

**The Toils and Opportunities of War:  
A Michigan Chaplain in Civil War East Tennessee**

**By William E. Hardy**  
*Journal of East Tennessee History* 77 (2005): 76-93



*View of Knoxville taken from the Residence of J. H. Seelye*

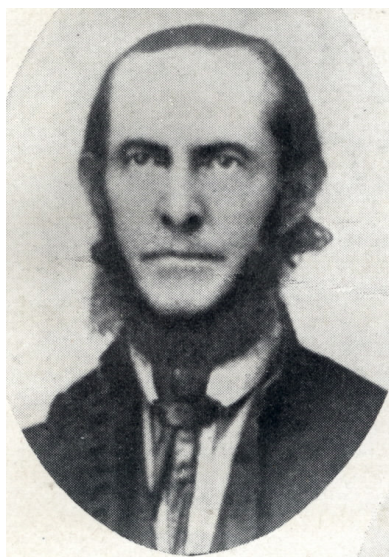
*Knoxville skyline looking south towards the Tennessee River, 1859. McClung Historical Collection*

Knoxville, East Tennessee's political and economic center, suffered throughout the Civil War as its residents confronted not only the painful reality of military occupation—as contending armies seized buildings for military use and stripped the city of its supplies—but also a grisly internecine war that pitted unionist and secessionist partisans against one another.<sup>1</sup> The scenes recorded by those who experienced the carnage of war firsthand document the destruction and the atmosphere of terror that permeated throughout the streets of Knoxville. Ellen Renshaw House, a troublesome unreconstructed Rebel, mourned as she noted in her diary on December 1, 1863: “The city is completely ruined, scarcely a fence standing. The sidewalks are like a stable yard, and the stench is horrible, particularly from the hospitals, and there are one hundred and fifty of them.”<sup>2</sup> Oliver P. Temple, unionist, lawyer, and author, depicted the deserted nature of downtown Knoxville as he observed, “There was no protection for any one. . . . No one went out on the streets unless forced to do so. The days were as the stillness of the sacred Sabbath. A vague and yet terrible sense of insecurity and uncertainty filled the minds of all.”<sup>3</sup>

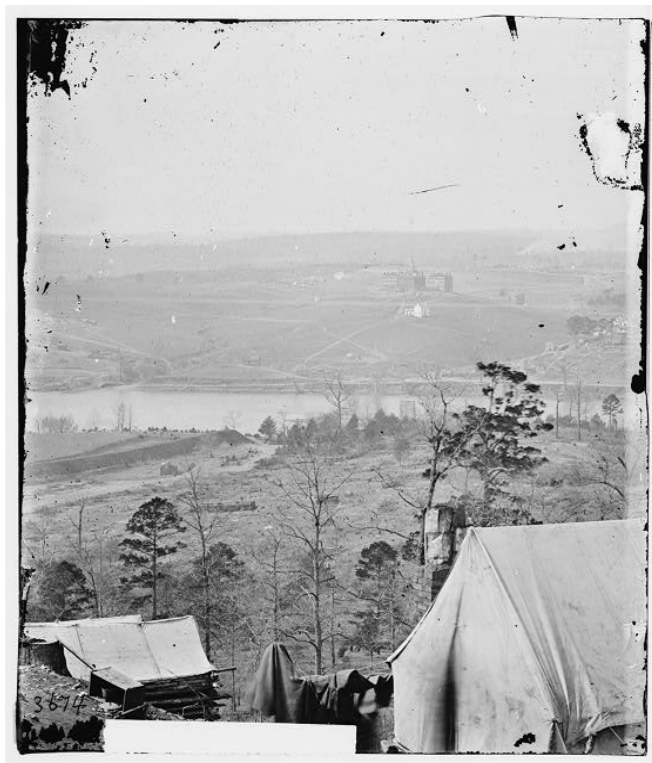
Situated on the north bank of the Tennessee River and nestled between the Appalachian Mountains and the Cumberland Plateau, the peaceful antebellum town's population of

approximately 5,300 prior to the war soared to nearly 8,000, not counting the presence of thousands of Union soldiers, by 1865.<sup>4</sup> The Civil War transformed Knoxville from a burgeoning economic center to a dilapidated metropolis that one observer characterized as a “military camp.”<sup>5</sup> Throughout the war, Confederate and Union soldiers occupied most of the city’s buildings, which were used for quartering troops, supply warehouses, and prisons. To care for the sick and wounded soldiers, both armies seized College Hill and converted the campus of East Tennessee University into a hospital.<sup>6</sup> The city was surrounded by a great enclosure that consisted of defensive earthworks. Within these fortified walls lay a barren landscape.<sup>7</sup> One visitor described Knoxville’s dreary environment as “[A] mass of dismal, dilapidated, weather-beaten buildings . . . with narrow, muddy, filthy streets.”<sup>8</sup> But, given the destruction and uncertainty gripping its residents, Knoxville stood on the verge of an era marked by significant changes. Aided by Yankee occupation and investment, Knoxville experienced a wave of economic prosperity unlike that of the 1850s, which propelled it along with a few other “New South” cities in the postwar era.<sup>9</sup>

From his position perched on a hill adjacent to the city located along the south bank of the Tennessee River, Chaplain Henry Cherry had an exquisite view of the destruction before him. Yet when Cherry’s eyes gazed towards Knoxville, he saw not a deplorable scarred landscape, but rather a city with the potential to become a prosperous beacon of light in the post-Civil War South. He was eager, like many other industrious northerners who made their way southward during and after the war, to play an active role in Reconstruction.



