



The Home Front

*T*HE MOST IMMEDIATE IMPACT on the home front came from the absence of over half of all Hoosier adult men. Nowhere was this absence felt more keenly than on the farms of Indiana, where nearly 200,000 worked as farmers and farm laborers in 1860, over half the state's employed workforce of 336,000.¹ While many older male farmers remained at home, their sons and the younger men who made up the bulk of the farm labor pool were the state's primary source for troops. These farm laborers were joined by a significant number of younger landholding, married farmers who also enlisted.

Altogether, there was a significant drain on farm labor, and the male and female farmers who remained sought ways to compensate for the lack of labor. Key among these accommodations was the purchase of farm machinery, notably mechanical reapers for wheat and other small grains. These reapers significantly increased productivity: with a mechanical reaper, two workers could reap in a day as much grain as twelve workers in the past.² Female farmers sometimes could be found in the field, though often the women who headed farm households hired workers.³ The war forced women to supervise the laborers they hired and to make decisions about marketing and planting. Labor shortages had less effect on the most important Hoosier grain, corn; it could remain in the field longer before being picked, so the lack of a mechanical solution was not as severe. The war years would see a slight shift away from corn and toward wheat in response to progress in mechanization. These shifting demands for goods, coupled with the loss of southern Indiana's most important market in New Orleans, brought anxiety about future prospects, especially in the early days of the war. By the middle of the war, however, the Mississippi had reopened, and the army's demand for foodstuffs raised prices for farmers. Hoosier farmers fortunate enough to have sufficient labor and capital to take advantage of the situation enjoyed a boom time, and many men reluctant to volunteer for the army reaped the financial benefits of the war, much to the chagrin of their more patriotic neighbors in the army.

For the state's small urban working class, however, the war was not so beneficial. Mechanization in manufacturing accelerated dramatically, and productivity increased in turn. Workers saw their real wages lag; despite the shortage of labor,

their income rose more slowly than prices, which climbed dramatically during the war. The war was a boon to manufacturing, but less so in Indiana than in other Northern states. Within the state, manufacturing shifted from New Albany and Madison to Indianapolis and Evansville.⁴

Higher prices for both agricultural and manufactured goods were a special burden on those who had to depend on soldier's pay, which was sometimes slow in arriving. Many communities pledged to aid those whose husbands or even sons were at war, but this assistance was often inadequate and sometimes dependent on partisan politics. These difficulties discouraged many married men from enlisting. The wives of those who did enlist often sought help not just from the government, but from friends, neighbors, and kin. Many women left their homes and returned to live with their parents or moved in with their in-laws, creating frustration and conflict for these women who had previously headed their own households.

Anxiety increased dramatically on the home front, as typical roles shifted within families. The emotions were most deeply felt as many Hoosiers had to say good-bye to their sons and husbands, brothers and cousins, sometimes forever. With both disease and battles claiming many soldiers, the folks at home were in constant fear of losing their loved ones. Ill health or a lingering recovery from battle wounds added to the suspense. Many feared that they would be the recipient of a letter informing them of the death of their son or husband. And more than 24,000 Hoosier men did die.⁵

Those who remained at home were expected to do their part, although it was an expectation that was not always fulfilled. Women shifted the focus of their volunteer work from overseas missions to the soldiers and their families, and sometimes even the freed peoples. Women and men prepared boxes of goods to send to their local companies, providing foodstuffs, clothing and blankets, and the small amenities that made life at the front a little more bearable. They also raised funds for national organizations like the United States Sanitary Commission and the Christian Commission, which had taken some responsibility for the physical and spiritual care of soldiers in hospitals and in the field. Men who remained at home worked at insuring that the honor of their community would be maintained by raising funds to increase bounties, cash bonuses for enlisting, and providing aid to soldiers' families. One of the most important responsibilities of families, especially wives, was to write their loved ones. To keep the morale of the troops high, their officers preferred letters that were not filled with complaints. Men appreciated much detail of home life in these letters, as a means of keeping them connected to the lives to which they hoped to return.

At the same time, the life of home went on. The fields were planted and harvested, the work was done, children were born, children and adults died.

