

Pvt. Thomas Lafayette Morrison, North Carolina 6th Infantry Regiment, Company A

Paula Teem Levi, new member of Descendants of Point Lookout, Org., shortly after joining the Descendants sent us this wealth of information about Thomas Lafayette Morrison along with a series of letters he sent to his wife. They provide information about his life as a Confederate soldier, POW, husband, and father. From these letters you can follow his journey through camp life, graphic detailed battles, being captured, life at Point Lookout POW Camp, and going back home to his family. She obtained the delighted permission of his direct descendants to have these letters reprinted in our newsletter. We will be giving these letters to you in installments as we didn't want to send out an extremely long Parapet!

Thomas Lafayette Morrison was born on December 31, 1837 in Burke County, NC. His parents were John Duckworth Morrison of Burke County, NC and Fannie Epley of McDowell County, NC. Thomas was married to Temperance Louse Hall on December 20, 1860 in Burke County, NC. In less than two years after his marriage, Thomas enlisted in the Confederate States Army in Burke County, NC as a Private on September 22, 1862. He was in Company A, North Carolina 6th Infantry Regiment.

While his young wife was at home, he shouldered the musket and marched against the enemy. He wrote a running account of his experiences as a soldier in a series of letter to his wife. At his request, she kept all the letters he wrote and when he came home after the war he copied them all with his own hand in a book he acquired for the purpose.

In the introduction to his letter, Thomas Morrison wrote as follows: "This is copied from the letters that I sent home while I was in the war. I left home in the 22nd of September, 1862. While in service, I was in Virginia all the time until I was taken prisoner on November 7, 1863, on the Potomac River, was taken to Washington City and stayed two nights and one day and then was taken to Point Lookout, Maryland. There I stayed one year and six months and then was paroled and sent to Richmond and stayed ten days and went then from their home till exchange and at home twenty-three days and peace was made. I went through the war and got back without the mark of a bullet."

Thomas returned to Silver Creek Township, Burke County, NC to live out the remainder of his life as a farmer of corn and wheat. He died at the age of 76 on August 7, 1914 from a strangulated hernia. He was buried in the Snow Hill Methodist Cemetery in Burke County, North Carolina.

These letters were first published in the May 27, 1927 issue of The News Herald newspaper, Morganton, NC and the others appeared subsequently until the entire group on thirty-eight letters selected had been completed.

Dear Wife: I sent myself this evening to drop you a few lines to let you know where I am and let you know that I am well and hope these few lines will soon come to hand and find you enjoying the same great blessing.

On the 22 on Sept. 1862, I left home - this is 7 days I have been traveling, We rode 100 miles yesterday on the cars. We have 100 miles to go yet and have it to walk. We got here last night at 10 o'clock. This morning we were marched out 2 miles where we will stay today and cook up two rations. Tomorrow morning we will start down the valley. The time is close at hand when we will face the enemy.

I saw all of Capt. Rollin's company in Richmond, They are all well and look well. The most of them are barefooted. T. A. Seals, David Hall, John Hemphill, Peter Epley, Leander Houk and brother, John, are with me. They are all well. We drew our Confederate suits and \$50.00 bounty in Raleigh. I would send you some back in this letter but it is a 50 dollar bill and I can't get it changed. I wrote you a letter back from Richmond with \$5.00 inclosed in it.

You think corn is sorry but it is good to what it is in this country. There is lots of corn has been planted and never plowed nor....

I want you to stay where you are and do the best you can and never break up housekeeping. We have not been married but one year and 9 months and have but little, but I want you to stay where you are and take care of what little you have got and maybe I will get home some time to stay with you. Some think this cruel war will not last longer than spring but I tell you that the prospect of peace is gloomy. There are 1500 men here to go on with us. We are sent over to Jackson's army. There is some talk of us going to Winchester and drill a month but I expect we will be marched right on to the battlefield like sheep to the slaughter pen. If I was back at home I would die before I would leave.

