

Sheet No. 2}

[October 3, 1862]

Camp opposite Washington in Virginia on a strip of land between two parts of Gen. Lees estate.

Dear Brother,

I am now in a Rebel State, but we don't see any Rebels here. It is very hot here today Oct. 3rd. The ground is sandy and at present very dry We however do not suffer here as in Camp Brown for water as a brook runs near by where we bathe. We get water to drink at wells and a spring about a quarter to half a mile off.

We can see Camps around us plenty of them I suppose by what I hear that here are a hundred thousand men. I can see the Capitol from the place where I now sit writing, with a part of Wash.

From a place a little farther west and a little higher I saw the Potomac and vessels on it. The prospect is pleasant East. The Capitol is near N.E. It is not so pleasant here unless one loves the sight of Camps Forts and Land without crops almost entirely. However the sight is grand on the whole counting the woods rolling land in the distance. The timber a small thick growth of Oak &c about this place has been cut down to prevent the Rebels being covered by it. We got in some time in the evening stacked our arms and after a while fixed our beds on the ground as best we could. I laid my Rubber Coat on the ground, my knapsack for a pillow and put my blanket over me. The ground is very dusty here, and my blanket was wet this morning. Se Sheet No. 3

James G. Macomber

N. Jones
Volusia N.Y.

On Picket Guard, Nov 1st, '62 Near Fairfax, Va.

Dear Mother,

I with a number of others were detailed and hurried off on Picket Guard this afternoon but I am the only one of our company at this station; which is a reserve. At present we have not any thing to do. I asked the capt. and he gives me leave to write. I am happy to write to you. I hope that perhaps Hannah may [read] this before she may go home. I received one from Melissa and Esther Tuesday morning; the first I had received from my friends since I came here. I have been rather neglectful about writing; yet I have written four letters to Chautauqua and one to Allegany, besides some business ones to New York. I wanted to answer Melissa's and Esther's to Ripley very soon; but I was with others, about 38 of us of our company called out on Picket the same day; and that was the first time I had been called on this duty. I wished when I had got to my station that I had brought my paper for there were three men of us; one to watch at a time, and one to be awake and ready to assist the other to rest. But they did not live up to the rules quite all of the time. But in the day time one could write if he should not be too sleepy. Especially the first afternoon; for we staid 24 hours and as it happened we staid that day much more. Since then we have moved about a mile to another camp. We are now a little south of Fairfax. We moved on Wednesday evening. And we have had to clear the ground in and about our camp. Yesterday we had a general review; there were a great many men together. I wish I could tell you how many. In the afternoon we swept the ground about camp and grubbed stumps and burnt up stuff up. Our camp is in a much better place than the other was. It is in a grove and near woods. How long we may stay we can scarcely say any thing. We may have to go tomorrow. Our Capt. said this afternoon before I left that we had orders to be ready to move, but not orders to march. My health is good. I thank Providence for the blessing. I buy some food, and have some found me that is good. As I do not eat meat I suffer some a part of the time, as I have not bought loosening food enough. Potatoes and apples may be bought, but just think how much money and inconvenience must be had for one to help himself so much. I bought two lbs. 2 oz. cheese yesterday and gave forty cents; and nine Apples for twenty cents. I bought 2 lbs, I think it was, a while ago for 35 cts. 17 ½ cts a pound. Butter is 40 cents a pound; still one of our men yesterday got a pound, and a loaf of Bread for forty cents; the same price.

I must close.

James G. Macomber, November 1, 1862, continued

I want some postage stamps very much. Will you send me a few, say 2 or 3. Will you, if you can write and tell me how your money matters stand. It may be I had better send my United States money home. But I have not a great deal besides.

Direct to

James G. Macomber
In care Capt. J. B. Fay
Co. E 154 Reg. N.Y.S.V.
Washington D.C.

Sarah M. Macomber }
Ripley, N.Y.

Nov. 2nd morn. We are going. J.G.M. God blesses me still. J.G.M.
(Electus took the road by us & turned off southward, at Centerville I suppose)
(Direct as before)

Wednesday morn. 5 Nov. We got here near the cascade hill Monday eve, heard the Cannons roaring beyond near the blue ridge yesterday, and last evening late. We suppose Burnside's. We have gone toward the thoroughfare Gap. Be sure [to] send stamps if you may. God bless.

Camp near Fairfax, Virginia,
Nov. 29th, '62

Dear Mother,

I was at Gen. Von Steinwehr's Head Quarters on guard when I wrote the previous sheet. It has been so cold since; and I have not had a comfortable place to write; that I have neglected to write. I am now in camp. We do not know whether we shall move soon or not. We had a Thanksgiving day before yesterday. A sermon preached. As it happened I was not so as to hear it yet the subject was told to me by one who did. The Capt and Lieut. promised something for dinner but failed to obtain what they sought. Meal for a Johnny Cake was the grand object. How glad we would be to taste of and eat what we might want, of a good one.