*Henry Cherry, Trowbridge, A Brief History of the 10<sup>th</sup> Michigan Cavalry*



*Knoxville, as seen from the south side of the Tennessee River, 1864  
Library of Congress*

Henry Cherry's rendezvous with East Tennessee, particularly Knoxville, began in Grand Rapids, Michigan in the summer of 1863. There Congressman Francis W. Kellogg appointed Colonel Thaddeus Foote of the Sixth Michigan Cavalry to commence the recruitment of a new regiment to be designated the Tenth Michigan Cavalry.<sup>10</sup> Cherry, a fifty-three year old ordained Presbyterian minister at the First Congregational Church and Society in Owosso, Michigan, left behind a wife and seven young children as he enlisted in the United States army.<sup>11</sup> Field officers and company commanders elected Cherry by a vote to serve as the regiment's chaplain, a position that has long been an established part of the American military tradition.<sup>12</sup>

The Tenth Michigan Cavalry officially mustered into the Union army on November 18, 1863, the day before President Abraham Lincoln delivered his rhetorical masterpiece, the "Gettysburg Address." The regiment left Michigan on December 1 for Lexington, Kentucky, where it arrived on December 5. There the men received their horses, as well as camp and garrison equipage. After remaining a week in Lexington, the regiment proceeded approximately twenty miles south to Camp Nelson, which served as a Union supply depot, hospital facility, and staging ground for a number of offensive campaigns. The six-week encampment there took its toll on the regiment. Although accustomed to Michigan's inclement winters, several men suffered from sickness and disease as a result of the exceedingly unpleasant cold weather. There were reports of Union soldiers from other regiments having frozen to death during the winter of 1863-1864 at Camp Nelson, because the hospitals were not suitably constructed for cold weather. A sense of relief billowed through the ranks when the regiment received its orders to move to Knoxville at the end of January 1864. The severe winter, however, continued to plague the Tenth Michigan Cavalry as it crossed over the Cumberland Mountains into East Tennessee. A mixture of rain, sleet, ice, and snow made for an arduous march. The soldiers were forced to dodge branches filled with heavy snow that occasionally fell and seriously injured men and horses. The Tenth Michigan Cavalry, minus Chaplain Henry Cherry and some fifty ailing soldiers, reached its destination in Knoxville on the evening of March 6.<sup>13</sup>

Cherry had been left behind in Somerset, Kentucky under Special Order Number 3 to care for those unable to continue on towards Knoxville. He was not only frustrated that he could not obtain Brigadier General Speed S. Fry's consent to arrange transportation for the ailing men to a Union hospital in Michigan or Cincinnati, Ohio, but also distressed over reported negative statements made about him by Captain Amos T. Ayers of Company I. Although the nature of Ayers's comments are unknown, Lieutenant Colonel Luther S. Trowbridge and all of the Tenth Michigan's officers signed a statement that condemned Captain Ayers's conduct. The incident left Cherry upset that his "wife & family should have had occasion for such grief."<sup>14</sup> Cherry spent his time in Somerset comforting and writing letters for the sick to their families and friends. In early March 1864, Cherry was relieved when he received word from General Fry that wagons would be sent to transport him and the sick back to Camp Nelson.<sup>15</sup>

Eventually, Cherry rejoined the Tenth Michigan Cavalry in Knoxville in the summer of 1864. Shortly thereafter, detachments of the regiment pursued Rebel guerrillas throughout East Tennessee until March 1865. Although Cherry remained in Knoxville, the regiment departed the city on March 20, 1865 to join Major General George Stoneman's raid into Southwestern Virginia and Western North Carolina in which the men played an effective role in dismantling over one hundred and twenty-five miles of railroad and numerous bridges. For two months, the

Tenth Michigan Cavalry marched over one thousand eight hundred miles in pursuit of not only enemy cavalry but also President Jefferson Davis, members of the Confederate government, and wagons containing large amounts of gold coins. Following the capture of Davis on May 10 in the piney woods of South Georgia, the regiment returned to Knoxville where reconstruction efforts were well underway.<sup>16</sup>

In the summer of 1865, Cherry and the Tenth Michigan left Knoxville and proceeded southwestward towards Lenoir Station and Sweetwater where the regiment remained in camp until August 1865.<sup>17</sup> The Tenth Michigan Cavalry then departed East Tennessee for West Tennessee during the late summer and fall of 1865. Writing on November 1 to Amos Gould, Cherry observed a noticeable difference in the temperament of West Tennesseans versus East Tennesseans:

They are proud, haughty, aristocratic, and are today as rebellious in spirit as they were four years ago. Bitterness of feeling exists to a degree which is really surprising, & they seem to wonder why Jeff. Davis<sup>18</sup> should have so failed, for there being no papers for them to read, they are yet as ignorant of the true state of affairs as though they had lived in Greenland. But they know the Confederacy has ended somehow; and they do not know on whom to spit their venom. When I went from Memphis to Jackson, I think I would come with the bounds of truth to say that I heard “God damn the Nigger,” “God damn the Abolitionists”—“God damn the Yankees,” not less than 500 times, most scornfully & bitterly repeated. Memphis too is a very determined rebel town, & I think there will yet be very serious trouble, for they are inventing all sorts of ways to prove that “the Nigger wont work unless he is made to work.” They will prove it, and great disaster will follow.<sup>19</sup>

While in Memphis on November 11, 1865, the men of the Tenth Michigan Cavalry received the welcome news that their regiment was being mustered out of the service of the United States Army. The regiment, which had a total enrollment of 1186 soldiers, had taken part in fifty-six battles and minor skirmishes during its two years of service in the field. Thirteen men were killed in action, twelve died of their wounds, eleven died while in captivity of the Confederacy, and one hundred and twenty-one died of disease.<sup>20</sup>

The story of Chaplain Henry Cherry is captured in his correspondence with Amos Gould, an Owosso, Michigan attorney and banker who became the city’s first mayor when it was incorporated in 1859. Cherry became close friends with Gould, who served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the First Congregational Church and Society in Owosso.<sup>21</sup> The seven letters published here are remarkable for several reasons. For example, they provide an account of Cherry’s service as a chaplain in the United States Army and capture a vivid portrait of Knoxville and the citizens, both unionists and secessionists, of East Tennessee during the Civil War and the early months of Reconstruction. Second, the letters reveal the hardships that not only soldiers experienced but also their families dealt with back at home. Cherry’s debt to Gould constitutes a recurring theme throughout the correspondence as he fears for the well being of his wife and seven children. Finally, Cherry describes the extent of the damage created by the Civil War on local churches and schools as he reveals his interest in playing an active role in the reconstruction efforts underway to rehabilitate southern society. Whether northerners came to

East Tennessee to rebuild southern society and help foster reconciliation or earn a fast buck, the letters of Civil War Chaplain Henry Cherry provide insight into the reconstruction of Knoxville, as it emerged from the Civil War a battered city on the brink of recovery.

