

CIVIL WAR LETTERS OF WILLIAM CHARLES

From the originals in the possession of:

Jack Finch

286 Galen Hill Road

Freedom, New York 14065

(great-grandson of William Charles)

Transcribed by:

Mark H. Dunkelman
62 Sheldon St.
Providence, RI 02906

Introduction

William Charles was born April 14, 1831 in Aberystwyth, a town on Cardigan Bay in Wales. (Accounts variously give his birthdate as April 15, 1834; April 18, 1834; or April 19, 1831. The date given was found in his own hand.) He was one of eleven children of David and Ann (Morgan) Charles. The family emigrated to the United States in 1842. (One of the children, a girl, died during the passage and was buried at sea, according to a family account.) The Charleses lived in Newport and Bridgeport, New York before moving west to Cattaraugus County in 1855 and settling in the town of Freedom.

On June 24, 1858 William Charles married Ann, daughter of Thomas and Frances (James) Evans. The couple had two children: Thomas David (born July 10, 1859) and Frances Ann (February 22, 1862)--the "Tommy & Sissy" mentioned so often in these letters. When Charles enlisted, his family evidently was living with his in-laws, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Evans, referred to frequently in his letters as "Dacke and Mange" (as best as can be made out--they are apparently Welsh terms). The family worked a farm near the village of Sandusky in the town of Freedom. The Charles and Evans clans were part of a sizeable Welsh community in Freedom dating from the early 1840s.

On August 26, 1862, William Charles enlisted at age 31 in the town of Freedom. He was enrolled by Thomas Donnelly, soon to be captain of Co. F of the newly-forming 154th Regiment, New York State Volunteer Infantry.

That very day, William Charles himself enrolled at least seven members of the Freedom Welsh community in the new regiment. They were: William M. Davis (age 30); Lewis L. Jones (age 20); Thomas T. Jones (age 44--referred to by Charles as "Uncle Tom"); William E. Jones (age 24); Benjamin D. Morgan (age 22); David J. Williams (age 41); and William Williams (age 25). It seems likely that William P. James (age 32), who also enlisted that day in Freedom, was enrolled by Charles; and that Richard Lewis (age 27) and Samuel R. Williams (age 21 and brother to William Williams), who both enlisted on August 30 in Freedom, were likewise enrolled by Charles.

This group of men is frequently referred to by Charles in his letters both individually and collectively (as "the Welsh boys" or "the Freedom boys").

(Charles completed his recruiting effort by enrolling Benjamin Dillingham in Machias on September 2. Dillingham, however, is not mentioned in his letters.)

The Freedom boys were unable to join their townsmen when the 154th was formed. All sixteen of Freedom's other enlistees were enrolled by Harrison Cheney of that town, and formed a part of his Co. D. (Cheney enrolled every single man in the company.) Cheney is often mentioned in the Charles letters, as are other Freedom friends like Ambrose

Arnold and Dwight W. Day. Charles and his band of recruits were assigned to Co. F, otherwise composed of men from Chautauqua County.

William Charles and the other Welsh boys were mustered in as privates in Co. F of the 154th New York on September 25, 1862. Thereafter, they served in the regiment with varying degrees of fortune, described to a good extent by Charles in his letters.

William M. Davis was promoted corporal prior to April 10, 1863; was reported wounded at the Battle of Chancellorsville, May 2, 1863; returned to the ranks prior to October 31, 1864; and mustered out with Co. F and the 154th on June 11, 1865 near Bladensburg, Md.

William P. James also mustered out with Co. F in 1865.

Lewis L. Jones was captured at Chancellorsville; paroled May 14, 1863 at City Point, Va.; wounded in the right wrist and badly in the hip on May 8, 1864 at the Battle of Rocky Face Ridge, Ga.; and died on June 2, 1864 in a hospital in Nashville, Tenn.

Thomas T. Jones was captured at Chancellorsville; paroled at City Point on May 16; and was absent since April 8, 1865 when he was sick and hospitalized.

William E. Jones was promoted corporal prior to April 10, 1863; captured on July 1, 1863 at the Battle of Gettysburg; paroled at an unknown date; and mustered out with his company.

Richard Lewis was captured at Chancellorsville; paroled May 14 at City Point; and mustered out May 15, 1865 at Elmira, N.Y.

Benjamin D. Morgan was captured at Chancellorsville; paroled at City Point on May 16; and deserted on September 28, 1863 while en route to the regiment from parole camp.

David J. Williams was wounded in the shoulder at Chancellorsville; and was mustered out with Co. F at the war's end.

Samuel R. Williams was captured at Gettysburg; paroled at an unknown date; and died on February 21, 1864 at home in Freedom.

William Williams was absent sick in the hospital at Brooks Station, Va. since April 13, 1863 and never rejoined Co. F.

As for William Charles, his letters tell his story in detail. At various times during his service with the 154th, he was regimental armorer, ordnance sergeant, and in charge of the regiment's baggage. He was promoted to sergeant on September 8, 1863 (according to his letter of the following day--although the New York Adjutant General's roster says he was promoted prior to December 28, 1862). During nearly three years of duty, Charles later declared, "Was not in Hospital of on furlough, or otherwise detained from duty." Sergeant William Charles was mustered out with Co. F on June 11, 1865 near Bladensburg, Md.

William and Ann Charles had two more children after the Civil War: William Carry (born May 5, 1866) and Milton J. (February 17, 1869). Ann Evans Charles died March 14, 1869, about a month after giving birth to their fourth child.

On February 1, 1871 Charles married Martha Ellen James, who was born in Wales on September 23, 1835, daughter of Stephen and Mary (Francis) James. (Martha's brother, David James, was killed during the war as a member of the 64th New York.) Two daughters were born to the couple: Cora Ellen ("Nellie", later Mrs. John Edmunds) and Maryette ("Nettie"). In 1889 the Charles family moved to Farmersville Station. By occupation William Charles was a farmer, but he also taught several terms in the district school. He was also justice of the peace, Good Templar and a deacon of the Freedom Ebenezer (Welsh Baptist) Church.

William Charles died on December 19, 1896. An obituary described him as "a most devoted Christian man and one prominent in every good work in and about Farmersville Station." He was buried at Freedom. His widow Martha James Charles lived on their well-kept farm at Farmersville Station and died on April 18, 1917.

Mark H. Dunkelman

Providence, Rhode Island

(Sources: 150 Years of Freedom 1811-1961; biographical sketch in Presidents, Soldiers, Statesmen, 1899, Vol. II, p. 1517; obituary, notes, and copy of "Individual Record of Officers and Enlisted Men" compiled by the New York State Bureau of Military Statistics, courtesy of the late Charles J. Edmunds of Farmersville Station, grandson of William Charles.)

Jones, Thomas T. (Private, Co. F): 2/22/63?; 5/8/63; 5/12/63;
5/17/63; 3/21/65; 6/3/65.

Jones, William E. (Corporal, Co. F): 11/6/62; 2/25/63; 4/5/63;
4/18/63; 4/23/63; 5/8/63; 5/12/63; 5/14/63; 6/3/63; 6/7/63; 7/10/63;
6/19/63 approx.; 7/3/63; 7/12/63; 7/16/63; 12/28/64; 1/27/65;
3/3/65; 3/5/65; 3/11/65; 3/?/65; 3/14/65; 3/16/65; 3/21/65; 3/26/65;
4/1/65; 6/3/65.

Lewis, Richard (Private, Co. F): 3/23/63; 5/8/63; 5/12/63; 5/17/63;
7/?/63; 9/5/63; 9/8/63; 9/13/63; 9/17/63; 9/18/63; 10/26/63;
10/29/63; 10/31/63; 11/30/63; 12/30/63; 1/7/64.

Loomis, Henry C. (Lieutenant Colonel): 9/13/63; 12/30/63; 1/15/64.

Lowing, Henry D. (Chaplain): 8/16/63.

Matteson, C. Harry (Hospital Steward): 3/21/64; 4/1/64.

Mearns, John (Private, Co. D): 6/6/63.

Mitchell, John (First Lieutenant, Co. D): 3/21/64; 4/1/64.

Moore, Sidney (Private, Co. D): 5/16/64; 5/23/64; 5/26/64.

Morgan, Benjamin D. (Private, Co. F): 11/15/62; 3/23/63; 4/18/63;
5/8/63; 5/12/63; 5/17/63; 9/5/63; 10/26/63; 10/29/63; 10/31/63;
11/30/63; 12/30/63; 1/7/64.

Pemberton, William W. (Commissary Sergent): 9/13/63.

Phillips, Delos (Private, Co. D): 5/23/64.

Phillips, George W. (Private, Co. I): 6/2/64.

Porter, Edward (Captain, formerly Quartermaster): 11/27/62; 12/27/62;
1/27/63.

Rice, Addison G. (Colonel): 3/2/63; 3/9/63.

Van Aernam, Henry (Surgeon): 7/3/63; 8/2/63; 9/5/63; 9/13/63;
9/17/63; 10/25/64.

Warner, Lewis D. (Lieutenant Colonel): 9/5/63; 9/13/63; 9/17/63.

Washburn, Isiah S. (Private, Co. C): 12/30/63.

Williams, David J. (Private, Co. F): 11/15/62; 12/27/62; 1/?/63;
2/25/63; 3/3/63; 4/24/63; 5/8/63; 5/14/63; 6/3/63; 6/7/63; 9/13/63;
11/8/63; 11/20/63; 11/30/63; 12/7/63; 12/17/63; 12/30/63; 1/1/64;
1/7/64; 1/11/64; 1/15/64; 1/18/64; 1/30/64; 3/21/64; 4/?/64; 4/24/64;
12/24/64; 6/3/65; 6/?/65.

Williams, Samuel R. (Private, Co. F): 5/8/63; 5/14/63; 7/3/63;
7/16/63; 12/25/63?; 1/1/64; 4/?/64.

Williams, William (Private, Co. F): 11/15/62; 11/27/62; 3/23/63;
5/14/63; 7/3/63.

Index--Soldiers of other regiments.

Evan, Billy (?): 10/8/62

Hooper, John (5th New York Cavalry): 10/3/62; 10/8/62; 11/12/62;
8/2/63.

Humphries, Ben (85th New York?): 10/3/63.

Hyde, Heman (64th New York): 12/27/62; 12/24/63.

James, David (64th New York): 12/24/63.

Jones, David P. (?): 12/27/62.

Jones, John B. (5th New York Cavalry): 10/3/62; 10/8/62; 11/12/62;
8/2/63.

Lewis, Alfred H. (64th New York): 11/15/62; 1/?/63; 2/25/63; 7/3/63;
7/26/63; 7/?/63; 12/24/63; 3/3/65.

Owens, David (?): 2/25/63.

Williams, Isaac ("Ike") (136th New York): 11/15/62; 3/31/63; 5/14/63;
7/3/63; 10/29/63.

Williams, John (?): 10/29/63.

