Transcripts of Alfred Ryder Letters 1861 - 1864
Hamtramck
Sept. 6, 1861

Dear 

Nothing occurs but our continued monotony here in camp drilling—sleeping—eating. I hardly ever here any signs of danger although the prospect of action is exceedingly good.

I have believed all the time and the last two days has confirmed my belief that Missouri will be our destination. Yesterday's telegraph says that Fremont demands an army of one hundred thousand. If we are strictly through, I hope not. There are near twelve hundred men here now, all waiting anxiously for their uniforms which are supposed to arrive today from Cincinnati. The horses came a few for the captains are here. The stables are ordered to be commenced today & after the erection Camp ford will be the center of curiosity. We have one building now nearly thirty rods long—quarters for sleeping. The old agricultural fair ground tent is up here for dining room. But they say that we will have to cook our own victuals after this. The camp kettle are new with all their equipage—ten pans, spoons, & spoons by the thousands. I am well & hearty & expect to remain so. Farewell is unwell but probably he will stick with the folks to know it. But it is generally very healthy.

C.W.R.

Camp Sioux
In the 7th Mass. 
Fair & crisp early.
Camp Jenny (1863)
Sept 24th 61

Dear Friend,

I am well but rather sleepy this morning. Having been on guard yesterday.

Our uniforms have at last arrived and I'm dressed in blue. Some blouses. And so are some drawn for pants and two shirts, two pair of socks, and a pair of boots. The overcoat and cap are expected to keep.

The men overall is a flutter about going home but all are alike refused.

There possibility is that we will go Thursday. As frigates present to move. I shall take my clothes to Ewinglake (?) tomorrow morning if I can get there.

C. A. Ryder
Dear Friend,

It is pleasant this morning and every one feels well except a certain Billy Brown who has been sick since we left Washington. Camp life has its delights — I can ride in my tent this morning & hear the music of new and long hands and view the converging activity of many regiments. We somewhat expect R (?) to arrive here to-day. They encamped only about seven miles from here. And possibly Cheyenne will come too for I wrote to him yestadt. The report is that we go back to the city as the body guard of Old Abe. I haven't seen Old Abe yet but we expect him up here soon. One thing is certain that we move this week in some direction.

It is dreadful, rolling searching that here in the middle of the day but the nights cool.

There is a New Jersey regiment encamped on our right — cavalry and one in front of infantry and a New York regiment a little way in our rear & there are regiments in all directions. At evening it looks splendid the camps being all lighted up you can see every encampment for miles around. You will notice by looking in my books of "Verse and Poetry" that I sent home from Detroit some verses that I wrote off. I wish you would put them in an envelope and send them to me for they some useful sometimes as quotations in writing.

Yours in haste.

W. H. H.

Washington, D.C.
Dear Friends

The day is stormy and dreary since noon, and all the soldiers are cooped up in their tents. This forenoon I spent in wandering around the city. But first I will tell you that yesterday we moved from Camp Sheridan to the position we now hold.

Retracing our steps we marched to Washington most directly from the point from whence we started, passing a few miles each in each new tents in the very midst of the city, and now occupy a portion almost in shooting distance of the capitol. I can look out now and see its vast unfinished dome over the beautiful grove in our front and I also can see in the other direction the many and vast buildings which compose the Washington Navy yard in part which occupied my attention this forenoon. The many yard toward a good many acres and well filled with buildings of monstrous size: the vessels in front are the Harriet Lane, Parce, Harriet Lane etc. all splendid war vessels. They look as though bullets could never penetrate their thick casements. They all leave today with abundant supplies with the ammunition of war. The minute the fire starts the two men in C 10 have been shot from the windows of a ladies house across the street. One shot in the arm the other in the leg and both have not learned where and still dangerous. I received a letter from a lady today whom I met at dinner to move we are all well and doing well although we have to go to get in the hospital.

Fosses in Booth W.M. Rayen
1st Vols. Cavalry Co. H
Washington. N. C.
Camp near Capital Hill
Oct 22nd 1861

Dear friend,

I've little time tonight having traveled considerably through the day. I went to church this afternoon. There was about one hundred of us started for the Congregational Church but when we got opposite the Presbyterian Church the minister came out and invited us in. We expected to see old Abe there that being the church he belongs to, and generally attended but were disappointed.

It was a splendid church and a splendid preacher that preached. He preached altogether different from any Presbyterian preacher that I ever heard before and mentioned anything that harmed through sermons. He said that all things worked together for good and that God was the creator of sin, sorrow, and suffering only to bring man to a proper appreciation of the pleasures he enjoys which I believe to be true as could have been said. But enough of that. I haven't told you that I saw looks across the street and saw the home once of Judge Garretson. It is a large brick house amount now in its appearance but probably rebuilt or remodeled over since he lived there. It's a house now enclosed about two acres with it all covered with high trees.

It's generally healthy but neither there is quite a wonder of the world. One of the scenes being murder. I have been informed to them myself that nearly two weeks ago, so I think that I should have them. I took some things into Billy's coat and knowing that they were not in there. Billy has got well and has been baptized by the surgeon as a waiter.

Yours truly,

Alf Rogers
Dear Friends,

I hear that Johnny has enlisted; think how I would like to know what he done that for. So many boys have already lifted their hands in arrow for the same. Also I'm too much boy but I stand it well in comparison with hundreds around me. Truly Seward have no helpful accounts of our sufferings but believe me when I tell you that the life of a soldier has overcome many. Has he been sworn in? Is he fact? If he is not, persuade him if possible to leave all soldiering alone especially for the present. Ask him how he would like to give up his bed such as night as last night and ride a horse or guard in the cold all night with a court martial and sentence on his head if he went to sleep for a moment.

But if he is fact, cheer him on and never give out to a feeling that will disturb his determination in the least, but let him rock himself to sleep in his own cradle, and he will sleep better to sleep sounder and wake up with a better appreciation of the life he has lived. Tell him to write.

We are all well. I received a letter from A. Smith last night, he says Crotch Farrell has left to go to unknown. He must have been homesick, indeed I have benefited by grace on him in that manner. But I can tell you privately that it must be a self controlling boy that writes & his text without some grumbling. Answer and I remain,

Yours without reserve.

A. E. Smith
Nov 2, 1861

Dear Sister,

I want to tell you something about the people here. The women are proud but kind-hearted. All those who are worth anything wear chaps breeches. When I was sick they came to my tent and brought with them pie, cake, and chicken broth beside many other things which they left freely and had plenty left for the sick of the entire camp. They are very fine indeed all the time. I am going to tell you how they dress their little boys.

It is a regular zucchini dress — their pants very full — a red coat such about as long as Charley's old red one trimmed with green blue tape at the collar. Their black long stockings cover the pants gathered around the tops of them. The cap is made to gather at the top from which hangs a tassel, the cap being red with a strip of blue around the button all of the dress made in blue and red mix. Well I know it would look splendid on Charley [aged 3]. It would make him look like a regular soldier.

A. E. Ryder

To E. Ryder

(Ed was then 10 - Charley 7. Edith died in 1863)
Dear Friend,

I am just recovering from the effects of the measles although somewhat weak as yet I feel strong to what I felt one week ago. I can assure you that the measles are not trifling illness in this country. At least they did not trouble much with me for actually at one time I was helpless as a baby. Farley's nurse carried me to the hospital just as they would carry a dead calf—But thanks be to the Doctor I came back to my tent yesterday with not any of their aid and firming believing that I shall be about my business within a week. The measles are the greatest plague in camp for they bring down the greatest number and make the sickest men. Quite a number has already died with them and some are still sick that can never recover. Information so to three few sets in and their cases are well with the mortal. All very sickly in camp company D has lost thirty five men lost for duty, our company is more healthy, having been seventy five. There are all sorts of rumors in camp, some say we are going to Baltimore for winter quarters, others say we are going to Virginia while some say that we will quarter here in Washington on seventh St. But I can't tell all may be right for the regiment is divided into three divisions, one under Major Atwood one under Major Balde and the other one under Major Towns. We are in the called division under Balde and the report is that we shall be provided with issuing instead of corns.

But I must make (2 lines missing).

And never fed money came more acceptable for if he occasionally supplied me with vegetables such as a dish of milk & the like I begin to know how to purse the few common things that flourish around Rome. Ask for any of the

food had any for near three months even if he had
work. (?) Prof. Farrar has cautioned dear me if such week boys don't regard the day then I'm no profit. I know what at it. I know that he never can stand it. But I'm rather warm with my big overcoat on. You see that I hit you know that I've got one. Only those that are on the sick list are provided with them.

( Two lines missing )

All right.
Camp Zackee
Nov. 14th 61

Dear Brother,

The day is very pleasant. In fact every day for a time church appears like spring weather in Michigan, that is when the snow shines for the light are extremely cold.

It is good working weather for them that work, but as for myself I'm playing up gentlemen as I'm excused from any thing of the like. The boys are all off drilling now with the horses. I haven't got any myself yet and don't want any till I am able to take care of one. It's a good two hour's work in the morning to take of a horse so it has to be done. Every one is called up by daylight or before and has to start immediately for the stables when they have to clean their horses. And they had to clean them to, there in no speaking about it. If one is caught idle, or his horse found dirty he's made to clean his own for an hour or two, then set about cleaning others or maybe he will be put in the guard house.

This is a pack country, little boys are or eight years old are passing by with pipes and cigars in their mouths with their pockets filled with tobacco and two chances out of three, if they haven't got a bottle of whiskey scattered about them. For I've seen them drink whiskey like teases. Little girls are get to be women at a very early time flirt and flack around with a form that would not disgrace either side.

I had one of my back teeth pulled out yesterday and my mouth feels as though I hadn't got any left. I ached all the time and when pulled out I found it was entirely rotten. I thought my head was coming off with the doctor doctor grub on his iron and commenced pulling. But it won't ache any more. There were great fireworks the new year that took place in the city in honor of Gen. McClellan's victory.

