

Futch Family Civil War Letters

General Overview

Letters from John Futch, Co. K, 3rd North Carolina Troops, to his wife Martha Ramsey Futch and a letter from Catherine Ramsey to Futch, her son-in-law. John Futch enlisted February 1, 1862 in New Hanover County and was reported absent without leave from August 11-31, 1863. He was shot for desertion on September 5, 1863. John and Martha Futch were married February 11, 1862 in New Hanover County where they lived with their families in the Holly Shelter area.

Note: The teacher may want to withhold the information about Futch's desertion and shooting until late in the lesson.

Lesson Objective

Students will be able to

- Discuss physical problems on the home front caused by the Civil War.
- Discuss emotional issues between separated families.
- Discuss the difference in reading about the home front in a textbook and reading about it in original letters.
- Compare prices of items before and during the Civil War with today's prices.

Preparation

Students should read some of the letters.

http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2234 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2468 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2442 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2471 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2433 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2450 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2480 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2505 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2514 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2518 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2547 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2550 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2560 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2569 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2572 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2576 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2601 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2257 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2535 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2508	http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2579 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2582 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2219 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2231 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2249 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2253 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2261 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2447 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2455 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2483 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2486 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2495 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2499 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2502 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2465 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2473 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2476 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2489 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2492 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2511	http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2522 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2532 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2538 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2541 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2557 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2563 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2566 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2585 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2590 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2592 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2222 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2228 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2242 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2245 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2436 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2460 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2544 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2553 http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?p15012coll8,2598
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Activities

Students should read the letters. The following questions should provoke discussion.

1. What do you learn about Mrs. Ramsey from her letter?
2. What do you learn about John Futch from Mrs. Ramsey's letter? From his letter?
3. What do we learn about the home front during the Civil War?
4. How did letters get "mailed" during the war?
5. How do the lack of punctuation and misspellings affect your ability to read and understand the letters?
6. What do you think happened to John Futch during the war?
7. How can you find out?
8. Where is Holly Shelter?

Enrichment and Extension

1. Discuss similarities and contrasts between how military families deal with their problems during the Iraqi War and how they dealt with their problems during the Civil War.
2. Investigate the movements of John Futch's regiment (3rd NCT). In what battles did they fight? Are statistics available about desertions?
3. Students can verify the prices quoted by Mrs. Ramsey by searching period newspapers. The teacher may want to have them search 1850s newspapers as well.

Sources

PC 507 Futch Letters at the State Archives of North Carolina
Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served during the Civil War, Record Group 109, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (microfilm, State Archives of North Carolina, Raleigh).