(On printed stationery with engraving of the United States Capitol, with the heading, "Headquarters 154th Reg't N. York Vols., Col. A.G. Rice, Company" F)

Camp Seward near Washington Oct 3d 1862

Dear Friends at Home

I can not write you but a few words but those few words maybe you will be glad to get We got to Washington yesterday morning. They kept us there untill most night then We march up to this place Last night I slept on the ground & the night on the top of a R Road car I have cached no cold yet and I feel about as well to day as I ever did but last the Bellyache troubled me a little. Please give my best respects and kind wishes to Mr. Harris & wife, and tell them that I had an hours talk with Ben. Humphries Mrs. Harris Brother this morning He does not look well, for he has been quite sick He is very sorry that he ever joined the army. I have no particular news to send. The _____ dry and O, O, how dusty the roads are they will be worse when it rains

I hope little Tommy will not forget his father for I think there never was a father that loved his child as I do him-- It is only the Almighty Himself that knows how hard it was for me to part with him. O my God be Thou his protector

History of our journey from Jamestown to Washington

We started from Jamestown about about 5 o'clock, the people there treated us to Peaches, apples Bread & cheese and lots of other things, before we started. at every stopping place We were loudly cheered We got to Elmira about 6 o'clock the next morning and was march out into a field for a while, it was while there that the Belts and Cartrige Boxes were given us. on the way back to the cars a splendid new musket Rifle was given to every man. From Jamestown to Elmira, We came in good cars and had plenty of room, but from there to Baltimore, we came in Freight Cars with nothing but boards around for seats. some of the boys thought that was rather hard for we could not lay down at all We did not get to baltimore untill 10 o'clock next day--- When we were marching through Baltimore I could not help thinking about those men that was murdered and hacked about the street untill their head was off their bodies---We have suffered some for the want of food but we have nothing to complain of a negro woman gave me some rice and molasses to day and I can assure you that I was very thankful for it. But our food will come up from the city to night then we shall have enough

Mr. J. Jones & J. Hooper came to see us this afternoon & O how glad we were to see them, and they were very happy indeed to see us--- They were both well--J Hooper is quite fatt and healthy J. Jones's health is improving there camp is only a little ways from ours

(on stationery with engraving of the United States Capitol and printed heading, "Headquarters 154th Reg't N. York Vols., Col. A. G. Rice, Company" F)

Oct 8 1862

Dear Friends at Home--

I have written one letter to you since We have been in this camp. To day I have no news to send to you, only that I am very thankful that I am well & growing stronger every day The boys are all pretty well but some of them are troubled with the bowel complaint

Mr John Jones & John Hooper were with us most all day yesterday & we had a glorious time of it. The health of John Jones is improving John Hooper has not been sick a day since he left home and I have never seen a more healthy looking man----

We have also seen Billy Evans. He looks well but he has seen some hard times he has been in a number of Battles. once his Regiment was completely surrounded by the Rebbels, and had to cut their way out through twice or three times their number it is a wonder that the boy has not been killed----

We are in full view of Washington City and not very far from the long bridge that crosses the Potomac on the Road that leads from Washington to Fairfax Court House, Centerville Bull Run &c. We are some 6 or 8 miles this side of Fairfax

Wm H Seward paid us a visit to day. Day before yesterday there was a Grand Review of 4 Regiments and some Artillery at wich Gen. Casey commanded You remember Casey is the one that lost so many of his men by his criminal carelessness, at the Battle of Seven Pines, or "Fair Oaks" I should think that he was to old altogether to take charge of any thing on a Battle field----

Mr. Seward is a very old looking man. This is the most baren looking country that I ever saw. War has made sad work with it. But they do not cultivate their land here as we do there

Please kiss the children many times for me and give my love to all enquiring friends

I will write to you in a few days you write offten

Most Truly

Wm Charles

Mr. John Parry--

Dear Friend Will you have the kindness to hand this to some of our folks and oblige yours &c

W. Charles

Mrs Ann Charles

Head Quarters 154 Regt
Fairfax C.H. Vir. Oct 30, 1862

Dear Ann

The first thing I must tell you this beautiful morning is that which you would enquire if you could see me. How am I? not so weak as when I left you but not so strong as I might be for the dysentery hangs about me yet. Still I feel well & comfortable, and very thankful that it is as well with me as it is

Lewis Jones is much better almost well and out of the Hospital. The rest of the Boys are well. We are moving camp to day & yesterday only a little way about a mile or so the other side of the village. I have no news to send you. you get more than I do.

Oct 30 1862 I send this in father _____ I have no time to write more to day- I thank Tommy very much for his letter & stamps &c. I shall not forget Joel's kindness in coming to see you you need not send me any papers, for I get one every day all most. Tell Marggery that I have socks enough for this winter

Yours in haste

Wm Charles

you may send us a little Butter if you like Still I can do with out just as well as with it for I have Sugar & mollasses whenever I wish and fresh meat most every day How are the horses-are they well. How is T____ and the Rest of the Animals Tell Dacky that he must hire somebody if he can it seems to me that A Cl____ was there long enough to thrash all you had--

I did not think that I could write a word to day but now and then I get a few minutes so I scrach down a few words my love all you ought to have sent your likeness too. I shall be very glad when I get it I meant to have taken them with me but I forgot it that morning I left you--

Tell Marrggy not to worry on my account for I am very comfortable I am very sorry that she suffers so much with the Teethache. I want you to live as comfortable as you can

Please give my love to Harris & family I will try to write him a letter some day. I am very thankful that you are so well

Yours most Truly

Wm Charles--

Near Thouroughfare Gap Vir Nov. 6 1862

Dear Wife

It is now nine o clock & marching orders has just come into Camp so I thought it best to send you a word or two to let you know the fact We are all well and the boys feels first rate I got the \$1.00 from Dacky I am very thankful to him for it I hope I shall be able to pay it back to him some day We ought to have been paid before now but we have not Received any yet I Received 4 postage stamp from Susan and I was very glad to get for it is most impossible to get them here please send me a few more unless you do I shall have to send my letters home unpaid and may be that would be as good a way as any for I know that many of my letters get lost Please remember me very kindly to my old friends there now--Tell Tommy to be a good boy and keep the card I send him until Datt comes home and tell Sissy the same When I get home we shall go and see Uncle Joel

Can you tell me where David Owen is now. I am very sorry to be oblige to say that some of our boys act very shamefull

The Village of Hay market is burned down it was but a small vil- lage Several Hogs and some sheep were brought in to night Billy Jones made out to get some Apples and honey when out on picket. Some of the boys steal and Dystroy every thing they come to, which I think is very wicked and enough to make Rebels of any one I have written a letter to father did get it--My love to all & lots of kisses for the children

Do not send me more than 3 or 4 stamps at a time you will hear from me often as soon as possible So rest easy with them

Yours in great Haste most Truly

W Charles

Near Warenton Vir
Nov. 8 1862

I did expect to get a chance to this letter to you be fore leaving the other place but did not

We came here yesterday and it snowed all day but it was not very cold it is clear and pleasant to day the boys brought in lots of turkeys Sheep chickens & Honey last night so we shall not go hungry for a few days.

(Letterhead has a color lithograph, including "West front of the Capitol")

Head Quarters 154 Regt N.Y. Vol
Thoroughfare Gap Vir. Nov. 12 1862=

Dear Wife

It is some days since I have written to you Simply because I have had no time to do so, for we have been moving about from one place to an other so that every thing was topsy turvy all the time

This morning I got a letter from you with the good news that you were all well that is the best news that can come to me I am very thankful for that Picture you sent me. it did me good to look at it

I am very glad that the Butter turned out so well and that Dacky had good luck in taking it a way-- So you are fattening the old Brindle cow-- We have plenty of fresh Beef-- I have eaten more Beef Steak since I have been in the army-- we have it three times a day very of often then ever before. the boys are growing fat myself with the rest--

I am very thankful that I am able to say to you that I never felt better in my life of course I would like it better is I was nearer home so that I could come and see you once in a while. but keep up good courage for the time may not be far off when when we can be together aggain--

We have seen no fighting yet but there has been some not very far from us---- We do not think but very little of the Rebels, and feel just as safe as if we were there but there are those around us that would be glad to take the life of every one of us if they dare do it. Mr John Jones paid us a visit yesterday he looks much better than when we saw him before he has not seen John Hooper for several weeks he is in camp near Alexandria or at least he thinks that he is--

Our Boys went out on Picket yesterday and of course captured some very fine sheep--and had a fine old time Roasting them. I have not a word of war news to send to you for I have not seen a paper for more than a week We have heard that Seymour is elected Governor of New York. And of course We Republicans feel mighty sorry over it. Still it maybe all the best.-- at least let us hope so.--

We have had splendid weather so far but one rain storm since we left home it is as warm here now as it is there in September I have not received any pay yet--or any one else in this Regt.

When I get to where they take likenesses I will send you mine I have not received that Picture of Tommys I have written to Joel not to send me any thing untill I should write to him again and I hope that that he will not do it. if he has sent it most likely I shall never get it, and that is to bad-- I am very glad that Tommy enjoys his new Boots & comforter-- I am also very thankful that he and Frances Ann are good children-- and that they send kisses to their father and may God give their father virtue and Wisdom so that he may prove himself worthy of them. I miss their company very much, but then I comfort myself some what when I think that that I am doing what is my duty to them and myself and my country.-- do all you can for them, and trust God for the rest----

Please remember me most kindly to Dacky & Mangy-- I know it is hard for them to get along without me there. I trust the time will come when I can help them again tell them to be of good courage and live as comfortable as they can----

(continued)

(November 12, 1862 continued)

I shall try to finish this letter tomorrow you must excuse me for my bad writing for I have to do it in such a hurry. It is most dark, & it is my turn to cook supper

Nov. 13th 1862

I have nothing new this morning it rains a little but it is quite warm--

The war goes on very slowly- that is it will never come to a close at this rate I think that both sides are tired of as they ought to be-- If this side can not whip the South why they ought to settle with them some other way--and that soon. The old soldiers are very much dissatisfied with the way that the war is carried on.

Please remember me to all my friends there, & to father & mother & Susan & John & Jane and Old Mr Rees & Wife _____ Robers & family D. Edwards & family &c.

Give my very warmest love to Mr. Harris & family I did commence a letter to him but some how or other it was lost. I will write to him as soon as time will permit tell him to write to me----

Invite those little girls of H. Roberts to write to me again they can put it in your letter I would like to hear from them----

Well good by-- Write as often as you can

To Yours most Truly----

Wm Charles O.S.