Knoxville, Tennessee  
June 10<sup>th</sup>, 1864

Hon. Amos Gould

Dear Sir,

I write you under some excitement & some indignation. On my return I found myself welcomed by Officers & men & sincerely so. As soon as opportunity offered Col. F<sup>22</sup> called me aside & told me how grievously & shamefully he had been treated by certain Officers & he was enraged. I of course had heard nothing & knew nothing & report nothing to any man. There is soon to be a terrible out-burst, but the Doctors & I are in no way mixed up with the matter & we think there is no way to draw us in. We were looking for it yesterday, but have heard nothing yet. An arrest is expected, and then there will be warm times. Such is the feeling, not against me in particular for he is very friendly & confiding (& I will not be so mean as to be a traitor to his confidence) but to the Regiment & Officers that he will not show kindness to any body at present. I told him all about Captain Knight's<sup>23</sup> feeling of sympathy & his returning to me of the original muster, saying I needed nothing more and that all was right &c, &c, but he says he must have a written document to show that such is the fact before he will risk my being put upon the Regimental "Muster roll" lest he may have to pay the whole himself! I talked with him today & he dictated the following, which was sent to Capt. W. W. Dean<sup>24</sup> with a request that he would forward it through the proper channels. Now I feel that it will never amount to a "hill of beans" and as I know that all is right & clear & straight I request that you will if possible proceed immediately to Detroit, & see Capt. Knight and or his clerk, & obtain a statement from them to this effect. Their "Muster Roll" will show that my name has been continued right along & you can induce them to testify that all is right. I have due me \$672.00 and with their testimony the Col. will not dare to leave me off the Roll. By the time your reply comes which I would be glad to get as soon as the 24<sup>th</sup> inst He may not be in command but I know not. At any rate, if you will do me this favor, I will pay you \$50.00 for your trouble as soon as we draw our pay<sup>25</sup> which it is probable will be on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July. The Regiment will it is said be then paid for May & June.

Yours fraternally  
Henry Cherry

Note, I do not write to Capt. Knight lest it might not be attended to in time.

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Headquarters 10<sup>th</sup> Mich Cav  
Strawberry Plains, Tennessee  
June 10, 1864

General,

During the month of Feb last I received notice from Lieut. Adair,<sup>26</sup> Mustering & Disbursing Officer at Detroit, Mich., that the "Muster" of the Rev. Henry Cherry as Chaplain to the Regiment was not recognized by the War Department, owing to some supposed irregularity in the form of appointment. Accordingly the Chaplain has received no pay since Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> 1863. He has been informed by Capt. Knight, Mustering & Disbursing Officer at Detroit, to whom he returned his certificate of Muster, that his Muster as Chaplain had subsequently been treated by the War Department as valid & his original certificate of Muster was therefore returned to Mr. Cherry. I have the honor to request an official notification of the validity of the appointment & Muster of the Rev. Henry Cherry as Chaplain to the Regiment in order that I may incur no censure in treating as such and that he may receive his monthly pay of which he stands in distressing need.

I have the honor to be General, very respectfully  
Your Obt. Servt.,  
Thaddeus Foote  
Col. 10<sup>th</sup> Mich. Cav. Commanding

Brig. Genl. Thomas<sup>27</sup>  
Adj. Genl.  
Washington, D.C.

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Knoxville, Tenn. July 11<sup>th</sup>, 1864  
(Headquarters 10<sup>th</sup> Mich. Cav.)

Hon. Amos Gould

Dear Sir,

Your favor of June 29<sup>th</sup> with duplicate to [ineligible] Genl. Wm. Hammond<sup>28</sup> came duly to hand with the signature of Capt. John H. Knight for all of which please receive my most sincere thanks. You doubtless soon after sending, received a few lines informing you of my good fortune in receiving a notice from the "Sec. of War"<sup>29</sup> at Washington that my muster was

recognized. That settled the whole matter with Col. Foote immediately on his return from Knoxville. It came in the night, with other official papers and so glad were the Officers present, that they at once deputed [sic] the Adjutant to go & wake me up, & hand me the paper with their united congratulations. Every Officer meeting me the next day rejoiced with me & for me. It certainly was a most happy circumstance, and as we are informed that the Pay Master was in Knoxville yesterday, we shall hope to see him here this week to pay this Regiment, and if he does so, you may expect all my debts to be paid as soon thereafter as is possible to send the drafts. I want my wife to have the pleasure of paying them for it will do her so much good. Her heart will rejoice as well as mine. Among all the undesirable enemies in the world, debt is the worst, for it makes a man feel so helpless, & dependent, & mean.

As for affairs in our Regiment nothing has been brought to a focus that I have heard of. I do not hear as much as I would, were I connected with the trouble. They are of a character which will permit no interference on my part, & as I have enough to do with my own work I am contented to make no enquiries. Yesterday I spent my second Sabbath in the country and it was a very pleasant one. I gave in the morning by special request, an address to a Union Sabbath School, & preached in the afternoon. The people from every direction are urging me to come & preach, but my duties will not permit me to be often absent from camp.

With many & sincere thanks to you I remain  
As Ever Truly Yours,  
H. Cherry

Please remember me to all your families & when you write to your Brother Ebenezer<sup>30</sup> give him my best wishes & regards.

