

The first day the shells flew  
around us thick some bursting  
above our heads others poughing  
up the gown quite near us but  
only several were wounded in  
our Regd. that night it rained  
all night. we were without tents  
and me without blanket or any  
thing to eat. the second day we  
run thru 2 or 3 miles further then  
started in the evening for home  
we ~~star~~ crossed the river that  
night and it was dark as pitch.  
pap fell down on the other side  
of the river and hurt his shoulder  
a little. The Rebels followed us <sup>to</sup> town  
that night and are now on the other side  
in force I cant tell you all about our  
march now for it is near dark I will  
write to Dock Gilbert and just as soon  
as I get time. no more at present  
but remain your son in obedience  
Wm. Som all well George

Pages 1 & 4

Camp near Charleburg Va  
Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup>  
1862

Dear Mother

I received your letter of the  
17<sup>th</sup> this evening but I was dis-  
appointed when I read it for I  
thought you had found Wilsons  
body and heard that you was  
going to take it home and have  
a decent burial but I hope it  
may be found yet for I would  
like to have him buried in the  
Methodist Grave Yard when I  
heard of Wilsons death I was in  
Boonesboro but on the way to  
the battle field Jim Brotherton  
stept up to me and told of it.  
I never received such a shock  
in my life before I felt as if  
something heavy had struck me on  
the head and with a sickning  
feeling I sat down on a step

in front of a house. this is  
all I knew until I saw Jim  
Brotherton standing in front  
of me the big drops of sweat was  
running over my face and the  
boy told me that I had fainted  
from the time of hearing ~~the~~  
~~news~~ of the death of Wilson  
until now I have had no sat-  
isfaction or pleasure in the Army  
and yet the bad news is coming  
in. I heard to day of Sydnamons  
sickness and I am sorry to hear it  
and very uneasy about him but  
I hope he will soon get well pap  
was very angry about it at  
Yeorning standing side when Uncle  
Welsh told him Uncle Welsh will  
tell you what he said if you  
ask him I got that bread and  
butter you sent and was glad

Pages 2 & 3

of it for I was out of bread and  
crackers I suppose you heard  
of our division ~~running~~ crossing the  
river on Thursday morning at Sheper-  
dstown Va our company was on  
picket and could not go but Dan  
singer John Bell and myself were  
me being the only 3 out of our  
company along. we had to ford  
the river which was no nice job.  
going through Sheperdstown the  
Yadits held their noses shut for  
fear of smelling Yankees and  
they tried to plague us in  
different ways but we did not keep  
much account of them. we advanced  
on the Rebels on the other side of  
Sheperdstown who commenced  
shelling us but they soon run  
when we began firing on them

Camp near Sharpsburg, Maryland

Tuesday, 21st [October] 1862

Dear Mother,

I received your letter of the 17th this evening but I was disappointed when I read it for I thought you had found Wilson's <sup>1</sup> body and heard that you was going to take it home and have a decent burial but I hope it may be found yet for I would like to have him buried in the Methodist graveyard. When I heard of Wilson's death, I was in Boonsboro [Maryland] but on the way to the [Antietam] battlefield. Jim Brotherton stepped up to me and told of it. I never received such a shock in my life before. I felt as if something heavy had struck me on the head and with a sickening feeling I sat down on a step in front of a house. This is all I knew until I saw Jim Brotherton standing in front of me. The big drops of sweat was running over my face and the boys told me that I had fainted.

From the time of hearing of the death of Wilson until now, I have had no satisfaction or pleasure in the Army and yet the bad news is coming in. I heard today of Lydnaaham's sickness and I am sorry to hear it and very uneasy about him. But I hope he will soon get well. Pap was very angry about Doctor Herring attending Sid when Uncle Nelson told him. Uncle Welsh will tell you what he said if you ask him.

I got that bread and butter you sent and was glad of it for I was out of bread and crackers. I suppose you heard of our division crossing the river on Thursday morning [16 October 1862] at Sheperdstown, Va. Our company was on picket and could not go but Dan Singer,<sup>2</sup> John Bell,<sup>3</sup> and myself went — we being the only three out of our company along. We had to ford the river which was no nice job. Going through Sheperdstown the Ladies held their noses shut for fear of smelling Yankees and they tried to plague us in different ways but we did not keep much account of them. We advanced on the Rebels on the other side of Shephardstown who commenced shelling us but they soon run when we began firing on them. The first day the shells flew around us thick — some bursting above our heads, others ploughing up the ground quite near us — but only several were wounded in the brigade.

That night it rained all night. We were without tents and me without blanket or anything to eat. The second day we run them 2 or 3 miles further, then started in the evening for home. We crossed the river that night and it was dark as pitch. Pap fell down on the other side of the river and hurt his soldier a little. The Rebels followed us to town that night and are now on the other side in force. I can't tell you all about our march now for it is near roll call. I will write to Dock Gilbert and just as soon as I get time. No more at present but remain your son in obedience, —  
George

Write soon. All well.

# Bio of GEORGE GETTYS PILKINGTON

Born in 1842 George was the son of Thomas G. Pilkington (1812-1863) and Nancy Reilly (1808-1864) of Waynesboro, Franklin county, Pennsylvania. He served as a musician, a drummer in Co. E, 126th Pennsylvania Infantry. George's father, Thomas, also enlisted with his son, though he served as a corporal in Company A. Thomas was wounded in action at Fredericksburg on 13 December 1862 and died of his wounds on 15 January 1863 in Emory Hospital in Washington D. C.

George's brother Wilson served in the 12th Regiment, Pennsylvania Reserve Infantry (41st Volunteers) and had survived the Peninsula Campaign only to be killed at the Battle of South Mountain — less than twenty miles from his home. George received the news from Jim Brotherton, a doctor from Wayneboro. George passed away 1889.

<sup>1</sup> Wilson Reilly Pilkington (1838-1862) was George's older brother. Wilson was killed on 14 September 1862 in the fighting on South Mountain in Maryland.

<sup>2</sup> Pvt. Daniel W. Singer was reported absent sick for much of his brief service and he deserted on 3 November 1862.

<sup>3</sup> John Bell was the fifer of Co. E, 126th Pennsylvania. Musicians were typically exempt from picket duty so that is why Pilkington and Bell were able to follow the regiment into Virginia.