

LESSON TITLE: CIVIL WAR CORRESPONDANCE
LESSON DESIGN BY: TANA SNYDER, MAYSVILE R1, 9-12
AMERICAN HISTORY
JULY 2007

Teaching Traditional American History Program
Funded by U.S. department of Education
Mike Lair, Project Director
<http://www.chillihistoryproject.com/>

Lesson Overview:

The lesson begins with an analysis of what historians can learn from ordinary Americans whose Civil War letters were preserved. It asks students to analyze a variety of primary source letters online. Next, students are put into pairs of letter-writing correspondents living in 1863. Partners represent a variety of American voices, North and South, and the lesson emphasizes the important roles women played during the war. As the memorable events of 1863 unfold

-- the Emancipation Proclamation, Gettysburg, Vicksburg, Chattanooga, the New York City draft riots -- students respond to events and recount how their lives were affected.

Essential Question:

What was life like during the Civil War for various groups in the North and South?

Objectives:

(Missouri Standard/ SS6, Performance Goals/ 1:5,1:8,1:10,2:1,2:3,2:4,4:1,4:5,4:6
GLE: 8 grade Concept H)

- **To learn about events that were critical to the outcome of the Civil War and its meaning in American history.**
- **To learn about the roles ordinary citizens played in making history, both men and women.**
- **To learn to analyze what historians can learn from primary source material generated by average citizens.**
- **To learn as writers how to incorporate factual material into fictional accounts.**

Assessment:

- **Students will complete Civil War Letters Analysis Worksheets (Appendix I) for a pair of letters. Total points 20.**
- **Students will create imaginary identities for themselves by filling out index cards. Total points 10.**
- **Students will write a biography of their imaginary identity. Total points 40.**
- **Students will write a series of three letters as their imaginary identity. Total points 30.**

Materials:

- **Civil War Analysis Worksheets (Appendix I)**
- **Civil War letters (Appendix II thru X)**
- **Letter writing material (paper, pens etc.)**
- **Index cards**
- **Digital photo of each student**

Class Time: Three to five 50 min. class periods depending on if the letter writing is to be done in class or as homework.

Teacher Input:

Day one: Ask students when they last wrote a hand written letter. What prompted them to write their letters? Now ask them when they last sent an email, and what occasioned their writing it. Did any of these communications contain important news? If students had something highly important to convey, what means of communication would they use? Why?

Now ask students how important they think letter writing may have been in 19th century America. With telegraphs, but no telephones, and relatively slow means of transportation, people were often separated from one another without any other way to communicate except by letter.

Ask students to imagine they are living during the Civil War. They themselves, or one of their family members, has just enlisted and gone off to fight. How important would it be to receive a letter in this situation? What would those left at home hope to hear about? What would those gone off to fight yearn to know?

Now divide the class into small groups such that each group is given one of the pairs of letters (Appendix II thru X). There are letters written by southerners and northerners, including letters from a free African American family (the Demus letters). While most of the authors are men, there is a letter by Mary Jane Demus, two letters by E. and Fannie Hunt. (You may wish to ask students if it is likely that more men's letters than women's have been preserved from the Civil War period; if so why and to what effect.)

In addition give them the Civil War Letter Analysis Worksheet (Appendix I). One for each letter analyzed.

When teams have finished analyzing their letters, ask one member from each team to come before the class as the letter writer. (Draw on students with some dramatic flair to volunteer for this.) Each "author" should then describe him or herself, thereby sharing the contents of the letter(s).

Day Two:

Next, tell students that you are going to put them into pairs. Each pair will choose imaginary identities for themselves such that one writer is or pretends to be a girl, and the other writer is or pretends to be a boy. Assign each pair to write as either supporters of the Confederacy or the Union such that the class is about evenly divided. (During the Civil War no mail was sent across Confederate lines into Union states.) If your class has an odd number of students ask two to write as "twins" to a third student, or become a letter writer yourself.