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Headquarters 10<sup>th</sup> Mich. Cav.  
Knoxville, Tenn.  
March 27<sup>th</sup>, 1865

Hon. Amos Gould

Dear Sir,

Since Dec 7<sup>th</sup> we have been located on the opposite side of the Holston River<sup>31</sup> from Knoxville. We are so high up the hill that we have a fair & beautiful view of the city & the river between us which is somewhat over 1000 feet wide & in low water from 8 to 12 feet deep in the channel. Directly back of our camp & about 200 feet higher than we are, is a strong fort with 8 cannon & to the south of us a quarter of a mile distant & about as high as the fort back of us is another larger & stronger fort with 12 guns.<sup>32</sup> Fort Sanders<sup>33</sup> is in full view from where we are, on the Knoxville side of the river & that the Fort which the Rebels attempted to take by storm, &

into the ditch of which were piled 537 men in a few minutes, by being tripped up with a telegraph wire which was wound from stump to stump near the edge of the ditch, while it is said 1000 yards lay in a hollow beyond having their charge impeded by wires fastened near the ground & by this strategy the Rebels under Longstreet<sup>34</sup> were defeated, & Burnside<sup>35</sup> held the city, driving Longstreet's forces beyond Strawberry Plains & afterward to near the Virginia line. For the last three weeks there has been quite a stir in these parts. Over 70,000 troops are said to have passed through Knoxville to operate somewhere around Lynchburg. Genl Stoneman has command of the Cavalry 12,000 strong & if Thomas<sup>36</sup> does not go up he will probably command the whole. It is said Genl. T. will go. The road is finished 67 miles & the construction trains are moving on.

Our Regiment now numbers over 1200 but we lack horses. Only 700 could be mounted for the raid. They are in the post of honor, that is, they are in advance of all the forces, & it is just what they were wishing for, for they know the country, having raided through it many times during the past year. We are all hopeful & joyous over an anticipated speedy peace. But we are (I mean we who have families at home) all sorrowful & downcast at the fact that no Pay Master yet comes, through in another 5 days it will be 7 months that our pay is due, & we want, for ourselves & our families. It is hard to be thus treated & bear it patiently. But we must bear it.

You will have discovered that my paper is poor, my pen is poor, & my ink will hardly flow, but at present, it is the best we can do & we must use this or none. My best regards to your own family, to the Colonel's, & to David's, & to Mrs. Graham's.<sup>37</sup>

As ever

Most Truly Yours,

Henry Cherry

*Henry Cherry Letters, University of Tennessee Special Collections Library*

Knoxville, Tenn.

April 11, 1865

Hon. Amos Gould

Dear Sir,

On my return to camp yesterday from Presbytery, I was made glad by a letter from you, though one sentence in it would have surprised me much had I not have known that many letters



are miscarried. I knew that I had written you not long since, & on referring to my diary<sup>38</sup> I find it was on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> March. Your letter is dated the 30<sup>th</sup>, so that mine to you hardly time to reach you. I hope you received it soon after writing yours, for it will go to show you how anxious I am for the Paymaster to come along among us. It is now the Eighth month, and some of us are really distressed & in want of what cannot be had without money. But we cannot help ourselves, & grumbling makes the matter no better, so we get together sometimes and try to comfort one another. Why we should be thus kept in suspense & want is more than we can answer. If you were to ask me why I do not send money I would say "because I have none," but Uncle Sam cannot say so & to us it is a mystery. I know well that my friends whom I owe may think me very backward in paying, but when I get the money they will find that then there will be no backwardness nor delay. I am quite as impatient for it as are my friends & I long for the Pay Master to arrive but he comes not yet. You speak of Thomas' Army. I believe he did not go with it. But it was a heavy affair. Even the Generals & their aides [sic] were kept in entire ignorance. At first we learned than an order was given for "rations for 10,000 men" for some 8 or 10 days. We thought that was ominous of a big thing. In a few days the cars began to increase & the trains came in & passed on at the rate of from 10 to 25 trains per day, and we began to discover that we know nothing about the affair, & could not find any body that did. Ten thousand, 20, 30, 40, 50,000 are passed & still they come & on they go, till it is said over 100,000 have passed toward Virginia. The last we have heard from them was that at Jonesboro Genl. Stoneman sent the 10<sup>th</sup> Mich in advance toward Boonville & all the Cavalry marched for Salisbury. Yesterday we had news of the surrender of Lee's<sup>39</sup> Army, & from every Fort around Knoxville demonstrations of joy were given in the firing of cannon. If I understand the conditions of surrender, (at an hour when necessity would have compelled it) I regret that Grant<sup>40</sup> should have offered any other than Unconditional surrender, & then let Government show such mercy & leniency as might be wise & proper. Johnson<sup>41</sup> may assume command and ask for the same terms. He has the same right, for he is no more in rebellion than Davis & Lee. But perhaps all is right & we do not get hold of the right end of the reports. Peaches, Plumbs, & Apples have been in blossom some time. The weather is charming. My best regards to each & all of your family.

Most Truly Yours,  
Henry Cherry

Allow me to add that if Ebenezer Gould would come to this country he could make a splendid fortune in 5 years & were he to live here that length of time he would never leave this beautiful land. At Maryville 15 miles from this there is not a lawyer. There were 3, each doing a good business, but left with the Army & the changes which must around that one place be affected, will give a fortune to a lawyer. If I were a lawyer I see the finest field open before me that I ever witnessed. The chances are many.

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Headquarters 10<sup>th</sup> Mich. Cav.  
Knoxville, Tenn. Apr. 21<sup>st</sup>, 1865

Hon. Amos Gould

My Dear Sir,

Your favor of Apr. 13<sup>th</sup> has just come to hand & suggests just what I have been desiring for some months and what several ministers have expressed to me who are residents of Tennessee but the difficulty to be overcome is a want of support. I suggested to you in my letter that your brother Ebenezer would make a fortune here in Five years as a Lawyer—and as a Preacher I could do well but for the distracted state of the churches divided & impoverished by the war. I am expecting in an hour to start for Maryville where says Prof. Lamar<sup>42</sup> is the fairest & finest promise for a colony of good industrious Northern men. I am invited there to preach & hold Sacrament on the Sabbath & shall commence service tomorrow.

