

Camp near Stafford, Virginia, may

[1863]

Dear Brother Daniel,

I was glad to hear that you was getting along with your spring work first rait(rate) and that you had drawn out your manure and 15 loads from delfonCrooks. Howmuch more is there to be drawn from there and can you bye (by) any more if you can do so. I was glad to hear that the colt had not been gayd around. Now you had better as soon as your corn comes out of the ground take him and cultivate out. Use him a little every day till it is done and do it as soon as you can. When you sue him make him tow the mark and keep him checked up in sood shape, and do not let him slouch along and draw the rains (reins) over him yourself and let nobody else.

I am glad the claves are doing well and I hope that you see that they have good pasture. I hope that the seed potatoes you bought are good and where did you plant them. Be shure (sure) and not try to raise any calves , but feed all the milk to the pigs. Along about July you had better get some shoats about 500 pounds and thicken your swill with them and I think it will be as good as bushels of corn in the fall. At least I think it will be better besides having them nearer fated. It will save your corn next fall. I see that Charlie got the --- of --- and the 47 dollars that I sent . Shannon with --- --- all but Fred Fetch, VE Darling and S. Darling . I will send home about 20 dollars in one month or before that time if I have good luck and get it and I think I shall and that will pay the rest of the little dets (debts) so look well and sell --- as well as your corn. I should think that's enough to pay off the land office and you can bye (buy) a pair of bulls to draw your hay that is three years old on three months lease and then you can keep ---. You will have plenty of hay to keep a pare (pair) of stags thru the winter and I will rest and I can get the money to take up the note when its due. Remember Thomas has had 1400 dollars of his pay so keep good track of it. I let him have 400 dollars when I was in Washington last August and the 1000 that you let him have is --- 1900 ---. I think that if I should get out of this by another spring or fall I should like to have you keep thru ten calves next winter and the best we can bye (buy). I think if you have a good crop of grass there will be enough hay to winter thru and if I am home another spring we can keep thirty head as well as ten head of cattle but remember this sell when ever you are offered a good price if it is the last thing there is on the farm. --- of rain and hay or fodder and byr (buy) the cheapest and always the best. I wasn't to know what you think about heifer calves. If you can get along without pasturing the orchard you can mow that by the first of July, and I think you had better. Did you seed down where you had sowed wheat and oats. If you did not you had better sow some now. I hope you will take the pains to answer this as soon as possible. There has been no change here and I think it will be some time. Give my respects to --- --- and tell him Edwin is all right in the hospital with rheumatism.

Your Brother
G. J. mason

Courtesy of Elaine Zimmer.

[ca. May 1863]

Dear Mother and Sister,

I reread yours of May the 18th. I was glad to hear that you are all well as this leaves me. G, B Elsworth left this morning for Washington, he is on the gain. Eugene Mires is dead, he dide (died) two or three days ago. Dan Gardener is dead, he dide(died) from a wound in his arm on the way to Richmond as a prisoner. Truman Shannon is still among the missing and I --- always will be but do not say anything for he might turn up yet. Edwin Sigar is at the hospital, he has the rheumantism I had a letter from Charlotte and have wrote to hear ---. I wrote to William a few days ago. To Rick Wells. Bard Mieres is missing. It was wrong to of reported Stiles kild (killed) and I told the captain that it was wrong in the time of it and it is a big joke on him. There was Stiles and 3 others reported kild (killed) and I told the captain that they did not get a scratch, he says he shall look out how he reports kild (killed) nest time.

I will send 2 months pay of the army at the - month in a short time to the first of May and that will straighten up your ----. I do not care whether you sell the colt or not but the - -- will not grow any better, and if you sell them you can do as you please about the colt, but he is what you want if you keep a horse at all. So use the best of your judgement on it is all I can ask but sell him rather than --- him.

The army here is very --- The Rebel is split thru but if he fails to take Vicksburg and gets defeated I think it is all --- with us . I suppose you think that there will be a draft. They cannot draft ---. For he is head of the family and whats more I do not think they will if they are successful in the ---wish the Rebs say that if one or two or more such men as Jackson should be taken from there Jeff Davis would leave the country and all we want is to sink the boat that he is on.

