

(Copy of 71-79.1)

Baltimore October 1st 1862

Dear Wife

We arrived at this day (wednesday) at eleven oclock A.M. we arrived at Elmira next morning after we left Jamestown soon after day light we stoped just long enough to get our guns and equipment and got on to the cars again and started for this place about one oclock P.M. yesterday we found 3 or 4 regiments here that arrived yesterday and day before waiting for transportation to washington they have come in lately faster than they could be forwarded from here, myself and the rest of the boys are all well and in good spirits, they could not otherwise be as we have had a verry pleasant ride thus far, but in moments of relaxation from conversation or other amusements a shade of sadness could be seen overshadowing the countenance a sure indication that the thoughts of home and loved ones wer crowding on the mind to be banished onely by new scenes constantly attracting our attention and exciting admiration we shall leave here for washington as soon as we can get transportation probably today or tomorrow I will write you from there is Posible or as soon as I can our destination from there unknown

Yours in haste

J.C.Griswold

Camp Whipple, Virginia. Friday, October 3rd, 1862.

My Dear boy: We arrived here last night about 8 O'clock P.M. we left Baltimore in the evening of the same day that I wrote to mother. we stayed in the cars that night on the road between Baltimore and Washington. got off the cars at Washington in the morning in the morning, lay beside the track untill about 5 P.M. and then started on foot for virginia across long Bridge-we marched about 7 miles and arrived in camp about 8 last eve. the weather being very warm we was all pretty well tuckered out, am without tent or any kind of shelter we spread a blanket on the hard bare ground and one over us we passed the knight and I presume the same number of me never slept sounder than we for we had been 3 nights in succession on the cars and the two last last was crowded about 2 deep in freight and cattle cars, our location is on the heights oposite Washington the prospect here is very pleasant. the Capital across the river is partly in view. the Capitol buildings are unfinished Washington monument being the principal object in view. while all the highest points of land on this side as far as the eye can reach are covered with fortifications and camp tents.

I had but a short time to see anything of the city yesterday. I only viewed the capital building on the outside. the dome as seen on this paper is not yet finished and those massive pillas in front not yet put up, a large number of men are at work are at work about the building. the yards about the capital look like an immense marble factory, a few of the boys wer rather unwell this morning owing I think to the watter they drank last night as they wer verry thirsty when they got here & it being dark they got some watter that was verry poor. I think they will all be right in a short time except Orrin he has ben unwell 2 or 3 days but is around some of the time. the surgeon is attending to him and we hope he will be all right soon, the boys begin to think that soldering is not all fun and if they wer home they might draft and be d -d. Dell Ames says that if you will have a pairing bee he will come to it and says that if you have any idea of enlisting you had better get rid of it soon as possible. we shall not probably stay here but a few days our destination yet unknown but letters addressed as below will follow us, I would write more but have not time now

Yours in haste  
JOHN C. GRISWOLD

John C. Griswold Co.F  
154th Reg. N.Y.S.V. Care  
of Capt. Donnelly  
Washington, D.C.

Headquarters 154th Reg't N.York Vols., Col.A.G.Rice,  
Company F.

October 11th, 1862.

Dear Wife.

It has been about a week since I wrote to Cassius and you probably think it time to hear from me again but I can hardly find time to write, as everything connected with camp life is new to us and it takes us more time to get through with its daily routine than it would if we were used to it. I have been well as usual since we came here untill day before yesterday when I had a violent attack of camp sickness which is prevailing to a considerable extent amongst the soldiers. I was very sick a few hours untill the surgeon gave me a dose that relieved me, it left me rather weak but am getting better so that today I am feeling quite well. We have but two in the hospital tent Bronson & Orrin Dalrymple. Orrin was quite unwell when we arrived here and has been verry sick with typhoid fever and bowel complaint but he is now considerable better. A few of the boys are quite unwell with the bowel complaint but nothing alarming at present. The weather has been pleasant but verry warm, uncomfortably so during the day but quite comfortable during the night. The boys tents are rather low being what they call fly tents, most of them are at work today raising them up by building up from the ground a little with boards or poles & putting the tents on the top. Myself & Lieut. Myers occupy quite a comfortable wall tent about 9 feet square. The Capt. another. We fixed up a pole bedstead with poles for a cord & bushes for straw on which we spread my bed blanket for a bed. The bushes feel rather coarse at first but soon got used to them. The night I was sick the boys took some hay from the teams belonging to our regiment and put into our beds which made it very comfortable (I think the boys will take good care of me when necessary). I have been trying to find time to get to the city to find a daguerian soon but have not yet hope to soon, our daily routine of duties are about as follows. Fall in line for rool call at 5 A.M. 2- slick up the tents 3- get breckfast 4- squad drill 5- officer drill -6 company drill and next dinner. In the afternoon battalion drill and dress parade. The rations are now drawn with more regularity, they got soft bread instead of gard tack, beef or pork, beans or rice, coffee or tea, sugar with coffee, vinegar & salt. I must get ready for battalion drill and finish this sheet afterwards.

Evening: Drill, dress parade & supper being through with I resume the pen to finish this sheet. Since I stoped writing in the afternoon we have got orders to march and report ourselves at Fairfax Court House to General Siegle as soon as transportation for our baggage can be furnished which will probably be tomorrow or next day. It is about 15 miles.

I begin to look anxiously for a letter from home, this may be the last I shall send from here but direct to Washington as before. Much love to you and Cassius and my respects to all my old neighbors who take pains to enquire.

J. C. GRISWOLD

Original in the file of  
illustrated letter sheets.

Fairfax. Oct 18th 1862

Dear Wife, I received yours and Cassius letter this morning and was verry glad to hear from you. It seems you had not got the last letter I wrote you at Camp Seward which mentioned that we had marching orders for Fairfax, On Sunday morning last about 9 oclock orders came for us to move, the men immediately set about packing their furniture and two days provisions which together with their houses on top their napsacks made quite a comfortable load to carry, we started about noon and marched ten miles making 2 or 3 short rests & put up for the night the boys pitched their tents temporarily and partaking of a little bread & cold meat we retired to rest I bunked in with some of the boys, during the night a rain storm came on & the tents not being very well prepared for it some of the boys got a drenching I got off with waking up and finding one foot out in the storm. The next day we marched about five miles to Fairfax whare we are at present encamped, we are something over 20 miles from Washington and seven miles from Centerville which is at present the advanced post of our forces on the Manassas road we learned today that 27 of the 9th N.Y.cavalry boys was taken prisoner a little beyond Centerville yesterday 5 of them afterwards escaped I have not learned who they were or what company the belonged to Fairfax before the war was I should judge about the size of Laona without its watter privelege it was a county seat with a court house and jail Clerks office &c it is the headquarters of gen siegel and presents an old and dilapitated appearance the court house is used for a guard house and one church the inside torn out and used for a hospital thare is nothing to be seen but soldiers and a few darkies

Sunday October 19/62

Today has ben as usual warm and pleasant we have had no drill today but dress parade, we had divine servise at 11 A.M. the regiment formed a square on the grass and listened to a short and excelent discourse from our chaplain from Proverbs 22-1st & Psalms 108-1st When we left camp seward a week ago today Orrin D. & Bronson wasnt able to come on with us & they with several others from other companies wer taken to the hospital at alexdria & we have not herd from them since Orrin was considerable better when we left him than he had ben as soon as I can learn whare to direct to I shall write to him as I am anxious to hear how he gets along whether he has written to his folks or not I do not know but presume he has before this, as he had lost one pair of his drawers and needed a change, I let him have a pair of mine trusting luck to get another pair you have probably heard of the accident to J. Hoisington, he accidentally shot himself in the foot last tuesday while trying his musket in the woods the ball entered his left foot in the ball of the foot or big toe joint passing under the joint came out the bottom of his foot about the middle a little forward of whare it entered it was verry painful for a couple of days but by constantly keeping it wet with cold watter the inflamation was kept down and it seems to be doing first rate. the rest of the boys ar all well except an occasional attack of camp cholera which yet prevails amongst us they are in tolerable good spirits but most of them think that if they wer out of this they could not be caught again but they will probably get used to it and like it better by & by my own health is tolerable good though I have not entirely recovered from the camp cholera my apetite has been very poor but is improving as fast as such food and cooking as we have will admit of we have bread that is tolerable good some time fresh beef sometimes salt pork with coffee and sugar beans rice &c such things as the Brigade comissary keeps we can get at government prices which is quite reasonable except potatoes which are a dollar a bushel we could get butter and cheese if we wer able and do get a little once in a while butter is retailed by sutlers at 30 to 40 cts per lb cheese at 20 cts so we do not deal much in the srticle but our cooking is done by the capt darkey in a rusty sheet iron pans that look as though they needed sand and soap to clense them and is served up on tin plates half washed and greasy, the coffee made is an old tin pale without milk is about the style of our living, but we shall probably get used to these things and call it all right The boys draw soft bread now most of the time, a part of the time fresh beef and then salt pork beans or rice coffee & sugar vinegar and soup, but the cooking of it themselves and crawling under a blanket in an open tent now the nights ar getting rather cool is not verry pleasant

I am sorry to hear that bessey is sick again also Rhoda hope they will get well soon  
Cassius wrote about some sider barrels they are probably not worth much John Ree  
took the only barrel I borrowed of abner he saw abner told him to I had atwo barrel  
one with vinegar in the other a forty gallon whiskey barrel both in the cellar  
there was never any thing said about the buffalo robes but if he claims them with  
the other things let them go.

Write soon

John C. Griswold-

Fairfax October 21st 1862

Enclosed I send you my ambrotype taken at this place, I cannot get any Photographs but you can take the plate and get it Photographed which will Bring the sword on the side it ought to be One of the men of Co.D. died yesterday in his capt's tent adjoining ours. he had been troubled with what I have termed the camp cholera (a bowel complaint) with which we are a most all of us afflicted with more or less, he was taken worse night before last and the disease terminated in congestion of the brain (so the doctors) and he died yesterday at 1/2 past 3 P.M. and was buried today at 3 P.M. the chaplain preached a sermon from Romans 8-18th his name was John Myers from Machias, aged about 25 leaves a wife and 2 small children, we have had 3 or 4 rather cold nights with a little frost which has made it rather uncomfortable sleeping in tents, this evening it is warmer again with a prospect of a rain storm, I sent a letter day before yesterday and have not much to write now hoisingtons foot is getting along as well as could be expected the rest of the boys are as well as usual I have not yet herd from Orrin, the Captain stays on the camp ground for there is no other place to stay, the Boys like him about as well as usual, no liquor can be obtained by the soldiers the sale of it to them being stricktly prohibited so that there is no drunkenness in camp But it is bed time and I must close, give my respects and good wishes to all my friends if I have any

J C Griswold

Write often

Fairfax Virginia Oct.26th/62

Dear Wife I received your letter Dated the 15th day before yesterday which was the first mail we have received since last sunday today (sunday) is a steady rainy day. the first of the kind we have had since we have ben in virginia I had calculated to go to Alexandria to see O. but could not get a Pass, so I shall write to him today and send a letter. The other sent in one she wrote to me, I have not herd from him yet, we have had a few frosty knights the past week the days pleasant & comfortable, today rather a cold rain which is rather uncomfortable in small low tents, and rather leaky at that but it is only a fore taste of what we may expect the comeing winter, we would all of us like to be in old Chautauque a day or two to go to a few neighborhood pairing bees and eat apples Pumpkin pies and drink cider and grow fat, we can get once in a while a glass of coder rather poor, at that for 5 cts per glass & apples from 1 to 5 cts a piece. common sized pies 20 cts a piece cheese 20 cts butter 40 cts which puts those things out of our reach except a little once in a while. so as not to forget the taste

