

Head Quarters 154 Regt. N.Y. Vol
Camp Near Stafford C.H. Va.
June 3d 1863

Dear Ann

Captain Cheney has just come back bringing with him for me a letter, a collar a neck tie and a Pocket Hankerchief and paper of needles, very good indeed I did not need the needles Many thanks Bill Davis and Bill James got hankerchiefs and some other things in the same little box Bill Davis got the picture of his wife and boy= I tell you I wish you could send me your likeness and the children= concerning that Horse of Billy Jones He does not know what to say= you ask his father about her= If Dack_ buys a horse I hope he will be lucky enough to get a good one Please give my love to him & Mang_.

In my last letter to you I stated that David Williams was coming home this week but I was told yesterday that he could not come just now But I believe that he will come before long.=

Captain Cheney says that the people of Sandusky gave him a very warm reception= Well I am very glad they did It made him feel good= He says that you look well I was very glad to hear that.

If I can not come home this summer you must go and have the likeness of every one of you taken and send them to me I will send you money to pay for them. But I will do my best to come and make you a visit in July or August

Billy Jones and my self went a way from camp to day to see if we could find some strawberries we did find a few.= we stopped at a house about a mile from our camp, and found out that we could exchange bread for milk it was just the thing we wanted for we get now more bread than we can eat. so to night we took two loves up there and got a Bottle full of fresh milk.= It will be a fair treat for us in the morning for we shall have plenty of milk in the coffee

June 4th 1863

We were awoke this morning very early by an orderly who came with an order for us to be ready to march by Sunrise!!! Well that was short notice to be sure we went to work at once some to get breakfast and some to pack up, and before sunrise The Regiment was marching off!! But they did not go but a little ways for the order was countermanded and we came back to camp So here we are with every thing packed up ready to move at a moments notice= Such is a soldiers life

We have got Our Tent fixed up very comfortable but it looks now as if we would not be here many days to enjoy it But still it maybe that we shall not move from here for some time

I should like very much to hear & see Tommy blow his horn= I wish you would go and have his likeness taken with his horn in his hand that is if you think it best and send it to me you can send it in a letter But maybe it would be to much trouble If I cannot come home this summer I should like however to have you do so= not only send me his picture but of you all

Please tell Father that I should to have a letter from him Billy Jones' father writes to him very offten But I never get a letter from my father just as if I had no father on earth

Yours very truly, and in Haste

Wm Charles

Head Quarters 154th Regt. N.Y.V.
Camp Near Stafford C.H. Va.
June 6, 1863.

My Dear Ann,

I believe that I do not owe you a letter, but then have a little time this afternoon I thought it would do no one any harm to write a few words to you. Last night we had order to be ready to march at a moments notice but here we are yet. But of course cannot tell what hour we shall be oblige to start. But some how or an other I think that we shall not go from here in some time.=

There was a great canonading late yesterday late in the affternoön and last for nearly three hours= It was reported last night that the Rebels tried to cross the River= But to day it is reported to day that part of our Army crossed the River below Fredericksburg &c. But I do not believe these Reports yet.

John Mearns is dead. This world will trouble him no more. He breathed his last about 12 o'clock last night His last words were "Dear Brother stay with me untill I die, then be sure to take my body home" His Brother promised that he would do so, and in a few moments after the spirit of John Mearns had fled to Him that gave it. It will be sorrowful news for his family. May Our Heavenly Father bless them in their grief==

Bill Davis is not very well he was getting along first rate but some how or an other he is now threaten with a fever He is very much to blame for he does not take proper care of himself. It is more than one can do here to keep well and take as good care of himself as he knows how but when a man wears the same clothes night and day for a long time this hot weather he is bound to get sick so it was with Bill he would a heavy pair of drawers and a thick pants through the day= and would sleep in the same through the night and would not wash himself half offten enough= you of mus not speak of this however because it would make hard feeling but it is the truth. And I have told William more than once that it was very wrong in him not to take better care of himself, and told him too that he must not keep on the same clothes on night and day such hot weather or he would certainly be sick=

I have just received a very good letter from Mary= they are all well She says that she has sent me an other hat,= for I happened to mention in my letter to her that my hat had holes in it, but still it is a pretty good hat and will last me a good while and I am very sorry that she has sent one to me for I could do without one for 2 months or more

The canons are roaring some where up the Rappahanock= It is quite warm and very dry Please give my love to Dack__ & Ma_g_ and my very best Respects to all friends