There is a good many leaving on furlough but I do not want a furlough for 10 days, it would be nothing but an aggravation to me. I think Nosh will try and get one. Harle Day and all the boys are all well excepting one or tow in our company, they have the camp fever. I was never in better health in my life. Please write soon as you can. I am glad Charles has got two lambs hope he will take good care of them. He must write to me as soon as you get this. I hope I shall get an answer to all the letters that I write.

From you affectionate son and brother
George J. mason

Courtesy of Elzine Zimmer,

GJM#1
Camp near Shepardstown, Virginia
May 63

My dear Sister Martha & All,

You will see by this that we have got back to our old camp. We left and march for (?) ford the next morning after I wrote to Ezra Darling. We have had rather hard times of it late. Have ~~been~~ been in Battle two days and our list of casualties is great. I suppose you have seen the list of killed and wounded and missing. We went into the fight with 50 men. Came out with 17 privates and a corporal and 1 captain. ~~was~~ Borton (?). Our losses were many. Wounded, was S. B. Ellsworth but how bad I do not know. He and a great many more are prisoners. Of our company there are 203 missing from the Regiment. We were badly cut up, but the boys fought like tigers. I think if they had retreated sooner we should not have had so many taken prisoners. Our Colonel was wounded and Adjutant ~~was~~ missing. If we had retaken the ground where our wounded and killed were we should have known more about it. But thank God, I am all right. There is no use ⁱⁿ telling how close the balls came to me but a miss is as good as a mile. Hooker has withdrawn for some cause or other and I do not know what for. We are ordered to move with 8 days rations and where for, I do not know but I guess towards Washington. Our corps is the 11, Henselman, I think will take our place here. Our corps was moved on Sunday, but we picked our position and Meade(?) downed the Rebs with grape and canister with great slaughter. I will write more as soon as we get settled. If we go to Washington, you would hear from me in 5 or 6 days from the time you receive this. I send this by a man who has got his discharge. We cannot send any letters by mail now and have not received any letters until today since we left (?). I received the things that you sent by S. B. S.B. was reported killed but I saw him the last of anyone. I think he was only wounded near the thigh. I would have stayed and cared for him but the bullets flew like hail for they had a cross fire on us. I will write more as soon as I am able.

Yours G. J. Mason

Mart Shannon is here but True I think is missing

657#2
Camp Nois near Stafford, Virginia
May 31, 1863

Dear Sister,

It is Thursday afternoon and we have just returned from march. It is most plaguey warm. You will see by this letter that we have moved camp and our camp here is named in memory of Samuel Nois our late adjutant. Our camp is a nice one and is in the woods very shady and free from bad smells that our other camp had. It is about one mile from our other camp. I am well and so are the rest of the boys. We have not much duty to do now for the Cavalry does the most of the picketing. Our Captain has gone to Washington. He was sick and had to leave the sargeant major his command of our company. Now we have 11 for duty in our company instead of 50 that we had before we left camp in the spring and I can assure you that it is rather lonesome. We have not heard anything from those that are missing. I presume we never shall.

Daniel Gardener died of the lockjaw, so I heard just lately. They are fortifying around here considerably and I think that we shall not leave here very soon. I see that we came very near being nine months men, but I guess we are in for three years sure enough. We came out under the Government call for nine months, but Lawrence(?) Morgan urged us in for three years. I think there were thirty men killed in the late battle from our Regiment besides the wounded. Boyd Meyers, I have heard, was in the Parole(?) camp- H. B. Day wishes to be remembered and is as tough as ever. I hope that you are well, all of you and that Dan has got his spring work done. I hope that I shall hear from home soon for I have not had any letter in a long time. I shall send home 27 dollars in a short time. I hope that you received that money that we sent by express. If you have not, let me know soon. I find the more I write home, the less letters I receive. I think I shall spare my paper.

Your affectionate brother
G. J. Mason

Mr. Charles Mason,

I should that you might try and write over a sheet of Fools Cap paper to me, and if you can not think of anything to write, get Dan to help you. I am sure you both can.

I suppose that you have both been at work hard, all of the spring, but you must be sure and spend time enough to write to me a good long letter and I shall expect it soon. What did you do with those piles of manure that Frank Day drew last summer.

I think that you could buy a barrel of plaster to put on the corn. It would be a good thing and I hope you will do it.