I found a great many thousand dollars, But enough talk since (Walters) letter turn off. Back letter by Alfred.)
Camp Reeder
Nov. 15th, 61

Dear Brother

Your letter I received yesterday about two hours after I put one in the office for you. Pretty good letter for the first time or any other time and I was glad to see it and know the news which it contained. You allude to my having the measles and of course you have full information in regard to that before this time from my letters which I have written. I feel quite smart to day, but not exactly yet like dwelling certainly as long as I can get an excuse from the doctor. You give me much caution not to lay on the ground we have not been obliged to do so yet for when we first arrived here, the first thing that we don want to look out for is a place to our tent and we easily staked enough pickets for the purpose. Also we have straw to cover the floor night, when we sleep and day time we roll it up in the corner and cover it with an old blanket which our German ever have and that makes our seat whenever we are in tent. You speak about sending my overcoat, of course you have learned from my letter that I have a coat now — and a real coat at it. It comes almost down to my heels and has a fine cape. It is not sleek it is more of felt like the cape and hat which are everywhere for sale. It would be pretty hard to wet it through. Farley had it on guard last night and it rained hard all night but it didn't wet it much of any. I have received no information in regard to C. Knows what he is ill as well.

Keep distant from the small pox of Plymouth its nearby life or death also do not write to us. We hear of that in every letter which we receive. Keep away.

The blankets which you sent from Wayne Co. & Company A. have not yet been received. We received some blankets back they were sent by the ladies of Detriot & Aurora, they have been drawn by lottery all the boys have drawn nice large white cotton blankets. They have not give me a chance yet but it don't matter for we have plenty. What
the boys have I have and we all together have 16 blankets, as you see we are not suffering. Hoping that this may receive you well I remain your forever

J. E. Byler

A. E. Byler
Dear Friends,

The day is very pleasant with a little soft rain this night. I am once again able to perform duty, although I have not yet commenced. I am very sickly in not having the measles harder than I am. Some are taken down long before me, and I am very sickly in not having the measles harder that I am. Some are taken down long before me, and I

Don't believe in ever cow. We are brigaded now and soon will be in active service I believe. Our captain says he will give every man a battle if we are not in active service within thirty days. The name of our men is Paine. He is an Illinois man I believe. His station is at the mouth of the Potomac, Col. 

The charge of all the cavalry 16,000 in number. A good number of the regiments are from Ill. and Illinois. They are all equipped and ready for the word "forward." We got our revolvers today - our sabers probably may after to-morrow, The corps are getting as that they shall quite spear - I haven't slept on there any yet.

Our captain saw that old brown horse that he thought would have a good future. John had so that he will work for us quick as a man. Robert Taylor has got the horse that John rode for the purpose. Farley has traded the one he first had for a splendid little grey horse which he has now.

Everyone here is on the tip toe of excitement in relation to the 4th of July. All the 4th will be spent with all the men in the world. Many of the troops think that they will be sent home before the 4th of July, but I believe that there will be called from the state before the war is ended. Some think the brawlers will accept propositions of peace which will be offered by the rebels. And I don't believe that any propositions will be offered or accepted by us.
The country seems happy, that is the north. Everything is contented and valuable. - wages is high. The community of the north exceeds the community of the whole state before the war. And men in power would not accept anything but unqualified submission as sufficient to brake the will which will never be given till forced. Great deal of dissatisfaction prevails around our troops caused by not getting our pay. If they are not paid before long I fear the effects will be a mutiny, which will be disgraceful indeed. Every week the officers affirm that the next week will bring our pay but no pay comes. The fact of the month was the regular pay day and other regiments received theirs, but through the incompetence of our officers we were left out. Then I see other troops have yet received the blankets which you sent. Probably blankets from each to our regiment were all put together without regard to any marks and sent on. At any rate nearly a thousand arrows at time since and were distributed, our tent getting four of them, 4 nine ones too. The boys are all well. There is a good number of sickness in camp. I think that we have had 27 men in all by death.

Quite a number for so short a period.

Yours forever. A. Hooper.
Camp Reeder
Nov. 22, 61

Dear Friends,

Your kind letter came at hand yesterday bearing with it an article of very great value in this country and nothing to be afforded at any. It is a very few I can tell you who have a cent of money in our camp. Nothing but sales (?) tickets. One fellow in our Co. has taken up 19 barrels in them others have gone in near as heavy.

Captain De Fox was here yesterday to see us. He was very agreeable. As for that matter though he always is. Saw Col. Stockton here in camp a few moments ago. He is a type of a looking fellow and will probably fight just about as he looks. De Fox said that they anticipated going to S. Carolina and would be much grateful if he. It is reported that our Col. has said that he believed we would go there from the disposition of facts. And our men are enjoying themselves finely over the report but I have no idea that they joy so much. At least I believe that we will not go for the present or until we can form battalion better than we can now. The idea would have its advantages and disadvantage if we could go there and close the war this winter and some autumn the spring it would be a good job but to stay next summer would be very much affecting the health of Pershing indeed.

Fairy was very sick a couple of days but has got well now and here by the side of me examining his sword and revolver. They are splendid implements the revolver shooting six times and you can load it I believe in a minute.

I have not heard anything from Ohio. Lake to deakin. His regiment was on the great review day before yesterday, that is as reported.

There is a celebration of some event for they are firing down at the army yard most continually. I told you that we have not been stone instead of Stoneman in my last letter. And until then I shall remain

Yours Truly, A. E. Ryder.
Camp Zicher
Nov 24th, 61

Dear Sister,

To day is Sunday and I being alone in my tent thought I would just write you a word & see if you would write an answer. It will leave you to write and leave your composer, beside doing justice to one far away. I take great comfort in my letters oftentimes receiving three or four a day. I have probably fifty on hand now or more. I lament the loss of my gold pen very much. There are as many around always that a camp in a few place to lose things. The way I write is to set upon the floor with my paper upon a book as position I should have declined to take not long ago on writing.

Although it Sunday I'm tired from the work of a hard washing which I have just finished with the help of the other boys a few minutes. We have considerable work on deck washing three times a day which we each perform alternately. I've told much all I could think of in relation to this country on the letter which I have written and now I am going to tell you something about the people. All that are worth anything wear silk dresses. When I was sick they came to my cot and brought with them gruel pie eam chicken broth. Besides many other things which they left freely and had plenty left to leave with the sick of the entire camp. They are very kind indeed all the time.

I am going to tell you how they dress their little boys, it is a regular 3 piece dress, — blue pants, very full — red coat cut about as long as Charley's old red one — trimmed with nice blue, makes the collar buttoning up to and around their necks like ours. They have long stockings and the pants come down and gather around the top — white stockings. The cap is made to gather at the top from which hangs a wind tassel — the cap being red with a strip of blue around the bottom part. All the clothes used in blue and red which — feel me it would look splendid on Charley. It would make him look like a regular soldier.

But shall I gettting late I will bring my letter to a period:

S. V. Ryder
remaining
Camp near
Capital Hill (Mar. 20, '61)

Dear Friend:

I thought that I would write a word this evening during that I enjoyed a good opportunity for doing so.

I don't feel quite as well as I have - I rather think that I want to write too soon at least I'm told so now by my friends but however I'm not down and shall not get much work again till all are satisfied that I can do anything like the doctors now prescribe the remedy and give the cause after the patient has got well.

To marrow over, now, but I can't tell exactly where - the report is that we go on Seventh St. The First division moved yesterday and the Third today. The First division have been sound out and the same day and they were passed many and all they had knew our fellow charged in dead bunch that had had his pocket picked of every one. The real thirty fellows. Another fellow by the name of Brink lost all he had in be of the 20 that all know is in. Brink came from Virginia but I don't know now be back at. The statement that we get this time is now thirty dollars. We have now three in Treasury notes or gold. Money notes were taken. They are good as the any other but I don't know whether they are worth any thing in Michigan or not as I get the chance I shall take the gold.

We have some arms now so at least we have two cadets and revolver.

I call these very good weapons. The revolvers Calico regular set shorter and I think should think if be loaded in a minute.

I have a letter of the 6th from Czar Lachinov he in better he said that he should like to be with the regiment on the grand union but didn't feel strong enough for the work.

The boys are all well and down taking care of their horses. The horses begin to look well. They give them four guard of once three times a day midst with corn. Those blankets and things are not paid among those people and figures never will be but however we have plenty. Prices here remain about the same. Bread at 10 dollars a week, everything else in proportion.

Best wishes to your sister to a doctor. Be very kind to him.

Yours truly

[Signature]
Camp Palmer
Jend 3/24, 61

Dear Friends,

Our camp is now moved. We occupy a position now north of the city, a mile or so on east 31st. I expected that we would go in Barracks, but we again have the tents. Our camp is on the works and on the side hill but still it rains wet and disagreeable. Homer Smith was here in camp a few minutes ago.

He looks like a soldier indeed having very new clothes and a very healthy appearance. I received a little from Ephraim Ukden. Yesterday he gave an account of Josephine. He said that she was at her grand mother and would probably stay there through the command of her father. His father is well, that is meet well again.

We got our pay this forenoon and most all being treasure notes. I shall send twenty five dollars home—putting ten in this letter and probably Captain in the mail, Head of the regiment and money some send it by express but I’ll risk it by mail. I know that if it does get back that it will well any one for there money. I enlisted for the money although I stand in need of a loan. Nearly every one feels happy now I can hear them singing. We pay all over the camp—money is free as the air. Some soldiers fellows.

Ours by buying some cheap watches—probably worth about a cent as long as giving you and to tell you price. I have no house yet but shall have one the end of the week. One fellow in our Co. has been promoted to a sergeant in the evening. Brigade and I shall take pictures—an eight and year old man party well drilled.

Regiments are around me again expect every hand both cavalry, infantry and artillery—men coming from 136 one infantry from California. Happened yesterday I came across a fellow in the 36th. Your dear brother. The regiment had all been a cross of stage from Carlisle. He enlisted at Albany.

Some one has had the kindness to send me a letter which I have just received and opened. Verily let you send me for the present and look over the papers.

Yours truly,

James Terrence
Camp Palmer  
3rd Nov., 1861

Dear Friends,

An opportunity offers itself to write and I shall improve it for a few moments.