My health is very good= We are having a good living now just as good as if we was at home We have plenty of good fresh Beef, Salt Pork and Smoked Bacon Soft Bread more than we can eat plenty of sugar Tea & coffee and sometimes dried apples!== We are getting to be good cooks so that we are taking some comfort in eating our food= If you were here it would surprise you to see what a good meal we can get= To day for the first the government has furnished us Pepper it is a very good article to much better than what we had to day of the sutler many kisses for thysel and the children= I am very truly yours

W Charles

Head Quarters 154 Regt. N.Y. Vols.
Camp near Stafford C.H. Va.
June 7 1863=

My Dear Ann,

Your ever welcomed letter has just come to hand. I am very thankful indeed that you are all so well. I feel very thankful to Mr. Williams for coming up to see you. I will try and write to him in a few days

You see by the date of this that we have not gone from camp. I sent a letter to you yesterday stating that we were under marching orders, and expect to move from here at a very short notice It may be in an hour and it maybe not in a week or a month.= But most likely that we shall not be here a week from to day; which way we shall go I can not even guess because it will depend all together upon what movements the Rebels will make===

Billy Jones and myself was at the Division Hospital to day Ambrose Arnold is there since day before yesterday He is not much sick but he has the Bloody Diarrhea. He says that he is much better to day he looks much better than he did a few days ago. Some days ago I mention in a letter to you about a man belonging to our Regiment being wounded so terribly in the hip. He is becoming very weak I had a long talk with him to day= The poor fellow that he could not live but a few days and wanted me to pray for him= for said he I do not wish to die without having Jesus Christ my Friend. I told him that I would pray for him and that he must do the same for me he said he would and added, O, what a happy time that would be if we could only meet in Heaven

I shall go down tomorrow again if I can to read some verses out of the Bible to him for now Religion and the Bible are his only comforts O how sorry he feels that he neglected Religion so long=

D. Williams is getting along finely= Wm. Davis is quite poorly I am somewhat afraid that he will have a kind of lung fever He is very homesick too I think= I was to have a furlough for ten days this week, But I told Bill that he might go in my place and I would wait untill some other time and he was coming but all at once the furloughs stopped so neither of us can come for the present

He said that he wanted to go home very much in order to see his sister Mary once more on earth.= I like very much to have him go but it was rather hard for me to give my chance of going But if I can come the last of July or the first of August it will be all right=

We had a thunder shower last night and the air is much cooler to day=

I am very sorry to learn that you have had a frost up there has it done much harm I hope it has not hurt the grass=

It is very strange that Susan or some of our folks does not write to me. Wonder if father got that letter I wrote to him after the Battle= Our present camp is in the woods and in a very pleasant place but I do not think that it is as healthy as if it was out in the open field. But it is more comfortable when the weather is very hot. What has become of the Roberts girls I have not heard from them in a great while. I believe they owe me a letter Please give the whole family

(continued)

(June 7, 1863 continued)

my best Respects and tell them that I feel lonesome because it has been so long since I have heard from them Please give my warmest love to Dacky & Mange= And remember me most kindly to all enquiring friends=

Tell Tommy that Dat has a little Book for him and will send it to him and he must learn Frances Ann to read it I have a book for her too which I send in this.= Many thanks for the postage stamps that came in to nights letter

Dont forget to write May Our Heavenly Father bless you all is the earnest prayer of

Yours Truly

Wm Charles

I am very glad that you have sent me a Hankerchief for I had lost mine some time ago.

June 8th 1863

I have just received a letter from Margaret Roberts stating that Mrs. Mills was dead &c &c I was glad to hear from them They wrote to me some four weeks ago, but I did not get they have sent some _____ too & that is lost

Camp of the 154 Regt NYV
Near Stafford C.H. Va.
June 12th 1863

Dear Ann,

You see by the above date that we are still in the same camp= Although the order came last night to be ready to march at an hours notice so we put every thing in readiness, but we were not disturb during the night and it is not likely that we shall go to day= I have no news to send to you.= The weather is quite warm and dry. Wm Davis has gone to the Hospital= I think he would have done better to remain with us, but he thought he better go. He seems to have considerable trouble with his lungs. But I hope he will soon be well again=

At the foot of South Mountain Maryland
July 10th 1863

My Dear Wife, the first part of this you see by the date was written in Va. far away from here on the day we started away from there The order came to start at once so of course I had no time finish my letter You see also that we have been on the move mostly night & day for 4 weeks I have sent you letters from most all of the Cities and vil-lages that we have come through Last Sunday we were very near to where we are to night The Rebs retreated so fast that it is all most kills us to keep up with them It is said that they are retreating across the Potomac as fast as they can but that is very slow and it is said that we stopped them entirely to day They are badly whiped but the end is not yet. they will give us an other great Battle before they are across the River, at least so I think