Your affectionate brother
George J. Mason

now please write soon.

GJM

Wednesday July 1 1863
July 12, 1863
Camp near Boonsborough, Md.

Dear Mother,

I thought that I would write a few lines to let you know that I am all right.

We have had a hard fight and our Regiment was most all taken prisoners. None of my camp was wounded. Deloss Darley is a prisoner. H. Day, H. Cunningham, L___ are all right.

Mart Shannon was a prisoner but got away and is here. We lost our Colors but out one State flag and the Colors of the 134th Regiment so that saves our Bacon.

The 134th Regiment was on our right and the enemy flanked them and cut off our retreat and the few that did get away were the best runners and the most exposed to danger- but I can say that we have had the pleasure of making the Rebs skeedaddle since. There are but 75 of us left, but we are as good, what there is left of us, as we ever were.

We were the first regiment that went through Gettysburg and commenced the fight. Our brigade lost about 500 men. They say that we shall have another fight but I guess that ~~Lee~~ Lee is getting back across the river and I do not believe we shall get another chance at him.

Write as soon as you can and let me know how you get along for I am anxious to hear from home. I am well and tough as ever. Let me know how Daniel gets along with his haying and be sure and write as soon as you can. If you hear from England I wish you would let me know.

I expect that we shall get our pay after this squabble is over. We have whipped Lee bad, but as far as annihilating his army as the papers say, it fools you. Probably you know as much about this as I do, for you can get papers.

I wish we could have been at home to spend the fourth.

We had a big fourth here with powder shot and railroad iron and shell on the 2, 3, and fourth. Such a one as I do not like to hear very often. I think I have had "fourth" enough to last me as long as I live.

We are now on the old Antietam Battlefield and shall move tonight.

Please write soon.

Your affectionate son
G. J. Mason

Corporal George J. Mason, Company K

Courtesy of Mrs. Juliet Mason

July 12, 1863
Camp near Boonsborough, Md.

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Please write soon.

Your affectionate son
G. J. Mason

George J. Mason

July 16, 1863

Dear Mother,

I thought that perhaps you would like to hear from me and I am sure that I would like to hear from home. We are now not far from Harpers Ferry, and shall cross the river tomorrow. You will see that Lee has crossed and we did not have another brush with him and I think we shall not very soon again, but I do not believe Lee would stand before he gets to Richmond. It was a sad mistake in letting him cross the river. I think we might have hindered him and whipped him again but we were doing too much at once. Now we have got to march and catch him again. If Charlestown is taken, you may begin to think that this war is about to close. I am well and want to keep so till the war is closed, even if it is for three years.

I think it strange that I do not hear from home. If you want to hear from me very often, you must write.

I see by the papers that the Copperheads are making quite a fuss in New York about the draft. I think that they will have to time and stand it.

I am anxious to know how Daniel gets along with the haying and how the crops are coming along and whether the stock is doing well. Have you sold the oxen yet?

Mart Shannon is here. He is not very well but I think that he will be in a few days.

I shall write to Charlotte in a few days. I have not heard from her in a long time. Please write soon and let me know how you all are.

● Your affectionate son

George J. Mason

My respects to all enquiring friends. I am the only one that is left in our Company that has been here with it since it came out. I have not been sick.

Harle Day is not very well. I suppose Styles Ellsworth cannot stand it long. Has he got home yet? I heard that Dick Wheeler was coming after him.

Lee has gone back across the river with about 50,000 men. Now write as soon as you get this.

Cattlets Station
August 16, 1863

Dear Sister Martha,

I have just received your letters of the 10th. Was much pleased to hear from home and you are all well as this leaves me.

We received orders to be ready to march at a moments warning. I think we shall move soon. I hear that the Army is moving toward near Harpers Ferry ford(?) but how true that is, I do not know. They are sending troops to Charlestown from here evry day. The first Division of our Corps has gone and I do not know but we shall have to go. Conscripts arrive in large numbers daily. We are all very anxious here to hear from Charlestown. I suppose they have had some hard fighting there before this. I hope that we may be successful and then I think the hard fighting is over.

It is almost useless to think of where we shall go when we leave here. I do not think that Meade is strong enough to attack Lee, nor do I think that Lee has ~~any~~ confidence enough to try us, but perhaps he may. I hope not until we get all the conscripts, and then let him come if he wants to, for then I think we will be ready for him.

