

(Undated fragment written from Lookout Valley, Tennessee)

in my last letter to you I sent a couple of crescents little ones-- in this I will send one (for Sergt. Ambrose Arnold boy) he paid me for it, but went away before it was done so I thought it best to send it to the boy--- ---

If you come across any Silver Send to me for every ten cents in silver is worth from fifty cents to a dollar to me I have sent Alice a very pretty one I think it will please her very much. The other day we found a piece of a Rebel Shell, what they threw at us from Lookout Mountain The butt or what is called the fuse chamber was made of a metal something like Brass so the boys must have it made up into finger Rings I have made 8 of them I intend to send one home But no sooner do I get one made than some takes it off I am going up on the mountain in a few days and maybe will come across some more If I do will certainly send some Rings home that you may see what they look like The first Silver I get hold of I will make Mangy a ring I know that she will wear it for my sake Please give Her and Dacky my warmest love and say to them that I have strong hopes of seeing them again in the flesh

Please Kiss the little ones for me=== for to yourself and them I send ever so many=====

Dear Wife= We have professed a good profession before many witnesses, but that is not enough. if we hope of ever gaining Heaven we must not only profess Religion But we must act Religion It is all important that our acts should be a little Better than our profession and let us implore Our Heavenly father to enable us so to live that He will not be ashamed of us In That Great Day

Yours Very Truly

Wm Charles

Head Quarters 154 Regt N.Y.V.
Lookout Valley Tennessee
Dec. 17 1863

Dear Ann,

I have not much of any thing to write to you this evening. The weather has been rather stormy for a few days.

The Regt. got back to day just before dark the boys are very tired indeed- many of them are without shoes and have been entirely barefoot for many days. it is to bad but it could not have been helped

But I have not heard a single complaint the boys take all their Hard ships as a matter of course

Dec 18th 1863

I have been up with the boys all the forenoon listening to their stories and talking some myself about the late Battle Our Regiment has been very lucky this time only 7 wounded and they will all get well Our corps chased Longstreet & his army nearly 300 miles It is no wonder that their shoes gave out.=

Received two letters this morning one from you dated Dec 1st and from Sister Susan She wonders why I do not write to her and to Father if she would write a little oftener to me she would find out.= I believe that I have written to them oftener then they have to me. I will write to her tomorrow and will send Her the Half moon that I have kept for her.

Am very sorry to learn that Ma_g__ is Sick. I hope that She is well by this time. In my last letter I told you that I had made a Ring for her. I send it in this and if it will fit I hope she will accept of it as a token of pure and endless friendship= It is the first Shell Ring that I have made. I Sold one this morning for A Dollar and I have made from a purple colored Shell. I will not sell it for any thing less than two Dollars if somebody does not take it at that I will send it home for somebody It is very strange that the woman you spoke of is in such a condition The Husband and the children are to be pittied it is too Sad What does the woman think of herself, to bring so much sorrow upon her self and family

Has that \$20 Army Allotment check come yet. it is about time=

The pay master was here 4 weeks ago and said that he would send the check to you, or rather to Dack__ as soon as he would get back to Louisville=

It was very cold last night and continues to blow and bluster considerably. I hope that the cold weather will not last long=

Please give my love to Dack__ & M_____, and my best wishes to all enquiring friends

I was told to day that David Williams was not far from here but has not come in as yet Trusting that this will find you all well I Remain yours

Most Truly
Wm Charles

Please send me some postage stamps. I send this 30 cts. to pay for them. Also a little black thread very little will do W. Ch----my health is not quite as good as it has been being slightly troubled with the dysentery &c

Lookout Valley Tennessee
December 24 1863
Head Quarters 154 Regt N.Y.V.