I have already played a large part in the “reconstruction” & this Rebel Presbytery is now all right. At its meeting week before last I was its moderator. I have labored much among the people & have I trust help to settle many old feuds & brought about a good state of feeling, & had not war desolated & impoverished the people & country, I would have several chances for a support. I think I see one chance, but it will require your help, the help of Amos & Ebenezer Gould, Ira Merrill, Burrell Chipman, & Mr. Knill.<sup>43</sup> This can be done quietly, so that no one there need make any talk about it, for if enemies know nothing of it they cannot talk about it. The Point is this, Education in Tennessee has lost Four Years. The cause needs an Agent, or Leader, & I wish to take the same place here which was so long held by Rev. McGregory<sup>44</sup> in Michigan, “State School Superintendent.” With your recommendation in my hand I would ask Prof. Lamar to work for me, & as Mrs. Brownlow<sup>45</sup> has urged me twice to call, I think I could through her, influence the Governor<sup>46</sup> to nominate me for that office. Prof. Lamar who is strongly Union, I know will approve the plan, and I expect to talk with him about it tomorrow. Now my Dear Friend I hope you will see fit to assist me in this quiet way which will injure no one & perhaps do me much good.

Please answer as soon as you can for the Legislature is now in session.—One Day, we were like you, all overwhelmed with joy—the next day covered with the great wave of tribulation & sorrow which sirocco<sup>47</sup> like made us bow to the earth.—The Lord reigneth.

Regards to all your family  
From Your True Friend & Brother,  
Henry Cherry

Head Quarters 10<sup>th</sup> Mich Cav  
 Knoxville Tenn. Ap<sup>l</sup> 21<sup>st</sup> 1865.

Hon

Amos Goulds

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Regards to all your Family  
From Yours True Friend &  
Brother Henry Cherry

Head Qrs 10<sup>th</sup> Mich Cav  
 Knoxville Tenn  
 May 2<sup>d</sup> 1865.

Hon<sup>l</sup>

Amos Goulds

Dear Sir

Your favor of Apr<sup>l</sup> 13<sup>th</sup> was thankfully received & immediately answered on the 21<sup>st</sup>, just previous to starting to fulfill an appointment in Blount County, 16 miles distant. Yours of the 24<sup>th</sup> came to hand yesterday & it gave me great pleasure to know that I have in you so prompt & faithful a correspondent. The weather is so chilly (& having no convenience for fire) it is very difficult to write, but I must try it at the rate of a few lines at a time and after a while I shall have at least half a sheet to send you. I feel it a pleasure to acknowledge your last letter & to know that your views & mine are so similar. The matter of "reconstruction" will involve a great many very nice points in law & in morals and in practicality also for what will work pretty well in one neighborhood will not reach

the peculiarities of another. It will assume an innumerable set of questions both in state & Church. At our last Presbytery the questions which came up & must be acted on, assumed so serious & grave a character, that we concluded to wait for more thought & further developements.

I was Moderator, and had a good opportunity to show not only decision, but moderation.

Known & acknowledged Rebels, who have in all ways in & out of the Pulpit, aided Lynch law & Rebellion, are yet members, but they will not be served as certain men would like to have served me.

They will not be condemned without trials, nor will I ever again be placed where there is no appeal from the action of certain prejudiced & mad individuals. I am almost ashamed of myself for having once been so foolish.

On the day I last wrote you, I rode 16 miles & put up with a Wealthy Planter who is an elder in a Presbyterian Ch., & who through fiery trials has stood for the "Union", during all the fearful days & nights of war, & its desolating concomitants wherever the Armies tread. He has kept the

Officers of both Armies at his house, the  
 Rebel, because he had to, & the Federal because  
 he desired to, whenever they camp near him.  
 Next morning he rode 3 miles with me to see  
 Professor Lamar (who was prof of Languages) of  
 Maryville College, & who has never truckled or  
 wavered since the war began. The College was  
 broken up, but he remained, & the people have  
 fed him, which was all they have been able  
 to do. I talk with him all day, a steady  
 stream (ie) I ask questions, & he answered, & he  
 ask questions, & I answered, till, I learned the  
 condition of things past & present. The future  
 we knew not, but he is exceedingly desirous  
 that I should stay & help him steer the  
 ship. I told him I had written to you, &  
 if I could have given him what I requested  
 of you, he would then & there have sent it  
 to the Speaker of the House & to Gov Blowton  
 both of whom are his personal friends.  
 On Sabbath I preached twice for him to large  
 & very fine audiences, who after service came  
 around me as though they were greeting an  
 old friend. With such a paper as I trust you

Officers of both Armies at his house, the Rebel, because he had to, & the Federal because he desired to, whenever they camp near him. Next morning he rode 3 miles with me to see Professor Lamar (who was prof of Languages) of Maryville College, & who has never truckled or wavered since the war began. The College was broken up, but he remained, & the people have fed him, which was all they have been able to do. I talk with him all day, a steady stream (ie) I ask questions, & he answered, & he ask questions, & I answered, till, I learned the condition of things past & present - The future we knew not, but he is exceedingly desirous that I should stay & help him steer the ship. I told him I had written to you, & if I could have given him what I requested of you, he would then & there have sent it to the Speaker of the House & to Gov Brownlow both of whom are his personal friends. On Sabbath I preached twice for him to large & very fine audiences, who after service came around me as though they were greeting an old friend. With such a paper as I trust you



1864  
May 2  
Fl. Cherry

will get up & forward I shall stand a pretty fair chance for a position, which at the present time is as important for the future good of the state as any position can be, & that is, to shape its educational interests. The Universities, Colleges, & Academies, & schools have all collapsed, & will have to be reorganized & I want to assist in doing it. I cannot do it & commence with a broken down church that can pay only \$200.00 & all the churches have been broken up. Next Sabbath I am to leave Sacramento 3 miles from our Present Camp (which is now 5 miles from Knoxville) which I have visited & preached to several times & now they have a S. School of 50 scholars & feel greatly rejoiced at their prosperity but are not now able to even feed a Pastor.