So I will close for the present by saying to you to not to write to me till you hear from me again for I can't tell you where I will stop at yet but I will write as soon as I can again. So I will close for the present by saying we will meet again. I as ever remain,

Your husband till death. T. L. Morrison

Dear Wife: I seat myself to drop you a few lines to let you know that I am well at the present and hope these few lines will soon come to hand and find you enjoying the same treat blessing. I have been well every since I left home, only one day and night the water made me sick, but I am well at present. Myself, brother John, T. A. Seals, David Hall, John Hemphill, Peter Epley, John Epley, Robert Epley and Leander Houk are in Captain Turner's Company A, 6th NC Regiment.

We got here this morning about 10 o'clock. We have been walking for five days. We walked a hundred miles. We were tired, you may depend. We had nothing to eat for two days and nights, only what little we bought. We are 200 miles on the other side of Richmond. When we got here we drew beef and flour.

I am 800 miles from home. I don't know how long we will stay here. When we leave here I don't know where we will go. It is thought the division we are in will fall back towards Richmond. There is no talk of our forces going over into Maryland soon. Again there is no talk of any fight soon. We are in Longstreet's division.

I wrote two letters to you since I left home and I want to hear from home. I saw Hamp Cowan on his road home. I had to sell all of my clothes, only what I have on, for I could not tote them. Take good care of what you have and maybe I will get home some-time to live with you again, although we are many miles apart and I see no chance of coming soon. The soldiers think that peace will be made this winter but I tell you that I don't see any prospects. Everything is quiet here now. There has been no fight here in two weeks. Since I left Staunton I have seen over three thousand sick and wounded men going back to the hospital. There is not much sickness in camp now. There are some few cases of smallpox about five miles from here. We were all vaccinated in Raleigh as we came on. I have seen rabbits as white as snow since I left home.

I tell you that a soldier's life is a miserable life to live. I can't tell you anything about what kind of life I am living but I tell you dear wife, if I were back at home I would give everything I am worth and would die before I would leave you. But now I am so far from home it doesn't seem like I will ever get back. So write soon and give me all the news.

I forever remain. Your husband till death, So Good Bye, T. L. Morrison

Dear Wife: I seat myself to drop you a few lines to let you know where I am and to let you know that I am well at present and forever hope these few lines will soon come to hand and find you and the baby both well. We moved one mile towards Winchester today on the account of wood and water. We have our water to carry a half mile in our canteens. There are so many men here that we can't stay long in one place for we burn so much wood that it soon becomes scarce and rations, too.

We don't get half enough to eat. We draw rations every evening. We get one pound of flour, one pound of beef and I tell you a pound of beef with the bone is not much meat. We get no salt to put in our bread and but little to go in our meat. We bought us some wheat and make our coffee.

Yours till death, T. A. Morrison.

Dear Wife: It is through the mercy of God that I have been spared to drop you a few lines and to let you know that I am still yet alive and well and numbered with the living. I forever hope these few lines will soon come to hand and find you and the baby both well. I received your kind letter last night hearing date of the 10th instance, I was truly glad to hear from you to hear you were well.

This morning a week ago we were marched out of camp two hours before day in a line of battle. The ground was covered with snow. We got back in camp last night, which was seven days the fight lasted. Thursday they fought in the town all day. We were two miles down the river. We could see them fighting all day. Against sundown the whole town was burned down to ashes.

Friday and Saturday we moved up close to town to support our artillery. There we lay two days tight between our cannon and the Yankees. We lay in a ditch while shells and cannon balls passed over us from both armies without hitting any of us. I never knew how flat I could lay in a ditch before. We were in a long bottom.

Saturday night we marched to the front lines and got behind the railroad one mile below the tower. There we shot all night long. The next day was Sunday. Everybody thought the big fight would come off but everything was quiet all along the lines. We held our position until Monday evening when it was thought the Yankees were moving around to our right. We fell back to reinforce our lines. Then they shelled about one hour and left. During the hour there were eighteen killed and wounded. There was one man who got killed by my side with a piece of bomb shell.