Dear Ann

Your letter of Dec. 11th came to hand this morning, with the good news that you were all mending and blessed once again with good health. Yours of Dec. 8th was received some days ago, in which you spoke about your success in gathering little comforts for the sick and wounded Soldiers.= Mr. Cornall is a poor man very poor of course he could not afford to give any more than a couple of old shirts as to Uncle Evan he is another very poor man very poor indeed He has my heartfelt pity for the the man that cannot afford to give anything to a sick and wounded Soldier, is poor indeed. Cannot give anything to those that have given their all God may pardon such a man but such a man need not look or expect a very great abundance of Heavens blessing

Tomorrow is Christmas a day for all people to be happy. We had a very happy Christmas last year, and a very good Dinner and a good visit from our comrades of the 64th. But ah where are those friends now. Where are they to night 4 of them we know are in the Spirit world= What a change one year has made. One year ago then Alfred was alive and well. The Brave and noble Alfred ever ready to step into the deadly conflict and sweep back the tide of Battle, With his own good sword and trusty boys untill death or victory crown his efforts There too was the Generous Herman a truer Soldier never drew a sword He was brave even to a fault. He took great pleasure in telling how he drew Beed on the Rebels at the Battle of Fredericksburg And the good nature and Brave David (James) was with us too. But alas they will be with us no more they have fought their last Battle, the grass allready grows over their honored graves and we Hope that thier Spir-its are in that Happy World where Blood Shed and Battles are never known

Capt. H. Cheney left us day before yesterday, by him I sent a crescent, and a Ring for Susan, also a little Basket for Sissy I made it from a Peach Stone. Would like to have an other one. I can make one some day, and put it in a letter. I have made 8 of those Brass Rings. the stuff came from Lookout Mountain, and said to be a piece of a Shell. I am going to get more of it if I can. That White Shell Ring would sell here very quick for a dollar but I made it for myself so you can keep it, unless that you find some one that wants it more than you do. That Big Crescent, marked 73 Ohio Vols. is not silver. I picked up from the road one day. In my last letter I think it was the last, I sent a Ring for Ma g. Hope it has come to hand before this time It was a white Shell Ring the first I ever made. We have been very bussy for the last few days, about moving camp and putting up winter quarters. We have a very good place for our new Camp, and we shall be very comfortable when the Houses are all completed

The weather continues quite cold

Dec. 25 1863

Merry Christmas to you all It is quite a cold day with and not very merry with us for we have not have quite enough to eat for the past

(continued)

(December 25, 1863 continued)

week Some of us are actually suffering from hunger The roads are so bad and the mules are so poor and so many of them dead that it is most impossible to draw the rations from the Steam boat landing

Well goodby That Brass Ring is for Dacky Most likely we shall remain here for some time so you better buy a bunch of Envelopes that are all ready stamped and let Mr Jameson or Sam put on the direction for you

Best respects & good wishes to all go and see Sam Williams if you can and tell him to get well

Yours Very Truly

Wm Charles

Head Quarters 154th Regt N.Y.V
Lookout Valley Tennessee Dec. 30 1863

Dear Ann

Your letter dated Dec. 17 came to hand yesterday. That camomile came to hand just the right time for my head was aching and had been for the past night. Made Tea of it three times yesterday & today I feel very well. Tell Tommy that Data Bach feels very glad that he does not smoke any tobacco. When dat comes home he may smoke whenever he does. I can assure you that will not be very often=

Dat is also glad that Sissy begins to talk a little. Tell Ma g that I feel very thankful that she has been able to, like the little ants to lay up in Summer=so much for winter use. That is always the way with the industrious and the wise

Let us all work while it is day for the night cometh in which no man shall work. Yes, yes let us work in this life to lay up a treasure that will make us glad through all Eternity!

I am glad that check has come will send you some money as soon as as I get it. I have lent Lieut. Col. Loomis \$25. as soon as he pays me back I will send it to you most likely we shall not be paid until the first of March maybe not then.= you seem to think that all of my letters come through all right. I hope that they do, but I am afraid that they do not.

I have sent some little money for the children in two letters since I have been here, a crescent for Mary Robert, one for Ann Edwards, and two others for somebody that you would like to give them to one for the son of Ambrose Arnold, also a ring for Ma g. Have they all come. if they have good luck. I did intend to make more crescents to send to you But I have had so much to do of late that it is impossible to tend to such things= We have put up Splendid winter quarters. Goodness it would do you all sorts of good to behold our city. Our houses are far and more comfortable the houses of the people=that have lived here all the days of their lives!!