We are all in a quandary. The Regiment is supposed to be in South Carolina. How long or how short the time may be when we shall hear the order to go to Michigan for the purpose of mustering out, is to us unknown.

May I hope to hear from you soon again? With kindest regards to all,

I am as ever  
Most Truly  
Yours

Henry Cherry

I had forgotten to say that we still wait for pay. The money is in Nashville & the Paymaster told our Suttler that he would be here on the 20<sup>th</sup> of March and he is not yet here.

Headqrs. 10<sup>th</sup> Mich. Cav.  
 Knoxville, Tenn.  
 May 2, 1865

Hon. Amos Gould

Dear Sir

Your favor of Apr. 13<sup>th</sup> was thankfully received & immediately answered on the 21<sup>st</sup>, just previous to starting to fulfill an appointment in Blount County, 16 miles distant. Yours of the 24<sup>th</sup> came to hand yesterday & it gave me great pleasure to know that I have in you so prompt & faithful a correspondent. The weather is so chilly (& having no convenience for fire) it is very difficult to write, but I must try it at the rate of a few lines at a time and after a while I shall have at least half a sheet to send you. I feel it a pleasure to acknowledge your last letter & to know that your views & mine are so similar. The matter of "reconstruction" will involve a great many very nice points in law & in morals and in practicability also for what will work pretty well in one neighborhood will not reach the peculiarities of another. It will assume an innumerable set of questions both in state & church. At our last Presbytery the questions which came up & must be acted on, assumed so serious & grave a character, that we concluded to wait for more thought & further developments. I was Moderator, and had a good opportunity to show not only decision, but moderation. Known & acknowledged Rebels, who have in all ways in & out of the Pulpit, aided Lynch law & Rebellion, are yet members, but they will not be served as certain men would like to have served me. They will not be condemned without trial, nor will I ever again be placed where there is no appeal from the action of certain prejudiced & mad individuals. I am almost ashamed of myself for having once been so foolish.

On the day I last wrote you, I rode 16 miles & put up with a Wealthy Planter who is an elder in a Presbyterian Ch., & who through fiery trials has stood for the "Union" during all the fearful days & nights of war, & its desolating concomitants wherever the Armies tread. He has kept the Officers of both Armies at his house, the Rebel, because he had to, & Federal because he desired to, whenever they camped near him. Next morning he rode 3 miles with me to see Professor Lamar (who was prof of Languages) of Maryville College, & who has never truckled or wavered since the war began. The College was broken up, but he remained, & the people have fed him, which was all they have been able to do. I talk with him all day, a steady stream (i.e.) I ask questions, & he answered, & he ask questions, & I answered, till, I learned the condition of things past & present. The future we know [sic] not, but he is exceedingly desirous that I should stay & help him steer the ship. I told him that I had written to you, & if I could have given him what I requested of you, he would then & there have sent it to the Speaker of the House<sup>48</sup> & to Gov. Brownlow both of whom are his personal friends.

On Sabbath I preached twice for him to large & very fine audiences, who after service came around me as though they were greeting an old friend. With such a paper as I trust you will get up & forward I shall stand a pretty fair chance for a position, which at the present time is as important for the future good of the state as any position can be, & that is, to shape its educational interests. The Universities, Colleges, & Academies, & schools have all collapsed, & will have to be reorganized & I want to assist in doing it. I cannot do it & commence with a

broken down church that can pay only \$200.00 & all the churches have been broken up. Next Sabbath I am to have Sacrament 3 miles from our Present Camp (which is now 5 miles from Knoxville) which I have visited & preached to several times & now they have a S. School of 50 scholars & feel greatly rejoiced at their prosperity but are not now able to even feed a Pastor.

We are all in a quandary. The Regiment is supposed to be in South Carolina. How long or how short the time may be when we shall hear the order to go to Michigan for the purpose of mustering out, is to us unknown.

May I hope to hear from you soon again? With kindest regards to all

I am as ever  
Most Truly Yours,  
Henry Cherry

I had forgotten to say that we still wait for pay. The money is in Nashville & the Pay Master told our Sutler that he would be here on the 20<sup>th</sup> of March and he is not yet here.

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Knoxville, Tenn.  
June 24, 1865

Hon. Amos Gould

My Dear Sir,

Many thanks for your letter enclosing the note & amount of my indebtedness to you. How glad my heart was to know that the money had got home safely. I had already informed you that I had sent the drafts to Mrs. C.<sup>49</sup>, & not as requested to you, for the Regiment had gone, & my trunk & papers were on the "Baggage train" & I had no way of getting at the amount unless I made you wait an uncertain period, & I thought you had waited long enough. So I concluded to do the next best thing. We are now 23 miles from Knoxville at Lenoir's Station, mostly dismounted, & without arms, and are in camp in an oak forest about one mile from the Rail Road. Col. Trowbridge is in command of our Brigade, & Genl. Gillam<sup>50</sup> of the encampment, while Genl. Stoneman at Knoxville has command of the Department. Our 10<sup>th</sup> Mich. Cav. is under the command of Maj. Standish,<sup>51</sup> but I had forgotten that Capt. Byerly<sup>52</sup> was there, & could tell you the form & color [sic] of things as they are. The Regiment is yet unpaid and very many of our men are suffering from sickness, mostly (Typho-malarial) and Red Tapeism has closed up the avenue to Hospitals as Knoxville, and my heart is sick of seeing men suffering & dying when there seems to be no necessity for it. True, men die everywhere, but when it is not necessary, it seem to me morally wrong to detain & keep them where they can

have no hospital comforts, no bedding, & no watchful care such as is absolutely necessary in cases of even ordinary illness. No garden vegetables can be bought for them, simply for the want of money, and were it in my power today, I would for the sake of those who are ill, & for their families & friends at home, command that the Regiment be immediately removed to Mich., to be mustered out, when Government desired. There is blame somewhere. There has not been a month within the last ten, but that money was in the Treasury, & yet the men here & their wives & children at home have suffered from want of pay, & it has thus been not only with the men, but with many of the officers. I can stand it to be in the army, I can & will face as many cannon in the hour of my country's need, as any other man, but I cannot bear to see them suffering from unnecessary illness.

