

Soldier Boy: The Civil War Letters of Charles O. Musser, 29th Iowa



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Blood and anger, bragging and pain, are all part of this young Iowa soldier's vigorous words about war and soldiering. A twenty-year-old farmer from Council Bluffs, Charles O. Musser was one of the 76,000 Iowans who enlisted to wear the blue uniform. He was a prolific writer, penning at least 130 letters home during his term of service with the 29th Iowa Volunteer Infantry.

Soldier Boy makes a significant contribution to the literature of the common soldier in the Civil War. Moreover, it takes a rare look at the Trans-Mississippi theater, which has traditionally been undervalued by historians.

Always Musser dutifully wrote and mailed his letters home. With a commendable eye for historical detail, he told of battles and marches, guerrilla and siege warfare, camp life and garrison soldiering, morale and patriotism, Copperheads and contraband, and Lincoln's reelection and assassination, creating a remarkable account of activities in this almost forgotten backwater of the war.

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