HEARTS SEPARATED

For young couples, war brought separation. Even before Lucius Chapin enlisted, his wife entreated him not to go. And once he was gone, the pangs of separation could be intense, especially when she was mistreated by his family, with whom she stayed for a while. Lucius's parents were born in Virginia and Kentucky and were moderately well-off farmers; Alice's father was John W. Osborn, a noted western Indiana abolitionist and editor. In 1860, Lucius and Alice were already married, but living with Alice's sister. Lucius was Quartermaster Sergeant of Company M of the Fourth Indiana Cavalry (Seventy-seventh Regiment).

Terre Haute, June 29th 1862

My Dear husband

What are you doing now about 12oclk. Oh, do you want to see *me*? I would give any thing almost to see you. I think I am better, they *all* say I *look* a great deal better, but I have such queer pains. Father came last night & brought a prescription which Dr Patrick says will do me good if any thing will. Father has gone out to Woods Mill [and] will write to you right away. & now my dear husband let me tell you I do not *verily* believe I could live & bid you good bye to go in the *Army*[.] How can you for a moment think of such a thing, can you leave *me*? Can you leave our babes? *No, no, no*, ever since the idea has got into my brain I'm like a foolish one, I cry & can't help it most all the time & still I struggle & work to help the precious promises in view. I pray & try to do so continuously for grace & patience for us *both* always, together, oh how disappointed I was to get no letter last night when they returned from the P.O. We sent over to Mr. Perry to bring over the bedstead for me[.] he at first refused because he had no order from you, they didn't urge him but after awhile he brought them, I am still as you left me in the Parlor. Father has a done a good deal to get ready at Sullivan, And heart full of desire to go ahead & for us all to help one another in all kindness, oh my husband I love you let us try to feel right and as Christians should, Uncle Jonas was just here & brought some nice cherries & a fine young Squirrel, oh, don't I want to see you though. I've a great many things to tell you but cannot write them; I think or at least before soon to be able to sit up or be moved but *God* alone has real knowledge. Did you go to Church today, please write to me *every day* and tell me what you do, wont you? & how Ally my own little Allie does & what? Solomon goes away in the morning. I don't remember where, but think to *Greencastle* Uncle Seely had a poor forlorn soldier from the Hospital with him, oh when I see such I cant consent to your even thinking of going. You wrote you should stay there some time; I can't spare you long can I? Though I am kindly cared for & every thing that can be thought of done, still I am not satisfied. I want my own corner & family. I will not try to tell you of

Father's movements but leave that to him. I don't know why but it seems to me there is such a heavy load on my heart it can never be removed & theres only one thing can do it; Dont imagine I only think of self I nor none of my folks think but what you have had the hardest time nearly any one ever had. I do not forget the many hours of patient kind attention you have given me. I love you for it & because you were of all the world my husband and I hope to make you a true & faithful though very weak wife until *death* shall *part us*, & now let us love one another and study what will make each other happy & that strive to do, & may *God bless us*

[handwriting shifts: has the voice of Alice's father]

We have just returned. Alice has spent a lonesome day but seems better than in the morning when we left. She is now pretty free from pain. The idea of your going into the Army b[r]eaks her heart—But I told her you certainly would not go unless you could procure such a position, as would *pay* and enable you to resign and return home if the service was not pleasant to you. It would certainly be folly for you to go on any other terms, when there are enough others to go, and there is enough to be done here to serve the country. But if you prefer going, come down, and we will endeavor to raise enough men for you to procure a commission. I have made some progress in preparing to enter with you, in the business talked of but this sheet is filled—I will write you again soon,—perhaps tomorrow. If you can do nothing to profit where you are, come to me at Sullivan

[no signature]



My Love, I got your Note of June 10th from Triune tonight, but although it is 12 oclck at night I must write you a few words, I love you tonight dearest—I sent you quite a long letter to Mur—this morn—there is nothing occurring here—except mother is *real* sick tonight I have just written to John to try to cheer him up a little—The news here tonight is that *Lee* with 100,000 men are across the Rappahannock and marching on Washington and Lincoln has called for 300,000 more. We of course hope it is a Canard—I am glad my darling that your whole soul seems so stayed on your Redeemer Oh may God bless and keep you Father wont listen a moment to a fear that any harm will befall you—Darling—*dearest hearts love* were you here you would see your Wifey mostly *undressed* sitting beside “*Our Bed*” *now* indeed a lonely couch to me—Could you see into my heart you would find *love* and affectionate regard so strong that your Wife would if you desired her immediately lay down this old *Pen* and would undoubtedly fall to loving her *dearie*, Would in all probability rush to his arms and never think of *Pen* again to night—possibly if the—Oh pshaw—but *where* are you? and [missing]