Tuesday Dec. 2nd, '62. in camp.

Dearest Mother I have just rec'd Mira's line with the envelopes, paper & stamps. I had not finished writing as much as I intended to; as my tent is not yet fixed warm with a fire. Some of the tents have a fireplace in them now. I have a part of the material to make one, some brick and a flat stone, but have not found time to make it. I was on Picket Guard Saturday afternoon & Sunday forenoon; yesterday I went out with the pickets to find where they went so as to carry them their provision; then went and helped carry it. I happened to get some potatoes of a Negro family, so I cooked some sliced ones with an Onion last night. I bought four pounds of Cheese for one dollar; good. poor Cheese is sold for the same I suppose; and for less too. I did not buy and butter this time. This is 40 cts. here good. Less in Fairfax .35 and poor.

A sermon was preached in the afternoon. They were to have a prayer meeting in the evening. I did not go at night.

My health is pretty good; though I am not quite well. I was told last night by the Capt. that I am growing fleshy. It is probably so. I have enough to eat and most of the time a very good appetite. We were called about half past twelve this morning into line and the Roll called. The first time we were ever called out in the night at so unreasonable an hour. We were a littled startled by it. By the blessing of providence the moon shone brightly. We packed our knapsacks; I believe the most of folded and rolled our blankets; our provision was divided and packed in

James G. Macomber, November 29-December 2, 1862, continued

our Haversacks; good soft bread & hard crackers; what I should say was not need to be cooked at the moment; and that was set a going. It was the meat that was cooked and the water was prepared for coffee; but the kettles and pans were called for and carried away to the waggons to be packed before the drink could be made. We were ordered to leave our tents untouched, as it would not take long to pack them to carry. These are carried by the men. Each one carrying a piece. But we are here still sun about 3/4 of an hour high and no more to start. I forgot to say we ate breakfast when we were up. We lay down again. I hope soon to write again. We have not received any pay yet though we hope we may (have hoped so) soon.

Yours in hope,

James G. Macomber

S. M. Macomber }

I wanted to pay the taxes with the expected money. J. G. M.

We had to come out without our trappings on, afterward, we stacked arms

I dont hear from my likeness at home. It went as far as Westfield any way. I wish Hannah could carry a new one taken from it. Will you say so to her

[January 3, 1863]

Camp near Falmouth. Opposite Side of the Rappahannock to Fredericksburg, and about three miles above. We are on the hights a little distance from the River.

Dearest Mother, I have commenced this rather unceremoniously but you will readily, if you are well, recognize the hand. I am happy to write to you once more; I have neglected it long; although I thought when I wrote last that I should write again soon. It seems almost impossible for me to write much; and yet I do not do a great deal neither. I have fixed my breakfast; fetched some chips twice; and some water twice; and that is the most of the work I have done today, and now it is 27 min. past twelve. We some time have to drill in the forenoon but not today. A part of Regiment is clearing off the ground adjoining our camp, for separating out the camp for the health of the inhabitants. I have a little time thank Providence, to write to you. I have now just taken off my Rice that I have been cooking for my dinner and I have a little apple sauce left that I stewed this morning. I have to cook in my cup one thing at a time. I cooked some Dessicated Potatoe that I bought a short time ago; last night; partly cooked it; and put it on my plate and baked it like a johnny cake this morning. This with crakers and sugar made a very good breakfast. We get Apples, peaches, potatoes, rice, sugar, molasses, beans, meat, both beef and pork, tea and coffee, of the government Quarter master. And if we could have enough of each we might with the Army Bread live well, but we do not. We had an opportunity just before New Years, to buy of the Brigade Commissary; and this helped those who had money to buy with; very much. The provisions were sold at Government prices without charge for transportation. Sugar ten cents very nice. Crackers (Army bread) five cents. Dried apples, good, eight, Peaches, dried with the skins on, and a little musty, ten. Dessicated potatoes 12 cents. This is very proffitable to buy. Beside they had rice, flour, beans, &c. We have had tea but once; that was yesterday; Des. Potatoes 3 or 4 times perhaps. Fresh potatoes once Christmas, or about that time. Peaches once. Others oftener. I have been full fed twice, perhaps eat too much for my labor. My health is now good, and has Generally been so. We had a hard muddy time a part of the way from Fairfax to this place. I stood the march well by the blessing of the Lord. A part of the way the ground was frozen. It broke up at that time. we have had dry weather most of the time since, the roads are good. It freezes nights now and thaws days. We suffer some by the cold at night for we are not prepared well for winter weather. Still we live and move. Two men died in our regimental hospital yesterday and last night. O how glad that I am well. I saw Electus a few days ago. He was over here to see us. He looked hearty. To day is the third of the month Jan. '63.