Sunday evening

the rain still pours down in torrents the boys are complaining grumbling swearing &c about their tents, and not without just cause for they are miserable things in cold or storm. we have rumors that we shall soon be ordered to go to Centervill but how soon we no not as we have staid here longer now than we expected to when we came here. there has ben considerable skirmishing near centervill of late between pickets and scouts and we herd yesterday that one of the captains and Lieutenants of the 9th cavalry was killed or taken prisoner. we are watching the movements of Lees army and if they retreat by the way of manassas or cantervill I suppose we shall have to face the music, Hoisingtons foot is doing as well as could be expected the boys are all tolerable well. I think the health of the company is improving but what the effect of this storm will be I cannot tell. 30 men and 2 corporals & one lieutenant are detailed daily for Pickett duty from this regiment they are stationed about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles from camp; B.Wiggins is one of the corporals tonight and a bad night it is to be out, the pickets last night got frightened at imaginary rebels and shot several trees which will probably carry the marks their audacity imposed to future generations

I was much pleased to get the censors and would be glad to get more if convenient; am verry glad to hear your health is as good as it is be careful of yourself and not run to much risk, my health is better than it was, write often, best wishes to all and Love to you

J C Griswold

Fairfax Nov 1st 1862

Dear Wife

Another week has passed and Saturday evening has come again and I sit down once more to pen a few lines to you. there has nothing of interest transpired since I wrote you a week ago tomorrow, it was raining hard then and cold and continued to rain till monday noon when it cheared up and has been pleasant since. one or two frosty nights after the rain & then warm and dry the roads are in good condition the days pretty warm and nights comfortable I received your letter written at Joels was verry glad to hear that you wer so smart and riding about the country; keep up good courage and enjoy yourself as well as you can, my health is quite good now am able to eat my rations tolerable regular except an occasional extra nigger stew. We moved our camp this week about a mile and have just got fixed up a little and now are ordered to march tomorrow morning at eight oclock. destination unknown to us 40 rounds of cartridges dealt out there has been considerable skirmishing of picketts on our outer lines of late. last night the rebs sent a party of scouts to Fairfax station about 4 miles from here and burnt the depo and some commissary stores and captured some 60 of our men. yesterday in the forenoon secretary Chase paid a visit to siegles headquarters some 20 regiments of infantry one of cavalry and a number of field Bateries were ordered out for review the day was fine and the display quite imposing  
The indications today are that there is to be a general movement of the forces about here toward the enemy it is thought that the rebels army is withdrawing towards Richmond and that siegle is to harrass their movements but this is all guess work to us, I have not yet heard from Orrin I wrote to him about a week ago and have not got any answer Austin Munger is quite sick he went into the hospital tent when we moved our camp he is better yesterday and today think he is on the gain and will soon be up Henry M. and some others rather unwell but not serious  
I will write again when we come to another resting place

write often

John C Griswold



In the woods in Va some where I dont no where, said  
to be 5 miles from Warrenton

Dear Wife

Saturday Nov 8 1862

Sitting under the shelter of a piece of canvass I take this opportunity of writing a few lines, not at what moment I may be stoped by an order to march, I stated in my last letter a week ago today that we had orders to march next morning, accordingly we wer aroused at an early hour on Sunday morning by the drums beating a long roll, in a short time the camp was all commotion, getting a hasty breakfast striking tents an packing up such things as wer neccessary to take with us on a march the men took ther blankets an tent cloth, & blouses, leaving their knapsacks and dress coats behind. the company officers tents we left & we are allowed a piece of tent cloth, like the rest of the men we got into line about 9 oclock but owing to some delay in getting the Brigade ready we did not start till about noon, we marched about eleven miles and halted just at sunset 3 or 4 miles beyond centerville the night being warm. after partaking of a little hardtack abd cold meat nost of ~~the~~ of us camped on the ground without sticking up any shelter, but about midnight a slight shower rather disturbed our slumbers, the wind changed to the north and the morning was cold and disagreeable. started early in the morning and marched about 15 miles and camped our rout was over the bull run battle field, twice rendered by the defeat of the of the union forces, evidences of those sanguinary conflicts were plenty on every side in the shape of broken down srtilery waggons broken muskets cannon shot musket balls with an-ocasional skull numberless graves out of some of which portions of limbs or skulls protruded, such sights to the new fledged soldier wer rather calculated to dampen the ardor of his profession, we encamped in an open field well fenced, but the weather being cold no sooner than our arms wer stacked than the fences wer transformed into piles of blazing faggots to administer to our warmth and before morning probably 100 rods of good oak fence had disappeared, while busily engaged fixing up some shelters for the night a terrible uproar in rear of our camp as though all the rebels in rebeldom wer charging upon us attracted our attention, on hastening to ascertain the cause instead of rebels we could discover nothing but 7 or 8 head of cattle being driven toward camp by some soldiers, in a second the boys forgot their sore feet and weary limbs and rushed pell mell after the frightened cattle and in less time than I can write it 7 beeves wer bleeding on the ground, and in an incredible short space of time big steaks wer broiling over the fires, camp kettles were procured and plenty of fresh beef was cooked for supper and breakfast we lay here untill yesterday morning, and I presume the farm yards around suffered some in the way of hens turkeys pigs sheep apples and potatoes, we wer 2 miles from through fare gap to watch the motions of the enemy and to fight them if the undertook to pass through this gap. we are in general Stienwars division of Siegle corpse of the army, yesterday morning we wer again ordered to march and about 9 oclock wer ready to move, it commenced snowing just as we wer ready to march and continued to snow all day the first snow we have seen we moved south for warrenton marched untill one oclock within 5 miles of Warrenton the storm being rather severe he halted in a piece of woods stuck up our shelters temporarily piled on the rails for fire confiscated a couple of sheep & 1 pig in our company for supper and so passed the night today the weather is pleasant and getting warmer a provo guard stationed to stop the plundering the boys are busiing themselves cracking hickory nuts writing telling yarns &c Warrenton was vacated by the rebels day before yesterday and is now occupied by our forces we have ben in hearing of cannading every day for 3 or 4 days, this morning quite spirited in direction of Warrenton Junction, in our two last marches we have left about 13 boys behind 2 or 3 quite sick they not quite able to stand a march we left Austin and Henry both at Fairfax Austin quite sick but better I have not yet heard from Orrin directbut since I commenced this letter Capt. had a letter from Bronson who said that Orrin was getting quite smartI have to write on my knee dont now as you can read it I havent recd any letter since I wrote before got paper would like to hear from somebody

John C Griswold

Alexandria Sunday Nov, 16th 1862

Dear Wife

It is with feelings of sadness and sorrow that I commence another letter to you at this place, Before this reaches you you will have heard of the Death of Austin Munger, I left our regiment on thursday last to return to Fairfax C.H. to look after some sick boys that we left in our hurried march from that place. arrived there late at night, on friday I found the boys in an old house in a room upstairs with a fireplace in it, tolerable comfortable in warm weather, there was 5 of them Milan Griswold, Jackson Hoisington, Henry Munger, T.F.Phillips & W.D.Forbush, I got them into a more comfortable room in a building used for a hospital where they could have better medical attendance, On saturday (yesterday) I concluded to go to Alexandria to see the boys that had gone to the hospital there as we had not heard a word from some of them, arrived here about 10 oclock last night, this morning called at one of the hospitals and enquired if they had any patients from the 154th regt, the surgeon said they had and one of them Austin Munger was dead My feelings at this announcement I cannot describe, so unlooked for & unexpected, as the last time I saw him he thought himself & I supposed him to be gaining it seems that he remained in the hospital tent 2 or 3 days at Fairfax after we left without much medical attendance, and grew rapidly worse, the camp fever run into the typhoid & the erysipelas in the head set in, and then removing to Alexandria in an ambulance all together done its work so that when he arrived here he was past help and lived but a few days, his father left here yesterday at 3 oclock P.M. had I got a train in the morning as I expected to I should have arrived in time to see him. which I much regret

But Austin is no more his moral worth and integrity at home is known at all who knew him, in camp it lost none of its purity and steadfastness, his quiet and gentlemanly deportment unobtrusive and peacable manners his cheerful performance of the duties of a soldier secured to him the good will and friendship of both officers and men, the first victi, in our company to the cause of our country. why should it be one of its best members, When I think of his Mother my heart sinks within me and to carry the news to Henry is a burden I would gladly avoid but cannot,. Orrin is quite smart & is doing some chores in the hospital, I return to Fairfax tomorrow and will write no more tonight

Fairfax Tuesday Nov 18th 1862

I returned from Alexandria yesterday the news of Austins death fel with crushing weight upon Henry the first burst of grief & afterwards his silent sorrow is sad to behold, when he was left here he was quite sick with camp fever, but has got better of that and is now troubled with the reumatis, the doctor thinks he will get over that as he gains strength Milan has the rheumatis in one leg has done duty for 3 or 4 weeks Phillips is better and helps wait on the others, Hoisingtons foot does not gain verry fast perhaps as well as could be expected, This is a hard place to be sick in I calculated to start this morning for the regiment at Thoroughfare gap, but heard that Siegles division was returning here to take the place of other troops here and on the railroad so I am waiting to day to see if our regiment comes this way. When I wrote you last we wer down near warrington the next sunday morning we wer ordered to march again and we wended our way over the hills through valeys and ravines to the foot of bull run mountains along its base to thouroughfare gap in front of which we have lain all the past week with a bettery of 6 pieces each, on each side of us pointing directly into the gap, if Mr secesh should attempt to pass through he would meet with a warm reception I received your letter written at Colsons was sorry to hear you was not so well as usual, do be verry careful of yourself and keep up good spirits if possible. My health is good at present.

Alexandria Nov 20th

I thought I would not finish this letter untill I got back to the company where I expected to find a letter from you but as I do not seem to make much progress that way and you will be looking for a letter before this time I concluded to finish and send it from here. As I intimated before our division returned to the vicinity of fairfax, they sent a number of the sick in advance on the railroad to fairfax station, and as I was at fairfax CH waiting for the regiment to come I was requested to go and see to them, I went down yesterday afternoon & found them in a church without anything

I return to the regiment tomorrow

to eat but a little hard tack went to the post commissary and drew some soft bread coffee & sugar for their breakfast and supper & stayed with them all night, 15 of them from our regiment one from our company, Byron Ables who is considerable sick, this morning I received an order from the surgeon to take them to the hospital at this place where I arrived with them this afternoon I got Byron Ables into the same hospital with Orrin where he will be well taken care of & I think will get rite along. some of the sick did not stop at fairfax but went I suppose to Washington amongst them Byron Wiggins, Lieut. Myers & Frank Weaver of our company, so you see they are getting sick pretty fast. I have had a tour of it & hope I shall not have another it has rained 2 days pretty steady and is getting quite muddy I think the regiment will not stay long where it is

J.C.Griswold

Fairfax Nov 26th 1862

My Dear Boy,

I received your letter dated the 9th of Nov. day before yesterday The reason of my not receiving it sooner was my being absent from the company looking after the sick. I sent a letter to your mother a few days since detailing my experience on that mission.

I returned to the company day before yesterday and found your letter & one from your mother, was verry glad to hear that you are all well, and enjoying yourselves for I have seen so much of sickness the last week that I am tired of hearing the word sick, We are at present encamped neat Fairfax C.H. about 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  miles from our old camp, we do not expect to stay here long nor know ehere we shall go to when we move from here but as we are the reserve of Burnsidess army we shall probably follow him towards Richmond, but it all depends on the movements of the contending armies I have not heard from Byron Abels since I left him in Alexandria but expect to soon I think he will have a light run of fever & then get up again, he is whare he will have good care taken of him Received a line from B Wiggins he is in Harwood hospital Washington he was a little better. Marvin stands it first rate. If our regiment had remained stationary while being acclimated and hardened most all of those that have gone to the hospital would have stayed with us and recovered, but when we are ordered to march those that are not able to go and carry their traps are left behind and are taken to the hospital, you ask how I stand it &c. My health at present & for the last 2 or 3 weeks has ben as good as it would average for a year past I was quite sick for some time & grew poor and had not fully recovered when my likeness was taken, I will answer your other questions in turn, I bought my sword in Washington Price \$15, I have heretofore forgotten to you that the sword was a present from the company. the belt cost me \$4. had a cap in my hand when the likeness was taken have worn it 2 or 3 times but not liking the cap institution I stick to my hat, we have not received any pay yet now seen any signs of getting any verry soon I have got 50 cents left dont know what I shall do when that is gone perhaps we may get some pay but it is uncertain as some of the regiments have not received any in six months.

