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Steamer "Dorence"
Feby 16th 1862

My dear Wife,

I informed you by telegraph that we are on the March to Knoxville, Tenn. Of our exact distination I know nothing more. Five Companies of the regiment under the immediate Command of Col. Garrett are 12 hours ahead of me on the "Dick Keys;" and the other five Companies are on this boat under my immediate Command. Maj. Anderson will not go with us. He preferred a place on the Staff of Brig. Gen Gladden, at Mobile. So for the present we are without a Major. Our orders are to repair "immediately and without delay" to Knoxville. Under these circumstances, it is most probable that the boat will not stop at Cahaba. I would make any honorable sacrifice to see you and the Children, even for a very short time; but I cannot disobey my orders. If I do not see you have no unkind thought of me. I know you cannot doubt that I love you as deserve. If I do not see you it will be because I am using every exertion to be worthy of your love.

God preserve and bless you my dear Wife and our dear Children.

I handed Mr. Robertson forty dollars for you, the day I left Mobile. You have $200, in the Bank of Mobile, subject to your order, of which I informed you when it was deposited.

My life insurance for $5000 has been renewed, so as to include the war risk. Please ask Mr. Sodor to get the policy and send it to John A. Winston Esq, so that the payment of the premium may be entered on the policy. Joel W Jones will attend to the matter. The last day of this month is our next pay day, & if we are then paid I will send you as much of the money as I can. I would prefer to live on bread and water rather than either you or our dear ones should know any real want. I got your letter as I came through Mobile. It was as you feared. Sam, poor boy, died of pneumonia in the hospital, at Richmond. Wm O. Pitts, whom I saw yesterday so informed me. He made a will and left it with Orson Howell — then Dr Howell had it and after he died Mr. Wise handed the paper to me. It is now in my safe. I do not know its contents; but Sam told me that he intended to give his property to you and his grand mother. Ask Mr. Sodor for the paper.

I will be called for in a few moments So I will end this Scrawl. Direct your letters to Knoxville, Tenn, allways adding "10th Ala Regt."

Give my love and many Kisses to all our dear ones. I hope to live to be with you and comfort and Cheer you, in a few County, before this year ends. Notwithstanding our losses, I have full confidence that the war will be ended, by a full acknowledgement of our Independence.

I am, as ever, most affectionately
Your husband,
Edm. D. Pettus

Mrs. Mary L. Pettus,
Cahaba,
Ala.