

Camp near Murfreesboro February 20th 1863

Dear Mother, Brother, and Sister:

I had the great pleasure and satisfaction yesterday to receive two letters, one of which was your kind communication of the 8th inst., the other was from Will Henry. These are the first, with one exception that I have recd, written since the battle, and the first word I have received from home for almost two months.

You can imagine then how joyfully they were received. I hope the mail will carry my letters safely hereafter. I am enjoying very good health and feel in good spirits. Our Brigade is now at work on the Fortifications less than one mile west of Murfreesboro. We left the rest of the Division almost two weeks ago, which was stationed three miles south of the town, and moved camp to our present location. Since that time the Brigade has been employed every day (Sunday excepted) at work on the Forts, which are being constructed on every available position surrounding the town.

The men like the work very well as they have no picket duty to perform and work but four hours each day. The Regiment is divided in to two reliefs--The Right Wing working from 8 to 12 in the morning and the Left Wing from 12 to 4. It is thought our Brigade will remain here when the army moves, but this is only rumur.

Old "Rosy" is making vast preparations for another advance and I hope another another victory.

The railrod has been completed from Nashville and the cheerful whistle of the locomotives are almost continually heard as they come toiling in with long trains of cars loaded down with supplies. It seems to be his intention to accumulate at this point enough supplies to subsist the Army throughout the next summers campaign. The greatest activity prevails ~~(sic)~~ To look from the elevated point we occupy over the adjoining country, thousands of men can be seen at work where long lines of upturned earth glisten in the light, show where extensive works are being constructed.

I'll have the greatest confidence in Rosy, who is known to every man in his army. He never passes a soldier but what he has something to say--generally to give him a good-humored cursing in terms which only old Rosy himself could utter. He professes to be a pious Catholic, but this habit of swearing is his great fault. I think it must keep his priest continually repeating prayers to keep his books balanced in the next world. If he does not devote his whole time to his prayers, I am afraid Old Rosy, his patron, will find a heavy balance against him on the swearing account.

I was surprised to hear that Eli had been discharged and was already at home. Although I am glad it is so ~~xxx~~ for I thought from the first his health could not stand the hard blows of a soldiers life. He has the proud satisfaction of knowing that her performed for his country all that could be done under the circumstances.

I suppose you have heard ere' (sic) this that Lieut. Smith is really dead. Some of our boys search the battlefield soon after the battle and found his boyd buried in a ditch with thirteen others. Yankees and Rebels--He had been carried to a house near the spot he fell, by the Rebels and there died the next morning. his boyd was buried by some negroes who informed our boys of where it could be found.

These poor negroes, the property of Rebels, had been very careful to place the Yankees above the Rebels in burying. They always took the best care of our boys they said and facts prove it to be the truth.

We have heard from those of our Regiment who were taken prisoner—They were taken to Richmond and Paroled and when heard from were at Annapolis Md.

Those of our wounded who were left at Mufreesboro are getting along very well. John Coddington who was shot through the right arm has been with the company for the last three weeks. He is getting this discharge made out. He has a parole that was given him by the Rebels, after he was wounded and fell into their hands.

Gen. Rosecrans has decided that these paroles are illegal and contrary to the agreement between the two armies in regard to prisoners. He has therefore ordered all soldiers holding such paroles to report at once for duty to their regiments.

Capt. Miller arrived in camp on the 17th. The boys were all glad to see him. He looks as if he had lived well while he was away.

Ben. Wagner also arrived a few days ago. He is interested in the Sutler establishment of Maynes & co.

I being to have better hopes for our cause which for a time appeared so gloomy. An officer from Roscrans Head Quarters, reports a dispatch received by the General announcing the evacuation of Vicksburg by the Rebels.

Our Regts. meets with the 79th at 5 this evening to hear(?) resolutions condemning the action of the Copperheads of Illinois. Our pay rolls have been made out a second time and we shall probably received our pay within 3 or 4 days.

I would like to know what Chap that is you call Freddy. Please give me an introduction to him in your next letter.

I send my love to Father, Eli and little Emma.

Yours,

Lyman S. Widney

Head Quarters 34th Ills. Vols.
Camp near Murfreesboro March 2nd 1863

Dear Parents:

I have this day received a letter from you dated January 26th. It was old, but not on that account uninteresting. Your letters never lose their interest to me. I write this letter not knowing when I may again have an opportunity to writing to you.

An order reach us a few hours ago for the Regiment of the Brigade to hold themselves in readiness to march at a moments notice with 5 days rations. Consequently we are now awaiting further developments not knowing how soon the order to march may come. I do not know in what direction we may move if we move at all, or whether there is to be a general movement of troops, But this you will have learned through the papers ere' this reaches you.

There was considerable skirmishing on the front within the last few days, and yesterday 59 rebel prisoners were brought to Murfreesboro, who had been captured. ****Orderly from Brigade Head Qrs. has just come in with the following order. "If this Brigade should be ordered to march the troops will move "light." One wagon will accompany each Regt. with five days rations. The men will carry their shelter tents." It is uncertain yet whether our brigade will accompany the Division should it move.

I am glad to know that none of you admire the patriotism of that noble party, calling themselves the true Democracy, and only true disciples of the Great Washington, but who are better known by the expressive term "Copperheads"—We in the Army, consider them the most contemptible creatures in the States, North or South. The Soldier in the ranks of the Rebel Army is engaged in a Righteous Cause, compared with a Copperhead. It has at least the appearance of honor to come out openly and show your sentiments to the world, but what can we say of these who are loud in their professions of love for the Union, while at the same time they are doing all in their power to destroy it. Not by taking up arms against it, but by weakening the hands, and throwing stumbling blocks in the way of those, who are nobly encountering hardships and danger to preserve it. Pretending to be the Soldiers Friend, they are his worst enemy. They are traitors in the darkest sense of the word. Like Judas, they would betray their county by a kiss, and like Benedict Arnold, their names will become in history a byword of the deepest scorn and contempt.

We are having very fine weather although there has been some very wet and disagreeable days lately. The work on the Fortifications is still progressing as fast as possible, yet a great amount of labor will yet be required to complete them. The recent heavy rains have caused two bridges on the railroad between here and Nashville to be carried away.

Washington's Birthday--the 22nd was celebrated here in an appropriate manner. In address to the Soldiers was issued by Gen. Rosecrans and at sundown a national salute --(sic) of thirty four guns was fired from every battery of Divisions or detached Brigades in this army.

We recd our pay on the 26th of last month. I recd six months pay up to Jan. 1st, but on settlins for clothing drawn since enlistment I had 22 dollars ***** direct from my allowance.

I recd \$56.70. I sent \$30.00 home by express and I am sorry I could not send a greater sum. I have yet learned who it is you call Freddy.

But I must close for this time. I have no stamp to pay the postage ~~on~~ this letter as there are none to be had at any price.

I remain

Yours affectionately

Lyman

P. S. I have written to Jesse Baker and have recd several letters from him. He was at Louisville on Guard at the Hospital, his leg was still very sore.

Head Quarters 34th Ills. Vols.
Near Murfreesboro, March 17th 63

Dear Brother:

I received your very interesting letter of February 22nd. I was very much pleased with your composition and penmanship.

They show that you have been improving your time to good advantage and that if you persevere you will become one of the best of scholars.

You say there are plenty of **Tory's** in Ogle County. I am sorry for it. I like to see birds of a feather flock together. They are sadly out of place, living in the same country with respectable people.

Don't you think they ought to go South and join their friends in their glorious efforts against the tyranny and unconstitutional measures of Lincoln. They ought to go there is not question about that, but I need not tell you the reason they don't go—they would meet with some danger, and then they have a foolish prejudice against hearing the song that Union bullets sing. They find it much more agreeable to their feelings to keep beyond the range of balls and dig mines beneath the great edifice of our Government, hoping soon to see its foundations give way, and the whole structure, dashed to the earth as mass of ruins. But do they know that when it does occur, they themselves will be ground to powder beneath its ruins.

These **Tory's** appear to have great trouble in regard to the Negro. I was about to say they are afflicted with "Nigger on the brain" but then it is so doubtful whether they have any brains that I have concluded to leave it to more experienced doctors to decide their disease.

I would like to see a squad of Niggers break loose from Florida and go right straight to Ogle County and ~~marry~~ every **Tory** or Copperhead in it—for this seems to be their greatest fear.

You say Velandigham is preaching treason all over the north. I wish he would come down here and preach us a short sermon from one of his usual texts. Why don't he come and cheer us poor homesick soldiers with the news that just as soon as old Abe can be put out and himself put in, he will stop the war, and put an end to all the hardships and dangers we now undergo, by sending us home to enjoy ourselves. Oh, how we should welcome the distinguished gentleman. We would honor him in our very best style.

I am sure there is not a man that would object to giving him an escort of men with fixed bayonets to conduct him through our camps in the best military style, and he could have as many drums and fifes as he could desire to accompany him in his grand tour, and play that particular tune, so inspiring to the ambitious, sometimes the "Rogue's March." I am sure he should never after have reason to forget his visit to the Army and the reception he received.

I was interested in your account of the way the convalescents at Keokuk disposed of the press of the "Constitution Office". I remember the old **Tory**, very well, who edited the paper.

When I was at Keokuk I used to go to his office to read the news. I never admired his principles, and if he made as great progress in ^{treason} within the last six months as the Chicago Times has done, I only wonder the soldier did not destroy his press long before they did.

The weather here is splendid(sic) Fires can now be dispensed with, coats, and jackets are laid off. Spring has commenced in real earnest, and it will not be long until we shall be again puffing and panting under the red hot rays of a southern sun.

Since I last wrote home, we received one day an order to strike tents and load the wagons in preparation for an immediate movement. This we done, and remained nearly all day, with all our baggage either loaded on the wagon or ready to be slung on our backs at a moments warning.

Order came however to remain where we were and we at once proceeded to rebuild our little town which the previous order had caused us to demolish, by tearing down all the houses.

We are still at work on the Fortifications, which will soon be ready for mounting the siege guns.

Railroad Communication with Louisville is now complete so that we have no trouble in getting late news. The Louisville Journal reaches us in Camp 24 hours after it is printed. The Nashville Union is our standard sheet and has a wide circulation through this army. It is valued chiefly because it speaks the views of every loyal soldier. It has no sympathy for traitors in arms or for copperheads.

The Chicago Times and Cincinnati Enquirer never reach us. Old Rosy won't let them come within his lines. Everybody is satisfied with the arrangement. Still there was no fear they could do any harm. The only effect that reading the Chicago Times had on our Regt. was to exasperate the soldiers against the class of men who upheld such sentiments.

But I must bring my letter to a close. I recd a letter from Jesse Baker a few days ago. He was still at Louisville—I also recd one from one of our boys who was captured at Stone River. He was then at Chambersburg, Pa. having been paroled. All who were taken and paroled unite in saying that we have no idea of the destitution and suffering throughout the southern states, they are confident the Rebels must soon submit. Their only hope is in the action of the Copperheads.

Yours brother,

Lyman

To Chas. W. Widnes

Head Quarters 34th Ills. Vols.
Camp near Murfreesboro March 28th 1863

Dear Mother and Sister:

I received your kind and welcome letter of the 11th inst. I was glad to hear from you all again. I hope you are still enjoying good health.

We are still staying at the same place with no strong indications of an early move.

The work on the fortifications is progressing rapidly. An addition has been made to the working force within the last week.

On Thursday last, there was some excitement in camp, created by reports that the enemy was advancing to attack us. The work on the fortification was pushed on with increased vigor, and heavy guns were shipped from Nashville to be mounted on the unfinished works.

Since then, nothing more has been said about it and we have come to the conclusion that the opportunity of giving the Rebels another thrashing will have to be delayed longer.

We have taken our position here and we intend to hold it. There is not a man among us who fears for moment that we may be driven out no matter what force the Rebels may bring against.

We are only afraid they won't attack us here. I believe they never will attack us. Their plan seems to be to throw a strong force into Kentucky and by cutting off our communications compel us to withdraw as Buell was forced to do.

They have already entered on their plan, the success of which is yet to be seen. Burnside, I think, will be able to checkmate them in that direction.

Our prospects are becoming more cheerful every day. The Rebellion is certainly on its last legs and would speedily crashed, if its actors were not encouraged by northern sympathizers to hold out in expectation of finding our army withdrawn to quell rebellions at home.

I always ridiculed the idea of starving out the south, but within the last few weeks I have been forced to think such a thing is not altogether impossible. The papers have stated time after time that starvation was staring the Southern people, in the face, but I always believed there was not a grain of truth in the story, but since hearing from our men who were captured at Stone River and shipped to Richmond, I find I was greatly mistaken. They declare that the destitution throughout the States they passed through, was really frightful. They say we have not the least idea how much the people suffer. I have no reason to doubt their account.

I felt very sorry to hear that Charley has been sick but I am glad he has recovered.

I am very happy to make the acquaintance of Mr. Frederic Eldridge, knowing that if he inherits the good looks and qualities of his worthy parents, I am honored indeed in making his acquaintance.

Give him, and Minnie too, my best respects. I am glad to hear that the Pine Creek Settlement has been reinforced by so many as 30 families.

The weather here is very pleasant and much like spring.

- I must close for the present. Give my best respects to ~~Father~~, Eli, Charley and all the rest.

Yours Affectionately,

Lyman S. Widney

Camp Drake

April 16th 1863

Dear Mother:

I have just received your welcome letter of the 9th inst. I was glad to hear that you were all enjoying good health.

I suppose you feel lonesome since Eli and Emma have gone. You will certainly miss the children.

We are still at the same old place working on the fortifications. It will require almost 3 months labor to complete the plan of the works-when that has been done Murfreesboro can be considered impregnable.

Several hundred refugees and deserters from the Rebel army are employed on the works.

Our camp was visited several times since the battle by an old man named Lock, calling himself the song maker of the Army. He always carried a valise full of printed songs of his own composition, for sale to the soldiers. He generally mounted a box and made short speeches to the crowd and sang a few songs. These were quite a favorite among the soldiers who were always eager to buy. They were no mean productions but would be an honor to many who are considered among the best of poets. One of his songs entitled "Brother when will you come back" was really affecting. According to his own account he had been all through the army of the Potomac selling his songs. A short time since he came and sung for the Regiment and said he was going to Grants Army. within a few days. He left us but in a few days we heard that he was under arrest at Head Quarters with a ball and chain to each leg. He had been arrested on the charge of being a spy. A complete plan of the fortification with other suspicious papers were found on his person. He succeeded in getting free from his chains and was passing the picket line on his way to the Rebels, when he was discovered and shot by one of the Pickets. So ended the career of our old "Song maker" "Hi's" "His song is dead, his muse is fled." Poor fellow.

I am very glad to hear that the Republicans have elected their men. I think old Pine Creek is sound on the "Goose," Father was quite fortunate to meet with such good success in his first attempt in running for office. It is my private opinion, publicly expressed-that the people could not have made a better selection.

I think I shall be able to get a furlough this summer. Gen Rosecrans issued an order some time since promising to offer a plan within a short time by which a certain number of men from each company would be allowed to go home. We are looking daily for the promised order.

Capt. Miller has been promoted to Major and Maj. Dyson to Colonel. Adj. Lewitt has returned. He is under arrest for absence without leave. Our payrolls have been sent to me. I shall receive our pay in a few days. I suppose you have seen John Coddington. I sent a few lines with him. I am sorry to hear that Charly has a sore thumb, I hope it is better by this time.

Your affectionate son,

Lyman

Camp Drake April 24th

Dear Parents:

I have been looking in vain for sometime past for a letter from home, and I now embrace the present opportunity of writing again, hopin you have not been prevented from writing by an misfortune. I think of you every day of my life and wonder how long before I may see you again. I cannot bear the thought that perhaps I may never see you. I will not believe that such may be the case. I feel assured that I will pass safely through the hardships and dangers that beset the path of a soldier, and behold once more that home where are centred all my hopes and joys. Twenty months of stormy troubled life have I experienced and sixteen more lie before me. I think of them not with feelings of sadness and discouragement, but with a heart filled with hope, and incouragement. I have passed through trials, greater, perhaps, than any I may yet encounter. My experience of the siege of Cornith appears now to me as a troubled dream. I can scare persuade myself that it was reality. More dead than alive. I felt that death would be no enemy.

I used to listen to the heavy thunder of cannon which was heard daily and long earnestly for the opening of a scene of Carnage which I thought would end the war, if successful to our arms. Never before or since did I fear death or value life so little. But now, the present and future appear brighter. Our experience of soldier's life at the present is one of pleasure and contentent. Never before have we had such good times. Never before were the men so healthy and in such high spirits. There is not half a dozen men in the Regiment who are not able to enjoy a game of ball every evening.

We receive a greater quantity, variety, and better quality of provisions than at any time since leaving Camp Butler. We draw more soft bread than we can eat, and would you believe it, we even draw a ration pf pickels every week, besides we have potatoes onions and fresh beef. This is considered the climax of good living in the army, where previous hard living on rusty bacon and hardtack, and only half rations of them--make the articles we now receive more pleasant to the taste.

I must not forget to mention that fresh fish is by no means a rare dish with us. The boys of Co. H are drawing at flourishing business, catching fish in Stone River with a seine made from coffee sacks joined together. The work on the fortifications is still being pushed on vigorously. A number of forts and long lines of works have been completed, but new positions have been selected and new lines of breastworks staked off. Months of labor will yet be required. An important movement has been made but the result has not yet transpired. Six divisions, and among them all of McCooks Corpp except this brigade moved out several days ago on a scouting expedition. We have heard nothing from them yet. They certainly cannot go many miles without getting into trouble for just outside our lines the Rebels are as thick as blackberries in June.

Our regiment received two months pay up to March.

I will send you some at the first opportunity. I will send by Express. The only money I ever trusted by mail was five dollars, which I sent a few weeks ago to Jesse Baker at Louisville. Jesse returned about 10 days ago, but I have heard nothing of the letter or money since. Many of the boys have always sent money by mail every pay day without any loss. I have given it a fair trial and shall not risk larger amounts. As I have reached the bottom of the sheet I shall close for the present. Please write soon. Give my love to Charlie.

Your affectionate son,

Lyman

I have opened a correspondence with Emmett Ross in the 1230 Penn and have recd and answered two of his letters.

Murfreesboro Tenn.

April 25th 1863

Dear Parents:

Enclosed find \$20.00 which I send by express.

I was in hopes that I could have had a larger amount to send at this time, but the late conscription act, cuts me out of 40 cents per day extra pay. One of its clauses declares that men on extra duty shall not receive additional pay for such service.

As I have written yesterday, it will not be necessary to add more at present.

If you receive this please write immediately.

Yours,

Lyman S. Widney

Camp Drake May 5th 1863

Dear Parents:

I take this opportunity of again writing to you. I have been waiting in vain to receive a letter from home, until I begin to fear that some misfortune has happened you. I have been kept so busy for sometime past that I could find no time for writing sooner.

I sent you \$20.00 by Express in the 25th of April, which I hope you have received by this time. There is nothing of importance transpiring here. We are anxiously awaiting something to turn up. Rumors in abundance are afloat of the advance of the Rebels to attack us here but for my part I do not consider such an event at all likely. The work is still progressing with energy on the fortifications. Every point is being strengthened for defense in the best possible manner. The weather is becoming very warm and a shade is by no means uncomfortable. The trees are covered with leaves and the fields with grass.

A large piece of ground near our camp has been appropriated for the use of the convalescents whose camp is also a short distance from ours. It is to be used as a garden for raising vegetables, and will be cultivated by the convalescents. I went over to the Catholic Church at Murfreesboro last Sunday to see the performance. The congregation is composed almost entirely of soldiers. The most distinguished member is Gen. Rosecrans who is a regular attendant. He looked very pious as he took the sacrament and I should have thought he was a sincere christian had I not know how terrible he swears when he puts off his Sunday face. I do not accuse him of being a hypocrite but I believe him to be altogether on the wrong track for Heaven.

While in town I went to see one of our wounded boys who is lying in the hospital. His leg was shattered by a minnie ball in the battle at this place. He cannot move about and is kept confined to his bed. His name is Elmer Lawrence, a brother to the Editor of the Religious Telescope. He is the only one from our company remaining here. All the rest have been removed to Nashville or hospitals further North.

Peter Householder has got back from Nashville looking well and hearty. He is now First Lieut.

I have received no letters from any quarter for a long time, although I have written very often. I cannot tell why they do not write. I have written two letters to Caroline which have not been answered.

News is very scarce and I will close for the present.

I send my love to Charlie and hope he will write to me occasionally when he finds time. I suppose you are all very busy now and do not find much time for writing letters.

Yours affectionately,

Lyman

Camp Drake, May 18th 1863


Dear Brother Harley:

I this day received your most welcome and interesting letter of the 11th inst. I also received one from Father and Mother dated May 3d.

I feel very glad indeed to learn that you are all enjoying good health. I suppose you have planted all your corn by this time. Oh, how, I should have liked to help you. I think I could enjoy myself for a short time once more in a cornfield. I should like so well to see a field of growing corn. I have gazed on scenes of desolation caused by the ruthless hand of war, so long, that they have become familiar to my sight. Yet I cannot forget the scenes of peace and industry which crowned our own State, and oh, how, earnestly do I long for the dawn of returning peace when the sound of war shall be hushed in our land, may God grant, forever.