It's a very beautiful day, the sun shining out upon us warm as it did last May. Our camp begins to wear more of a pleasant aspect. The boys are all to work cleaning it up, though our horses are rather to blame for our tents I make very clean work. I have been as guard so I am rested from fatigue. Probably you have received the letter I wrote on the 31st and the money that I was in it. I told you in that I would send 15 dollars in the mail but I have concluded that I would tell you I received an answer whether you received that or not.

Gen. Palmer was here and inspected us yesterday. He is a very good looking man. We expected Gen. Stoneman and Pres. Lincoln but they were not here. I came across a stranger of Victory Hoyt yesterday he belongs to one of the rifle regiments of N.Y. He is a smart young fellow too. The boys all have new coats and good ones too, some say better even than the regulars.

I have not been sick once a piece within two months & believe but I think that I can get one this week when I shall try to go over to the second regiment.

I believe that I have got eating poor with the measles but I have left me up in one case but probably time will wear it away. When I was taken down with it I weighed over 140. But now I weigh 135 and I see that I had plenty of luck in getting over it. I have not received a letter from home this long while and therefore I shall expect an immediate reply to this.

Yours Truely,

C.G. Ryder
Dear Friends,

I received a letter from home yesterday morning — from E. Ryder at all events the only one I have had this many a day. Tuesday we move about 60 miles to Fredericksburg and then we await the orders of Gen. Canfield. Some think that we go immediately south but I should render my judgment some different from that.

We have been drilling party thorough since we moved our camp—skeleton drill. We all have just been on inspection — to see if our clothes are in proper order and our arms all right. We have such inspections every Sunday. Warner McFarlin was over here to see me the other day — he looks very healthy and keeps up very admirable reports — a feeling quite necessary in soldier life. He says they are preparing for winter quarters in their camp, but I think it, very foolish for the army to go into winter quarters — this being the only time for action of ever this is a time.

This will be a long war if there is no more done in the future than there has been done in the past to bring it to a conclusion — very long indeed.

It's more healthy in camp now than at first to be although some that were sick with the measles when we came have not yet recovered. But I shall rest to draw my letter to a close for I shall start to go on another journey this afternoon.

It's write soon.

Yours Truly,

E. Ryder
Dec 14, 1861

Dear Brother,

As I now have the opportunity and time I will improve it by writing a few lines to you. It has been very warm here for a few days past, the snow had all melted away, and it seems now like summer than winter. Crop & Farwell had been a week or more out here, we still being come out together to which I suppose they got away from them. They said at first they would not go back, but unless they went for them, Bill King has not gone back and says he won't, he is sick. Crop went back this morning on the stage, probably will take his dinner in the guard house. They are foolish, too, if they want to go to Washington. Col. Rankin, Crop & Col. spoke to Plymouth last evening. He is a noble looking man of about sixty years of age, gray whiskers, but looked brave and a lion. He was a slim fellow, but quick & active with the lumber, they got about as heavy as could bear now. I know, John well know, and he is as often if they had been any that I knew I believe I should enlisted. I should like to be a soldier, and if this war keeps on much longer, I shall come, if I could get a good chance I would go with Crop, when I go I know I shall try. I go in that company if I can get in before if they go to Washington which probably won't be till next spring.

You spoke of your going deep in one of your rear, did it get any better? We received your letter of the 20th - the last one that was wrote it by wrote, and him wrote me the one stating that we had received the ten dollars that you sent. We are all well at this time. The small pox in Plymouth has got well, so I must close by signing my name,

J. E. Ryder

A. B. Ryder
Sunday 15th Decem
1861

Dear Brother,

The day is very pleasant, it seems like October weather in

This. We have a fine camping ground, the trees, so in the woods as

Before. cavalry regiments nearly always camp in the woods, as to

Have bivouac places for the horses handy. The camp is at rest and it lay

Every body having been on the hilt for the past few days. Al-

though everything went off pleasant on the trip. You remember that

They had a sort of a battle at Harpers Ferry one day last week. Well

I was going to tell you that we were on the march that day. And the

news came that the rebels had gained the victory and had crossed

the river and were marching toward us at a rapid pace rate. Once the

report was, that they were within 1% miles. And it was found out by

Scouting the country to the front.

I believe certainly that our officers were wonderfully correct, but the

men didn't seem to care a fig.

Harpers Ferry is 30 miles from here, and if some fighting is to be

done it will be in that direction.

I got a letter from E. Ryder, and I took leave with him from

You on the other day. He said that I had had a little

tongue (I had not heard about that). Well, quick... and with telling. But I've no more time to write so answer you can.

E. J. Ryder

C. H. Ryder
Camp Broadhead
Christmas morn. 6th

Dear Friends,

I had almost forgot that today was a hollow day. But
if I had been at home I probably should have been thinking
about it for a long time past. All today is stillness among
our privies, but the region enjoys great peace and even often
an invitation to Lin. Banks. It looks very pleasant out, just
enough snow to remind me of the sleigh rides we are used to
having. We are situated on a hill in a valley—high hills and
some mountains entirely encircling us. The city of
Fredericksburg could be strongly defended by little defense in
budding fortifications. I could go down to the city today if I
wished to meeting but I believe I had rather sit by the fire and
write.

Now, I must write something of slaves. For you know this is
a slave holding country. It is novel to me to think of
one to talk to a man that is owned by a slave. When
the slaves came along and we got in conversation about slavery
he seemed quite intelligent. I asked him about how much he
was worth—he said that few years ago he would bring
1180 dollars but now he would bring about 700. you can see
slaves almost at every house—there is a house nearby where
there are two little ones about three years old. I should think—
they seem to enjoy themselves. They play and act with their masters
children. The boys are all well, and am I. As I guess
that we will come through this hollow days all right.

Yours Forever,

Wm. Grahm
Jan 1st 1862

Today began the new year and a pleasant day indeed. I watched the coming of the new year last night on picket and also watched the coming of the relics. We have been on the march for the last 4 days and every night Stewart's forces having been in these parts. One 1st man was shot last night while on picket. I was shot at but a few days ago nights ago while on the same post but they couldn't come. (left 6 or 7 lines are missing so was first part of letter)

-- package of envelopes with stamps all on which I remember night well. They will last a long time.

The war tell what the end of this year will bring. It don't look very prosperous next to me but I hope for the best. RintenFarwell is in camp but I haven't seen him yet. I rather think that he will get his discharge. You speak of Jornie getting his discharge. Why don't he do it if he can't stand the life as I'm pretty sure he can't. He wouldn't like driving teams in the army. I know, it requires too much patience for him. But I think that he is in good hands among friends. I am well and doing well and I hope Jornie can even say the same. I am glad to receive frequent letters from home. I tell you. Farewell with a happy new year.

A. B. Ryder.
Camp Brodhead
6th Jan 1862

Dear Friends,

Yesterday afternoon at 3 o'clock we were put under orders from Gen Banker to prepare for a march at an instant warning. As we knew we should learn there was an anticipated battle not far from Harper's Ferry—near about 15 miles distant—immediately all was excitement—some sat about sharpening their sabers, others went to practising with their revolvers. Three days' rations was cooked and packed in our haversacks; three fleeces of rats latched on our saddles. Our blankets were done up all ready and lashed to the saddles also. Our revolvers were also loaded with lead. But still time lingered on till night and yet no orders to move. Some had even their horses saddled. All was excitement till nine o'clock when the "taps" sounded and we were ordered to retire back to keep in perfect readiness in case we should be called. But had a sleepless night. Monday forenoon we slept sound enough till morning and we are still all ready. The Catholics went to their priest and had their sins pardoned as I expect they consider themselves safe. Our advance guard was sent out but had come back this morning as I guess it all smoke. The snow is now 3 inches deep, and it's pretty cold.

I'm well.

Yours Forever

A. D. Ryder
Camp Brothhead
9th Jan. 62

Dear Brother,

Your letter was very welcome received to day. You forgot to put the date on so I hardly knew when to bind my letter for your furlough may be concerned and you to back to Detroit. You asks whether I have received any letter lately from you or not. So I knew not but I wrote one to you a few days ago that's not yet accounted for.

I am glad that you are satisfied with what you have already experienced in soldiering. You will be likely to think better of it too when you get somewhat older in the business. At least I would guess more to get home when I was in Detroit than anytime since. But I can tell you that there are plenty of home sick boys here — Billy Coats has gone home and probably quite agreeable to himself. We have been reconstructing things here for a day or two. We have been making a log bed. We build it up about three feet high then cover it with our tents, two tents together. We all go by the name of Plymouth boys. There are nine of us together. We enjoy ourselves pretty well always being full of some kind of noise. While I write all is hurried and confusing but I'm so use to it that it don't trouble me in the least.

Your letter was quite short, being full of news I don't believe you will have Detroit as quick as you believe. Enjoy yourself while you can.

Write often.

Yours Forever,

A.G. Ryder

J.E. Ryder

Co H. 1st Mich. cav.
New Banker division
Frederick Md.

What's the name of your Capt.
Dear Friends,

Five months ago tonight was my first night of soldiersing from home. And how well I remember that night and no compliments to it either. What I felt felt rather than seen, but I've conquered all such feeling since. The question now is how many more five months will find us in camp. The general opinion is that we shall be back here than a year anyway. And if war is declared ever with England, if we couldn't go back I believe surely that there would be a mutiny in every Michigan regiment.

There is a good flood of excitement here most all the time. We come reenacting to the fight the other day at Hancock. If the rebels had not retreated after burning the bridge and destroying the telegraphs, the whole division would soon have knew after them. I think now we will have some few in fighting if fighting is ever long before spring. Surely if it ever is done it should be done before them.

I got a letter from Johnny the other day and asked one in reply. He wrote a first rate letter. I don't hardly think that they will ever be called on if enlisting don't raise in demand. It takes a long time to learn the leisure drill and to learn the sword exercise without saying anything about the months that it will take to drill the horses.