I was out on Picket duty night before last we are out 24 hours at a time have been out twice before the duties of a commissioned officer on Picket duty are to oversee the picket line, see that the guards are releived every 2 hours examine passes visit the stations frequently and see that the sentinels are awake & doing their duty &c. one of my men the other night got a canteen full of milk and I had a small loaf of bread so we went in for a meal of bread & milk which was the best meal I have had in virginia it rained last night and today the weather is cold and disagreeable hwe had no snow since the fore part of the month and that was all gone next day the weather has been verry favorable thus far Tell Mack when he sits down in the evening to eat apples & drink cider, after he has taken his own rations if there is any room he may eat a peck of apples & drink about half a dozen glasses of cider for me if it wont bust his biler I think I could stand double that rations and not mind it

J.C.G.

Fairfax Nov 27th 1862

Dear Wife

I received your letter of the 19th inst, last evening and was glad to hear that you wer well and at home enjoying yourself, and as you have concluded to keep house I am verry glad to hear that Mrs. Skinner is a going to stay with you

How I should like to have ben with you today and enjoyed a good thanksgiving dinner but as that cannot be we must make the best of our circumsyances we can. The weather here today has ben verry pleasant and comfortable, and on account of its being thanksgiving we wer excused from any drill except dress parade I have ben to Fairfax to see some of the boys in hospital there and also to get some bread & sugar to live on. the boys thare ar doing as well as could be expected except Henry Munger, he does seem to impvove much yet, the most that ails him as rheumatise. I made arrangements to have him taken into better quarters and have more care than he has had. In regards to him and T.S.Phillips being left alone when we marched from Fairfax the circumstances wer these, there was 49 (the figure is 9. Ed) of the boys that thought they could not march. amongst them was Henry, Milan, & Hoisington their names wer given to the surgeon & by him to the medical director to be taken care of; with the exception of Hoisington & Henry they wer all able to take care of themselves & help the others if necessary, the tents wer all struck as they wer quartered with different persons, but as every one had to carry his own piece of tent they had theirs and after we left they pitched thair tents and staid on the ground 2 nights before thare was a place provided for them, the surgeon into whose hands they fel was a poor stick but we wer not to blame, they have a new surgeon today & I think they will have better care.

When we march we have but a few hours notice, & those that are able to go are obliged to go & those that are not are left behind to be taken care of circumstances admit of, Make the best of it, it is a hard place to be sick. I received a line today from B.Abels he says that he is about the same as when I left him in Alexandria; I expect to hear that he was worse, in regard to the rumor of my being captain we have heard nothing of it here & Mr Donnelly holds that position; I conclude by your writing that (Nabley ?) is overseer, tell her to keep a good look out as to the management of affairs & have an eye on Arna, J Reed & C. is Susan going to pedling ink, if so tell to come this way as ink is rather dear. I wish mt stockings wer at home a day or so as thare is some awful holes in the heels I see by the writing on the rapper that you are having some snow, we have had none since the 7th but the nights are quite cold and the boys are not verry comfortable in their little tents, If we knew that we wer a going to stay long they would soon fix up comfortable places but expecting to have marching orders every day they dont like to fix up and then leave; I have blankets and clothes enough while we are marching every little while, would like a something good to eat but as we dont know one day whare we shal be the next it is not safe to send any thing yet Marvin has not had a chance yet to get his box. I wish to could be thare a week or 2 and help Cassius get up some wood I am afraid it will be quite a chore for him to do it. hope he will go to school all the time he can One more ~~were~~ of our company died in the hospital at Washington lately Oscar W Brown of French Creek A noble Bor, respected by all

J.C.Griswold

Camp near Fredericksburg. Dec. 26th

My dear Boy.

After a long time I again take my pen to write a few lines to you to let you know that I am still in the land of the living and in good health. I received you & Morris & ma letter dated the 9th inst. containing 2 dollars. was glad to get a little money as Uncle Sam does not give us any yet. you said that you sent 2 dollars the Saturday previous I have not received that yet. it probably came while we wer on the march from Fairfax it may come around yet but uncertain I was about writing a letter at Fairfax the first of the month when Mr Munger arrived to see Henry & I was verry busy visiting with him a few days when Henry was taken to Washington & Mr Munger left sooner than he expected to, I went to Fairfax with him and when I returned to camp the Brigade had received orders to march next morning early & I had all I could attend to to get ready and no time to write. We left Fairfax on the 10th marched every day and arrived at our present camp on the 17th the teams had fel behind my writing materials being in my trunk & they did not come up in 3 or 4 days. The weather was so cold & we had no tent with fire in it that I could not write untill it grew warmer or we fixed up a place with fire in it to keep my fingers warm. but the weather is now warm & we have a tent with a stone and stick fire place in it & I think it time to write a few lines at least But the Colonels orderly looks in and says that I am wanted at the Adjutants office. I will go and see whats up I am detailed as officer of the day and shall not probably get time to finish this letter till morning, as the officer of the day has to oversee any work that needs to be done for the benefit of the camp; (Evening) the weather warm & mild, we have had but one snow storm since the 7th of Nov. on the 5th of this month while at Fairfax at snowed some 3 or 4 inches then cleared off cold & freezing & we had a few days of as cold weather as I ever saw for this time of year. when we left fairfax the ground was froze very hard, about noon it began to thaw at night we camped in the woods, cleared away the snow pitched our tents but the ground being cold & wet it was not verry comfortable. I made a cup of tea fried some beef steak in watter and turned in. it froze during the knight quite hard, next day it thawed the snow all of and became verry muddy and the mud being verry sticky it made the hardest marching I ever saw, but the weather was warm & pleasant which made it more comfortable. the first day of the march one of our men being quite unwell I carried his gun, the next day I shouldered his knapsack gun and all in addition to my own traps, at night at the command halt I was ready to stop. got quite rested during the night in the morning shouldered them again and started but gave up the gun toward noon arrived at Dumfries a little after noon and stoped for the night & if I was ever tired it was then & I made up my mind that the knapsack must take care of itself but the next day he got a ride in the ambulance and carried his own load. the next day we left Dumfries in the afternoon our rations wer about eat up & no chance to buy any the men were famished 3 hard tack apiece & no meat but when we stoped next night we discovered some secesh cattle which were soon confiscated and gave us a good supper and supply of beef, the next morning I roasted a little meat and made a cup of coffee for breakfast and started again. for supper I had the same with the addition of one hard tack, we camped near Stafford Court house & next day wer furnished with rations of hard tack coffee & sugar which set us all right again we marched Thursday to within 3 miles of Fredricksburg where we lay till next night at 8 oclock P.M. when under cover of night we marched to our present camp near the river about a mile above Falmouth & 1½ miles from Fredrickburg, we are in full view of the rebel fortifications on the opposite side of the river and in shelling distance; but everything has remained quiet since our arrival. The day of the great fight we arrived at Dumfries & wer in hearing of the artilery which was incessant and spirited but which resulted so disastrously to our cause & has dampened the spirits of the army. What the next movement will be we have no means of knowing. While the two armies ar gunning at each other across the river our generals & cabinet with the help of congress and Political demagogues are having a hand to hand fight at Washington in the shape of court martials, cabinet making & quareling over this & that policy of conducting the war, & thus losing the advantage of the best weather I ever saw for military operation but it is getting late & will adjourn till tomorrow and finish if I can get time. DEC 28th, yesterday was a busy day with me in drilling & other duties & in the evening I had to assist in making out a muster roll which has to be done every 2 months so

that I got no time to finish this letter and today Sunday after inspection at 9 oclock I was ordered on picket duty, to be out 2 days & nights, so I brought my writing materials with me and improve some leisure moments to rite a letter, I have just returned from a walk along the river to my station a little back of the river, the rebel pickets wer in plain view on the oposite side of the river, the pickets have in a few instances crossed the river & visited with each other, but this is now strictly prohibited, have not heard from B Abels in some time B Wiggins and some other of the boys have ben sent north they were doing well the last I herd from him The Ames boys are well & all are enjoying themselves this fine weather But I guess this letter is about long enough

J.C.Griswold

The old desk is worth 3 or 4 dollars just as you can sell it I wish you could send me some kind of cravat to keep my neck warm, long enough to go twice around and tie. worsted or silk, black or red, Mereno or anything you think best but not very large a pair of them, you could put one in an envellop & send them by mail, as for my stockings I am going to make a bee some evening and mend them up if I dont get sick of it, I received a letter the other day from the ladies aid society of Sinclearville enclosing an express receipt of a box sent to the Sinclearville boys, there is also 2 or 3 boxes sent to different ones of our company in Washington & we are watching for a chance to send for them how long we shall have to stay here we now not but dont think we shall stay long as we do not generally stay in a place long. I received a letter from Mr Wiggins a few days since the only letter I have received from any my old neighbors and must answer it, give my respects to all that inquire of me, how is elder Bailey & Lons folks

J.C.Griswold

Camp near Falmouth, Va. January 17th 1863

Dear Wife

The package containing the nexk tie came in last night and a very nice thing it is I think I shall make two of it, I had ought to have told you to put a wrapper around it the same as newspaper with the ends open and paid news paper postage, one of our men from Cataaugus had a pair of socks & gloves sent in that way for four (4) cents, was glad to hear from Ann and I have not heard from any one but you & Cassius in that community, yours and Cassius letter was received a few days ago and I was about setting down in the evening of Monday last to answer it, when orders came to be ready to march a 2 Oclock that night so that I had no time to write. at 2 we marched went about eight miles up the river to make a road rite across the rover, was gone two days and one night and are today ordered to march at eleven Oclock so that I shall have to stop and pack up

Jany 18 Camp in the woods 7 or 8 miles above Falmouth

We arrived here last night or rather in the afternoon at the same place we stayed the other night, we are sent here to clear away places to plant artilery on the bank of the river, make roads & I suppose to assist in laying a pontoon bridge to cross on, the pontoons are near here now. the weather for two days past has been quite cold but fair not a flake of snow since Mr Munger was here & but 2 showers of rain. Waggoner had a letter from Milan the other day he is in delaware Co. Penna hospital thinks he shall get a discharge soon Cassius asked whose tent I carried on the march it was Wm Harper, he is well now as a good many others might have been if they had got up a little gumption and stayed with the company and not got so swful homesick. Ann wrote that Dele wanted you & Cassius to come out thare I am willing you should go but do not know where the means ar to come from to carry you thare as I have not yet received any pay. should be glad to furnish you the means to go if I had it, if you thought you could stand the journey, as to sending a box you say you guess I dont want you to send one. I should be glad to get one but I thought it would be more trouble to you in your condition than benefit to me and as thare was no one else that felt any interest in the matter I concluded I would not send for any I told Marvin to tell Cassius to send me some leather to mend my boots, it is about impossible to get any such things here even if I had the money, we do not know how long we shall stay here. brought our tent cloths and baggage with us, we had our tents at Falmouth all fixed with fire in them and it is rather tough to sleep in our little shelters with fire out doors these cold nights but I think it is going to be warm again, shall send this as soon as I get a chance

J C Grosword



Headquarters 154 Regt  
Near Falmouth Feby 4th/63

Dear Wife

you will probably think that I have waited a long time again before writing to you, But since I wrote last we have had a very busy time and some hard work & marching your letter of the 24th ult is received and I am glad to hear that your health is still improving and hope that you will be careful with your health the greatest blessing in adversity. I should have liked to have been to that donation party verry well but it will not do for a soldier in the field especially in the winter to indulge too much in the thoughts of home and society and the comforts to be enjoyed there for it only serves to make him dissatisfied with his lot which he cannot change.

Feby 5th evening

I commenced this letter last evening sitting in a snug cabin we had just completed with a fire place in it & though we are having the coldest time since we came to virginia we could keep quite comfortable and wer indulging the hope that we should be allowed to stay and take the comfort of our labor till better weather, but before daylight this morning orders came to break camp & march at 8 Oclock there was awful swearing in the Army of the Potomac not so much on account of the march but the idea of camping out at night without tents in such inclimate weather & tonight we are huddled camp fires with our tent cloths put up in the shape of sheds with the fire in front. the snow has changed to rain & altogether it is quite disagreeable, where our destination is we no not but if it keeps raining we cannot go far some say that Siegles core is to be sent to tenesee

Feby 6 evening

we were ordered to march at 8 Oclock this morning but owing to a Bridge being carried away we did not start till afternoon it had rained all night and the going was awful we are encamped to night in the woods near Stafford Court house where Siegles Core is mostly encamped whether we march to morrow ir not we no not.

