These are Civil War letters of John B. Mains of the 6th Missouri Infantry. Mains wrote from camps in Missouri while he served in John C. Frémont’s Army of the West, and from Tennessee, Mississippi, and Alabama during service with the Army of the Tennessee.

John B. Mains was born in Harrison County, Ohio, but spent most of his life around Silver Mine in Madison County, Missouri. At the time of his death in 1940 he was one of only three remaining Civil War veterans in Madison County.

Mains enlisted in Co. D, 6th Missouri Infantry, on 11 August 1861 at Pilot Knob. The regiment was assigned to Gen. John C. Frémont’s Army of the West in the fall of 1861, and Mains saw service during the abortive advance on Springfield. Following the termination of that campaign, the regiment guarded the Pacific Railroad between Jefferson City and Tipton. Mains described his experience with the Army of the West in letters from Jefferson City, Springfield, and Camp Lamine on the Pacific Railroad.

The 6th Missouri was assigned to the Army of the Tennessee in April 1862, an association which lasted almost without interruption until the end of the war under Generals Grant and Sherman. The Army of the Tennessee campaigned in Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, and the Carolinas. John B. Mains served with his regiment until his discharge in September 1864. His papers include letters written from Memphis, Tennessee, Corinth and Vicksburg, Mississippi, and Larkinsville, Alabama.

With the exception of one letter by a family friend in Ohio, the Mains correspondence is addressed to David Mains in Madison County, Missouri, by his son. John B. Mains was inconsistent in the spelling of his surname, styling it as “Means” a good deal of the time. He is listed as “Mains” in the official military records maintained by the Missouri State Archives.

These are Civil War letters of John B. Mains of the 6th Missouri Infantry. Mains wrote from camps in Missouri while he served in John C. Frémont’s Army of the West, and from Tennessee, Mississippi, and Alabama during service with the Army of the Tennessee.
14 January 1864  Larkinsville, Alabama.
3 June 1864  General Hospital, Chattanooga, Tennessee.

* Dr. Isaiah Bowen to David Means (Mains). All others are from John B. Mains to his father, David Mains.

r327  8 January 1986  James Means, through John P. Skaggs  Gift

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