There's some snow on the ground now with all its quiet peace and knightly (real) little idleness.)
Camp Brockhead 8
17th Jan 62

Dear Friends,

Five months ago today we stopped in Camp From, but it don't seem so long as that. We don't do much of anything now days. The carpenters are busy in building stables for the horses. They are slashing down the timber in every direction. The men that drove the woods, said that they would not have taken any offer for what had already been done, with all land is very cheap here. I was immensely surprised when they told that land was worth only from $5 to $10. Below an acre, here as it was in almost the very garden of Maryland. I've been all over the country 'round about and had therty considerable chances to view it with its people. I have to laugh sometimes in silence when I hear the people talk. They say "right smart new", "right smart chunk of a horse", etc., beside all sorts of other abilities. They are good natured but very ignorant - the common people seldom knowing even the rudiments of an education. Our troops in trade cheat them out of their eye teeth. They consider Michigan men regular tycoons.

It's the greatest bother in the world how to get postage stamps. We can't get to the city and they don't keep any to sell here. I want you to send me a dollar-worth - put them inside of thick paper and let them come. The boys send today for a lot alike. We enjoy ourselves in our letters. When the mail comes everyone so anxious to receive his letter. Four of us have got 15 in one day. And I always receive my shares all at once. Yours forever.

A. G. Ryder

No letter from you in quite a time.

Since I wrote the above we have each of us drawn a large Indian rubber overcoat which will inevitably be of immense service to us very often when on a march. We ensure it for to keep the damp cold ground from affecting us.
Fredericksburg Va
Jan 21, 1863

Dear Friend,

You observe that we still remain here. I almost begin to believe that the ways of war are just finding out at least in military matters, but oh friends it matter little when we are if we only are blessed with good health. I've hard work to write to day. One of my friends - now a brother - is lay on his couch with almost a mortal disease. Alas poor man I believe it. But Reuben Farmer is sick with the small pox. He was taken unwell the day we started from Washington and was so throughout our march to this place. Thus we receiv'd the lowly pitiable and this morn was to be taken to Alexandria but afterward it was ordered by the doctor to return him here. Now he is in your tent near a hospital yard away. The tent is in a good place it being a sort of an elevation where the wind blows cool and also in the shade of a large oak. He is brothed up and every thing is favorable as could be expected. No one knows how the wind affected him.

He came from Washington. The doctor says to the small pox and if so we all have been very exposed for we have been with him by day and by night. We have been all we could. There is a man detailed in the company to take care of him, after this, that has had it, a first rate fellow. I expect I shall see him, but as he prays, for I'm getting sick in regard to such things. I want to see my friend. We have all got to die some day, it only being a question of time. Great steel life is sweet to each one few of the world but if heart is a necessity there is reason of living a hand in hand.

It seems hard to part with one who has been my friend ever since I left home. We were always together and always found him reliable.

But still I hope that he will get the with me again for long or we with him. He regrets today that we will again not have a chance to see each other again. I am sorry I am not with you today to see you. May you receive this in health.

(....)
Yours Forever

Ag. Byrd

I thought I would send you a little Confederate change to use among those sympathizers if there are any.
Camp Broadhead
24th Jan. 1862

Dear Brother,

I received your letter two or three days ago and gladly too. That being the only letter I've received from home in a long time. And glad was I to hear that you were all well. You hardly know how to value good health in sick. I want till I get home and I'll tell you how some poor fellows here live and suffer for the want of it. And still it's generally healthy in our camp though the Maryland boys at first away across the street are said to be infected with a very mortal disease. In fact, they have had a maccusful air to the memory of some poor fellow near every day.

You write about my being dismissed because of an account of disfigure, Curious heavens! I haven't heard of such a thing before. And as far as I'm altogether better off than I was seen for now I was been considerable from my right ear which has been perfectly deaf. I shall come out all right, I think in the end. I hear that Johnny is home sick with measles. It's hard to be sick. But he will find the sick the better to be sick at home than far away. The report tonight that we cross the Potomac next week tomorrow will be true, I hope. A soldier's life is a life of expectation. I receive no letter in reply to those I have written to Charles and Egbert. (Who?) or to Warren and Angeline (Shatt.) (Relative—Shatt's drink in foot—Hoboken in (over ditto.) I shall never write again till they write, I'll write as soon as an opportunity offers to the one you requested.

I have very bad weather here of late, continually rainy or snowing, the ground melting as fast as it thaws—case in the mountains where probably of all remaining. You remember that you the Poor Mountain, on the way to the station to near where you the eye can see—towers near all white with snow.

The general order to return to the ranks about tomorrow morning.

It's better having the same of the years.
Dear Brother,

I received your letter two or three days ago and gladly too. That being the only letter I've received from home in a long time. And glad was I to hear that you were all well. You hardly know how I value good health in minds. I wait till I get home and I'll tell you how some poor fellows here die and suffer for the want of it. But still it's generally healthy in our Camp though the Maryland boys a short way across the street are said to be inflicted with a very mortal disease. In fact I hear the drums beat mournful airs to the memory of some poor fellow near every day.

You write about my being dismissed because of account of sickness, Venereal Disease! I haven't heard of such a thing before. And so for that I'm altogether better off than I have been for now. I saw here considerable from my right ear which has been perfectly deaf. I shall come out all right I think in the end. I hear that Johnny is at home sick with measles. It's hard to believe. But I will send what I am for better to the sick at home than far away. It's reported tonight that we cross the Potomac next week but it may not be reliable. A soldier's life is a life of expectation. I receive no letter in reply to those I have written to Charle and Cynthia Hoke (both of whom) or to Martin and Angeline Shutt. (Relative - Shutt lived in Upsal, Hoke is in Maryland.) I shall never write again till they write. I'll write as soon as an opportunity offers to the one you requested.

It's been very bad weather here of late, continually raining or snowing - the snow melting as fast as it comes - save in the mountains where probably it still remains. You remember the Blue mountains on the map they extend in our front as far as the eye can see - tall and white with snow.

Write again you need not be troubled about my not reading it. It's better writing then some of the young
Write often.

Yours forever,

A. T. Ryder.
Dear Friends,

The day being wet and rainy and having nothing to do I thought I would write a few lines although I have received no letters in a long time. This is a terrible country for mud — the soil making up for full so thick in depth. If it weren't for the government roads it would be most impossible to get from camp. I rejoice in the day when I enlisted in the cavalry when I see the poor infantry following wallowing knee deep in the mud.

I now a splendid looking horse now — dark bay — one that used to belong to the Banke's bodyguard. The fellow that owned it got nearly killed by a kick from another horse, and this horse coming back to the regiment, I got possession of him. The colonel informed that I had a time since I gave up to the fellow on his return and I made a good bargain for him and now get the smartest looking fellow in the company.

Some say that we will have to go home or enlist in the infantry. I can tell you what I should do for I should be loath to go in the infantry for the want of durability. Rates of $5 to $10 dollars are freely offered and taking that we go home in three weeks, but I believe yet our chances are good for quite a lengthy stay.

I hear that they have turned the cannon into artillerymen, but I don't know how truly.

We got paid again a few days ago $35 dollars. I have lent $10 to Walter Dickie, a son of the Dickie that live down in the White River, who got his week's pay — good to the wheel.

There are too many new in our tent — Keely, Farrell, Bee and our German friend John Anger, Watterson, a child son of Jerome Dickie, John Coe, Sones, and a fellow by the name of Remy. From this we made two tents in 1813, and 21 years by the name of Pilgrim, altogether we all being called Plymouth boys.

Yours sincerely,
A. H. Ayler.
Camp Broadhead
1st Feb 1862

Dear Friends,

Although I wrote you last two or three days ago I thought I would write you a line this evening. Circumstances are quite different from then. We are now at a point quite a distance from our former location. We are now all in confusion and a hurried to and fro. Our company has been detached and ordered to Hagerstown. Our officers consider it permanent but we can't tell how long we will stay. Some say that we go to secret prisons to a future place of safe keeping. And some say we are sent in reconnoitering the country and guarding the telegraph wires. But no one knows. I can tell you that if the war is going on apace in demand our company will be the one to strike. The officers are desperate men and fit for any condition.

I have received your letter of the 26th stamps and all.

I am glad the barracks are disbanded. Tommy comes out all right. He would have found soldiering in Maryland somewhat different from in Detroch.

Hagerstown is 30 miles away. We are ordered to march today and tomorrow morning. It will be hard for the horses—being so extremely cold, but heavens, how difficult for the men from going on foot.

And true it is that old maxim which affirms, "God knows, not what a day may bring forth."

Yours Forever

[Signature]
Hagerstown
Feb. 16th, 1862

Dear Friends,

We marched as I wrote on Sunday morning last and arrived in this town about 9 o'clock in the evening, and I can tell you we were all glad to hear the word " hometown." We are now quartered in the fair grounds buildings. Our duty consists in guarding the telegraph line from Frederick to Fairview, a distance of near 40 miles. The telegraph line has been so frequently cut on this road that it's considered necessary to have a guard. Also the search has a system of throwing an apparatus over the line that takes all important communications from it—keeping them perfectly perfect. We are all the time getting closer to the search—being only 5 1/2 miles from the line, now, the Potomac being the line.

Williamsport is situated on this side and across the stream can often be seen their pickets, viewing the movements on this side. One of the Maryland boys was picked telling me that he being down with the other day and one of the bullets shot that he ever did. An Indiantown fellow with a Annie gun engaging a search, picked up on the hills near a mile away drew shot and fell him at the first shot. He said he was down & handsome when they tried to score but when the scores were thrown in among they did such as got each as possible. One of the citizen's told me that many of the farmers were about, got everything ready for a flight on that morning to Pennsylvania—he among their number having the horses safe and sound. (It's only 5 miles to the Pennsylvania line.)

It snowed all day yesterday making passable sleighing today. This is a terrible mountainous region section of country. We had good sleighing in the mountains for a long time.

All the boys are well taking this way, receive your all the warm

Yours forever,

R.H. Hesper

Arrived 11 1/2 hrs. as usual
Hagerstown, Md, Feb 8, 1864

Dear Friends,

Although I feel somewhat tired and sleepy today, I thought I would write you a few lines if I do have nothing else to write with. I am well with the exception of a cold and that a soldier must always have.

