

## Primary Source: Pleading for Corn <sup>[1]</sup>

*Joseph Cathey (1803–1874) of Haywood County, North Carolina, was a community leader who often received requests for assistance from soldiers or home front families during the Civil War. In this letter Emma Shoolbred, who indicates that she is a widow with a son in military service, writes to request Cathey's assistance in locating corn and an ox to purchase.*

*In this letter of March 30, 1863, Emma Shoolbred writes to Joseph Cathey. She is a widow with three sons in Confederate service and another unaccounted for, and she does not have the resources to provide for the people she has enslaved. Though she had never met Cathey, she makes her request based on Cathey's knowledge of her son James, and she inquires about the possibility of purchasing corn, an ox, and wheat flour, and what those items might cost her.*

---

Flat Rock  
March 30th 1863

Col. Cathey

Sir,

Though personally a stranger to you, I know that you are acquainted with my son James, and an induced <sup>[2]</sup> to apply to you in a time of difficulty I have been a widow for three years, and James and his two younger brothers being in the army, in Virginia, and my eldest at [illegible], I am entirely with out any one to assist me the war has greatly reduced my circumstances, and I find it hard to live. I have many small negro children besides their parents to feed, and would be glad to know if I can purchase some corn from you at a reasonable price, and if you would allow me to purchase from you an ox, as I have lately lost one of mine, and understand from W. [?] Tabor that I cannot procure <sup>[3]</sup> one in this neighborhood. I should also be glad to know the price of wheat flour, and if I can get any from you. An early answer will oblige

yours respectfully,

E.A. Shoolbred  
Flat Rock, N.C.

Please name the price of the ox corn and flour if I can obtain them from you or in your neighborhood.

Emma A. Shoolbred

---

### Primary Source Citation:

Emma A. Shoolbred to Col. J. Cathey, March 30, 1863. Joseph Cathey and Cathey Family Papers, Hunter Library Special Collections, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, NC. <https://cdm16232.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16232coll5/id/216> <sup>[4]</sup>

### Contextual Information Citation:

Hunter Library Special Collections, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, NC. <https://cdm16232.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16232coll5/id/216> <sup>[4]</sup>

### User Tags:

[Civil War](#) <sup>[5]</sup>  
[Haywood County](#) <sup>[6]</sup>  
[history](#) <sup>[7]</sup>  
[home front](#) <sup>[8]</sup>  
[North Carolina](#) <sup>[9]</sup>  
[North Carolina History](#) <sup>[10]</sup>  
[Page](#) <sup>[11]</sup>  
[Students](#) <sup>[12]</sup>  
[Teachers](#) <sup>[13]</sup>  
[women](#) <sup>[14]</sup>  
[All Rights Reserved](#) <sup>[15]</sup>

### From:

[ANCHOR: A North Carolina History Online Resource](#) <sup>[16]</sup>

### Copyright Date:

2008

### Primary Sources:

Gla. Rock  
March 30<sup>th</sup> 1863

Col. Cather,

Sir,

Though personally a stranger  
to you, I know that you are acquainted  
with my son James, and am induced  
to apply to you in a time of difficulty.  
I have been a Widow for three years, and  
James and his two younger brothers being  
in the Army, in Virginia, and my el-  
dest son at Antietam. I am entirely with-  
out any one to assist me. The war has  
greatly reduced my circumstances,  
and I find it hard to live. I have  
many small negro children besides  
their parents to feed, and would be  
glad to know if I can purchase  
some corn from you at a reasonable  
price, and if you would allow me  
to purchase from you an Ox, as I  
have lately lost one of mine, and  
understand from Mr. Tabor that I  
cannot procure one in this neigh-



neighborhood - I should also be glad to know  
the price of Wheat Flour, and if I can  
get any from you - An early answer will  
oblige

yours respectfully,

E. A. Shoolbred.

Glen Rock, No. C.

Please name the price of the Ory corn  
and flour if I can obtain them from you  
or in your neighborhood -

Emma A. Shoolbred

[18]

Pages 1 and 2 of the original letter, "Emma A. Shoolbred to Col. J. Cathey, March 30, 1863."

<https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/history> [8] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/home-front> [9] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/north-carolina-5> [10] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/north-carolina-6> [11] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/page> [12] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/students> [13] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/teachers> [14] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/women> [15] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/all-rights> [16] <https://ncpedia.org/category/entry-source/anchor-north> [17] <https://ncpedia.org/media/letter-emma-shoolbred-col-0> [18]