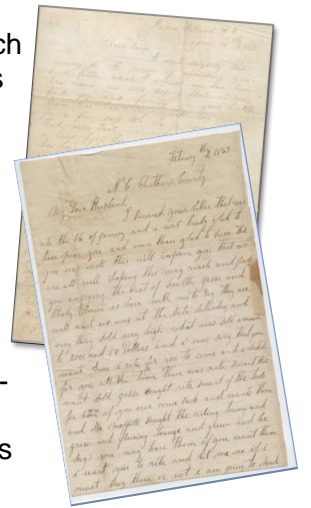


The Stone/Elkins Family Civil War Letters

*Transcribed and Annotated by W. Davenport "Dav" Robertson**

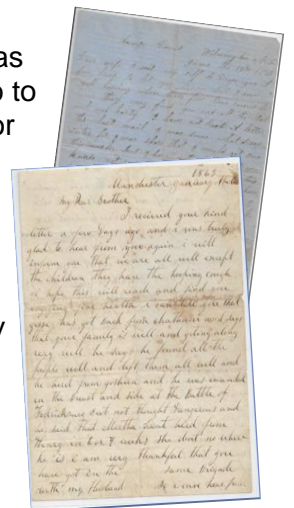
April 2020

This collection is composed of nine Civil War period letters between Andrew Jackson Stone (1832-1864) and his wife Emily H. Elkins Stone (1842-1891), and one letter each from Andrew's sister Pheby Stone Elmore (1836-?) and Emily's brother Oren L. Elkins (1841-1914). The original letters were purchased at the estate sale of Robert Stone in Shelby, NC, and digital copies donated to the Chatham County Historical Association by Eric and Nicole Wamsley in October 2019. One additional letter from Andrew J. Stone to his wife Emily in Chatham County, was added from the collection of the Library of Virginia.



The original letters and transcriptions can be accessed below. First, some background. The Stone and Elkins families lived in the southern part of Chatham County called Pedlar's Hill, near Bear Creek. Pheby Elmore lived in nearby Manchester, Cumberland County. They were in the yeoman farmer class, meaning they were self-sufficient small landowners. Andrew Stone didn't own land himself in 1860; he rented fields from others. These families owned no slaves, and in these letters they do not mention slavery or enslaved people.

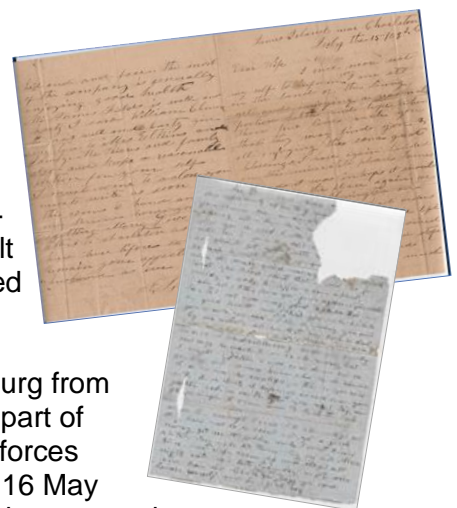
The letters date from 1862 to 1864 with most written during the winter of 1862-1863. They present a description of the everyday concerns of the wives at home as well as of the soldiers in camp. In several of the letters you can get a sense of what Stone—as an enlistee—thought about reluctant conscripts and those who hired substitutes to go to war in their place. You can also get a sense of how the war soon posed challenges for survival on the farm, and later how disaffection was brought on by prolonged conflict.



The first letter is from Oren L. Elkins who was nineteen years old when he joined the "Rowan Artillery," Co. D, 1st NC Artillery, later called the 10th Regiment North Carolina Troops (NCT), June 15, 1861. His company was "detailed" or "attached" to the 4th Infantry Regiment NCT when they were sent to the northern Virginia area, 20 July 1861. In the only letter we have from him, he describes the brief time he was stationed near Dumfries, VA. Throughout the war, Elkins and his company provided artillery support for a number of other units in Virginia.¹

Most of the letters are from or to Andrew J. Stone who was thirty years old when he enlisted in Co. D, 61st Regiment NCT, 8 August 1862, with many other men from Chatham County. For most of the war, his regiment was stationed along the NC and SC coast, with brief periods in southeastern Virginia. They were stationed at Smithville (later called Southport, NC) in defense of Wilmington and Fort Fisher. As one of four regiments in Gen. Thomas L. Clingman's Brigade, the 61st took part in the Battle of Kinston, in December 1862, and then returned to Wilmington. For most of 1863 they were stationed around Charleston, SC, and briefly in Savannah, GA. On the day of the Battle of Fort Wagner (or Battery Wagner), 18 July 1863, Union troops attacked the Confederate defenses on Morris Island which protected Charleston. The attack was made famous in the movie "Glory" for it was led by Col. Robert Gould Shaw's 54th Massachusetts Regiment composed of African-American soldiers. Although Stone's regiment had seen duty on Morris Island, they were stationed on neighboring James Island that day, while another regiment in their brigade, the 51st NCT, bore the brunt in fighting off the attack.