154 Reg't

Head Quarters 154 Regt N.Y. Vols
Thoroughfare Gap Va. Nov. 15 1862

Dear Ann,

All the spare time I have I spend in writing to you or somebody else but really I have no time to write half as much as I should like to, for I have written to no one except you and mine own folks. The day we started from Fairfax it was somewhat cold & snowing but since then it has been warm & pleasant, have not had but very few cloudy days since we left home I am not able to give you any kind of an idea how bad the roads are here, and it is a great wonder to me how the mules draw such heavy loads over them

Our camp is now right at the mouth of the Gap, which is a very narrow gulf through the Bull Run Mountains that part of them called Pound Mountain in the maps--The R. Road & a Wagon Road runs up through it. Some say that Jackson will try to come through it. If he tries he will certainly do it, for he will get some of our Generals to help him But I think that will not try to come this way

I have a Particle of news to send for I have not seen a News paper now for two weeks.---

The Welsh boys are all well & growing fat. B.M. is much more fleshy than when he enlisted and D. Williams looks almost like an other man and so does Wm. Davis--Will. Williams has not forgotten how to scoolka he was very home sick when we did not get plenty to eat, But as long as he can get his belly full he cares very little for any thing else--

Isaac his Brother was with us a little while yesterday There was two Boys from the 64th here yesterday too, but I was not lucky enough to see them.- I would if Alfred Lewis would come to see us. maybe he will some day

How is Jane & Johny--Give my best respects to them. I was very sorry to hear that Uncle _____ O _____ had such a sore arm do they intend to remain an other year in Sardinia I was very glad to learn that the town of Freedom gave such a large majority for Wadsworth. I think that it is a great shame that he was not elected The Rebels will now say that the north has owned itself to be in the wrong & are willing to settle up on any terms & of course if the proslavery Democrats gets into Power they will give the Rebels everything that they wish I think it is worse than useless to fight as long as the Rebels have so many friends at the north. We can never subdue the Rebels by fighting if we do not do very different from what we have done. We are much farther from subduing them now then a year ago (by all odds.) Please Remember me to all

Give my love to Dacky & Marrggy by all means & tell Tommy that Dattie is making a little ring for him & maybe one for Frances Ann too. If he was here O what Big lump of sugar I would give him I will write to D. Howlet as soon as I get time tell him to write to me and give him & wife my very best respects & good wishes--and all others that enquire for me I did intend to write to Mr. Harris this week but time failed me. I wish that he would write to me. tell him to write a few lines in your letter if nothing more--Also tell him that I do not forget him & trust that he does not forget me--

I have not heard from Joel since he was there. the reason is that he expects to hear from me--

(continued)

(November 15, 1862 continued)

You must not send any thing untill we let you know when-- --
In fact we do not need any thing at present but by & by you may
send us some good things We have not been paid yet neither do we see
any signs of it.

Much love to you all
In haste Truly Ever

Wm Charles

I did send some envelopes to you Directed to me so that you could
put your letter in them & save you directing it. Did you get them
I also sent you a letter Written by a Rebel Did you get that--Let them
see it down to the village I might send home many more but I thought
it was not worth while

The Boys are not allowed to steal any more for they made such
infernal Hogs of themselves All the Houses hereabouts are now Guarded
by Union Troops--

Do the Best you can With all things

Yours most Truly

Wm Charles

Tell Mrs. D. Williams that David never looked better in his life

22 Nov. 1862

Dear Wife

I have nothing new to send to day only it is very wet and Some what muddy

I have not heard from Joel since _____ has been there

I send Tomy 2 little Rings he can give one to Kitty Lewis or he may keep it for his little Sister I will make more if I can get the wood I made one for you but some thing fell on it & broke it but I send it to you neverthe less--

will make you a Ring from a piece of Bone some day----
you must excuse this letter I will write a better one in a few days--

All of the Welsh Boys Send their best Respects to you all

very many of Capt Cheney men are sick but none of them have been on picket or any where els Cheney himself is in the hospital

Truly

Head Quarters 154 Regt. N.Y.S.V.
Second Division 11th Army Corps
Nov. 27th 1862 Germantown Va---

Dear Wife

Although I do not owe you a letter still having a little time I will myself the pleasure this Thanksgiving morning to write a lines to you so that you may know that I well.---I try to be very 'that' thankful for it but I know that I am not thankfull enough no not half for if I loose my health here I loose all

I have no news to send you. it is very pleasant or is going to be for it is not yet daylight. it has been very cold for a few days and it frose very hard last night Yesterday I turned over to the Government 150 Guns that had been turned into me by those who were unable to take care of them So you see that our Regt is Dwindling away pretty fast.-- The Welsh boys are all Well except Will. Will. & some of the boys say that he only pretends to be sick so as to save himself from duty, but he cannot play that game long, because his very pretentions of being sick will make him so-- His Brother takes no care of him at all, and I do not know what the boy would do if it was not for those that are better than a Brother to him----

Late in the affternoon of Thanksgiving day 1862 The has been a very pleasant one.--- Mr. J. B. Jones was with us most of the day and of course we were all very happy to see him. What kind of a Dinner do you think we had. well I tell you it was pretty good one considering all things, and if you could see us eat, you would think it was a very good thing. We had a nice piece of Beef Boiled and Beef Soop with flour in it boiled Potatoes Soft Bread and a cabbage head cut in vinegar I would not eat with the Quartermaster because I wanted to eat with the boys-- Although he had Oysters and other good things I shall have some Oysters for supper--

You know that we have been twice over the Battle field of Bull Run. in going over the first time we caught a young quail or a Partridge I sent a couple of its feathers to you for a curiosity I am afraid that you did not get that letter

Did you get a letter with a couple of cards in it and did you get one with a Rebel letter in it. That letter of Brother Harris has not come yet. I believe many of the letters get lost

I suppose that you have been to church to day you know how much I would like to be with you. O you cannot tell how lonesome it is and how sad it makes one feel with out having any meeting at all.

When I think of these things it is then that I am a little Home-sick----

How is Tommy & Frances Ann they were not very well when you wrote last. are they getting better I am very glad that you have got a new dress get all you want for yourself & the children. When Uncle Sam pays me I will send you some money I want all of you to get enough to make comfortable and warm.-- I suppose that you have plenty of snow We have not seen any snow only once. I must stop for some body wants something

Nov. 28th 1862

(continued)

(November 28, 1862 continued)

I have just got up. it is not quite daylight We have a good place to sleep now and for the last to nights I have taken my clothes off for the first time since we left Jamestown It was a good thing that I brought my own vest and Pantaloons with me. my vest has done me good service

I wish that Dacky could see the pipe that I made from the same kind of Root that those little Rings were. it smokes as good as any pipe I ever saw. and by the by you must know that I smoke once a day - just as I did there, just before going to bed. But I never smoke without thinking of those in Freedom. I will keep that pipe untill I come home if I do not have an opportunity to send it home before. Three times I have been interupted since I sat down this morning so I must send this letter as it is with out writing any more. My health is very good I do not allow my self to be idle for one minnit and that keeps me in good spirits & Please give my love to all----

Yours most Truly----

Wm Charles

I will write again as soon as I have time

Headquarters 154 N.Y. Vols
Camp Near Falmouth Dec. 27 1862

Dear Ann,

Last Wednesday I got a letter from you, and it made feel very happy to learn that you were all well-- I have sent you two or more letters from this place-- When we came to this camp, we did not expect to stay but a day or two--but here we are yet, and the boys have not fixed their Tents very well and some of them begining to suffer some from Sleeping on the ground. The Rheumatism or some thing else has taken hold of my left arm & made it quite lame I had some difficulty in putting on my coat this morning you know that I have had some pain in my left elbow for some time I believe that I have told you in an other letter some thing about this place--

I do not believe that we can ever drive the Rebels from here as long as they wish to remain In my way of thinking it will be a very foolish and cruel undertaking to attempt the thing in the way it was done before--Burnside is not popular with the Soldiers they do not like him They have but very little confidence in him. The fact is the Army is getting very much discouraged--And the way that Our Rulers have and are acting is enough to dishearten any army in this world---- you see that the pro Slavery men of the North Blame Lincoln for not putting down this Rebellion and yet they are doing all in their power to prevent his putting it down. I have sent a letter to Mr. Harris & to M.S. Roberts--I have also written to John & Joel--I have not heard a word from Joel since he was there I do not know what he did with that little likeness

Dr. Day left us yesterday for Home I gave him a likeness of mine for you & Pipe for Dacky that I made from the Root of a Laurel Bush that Grew on Bull Run Mountain near Thoroughfare Gap--It was made while at the Gap--and I have smoked with it many times--

Christmas day was very pleasant with us in the morning I spoke to the Boys (that is the Welsh Boys), To know if we could not have a dinner all to gether for once. they all said we could, so I went and Bought a Peck of very good Potatoes and the Quartermaster let me have plenty of Beef steak & Pork and Sugar coffee &c &c--So we went off a little ways from camp into a pine grove by a little Stream of water there we cooked our Christmas dinner D Williams W.P. James & myself cooked the meat while the rest of the Boys looked after the Potatoes & coffee &c. Every thing being done we sat down on the grass and eat untill we were all satisfied and all said it was the Best dinner they had since we came from home. H. Hyde was with us While eating we talked about many things some said that they could not wish for any thing that would please them so well as to wish that we might all live and go Home by next Christmas and to eat our Christmas dinner with our friends at Home many other wishes were expressed some very good indeed After we were all through eating and drinking our coffee one of our number Returned thanks to Our Heavenly Father--for his protecting care over us since we left our homes----So taking it all in all we enjoyed ourselves very much indeed So much so that we shall never forget our Christmas Dinner on the Banks of the Rappahanock----in the year 1862

I have but little hopes at preasant that we shall go into Winter quarters it will be very bad for us if we do not for we have no Tents

(continued)

(December 27, 1862 continued)

fit for winter use I will finish this tomorrow/ I have no news at all to day/ you may tell Father when you see him to tell Mrs. Roberts of Eagh (formerly Mrs. John Jones) that her Son, Captain David P. Jones, came here to see me to day. Our Regt. are only 3 miles a part. He is well. I am going to see him some day he was in the late fight, & was wounded slightly

Dec. 28 1862

I have nothing new to add to this, only my arm is much better, almost well

yesterday in the afternoon I felt not very well and almost Home-sick, but as good luck would have it I was invited to take a Horseback ride just the thing I had been wishing for. The day was fine and the roads dry & very smooth--We went first to the Rail Road Depot, Where we saw 2 Trains come in and O my what a large heap of Boxes & Barrells was there Then we went down the Banks of the River just opposite the city Fredericksburg and had a fine view of the city, and of the Rebel Fortifications beyond the city Indeed it is enough to break any ones heart to think what a desolation this country is making of itself. We came back to camp just before night and for myself I felt almost a new man

That likeness I sent home was taken at Jamestown I did intend to send it home with the others, and thought that I had done so until I found it in my pockets afterwards. I am a little more fleshy now than I was at that time I will have my picture taken as soon as we get where the thing can be done. My love to you all.