What manner of creature am I to write to you after this style when I know not *how* you are or where but oh my love how I should delight to have you here—to *love* you—to feel you once more *all my own* and *free*, is it possible those days are flown forever! That we shall never again enjoy the *close embrace* of wh[ich] you spoke in your late note! That the loving kiss shall ne'er be pressed again? but I wont think it I will try to trust *Our God* and if we never meet on Earth again I believe, hope and pray that in Eternity we *shall*—I love you—and only write this line to say so and to ask if you think I could I had best try to send you a [?]Boxer now—I'm more than anxious to—I'll try to say howdye do in the morn—Write all you can dear one to me—I love you for writing so often—Good night didn't Wifey make a fancy bird? Here is a kiss—Mr. Abbotts note I thought was kind—he is to fill H. Ward Beechers pulpit part of the summer—I suppose you know H.W. has gone to Europe—

I have no word from the home folks—Miss James wants me to go home with her—and talk to Mr. Williamson in regard to the business proposition—What do you think? please write very soon

Your ever loving
Alice
June 15th/63
Destroy

First letter from Lucius P. Chapin Papers, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis; second letter from photocopies filed in 4th Indiana Cavalry correspondence at Indiana State Archives, Indianapolis, courtesy of Robert Butikas, Westville, Illinois.

A FATHER'S GRIEF

The worst fate for those on the home front was to lose a loved one. Here J. W. Gordon explored the meaning of his son's death. Gordon was probably Jonathan W. Gordon, a prominent Indianapolis attorney and Republican politician. His unnamed son might have been James R., sixteen years old in the 1860 census.

Indianapolis, Ind.
Feb. 8th, 1862.

My Dear Sir:

Yours of the 4th inst., came to hand this morning. I thank you for its expression of sympathy. I know it is heartfelt; and, therefore, feel its generous power to alleviate my great sorrow. I was very sick when I wrote you; and am still very poorly; for I have not slept without taking medicine, since my glorious boy gave up his life for a country that I fear is, as you say, "lost."

You Know that whatever might be used of my letter without compromising me, and with advantage to the country is at your service. By compromising me I

do not mean in any political sense; but as a soldier in the army. All I said is true; and, keeping my name out of use, you may use it, as I am sure you will discretely for the country and mankind.

Let me, (if I did not), give you an extract from my boy's last letter to me, which I found in his coat pocket immediately over his heart, after it was brought home to me; and covered with his own innocent blood: It is to me his last will and testament—sealed with his blood. A nobler testament was never made, by hero or martyr. He says:

“You seem to be at a loss, My Dear Father, to understand my motives for volunteering; but, I think, if you will remember the lessons, which for years you have endeavored to impress upon my mind, that all will be explained. When you have endeavored ever since I was able to understand you, to instruct me, not only by precept, but by example, that I was to prefer Freedom to everything else in this world; and that I should not hesitate to sacrifice anything, even life itself, upon the altar of my country when required, you surely should not be surprised that I should, in this hour of extreme peril to my country, offer her my feeble aid.”

In another letter to me in answer to the first one I wrote him after I learned of his volunteering, he uses language similar to the above; and then adds:

“When you have endeavored to instruct me from my childhood, not only by precept but by example, that my *first* duty was to my God; my *second*, to my country; and my *third*, to my Parents, you surely can not complain of the legitimate results of such teachings. I have been derelict in all three of these duties, I sorrowfully own; but trust me, My Dear Father, that henceforth it shall be my endeavor to act in a better manner, the part assigned to me in the great Trgedy of life.”

His officers all say “he was as bold as a lion; and as gentle as a lamb.” Genl. Milroy says “he was brave almost to a fault—generous as the sun, diffusing joy, and life, and animation in every circle in which he moved.” But he has closed “the tragedy of life.” Few of any age have ever acted their part more nobly. I feel that there is nothing left for me to do; but to build his monument. I had hoped he would have done that for me. But all my hopes are in the grave.