While the men were fighting or encamped, the women also served the cause at home. Even before her husband Andrew enlisted, Emily Stone was hard at work weaving blankets, sewing socks, making soap, and gathering supplies along with other Chatham County women to send to the soldiers far from home.² Later, in her letters to Andrew, Emily describes the challenges she faced, from smallpox to killing hogs, from finding land to farm on to drawing rations. Through the years of war, she dealt with the deaths of both Andrew's father and her own father, and she raised their two sons.



At the end of 1863, Andrew Stone's regiment was sent to defend Petersburg from invasion via Suffolk County in eastern Virginia. There, the regiment, as a part of Clingman's Brigade, was assigned to Gen. Robert Hoke's Division in the forces led by Gen. P. G. T. Beauregard. At the Battle of Drewry's Bluff, Virginia, 16 May 1864, Beauregard's army stopped Union forces under Gen. Benjamin Butler, preventing them from taking Richmond from the southeast. Andrew J. Stone was killed on 18 May 1864, in the aftermath of Drewry's Bluff. For more information about the history of the 61st Regiment NCT, see the account written by Chatham County native Nathan A. Ramsey, Captain of Co. D.³

Family members mentioned in the letters:

Andrew J. Stone (1832-1864) married **Emily H. Elkins** (1842-1891)

Their children: Joel M. Stone (1856-1940) and Edgar M. Stone (1860-1929)

The Stone Family:

Elijah Stone (1794-1862?) m. **Sarah Witt** (1802-?)

Mary Ann Stone (1823-1900?) m. **Gilbert Poe** (1795-1888?)

Jesse Stone (1826-?)

Martha Stone (1827-1921)

m. (1) **Henry Oldham** (1832-1863), Co. A, 5th Regiment NCT

m. (2) **William T. Dowdy** (1837-1920)

Joshua Stone (1830- 1875), Co. G, 48th Regiment NCT

Andrew J. Stone (1832-1864), Co. D, 61st Regiment NCT

Pheby (or Phoebe) F. Stone (1836- ?)

m. **William F. Elmore** (1834- 1910), Co. E, 8th Regiment NCT

Sarah A. "Sallie" Stone (unproven) (1842-?)

The Elkins Family:

Joel Absalom Elkins (1819-1863) m. Sally B. Harris (1823-?)

Joel Absalom Elkins, Jr. (1852-1923)

Emily H. Elkins (1842-1891)

Oren L. Elkins (1841-1914), Co. D, 1st Regt, NC Artillery (also called 10th Regt NCT)

Joseph J. Elkins (1844-1899), enlisted 28 Oct. 1864, Co. E, 26th Regiment NCT

Leona (or Leana) M. Elkins (1848-?)

Mary J. Elkins (1850-?)

Others mentioned in the letters:

- James F. Rives (1820-1887), Justice of the Peace and Colonel, 50th Regiment, 12th Brigade, NC Militia (Chatham County), from 4 Jan 1862
- Lucy Rives (1848-1895), daughter of James F. Rives
- Alvis Stone (1821-1891) (unproven relative of Andrew J. Stone) m. Sarah A. Burns (1821-1900)
- Daniel C. Elkins (1822-1907), "Uncle Daniel," brother of Emily Elkins Stone's father.
- J. L. Fields (1812-1903), Co. D, 61st Regiment NCT (with Andrew J. Stone)
- John Fields (1835?- ?), Co. D, 61st Regiment NCT (enlisted with Andrew J. Stone)
- Nancy Fields (1810?-?) (probably mother of John Fields, suggested by 1860 Census)
- Hastin Poe Straughan (1816-1898), Co. E, 6th (also called 76th) Regt, NC Senior Reserves
- Dr. Gaston E. Brown (1817-1863), surgeon; founder and pastor of both Brown's Chapel M. E. Church and Pleasant Hill United Methodist Church
- Robert N. Green (1810-1896), NC House of Commons Member from Chatham County (1857-1861), and Beaumont, Chatham County, postmaster
- Noah is probably James Noah Fields (1839-1910), son of J. L. Fields, Co. E, 26th Regiment NCT; lost an arm at Gettysburg, July 1, 1863.
- Mr. Moffit (probably Milo Moffitt, 1828-1881, Co. H, 38th Regiment NCT)
- Nathan A. Ramsey (1827-1906), Captain, Co. D, 61st Regiment NCT




The homes of Danl. Elkins (Emily's uncle), Jas. F. Rives, and J. L. Fields are shown on Capt. Ramsey's 1870 map of Chatham County.⁴

Location of Pedlar's Hill on Chatham Postal Map (date unknown)

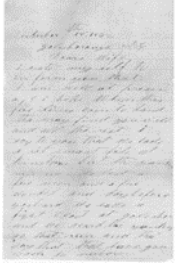


Highlights from the Letters and Links to Transcripts and Original Images

Click on the thumbnail for a link to the transcript and original images for each letter.