Yours in love,
Your son
James G. Macomber

Sarah M. Macomber }
Ripley, New York

Camp near Falmouth,
Sunday Jan. 4 '63

2nd Sheet

Dearest Mother,

I had so much to do yesterday I could not finish my letter. I received one from you and Leslie last night about nine o'clock. I am so glad and happy to have one from you. I would like to know whether or not you received one from me with the likeness; and also, whether you got one from me, written from Fairfax (camp near) just after we were surprised in the night by the calls to be ready to march. This call I said was the first we had had at so unreasonable an hour; but it was not so. We had had one like it at Thoroughfare Gap; but I was gone away, and was with the team at Gainsville, so I did not know it, did not inquire though I ought to have done it. Did Hannah see my Picture? It seems that she got back from Erie, 4 days after it came to Mr. Jenkins'. I wanted very much that she might have another taken, and that she should take it home. I have written to Ebenezer, and to Melissa lately. I am sorry I have not or could not write to you I think I could have done it if I had been more thorough. I want some one to mend my pants I hardly, I might say, do not get at it. they need it very much. There were two funerals yesterday in our Reg. I attended one. A funeral sermon is to be preached today. Many of the men are fixing over their tents today. We had not a very cold night, last, and a very pleasant morning this; and now the wind blows very brisk from East of south. The Sun shone very warm a while ago. The clouds gather. I hope you may have got my last letter. Very many of the men here have colds. Those who died, had Typhus and Typhoid fevers I believe. I do not feel quite well, but nearly so. Pray for me I trust you do. And I try to trust in God. Tell Leslie that my log chain did hang on the large sheep rack. I think I left it on the East end of the boards, over head over the hay. I think I left the small twisted link chain in the same place. Look for the ring which is to be put on the four of the kettle which belongs to each chain. The other chains, two, I left over the fire place in shanty. The two rods and little piece of a chain, which were used for a bail to one of the cauldron kettles I left under the out shed by the shanty in the woods. Close up to the roof. Will you Leslie try to take care of them. Will you if you can see to my bake kettle and other small kettle that they do not rust badly. Also the griddle, and andirons. I left the large hand saw on the east end of the old shed, overhead over the polls. Will you look for it if Providence permit. Try to do the best you can; I know not how things may be with me in future. The affairs of the Nation may be changed soon. I have not received any money yet.

Yours in love,
James G. Macomber

Mother and Leslie
Sarah M. Macomber }
Ripley, N.Y.

Camp near Falmouth Va.

Feb. 2nd '63

About a mile to the West of the old camp.

Dearest Mother,

I am happy to write to you once more. The changes among us in the course of events have been considerable since I wrote to you. Among it all I have been blessed by the Lord, beyond many of my fellows. My health at present is very good. I am fleshy, and towards as tough as a Bear. My appetite for food has been, most of the time since I have been in Va. very keen. My food, when relishable, has relished very well. I have, by the blessing of the Lord enough at present. I have had some given to me; I draw most of my rations; and buy some. I bought four pounds of Cheese last Friday; 3 lbs of it for 50 cts. a lb. 1 lb. f 40 cts. making \$1.90. I have not bought any butter or Cheese before, since I was in (or near) Fairfax. I have purchased considerable Army Bread, and some fruit &c. as I needed, but my fruit was gone long ago. I need more. Dried Apples & Peaches, are very necessary here in the Army; our bread is so firm and hard to be digested. It is very much unsatisfying to the Stomach, also. I feel as if Cheese is a very enervating element for me; and it is certainly an important relish. I am sorry to pay so much; but I am not sorry I got it, though I had to do so. My money has lasted and much more. We got some of our pay day before yesterday, (saturday). I got sixteen dollars forty five cents \$16,45. My Allotment draft is twelve dollars; which I intend and expect if, Providence permit, to send to you. I do not recollect that I have learned that you have ever known that I allotted it to you; but I have tried to inform you of it. Take it and use it well according to your own judgment. If you with take it for what I owe you on taxes; toward it I should say; for that will not pay you.

There has, apparently, been a great calculation made in the Army, for a move and strike at the Rebels, or enemy, on the other side of the River. The move was commenced and partly prosecuted; and the storm of rain came and frustrated the movement. It was impossible to move the Pontons by teams; then the Cannon you know are heavy. It takes six horses to draw those of common caliber almost any time. But when the ground gets soaked with water the wheels cut in so deep in places where the road is not very hard, that it is nearly or quite impossible to move them or the pontoons (Pontons) on wheels. The pontoons (Pontons) are a kind of Scows for making bridges. They are anchored and fastened, and planked over (a plank bridge is placed across the boats.). You know a road will soon get

James G. Macomber, February 2, 1863, continued

cut up where so many are passing. It seemed as if Providence put a stop to our move to save the great loss of life which must inevitably have taken place, if the movement had been successful. I hope, if the Lord is willing, that the contest will soon be over; and good be done; the enemy conquered without so much fighting as would have been, if we had met him here. Our men are generally well and hearty, but this last move was very hard on them. They had to march work, and be out in the rain. We have to clear land and make roads. Our regiment was out in the rain with knapsacks on or near, all of one night. But I with some others, thirteen at the place were I was were much better off only on guard at Brigade head Quarters of Commissary stores and teams. This was a cold and wet station; yet we had a tent; and at least a fire in it, then the tent was warm. I took some cold through some neglect and the severity of the weather but I soon recovered. I with the most healthy of our reg.; except two com. who were stationed as support of batteries near the old camp, went before, up the river and worked on a new road down a ravine toward the river.