I am solicitous to fix his name in some enduring form in the memory of mankind; for I do not think a nobler sacrifice was every laid upon the altar of *Freedom*, or exacted as an expiation for the crime and curse of human slavery.

But I am a child on this subject—all weakness. Pardon this; and accept my love.

Yours truly,
J. W. Gordon.

RUNNING THE FARM

When husbands left, many women added the men's duties to their own already considerable work load. Women's letters to husbands at the front were as likely to focus on finances, once the sole province of the man, as they were on love and affection. Lydia Peck's husband, thirty-six-year-old Rufus Peck, was a captain in the Fifty-third Regiment, organized about two months before this letter was written. In 1860 the Pecks had a farm in Wood Township of Clark County valued at \$2,500, substantial but not as valuable as those of some of their neighbors.

Newprovidence April 29th 1862

Dear Husband,

Yours of the 17th has just come to hand I was glad to hear from you again it is strang it takes letters so long to come and go there I thought I had told you what the sale bill was but if so you have not got it so I will tell you again it amounte'd to \$195.90. Bellows Note \$101.35, Croak security, Cooks Note \$52 Bellows security[,] Dave Goss Note \$16.65, Doubt security[,] Watterman Note \$10, Bellows security Cash \$15.90, total \$195.90, the Notes are payable in one year with intrest from date. Bellows said you left no order with him about it and you wrote to me that I would have to suit my self, and Bellows said the things would be apt to sell for more at a year credit with intrest than six months without so I told him to sell with years credit as he would know who to credit, and knowing him to be your friend when I want advice that I think would take so long to get from you I ask him but haply I have not troubled him but once that was about the money Mit Hallet paid I asked him about putting it in the bank as it was paper and part Kentucky money) his reply was he might put it where the devil couldent get it I told that was a fact but I asked him only for avice about it as I did not want to keep it on hands or about the house[,] he said he would take it himself as he could pay it out and not make his debt more or less I kept the cows you told me to Jonson and jinny[,] we could not keep one without the other they was so lost without the other cattle that they got out once and went up to Bailies as it was, jinny and I get along pretty well but she wont let me milk her any place but in her stall. It has been so very cold we have not sheard the sheep but it is warm enough now and I will have it done if I can get any one to do it if not I will do it myself Ann did not seem to like to give up coming to work at the wool so I told her if she come and help to wash pick spin and weave up what I wanted done this fall I would give her two linsy dresses and stocking yarn[,] she said she would do it but she did not want the dresses as she was not going to wear linsey unless calico got higher than it is now but that she would make her two blankets.

her parents was here a week or so ago and staid all night I told them if she come I wanted her to pitchin and work as if she was at home but she need not expect me to buy her anything[.] they said they wanted her to come and for me to make her work I told them I did not expect to order her around much[.] as to the boy you wrote about I don't know who you mean as she has none and as for bringing Bens boy here I would not allow it for she is as much as I want to board. I let Tom have 2 and half bushels of potatoes for one gallon of tree molases I had plenty of them for they sold so low that Bellows only Sold 10 bushels I have 2 or 3 bushel yet and the children wanted the tree molases I am as saving as I can be and spend as little money as posable brook doctor bill was 2.50 which is the most I have spent but that I could not help, my butter has kept us in all the little notions we want from the store[.] true paid the intrest on his note as usual and I paid jesse as you told me Hedrick paid \$2 of his debt leaving 67 cents behind I saw old baby Newman last week he said you told him you would not want it till fall I told him I would need some flour before that and if he would let me have some wheat I would as soon have it as the money and he said he would let me have some after harvest. if I see Carnel or can send him word I will have that seen to I had forgot how much it was till you wrote[.] I was sorry to trouble you about the renting of the place but I though it was hardly fair to find one horse and only get one third[.] henry has worked Compry every day except one but he dont push them much only once in a while he gets a smart fit on him then you would think he would do it all in a day[.] there is a school started in town bob lucas is teacher I signed ½ schollar only as I want bub to work some this summer[.] he says he would like to know if your boys catch any fish down there[.] he dont know what else to write as I have wrote so much we are well, write as often as convenient, your Wife

Lydia B. Peck to Capt. R. A. Peck

Peck Family Collection, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis.