Link to Transcript and Images	Highlights
	<p>3 Jan 1862, Oren L. Elkins to his sister Emily Elkins Stone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In this optimistic letter, sent from his encampment in Virginia, Elkins describes firing on the Yankee boats in the Potomac River from the Virginia side. • The tone of the letter exemplifies the confidence of the Confederate soldiers early in the war after several Southern victories. Elkins says the Yankees “are too afraid of the Southern boys. These boys flogged them too often.” • Elkins is pleased with the relatively good living conditions for the winter. He writes, “We have found some shanties & we are living finely here, plenty of bread and beef to eat.” • He asks for news from home and especially “how all the girls are getting along.” Was he just being a romantic 20-year-old, or was he inquiring about his young sisters? • Elkins concludes with the same bravado as in the rest of the letter: “I remain Your Brother until Death.”
	<p>26 Sep 1862, Andrew J. Stone to his wife Emily Elkins Stone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This letter was written just a month after 30-year-old Andrew Jackson Stone enlisted. It gives his impressions of camp life and also his concerns for the normal flow of life he has left at home. • Andrew Stone writes of the uncertainty of their encampment and movements. The rumors are such that “you can hear anything here.” • It is fall planting time, and Andrew gives Emily advice about purchasing and planting seed wheat. He also tells her that the all-important salt needed for preserving hams is bringing \$10-\$12 per bushel. • Andrew’s regiment is stationed near Smithville (now called Southport), NC, to protect the mouth of the Cape Fear River and the port of Wilmington. He says of the shelling at Fort Fisher, about six miles away, that it didn’t “excite us much although we heard three balls whistel over us yesterday.” • In this letter, as in many of the others, the spelling is not very good, but it is phonetic. Andrew concludes this letter by telling Emily, “You must look over my blunders.”
	<p>10 Dec 1862, Emily Elkins Stone to Andrew J. Stone [This is perhaps the most interesting letter in the collection.]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This letter presents a good example of the strength women at home often displayed during the War. Emily is now responsible for killing the hogs, despite not yet having found salt for preserving them. She has made ten gallons of cane syrup, harvested her potatoes, and arranged for her father to plant the winter wheat. • It has been very rainy and she is worried that Andrew might not have a tent. • In this letter Emily expresses the great desire for her loved ones to come home. She writes, “You must whip the yankees at once and come home....There is not much talk of Christmas up this way. It will be a dull time I know.” Prices are spiraling: “Liquor, eggs & sugar are too high to try to have a nogg.” • Emily has not been able to get shoes, but she does have a “bed tick” for Andrew and some “jeans weaving,” and she asks if he needs socks. She asks Andrew if he has ever drawn his pay, implying they could use some cash. • Emily concludes the letter on an upbeat note by telling Andrew that their young sons, Joel and Edgar, are well and they “are always talking about you wanting you to come home.” She tells him the family are all well and they “send a heap of love to you.” Invoking another often-used phrase, Emily says, “Edgar & Joel send howdy to you.” • This letter also includes a one page note from Andrew’s friend James F. Rives. He speaks of farm matters and says his family is faring well. He harvested “a pretty good crop [of] corn, potatoes.” He has killed some of his hogs and jokes he has “fatty bread and chitlings so you may guess I am fat.” • In April 1862, the Confederacy instituted the draft for men ages 18 to 35. James F. Rives was Colonel of the Chatham County militia and had the responsibility for rounding

up the “conscripts” and sending them off to their regiments. Both Emily and Col. Rives refer to the problems resulting from this unpopular action. By late October 1862, the Confederacy had extended the upper age limit to 45, and Jefferson Davis issued a call for men up to age 40.⁵ Emily says “The 40 men are called out” even though some are still “out in the bushes.” She adds, “they talk of taking all the officers too,” meaning the local militia officers so far exempted. Another exemption is for the making of saltpeter for gunpowder. Rives mentions a Moffitt who “has failed in salt peter and I think will have to go yet.”