I put out at 9 o'clock last night and rode till this morning, riding near 30 miles up hills and mountains. It seemed as though I only went down one hill to go up one still larger—riding to one of the highest peaks of the Cumberland Mountains. It's called Fairview for the country can be seen far as many miles around, but it was midnight when I was there so I could not see much. I can tell you that it sets a fellow to thinking when travelling over these strange roads, in the night with nothing to answer or arrest one's attention but the clatter of the horse's feet or the jingle of the sabers.

After today we go closer to Hagerstown. Then our march will be over 50 miles. The boys are all well.

Yours ever,

A.D. Spieker
Hancock.
Feb 13th 1862

Dear Friends,

Today finds me as you see in Hancock. Our line being extended from Fairview to the place 15 miles further.
I started from Westport at 1/2 past 7 o'clock this morning and arrived here at 1/2 past 12. I've seen all there is to see and with nothing to do I feel uneasy and so I thought I would write you a few lines for a diversion.

This is rather a dirty looking place at present. The citizens have all left it to the sole occupation of soldiers. Soldier, soldier in every store, grocer, and dweller, all soldiers, above and below and all round.

I can look across the river and see where the reasch had their guns planted to blow up city. It don't look like a little way, the river only being roughly 10 rods wide. It runs swiftly I though it can be easily forded. As to its, the general opinion here that this place will be shelled before long as the turning of Hesperus Ferry and I believe it will be though unsuccessful before. They have great advantage over us in position, having high mountains front to shoot from whereas our position is low in comparison. Most of the soldiers here from Connecticut though some are from Pennsylvania. General Williams is in command here. His office being in an adjoining room from where I write. I go back tomorrow morning.

We have our men's uniforms and they are tremendously warm for this matter. Will write.

Yours forever,

A. B. Ripley.

Tell Joe, Jack & Jared and a more tired fellow you never see but that's nothing for what we get over them. Write soon.

C.B.
Dear Friends,

I received your kind letter yesterday and was glad indeed to hear from you. True we are marching toward home slowly but withal we find plenty of work in this part of the country. Nearly all of these little towns you know reported the rebel flag till the military were among them. Frederick for instance was intimated intended as the rebel capital of the State. We have been having quite interesting times this morning with a rebel prisoner. He was driven back and rather than be captured as a prisoner by our men, gave himself up as a desertee across from Winchester. He was brought down here for safe keeping last night and this morning was sent to Fair Banks' Head quarters. He was a fine looking man mounted on a good horse with good clothes and equipment and a smart talker.

And now if he can authenticate his pretentions before Fair Banks he will be all right.

He said that he was at Bull's Bluff and that there were 45 thousand rebel soldiers at Winchester and that we would have a hard fight there. In fact half of the people in this part are rebels at heart and at half the time when we speak to them that they don't answer.

We enjoy ourselves just as well as could be expected all being well.

I've been to church twice since we have been here—Northen Church and a very intelligent profound preacher it has.

I'm sorry to hear that the measles are among you. I hear again that the cancer are distanced. I hope so that Johnny may be relieved.

That this may receive you all again well to my earnest wish.

Yours forever,

A. V. Mixson
Dear Brother,

I received your kind letter yesterday and I can assure you that I was glad to hear from you. You report hard times in the Generals; oh! you little know what few days you served the realities of soldiers! Don’t believe because I don’t write hardships that there are none here to endure. Great chance! I could tell you stories that would make your eyes stick out but it would be worse than useless, so I shall never make the attempt. I’m glad to learn that you are well again and hope that Abbie will soon be as well as if the measles there are like unto them here it is a deplorable disease. It is new writing ever new for you know more about the war than we do here. In fact what we know about it chiefly we gain from the few papers we receive from old Michigan.

The days are all well, Rainbow I believe goes to Kenoek tonight if he has such a time as I did coming back from there the other day & to pet him a hard storm of rain blowing in my face nearly all the way nearly blowing me off sometimes down the sides of the mountain—It being all the time almost like Egyptian darkness. But there is nothing to write today in particular as you will not get this a short letter this time. Write often. Hope that you may receive this in perfect health.

Yours Forever,

A. Y. Ryder
Dear Friends,

Many interesting events have happened since I last wrote you. Monday morning we started from [town name] and arrived that afternoon in Frederick. Tuesday we joined our regiment 18 miles toward Harpers Ferry. That night we slept on the ground having packed our tents. Wednesday we were under marching orders all day but right come and no more slept. It rained hard as we retired to an adjoining farm to rest, but we had no more than got fairly in our beds then orders came for an immediate move. All were up in a hurry and out in the darkness to saddle. The men were now deep and raining still. We were fed in rank and marched in the darkness through deeper mud than you ever saw toward the Ferry near five miles when a counter-march came and we were back on the road. We went back to the town but were up and ready by daylight to resume our nightly journey. We arrived at the celebrated place of Harper's Ferry and quarantined there for the night. It's a very picturesque town although the people have all left nearly. Houseworth thousand of dollars have not other occupants but rats and mice. Its arsenal was burned down by our troops and the arsenal turned two splendid bridges. Now there 15,000 people here but they must have fled in a hurry for great confusion was everywhere manifest although they had been gone 5 days. We were ordered to send the country toward this place and were ready by daylight for the same. On coming up to the town we saw nothing military of any extent as we reached through a dead run. Coming the opposite side we saw the rebels flying with the greatest speed they could make. The three battalions were divided one going each way. Our battalion gave chase to 16. But they were to good runners. After chasing them a good many miles out we returned capturing and bringing with us two wagons, 12 horses and 23 barrels of flour and some markets of the flying rebels dropped. On our return the battalions joined and marched slowly through the town singing "The Star Spangled Banner" and "The Red, White, and Blue". As we reached the home of first entering and
occupying the place. Now there are a good many thousand soldiers here. The people here look afraid as if we were barbarians. All women I saw cry and young women look mad. We are quartered in a meeting house although we have been on duty nearly all the time. I was on picket the first night—the very picket toward the seashore. All the rest of the pickets were driven in last week. Two of our boys were taken prisoner. We expect a battle soon. Our pickets and theirs are in sight of each other today. Troops are arriving from Washington. We expect the 2nd.

But I shall have to close now. I expect to have to go with the company after 100 barrels of flour the rebels have not got away.

This place is the one that hung John Brown. The prison and courthouse are but a few rods from me. I'm well and doing well. I hear that Company E and K lost 14 men in taking a battery of guns with a lot and some rebel soldiers.

Yours forever

D. G. Ryder

I've received no letter lately and I don't know whether you will get this or not.

A.W.
Virginia Charlestown 20
March 5th, 1862

Dear Friends,

The sun shines out bright today on this land and we need it for it is very rainy and muddy. We have been out scouting every day since we came here except today. We have captured near 300 barrels of flour since we came here.

After I finished my letter to you the other day our company went out and took 226 barrels. We found it put away in a tall house on the railroad between here and Winchester. We put it on the old cars that were there and pushed it by mule forces till out of danger. I never worked harder in my life. We expected the beach would come out to oppose us but they were too much scared when we came in town.

There was about 50 soldiers when we come but they mistook our guides for black flags and I can tell you they run like hell hounds.

I'll put a bill of need money in. I suppose it will pass well there but I have no more time to write. Soon all are well

Yours Truly,
A. T. Ryman, Co. K.
1st Mich Cav.
New Banister Division
Virginia
March 8th 62

Dear Friend:

Today is a sad day in our company. One of our best boys is dead of a mortal wound by the hands of his own friends. But I'll explain. Two days ago a squadron was detailed to reconnoiter and picket with the enemy near Leibtown about five miles from this place. We started at sunup and traveling faithfully passed through the enemy's lines a long distance. Searching the country round about with our company we returned to our picket post without any apprehension of danger. We had gained the town and found Col. McIntyre's (? Maryland) Home Brigade there.

It was about 11 o'clock at night when we arrived at the pickets. We were glad to see the boys for we had known them at Camp Onhead. They sent a messenger to camp to warn them of our approach. But even then our 1st lieutenant was there and had spoken to them. We passed on supposing all was right. The camp was in full sight and our boys were congratulating themselves with the prospect of warming them by their fire fire. We were marching by twos some had passed on outside camp. All were but a few miles from it. Great flames, volleys of musketry were roaring in our ears. Their camp fully blazing with the flash of firing muskets. I saw houses and men falling around me. I could hear the bullets whiz in every direction but mostly above our heads. It's said to be hard to stand the fire of enemies, but it's much harder to stand the fire of friends. For our enemies would have died, we burning them, to return the fire. But then we were too late and had to take the end lead of our own friends. At last, we made them understand that we were their men, fleeing soldiers of themselves, when they went with true soldier's hearts. But it was too late one man was mortally wounded and two horses killed. Ambrose Whitman of Pontius - he lingered on till 4 or 5 o'clock yesterday afternoon and then a soldier we were breathed his last. We attend his funeral this afternoon. It firmly reminds us of the
uncertainty of life, I was riding with Farley close to him when he fell. All the boys are well. I feel sick now. I shall have to have you send more postage as soon as you can. I am truly yours.
Winchester, Virginia
March 20th, 1862

My dear Mother,

I received your kind letter of the 18th last day or two since and shall attempt to write you a few lines in reply. We are almost continually at work now, so I don't have but little time to myself. We expected a severe fight when we entered this place. The artillery there shelled them twice before we gained the town. Our Company was the first in town. We have a skirmish with them almost every day. They ran three miles for us yesterday.

The people here have what you may call hard times. Tea was 4 dollars a pound, coffee 6 dollars, Boots 35 dollars a pair. Some things that used to be bought for you 2 dollars now is 100.

The common article salt here and the people before we came was 25 dollars a bushel. War is worse than famine. I hardly can believe that the war will end as soon as you speak of, although I can't tell how much as you could tell. We don't get any news only by what we hear. I shall almost sometimes think that I shall forget how to read it so long since I have read any. The report is now that we go to Washington this long and from there to Texas. But I don't believe it yet. At least I hope it won't be. The weather is very changeable. One day it will be very warm next day it will be cold. Therefore we have a good many hard coats. But it is getting dark and cold and I shall have to quit. I think that I have done pretty well today. I have been out gathering grains and done up my washing and wrote you a letter.