“I DO NOT KNOW WHAT HE WOULD DO IF IT WAS NOT FOR HIS GIRLS”

While some farmers who owned their own land volunteered for the Union Army, many more volunteers worked on someone else's land, either as unpaid workers for their parents or as hired hands. The drain on farm laborers meant that farmers, male and female, who remained needed to find new sources of labor to replace the volunteers. Two key sources were to draw more females into the labor force and to depend on machinery. Mary Hamilton's father did both to replace the seasonal labor he probably would have hired before the war.

Fort Wayne March 20th 1863

Dear Cousin Adelia

I received your letters on the 18 and was very glad to hear from you, but oh how sad it made us all feel when I read the death of your dear father. We are all well at present and hope these few lines may find you and the rest of your folks enjoying good health. For a couple of weeks we had such nice weather that we began to think that we were not going to have any more snow, but lo and behold when we got up this morning the ground was covered with snow about three inches deep and the wind has blown cold all day, and it is raining this evening. I do not know what it will turn out to be by tomorrow morning.

I have not heard from Uncle Williams folks for a long time: I am going to write a letter to Ester again and jog up her memory and let her know that I have not forgotten her if she has me. I wrote to her the forepart of the winter and have not received an answer yet maby the letter never reached her so I will write another and make shure of it. I had such a good time going to school this winter, but alas school days are gone not to return no more. I am at home now helping Father out of doors all that I can[.] as long as school lasted I did not do him much good for I was away all day and could not do much to help him just in the morning and at night but now I am redly to answer at any call. I have been out in the barn all day helping him to thrash wheat. he has a machine that he made him self and then he puts all of his grain in the barn and thrashes it just as he wants to use the straw to feed the cattle. When we thrash he has my younger sister drive the horses and my brother to rake the straw from the machine and my oldest sister to pitch the sheaves to me and I have to unbind them and get them up on a table so he can get at them and he feeds the machine him self. I do not know what he would do if it was not for his girls. I tell mother that he could not do any thing if he did not have us girls to wait on him We lost a cow yesterday that was worth 80 dollars to any man. she was the best one out of six of them she was a great favorite with all of us: it always happens so that the best must always go first . . . Oh Adelia how I do wish that you could come out here you would be welcomed by us all. do come if you can. I shall have to bring my letter to a close for it is getting late and my eyes hurt me very much to night. give my love to all the folks and keep a good share for your self excuse all mistake for I am in a hurry.

From your affectionate Cousin
Mary Hamilton

NO SUPPORT FOR SOLDIERS' FAMILIES

With their husbands off to war, some soldiers' wives struggled to maintain their families in the face of the irregular flow of pay home. Efforts were made to provide relief for such families, but the efforts were limited and locally based. The German-born Rows held real estate valued at only \$180 in 1860. D. D. Pratt was a Logansport lawyer and leading figure in the Republican Party; Malisa Row must have believed he would have some pull. There is little information on the Shermans; like the families of many Civil War volunteers, they may have been propertyless and less fixed in place.

Pulaski Pulaski Co
ind Dec the 24 1863

Mr prat

Dear sir I must drop you a few lines and lat you know the sirkimstand I am in My husbend inlestet in 1861 in the 46 Rechment Co H ind vol he inlestet in Pulaski and wen the speches was Made the promes was that his famely shut be taken Care of and he was a Man that lovd his Contry and famely he told them af thay woud see to his famely he woud go thay promest him thay woud be all taken care of and he has bin now in survis better then too years and was alls on dudy wen evar he was Calld one ontill he was wounded in the battle at Champin hill May the 16 last and then was taken to the hosepital and hase bin thare evar since and he hase Got no pay since he is bin in the hospital he hase bin trying to git his discharge for he is cripeld in his thy and will not be able to March aney More bud thay dit not discharge him thay put his name in the invlid Core and as long as he was with his Rechment and Got his pay I Got along with out aney help but now he hase dra[w]de no pay since he is wounded and I have Com in neede I have sold his teeme since he laft to Git along with and that is all he laft for Me to sell for he was a man that hade to Make aliven with his teeme and hade to Rent and thay hase not bin nothen don for the Soldiers wifs here that I no of at lest thay have nevar bin to see wether we hade aney thing or not and I Cut not Git along aney longer so I went to the township troste and lade in a [complaint] that i hade to have help and he give Me anoder for to Git som few things to Git a long a few days now and they want to put My childern out and have Me take the smalast and Go and work out I have five Childern the oldest is 10 years old next 8 one 6 one 4 and 2 years old these littel childern thay want to put out to save the expence of the Conty this is the way the Butternuts treats the soldiers wifs here I got along too years with out thur c help and now becose My husbend dont Git his pay so I hade to Call one them and Must I now brake up houskeeping to plese these Butternuts for the Most of them that lives here is Butternuts now af you plese write to Me as soon as you git this and lut Me no wether they can treat