I did not get Schuyler Seagers letter. Danforth(?) Fairbank was taken prisoner at Gettysburg.

I was muched pleased to hear that you had a good garden. Dan better sow his grass seed on the bare places in the meadow this fall. He better get all the hay that he can. I wish the oxen were sold. I am glad to hear that the corn looks well and I hope that there will be a good cropp. How much buckwheat did Dan sow and where?

I think that we shall not stay here long enough to get a box of things by express, but when we do get into a place I will let you know.

I do not know whether E. Gardiner has got back to his Regiment or not. I think you have done fairly well with the butter considering the family there is to eat it.

The boys must look well to their apples and not let any of them spoil for they are worth money. How does the store prosper now? I would like to know who was drafted in our town. We have preaching today. I wish that I were at home to have a Sunday dinner. I think it will not be long. I hope so. Write as soon as you ~~can~~ can and send me some stamps for I had to borrow this one. Give my best respects to all.

Your affectionate Brother,

George J. Mason

Alexandria, Va.
August 27, 1863

Dear Sister Martha,

You will see by this that we have moved to this place. Our Brigade is encamped near Alexandria, towards Washington. We are about 20 rods from the river. We are on the river guarding Conscripts and also are guards on the railroad to guard the Deserters and Conscripts of the regiment. It is not very agreeable work for the boundary frequently used is uncertain and we have to be very strict, but it is not as hard as being out in front.

I wish you would send me \$ 5.00 for we shall not get our pay in some time. If it gets lost, let it go. Send that as soon as you can. I am well. Direct your letters as you have and write as soon as you can. I shall send for those things, if we are likely to stay here, in a day or two. This is the best camp we were ever in. We have the largest tent and all of our company is in one tent, only 8 men. We have lots of fun. In the town we go to where we please, that is, we wear a badge on our hat that passes us anywhere- our regiment and the 134.

Write as soon as possible.

Bridgeport, Alabama
October 3, 1863

Dear Sister Martha,

You will see by this that we are in the Army of the Cumberland. We are about 24 miles from Chattanooga and shall probably march there in a few days. We were 6 days and nights on the cars. Had a good time but it was rather fatiguing. It was a long ride.

I got the box safely just the day before we left Alexandria and a letter from Thomas. I would answer it if I had time and my hand did not shake so. I have had 2 or 3 chills of the ~~the~~ Ague and I do not feel very well but I think I shall be all right in a few days. You may direct your letters to G. J. Mason, Co. K 154 Regiment N. Y. State Vol 1 Brigade, 2 Division, 11 Corps, Army of the Cumberland. This will find me. Send me some stamps if you can. Write as often as you can and let me know how you get along.

I have enclosed a dollar for Willie Shannon. You can give it to Mary and she can do as she likes with it. I would have sent more money to you but I thought that I might want more, if we do not get our pay under four months.

We get our water out of the river to drink and it is not good. Our parole prisoners have got back and are exchanged.

I think I can break the Ague up for I have what whiskey I want or at least the Captain will get it for me. He is as fine a man as ever trod in boots and we all like him. I would write you a long letter, but I can hardly write this so that you can read it. I shall write again soon. Write as often as you can. Hope Thomas will excuse me for not writing this time.

Your affectionate brother

G. J. Mason

You need not be afraid to send stamps for they do not cost much. Send me some in every letter and not let me have to write every time for them ~~for~~ for I want stamps to write somewhere else than home. I sent 60 dollars to Day of Leon. He will pay it to you and I sent a check ~~of~~ of 48 dollars and 7 dollars in money for Harle Day for his mother. You can get it of Day and let Mrs. Day have it.

Write whether you ~~have~~ have received it or not.

GJM#8
Company of the N. Y. Vol
Near Atlanta, Ga.
July 27, 1864

Dear Sister Martha & All

I received a letter from you some time ago. Was glad to hear from you. I am well. We are within a short distance from Atlanta. I hope we shall soon be there. We have had some hard fighting and think we shall have some more, but the Rebs must get out of our way, if we have to throw shells into Atlanta.

I hope that this finds you well and all the rest. I received a letter from Mary last night and also one from you. There is no news.