I am glad to hear that you have such an interesting Sunday School. It must be very pleasant to visit it. But perhaps you do not know that we too have a Sunday School.

Every Sabbath a large number of soldiers meet in one of the stockades, we have constructed to read the Bible and learn from those who kindly offer the services to teach. Col. Buckner of the 79th Ills. together with the chaplains of our Brigade have the school in charge. Preaching is held in the stockade several times during the week.

Perhaps you are curious to know what kind of a building we use for a church. It was built not to keep away the devil, but protection against his principal agents on earth—the Rebels. It consists of heavy logs not less than 3 feet through and about 15 feet long standing upright side by side planted firmly in the ground. The sides are hewn perfectly smooth and made to fit closely together. The walls are shaped thus . The whole is covered with heavy logs and several feet of earth, and is considered proof against balls and shells. Between each upright timber an opening is made large enough to admit the barrel of a rifle so that a man can stand within the building and fire through these small loopholes without danger to himself. The entrance is secured by a heavy door strengthened with large iron bolts and bars. The building is enclosed by strong breastworks and is intended as a place of refuge for the garrison should the enemy succeed in getting within the line of breastworks.

Smugly closed within this building a handfull of men could rake the enclosure with a deadly fire and be perfectly secure against everything but heavy artillery at short range.

There is nothing new occurring in camp and were it not for the warlike appearance and preparations for offense or defense we could scarcely realize that we are in the enemy's country and surrounded by a hostile foe.

Our brigade is still dig, dig, digging away with but little prospect of completing the work this summer, should we remain until it is completed. The men are enjoying excellent health and are in the best of spirits.

They have become satisfied with their conditions and have ceased to grumble about hard times having learned by experience that grumbling does not better the case.

Charley I am sorry you found it necessary in your letter to correct the report that Richmond had been taken. It is indeed too true that our army has suffered another defeat. The experience of the Army of the Potomac is made up of blunders and disasters from beginning to end. I know not where to lay the blame. It cannot be upon the men composing the army; for the numerous struggles in which they have been engaged have fully proven that they do not lack for courage or willingness to fight.

The leaders must be the cause of defeat, and yet I had the greatest confidence in Joe Hooker. Now since he has failed who can be found able to lead that army on to Victory which it so much deserves.

I am afraid the day that shall witness the downfall of Richmond is yet far in the future. God grant that I may be mistaken.

I enclose, "Ye Copperhead Song". Not very refined it is true, but it so truthful a sketch of a soldier's life that I have concluded to send it.

I must close for the present.

I send my love to all.

Your brother

Lyman S. Widney

Camp Drake May 29th 1863

Dear Parents:

I improve the present opportunity of addressing you a few lines.

I am still enjoying very good health. The health of the Regiment was never better than now. All the boys are in excellent spirits. They have got just work enough to give them a good appetite(sic) and preserve their health.

The weather is very pleasant although a little too warm for comfort.

There is but little news stirring within our lines, everybody is engrossed in the operations of General Grant at Vicksburg. We look forward to the result with feverish anxiety. There is but little doubt that, that celebrated stronghold together with Pemberton's Army will be captured and yet there is a possibility that they may not be taken, which would be a disappointment hard to endure after having our hopes placed so high on success. But ere this reaches your eyes perhaps the contest will have been decided so I need make no speculations. We can only trust in the overruling arm of the God of battles and the stratagem of General Grant.

This army is under orders to be in readiness to march at a moments notice. "Old Rosey" is keeping his eyes on Bragg, closely watching every movement. If Bragg should conclude to send troops to the relief of Vicksburg he will find the Army of the Cumberland falling upon his remaining troops to blot them from the face of Tennessee. Bragg dare not risk the consequences of weakening his forces on our front even if it were not already too late to rescue Vicksburg. Old Rosey is a General who will not let slip a single opportunity of fighting when there is a prospect of success in so doing. He does not like Buell, expect to gain any battles without fighting.

The Vallandigham case possess its share of camp gossip. A good many of Abraham's childrenz felt disposed to grumble about the mercy that was shown that famous Copperhead in transporting him through our lines instead of shutting him up in Fort Warren. He arrived at Murfreesboro last Sunday and was escorted through our lines and delivered to the Rebels under a flag of truce. The Rebel Colonel commanding their picket line declined at first to receive him but finally consented. Vallandigham addressed the Colonel, "I am a citizen of Ohio of the United States and come within your lines against my will, I wish to be considered as your prisoner."

It was reported yesterday that he had been returned by the Rebels to our lines but the pickets refused to receive him and that he occupied neutral ground between the two lines, not daring to approach either. This would be neutrality and conservatism with a vengeance. The report is not however considered reliable. Yet it would be nothing strange if it were so. The Rebels detest such a class of men almost as bad as we do. They love the treason but despise the traitor.

Rebel prisoners say they respect the Federal soldiers much more than the men who are constantly crying out save the Union, save the Union, yet always throwing obstacles in the way of those who would save it. They do not deny that their chief reliance is upon the Copperheads of the North. I have heard this repeated again and again by Rebel prisoners and so has almost every man in the Army. This is one of the reasons why there are no Copperheads in it.

Our Regiment, as well as others, are to be filled up with conscripts, as soon as it can be accomplished. The evidence of this fact is here in the office, written by Rosecrans himself. It was written by him in answer to a certain document sent to ~~him~~ for consideration. Gen. Johnson wrote the following note in the same connection. "The 34th" Ills. is a good regiment and when the ranks are filled by conscriptions will be one of the most efficient in my Division."

Adjutant Lewitt has resumed his duties as Adjutant. During his absence on recruiting service Lieut. Johnson of Co. B acted as such.

I received another letter from ~~Bennett~~ Ross a few days ago. He was then at home. His regiment having been mustered out of service. He was in the Battle at Chancellerville but escaped unhurt.

We are awaiting the return of the prisoners captured at Stone River. All prisoners have been exchanged up to the 6th of May.

I will close for the present.

Tell Charley to write as often as he can find time.

I remain

Your affectionate son

Lyman S. Widney

PS I received two papers which I suppose were sent by you. I am very much obliged.

LSW

Camp Drake June 5th 1863

Dear Parents.

Yours letter with Charley's of the 24th of May came to hand yesterday.

I am pleased to learn that you are all enjoying good health but how sad I feel for Caroline and Emma. I had heard nothing about the sad accidne until I received your letter. How trying it is to see one's home reduced to ashes. I can appreciate the gloomy feelings of discouragement that must overwhelm her.

I am very anxious to hear the particulars. We are still at the same place engaged in some duty. Although it seems very probable that we may move shortly. Our Brigade received orders on the 3rd to be in readiness for an immediate march. The men were required to have 3 days rations in their haversacks and 4 days rations in knapsacks. The order is still in force but is considered as only precautionary. It was issued only to have the troops ready for any emergency. Heavy firing was heard yesterday the entire day beyond our lines in the direction of Shelbyville. Several Divisions are out and they may have had severe fighting. I have heard no news from them. It seems to be the intention of Rosecrans to reconnoitre the enemy's position and discover if possible whether he is sending reinforcements to Johnson near Vicksburg. If such proves to be the case there is no doubt but that the Army of the Cumberland will advance. Our movement at present depends entirely upon that of Bragg.

Everybody is interested deeply in the fate of Vicksburg. We long to hear of its downfall and this must shortly be the case unless Johnson is allowed to concentrate a sufficient force to engage Grant in the rear and force him to raise the seige.

The Government, I believe, is conscious of the great importance of this straggle, and will not allow the anticipated splendid victory of Gen. Grant to be plucked from his grasp by neglecting to supply him with the men and means to keep Johnson at bay. All honor to Grant for his splendid achievements, nothing but a self-evident blunder on his part will now detract from the honor he has so justly earned. If the Government fails to furnish him men and he is forced on that account to withdraw his force, justice demands that the blame should not rest upon him or his army.

Our Brigade enjoyed a rich treat last night in the shape of a Political speech from Gov. Williams of Indiana. The man who wasn't elected Governor when a candidate in that State. Nevertheless he has got the name if not the office. He spoke for about two hours to the Brigade which was assembled at Brigade Head Quarters. As a matter of course he gave the Butternuts particular thunder, no other kind of a speech would be tolerated. He found, too, that Butternuts were no great favorites of the Second Brigade.

Corp. John Geeting of Co. H. was severely injured a few days since. A large pile of sacks of corn, about which he was working fell upon him, breaking his cheek bone and injuring him less severely in other parts of the body. He has been sent to the convalescent Camp. Nehemiah Wagner has also been sent to the camp. He took sick soon after his arrival here.

I received the two papers which Mr. McDannell sent. I did not know at the time to whom I was indebted for the favor which I esteem no small one. Give him my thanks for his kindness, and say that all such favors will be gratefully received and the donator gratefully remembered. "The Telescope" is like the voice and smile of an old acquaintance.

By the way I might say that the Editor of the Telescope was in our camp a short time since. His brother Elmer Lawrence belonged to this company and had his leg shattered by a musket ball at the Battle of Stone River. Since that time he had been lying in the hospital at Murfreesboro, and his brother, the editor, came down to procure for him his discharge which he succeeded in doing through the influence of Maj. Gen. Stanley, a cousin of theirs.

Yesterday we received a written address from Gen. Johnson to the soldiers of the Second Division. He said that although we had been driven back at Stone River by overwhelming numbers, it was not at all likely to occur again. He desires us at the next meeting with the enemy to maintain our character as one of the best Divisions in the Army. The Rebels themselves have learned to respect the Second Division. This fact we have learned from Rebel prisoners and deserters who say that the reputation of this Division is very high in the estimation of the Rebel Army.

I have nothing more to write at present.

Yours,

Lyman S. Widney

T. Brooks has not yet returned)

Camp Drake June 12th 1863

Dear Parents:

Yesterday I received your welcome letter, and I now seize the present opportunity of answering.

I felt very unwell for several days but have recovered entirely. I had some fever and a very bad headache. At the present time I feel as well as ever. The health of the Regt. is very good, yet not so good as it has been.

The Brigade has been relieved from work on the fortifications and the men are now exercised six hours daily in company, battalion or brigade drill. We have not however broken camp nor will we be at all likely to do so unless ordered on a march. The men are well satisfied with the change of work. They have become tired of shoveling dirt and prefer playing the soldier for a little while. Work is by no means a desirable occupation for soldiers whose laziness is proverbial. Although it often falls to the lot of the soldier to labor in various ways, yet he is always careful not to waste too much of his strength. With him spades are not always trumps.

It cannot be expected, however, that Uncle Sams hirelings will be so foolish as to work hard when he receives just as much for lying idle. Besides he has no fear of being thrown out of employment. He can look forward to a period of steady employment for as long a time as he at first contracted for, no matter how idle he may be or useless. Uncle Sam will not discharge him until the expiration of his time—and will then be eager to engage him for another turn of service. Who ever heard of a better hearted master than this same individual Uncle Sam, poor old man he is sadly imposed upon sometimes. But this is mere foolishness. I shall try to talk of something sensible.

Our exchanged prisoners have returned and we can once more muster a Regiment of respectable size. Their return added 60 men to the number present. There is still quite a number who have not returned with the party. Some are sick in hospitals and some at home enjoying themselves. The boys express themselves glad to get back to the Regiment. They have no desire to take another trip through "Dixie"

I suppose you learn through the papers that Rosecrans is doing an active business in the way of hanging spies and shooting deserters. Scarcely a week passes that does not witness the execution of one or more persons.

Several spies were to be hung near the town this afternoon and quite a large number of our men went over to witness the execution. A large crowd was assembled around the scaffold which had been used for that purpose, but they waited in vain. The spies were either not hung at all or hung in a different place. At least their curiosity was dissappointed.

Here, as elsewhere, everybody is deeply interested in the fate of Vicksburg. Our prospects of success we consider very favorable.

With us all is quiet. Several days ago the enemy appeared to be unusually active and several demonstrations were made against our lines. A large force attacked Franklin but were handsomely repulsed. Perhaps they will now consider the capture of Franklin an event beyond their power. They have tried to do so time and again and have invariably failed.

I received the three papers which Mr. McDannell sent. I thank him very kindly
papers are to me always a welcome visitor.

There is but little news of importance stirring except such as we gather from
the papers. In this you have the same advantage.

I admire Charley's spunk. He is Yankee from the ground up. I am not afraid
--that he will ever be converted into a Copperhead. He has got too much sense and
patriotism ever to forget what he owes to his country. That's right Charley, stand
up for the Stars and Stripes. We know they will yet wave over every foot of ground
from Maine to Texas.

I have heard nothing yet from the folds in Iowa. I am glad the neighbors
have been so kind.

I would like to hear from Mr. Dennis. He may have been in the fights at
Vicksburg, where many a poor soldier found his last resting place. I hope that he
has been among the survivors.

I expect to send \$20.00 by our Chaplain. He has applied for a leave of
absence to go to Louisville to carry money for the Regt. and there express it wherever
desired. A leave of absence will probably be granted him, if not I shall send it
from this place by express.

Give my best respects to all enquiring friends.

I remain,

Your affectionate son,

Lyman S. Widney

Camp Drake June 12th 1863

Dear Parents:

Enclosed please find \$20 which I send by Express.

We received two months pay yesterday up to May 1st 1863.

Adjutant Lewitt presented me with ten dollars as a reward for my services last month.

As I expect to send a letter by mail I need not write more in this.

Your affectionate son,

Lyman S. Widney

June 17th 1863

Dear Parents:

I have been waiting for five days in order to send this package with Chaplain Decker. He will start tomorrow morning for Louisville and will carry (carry) this with him.

There has been no important changes since my last letter, except in the weather which has changed from hotter to hottest—The last two days and nights have been remarkably warm. This evening as I write is the warmest I have yet experienced in "Dixie".

The Regiment is exercised in Battalion drill two hours each morning and in Brigade drill 3 hours in the afternoon. It is far from being a pleasant duty, marching quick and double quick under the influence of the heat rays of the sun.

Colonel Rose of the 77th Penna. is now in command of the Brigade, and enjoys the unenviable (inevitable) reputation of being disliked by almost every man in it.

We have but little confidence in his ability to handle a Brigade in a battle. He was formerly Captain of Co. "B" 77 Penna. which together with himself hails from Pittsburgh.

We wish that Gen. Kirk would return to his old Brigade. Although he enforces the most strict discipline and seizes every opportunity of leading his command into action. His men prefer him to any other.

An important order was received from Gen. Rosecrans a few days since to the effect that all soldiers who had been irregularly paroled, that is, paroled and set at liberty without delivering them at Cly(?) Point Va. or Vicksburg, from Dec. 10th to March 1st should be sent to Head Qrs. and from thence shipped to some paroled camp to await exchange. This period includes the battle of Stone River in which a

large number of our troops were captured in that way, but were returned to duty by order of Gen. Rosecrans, who decided that their paroles were not legal and binding. This has been the case with quite a number in our Regt. They have no desire, however, to go to Camp Chase or Benton Barracks, and nothing has been done towards obeying the order. They are willing to risk the consequences. Unless another more positive order is recd, the Confederate States will be cheated out of several thousand prisoners.

Gen. Rosecrans has reduced the price of Louisville and Nashville Daily newspaper from 10 to 5 cts per copy, and Frank Leslie's - Harpers & Waverly Magazine from 30 to 15 cts each. This is all very good but it has entirely cut off our supply as no one will distribute them through the camp at those prices.

Rumor says that the Rebels have invaded Pennsylvania. I am glad of it. I wish they were up in Illinois. I want to see the Copperheads stirred by their friends.

I recd a present of a new five dollar hat the other day from Lieut. Johnson formerly Act. Adjt.

I must wind up for the present. My love to Charley and best respects to all inquiring friends.

Very affectionately,

Lyman

Tullahoma July 24th 1863

Dear Parents.

I enclose you \$20.00 which I shall send by express.

I am enjoying very good health and find no reason to complain of anything in particular.

We received two months payon the 18th inst. up to July 1st.

I think we shall be paid regularly hereafter every two months. Such an arrangement will be very acceptable to the soldiers, whose best friend is greenbacks.

We can purchase good living here at very reasonable rates—for example—cabbage, 50 to 60 cts. per head—potatoes \$1.35 per peck, small onions—5 cts. apiece. Butter 60 cts per pound, small biscuit 50 cts per doz. Pies 20 cts each—and everything else in proportion.

As I intend writing by mail tomorrow morning. I shall close for the present.

Yours affectionately

Lyman s. Widney

Tullahoma Tenn. July 25th 1863

Dear Parents--

I take my pen in hand to address you a few lines, earnestly hoping this may find you in the enjoyment of good health.

We still remain at Tullahoma and may remain for sometime longer.

There is nothing of very great importance occurring here at the present time. We are all engaged in anxiously watching the progress of events in other quarters of the political horizon. We cannot but feel rejoiced at the brilliant success which has lately attended our army. The fall of Vicksburg and Port Hudson, the defeat of Lee and the result of Morgan's invasion are events that will be marked in History as the beginning of the end. By these victories our nation has made rapid strides toward the peace and prosperity of a United People. The Confederate Government is the huge hulk of a vessel, which to outward appearances, is strong and substantial, but in reality merely a weak shell without the braces, bolts, and bands necessary to render it durable.

The leaders before the Rebellion have excited the prejudices and inflamed the passions of their tools, the lower class of Society in the South, and have succeeded in arraying them against their Government. The Leaders are desperate now and their course is marked by desperate measures. Consequently their work is seemingly of gigantic proportions, but is in reality a mere shell unsupported by the eternal principles of truth and justice. It is bound together only by the weak prejudices and inflamed passions of the people, and must sooner or later fall to pieces a helpless wreck--Our Government is established on a foundation constructed by Washington and his band of Patriots during the dark and bloody days of the Revolution. And now shall our old Ship of State, whose strong timbers has supported her in many a gale yield to that weak hulk call the Confederate Government? All that is required of us is one earnest, vigorous united effort, and we shall see the old hulk falling to pieces, never again to be set afloat. The Rebel papers have declared their intention to die in the last ditch rather than submit to us. This I have discovered is simply ridiculous. When their old vessell begins to sink, they will only be too glad to seek safety on ours. When their Army has been dispersed or broken up into Guerrilla Bands, the Citizens will be eager to take the Oath of Allegiance and come back into the Union.

We are interested in the result of the siege of Charleston. There seems to be very strong indications of success. Gen. Gillmore has thus far laid his plans and executed them in the most skillful manner. His efforts will, I think, end in the capture of that nest of Seccession.

The weather for some days past has been much warmer than usual although not near so hot as it was this time last year.

I noticed a singular funeral passing our quarters today. A citizen, mounted on a horse with a coffin containing the body of a child, in his arms, led the procession. Following immediately after were two men and women on foot. They were on their way to the village graveyard.

I sent you \$20 by Express. It will probably reach Pol#(?) as soon as this letter.

I sent you by mail a few days ago a roll call the soldiers record. I made out the list of names and memoranda and set it to Cincinnati where it was printed. Every man in the Company has got one or more copies. I sent copies to Pittsburg and Iowa.

Adjutant Lewitt has resigned his commission and gone home.

The mail has just arrived bringing 2 packages of papers. I am very thankful for them. I received your letter of June 13th.

I send my love to Charley.

Yours affectionately,

Lyman

I send you one of Bragg's official document which I picked up here.

Tullahoma Tenn. Aug 7th 1863

Dear Parents.

Your welcome letter of the 31st ult. has been received. I am very sorry, Mother, to hear that you were unwell. I hope these lines may find you entirely recovered.

My own health is very good. That of the Regiment, generally speaking, is excellent.

This mornings report shows 19 men on the sick list, that is: who are unable for duty. There are none sick enough to be confined to bed. Those reported are men who feel a little unwell and are consequently excused by the Surgeon from going out of Picket or other duty.

Our Division is under marching orders at the present time. We are now awaiting the arrival of ten days rations which we are required to take along. The rations were sent for to Murfreesboro and will probably arrive on the train today.

It is thought we shall then move on to the front or how much further we know not. Although we have orders to be ready to march, we may not go at all. Time will show.

Yesterday was thanksgiving day, it was properly observed here in camp. All business was suspended and Sutler shops and stores closed. The day wore the appearance of Sunday. Our Regiment had divine service in one of the town Churches, which stands but a few rods from our camp. We fitted it up for our own use, and it is now a very pleasant place of worship. It boasts the dignity of a steeple and bell. The latter is very convenient for announcing the hour of service and calling the men together.

When we arrived at this place, the church was in very bad repair, being used as a store house, and filled with tents and various kinds of camp baggage. This may be taken as a fair index to the Christianity and morality of the Rebel Army. How can they expect to be favored by the God of Battles when his temples are profaned and desecrated in such a manner.

An agency of the Christian Commission is located here and doing much good among the soldiers. They have a large room filled with books and papers, generally of a religious character. Every soldier is privileged to select such papers or tracts as he may desire. These he is allowed to keep. They have a collection of books of various kinds for the purpose of lending. By registering his name and Regt. any soldier can borrow a book to read. This is just what is required and soldiers know how to appreciate its advantage to them.