It may be difficult for you to believe that but it is true never the less.====

The poor Whites of the Slave States are the most ignorant and depraved set of beings that exist on Gods foot stool= I will tell you more about them when I come home. I say come home Dear Wife that time may never come, but yet let us hope so. The other day one of our Boys died his Wife and 4 children are living in Hinsdale where the Q.M. lives. So it became his duty to write to her the sad intelligence of her husbands death. So he did write but some how or an other he could not finish the letter to suit him. So he wanted me to finish it for him so I took his pen and wrote the following words. He that doeth all things well hath deprived you of your husband and your little ones are fatherless but mourn not as our having no hopes for that same Being hath promised to be a protector to the widow and a Father to the fatherless=

Besides your husband died for a noble cause Battling for his country Freedom and the dearest rights of man &c

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(December 30, 1863 continued)

Dear Ann, if those words ever come to you take it all as for the Best The question with me is not weather we shall see one another in this life, But are we prepared to meet each other in Heaven thats the question That is the great question that consumes me the most.

Please give my warmest love to Dack__ & Ma_g_ & Father & Mother
How do you like that Ring I sent to Susan

The weather has been very wet for the past few days and the mud is very deep= the freedom boys are all well. Where is David Williams Dick Lewis & Ben Morgan have gone to Canada have they not? My best Respects to all enquiring friends and accept for yourself and little ones the undying love of

Your unworthy husband

Wm Charles

(Note: The dead soldier Charles refers to was probably Private Isiah S. Washburn of Co. C, who enlisted at age 38 at Hinsdale on August 6, 1862 and died on December 11, 1863 at the corps hospital in Chattanooga.)

Head Quarters 154 Regt N Y V
Lookout Valley Tennessee Jan. 1 1864

Dear Ann

An other New Years day has come a round. And of course I wish you all a happy New Year, not only one new year but many of them.

It is not very happy with us to day because the weather is so cold. yesterday it rained all day, and was quite warm but last evening the wind shifted to the north west and blew almost a hurricane. it uprooted some trees one fell in the camp of the 73. Pa. Vols and instantly killed one man!!

The wind does not blow so hard to day but it is cold. there was a little snow last night just enough to say snow thats all. The first we have seen this winter most likely you have plenty of it by this time.

There are some furloughs granted now, and I could have one if I wished it but not thinking that it would pay, so will not apply for one just now.

You see it would be but a very poor satisfaction for me to come so far for the sake of staying there a few days and then make you feel worse than you do now by leaving again. There is not a man living that would like to come Home better than myself, but I believe that as long as you are well there and I am well here it is nothing but foolishness for me to come

Maybe that before another year is past this war will come to an end then I can come home to stay. Ambrose Arnold has applied for a furlough and most likely will get one He says that he will come and make you a visit himself and wife. Ambrose is a good boy a good soldier and a good friend--good luck & long life to him.= Bill Davis too talks about going Home. do not know whether he has applied for a furlough or not. was told this morning that he had.

I see no reason why he should not have one if he does get one most likely you will see him if you do treat him with the utmost kindness & respects. that is the best way to act towards friends & foes There is no news worth sending to you. John Williams and his Brother was here the other day. they are both well. Have not been able to find the Brother of Mrs. Harris

Have you seen Capt. Cheney yet. What has become of D. Williams. How is Sam Williams How does Frances Ann like her little basket, and How does Mange like that Ring

Must wait untill tomorrow before finishing this so good by now.

Lookout Valley Tennessee
Head Quarters 154th Regt N.Y.V.
January 3d 1864

Dear Ann

We have had no mail for the past three days, neither have we had but very little to eat but I have not felt hungry any yet and most likely we shall get something tomorrow

Bill Davis has applied for a furlough and so has Doctor Day= They expect to start tuesday. With him I shall send a coat, and a blanket I do not need them here you can cut the blanket and make it smaller if you like and use it to keep the children warm when they go from home am not shure but it would make a good over coat for Tommy and leave a nough to make a cape for Frances Ann or else you can use it as it is Will also send by him a coat that you can cut up for the Boy if you like I do not need it here have not worn it for the past Six months. Will also send some little Trinkets for the children, and a Pipe for Dack_ I have had it for more than a year and every body likes to smoke with it. I hope that Dack_ will take comfort in smoking with it too I do not use it very offten myself and for fear of loosing it It shall go home to comfort the declining years of Dack_ Tell him not to be afraid to use it It does not look as well as it did once for it has gone through many campaigns and has seen some hard service It has been used by Generals Cols. Doctors Captains Lieuts. Seargeants corporals and any quantity of privates I have lent it before now and would not see it again for a month or two, But some how or and other it would always come back. So I am determine to give it an honorable discharge from military mouths and let it retire with all its glory into private life.-- my canddle is going out so good night. It is 11 o'clock Snowing a little and somewhat warmer.