Yours Truly

Wm Charles

Head quarters 154 Regt N.Y. Vols
Camp Near Falmouth Vir
Jan. 2 1863----

Mrs Wm Charles}

Dear Wife,

I have not written to you for 2 or 3 days, not because I could not do it, but I was in hopes of getting a letter from you so this morning it came With the good news that you were all well. I have sent you many letters since we left Germantown. I think I have sent 3 or 4 from this place-- Well the first thing I must wish you all a Happy New Year, and many of them we had a very good time of it here considering where we are-- Mr A. H. Lewis D. James & H. Hyde came over to spend the day with us. We were very happy indeed to see them. Through the kindness of the Quarter Master I was able to get a very good dinner He gave me from 8 to 10 lbs of sugar a Big piece of Beef steak & Pork, cracker, Dried Peaches-- The boys had coffee enough. The day was a Beautiful one and we enjoyed ourselves very much. I went over & stayed with Alfred last night & had a good visit with Him This morning he cooked some Pan cakes made from some flour that the boys got in Fredricksburg they were ver good and the first I had since I left Home. I told you in my other letter what a good time we had christmas----

The weather continues very good to day is almost like a summers day--although it froze very hard last night. I have no new news to send to you. only we expects to have marching Orders every hour Did you get the tow Bone Rings that I have sent to Tom & Sissy-- I have made an other one for him, and I have got one for you trade my knife for it.-

This Ring which I send in this letter for Tomy it took me a long time to make it I wish you would have him be careful of it= and keep it in remembrance of his father yes a father that thinks more of him then he does of his own life. in my next letter I will send you one I think it is a very pretty one I hope it will fit you Billy Jones has made several Rings & has sent them home from the same bone that I made Tomys Ring he made one for M. H---- you will see it on her finger before long. Since I began to make Rings every body in the Regt. has got to making them. I am almost ashamed that I have sent that little Pipe home I am making one now that will be worth looking at.---- I will send it home if I can I will finish this to morrow----
Good by now

Jan. 3d 1863

Dear Ann

I have no news what ever to Send to you we get no news here we did expect to move from here before this but here we are. And a very bad place for a camp it is 3 men from this Regement have died Since we have been here--

I would like very much to have you tell some one to Send me a New York paper The Tribune if you can, for we do not get the Papers now

Give P. Williams one and tell him to send it to me. You must try to take the Tribune an other year. And if you can spare the money--take the Agricultural too. I feel real bad that I am not able to Send you some money but I can not send you any untill I get it Some say that we are to be paid the 15th of this month--but I doubt it very much. The weather continues very pleasent indeed only the nights are cold-- The ground is dry & the roads as dusty as they are there in summer

Please give my best respects to M. Davis I am very thankfull to him for his kindness to you if it will be in my power to do him a favor I will do it. Remember me to my old friends & give my love to Dacky & Mangy & kiss the little ones lots of times for me O how thankfull I am that you are all well

I do not hear from any of my folks no more then if I had not a Relation in the world I know not what I have done to them that they would not write a word to me

I tried hard to have Father do what was best for him but he would not listen to me now I have nothing to do but let him and the rest do as the like--

What has David Edwards done about saving that money-- -
- The last letter I got from you was dated the 9 of Dec--
But the one before that was dated 17 of Dec so you see how irregular the letters come

I have not received any letter from you Since you knew that we were on the march to this place I saw a letter from Jane writen Christmas day.-- I was very sorry to learn that Marys children are sick I trust that they are well by this time--

This letter is so dirty and writen in such haste that I am ashamed to send it to you We have sent to the Drych what kind of a times we had here Christmas time May be you will read it in that paper before this gets to you

Write as often as you can to

Yours most Truly

Wm Charles

Head quarters 154th N.Y. Vols.
Camp Near Falmouth Vir----
Dec. 5th 1863 (Note: must be January 5, 1863)

Mrs. Wm. Charles

Dear Ann-- you ask me if we have a prayer meeting now. Since we have been on this last march We have not had many but last night it was very pleasant so a number of us went out of the camp a little ways and had a very good meeting indeed-- we enjoyed ourselves very much-- O What a comfort it is to have the same sinforgiving God to go to as we did at home Dear Friends We know that you pray for us, and we try to pray for you-- O what a blessing it is to have a God that can hear our prayers no matter how distant we are from one an other--

It would please me very much to hear that lecture of Elder Harris. I have just read the 2ond Chapter of Matthew. there is enough in it for many lectures--for it contains the glad tidings of the Birth of our Blessed Seavour. May we love Him more & more as we approach that world where we can see him as he is and be with Him for ever more If we are not to meet again on earth let us pray yes earnestly pray that we may all meet in that Blessed Abode Where Strife Sorrow and Sepperation and parting is never known

you say that Elder Harris sent me an other letter it has not come yet I am very thankful to him for writing me one-- I have sent one to him I hope that he has got it before this time I have writen one from this place to Mr. Roberts little girls did they get it. I am very thankful that you had such good visitors on Christmas day-- I Hope that all of you was down with Father New Years day--and I also hope that all of you enjoyed yourselfs very much. I have told you in other letters how we spent our Christmas and New Years days

I am so glad that Tommy was pleased with his Rings. And would you like to know how I got that 50 cts. Paper I sent to him. Well I gave my Pocket Book for it, for I had no use for it, because I had found an other one

I am sending you a Ring in this letter I hope you will get it, for I think a great deal of it I wish I was there to place it on your finger as a token of that undying Love which was plighted and given to you some years ago= Wear it for my sake and may it comfort thee and encourage thee and uphold thee in all the Storms and trials which may in this world meet thee

You see the hearts in the Ring are a part one from the other Still they are not Seppparated for they are in the same Ring. So our hearts are now far a way from each other but still I trust that they are United and will continue so untill time is no more

If you can get some kind of a Cap for me that I can Sleep in it would add very much to my comfort any thing will do and maybe that Doctor Day will bring it if he is coming back I have not the least hopes of going into Winter quarters. Still we may----Please give my love to Dacky & Mangy & comfort my Father & Mother all you can It greaves me to think that Father has so much trouble in his old age but I am sure it is no fault of mine for I have given them what ought to to make them comfortable my Best Respects to all

Yours most Truly

Wm. Charles

Head Quarters 154th N.Y. Vols.
Camp Falmouth Jan. 9 1863

My Dear Ann,

I did expect to get a letter from you last night, but it did not come So I will not wait an other day but will write a few lines to you this lovely morning We have had beautiful weather now for a few days. The last letter I got from you was written some time ago. I got one a week ago written 3 days after it was-- you say that D. Edwards has given a mortgage on the cows to secure your Father for that money I am very glad that he has done so, for I should feel very sorry indeed to have Dacky loose any thing on my account= of course you have Recorded the mortgage in the Office of the Town Clerk--And you must Remember that it is only good for one year. I am very sorry that there are some folks there (you do not say who) that says things to Dacky, which I fear gives him unnecessary trouble If they cannot enjoy themselves any other way--why let them talk-- I hope that he will not pay much attention to them.--

If you can sell or trade the cutter for any thing and think that you can do without it I am perfectly willing. I can not tell you how thankfull I feel that you are all well. We have burried 3 since we have been to this camp. there is an old man here he looks almost as old as my father He joined this Regiment because his only child was in it-- He could not let his boy go with out his going with him So they both came, and they were most always together. The other day that boy was taken sick and in less than three days--that poor old man was without a child in the world oh dear who can tell the grieff and the sorrows of that poor old man. Indeed I am not able to look at him without shedding a tear and uttering a prayer to that Being who alone can comfort him--

I am very thankful that there are so many there that pray for us= may God bless you and them for it is the most that you can do for us-- I feel sure that your prayers will be answered for in part they have been answered all ready-- Continue O friends to pray and some day you will certainly be rewarded-----

In my last letter I sent you a Ring I hope it has come to you before now. In this I send Tommy a picture maybe it will please you all----A friend of mine made it last night with his pen a pretty good one for a pen & ink is it not. If you think it worth saving you can put it in a frame with a glass over it. then it will keep clean for a great while--

I have no news to send to you. The boys are all well and they have fixed for themselves very comfortable tents, with fire places in them so now we live more comfortable then at any time since we left home. but maybe that before tomorrow morning we shall be oblige to go somewhere else-- Every thing remains the same as they were a week ago. as far as we can see the Rebels seems to be just as plenty the other side of the river as they were then Some think that we shall try once more to drive them a way from here I think that they will remain where they are untill they see fit to go away-- How does the fodder hold out will you have enough do you think How does the sheep

(continued)

(January 9, 1863 continued)

do, and the calves and so on--

Do you have any milk now-- How does the Buck wheat hold out If I was there it would have been cut up long ago

Jan. 10 1863

I did not finish my letter yesterday, so this morning I will try to finish it-- I have no news what ever-- We had a mail last night but I did not get a letter it is very strange that Brother Joel does not write to me I have heard a word from him since he was up there it must be that he does not Direct them right-- Those letters of Mr. Harris has not come yet.

you tell Miss Frances Ann that not to jelous for I will try to send her a little picture in my next letter.----

Good By---- am called again Remember me to all friends Give my Respects to Ma_g_ and tell her that I have made a Ring for her and will send it home in a few days

May the Lord God of Our Fathers Bless you all is the earnest Prayer of

Yours most Truly

Wm. Charles

I have no time to look over this letter so excuse all Blunders

(Note: The father and son mentioned were Benjamin Barber and his son, Levant F. The two enlisted on September 6, 1862 at New Albion; Benjamin gave his age as 44, the maximum lawful age to enlist--he was apparently older--and Levant was 18. They served as privates in Co. I. Levant Barber died of typhoid fever in the regimental hospital at Falmouth on January 10, 1863, according to the records of the New York State Adjutant General, which apparently list the wrong date.)

Head quarters 154th Regt. N.Y. Vols
Jan. 20 1863
Camp Near Falmouth Va.

Dear Wife,

An other night has past an other day is passing of anxious waiting for orders my things are all packed up ready to march at any time Yesterday I sent a letter to you Stating that it Seemed to me that there would be a Battle here in a few days or it might begin at any time I have had no reason to change my mind as yet for if the Rebels do not fall back there will be a great Battle here within a very few days I do not have much to do to day So I thought best to write a few lines to you for fear that the one I sent yesterday would not come to you--making you feel uneasy You must not feel uneasy if you do not get a letter from me for a week or more that is if we shall be able to cross the River-----

I have just heard from the boys they are well I feel almost certain that they will not be called to fight much this time--for they are at work every day cutting down trees and making roads &c &c. My health is very good Last night I was invited to sleep with Dr. Rugg of our Regt. it was the best bed I have been on since I have been in the Army-- and I had a Dream that I had got home and after Kissing you all round you held little Sissy up to kiss me, and it seemed that her kiss was sweeter then all the rest. May be that it will be so some day my hopes are very strong that it will--
--

kiss little Sissy for me and little Tomy too I should like very much to kiss them my self but I can not for a little while.-- -- -- --

The weather continues dry but it is cold at night. I have no news what ever to send to you---- I will write to you as offten as I can but the trouble will be there will be no mail from here I will write again in a day or two if the Battle does not commence---- Some time I think it will begin to morrow morning---- But still it may not for several days-----

Please remember me to all enquiring friends--and give my love to Dacky & Mange-- -- ----

I must go-----

Good by----
Yours most truly
Wm Charles

(Bottom half of an undated, four-page letter)

But where to is of course unknown to us.

