

March 28th 1865
Head Quarters
Camp Sherman
Blair's Landing S.C.

Dear Ann

The boat has just come up from up from Hilton Head. Some of the boys got letters but I believe none came from Freedom.

We are all pretty well Major Cheney complains some with the dysentery, but I hope that it will prove nothing very serious. It is now most ten O'clock and the mail will leave in a few minutes for the Steamer is to return to Hilton Head in about an hour It has been raining quite hard all the morning and the wind blows chilly and cold=

You will please give my warmest love to Dack__ & Marge I would like to see them very much. Not quite six month you know, and then! I hope to see you all Give lots of Kisses to Tommie & Sissy & tell them to be very good children=and to help Marge & Dack__ all they can.

Tell them that they must plant a tree or trees this spring and also some bushes by the house and they must ask Dack__ for little pach of land for their Garden

Yours Truly

W Charles

(On printed stationery of the New York Branch of the U.S. Christian Commission.)

Head Quarters
Camp Sherman
Blairs Landing S.C.
April 1st 1865

Dear Ann,

Another month has gone and I hope that "all is well". There is no news here worth sending to you, in fact we get very little war news, it is over a week since we have seen a northern newspaper.

Yesterday Chaplain Wright, an old minister and myself took a walk into the country to see what we could see. about five or six miles from here we came to a place called Fraziers Plantation. the road leading to it is perfectly level and as smooth as a house floor and arched over by gigantic shade trees with all their limbs heavily hung with festoons of moss! Under the trees on either side is a hedge of climbing rose bushes, honeysuckle and other flowering shrubs. Some of the roses & honeysuckle were in bloom. It is the most beautiful avenue I have ever seen anywhere not in any city have I ever seen anything half so grand & lovely.

of course the Dwelling House or Mansion and all the machine shops mills and store houses and stables had been burned long ago nothing but the negro village is left. The shade trees about the house & garden are not very much destroyed.

not far from the ruins of the house is a large Fig Tree loaded with green figs. I send you a young leaf from it. Then there are Grape Vines, Mulberry (which is a most excellent fruit just as good as the strawberry and somewhat like it only it grows on trees and is of the same shape as the Blackberries), oranges, lemons, Peaches, Pears, magnolias and olives and other trees for which I could find no name. Between the house & the river are walks lined on either side with Boxwood leading down to the water, and right on the bank of the river under a magnificent live oak, there is a spring of sparkling water cold pure as the dew of heaven, something not often seen in this part of the country. I took a long draught of the water and walked among the roses, honeysuckle and jasmin & became almost wild or rather intoxicated with the sweet odor of this once Happy Home

Mr Frazier must have been a very wealthy man for he seemed to have gathered about him all that wealth could procure

But he like thousands of others in this country obtained these riches by robbing others, or at least wronging others, therefore a great a terrible judgement has been brot upon the country. For all that, I would give most anything I have could you have been with me yesterday so that you could have seen how like Kings some of the great slave owners lived. in fact they began to believe they were Kings and because they could not have their own way in every thing they attempted to destroy the Govt and set up one of their own. Hence Oh this Bloodshed Ruin and unutterable "Woe".

If you can read this you can do more than I think you can since I began to write my tooth has pained me so much that sometimes every-thing gets mixed up. you know what the toothache is so you can excuse me.

(continued)

(April 1, 1865 continued)

Wm Jones & Major Cheney are well they have had no letters from home yet We have all things fixed to our liking now---- have very pleasant times as pleasant and cosy a time as we ever had in the service or expect to have while we are in. The weather is very pleasant and fine only the wind blows the sand a little too much some times.

Please give my warmest love to all the friends. accept the largest portion for yourself & Tommy & Sissy with an earnest prayer that the blessing of Heaven may rest or abide with you all I remain

Yours truly

Wm Charles

(Note: This letter courtesy of Charles and Mildred Edmunds,
Farmersville Station, N.Y.)

Head Quarters 154th Regt. N.Y.V.
Camp Near Washington D.C.
June 3 1865

Quarter Masters Department
154th Regt. N.Y.V.
Washington D.C.
June 3 1865

Dear Ann

The first of this week I sent a letter to you and one to father. since then I have been to the city, and saw a great many strange things. William Jones & self started very early Wednesday morning. First we went in to the Capitol Building and that it the most beautiful place that I have ever seen the Senate and House of Representatives are very nice but the President Room is much better.----from there we went down to the Navy Yard. there we saw some of Uncle Samuels Big Guns some so large that I could crawl into them and turn a round and come out again! there were two monitors lying there we of course went on board of them and saw the marks that the Balls & shells of the Rebels had made on them one of these was in the Battle that resulted in the capture of Fort Fisher. God bless the Monitors! From there we went up to the White House, where the Presidents of the United States live when in Washington We of course did not go only into two of the reception Rooms. they were very nice, but not near so beautiful as the reception rooms in the Capitol building the house is still covered with mourning in honor of our father, that was so cruelly murdered. Then we went up to the Patent Office, which is a very large and splendid building filled with all kinds of curious things I think that there is a Patern there of every machine that was ever invented by man. General Washingtons mess chest that he had to hold his dishes for nearly seven years in the War of the Revolution the Plate that he eat from and the cup that he drank from and the spoon & knives are there also his dress & sword!

We also saw the jack knife of the celebrated Daniel Boon and the Razor of Captain Cook the man that first sailed around the world and the Dress that Doctor Kane wore in his artic expeditions, & the coat that General Jackson wore at the Battle of New Orleans, in 1812 and so many other things that I cannot begin to tell you From there we went to the Treasury Department, which is a tremendous big building.= Next we visited the Smithsonian Institute where there is to be seen the skins of animals and birds of all kinds stuffed so as to look almost as natural as life The nest & eggs of all the birds in the world are there. some of the eggs are very small, as that of the Hummingbird and some other small birds, while some of them are very near as large as my head! as that of the great African Ostrich! But the most curious thing that we saw there was a very large piece of metal (something like Iron) that fell from the sky! some years ago!