The late order from the War Department in relation to the organization of a Veteran Corps, has created quite an active interest in camp. A great many of this Regiment have concluded to re-enlist for three years or the war in that Corps, as soon as arrangements are made to receive them. If you have not noticed it in the papers I will tell you what it means so far as it concerns us. After the 25th of September next, I could re-enlist for these years and receive on being mustered in a bounty of 27 dollars and one month's pay in advance. At the first regular pay day after serving two months I would receive 50 dollars--after six months, 50

dollars more, and so on at different periods during the term of service until the full bounty of 402 dollars had been paid. All this is in addition to the regular monthly pay.

I cannot say that I have any serious notions of re-enlisting, until my present term of service had expired. Then, if the war continues, and I feel disposed to re-enter the Service, there will be abundant opportunities to do so.

I am glad to know that you received the record I sent. I am not sure that I can explain the meaning of all the pictures shown in the design as that portion(?) of it was invented by the publisher. I do not remember how the portraits were arranged but I could tell you the names if I had the roll before me. I suppose you recognize the portrait of Old Abe. Then there is Rosecrans, Grant, Hooker, Banks and Butler, the others (if any) I do not remember. The Battle scene, I think represents the Rebels being driven into the last ditch, which is the Gulf of Mexico. It is a battle that is yet to be fought, but I hope this picture gives a faithful representation of what will be its results.

I received a letter this week from no less a personage than Mr. John Cowan. -- I also received one at the same time from Emmett Ross. He says the draft came off there not long since and Anderson was so fortunate as to draw a prize of a musket and a suit of Blue. He did not state whether Anderson was going to face the music like a man and fight for his country or whether he would pay his 300 dollar exemption fee and stay at home. Two notorious Copperheads Jim & Joe Holley were among the victims of the draft. It is a glorious thing, this draft is--glorious I mean for such person, as myself, who are already in the service. Glorious for women and children, old men and cripples and all sorts of exemptions--but how horrible, frightful, what an unpardonable sin it is, cruelty to drag peaceably inclined, able bodied copperheads into the slaughter pen of the army. I pause for want of words to express my intense horror at the thought. Imagination alone can comprehend its wretchedness.

Adjutant Lewitt resigned his commission almost a month ago and has gone home. He was an excellent man, but had one great fault, his love of strong drink. It is sad to think of what he might have become had he not ruined himself by intemperance. He was a man of splendid abilities and fitted especially for the duties of an Adjutant. He appeared to know everything connected with his business. All the officers in the Regt. looked upon him as an oracle in his profession. They always came to him with questions about the manner of conducting any official business or correspondence, which they could not settle themselves, knowing that if he could not answer them, nobody else could. It was a common remark with the boys that what Adj. Lewitt did not know was not worth knowing. Gen. McCook said that Lewitt was the best Adjutant in his Corps. He has a splendid education and is a Civil Engineer by profession. But all his good qualities were ruined by the demon of intemperance. He would get on a spree and neglect his business for days together. This is all that prevented him from rising to a position equal to his capabilities. But I must bring my letter to a close for the present. I should state however that I sent 20 dollars by Express on July 27th. I also sent a letter on the 25th--I did not receive the papers you mentioned in your letter. When you write again tell me all about the farm, what changes have been made, and all the little things connected with it. I am foolish enough to be interested in just such news.

Yours affectionate son,

Lyman

Bellefonte Ala. Aug. '23d 1863

Dear Parents-

"Away down in Alabama", you exclaim as your eye catches the heading of the letter. Yes, we are away down in Alabama-right glad of, at last finding a resting place, after a long and weary march of six days from Tullahoma.

On Sunday afternoon the 16th inst. our quiet meditation were suddenly interrupted by an order to be in readiness to march in two hours. Long before that time had expired everything was in readiness and at 4 P. N. we started on our way rejoicing in the direction of Winchester. The men were never in better spirits since we left camp Butler or Green River; they acted like so many schoolboys just let loose from school. Every little occurrence that could be construed into something funny, provoked a roar of applause and laughter, like that you would hear at a political meeting when the speaker relates a funny anecdote. One unlucky fellow whose eyes were evidently not gazing upon the way that he should go stumbled and fell as we marched out of camp. This was ridiculous in the extreme and of course had to be announced in the usual noisy manner.

We marched that evening 8 miles before encamping. Early next morning moved out again and reached Winchester about noon. It is a beautiful village, laid out with great taste, and pleasantly located in a fertile and productive country. It forms a striking contrast with the old fashioned, dilapidated towers we have been accustomed to see in Kentucky and Tennessee.*****hang on the. There was but one objection to the country, the scarcity of water. In a march of 30 miles south of Tullahoma we did not see a single spring.

During the afternoon of the 18th, reached Larkins Creek in this State. Here, our route for ten miles lay along the course of the stream. The road crossed and recrossed and in many places followed the bed of the stream for a number of rods. There were no bridges of any kind and the men on foot had to follow the road-wading through the water which was in many places almost waist deep. The teams in front were forced to stop every few minutes and the consequence was that nightfall found us, still with six miles of water to navigate. We were in a deep valley shut in on all sides by frowning mountains, and as the moon did not shine, we had a specimen of Egyptian darkness. As we would pick our way up out one ford, and scarcely before we had set our feet on dry land, splash, splash, would go plunging again into the water, there perhaps to be stopped in the middle of the stream by the sudden halt of the team in front, standing there until some wagon had been lifted out of the mire. We would again stumble on to plunge in more mud holes. or wade through more water. It was almost midnight when we encamped-when almost every man weary as he was, flung himself on the ground in his wet clothing to steal a little slumber ere the morning bugle called him forth to move again on another day's march*****I know of not a single man who has taken sick from the effects of that soaking.

On the morning of the 19th we again moved off and reached the foot of the principal mountain about noon. There the road ascends the side of the mountain for 1 1/4 miles almost perpendicularly, hugh(sic) ledges of rock projecting one

above the other give it about the shape and slope of a common pair of stairs. Yet up this place we were to drag all our wagons. From 10 to 12 mules were hitched to each wagon and about as many men to push behind—knapsacks, blankets, and shelter tents were all carried by the men, and yet it required twenty-four hours hard labor to draw the teams of this brigade to the top. Our Brigade was the first to ascent, and soon as we reached the summit which was at noon on the 20 we moved on 8 miles further and encamped, being still on top of the mountain. It is there 10 miles wide and comparatively level. On the 21st we began to descend and soon found ourselves in a rich valley along which we continued for 15 miles until we reached Bellefonte on the same day. The 1st brigade of this Division arrived here yesterday afternoon, and the 3rd Brigade is expected this afternoon. We were all together at the foot of the mountain, but it required 24 hours labor, night and day, to get the train of each brigade to the top*****
Upon our arrival here the 34th was detailed by Gen. Johnson as Provost Guards to the town, and Lt. Col. Van Tassell appointed Post Provost Marshal.

Yesterday morning Head Quarters was moved to the Court House, and the Adjutants Office located in the room formerly occupied by the Clerk of Court. We found all the old records of the County (Jackson) scattered over the floor. The documents are dated as far back as 1820. About fifty large books, we reserved while the remaining books and papers were collected in one great heap and burned. There were not less than 3 bushels of marriage licenses and bonds signed by the Jeremiah's, his X mark and Elizabeth's, her X mark—not one out of ten could sign their own name.

This building is an excellent one for this country, it is built of brick, and 2 stories high. It is surrounded by a fine cluster of locust trees and altogether is a very pleasant place for persons who have within the last two years spent as little time within a house as I have.

It is less than a mile to the bank of the Tennessee River from this place. The Memphis & Charleston R. R. runs by, two miles to the north. There are plenty of Rebels just across the River and were plainly seen by some of our men who went to the river to bathe.

We shall probably remain here until a crossing has been effected at Bridgeport or some other point on the river. I should have stated before that only our Division moved from Tullahoma to this place. We know nothing*****

Camp near Stevenson Ala.
September 4th 1863

My dear Brother:

I cannot tell you on paper how well your letter pleased me; the one you wrote Aug. 23d. That is the kind of news I like to hear. It is always interesting to me to hear all about the farm, and of what you are doing. Charley, I would give all the old jack knives and buttons in my pockets to grasp your hand once more and say, "Why, Charley, my dear boy, how do you do." I know that would be one of the happiest moments of my life. I think about it when awake and dream of it asleep.

Since I last wrote, we have once more been on the move, and once more settled quietly in Camp for a short time. Our Division marched from Bellefonte on Sunday Aug. 30d and halted for the night within three miles of Stevenson on Crow Creek having gone 12 miles. Our Regt. encamped within a few rods of the exact spot, occupied by it thirteen months before. When Buell had command. They were encamped there about two weeks at that time, and the bunks that were built by the men were many of them still standing. Alas; how many of the poor fellows, who were then hopeful as any, looking for the end of the war, now lie beneath the sod.

Leaving Crow Creek on the 31st we marched three miles to the river and crossed on a pontoon bridge that had been built two days before. We encamped on the south bank and had remained here ever since. I suppose you know how a pontoon bridge is made, but perhaps you do not know ~~how~~ they get the bridge across, when the enemy is standing on the opposite bank. Well, I'll tell you how they went about building this bridge which is 70 rods long—When the Pioneers reached the river with their boats (60 in number) they saw the Rebel Pickets on the other side. A battery was brought and placed along the bank and loaded with shell, while the boats were hauled into line, and a certain number of men placed with each boat. At a given signal the boats were all run to the water together and while part of the men sat with their guns pointed at the Rebels the others pushed across with poles. The Rebels stood at their posts and looked on without firing a shot until the boats had reached the middle of the river, when they broke for the rear, and just in time to be too late for they were suddenly fished up a standin" by the 2nd Ky. Cavalry, who had been crossing above and below and very nicely surrounding from 35 to 50 of the pickets. The others escaped, and left the Pioneers to finish the bridge in peace. Four hours later, men and wagons were crossing on it. Not a shot was fired by either party in launching and cross the pontoons.

Our Regt. has been detailed to guard this bridge and also to throw up works for its defence. The rest of your brigade and division marched on three days ago. It was intended that we should remain here only a few days until another Regt. should relieve us, but the relief hasn't come yet, and probably won't within the next week. The only troops here, besides us, is the 2d Tenn. Cavalry.

It is reported that our Division has had a fight with the Rebels near Trenton—twenty-five or thirty miles from here and of course came out victorious.

Deserters from the Rebel army are constantly coming within our lines. One came into our Regt. day before yesterday. He belonged to the 1st Ky. Cavalry and wants to get home and stay there. He says he will take any kind of an oath we choose to give him—He'll even take a dose of ipecauc, (ipecac), he says, if it's necessary. He says there are thousands of deserters hiding in the mountains who want to give themselves up—"I thought the Confederacy a very nice thing", said he, "when I enlisted, but it's a dead dog now". Bragg, he says, won't fight at Chattanooga his Army is so badly demoralized, and all the Tennessee troops say they won't go a step further than Chattanooga. They will desert by Regiments if a move is made for Atlanta—His statement I believe is correct as all the deserters repeat the same store. During the short time we remained at Bellefonte, fifty deserters came in, and so it has been all along our lines.

Unless some speedy and grand victory is gained by the Rebels their case will be hopeless, if it is not so already. The confederacy has been on its last legs so long that it must now be on crutches.

A specimen of the F. F.s of Alabama were here today in the persons of two women, one hunting a cow the other hunting a mule, that had been lost. They live four miles from here on the other side of the river and walked all the way in their barefeet. Their lost animals, they said, were three miles from here and they wanted a pass from the Col. to get through the lines—so it is seven miles to where they expect to find them and yet they expect to get back home today. I don't think Illinois can beat that.

I received a letter from Emmett Ross today, he says Anderson wanted to go to war, but his father and mother wouldn't hear to it, so he paid his 300 dollars and did go.

I forgot to tell you in my last letter of the fun we had while on our way to Bellefonte. At a certain place where we stopped for dinner, the men had stacked arms and were sitting on the ground eating when some one cried out "the coon", "the coon", at the same time looking up into a big tree. It was not long until more than one half the brigade had gathered around the tree to see the coon, which was nothing more than a big knot on the side of its trunk. After some of them had enjoyed the ~~sell~~ and the laugh had dead away, one of our boys went up to Col. Dodge who commands the Brigade and asked permission to shoot a coon. As the Col. had learned nothing of the joke he proposed to his staff and number of field officers from the Regts. who were present to go down and see the coon shot. So down they came, all eager to see the critter, walked to the tree, and looked up among the branches. The men saw into the joke at once and began the yell, in the midst of which the victims made their exit, and in one minute after the Col. had mounted his horse and ordered the bugle to sound, the march, concluding not to wait to see the coon shot.

All the men fit for duty are out today working on the fortifications. I have very little to do now since we have been detached from the Brigade.

Give my love to Father and Mother and to all enquiring (sic) friends.
Write soon.

Yours sincerely,

Lyman S. Widney

Camp at Battle Creek, Tenn.
Sept. 20th 1863

Dear Parents:

I had just finished writing my letter of the 16th when orders were received to be in readiness to march. I concluded therefore to keep the letter until we stopped again. Our Regt. was detailed by Gen. Morgan to assist in removing the Pontoon Bridge from Capertons Ferry to this point, 18 miles above. Our baggage was sent by land and the men had to bring up the pontoons by water.

There were 63 pontoons and 6 men were placed in one to row, pole or sail up stream. There are just six of us in our mess, and we chartered a boat for our own use. After putting aboard our baggage and plenty of provisions. We plied the oars until we were tired, when we determined to find an easier way of floating up stream, so putting into shore, a sail was rigged from four. Shelter tents and as a stiff breeze was blowing in the right direction, we scudded out before it, and moved quite lively without any other aid. We were not the only crew that hoisted a sail as every one of the sixty-three boats had taken advantage of the breeze, but we had a leetle the biggest sail on the waters, and of course ran a little the fastest. Our was nearly the last boat to start out, and they were scattered along for more than a mile ahead, but we passed one after another of the boats while the crew were tagging at the oars, and we enjoying ourselves, and doing nothing but to steer the boat. We soon saw that we were an object of envy to all that we passed, but that didn't vex us much. At noon we ran ashore and cooked a good dinner, and agin started off under a good breeze. Everything went very nice until we had almost reached Bridgeport 4 miles below here, when sudden squall caught our big sail and drove the boat broadside upon a nest of snags, almost upsetting us into the water. There we stuck fast unable to do anything but to hang to the upper side of the boat to keep the wind from completely capsizing it. Now it was that those we had left in the rear had their revenge, as they went dashing by us, letting out a few yell^s of triumph as they saw the boat with the ~~big~~ sail almost wrecked. We did not get away for half an hour, when the gale subsided, and we once more went on our way rejoicing. But alas for the wind, it had spent all its energy in that one big blast, and after making our way under tow pontoon bridges at Bridgeport we found a stiff current to contend with and not a breath of wind. After rowing about a mile we ran ashore and encamped for the night.

The next morning we found a strong breeze blowing directly down stream, which made our sail useless, so we took down our mast and once more laid hold of the oars, and by dint of hard pulling at length reached our present position at the mouth of Battle Creek. The bridge was constructed the same day, and we are now encamped on the east bank of the River guarding it. We are compelled to be on the alert for Rebel Cavalry who may attempt to cut off communication from the Army in front. We hear many reports from the front but they are so unreliable that I will not attempt to give them.

Some of our boys who were out in the country today heard heavy and continued cannonading, and it is supposed that a battle has taken place or is now in progress.

The weather is extremely cold and almost freezes the poor fellows who have not many blankets.

I must close as the mail is ready to go out. I sent my love to Charley.

Yours,

L. S. W.

Capertons Ferry
Near Stevenson Ala. Sept. 16th 1863

Dear Parents:

Your welcome letter of the 9th inst. has been received. Also a "Tribune" for which I am very thankful.

My health is very good at present although I was very unwell for more than ^a week. When I wrote last we were encamped in the heavy timber, on low swampy ground. It was very unhealthy as the rapid increase of the sick list plainly showed. I had a severe attack of the Cholera Morbus one evening and took a dose of every kind of medicine in the Surgeons office, without getting any better until the doctor administered chloroform, which put me to sleep. When I awoke I felt much better but was still unwell for ten days after. A few days since, our was located nearer the river on high ground, and the sick list is now decreasing as fast as it increased before.

Our tent is pitched on the edge of a high bank about ten steps from the waters edge. The breeze from the river is very cool and refreshing. Several canoes are moored(?) close at hand, and I often indulge in the luxury of a ride on the water.

We received reinforcements about a week ago of one Regt. (the 60th Ills) a Battalion of Pioneers and one section of artillery. The 60 Ills has relieved our Regt. every second day from work on the Fort, which is now almost completed. Our Regt. is yet the only force on this bank of the river, but as soon as the fort has been furnished, the Artillery will be sent across from the other side. This point is liable to an attack at any time from scouting bodies of Cavalry. It would be quite an advantage to the enemy to destroy the pontoons and thus cut off communication with the Army in front. We consider ourselves, however, fully able to hold our ground, against any force of Cavalry that is likely to be sent against us.

This Regiment is now under command of Gen. Morgan of the Second Division, Reserve Corps. This, however, is only a temporary arrangement. We still, really belong to McCook's command. Our Brigade and Division are somewhere in Georgia looking after old Bragg. We hear many conflicting rumors from the front but nothing reliable.

From what I can gather, there seems to be a big battle close at hand. Bragg, no doubt, has been largely reinforced from Lee and Johnson and together with Buckners forces will be able to concentrate quite an army. Troops from Fort Donelson and Corinth have already arrived to reinforce Rosecrans; I think we can attend to the Rebels. The people of the country still continue to come in for passes to cross the river and make their way to Tennessee, Kentucky or Northern states. Quite a number of deserters have come in. Some of them have enlisted in an Alabama Regiment that is being organized at Stevenson.

Men, women, and children come here to beg for something to eat. They have been stripped of everything by their friends, the Rebels, and by our troops. It is a sad sight to see human beings reduced to low, yet the majority of them were Rebels, and are only meeting with their just rewards. They all claim to be Unionists now, but they cannot be trusted.

Some of them are now and always have been devoted to the Union. The suffering of such people are almost incredible(?) One instance among many is that of the wife of a Federal soldier in the E. Tenn. Cavalry. She came into our camp not many days ago to beg for something to eat for herself and children. She carried a child in her arms and had walked five miles when she reached here. Two other children, she said, were still at home, and they would have nothing to eat 'till she got back. She wanted to go to Stevenson to make arrangements for getting rations from the Government. After receiving her pass she trudged off through the heat and dust for Stevenson, 3 miles further on. We have given away all the surplus rations, and the Major has applied to Gen. Rosecrans for authority to draw rations from the Government to issue to families who have been reduced to actual want. These people are the poor white trash of the south, living as they do in the sterile country of the mountains. They admit themselves that the slaves are more respected by Aristocratic slaveholders, than they are.

Democrats of the North talk of negro equality among those they call Abolitionists. But the slaveholders here associate with their niggers as much if not more than with the whites. One of the F. Fs of Alabama, the former Mistress of the Alabama Hotel at Stevenson, came into our camp a short time ago, riding on horseback with a dirt-wooly headed darkey, as black as the Ace of Spades, perched on behind. She is one of the Aristocrats and was dressed in the style suitable to her class. Yet she saw nothing improper in riding on the same horse with one of her little nigger slaves. What would Conservative Democrats think to see one of our Abolition women of the North in such company. Yet this is an everyday occurrence----a universal custom in the South.

I have opened a correspondence with Cousing Sophia Bamborough, and have received several letters as well as packages of Lancaster Papers. She writes very interesting letters.

I was sorry to hear of the great frost that has visited the Northern part of the State. How did your corn on the bottom stand it? Did you have any that escaped? You did not say whether your corn would average a half crop or whether it applied to all the corn of the neighborhood. I am anxious to hear. Be sure and let me know next time.

The weather here is hot during the day and cold at night. It is^a/splendid place for ague and many of the men are shaking with it.

I think we are beginning of the end of this cruel war. When I get home I believe it will be to enjoy to(the) blessing of Peace. One year will see the close of one of the most causeless and wicked Rebellions that ever cursed the face of the Earth. Be patient and hopeful, all will yet be well. The pleasure will yet be ours of meeting once more when swords shall be beaten into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks.

Yours most affectionately,

Lyman

Battle Creek, Tenn.
October 4th 1863

Dear Parents:

I send you this letter by Capt. Henry Newcomer. He has resigned and will start for home today.

I hope this will find you all enjoying as good health as I do myself. That unwelcome visitor-Ague-has been laying violent hands on many of our men, drilling them severely in the act of shaking. I have managed thus far to keep out of the clutches of the old monster.

When I last wrote we were encamped on the east bank of the river. We have since moved to the west bank, and have taken up the pontoons to prevent an attempt by the enemy to cross on them. A part of them have been sent to Bridgeport.

I suppose you felt some anxiety for the 34th when you heard of the battle of Chickamauga. If you received my last letter written shortly after the battle, you will know that our Regiment did not take part in that bloody carnage. Had we been engaged, and suffered as heavy loss as the remainder of our Brigade, there would now be nothing left but the name of a Regt. All but 25 men of the gallant 77th Tenn were captured, and are now enjoying themselves somewhere in Dixie. Several of the 34th, who had been on duty at Brigade Head Quarters were "Gobbled"--

I suppose you have learned from the papers the principal details of the battle. The Rebels have taken the greater number of prisoners because they captured our Field Hospital filled with wounded, but their loss in what can never be replaced, the lost of life-is greater than ours. They have failed in their grand object, the capture of Chattanooga. Our army still confronts them, secure in its possession of that stronghold. If they could not accomplish their object, with a force outnumbering ours, two to one, how can they hope to do more, when reinforcements have swelled our number to an equality(?) with theirs.