18 Dec 1862, Andrew J. Stone to his wife Emily Elkins Stone

- Andrew has been in battle around Kinston and Goldsboro, NC, and this letter not only describes the fighting but reflects the agitation Stone felt. It is hurried and full of spelling errors. Stone writes, “I say to you that we hade a rit [right] smart fite [fight] at Kinston but the Yankees run us.” But a couple of days later “we hade to fight clost [close] at Golesbor [Goldsboro] and we scard the Yankees so that [they] run.” He adds that the Yankees have retreated to their stronghold in New Bern. This Confederate victory was important for it prevented the Union forces from destroying the railroad from Wilmington to Weldon and on to Petersburg and Richmond that supplied Lee’s Army of Northern Virginia.
- Despite the unsettled nature of the letter, Andrew concludes with the reassuring phrases commonly used in such letters: “Tell the children hoddy [howdy] for me and give my love to all inquaring friend[s] and rec[e]ived a posun [portion] your self.” Correspondents of the time often said to “give howdy” or “tell howdy” to friends and children. Other writers would use a phrase like “give my love to your mother and keep a large portion for yourself.” * *This letter used by permission. Original obtained from the Library of Virginia.*



6 Jan 1863, Pheby Elmore to her brother Andrew J. Stone

- In contrast to the Oren Elkins letter a year earlier, this one from Andrew’s sister Pheby on the home front has a pessimistic tone. Things have changed and the war goes on. After reporting on wounded relatives and diseases such as whooping cough and smallpox in the neighborhood, Pheby concludes, “It looks like we never will see no more peace in this world so let us prepare for a better one than this.”
- Pheby reports that Andrew’s family is well, but she heard that their brother Joshua was wounded at Fredericksburg.
- On behalf of her sisters, she asks if Andrew has heard anything about how their loved ones are doing, whether they are dead or alive. Sister Martha wants to know how her husband Henry Oldham is doing. Sister Sarah says she is very glad that Andrew has written that her friend Noah [Fields] is alive. This letter illustrates how important these communications were to those at home as well as to the soldiers on the front lines. [Noah Fields would lose an arm six months later at Gettysburg.⁶]



21 Jan 1863, Emily Elkins Stone to her husband Andrew J. Stone

- One can only wonder about the torn and missing corner of this letter. Did it happen during the War in Andrew’s possession, or did it happen years after the War had ended?
- Emily’s letter is much more upbeat than Pheby’s. The family is in good health, including brother Joshua Stone who had survived wounds received at Fredericksburg. Emily has obtained enough salt to preserve the hams, and she has received the money Andrew sent.
- She recounts that the county has voted money for the support of families. Emily reassuringly writes, “What you heard about that is not so, for nobody is likely to suffer. I have a plenty.” Chatham County took the lead in North Carolina in providing financial support to soldiers’ families, giving from \$25 to \$75 per month to each family.⁷
- Emily knows from Andrew’s letters that he is in the Wilmington area. She would like to visit him but there are unknowns. Emily writes, “I thought I and father would come down and see you soon but we don’t know what to do about it as we hear the smallpox is there.” She entreats Andrew, “So you must write to us about it before we will come.”
- Emily tells Andrew that his father’s estate sale is coming up at the end of the month. This implies that Elijah Stone had recently passed away. Emily pleads with Andrew, “you must try and get furlough to come home to be at the sale.” You can find out whether he did or not in Emily’s next letter.
- The issue of conscripts comes up again. Emily relates that not all of them have been called up and, furthermore, “a great many got in the public works.” (Draft exemptions included even minor local government jobs.) Their friend or relative Alvis Stone “says he is not at the salt [peter] works” and may be drafted. But life goes on and Alvis and his wife have just come and spent the night with Emily.



2 Feb 1863, Emily Elkins Stone to her husband Andrew J. Stone

- Perhaps Emily was hurried when she wrote this letter; it has more idiomatic language and spelling errors than most of her letters. The sale of Andrew's father's estate has taken place and it brought in \$2,050. Emily tells Andrew, "I was very sor[r]y that you want hear [weren't here]." She berates him, "I [w]rote for you to come and I looked for you all the time." In a heartbreaking conclusion to the letter, Emily writes, "The children send their love to you and want you to come home very bad. They sat up last Friday knight till 9 o'clock waiting for you to come befor[e] I could get them to sleep." Joel was six, Edgar not quite three.
- Andrew's sister Pheby Elmore and brother Jesse Stone came for the sale and Jesse bought some of their father's carpentry tools to hold till Andrew comes home. So did their friend Mr. Moffitt who bought some specialized molding planes for Andrew.
- Emily tells Andrew that she is going to send him a comforter and some socks even though he keeps writing her to "not send any thing."
- In light of the prevalence of smallpox mentioned in previous letters, Emily writes. "Me and the children has been vaccinated and we have very soar arms."⁸
- She relays information about their soldier relatives. Andrew's sister Martha's husband Henry Oldham is near Fredericksburg and is well, but there is a rumor, which they don't believe, that their brother Joshua had died from the wounds he suffered at the Battle of Fredericksburg in mid-December, 1862. [In fact, Joshua Stone was wounded at Fredericksburg but recovered. Henry Oldham was not so lucky; he died a few months later, 1 May 1863, at the Battle of Chancellorsville.⁹]
- Emily closes with her usual, "your loving Wife until Death." One might wonder how these words struck the recipient.