Tuesday the Yankees made a raid on Hamilton's Crossing some four miles below us. We were double-quickened down there but our men drove them back with a heavy loss before we got there. They shelled us for two hours. We lay behind the railroad which protected us from danger. We lay there until dark and then moved back up near town.

Wednesday the Yankees attacked our lines all along but were driven back with a heavy loss on both sides. On Wednesday night myself, T. A. Seals, Peter Epley and a man by the name of Moran were detailed to go back two miles, and cook rations for 100 men. It rained and the wind blew and we toted rails and baked bread and boiled beef till 2 o'clock.

I guess you want to know how we make up our dough. Some times we have tin pans; some times we have to spread down a cloth and make it up on it. When I got done we started for camp.

It was raining son hard and was so dark I got lost. I wandered about for two hours and found I could not get back. I was compelled to sit down by a tree and sit there until daylight. When I got to the company I found that the Yankees had gone back over the river.

You can't imagine how glad I was for I can't tell you how I have suffered for the last seven days. It has been so cold and not a spark of fire could we have. Some times I thought freeze to death I should. We were nearly worn out for sleep but we still held the battlefield. The dead are not buried yet. I can't tell the loss on either side yet. It is thought our loss is about 2,000. The sight I have seen I never shall forget and home I may never see it again. So write soon,

Yours till death. T. L. Morrison.

Dear Wife: I seat myself to drop you a few lines to inform you that I am well at present and forever hope these few lines will soon come to hand and find you and the baby both well. I wrote you a letter a few days ago but as we have had a big fight here and I know that you will be uneasy about me until you hear from me so I thought I would write again and let you know that I came though safe without ever being marked with a bullet.

I was in the fight seven days. The like of dead men I never saw before and hope I may never see such a sight again. Some places the men lay so thick you could step from one to another. The dead were not buried for several days. You want to know how the dead are buried here. Where they lay so thick they pitch them in holes and gulleys and drag them in piles and take shovels and throw dirt on them. Where they are not so thick they throw a few shovels of dirt on them where they lie. If my life is spared to get back home I will have many a sight that I have seen to tell you. Sometimes I am out of heart of ever getting back home for I tell you that there will be many a man lose his life yet before this cruel war ends for there is never a day but what some

man passes away. Some are dying from their wounds and others from sickness and so many men and guns here that there are always accidents happening here in camp.

I wish I could give you a history of a fight and a battlefield so plain you could understand it as plain as I have seen it. When a battle is raging the noise of the guns, the bomb shells bursting and the cannons roaring it is like the loudest thunder you ever heard. The air seems to be full of bullets and the men are falling dead on the ground like hail.

I know you want to know something about cannon balls and bomb shells. There are many sizes, ranging from the size of your fist to dinner plates. Some are six or eight inches long, the size of the half-gallon pots. The cast bomb shells are hollow felled up with bullets and old scraps of iron and powder. They have a small hole in them. The hole is stopped with a brass screw. When loaded it has a fuse in it. When it is shot the fuse takes fire. It goes until the fuse burns into the powder and then it bursts, which does great execution.

Cannon balls are solid and will mow down great lanes through the men, tearing them to pieces. A cannon ball passing through the lines puts me in mind of bees on a limb. Wipe off a streak and they will close up together again. That is the way with the men. Mow down a lane through them and they will close up in a minute. A grape shot is a cast shell about the size of a hen's egg. To hear the groans and cries of the wounded and dying men on a battlefield is the most distressing noise I ever heard.

So write soon and give me all the news you can. I as ever, remain,
Your husband till death. T. L. Morrison

Dear Wife, I seat myself this beautiful New Year's to drop you a few lines to let you know that I am well and hope these few lines will soon come to hand and find you and the baby both well. Last New Year's day I was at home with you. This New Year's I am far from home and you and friends and in camp on a bloody battlefield where I will take New Year's. Next Year I can't tell you but I hope I will be at home with you. I tell you there is many a man here who will never live to see another New Year's day. This is the last New Year's day that thousands of us poor soldiers will ever see. Many a one of us saw the sun rise this morning the last time we will ever see it rise on New Year's morning.