The 11th Corps from the army of the Potomac has arrived at Bridgeport and another Corps is on its way. The only troops from Grants Army that have arrived is one Battalion of Regulars. If do not know whether others are coming or not. Rosecrans will soon be able to again assume the offensive and unless Bragg take his army out of the way, it will get roughly handled. Our men are in the best of spirits, and more than ever confident in the abilities of their commander.

Longstreet's Rebel Corps from Virginia were roughly handled in this battle. I talked with several of the invincible chivalry who had been captured. They said they soon discovered they were not fighting paper, shirt collars. Braggs men were almost as well satisfied that Longstreet was beaten as we are.

A prisoner from Braggs army said that when Longstreet's corps was falling back after an unsuccessful charge on our lines, their men yelled out--"You aint charging on paper shirt collars, and white shirt bosoms now, are you," and a hundred such tantalizing remarks, not very acceptable to the "invincibles."

A terrible accident occurred at Bridgeport four days ago. A huge pile of ammunition 20 feet square by 4 in height was ignited by the accidental burstin of a percussion shell, and exploded with a terriffic roar, killing 15 soldiers and wounding 30. The bodies of the dead were horribly mangled, many torn into fragments. The sound of the explosion was distinctly heard 30 miles distant. I have not learned how much further it was heard.

Wheeler's Rebel cavalry made a raid on a portion of our supply train, a few miles above here, and destroyed a large number of wagons with their contents. Our regt. was kept in line all day expecting to receive a visit from the "critters", but they didn't come. I must close for the present. Write soon. I have not heard from you for almost a month. I send my love to Charley.

Yours affectionately,

Lyman

Battle Creek, Tennessee
October 16th, 1863

My dear mother:

Your letter, with Charley's, of Sept. 30th was received a few days ago. It finds me enjoying good health. I hope this may find you all well, also.

You see we are still at Battle Creek. There are no indications of our moving soon. We are very comfortably situated, with a nice camp, and good houses. The men have houses built with boards, and nice fireplaces with brick chimneys.

The material was furnished by a large house with its out buildings, that stood near our camp. It was a splendid building, the property of a skeedaddled secesh. All that now marks the spot where it once stood is the bare frame. Everything that could be carried has been transferred to our camp.

Two officers of our Regiment, Lieut Robinson of Co. A and Capt. Parrott of Co. B. went to Chattanooga about a week ago. As they were returning yesterday by the road that follows the river in company with two others, they were fired upon by the Rebels on the opposite side of the river. Putting spur to their horses they expected to ride through, but the farther they advanced, the faster flew the bullets from the Rebels who lined the shore for several miles. They were finally forced to leave their horses and scatter through the bushes. Capt. Parrott and another of the party succeeded in getting through and reached camp, but lieut. Robinson and a Private from the same company have not been heard from since. It is not known whether they escaped or whether they have been killed or so badly wounded as to be unable to get away.

One extremity of the Rebel line rests on the River at that point, so the road is effectually blockaded, and none dare go there in search of the missing one.

A complete reorganization of Corps, Brigades and Divisions in the army, is being made. I suppose you know that our old commander, Gen. McCook has been relieved, and also Gen. Crittenden, who commanded the 21st Corps. His Corps and McCooks are to be consolidated into one.

Our Division and Brigade have both been disorganized, and the different regiments composing it, assigned to new commands. We do not know yet to whom we belong. The Regiment is at present under charge of Gen. Morgan, formerly commanding 2nd Division Reserve Corps. He removed his Head Quarters about a week ago from Stevenson to this place.

Now a word or two about myself. I have not had much to do lately, as all the blanks for making the proper returns have run out. We are several months behind with reports to Washington. The Adjutant will get some today and then I'll have to make up for lost time. I live very well now, there are five of us in a mess, and we have a colored individual to superintend the Culinary Department. My messmates are all jolly good fellows, they are the Sergeant Major, Drum Major, Chief Bugler, and Postmaster.

I sleep in the office, but have an interest in what we call our "Ranche" or "Shebang". It is a neat shanty built from the lumber of the houses I have spoken of,—and is dignified with a fancy door, and a window sash from the same building. Then we have a nice big fireplace and brick chimney to carry off the smoke.

To be sure our Ranche wouldn't be considered a first class Hotel on Broadway, but we think it "bully,".

It is only by experiencing pain that we can enjoy pleasure or by enduring the trials of poverty, that we can appreciate the value of riches. So it is with those who have been accustomed to use the earth for a bed, and nothing but the sky overhead. They only know what comfort can be found even in a "Pup tent"

In a conversation with the Quartermaster not long since, I learned something that I had not before clearly understood. When Abram Beeler resigned his position as Quartermaster of this Regt. last summer, the commissary Sergeant, David Talbot was appointed his successor. This left a vacancy in the rank of commissary Sergeant and I thought I had at that time good reasons for believing I should receive the appointment to fill the vacancy, but on the same day that Talbot received his commission and was appointed Q. M.—my expectations were scattered to the winds, by an order from Col. Dysart appointing a Sergeant from Co B to fill Talbot's place.

The Quartermaster now, says that it was his own intention to have me appointed, thinking of course, that the Colonel would appoint whoever he might select, as had always been the custom. But the Colonel, without waiting for the Q. M. to make his selection, and without a word to him on the subject, issued the order appointing another person. The Q. M. went to the Col. at once to know why he had not given him the privilege of speaking a word in the matter, instead of making the appointment without his knowledge.

The Col. excused himself by saying he thought it was all right, and that he wouldn't have appointed one who did not please the Quartermaster, if he had known it—But the order was issued and of course could not be recalled without great injustice to our present worthy Commissary Sergeant—who is one of my most steadfast friends—But enough of this.

Rain has been falling for several days and all the streams are bank full. The Tennessee has risen about ten feet, and the water is within twenty feet of my tent. The bank is high however, and I guess it will "gin out before it reaches the top.

Our camp is cut off above and below by two creeks that cannot be crossed except with canoes. A portion of our Pickets have been cut off from camp by the flood.

Five companies of our Regt. are now at work building a bridge across the Sequatchee River 2 1/2 miles east of Jasper and 8 1/2 miles from this place on the road to Chattanooga.

I received a letter from James Ross not long since. I must close my rambling letter for the present, for I think I have written enough stuff to exhaust your patience. Charley must not forget to write often.

Ever your affectionate son

Lyman

Anderson Cross Roads Tenn.
October 26th 1863

Dear Parents:

I seize this opportunity of dropping you a brief line. We marched from Battle Creek on the 20th and reached this place on the 21st, a distance of 26 miles. We are in Sequatchee County four miles from Dunlap the County Seat—and 30 miles north of Chattanooga. We had a miserable time coming here and for several days after we arrived. It was very wet and cold. The weather has moderated and we have once more become comfortably situated.

Several other Regiments are here with us under command of Gen. Morgan. One of the roads leading from Bridgeport to Chattanooga crosses the mountains at this place and it is made a depot for storing supplies.

Hard crackers are very scarce, we have been on quarter rations for several days, and they have now run out entirely. Our teams have gone to Stevenson for rations but that is more than 40 miles distant over a miserable road so that it will be sometime before they return and then as there are but three wagons we cannot expect a very large supply.

The Commissary Sergt. and thirty men went out today to get forage in the country but they have returned with nothing more than two beeves.

Another party is going out tomorrow to get corn, if possible and have it ground in a mill near by. We are not much afraid of starving but we'll have to work for what we get to eat for the next few days.

Our Regt. has not yet been assigned to any command. We are directly under the command of the Department Commander whoever he is. We were notified to send weekly reports of our whereabouts and of our number direct to Dept. Hd. Qrs.

We have heard that Old Rosey has left us; we are very sorry for it, and cannot imagine what it is for. We receive no papers in this out-of-the-way place, and don't know much about the news. I suppose you know, however more than I do in this matter.

I am enjoying excellent health and hope you are the same. The mail will soon go out and I must close.

I should have written sooner, but the mail did not go out. We have received none for the last ten days. Excuse haste. I will write again soon.

Untill then,

Good bye

Yours affectionate son

Lyman

Anderson Cross Roads Tennessee
Sun. November 8th, 1863

Dear Parents:

Having but little to do this cold, blustering Sabbath day, I shall devote a portion of my time in having a pleasant chat with you. I suppose you have received the letter I sent, soon after we arrived at this camp. I have been so hard at work, writing since then, that I could not get an opportunity of writing to you until the present time. I have not however received any word from you since Sept. 30th.

Our mail comes very irregular, so I suppose there is a precious letter on the way for me.

We are very comfortably quartered here, all the men have good huts with fireplaces. I wish you could drop into the office this morning and see our nice, big fireplace with its warm cheerful fire, and the smooth pine floor, elevated from the damp ground. These are luxuries, and well do I know how to appreciate them. Perhaps you would like a little, rough sketch of the situation.

Imagine a wall tent, with the door in front, the desk and writing table in the rear, and flanked on the left by the fireplace and on the right by my "bunk". Sitting, on a chair in front of the fire, is the Major, smiling to himself over the comic pages of "Major Jones' Courtship". Lounging on the bunk, gravely studying "Military Law" is Adjutant Weld. In one corner near the fire is the Orderly, sitting upon a cartridge box (don't be alarmed about an explosion, the cartridges have been taken out)—and last of all, sitting on a camp stool at the desk is your undutiful son, making a fool of himself by scribbling nonsense to the old folks at home. This he seems to have discovered, and changing the subject proceeds to write about the climate of this country which is almost as cold as Northern Illinois. Citizens tell me that snow frequently falls knee deep in this valley. We have already had specimens of what we may expect as the season advances, in the shape of cold storms of wind and rain, that sometimes, almost blow away our camp.

When I last wrote we were on short rations. We have since been able to procure a bountiful supply and with what we manage to scrape up from the surrounding country, live "on the top of the pile", as the soldiers say. I went to mill the other day almost three miles from camp with a bushel of corn and had it ground. Like other southern institutions this mill is built on the one horse principle, old fashioned and clumsy. It is run by a small stream of water eight inches in diameter with an overshot wheel. It required almost an hour to grind one bushel, and after sifting it by hand, the Miller, charged for the job, the immense sum of ten cents. That man will certainly realize a fortune at that rate. While waiting for my grist, a squad of men came to the mill, a portion of them dressed in Rebel uniforms. They were unarmed and so was I. They didn't molest me, neither did I molest them, because I didn't believe I could whip five Rebeles even in a fist fight. They seemed very inquisitive about affairs in our camp, but of course I wouldn't give them any information, neither could I learn anything from them. I do not say they were Rebel soldiers but I concluded at first sight they were suspicious characters, and that the old mill was not an improbable place of resort, considering that the Miller had a son in the Rebel Army, and that Yankees seldom visited that out-of-the-way place, hid among the mountains.

While writing the above I was interrupted by the cry of "mails come" and in due time I had the pleasure of receiving a letter directed in father's familiar hand writing, which proves to be Mother's and Charley's letter dated Oct. 18th. Very glad I am to receive it. I do not understand why your letters do not come through. Do mine all reach you?

Charley feels jubilant over the election in Ohio. He makes merry at the expense of the poor, persecuted, down-trodden exiled, slandered, liberty-loving, patriotic, peaceful, and righteous, Vallandigham and his valiant-big-hammers. How can you be so cruel, Charley--don't you know they are mourning the death(Political) of their mighty leaders in Pennsylvania as well as Ohio! Did not the noble Woodward fall before the overwhelming numbers of Black Republicanism and Abolitionism led by the tyrant Andrew Curtin! Aint he dead for the balance of the stream! Why don't you try to console the living followers of the illustrious dead, Vallandigham and Woodward! Say to them, Grieve Not--the fame of your leaders is not buried with them. Their names will be inscribed on the glorious page of History with the immortal Benedict Arnold, and their memory forever cherished in the hearts of self-denying men, who hesitate not to sacrifice their Country, for the good of their country's enemy.

Mother, I am sorry to learn that you are somewhat inclined to believe the slanders of newspaper scribblers in regard to Gen. Rosecrans. He is charged with being stupefied with opium in Chattanooga while the battle was raging. This we know is utterly false. I have seen scores of men who were engaged in the battle who say that Rosecrans was constantly on the field. The report originated in the brain of some lying editor or newspaper scribbler and is not believed by a single man in the Army of the Cumberland. It is a matter of astonishment to everyone here why he was relieved. One of your objections to Rosecrans seems to be that he is a Catholic. Of course, his faith don't suit me, but consider the case for a moment. His successor Gen. Thomas is a Protestant, but not a Christian. Now one believes the teachings of the Catholic Church and obeys them.--The other believes in the Protestant faith and obeys not its teachings. Which, then, is the more consistent, or which stands better approved in the eyes of the great Searcher of Hearts? What, then, has been gained in superseding Rosecrans by Thomas? I would not have you believe that I am dissatisfied with the appointment of Grant to command the two armies, nor of Thomas to command this army. I admire the skillful strategy of Grant and the brave Thomas stands next, in my estimation, as well as in that of the Army to the gallant Rosecrans.

As it is, we have every confidence to believe, that the situation at Chattanooga will soon be improved. Many important positions have been gained since the battle, and it is now not only reported, but believed, that the Rebels have abandoned their position in front of Chattanooga.

Since the opening of the river our army has been well supplied with rations. By the aid of brick and frame buildings in Chattanooga, the men have built good comfortable huts.

The two picket lines have been not more than 200 yards apart on each side of the small creek. No firing is permitted and the two parties are on the best of terms with each other. No conversation is allowed by the Officers, yet at every opportunity the men indulge in good humored jokes, and carry on a sly traffic in various articles.

Near Chattanooga Tenn.

November 18th 1863

Dear Parents:

Once again settled in camp. I seize this first opportunity of writing you a hasty letter.

One week ago (the 11th) we marched with Morgan's Command for Dallas, 16 miles above Chattanooga on the Tennessee River. The first day was spent in toiling up the side of the mountain with teams and battery. At sunset we were not out of sight of our old camp although we had reached the summit of the mountain, a section of Waldron's Ridge. The next day we travelled 13 miles along this Ridge, and late in the afternoon we reached the point where the road descends into Chattanooga Valley 6 miles above Chattanooga. The view from that point was one of the most sublime I have ever witnessed. The mountain descends almost perpendicularly and beneath our feet lay the valley, so far, far, down that I would scarcely believe it was not a picture. I have often tried to imagine how the earth would appear to a person elevated thousands of feet above its surface in a balloon. As I stood on the mountain looking down into the valley I realized what imagination had failed to paint in true colors. A silver thread marked the course of the Tennessee for miles until it was lost amid the dime blue mountain that bounded the vision.

Into this valley we descended to encamp. Down for two miles we went, winding zig-zag across the face of an almost impassable wall of solid rock. A single false step would precipitate a man hundreds of feet below. On the 13th we reached Dallas without adventure. No sooner had we reached camp than every man went hard to work cutting logs for his hut, expecting to remain, perhaps all winter. The next day (14th) at noon the work still continued and log houses were growing thick and fast. By dint of extraordinary labor many had succeeded in gathering a few bricks, an invaluable article in building chimneys. While the din and noise of hammering, sawing, chopping and splitting was at its highest, and Orderly rode up to the Colonel and delivered a dispatch. It was from Gen. Thomas and simply read, "The 34th Ills. and 108th Ohio will report to Gen. Beatty opposite Chattanooga". In less than a minute all sound of building had ceased. Men who had been staggering along under heavy logs, let fall the load and the value of bricks fell to zero. One hour later we were tramping on for Chattanooga, 16 miles distant, and arrived on the afternoon of the 15th.

Reporting to Gen. Beatty, our Brigade Commander, this Regt. and the 108th Ohio, were at once sent forward to occupy our present position at the foot of the famous Lookout Mountain right under the guns of the enemy. I will sketch a rough and hasty outline of our position for your better understanding.

see back page

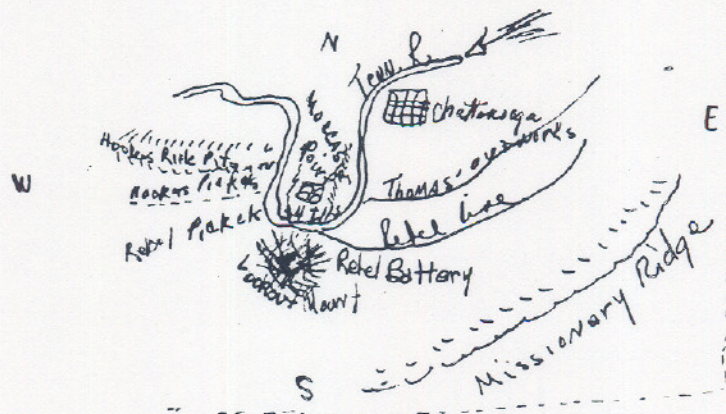
You will see that we occupy Moccasin Point, a high ridge separated from Lookout Mountain by the River--Notwithstanding newspaper reports that mountain is still in possession of the Rebels except a small portion held by Hooker's Pickets. On the summit of Lookout is a Rebel Battery of 32 pounders, which sometimes throw shell all the way to Chattanooga. We are in plain open view of this Battery, but they don't damage us, because we are so close to them. They dare not depress their guns to bear upon our camp, as the explosion would dismount them from their carriages. Several of their shells have burst within 20 rods of camp, and quite a number from 50 to 100 feet overhead, but none near enough to scare us away--A few rods in advance of us are stationed two of our batteries numbering 12 guns--half of these are 12 pound Parrot guns, and can easily throw shells or balls clear over Lookout. They also have range of a road by which the Rebels carry supplies, but although they do much firing, little damage can be done as the Rebels have dug a trench for the road at exposed points.

The Rebels on Lookout keep up an irregular firing generally directed at Hooker's Rifle Pits, and occasionally at our Batteries. It is interesting to watch the firing from the mountain. When the gun is discharged, there is a flash of fire followed by a puff of white smoke, then a pause long enough to count five, when the report reaches the ear almost instantaneously with the whistling and explosion of the shell.

Yesterday a party of Rebels commenced to work on the side of the mountain, throwing up works to plant a new battery. We could see them very distinctly working like beavers. Our gunners saw them too, and at once opened on them with shell, and for about 15 minutes I couldn't hear myself think. The way the gravel and smoke flew, as the shell ploughed into the ground and burst, around the spot where the Rebs stood, was caution to all other parties that expect to work at that place. The whole party skedaddled. Another squad appeared today in another spot, but were shelled away as before.

At all other points along the line everything is quiet. There is no musket firing. Our Regt. is now on Picket along the river. The Rebels are on the opposite side. Our men have orders to fire only at large bodies of the enemy, or at any person attempting to injure the railroad track occupied by the Rebels.

Today some of our Regt. thought they observed some men drilling rocks on the side of the tracks, and yelled across that if they didn't stop at once, they would get

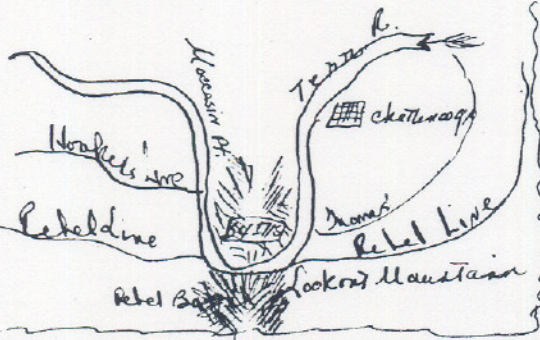


Near Chattanooga Tennessee
November 20th 1863

Dear Sister:

I this day received your letter of the 8th inst. I am sorry you do not receive all my letters. My last one to you was dated Nov. 4th and I should have writtin again ere this time, but we were on another tramp and have only now got once more settled down.

I last wrote you from Anderson Cross Roads. We marched from that place on the 11th inst, and on the evening of the 13th reached Dallas, a point on the Tennessee River 16 miles above Chattanooga. (sic) We expected to remain there for sometime, and commenced to build log huts for winter quarters, but the 14th by an order from Gen. Thomas, directing that the 34th Ills, and 108th Ohio should report to Gen. John Beatty at Chattanooga, these Regts. having been assigned to his Brigade. Leaving Gen. Morgan's command, we started at 2 P. M. for this place, arriving(?) on the afternoon of the 16th. We occupy(?) Moccasin Point separated from the famous Lookout Mountain by the River. For your better understanding I will try and sketch a rough hasty outline of the position.



