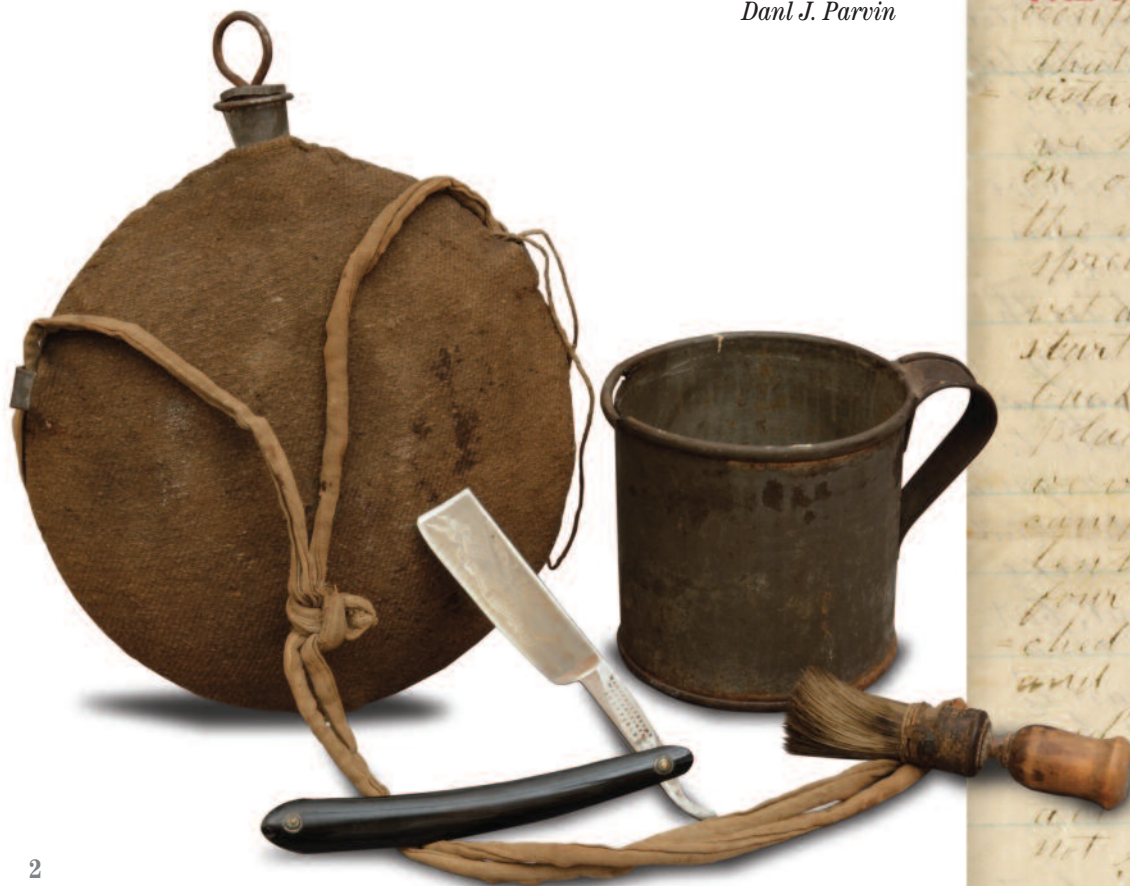
Dear wife and relatives,

Mother you are right in saying that I do not forget you. I do not forget the dear ones that I left at home and if I fall in battle my last thoughts will be on those that I have left behind.

Sarah, I believe I have one of the best women living, and I am sorry that I came off here and left her, but I thought I was doing my duty, and as far as right and wrong is concerned, I done right, believing as I did that my country needed me. And I feel now as I did then, that I would be willing to spend my life's blood for my country if it is necessary.