Feby 7th

the indications are that we shall stay here a few days probably just long enough to get fixed up to be comfortable and then leave for parts unknown, we have built cabins three times this winter and are going to work at it again. since I wrote last we came near crossing the river but a rain storm set in which made it so muddy that the artilery and wagons could not be moved and the movement failed. whether for better or worse. we cannot tell. but the fates seem to be agains the Army of the Potomac as there is a choice to end this letter I must close J.C.G.

Feb 7th 1863

The paymaster made us a visit last saturday & paid the men 2 months pay only & paid the officers but one month & 6 days or from the 26th of Sept to the first day of November which gave general dissatisfaction & as I had ben living a spell on credit & shall have to keep some to live on till I get more I shall send but 75 dollars home at this time & as Dr VanArnum our surgeon starts for Cattaraugus today I shall send it by him, he will send it by express to you in care of Elsworth directed to Fredonia but probably will go to Dunkirk you can pay for the grave stones & let them wait for the rest till I send more, use what you need yourself & if Taylor & Jennings will take the rest and agree not to close on that mortgage untill I can pay more you may do so. if they wont wait ~~me~~ do what you like with it, if they should conclude to do so do it in your own name and take a receipt & agreement in writing that they will assign the mortgage to you when paid up or so much of it as you do pay but do not have the money endorsed on the bond or mortgage you can get Elsworth or some one to do it for you.

dont let me money get into their hands to apply on any other debt. as to the place being sold on the loan mortgage I think there is no danger if the interest was paid last fall for it is not yet due but I must close if I send it today. give my respects to all. I will write again as soon as we get in a situation to. write as soon as you get this letter

John C Griswold

Camp near Stafford C.H.  
February 22d 1863

My Dear Wife

your letter of the 18th came in last night & I was glad to hear from you again you think I am getting careless about writing perhaps I am to much so, but there are a hundred things continually arising to hinder one from writing at any time he would wish but I will try to keep even with you if I can, my health is not as good at present as it has been in marching to this place in the storm & lying on the ground nights & then working hard 2 or 3 days to get a cabin fixed up so we could be comfortable I caught cold & overdone & was taken quite sick & was threatened with a fever. I called in the surgeon a week ago today he gave me some powders & ordered a dose hot pepper tea on going to bed which gave me a good sweat that broke up the fever so that I have been gaining since and am now quite smart, we are having a good deal of stormy weather, last Monday night it commenced snowing, snowed all day Tuesday fell about 5 inches, Wednesday it rained all day & night & took it all off & left nothing but mud and water. it remained pleasant & warm till last night it commenced snowing again today it is 6 or 7 inches deep & still snowing but the boys have all got their cabins built up with fire in them so that they are tolerable comfortable I have heard nothing of Orrin Dalrymple since I went to the hospital with Byron A. nor heard anything about his taking the money only what we have heard from home, Ab Goulding has been quite sick but is recovering Charles Brown whom we supposed died on his way to the hospital after we left our last camp is in a hospital in Washington, Marvin is tough as ever the boys are generally well and in good spirits we do not drill unless the weather is good but have to take our turn picketing which is rather hard when it comes in a snow storm, but to offset the storms we are living at present on the top shelf, hard tack & salt pork are laid aside for a season while our table is loaded with all the delicacies & luxuries of the season, dried beef & sausage Pies & cakes, Preserves of all kinds Butter & cheese of the nicest flavor, &c. if a person were to look in at our meals they would suppose we were living at a first class hotel our boxes came a week ago today but being sick at the time I did not open mine until 3 days after for fear I should kill myself eating; the Captain received one at the same time also. several others in our company. I have not yet opened the cans as the Captain had some of the same kind and we are using his while they last, it all came in good condition except the crackers that were thrown in loose were broken up considerably the box was marked on the bottom & from the appearance it came bottom side up most of the way, the pies were somewhat soze but perfectly good & not having seen a pie in so long a time they seemed the best that was ever made; & so with all the rest of the eatables, those apples (I wish they were bushels instead of single numbers) puts one in mind of long evenings passed in the society of the donors of this treat, give my thanks to those who so kindly remembered me in filling this box it troubles us some to think of coming down from such a fare to hard tack salt pork & coffee, but soldiers must learn to accept the good as it comes & make the best of that which is not so agreeable. Today being Washingtons birthday we are getting up an extra supper Col. Waggoner gave us some buck wheat flour that came from Charlotte which we are making into Pankakes. (I think that maple sugar will do them up brown) some of Mrs Mathews sausage Mrs Donnellys preserves some butter cheese &c will make a supper that cant be beat in this camp at any rate,

you ask me what you shall do, this is a hard question. but I can tell you what you must not do that is, doing work that is beyond your strength and endangering your health until it is more thoroughly established if you wish to go to Michigan on a visit in the spring do so it will probably cost you about 10 dollars a piece if you keep house you must have some one to stay with you and do your hardest work if you after hire a girl & use some of the money I send home to pay it for I had rather do that than to have you undergo what you have or you must hire your board & pay in the same way so that you will not feel beholden to any body for it, one of the courses you must adopt and take your choice as circumstances seem to direct, but do not by any means go to work beyond your strength, as it did not cost me anything to get the box I return the money you sent with the express bill, I have never seen the first 2 dollars you sent it probably came while we were on the march from Fairfax, a number of others lost some at that time, we think that we shall get pay from the 3rd of Sept

but we are not sure of it yet it will be mean if we dont I am in need of a few things that I cannot get here and it is difficult to get a pass to go anywhare to get them my hat is nocked to pieces and I need a new one, also a pair of suspenders and a pair of buck skin gloves, If you and Cassius would be to the trouble to git them & put them in a box & send by express the same as the other was sent I will send the money to pay for them for I think I have enough to do it and last me till I am paid again, if you can do so my hat wants to be  $7\frac{1}{2}$  size at least not smaler than  $7\frac{3}{8}$  I would like if you could find one a little taller than the one I wore from home crown a little tapering rim not very wid tolerable good quality worth when I came away about 20 shillings, a good pair of white or buff buck skin not sheep skin gloves & suspenders; do the hat up in some papers, put the gloves & suspenders inside of it & fill it up with dried apples so it will keep its place and then fill in around it with dried apples doughnuts or anything that will not stain or injure the hat. there was one pair of taps in the box but I had borrowed a pair to fix my boots and shall need more if Cassius can get a piece of leather good for taps and have it cut wide enough for one or two taps he may send 8 or 9 pair & I will pay for them they will take but little room and they cost 50 cents a pair here, the box should be iron hooped as one end of the other was, if you cannot find a hat that you think will fit me you need not trouble yourselves about the other things. If you send them do so as soon as you can conveniently so that they will get here before we move again; write as soon as you ascertain whether you send them or not and what the cost, if you do I will send the money

J.C.Griswold

March 9th 1863

Dear Wife

your letter of March 1st came night before last and last night another containing the receipt for the box, I am verry glad to hear that you are yet well and also all the rest of our friends your last letter was truly refreshing, it seems so natural to take a regular feeling occasionally, if I could only see your eyes snap the scene would be life like & exilerating. But as to writing about old women having babies as you speak of I have neither wrote nor seen any thing of the kind But if you wer away from home & if you wer informed that the appearance of one your best friends indicated dropsy, how could you help feeling anxious about it, & want to be kept posted in regards to it especially when it was intimated what kind of Dropsy it was, so no more of your scolding about that. but rattle to bang goes the drums Picketts are ordered to fall in & I must roll up my blankets and cram 3 days rations into a work pocket & start for the woods on a 3 days & nights Pickett tour, & shall have to leave this till I return,

March 13th I have returned from Pickett half dead for want of sleep. the 2 first nights I slept about 4 hours each, the last night we wer not allowed to go to sleep at all as there was fears of an attack on the Picket line a force of 500 wer ordered out to reinforce the Pickets & altogether we had quite an exciting time but it passed over without any disturbance,. Captain Donnelly has just come in, he bringsthe likeness of a gal I would like to see. I think she has improved in appearance considerably since I left, But Capt thinks a ten days furlough does not pay verry well & it is harder to get away than it was the first time, you say that Cassius has hired out for 14 dollars per month, I dont know what wages are but I dont think he ought to work hard enough to earn full wages, & if the work is to hard for him he had better quit and work at liter work and less wages. about that cost you may pay a part of it if you think best I will enclose five dollars to pay for those things I think I can get along till we are paid again write me and let me know if you get it & also the 2 dollars I sent before but I must close for the mail

Truly yours

John C. Griswold

In Camp near Stafford Court House Va, March 16th 1863

Respected Friends

I have neglected answering your letter so long that I had almost come to the conclusion that I had not better do so until I heard from you again, but fearing that I should have to wait longer than I should wish to I concluded to write a few lines hoping thereby to hear from you again. When I received your letter circumstances were such that I could not answer it for some time & I have since been waiting a more convenient season to write. I was much pleased to hear from you as I had not up to that time heard direct from any of my neighbors since I left home and began to think they had forgotten that I was in the land of the living. My health is quite good at present and has been so (excepting 2 attacks of camp fever) ever since I recovered from my sickness when I first landed in Virginia. The health of the company is also good at present there being only 3 but what are able to be on duty at present & they are recovering; they are Augustus Burnham Adson Ames & A.H. Goulding. We have been in this camp a little over 5 weeks which is the longest that we have been in one place since we came here the boys are all enjoying themselves very well at present having built themselves comfortable quarters & have plenty to eat & of good quality such as it is, of course not many nick nacks, when the weather is good we drill some every day, if stormy drilling is dispensed with, our hardest duty is Picketting. We have to go out once in about nine days on a 3 days & nights tour, of course we do not get much rest during the time which makes it rather fatiguing our division of the army lies upon the outer lines, consequently more exposed to the raids of rebel cavalry & we are obliged to throw out a large picket force, but in spite of all our precautions Stewart occasionally gets the start of us and makes a dash into our lines & makes some captures, as he did at Fairfax Court House a few days since carrying off an acting general & quite a number of horses, the general could be spared, as there are a plenty of them but horses are getting scarce, our numbers are considerably reduced although there has been but 2 deaths from our company there are quite a number in the hospitals, most of whom as near as can learn are well enough to be in the company but are hanging around the hospitals in hopes of getting a discharge, we hear that those that have been discharged get home fatter and healthier than they ever were before. There is nothing very Pleasant or agreeable in soldiering, still it is no worse than I expected we generally get enough if soldiers fare to eat except on marches when we generally get short & have been 2 or 3 days at a time with but very little to eat but what tries the endurance of the men the most is lying on the ground nights, especially during the winter season when the nights are cold and damp. After marching all day & getting about tired out, build a little fire cook a cup of coffee & little meat with some hard tack for supper & then crawl into a shelter tent with the ground and air damp and cold is what tires the constitution more than any thing else, all the way that a soldier in the field can make his lot endurable is to take no thought of the past or future, let past seem to be forgotten and tomorrow take care of itself and make the best of the passing moment and get what enjoyment he can out of surrounding circumstances, but his mind will at times go back to times past when enjoying the comforts of home and the pleasure of mingling in the society of friends and all that makes life pleasant; and then compare it with his condition in camp, he finds that contrast not very encouraging, but we are learning to take things as they come and not fret about that which we cannot control. The prospect of a speedy termination of the war seems to be as remote as ever, although the army of the west seems to be making some progress & we are waiting with anxiety to hear the result of the Vicksburg & Port Hudson expeditions, the soldiers of the army of the Potomac by repeated defeats are very much discouraged as to the result of the contest, on our arrival at Falmouth 3 days after the defeat at Fredricksburg we found the soldiers in a condition bordering on insubordination some regiments went so far as to declare that they would never go into another fight with the rebels, that there was no use trying any more for we could never subdue them by force, that it was nothing but a damned nigger war, and that sooner it was settled on some terms the better, the democrats in the army advocated the same idea, this together with the dissensions among the generals & in the cabinet & the extremely divided sentiment of the people at the north, created a feeling of despondency in the mind of the soldiers that was truly gloomy and discouraging, but I think this feeling is

gradually wearing off and a better feeling arising in the minds of most of the soldiers caused partly by a change in commanders & partly by an increased unanimity of sentiment in the north, My faith in our final success is stronger today than it was 3 months since All that is wanting is a united effort & a firm determination on the part of the whole people to sustain the government; & it resolves itself into a mere question of time as to our final success.