Write again and give me all the news for I can't write as much as I have having no pen or ink or paper or stamps or any thing else.

Yours Truly, Forever

C.B. Rudder
Piedmont Station Va. 23
April 14, 1862

Dear Friends,

It has surely been a long time since I have written, but it is not fault of my own for we had not a stamp or no mail chance of getting any. But today I received a letter from Jenny dated 25th March. It is over a month now that I've had no news from home - nay, a syllable of anything transpiring around you. A long time indeed, since I wrote the letter to you at Winchester.

In the meantime, since I wrote the letter to you at Winchester, we have been continually on the go through day and night. The night we arrived after leaving, we were ordered for a march to Centerville. We secured and loaded pack all prepared for a 7 days' march. We started on our joyous journey.

We crossed the Shenandoah that day and joined the 2nd Virginia Brigade. That is our Squadron, C 1st Va. Camping or stopping rather near from the river, for we had no tents. It rained that night but that was nothing. Next day we journeyed on 20 miles farther and stopped the night.

That night & the next day rains we could hear the cannons thunder. Because were right in the battle raging at Winchester. That day at 5 o'clock we were ordered back. We went back to the river that night. The bridge was gone - we couldn't get over. Next morning we built a bridge across back and then reloaded on a return to Centerville. From Centerville we went to Manassas.

We passed over the battle field of Bull Run. Such desolation and destruction you never witnessed. As we approached Manassas, we stopped over night at Manassas and went on to Warrington Station next day. Between Centerville and the Station there were no signs of a living thing - fences all gone - houses all destroyed - every thing desolated.

Log huts though are scattered in regular villages all along the route. We occupied one village while there, built and previously occupied (by) the famous Mississippi Regts. Very good quarters too.

The next week and expenses that they have been in building and fortifying were better be imagined than told. From the Station we came to Warrington City from there to White Plains from there to Middleburg from there to Lippensburg from there.
Middlebury is famous for raising the black flag. Our company
chased the rebels out of town once before. We came here yesterday.
There were about 30 rebels around here but they made tracks soon.
We are in command of Col. essay famous in Kansas, Lt. Col. of the 28th Pa. Vol. Two of his companies are here and with us.
I'm well and so is the rest of the boys. We are skirmishing
with the rebels nearly every day. Sometimes it's fun and some-
times it is not. But as the fellow says, "I don't think there is
much danger for if we should be killed, probably the salt-
licks that we have eaten would preserve us to many generations
to come." Though our jaws might be somewhat disfigured and
our teeth knocked out for ever now they began to testify the
terrible power of hard bread.

Yours Forever,

A.D. Ryder
Piedmont Station 24
April 17th, 1862

Dear Brother,

I feel sad tonight. Two of our best men lie dead in the room where I write, maliciously shot contrary to all rules of war peace among civilized people. To begin with we were scouting to the west end of this place, among the mountains, unconscious of the deadly foe, when the cracks of their rifles from their hiding places reminded us, and we looked and beheld two of our men fall from their saddles. At noon they were enjoying as well as could be expected — now they are much in death. Both from Detroit, one a private named Tellchuck the other a sergeant named Battersen, both brave and gallant men. Four of us were ordered behind in charge of our dead. The last words of the sergeant were: "Boys, pray for me." As soon as we had placed them in a conveyance for camp, two of us joined the company and found them chasing the rebels but with no possibility of catching them for their hiding places are secret and unknown, so we went on our way three miles farther in an oblique direction. And coming back the same way we found a farmer near the spot that one of our fellows recognized as the identical chap that killed one of our men. And we have him under guard tonight. The citizens are generally worse enemies than the soldiers.

But enough of that. It is now late and I'll postpone till tomorrow. It's very pleasant weather and quite a contrast to what we have been used to having. I can tell you that your letter was very welcome having not heard from Michigan in over a month. I hope that you will write often. It's almost impossible for me to get time to write. I get that paper the same time that I did your letter. I think that it will take longer to settle this war than you imagine. If we get home within a year I shall be satisfied — in fact if we get home I shall be. Death be it with you as well as with me. Everyone must take his turn. I think that I would be unnecessary to send writing paper or
envelopes and as for stamps you sent enough for a
long time as our privilege for writing are rather low.

Write and give the news.

Yours Forever

A.J. Ryders

Privet Juni Banker Division

Virginia
Piedmont Station
April 23rd 1862

Dear Mother

Being somewhat unoccupied to day, and the privacies of pen and paper, I thought that I would write you a few words that you might know that the same sun that shines upon your letters shines upon me in health. I was glad to receive a letter from home, dated 14 April. Can you estimate the value of a letter here, with us, almost isolated in the world, shit ever. We know nothing much of what going on in the world, except the little space immediately surrounding us.

You have learned from the letter that our Co has been in the Winchester battle, but have few mistakes. We have been in no real battle yet, although we have frequently fired on and been fired at. The rebels always fire and run, they are sneaking cowards, and have lived villains, entirely unfit to compete in honest warfare. They are guerrillas and desperadoes and the citizens are worse still. I see that sickness and death is with you as well as here. Almost the last to leave us on our leaving our native town was David Joe Farlane. He stayed here until he knew he would have to leave. We all returned and four more went before any news. And almost the only living thing that I saw and knew in the vast crowd that we left on the wharf at Detroit was Billy Brown, and now he has gone.

And John Peck, too, all gone forever. Don't, if you can, dwell on this, it only brings back to me.

Hoping that you may receive this all well and dispose of all forbodings, I remain yours forever.

A R Wood

Lieutenant, 1st Virginia Infantry
Dear Father,

Although I've written since I have received a letter from home before yet having time this morning I thought that I could pen a few lines. I have some hard news this morning. Albert Walker of Canton and two others of our boys was captured day before yesterday while on dispatch duty to Front Royal by a hard Rebel cavalry. They were on the return and as far as London when they met with 14 of the 26th N Y. Vol. that they fired. Whereby they all stopped and were unguarded when it was reported by the rebel cavalry rode down from the mountain upon them and they were taken unconditionally. They shot some of them slightly but we can't learn which one. Our boys had the mail and probably some for me which was likewise taken.

Robert Farrell and another went through the place 15 minutes after it happened. They hadn't even left the place when they went through. Dispatch business is very dangerous we often have to go very near the enemy and you can believe they are continually on the look out for the stray once, most daring to attack in body.

We are now said to be in Mr. Powell's between he is under command of Gen. Grant. This place is on the Manassas Gap railroad about 5 miles from the gap. We are surrounded by mountains almost, the Blue Ridge Mountains, the Bull Run mountain and the Cobble mountain and on. The roads have a good chance to hide themselves for especial war and they improve it.

Yesterday morning I got up pretty early and found my horse gone. I started in pursuit encouraged by the good circumstances. I kept a going till I saw two gray coats coming round the brow of a hill. I had no arms as I retreated to the woods when they returned. I found my horse. It was a gray color. I gave a soldier who for one thinks this morning about those that have been lost.

We are all derived in our captain. We suppose him to be a brave and fearless man and every way qualified for his rank. But not so. He is a coward and black-hearted, unprincipled and entirely unfit to command American soldiers.
Although he has never especially favored me, but when
often have drunk deep the cup of sorrow from him. But
never mind those are 50 men in the E. if he ever go into
battle, I would like to see a bullet through him.

We are ordered by Gen. McClellan to fortify against an attack
the 2nd the 4th and the 5th and to work now. Now a few words
in regard to my pay and I will close. The mail is as uncertain
that we can get much change in it. Therefore I among others have
taken a draft to your order on U. S. If I'm unfortunate any way the
draft will benefit no one but you. If I knew it I can get another.
We will be paid before long when I shall send a 25 dollar draft
home. Sign it and send it. You can sell it anywhere I guess
and I'm told you a premium. I've got 70 dollars that I wish
you had now. Some of us sent our overcoats home the other day
by express. We labeled the box Cheever, Plymouth in care of
American Express Co. I wrote a letter to Charles Hayt. He knows
all about it. Let my east. Pay Charles the express fee and tell him
to clean it up a little if the box ever arrived. It is very
pleasant here. The work are dined with foliage. The age is
all headed out. I wrote to you the other day a Jany. Write
to us direct as usual or in care of Gen. Blechy. All the boys are
well. Yours forever
A. T. Ryder

I've kept this letter in my pocket three or four days with
the hope of buying a little tobacco but they are n't to be had you
love as money as I guess I will send it and let you pay for
it there.

A. T. Ryder
Monacan, Virginia
May 28, 1862

Dear Friends,

Although it's not long since I wrote you last, having no opportunity to write, I thought I would pen you a few lines. Here are great many changes since I wrote before. We left Piedmont the 24th by order of the army in consideration of the advance of an overwhelming force of the enemy. Although Lee did not wish to fall back without a fight but the cavalry was said fall back as soon as we had to go. We had fortified the place against an attack of their near number and it looked hard to leave it without any resistance. We joined the main command at 2 town the 25th and covered the retreat of the artillery and infantry to White Plains where we arrived the same night 3 o'clock in safety. The enemy were in sight when we left and were advancing all next day. That night we were in saddle all night expecting an attack. The infantry and artillery were again ordered to retreat which they done during the night. We remained till 11 o'clock 26th when we again left with the enemy near at hand. Two companies of our regiment in command of Major Atwood. We overtook the brigade at Morristown Gap, where we found every one prepared to give battle to our enemy advancing from Washington. Gen. Wade's command was there. But all were again ordered to retreat and to do so immediately. The men left everything except their field with private and government property, tents—all. There was thousands of dollars worth of goods left on the field. Wm. N. Sewall's rear guard and this time only our company. We were ordered to burn every thing that we would get our hands on which we very unwillingly done. The depot and telegraph office filled up with every thing was all burn. Camp & equipage all. Then we left the Gap where we had to stop the order had against any order till the army got properly away. We left the Gap that 2nd and got here late the same night.