15 April 1863, Andrew J. Stone to his wife Emily Elkins Stone

- Andrew's regiment has moved to South Carolina to protect Charleston. Andrew describes an attack by Yankee ironclads on Fort Sumter that was repelled. He writes about being on picket duty close to the Yankees: "We could see the light of the fires in the Yankey camps, hear them beating their drums."
- Andrew is sorry to hear of the death back home of the local doctor, Dr. Brown. He is worried and writes, "I don't know what you will all do for a doctor in that section of country." [Naturally, the soldiers were very concerned about their families back home. Just a few days after this letter, Andrew's company captain, Nathan A. Ramsay, wrote a letter that was published in various newspapers in the state, in which he maintained that despite what the home folks might have heard, they were getting plenty to eat and they were faring well. He pleaded, though, for more support for their families back in Chatham County.¹⁰]
- This letter reflects the built-up resentment that veteran soldiers like Andrew hold towards the conscripts back home who won't fight. He writes, "you stated in your letter that it was rumored that all the men were called out up to forty five [years old]. I think if they would call them out up to that age officers and all that it would be the very means of bringing the war to a speedy close." Does he mean that having more troops would boost their fighting force, or is he being facetious, meaning that such a draft policy would bring on protest from powerful citizens and result in a peace settlement? Andrew's frustration is clear when he adds, "And more than that I think the men up to that age and the commissioned officers has just as good a right to fight for their country as I have and just as much to fight for. They are no better to leave their homes and familys and go to the war than I am." After two years of fighting, people on both sides were wondering what it would take to bring an end to the war. Gettysburg is over two months away; Appomattox two years.
- Andrew makes the issue of conscripts personal. He asks specifically about Emily's Uncle Daniel Elkins and her brother Joe Elkins. He encourages his brother-in-law, "Tell Joe I think he had better come to this company if he does have to go to the war." [In fact, after more than a year later in October 1864, Joseph J. Elkins did enlist, but in the Chatham Independent Guards, Company E of the 26th regiment NCT. He survived the war.]
- Lastly, Andrew tells Emily that he has sent some money (\$60), paper, stamps, and envelopes, and "a parcel of rings" to her and her sisters. Probably these items were available to him in Charleston, but he doesn't say.



19 June 1863, Andrew J. Stone to his wife Emily Elkins Stone

- Re-stationed back in the Wilmington area, Andrew is anxious to tell his wife he's all right. Frequent letters like this were extremely important so the soldiers' families back home would know they were still alive and all right. By the same token, the soldiers needed to hear from home regularly. Andrew lets Emily know how he feels: "I have not recd. [received] a letter the last mail. I was some what disap[p]ointed for I was shore that I would get one this week." Andrew is worried about Emily back home. He writes,

“There is reported that soldiers’ wives is a perishing to death down hear. I hope that will not be your case.”

- The beach and the “wide waters” are impressive to Andrew, who might never have been on the coast before his military service. He observes, “It is a good smart sight for them that never saw it.” But then in a realistic juxtaposition he describes being close enough to the Yankee blockade ships to see the men walking about them.
- He mentions that he will be getting some things in town for the folks back home and he asks his wife if she needs any pins or needles. These goods were in short supply in the inland counties but could be obtained in Wilmington or Charleston.
- In one of the most poignant sentences in any of the letters, Andrew says he wishes he could be back home working the fields with his friend, James F. Rives. He writes, “Tell Mr. Rieves that I would like to be up there at harvest to help him cut his wheat and to take some big h[e]arty lafes [laughs] together and git something good to eat.”
- Then he conscientiously lets Emily know, “We are get[t]ing a plenty to eat hear now of Yankey bacon.” Somehow they have obtained bacon from Cincinnati, probably through the blockade. He relates that, “It come from sinsenatta Ohio bacon. It is marked that way and it is about eigh[t] inches thick.” He adds they are getting plenty of cornbread from meal that hasn’t been sifted and contains husks “as big as a sicpance [sixpence].”
- With that he turns to asking Emily if she is “drawing” (withdrawing) money or supplies “a nuff [enough] to do you.” This appears to be another reference to the system for the county’s distribution of financial aid to the families of soldiers.¹¹ Apparently Emily and others in her district in the county had to be deemed qualified by Robert N. Green, a local man who was a well-off former member of the N.C. House of Commons. Andrew has no affection for him. He explodes, “If women have to go to Old Bob Green and have to be sworn before they can get enny thing, he is gust [just] a fite [fit] subegect for the Devil.” Andrew’s resentment can’t be contained: “Enny won [anyone] that would do such a thing as that he ort [ought] to be put in a canon and shot clear into the midst of the Yanke[e]s.”