There is a fight expected here soon. We are building breastworks every day. We build breastworks and when we get them done they are no use to us for the Yankees find it out and attack us somewhere else. The Yankees seem to be preparing for a fight, we can't tell where. The river is between us and them. Our head men think the Yankees are sending troops here every day. Our regiment was out on picket duty last night. I did not go. I was sent on a detail down to Hamilton's Crossing to unload cars.

John Morrison came back to camp this morning. He said the Yankees laughed and talked with them all night. He said the Yankees told our men if we would throw our guns in the river, they would throw theirs in first. Sometimes the Yankees cross over on our side when the officers aren't about and swap knives with our men and fetch coffee and swap it for tobacco. It is against orders for them to speak to one another. General Hoods order is if any of our men are caught speaking to the Yankees they are to be shot. The headmen are afraid they will get to friendly and won't fight. It is strange to see men sitting along the river banks on each side for an hour loafing and talking to each other, the next hour shooting and killing each other. You need not be surprised of hearing of a big fight at any time. If they do fight here again it will be a bloody time for we are well prepared to give them a lively time of it.

I have sent you \$29.00 since I left home and I have \$15.00 more I will send you the first chance I get. I dream often times of being at home with you and the baby but when I wake up I find myself a long ways from home.

So I will have to bring my letter to a close, as the sun is fast setting, by asking you to write soon and often as all the pleasure I see is when I get a letter from home. I have got a pretty four bladed Yankee knife I will send you the first chance I have. So I will close for the present by

asking you to give yourself as little uneasiness about me as you can for I will take as good care of myself as I can. I forever remain,
Your husband till death, T. L. Morrison.

At a Camp near Fredericksburg, VA:

Dear Wife, I seat myself to drop you a few lines to let you know that I am well at present and hope these few lines will soon come to hand and find you and the baby both enjoying the same great blessing. This letter leaves me and all the rest of the boys well. I got a letter from Lawson today. That was the only letter I have received since the fight. I think the time long since I have heard from home. You surely have heard from me in this time.

Everything is quiet here at this time. The Yankees are making preparations to fight here, or leave one, we can't tell which. It is thought by our leading men that the Yankees are going to try us again. If they fight here again the Yankees will have to cross over the river and attack us for we have no way to cross the river to fight them. Were in sight of them every day. The Yankees are all dressed in blue. They are so thick they look like blackbirds. If those bluecoats come over the river there will be a many of one of them never get back for many of them never got back before.

Times are hard here and the winter is very cold and clothing only scarce. We have no clothing except what we have on. Our house is the forest and our bed is the cold damn earth. Three of us sleep together. We spread down one blanket and cover with two. You can have an idea how warm we sleep. We certainly lie close together.

There is no use to say anything about how lousy we are. We are as lousy as hogs and can't help ourselves. A body louse won't stay on your head. They are the termentingest things that I have ever been plagued with. They are a great deal larger than a head louse and can bite and scratch at once.

You don't know anything about hard times unless you were here and could see the condition of the poor women and children that are here. It looks like they will be bound to starve to death. They have been compelled to leave their homes and many of their houses have been burned to ashes, and where the armies are they can't make anything. Sometimes after their crops are made the army destroys it all. This is very rich country and the people have been very wealthy before the war. The land is rich but it looks like the country is ruined. The houses are burned down and the fences and everything burned up. Poor people can never live here again I don't think.

I will close for the present by asking you to write soon. I remain,
Your husband til death, T. L. Morrison

Dear Wife: I seat myself to answer your letter of the 5th instance which I received today. It found me well and I hope these few lines will soon come to hand and find you and the baby both well. I have no more to write at present, only hard times and that is everywhere.