I have just finished a petition to Gov Crapo<sup>53</sup> hoping to get it signed by the officers, praying his influence for our speedy return to Michigan. I cant help it—I came to do a Chaplain's duty, & I will do it.

With many thanks for your kindness I remain as ever with affectionate regards to your own & your Brothers family.

Truly Yours,  
H. Cherry

After enclosing this an order came to the Eleventh Mich. (a part of our Brigade) to march for Nashville. Is it ominous?

Notes:

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<sup>1</sup> For a thorough discussion of East Tennessee during the Civil War era see Charles Faulkner Bryan, Jr., "The Civil War in East Tennessee: A Social, Political, and Economic Study," Ph. D. diss., University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1978; Noel C. Fisher, War at Every Door: Partisan Politics and Guerrilla Violence in East Tennessee, 1860-1869 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); W. Todd Groce, Mountain Rebels: East Tennessee Confederates and the Civil War, 1860-1870 (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999); Oliver P. Temple, East Tennessee and the Civil War (Cincinnati: R. Clarke Company, 1899); Paul H. Bergeron, Stephen V. Ash, and Jeanette Keith, Tennesseans and Their History (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999), 132-80.

<sup>2</sup> Daniel E. Sutherland A Very Violent Rebel: The Civil War Diary of Ellen Renshaw House (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1996), 57.

<sup>3</sup> Temple, East Tennessee and the Civil War, 472.

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<sup>4</sup> Stephen V. Ash, A Year in the South: Four Lives in 1865 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 52.

<sup>5</sup> Fisher, War at Every Door, 37.

<sup>6</sup> In 1879, the General Assembly changed the name of East Tennessee University to its current title, the University of Tennessee. James Riley Montgomery, Stanley J. Folmsbee, and Lee Seifert Greene, To Foster Knowledge: A History of the University of Tennessee, 1794-1970 (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984), 65-7; Aaron D. Purcell, "War At Our Doorstep" Tennessee Alumnus 86 (Spring 2006), 15-19.

<sup>7</sup> For images of wartime Knoxville see Digby Gordon Seymour, Divided Loyalties: Fort Sanders and the Civil War in East Tennessee (Knoxville: East Tennessee Historical Society, 1982), 110-11, 117-21, 151-55, 158-63, 170, 174, 178-81 and Maury Klein, "The Knoxville Campaign," Civil War Times Illustrated 10 (October 1971): 43-45.

<sup>8</sup> Ash, A Year in the South, 52.

<sup>9</sup> William Bruce Wheeler, Knoxville, Tennessee: A Mountain City in the New South, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2005). For studies on the non-planter elite's effort to create a "New South," a philosophy crafted to enrich the region, restore its power and prestige, and ease its guilt over slavery and secession, see Paul M. Gaston, The New South Creed: A Study in Southern Mythmaking (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1970); C. Vann Woodward, Origins of the New South, 1877-1913 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1951); and Edward L. Ayers, The Promise of the New South: Life After Reconstruction (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

<sup>10</sup> Luther S. Trowbridge, A Brief History of the Tenth Michigan Cavalry (Detroit: Friesema Bros, Printing Co., 1905), 7.

<sup>11</sup> According to the 1860 United States Federal Census, Cherry's household included his wife, Henrietta (37), and their seven children: Henrietta (15), H. T. (13), Mary (11), William (9), Marcus (7), Francis (4), and Charles (4 months). 1860 Federal Census, Cass County, Michigan, Roll: M653-541.

<sup>12</sup> Warren B. Armstrong, For Courageous Fighting and Confident Dying: Union Chaplains in the Civil War (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 2; Steven E. Woodworth, While God is Marching On: The Religious World of Civil War Soldiers (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001), 145-6. According to the 1861 United States Army Regulations, all chaplains were required to be regularly ordained ministers of a Christian denomination. Congress, on July 17, 1862, passed an act that substituted the words "religious denominations" for "Christian denomination." Less than a week later, Congress passed a bill that clarified a chaplain's rank in the United States Army as equal to that of a captain of cavalry. Armstrong, For Courageous Fighting and Confident Dying, 3-8.

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<sup>13</sup> Trowbridge, A Brief History of the Tenth Michigan Cavalry, 9-10.

<sup>14</sup> Henry Cherry to Amos Gould, March 4, 1864, Henry Cherry Letters, 1864-1865, MS-2214, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Special Collections Library.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Trowbridge, A Brief History of the Tenth Michigan Cavalry, 17-42; William J. Cooper, Jr., Jefferson Davis, American (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 2000; reprint, New York: Vintage Books, 2001), 562-75.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>18</sup> Jefferson Davis (1808-1889) served as President of the Confederate States of America (1861-1865).

<sup>19</sup> Henry Cherry to Amos Gould, November 1, 1865, Henry Cherry Letters.

<sup>20</sup> Trowbridge, A Brief History of the Tenth Michigan Cavalry, 45.

<sup>21</sup> American Biographical History of Eminent and Self-Made Men: Michigan Volume (2 vols., Cincinnati: Western Biographical Publishing Co., 1878) 2: 29-30.

<sup>22</sup> Colonel Thaddeus Foote. Civil War Compiled Military Service Records United States National Archives Record Group 94.