— I remain yours forever

Danl J. Parvin



THE GIRL I LEFT BEHIND ME.

occupied, and when we got
that they had been driven
distance, it was about
we halted, and we were
on our arms, and made
the night, we had no place
spread on the ground, so
wet as it was, and laid the
started milling early next
back to our camp again.
places nearly up to our
we were a guy looking
camp, and the next day
ten to and march, that
four or five miles, towards
chid our tent, and stayed
and yesterday we were
and march, and we march
and, and to day is su
a day to day, whether
not I do not know, we are
miles apart, and
from the enemy, last

February 12, 1862

California,

Moniteau County, Missouri

Dear wife and relatives,

There was another one of our company that got an honorable discharge from the army last night. His name was Charles Fitsner. He died between one and two o'clock. That makes two that has died out of this company. Lieutenant Magoon has gone home as a recruiting officer. Another piece of nonsense, for we now have twice or three times as many soldiers in the field as they know what to do with them. The last thing that I told George was to not get any of my brothers. He looked a little sour at me but said nothing. I supposed he would of liked to have had my influence if I have any, for the way I understand it is that every recruit that he gets puts two dollars in his pocket.

— I remain yours as ever

Danl J. Parvin

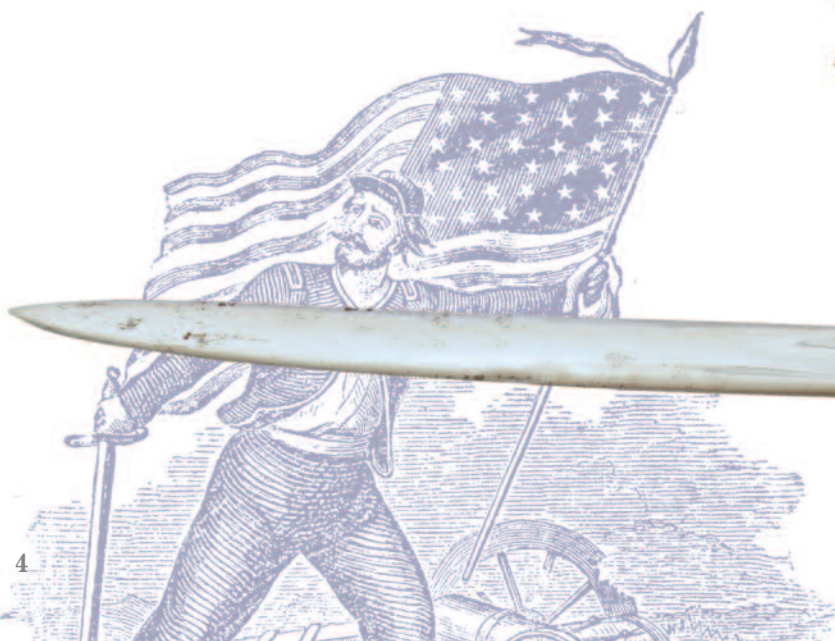


April 23, 1862
Pittsburgh Landing

*Dear wife and relatives,
One thing I do know and that is that I am tired of fighting and tired of soldiering. The fact is I am homesick. If I had been one of the lucky ones in the fight and got wounded, or if I had of got scared and run then I might have had a chance to come home. The first way is honorable, but I despise the men that adopted the other plan. A man that will desert his fellow man in the time of danger is not worthy the name of man, yet we have too many of just such men.*

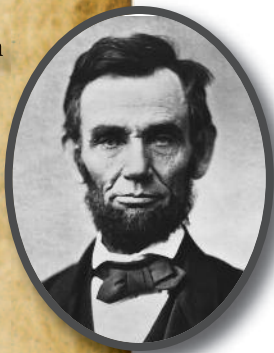
It is a fearful thought to think of going into a battle when you know that many a good man has got to lay down and die, but I am willing to run my chances in battle if it will only bring this unholy rebellion to a close. Oh!- the amount of sin that the leaders in this rebellion will have to answer for -and for the destruction of human life and happiness is beyond my powers of calculation.

— I remain yours truly
Danl J. Parvin



“I would rather be assassinated than see a single star removed from the American flag.”

— Abraham Lincoln



April 28, 1862
Pittsburgh Landing

*Dear wife and relatives,
There was one poor wounded rebel that had received his death wound and as the American flag was carried past him he looked up at it and said that he thanked God that he was a going to die beneath the American flag and I have an idea that there are plenty of rebels that would gladly leave their flag and fight under the stars and stripes if they only knew that they dare.*

— I remain yours forever
Danl J. Parvin



October 15, 1862
Camp near Corinth

Dear wife and relatives,

Since last I wrote I have seen some middling hard soldiering. The fight lasted for two days and the slaughter on the rebel side was very great. After they were whipped and driven from the field we were ordered to follow them. At the Hatchie River a part of our forces got in ahead of them and gave them another whipping. Their confusion was great and the road was strewn with their stuff. I picked up one of their guns - a great deal better than the one I had - so I took that and left my old musket. So now I have a good rifle. They had better keep out of the way of it for I think that it will shoot first rate. If the man that stands behind it only does his duty it will be a bad gun to stand in front of.