The strip of land enclosed by the bend of the River is Moccasin Point. On the lower extremity of this strip is our camp, near that of the 108th Ohio, and two of our batteries. On the top of Lookout is a Rebel Battery of heavy guns some of them 32 pounders. Their Pickets occupy the south side of the river and oufs the north. Our Batteries at this point and the Rebel guns on Lookout keep up an irregular firing all day and occasionally at night. Our guns 12 pd Parrotts throw shell clear over Lookout, and the Rebel guns can throw shell a mile beyond our camp. We are in but

little danger, because we are so close to them. To shoot into our camp, which is in plain view, their cannon would have to be lowered to much at the muzzle, that the discharge would dismount them. Some of their shell have burst over head and many have passed to the right and left of us, but nobody has been hurt. Finding that nothing could be gained by shooting this way, they have directed their fire at Hooker's line on our right. We are close enough to hear(?) the whistling and see the bursting of their shells. The Rebels have made several attempts to(?) throw up works for new batteries on the side of the mountain nearest us. As often as they have appeared our shell have driven them away. It is amusing to us to see the Rebs skedaddle when our shell burst among them. Several times everyday we have the pleasure of witnessing these little affairs. Amusing to us but quite a serious thing for the unlucky Rebel Fatigue squads.

We expect stirring times tomorrow. Sherman's Corps has arrived, and large bodies of troops are moving tonight. All of our Brigade except our Regt. have orders to be in readiness to move tomorrow morning with 2 days rations and 100 pounds of ammunition to the man. The Pontoon train is moving up the river. Our Regt. is now on Picket at the River with orders to remain three days. A reserve is posted to protect the batteries.

Eli has been very unlucky in hurting his leg and also in loosing his Discharge Papers. I will write to Lt. Col. Sheets of the 92nd for a certificate to the effect that Eli has been discharged. That I think will clear him from further trouble. Give my love to all concerned. I must close for the present, so good night.

From your

Devoted*****

*the work was suddenly interrupted at noon on

I suppose you know that the army has been entirely reorganized. Notice was received a few days since that our Regt. has been assigned to the Second Brigade, Second Division, 14th Army Corps. The Corps is said to be commanded by Gen. Palmer, but we have not learned who commands the Division or Brigade.

I have quite an interesting correspondence with Cousin Sophia Bransborough. Here letters are always full of fun as well as good sense.

We are looking anxiously for the paymaster, but he does not come.

I shall close for the present by sending my love to you all. Give my best respects to all enquiring friends.

I remain as every,

Your devoted Son

Lyman

Direct

34th Regt. Ill. Vols.
Via Nashville Tenn.

Moccasin Point Tenn.

Near Chattanooga

Nov. 26th 1863.

Dear Parents.

Yesterday and day before there was heavy fighting around us but the 34th was not engaged. Missionary Ridge was charged and captured by our troops. Report say 46 pieces of artillery were taken. Lookout Mountain was captured day before yesterday with a large number of prisoners. Both these actions we have witnessed.

It is supposed the Rebels are on the retreat to Atlanta. Everything is going gloriously.

Yours

Affectionately

Lyman

I shall write again as soon as I hear something reliable.

Moccasin Point,
Near Chattanooga, Tenn.

November 27th 1863.

Mr dearest Parents.

Having written you a short note yesterday to let you know that the 34th in general, and myself in particular, are all right, I will now attempt to give you a faint description of what I saw of the great battle that has just taken place, resulting in the glorious victory of our arms.

Knowing but few, reliable accounts of our loss and that of the enemy, as well as many other particulars, I shall confine my remarks to what I actually saw.

Last Monday (23d) the ball was opened at 3P. M. by the advance of our line in front of Chattanooga. Taking my position on a hill facing Chattanooga the great panorama of battle was spread before my eyes on the plain below. A furious cannonading from our forts was opened on the Rebel line, and soon after a dark line of blue coats, consisting of several Brigades issued from the entrenchments, and moved steadily forward, with bayonets glistening in the sun. As they neared the Rebel works, a puff of white smoke and the war of musketry announced the work begun. Nothing daunted our line. Our line moved rapidly on until it reached the strip of timber occupied by the Rebels. There it was lost from our view, but the long line of smoke rising above the trees, and the cracking of muskets, marked the course steadily onward. An hour elapsed, when the firing ceased, and a cheer from the breeze, announced our success. Report says this change resulted in the capture of one line of entrenchments and 500 prisoners.

At dusk the batteries on Missionary Ridge, which had previously been silent, opened for the first time on our lines, and for nearly two hours, kept up an incessant bombardment. Such a spectacle I shall never forget. The dusky form of the mountain, encircling our position for 3 miles seemed in the dim twilight, like some dense thunder cloud looming against the heavens, and shooting forth unceasing flames of lightning, while its thunder made the earth tremble beneath our feet. Along the crest and on the sides, was it illuminated by the incessant flashing of scores of batteries, while innumerable shells fell, bursting above and around our lines. Not an answering shot was fired from our batteries, and gradually the enemy's fire slackened until both armies sunk into deep and unbroken repose. I have not learned that any considerable injury was received from the terrific bombardment of the enemy.

While this was progressing, our brigade was moved to the left, leaving our regiment to hold Moccasin Point, support the three batteries planted here, and picket the northside of the river.

Early on Tuesday morning skirmishing began immediately on our right, and in Hooker's front. This continued with more or less severity till about 8 a.m. when a furious cannonading was opened by eight or ten batteries of Hooker's planted on a high ridge running west from this point. All of the Regt. not then on Picket, myself among the number, collected on a hill a few rods west of camp, where was stationed one of our Batteries. There we had a full view of all that was going on.

At the foot of Lookout Mountain was a line of Rebels sheltered behind the railway embankment, across the river from us, but not three quarters of a mile wide was Hooker's troops, lying in their rifle pits. The two parties were hidden from each other, but owing

to our position on one side, we could see both. Over this valley were flying shells from Hooker's batteries at the rate of three every second, bursting above and around the Rebel line, aided too by the battery near which I stood. The spot soon became too hot for southern courage, and the greater portion soon retreated to a second line of entrenchments. At this moment our troops leaped from their works, and moved rapidly forward towards the enemy. A volley of musketry from the railroad made now impression on our line, but as it neared the road, we would see the rebels, starting out, singly and then in squads climbing the hill to their second work—decidedly in a big hurry, as shell and rifle balls fell much too fast for their safety. Our battery had an excellent flanking fire on the grey line, crouching behind the second work and a few shells raking from right to left, together with the steady advance of the infantry, induced them to strike for the timber in gallant style. Our infantry followed and soon both parties were hid from our view yet the smoke marked the course of our troops onward and upward. Almost an hour rolled by when a line of men were seen straggling across an open field almost to the summit of the mountain, directly in front of us. Collecting in another line of entrenchments a rapid firing in the direction from whence they came, told that our men were not far behind. Thirteen guns from Moccasin Point dropped their missiles of death around that work, but soon a dark line emerged from the timber and floating above them in triumph, was the brave old stars and stripes. Oh that you could have witnessed that scene. Our group of spectators; excited to the highest pitch of enthusiasm burst forth with one impulse and as one man into three long, loud cheers from the very bottom of their soul, for their dear old flag. That moment I shall never, never forget. The Rebels from behind their works were pouring an unceasing fire into our line, which ceased to respond and halted as if gathering its energies for a mighty blow. Now with bayonets charged it moves on the double quick, leaps the works of the enemy and drives him in confusion across the open field. Circling round the hill our force once more engages the enemy in his last and strongest work. Here our progress was checked by fresh reinforcements for the enemy and the fight became desperate. Reinforcements for both parties were pushed forward.

At length between three and four o'clock a heavy cloud of fog that had hung at the top of Lookout began to descend and soon enveloped friend and foe in ~~un~~penetrable midst. But still we heard the firing, and occasionally the "zip" of a stray "minnie" on its flight from the field of battle. There it continued during the remainder of the day while anxious faces in camp were turned to the mountain in a vain attempt to peer through the veil that enshrouded it. Soon after dark the cloud lifted and the moon shone out in all her brilliancy. Now we could see the position once more by the flashing of the guns of both friend and foe, as they were discharged like the short quick gleaming of fireflies on a summer eve. When the firing was most rapid, a stream of lightning seemed to run almost from the top to the bottom of the mountain. The firing continued with cessation until midnight when it began to decrease and finally ceased.

The following morning, revealed the Rebels "skedaddled" and our brave boys—in full position of Lookout Mountain. Report says we have three cannon and eleven hundred prisoners. I will not vouch for it, and do not mean to *****because*****a great many prisoners were*****. I have not learned whether the "Mountain Angel" escaped. A heavy cloud hanging around the summit of Lookout, when it was attacked, prevented the battery on it from firing a shot. The last work of the "Angel" was at dusk on Monday evening, to drop two shells into our camp, which fortunately did not explode and none were injured.

A portion of the Regt. were on picket during this contest and the bulletts dropped so freely around them, they were compelled to lay all the time in the rifle pits. Our friends the Rebel pickets on the other side lay very quietly while the fight was progressing. At length taking the alarm they beat a retreat without firing at our pickets who would easily have shot them as they run, and would have done so had not their orders been not to fire unless fired at. They did not excape however as all their pickets along the river were cut off and captured.

These are but small affairs compared to that portion of the great battle we ~~zzid~~ saw on Wednesday last. It was the capture of Missionary Ridge with many prisoners and many cannon.

On the afternoon of that day, we were called to our position on the hill by the war of Cannon and small arms in the direction of the Ridge. We discovered it to be a general advance of our lines in front of Chattanooga. Looking down upon the open plains our troops could be seen moving out in long line of

Dixon Ills.
Sunday Feb 28th 1864

Dear Parents-

I have an opportunity of dropping you a few lines. The Regt. will start this evening or tomorrow morning.

I send you a few photographs. You will discover they are miserable, I would not have taken them but they were paid for in advance.

Minnie may take what suits her. I will get some better ones before I return to the field.

I have just now learned that we do not go until tomorrow morning. Why did not Charles come down yesterday. I was disappointed, and felt very uneasy about him getting home that night. I still fear that something happened to him on the way, but I hope not.

That box of provisions is turned to good account now. I have treat reasons for thanking you every time I set down to eat. One of my friends whom I invited to take a bit said to me, "You must have a good mother", "Yes," I replied "I have one of the best of mothers and the best of sisters.

I send my love to every one of you. I'll write again at the first opportunity.

Lyman

Camp near Rossville, Ga.
March 13th 1864

Dear Parents.

We are over more settled quietly in camp. We arrived here on the 7th fortunately without any accident. It is about as dangerous riding on the railroad from Nashville to Chattanooga; as it is to go through a small fight.

The rear car of our train ran off and run quite a distance on the ties. It was occupied by Col. Van Tassell and Staff, but fortunately nobody was hurt as the train was not running very fast. We laid over at Stevenson, Ala. a few hours. I was standing by the side of the hack while there, when a train of Veterans returning was moving out. It had got fairly in motion when the car occupied by some officers of the Regt. ran off the rail and went jolting along on the ties. Many of the occupants jumped out among them, the Major, who broke his leg. A smash up occurred just ahead of our train resulting in the death of several persons. Thus you see we have reason to be thankful that we came through safely.

Our present camp is six miles south of Chattanooga with our old Brigade and Division. There is no enemy near us and no probability of having any fighting to do very soon.

I took sick when we reached this camp and had a slight touch of fever. I have got over it now and feel as well as ever. When I was lying in the tent sick, I began to think of home and wish I was there, if that fact, I was almost homesick. But now since I am well once more, I feel very well satisfied. I often think now of the many good things I couldn't eat while I was home. I wish I had some of them here.

My old messmate Sergt. Major Henry D. Wood has been commissioned as Adjutant. He is the second regular Adjutant we have had in the Regt. D. Leavitt was the first. I am still employed in the office. The boys have all sobered down now since they have once more got in the field. They have been hard at work ever since we came here building huts and clearing stumps from the camp ground. There is nary a drop of whiskey in this country no copperheads within striking distance and no groceries to clean out. All together we are a very decent set of fellows now.

The weather is very pleasant through the day but very cool at night. Coats are seldom worn through the day.

I have got pretty well broken in to camp life again. The Adjt and I sleep on bunk made of rough round poles laid on loosely and covered with two blankets. I slept on soundly this morning on it that I didn't hear reville although it was beaten of half a dozen drums less than a ***** Roq from the tent. How does Minnie like country life by this time. I suppose she will like it better when the warm weather comes.

I have received your family letter of Mch 2d. I am so glad to hear that mother was getting better. I hope she is entirely well by this time.

I was very badly disappointed Charley that I did not see you again before we left Dixon. I looked so anxiously for you, but then as you say it is of no use to complain as it can't be helped now. Some day I'll go home to stay and then we won't have the sorrow of parting.

The small pox is very bad throughout this Army. Capt. Gallion and several others of our Regt. are sick with it in small pox hospital at Nashville. Two others have it at Chattanooga: The surgeon vaccinated the Regt today. I hope the disease will spread no further. It is so terrible.

Give my love to the children.

Very affectionately,

Lyman

Direct to Regt
via Nashville

Camp near Rossville, Ga.
March 27th 1864.

My Dearest Parents.

It is just two weeks today since I last wrote to you. No doubt you are beginning to feel anxious on my account or blame me for not writing sooner. Soon after writing I was unfortunate enough to fall a victim to one of the ills of this life, the mumps. It has been circulating through the Regt. and swilled faces are now fashionable.

Troubles never come singly, so while one side of my face was swilled with the mumps, another evil spirit, the toothache, took possession of the other side, and between the two, I was pretty severely handled-not to mention the soothing presence of a very bad cold.

For this day I have arranged a kind of armistice with my two tormentors, but I still feel their presence. A swilled jaw is good evidence of one and an occasional twinge still better evidence of the other.

This is the first warm day we have had for almost three weeks. I have suffered more inconvenience from the cold since we arrived here than I did through all of last winter. A few days ago snow fell almost 12 inches deep on a level, it remained three days and was followed by another snow one inch deep. We were entirely unprepared for such weather in the month of March, away down in Georgia. Almost everyone like myself had left their heavy clothing at home, expecting to find here peachtrees in bloom, green grass, flowers and hot weather.

The recruits are very much dissatisfied with the way hot weather is dealt out in the sunny south. There is nothing worthy of note occurring here. All is remarkable quiet. Our Regt. has not yet been supplied with mules and wagons. Of course we cannot be expected a march without them.

Smallpox has been raging in this portion of the army. Capt. Gallion and several others of our regt. took it at Nashville and were left there in Hospital. Chas. Morse of Co. A died with it last week at Chattanooga.

Those men belonging to the Regt. who did not re-enlist and were transferred to the 78th Ills. are to be sent back again to their own Regt.

Gen. Thomas will review our Brigade tomorrow. The Regts. have been busy all day in preparing for it.

We get plenty of rations now. More in quantity and better in quality than at any time since we left Muffeesboro.

In our mess of five members, we have about eight pounds of coffee and ten pounds of sugar, surplus rations since we came to camp. Yet we throw away as much of both as would keep a small family. We surely cannot complain of short ration now.

I have heard but once from you since I left home and feel anxious about your welfare. I suppose Minnie is still with you. How I should like to see you all again. It does not really seem as if I had been at home. It appears like a strange dream.

Give my love to Minnie Charley and all the children.

Yours ever

Lyman

Direct to Regt.
Chattanooga Tenn.

I have not heard whether you recd my overcoat which I sent by Express from Dixon.

Camp near Rossville, Ga.
April 7th 1864

My dear Parents.

Two years ago today the 34th was resting on the battlefield of Shiloh after the days bloody work was done. The anniversary of that battle will never pass unnoticed by any who have taken part in it. Neither will it be forgotten by Fathers, Mothers, Brothers, Sisters and friends of those who fell.

I have been thinking of you all this evening, wondering why I hear nothing from you. Only one letter has reached me since I left home. Day after day as the mail arrives I look in vain for a message of love, a word of cheer, bearing the welcome news that all are well. My heart is oppressed with anxiety lest a shadow has darkened the home circle, and sorrowful news awaits me. But, I will not indulge in gloomy fancies. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. I'll draw pleasing pictures of your happiness and comfort. I'll imagine you in the midst of children and grandchildren listening to these lines, and you wonder why I have not received the letters written in prompt response to mine.

The Post Office Department must shoulder the blame for all this. It has either failed to carry my letters to you or yours to me. Perhaps the next mail will bring a welcome messenger and put my anxious fears at an end.

I cannot think of anything remarkable to tell you unless it will be to say that it is remarkably quiet. Some of the recruits still manage to discover the enemy stealing upon them while on Picket, and generally keep up a scattering fire during the night, on dangerous logs, stumps &c. Aside from the imaginary enemy, there is none to trouble us.

You will remember that when I last wrote I was under a crossfire of mumps and toothache. Well, I managed to outlive both, and have no more trouble with the "Critters."

There has been another addition to my comfort. The weather which was so unreasonably cold and cheerless has changed to be so mild and beautiful as we can reasonably hope for.

Outdoor sports are much indulged in. Everybody is glad to breathe the warm pure air. Every evening we have a big game of ball. Other individuals indulge in a hop step and jump to the music of a fiddle which some musical individual brought into camp with him. Now sickness and discontent are strangers to our camp.

The fact however is doubted by the "individuals" who didn't re-enlist and are now serving with the 78th Ills.

They say that when we were going home, if asked what Reft. the reply would be in a triumphant tone Thirty Fourth Ills. Veterans, but that on our return a reply to the same question would be in a weak sickly voice, thir-ty-fo-ur-th E-l-en-o-i-s.

I want to ask Minnie how she likes the West by this time, how Willie and Elmer enjoy themselves. Whether she has heard from Burr, and if he has made his trip to Nashville yet. Does he have any intention of going out West himself; I would like to ask a hundred more questions, but then I must not forget that you all would be tired reading them. Minnie must not forget to write as soon and as often as she can conveniently.

I read a letter not long since, written by one of our Regt. who has lately been a prisoner on Belle Isle. He was captured with Lieut. Robinson at Battle Creek last September and lived, or rather got along in the Confederacy up to March 6th when he was paroled and sent into our lines. He does not say directly how he fared, considering it would be a violation of his parole, yet he throws out a few broad hints that cannot be misunderstood—You have heard much no doubt of the sufferings of prisoners on Belle Isle. This man's story confirms the worst that has been asserted. Without saying in so many words that they had not enough to eat. He mentioned a case. Four dogs having got into camp, they were killed and eaten by the prisoners. This ~~man~~ said he is not the worst but does not tell what was the worst.

I am pretty well supplied now with reading matter, the Adjutant and I subscribe for the Atlantic and Harpers Monthlies at half price. This is a generous arrangement entered into by Publishers for supplying the Army. We have already recd four numbers of the Atlantic, and expect as many more of Harpers shortly. I have more time for reading now than usual. There is but little business to be done in the Office.

I have been offered an excellent position as chief clerk at Gen. Davis' Hd. Quarters but I have determined to stick to the Regt. for the present at least.

Give my love to all and reserve the largest share for yourselves.

Your young hopeful

Lyman

Direct to Regt.

Chattanooga, Tenn.

Camp near Rossville, Ga.

April 12th 1864

My Dear Parents:

Your letter of March 30th was received the 8th inst. the next day after I had dispatched one to you. I was so thankful for it as it had been so long that I had heard nothing from you. The band has just commenced playing "Tattoo" and the companies are falling in for roll call.

I had just finished a game of chess and sat down to read "Harper" for April--when the thought struck me very forcibly (no injury sustained however) that you may be longing to hear a word from me and that a letter would be welcome, if it is filled with nonsense. I would like to write some great big thing that has happened down here, but unfortunately I would have to draw all my material from imagination. Nothing more tremendous has happened than sunrise and sunset, rain and shine. Revielle and Tattoo and a long string of like events too numerous to mention. We are getting along fully enjoy good health, have plenty to eat, and little to do. As for myself the only hardship I imagine is cooking one day out of five. You see "we-uns" have a mess. Now by "we-uns" I mean myself and four other fellows. The Sergt. Major Drum, Major Chief Bugler and Post Master. As I said we have a mess together, and take turns cooking, one day for each man. Now we are all supremely lazy, and if there is any difference, it is that every one is lazier than the other. We never lack for fun or something to laugh at. The Drum Major (who by the by carries a tremendous name, George A. Quackenbush) is as full of wit as his name is full of letters. and it flows from his mouth like water from a hydrant. As our ranch is used for the distributions of the mail, the Regt. seems to consider it a public institution and interrupt our domestic enjoyment not a little. At least one hour before the mail arrives each day a crowd begins to assemble around the tent, and continues to increase in size and noisy impatience until the mail itself arrives. Then it would do you good to be around. When the Post Master gets into the tent with his letter one of us takes his position at the door with a drawn sword to prevent everybody from crowding in.

While the letters are being assorted by companies, the crowd outside surround the tent, like starving wolves at a sheep pen. Every little crack and hole is occupied by a pair of eyes, gazing as wistfully as a young urchin stealing a peep into a circus or animal show. No sooner is the mail fairly distributed, than a score of voices cry out "give me A's" and equal number "give me B's" and so on through the ten companies, every one yelling at once until their packages are delivered, when they break for their respective companies to crowd around one who reads aloud the names on each letter successively.

It is hard to explain why they crowd so when they know that the mail for each company, is given from the office only to one man of such company, to be distributed afterwards. This is fact, not fancy.

You folks up North don't know how eager the poor soldier is to hear from home, or some place.

It is an undisputed fact and one that does not speak well for the conduct of our correspondents, that two letters leavethe Regiments for one that is received.

Nate Perrine and Bill Saddler arrives today. I have not yet had an opportunity of speaking to them.

April. 13th. I have see Nate Perrine this morning and he tells me that you were well when he left and all the news of the neighborhood.

I am glad to hear that the Caps were badly beaten in the late election.