We are having considerable stormy weather this month frequent flurries of snow but none to stay any length of time, Moses Stevens returned to the regiment today We had a visit from T D Phillips last week he thought the sight of the elephant well paid the expense We do not expect to stay here a great while longer as soon as the roads get settled we shall probably be on the move. what the movements will be we have no knowledge, but expect that fighting we go, will not keep us idle long. I received a letter from Byron A. a short time since was glad to hear from him tell him that as soon as I get some more pay I will send what I owe him I think Mack had better come out and try a short campaign and if it agrees with him we will do what we can to get him a Position

But I must close for the mail

write soon & give all the news. give my respects to all that may enquire

A kiss for Reina (?) & love to all the young folks

yours Truly

John C. Griswold

W.M. & C.C. Tarbox

Camp near Stafford C.H.  
March 22d 1863

Dear Wife

your letter of the 15th inst came to hand last night and I was glad to hear from you again, it seems you had not got my last letter but have probably received it before this time I sent a letter to Cornelia last week I received a letter from Ann some time ago it came when we wer on some of our marches & I could not answer it then & have forgotten the directions I had forgotten about that Public money there was a little due the district at the meeting house I forget how much I think Mr Rice wont know, if you have got the money pay it if not they must wait till I get pay again. which we expect before long I see you keep 'jawing' about that case of dropsy, as to my saying or mistrusting any thing about it before I came away that is all gammon, it was mentioned to me in a letter and of course I wrote a few lines in reply what others have wrote I know nothing; the 9 montas panic rages here quite hard, a good many think that they cannot keep us only 9 months But I think we are fast enough for 3 years if they want us; I am in just as good condition to resign as tho I had not enlisted, as to getting a furlough it will not come our time for another in some time; and before that we shall probably be on the march and no more can be got, but if I could I fear you could not make up your mind to let me come back & then I should be in a fix. but some think that the war is agoing to end soon & we shall all go home, we all hope so it may, we had quite a snow storm day before yesterday, to day it is warm and pleasant amd the snow all gone Moses Stevens returned to the regiment a few days ago. A. Burnham is getting better Edson Ames has got quite smart, Marvin Orrin & the rest well as usual if Mr Peebls is married give him joy for me you saw he had bought the Skinner house what has he done with the other I presume it will be cheapest for you to hire your board, but do what will make you most comfortable but do be careful and not overdo I wrote in my other letter that I was afraid Cassius was trying to earn to high wages, if the work should be to hard for him he had better quit and do lighter work for less wages for it seem to me that he ought not to do a mans work; tell him to have good courage and hope for better days I cannot tell what I feel about it, the box came the same evening that I sent the last letter it came in good time and in first rate order the things all right & just what I wanted the pies & cakes fresh & good I suppose it does not pay the trouble to send such things but it is comfortable to have a little something good to eat once in awhile especially when it comes from home. Dell sends his respects to all, give my love to Kate for her kind remembrances of me & my respects to all who may enquire of me

Yours with love and esteem

J. C. Griswold



Camp Manly Va. April 5th 1863

Dear Susan

Sunday evening; Coming in from Pickett this after noon I found your letter of the 29th awaiting me, & not having answered your other one which came a few days ago I concluded it was time to hurry up my cakes and begin to write or the old lady would be down on me with another curtain lecture, so notwithstanding I did not get much sleep last night I concluded to write some tonight and finish when I could.

I received a letter from George at the same time I got your other one & will answer it soon as convenient I also got a letter from Cassius last Friday night and answered his on Saturday (yesterday) & was agoing to write to you but was detailed on Pickett duty for a three day & night tour; about dusk last night it began snowing & blowing a perfect gale which continued all night, a worse night to be out I have not seen in Virginia. the snow this morning was plumb eight inches deep, but the ground not being froze it keeps melting. in consequence of the storm we wer relieved to day and returned to camp We are still at our old camp near Stafford, how long we shall remain we no not but the indications are that there will be a move as soon as the roads & weather will admit; an order came some 10 or 12 days ago to stop granting furloughs; Probably in anticipation of a move. but last Thursday the order granting furloughs was revived again, but the probability is that by the time one set of furloughs expire they will be stoped again, but if they continue long perhaps I may get a chance in by and by if I concluded to take one; We are takeing it rather easy at present. when not on Pickett if the weather is Pleasant we drill some, take our turns in doing camp guard duty and back our wood about half a mile. this is the most laborious part of the work, but lately the officers have had most of their wood drawn; on the whole the boys are having quite an easy time and are getting fat and lazy. The Chaplain has a large tent close by ours where he holds prayer meetings on week day evenings 2 or 3 times per week and preaching on the sabbath, but the officers are required to attend tactic recitation every week day evening & generally on pickett or camp duty Sundays, so that our opportunity for attending meetings are rather limited. I think of adopting your advice in regard to spending the money as fast as I earn it for I can do that here & not half live at that. but as to your coming down here to help me I dont know what in tophet I could do with you here, you could not march & keep up & I have no idea they would let you ride one of the mules for they are so poor they can hardly carry themselves, so on the whole I guess you had better stay where you are and what I dont spend here I will send to you to pay your way & do what you like with; but as this is a great place to spend money you will probably have but little to be troubled with. as to what you shall do yourself I dont see as you need to worry yourself about it, if you have a good place to stay just make yourself at home, eat your rations when dealt out to you, spin street yarn as much as you are able go a visiting when you can and wish to; be as lazy as possible; keep as contented and cheerful as you can & not trouble yourself about that which cannot be avoided; pursue the course thoroughly through the summer & if it does not agree with your system & improve your health I shall have to prescribe some other course for next winter; & as I cannot be with you all of the time to attend to it I hereby give Sally, Power of attorney to see these rules enforced: So just make up your mind to submit to the rules & regulations of the War department. I see that you are not disposed to drop the quarrel about that case of (what is it) but are trying to wring Sally into the mess. Well pitch in with what help you can get & I will try to stand it. I haint said who had the dropsy but if you come down to hard on me I shall let the cat out of the bag & then I guess you will hush up.

April 7th the weather to day a little warmer the snow nearly gone if this is a fair sample of spring in Virginia I dont see as they are much earlier than in Chautauque, but I presume it is cold & backward there  
 Monroe Young started to day for Sinclearville on a ten day furlough but this will not reach you in time for you to see him, I sent those white shirts by him to be left at Mrs Donnellys, also my commission, also a specimen of petrified wood which I saw taken out of a hole in the solid ledge of rock, Moses Stevens got it out, he had to crawl into a hole the size of the tree, 30 feet to get it. I marked the initials of

my name with ink on it, I send it to Cassius, you can send over by some one going over there & get them. you did not say whether that five dollars I sent came safe or not. those bees I reserved just as I told you. I think I told him that I should let you do as you saw fit with them at any rate I gave him no jurisdiction over them, If Abb cant pay that interest on the loan you need not trouble yourself any more about it but use the money as you see fit we are expecting to be paid again every day I received a letter from Zebina Dalrymple some time since requesting me to write to her about Orrin as she had not heard from him in a long time, but he had wrote himself and got an answer & wrote again himself so I have not written to her. he says that when By left the hospital he was owing him some money & that By told him if the money came to take his pay out of it. I am sorry that Abner has not done as he agreed to with susan, he agreed to get his father to sign with him or secure her some way it is no concern of his whether she gives up my note or not; that snuff is hard on sneezing it has thrown a number of the boys out of their boots besides causing near dislocating the necks of several. B Wiggins & Henry Munger has not yet returned to the regiment. we heard they wer both in convalesent camp. give my respects to all

Write soon

Yours as ever

J. C. Griswold

I shall have to beg a stamp for this & they are verry scarce, so if you do not hear from me again verry soon you will know the reason

(Copy of 71-79.21)

Camp "John Manley" 154th Reg't N.Y. Vol.,  
1st Brigade, 2d Division, 11th Corps, Army Potomac.  
Near Stafford C.H., Va. Sunday, Apr. 12, 1863

Dear Wife,

Having received orders to march tomorrow morning I thought I would write a few lines and not wait until I got a letter from you. I rather expected to have got one tonight but did not and if we move in the morning as we expect to now, we may not get a mail again in a week or have a chance to send one. We were not expecting to move quite so soon but orders came this afternoon to march tomorrow morning. Our destination of course is unknown to any but the general officers, but as there is only 2 brigades of this Corps to go tomorrow it is expected that we shall go to some of the fords on the Rapahannock to do Picketts duty and repair the roads preparatory to another advance to the front. A. Burnham & Edson Ames are not yet well enough to go with us. Henry Rice has been quite unwell of late & will be left behind also T.S. Phillips on account of his leg. B. Wiggins & Munger has not yet joined us. Abb Goulding will get his discharge in a few days I expect his papers has gone to headquarters for approval. He is reduced to a skeleton almost by cronic diahrea, the rest of the boys are well and in good spirits. It will come rather tough at first to leave our comfortable bunks and camp out again, but we hope we shall not have any more very cold weather. It has been cold and stormy here untill 2 or 3 days past which has been quite warm and spring like & reminds me of the warm sugar that is being made up north.

We have had two reviews the past week of this Corps of the Army. One by General Howard our new commander & one by father Abraham. The latter created quite a sensation & passed off quite creditably.

I received a letter some time since from Ann G. & one a few days ago from Albert & Herry, which with yours I have answered before leaving here, but our notice to quit is so short I shall not have time to do so. excuse me to them for the present & tell them not to quit writing, as I am glad to hear from them often. The Paymaster is to be here tomorrow but whether he will follow us or not I cant say. I have no news to write as there has nothing transpired of late. I shall write again as soon curcumstances will admit.

John C. Griswold.

(copy of 71-79.21)

Original in file of Civil War  
illustrated letter sheets.

Kellys Ford Va  
Sunday April 19th 1863

Dear Wife

Hear we are again on the banks of the Rapahannock watching the rebs on the oposite side of the river with our battery of 3 inch rifled cannon looking defiance at them from a rise on ground on the bank, while in turn they are grinning at us with an equall number of artilery pieces from the oposite side, thus presenting the appearance of two killkenny cats with their backs up ready to pounce upon each other & tear one anothers eyes out

I received your letter dated the 6th inst last night which was the first mail we have received since we left our old camp last monday morning. I wrote one last Sunday & one some days before neither of which you had received before you wrote but have probably received them before this time. We arrived here Tuesday afternoon after two days march the last day we wer hurried through pretty sharp and marched about 18 miles by middle afternoon which tired us verry much, after lying in camp so long & being out of marching practice. We learned on our arrival here that we wer sent to this place to support a battery and prevent the rebs from crossing at this place while a heavy cavalry force wer to cross above here at Rapahannock Station and make a raid towards gordonville, but the night after we arrived here a terrible rain storm commenced, which continued without cesstion for 24 hours swelling the streams and rendering the roads almost impassable, so that there has been nothing done yet; whether the expedition will be abandoned or not we do not know. When we left camp we expected to return in a few days & left our baggage and every thing except what we wore & a blanket, but yesterday orders came to send the teams for our napsacks & baggage, so that we shall not in all probability see our old camp again & whither we go from here or how soon we know not. Captain Donnelly left us yesterday morning having resigned; who the Captain will be is a little doubtful, thare being a plenty of Cattaraugus asperants for all such positions, you spoke of those mortgages, they are mentioned in the deeds of course the weather since the rain is pleasant amd warm during the day the nights rather cold I shall send this tomorrow if thar is a chance if not as soon as I can, we heard that the paymaster was at the old camp & expect him here when the teams return

Yours truly John C. Griswold

Sunday 26th 1863 We are still at this miserable god forsaken place called Kellys Ford where we cannot communicate with out friends nor hear from them or what is going on in the world outside of our lines which are very limited in extent, but if the rebs do not nab us soon we shall probably be in a situation to send and receive our mail occasionally, as our folks are about opening a railroad that runs in about 5 miles of us. I wrote the forepart of this sheet last Sunday but have had no chance to send it yet; how soon there will be a chance we no not the report is that we are to be relieved by another Brigade and go back to our old camp to be paid but we hear so many reports that we do not put much confidence in them we had another severe rain storm last week which keeps the roads in terrible condition. We are all well as usual we know nothing of what is going on around us therefore have no news to write

John C. Griswold

Camp 154 N.Y.V.