After you have partnered students, tell them to look at the map of the U.S. in 1861, and then to decide the following about themselves:

- What are your imaginary names?
- How do you know one another, or how are you related? (e.g. mother/son, father/daughter, sister/brother, husband/wife, engaged couple, etc.)
- How old is each of you?
- Where does each of you live? What are your addresses (no zip codes needed back then!)

(Note: Students should consider the various kinds of Americans living in the 1860's – they might be an immigrant, a freeborn African American, a slave, a Mexican American, an American whose ancestor fought in the American Revolution, and so forth.)

Pass out index cards and ask each pair to write on the top their real names and below to write down the answers to the above questions.

Once their identities have been approved by you, assign each student (in consultation with their partner) to write a biographical description of themselves, based on the following list:

- Describe your home.**
- Describe the most important members of your family in some detail.**
- Describe your upbringing and the extent of your education.**
- Describe your livelihood or how you were financially supported before the Civil War began.**
- Describe your reasons for supporting the position of either the Union or the Confederacy.**
- If you are a man, explain what compelled you to enlist to fight. If you are a woman, explain how you feel about your writing partner joining up to fight.**
- Describe the most pressing concern in your life, your hopes and dreams, before the war broke out.**
- Describe the ways in which you fear the war will change your life.**

Next, ask each student to get a photograph of their character. They can use a downloaded image from the web, or take a photo of themselves dressed in costume. You can post their biographical descriptions and photographs under the index cards for all class members to read and see. They will generate great interest and excitement as the lesson proceeds!

Day Three thru Five:

Now that students can envision the roles both women and men played in the war years, they are ready to write their letters. Letters will look authentic if they are hand written on white stationery. Each should be headed with a date and the place from which the letter is being written. They should be "mailed" in envelopes with the name and address of the fictitious person being written to.

Below are three rounds of letter writing topics and activities. It speeds the process up if each partner writes their Round 1 letters simultaneously. The postman is the teacher who then distributes all letters at once. Next, both partners respond simultaneously in Round 2 to the letters received in Round 1 and so forth. Between rounds call up pairs to read aloud their letters, or put students in groups of four (a northern pair and a southern pair) to read each other's ongoing correspondence.)

Remind students to write about the events below in character (and not in essay style). For example, in reacting to the Emancipation Proclamation, how would the following have been affected differently: a slaveowner, a slave, a northern immigrant, a northern abolitionist. Also remind students to write about their ongoing personal lives – romances, finances, family stories and so forth.

Round 1 Topics: January 1, 1863.

- Your wishes for the coming New Year.**

- Your predictions about the prospects for ending the war.
- Your response to the Emancipation Proclamation and the enlistment of freed slaves and free Negroes in the northern army.
- The Confederate army commandeers male slaves as laborers and factory workers; your reaction.
- Confederate economic woes: prices rise 10% in a month.
- Northern factories boom, but discontent with slow progress of the war rises.
- Your efforts in the war; battlefield or homefront.
- Personal news, news from relatives and friends.

Enclosure: Send a political cartoon, a clipping from a Civil War newspaper, and/or a casualty list from a recent battle.

Round 2 Topics: July 4, 1863.

- July 4th; it's meaning to the cause you support.
- Military progress this spring; revised predictions.
- Death of Stonewall Jackson on May 10; your feelings about it and what it bodes for the future.
- The Battle of Gettysburg. Describe what you experienced in some detail if you either fought in the battle or served the army in some other function (e.g. nurse). Write what you have heard about it in newspapers or word of mouth if you were not there.
- Somewhere you have seen first hand an important military or political leader. Describe the situation and experience.
- The Union begins a military draft. Your reaction, the reaction of others (Note: NYC Draft Riots will erupt July 11.)
- The effort of women you know to support the cause.
- A terrible personal loss (a child, a soldier, aging parent, etc. related or not related to the Civil War.)
- Your wishes for the person to whom you are writing.