The weather is very warm and pleasant now.

I have very little to do, for a wonder, in the office.

I suppose Minnie has gone home by this time. Don't you feel lonesome without the children to keep up a noise.

Charley I know will miss Elmer who must be quite a farmer by this time under the teaching of one so skillful as Charles.

Capt. Gallion has recovered from small pox and is now in charge of the Guard at small pox hospital, Nashville.

Don't forget to write soon; meanwhile

I remain

Your Devoted Son

Lyman

I am very thankful for the stamps
you enclosed in your last letter.
I have dropped in the envelop a
few flowers gathered on the battlefield

Camp near Rossville Ga.
April 22d 1864

Dear Parents.

Your letter of the 10th inst. was received in due time.

Nothing new has turned up since I last wrote except a reconnoissance made by the 78th Ills. of our Brigade. They went to the town of Lafayette 23 miles south of here and then turned to right going as far as the gap occupied by McCook Corps just before the battle of Chickamauga. One of our scouts met the Colonel of the Regt. there and informed him that a large force of Cavalry had left Dalton to cut off his retreat. Having learned all that was desired the Colonel started on the return, taking good care to avoid the force sent to intercept him. The wheat in that section of the country was six inches high, and farmers were furrowing out for corn. Very little of the land was being cultivated, for very good reasons. In the first place there are few to farm and those who do, have no certainty of ever reaping the benefits of their labor. Their country will probably be the theatre of the coming summer campaign, and they know too well the ruin that will follow.

The soldiers say, the people generally show a good Union spirit, and soldiers you know are not easily deceived.

Day before yesterday, Sergt. Major Clements, myself and three others, started for the battlefield of Chickamauga, about six miles south of our camp. We went well armed with guns and revolvers prepared to disperse or capture any foolish Rebel Cavalry that might venture in our path. The battlefield is disputed ground lying between ours, and the Rebel pickets. After a pleasant walk of five miles beyond our Pickets, through a country blooming with numberless flowers, and marked by the blackened ruins of houses, we came to the first evidence of the battle. Trees marked with bullets or shattered by cannon balls, the ground strewn with wreck of guns and equipment, and grave of friend and foe. Near the roadside is a large mound surrounded by a rude fence and overshadowed by a large oak, which tells the visitor that two commissioned officers and 17 men of the 87th Ind. lie buried beneath. Also shows the direction of the line of battle of the Regt. which passed directly beneath the tree. A mile further on we came to a rude breastwork of logs and rails, surmounting a moderate rise of ground. There was when our Brigade repulsed four successive charges on the work by the Rebels from the opposite side. The trees in this vicinity were fairly riddled with bullets. There, too, could be seen the positions occupied by our Brigade Battery. The section of timber exposed to the range of its fire had been mowed down as grass before the sickle. Trees two feet in diameter by actual measure were cut off close to the ground and others shivered into thousands of splinters as if from a stroke of lightning. With such evidence before our eyes it was easy to believe what a storm of iron hail swept the ranks of the advancing enemy and drove them terror stricken back.

The guns were double shotted with grape and canister shot and served with terrible effect. Our Brigade held their position in the face of overwhelming numbers until ordered to withdraw with the remainder of the army to Chattanooga.

I should have stated that their work was constructed during the night following the first days battle, and while the enemy was within hacking distance.

Having satisfied our curiosity we started on our return and presently came to one of the few occupied buildings of the country. We concluded to stop awhile and passed into the porch, where a pleasant looking woman invited us in. Taking our seats in the parlor, a large room destitute of almost every article of furnitre, we struck up a conversation in which the lady took an active part, and related many incidnets that had occurred within the Rebel lines.

The family consisted of herself, husband and two children. Their home had been near Ringgold but the Rebels burned their house, confiscated everything worth taking, and drove them out of the lines. The house they now occupied had been the property of a rebel, but was now owned by the Government which permitted them to seek shelter in it.

They were sincere Unionists and cherished a feeling of bitter hate for their persecutors, especially their old secesh neighbor. She gave an instance of Rebel cruelty, that equals in fiendish atrocity the outrage at Fort Pillow. The house of one of her neighbors had been filled with our wounded after Chickamauga battle and the woman who lived there declared on her honor that they were all murdered by the Rebels.

Before we left the house, she invited us to take some milk and bread, and of course we didn't refuse. She declined to receive any pay, but the Sergt. Major and I had taken the precaution to have a quantity of surplus coffee and sugar along which we gave her and more than repaid the value of the milk. Their only means of getting these articles is from our Army. Leaving the house we had gone a short distance along the road, when we met two old women, one 50 years old, the other 88. These poor old creatures were just returning on foot from our Division Headquarters, carrying the rations they had drawn from the Government.

As we met, the younger one of the two spoke out. "How many of you soldiers chew tobacco." This we knew was an invitation for a "chaw" of the filthy weed, but unfortunately enough, only two of our party used it, and were entirely out. Tobacco is almost as scarce as gold in this part of the army. We explained the reason their request couldn't be granted. "We can't hardly get along," said one without our tobacco; we've always used it and now can't get a bit to smoke or chew." We can't get any thread, needles, pins, buttons or sich like, and we wouldn't get anything to eat if it wasn't for you-uns. We have to walk through seven miles and carry home what we get to eat. The Rebels took most all we had." "Yes," said the oldest one, "and they hung my son 'till he was almost dead, but he got away from them, thank God." We gave them all the thread, needles, and pins and "sich like" we had with us.

Three years ago those old women lived in plenty, and owned hundreds of acres of land and scores of slaves.

At the next house we also stopped, determined to learn the phases of life in Georgia. It was a large log house of seven or eight apartments, and surrounded by huts that had once been occupied by slaves, but now deserted.

Introducing ourselves we found the inmates to consist of a middle aged woman and her aged, almost helpless, parents. We sat down in a large kitchen before a huge fireplace, beside the old man who was scarcely able to totter across the room, and was trembling and shaking from the effects of some nervous disease and old age (79 years).

He was quite cheerful, however, and did not utter many complaints although he had abundant reasons for complaining. "I raised ten children in this house," said he, "and now they are all gone but one". We did not ask him where. The Sergt-Major carried a Henry Rifle, which shoots 16 times after once loaded; this astonished the old man to a wonderful degree, to know that such a dangerous yankee gun could be invented, and thought it quite an improvement on the old muskets. "We know what war is," said the daughter; "the Cavalry fought for eleven days around our house and we never expected to live through it. We often thought we'd leave the house, but where could we go to? I hid in every corner of the house but it wasn't quite safe anywhere. You can see where the balls came through the house."

"Do you raise any stock," was asked. "No, indeed, not now any more, we've nothing left but an old piece of a cow." "Piece of a cow?" said I in surprise. "Yes," that's what we-uns call an old critter." I smiled audibly and thought of the old woman in East Tennessee, who was telling of a skirmish near her house and said. "Mister Wolford formed his critter company right across my lot and broke my ash barrel that I wouldn't a' taken two dollars for."

Having disposed of the "piece of a cow" to our satisfaction, she continued, "We had plenty of cattle, sheep and hogs, but what the Rebels left, the Federals took, and now they're all gone but the old cow and I'm glad of it, for I'm not bothered looking after them any more." And I wish the old cow was gone, too," said the old man, "she is more bother than she's worth; my daughter has to run after her a mile every day." "We get enough to eat from the Government," said the daughter, and I ain't going to complain; We'll think ourselves lucky if we get through the war with our lives.

We didn't wait to hear any more but hurried into camp as it was getting late.

It is needless to say these people are sick and tired of the war Secession, the Confederacy, Jeff Davis and the Devil.

Nothing more at present, I remain

Your Devoted Son

Lyman

Camp near Rossville Ga.

May 1st 1864

Dear Parents and Brother:

Yours of Apr. 24" recd yesterday. I write now because this is our last night in this camp, we have order to start for Ringgold tomorrow morning. You will have learned ere this reaches you whether this movement is part of a general advance on Johnson's Army. We can only guess at it as yet, although we have very good reasons for believing that a fight or footrace is about to come off. Yesterday all surplus baggage was shipped to Chattanooga thence to be sent by river to Bridgeport. By surplus baggage is meant everything over and above what can be carried on our backs. Not tents, boxes, truncks, chests or valises are allowed to be taken by Regts. Only one team is allowed to each Regt. and that must be loaded exclusively with the most essential part of our rations. Coffee, sugar, and salt and crackers. A three days supply of these will be required to last five days. The only baggage now in the Regt. is one woolen and one gun blanket a shelter tent and a single change of clothing to each man. Officers and men have the same privelege;(sic) that of carrying on their backs what they can.

All these preparations speak very clearly of long rapid marches, long continued active service, and battles to be fought. As the Regimental and Company desks have been sent to Bridgeport, it is very clear that "red tape" is to be laid aside till we dispose of Johnson's Army.

The Regt. is in the best spirits and eager to break the restraints of camp. We hope to see a desicive blow struck this summer, and we cannot expect to see it accomplished while we lay idle in camp. We are willing to undergo unusual hardships, if a corresponding amount of good can be derived from it. If by taxing our endurance to the very utmost. The war can be ended the sooner, we will cheerfully submit. The campaign with us is opening with a show of energy not before exhibited and we have reason for thinking it will be conducted with no less energy. Gen. Sherman seems determined to accomplish everything within the range of possibility if not to accomplish what may seem an impossibility.

The weather is very fine; trees half-clothed in leaves; grass and flowers rapidly covering the earth.

It was reported in camp several days ago that a squad of the 92nd had been captured while on picket and the majority murdered on the spot by some Rebels belonging to the 1st Tennessee. If the report proves true there will be little mercy shown to any of that Regt. who may be captured. The Tennessee troops in our Army say they will never take any more prisoners, especially from Rebel Tennessee Regiment, because of the outrage at Fort

Pillowl None of Forrest's command, will escape death if captured by our troops, whether an order for retaliation is issued or not.

Our pay rolls are all made our and if we had not marching orders would receive pay on them, this week. We may, however, get paid yet.

Mother, the very best as well as cheapest article you can send that will add to my comfort, is a letter, as often as you can conveniently. I know of nothing else that would be more welcome.

I must close for the present to fix up a little more for the march.

I 'll write again at the next opportunity. Til then, I remain

As ever

Yours Affectionately

Lyman

Near Rome Ga.

May 18th 1864

Dear Parents:

As another opportunity of mailing letters is offered, I will improve it by dropping you a few lines. Perhaps you received the note I wrote near Resaca. Since then we marched to our present position before Rome and had another fight yesterday evening driving the Rebels within their works, and forcing them to evacuate today.

Our Regt. lost three wounded and two missing. We have been lying quietly in camp all day but there are rumors of another move tomorrow morning. Since leaving Rossville our Regt. has taken part in four engagements. The first at Buzzards Roost, May 8, no loss-next at Rocky Faced(sic) Ridge May 9", loss 9 wounded, one mortally-Resaca, May 14"-loss, 6 killed, 25 wounded-near Rome, May 17", loss-5 wounded and missing.

Besides these portions of the Regt. having been at different times in skirmishes in which, however, no loss was sustained.

Post Master is about ready to start, I must close at once. I am well.

Lyman

In the field near Dallas, Ga.
May 29, 1864

Dear Parents.

It is seldom we have an opportunity of sending off letters, and then we have not the tools for writing long ones. I suppose you are well enough, satisfied to know that I am still alive and well. I can't give you the particulars of our adventures yet, but leave that until a suitable opportunity. The Regt is now lying in line of battle behind a breastwork of logs and rails, in view of the enemy. A part of the Brigade is now on the skirmish line a quarter of a mile in advance of us, exchanging shots occasionally with the Rebel skirmishers. We were on the line yesterday and nearly all of last night. A portion of the Rgt. exchanged shots with the Rebels, but none of our men were hurt.

We moved down here from Reome four days ago, we are 30 miles north of Atlanta. We have had considerable marching to do, tramping back and forth from right to left and from left to right of the line. We didn't know much about the situation of offense here except that everything is progressing favorably. The Rebs have thus far had the worst of the bargain, but the great struggle is yet to come, provided Joe Johnston can be made to fight this side of the ocean. We have no fears as to the result of a general engagement, we are bent in success and know no such word as fail.

The weather is very hot, Only one has taken sick since we started from Rossville.

Last night Dan Saddler was accidentally shot in the thumb. It is but a flesh wound and will soon heal. I saw cousin John Widney (Uncle Aleck's son) at Resaca. He belongs to the 112nd Ills. in Schofields Corps.

Give my love to Charley.

For a while goodbye.

Lyman

In the field, near Acworth
June 7th 1864

Dear Parents:

As we expect to rest today I will employ part of the time in giving you a sketch of our operations since leaving Rossville. The campaign thus far has been a hard one and we greatly need relaxation from the almost constant suspense and anxiety to which we have been subject. For more than a week at a time we have been within range of the enemy's fire, where their balls whistled over and around us day and night. The Rebels have now abandoned their position here at the Allatoona Heights and our portion of the army at least, has been resting for the past few days.

By referring to my journal I can give you a connected action.

May 2d-Marched from Rossville to Ringgold

May 7th-Marched to Tunnell Hill and took position in front of Buzzard Roost, a portion of the Regt. had a slight skirmish but none were hurt.

May 8th-Brigade charged the Rebels from a hill at the mouth of the Roost and occupied a position in plain view of and not 3/4 of a distant from the Rebel forts.

May 9th-At 5 p.m. Regt. was ordered out on the skirmish line on the side of Rocky Face Ridge, in which Buzzard Roost is a gap. An advance was made by our line until an impassable obstruction was encountered, being a natural palisade of perpendicular rock, running for miles above and below the Roost. Over this it was impossible to ~~*****~~ had the enemy not been stronger ~~*****~~ on an opposite hill. Their shell passed over our heads and buried in the valley beyond. An occasional rifle-ball from the Rebels would drop among us. The skirmish line was less than a quarter of a mile in advance of us and there one company was stationed, and kept up an irregular exchange of shots with the Rebel skirmishers. Both parties lying concealed behind logs, stumps or trees. Many of our boys, stole out to the line of their own accord and getting a good position, pecked away at the Rebels very contentedly. None of our men were hurt but if reports are true some of the Rebels were. I came near stopping a shell here. While going on an errand to the Company on the skirmish line, as I was passing an exposed point of the hill a shell from the Rebel fort came shrieking by, and passed along the path, I had traversed a moment before. Had I been three steps slower, I would have met the ugly "critter" right in my path.

May 12-Hooker's, Schofield's and Palmer's Corps moved from the Roost ~~*****~~ to Snake Creek Gap, another opening in Rocky face Ridge ~~***~~ miles west of Resaca, a railroad station 18 miles south of Dalton. McPerhson's Army had taken possession of this important gap several days previous and now ~~****~~ only awaited reinforcements before advancing on Resaca and thereby cutting off the retreat of Johnston. It was after midnight when we reached our destination, and had the opportunity of lying down to sleep.

May 13th-Spent in placing troops in position. Our brigade halted two miles west of Resaca, and bivouaced for the night.

May 14th-A grand charge was made on the Rebel works and part of the line captured. Our Regt. was the only one of the Brigade engaged and charged across an open field in the face of a shower of grape and musket balls to a ditch close to the Rebel fort where they lay and kept the cannoniers from

their guns till dark, when they were ordered***** their original position. Our dead ***** May 15th-Brigade moved to a position a mile further on the right and occupied works that had been constructed during the night. A portion of the Regt. was sent out to skirmish while the remainder retired under cover of a small elevation thirty rods in the rear. Our skirmishers were soon after relieved by another portion of the Brigade, and the regt. remained together. The firing was quite lively all day, and half a dozen wounded men from our Brigade were carried through our Regt. to the rear. We were comparatively safe, although somewhat annoyed by one or more Rebel Sharpshooters, who occasionally sent a ball whizzing uncomfortably close to our heads or striking wickedly in the trees near by. At night fall we received orders to dig entrenchments in front of the Regt. Two companies were set to work to be relieved by others at proper intervals. The Adjutant and I spread our blankets down, and endeavored to snatch a little sleep. That we found to be an easy task. The constant rattle of pick and spade in the hard gravel; the irregular chackling of musketry in front; and last but not least the *****explosion of half a dozen heavy cannon, not twenty rods distant, making the earth tremble beneath us. Notwithstanding these horrid noises, I finally **to sleep to dream of home, when jst at midnight the sudden out-burst****a storm of musketry and a whole roadside from two or three***** scattered my vision to the winds, and before my eyes were fairly****had on my coat and one boot and was snatching for the other. *****gun and cartridge box the Regt. had formed in line in less than five minutes and stood ready to receive the enemy who was supposed to be coming on the double quick. The firing continued but a few moments****then quieted down to an occasional shot from some alarmed skirmisher. The Rebels had advanced but meeting with such a reception retreated*****they appeared. *****without interruptions for three miles when the crack of a carbine in the road in front indicated the positions of the Rebel Vidette. Halting long enough to deploy a position of the Regt. as skirmishers we again advanced driving the Rebel Pickets before us until we were within a mile of their works on the north side of Etowah River opposite Rome. When in plain view of these we were saluted by the discharge of two pieces of artillery and the ugly whistle of ~~grape~~ grape shot and shell. Prudence dictated that we had gone far enough for the time, so the Regt. halted to await the arrival of the rest of the Division. The Rebels finding but a single Regt. in front felt their courage revive and while two columns started out to the right and left, another force of four Regts. jumped from their works and advanced straight in front. Meanwhile their cannon was busy throwing grape in our midst, but without harming us. The Rebels in front pressed down on our skirmishers who retired slowly disputing every inch of ground until two Regts. of the Division came up on the run, when they once more advanced and after a severe*****drove the Rebels within their works. Darkness closed the****but the time was improved by our forces in building temporary—for use the next day. The Regt. lost five wounded.*****Rebel loss was remarkably heavy as we learned from Rebel Citizens ****in Rome at the time. One who saw their wounded brought in told*****thought their loss was 200 killed and wounded. Our total loss was not over 60 and the Rebels had the largest number of men engaged.

****Found that no more fighting was necessary, the Rebels having****
During the night after burning the bridges. Part of our force moved****
possession of the city. Large quantities of provisions, cotton and
**** were found. -Their factories for the manufacture of arms and****

May 26th-Reached Dallas and bivouaced for the night.

May 27th-Heavy skirmishing occurred this morning in front of us, a number of stragglng bullets reached us. One passed through the leg of a man belonging to the brigade. At 9 a.m. moved out and took position in rear of skirmish line. At not heavy firing of musketry and cannon commenced on the right of Hookers Corps, two miles and a half to the left of our position. Our Regt. was on the extreme left of our Division. Between our left and Hooker's right, a distance of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, there was an open space in our line which for some strange reason had not been filled. About sundown Col. Van Tassell recd an order to take his Regt. and extend it across this open space thereby connecting the line. It was a hazardous undertaking by the 34th had a reputation and was selected as best fitted to accomplish it. Gen. Davis sent his guide, a citizen, to pilot us through so plunging boldly into the dense timber we moved on in the direction of the firing through deep ravines without the vestige of a road. Our progress was necessary slow, and darkness soon wrapped the forest ***almost impenetrable gloom. The firing which had continued all afternoon now ceased, and our only dependence was on the guide who professed to understand the country. We had gone nearly two miles and a half when the Col. riding ahead noticed several men armed coming towards us across a field from the enemy's side of the country. "Halt! what command do you belong to" the col. called out. Without deigning a reply the men turned and fled into the opposite timber. It was impossible to distinguish gray from blue at the distance of a few feet, but the conduct of these men excited suspicion. Several men were sent ahead to give notices in case of danger and the Regt. followed at a
*****had not proceeded*****in the direction of our lines along an almost impassable and almost unknown trail. Scarce a whisper was heard as we stumbled along over loose, rough stones in momentary expectation of receiving a volley from the gloomy depth of the surrounding timber. After travelling half a mile we reached a house where the inmates informed us that the Rebel Pickets were only a hundred yards distant, from us. This did not look much like getting away from them but still we continued on until we felt safe from the enemy, but another difficulty was before us. Would not our own Pickets, receive us with a volley of musketry, seeing an armed force approaching them from the outside. The question was a disagreeable one but we could only wait for a solution. We were ignorant of the location of our line, but dare not stop lest the Rebels in our rear if pursuing might overtake. We knew not at what moment the bullets of our friends would sweep through our ranks. We knew they had been fighting near that point all afternoon, and we knew that our Pickets stood with arms ready to fire at the moving of a bush. while the appearance of a single man in front would wake up whole *** for the line. Our chances of getting in safely looked decidedly slim. Although these thoughts passed through our minds we did not slacken our pace and after a march of almost two miles from where we encountered the Rebel pickets, we approached some fires which proved to be at some of our hospitals. We were safely within our lines. We

had stumbled accidentally on the only path that was not guarded by our pickets. Had we gone a quarter of a mile further to the right we would have attracted the fire of a whole Brigade of Infantry and two batteries of artillery. Heaven only knows what would have become of the***in that case. It*****

of a shower of shot and shell in getting to our starting point and while the men were being posted the Rebel skirmishers kept up an annoying fire. The first company that was posted had a chance to skirmish just as soon as they took their position. Further to the right, however, there were no Rebels in view and the remaining companies were stationed without much difficulty. Remained on the line all day. all quiet except slight skirmishing on the left of the Regt. Late at night orders came to relieve the Regt. and report to the Brigade. It was a difficult matter and occupied till 2 o'clock the next morning.