Everything is still all along the lines at present but how long they will remain so I can't tell for winter is nearly over and spring is near and hard fighting will soon come. Old General Jackson has no mercy on poor soldiers. He marches us sometimes day and night and rushes us right in the bloody battlefield where we are slain by the thousands. Sometimes I think this summer will end this war. If the Yankees don't whip us starvation will, for if they don't give us more to eat in the summer than we get to eat now, the men can't hold out to march these long marches.

I will tell you what we get to eat. Sometimes we get salted pork, 1 pound and three quarters every 7 days. When we get bacon 1 pound every 7 days. Sometimes we get pickled beef 2 pounds every 7 days. We have no shortening to put in our bread and sometimes no salt.

Times are hard here. A turkey hen is worth \$20 to \$25. Chickens are worth from \$8 to \$10, eggs 25 cents apiece. Bacon is \$2.00 a pound and we poor soldiers only get \$11 dollars a month. You have no idea how hard I live. Am almost naked and the weather is so cold here.

I wish I could come home and tell you of the ups and downs I see. The men are running away steadily. Last night there were five who left, William Watts, Prune and Van Johnson, and the other two were from Yancey. The captain followed them to see if he could overtake them. If he gets them thy will be fetched back and shot. There is no doubt but what a heap of the men will

leave here this spring and try to get home and a heap of them will be put to death. It looks like it is death to stay and death to try to get home, so I will stay and do the best I can. It's every man for himself here. There is no one here who takes care of anybody but himself. They steal your rations unless you have it hung around your neck all the time. The man that steals the most gets the most to eat. I hold my hand very well. If I only had the bread that falls from your table I know I would live well to what I do live here. So I will close for the present by asking you to write as soon as you get this letter and give me all the news. I as ever remain,
Your husband till death, T. L. Morrison.

Richmond, VA Camp Winder Hospital, Third Division Ward No. 87

Dear Wife: I seat myself down to drop you a few lines to let you know where I am. I am sick and in the hospital at this time. I am not confined to my bed. I am able to walk about but am not fit for duty and was sent here. It is the chronic diarrhea that ails me. I haven't had a letter from you in two months. I will say to you I have been at this place for two weeks. I have a good bed. My diet is coffee, light-bread, rice, mashed potatoes and bacon. There is a heap of sick here. There are only three here that I know. They are dying from four to five a day here. There is a heap of wounded men here and the weather is getting very warm. I have not heard from your brother, Dave, and brother, John, since the fight. Dear Wife, I am getting tired of this war but I don't see any prospect of it ending soon. I have a heap of ups and downs here and I long to see that happy day when we will hear the glad news that the war is ended and peace is made and the poor soldiers get to go home. Oft-times I think that will be the happiest day we ever see on earth. Many brothers and mothers will rejoin in that day to see what sons come flocking home and I hope I will be in the crowd. So I will close for this time by asking you to write soon. I as ever remain,
Your husband till death, T. L. Morrison.

Taken Prisoner, Dear Wife: Happy am I today that I have been spared to get through another fight without getting killed or wounded. I had two bullet holes shot through my pants, several lock of hair cut off my head, bayonet run through the breast of my coat. On the 7th of this month we had a bloody fight. The sun was about hour high and while we were crossing the bridge on the Potomac river the Yankees shelled it, killed a great many men. We then fell in our breastworks where we remained quiet until about one hour in the night when we were charged with a heavy force of Yankees. The fight lasted about fifteen minutes. In that time we were all killed and taken prisoner. Our loss was heavy. About one half of my regiment is missing. About two thousand taken prisoner with me. I am today in the hands of my enemy and a prisoner of war on a little island entirely surrounded by water right where the Potomac empties in the Chesapeake Bay. The river is seven miles wide, the bay twenty. I was captured the 7th and was taken back five miles that night. Next day I was taken to Washington City. I got there in the evening and stayed there till the next and was put on a boat. The next evening we landed at Point Lookout where I will likely remain many days. Don't write till you hear from me again.
Your Husband till death, T. L. Morrison.

