

Name: Jacob Miller

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Sharpsburg, December 7th, 1862 [Jacob was 80 yrs old]

My dear children Christian and Amelia,

I acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23d November. We are all pleased to hear that you are all well and doing well, although it appears you have some political difficulties to encounter in your section of the country as well as hear with those black republicans and abolitionists. That party is the whole and sole cause of all our difficulties and rupture of this, of all countries the best in the world, and I fear never will be restored, and I know can never be as it was. As to my individual interest in the settlement of this matter will amount to but little as my race is nearly run, but as to the rising generations the difference may be great.

I will now say something about our local affairs. Your Unkle Daniel Miller is no more. He departed from us on Sunday 16th day of November last, between the hours of twelve and one o'clock, and was buried on Monday about the same hour of the day. He was not well when he left home, the day before the big battle which came off the 17th of September. When he came back he went to Henry Newkirks and continued there the balance of his time. He came to town several times [.] after he got back he was taken with a diarear which was a very common complaint with the troops and citizens. Both armies were afflicted with the disease, however. Daniel took sick on Monday or Tuesday and continued getting worse with sick vomiting spells. I sent once to see him on Thursday and found him ill but he could still converse yet on almost any subject, but the next day I found him worse and so he continued failing

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to the end [.] he was 84 years of age the 12 day of September last, four years, three months and eighteen days older than I [.] he appeared anxious this warfare should be settled but now it is nothing to him whether it is settled or not. Mrs. Adam Michael is no more she took her flite this day a weak [.] her oldest daughter had just gon before her about eight or ten days, the other daughter and Kalille were both down and verry ill at the sametime but are getting better, - Hellen

and Janet have had a severe attack of typhoid fever but are both getting better [...] Hellen is up and about in the house [...] Jacob and Annamarys children nearly all or perhaps all had scarlet fever but are all getting well – Henry Mummas wife is no more, she departed this life about two weeks since, she had the same fever [...] nearly all or quite all of John Smith family wore down but are all getting better. Many other citizens and hundreds of soldiers have been taken with the same and many died, it is an army disease thus adds an addition to the Horrors of war.

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We have still got 2 Regiments along the canal [...] their headquarters are in Billy Blackfords and our woods and they are strung along the canal up and down. They have got our barn and wagon shed for their commissary stores and the field back of the barn for a wagon yard and an encampment [...] there they commit all kinds of depredations burn our rails, board, and pale fence, now and tin milk our cows, use our sleigh shed and chicken house for horse stables, they still occupy our blacksmith shop and the house opposite the horse stable, and our basement story for a provost yard of forty odd soldiers, our wash house to cook and wash in, there are 50 or 60 wagons employed here to bring in and haul away their stores, they live well, they have fresh and pickled beef, pickled pork, bacon, crackers, flour, potatoes dried peaches, and apples, rice coffee, tea, sugar, molasses and many other things put up in tin cans, boxes, etc. – when I wrote to you before I think there was still some fencing on the Wilson farm but now \_\_\_\_\_? says there are none but a few panels around the house and barn, up above Groves warehouse there was some fence left when the main army left, but the pickets are now burning them, so I think by Spring I will not have any fence left, except an outside fence around my home farm and one field fenced off, and you know the fence along the

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Hagerstown road is about three fourths stone and that is pretty well knocked to pieces, twenty odd [cannon] balls and shells struck it, several took it nearly to the ground. – perhaps you have not seen it stated in the papers as to [JEB] Stewart's ride through Pa. he took about two thousand of his cavalry (while the federal army was lurking about in Maryland after the big fight) and crossed the River in the neighbourhood of the [clear?] spring and passed over into Pennsylvania and gathered up a parcel of horses. they took nineteen from Andy Schebly's father-in-law at Mercersburg and many others as they went along to Chambersburg there they scoured out the country till they had about eighteen hundred head there they found large commissary stores the South (?) the wagons they took along some government wagons and loaded all them and sent them back to Va. and then piled on their horses what they could get on them such as clothing shoes blankets. He piled them up on their horses as high as a mans head Shoes they strung

up on ropes and hung them on their horses necks and some of the soldiers would hang them about their own necks They took from the stores what they could and the balance destroyed by fire. Then popped down through pa. in the direction of Frederick City leaving it to their right about four miles popping on down to the river and crossed over into Dixie without molestation notwithstanding they stopped to feed their horses between Frederick and the river thus you see they made a successful raid clear around the Federal army in about two hours after they got over the river The Federal Cavalry came up with great pomp about three thousand in number but too late though quite as early as they wished it

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after the frolick was over they came back and staid about town for sometime, one of the officers was at John Snevelys and they got to talking about the rebels coming over and making that raid. He said they had it in their power to have headed them. John asked him why they did not do it. His reply was that they knew better than to attack that party, - I do not recollect whether I gave you a history of a battle that was fought below Shepherds town on Saturday after the big fight of Antietum. If I did it was very imperfect as I only got to know the particulars since then. - the rebels moved back from the river entirely out of sight of the federal troops which emboldened them to cross on Saturday or Sunday about three thousand of their troops ventured over below the burnt mill, there they met with a negro and asked him if there were any rebels about and his reply was [""] god help your soul hunny dare is no rebbles in dis neighborhood ["] so they moved on some distance when they came across about two or three hundred rebbles (who ware sent out appurpose to toll them out) the rebbles started off as if they ware fritened to death threw away their knapsack blankets and guns. The yankees pursued them in great earnest but when they got out to a heavy pine [piece?] of woods there they found Gen Jackson with a heavy force rais up out of the woods and let loose upon them[,] the yankees wheeled about and took to their heels; the rebels followed them with all their speede the yankess not knowing the road made for the river

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at the nearest point and that happened to be at the cement quarry they made no halt but tumbled over into the pit. Some broke their arms some their legs some their necks and some knocked out their brains but nearly all that went over ware killed they were piled on top of each other eight or ten feet high one fellow went over on horseback, while this was going on the yankees were firing across the river with their big guns to protect their men but by the by killed a considerable number of their own men and not killing any rebbles the yankees loss was about eighteen hundred ^killed wounded and prisoners^ while the rebels was only eight or ten in all. - We have some doubts whether our letters all reched you. Savilla says she sent you her and Sam's photographs last summer and has not received an acknowledgement of the receipt of it as yet.

You say my letter was opened before you got it, but from your statement I suppose you got the whole of it. We have nine acres wheat down on all of our land and if the army had not been here I would have had upward of a hundred. Many of the farmers have not sown a handful. – if the soldiers all go away we will have a fine chance for a large crop of corn next summer if we can get fences made.

Nothing more at present but that we are all well except myself having taken a bad cold through this change of weather. The family join me in sending to you our love and best wishes.

Affectionally yours

Jacob Miller