May 29th-Rejoined the Brigade and found it occupying works on a hill opposite Rebel works. The muzzles of the cannon could be plainly seen and we were in momentary expectation of being shelled out of our exposed position.

May 20th-Very little sleeping was done in our camp last night, the Rebels made repeated charges along our line at various points and every few moments we were called up from bed.

May 31th-Regt. was again ordered out on Picket at our former positions. During the day the Rebel Battery opened on our Brigades, with shells killing one man and wounding three. A number of shell exploded on the ground our Regt. had occupied before going on Picket. We were between the brigade and the battery a mile from the Brigade and a half from the battery. A part of the Regt. had some skirmishing and a great deal of talking with*****

June 1st*****

them back. We soon found they were determined not to let us sleep and they succeeded. About every hour the war of musketry and occasionally artillery would suddenly break out, and as suddenly subside into the irregular but continual firing of the pickets.

June 2d-3d-Remained in the same position. We were compelled to keep our heads below the breastworks, the appearance of one was sure to be followed by the whiz of a bullet. One man was killed and one wounded from our Regt. in this position. I slept with the Col. Major and Adj. in a few fortified with logs and rails. Balls whizzed by every few moments.

June 4th-I awoke this morning to find Capt. Wilson A. A. G. standing in the opening of our fortified pen, instructing the Col. to be ready to march at sunrise. We were relieved by another Brigade and at the appointed time moved off still further towards the left of our line and formed in the rear of Johnson Division as support. Day passed well enough but an night after we had lain down to sleep the Rebel sharpshooters began to annoy us by shooting with camp. They were guided by our men got up a*****

Camp near Marietta Ga.

June 30th 1864

My dear Parents.

We are still hammering away at the Rebs along the same line, without seeming to accomplish much. We are creeping slowly forward and of course they will have to skeddadle before long. You have heard of the unsuccessful charge made upon the Rebel works on the 27th. Two Brigades of our corps were engaged, the second and third. A portion of the 34th was deployed as skirmishers and helped drive the Rebel skirmishers from their line of rifle pits into the main works. Our two Brigades charged up to the main works and although unable to carry them, held the ground they had gained and constructed a line of works only twenty yards from the Rebels. They are so close now that a head dare not appear above the works on either side, and the two throw stones at each other. Our Regt. lost 6 killed and 28 wounded.

If you received the last letter I wrote in pencil you will remember we then lay in front of Kennesaw Mountain exposed to the shells from the battery on top. They favored us with a few dozen shells after I wrote but without hurting any in our Regt., although some men were hurt a short distance from us. Our batteries handled them so roughly that they could not fire while our guns fired at them, consequently they would keep out of sight till all was quiet, and we were running loose through camp away from our works, then they would run up their guns, load and sight them, and before we were aware of it, would fire a whole volley into the midst of our camps, sometimes killing or wounding some unfortunate soldier. Our batteries would then open on them vigorously for fifteen or twenty minutes, but the Rebs would lay quietly under cover until another opportunity offered for repeating the dose. On the night of the 26th we moved from that position 3 miles further to the right of our line, near our present location, and the charge took place next day. We are half a mile in rear of our advance work and the Rebel bullets "Zip" around day and night.

Yesterday morning the Rebs sent in a flag of truce proposing an armistice of six hours for the purpose of burying their dead and our lying between the two lines. It was agreed to and hostilities in our front ceased. I went out within a few steps of the Rebel works where the blue and grey coats were promiscuously mingled together, engaged in friendly conversation. The Rebel works were lined with buttermuts with their arms in their hands. Our work were the same but no armed men were allowed on the neutral ground. I had quite an interest chat with a Reb Lieutenant. While talking with him, General Cheatham and Windman came out with their staffs and met some of our Officers. A Rebel Colonel made the introduction and after bowing and scraping very politely the whole party sat down on the ground about six feet distant from where I sat on a log and talked pleasantly together for almost an hour. Cheatham looked very unlike I supposed a Rebel Major General commanding a corps would look. He wore nothing but a rough pair of grey pants tucked under the tops of an unpolished pair of boots, a blue flannel shirt and rough felt hat completed his attire. He had neither coat or vest and was without any or manner to indicate his rank. Gen Hindman

was just the reverse. He has a handsome good natured countenance, and wears an abundance of gold lace and cord. Speaking of prisoners he remarked that a great many of our soldiers had fallen into his hands, and none ever had cause to accuse him of unkindness. A prisoner, said he, ceases for the time being, to be a soldier, and should be treated as kindly as possible under the circumstance.

Our men and the Rebs were busily engaged till after two o'clock in burying the dead. When the task was completed the flags were taken down and both parties retreated to their works, and soon the sharp irregular firing along the line showed that the work of death had been resumed.

Last night three companies of our Regt. were sent to dig rifle pits in front of the Rebel works. They worked undisturbed till between 1 and 2 this morning when the Rebs stole upon them in heavy force and attempted to capture them. Our men had scarcely time to drop their tools and grasp gun and cartridge box and retreat through a shower of lead to our first line of works, losing two men wounded who were brought back to camp. The attack which began here rolled along the line to the left until our Division and another had been engaged and artillery and musketry lighted the heavens with a lurid flame, and blended their voice in one terrific roar. It continued half an hour and ended in the repulse of the Rebels. The balls flew into our camp and wounded a man of Co. N (Creshian Neiss—A ball cut through the pants of Lt. Myers, but did not injure him. Another force goes out from the Regt tonight to complete the unfinished work. Another attack will doubtless be made but our men will be prepared.

July 1st. By some mistake the Adj. locked my letter in the satchel yesterday and I was unable to get it until this afternoon. The Regt. moved out to the front line of works last night and relieved another Regt. I have not moved out yet as I have some papers to fix up. They are only a few yards distant from the Rebs and both have to lay close in their ditches. Only small cracks are left in the works large enough to stick a gun through, yet two of our Regt. were wounded since they went out by peeping through the crack to see what could be seen. The Rebs fired a volley from their work in front of our Regt. last night and for a short time the firing was quite heavy. A portion of our line was advanced last night close to the Rebels. The men rolling barrels or boxes filled with earth before them. These make quite a good protection against musket rolls.

The weather is intolerably hot. We almost roast to death in the shade. We are anxious to have a lull in the campaign, but don't want to stop this side of Atlanta. We were foolish enough to believe before we started out this campaign that we knew what it was to be a soldier, but our conclusion now is that we have heretofore been playing soldier. We once thought it a good thing to be exposed to the enemy's fire for a few hours. It is the sixtieth day of the campaign and during that time only thirteen days passed that we have not heard the whistle of Rebel balls. The remainder of the time has found us night and day in surmounting danger of being shot. Scores of men in our Brigade have been killed or wounded in their tents. We have become

accustomed, however, to the constant presence of danger and don't mind it much now unless the firing assumes the *****of a battle. Our men are hopeful, and cheerful and speak of the summer campaign as being the last. They are confident of Grant's success and, too, of our own success, it is regarded as so certain as that the sun will rise tomorrow morning. The Rebel soldiers all say they think this summer will decide the contest, but they are doubtful which way it will terminate. We get plenty of rations, the trains run clear through to our advance lines. The road has thus far been repaired as fast as we have marched. Before we left Chattanooga, the timbers for every R. R. bridge between there and Atlanta had been prepared ready for fitting together, so that when a bridge was found destroyed, the timbers were put together and a new one formed in a very short time. Every bridge on the route had its counterpart at Chattanooga.

I suppose you are very busy and don't find time for writing often, but I hope you will write as often as you have an opportunity. Letters are the cheapest and most desirable gift you can send.

Remember me to Charley.

Yours affectionately,

Lyman

Camp near Atlanta Ga.
July 24, 1864

Dear Parents:

I am very glad to tell you that I'm all right, but very sorry that I can't tell you Atlanta is ours. We are less than 3 miles from it though and our battery shoots at it occasionally. We can see it quite plain from here. ****badly fooled on the 22d by a report that McPherson reached the city and that the Rebs had again *****. We were then five miles distant and the Rebels the day previous were right in our front but on the morning of the 22nd their works were found vacated and a dispatch from HdQts. stated that the road to Atlanta was open. At noon we started for that much deserved place but unfortunately ***for our bright hopes were halted at this place by the Rebels so have to await further developments. We hold the extreme right of the army. There has been severe fighting on the left and McPherson has been killed. We are all extremely sorry on his account. He was a valuable officer and very popular with the whole army. He commanded the army of the Tennessee. We have heard nothing reliable of the result of the fighting whether successful for us or not. Capt. Costeller of Company "I" was severely wounded yesterday while visiting the skirmish line of which he had charge. A musket ball passed entirely through his body a quarter of an inch below the heart.***** He was one of the best officers in the regiment. We have had five wounded since crossing the Chattahoochee River. We are resting comparatively quiet now behind very good works. The Rebs only shoot over here occasionally. They made demonstrations yesterday as if they were going to charge us but the preparations made to receive them changed ~~their~~ their plan. Our boys were very sorry they didn't come. They stood looking over the works within the line of greybacks would emerge from the opposite timber but no such good fortune awaited them. It all ended in heavy skirmishing with our pickets in front. They attempted to make a charge on the Brigade next to us, but the skirmish line drove them back.

Two days before we moved down here our Regt. and the 98th Ohio and 23d Missouri had great sport, although it was cruel to consider it such. These three Regts. had secured a position within 150 yds. of the rebel skirmish line, and all day long poured a constant shower of balls on their works forcing them to lay in their ditches without stirring. Two cannons were brought up to the line and planted so as to enfilade them. Every discharge from the Cannon would create a stir among the Johnnies and then our men would pour in a whole volley on all that were compelled to expose themselves, whooping and yelling*****

Nearly all of our Regt stole out on the skirmish line and find fired over a hundred rounds apiece. Some of our Regt. crawled up within a few steps of the Rebels who had not the courage to raise their heads above the ditch and seldom returned a shot. Their loss must have been heavy. Our regt. had one wounded. As soon as it was dusk, the Rebs left their ditches and fell back more than a mile..our skirmish line followed them.

I'll close for the present--Next time I hope to date my letter at Atlanta.

How glad we will all be when this cruel war is over and we are safe at home.

I believe that time is not far distant.*****
over head and the skirmishers are ***** lively. If the Rebs don't keep back the will get hurt.

My love to Charley--tell him to write.

Yours affectionately

Lyman

Camp near Atlanta Ga.

Aug 23d 1864

My dear Parents and Brother.

I am very glad that I can still say of myself—alive and well. In such times as these human life don't appear to be of much account, and not a day passes but some poor soldier receives marching orders and quits his companions on earth. But the cause is worthy of the sacrifice, and the blood that now flows so freely, flows not in vain. The result though seemingly uncertain is in the hands of Him who doeth all things well. Our country will beam as bright in the light of peace and prosperity as it is now darkened by the shades of war and adversity. Truly that day seems far in the future but in God's own time it will come. Till then let us be patient, hopeful and earnest.

After various movements to different portions of the line we have at last settled down near the village of East Point where the R. R. to Macon, Ga. branches from the road to Montgomery. Of course we don't hold that point but we expect to before long, as soon as Sherman decides on it.

We are six miles from Atlanta but portions of our line are within a mile and a half. At present we are lying on one side of a hill and the Rebels on the other side—half a mile distant. Our breastworks are on the crest of the hill and our Pickets, a few yards below. The Reb pickets and ours are continually shouting at each other and the hostile "Minies" fly over the rest of the hill and over our heads to strike the side of a hill in our rear. We are comparatively safe, but a man fifteen feet high would stand a poor chance if he stood upright in our camp. Every few minutes one or more of the spiteful missiles go cracking through the tree tops, each one pitched to a different tune. We have a splendid opportunity for noticing the different notes sounded by them. Some go over with a short "whisp" as if well greased and sliding through the air, swift as thought. They are the ones that go through a man when he stands in their way. Others come like a young thrashing machine, whirling end over end. They have struck something on their course which has deranged their original motion. They are generally battered into different shapes and emit a sound that is varied according to the form and speed of the ball. The consequence is that there are just as many different sounds as there are different shaped balls. Every hour or so some new note is struck, and is generally greeted by a laugh that runs through the Regt. Very frequently spent bullets fall among us with about the same force as if thrown by hand, but sometimes a little harder. Joe Wolf of Co. F was struck by one in the stomach, and bruised him badly. He is now in hospital—seven or eight men in the Brigade have been killed or wounded since we came here. Several tents in the Regt. have been pierced with bullets. More balls fly at night than in daytime but that don't prevent us from sleeping soundly.

Our team is with us now and the wall ^{tent} leur(?) and desk has been set up. We are getting along very comfortably having got used to such a way of living. Details are made every few days for Pickets, and they go

out and fire away at the Rebs for twenty-four hours and are then relieved by another detail. This we call fighting by detail. The army is in good spirits and willing to go whenever Sherman leads. There don't appear to be much going on except that our Cavalry are busy cutting the communication of Atlanta. The Rebs are on short rations. We have had abundance ever since we started. It seems to us that we could easily take Atlanta if Sherman would but order it. He seems to be waiting for developments in other quarters.

Our non-veterans talk much about going home. They have only a few days to serve and are anxious to get through safely. Many of them have never been home since they enlisted. Our Regt. is now reduced to 225 men for duty. If we ever get into a quiet camp again we will know better how to appreciate its comforts than ever we did before.

I feel confident that another such campaign as this will never be made. The hardest work will all have been accomplished by next fall. If Grant keeps Lee from reinforcing Hood, there will be mighty little left of this Rebel Army when Sherman is through with it.

I wish I could carry this letter home and deliver it myself. I don't care much about going now but would if the Campaign was over. I'm determined to see the end of it if I can. Fred Traver was killed in the charge at Kennesaw June 27th and is buried on the battlefield. Too many brave men lie buried there.

For the present goodbye. Don't feel uneasy about me. I confidently believe I'll pass through unharmed and arrive safely at home. Won't that be joyful.

Affectionately,

Lyman

We expect to be paid next month.

Camp near Atlanta Ga.
Sept. 9th 1864

My Dear Mother:

I suppose you feel about as glad as we do of the capture of Atlanta. Besides the honor and advantage of gaining a victory it gives us rest, welcome rest from a campaign unequalled in severity. Of course you have learned the particulars of the movement which resulted in the capture of the city, from the papers.

The Rebs. believed we were retreating and were in the midst of a grand jubilee when the disagreeable news was received that we threatening their only line of communication south of Atlanta. Our corps found Hardee's Corps posted along the railroad behind works, and at once went in with a yell capturing 900 prisoners and 11 cannons. Our Brigade has credit for taking 300 prisoners and six cannons.

The Regt. lost five killed and fourteen wounded. This charge was made Sept. 1st near Jonesboro, a station on the Macon R. R. 22 miles south of Atlanta. It was made late in the afternoon and the darkness which soon followed; gave the Rebs a chance to escape with the remainder of their force leaving the railroad in our possession.

The force left in Atlanta hearing the result, destroyed their ammunition, locomotives, cars &c. Spiked their guns, 30 in number- and retreated fast enough to escape capture. The 20th corps occupied it the next morning. Our corps remained at Jonesboro for several days. Yesterday we fell back to our present position $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles south of Atlanta on the R. R. "e're just fixing up camp now and preparing to take a little rest. I haven't been to Atlanta yet but expect to go this week.

"There is no danger that Hood will trouble us any more unless he gets re-enforcements from Virginia, which is not very probable. Our non-veterans have not started home yet. Their time was out on the 7th. They have to wait until their muster out rolls are completed. They feel better satisfied to go home now since they have helped take Atlanta. Some of them were in the fight of the 1st, but fortunately none were hurt. It would seem so much worse for a man to be killed when his time is so nearly out.

I recd a letter sent long since dated July 17". This envelope was addressed to me while the letter commenced "Dear Minnie" and was not signed at all. It was your writing though, and I was just as well satisfied with it, as if it had been intended for me.

I suppose somebody up north is drafted by this time. If we get the full number of men in the field, the Rebels will soon be crushed in spite of Jeff Davis and Vollandigham.

I suppose you know that our Jeff Davis has come to be Major General and now commands our corps in place of "Pap Palmer."

Jimmy Morgan commands our division..

I haven't time to write much. I send my love to Father and Charley.

Don't fail to write soon. I'm very anxious to hear from you all. Letters from home have been few and far between.

Very affectionately,

Your son

Lyman

PS Direct to Atlanta

We expect pay soon.

Camp of the Regiment
Two miles north of East Point, Ga.

My Dear Parents.

I wrote to you day before yesterday, but as I have nothing particular to do at this present moment, I thought I might as well write again. We are still at the same place and nothing unusual has occurred since my last. There were some whispering of marching this morning, but they have died away.

There may be some movements in operations that we know nothing about, but everything seems inactive along the whole line, except that our cavalry are constantly meddling with old Hood's cracker line. Gen. Kilpatrick went clear around the city a few days ago and done some damage. I expect there will be a big smash up here some day in which somebody will get whipped, and that somebody will be old Hood.

In the Chattanooga paper yesterday I noticed a letter written by Gen. Sherman to a certain agent from Massachusetts who applied for a pass to come down and establish recruiting office for negroes to fill the quota of the State. But I'll just cut out the letter and enclose it. I don't exactly agree with the prevailing spirit of certain Republican papers that have gone crazy over the subject of Negro Soldiers, but for myself I say "them is my sentiments." It is indeed disgraceful to be a soldier when no gentleman will go to war any more. They can't associate with common soldiers, but must send agents away down into the wilderness of Georgia and the country thereabout to gather up the "lame halt and blind" negroes, that have been discarded from the Rebel Army because unable to earn their grub. Poor Sambo is gobbled into the army willing or unwilling, and when the great day of the draft comes, some loyal, patriotic, self-denying, gentleman of Massachusetts is excused from the onerous duty of fighting for his country and sits down in his comfortable parlor to expatiate on the profound wisdom of the policy that allows, recruiting in Rebel States.

He is not wearied by long marches; pinched with hunger, pained with wounds. He is a gentleman and don't have to submit to such undignified circumstances, but that don't hurt his claim to a big share in the glory. He points with pride to his "representative" in the Army and thanks Heaven that he is not like other men, disloyal and selfish. I hope Mr. Spencer from Massachusetts won't get a recruit, but I do hope they will draft him, and the men who sent him here, and make them carry knapsacks till the close of the war. If the country is worth saving why don't they help save it. The enemy threatens their homes and friends but instead of defending their homes as men should they send a man away down to Georgia to catch a few, poor old broken down negroes, who will be forced to receive the blows that might otherwise fall upon them and all they hold dear.

Verily such philanthropy will make a bright page in future history. Now glorious will be the record of Massachusetts which always rolls up such heavy majorities at elections for allowing negroes to vote and hold office.

With what pride they can contrast theirs, the most enlightened state in the union with "Egypt" the benighted portion of Illinois, where "Copperheads", "Disunionists and Nigger-haters" held sway. The devotion of Massachusetts to the cause of the Union will be measured by the number of men she furnishes to defend it. History will record that while agents from the former State are seeking for negroes in Georgia to supply her deficiency in men. Egypt had more than its proportion already in the field. That this benighted region has furnished more men in proportion than any other portion of the north. The records of the War Dept. show that Illinois has furnished the most men and also that the southern half of the State is far ahead of the northern half. I wonder how history will account for this phenomenon. I'm afraid the Bay State won't get full credit for her sacrifices.

Don't you think it would be proper for her to keep quiet and not call other folks bad names until this matter is looked into and explained; lest thoughtless persons come to believe that where they cry "down with slavery" the loudish, the less danger there is of them doing it.

Sumner and his clique are so busy trying to elevate the negro to social equality with the whites that they haven't time to attend to putting down the Rebellion. Let us do the latter first, then we shall have time to attend to the former.

I didn't sit down with the intention of torturing you with a political sarrmint but I can't help but say something about that Massachusetts humbug. Sherman's letter, however, is clear and pointed enough. I have no sympathy with "Copperheads" neither have I any sympathy with the New England fanatics who talk big and work little. I am no more in favor of negro equality now than I was three years ago. I am in favor of emancipation because Slavery stands in the way of putting down the rebellion.

I never doubted the right of the President to arm the negroes but don't admire the policy so much as the Chicago Tribune, Massachusetts ~~xxx~~ stay-at-home's &c. I think the deficiency in our army should have been filled by a draft, when volunteering failed to do it, and instead of arming the blacks with muskets, armed them with entrenching tools. It would have saved our soldiers many a hard night of digging, after fighting hard all day and besides would have saved the administration a mountain of trouble. But the experiment of employing Negro Soldiers is being tried and I am willing to wait the final result before I blame the administration.

We hear that there is danger at home of an outbreak to resist the draft. I hope it is untrue, but if there is really any danger the Government should be prepared and teach the rioters such a lesson as would not be forgotten for the next ~~ten~~ generations. Let us have no more firing of blank cartridges this time. The day is not far distant, let us see.

A report is just now circulated that the Rebs are evacuating Atlanta. The skirmishers in front of us haven't left yet, for there goes a "minie" singing over my head just as they have been for the last two weeks. I have seen John Perrine several times since we came to this camp. He is well.