Our Wagons have not come up yet and we suffer some from the want of dishes to cook our food in----

I am writing this in Mr A Lewis Tent his Regt. and mine are only a mile and a half from each other So We are having a good visit to day He is (2ond) Second Lieutenant, and has a good deal to do just now for the captain is quite unwell Since the Battle. And he has just been called out to see about getting a coffin for one of the men that has bid farewell to earth only a few minnits ago.-- So while he is gone I write these few lines There was not one of this Company (that is Alfreds company) killed but there was 12 of them

has been taken by the Army under Banks but we do not believe it yet. It is false

The weather continues cold but I slept warm last night, and I feel very well only a little tired and sleepy I did expect to get a letter from you this morning but it has not come yet The Welsh boys are all well. I never saw David Williams look so well as he does now. Last Sunday morning while waiting for the wagons to come up I was walking over an old camp ground I found a very pretty Pistol worth from \$10.00 to 15 dollars It is a Revolver, called the Seven Shooter Every hill and valley about here are covered with Tents & Wagons I have never seen the like before

was from Greenwich Conn. and used to be well acquainted with him when there and he had bought some Butter of me. So of course we had a lively talk for a while, and by & by we spread our Blankets on the floor of the old house which was made up of stones and mudd----and slept a good share of the night About 4 o'clock in the morning it began to rain in torrents, and before daylight the water ran in streams every wheres. I tell you it looked rather dismal that morning But we started on and before 9 o'clock it stoped raining We had not gone more than 2 miles before we got stuck in the mudd-- Our last wagon but one got in clear to the hubbs----

I got back to our camp just before Dark and found that our wagons had come-- So we are all right again-- This morning I got a letter from you O how glad I was to know that you were all so well while so many are sick-- I heard the sad news yesterday that Miss. H---- Morgan was dead-- I have not told Ben yet for I can not bear to do it I think that Tommys pants are very pretty indeed & I would like to see him in his new clothes I hope that I shall live long enough to pay Mang_ for her loving kindness to my little ones But if I can not pay I know that Our heavenly father will do it I send my love to you all-- I send this 50 cent piece to Tommy & Frances Ann for a New Years preasent-- I am much oblige for those stamps-- I will write to Mr Harris as soon as I can. I am very bussy to day= we can see the Rebels works very plain to day-- Very Truly

Wm Charles

(Note: Apparently written in January, 1863)

Jan 22 1863

Dear Wife

I did not have an opportunity to this off so I will write a few words this morning two days more we have been packed up & waiting for orders to go night be for last a most violent Rain storm set in from the North East which has continued in its furry up to this hour (10 o'clock A.M.) It is very cold I think that the Battle would begin yesterday morning if it was not for the storm---- now since it has got so wet cold & muddy I some what doubt if an attempt will be made at present to cross the River---- Still they may try to cross to day---- One time yesterday I did expect that there would be some firing from the Batteries that are planted near where we are----for we were ordered to take our sick men a way within an hour---- well the sick was hurried into the wagons and started off and there was considerable excitement but I did not see any thing that looked very frightfull-- Although I did expect that a shell or two would make a visit But so far not a gun has been fired and this morning it does not look so much like a Battle as it it two days ago= yesterday morning we had orders to be ready at 6 o'clock but this morning we did not get any orders at all----

In the afternoon 27th Jan. 1863

It has been rainy all day it is getting very wett and we have not got our new camp fixed up very well. I send to Tommy in this a little picture drawn by a boy that writes for the Quarter Master He & I sleeps together. it is a very good likeness of the Tent we stay in.= We have not any bed made yet, so we spread our blankets on the ground --but if we stay here many more days we will fix up a bed or something that will answer for one

I am very glad if the fodder will hold out for I presume that the fodder will be very high there before spring or at least before the grass grows

I think that you are doing first rate only have courage to go on- - - - -

So Tommy pushed the Babe on the stove well I hope that it did not burn her very badly Tommy must not do so no more----

I have not time to make a bow Ring yet but I will make one as soon as I can.= You fear that I am sick-- No I am not sick through the great mercy of Our Heavenly father. My health is pretty good and has been all the time The Rhumatism plagues me a very little once in a while=

So Libby has lost both of her little ones-- A great misfortune has befallen her=== But still it may be all for the best although it is hard for us to think so= Mary Davis is dead too. Well how many have died since we came away-- A Mother, Son & a Daughter from one family= Has John Davis boy got well= How is Deacon Lewis-- It is very strange that those letters of Mr Harris Does not come I have writen one letter to him did he get that=

I am very glad that you got some wood cut. I expect to get some pay before long-- As soon as I get it I will send it home to you= That Box that Joel sent me has not come yet. The time seems long to you well I have no doubt of that but when the weather gets warm & pleasant the time will not seem so long--

How is Mang_ is her health pretty good-- Does Dacky feet get better please give my love to them= I should like very much to come home as you well know but there is no way just now-- So keep up good courage I will come as soon as can== Please give my love to Mother & Susan and all I wish to be remembered to all my old friends there. Write offten I have no news what ever the boys are all well I got the letter of D. Edwards-- Give best wishes & tell them that I will write to them as soon as I can

Yours very Truly

Wm Charles

Head Quarters 154th Regt N.Y. Vols.
Camp Near Stafford C.H. Va.
Feb. 11 1863

My Dear Wife,

I was sorly disappointed last night for the mail Bag came but there was no letter for me. I am very anxious to hear from you for I am afraid that some of you are sick. Bill Davis got a letter night before last stating that Father was very sick. I hope He is better by this time for I trust that God will let him and I live to see one another once more on earth. but maybe it will not be so. it makes me very uneasy & homesick to hear that any of you are sick or unwell==

Please give my love Father & Mother & Susan and all, and Mary if you ever see her=

You say that Tommy Back is fond of smoking and smokes a pipe full sometimes= Please do not let him have any but the weakest kind of Tobacco and as little of it as you can= I would like very much to be there and smoke a pipe with him and Dack_ = Have courage for maybe the time will come when we can be all together again= That will be a happy time Do you not think it will==

We have got our Bunks fixed quite comfortable once more. it well that we have for it is snowing raining & hailing to day= my health is very good with the exception of a slight cough that troubles me some what at night.

How does the fodder hold out. will you have enough do you think.= How does the calves and the sheep get along=

I have had no time to make you a Ring yet as soon as we will get settled I will make you one I did intend to go to Falmouth to have my likeness taken but we had to march this way== I suppose that I could get a furlough for ten days or so, but it would only make bad matters worse for me to come home for a day or two and then leave you again I will try get a furlough so as to be with you in July & August, if it will be possible All I have to say is do the best you can and hope for the best and trust to our Heavenly Father for all the rest I have no news what ever to send to you The Welsh Boys are all well Please give my warmest love to Dack_ & Ma_g_ & the Baby and Thy self= has the Baby face got well and Tommy too. Tell him to be a very good boy and to learn his letters so that he can say them all when Data comes home

Give my best Respects to all
Has Mr Harris folks got well=
How are Hugh Roberts folks &c Write soon to

Yours Most Truly

Wm. Charles

Feb. 12 1863

I got a letter from Joel last night They are all well with him--

On the 2ond of this month I sent to you a check for \$21.00 have you got it

Head Quarters 154th Reg't N.Y. Vol.
Camp Near Stafford C.H. Va.
Feb. 18th 1863=

My Dear Wife

You owe my many letters now but then I will for all that write to you as often as I can for the greatest pleasure I have here is writing to you and reading letters from you. Yesterday it snowed all day and it has been raining all day to day= So it has got to be very very muddy= and disaggreable I can assure you.--In my last letter I said that in my next letter I tell you all about what was in the box that Joel & Alice sent to me=

1st A mice Pie baked between two big tin plates. it was Sent as it was baked, in the plates and kept good and it was the best thing in the shape of a Pie that I ever tasted=

2ond Aplles of the very best kind but nearly all rotten. 3rd Cookies, pretty most all spoiled 4th Fried Cakes all good 5th biscuit all spoiled 6th A large Fruit Cake, as good as could be. 7th A piece of Ham as good as any I ever tasted. 8th Cheese nearly spoiled 9th A Baked fowl, all spoiled= 10th Butter that is tip top the only bit of good Butter I have tasted since I came from home 11th A Belt for the purpose of wearing round the body next the skin a very good thing and very useful 12th A Bottle of the best Wine= which I shall not open as long as I am well It may prove a great blessing to me or to some of my comrades some day.

I shall keep it very choice for to me it is a token of a Brother's love that is worth far more to me then Silver and Gold. Now you can see what good things they sent to me and Our Heavenly Father will bless them for it. My hopes are that I shall be permitted to live long enough to pay them for their kindness

It was to bad that it was on the way so long (32 days) but that was not their falt and of course I am as thankful to them as if every thing came through all right

He did not send that little Picture I did not expect he would He will keep it as long as he can= and I do not blame him as I know of but, but he will give up whenever I Say So. But I dare not have it with me for fear that it would get lost.= I hope that you and I and Tomy and Frances and == will be be able to go down there some day to see them them and to get the picture. he will take good care of it for it was the picture of his own child he could not think any more of it So he may may keep it for a while. We have soft bread now once in a while and we take Great comfort in eating our Bread & Butter &c. It continues to rain= and I must go to eat my supper-----

Well how is Tommy is he well my darling boy I would like to see him Yes I would my lovely boy

(February 18, 1863, continued)

Doest Thou miss thy Father
Doest Thou hear his voice no more
Doest Thou offten ask thy Mother
When will Data Bach come Home

And how is Frances is she well-- My God only knows
how much I would like to see her. tell her

That Datt will come some day
And press her to his bosom
Then with her h'll play--
The Darling little blossom=

And how are you my Dearest Wife
The hope and comfort of my life
Trust and hope a little longer
And have thy faith a little stronger
This Struggle will not last long
It must be Settled right or wrong
Then I'll come there to remain
Not to go way from you again
Then we'll fight the Battle of life together
With stronger love for one an other
And when the battle of life shall siecse
We'll hope to meet in that world of Peace

Dear Mother how are you=
With a heart so warm and true
I can not forget thy kindness to me
My very best wish are always for Thee

Has that \$21.00 check come= I sent it on the 2ond or
3d of this month

Dear Father how art thou
That has to take care of the sheep & the cow
If I could come home & be with you
I'd give you a heap of Tobbaco to chew
I know how you look so serious & thin
With the juice of Tobbacco running down your chin
But never you mind but hope for the best
When I come home you'll have a little rest

There is verses enough for one letter
In my next I will try to do better
But I meant to say that in solid old prose
Ginggs I cannot write prose any more
So to stop the whole thing I'll stop writing
For I hear the Drums all ready Clattering
Not a moment more I have to write
So here to all a Happy Good night

(February 18, 1863, continued)

I am yours very Truly
Wm. Charles

I send this money 50 cts. to Tomy so that He can send Datta some Postage Stamps It is most impossible to get them here but it would be as well for me to send my letters unpaid & you pay for them there it would be just as well

Feb. 19th 1862

This morning I recieved a letter from you dated the 1st of Feb tell that Father was very Sick I do try to pray for him I do pray earnestly that God in his mercy will spare his life yet a little longer= I Sent a letter to him yesterday & one to Sister _____

It rained all night & continues to rain this morning. I expect to get a letter from you very much to night for I want to hear from you all. I know that many of my letters are lost and do doubt some of yours are