soldiers famelys this way I think this woud be Ruther to hard for a man to leve his famely to purtact his Contry and fite for them that is at home as well as for him self and wen he Coms home to find his childern scatert amongs strangers how will he fell thay are Makin op Money for to git the men to inlest now to keep the draft of[f] I think a Man that Gose for the Money will make a poor soldier thay batter lat them be draffet and safe that Money to take care of the famelys and lat them that Gose now have wut our Men Gits that wen too years a Go so no More at present yours in haste

Malisa Row
Wife of George M. Row to Mr prat

D. D. Pratt Papers, Indiana State Library, Indianapolis.



December the 10th 1863

Mr. morton govnore of indiaania i take my pen in hand to in form you how us poor Soldiers wives are treated Some times we have Some thing to eat and Some times we dont and there a[r]nt But four Soldiers wives in Moors Hill[.] all of our Children are naked for Clothing and they pretend to do [illegible] things and Dont Do any thing and there is a man in this town that Says let the Soldiers wives go to the poor house where they Belong and i want you to raly up the loyal men if we have got any Among us But Dont say any thing A Bout [w]ho informed you of the fact we are Doged to Death [illegible].

Yours truly
Mrs Mary Sherman
Moors Hill Dearborn Co Ind

Rite Soon and let me [k]now if you get this or not.

Governor Oliver P. Morton Papers, Indiana State Archives, Indianapolis.

WAR AND MADNESS

The anxieties brought about by the war and by the conflicts at home could drive the more mentally fragile into clinical depression or psychosis.

Total no. 2332	No. for the Year, 144
Date of Admission, August 7th 1862	
Name of Patient, Amelia A. Lewis	
Nativity, Virginia	Post Office, Greencastle
County, Putnam	Age,
Social Condition, Married	No. of Children, 4. 4 dead

Duration of Insanity, 6 weeks	Form of Disease, Mania
Predisposing Cause,	
Exciting Cause, Supposed that her Son being in the Army was the Cause, supposed him dead etc.	
Propensities, Homicidal and Suicidal	
Bodily Disorder,	No. of Attack,
Religion, Baptist	Temperament,
Occupation, Housewifery	
Are the Parents of patient blood relations?	
Remarks: Made an attempt to destroy herself by using a knife to cut herself	



Total no. 2441	No. for the Year, 53
Date of Admission, Feb 10, 1863	
Name of Patient, Hanah Ellen Duesler	
Nativity, New York	Post Office, Lisbon
County, Noble	Age, 29
Social Condition, Married	No. of Children, 6
Duration of Insanity, 6 months	Form of Disease, Melancholia
Predisposing Cause, Unknown	
Exciting Cause, War excitement. Fear of draft	
Propensities, Suicidal & Homicidal	
Bodily Disorder, None	No. of Attack, 1
Religion, None	Temperament,
Occupation, Farmer's wife	
Are the Parents of patient blood relations?	
Remarks: She left a pair of twins at home 3 mo old.	



Total no. 2511	No. for the Year, 123
Date of Admission, June 26, 1863	
Name of Patient, William Badger	
Nativity, Ohio	Post Office, Shelbyville
County, Shelby	Age, 45
Social Condition, Married	No. of Children, 9
Duration of Insanity, 10 days	Form of Disease, Mania
Predisposing Cause, Unknown	
Exciting Cause, Scared at soldiers who professed that they were going to arrest him	

Propensities, Suicidal
 Bodily Disorder, Maniacal exhaustion No. of Attack, 1
 Religion, None Temperament,
 Occupation, Farmer
 Are the Parents of patient blood relations? Unknown
 Remarks:



Total no. 2512 No. for the Year, 124
 Date of Admission, June 26, 1863
 Name of Patient, William M. Wilson
 Nativity, Indiana Post Office, Homer
 County, Rush Age, 33
 Social Condition, Widower No. of Children, 1
 Duration of Insanity, 20 days Form of Disease, Mania
 Predisposing Cause, Unknown
 Exciting Cause, Excitement. Was enrolling Commission[er] in Company
 with Deputy Provost Marshal Stevens in Rush Co at the time he was fired
 on by the mob and killed.
 Propensities, Homicidal, but not decidedly so
 Bodily Disorder, None No. of Attack, 1
 Religion, Methodist Temperament,
 Occupation, Farmer
 Are the Parents of patient blood relations? No
 Remarks: Refer to Inquest papers



Total no. 2764 No. for the Year, 178
 Date of Admission, Oct 5th, 1864
 Name of Patient, William M. Snell
 Nativity, Ohio Post Office, Rockville
 County, Parke Age, 37
 Social Condition, Married No. of Children, 6
 Duration of Insanity, 10 days Form of Disease, Mania
 Predisposing Cause, Unknown
 Exciting Cause, Fear of Draft. Is drafted.
 Propensities, Homicidal & Suicidal
 Bodily Disorder, None No. of Attack, 1
 Religion, None Temperament,

Occupation, Carpenter

Are the Parents of patient blood relations? No

Remarks:

Admission Book number 1, 339, 448, 518, 519, 230, Indiana Hospital for the Insane, Central State Hospital Records, Indiana State Archives, Indianapolis.

THESE TERRIBLE TIMES

For Democrats like Isaac Ireland and Aaron Stryker, the war brought trials on top of the tribulations of daily life. From a family originally from Pennsylvania, Ireland held a Jackson County farm valued at one thousand dollars. New Jersey-born Aaron Stryker was a farmer as well, with real estate valued at only six hundred dollars.

Brownstown July the 21 1861

Dear Brother after delaing to Rite to you I Embrace ths opportooinity to Let you Know that We are all Well at Present and Hope that [t]heas Lines may find you all Injoining the Same Blesing We Lost ower Litle girl Mary Caroline She Died the 6 Day of July this Month with the flu She was 4 years and 3 Months oldd[.] She was Sick 5 days[.] the Conexion are all well as Comon at present Mother is Still Very Feeble all the Time Times is very hard heare Crops are all good and Look Promesing I am Farming on nomber one ths year Every Body is Traitors and Torys that Dont Sancton the Ablition wore aganst Slavery[.] the Chikogo Plat Form Denies the South the Right to the Comon Territory and Places the Negro on Equality with the Wite man I am sorry that Thare Ever was a Sectional Man eleted President[.] we are Reping the Reward Now[.] Times is the Dullest I Ever Seen I dont Believe that Wheat Can Bring More than 50 cts Corne wownt Be worth More than 10 or 15 cts this Fall[.] the People are Crazy A Bowt the ware I mean the Fanatics[.] the Same Party that oposed the Mexican Wore are the Same party that are Ergin the Extermination of the South and wanting the Negroes Freed[.] the Republicans Threten to hang Every Body that Dont Believe as tha do god onley Knows the End of ower Troubles Three compnyes has gon From ths County and 5 companyes has organised under the Sate Melitia you Don't know to Day W[h]o is your Frien to Morow I Feel Sad over the Condition of ower Country[.] I Dont K[n]ow What to Right I would Be Glad [to] See you
No more at Present I remain yours

Truley
Isaac Ireland

P.S. I will try and write a few Lines to fill up Isaac's Letter[.] our old Friend Jugde Miller is out hear again this summer and for the Last few days he has been verry

pooreley[.] they think he cannot stand it much Longer[.] we are all in good health Mother continues to be verry feeble[.] she is Liable to drop of any day so if you Can Come out this fall you had better try and Come Joseph Miller folks are all well but I believe he will not build him a house this fall[.] we have plenty to Eat hear this fall but no money to buye it with[.] write soon and Let me know wether you will Come out hear this fall and if so how soon we may Look for you and Mary Ann out and as Many Moore as you Can Bring Give my Love all and a Kiss to boot yours Respectfully

Aaron Stryker

James Ireland Family Correspondence, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis.