William your way of thinking and mine are nearly alike as regards slavery. If we cannot have the Union with it lets have the Union without it. The President's proclamation suits me very well, only it ought to of come a year sooner, but I suppose better late than not at all.

— Yours truly and forever,
Danl J. Parvin

TELEGRAPHIC.
REPORTED EXPRESSLY FOR THE JOURNAL.

Midnight Report.

FROM THE LOWER MISSISSIPPI.

A body of our troops attacked by Johnston's forces.

Terrible condition of the Rebels within Vicksburg.

A Rebel steamer surrendered to the gunboat Tyler.

Successful expedition of 10,000 men between the Yazoo and Black Rivers.

Nashville, Tenn., attacked by a large Rebel force.

The Rebels repulsed and pursued six miles.

Depredations in Kentucky by Rebel Cavalry.



April 17, 1863

Lake Providence

Dear wife and relatives,

We are laying here expecting every day to be ordered to Vicksburg. There has been heavy firing in that direction last night and today-what it means I cannot tell but I think that some of our boats are trying to run the blockade. I am in hopes that the rebels are nearly subdued for I want peace on no other terms.

The Negroes are now free and the government is arming them and putting white men over them to lead them on to victory and their freedom and this must make the traitors tremble for this is turning their support against them and it is bound to give them their death stroke.

— Ever remaining yours,

Danl J. Parvin





During the three months' campaign of the 35th Iowa, commencing at their embarkation from Vicksburg on the 10th of March and ending with their arrival at Memphis, on the 10th instant, they lost 22 killed and 83 wounded.— They were engaged in four general battles and a number of skirmishes, besides many hard marches. Muscatine mourns deeply over the loss of her brave sons in this regiment, yet she is proud of their record, and will hold their deeds of valor in grateful remembrance.

January 31, 1864

Vicksburg, Mississippi

Dear wife and relatives,

There is an expedition leaving here and I expect that we have to go with it. What is the object of the expedition I do not know but I understand that it is going to be a big one.

I believe that I am doing right in trying to put down this dreadful rebellion. If it was not for this belief I can assure you that I should not be soldiering now for it is anything but a pleasant business to me and I shall be dreadful glad when this dreadful war is at an end, and when that will be only He that knows all things can tell. I sincerely hope that the time is close at hand when our beloved Country will be again united and peace and plenty will again take the place of war and its natural consequences.

My sheet is full and I shall have to close, I remain yours until death.

— Danl J. Parvin

July 24, 1864

Camp 11th Iowa, near Atlanta

We have been in another terrible battle. On the morning of the 21st we had been building breastworks and we were ordered forward. We went up to within about two hundred yards of their works and commenced to entrench ourselves and I tell you that the bullets came thick! We got our trench just about done and we were ordered to leave and go further to the left so we moved about half a mile to the left and threw up breastworks there. Early on the morning of the 22nd we heard musketry firing in our rear and we knew at once't that they had flanked us. They came closer and closer until we found that they were on three sides of us and closing in on our open side so we were compelled to fall back. We fell back a short distance and we fought them all day. In the evening as we were retiring from the front we passed over a part of



the battlefield and in some places the dead rebels laid so thick that it was difficult to walk without treading on them so that I think that their movement cost them pretty dearly. Yesterday was spent in burying the dead and today we are getting ready for action.

We hold the greater part of the field that we fought over and we had a great many of their dead to bury and I am in hopes that they will bury our dead as respectfully as we did theirs.