Very Truly Yours
Wm Charles

In Haste
Write often as you can

Head Quarters 154th Regt.
N.Y. Vol.
Camp Near Stafford C.H. Va
Feb 22/63

My Dear Wife

Yesterday I wrote part of a letter to you but it did not go off so I will finish it this morning Yesterday was a very pleasant day but last _____ an awfull snow storm from the North East set in It is just such a storm as we get up there sometime the Snow is about a foot deep now. (12 o'clock Noon) and the Storm Still continues with no sign of stopping

I could not find a hat or cap that would fit me So yesterday Bill James made me a cap from the Skirts of my old Coat. it is a very good one and suits me first rate. I am very much oblige to you for the stamps you send to me. in my last letter to you I sent 50 cts. to pay for them.= It is impossible to get any here. This is the birth day of General Washington and canons are being fired in his honor all the morning= This is by all odds the worst storm we have seen yet, but we have a pretty good tents. Still the snow blows into them last night I woke up several times because the fine snow was dropping on my face but I was not cold in the least. The snow coming on my face only tickled me and kept me from sleeping= I have not news to send. Uncle Tom is better today==

Give my Best Respects to all enquiring friends

I am Yours Most Truly

Wm Charles

Head Quarters 154th Regt. N.Y. Vols
Camp Near Stafford C.H. Va Feby 25/63

My Dear Wife

Night before last I received a letter from you with the good news that you were all well and that Dack_ & Ma_g_ were going to see Uncle Samson &c I am very glad that they have been

You also say that you did not owe me a letter. well that is very queer for I have sent a great many letters from this camp, but maybe that they have not come yet. you want me to come home in March when Captain A. Lewis & Captain Cheney & Wm. Jones are coming. Well I have not heard a word about their going at that time or at any other. It seems that there are many false stories about there you must not believe them untill you get some proofs I will come home if I can next Summer. I told you all about what I thought about coming home in my last letter So you have got 2 little lambs well I hope that they will live. I have forgotten the birth day of Frances Ann please let me know=

have you got that money from Ellicottville So David Owens got home alive well I am very glad of that. he has been very lucky I think.

So you were not invited to the wedding well I hope that you have not shed many tears on that account. I think that one or two of your letters must have been lost for you say "I will tell you more about Joels wedding&c" that was the first that I had heard anything from you about it. So if you spoke about in more than one letter, of course it must have been lost. D. Williams take it quite hard on account of loosing his child. Yesterday i was sent to Aquia Creek landing to see about some clothing &c. it is 10 or 12 miles from here= So you see I had a chance to ride on a Rail Road once more Aquia Creek landing is on the Potomac and the river is very large at that point. it looked very beautifull to me for I had not seen a ship or any thing of the kind for a great while, and the sight of so many Steamboats and other vessels sailing here and there was something that pleased me=

While I was there I saw a great many sick Soldiers and some dead ones going home or else to the Hospital. There was some women there too.= Sisters that had come to try to rescue a Brother from Deaths Grasp Or Wifes perhaps that had come to cheer & support a Husband in his agony and pain, and maybe to lay his head upon her bossom so tenderly and impress a last kiss on those lips allready cold for the Spirit of him she loved so dearly had gone to Him that gave it. I saw one Woman helping a Sick Soldier to walk from the cars to the Steamboat I am sure it was her husband=for she looked so cheerfull and happy. And by her looks she seemed to say, "I have come and have found him. I will not leave him if he dies on the way I will take his body home, and burrie it where I can offten go to visit his grave and there implore the blessings of the God of the Widdow and Fatherless upon me and my little ones" I have seen very cheerful women before but I have never seen a woman look so thankfull as that woman did= May God bless her for her good work= We have had a great Snow Storm and cold weather but it is quite pleasant to day. I have no news what ever to send to you. my health is very good. Please give

(continued)

(February 25, 1863 continued)

my love to all. What does Tommy think of the little lambs. Write soon to

Most Truly Yours="In haste"

Wm. Charles

When you go to the Village I wish you would buy a Bunch of Envelopes, and have Mr Jameson or Sam or Milo Hohns or somebody put this Direction on them:

William Charles Order Sergt
154th Regt. N.Y. Vols.
Washington
D.C.

Then you will always have them ready for us Get them that have a postage stamp all ready on them if you can I want you to write at least twice a week if you can but I know it is difficult to go to the village twice a week.= but it will not be so bad when the roads get to be good=

Yours Most Truly

W. Charles

Head Quarters 154th Regt. N.Y. Vols
camp near Stafford C.H. Va
March 20nd 1863

My Dear Wife

Night before last I Received a letter from you dated Feb. 20th. I have written to you since the 11th of this month= one letter on the 16th one on the 19th one on the 23d one on the 25th= So you see that I am not very backward about writing to you. I want to hear from you again to know if you got that money that the Hon. A. G. Rice got for me from the State of New York. I told him to send it in some safe way to you. I hope he has done it before this time; for I know that you want the money to use. I never expected to get that money but you see I have got some friends some wheres= It pays me pretty well for the time I spent in recruiting those men you know that I was only at it about two weeks, and sixty seven dollars is pretty good pay for that length of time, and will be of great help to you just now.=

I cannot feel thankful enough to my Heavenly Father that you all of you are blessed with health while so many are sick. I try to thank him but I am afraid that I do not do it enough

I send this little trinket for Sissy be sure not to let her swallow it. the Sleeve Buttons are for Tommy= Tell him to be a good boy and Data Bach will send him a picture someday

March 3d 1863

Last night I Received a good letter from you stating that you were all well, &c. I am very thankfull indeed for such good news. Tell Mang__ that I thank her very much for that verse. let her send more of them

I am glad that you have looked out in time for a man for Haying & harvisting It is a hard price to give but I do believe that you could not do any better I trust Gilbert will prove faithful and do all he can to secure the crops= provided that Providence will again gladden the Earth with an other crop==

I have written some verses to you all,=in some of my letters. they were in English and you can read them easily. have you got them. It is a most lovely morning, but rather wet under foot.

Please give my love to all==

My health is very good. Mae plant y cymrn ynia all yn yach. D. Williams does not feel so bad as I was afraid he would=

I have written lots of letters lately. I sent one to Father, to Sister Ann, to Sister Mag--to Sister Catharine, and Brother John & Joel-- yesterday I sent a letter to Hugh H. Roberts Girls & one to Miss Hettie G. Owens. I must give up= The Drums are beating and I have a job on hand. Yours most Truly and forever

Wm. Charles

Head Quarters 154th Regt. N.Y. Vols.
Camp near Stafford C.H. Va. March 6, 1863

Dear Ann,

I did some what expect a letter from you last night, but did not; So having a few spare moments I thought that I could not do any thing better than to write a few lines to you=

The best news that I can send to you is that I am blessed with my usual health, for which I feel very thankfull indeed. As long as you are well at home, I feel contented here. I think that I could be contented most any wheres as long as every thing was all right at home But if you or any of you should get sick it would make me feel very miserable indeed. Therefore I hope and pray that Our Heavenly Father through his infinite mercy will bless you all with health=

I heard yesterday that Gen. Sigel had resigned for one I am very sorry for I believe him to be a very good General and one that wishes to put down this Rebellion. You have or will see something about in the papers no doubt. It is also reported here yesterday that Vicksburg was taken but we do not believe it yet. I am very much disappointed at the course that General Banks has taken at New Orleans. Most every thing that he does is that wich he ought not to do, and that wich he has undone is that wich he ought to do O it is so shameful and so wicked for him to send those poor fellows that worked so hard for their Freedom back again into Slavery= Ann it seems to me some times that this Nation is given up of God on account of its great wickedness, and still clings to that wickedness as if it was the very thing that was going to save her. O how foolish== My prayer is that this nation will return to her reason and to her God before it is to late.=

I have no news what ever to send to you. The weather for the past 15 days has been rather stormy, and cold, with the exception of a day or two. night before last and last night were very cold it snowed a little this morning and continues very cold=

How does the little lambs stand it How does the fodder hold out. What do you think makes Jimmy lame in his fore leg I dreamed last night that Brother Joel had come to see me and that he put his arms around my neck and we were both so glad that we cried like babies and because we cried the rest of the boys that were with us cried too. and that was the end of the dream. I have for Tommy a very pretty thing to put on his hankerchief or comforter it is a Bone Ring with a Big heart on it The heart is carved with a head of an Eagle 2 flags _____ a _____ and the letters T. D. C. &c. &c. Every one that has seen it says that it is the best thing that they ever saw made with a jack knife.= I will send it in a letter if I can not do it some other way I will make an other for you or the Baby when I will have time. You may think that I am very foolish to spend my time in making such things but then I like to do it, because I think it pleases those little ones that are so dear to me. you see that love will do that which money cannot do.

Please give my love to father & Mother & Susan & Mary. I expect a letter from them every day.= I should like very much to be with you

(continued)

(March 6, 1863 continued)

at the dinner party of Mr Foot maybe that you had something good to eat. The Turkey must have been very good you tell Mrs Howlet that when this war is over I shall come @ take dinner with her=

you say that Frances Ann is a very nice good looking little girl, and then go on to say that she looks just like me That you makes me suppose that I am "good looking" Well, Well, you must not flatter me in that kind of style--

Mang_ says that is I wish to know who the baby looks like, To look in the glass But how do you know if I have a glass to look into.= I do not own one! but I see myself some time in the Dryck of others

March 7th 1863

Dear Ann, I did not send this off yesterday, hoping that I would get a letter from you last night But no letter came

I Received the Socks & the night cap yesterday afternoon. They are very good ones and I am very thankful to you for them. I tried to sleep with one of the caps on my head but could not for it felt so odd. It rains this morning & much warmer than it has been=

I have no news whatever. The Quarter Master I think will go home in a few days He lives in Hinsdale= he says that he will bring me any thing that I wish from home if it is brought to him I will let you know is he goes= If he does go I will send some little trinkets for the children with him. Good by I must go----My love to all
Write soon

I remain Yours Most Truly

William Charles

Head Quarters 154th Regt. N.Y. Vols.
Camp Near Stafford C.H. Va March 9/63

Dear Wife,

Last I Received a very welcome from you I was very glad indeed to hear that you were all so well I am sorry that you have sent me these \$4.00. I did not want. I have bought a pair of Boots and Bill James has made me cap from the scirts of my old frock coat, so I am very comfortable now

I have writen 3 letters to you in which I spoke of that money you Received from Col. Rice. It is the money that the State of New York paid me for the time I spent in Recruiting. I wish to give Mang_ \$10. of it, and if you like you may give Harris \$2. for me and as much as you like for yourself.= Dacky & you can do with the rest as you think best. I wish you would give Father privately a dollar or two more just as you like= or buy him something that you think he needs=

I am very glad that you got that money for you know that you can make good use of it. If I want money at any time I will let you know= Be sure to send me a postage stamp, for I can not get them here

Can you give any reasons why Brother John Does not write to me= is he mad= I should think that Susan might write oftener too but if they do not wish to write why I have no fault to find= How is Uncle John James & Family you do not say a word about them=

I think that Susan is very foolish to think about going with Gregory= I am certain she will not go. What do you think of my taking a Lieutenants commission. A day or two ago Col. Jones said that he wish that I would I would then get about one hundred dollars a month. of course I would have to find my own cloths and board my self but then I could save about forty dollars every month I think some time that I better take it for then if any thing happens that I must come home I can resign and come= that is if I had good reasons for it.=

You know that nobody can Resign only those that have commissions= that is no officer that ranks lower than a Lieutenant can resign= Write me as soon as you get this and let me know your mind on the matter= for I do not wish to do any thing contrary to your wishes if it can be helped. If I get a commission I will ask for a furlough of ten or fifteen days and will come home to get some clothes suitable for the new office=

I have no news what ever= We are pretty well. The weather is much more comfortable although it is somewhat wet, and the roads are very bad. We shall not remain here long only long enough for the roads to dry up But where we shall go is of course unknown to us--

Head Quarters 154th Regt. N.Y. Vols.
Camp near Stafford C.H. Va March 10/63.