<sup>23</sup> Captain John H. Knight served as the Mustering and Disbursing Officer at Detroit, Michigan. Civil War Compiled Military Service Records, United States National Archives Record Group 94.

<sup>24</sup> Although Cherry wrote "W. W. Dean," this is possibly a reference to Captain and Assistant Adjutant-General William W. Deane. The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies (128 vols., Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1900) ser. 1, 38 (5): 563-64.

<sup>25</sup> Initially, Union chaplains were paid \$145.50 a month while their counterparts in the Confederate army earned \$80.00 a month. But in the interest of economy during the Civil War, Senator William P. Fessenden of Maine was instrumental in passing legislation in mid-1862 that reduced a chaplain's annual salary from \$1746.00 to \$1200.00. To compensate the chaplains for the cut in pay, the federal government provided forage for their horses and pensions to the families of those chaplains killed in the service of the United States army. Steven E. Woodworth, While God is Marching On, 146; Armstrong, For Courageous Fighting and Confident Dying, 8-10; Congressional Globe 37<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, 1085-88.

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<sup>26</sup> Lieutenant George E. Adair. Civil War Compiled Military Service Records, United States National Archives Record Group 94.

<sup>27</sup> Brigadier General Lorenzo Thomas (1804-1875).

<sup>28</sup> A search of the Civil War Compiled Military Service Records reveals that the only general named William Hammond in the Union Army during the summer of 1864 was Surgeon-General William A. Hammond (1828-1900). Civil War Compiled Military Service Records, United States National Archives Record Group 94.

<sup>29</sup> Edwin M. Stanton (1814-1869) served as Secretary of War (1862-1868) for both President Abraham Lincoln and President Andrew Johnson.

<sup>30</sup> Ebenezer Gould (1818-1877), a prominent businessman and lawyer in Owosso, Michigan, enlisted as a Second Major of the 5<sup>th</sup> Michigan Cavalry and was later commissioned full Colonel until poor health forced him to resign in October 1864. American Biographical History of Eminent and Self-Made Men, 2: 28-29.

<sup>31</sup> The Tennessee River's name and origins have changed several times since the late 1600s. Throughout the nineteenth century, the portion of the river that ran along the banks of Knoxville was known as the Holston River. In 1889 the General Assembly declared that the Tennessee River extended northward to Kingsport; however, an 1890 federal statute recognized the junction of the French Broad and Holston Rivers, to the east of Knoxville, as the root of the Tennessee River, a designation that still stands. Carroll Van West, ed. The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture (Nashville: Rutledge Hill Press, 1998), 943-45.

<sup>32</sup> Defensive earthworks surrounded Knoxville's landscape during the Civil War. Cherry was stationed at Fort Dickerson, which commanded the high ground above the city on the south bank of the Tennessee River. To its east and west were Fort Higley and Fort Stanley respectively. Seymour, Divided Loyalties, 108-9

<sup>33</sup> Fort Sanders, a hastily built yet bastioned Union earthwork, located just west of Knoxville, was the scene of an ill-conceived Confederate frontal assault that resulted in the massacre of troops that the Confederacy could not afford to lose. The Confederate's failure to capture Knoxville guaranteed Union control over the city and the majority of East Tennessee. Seymour, Divided Loyalties, 178-81.

<sup>34</sup> General James Longstreet (1821-1904).

<sup>35</sup> General Ambrose E. Burnside (1824-1881).

<sup>36</sup> General George H. Thomas (1816-1870).

<sup>37</sup> Unknown.

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<sup>38</sup> The location of Cherry's diary is unknown.

<sup>39</sup> General Robert E. Lee (1807-1870) surrendered the Army of Northern Virginia to General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House on April 9, 1865.

<sup>40</sup> General Ulysses S. Grant (1822-1885).

<sup>41</sup> Although this name is clearly spelled "Johnson," it refers to General Joseph E. Johnston (1807-1891).

<sup>42</sup> Thomas J. Lamar (1826-1887) served as Professor of Greek Languages and Literature and of Sacred Literature at Maryville College from 1857 to 1887. Despite the destruction to the campus caused by both Union and Confederate armies during the Civil War, which led the institution to close its doors in 1861, Lamar remained committed to reopening the College once peace returned to Maryville. On July 4, 1866, he issued a circular announcing that classes would begin in September. Regarded as the second founder of Maryville College, Lamar served as Chairman until the arrival of a president in 1869. Ralph Waldo Lloyd, Maryville College: A History of 150 Years, 1819-1969 (Maryville: Maryville College Press, 1969), 70, 266; Samuel Tyndale Wilson, Thomas Jefferson Lamar: A Memorial Sketch (Maryville: Martha Ann Lamar, 1920), 48.

<sup>43</sup> Ira Merrill, Burrell Chipman, and Mr. Knill were most likely friends of Cherry and the Gould's in Michigan.

<sup>44</sup> Unknown.

<sup>45</sup> Eliza O'Brien Brownlow.

<sup>46</sup> William G. Brownlow (1805-1877) served as Governor of Tennessee from 1865 to 1869.

<sup>47</sup> A sirocco is a hot and oppressive southerly to southeasterly wind in the Mediterranean that originates from the Sahara and similar North African regions.

<sup>48</sup> William Heiskell, Representative of Knox County, served as Speaker of the House from 1865 to 1867.

<sup>49</sup> Henrietta Cherry.

<sup>50</sup> Although this name is clearly spelled "Gillam," it refers to General Alvan C. Gillem (1830-1875).

<sup>51</sup> Major John H. Standish served in Company A of the Michigan 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry. Civil War Compiled Military Service Records, United States National Archives Record Group 94.



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<sup>52</sup> Captain Edgar P. Byerly served in Company H of the Michigan 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry. Civil War Compiled Military Service Records, United States National Archives Record Group 94.

<sup>53</sup> Republican Henry H. Crapo (1804-1869) served as the fourteenth Governor of Michigan from 1865 to 1869.