Dear Wife: I seat myself to write a few lines to you to let you know that I am well and hope these few lines will soon come to and find you and the baby both well. I have been well ever since I have been here. I am treated about as good as a prisoner of war could expect. Give yourself as little trouble about me as you can for I have no idea there will be any prisoners sent from here soon. As quick as you get this letter write to me. I have had no letter from you for several months. There is nothing that would afford me half of the pleasure that a letter would from you.

Direct your letter to T. L. Morrison, Point Lookout, Md. Only write on one side of a half a sheet of letter paper. Send it open. Don't seal it up. Put a Confederate stamp on it to fetch to the Yankee lines, five cents in silver to bring it on.

So write soon and fail not.

I as ever remain your husband till death, T. L. Morrison.

Dear Wife: I seat myself to drop you a few lines this New Year's morning to let you know that I am still yet alive and have lived to see another New Year's day, though I am many miles from where I was last New Year's day and have gone through many dangers.

Many of my companions since last New Year's are this morning trying the reality of an unknown and invisible world to us. I still am in hope that I will get home again. The next New Year's I hope I will be at home with you.

I wrote you a letter last week which I hope you have got by this time. I have not had a letter from you since last fall. I wish I could hear from you once more. I know you have written to me but I have not been at one place a few days at a time since last fall I landed here, and here I expect to stay awhile. There will be no exchange of prisoners soon, some think there will be no exchange till the war ends. No tongue can tell what I have seen since I left home.

I get a tin of coffee for my breakfast and a small piece of bread; for dinner a small piece of bread and a little slice of meat. We get no supper, have nothing but the ground to sleep on. We are allowed one blanket apiece.

So I will close for the present. Hope to hear from you soon.

Your husband till death, T. L. Morrison.

Dear Wife: I again seat myself to write you a few lines to let you know that I am still yet alive. I have been looking for a letter from you for a long time, but have not got any from you since I was taken prisoner.

I have written to you as often as I could. I have no money and can't get paper and stamps to write to you only as I get out on detail and get a little wood and sell it or save my ration and sell.

You don't know how glad I would be to get a letter from you as I haven't heard from you since last fall. You may not have heard from me and think I am dead as all were killed or taken prisoner that went in the fight.

The fight was on the night of the 7th of November, 1863. The men lay dead so thick I could not walk for stepping on them. Thank God I got through soft. I had a bayonet run through the breast of my coat, several bullet holes in my clothes, on through the rim of my hat. One trimmed some locks of hair off over my ear. I was one of the first prisoners that ever was brought on this island. There are now 12 or 15 thousand here fetching in every day. I am on an island surrounded by water. The river is seven miles wide on one side, the Chesapeake bay 20 miles across. I can see no land, only the little spot I am on.

Direct your letter to Point Lookout, Md. Put a Confederate stamp on it and five cents in silver in it and send it open as no letter can come through sealed.

I hope to hear from you soon.

T. L. Morrison.

February 28, 1864 - Point Lookout POW Camp, MD.

Dear Wife: I seat myself to answer your most kind and welcome letter I received today, bearing date February 15th. You don't know how glad I was to get a letter from you and to hear from you and the baby, and to know you know where I was.

I had almost given up all hopes of ever hearing from you. This is the first letter I have had from you in five months, and I know if you had not heard from me you had given up all hopes of ever hearing from me.

You don't know how much pleasure it was to me to get your letter and to know you knew I went through the fight safe. You must write often and fail not and I will as often as I can.

I am here a prisoner and have no money and haven't got means to get stamps. The prison I am in is unhealthy. I fear it will be very sickly in the summer as the water is bad and sometimes

the tide rises and nearly covers the island. I am as well treated as a prisoner could expect. I suffer a great deal with cold here as well as for something to eat. It is very cold here. I can't say I am lonesome here for any time you look out on the waters day or night you can see the big ships riding on its bosom and the sailors going up and down the mast pole. So I will close for this time. Hope to hear from you soon. I as ever remain your husband till death,
T. L. Morrison.

