

A Civil War Collection from the VMI Archives
Morgan Family Letters
VMI Archives Manuscript #0356
Joseph B. Morgan to his son, VMI Cadet Patrick Morgan.
January 28, 1863
Indian Ridge, Currituck County, North Carolina

Indian Ridge
Currituck County, Jany 28/63

My Dear Son-

It is a long time since we have had a letter from you. The last one I think was dated the 16 of November last. We heard from you by Albert, who got safely home, but destroyed all the letters he brought off with him for fear of falling into the hands of enemies. He reported you tolerably well- but gives a horrid description of your fare, & seems very glad to get home even under the circumstances.

Your Uncle James has again been driven from his home by the shelling of his premises, and together with his family is now residing with us. Albert is going to school to Mr. Lowe, who now has a very large school. Since I last wrote you we have the distressing intelligence of the death of your Uncle [Geo?]. He was killed at Fredericksburg. His family is in great distress. They are making arrangements for moving back to Currituck & will reside with William [D___], who was recently married to Miss[A_net] Barnard. Your Ma is in deep distress in consequence of her brother's death. She takes it very hard indeed. Otherwise we are getting along about as we have been for the last eighteen months.

The enemy occasionally makes raids upon us & plunder & destroy our property. A few weeks ago they came over to Indian Town & burned all the buildings on Dr. Marchant's place, opposite where he used to live, together with the academy, & plundered several citizens, taking horses, carts, [__groes], salt & c. They have since removed from Shiloh & have made their headquarters at E. City¹. One of their officers, a Capt. Sanders was killed in the street the night of the 5th inst.

The Diphtheria has been very prevalent this winter. I believe I wrote you of the death of two of Mr. Baxter's children. Now I have to inform you of the death of [____] Shaw of the same horrible disease. It was a heart rending scene to witness the distress of the family. I deeply sympathize with the bereaved parents, but for [____], we know she is better off. She is beyond the reach of harm, safe in her Heavenly Father's arms. Jodie has been strongly threatened with the same disease, if indeed he has not had it in a modified form. All of us have had sore

throats & your Ma has been doctoring for diphtheria. All are however better now, Lillie & Ida going to school & Jodie playing about the house as lively as ever. He has grown very much since you saw him, & talks quite plain. You would hardly know him.

I write this my dear son hoping it may reach you soon, knowing you will be glad to hear from home and hoping soon to hear from you. You cannot imagine how anxious we are to hear from you, or surely you would write much oftener than you do. What can be the matter? Is it that you do not write, or does your letters miscarry? I know not the cause, but whatever it may be should be very glad if it could be remedied. I know not how to direct you more than I have.

There are so many changes. I received one letter from Mr. Lassiter from Mr. [Boro]. Since then I learn he has sold out & removed, so you must seek for information & opportunities, & neglect no possible chance of letting us hear from you. I have committed you unto Him that is able to keep you, and I forget not my prayers morning & night to beseech Him to take care of you, to preserve & keep you from all evil & harm, and restore you again to the bosom of the family, if it can accord with His blessed will. All send their love.

Your Father. Jos. B. Morgan

¹
Elizabeth City

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Joseph B. Morgan to his son, VMI Cadet Patrick Morgan.
February 13, 1863
Indian Ridge, Currituck County, North Carolina

Feb 13 [1863]

We have just heard that the guerillas had attacked the enemy in Pasquotank killing [Tim.] Cox & probably some
others. We hear that the Capt. commanding in E. City ¹ has ordered all the people white & black to report to him, & it is
said he intends to compel them to take up arms. The whole country is in a perfect ferment. The people are growing
desperate & the inhuman conduct of our enemies seems to be driving every man capable of bearing arms into the
bushes or into the army. How long such a state of things is to exist the Lord only can determine.

My health is very bad just now. I am suffering among other things with sore throat, & have been for some time past.
The rest of the family are well.

I should be so glad to hear from you. Not one word yet since Albert left have we heard from you. Mrs. Shaw gets
letters from Willie ² & Julian & I should suppose yours could come in the same way. Send them to Col. Shaw & he will
forward them if you will request him to do so I am sure.

