

Primary Source: Girls Helping the Cause ^[1]

It was not only those who joined the ranks of the Confederate Army that served the Confederate war efforts. On the homefront, many of those left behind, especially woman, worked to provide materials to Confederate troops.

One such young woman was Julia. Below is a letter she wrote to her grandmother where she discusses life on the North Carolina homefront during the Civil War, including the making of materials for Confederate troops.

Home Nov 4th 1861

My Dear Grandma

It has been a long time since I wrote to you last, and I am ashamed for having neglected it so long, I hope you will forgive me for the delay. We have all been so very busy, that I actually have not taken time to write a letter to anybody. We have been working a good deal for the soldiers, I believe the homeguard have supplied the first company with clothing for the winter and will soon begin to work for the second. Mr Barber's company started about two weeks ago, I was at Wilkesboro during the time that the uniform was making up, but I did not stay until the company started. Some of us were going up to see them start but the river was up so that we could not go. Cousin Ransom went up, he said that it was a splendid looking company, and left in perfect order, no drinking at all [sic]. We did not work as much for Mr Barber's as we wished, but we kept telling them to send us more work and they did not do it. Mother sent them six blankets. Mrs Barber is very lovely, she wants some of us to go and stay with her this winter, I think Millie will go and stay awhile she wants to go and wear her homespun dress. We have made some very pretty homespun this fall, it is the most uncommon looking I ever saw. Cousin Dick speaks of starting to Manassa [sic] with the boxes of clothing to day, I believe Tom is going with him, they got a letter from Cousin Nath dated the 28th he was very well then. Cousin Lizzie has been working very hard lately they have had a great many overcoats to make, and a great many gloves and socks to knit. We made some shirts, and knit some gloves, socks, and comforters for their box, I think Uncle Dickie intends to have them warm enough, he has had [sic] some jeans shirts made and ever so many overcoats to come down to their feet nearly. Cousin Sallie Hugh has not been up to see us yet, Millie has been down there several times but she has not been up yet, I have not seen her since she came over. Mary and I have been spinning and weaving lately, I wove a dress for myself or nearly all of it. I have not told you anything about the children yet. I know one thing about them, they are very bad and nearly all in rags, for we have been working so much for the soldiers that we have not done anything scarcely for the family and now it is absolutely necessary. Joyce is a mighty sweet little thing when she tries to be, and very bright and smart, she will soon be walking I think. Willie is not very well he has been sick a day or two, but is better now he "says he is going to get behind Coon on a horse and shoot the Yankees". I believe Nora is as fat as ever Millie has shingled her head and she looks mighty sweet. Laura is pretty rapid I tell you, she is learning right fast can read very well, she has been knitting some too, she wants to see little Jule mighty bad she says. Jim and Wat are just running wild I do wish Jim was going to school in Lenoir he could learn so fast and he is not learning a thing here at home. Now is the very time for him to be studying as hard as he can I know he can study when he tries.

I want to see you all very much, I would like so much to go up there, but I don't know when I can again, I wish I could see Gwyn and Tommie, they are such sweet little fellows. Mother got a letter from Mrs Fulton last week she had not hear from her before in several years, she said that Uncle Tom called to see her once, and she hoped to see him very often. We had a great many pumpkins This year, we are going to make some molasses in a few weeks don't you want some? I do not like it as much as the sugar cane molasses, Uncle Hickinson made some very nice and sent us some. We have had another glorious victory, the scene at the [battle of Leesburg](#) must have been terrific, our forces driving the Yankees in the [Potomac river](#) like a herd of swine or something so, and shooting at their heads every time they would pop up out of the water. It does seem that Providence is on our side we have gained so many brilliant victories over them, and they always have every advantage almost. I hope this wind is blowing old [Abe's](#) ships the wrong way, I think that storm the other night must have swept some of them to [David Jones](#) I hope so anyhow. Well! Grandma I reckon I must stop Jim is going to start to [Elkin](#) in a few minutes and I must have my letter ready to send by him, I know it is a poor one, but I am sorry to say that I do not write any other sort. Mother says that she has so much word to send and so much to say that she gets out of [illegible] and wont begin.

Give a heap of love to all for me and accept a double portion for yourself. I reckon the other children would send theirs if I would as them so you can take it for granted sent.

Your Very Affectionate Grandchild
Julia

Primary Source Citation:

Lenoir Family Papers. Personal Correspondence, 1861-1865. Published online by Documenting the American South. University Library, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. <https://docsouth.unc.edu/imls/lenoir/lenoir.html> ^[2].

User Tags:

[Civil War](#) [3]

[history](#) [4]

[home front](#) [5]

[North Carolina](#) [6]

[North Carolina History](#) [7]

[Page](#) [8]

[Students](#) [9]

[Teachers](#) [10]

[textiles](#) [11]

[women](#) [12]

[Creative Commons BY-NC-SA](#) [13]

From:

[ANCHOR: A North Carolina History Online Resource](#) [14]

Copyright Date:

2009

Related Topics:

- ["Reminiscences: Work of the Women of Fayetteville during the War Between the States"](#)[15]
- [The Homefront, North Carolinans during the Civil War](#)[16]

3 January 2018

Source URL:<https://ncpedia.org/anchor/primary-source-girls-helping>

Links

[1] <https://ncpedia.org/anchor/primary-source-girls-helping> [2] <https://docsouth.unc.edu/imps/lenoir/lenoir.html> [3] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/civil-war> [4] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/history> [5] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/home-front> [6] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/north-carolina-5> [7] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/north-carolina-6> [8] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/page> [9] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/students> [10] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/teachers> [11] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/textiles> [12] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/women> [13] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/creative-commons> [14] <https://ncpedia.org/category/entry-source/anchor-north> [15] <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/Documents/Detail/reminiscences-work-of-the-women-of-fayetteville-during-the-war-between-the-states/584861> [16] <https://www.ncpedia.org/anchor/home-front>