Well do you not think that we saw enough for one day. Any how we were very well satisfied, as well as very tired by the time we got back to our camp.

(continued)

(June 3, 1865 continued)

Well I have no news worth sending to you. Do you hear any thing from Uncle Thomas Jones I hope that he has got home. I am very Home-sick and every day seems as long as a week There is a slight hope of our getting a way from here in the course of next week, but still we maybe here two weeks yet. The weather is quite warm to warm for comfort my health is pretty good-----

D. Williams is well & sends his best respects to you all. Wm Davis & Wm Jones are also well so is Bill James & Cheney and all of the freedom boys, as far as I know

Please give my warmest love to Dack_ & Ma_g_ and father & Mother and Susan &c, &c. Tel Tell Tommy not to study so hard as to hurt his growth Does he continue to go to school----

Does Sissy know that she has a father. I dont believe she does.-- I expect a letter from you to day.

Yours Very Truly

W Charles

Head Quarters
154th Regt.. N..Y..V..
Washington D..C..

Mrs. Thomas Evans

Dear Mother, you must excuse me for not writing to you oftener than I do, for you must remember that when I write to Ann, I write to you as well. Am in hopes that I should not be obliged to write many more letters while in the service but it is not at all likely that we shall get away from here this week but I do hope that we shall in the course of next week.

You must remember Marge that when I get Home that I shall want lots of bread and milk We get a little milk here but it costs ten cents a quart and very poor skimmed milk at that.----

I am getting more Home sick every day. before the Rebels gave up I did not think any thing about coming home but since the war has come to an end it seems that the time will never come for us to go home

You will please give my warmest love to Dacke_ I hope that I shall live long enough to repay him and you for what you have done for me and mine-----

I have no news what ever to send to you the weather continues very hot, and most of the boys are complaining a little with the bowel complaint &c, but none are sick.

My own health is quite good, only I have a slight inflammation of the eyes, they became sore on the march from Raleigh to Washington and have been a little sore ever since----

The boys complain very much that they get no letters from Home what the reason is we get no letters is of course more than I know. The last letter that I got from Ann was one week ago last Sunday. I expected one last Saturday very much but was disappointed. The freedom boys are all well I have not William Davis for several days. he is at Corps Head Quarters yet, but most likely will come to the Regiment to day or tomorrow.=

David Williams is enjoying first rate health he wishes to be remembered to you all.

Hoping that you are all well

I remain very truly Yours

W. Charles

Head Quarters
154th Regt. N.Y. Vols.
Washington D.C.
June 8th 1865

Dear Ann,

Though no letters come from you, still I must write to you I know not why we should not get a mail====every body are complaining that they get no letters from home

I have no news this morning that would interest you. the weather is not quite so hot, but for some reason or an other we do not enjoy good health here most all of the boys are complaining more or less.

My own health is pretty good. yesterday I had a terrible spell of the sickheadache but it did not last very long.

I think that we shall start from here the first of next week perhaps monday. so you see that we shall be at Home the last of the month. (God willing) Aint you glad; I know are. Tommy & sissy will be glad too.

Give my love to Dacke & Ma_____ & father and mother and all the family, & kind remembrance to all enquiring friends

Hoping to be with you soon

I remain most Truly Yours

W Charles

[On U. S. Christian Commission stationery]

Elmira N.Y.
June 15 1865

Dear Ann

You see by the above date that I am in our own state. We started from Washington city last monday night & reached this place yesterday about noon, & here we are and likely to be for nobody knows how long. most likely for two weeks!! We were mustered out of the United States service last sunday & why we are kept so long is more than I can tell. But there is no use worrying about it, for that will do no good. if I had money I should come home--then come back to get my pay, but having none I will remain here untill the Regt. is discharged

My health is pretty good, although I am not in a very good humor this for it rained last night & one of my socks got soaking wet and it is cold as winter but never mind it will be warm to morrow and we shall get a tent to day, & then we shall live again. but it is to bad to keep us so long when it seems to me we as well be at home.

Give my love to Dacke & Mange--& father & mother, and all the folks.

Much love to yourself and Tommy & Sissy--
The freedom boys are all well

Yours Very Truly
W. Charles

P.S. Have received no letters from you this great while and I Hope that you are all well

W. C.

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

South Mountain Gap Maryland July 12 1863

Dear Ann

It is a great blessing to me to have the privilege now and then to write a few words to you= I do not feel much like writing to day but maybe tomorrow or next day or next to that I can not have the privilege= I have not much news, only I saw a man to day from our Regiment that was taken prisoner the same day as Billy Jones he made out to get away from them after being a prisoner for 2 days There was 157 privates and some 12 Officers taken from our Regiment on the first day of the Battle of Gettysburg=

Our Corps march right through the town and before they knew it they were surrounded by the Rebs @ gobbled up in less than no time and of course the report went forth that our Regiment was all cut up, only 17 men left &c. &c. yesterday I certainly thought that the Battle would begin before now but as yet it has not and I begin to fear that Lee will succeed in getting a cross the River in spite of our Army but still I trust not the next day or two will tell

July 16, near Jefferson Md

Dear Ann

Since yesterday morning we have come from 8 miles beyond Hagerstown Last Tuesday I went up to the Regt. for we expected that there would be a great Battle &c but the Rebs left I heard from Billy Jones & S Williams yesterday they are all right

Well I not wait any more for the bugle is sounding forward We are on the way to Harpers ferry We came over 20 miles yesterday and about 14 allready to day

Good by

Wm Charles