Your Ma sends her love & says she would like to write, but you must not think because she does not, she has
forgotten you. Other causes prevents. I have hastily penned these few lines this morning having just heard of an
opportunity for sending a letter out. Your Uncle James is still with us & talks of coming out soon.

Your Father. Jos. B. Morgan

¹
Elizabeth City

²
William Brenton Shaw, VMI Class of 1865

A Civil War Collection from the VMI Archives
Morgan Family Letters
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Joseph B. Morgan to his son, VMI Cadet Patrick Morgan.
January 3, 1864

Currituck County
Jany. 3d 1864

My Dear Son-

It is a long time since we have had a letter from you & we are beginning to feel very anxious to hear from you. I wrote you a short time since giving a short statement of our troubles & the devastations & excitement produced by a Brigade of negro troops under Gen. Wild passing through our county. But it is utterly impossible for me to give you anything like a correct idea of the state of things in our midst.

I have just returned home from Fortress Monroe. The citizens of our county held a meeting & appointed Dr. Cowell, A. J. Lowe, B. L. Dey, B. M. Baxter & myself a committee to proceed to Old Point, the Headquarters of Gen. Butler ¹, who is in command of the Department of Va. & N. C., for the purpose of ascertaining what was required of the peaceful inhabitants to secure their property from destruction & their dwellings from the flames. We left home last Sunday & passed through their lines by way of Deep Creek. Col. DeForest in command at North West treated us very courteously & and gave us a passport to Gen. Getty's ² headquarters, which is some three miles back of Portsmouth. We had a very pleasant interview with Gen. Getty, who seems to be a perfect gentleman, and who kindly facilitated our business by giving us a passport and transportation to Gen. Butler's Headquarters.

Tuesday morning at 8 o'clock we took the boat for Old Point, where we arrived about ten A.m> We obtained an interview with Gen. Butler about three o'clock P. M. He received us very respectfully & treated us very courteously, and after hearing our statement conversed with us some half an hour or more very pleasantly. He said nothing was required of us only to remain peaceful and use our influence to put down guerrillaing & blockade running; that being accomplished we should not be further molested by his troops; that he did not include us in his general order no. 49, nor did he consider us within his lines.

We returned home & reported the result of our interview with Gen. Butler. We had hardly got home when a squad was sent out to enroll the inhabitants of Camden & Currituck. We are inclined to believe, however, they are recalled & we may be allowed a short respite.

Your Ma has been quite ill but is now fast recovering. Jodie is suffering from croup very much. All the rest are tolerable well. I am not very well but hope am improving. Everything is excitement & suspense & God only knows how we are to get along. All is gloom & doubt around us, but God governs in the affairs of men & will bring all things right in the end. You Ma is trying to get some shirts ready for you, and whenever we can procure anything for you will send by the first opportunity. Some of my friends talk of going to Richmond & if they do I shall try to send my horse by them with instructions to sell him & send you the money. It may come when you do not need it & if so take care of it for future use. You must be economical & make the best use you can of both time & money. Should they bring him out, I shall instruct them to sell him and have the money insured & sent by express to you.

All send their love & best wishes, and I pray that a kind Providence may preserve and protect you my dear son.

Your Father. J. B. M.

P. S.

Since writing the enclosed your two letters of the 13th and 27th of Decr. have come to hand. We are glad to learn you are so well after your exposure & hope you will not suffer any very serious consequences. All are well at present & send their love. Those gentlemen I spoke of coming out have returned. They sold my horse for \$600 & I trust you have recd. the money. J. B. M.

1 Union General Benjamin Franklin Butler

2 Union General George Washington Getty

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Joseph B. Morgan to his son, VMI Cadet Patrick Morgan.
May 16, 1864

Indian Ridge
May 16th 1864

My Dear Son-

I embrace the opportunity this morning, as our Forbs is just going out, to write you a few lines, to let you know we have had the pleasure of receiving yours of the 26th of April, that we were all well, & made still more happy on hearing glorious news from Va. The N. York Herald admits that Grant has been terribly whipped & driven back with the loss of only 41.000 including 7 Major Gens. & some 15 Brigadiers. We have rumors that the Yanks have also been badly worsted near Petersburg & driven back with considerable loss. Also various other rumors of the capture of the "Beast" &c &c. which if true you have no doubt heard ere this, as you can learn the truth much earlier than we can. Should these things be true, this fanatical war must be drawing rapidly to a close. May God speed the happy day. I think there can scarcely be a doubt of the truth of Grant's disaster. I did not see the statement myself, but Mr. Hilliard Baxter told me he had read it in last Thursday's Herald & you may be sure his loss is much greater than the Herald would admit. The Yanks have been making frequent raids among us for the last three weeks, one a week at least. Saturday night they carried off one of my mules, but I was fortunate enough to recover him on Sunday.