Dear Ann

Your letter dated the 3d of this month came to hand last night I also got one from Susan. Monday night I Received a letter from Lockport which I sent to you and the same time I got one from John; and a few days ago I Received one from Brother Joel. They are well with him except the Baby. She has got the Hooping cough=but not very hard=

I have no time to write you but a very short letter for I must go and wash my cloths=&c= I am very much oblige to you for the c it was just the thing that I wanted I made a breakfast of it this morning and I am sure it will do me good. I am very glad that you have bought you a cloke=if you needed one I wish you would get every thing that want to make you comfortable. Dacky better not pay Jones for the Tubs only as he gets them for if he pays him first maybe he will never get the Tubs.= Has Ben. Roberts paid you those \$2. if he has not you must ask him for them= I have no news. We are all well. Most all of the boys are out on picket We had quite a snow storm last night which makes it very disagreeable and muddy=but it is not very cold= Give my love to all, and many kisses to the children for me

Yours most Truly

Wm Charles

March 20th /1863/ in the evening

The mail has just come in but no letter for me. I am a little disappointed but tomorrow night I guess that I shall get a letter or two.=

Do you hear any thing about that town bounty that we were to have. You know it amounted to something between thirty and forty dollars. I have not heard a word about it since I came from there it ought to be paid now before long if you get that it will help you there is some little prospect of my getting the extra pay that belongs to me= It is 40 cts. a day and now amounts to \$70 dollars. I hope that I shall get it some day= for you will need all that I can earn

The talk is here that we are not to remain in this camp for many days. but this snow storm prevent our moving quite so soon for the roads will get very muddy It will be rather tough==for us to camp on the ground after being in warm Tents.= But you know that a soldier must take every thing as it comes, and that without grumbling==If we do not fare any worse than we have thus far we shall do well enough We as a Regiment have been very lucky indeed since we came from home And the blessing of our Heavenly Father will continue with us if we deserve it.

There is also some talk here in camp that we are only "nine months men" and that our time will be out in may &c, &c. do you hear any such talk I do not believe a word of it. But still there may be something in it

I send a Ring to you and Sissy in this=

The Quarter Master has gone home for ten days and I have the Office pretty much all to myself and being all alone this evening I could not do any thing to please myself any better than to write to you= And how thankful I am that I am able thus to communicate with you= I do not dream very often but this forenoon I laid down a little while and got a sleep something I have not done before since I have been in the service. And I dreamed that I was at home=and Tommy went out to the Barn to show Data Buck the little claves and lambs &c and we found some eggs=and of course he had to the house in his little apron= I thought the path was full of holes and I was so afraid that he would fall.=and there my dream ended=

I want you to get all the clothes that you think you need It is not my wish to have any of you to be in need of any thing. If you want a silk dress this spring I want you to get it, and a new bonnet too if you need one and when pay day comes I will send you money to pay for them. The Regiment was furnished yesterday with new clothes I was not in need of any thing but pattaloons and I got a pair of sky blue they are very good ones, and when Joel will send me the hat I shall be all right I have got very good pairs of boots. they are not new ones but I tapped them so they are about as good as new new boots here cost from \$8. to \$15.=so as far as clothing I am very comfortable My over coat is but little worse than new=for all of which I am very thankful So good night to you all= Wm Charles

Sunday March 21 1863 Got a letter from you last night with ___ & 2 stamps very much oblige I got the \$4 long ago= All well=

Head Quarters 154th Regt. N.Y. Vols.
Camp Near Stafford C.H. Va.
March 23, 1863

My Dear Ann

Your letter dated March 16th has just come to hand it makes me feel very happy to learn that you are all are well at home. you say that you will try to get John to go with you to Hinsdale to give Q.M. Allen something to bring to me No It will be to much trouble for you while the roads are so bad I did think of sending a little box by him with some little trinkets for you and the children But then I thought it would not pay to have you go so far= In fact I am not in need of anything that you can send to me= for I am very well provided for just now. I expect every day to get that hat from Joel then I shall be all right as far as clothing is conserved for the next 3 or 4 months=

As far as anything to eat is conserved I get enough of that, every day= My appetite has not been very good for some days,= and what I do eat makes me sick at my stomach.= so you see I must not eat but a very little so that my stomach may be allright again= You cannot see why I do not come home this winter= Well you know that I would like to come very much but you know it would cost me some \$30. or \$40. now are you willing to give that in order to have me come home for three of four days=

Do you think that you would be more contened after wards than you are now. I do not think that you would I am afraid that it would make me very homesick and lonesome to come home for so short a time and then come back= But for all that I have a great mind to apply for a furlough some days= I was talking with Col. Jones about it last night. he thought that there will be a better chance to get a furlough in July than now, and you well know that you will need my help then, much more than at present.=

I have not heard a word about Ben Morgan coming home in fact I know that he is not coming

(W.P.J. gets letters from there, some of them are very lovesick too=) But say not a word

I am very thankful for those good verses you send to me. I will try to prove myself worthy of them. The Bible is indeed a great comfort it is a comfort every where under all circumstances and at all times. Blessed be God for his Holy word

Read it much my Dear Wife and teach those little ones that God Hath given to us, not only to read it but to obey it and live by it.= Good night I will try to finish this in the morning. the weather is a little more comfortable to day=but yet it is very chilly and looks as if we might have a rain storm in a day or two We shall move from here as soon as the roads gets a little better= Are the Copper Heads as noisy as ever there Do they not begin to think that to let the "Bond Go Free" is about the best thing to be done I hope that our Nation will come to its senses before it is to late.= I send you a ring in this letter which I wish you would give to Susan=and tell her that she owes me a letter, and so does John=and so does Hattie Owens and the Misses Roberts and D. Edwards &c=

So good night once more=

(continued)

(March 23, 1863 continued)

I am very much oblige for the Postage Stamps What would I do if I did not have a wife to send me stamps.= Who tells you that you cannot send me Newspapers= Who ever does, tells you what he don't know any thing about you can send me a newspaper whenever you like The Quar-ter Master get one or two from his wife most every week==

Richard Lewis gets the Tribune from his wife quite offten. So you see that somebody has been telling you a story= If you find anything very interesting in a paper you must send it, as it will only cost one penny= In fact the Boys here gets most every thing you can think of by mail from love letters to a pair of Boots--and Stockings hanker-chiefs Hats, Suspenders and so fourth &c=

But Good Night.= If I write any more I will have nothing to say in the morning So pleasant dreams to you all=


March 24, 1863

It is a little warmer this morning but looks very much like rain== or snow or both

I should think that Mr. Harris would answer that letter that I sent I sent to him some time ago. But then I suppose that he has so much to do that he has no time=

Well I have told you all that I can think of= This Ring with your letters on you can keep it or send it to Joels Wife or do what you like with it. Maybe it will fit you better than all the rest.= Or give it to Johns Wife or what ever you please I have made two hanker-chiefs slides for Tommy and Sissy= I will send them before long I think they will be very much pleased with them==

The Cymrn Boys are all well, and as fat as hogs every one of them Bill William is so lazy that it is most impossible to get him to do anything at all. he has not done any camp duty to amount to any thing in a great while He says that he feels kind=O weak and he cant do any thing= There is no use to say any thing to him for he says that he does not care for any thing or any body= And in fact I dont think that he does He says that if the Rebels would come he would let them take him prisoner for he thinks that the Rebels would let him go home He is chummy enough to get along any wheres= He went over to Stafford the other day, and stole a very nice towel out of some Officers tent. He said that he thought that the towel would do him as much good as any body else Keep this to thyself

 Please give my love to all

Yours Most Truly

Wm Charles

Head Quarters 154th Regt. N.Y.S. Vols.
Camp near Stafford C.H. Va.
March 31 1863

My Dear Ann,

Your letter dated March 23d came to hand last night I was very glad indeed to learn that you were all well, and getting along so finely I hope that Dack_ is quite well by this time=

The hat from Joel came to hand Saturday night it is a very good hat and a perfect fit. Last night I got a letter from him and Mary-- they are all well except the two youngest children they have the Hooping cough= also last night I got a letter from Misses S. & M. Roberts, and the Drych with some very fine Green Tea in it from Mrs. Roberts.= the Girls put about two pipeful of Tobacco in their letter, so you see I am not forgotten by every body=

I am very sorry that Mother or any one should be so cruel as to give you trouble or hurt your feelings but you know that Mother will act so and no one can prevent her. you must not let her have that Saw if you got it keep it and do not let the mowing machine go from the farm this summer. That machine as well as my self have done enough work for other people=

What did Mother want with my over coat= Maybe that she thinks that she paid for that too She must have made up her mind that I am never coming back to wear it. But in that I trust she will be disappointed, if I never do. I do not think that you would like to see any one wear it except Tommy=and if she knew anything she ought to know that. But never mind Mother may need my help yet, before she dies= I think that I told you in my last letter that there has been nothing said about my having the office of a lieutenant. there are a great many that wants more than I do and they can have it.=

But Where I am concern but little money for you and children= if you can get along with out money why you know I can.= If I get my extra pay I can get along first rate and if I do not, maybe that you will not suffer. I know that you or the little ones will not as long as Dack_ and Ma_g_ will have any thing to decide=

Half of what father sold certainly belongs to me= for I put in some thirteen hundred dollars into that place and it is so strange that they now wish to turn me off with nothing= Do you know what Father got for the farm.===But we must not lay up any thing up against them. If they are bad to us we must be good to them= We must try to be good to all because Jesus Christ says Love those that despitefully use you, &c

Ike Williams is no better to day= I am going over in a little while to see him, and to morrow morning I will finish this letter till then good by====

It has been snowing part of the night the snow is some 3 inches deep, but it rains now and it will soon go off. The roads will get very muddy again so it will be impossible for us to move for some days at least I have not heard from Ike this morning he was a little better last night Please give my warmest love to Dack_ & Ma_g_ and all enquiring friends

Be of good cheer for I think that this war will end in six months=

I am Dear Wife yours Most
Truly
Wm. Charles

I am very glad that Tommy is such a good Boy= I hope that he will be very kind to his little sister

Head Quarters 154th Regt. N.Y.S.V.
Camp Near Stafford C.H. Va
April 5 1863

My Dear Wife

Your kind letter dated March 26 came to hand last night with the good news that you were (through the blessing of our Heavenly Father) all pretty well--that is allways good news to me It makes me very happy indeed to learn that Our Darling Boy is so good= May God be his protector and his guide all the days of his life== is the constant prayer of his father=

After reading your letter and finding that you had not received those pictures I felt little fearfull that they were lost But Billy Jones got a letter from Somebody saying that you had received them, so I felt better

What do you think of it Do I not look as well as when I left home= now you know it is your turn to send me your likeness to me but maybe I better wait till I come home to get it.