Yours My Mother

James G. Macomber

Sarah M. Macomber. }
Ripley, N.Y.

Feb. 10th I hope to send it by Isaac T. Jenkins. J. G. Macomber.

We crossed one over a creek on the 6th of Feb. Potomac Creek. The Creek was raised by the rain on the night of the 5th. Look for Aquia Cr. landing. We are now near it the 10th between potomac and Aquia Cr.



CAMP "JOHN MANLEY," 154TH REG'T N. Y. VOL.,
1st Brigade, 2d Division, 11th Corps, Army Potomac

Near Stafford C. H., Va.,

1863.

May 12th

Dear Mother,

By the blessing of God I am here in quite good health, though not perfect. I attempt to address you again. I wrote to you yesterday; but the letter may not reach you; the stamp was poor. Will you send two or three stamps and one sheet of paper in the next letter. I have envelopes at present. I want you to fill the letter with writing as much as possible. The second time you write; will you send a pencil. If you have an opportunity, tell Norman, or Bell, that I want one for writing letters; one that is fine and good. The pencils here are too soft and muddy. This one is rather hard. I got this at their store. If you have the success to get one; cut it in two, and send half at a time. Write soon; as soon as possible.

I got my four months pay last night. We had to go on Corps Drill yesterday afternoon, so I could not write. I intend to send the draft in this, if the Lord will. I leave it with you to do the best you can; I expect you will. I may want to buy a cow &c next fall. Some one who is safe might have the money a while. I wrote in the other letter about paying Mr. Lumbard; and you taking money for yourself. If any of our friends don't want what you may have to spare; let Leander Bickford have it, if you can. You can send word to him some way, if the Lord will, and he may come and get it. After I get home, if I do so well, I expect to want money and help. I hope you may be with me a while, at least. May I be resigned to the Lord's will. But my hopes, if not faith, are strong that I may be home before long. I may do wrong if I don't say I think I have faith. O may the war be done; yet in a right way.

Our company went into the battle with about 66 men all told. And came out with 30, I think. Yet some, two or more, are in the hospital at the Railway Station. The most of the missing cannot be shown by us of their whereabouts. We suppose they are dead, taken prisoners, wounded and prisoners, perhaps some are gone to Washington. There has been talk that the Colonel [Patrick Henry Jones] and Lieut. Isaac T. Jenkins have gone there. We do not know that Isaac was wounded. Still he may have been. Isaac N. Porter is here. You would like to know how I escaped. I was detailed, when in the Reg. near Kelly's ford to go to our old camp,

James G. Macomber, May 12, 1863, continued

this place, to help, and see to getting our knapsacks when I returned our Reg. was gone across the river, all except a few men and the teams. I was then set on guard, with the rest of our company of detailed men, over the Commissary Stores, that were left behind in Mt. Holly Church, situated near Kelly's Ford, and near our camp. When the stores were moved, we moved; and kept with the wagons as guard, till they were stored or stationed near this place and through that day, four of us were kept and then relieved by another guard.

So I was not in the fight at all, nor near it. We did not cross the River. I heard much of the booming of the cannon; and saw one or two shells burst; which were thrown among the teams near a half mile from me. I was comparatively safe, yet some times we had to be very watchful while we were on guard. I saw Martin Harmon Sunday. He was here, well tough and fleshy. I saw M. Dickinson of Cattaraugus, yesterday, about a minute, just as we were forming in to go on drill. He said that he had a letter from Amon's folks the night before. Esther had got there. I think he said they were all well. I have not heard from Electus. They were in the hard fight. —

Will you write of the sugar business. Save some Molasses for me as I wrote, and a little sugar. Save all of my letters. Give my love to all the Neighbors and friends. Pray, and may the Lord's will be done.

Yours, from your filial son,

James G. Macomber.

Sarah M. Macomber }
Ripley, N.Y.

[Oct 3, 1862]
Sped) Camp opposite Washington
No. 2

in Virginia on a
strip of land between two
parts of Gen. Lee's estate.

Dear Brother,

I am now in a
Rebel State, but we don't see
any Rebels here. It is very hot
here today Oct. 3rd & the ground
is sandy and at present very dry.

We however don't suffer here
as in Camp Brown for water
a brook runs near by where we
bath. We get water to drink ^{at} wells
and a spring about a quarter to
half a mile off.

We can see Camps around us
plenty of them I suppose by
what I hear that there are
a hundred thousand men.

I can see the Capitol from
the place where I now sit
writing, with a part of Wash.