I have just Received a letter from you dated July 2nd It makes me feel very thankfull to our Heavenly Father that you are all so well. My health is pretty good but I am not strong at all. But if we whip the Rebs again this side of the River we shall stop and rest for a few days at least Most of our Regt was taken Prisoners but 4 to 6 killed Billy Jones was so it is said was taken prisoner. The mail is just going out I will write to morrow if we do not have to move

My love to all

Yours in haste

Wm Charles

Head Quarters 154 Regt. N.Y. Vols.
Camp near goose creek
Some where in the state of Va.

My Dear Ann

In my last letter I told you that we were under marching orders= for some days. so at last the orders to march came and we started from Stafford C.H. one week ago to day at 2 o'clock p.m. Towards Catlets station So long the Rail Road to Manassas junction and to Centerville and last monday we were with in 4 miles Fairfax C.H. where we staid one day then started almost on the double quick towards Leesburgh We are with in about 8 miles of it We came here night before last Why we stop here is more than I can tell maybe the Rebels will not let us go any farther. But most likely we shall go somewhere else to morrow or next day & maybe before morning We came up here to wach the Lee & Ewel and their armies and fight them if we can The last news I heard from the Rebels that part of them had gone to Penn. - - I wish the whole Rebel army would go not only into Penn. but also into New York= in order to see how the copper heads would like it.==&c &c We have been on the go almost night and day since we started and of course we are or rather was very tired. We are suffering very much for the want of water. It is very dry here we had a little shower last night for more than 5 weeks before that not a drop of rain had fallen Of corse the crops what little there is are driing all up. There are some splendid farms this way and the people seems to be well supplied with all sorts of worldly comfort except coffee, salt & sugar= Flour is \$12.00 per Barrel, Corn \$8.00 &c The weather is and has been very hot= The Boys suffered very much from sore feet but they are all getting better===

Billy Jones feet got very sore the first 2 days, so he stayed with me for a couple of days and got his knap sack and gun &c carried=

Dear Wife I have no news what ever to send to you. Excuse me for not writing any more for I am sitting on the ground with the paper on my knee. one of my legs is a sleep I do not feel first rate neither for the Diarhea troubles me some what to day worst than I have had it in long while= Please give my love to all. Tommys Pants are very nice indeed

Trusting that you are all well

I Remain

Very Truly

Wm. Charles

(Letter was most likely written June 19, 1863)

Bolever Maryland
June 28th 1863
Head Quarters 154th Regt N.Y. Vol.-----

Mr. John Charles

Dear Brother= I believe that I do not owe you a letter, but no matter for that I will try to send a few words to you

near South Mountain (June 30, 1863)

Dear Ann you see by the above date that I was about to write a few words to Brother John last Sunday when we were ordered to March, and a way we we went, back to Middletown from there to Fredrick City about 8 miles off. next morning started very early and traveled all day, untill about 6 o'clock we reached Emmetsburg so here we are on the last day of June 1863. It has been raining more or less for 3 days yes four days and yesterday it was very bad travelling We came 25 to 28 miles yesterday, and of course we were very tired indeed I am getting stout again but not very I rode most of the way yesterday But I would much rather walk if I was able. I feel very well this morning only the Diarhea stick to me yet but not badly I have only had it very bad for 3 days then I was pretty sick and could not help myself much=

We are within 2 miles of Pennsylvania line this morning, and very likely before night we shall go to Gettysburg wich is about 10 miles from here in the st of Penn= so you see that I am not more than 300 miles from you (maybe much less) so you can get a horse and buggy & drive down to see me it would not take you only 3 or 4 days!! Would you like the ride It is reported that the Rebels are near Chambersburg I do not know where they are But I am very much afraid that they will prove to much for us and will get back in to Va. again before we can get at them A very few days will tell the story But I do not see How they can get out of this state with out fighting=

How does the folks feel there now. Do not all the men want to enlist I should think that they would because they will not have to go far before they will meet the Rebels=

How would you would like to Have them come to freedom and help themselves to all they wanted and take all the men as as they are doing now in this state to the Rebel army It would serve some of the Freedom boys just right if they were oblige to serve in the Rebel Ranks I think that is their proper place=

I understand that you are to have a great 4th of July in _____ = Dr. J. Sawyer to be President of the day= that itself is enough to make every thing lovely= I am some what anxious to hear from you it is now a good while since I had a letter