Lookout Valley Tennessee
Head Quarters 154 Regt N.Y.V.
Jan 7 1864

Dear Ann

I did expect a letter from you last night, but none came But David Williams did and I was very glad to see him

He brought the shirt & socks all right they are very good ones indeed many thanks to you for them. He tells me that you all look well and are doing finely I am very glad to hear such good news from I am very sorry that you have have to work so hard Tell Dack_ not to be discourage for I will be home maybe before next fall then I will help him some. The cold weather continues, but we do not mind it now for we have plenty to eat

A few days ago I Received a letter from the Roberts Girls and will answer it in a few days as soon as I have time.-- David Williams looks pretty well and feels well only has a slight cold

The freedom boys are all well as far as I know

Have you seen Capt. Cheney yet. There is but little doubt but that Ben. Morgan & Dick Lewis have gone to Canada

I hope that shame if nothing else will for ever keep them from coming in that town again. Would you not like to have your husband be a deserter. you have met Dicks Wife have you. I am very sorry for her, for she did all she could to encourage her husband to be a faithful Soldier and I know that she is ten times as unhappy now than she was when Richard was in the army It would be much better for her to be a Widow at least so I think

Bill James has got to be a tailor for the Regiment a good thing for Bill. He will not have to carry a gun any more not as long as he behaves himself.

Well good by There is no news worth sending to you

Please give my warmest love to Dack_ & Mang_ and Father & MOther. Where is Mary & Sue Is it very cold up there it must be for it is quite cold here but no snow although it looks as if we might have a snow storm.=

Many kisses for you and the children.

Very truly Yours

W Charles

P.S. Please send Postage stamps

Lookout Valley Tennessee
Head Quarters 154 Regt N.Y.V.
January 11 1864

Dear Ann

Last night I received three letters two from & one from Lydia Owens in one of yours was a cake of _____ and in the other some Tea Accept my warmest thanks for them. My Health is very good. in an other letter I have told you that David Williams had come back to the Regiment and brought the Shirt & socks all right He stays with me for the present.

We have had three prayer meetings since he came " (Welsh phrase)" and have all enjoyed them very much.==

I have a good wall tent for myself this winter so you see that it is all growing better with me I try to be thankful for it But am afraid that I am not half thankful enough

I am very glad that you went to see Mrs. Arnold it must have resulted in good to you both=

Am also very glad that you had such a good Christmas dinner= I hope that you and the good friends there will live to enjoy many such times

Capt H. Cheney must have arrived home before this. he started from here on the 22 of last month. By him I sent you & susan a letter with some rings &c. Hope you have got them.

I have no time to write much to day for it is some what bussy with me just now

Dack__ has my condolence for the sad news that came to him from the old country It is only an other warning to us, to be ready for the time will soon come when we too shall be numbered with the dead.== It is indeed a sad news to hear that an other Sister has gone to the spirit World But O how cheerful the thought that time may come when we shall all meet again and together enjoy a Blissful Eternity together Let us daily implore Our Heavenly Father that it maybe so.==-

The weather continues quite cold with us but it is a little warmer to day=

Have no news worth sending to you the boys are all well. Bill James has just come in and wish to be remembered Very kindly to you all. David Williams sends his love and best wishes. David is some what low hearted but his bodily health is improving=

Please give my love to all. let the children have as many Pictures as they want. I do not wish Tommy to go to school much untill he is 8 or 10 years old because it will do him more hurt than good. Tell Sissy that she must learn to talk before long Let them have all the Slates and pencils they wish and all in your power to make virtuous children of them

Yours Very Truly

W Charles