From a place a little further
west and a little higher I saw
the Potomac and vessels on it.
The prospect is pleasant. East
the Capitol is near N. E.
It is not so pleasant here as
one loves the sight of Camps
Fort and Long with camp
almost entirely. However the
sight is grand on the whole
country to be almost nothing but
in the distance. The timber is
small which growth of Oak
etc about this place has been
cut down to prevent the Rebels
being covered by it. We got on
some time in the evening stacked
our arms and after a while fired
and held on to the ground as well
as we could. I laid my rifle down
the ground my knifuck and a pillow
and my blanket over me. The ground is now
dust, hair, and my blanket over me.
My sheet all in
R. Jones "Plusia" James to the commander

time, as I have not bought loosening
 food enough. Potatoes and apples
 may be bought, ~~at a price~~ but I don't
 think how much money and in-
 convenience must be had for
 one to help himself so much.
 I bought two lbs. 2 oz. cheese yesterday
 and gave forty cents, and nine apples
 for twenty cents. I bought 2 lbs. of
 butter, it was a whiliago for 35 cts. 1 1/2 extra
 pound. Butter is 20 cents a pound, still
 one of our men yesterday got a pound,
 and a loaf of bread for forty cents,
 the same price. I must close.

I want some postage stamps
 very much. Will you send me
 a few, say 2 or 3. Will you, if
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 It may be I had better send my
 United States money home. But I
 have but not a great deal besides.

Direct to
 Sarah M. Macomber
 Ripton, N. Y.
 James C. Macomber,
 In care Capt. J. B. Fay,
 Co. E. 154 Reg. N. Y. S. M.
 Washington D. C.

(Electin took the road by us, turned off southward, at Antiochville
 & supposed)

On Pocket Guard, Nov 21st '62.
 Dear Mother,
 I wish a number
 of others were detailed and hon-
 red off on Pocket Guard this
 afternoon, but I must be one
 of our company at this station,
 which is a reserve. At present we
 have not any thing to do. Told
 the capt. and he gives me leave
 to write. He is about I am
 happy to write to you I hope
 that perhaps I am on my way
 this before the morning time.
 I received one from Melissa and
 other Tuesday morning, the first
 I had received from my friends
 since I came here. I have been
 rather neglected about writing yet
 I have written to four letters to
 Charita, one to Allega-
 ny. besides some business ones
 to New York.

End leave me till 10 P.M.
 We are going
 I wish more

the line ^{was} yesterday, and last evening late. We suppose ^{Busside's} ~~Busside's~~
I wanted to answer Melissa's and Esther's
to Ripley very soon, but I was with
others, about 3/8 of us of our
company called out on picket
the same day; and that was
the first time I had been call
on this duty. I wished when I had
got to my station that I had
brought my paper ~~and pen~~ for
there were three men of us, one
to watch at a time, and one to
be awake and ready to assist
the other to rest. But they did
not live up to the rules quite all
of the time. But in the day time
one could write if he should
not be too sleepy. Especially
the first afternoon, for we
staid 24 hours and as it happen
we staid that day much more.
Since then we have moved about
a mile to another camp. We are
now a little south of Fairfax.

Wednesday mon. 5th Nov. We got here near the over the hill Monday on, and the line of passing beyond now.

We have been toward the Hills of Fairfax. Early. 13th Nov. Sun. & toward Fairfax. May. 5th. Kill. X.

We moved on Wednesday evening.
And we have had to clear
the ground in and about our
camp: yesterday we had a general
review: there were a great many men
together. I wish I could tell you how
many. In the afternoon we cleared
the ground about camp and grubbed
stumps and burnt up stuff up.
Our camp is in a much better place
than the other was. It is in a
grove and near woods. How long
we may stay we can scarcely say
any thing. We may have to go some
row. Our Capt. said this afternoon,
before I left, that we had orders
to be ready to move, but not orders
to march. My health is good.
I thank Providence for the
blessing. I buy some food, and
have some found me that is
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trappings on, afterward, we
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The water was prepared for coffee, but the kettles and pans were called for and carried away to the waggons to be packed before the drink could be made.

We were ordered to leave our tents untouched, as it would not take long to pack them to carry.

These are carried by the men. Each one carrying a piece. But we are here still some about 3/4 of an hour high and no more to start. I forgot to say we ~~etc~~ breakfast when we were up. We lay down again. I hope soon to write again.

We have not received any pay yet, though we hope ~~we may~~ (have hoped so) soon.

Yours in hope.

S. M. Masomber

James Masomber

I wanted to pay the taxes with the expected money.
S. M.

Camp near Fairfax, Virginia,
Nov. 29th 1862

Dear Mother,

I was at Gen. Von Steuben's Head Quarters on guard when I wrote the previous sheet. It has been so cold since, and I have not had a comfortable place to write; that I have neglected to write. I am now in camp. We do not know whether we shall move soon or not. We had a Thanksgiving day before yesterday. A sermon preached, as it happened I was not so as to hear it yet the subject was told to me by one who did. The Capt and Lieut. promised something for dinner, but failed to obtain what they sought. Meal for a Johnny Cake was the grand object. How glad we should be to taste and eat what we ^{might} count, of a good one.