Enclosure: Send a sketch of a battlefield or homefront scene, something that helps your correspondent "see" with your eyes a scene you have experienced.

Round 3 Topics: Thanksgiving, 1863

- President Lincoln initiates a national day of Thanksgiving the last Thursday of November. Experience of this day in the North; reaction in the South.
- Gettysburg Address delivered on November 19th. Whom did you know who fell at Gettysburg? What do Lincoln's words mean to you?
- The Battle of Chattanooga (fought October-November) as you experienced or learned about it; what it portends.
- Blockade running in the South, stories and rumors.
- Enlistment of African American soldiers; work of African American women.
- Experience of a hospital either as patient or nurse(if you have not written about one yet).
- Ongoing personal news about family and friends you know, health and finances, hopes, dreams and fears for the future.
- Your revised predictions for the future of the war.

Enclosure: A keepsake to be remembered by your correspondent (e.g. lock of hair, photograph, tear-stained poem).

Background:

This lesson can be used a follow up/review of the major events during the Civil War. It may also be incorporated throughout the entire unit on the Civil War as each new event is taught.

Activities:

- Civil War letter analysis
- Civil War character development
- Civil War character biographical sketch
- Civil War letter writing

Closure:

Hold a discussion posing the following questions:

- In how many ways was 1863 a turning point of the Civil War?
- Why then did it take two more years for the North to win the war?
- How did Northerners and Southerners experience the war in different ways?

Appendix I

Civil War Letters Analysis Worksheet

• What can we infer about the letter writer at the time the Civil War started, his or her home, family members, work, level of education? How do you know?

• Can we tell which side the author of this letter supported, the Union or Confederacy? If so, how do we know? Give specifics.

• What is happening during the Civil War at the time the letters were written? (Students can check their texts and/or internet sources)

• If the author is a man, why do you think he has enlisted? Does he say anything about the views or attitudes he holds that have led him to make the commitment to fight, or can we infer them in any way?

• If the author is a woman, does she say anything that enables us to know which side of the conflict she supports and why?

• If either the author or recipient is a woman, what can we learn about the lives of women during the Civil War from the letters? How did women make sacrifices for or contributions to the war effort, even though they themselves could not fight or hold political power?

• What personal concerns does the author express? Is the Civil War the only threat to his or her well being and happiness?

How important does it appear to be for the author to receive letters and/or to write letters at this time? Why?

Appendix II - X
Franklin County:
David Demus to Mary Jane Demus, November 8, 1863

[Bibliographic Information](#)

SUMMARY:

Demus writes that he does not like hearing that his wife is working in a field husking corn. He suggests that he might come home soon--as soon as he is paid the \$90 owed to him.

november the 8th 1863

My Dear Wife

I take this opportunity to inform you that i am Well at present and hoping that these few lines may find you in the same state of health i receive your letter on the 5th of this month and i Was very glad to hear from you all and i happy to hear that you have got such good health since i left home but i am afraid that you are going to hurt yourself Working i don't think that you ought to go out in the field to husk Corn or do any such Work i don't think nothing of you Working at Mr paterson some times but i don't Want to hear of you going in the field to any more and you need mind What you hear all the talk that his son Can talk Won't Hurt you i he think that i Won't get home soon but i Would a Come home this time but i thought We Will get our money in a few days and as soon as We get it i Will be at home to stay a Will and i have only got a dollar now but if you look in the next letter i Will send you some home We have got about ninety Dollar Coming to us now and tell me how hold the thing for you you [unclear: sed] [unclear: robsen] boys What [unclear: robson] Was it for i Want to now give my love to your father and lysbeth and solomon harson and aunt merrey harson and tell them to write to me Wants give my love to all the friends

nothing more at Present but still remain

your Dear husband

David Demus to mary Demus

Direct Mr David Demus
Hilton Head SC
54th Regiment
massachusetts
volunteers

**Franklin County:
Mary Jane Demus to David A. Demus, February 23, 1864**

[Bibliographic Information](#)
[Modern-Spelling Version](#)