I am glad to learn you were pleased with your things. The boots & gloves I expected would be full large, but it was the best I could do, & your cloth, how does it suit you? It was nearest the color that could be got.

We have felt a great deal of anxiety about you of late, fearing that the Yankees would get so near, you would have to take the field again, but if Grant is driven back we should feel much easier on that account. ¹ I forgot to say that our joy at the good news was somewhat allayed by a report that the brave & noble Gen. Longstreet was badly wounded, Pickett & Jenkins & some others killed. I trust the reports may not be true, but should it prove true, God will raise up others to fill their places. He will not suffer our enemies to succeed in this unjust, cruel & unholy war.

I said we were all well. Jodie has slight chills & fevers, caused perhaps by the [days?] of The Measles--he says he wants to see Bro. Pat mighty bad. He has been keeping you some

apples but has been compelled to eat them, to keep them from rotting. The children all send their love. Mr. Low & family request me to send their respects. Mrs. Shaw & family are well. Give my respects to Willie, Jule & all your friends. Write often. May a kind Providence continue to watch over you & protect you my dear son.

Your Father. J. B. M.

¹ As yet unknown to the family, the VMI Corps of Cadets *had* been called to the field, and Cadet Morgan had taken part in the [Battle of New Market](#) on the previous day, May 15.

A Civil War Collection from the VMI Archives
Morgan Family Letters
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Joseph B. Morgan to his son, VMI Cadet Patrick Morgan.
October 31, 1864
Indian Ridge, Currituck County, North Carolina

Indian Ridge
Oct 31st 1864

My Dear Son-

After so long a time I find an opportunity of sending you a few lines from home, as I know you are very anxious to hear from us all. Your note from Riddick's Ferry was received, though not until we heard from you through your friend from [K/Hitt___?] & who also delivered me a package of smoking tobacco, which was very acceptable, & for which accept my thanks.

We have had a good long respite from the Raiders, not having been troubled with any since you left. They have passed on the Indian Town Road once since, but none came up our road. There is no news at all. Everything seems to be at a stand. We are still having the most delightful weather. It is so dry we can scarcely get water to use. I have never seen so dry a season. Mr. Lowe and myself have just finished making syrup. We have made about 70 gals., enough to serve us the next year plentifully. I am again without any help at all. Mr. Sawyer & his wife left the week you went away. I do not know how I shall manage to house my crop as there is no laborers to be had.

A few days after you left I saw the order postponing the commencement of your school until the 10th of Novr., and ordering the cadets to report for temporary duty at Camp Lee. I suppose you are still there, though according to the order will soon leave for school. I shall therefore leave the direction of my letter to the friend who will take it out after he can ascertain your whereabouts.

We are all in as good health as usual. I am still very much troubled with rheumatism in my arm, which bothers me very much. You must write me every opportunity, tell me how you are getting on, & how you have disposed of your money, and do not forget to have the discrepancy in your account corrected. And above all things else my Dear Son do not forget, nor neglect, your duties to your Heavenly Father; let not your young & gay companions lead you astray, nor tempt you to neglect your religious duties, and may our Heavenly Father keep you as in the hollow of his hand, shield & protect you from all danger & harm, and restore you to us again in His own good time.

I forgot to tell you the result of our meeting. It closed on Sunday after you left, and on Monday seventeen were baptized & added to the church, among them our neighbor Mr. John Fanshaw.

Your Ma, Archie, & the children all send their love. Frank is on a visit to Mayock & will write you soon. Write him often. Mrs. Shaw & family are all well. Tell Willie he must write me sometimes. Give him my respects & tell him not to forget his good resolutions & to never stop until he has obtained the pearl of great price. God bless & protect you my dear son is the constant prayer of our father.

J. B. M.

Ida sends you some money, \$2.00.