I don't hear from my friends at home. So went as far as Westfield any way. I wish we could carry a new one taken from it.

Nov 29 1862

Tuesday Dec. 2nd '62. In camp.
Dearest Mother I have just rec'd. Mias
line with the envelopes, paper & stamps.
I had not finished writing as much as I
intended to, as my tent is not yet fixed
warm with a fire. Some of the tents
have a fireplace in them now. I have
a part of the material to make one,
some brick & a flat stone, but
have not found time to make it.
I was on Picket Guard Saturday after-
noon & Sunday forenoon; yesterday I went
out with the pickets to find where
they went was to carry them their
provision; there went and helped
carry it. I happened to get some
potatoes of a Negro family, so I
cooked some sliced ones with an
Onion last night. I bought four
pounds of Cheese for one dollar good
poor Cheese is sold for the same I
suppose and for less too. I did not
buy any butter this time. This is not
the ^{good} less in ^{Wanda} and poor.

My health is pretty good; I thought
I am not quite well. I was told
last night by the Capt. that
I am growing fleshy. It is
probably so. I ^{have} enough to eat
and most of the time a very
good appetite. We were called
about half past twelve this
morning into line and the Roll
called. The first time we were
called out in the night
at so unseasonable an hour.
We were a little startled by it.
By the blessing of providence
the moon shone brightly.
We packed our knapsacks;
I believe the most of fold^{ed} and
rolled our blankets; our provision
was divided and packed in our
good soft ^{hard} bread & hard crackers,
flour sacks; what I should say was
not needed to be cooked at the
moment; and that was set a going.
It was the meat that was cooked and

I do not know what I should do in the afternoon. I have a rough meeting in the evening. I do not know what I should do in the evening.

Generally been so. We had a hard muddy time a part of the way from Fairfax to this place. I thank the march well by the blessing of the Lord. A part of the way the ground was frozen. It broke up at that time we have had dry weather most of the time since the roads are good. It freezes nights now and thaws days. We suffer some slight cold at night for we are not prepared well for winter weather. Still we live and more than men died in our regimental hospital yesterday and last night. I how glad that Sam well. I saw Electus a few days ago. He was over here to see us. He looked hearty.

Today is the third of the month Jan. '63

Yours in love.

Your son,

James C. Macomber.

Sarah M.

Macomber

Ripley, New York.

[Jan 3, 1863]

Camp near Palmyra. Opposite
Side of the Rappahannock to
Fredericksburg, and about three miles
above. We are on the high a little
distance from the River. Dearest
Mother, I have commenced this rather
unconsciously but you will
readily, if you are well, ^{recognize} ~~recognize~~
the hand. I am happy to write
to you once more, I have neglected it
long, although I thought when I
was last that I should write you
soon. It seems almost impossible
for me to write much; and yet I
do not do a great deal with it.
I have fixed my breakfast, fetched
some chips twice; and some water
twice; and that is the most of
the work I have done to date
now it is 27 min. past twelve.
We some times have to drill in the
forenoon but not today. A part of
Regiment is cleaning off the ground

adjoining our camp, for separating
out the camp for the heat of
the inhabitants. I have a little time
I thank Providence, to write to you.
I have now just taken off my rice
that I have been cooking for my dinner
and I have a little apple sauce
left that I stewed this morning.
I have to cook in my cup and
I boil at a time. I cooked some
Dessicated Potatoes that I bought
a short time ago. Last night,
partly cooked it, and put it on
my plate and baked it like a
Johnny cake this morning. Oh with
my apple sauce and hard
crackers ^{and sugar} ^{and} a very good break-
fast. We get Apples, peaches, po-
tatoes, rice, sugar, molasses, beans,
meat, both beef and pork, tea and
coffee, of the government Quarter
master. And if we could have
enough of each we might with

the army Bread live well, but
we do not. We had an opportu-
nity just before New Years, to buy
of the Brigade Commissary, and
this helped those who had
money to buy with, very much.
The provisions were sold at Gov-
ernment prices without charge
for transportation. Sugar ten
cents very nice. Crackers ^(Army brand)
five cents. Dried Apples, good,
eight, Peaches, dried with the skins
on, and a little musty, ten. Dessicated
potatoes 12 cents. This is very profit-
able to buy. Beside they had rice,
flour, beans, &c. We have had
but once that was yesterday's
Des. Potatoes 3 or 4 times perhaps.
Fresh potatoes once Christmas or
about that time. Peaches once. Other
often. I have been paid twice,
perhaps not too much for my labor.
My health is now good. &c. &c.

