

## PRESS RELEASE

# *Your Affectionate Son* Letters from a Civil War Soldier

Milann Daugherty

The words of a young man from Bedford County, Pennsylvania who completed his basic training at Camp Wilkins outside Pittsburgh, in Lawrenceville, in 1861, are brought to life by his great, great niece nearly one hundred and fifty years after they were penned.

It was early in the 21st Century when Milann Daugherty found James Cleaver's faded letters in the bottom of an old dresser drawer. Through her painstaking transcription, extensive and diligent research, readers will hear the strong, clear voice of the twenty-two year old who set aside his teaching career to answer the call to help preserve the nation he dearly loved.

*Your Affectionate Son* reveals a fresh perspective on the day-to-day life of a soldier in the Civil War, sharing sharp, colorful details of camp life and revealing a sensibility in the author that allows the reader to experience the struggles, the natural beauty, the friendships, and even the times of pleasantry.

*I arose at three o'clock, called up the men, took breakfast, and started. It rained all night...so that we had a muddy tramp and a very disagreeable time being out 30 hours without shelter...*

*Christmas passed...pleasantly in camp...thanks to our dear kind friends at home, and the good things sent to us, we had a most excellent dinner and enjoyed it exceedingly.*

James Cleaver's carefully crafted words bring a new appreciation for the suffering endured by the men and boys—(Of the federal dead, three out of every five soldiers died of disease.) dysentery, persistent coughs, attacks of boils and yet, in his elegant and detailed style, the young soldier bears witness to his faith in God, his love of nation, and his grasp of the enormity of the events unfolding before him.

From Richmond in June of 1862 he writes: *...two great armies are standing in the very face of each other, one offensive, and the other defensive. And all the preparations for attack and defense that great minds can conceive are being made.*

***Your Affectionate Son*** *Letters from a Civil War Soldier*

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