SUMMARY:

Mary Jane Demus inquires about her husband's health and tells him that she is temporarily working at Mr. Patterson's.

the 23 of february 1864

My Dear husman

I take my pen in hand to inform to you that I am well at preasant and I hope that These few lines may find you The same stat of helth i recive you kinde letter the 18 of february i was glad to hare form you once more but i am sorry to hare that you ar to be in a norer battel i harey have the harte to rite eney mor it tak all mi time to [unclear: stutey] and thinke abote it i tre to keep mi seff in [unclear: harte] but it wis a hard things but i hope and pry that wee will git to see ech orer agane all we cane do put ar trut in god for he the only one wee cane look too i am glad to hare you ar well have you [unclear: haed] gut rite well i am [unclear: fard] you will cash cold in you head i ant be sike one day sinc you ben gone do you thinke if i wos sick i woud not rite to you and leat you now yet haven ben so longe sinc i rote mab you diden git it i am liven at Mr. patterson i come home when yor rote to me you was come home then you diden come i went back agane i am gonen to stay a month and little beter then i am come hom then i am gone down to John the last of march than i will stay and halp him to move if you dont com home i will [unclear: har] out this somer for ever things ar so dear i cant stay at home for i mos earn mi [unclear: clos] so meney pepel gonen a way with and [unclear: colerd] [unclear: unel] Bill Burch and purk wason jame handey o seall famel [unclear: gonen] it so meney sails [unclear: pel hisson] have a sail this week [unclear: har] mother ar gonen to to west and pet a gonen with them thay cane go for me and we welkum for thay ante fiet to go to the west i dont now [unclear: woth] i come over hom to night to rite this letter i have to go back to night i cant rite ther for the cheldren boser me too moch give love to the rest gorge and the boys i am sorry to hare thay wont pay you but thay will som day i hope aunt Mary and unel solum sends thar love to you mi best to your selff thay dont hare eney things a bout Bill Bown and unel Joney aunt sharlot ar well it 8 a klok and must brings mi letter to a clos rite sone

good night pece be with you

Mary Jane Demes to David Demes

**Franklin County:
E. and Fannie Hunt to Their Cousins, December 1, 1861**

[Bibliographic Information](#)
[Modern-Spelling Version](#)

SUMMARY:

The Hunts write of illness in their family and among neighbors. They also express support for defeating the rebels.

[unclear: Haneville]

Dec. the 1 = 1861

[unclear: Ever] dear Cousins

After so long a time i once more seat my self to write a few lines to you we are all well and hope this will find you all the same we received your most welcom letter in due time and was glad to hear from you once more we had a good deal of sickness in our famly this fall it commenced in Bateses famly first little sarah Jane was taken with the bloody flux and dide she was sick five weaks before little sarah Jane dide Bateses wife was taken with the same disease she lay for 6 weaks that she [unclear: want] expected to live but through the providence of god she is better father was taken with the same disease and for two weaks we did not think he would live but he is getting better now so you may judge wether we had our hands ful or not they is great excitement hear about the war evry boddy is for fight Illinois has turnd out 70 thousand troops for the war and can send as many more if wanted i say down with the rebel flag if it takes all we have got, our property and our lives if cotton is king then let us no it but let us wallow in blood up to our horses bridle bits before we give it up let the canons roar till evry rebel shall lay down his arms and beg for mercy Lyman you wrote, you talked of comeing west you wanted to no the price of land hear it is various prices improved farms are worth from 15 to 25 dollars a Acre prairie from 10 to 12 dollars a Acre i think you had all better sell out and come west for i think you can live easier hear than you can there tell uncle and aunt to come west and see us and then he can see the Country for i am shure if he seas it he will like it we have plenty of fruit hear this fall father had all the apples and [unclear: curence] and [unclear: laughten] berries they wanted uncle Eshon Winchesters folks are all well uncle has took Bates farm for five years he likes the county verry mutch Samuel Winchester has gone to war he is in Kentucky Polly Jane is teaching school i must draw my letter to a close for fannie wants to write a few lines you must write oftneer and i will do the same.