Monroe Carpenter is dead. He died in the Hospital at Chattanooga. You probably know as much about Milton Bush's death as we do. We have official news of it, in the Company. Stiles is back with the train. He probably will go home soon. The boys are all well. It is very warm here. I wish you would send me some more rhubarb, for it is as good a medicine as we can take when we cant get where a doctor is, and it is much better than their medicine anyway.

Gen. Hooker has left us and we all miss him much. I wish he could have stayed with us, they all liked him so much. He was a good Commander and very careful of his men.

July 30 There is nothing new this morning. We have the Rebs nearly surrounded here, and they will have to make a break somewhere.

I wish that I were at home to work through haying, but we have enough to do here, and I want to see the inside of Atlanta.

I hope Daniel will save all the hay and fodder that he can, for he will need it next winter. Have him take as good care of those heifers as he can, for we want to make some good cows of them.

I have not received my pay and do not know when we shall. The Government now owes me \$ 1200 and I wish they would step around and pay me a little, but when it comes, it will be in a lump and if we do not need it, I would let it be until my time was out, and then I would have quite a take, but 2 years has almost gone and only one more we will have to stay here.

I hope this will find you all well a Mother much better. She must have that medicine when she wants it, if it costs our house. She must try to write as often as she can. I do not write my letters to any particular one, but to all at home. Dan might write to me every week if he were a mind to. I think that Charles does not to write but he must.

We are now lying in entrenchment and I hope we shall stay here until the Rebs make a break if they do at all. We fought the Rebs on the 20 and 22d. as we have every day since.

I want my hat and that pocket dictionary and then I shall be all set.

If I can get a furlough after this campaign is over, I shall try to do so. I shall be Orderly Sergeant of the camp next month if Mart Shannon does not get transferred to the Invalid Corps, he will be reduced, for the Major said that the one that does the duty should have the pay and that was the understanding, when Mart was made Orderly, that he should be transferred immediately or should be reduced back to Sergeant.

Write often.

Your affectionate brother

George James Mason

Savannah, Ga. Dec. 18, 1864

Dear sister Mary,

It has been a long time since I wrote to you, and I hope this will find you as it leaves me, and I am all ~~right~~ right.

We reached here a few days ago, but we have not taken the city yet. We have just opened our communications, and we feel as if we could hear from God's country again. We had a large mail yesterday but I had not a letter. We have marched a long distance since I last wrote to you. We have laid waste a large country and destroyed a great deal of railroad, and are now busy in Savannah. I think we ~~will~~ shall have the city in a short time. We have not much rations but we shall have ~~plenty~~ plenty soon. I shall write home when I hear from there. I will tell you all about the country around here. It is very swampy and level. I would like to hear from you soon. We destroyed Atlanta and burned everything.

We left there on Nov. 15 and have been very successful all the way through, and have done a great deal of damage to the Rebs. We shall probably be in Savannah in a short time and I think our campaign will be ended for a short time. I hope you will not let anybody see my letter, for they will think I am a blockhead. I can't write this any better on the back of a plate, and I do not care if you can read it.

I sent 150 dollars home and would be anxious to hear from it, but our folks, I suppose, do not care whether I do or not. Address your letters to 154th Reg't, N.Y. Vols. Co. K 2nd Brigade, 2nd Division, 20th Corps. Army of Georgia.

John Green and Butler are well and all of the rest of the boys that come from Rut. (Rutledge) I hope soon to hear from you. Tom wants some socks, and you may tell Martha to send me 1 pair, 1 comb, 1 pair of suspenders, and a housewife for I have lost my old one and a silk pocket-hankierchief. These I want now and can't get them here and I hope you will soon get them. I will write to you in just one week and hope you will do the same as soon as you receive this. I wish I could come home and spend a short time but I cannot now. We have only 9 months more to stay in the army. I wish you a Happy Christmas and Happy New Years and would like to be with you at home I do not know when we can send this out, but I hope soon.

Thomas has wrote Martha today. I hope that William will have his property so he will not have so much on his mind and if anything should happen to him his things would be settled and if the war should close now it would make a smash up in everything and he could not do as well as he can now. How do you like your farm?