The two rods and little piece
of a chain, which were used
for a bail to one of the caldron
kettles I left under the out shed
by the shanty in the woods. Close
up to the roof. Will you Lestie
try to take care of them. Will
you if you can see to my
bake kettle and other small
kettle that they dont rust badly.
Also the griddle, and another one.
I left the large hand saw in the
east end of the old shed, overhead
over the polls. Will you look for it
if Providence permit. Try to do the
best you can, I know not how
things may be with me in future.
The affairs of the Station may be
changed soon. I have not received
any money yet.

Yours in love,

Mother and Lestie.

James Macomber.

Sarah M. Macomber
Ripley N.Y.

Camp near Palmyra Sunday Jan. 4 '69
2nd Street.

Dearest Mother,

I had so much
to do yesterday I could not finish
my letter. I received one from
you and Lestie last night
about nine o'clock. I am glad
and happy to have one from
you. I would like to know whether
or not you received one from me
with the likeness, and also, whether
you got one from me, written from
Palmyra (camp near) just after we
were surprised in the night by
the call to be ready to march.
This call I said was the first we
had had at so unseasonable an
hour, but it was not so. We
had had one like it at Vough-
fare Gap, but I was gone away, and
was with the team at Lainsville.
So I did not know it, did not

inquire though I ought to have
done it. Did Hannah see my
Picture? It seems that she got back
from Erie, 4 days ~~ago~~ after it
came to Mr. Jenkins. I wanted
very much that she might have
another taken, and that she
~~might~~ should take it home.
I have written to Ebenezer, and
to Melissa lately. I am sorry
I have not or could not write
to you I think I could have
done it if I had been more
thorough. I want some one
to mend my pants I had
by, I might say, do not get
at it. They need it very much.
There were two funerals yesterday in
our Reg. I attended one. A funeral
Sermon is to be preached today.
Many of the men are fixing over
their tents today. We had not

a very cold night, last, and a very
pleasant morning this; and now
the wind blows very brisk from
East of south. The Sun shone
very warm a while ago. The
clouds gather. I hope you may
have got my last letter.
Very many of the men here have
colds. Those who died, had Typhus
and Typhoid fevers I believe.
I do not feel quite well, but near-
ly so. Pray for me I trust you
do. And I try to trust in God.
Bill Leslie that my log chain did
hang on the large sheep rack. I
think I left it on the east end of
the boards, over head over the hay.
I think I left the small twisted
link chain in the same place. Look
for the ring which is to be put on the
hook of the kettle which belongs to
each chain. The other chains I
left over the fire place in shanties.

successful. I hope, if the Lord is willing, that the contest will soon be over, ^{and} good be done; the enemy conquered without so much fighting as would have been, if we had met them here. Our men are generally well and hearty; but this last move was very hard on them. They had to march with, and be out in the rain. We have to clear land and make roads.

Our regiment was out in the rain with knapsacks on or near, all of one night. But I with some others, thirteen at the place where I was were much better off only on guard at Brigade head Quarters of Commissary stores and teams. This was a cold and wet station; yet we had a tent, and at last a fire in it, when the tent was warm. I took some cold through ~~some~~ neglect and the severity of the weather but I soon recovered. I with the most healthy of our reg; except two com. who were stationed as support of battalions near the old camp, went before up the river and worked on a new road down a ravine toward the river.

Sarah M. Macomber
Richmond, Va.

Yours truly,
James G. Macomber.

Camp near Falmouth Va.

Feb. 2nd '63.

(Camp)

About a mile to the West of the old
Dearest Mother

I am happy to write to you once more. The changes among us in the course of events have been considerable since I wrote to you. Among it all I have been blessed by the Lord, beyond many of my fellows. My health at present is very good. I am fleshy, and towards as tough as a Bear. My appetite for food has been, most of the time since I have been in Va. very keen. My food, when relishable, has relished very well. I have, by the blessing of the Lord enough at present. We have had some given to me; I draw most of my rations; and buy some. I bought four pounds of Cheese last Friday; paid of it for 50 cts a lb. 1 lb. of lard, making \$1.90. I have not bought any butter or lard before, since I was in (or near) Fairfax. I have

purchased considerable ~~of~~ ^{of} Army Bread, and some
 as I needed, but my ~~part~~ ^{part} was gone long ago. I need more
 fruit ~~bc.~~ ^{bc.} Dried Apples & Peaches, are very neces-
 sary here in the Army; our bread is so fine
 and hard to be digested. It is very much
 unsatisfying to the ~~ft.~~ ^{ft.} Stomach, also.
 I feel as if Cheese is a very enervating
 element for me; and it is certainly an im-
 portant relish. I am sorry to pay so much, but
 I am not sorry I got it, though I had to do
 so. My money has lasted and much
 more. We got some of our pay day before
 yesterday, (Saturday). I got fifteen dollars
 forty five cents. \$16.45. My allotment
 draft is twelve dollars; which I
 intend and expect if, Providence permit,
 to send to you. I do not recollect
 that I have learned that you have
 ever known that I allotted it to you,
 but I have tried to inform you of it.
 Take it and use it well according to your
 own judgment. If you wish take it for what
 I owe you on tapes; toward it I should say,
 for that will not pay you.