this from

E. and F. Hunt

good night
mutch love to all

to L. Foster and Wife

**Franklin County:
E. and Fannie Hunt to Their Cousins, December 1, 1861**

[Bibliographic Information](#)
[Modern-Spelling Version](#)

SUMMARY:

Fannie writes about her mother-in-law's efforts to take care of sick family, and about the cold, snowy weather.

Haneville
Dec. 1st 61
Ever dear Cousins

I will improve the few leisure moments allotted me in answering your kind and ever welcome letter. We was happy indeed to hear from you once more, and to hear that you were all enjoying so good a degree of health. Our family is all well at present. Cousin Lyman how little did I think when I saw you at Mr Alexanders that I should one day address you as cousin but strange things will happen

Tell Aunt Sarah that Mother Hunt has had a very hard time of it this fall Fathers being sick and Sarah too She was first at Sarah's and then at home I would go and take care of Father when she was up to Sarahs . But she stood it remarkably well she will outdo any girl in Ill.

We are having very cold weather here now, we have snow enough to make tolerable good sleighing Now Lyman when you write again have your wife write some we want to get more acquainted with her I must close for it is late

Much love to all From your aff. Cousins

E. & F. Hunt

**Franklin County:
Samuel M. Potter to Cynthia Potter, December 10, 1862**

[Bibliographic Information](#)
[Modern-Spelling Version](#)

SUMMARY:

Potter describes the hospital in which he works and tells about distributing medicine to patients.

Camp Casey
Dec. 10 1862
Dear Cynthia

Marys letter informing me of your sickness came safely to hand & I felt very glad that you got along so well with your fine boy. I do not know what name to give him now. After I get home & see him I can find out a name for him. Take good care of him till I see him. I am glad too that you have such good neighbors so that you had all necessary care in your sickness. My dutys in the hospital are to give out the medicine the Surgeon prescribed. The sick call is at eight oclock in the morning when all the sick in the companies come up to the hospital with their sore toes, sore shins, sore heads, bad colds, rheumatisms about 30 or 40 every morning come to get medicine & it takes the Dr. about 2 or 3 hours examining their ailments & prescribing the medicine for them which I have to put up for each one. Some are sick in their tent. The doctor visits & prescribes for them so they are coming in all through the day for medicine & some of us have to be on hand to give it out. We have 10 patients in our hospital who have to have their medicine & my duty is to see that they get it at the right times & to see that the nurses do their duty keeping the hospital & patients clean & properly warmed & also to see that the patients each one gets his proper diet so one of us have to overlook the cooks to get what is suitable for the patients cooked. [**One poor soldier will probably**] So you see I am kept very close in the hospital. This afternoon the other hospital steward Dr. Casey & myself rode out for a couple hours. We visited some of the forts handy. Fort Lincoln is in sight only 1/4 of a mile from our camp. Well Cynthia I would very much like to have been there with you. I have felt uneasy for some time but now since it is over & you are doing well that care has been lightened & I pray God that he may continue your health that you may train up those children in the fear of the Lord & I would pray that your health that we may meet again & enjoy each others society & have that pleasure in our children we have enjoyed. Josey must be a good boy to his little brother & nurse him for me & I know Lucy & Bell will like the boy they have got. Bell be a good girl & Lucy must be good to her sister Bell as well as her little brother. Well Mary I feel proud of the compliment the old doctor paid you. You are deserving it. May God bless you Mary & enable you to grow in grace, to adorn the Christian character & to hav your hope in heaven. Well Cynthia let us all still put our trust in that Almighty power that has kept us all in the hollow of his hand & we will be happy. No more at present but remain

Your affectionate husband

S.M. Potter

Franklin County:
Samuel M. Potter to Cynthia Potter, July 20, 1863

[Bibliographic Information](#)
[Modern-Spelling Version](#)

SUMMARY:

Potter explains his lapse in writing as the result of a stomach and liver illness he contracted after the battle at Gettysburg.