*— I remain yours as ever,
Danl. J. Parvin*



“ I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States of America,
and Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy thereof,
do hereby proclaim and declare....that on the first day
of January in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight
hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves
within any State....shall be then, thenceforward, and
forever free.” — *The Emancipation Proclamation*



August 12, 1864

Camp 11th Iowa, near Atlanta

Dear wife and relatives,

As this is my birthday I thought that I would spend a part of it in writing to you. Our lines are getting pretty close together and they keep up nearly a constant firing on both sides and there is a good many killed and wounded every day by this way and now whilst I am writing the balls are almost constantly whistling past me and occasionally one will strike a soldier that happens to be in its course. The sound of these missiles as they pass through the air is not very pleasant to the ear for we cannot tell where they are going to strike and perchance they strike the man next to you, and we do not know but what our turn may be next. The rebels attacked our pickets three times last night but I would rather fight them in the day time if it should suit them for I can see how to shoot better by daylight, but we will try to be ready for them at all times. As loyal men defending our Country's rights we will meet them and endeavor to do our duty to our Country and trust to Providence for the result and I trust that all will be right in the end.

— *I remain yours till death,*
Danl J. Parvin

September 6, 1864

Marietta Hospital

Dear wife,

I again undertake to let you know that I am yet counted among the living. Sarah, I shall be a dreadful homely man when I get well, for they took out so much of my jaw bone that it will let my cheeks and lips settle in and my teeth are about all gone and there is various other ailments too numerous to mention now. I have received two letters and I expect those will be the last that I shall get until I get settled down someplace and I hope that it will be Muscatine, Iowa. Well I am tired of setting up and shall have to stop writing.

— Ever remaining yours,
Danl J. Parvin

September 21, 1864

Marietta Hospital

Dear wife and relatives,

I have suffered a good deal for my County and if necessary I am willing and ready to die for my Country, but I am in hopes that that sacrifice will not be required. There are many that are better than I am that will yet suffer death before the terrible rebellion is put down.

— Ever remaining yours,
Danl J. Parvin

Danl. J. Parvin

Colonel Cornelius Cadle

- October 10, 1861 - at the age of 25, enlisted as a 2nd Lieutenant, 11th Iowa Volunteer Infantry (IVI)
- October 18, 1861 - promoted to 1st Lieutenant and appointed Adjutant, of Co. "S", 11th IVI
- May 1, 1863 - promoted to Captain and Assistant Adjutant General – Co. "S", 11th IVI
- July 22, 1864 - distinguished himself at the Battle of Atlanta by volunteering to lead a company of men on a deadly charge to repel a flanking movement by the enemy
- March 13, 1865 - promoted to Brevet Lt Colonel
- March 13, 1865 - promoted to Colonel
- April 3, 1865 - promoted to Major



“And finally the war will end, the kingdom come,
the devil chained and I’ll come home.”

— Charles T. Ruger, September 23, 1862



Charles T. Ruger was mustered into service in August, 1862. While the average soldier believed the bullet was his most deadly enemy, disease was by far the biggest killer of the war. Of the nearly 620,000 deaths, over 400,000 men died of disease. Charles Ruger died on September 21, 1863 of chronic diarrhea.

June 27, 1863

On the battleground of Vicksburg

My Dear Wife,

You said you wanted to see me so that you wanted me to come home let it cost what it would. If I had known the war would last so long I would have come home before I enlisted. I was a going to write to you yesterday but we was called out with orders to storm the fort.

Our canons played on it a while and ceased firing for some reason. I don't know why. They still fire about four times a minute but that is common. But in a charge the firing is a continual roar. I tell you Ann a man does some solid thinking when he is going into battle.

I saw the house of Jeff Davis burn at Jackson and the city went with it so good bye to the capital of the state of Mississippi.

— Goodbye to you and Caty,
Charles T Ruger

from Charles T Ruger

September 21, 1863

Kind friend,

I am sorry to inform you of your husbands death. He died last night. He did not get to go north as was expected he died in the hospital where he was taken sick.

They will bury him this afternoon. He bore patiently through all his afflictions, and was in hopes to the last of seeing his family. He never uttered a word of complaint. May God be with the fatherless and the widows. It is my humble prayer. No more at present.

If your husband had been taken north at the time I wrote that letter to you, I believe he would have been alive yet.

— I remain your friend and well wishes,
William Ruth



Catalog Entries

Pg. 1

Battle of Vicksburg

Kurz & Allison

Chromolithograph, 1888

Gift of the Musser Public Library

Pg. 2

Canteen, Shaving Brush, Drinking Cup

Gift of the Muscatine County Courthouse

Straight Razor

Gift of Raymond P. Savage

Original Letterhead

First in a series of excerpts from the letters of Muscatine soldier Daniel J. Parvin to his wife and family

Gift of Francis Esther Rolfe Hubbard.