May 14, 1863

Mrs. Jn. C. Griswold-

We have just heard from Your husband by way of flag of truce. He is not dead but severly wounded & a prisoner. We did not learn particulars. He will probably recover.

Yours respectfully

H. C. Loomis  
Lt. Col 154 Ny.

He is paroled & will be in camp tomorrow & I will write you particulars then -

H.C.L.

(Copy of 71-79.26)

Libey Prison Richmond May 22 1863

Dear Wife

I am here and in the hospital department I was wounded in the right arme near the shoulder no bones broken I am doing well and things are as comfortable as I could expect in this place I expected to start for home tomorrow But am disapointed I Shall have to wait till next time wee are not allowed to write only ten lines So I Shal have to Bid you good By for this time I am as ever yours etc

John C. Griswold

(Copy of 71-79.27)

St.Johns College Hospital  
Annapolis, Md. 30 May/63

My dear Wife

I arrived at this place on Tuesday night last and went into the hospital on Wednesday morning where I have pleasant quarters and am very glad to get out of Rebeldom

I was taken sick a few days before leaving Libby Prison but my health is now much improved and my arm is doing as well as can be expected under the circumstances

I was shot through the right arm above the elbow on Saturday the first day of the action and became so weak from the loss of blood that I was unable to leave the field and was therefore taken prisoner

I have not yet heard from my company and do not know how many or who were lost. As soon as my health is a little recruited I intend to get a leave of absence if possible and come home for a while

My time is passed very pleasantly here there bring a library attached to the hospital which furnishes reading matter, and in strolling around the college yard which is large & well shaded

As soon as you receive this write to me directing to St. Johns College Hospital Annapolis, Md.

Yours as ever  
John C. Griswold  
per Alex R.

(Copy of 71-79.28)

U S St Johns College Hospital  
Annapolis M D  
June 8/63

Dear Wife

Your Letter of the 3rd is received and i am glad to hear from you once more and that you are all well I was sorry to hear that you had herd such bad news of me but thank god i am among the living and improving as fast as can be expected under the circumstances of my wound my helth is getting better and my wound is healing fast every thing is very favourabel at present Dear Wife i am painfull to hear of our sister Deth i had antiseperated much of meating with that familey circl unbroken and having grate Pleasure in thear society Dear Wife you speek of coming Down to see me in deed i should be pleased to see you but under the Present circumstances i think it would see un safe for i dont no how long i may stay hear nor ware i may be ordered so i think it advisable to defer it for a wile

And Dear Wife i intend to git a leave of absence or a furlough after a wile the Prospects is not very favour-able now i shall wait a few days longer thear is so meny officers hear now and in a few days thay will be sent to join thear Commands and then thear will be more chance to git a leave of absence I received a letter from Dana Horton the other day the first i received since i left he writes that thear is a grate meny sick since the Battel he says thear was 25 kiled wounded and missing in the Company he reports 5 kiled 4 or 5 wounded & the rest Probley are Prisoners i feal very anchious to visite the Company and shall do so as soon as i can git Permission as i half to git some one to do my writing my letters will not bee so long as thoe i wrote my self write as soon as you receve this and dorect as before yours as ever J C Griswold to his Wife

(Copy of 71-79.29)

U S Gen Hospital Dev No 2  
Section No 2 Annapolis Md  
June 23/63

Dear Wife i received your letter on the 19th wich was dated the 12th and glad to hear that your self and friends ware all well my helth is tolarbel good much better than when i came hear my Arm is improving slowley all thoe i have no use of it as yet i have made a Application for a leave of absence but as thear is so much red tape wound around all military transactions it will take a number of days to asertain the result i am bund to git home in as short time as posabel prohaps i will half to go to washington before i can git my leave I have herd nothing from the Comp since i last wrote still i should like to hear from them as i think so much about them i feal it My Duty to bee with them as they are on the move but sircumstances wont permit it the wether hear the most time is very warm and dry we havent had but one rain since i have bin hear that is to call a rain you sayed some thing about money since i have bin hear i received some of My Pay as i have a nugh to git me home if i can git the oppertunitey i will close this with my respects to all those firends ho remember me and my warmest love to you no more at Present i still remain your loving Husband

John C. Griswold

PS Write as soon as this comes to hand and dorect as before

(Copy of 71-79.30)

Sunday Aug 6th 1863

My Dear wife. I thought I would try to write a few lines myself today Dell wrote a few lines for me the next day after I got here I arrived in Washington Friday morning went & saw Justus Burnham a few minutes he is getting quite smart I took the Boat for Alexandria & there took the cars & went to catlit station wher I arrived about dark stayed all night & learned that the regiment was at Alexandria came back here on Saturday our regiment & two others are detailed her to furnish guards to escort conscripts to the army & shall not probably remain here any longer than is necessary for that purpose we are encamped just out of Town towards & in sight of Washington on the banks of the river a verry pleasant location I have a wall tent & a hay bed which is quite comfortable I found my luggage about as I left it one army blanket & the old quilt which comes in play again I had the misfortune to loose my satchel at Elmira just as you packed it arrived there in the night & while waiting for the cars I was out of sight of it for a few minutes when it skedaddled I was sorry to lose it especially on account of the things sent to the boys my health is good & my arm improves a little I am reported on the sick list & have no duty to do except a supervision of the company business I have been verry busy the past week overseeing the making of muster & pay rolls & updating other papers which had become considerably mixed The boys are all well that is here. we are about 3 miles from parole & convalescent camp & some of the Boys are here most every day the Scott Boys and James Skiff are here tofay Henry Rice came to convalescent camp today & will be with us soon , two of our boys taken at Gettysburg ar paroled Fordice Thayer & Smith. Thayer is verry much out of health & quite feeble but my hand aches and I will stop for this time

write soon  
J C Griswold

(Copy of 71-79.31)

Camp of the 154th regt at Alexandria  
Aug 30th 1863

Dear wife

I came to the regt yesterday and found the boys all wright they are doing provose duty now for a spell and they think that they will stay here a spell there is three regts of us here and we are guarding conscripts and taking them to the front i had the bad luck to leave my valease i left it in the seting room at Elmira depot and was gone a few minutes and when I came back it was gone my health is about the same as it was when i left and arm to, I bought me another satchel and a shirt & vest and few other things I will look around a little and get things seteled and then i will write again and write all the news that is all for this time so good by

John C. Griswold

Friend Cassius

I thought that i would write a few lines to you and let you know that i am well and hope that these few lines will find you the same we have got a good post now whare we wont have to do enny more marching to do untill we go to the front a gain i am going up to the front today with some conscripts to take them to there regt and I am in hopes that we will stay here this wonter if we do i hope that you will come down and see us and we will have a big time i will have to close for this time for i will have to go now excuse this letter for it is wrote in a hurry write as soon as you get this

Dell Ames



(Copy of 71-79.32)

Alexandria Va. Sept 14th / 63

Dear Wife

as my fingers are getting a little more pliable I thought I would write a few lines today Dell received a letter from you yesterday I concluded to wait till today but the mail is in & no letter for me, but one for Dell from Cassius so it seems that I am out of the play

my health is good & my arm improves slowly the boys are all well that are here I have not herd from Fordyce Thayer in some days he is at parole camp we do not hear any thing from the rest of the gettysburg Prisoners since Thayer left them at Richmond; Lieut. Jenkins was taken again at Gettysburg and died of fever in Libby Prison

the weather has ben verry warm since I came back it is a little cooler to day we expect Dana, E.Ames & John Erwin back to the regt this week. I did not buy but one shirt after loosing my satcher & I find the one I left here about plaid out & shall have to have me another pair. they are verry dear here & poor things to wear, if you can get some good Factory plannel shirting & make me a pair I should like to have you, if you think you can write and I will not buy any here & will send you the money to pay for them when I get some pay which I expect before long but my hand begins to ache & I shall quit give my best wishes to Sally & kind regards to all

John C. Griswold

(Copy of 71-79.33)

Alexandria Sept 22d / 63

Dear Wife

I received your letter your letter of the 17th inst this forenoon & also received one the next day after I wrote my last letter previous to this. I was glad to hear from you but sorry to hear that you was not as well as common. but think from your last letter that you wer some better, so be as careful of your health as possible and not get down again my health remains good yet & my hand gains, but verry slowly I hope the time will come ere long that I can get out of this creditably, but see no way at present only through the invalid corps and as long as the regiment is here I had rather be with it than in that Corps, two Lieutenants of this regiment have offered thier resignations since the hettysburg fight & been refused I am reported on the sick list yet & do no duty only oversee the affairs of the company I expected Dana back last week but he does not come yet if thare had been any women coming with Mr Ames that you could have had company I should like to have had you come but he will probably start before this reaches you I have not got any srawers if you can send me some I will wait & not buy any here I have been this afternoon to see about the setting of Austins grave stone the bill and dimensions of which I enclose the yard is to be a permanent one & fitted up in nice style The Boys here and at parole camp are well except F Thayer & Eugene Travirs both of whom are quite sick we are expecting an exchange of prisoners soon. I saw Otis Luce today who was slightly wounded at Gettysburg. he was on his way from the hospital to convalescent camp. Erastus Ramsdells boy was with him the weather has been quite cool a few days past, the conscripts are arriving in considerable numbers for the last few days they are mostly substitutes from cities and are hard cases ready to desert the first opportunity, a number has been shot & some under sentence of death, we know nothing of Upton or Young, I am sorry that they did not return with me; none of the boys here know anything about Orrins whipping a negro, a negro was whipped by order of General Steinware Dell Ames was ordered to tie him up and a boy in Co.D ordered to do the whipping I guess you cannot read what I hace wrote respects to all

J.C.Griswold

(Copy of 71-79.34)

Bridgeport, Alabama. Oct 2d 1863

Dear Wife

you will have herd before this reaches you that we had left virginia for some other part of the world We left Alexandria last Saturday on the cars went though Washington most to baltimore took the baltimore & Ohio R.R. to Wheeling crossed the river into Ohio & went by the way of Columbus, Indianapolis & Jefferson city. crossed the river to Louisville K.Y. thence by the way of Nashville, Murfresboro , Tullahoma to this Place which is in the north east corner of Alabama on the Tennessee river some 35 or 40 miles below Chattanooga to which place we shall have to go on foot as the railroad is running only to this place we have been 6 days & nights on the cars only getting off twice a day long enough to get something to eat it has ben a long & tiresome journey, we arrived this forenoon weary and dusty & most of us have been into the river and had a wash & feel much refreshed it was a rather sore disappointment to us to leave Alexandria we wer flatering ourselves that we should stay thare sometime but it does not seem to our fortune to get an easy berth any length of time The boys are all well that is here 13 of them, the paroled prisoners are exchanged & we expect them here soon My health is good my hand about the same, if Dana had been with us I should have tried to get off from coming but the order was so suden and the notice to march so short that I had all I could do to get the company ready in time & no chance to make application to get off myself I begin to think the tender mercies of war are cruel but shall have to make the best of it for the time being. we are in a rough wilderness country. this station having been burned thare is not a house to be seen anywhere & we think we are nearly out of the world.

Write Soon

J.C.G.