I hear William Mason talks of buying a place. What is he going to buy and what is he going to pay with? I did think that I would buy his part in the old farm at home but I shall not now. I shall keep my money as near together as I can until I get out of the army and then I can do as I like. The weather is warm here now and it does not seem as it did in December but more like September. Kiss little Williw for me. I would like to see him. Tell William that he must write me.

From your affectionate

Brother

Geo. J. Mason

Savannah, Ga. Dec. 30, 1864

Dear Sister Mary,

I promised you that I would write to you this week and I will now try and do it. I am well and hope this will find you the same. I have not heard from home since we are here at Atlanta.

You will see by this that we have taken the City of Savannah, and are now doing Provost duty in the city. [REDACTED] Tom is well and all the rest of us from our part. We had a Corps. review today. We were reviewed by Sherman. He is here in town. This is a nice city and I think it has been a splendid place in its day. I think we shall stay here some time. The weather is warm and it is pleasant as May.

We have no news to write. Everything is at a standstill here now but there will be something doing here in a short time. I hope soon to hear from you and I wish you all a Happy New Year, and wish that I could be there with you to spend the day. I have not time to write much but will write often. I suppose you have had some cold weather long [REDACTED] before this but it has not been cold enough here to freeze the mud. The roads are now very dusty. John Green is here and well. I hope the war will be settled this winter and I think it will. The people here have mostly taken the oath of allegiance and are sick of the war and so am I but not till they are ready to lay down their arms.

I have not time to write any more now and will have to post this.

Your Affectionate Brother .

George J. Mason

Twenty- five miles from Savannah, Georgia
January 30, 1865

Dear Mother and all at Home,

We left Savannah on the 27th and marched to this place last night. I received the stockings that you or Mary sent when you were at Leon. It is pleasant weather here now and I think we shall cross the Savannah river tomorrow into South Carolina.

We do not know what place Sherman is making for now, but we think Branchville. We hear that Longstreet Corps is here to oppose us but he can not do much with what men he has. I hope to hear from you soon and hope to get the other things that I sent for. We are well and I hope this will find you the same. I have no news to write only that they have had a large fire in Savannah since we left and that makes me think about the chimneys at home. I hope that they are all safe and that they are all cleaned.

I want Daniel to make all the sugar he can and he must tap every tree that is on the farm. I write this in a hurry and hope that you can read it.

Be sure and take good care of the colts. I think if you should sell them in the spring and buy a horse that would raise a colt and one that you and Martha could drive, that would be best, but do as you think best and that will satisfy me. Only look at the thing on all ~~sides~~ sides.

You have not said whether you wanted any more money or not but let me know soon.

I have not heard from Charlotte in some time, the last was a good while ago, but I suppose she has got something else to do now beside writing to me. but so goes the world.

I shall expect to hear that Will Mason has another boy in a short time, but I hope that he will be a Lincoln one, and will stand by the Union and say that the Lincoln days were the most prosperous days that his father ever had.

These old Copperheads will stand back and say that it is hard times, but it is the best times they ever have seen for making money. This draft will make them squirm again and I do not care for that is what will bring in a durable peace and the sooner it comes the better. ^{Styles}

I wrote to ^{Styles} Elsworth a few days ago and will write to you as soon again as I can.

The money that was used for Mother to go East and for her teeth was a present from me and I do not want anyone to have anything that belongs to me, if I have anything, but Martha, if anything should happen to me so I thought I would let you know what I thought about it. I do not know what we shall get when we get our next pay. I think that we shall get only four months pay, but I hope we shall get it soon if you want it, if you do not, let me know as soon as you can.

From your son and brother

George J. Mason

Do not let anybody see this not even our relations.

Goldsboro, N. C.
March 30, 1865

Dear Sister Martha,

I hope that Charles and Dan will help each other and that Charles will do as Dan says, but if he has an opinion that he thinks is better, always let it out, and I hope that Dan will not turn a deaf ear to anything that Charles may have to offer, for what one does not think of, the other might. . I have one thing to say to Charles and that is I want him to try to help Dan all he can and use judgement in all that is to be done. Never to go to the village without telling someone and not ~~to~~ go only when it is necessary and do not associate with one only when you think they are your equal and let all pleasure drop for the next six months and let your aim be to get out of debt and lay up something for old age. If you will do this, next winter, I will let you and Daniel go to school all winter and you may have all the fun you please. I was glad to hear that you had got so near through your Arithmetic. I see you have improved in writing and spelling. If you would get a book and scribble in that you would learn to write fast. Learn to write and it will be a great help to you.