Pg. 3

Ribbon and Pin

Capt. W.M. Stewart. 17th Reunion

35th Iowa Inf. Muscatine, Iowa, Sept. 6-7, 1916

By Whitehead & Hoag

Soldier's Record, Muscatine Rangers, Company A 35th Iowa Vol. Regiment

Chromolithograph

Published by Chas. Shober, 1862

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Dave Manley

Pg. 4

Ceremonial Banner

Col. S.G. Hill Camp No. 25

Sons of Veterans, Muscatine, Iowa 1908

Gift of the Muscatine County Courthouse

Pg. 5

Infantry Flag

Presented to: Company "D"

11th Iowa Volunteer Infantry

Made by the Methodist Church Ladies Aid, Wilton Junction, Iowa

Dyed and painted wool, c. 1861-1864

Gift of J.L. Dawson, Wilton, Iowa

Presentation Sword

Presented to Capt. Abraham John by the members of his company, October 30th, 1862

Polished steel with engraved brass hilt

Pg. 6

Artillery Case, Bayonet, Bullet box

Gift of the Muscatine County Courthouse

Cartridges & Fuses

Gift of Richard Bublitz

Muscatine Daily Journal. Vol. VIII, No. 270,

Monday Morning, June 15, 1863

Pg. 7

A Soldier's Record, Company A,

Ninth Iowa Vol. Cavalry

Chromolithograph, 1863

Gift of the Muscatine County Courthouse

Pg. 8

Sword presented to 1st Lt. Thomas A. Burke

Presented by the Old Veterans of Co. E 16 Iowa to their 1st Lt. for his bravery at the Battle of Shiloh, Iuka, Corinth & Vicksburg. 1st Lt. T.A. Burke

Made by W. Clauberg/B. Kittredge & Co., c.1865

Polished and engraved steel

Gift of Dennis O'Leary

Muscatine Daily Journal. Vol. IX, No. 276,

Saturday Morning, June 18, 1864.

Pg. 9

Bugle used by Charles Knoblauch

Gift of Marion Knoblauch-Franc

Daguerreotype of Charles Knoblauch c.1862

Gift of Marion Knoblauch-Franc

Photo - 35th Iowa Volunteer Infantry

Taken at Pocahtonias, Tennessee Winter 1863-1864

1. Hermann Schmidt – Chief Musician

2. John Huber – Corporal Co. C

3. Frederick Meyer – Sergeant Co. C

4. Matthias Becke – Drum Major

Drum carried by Thomas H. Cummins

Company "A" 1st Iowa Volunteer Infantry c.1862

Gift of the Muscatine County Museum

& Fine Arts Association

Pg. 10

Photograph of Captain Abraham N. Snyder

Mustered into service September 18, 1862

Snyder survived the war and later served as Sheriff.

Gift of W. Schmitt

Life Cast of Abraham Lincoln's Hands

By L.W. Volk. 1860

Gift of the Muscatine County Courthouse

Pg. 11

Bronze Relief

Col. Cornelius Cadle,

A.A. Gen'l. 17th Army Corps

Gift of the Muscatine County Courthouse

Daguerreotype of Cornelius Cadle III

Lent by George & Nancy Maze

Pg. 12

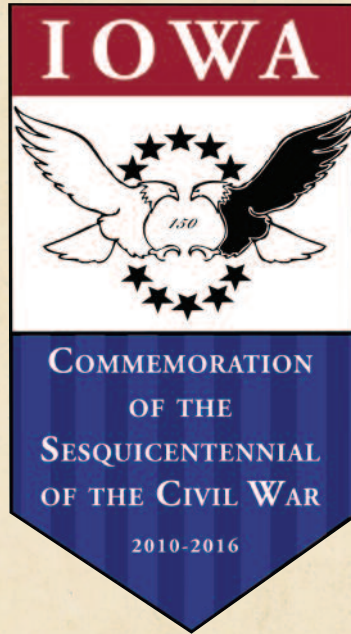
Tintype of Charles T. Ruger

Lent by Paul Temple

Envelope addressed to Mrs. Charles T. Ruger

September, 1863

Gift of Glenroy Ryan



The catalog *Muscatine and the Civil War: A Sesquicentennial Commemoration*
was funded with a generous contribution by the HNI Charitable Foundation