Think of me often

Ever Yours

Lyman

Whitehall, Ga. Sept. 26, 1864

Dear Parents:

I had just picked up my pen to commence writing a letter to you when yours of the 17^{inst} was laid before me, and I stopped long enough to read the welcome news, before going further. You cannot imagine how glad I am to hear from you again, and to know that you are alive and well. I am so glad that Harry is with you. I did not know it before. Old Wheeler must have gobbled the letters you wrote to me. The old sinner delights in destroying the tender missives of love, affection, friendship or whatever else the missives may be freighted with. No later than this morning it was reported that the honest robber had taken charge of three trains on their downward trip, and had disposed of them in the manner which was best suited to the interests of his delightful, humane government. But what was worse than all them, had taken our mail. A hundred thousand months (more or less) gave vent to the angry feelings of as many bosoms. I day say, that if the one hundredth part of the maledictions invoked upon him should come to pass, he would be the worst afflicted mortal upon the face of the globe or under it.

It turns out, however, that the trains Wheeler burnt, wasn't burnt at all but come through safely, and the mail that he destroyed, came in tonight.

The soldiers seem unusually jubilant tonight, and are yelling themselves hoarse, in every direction. Everybod feels good over Sheridan's victories in the Shenandoah valley. The praise of "Little Phil" as we call him here, is on every tongue. We are particularly interested in his success because he belonged for almost two years to our (McCook's) old corps as commander of a division. "Little Phil", however should not have all the credit for the brilliant success attending his movements. Grant appears to have a hand in running that particular machines, and Sheridan is merely executing the well-laid plans of his superior.

Nothing unusual has taken place here lately. An armistice had been arranged between Hood and Sherman to terminate the 23^d but I hear it has been extended. The time was occupied in shipping the inhabitants of Atlanta through our lines into Hoods, and in the exchange of prisoners. Several trains loaded with sleek well-fed Rebs passed down and an equal number of pale emaciated skeltons of Federal Soldiers returned.

Atlanta has been cleared of citizens, men, women and children. It is a deserted looking place. Near the Depot all is activity, and the adjacent buildings are all occupied, either as Government store houses, or as sutler shops. The greater portion of the city consist of long rows of deserted buildings, the doors bursted open and the floors strewn with the wreck of shelves, counters &c. The most handsome as well as the largest block of buildings in the city exhibits great gaps in the wall where our shell passed through. Blackened ruins in other places show where the work of destruction by our shell was more complete. At the east end of town are seen the wreck

of more than eighty cars that wer loaded with arms and ammunition. They were set afire and the shell exploded with frightful effects. The ground in the vicinity is strewn with the fragments some of which were hurled to a great distance. Troops have been moving to the rear today for some purpose. One divisions of the 15 Corps passed our camp today going northward. Probably a raid by the Rebels, is expected. Men enough can easily be spared from this point to hold the railroad against any force the Rebs can sence to destroy it.

The weather is getting quite chilly. Yesterday was quite cool. Our coats were brought into requisition by those who possessed one and the campfires attracted a goodly number of shivering visitars.

I received a letter day before yesterday from James Ross. Emmett is at Carpers Ferry.

Now a word to Charley and Harry in answer to their interesting letters. I am glad my dear boys or rather men that you have at last got together. I know how well you must enjoy each others company. Do you ever have any delightful games of ball when work is over. Of course you do if you have a ball, and if you haven't, why don't you rip up an old stocking and make one. I would like to run home some day and say "good morning to you". There I see a smile on Harry's face, as much as to say. "You would have a long run old boy". Ah, yes, there is many a long mile between us, and the longer the rebellion lasts the greater the distance becomes. But I expect to shorten the distance before a great while. This cursed rebellion won't always stand up to defy us. We're going to bust the Confederacy before many days and go home in peace. Charley, I see you still hate Copperheads as hard as a mule can kick. Don't you know there won't be one of the reptiles left in a short time.

You remember that St. Patrick drove all the snakes and toads out of Ireland. Now Grant is going to do the same thing in our country with the copperhead reptiles that are hissing and biting at the heels of Union soldiers when they are trying to drive the robbers out of Uncle Sam's farm.

But I must close for the present. Please write as often as you find opportunity. I enclose a copy of Gen. Thomas' congratulatory order.

Yours affectionately

Lyman

Direct to the Regt.
2 Brig. 2Div 14"A. C.
Atlanta.

Chattanooga, Tenn.
Oct. 15th 1864

My Dear Mother:

Your letter and Charley's of the 2d just was received yesterday evening. Also the package you so kindly sent. Since I last wrote our Division has made a journey of 420 miles by rail and 100 miles on foot and finally we find ourselves at Chattanooga awaiting further orders. Our quiet repose at Atlanta was suddenly interrupted on the evening of Sept. 28th with orders to be ready to march early the following morning. At that time we marched to the depot and at dusk of the 29th we were loaded on board the train and started for Chattanooga. Our whole Division with its battery, and all necessary baggage were all loaded together on eight trains. We passed through Chattanooga and halted one night at Stevenson Ala. the junction of roads running to Nashville and Memphis. We first started on the Nashville road but afterwards backed onto the Memphis road and ran to Huntsville Ala. which was threatened by part of Forrest's force, who disappeared upon our arrival. We remained one night and half of the following day at Huntsville and then got aboard the train once more and ran to Athens the scene of a disgraceful surrender the week before. The fort was garrisoned by negro troops and was given up without firing scarcely a shot. The Co. Comdg. is probably the only one to blame. The 18th Mich. sent to relieve the garrison found the fort in hands of Forrest and was also captured. The day before we arrived Forrest had made another attack on Athens but was repulsed by the 73rd Ind. Upon our arrival the 34th was at once installed as Provost Guards of the town and we were soon comfortably quartered, out of the rain which had been falling for several days. Contrary to the expectation we remained only one night, starting the following morning through a heavy rain, on foot for Florence on the Tennessee R. 45 miles distant for the purpose of intercepting Forrest who was then near Columbia Tenn.

On the evening of the second day we arrived near the river just in time to be too late, as the wary Forrest had made forced marches (his force was all mounted) and succeeded in crossing the river just ahead of us. We had a little skirmishing with his rear guard and captured a few prisoners. We might have met with better success had not the elements themselves conspired to retard our march. During the two days of our march, it rained constantly mud was knee deep and streams swollen which we had to ford. Two men of the 17th N. Y. Lonans died of exhaustion, the march was so severe. It may be reckoned as one of the hardest marches the 34th ever performed. We stopped at Florence three days and marched back to Athens where we again took the cars and were run back to Chattanooga arriving yesterday morning.

Oct. 16 I was interrupted yesterday by marching orders.*****
*****and located at Fort Wood *****the camp of another
Regt. which stood*****for Ringgold. All afternoon was spent in firing
up as we expected to remain for some time but up stakes and marched to the
depot (our Brigade)*****and then moved back to camp. Mean-
time every stick of timber adjoin*****

No sooner than arms were stacked and ranks broken than the whole Regt. charged on the enemy's camp and recaptured all the lumber and more too.

We don't know when or where we will move next. There is nothing certain but uncertainty. Old Hood has managed to damage the railroad considerably. He is playing a desperate game to *****communication and force Sherman from Atlanta. We have no fear that he will accomplish anything but his own *****For several days past citizens *****and contrabands have been hard at work digging entrenchments around Chattanooga and an attack was confidently looked for. Old Hood, however, is not foolish enough to butt his brains out against the impregnable Forts that defend it. Our Division can easily hold them against Hood's entire army.

If we had our money we could indulge in a few luxuries while we are here. Our chances for being paid very soon are slim enough. All our books and papers including pay rolls are at Atlanta and cannot be obtained until communication is again opened. How long that will be we cannot tell.

Mother, you think I talk like a copperhead when I say it is a disgrace for Massachusetts to be searching the country for contrabands to fill her quota. Well if believing so makes me a copperhead, then I am one of the snakes sure and cert in. Sherman is one too and just took Atlanta to aid and comfort eh Southern Confederacy. We ought to be relieved from command and vanished from the country and the Editor of the Chicago Tribune put in his place. I think I have a right to my own opinion about the policy of the administration but I don't claim that it is not my duty to support the Government when it happens to do things contrary to my peculiar motives. I am no more in favor of slavery now than I was when the war commenced and would rather serve in the army my life time than back down a hairs breath from the object we started for.

The Ohio Regiment in our Division voted for state officers while we were on the march fro Florence. The same day they voted we marched 19 miles. We are glad that the Union candidates have been elected in Ohio, Illinois & Pennsylvania. McClelland cannot be elected. He is ruined by linking his name with that unmitigated traitor Pendleton and running upon a peace platform. I respect Mac, himself and find no fault with his letter of acceptance but I do not respect the men who made the platform and nominated him.

I received several packages of papers from Jas. Ross yesterday. Every mail brings great quantities of political papers, speeches &c, sent by the Union Club for distribution.

Charley appears to be quite a politician. He will deserve an office from Lincoln when he is reelected.

I must close for the present. Give my love to Eli, Emma and all the rest. Tell Em to write when she can.

Direct to Chattanooga.

Yours affectionately,

Lyman

Rome, Ga. Oct 31st 1864

My dear Parents:

We have been shifting about here and there so constantly of late that I seldom have an opportunity of writing.

We have been entirely cut off from all communication with the rest of mankind or womankind the greater portion of the time and of course received no letters. I believe I last wrote from Chattanooga. The Division marched from there on the 18th passing Gordon's Mills & Lafayette crossing the line into Alabama at Alpine, and forming a junction with the main column at Gayesville over 70 miles from Chattanooga or 25 miles west of Rome. Then the Army was resting after a fatiguing march from Atlanta in pursuit of Hood who wisely rejected all offers of battle and hurried south into Alabama as fast as legs could carry him. Upon reaching Gayesville, Gen. Sherman issued orders that everything in the valley should be taken from our own use except milk cows and such things as the people had in their houses. Our supply of rations was stopped and it soon became a military necessity to go foraging whether agreeable to inclination and conscience or not. It is needless to say that the order was carried out to the fullest extent and like the Shenandoah Valley the crows will have to carry rations when they fly over it. The mills in the vicinity were put into operation, the corn and wheat gathered in, and plentiful supply of meal and unbolted flour turned out daily for the use of the army. The flour was unbolted because some yankee Vandals had destroyed the bolting material. Meat flour and fresh beef were all that we received. We had not a drop of grease or a grain of salt, sugar or coffee. The flour drawn by our mess we carried to a neighboring family to have it baked into biscuit. They were so nicely done that I think you ought to have the receipt and try it next time you bake. Take equal quantities of flour, bran and shorts, mix up quickly with cold water and put into a dutch oven before it rises. When half done take them out and serve on a big chip. Be careful and not spoil them by putting in salt, soda or anything else except what I have specified.

In order to relish it more fully it will, be a good plan to eat nothing for three days previous. The commissary finally took pity on our condition and issued a large supply of soap and candles. In my opinion soap don't amount to much as an article of food but candles are mighty handy for greasing the pan for baking corn cakes.

We remained in the valley from the 22nd to the 28th when we started for home, arriving next day. Since then we have remained awaiting further orders which may come at any time. An officer has been sent to Atlanta to bring up the pay rolls and our prospect of getting pay soon is very good.

The colonel and staff received pay at Chattanooga and I have borrowed enough to see me through.

The Sergt. Major and I went into the country yesterday to visit some folks we got acquainted with five months ago when we took Rome. We were well acquainted with a family named Moore, and started first for their house. Reaching the spot we found not the house but two bare chimneys and a heap of blackened embers. Walking on to the next house we stopped and asked of their fate. Moore had a son in the Rebel Army who stole home one night and remained in the neighborhood several days. About that time a soldier of the 1st Alabama Cavalry (Federal) stationed here was shot near Moore's house. The deed was laid to Moore's son who was then supposed to be in the vicinity and the Colonel of the Regiment sent a detail to Moore's house ordered him to remove his furniture and set fire to it. Everything was consumed and Moore and his family were at once shipped south through our lines. Whether we was responsible or not for the murder I know not although many think he wasn't.

When we left Atlanta a little more than a month since Adjutant Wood was unwell and could not go with us. For three weeks we heard not a word from those we left there in charge of the camp, but all supposed that of course the Adjutant had got well and was enjoying himself. The possibility of his growing worse never crossed my mind. What was my surprise then a week ago when notice was received from a hospital in Atlanta dated Oct. 12 that Adj. H. D. Wood was dead. He had died of typhoid fever. He was like a brother to me and even had he been I could scarce regret his death the more. He was wounded at Shiloh, taken prisoner at Stone River, and escaped unharmed amid the dangers of the great campaign--only to fall by the hand of disease when all danger seemed past.

I must close now. Give my love to all and don't forget to write. There are so many of you know that it will not be a very hard matter to write more frequently. I shall expect a letter from home of you by the next mail we receive, if my last has been answered.

The weather is getting cool; the nights especially. I saw Joe Johnston at Chattanooga. An election was held last evening in the regiment resulting as follows, Lincoln, 275--McClelland 14--Non committal-17.

Yours truly,

Lyman

Atlanta, Georgia 8 Nov. 1864

Dear Parents:

I write this letter without knowing whether I will have an opportunity of mailing it. You last heard from me at Rome, I thing. We marched from there to Kingston on the R. R. between Atlanta & Chattanooga, fifty-nine miles from the former place. There we received our pay up to Sept. 1st. I have sent you 180 dollars by Col. Van Tassell.

Three days ago while we were in Kingston the Col. told me to get ready as soon as possible and go with him on the next train to Atlanta. I soon packed up and we went to the Depot but had to wait till evening for a train. We jumped aboard a car with about a dozen officers and had run but a few miles when a train ahead ran off the track and an hour was spent in getting it on.

Started up again but pretty soon a car got off the track and stopped us again. By this time it was long after dark and as there was no stove in the car it was extremely cold. We had to stamp throug the car to keep ourselves from freezing. I laid myself down on a bench and in spite of cold aching feet succeeded in getting asleep when suddenly I was awake by a tremendous thump which rolled me out of bed. It seems the lights on our rear car had gone out and the engineer of the train in rear of that, supposing that our train had moved off while we was asleep, started up and ran jam into us, but without much damage.

I got awake in time to hear an amusing conversation. We were near Alatoona. One of the soldiers stationed there came to the car and enquired how many trains had to come yet. It was too dark for him to distinguish who was in, and one of the officers concluded to pass us off as conscripts going to the front, So replying that there were only 25 trains in rear of us, he anxiously enquired if there was any fresh butter to be had there-- Another enquired if they wan't fighting every day, what sort of a place Atlanta was and if they were still fighting there. Everyone had some foolish question to ask which the soldier answered very honestly although it tickled him mightly to think how ignorant conscripts were. As the train moved, a loud burst of laughter from our car gave the soldier to understand that he had been sold, and he commenced cursing in true army style as long as he could be heard.

We ran well enough till wihthin five miles of Atlanta when some thing else staopped us and we laid nearly all night. The Colonel and some others jumped off and came to town on foot, getting in an hour in advance of the train. Since I camedown here the Colonel and Quartermaster have been mustered out and have gone home. The QM Sergt. will be Quartermaster and he says that as soon as he receives his commission he will have me appointed Q. M. Sergt. I would rather have that than any other in the Regt.

Atlanta will probably be evacuated by the time this letter reaches you everything will be shipped up to Chattanooga. This army of the Tennessee and the 14th and 20th Corps are going to strike for Salt water, Savannah or Mobile is our destination. Our Corps left Kingston day before yesterday and will be here tomorrow. The R. R. between Chattanooga and Atlanta will be abandoned. I suppose we will not hear from the north again until we reach the coast. This is election day. I wonder who will be elected. I haven't heard from any of you for many weeks.

Give my love to all. I send Charley a picture of Gen. Grant.

Yours affectionately,

Lyman

Camp of the Regiment
Infront of Savannah Ga. Dec. 16th 1864

My dear Parents:

Here we are in the swamps of Georgia snuffing the sea breeze and longing for news from home and the rest of mankind. I succeeded in bringing myself throug the confederacy alive and well. We left Atlanta one month ago today and arrived in front of Savannah about the 11th inst.

Our Regt has been in line of battle since that time four miles west of the city. The Rebs are about half a mile in front of us and keep throwing big balls and shells around very carelessly, but they don't hurt many. Our line reaches from the Savannah River about the city round to the Sound below. We have a goodly number of the varmints cooped in but I don't know whether they can get out through South Carolina or not.

Communication with the fleets of Farragus and Porter and the Army of Gen. Foster was first opened on the 13th inst by the capture of Fort McAllister with 260 prixoners and 32 guns.

Our wagons have gone after rations of which we are much in need. Most of the time we have been here we have lived on rice, having to gather it in the sheaves, thresh and hull it. The only loss in the Regt. during the campaign was one man accidently wounded.

I haven't time to write more at present but will give you more satisfaction next time the mail leaves. I'm anxious to hear from the north we've heard nothing since leaving Atlanta. My love to all the family.

Yours in haste,

Lyman

Camp of the Regiment
Near Savannah, Ga. Dec. 27'64

My dearest Parents:

If you received my first note after reaching Savannah you will remember I promised to write again by next mail. I done so but the letter I now find was mislaid and did not go off, therefore, I write again. I have just got back from the city where our corps was reviewed by Gen. Sherman. It was a splendid affair and went off excellently. "Old Billy" sat upon his horse in front of his Head Quarters on one of the principal streets while the Corps marched by with colors flying and drums beating..

Our journey of over 300 miles from Atlanta was altogether a very pleasant one. We never had so easy a campaign. To be sure we were a little hungry betimes but not often. The second day after leaving Atlanta, I had only three small turnips and three cabbage stalks, but on the fourth day I had corn bread, honey, molasses, butter, sugar, preserves, jellies, &c, &c. The land was literally flowing with molasses & honey. Every plantation had from half a dozen to a dozen barrels or hogsheads of the finest syrup. We drew nothing from our trains but coffee during the entire trip. Everything else we provided ourselves, and generally in such abundance that an army might have feasted on what we left in camp as we marched out each morning. I never lived so well since I came into service. But since reaching Savannah we have lived very poorly--getting not much over quarter rations. Although Beauregard called upon the people to harass our army in front flank & rear during the march and give us no rest night or day, we pursued our way almost unmolested. Wheeler's Cavalry endeavored to delay us as much as possible but the gallant little Kilpatrick with his Division, never failed to thrash Wheeler as often as he encountered him, and thus cleaned the way for our Infantry columns to take their own gait. As for struggling bands of cavalry harassing our flank, a few trials convince them of its uselessness. Every Regt had its organized band of mounted foragers scouring the country right and left, always ready for a fight with any hostile party they might encounter. Not a day passed without a little brush but it did not delay the main columns an instant. As we approached Sanderville, the foragers of our Brigade ran upon some of Wheeler's men, but our foragers charged with a yell and took to the town with a loss of one killed and one wounded. One dead Rebel lay on the streets and one wounded in a house. One day that I went out foraging I came near getting into a scrape. A squad of about fifty of us had got ahead of our advance guard about five miles. As we approached a belt of timber, half a dozen men mounted on mules galloped in and in a few minutes we heard the crack of muskets and back came a part of them, some without hats, others without their mules. They had bolted right in upon a Regt. of Rebel cavalry. We stopped at the edge of the timber and made preparations for defence if they should come out on us. Other foragers coming up swelled our squad to a considerable force and we advanced cautiously forward through the timber and across a swamp and found the Rebs gone, but in the swamp lay one of our poor fellows weltering in his blood--dead. In the road lay a second and further beyond in a house lay a third, all having been murdered in cold blood after being captured. We burned all the buildings in the vicinity.

We burned the ties and twisted the rails of more than two hundred miles of railroad, destroyed millions of dollars worth of cotton and corn, and carried on a wholesale slaughter of hogs and chickens.

After we established our line around Savannah we had to endure a constant shelling from the enemy's heavy guns. We took positions on the line on the 11th and on the night of the 20th the Rebels evacuated and we entered the following morning. We found their cannon standing in their places at the embrasures in the same positions they had been fired last. They were spiked but in so imperfect a manner that a few hours labor put them all in good order. Everything else was uninjured. They had evidently left in a very great hurry, taking only what they could carry with them, and only two light batteries. All the remainder of their stores and guns fell into our possession. The number of cannon is estimated to number from 150 to 200. A great many of the Rebs didn't evacuate and many others who did, are returning daily.

The principal Savannah paper contained an address to the people of Savannah the morning after the Rebel Army evacuated. It strikes one as being remarkably mild for a fire eater. The Editor advised the citizen to submit peaceably and trust to the generosity of a magnanimous foe. Some of our people he says have a mistaken notion that Gen. Sherman will drive them from their homes as he done from Atlanta. Sherman could not feed the citizens and his army and therefore could not do otherwise.

I talked with citizens in the city today and they say the Wheeler's Cavalry are a band of thieves and robbers. That they done more damage when leaving the city than our army when it entered. They broke open stores and carries away watches, jewelry and whatever was worth taking. They would have burned the city had it not been for the efforts of the citizens.

We expect to start on another campaign in a few days. All in good spirits and anxious for it.

I have not heard a word from you yet nor from the money I sent you. Please write as soon as you can.

Given my love to all.

Yours Affectionately,

Lyman

Direct to
Savannah, Ga.