When I went to England, I could not write as well as you can, but I learned by myself so that I can write faster if not better. Read all the books you can get. Never mind if they are novels as long as you know there is ~~no~~ no truth in them, but I find that there are a good many hints that will show a man what is right and wrong.

Of course you never drink liquor, smoke or chew tobacco, so you must spend your time and money that you have to spend on something to read. Mother may think that her Advocate is all that a family needs in the paper line, but I say that unless she can get her children interested in reading, she can't get them to read the papers. So do not keep papers out of the house. Get papers with stories in them. They will be brought from the office at an early hour and read before they go to bed. If you get them interested in one thing they will be looking in every paper to find more. But enough of this!

I hear that Mary is better by way of John Green. He is not well today. I expect we shall be on the move in a few days and then I think the next campaign will last our time out. Write often. I shall write to Charles in a day or two. I am as tough as ever but not fat and glad of it. We hear that Grant has had a big fight but do not know. Harle Day was here today. He is well and is like a brother to me. Henry Cunningham is well.

We shall have a large army here in a short time. The 112th is here. I mean the 112th Regiment.

I hope that Dan will not forget to raise some turnips and at least two acres of potatoes. I would like some warm sugar. I had a letter from Charlotte. She was well. I will write to William Mason and Susan in a few days. No more now, so goodbye. I shall draw pay I think before I leave here and I will send it home by express. We shall probably get interest notes and you can keep ~~them~~ them in the house in case of need.

From your affectionate brother

George J. Mason

Raleigh, NC.
Apr. 21st /65

Dear Sister,

I thought that I would write a few lines to you, hoping it will find you all well and shouting for joy as we are before the coming parade. We leave here in a few days for Richmond when I will write to you again. We will have to march there, but we can do it if we are all well and I hope this will find you the same.

I could not tell you what has been done here for we do not know and probably you will hear more about it in the papers than I can write. I shall probably be home in June and shall probably stay with you and help do what I can for a few months but I can tell you better when I come home.

I would like to have you see the army when it reaches the Patomac, but as I could not be with you and show you what there to be sure, I am in the army but I am bound to one place and not be free until we reach Elmira, NY. We have one grand reunion of the 14th, 15th 17th co and 23 corps., and it will be a grand time. If I could be with you I would not have you miss seeing it for all the world, for it will be the grandest site that has ever been seen in the time of the war. This army as soon as it reaches the Patomac will have one grand encampment and one ----- . I say the army, I mean Shermans and not the army of the US (Union Soldiers). We have done more to crush the ----- and have marched 800 miles in the last six months and shall probably add 300 more to it soon. I was in hopes that we should not march so any more but it seems to be our luck , and we must stand it.

I hope that you will write to England and tell them that we are all right. I should have wrote to them before this if you had sent me the stamps. You can write and use them for me and that will be \$ --- that will be due me and \$110 bounty, which will be about 300 dollars, with the time that we are mustered out, that I should have to bring home.

I do hope that you have sold the calves and that we will be able to pay farm and stop the interest and then we shall have enough make the first --- without trucking, what you make this summer be sure and save every sent (cent) you get for money will be scarce next year and perhaps produce will not fetch much so you must make enough to pay next years installment. Do not by(buy) a mowing machine if you have not, a spend a cent you can probably help. I presume--- --- ---keep our produce for a short time but it will be down in the fall. Keep all the sheep you can and lambs.

I hope you have had good luck with all you cows and that you did not have any hay to by (buy). You can write to me, shall probably get our mail when we get to Richmond.

If Daniel can get some plaster be shure(sure) and have him do it and sow it on his wheat and oats, this I want done and he can do it. There is some lime in plaster and it will help keep of weeds. The corn wants plaster and \$10 will by(buy) it all .

So be shure(sure) and have it done, if you do not and twice over. Write often and I will. Be sure that that you have pains enough and keep plenty of sugar for your own use, which will not be --- --- 0 pounds and if you have any more sell it right away. Dan had better fat a veal calf on sweet milk I mean skim milk .

Your brother George

Courtesy of Elaine Zimmer,