15 July 1863, Andrew J. Stone to his wife Emily Elkins Stone




- Since the previous letter, Andrew’s regiment has yet again moved from Wilmington back to Charleston, and Andrew does not like it one bit. “I have again landed on this miserable place James Island. I was in hope I would never see the place again.”
- He has been on picket duty “in full view of the enemy. Our pickets and the Yanke[e]s wore [were] close enough to talk to each other at a distance.” The Confederates and Yankees almost came together to trade supplies. Andrew writes, “The[y] offered to exchange coffee for tobacco with some of the boys but our officers finding it out broke up the trade.”
- Andrew has grown weary of the sound of the fighting going on at neighboring Morris Island. He writes, “I am in hope they Yanke[e]s will soon disappear so we all can return to North Carolina.” Three days after this letter, two of the other regiments in Andrew’s brigade would take part in the defense of Fort Wagner on Morris Island depicted in the movie *Glory*.¹²
- Andrew describes an odd accident that occurred at the railroad station in Wilmington before they departed. They had been ordered to stay the night in the “cars.” Doubtless the crowded cars were hot so Andrew says “some of us went on top to sleepe.” Andrew’s friend from home, John Fields, was one of them. Andrew describes what happened: “Some time in the night thare came up a rain and John raised up in his sleepe and fell off on the hard warfe [wharf]. We thought he was dead for some time but he came two [to] and got better....He fell about ten feet on his head.” When last Andrew saw John at the “hospitle,” he thought he was “some better.”
- Andrew assures Emily that another neighbor, James Fields, is well, as is William Elmore, Andrew’s brother-in-law. He closes this letter lovingly, “So I stil[l] remain your affectionate husband as ever.”

17 March 1864, Andrew Stone to his wife Emily Elkins Stone



- Eight months have passed since the previous letter from Andrew; surely there were other letters, but only these have come to light. Andrew’s regiment has been sent from the Carolina coastal area to Petersburg, Virginia, to prevent an attack by Union forces from the coastal Suffolk peninsula.
- There is no talk of fighting in this last letter. Andrew has become resigned to protracted warfare and now appears somewhat fatalistic. Still, he begins by saying how glad he is to hear the family is all well, and he lets Emily know in a postscript that “This leaves me enjoying my usual health.” He asks Emily to let him know “what kind of rations you are a getting and how much.”
- Daily life has become routine in the regiment’s winter quarters. Andrew drills two hours a day and expects “to draw a new suit of clothing the last of this week.” But he adds, “Our money is not worth much to us here now except small change.”

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrew is still frustrated about the conscripts issue. (Chatham County was known as a center of draft resistance and a refuge for deserters.)¹³ This time he inquires about men who had hired substitutes to go to fight in their place: “I wish to hear if any of the men who furnished substitutes from our neighborhood has been conscripted yet or not and whether any of the detailed men has to go to the army or not.” • Andrew philosophizes fatalistically, “I was sorry to hear of so many deaths from the neighborhood but people die at home as well as abroad. It is appointed unto all men once [once] to die.” • Andrew closes the letter as he did in most of them by requesting that Emily “Tell the little boys howdy for me.” He signs off, “Your devoted husband, A. J. Stone.” • Two months later, Andrew’s regiment was instrumental in turning back the Union invasion forces at the Battle of Drewry’s Bluff on the James River. While fighting Union skirmishers two days later on 18 May 1864, Andrew Jackson Stone met his death.¹⁴
	<p>Envelopes</p>

Epilogue:

Emily Elkins Stone lived out her life in Chatham County, dying in 1891. She is buried at Mount Vernon United Methodist Church in Siler City. The boys led long and full lives and raised many children in Chatham County. Edgar M. Stone lived until 1929; Joel M. Stone until 1940. Edgar Stone is buried at Loves Creek Baptist Church, Siler City. Joel Stone is buried at Mount Vernon Springs Presbyterian Church in Chatham County. Although there is a virtual memorial to Andrew J. Stone on Find A Grave (<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/103260577>), it is likely that Andrew J. Stone’s body was buried in an unmarked grave in Virginia. No proof of a burial site has come to light.¹⁵

Oren L. Elkins survived the fighting and got married three months after the end of the war to Susan Ann Talley. They moved to Stanly County, NC, where they farmed and raised a son and daughter. Oren Elkins died 23 April 1914, and is buried at Bethel United Methodist Church Cemetery, New London, Stanly Co., NC. His wife Susan A. Tally Elkins (18 January 1844—12 June 1922) is also buried there.