You had better believe that a line of 8000 horse & of fellows never lined together. I had not slept for four months nights. Our men never falling off our horses. Some of our boys look their hats and would have got off by simply getting off but were too tired to done, I only wished to come home safe. I am well and in good health.
and made out to get my dinner and sick my horses when I lay down.

I knew the ground and throw my blanket over me and thus you had better
believe I slept. It rained and wet me through to the flesh, it
came splashing on my face and ran down my back, but good gracious,
I don't stop sleeping for that. But I got up in the morning feeling
much better that was yesterday. Yesterday we all expected a fight. In
Sheridans Van and Powell division arrow yesterday and have gone in pursuit
of the enemy today. Probably to cut off Jackson army. There is a good
many thousands although left here yet. Cavalry from near every state are
here, from Indiana, Iowa, Illinois, Vermont, New York, Pa—all have
Cavalry here. I can see them and see the various faults that the rebels
built and the long line of entrenchments that bound the field all of which
would probably be used against them in an attack. Snow yards are numerous,

But I guess my letter is getting too long. I am now today, I am well
and as are the other boys. Well I've ate dinner since I wrote the above
and I guess I'll write a while again. We have some times terrible change
and death to encounter before we get my last letter from Jenny gave
manifestations of the same with you. You don't know how she death of
T(1)Smith struck me. It hard seems possible as though it all could
happen. I've had many good times with them that have gone forever. If I
return know changed all will appear. Many that I left in health are now
silent in death. Know that our life are married and converted to
reunion as changed dwelling places. Changed in bodies actions and

... But we are to move this afternoon I guess back again tell
Jenny that his statement in regard to Maria is worth attention with

astonishment. I feel like repeating the old Indian lament

I'll get my bed and lie down in despair

I'll paint me with black and wear my hair

And no more for the present. Your ever

A. T. Ryder

Neatly be mode.

I suppose you got my letter stating that Albert Young was
taken prisoner at Lealboro the 17th of this month with others.
New Friends.

We arrived in this city May 30th by order of Gen. Walker and took up quarters in the old barracks of the Rhode Islanders near the city. I was very tired but intended to write immediately, but we were suddenly ordered on an expedition toward the mountains. We started from here a week ago today and went as far west as Danielsville, the scene of a severe fight along the Potomac River where we put up for the night. Next day we went on through the famous city of Fredericksburg to a village called Waterford where we again stopped. It was reported that 600 rebel cavalry was down in Kilmarnock. The search was in high spirits thinking that they would take our Co.

Of course at Fredericksburg where we went through we intended to send out their little children to follow for Jeff Davis. But the people of Waterford are all brave people. They wouldn't believe their own eyes when they came in town. They thought that we might be rebel soldiers sent there for the purpose of freeing them out. They are Freeholders as well as citizens. They all had to go to Maryland last summer. They voted in succession 2 to 1 against it.

That day they expected them there and they found out true principle they asked all in their several houses where we ate and talked as in old times. After going over the country all around we returned to stop with the people of Fredericksburg, the worst secession in all Virginia. But I should have said that in the meantime Jackson was driven back and of course the cavalry went with him. The Fredericksburg people said that we couldn't stay there with such a large body of men. We quartered in the rear houses and bringing our horses in the yard, putting two flags across the street, sang national songs and raised red generally. They would stand round on the sidewalks by the hundreds but didn't say anything. The famous Battle of Balls Bluff was fought in sight of this place. They boast wonderfully of that battle. But enough of that. We got home yesterday and in again in quarter although I believe I should
prefer to live among the mountains of Virginia. I don't know the intention in bringing us here. Half of the regiment are here. But it is said that there is another expedition about getting up and that we are recruiting for that purpose. But however, I disbelieve every thing till I am obliged to believe it. I have written a good many letters and have received none lately. I wrote 3 or 4 letters one day at Manassas but never have received any answer. All well. I hope that this will find all you the same. 

Yours Forever

[Signature]
Washington, D.C.
June 18th, 1927

Dear Mother,

I received your kind letter of the 15th today. I can tell you that I was glad, very glad to hear from you, it being the first letter I have received from home in a long time. You sent new stamps. We are now when all stamps come from us have almost ready that you sent them. But then I may see the time that they may be useful. You speak of the things that we sent home being all right. Charles Hoyt will give you the pictures of Watterson. I suppose notice of this things and E. Doris also. We are having pretty good times now and although I think that the mountains would be better for us. I was through all over town yesterday. I went all around the Smithsonian Institute. Then I went and beheld the Senate of the United States session. I sat in the gallery about 3 hours. Among the senators that spoke were Summer, Wilson, Wade, Senate, Harris, Fritz, Crump, and the Vice President was also there and the clerk Harry Fitch (?), others that I heard. They were trying the case of Judge Humphrey for impeachment. The Senate and Representatives, judges and foreign ministers were nearly all present and I can tell you that it was very delightful.

If rains today very hard, it's awful muddy again. But I guess I won't write you a very long letter today. We all well, write soon.

Yours for now,

A.D. Edgeler

I received 20 dollars today. I sent 20 the other day.

Alfred E. W. 1st crew, C.M.

Washington, D.C.
Dear Friends,

I am well today with the exception of a severe boil upon my left shoulder that almost deprives me of the use of my arm. But I have reason from what I know to be thankful for only such light afflictions. Review Tarrell had a child of the ague with fever of yesterday but is somewhat better today and I am in hopes he'll have no more.

We arrived last night here last evening after a severe march of 3 days, it having rained a considerable of the time and we having no tents in which to shield us from it as from the immense dew that every night brings. We came through Alexandria and from there to Dumfries and Stafford county past. But what a contrast in that country and the valley of the Shenandoah, this being a rough and hilly country that one of the most beautiful countries that the eyes can show rejoins. What few little towns that we met with were the mere ruins of antiquity. Dumfries a little town of a dozen buildings, the occupants told us, was once a flourishing city of many thousands. It was the second town settled in Md. they told us.

This is a fine looking city stretched along the banks of the Rappahannock. I was in swimming in it at little while ago that is the river not the city. There was a U.S. gunboat swimming in there too — a peculiar looking object to the sight of the rebels. We expect to move again tomorrow morning but if not I shall soon write again although I don't receive any. I have written 4 or 5 letters without receiving any reply. I put $2 dollars in them. I hope you receive them. I am glad if you don't it makes difference in you. I have still enough and spare. Write and remember and give my love to all the friends.

Yours for health Forever

A J Ryder

Dear Friend,

I feel pretty well this morning and I rather think that I look pretty well for I have put on a new suit of clothes. Robert is considerably better - he looks down considerably. I can tell you that he has had four hard days. He is broke out all over, even to the top of his head but the doctor tell me this morning that he will have it remarkably mild. We all do our best for him. We all have been vaccinated and in case we come down probably will also have it very light. At least bother no trouble for sufficient to the day is the evil thereof especially when there is no possible event of making a difference.

Here is the usual reports in camp relative to ourselves but nothing that would probably interest you. We get the mail regular now but I get none from home but then I expect to get some before fall. Where is Johnny and Abby that they don't write. What they may consider of very trifling importance is worth a good parcel here. I can tell you. I suppose that crops are about as far as they are here. What begins to ripen and I've seen some corn that was tending out but this is by no means the Shenandoah valley.

There are about 40 contrabands to work on the road a few rods from where I am. Their overseer quietly sits on his horse and rides them proceed and they look up as much as possible and say "all right, meny."

Have my respects and be all well and believe me your

Forever

A J Rudder
Detach Co K 1 Mich Cav
Washington D C
Centreville 24th, June 1862

Dear Friends,

Tonight finds me here in one of the worst places that I have ever been in.

You can imagine what it was like when I tell you that I have counted 30 dead horses together. Well, I'm well; and that's something to be thankful for when I tell you that the three boys that I enlisted with are all in charge of the medical department. Farewell, Farewell and Farewell. Farewell we left at Fredericksburg in charge of the division surgeon getting along fast now. We'll be with you in a few days. Farewell went to Washington the night before we left that night before last on the cars sick. And Farewell not with us so they are all down but one.

We are ordered back to the regiment "double quick," but the way through the mountains is very inaccessible, so we go around by Washington and through Maryland to Harpers Ferry and from there to the regiment. It's said that there is work ahead, but I hope it's different work from what we've done lately. If I could only see you for a few hours I could tell you more than I could write in a month.

I thought I would write you these few lines not having even that I could mail them. But I'll do as if it's possible and that's all anyone can do.

We have tents once more—large enough for two. We carry them on our horses, they are of good service. Our mail facilities after this—that is when we join the regiment will be more direct. But I'll write again.

Yours forever,

W. D. Ryder

28th Washington. I had no chance yesterday to mail the above, so I'll mail them today. I don't hear anything about Farewell or Fairley since we left Fredericksburg.
It is said that we start tomorrow or next day for Harpers Ferry, hoping that this may receive you as well as myself. I remain your ever yours,

A.HPTwyd
Dear Frante,

I thought that I would write you a few lines as the best means of whiling away these lonely passing moments.

I feel very well tonight although not sufficiently able to yet be reported for duty. I rather think that the cause of my illness was the over exertion in the quick march from Fredericksburg. I will tell you privately that I was pretty rank up for a little while. And I believe that I can thank my stars for the aid that the experienced surgeon of the navy yard hospital rendered at that time. But that's no matter now I'm all right.

I haven't heard anything from Frante since we left yet, but then he was getting along fine when we left and I'm in hopes he will be with us soon for I'm very homesick without him.

You see that we are here yet and I don't know now when we will leave.

We have this evening got a Sharpe's carbine rifle said to be a very efficient weapon and I think that their appearance verifies the saying (?) for one of our boys shot a round tonight & put the ball in the eye of the target and that the first time.

But what would I be talking or thinking about if I was at home tonight. About war you suppose; I guess not—Tommorow is the 4th of July. I hope it will be celebrated in Old Michigan so become the day. I know nothing of nothing that will interest me much tommorow except I might go down and hear a declaration speech at the soldiers retreat. But it's getting rather late so I'll cut short our letter by a prayer for your joy tomorrow.