May 1, 1864 - Point Lookout POW Camp, MD.

Dear Wife: I sent myself to drop you a few lines to let you know that I am well and hope these few lines will soon come to hand and find you and the baby both well. I have had but one letter from you since I have been here. I have had no sickness since I have been here. The Prisoners are beginning to die here very fast. There are some few cases of smallpox in the prison. We see nothing green here to tell us that spring is coming. Nothing grows on this island but pines. There are no trees of any other kind. Our rations is a little piece of meat and bread for breakfast; for dinner a tin of some kind of soup and for supper nothing. We do get but two meals a day here. If I live to get home I will tell you my ups and downs. I can't tell of half I have seen and gone through. There is no prospect of peace here. The Yankees say when they whip us it look like all of the South will soon be in prison. Do the best you can and maybe I will get home some time. I would freely give all I have to get this.
So farewell, I as ever remain your husband till death,
T. L. Morrison

August 6, 1864 - Point Lookout POW Camp, MD.

Dear Wife: I seat myself to answer your letter which came to hand today, bearing date of May 20th. It found me not well. I have been very low with fever. I have been sick for two months and now slowly recovering. There were three weeks I was out of my head. I can now only sit up a little while on my bunk. Don't grieve about me. I will do the best I can. It has sickly here since warm weather has set in. It is very hot on this island. The average is about fifteen every day and night that die. The most die with diarrhea and fever. I am too weak to write any more now. Write soon and often. Your husband till death,
T. L. Morrison

October 1st, 1864 - Point Lookout POW Camp, MD.

Dear Wife:
I seat myself to write you a few lines to let you know that I am still yet alive. I wrote to you the 8th of August. I had been sick a long time. I have gotten about well. I know you want to hear from me. You know I have no way to get stamps and paper. I have no money and have to save a little of my rations. I only get a piece of meat and bread for breakfast, for dinner a tin of soup, for supper nothing. I live a hard life. I hope to hear from you soon, I will close at this time.
Your husband till death, T. L. Morrison

January 30, 1865 - Point Lookout POW Camp, MD.

Dear Wife: I seat myself to write you a few lines. Have got no answer yet from my last letter. I have no way to get stamps and paper, only as I save my rations and sell them. I have seen hard times since I left home. I suffered with hunger, suffered with sickness and with cold, with heat, hard marching. Home may be ever so poor but it is the happiest place on this side of heaven. I would rather be at home and live on crumbs that fall from your table than to live a soldier's life. You may look for me at home by fall for this war is bound to end this summer. There is no exchange of prisoners. There has been no exchange of prisoners now for over 15 months.

I was on the second boat of the prisoners fetched here. There were only 3000 men here when I got here. There has been no exchange since I came. Nearly all of the first prisoners are dead. The average death here are 18 every day and night, and if on this island my body must mold away and your face I never behold, grieve not after me. Write soon and often. You husband till death,

T. L. Morrison.

Today (February 1, 1865) I enrolled my name for to go home. Left Point Lookout February the 6; was on the Chesapeake bay one day and night: landed at the mouth of James river the 8th at 5 o'clock; got up to Richmond at 9, got to Camp Winder at 11 o'clock.

Left Richmond the 18 at 4 o'clock, got to Danville 12 o'clock. Left there the 19th at 10 o'clock and got to Salisbury at 12 o'clock. Left there 22 and got in six miles of Morganton till 8 o'clock which was as far as the train runs. Stayed all night with the Widow Whisenant. Left there the 23 at 4 o'clock and walked 18 miles and got home at 2 o'clock that evening.

I was then back at home again, a paroled prisoner, with my wife and child whom I had not seen in two years, five months, and one day. The war ended April the 26, 1865.