

**Transcription, Letter from John Gibbon**  
**To his Wife, April 19, 1865**  
Gibbon Family Papers, Collection 2031

*John Gibbon (1827-1896) was a life-long Army officer. He was in Holmesburg,<sup>1</sup> Pennsylvania. Soon after, his family moved to North Carolina, where he graduated from the United States Military Academy and entered his career in the Army. When the Civil War broke out, several of Gibbon's family members were slaveholders and fought in the Confederate infantry. He decided to remain loyal to the Union. Soon Gibbon was promoted through the ranks, and eventually became a Brigadier General.*

HEAD-QUARTERS TWENTY-FOURTH ARMY CORPS

In the Field, Va., Burksville, April 19<sup>th</sup> 1865.

My dearest Mama,<sup>2</sup>

I reached here yesterday afternoon having ridden on a Engine 10 miles on perhaps the worst road you ever saw from a place called Prospect Station to within a mile and a half of Farmville and from there on horseback some 20 miles reaching here pretty well tired out, and slept at Genl. Meade's Hd.Qrs. My troops got in this morning and we are now in a beautiful camp near the Army of the Potomac. I reported to Genl. M by telegraph and expect to receive orders to march to Richmond where my 3<sup>rd</sup> Div now is under command of Gen. Devens who I see has command of the city.

Every body is eager after the papers, from which we have been separated too long, to read the horrible details of Mr. Lincoln's most outrageous murder. It has thrown a gloom over every body right in the midst of all our joy at the successful termination of our campaign. It is the greatest calamity that has ever happened to this country, regarded so even by the people down here who if they had had their way would certainly have preferred he should have lived, and I think they may well feel so. I trust however that the misgivings of many will not be realized, and that all will yet go well for our poor distracted country, and that we will before long be once more a peaceful nation.

I received last night your letter of the 12<sup>th</sup>. Are you not ashamed to accuse me of not writing when you know I am so much more faithful in that respect than you are. I have written to you frequently and by every favorable opportunity and hope by this time you are satisfied of the fact by the receipt for all of my letters. In one of my letters I told you all about Osmam Latrobe, and last night got a letter from Mrs. L. making anxious enquiry about him. Lest my letter should have been lost I will repeat. He was among those captured in Lee's army and was paroled as an officer of Longstreet's staff. He left Appomattox C.H. on the 13<sup>th</sup> intending to travel on horseback across the country to Harper's Ferry where he would take the cars for Baltimore, and expected to reach there in about two weeks. He was quite well, and I hope it will not be long after you receive this before his mother will have the pleasure of seeing her long absent son, for which I know she is so anxious. Tell her I will write when I have time. You can explain to Mrs. L. from my former letter the terms given to all Genl. Lee's officers and men permitting them to go to their houses and remain there unmolested by U.S. Authorities. I also received a letter from Miss Emily Hoffman making enquiry about her brother, of whom I have heard nothing. Please say to her that I find on enquiry he belonged to Genl. Echols' forces which were not

---

<sup>1</sup> Now part of the City of Philadelphia

<sup>2</sup> He addressed his wife, Fannie, as Mama in his letters. She and their four children were in Baltimore.

## Transcription, Letter from John Gibbon

To his Wife, April 19, 1865

Gibbon Family Papers, Collection 2031

included in the surrender and did not belong to Genl. Lee's army tho' many of them made into Lynchburg and were paroled. If I hear anything of them I will let her know. Ned just told me that he had enquired of a number of Battalions [?] as to where he was and they he was with Echols whose troops were in S. West Virginia.

I am surprised not to have heard from Genl. Ord before this as I telegraphed him last night. If I go to Richmond, and there is a prospect of remaining there how you like would to come down and live with me, or would you rather go to W. Point? I hope most sincerely that the fighting is over, and if it is and I have a prospect of remaining quiet for the summer I don't see why I cannot have you and the children with me, but I am afraid that this too much happiness to look forward to, and I cannot tell what the chances are until I go over to Richmond. As soon as I can get away I am coming to see you my darling, and settle that business with Harry[?], who I suppose begins to think he will never get it arranged. But I hope the matter will not have to be much longer postponed.

Tell the children I have a little pointer pup, which I have yet decided whether I will name John or George after Genl. Getty who gave him to me. Hi is a pretty little fellow and is now snoring away at the foot of my bed. A little while ago a little bit- [sic] of a rabbit ran into my tent. Scared by some of the men I suppose, and sat down right alongside of him without waking him up! We tried to catch the rabbit, but he got out under the edge of the tent. I received a note from [S. . .?] tonight in which she says you not intend to write any more letters now the war is over. I hope this is not so, and that I shall soon hear from [you] and often. If you do not write I shall make an effort to come home to you, and if that will give you as much concern as it will me you will be sufficiently punished for indeed my dear dear Mama I want to see you very very much, and shall be much disappointed if I not heard from you tomorrow. I send you a flower from the garden of the house in which Genls. Grant and Lee held their conference at Appomattox C. H. and in which also the commissioners held their meetings. Kiss my dear children for me.

Yours ever,  
J.G.