Recd 10th June 1864
 By Isaac Perkins
 J. S. Macomber

(Paris near it the 10th June 1864) ^{near it the 10th June 1864}
 There has, apparently, been a great calculation
 made in the Army, for a move and strike
 at the Rebels, or enemy, on the other side
 of the River. The move was commenced
 and partly prosecuted; and the storm of
 rain came and frustrated the movement.
 It was impossible to move the ^(Pontons) ~~pontons~~
 by teams; then the Cannon you know are
 heavy. It takes six horses to draw those
 of common caliber almost any time.
 But when the ground gets soaked with water
 the wheels cut in so deep in places where
 the road is not very hard, that it is
 nearly or quite impossible to move them or
 the ^(Pontons) ~~pontons~~ on wheels. The ^(Pontons) ~~pontons~~ are
 a kind of ~~boards~~ ^{boards} for making bridges.
 They are anchored and fastened, and
 planked over. ^(A plank bridge is placed over the boats.)
 You know a road will soon
 get cut up where so many are passing.
 It seemed as if Providence put a stop to our
 move to save the great loss of life
 which must inevitably have taken
 place, if the movement had been

The rain on the night of the 8th of June was very heavy.

The pontons are one over a one and one half inch.

When the stores were moved, we moved
and kept with the wagons as guard, till
they were stored or stationed near this place
and through that day, four of us were here
and then relieved by another guard.

So I was not in the fight at all, nor near
it. We did not cross the River. I heard much
of the booming of the cannon; and saw one or
two shells burst, which were near among
the teams near a half mile from me. I was
comparatively safe, yet some times we had
to be very watchful while we were on
guard. I saw Martin Harrison on Sunday.

He was nice, well tough and fleshy.
I saw Mr. Dickerson of Cattaraugus,
yesterday, about a minute, just as we were
forming in to go on drill. He said that he
had a letter from a few folks the night
before. Esther had got there. I think he said
they were all well. I have not heard from
Eloctus. They were in the hard fight.

Will you write of the sugar business. Have
some Molasses for me as a note, and a little sugar.
I have all of my letters. Give my love to all
the neighbors and friends. Pray, and may the Lord
will be done.

Yours, from your filial son,
James S. Macomber.



CAMP "JOHN MANLEY," 154TH REG'T N. Y. VOL.,
1st Brigade, 2d Division, 11th Corps, Army Potomac.

Near Stafford C. H., Va., May 12th

1863.

Dear Mother,

By the blessing of God I am
here in quite good health, though not perfect.
I attempt to address you again. I wrote to
you yesterday; but the letter may not reach
you; the stamp was poor. Will you send
two or three stamps, and one sheet of
paper in the next letter. I have envelopes
at present. I want you to fill the bible
with writing as much as possible. The second
time you write, will you send a pencil.
If you have opportunity, tell Mr. James
Bell, that I would like to see his
letters; or that is fine and good. The
pencils here, are too soft and many.
This one is rather hard. I got this at the
store. If you have the same, I got
one; cut it in two, and send half at
a time. Write soon, as soon as possible.

I got my four months pay last night.
I had to go on Corp Quill
yesterday afternoon, so I could not
write. I intend to send the draft in this,
if the Lord will. I leave it with you
to do the best you can; I expect you
will. I may want to buy a cow & exempt
fall. Some one who is safe might have
the money a while. I wrote in the other
letter about paying Mr. Lambert; and
you taking money for yourself.
If any of our friends don't want what you may
have to spare, let Leander Bickford have
it, if you can. You can send word to him
some way, if the Lord will, and he may
come and get it. After I get home, if I do
so well, I expect to want money and help.
I hope you may be with me a while, at
least. May I be resigned to the Lord's
will. But my hopes, if not faith, are strong
that I may be home before long. I may do
wrong if I don't say or think I have faith.
O may the war be done, yet in a right way



Our company went into the battle
with about 66 men all told. And came
out with 30, I think. Yet some, two or
more, are in the hospital at the rail-
way station. The most of the missing
cannot be shown by us of their whereabouts.
We suppose they are dead, taken
prisoners, wounded and prisoners, perhaps
some are gone to Washington where
has been a talk that the Colonel and
Lieut. Isaac J. Jenkins have gone there.
We do not know that Isaac was wounded
still he may have been. Isaac P. Potter is here.
You would like to know how I escaped.
I was detailed, when in the Reg. near Hellys
Ford to go to our old camp, this place,
to help, and see to getting our knapsacks
when I returned our Reg. was gone across the
river, all except a few men and the teams
I was then set on guard, with the rest of
our company of detailed men, over the Com-
missary stores that were left behind in Mt.
Holly Church, situated near Hellys Ford,
and near our camp.