Tell Frances Ann to learn to talk as fas as she can for when Dat comes home he will want to talk with her lots and lots and tell ever so many Stories about life in the camp and the south and the War and many other things= you must not believe all you hear about the people of the South living in a starving condition= no doubt they suffer for some things worse than we do but I am far from believing that any of them are starving But if we could get Vicksburg and the controll of the Misassissippi River it would go very far towards cutting off their Supplies For at present they obtain the greatest part of their food from the West side of that River My health is not quite as good as I wish it was. Somehow or an other I have taken a bad cold at night I cough considerbly= A great snow storm sat in early last night and still continues I do not remember of seeing a worse storm (page is ripped) at this time of the year It does not look half as much like spring here now as it did six weeks ago=

This storm will prevent our moving for some days anyhow

Well I believe that I will not write any more today for it is very cold The Rest of that Town Bounty some \$28.67 (twenty eight dollars & sixty seven cents) you will get in a few days you know that I got some \$21 & over before so the whole makes \$50.= Mr. D. Lamun has got the money and will pay it over to you as soon as a letter from me will get to him= The money will come handy just now to buy meal for the cows have you Oats enough how does the Wheat hold out= be sure to keep some Buck wheat till I come for I shall want some pancakes. I wish I had some to day= My Appetite is is not very good now days Ike Williams is much better

Please give my warmest love to Ma_g_ and tell her not to stint herself in Tea but use all she wants Don't live on weak Tea and give my love and best wishes to Dack_ and tell him= to chew and smoke all that he wants to= Give my best respects to all enquiring friends= Are the cows doing pretty well. How much would I give for a drink of milk this morning I shall make up for lost time when I do get home Well good by=

Yours most Truly

Wm Charles

Monday April 6 1863 I feel very well this morning only my lungs are some what sore and the cough is not quite Stopped

(Bottom half of page of undated letter)

I do not know but you will think me very extravent, for I must tell you that I buy a pint of milk most every day and some days a quart it cost 10 cts. a quart=

Bread & does taste so good that I can not resist the temptation= Haint I a great calf 30 years old and yet can't do without milk= But so it is==

I am very glad that Dack_ has got Buck Wheat this year= because I shall want some cakes when I come home= Mr James Warring of Franklinville was here yesterday (he is the man that has bought our Wool for the past 2 or 3 years) He says that he is coming up there see the Butter=

Well good by= Please give my warmest to Dack_ & Mang_ & Father & Mother and my best Respects to all enquiring friends

Very Truly Yours

Wm Charles

How are the children Does Frances Ann talk yet. And how does Tommy do

Head Quarters 154th N.Y. Vols.
Camp Near Stafford C.H. Va.
April 13 1863

Dear Ann,

The Boys are gone towards the Rappahannock, to see what they can see. May be that they will meet with the enemy before they will come back. but I do not hardly think that they. It is very lonesome I much rather be with the boys. but you know that a Soldier can not have his own way, but I did feel some disapointment this morning when told that I must not go for I had got my things all packed up and ready= But it maybe all for the best. Maybe that Hooker is going to make an attempt to cross the River. if he is there will be some fighting no doubt, And maybe a big Battle= Well if we have got to fight we may as well do it now as well as any other time. We are much better able to now than we shall be two or three months from now/

April 14th 1863

This is the most lovely morning that I have seen in Virginia The Robin and some few other birds are full of music. They seem to put forth their whole strength in praise of their Maker= The birds are happy=just as happy as they can be, because they have not fallen from the place where they were created to be.= But O how different it is with Man He has fallen--fallen from that high State of happiness that his Maker created him and of course woe and misery has become his portion== We do not get the mail now, it goes to the Rappahannock= where the Regiment has gone= it seems a long time since I have had a letter from you, But I am in hopes that you are well I would give most any thing if you and Tommy and Sissy were with me this morning If it was not for this move I think that I could get a furlough the last of this week. But now I can not tell when any more furloughs will be given= I am very thankful to my Heavenly Father that I am able to say to you this morning that I am pretty well= My appetite is very good and my strength is returning= I have not heard a word from the Boys since they left yesterday morning= If there should be an attempt made to cross the River I shall hear from them to night or to morrow morning==

4 o'clock in the afternoon

Dear Ann,

The day is almost gone, and we have not heard a word from the front but fearing I should not get a chance to send this off tomorrow, I thought best to send to night for tomorrow we may have to move the Supply train one way or the other It begins to look to me as if Hooker had made up his mind to cross the River in order to find where the Rebels are and maybe there will be a great Battle But this is Guess work with me But when the great Battle does come O I do pray that Our Heavenly Father will crown our efforts with Victory I will send you a letter as offten as I can get it mailed= May be that the mail will not go from us again this week If there will be a Battle now it will most likely commence to morrow morning= Yours in haste
I send Tommy some Peach blossoms The Peach trees are nearly in full bloom here

Head Quarters 154 Regt. N.Y. Vols.
Camp Near Stafford C.H. Va
April 16th 1863=

Dear Ann

I set down to write to you but at the same time I have nothing new or very important to send to you Our Regiment has been since monday morning- and I have not heard a word from it. We did expect to go to it or at least as near as we could yesterday= but night before last there began a very heavy great Rain Storm the like of which we have not seen in Virginia= it kept raging all day yesterday= It was very much like that storm- when we were down to Uncle Samson--so that there was nothing but water-water-water every where. The storm came in the worse possible time for us= that is as it seems to us now-but maybe it will prove all for the best

It was very fortunate for me that I was not permitted to go with the Regiment If I had gone and got Soaking wet &c. I certainly do not think that I could stand it, for I not near as tough as I was four weeks ago= I have grown thin very fast lately= and good share of my strength has gone too= I feel so sorry for the boys because they must have suffered very much by wet and cold and I am afraid that many of them will be sick if they are not already= I think that the Battle would have began yesterday morning if it was not for the rain-- now I know not what will be done It is Reported here that our Cavalry have crossed the river If they have they will find it very difficult to come back for the river must be swollen very much

We have had no mail since sunday and of course I have not heard any thing from you= The last letter I got from you was dated the 26th of March--so you see it is a a long time not to hear any thing from home= But I know it is not your fault When we do get a mail most likely there will 2 or three letters for me=

It was said that we were to be paid this week, but I see no signs of it yet. Did you get that Town Bounty from Mr. Lannin=

Well how are you all any way are you all well Has the Snow all left you= how does the fodder hold out. What is the price of Butter with you= calves skins bring a good price as so will wool I will send you money as soon as I get= so tell Dack_ not to let the cows suffer for he can use all the money that you do not need

Please give my warmest love to Dack_ & Mang_ I want to see them very much If I was there I think Mang_ could cook something that I could eat--

My appetite is not very good I live mostly on water gruel for that seems to agree with me better than any thing else= I do not have any cough but the Dysentery bothers me some

Does Mang_s Strawberry bed begin to grow= are the Pear Trees alive

Well now good by= I will write again to morrow if I hear any news I have sent to you and Tommy some little books and papers

I am Dear Wife

Yours very Truly

Wm Charles

Please give my best respects to all Did you get those Rings-- did that one I made for Hattie come

Head Quarters 154th Regt N.Y.S. Vols.
Camp John Manley Near Stafford C.H. Va
-----April 17 1863-----

Dear Ann

I can not answer your letters because the mail goes up to the Regiment, and they having been gone since Monday and I have not heard a word from them but the Quarter Master is and has been expecting orders every hour for the last four days to go after the Boys. But no orders have come yet=

It is very lonesome for us here and we earnestly hope that we shall be permitted to go ahead before long. My health has greatly improved since the great rain storm yesterday I began to feel hungry= and to day I feel almost like myself aggain=

The Doctor gave some medicine to stop the Diarrhea, so I put the medicine in my vest pocket and went and bought one pound of cheese very poor cheese for 40 cts and boiled it in my water grewel. that or something else stoped the Diarrhea, and I am gaining strength very fast. So you see I shall keep the Doctors stuff in my vest pocket for a while= I am very lonesome and uneasy on account of not hearing from you But I think that to night or tomorrow the letters will come

I have no news whatever to send to you and it seems foolish for me to write so offten But I thought that it was my duty to let you know this morning how I was= and O how thankful I am to my Heavenly Father that I am so well & that it is so well with me= now if I could only hear that you were all well then I should be all right again=

It begins to look some like Spring here, and I am going out into the woods by and by to see if I can find some wild flowers. you know that I am very fond of flowers If I find some I will send them in my next letter to you.

Remember me most kindly to Dack__ & Ma_g_=and my best respects to all enquiring friends= and lots of love to yourself and the babies How does Father & Mother like their new home Tell Father when you see him that I should like very much to hear from him I wonder what security Did John give him for that \$800. Do you know?=
How is Elder Harris & family. Has John or rather Deacon Lewis got well yet.

Did Dan Howlet get that letter from me= I sent one to him a while ago Give my very best Respects and good wishes to all my old friends there

Write offten and let me know all the news

I send these verses to you for I think they are very good ones

I am Dear Ann

Yours most Truly

Wm Charles

I hope my Dear Wife you will not wach for me in vain But from this wicked strife I will return to you some day

(A clipped poem, "I Watch For Thee", is pasted onto the letter.)

Head Quarters 134th Regt - N. Y. S. Vol.
Camp John Waukey near Stafford Ct. Va
April 17 1863

Dear Ann

I can not answer your letter
because the mail goes up ^{to} the Regiment and
they having ~~been~~ gone since Monday and I
have not heard a word from them but the
Quartermaster is and has been expecting orders
to every hour for the last four days to go after
the Regts. But no orders have come yet =

It is very lonesome for us here and we earnestly
~~hope~~ ~~that~~ ~~we~~ ~~shall~~ ~~be~~ ~~permitted~~ ~~to~~ ~~go~~ ~~ahead~~ ~~before~~
long. My health has greatly improved since the
great rain storm yesterday I began to feel hungry =
and to day I feel at most like myself again =

The Doctor gave some medicine to stop the
Diarrhea. So I put the medicine in my best pocket
and went and bought one pound of Cheese, very
proach for ~~50^{cts}~~ 40^{cts} and boiled it in
my water gourd, that or something else stopped
the Diarrhea, and I am gaining strength ~~and~~ very
fast. So you see I shall keep the Doctors stuff
in my best-pocket for a while = I am very
lonesome for ~~it~~ and money ~~to~~ on account of
not hearing from you. But I think that to
night or tomorrow the letters will come