

Palencia, Elaine Fowler. “On Rising Ground”: The Life and Civil War Letters of John M. Douthit, 52nd Georgia Volunteer Infantry Regiment, C.S.A. Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 2021.

52nd Georgia Infantry, private, promoted to second sergeant, letters often “reticent” p. xiii.
1860 Census, p. 1—quite evocative, Hot House, Fannin County, North Georgia—farm hand
Area of reluctant secessionists
And brothers did not immediately enlist, 9
Community described Jonathan Sarris’s A Separate Civil War
Douthit enlisted on March 4, 1862, 14 (Co. H, Fannin Rifles, 52nd Georgia)
Filed a will four days later
Camp McDonald,
Mustered in election of officer, dissatisfaction with food, 18-19
Regiment lacked tents and blankets
Deaths in camp
Camp schedule, 22-23
Andrews raiders, 24-25
Rough train ride, measles, mumps, 30
Men unfit for duty, 31
Prejudice against East Tennessee, 35-36
Cumberland Gap, Chattanooga, 37-38
Information from a 16th Ohio soldier near the Gap, 40-41
Thinks there is a large northern force on his side of the Cumberland Mountains, 42-43
No word from home, 43
Many soldiers ill or deserting, 44
Soldier executions, 46-47
Hospital at Strawberry Plains with a fever, 49-52
Joseph Brown proclamation against desertion, 53
Getting better in hospital, doctor cannot give furloughs, denies that Yankees had taken Richmond, 54
Says he is healing fast and out of danger, 55-56
Newspaper letter discouraged family members from visiting troops, 57
Another daughter born, would have preferred a son, 59
Cumberland Gap, camped near enemy guns, 62
Instructions on farming at home, 62
Yankees cannot hold out much longer at the gap, they are out of food, 63
“Living high” on roasting ears beef flour bread,” 63
Enemy burning items in night to prepare evacuation, 65
Account of march Bragg’s Kentucky campaign, 68—long and most important letter in the book
Water shortages—cooking water, water for livestock, and bathing all in one place, 69
Greeted by women waving handkerchiefs and Confederate flags, 70
Soldiers taking agricultural products despite orders against foraging, 70
Much straggling, 70-71
Some men captured by the Federals, 71
Marching and skirmishing, 72-73
“fearlessly attacked a hen roost” led by several company officers, 74

Saw hog skin and chicken feathers on way back, 76
 Hard conditions on the retreat, 76-77
 General history on the regiment itself and war==filled in around the letters
 Furlough, clothes, 84
 Soldier pay and money sent home, uncertainty of when paid again, 85
 Camp rumors, 88
 Regiment dwindled, disease, capture, casualties in skirmishes without a major battle, 88
 Manchester will stay until spring, 90
 Food, 90
 Food prices, salt shortage, 90
 Some deserters, he would like to come home but will never desert, 92
 Circuitous path from Murfreesboro to Vicksburg by rail and marching, 94—great example of transportation problems in the Confederacy
 Chickasaw Bayou, 95-
 Lightly engaged, but casualties, some description of being under fire, managed to scramble into trenches and so had only one man killed and one wounded, 101
 Worries he might not write the truth about the fight because he did not see much, 102
 Occasionally publishes reports from the ORs to supplement the letters
 Also uses newspaper letter for supplement
 War weariness and complaints about mean colonel, 111
 Comments on Grant's canal, no end of rain and mud, Vicksburg, Feb. 2, 1863, 112
 Could you some socks, he received hair she sent but would rather be with her and the children, 224
 Reports good rations and tents, February 1863, 115
 March is unwell but hopes to be well in a few days, 117
 Ill several times with the inevitable camp diarrhea, 120
 Diagnosed with "remittent fever" p. 121
 May 1863 expected Federal attack, 122-23
 Sends \$50 home, 123
 Feel poor and does not go with regiment to Warrenton, 125
 Champion Hill—no account from Douthit survives, 127-40—carefully done
 News of Champion Hill coming back to Georgia, casualty lists, 137-38
 Douthit had diarrhea as Grant was assaulting Vicksburg in May 1862
 Few letters got in or out of Vicksburg
 Great reduced rations, listed, 143
 Men too feeble to break out of Vicksburg
 Georgia editor spun surrender in favor of Pemberton and against Grant, 145-46
 Martha heard nothing from John despite his regiment being paroled
 A neighbor wrote in September that might be in Federal hands or in a Mobile hospital, 147
 Both John and Davis Douthit signed paroles in Washington hospital in Vicksburg, 148
 Put on hospital ship to Mobile, but instead admitted to St. Louis hospital in New Orleans 149
 John died of diarrhea in late July and his Davis in August
 Buried in Cypress Grove Cemetery, named misspelled and uncertain dates of death, 151
 Barton-Stovall brigade, desertions, 153
 Douthit women had their Union soldier (Martha's oldest brother) write to see to if John Davis had made any "professions" before they died, 155—look for signs of the good death

No evidence about John's religious faith
Had been buried in cypress coffins only a foot or two below the surface, 158
Confederates moved to mass grave in Greenwood cemetery
Social conflict in Fannin county during later stages of the war, 159
People left country because of lawlessness
Some members of the 52nd became Unionist guerrillas, two shot by firing squad
Lots of postwar genealogical information
Martha lived to be 90—kept a black dressed to be buried in, 168-69
“noble stoicism” in John and Davis, p. 171
Tragic heroism—a bit neo-Confederate, 172-73---a very empathetic (if not sympathetic)
treatment of Confederate soldiers.