Phoebe (Pheby) Stone Elmore and her husband William F. Elmore lived in Cumberland County and in Randolph County, NC, and in their later years, Lauderdale County, Tennessee, with their daughter’s family. They raised several sons and daughters. William Elmore died 4 November 1910 while residing at the Confederate Soldiers Home in Raleigh, NC. He is buried in Oakwood Cemetery, Raleigh. Phoebe Elmore also resided at the Soldiers Home in the 1910 Census. Mysteriously, William’s middle initial on the tombstone is “P” not “F,” and a search on the Oakwood Cemetery website (<https://www.historicoakwoodcemetery.org/search-burial-records/>) returns his name as William Phoebe Elmore. Is it possible that Phoebe is buried with her husband at Oakwood Cemetery?



Sources:

To figure out the families, relationships, birth and death dates, I used [FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org) with some assistance from Find A Grave <https://www.findagrave.com> and [ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com). I tried to find at least two sources for the dates, but I do not guarantee their accuracy. I would welcome any corrections.

To find the regimental memberships, I used the “United States Civil War Soldiers Index, 1861-1865” and the “North Carolina, Civil War Service Records of Confederate Soldiers, 1861-1865” on [FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org). I also used the “Roster of North Carolina Troops in the War Between the States, Prepared by John W. Moore, 1882,” and for the history of the regiments, “Histories of the Several Regiments from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-65, Written by Members of the Respective Commands, Edited by Walter Clark, Published by the State, 1901.” Both of these are accessible via the “Civil War Index”: <https://civilwarindex.com/north-carolina-regiments.html>. (These online sources were accessed February 21-March 1, 2020.)

In transcribing these letters, I left the original spelling in most cases. If a word was unclear, I added the correct spelling in brackets. If I had a doubt about a word, I included a question mark with the

bracketed word. Occasionally the writers left out words or duplicated words. Capitalization and punctuation are a challenge in these letters. I have added periods, commas, and capitals when I thought them appropriate and necessary for understanding a sentence. The idiomatic language used by the writers of these letters can still be heard around Chatham County today. I welcome any corrections.

Source of Letters

Ten letters were purchased at the estate sale of Robert Stone in Shelby, NC, and digital copies donated to the Chatham County Historical Association by Eric and Nicole Wamsley in October 2019. The Historical Association greatly appreciates this generous donation.

We obtained and transcribed one additional letter from Andrew J. Stone to his wife Emily in Chatham County, 18 Dec 1862 from the Library of Virginia's collection: <https://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/guides/civil-war.htm>. Used by permission here.

Related Letters in Other Collections

Letter from Elbert Carpenter, who served in Co. D, 61st Regiment NCT with Andrew J. Stone, to his father Solomon Carpenter in Chatham County, 26 Nov. 1862. Tells of the deaths of his brothers from disease in camp. The letter is online at the Joyner Library, East Carolina University: <https://library.ecu.edu/specialcollections/2010/10/20/elbert-carpenter-civil-war-letter/>