Direct

Co.F 154th regt N.Y.S.V.  
11th Core Army of the Cumberland  
via Nashville Tenn

(Copy of 71-79.35)

Bridgeport Oct 12th 1863

Dear Wife We are still at the same place from whence I wrote you a week ago, the baggage of the officers and regimental horses have not yet come up the rebels have broken up the railroad twice the past week between here and Nashville which has made provisions rather scarce the men have been on half rations most of the time since we came here, the cars are running again to day; The 12th Corps and one Brigade of our division have gone back to guard the road. Bridgeport is where the Nashville and Chatanooga rail-road crosses the Tennessee river The Bridge which is a long and high one was mostly destroyed by the rebels, & the government has a large number of men at work rebuilding it, they are also building a flat bottomed steam tug at this place to run on the river this place has been in possession of the Union forces before, once under general Mitchel who had a skirmish here and then under Buel, but last year they were obliged to fall back to Nashville. It looks a little as though we might be obliged to do so again as the report is that Bragg's forces now amount to 175,000 if that is correct he must far outnumber Rosencrans and unless the latter is reinforced the result of an engagement which seems to be pending looks a little doubtful to us, but we have great confidence in old Rosie and can only hope for the best. The boys are all well that are here a part of the Chancellorsville Prisoners are here, Milan is here well as usual, we number 22 here Dana, M. Skinner & Edson Ames & some others are still back. William Scott & 2 Cattaraugus boys from our company left the cars on the way here. Milton Scott was left at Louisville sick we are getting anxious to get news from home as we have not had any since we left Virginia the weather has been cool & the nights cold two frosts the past week, the men are doing picket duty a part of the time and a part of the time building a fortification to defend the Bridge. But it is hard work for me to write as you will plainly see give my love to all

John C. Griswold

(Copy of 71-79.36)

Bridgeport Oct 20th / 63

Dear Wife Your letter of the 11th inst was received night before last & I was very glad to hear from home again especially in this out of the way god forsaken place, the country about here is wild & Mountainous without a habitation in sight. though there must be some inhabitants somewhere, for occasionally we see a few women on horseback (so thin that it would take both horse & rider to make a shadow) emerging from the forest & winding their way to Uncle Sams Commissary to get a few rations to keep soul & body together affirming their loyalty while in all probability their husbands & sons are engaged in the aludable business of bushwhacking or guerilla warfare, yet common humanity forbid that they should be allowed to Starve. My health is good yet, likewise the rest of the boys, my hand & arm does not seem to gain much lately the cold affets it severely. Augustus Burnham & R. Ray joined us day before yesterday, the Regiment has been building corduroy Road the last 5 days; every exertion is being used to get provisions to Rosecrans army who are said to be on half rations & closely watched by the rebels, but the bushwhackers & gurreillas seriously interfere with the transportation of provisions to Chatanooga; shooting mules & drivers & capturing trains &c. I said nothing about any shirts & drawers because I think I could not get any through at present our baggage has not come yet, & I was obliged to buy one shirt for a change of a dry good sutler it cost \$4.95 Octs & no better than those I had at home. butter & cheese is 50 cts per pound each. I have seen nothing in the shape of fruit here, our living is hard rack meat & Coffee. I am sorry to hear of Nal--bys (un-radable) sickness & hope to hear next time that she is better. Much Joy to George & Sally for their success in their family affairs (dont they feel big about it) & tell Sally I should like to be there & make a few visits this winter & shall do so if I can, give my respects to our young nephew and tell him I shall look for him down here with a napsack & musket under the late call of the President for volunteers we will try to do nice things for him and if he acquit himself soldierly he shall have a position. give my respects to all

John C. Griswold

Respected Brother

Your letter of the 17th inst was received yesterday In regard to the purchase of the Cardot Lot if you think it can be disposed of again if necessary so as not to loose anything you may buy it. But under present circumstances you had better buy it in your own name and take charge of it at present. I sent 300 dollars home by Ames which I presume you can get, to use. the rest they can wait for untill I get paid again. There is a 400 loan upon it if they have not paid it which can remain as long as the interest is paid which might be an advantage if it was to be sold again Taylor agreed to take 30 dollars for what I owe him but I suppose he means the whole of it in this trade. If you trade with them perhaps you can turj that 50 dollars of snows if you have not got it, and let the skimmers have 50 of what I sent home; We expect to move farther up the river tomorrow, troops are massing towards Chatanooga, grant has taken command of this department & everything denotes that something is to be done when they get a good ready the results of which time will tell, at all events it seems necessary to make some kind of movement to facilitate the getting of supplies to Chattanooga as they are supposed to be short of rations. Give my respects to Louisa Stevens if she is still thare I much regret that I was not at home to visit with her, it is difficult gor me to write much my regards to all the family tell Ann to write

J C Griswold (tohis brother Elsworth Griswold)

(Copy of 71-79.38)

Bridgeport Nov 1st / 63

Dear Wife

Your letters of the 21 & 23 have come to hand & I was glad to hear that you were comfortably well and also the rest of the friends I suppose by what you wrote that you will be keeping house by this time I hope you will have a good time of it & that I shall be able to get home this winter a short time and see you. I shall try to get home before Louisa goes back if I can. I fear you will find a good many things to try your patience in keeping house with a lot of young girls, especially if they all have beaux but hope that you will succeed satisfactorily. Perhaps you might as well get a (unreadable) for you will kneed something of the kind. you say that Wm Scott is home on furlow, he took french leave on his way to join the regiment & if he returns soon it will be all well, if not he will after go to the deserters heaven (Canada) still there is no danger of being shot for desertion of that kind especially the first offence. The 11th & a part of the 12th corps left here last Tuesday up the river to open communication with Chatanooga our regiment with the rest but not being well at the time and also a cripple I was left in charge of the camp & what men was not able to march. I herd from them yesterday morning they had got up to the foot of Lookout mountain had had a sharp engagement some of the regiments lost heavily but I heard that ours lost none except a few wounded, whether they wer in our company or not I did not learn. The rebs still held the top of the mountain with our men on this side & grants on the other it is thought that they would evacuate it if not thare will probably be another fight. the boat now runs within 8 or 9 miles of Chatanooga which is a great help towards forwarding supplies to that place do you recollect what regiment Orlando belongs to if so write perhaps I may come acrost him My health is good at present my hand & arm gains but little I have not much use of it yet the cold effects it verry much the weather lately has been warm with heavy rains though last night was cold with light frost we expect to go to the regiment in a day or two as they will probably stay up the river unless driven back give my respects to all our friends not forgetting the young soldier Boy

With much love from yours &c

John C. Griswold

Dear Wife

I have not received any letter yet this week but suppose there is one on the way. As it has got to be Tuesday I thought I would not wait any longer but write a few lines although I have nothing in particular to write about. I started for the regiment the day after I wrote my last letter & arrived here on the third day I found the boys all safe and sound & in good spirits. we are in the valley of Lookout mountain the top of which is in possession of the rebs from which they daily throw a few shells at our trains or camps but seldom doing any damage we are about 4 four miles from Chattanooga which lies on the other side of the mountain & up the river. our camp lies on the side of a lower ridge which practically secures it from the batteries on the top of the mountain the country is rough and mountainous with an occasional valley large enough for farm or two the soil of which is very rich but poorly cultivated the inhabitants live in miserable log houses that their fore fathers built & probably think they cannot be bettered everything denotes a want of that thriftness and enterprise to be seen in the free states

There is two boats running from Bridgeport to Kellys Ferry that keeps us tolerably well supplied with rations they dare not run by the mountain to Chattanooga but it is but 3 or 4 miles from the ferry, that they have to draw by teams it has been quite warm lately untill yesterday it grew cold & last night it froze ice a little Dana joined us day before yesterday Henry Rice came through with me the march was to much for him & he was taken sick & there being no convenience for doctoring here he went to the corps hospital A Burnham is quite sick again he does not seem to stand camp life very well is there going to be any volunteering this fall

give my respects to all      From yours &c  
J C Griswold

(Copy of 71-79.40)

Lookout Valley Nov 18th / 63

Dear Wife

Your letter of the 8th inst was received yesterday & was glad to hear from you again it seems that you had not got the letter that I wrote at Bridgeport 2 weeks ago Sunday, but you will probably get it & also one I wrote a week ago which will post you as to my wheat abouts. We are still lying in lookout valley and nothing of consequence has transpired since I last wrote, the rebs daily pay us the complements in the way of a few shells one of which the other day came howling directly over our camp & striking a little beyond, our regiment has been engaged lately in building corduroy roads between here and the landing which is about four miles the wet weather lately making the roads very bad. We received two months pay on Monday & the paymaster when he gets back to Louisville will send you a check for \$200 dollars, out of which you may pay Barmore my note between 15 & 16 dollars & also my account at Whites tanery he agreed to take one half & balance the account. the remainder do as you think best with if Elsworth buys that lot you can let him have it if he wants it but you need not trouble yourself about living on that lot unless circumstances are different from what they are at present

Has there been any election in Chautauqua Co this fall, who were elected assemblymen, was there any excitement did anybody get intoxicated was there any fighting, if not it must have been dull times indeed my arm gains strength slowly the weather is warm and pleasant the ground has not been frozen but once yet the boys are generally well 2 or 3 were excused from duty today not feeling very well Orrin got the Postage stamps

yours truly

John C Griswold

Lookout Valley, Nov. 25th / 63

Dear Wife

After waitting 2 or 3 days for a letter yours of the 13th came to night and I will sit down and answer it although I have not much to write. The regiment left 3 days ago for Chatanooga, I was excused and remained in camp, day before yesterday they wer in an engagement but came out with 6 or 7 wounded, yesterday a part of the 12th Corps and some of Grants old troop attacked the rebs on Lookout mountain and drove them from the sides taking from 10 to 15 hundred prisoners during the night the rebs withdrew from the top the yankees taking possession this morning it was a hazardous undertaking but executed without a verry heavy loss to us.

I visited the top of the mountain this afternoon it is a lofty eminence rising 2000 feet from the plain of Chatanooga and from the summit a splendid view of the surrounding country is obtained. I had just reached the top of the mountain when a terrible engagement commenced on missionary ridge back of Chãttanooga it commenced about 4 oclock but the distance was such that I could not with the naked eye tell the result and have not learned it yet, but I heard that the 11th Corps was in and suffered severely, I wait with anxiety to hear the particulars Charles Brown and Marvin Skinner arrived here this forenoon you say that Abels has bought the Cardot lot, all right. Mr Taylor agreed to take 30 dollars and give up our note if he will do so you may pay it when you get that 200 of the paymaster you may also settle with Mr Grant if you do so at the same rate or better, and settle your bill at Georges, at to buying a place you had better wait till Spring unless you can find one at a bargain, if you find no other place for the money I think you had better invest it in the same way I did the other it will draw some interest but do as you like it seemes your family is quite small, you can probably get along with one girl if she does have a beaux occasionally but whether you will be able to keep Cassius out of the salloons is another question. I cant tell yet whether I get home or not this winter I may be discharged for disability but not verry probable

Thursday morning 26

I have herd this morning that our regiment was not in the fight yesterday afternoon

Yours as ever

John C. Griswold

Lookout Valey Dec 2nd 1863

Dear Wife your letter of the 22d ult arrived yesterday, you say you have not herd from me in almost 2 weeks, I have sent a letter every week so far I believe, you will probably get them by & by. I was sorry to hear that you was running down again, but it is about as I expected when I herd of your cleaning house, you can now better understand why I did not seem more willing for you to keep house so long as you wer gaining I was contented but now it is otherwise, the best thing you can do now is to hire some body to do your work before you get so that you will have to hire 2 or 3 to take care of you

In my last letter I wrote that the regiment had gone on another march a part of it returned yesterday the rest are expected to day there has been a general move of this army driving bragg from his positions around Chatanooga with the loss of a large number of prisoners, guns, munitions, and stores, it has been a grand cleaning out, the particulars of which you will probably hear in print before this reaches you. We have not yet heard much of the details here in camp. Our regiment escaped with a few wounded it seems you had not received that check from the paymaster, when it comes you can use some of it to buy your furs, what you dont use you can let Ell have if he wants it. I visited O Markham a few days since he is at Chatanooga, day before yesterday he was over here, his folks wer well Deal was teaching at Gaines Station. How is it with your friends the Desserters, are they still lurking around, a part of the time lying in the woods for fear of the Marshall & at all times ashamed to see the face of an honest & honorable man, or have they all gone to that bourn of refugees & niggers - Canada; one or two of them served up in the presence of the regiment might serve as a warning to others but the punishment to them too slight, Death by musketry in the hands of true and Loyal men engaged in the defence of their Country, is to honorable, rather let them suffer through a long life the upbraidings of their own guilty concience & the execrations & contempt of ther fellow men.