Harpers Ferry Va.
July 20th 1863
Dear Cynthia

Will you ever excuse me for not writing you for so long a time. I know you will & I must assure I feel very sorry for you & will hurry & tell you the reason for not writing sooner. Soon after the battle at Gettysburg I got sick. My stomach & liver were out of order. I hung on day after day hoping to get better but instead got worse. We were moving over the mountains until we came to Boneboro Md. when I got so sick as not to be able to go any farther. The Doctor sent me to a barn with John Milligan to wait on me. I lay there a week & got some better. Then we come down here yesterday Sabbath. I was still better but did not feel strong enough to ride every day with the retiment, when I got the Doctor to write an order for me to go to Baltimore to go to the hospital. Well the Dr. wrote the order & I came here. Saw the Quartermaster who had charge of the R.R. & he told me I would have to get a transportation order from Gen. Lockwood. I called on him & he sent me to his Medical Director who told me I would have to go into the hospital here. He could not send me to Baltimore so I stopped here. There are about 200 sick here. I have to act as Hospital Steward for them. They have not been in operation long & are not fully arrayed yet. The Drs. are very glad that I did come, as they had no one who knew anything about a Hospital Stewards duties & some of the Drs. dont know much about Hospital practice. They treat me very kindly. I hope to be able to get a furlough & get home before I got back to the Regt. I have felt very bad about you since I was sick knowing that you would be uneasy. You would go over to the postoffice & wait patiently for letter then to be dissapointed time after time. I know it would be very unpleasant for you. It has been the greatest trouble & sorrow I have known to be dissapointed in getting your letters & the children too would wonder where Pa is. I do wish I knew where he is. I think I can hear Josey saying. & so you are all at home again, you wrote to me in your last. I forgot myself when I was reading it & I thought I was at home on the back porch reading your letter & you were getting dinner for me. I felt bad about it & wished I could have got up & run there on the double quick. Well we have driven the rebs back into Old Va. again & hurt them some as they were going. Our regiment had a brush with them while I was sick & several were killed & some wounded. Abe Lezarden was killed & James Milligan was wounded. I hear our hospital was a factory & stands high on the Virginia side of the Potomac which washes the walls of the building. The Stewards room has a window looking out on the river & I am writing this on the window seat with the roar of the river in my ears as I write. This is called the Factory Hospital & if you write soon address Factory Hospital, Harpers Ferry.

Teusday . The mail has not gone yet but will in an hour or two & I will write a little more since this is the most enjoyment I have since your letters can not reach me from the Regiment. I feel quite well this morn & should go back to the Regiment but as they want me to stay here I will remain & see if I can not get a furlough. to get home. I would like so well to see you all once

more. I would like to hear from you soon to find out how you all are. How Josey has got over scared at drowning. I hope he will be more careful of the millrace & keep a respectful distance from it. How do Lucy & Bell get along. Tell about them when you write & Jimmy I suppose Jumping Jimmy from what you say of his activity is he walking yet. How is the cow getting along. Do you have her in a pasture or is she living as usual in the road. I suppose you have a good garden. I hope to be able to help you eat some of it this summer, if my furlough comes all right. I will still leave you in the hands of our Great Preserver who has kept us all so long in the midst of dangers & preserve us from harm. Oh how I would like to be sitting beside you in the old church on the hill listening to Mr. McKee. Those were among the most pleasant hours of my life there to have them with the children & me there & oh how I would like to enjoy them again. I hope God will preserve & protect us & permit us to meet again to enjoy the service of his sanctuary again on earth. Pray for me dear Cynthia that I may grow in grace maybe more sanctified & that I may be more acceptable to my Creator & I will still pray for my dear wife that she may be kept in the hollow of Gods hand, that no harm may befall her that she may be made holy & righteous that we all parents & children may be accepted by the Almighty through his son the Lord Jesus Christ. That will bless you all in the prayer of your most affectionate husband.