“MONEY IS ABUNDANT”

While the beginning of the war brought fears of economic disaster, by 1863, those fears had subsided; even Aaron Stryker would celebrate the high prices. The maintenance of the Union Army provided a ready market for many Hoosiers' goods, and the fall of Vicksburg led to the opening of the Mississippi River and access to Indiana's traditional market at New Orleans. As a stepping-off point for many goods to the army, the Ohio River towns especially prospered, or at least their middle class did. For the working class, wages rarely kept up with skyrocketing prices. Here a C. Denby (probably Charles Denby, once colonel of the Eightieth Indiana and a Democratic politician) adds a postscript to a business letter to a Captain James L. Orr telling of the prosperity that has overtaken Evansville.

PS There will probably be a draft in this Township for 100 men. Some Country Townships are full up. Considerable efforts have been made to recruit up but with no great success. There is much sickness here and several ladies have died lately. Charley Wagner is seldom in town—he said when I saw him he thought of going back. We are flooded with amusements and this City is rather gay. Dresses are most extravagant among the fair. Money is abundant and real estate goes off like hot cakes. There is very little said about the war. People are content to leave *that* to the Army and to make money for themselves. Refugees are here by the hundred and great distress prevails among them. Vast amounts of money are now given in charity, some compulsory under Mayor Robinson's commercial and *permit* dictation, and some voluntary. Combs is pretty low in health. Congress will probably repeal the \$300 clause.

Letter from C. Denby, Evansville, to Captain I. L. Orr, December 15, 1863. James L. Orr Collection, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis.

AIDING THE FREED PEOPLES

The most common volunteer efforts to aid the war came through the U. S. Sanitary Commission and communities' efforts to aid local soldiers. For Quakers and others of humanitarian good will, the refugee crisis of African Americans in the South, escaped to Union lines or abandoned by their masters, prompted them to provide relief. Irish-born Ann C. Thomas headed her household of three boys, aged nine to twelve, together with real estate valued at \$1,200. She prospered in the 1860s, with her real estate valued at \$3,700 by 1870.

College Corner Jay Co.
Dec 11 1862

My Dear Em

I received yours at least two weeks ago but had not a spare moment to answer your kind letter until just this afternoon. I have been very busy begging for and fitting out a box of clothing to send to the poor Freed Men women and children I had the pleasure of contributing myself 28 garments Spools Sissors, thimbles, + needles. I had a pushing time to get them made, and to collect that I begged, Mr. Tucker packed the large box, he packed them so hard that his hands pained him for a week after, there was a hundred and Seventy five things in the box besides thread + needles +. We had bed clothes also yarn ++ I had money saved to buy a black Mohair or Silk lustre dress to wear on particular occasions + times, which [the money] I took and laid out for good strong materials to make those things I sent, I thought I could better do without the dress than they, who were robbed of all and especially at this trying time.

I had some thought of going to Ireland when I heard of your City being threatened with shells, but am thankful for the privilege of staying just where I am.

I was afraid you were going to let the Rebels come here and pick me up +++++ so I had a big Mind to part.

Lydia + husband promised me a visit immediately after her Marriage and I expected you and Henry to come with them (I told her to bring you both) as Lydia said you were to be at the wedding, so about the time I expected you all I actually killed the *fatted calf*, prepared all the good things hired help to do so, dressed myself + young ones in our very best, and looked for you all for three or four days; When we sat down to breakfast, we would say, well they will be to dinner actually keeping the goodies waiting hot + cold for a week long and then the visit turned out a fizzle[,] Lydia having skedaddled to Kansas, and you both even not thinking about *your poor relations*.

Blessed are they who expect but little, they shall not be disappointed.

I actually had the Vanity to think that you would judge me worthy of a Visit and have looked for the last three years every fall and summer for you both. True I have no inducements to offer but—but—nevertheless.

You ought to have told us the name of your boy. I am glad to hear of your prosperity in this worlds things, May you be blessed with the realization of *your Eternal Inheritance* purchased for you through the Love of God in, + by, Christ—the Lamb of God that taketh away the Sins of the World!!!

We are all well with the exception of colds.

The boys are at school[.] the[y] are making a little progress in their education. Joseph is as tall as I am. Give my Love to Henry, I should like to see Him.

Yours affectionately,
Ann C. Thomas.