However I hope that thare will be an oportunity offered by government this winter for them to return to duty & that they will be wise enough to profit by it. The weather the last few days has been quite cold but pleasant freezing nights quite hard a few flakes of snow was seen in the air one day but none on the ground

yours as ever

John C. Griswold

Head Quarters 154th Regt. N.Y.Vols.  
Lookout Valley, Tennessee  
January 13th 1864

Captain

The Certificate of Dr. Davis intended to extend your leave of absence was recvd. on the 11th inst. It is entirely defective and does not comply with the requirements in such cases. It does not state that you are unable to travel which must always be stated in such cases, otherwise the Officer must report in person, there is no variation from this, "Revised Army Regulations 1863, par. 187, page 33", In addition to this I am inclined to the opinion that the certificate should be made by an Army Surgeon. I am quite confident such is the case, but will not examine that point as the other is fundamental and goes to the whole extent.

With regard to your wound. I have consulted the Surgeon on duty with the Regiment Dr. Day & others who know its effect upon your arm and health generally, they are of the opinion that you will never be fit for active field service at least such service as we have experienced in this department and they think that you are fit for duty in the Invalid Corps. I will second any effort you choose to make for a transfer very cheerfully. I am satisfied it is the most proper course to be persued in case you shoose to continue in the service. Your company has now been deprived of its permanent commander almost since you have held that position, for although you were occasionally present with it, you could not be placed upon active duty, and when another application is made for a Leave or a proper extension by you, I shall deem it my duty to call the attention of the department commander to the case, and ask him to lay it before the medical authorities for their advice.

I know there is seeming hardship in this but the Government has provided the Invalid service for Officers partilly disabled and who are discharged on that account & pensions for those who are entirely disqualified. The duty of the Regt'l Commander is therefore plain and unavoidable by him.

And since our Regiment has been reduced below the minimum, we are entitled to but two officers in a company. It is therefore necessary that those who are disabled or otherwise disqualified and who are never expected to do duty again, be withdrawn from the service. There are enough of casualties and unforeseen events occuring daily to always reduce the Roster of Company Officers. At present there are but eleven Company Officers for duty with the Regiment, one or two more casualties occuring among the duty Officers will leave some of the Companies without a commissioned Officer to receipt for their necessary clothing and subsistence.

You will therefore see Captain what my imperative duty is with regard to your case and all of a similar nature. Although it may bear upon individual considerations of duty to the Regiment, and the service generally must be paramount to all others, and you will take such course as your judgement and sense of duty may dictate

I am Captain Very Respectfully  
Your Obedient Servant

sg. (P.H. Jones)

To  
Capt. Jno. C. Griswold  
154th N.Y.Vols. Fredonia, N.Y.



(Copy of 71-79.44)

Nashville Monday 15th / 64

Dear Wife

I arrived here last night all right & baggage safe, I have just been to the hospital to see A Burnham but learned that he started home on a furlough last Friday the same day I left home. I understand that express boxes are forwarded from here as fast as they can get transportation. The weather warm & raining today. I leave to day for Chattanooga. Have Cassius or some one write immediately and often. I will write again when I get to the Company.

Yours as ever

J.C.Griswold

(Copy of 71-79.45)

Camp 154th Regt  
Lookout valley February 20th / 64

Dear Wife

I arrived at this place on Sunday last and found the boys all well except James Skiff who accidentally discharged his gun by stumbling in the dark while on picket, the ball past through the ball of his left hand, making a severe flesh wound, it appears to be a doing well at present.

I left dunkirk the P.M. that I left home & the next morning at daylight was between Columbus & Cincinnati beyond the regions of snow & have not seen any on the ground since, arrived at Cincinnati at noon and took the steamboat for Louisville which gave me two good meals and a nights rest, which is much more pleasant than all the way by rail & a little less expensive, left Louisville at 7 o clock sunday morning & arrived at Nashville a little before sundown, I had to remain there over night, & wrote you a few lines from there on monday

I have not yet fairly concluded what I had better do or what they will do with me, the Colonel say he had rather I would stay if I think my health is sufficient I think I will stay a while and try it, but your situation at home worries me and I hardly know what I ought to do our regiment is doing guard duty on the railroad a part of the time, and the indications at present are that they will remain on the line of the road for sometime everything is quiet about here at present but we hear rumors of Morgan preparing to make another raid some where no one knows where The weather for the last few days has been quite cold, they say almost as cold as it was new years but no snow The boys are getting some boxes they forwarded them from Nashville as fast as they can get transportation they should be marked for Chattanooga Milans & Browns & Harpers has not arrived yet I am getting verry anxious to hear from home, hope to hear soon write often

Yours as ever

John C. Griswold

Lookout Valley March 14th 1864

My Dear boy

your letter of the 6th inst was received yesterday, I had heard a few days previous from Ann, of your Dear Mothers death, and the news came like a thunder clap in a cloudless day, for I had herd but a day or so previous that she was a gaining and was indulging in the hope that at a not distant day our little family might be united and enjoy some of the comforts of life in each others society, but alas that can never be, for the polar star around which all our hopes & affections and all those sweet influences that makes home desirably centered is stricken from its orbit leaving a blank that can never be filled, it is hard as you say, but she cannot be recalled and we must submit, And then to think that I could not be with her during her last illness or even to see her consigned to her last resting place.

I feel verry Lonely and discontented more so than I have ever been before and sometimes think I will quit the service and go -- whare -- with no place to call home perhaps I am as contented here as I should be any whare and I feel at present that it was of small moment what became of me, but do not forget the admonitions and consels of your dear mother, she reposed great confidence in your integrity and the uprightness of your intentions do not let that confidence be misplaced but remember her meny virtues and patern after them

you spoke of disposing of some of the things that would injure by keeping such as tubs pails &c. you had better do so, the rest of the things if they are whare they will not be in any bodys way you can leave then for future consideration, but if such things as chairs beadsteads &c. are in the way you may sell or give them away as you see fit

did she say any thing as to how she wished her dresses and other things disposed of I do not know as she left any that is of much account when she supposed she was near her end before, she requested that her clothing be divided mostly between her sisters but I have forgotten how they wer to be divided, perhaps Sally or some other one will remember, if their is any thing amongst them that Ann would like let her have it, the rest divide amongst her sisters & friends as you see proper write soon

John C. Griswold

Lookout Valley March 22nd / 64

My dear Boy

your letter of the 18th inst was received yesterday containing the express receipt for the box which will be looked for with anxiety by all hands untill it comes I wrote you about a week ago in regard to some of the things & what I thought you had better do with them for the present, I did not think any thing about the carpet if cornelia or any one else wishes to buy it you may sell it, and those things that you said Mrs Skinner would buy let her have them & if she or any one else wanted a set of the chairs & one of the tables you may sell them for what they are worth which is not much. The weather up to last night has been verry pleasant & most of the time warm ever since I returned and they say it has been the same all winter the ground verry dry to much so for vegetation. Peaches have been in blossom for a week past, & day before yesterday I was at the Landing on the river & saw apple trees leaving out & the blossoms beginning to show considerably, but this morning when we awoke it was snowing about as fast as I ever saw it & this afternoon it is from 12 to 14 inches deep but not verry cold this is the first time that the ground has been fairly covered this winter, but I am not feeling verry well this afternoon and will wait till tomorrow before closing this

March 26th 1864

since writing the preseeded I have not been able to sit up but little untill to day, was taken with cold chills & threatened with a fever, the diarea set in and reduced me quite low but am better to day and hope to be all right soon, the snow commenced leaving the next day after it came & night before last it had a slight addition but to day has been warm & pleasant & finished the remains of it I have heard that the inhabitants say that this has been the deepest snow that they have seen for years. the box came the day before yesterday and the boys are enjoying it Hugely my present condition forbids me partaking of the contents of the box but perhaps I shall be in a situation to before it is all gone I want you to lock up the desk with the papers in it & take care of the key as I dont want them rummaged over and lost for if I ever return some of them may be of some use to me. I hope you will get a good place to work in wherever it may be do not try to get wages out of proportion with your years and strength give my respects to all the Friends write often

From your affectionate Father  
J.C.Griswold

Camp of the 154<sup>th</sup> Regt. N.Y.V. March 30<sup>th</sup>/64

Respected Niece

Your letter of the 13<sup>th</sup> inst together with the box arrived here the 24<sup>th</sup>, but being sick and unable to sit up much at that time I could not answer it then and I have not been able to write but verry little since untill today the box came through sooner than we expected & every thing was in fine condition, the Liquid in the cans had leaked out wetting the packages some but it came so quick that no damage was done and the several articles wer just as good as when started. the selections for the box wer as good as could have been made. I wish you could have seen the interest manifested by the boys on the receipt of the box. as soon as it was landed here it was surrounded and every word of the mark read and reread the No. weight & freight examined and criticized the box heafted and one particular hemlock board in the cover was decided to have come from Arkwright. after they had sufficiently examined the box not being able to take any part in the matter myself I directed Sargent Ames to make a hole in it and ascertain what was inside. with hatchet in hand he made them fall back in ring and proceeded tonock off[[f] the cover, and now comes a general overhauling article after article is draged from its resting place untill the bottom of the box is reached, and every thing exposed to view I then directed that the contents

be divided as near equal as could conveniently be between the diferent bunks of the company according to the No. of inmates, the Company being small it gave to all quite a taste of the luxuries of home, which after a long period of living on army rations is quite refreshing the Company appreciate this act of of friendship and good will on the part of the donors and desire to express to them their genuine and hearty thanks for their generous donations and kind regards for our welfare. if any one has paid for freight on the box more than was donated let us know the ammount and we will make it up, this we are willing to do, let us know about it My health is quite poor but am improving some and unless I get considerable better I shall have to quit the servise if Susan was alive & I had a home to go to I should not stay any longer than to get discharged but under present circumstances I presume I am more at home here than I should be any whare else. it is hard to think of ones home being broken up by the death of a loved wife and mother, but the worst is past & it is of but little moment what becomes of me now. tell Reina I hope to see her again some time give my regads to Hersey. I am axious to hear from her and how she is getting along give my respects to all our old friends

Yours with respect

J.C. Griswold

(Copy of 71-79.48)

Lookout Valley Tenn April 10 / 64

Dear Cassius

your letter of March 30th was received 2 or 3 days ago and was glad to hear that you was well but sorry to hear that your uncle Ells health is so poor this spring I guess he will have to give up work entirely if he wishes to recover his health, my health is considerable better than it has been of late, we are still lying in Lookout valley, but expect there will be a move here as soon as they can get ready. the 11th & 12th Corps are consolidated & we expect that there will be a consolidation of Brigades & regiments, if there is there will be considerable many officers to be mustered out of the service & perhaps I may be one. I am not particular. you spoke about the chest, I have not got it I it through all right to Nashville, from there to Chatanooga the road is run by government & baggage is not checked but merely marked the No. of the station at which it is to be put off, the chest was marked for Lookout valley and as they would not let me take my satchel into the car with me that was marked the same & put into the baggage car. I was in the hind car when we got to Lookout & when I got out they wer throwing out baggage but before I could get to the car the train started for Chatanooga, my satchel was thrown out but the chest was not, I got a man to watch the train when it returned and went to camp thinking I would go to Chatanooga that afternoon to see if it was there, but could not get there without a pass & could not get a pass till next morning, when the train returned no baggage was left, I either went myself or sent to Chatanooga every day for 4 days but failed to find it & have sent back to Nashville twice by the sutler but all to no purpose & have given it up. this is but a small item in the casualties of war. In regard to the things; you ask what to do with them, if I was there I could tell better, I wrote in my other letter about some things that you had better dispose of, perhaps there are other things that had better be sold or disposed of some way. I hardly know what there is anymore & if there is any particular things you wish my advise about just mention them if they are going to be in ay bodys way you had better sell or give them away & if you cannot do either build a fire and put them on. the boys are all well at present Dell sends his respects my respects to all

yours &c.

John C. Griswold