S. M. Potter

**Augusta County:
John H. Cochran to His Mother, December 11, 1860**

[Bibliographic Information](#)
[Modern-Spelling Version](#)

SUMMARY:

Cochran talks about the growing anxiety and uncertainty surrounding South Carolina's threat of secession and evaluates the South's readiness for a war.

Richmond
Decr. 11th 60
Dear Mother

Your letter is received and contents noted. I will come up sometime after Christmass what time I cannot now say but as soon as circumstances will permit. The country is now in a fearful state of agitation. So much so that thinking men believe that a war between the sections is imminent . Should things continue as they are I do not think that any one will venture into the tobacco business at least until near spring. We contemplate holding off until then as we expect that by that time things will have been settled or taken such a turn as to indicate whether the business will be safe or not. Ours [**business**] being a credit business and being carried on almost exclusively through agencies in the northern states would be the first and longest sufferer from civil war. As you have seen by the papers your own glorious native state has at last determined to throw off the shackles of a government which it would be disgrace for any southern man to submit to. Glorious South Carolina how I wish I also could claim it for my native country. In this city the friends of Southern rights are not idle though we are not making any fuss or parade of our streangth . We could muster with a days notice five hundred good men and true who are determined to maintain our rights. Even though we have to fight in the language of the infamous traitor Douglass "with halters around our necks," Blue cockades are not uncommon here. I have been wearing one for nearly two months and so help me God I intend if necessary to make the declaration implied by it good even with my hearts blood. As to the gun. Trades in guns and horses are proverbally uncertain. Frank when down here saw a gun that he liked as well as mine. And Paul who is very anxious to possess [**my**] mine has purchased that one with the hope of trading with him. It is as good as mine but Paul like myself has falled in love with mine. He made Frank an offer while down here which pleased him. If you do not object P. and myself have determined to send his and the boot agreed upon between him and Frank in place of mine. I hope this arrangement will be satisfactory to you and Frank as P. is very anxious to have my gun. It would not do at this time to send a gun by a negro even with an order as it would get him into trouble. The arrangement for paying suits me as well as any other. I am glad to hear that the baby is better and hope he will continue to improve. I could not get your bill to day but as Paul is anxious for a reply to my propposition I determined to write to day so that I could get your reply as soon as possible. I will get your Bill as soon as possible and send it to you in my next. Paul sends his respects and says times are worse and worse.

Give my respects to all and believe me your affectionate son

J. H. Cochran

P.S. Enclosed I send you some speeches delivered in the Senate which will give you some idea of the feeling existing there.

Augusta County:
John H. Cochran to His Mother, December 21, 1860

[Bibliographic Information](#)
[Modern-Spelling Version](#)

SUMMARY:

Cochran reflects on the meaning of South Carolina's secession.

Richmond
Decr 21st 60
Dear Mother

Your letter was received on the 19th. I will send Franks gun up on monday by the express train. There is nothing talked about here but that all absorbing [*illeg.*] subject secession. South Carolina has gloriously vindicated her honor. She has passed her ordinance of secession and henceforth the 20th day of December will be as glorious a day for the South as ever the 4th of July was to the United States. We speak now of the United States as of a nation that has passed away as of a government that has lived out its allotted time and passed away into the dim past. More glorious things are looming up in the now near future.

Enclosed I send your bill. Mr. D. gave me \$25. I would send the change but it would not be safe I will bring it up with me when I come. As you see it is \$2.85.

Give my respects to all my friends. Hoping all are well I remain your affectionate son.

J. H. Cochran

P.S. Franks letter was received today I will answer soon it was missent. J.H.C.