Endnotes

- ¹ Captain John A. Ramsay, "Additional Sketch Tenth Regiment. Light Batteries A, D, F and I. Company D," pp. 561-582. *Histories of the Several Regiments from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-65*, Volume 4, Written by Members of the Respective Commands, Edited by Walter Clark, Lieutenant Colonel Seventeenth Regiment N.C.T, Published by the State. Goldsboro, NC: Nash Brothers, 1901. https://civilwarindex.com/armync/reghist/10th_nc_artillery_reghist.pdf
- ² "For the *Observer*: Beaumont, Chatham Co., Nov'r 1, 1861." *Fayetteville Semi-Weekly Observer (Fayetteville, North Carolina)*, November 4, 1861, p. 2. [Note2ChathamDonations1861.pdf](#)
- ³ N. A. Ramsay, Captain Company D, "Sixty-First Regiment," pp. 502-514, *Histories of the Several Regiments from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-65*, Volume 3, Written by Members of the Respective Commands, Edited by Walter Clark, Lieutenant Colonel Seventeenth Regiment N.C.T, Published by the State, Goldsboro, NC: Nash Brothers, 1901. https://civilwarindex.com/armync/reghist/61st_nc_infantry_reghist.pdf
- ⁴ While Capt. N. Ramsey's 1870 map of Chatham County does not show Pedlar's Hill, it does show the approximate locations of the homes of three people mentioned in the Stone/Elkins letters: Danl. Elkins (Emily's uncle), Jas. F. Rives, and J. L. Fields. You can see Ramsey's map here: https://chathamhistory.org/images/old_map.jpg Click on the map to enlarge.
- ⁵ United States. War Records Office, et al. *The War of the Rebellion: a Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. Series IV, Vol. II, p. 132. Washington: Govt. Print. Off., 1880-1901. <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.a0013553433?urlappend=%3Bseq=146>
- ⁶ See Fields, Noah in Chatham County Claimant Table, Ansley Herring Wegner, "Chatham County Amputees, Civil War Amputation and North Carolina's Artificial Limbs Program," March 2020. <https://chathamhistory.org/pdfs/ChathamCountyAmputeesandArtificialLimbs.pdf> (Noah Fields' first name was James, and he is listed in the roster of Co. E, 26th Regiment NCT as James N. Fields.)
- ⁷ Letter from Henry A. London to Gov. Z. B. Vance, October 15, 1863, as found in *North Carolina Civil War Documentary*, edited by W. Buck Years and John G. Barrett. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980, p. 261. London was secretary of the Committee assigned by the County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions to oversee the distribution of county funds to the families of soldiers. In this letter he states that Chatham County had expended the \$40,000 originally authorized and that he had been "instructed to provide for the families regardless of the amount required." He estimates the county will hand out \$100,000 this year of 1863.
- ⁸ For more about vaccination, see Terry Reimer, "Smallpox and Vaccination in the Civil War." The National Museum of Civil War Medicine. Accessed 26 April 2020. https://www.civilwarmed.org/surgeons-call/small_pox/

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- ⁹ "Casualties in the 5th N. C. Troops, May 11, 1863" *Weekly State Journal* (Raleigh, North Carolina), May 20, 1863, p. 4. [Note8OldhamHenryDeathNotice.pdf](#)
- ¹⁰ "The Soldiers' Rations," letter to the Editors of the *Mercury* from N. A. Ramsay, Capt., Co. D, 61st N.C.T., James Island (SC), 25 April 1863. Published in *The Weekly Standard* (Raleigh, NC), Wednesday, May 6, 1863, p. 2. [Note9RamseyLetterreFoodRations.pdf](#)
- ¹¹ London, p. 261. London describes the county's authorization system for financial assistance: "In order that all might be taken care of the Court appointed 3 Committee men in each Capt district to ascertain who were in want & required assistance and to see that they were provided for."
- ¹² *Glory*, the movie, 1989. <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0097441/>. Also, for information about the role the African Americans unit played in the Union assault, see Christopher Klein, "Glory Regiment Attacks Fort Wagner, 150 Years Ago," HISTORY Channel (A&E Networks). Original July 18, 2013; up-dated September 4, 2018 (accessed April 27, 2020). <https://www.history.com/news/glory-regiment-attacks-fort-wagner-150-years-ago>
- ¹³ See William T. Auman, "Neighbor against Neighbor: The Inner Civil War in the Randolph County Area of Confederate North Carolina." *North Carolina Historical Review*, vol. LXI, no. 1, January, 1984, pp. 59-92. One of the fundamental books about conscription in the Civil War is Albert Burton Moore, *Conscription and Conflict in the Confederacy*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1924.
- ¹⁴ "61st Regiment: Headqrs.61st Regiment N.C.T., Clingman's Brigade, near Drewry's Bluff, May 18, 1864." *Semi-Weekly Standard* (Raleigh, North Carolina), May 31, 1864, p. 2. [Note13StoneAJDeathNotice.pdf](#)
- ¹⁵ While the bodies of some Confederate soldiers were identified and either retrieved by relatives after the war and re-buried at home or re-interred years later in cemeteries such as Oakwood Cemetery in Raleigh, NC, many lay in unmarked or forgotten graves where they fell. It would have been unusual for Andrew Stone's family to have had the resources to have traveled to Virginia and retrieved his body after the war. At Hollywood Cemetery, Richmond, VA, there is a monument to 52 men whose bodies were re-interred there from Drewry's Bluff in 1893. Perhaps Andrew J. Stone was one of them. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/26337316>

* Dav Robertson has lived in Chatham County since 1975 when he earned a Master's degree in Library & Information Science at UNC. After a career as library director at the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, he is transcribing 19th century family letters held at UNC's Southern Historical Collection and writing a biography of his great-great uncle Lt.-Col. John T. Jones, 26th regiment, N.C. Troops, C.S.A.