Mary or Joel has sent me a Hat but I have not worn it and most likely never will. I sent a likeness in the last letter the wagon wheel ran over it and came very near spoiling it. Please give my love to all the family

Does Frances Ann talk yet Has Dack_ fixed a sythe for Tommy I dare say that he will want to cut some hay

Yours Truly

W Charles

West Minster Maryland
July 3d 1863

My Dear Wife

We came to this place last night, about 11 or 12 o'clock from a place called Tonnytown about 11 or 15 miles from= The fight began day before yesterday at Gettysburg Pa. a place some 8 or 10 miles from Tonnytown Our Regement was in the fight and it is said that many of our boys are taken prisoners some killed and wounded But, I can tell you nothing that I know to be true= for I have been with the Wagon Train since the Battle began

I must stop for I have no more time My health is a little better. We are only 28 miles from Baltimore

I have just heard that We drove the Rebels yesterday. All I know is that there was a very great Battle yesterday as well as the day before=

I will write again as soon as I can learn some facts

It is very doubtful if you ever get this letter May God bless you all is the earnest prayer of yours Truly

W. Charles

In a great haste

Tell the people there not to worry untill they get the facts about this Battle But I am really afraid that many of Our Boys are among the dead=

Please give my love to all=

Camp Near Westminster Md.
July 3d 1863.

My Dear Wife

This morning sent a few words to you or at least I put a letter in the post Office in this place But it seems that we shall remain here for to day that is if the Rebels do not drive our army back towards Baltimore. It seems to be the intention of the Rebels to do all in their power to capture Baltimore if they can do that it will be a horrible thing for us God only knows what will become of our country. The Rebels was in this place last monday and took a great many horses & other property with them= They have a many friends in this state in fact they have many in every state and if the northern people do not do their utmost now the Rebels will certainly beat us. It is reported now that our army has been able to hold the Rebels in check at Gettysville but then in reading the account of this Battle you must remember that our Regiment belongs to the 11th Corps 1st brigade 2nd Division & General Meade is now our commander in place of Hooker why Hooker was removed I am not able to inform you=

The last time I saw the boys was on Wednesday night. Billy James was not very well. I do not think that he was in the fight the next day=

For two days on this march the Doctor made me ride in the ambulance that is the wagon they have for the purpose of carrying the sick and wounded so I got along very well and I shall always be very thank to Doctor Van Arnam & Day for their kind treatment.=

Billy Jones and Sam'l Williams was all right Isaac Williams was with us when I left them Bill. Williams is somewhere in Hospital The 64th Regt. Alfred Lewis Regiment passed us about 5 miles from Gettysville But I could not learn weather Alfred was there or not=

I wanted to go up to the front this morning to see if I could find how things were going on with our Regiment but the Quarter Master said that I could not stand it, and I must not think of it, so I must wait and hope for the best and pray to my heavenly Father to Shield my comrades in these terrible days. How I should like to know how it is with the Freedom boys today= I am really afraid that I shall never see them on earth again. If I had been a little stronger I should certainly be with the boys in this Battle, for I do not consider my life any better than other mens. But still maybe it would be wrong in me to expose myself when it was not necessary=that I should do so= But you know that Our Heavenly Father is as able to save my life in one place as well as an other. In Him let us put our trust and in the end it will be well with us

We went up within 2 miles of Gettysville on Wednesday. The Battle had been going on for 4 hours, & General Reynolds was killed & the Rebels drove our men back from the town and the wagon train was ordered back It rained tremendously most all day and the road was awful muddy We travelled most all night and stoped at Tonnytown most all day then started again for this place coming by the way of Unionvill &c All the villages we came through in this state are very beautiful and quite large This place is almost as large as Lockport I sent you a letter from Emmetburg & just before night I was made glad by receiving one from you with stamps in it & a piece of Tommys jacket. it is very pretty in deed=

(continued)

(July 3, 1863 continued)

I will write you all the perticulars conserning the Welsh boys as soon as I can hear them.=

Please give my warmest love and best wishes to Dack_ & Ma_g_ & father & mother and all Tell Mr Rev. John Williams that I will write to him as soon as I can= as soon as we get settled again you know that we have been on the move now for more than three weeks night & daya and it is very difficult to write at all

Well good by to you & the little ones lots of kisses & unding love

and remain very

Truly yours

Wm Charles

Excuse this bad writing for my hand trembles a little to day for some reason or an other

It is said that our loss was very heavy yesterday the Battle Rages fear fully again to day

July 4=

Nothing new this morning To morrow I will write you--and will let you know about the freedom Boys if I can