[Signature]

Washington, D.C.
July 3rd, about 6 o'clock
Dear Mother,  

Braving that I have a little time to spare in some way I thought that I would as well apply it in writing you a few lines as any other. Redford is away again and I have arrived today from Fredericksburg. He is as well as he could be, although of course somewhat weak. It was a very warm day, rather too warm to be in the sun, although we were drilling carbine drill this afternoon. We again said we leave tomorrow but I shall believe nothing till I'm obliged too. But how did you spend the 4th? I wondered how the city came in the afternoon, and in the afternoon went down to the dock and saw those poor fellows off the steamer from the late field of battle. There were 2000 of them. Many from Michigan but most that is known. They had to be carried off the boats to the ambulances, that is many of them. I saw a boy that I knew yesterday from the 8th and regiment. Jenny knows him. His name is John Trotta, a very intelligent, good-hearted boy. He was wounded in the arm at the battle of Fair Oaks. He says Farrell went very well, having the rheumatic a good deal. He said that he would get his discharge if he wanted it. There was a Dutch 4th man told me last night that Mr. Mason a cousin to school master Mason was killed in the last battle. 

I have just received a letter from Sally which shall be answered soon time. The fact that I remember of ever receiving from her I guess that she will hardly be able to write poetry often for she is getting to be a first-class writer. How does Shirley get along now days. I hear she still cling to the idea of the boomer. I should like to see the chaprow, for a little while anyway. I suppose now that Jenny is helping throw the brick around the corn for the second time. 

I don't do that any more but she got a stone that threw it on my face and from that threw down my throat. Well, however, we'll see if it wouldn't be going much to say that she would like very much to see you all. But my hopes is about gone so good buy for the present. 

Yours affectionately forever.
Dear Friends

We arrived here yesterday morning safe and sound & in good health. although you can imagine somewhat fatigued & sleepy when I tell you that Friday I was on picket, & for some time all night. Saturday we marched all night. Sunday we expected an attack and were up and ready through the night and last night were up again on guard. But then all became quiet. We heard some unanswerable excitement since yesterday morning having been reputed by the | being reported near at hand. (6th) I was suddenly broken off after writing the above yesterday for the purpose of going on a scout. We went 7 miles towards the enemy without seeing any.

We have a good confidence in ourselves now being well armed, well supplied and about my ear time at half legion time. Now our infantry men can load & shoot the muskets, & had enough of such. Tomorrow we will make a defense for my 1st birthday. To be certainly anticipated with thrill by everyone. But it gives me no especial feeling or emotion whatever. For my calculations will read an uncertain unless declared the war unjust. If I do I have nothing to be thankful for; I am ready to die and go to Heaven.

I am sitting here in the field with my knees grazing for across with 2 or 3 hundred others. But a few days since my sight in the dwelling of the editor of the Washington Star. I said to him when the war broke out that the family has lived here all the time. He owned a large plantation there.

We are all well. I had a point rate about last night. They are perfectly entire, well & healthy. All left behind is here, but they are wearing away fast. There are a large force of cavalry here. This in 1200 or possibly 1200. But I must go to my room by writing you all in good health.

[Signature]

John Reeder

11th June 1862

Washington, [DC]
Camp 10 miles south of Culpeper 35
July 21st 1862

Dear Mother,

Having a few spare moments tonight I write you these few words not knowing for certain that I can mail them. I have been on the march since the 16th almost all the time. I was on the march my birthday. It rained several all day and we forded them, sometimes having to swim our horses. We went on a foraid toward Bardemville, had a fight with the enemy near there, wounding one of our Co. so that he had to be left. We were without a meal for 4 days and you can imagine that raw cats would taste well in such a time. It rained 5 successive days, torrents. But we all are well. I received your kind letter of the 10th. You want to know how warm it is here. Well I'll tell you. If I lay my hands in the sun I burn my hands to a blister if I touch it. We expect a fight before long with Jackson and expect to whip him. Hoping that these may receive you all will I remain.

Affectionately Yours,

C. H. Ryder.
Dear Brother,

I received your kind letter of the 13th today and having an occasion I thought that I would write you a few lines in reply. I have written a great many letters that you probably have received at any rate that none have been answered. I wrote one at Harrods one at this place before and one 10 miles from here in camp to the neither of which have been answer received. You speak of the paper ending the war in 30 days. If it ended in 30 years the way it is moving on it will be sooner than I expect. Yesterday we came from beyond survey and in coming I observed a guard in nearly every house. Now I can tell you that hundreds of men detailed for such duty weakens the strength of the army and its confidence more than twice that number killed in battle.

It's a serious country that protects and aids its own enemies in war. And if the policy is followed up, you can truth assure that all we can be so naught, for protection and this training never will go successfully together. Since we were here before we have been traveling nearly all the time. We started from here the 16th. It rained for five days every day. My clothes was wet for nearly all the time. If it would stop raining for a few hours we would have a swim in a river and thereby get wet as rats again. And as it went. But I have been well all the time. I shall long remember my 21st birthday. I was as well as could be as mad and ugly as could be for I had had no sleep for 3 or 4 nights except the little I caught the night before on the ground in the rain with nothing over me. I was shivering through the mud up to my knees on barren and soft times with the bullets whistling by my head showing that somebody in the front was making earnest work.

They shot one of my comrades arm nearly off but I reckon as the people say here they had some trouble also. Our reg. and the 71 4 32nd went down near Bardenville seeing what we could see and the rebels got mad and sent
Early in the course of the war I was in the 7th Indiana and we
liked to get in a scrape there by for they nearly surrounded
us. But it would make you laugh sometimes to see them
"left about wheel" when we got too close on 'em.

It's pretty warm some time here now days. We couldn't
stand it if we didn't wear wadded clothes to keep us from
burning. But when I have got near it so that's nothing.

You spoke about electing again if the war wouldn't
last forever. All I've got to say is I don't want to
talk with you for a few minutes. I would tell you that
would make you think of sticking near your mother's cornbread
for a while at any rate. Don't you think because I don't
write home my sufferings in flying colors that there is no
devil on the post. For believe me when I tell you that I have
seen strong men curse the day they enlisted with tears in
their eyes. If you want a taste again just try it home for a
while. Fast for four days without even a hard bread, don't
sleep, let it rain all the time and you be wet, without the
mentioning the comfort of whistling bullets and see how you
like it. And then if you like it I will you something that
you wouldn't like. But then it's all what one might expect.
I am not yet derived in soldiering. Tell the drummer boy I
should like to see him some day at his leisure and in fact
I should be glad to see you all. Perhaps has been unwell
lately but is again sound. Farley is sick and was very
sick too last night.

I'm well and hope you the same.

C. F. Ryder.
Camp near battle ground. Circujpper. 32.
August 5th 62.

Dear Friends,

This is the first chance I have had in a long time to send you a few lines today, as I gladly take it. I have been in the hospital since the 6th with the camp fever till yesterday. Though I feel now quite strong and am with the Co. yet I don't do any duty yet. I was told almost 50 miles in the old ambulance, the hardest thing to ride in, on God's earth as the old gray says. Our reg. existed in the fight although they was skirmishing with the rebel not but a few miles away. I was all over the battle ground yesterday. There are a good many hard sights there. I saw with my own eyes dead men sent post-truck from there burial place. The rebel sent work. They fought for two miles or more on gray road and as it was the ground is one vast burial ground. Nature lay dead in every direction by the score. They smell terribly. It is one likely knows exactly the lands but it is much more I can tell you than the paper reports. But enough of that. The last letter I received from home was dated 22nd July. I have two or 3 that are yet unanswered. I put so late in one. Today I believe you commence drafting. That will be tough to be made to go. I still to glad though you write how the thing goes on the unbelief. It will take the scales from their eyes when they get here on packet not knowing one minute but what the next will play them through with a barrel full of buck-shot. They will think indeed that this is a savage and wicked world that we live in.

I feel like talking with you all this morning, I could answer myself as I couldn't you. But I guess that time is far away yet.

One year ago tomorrow morn, I swear in Uncle Sam's service and now the question is how many more will face in his service.

I'm not yet deceived, though, I think, in what I find to contend with in soldiering. But write often and tell me all.

Yours Forever,
A. J. Ryder

The boys are all well.
Dear Mother,

Your letter of the 10th was indeed gladly received this morning. O, you don’t know how interesting it is to look over these few words so late from home. A letter is worth more than a thousand pages & so any time. I spoke of receiving you and wish to know whether it has come yet.

Frank have it on rest. Do as you think best of course. All I wish to know is whether you receive what I send. Write in your next how much in all you have received. You speak of giving it here rather than starving. Such money how would pass for anything. However, I guess that there is no danger of even starving. You say that they say that the rebellion shall be put down this fall. I guess that they will have to long enough to come some. And that Johnny has gone to enlist. Well, if he has got the war fever and is bound to go I hope it will soon terminate in child’s play in “Reprise” land.

Should thought that he would have gone in the cavalry for a much better service than the infantry—though Charley Hoyt will make a splendid officer—for he will be as fine as well as as a soldier. I hadn’t heard of Charlie Hohardin in a long time before although I expect that he is somewhere within a few miles of me and with his regiment, but which way I can’t tell.

As far as is in the same regiment. We expect to are expecting to see them. The 11th was a half mile away they are from South Carolina. There is a real army here. I hope that you will write often. It is very hard for me to get the material for writing, though I have stamps now plenty. I suppose that many of my friends think that I don’t wish to write them. But I need to write when I had a chance and would now if I could, but it as much as soon as he or write home occasionally.

I feel pretty well today. It the first time that I’ve missed any duty since I’ve been in Va. Don’t be afraid that I shall care. I hope. Tell all to write. Yours Forever

A Y Ripper

P.S. News are all well.
Dear Friends,

I have this morning for the first time in a long time an opportunity of writing you a few words.

The news that had passed since I wrote you before I can very truly tell you has been very eventful indeed.

I have since been a prisoner of war in the hands of the rebels, but am now on parole and am to start for Annapolis this afternoon. I can tell you that I have been in war for a few weeks when the rebels fired the arsenal, the magazine and the canons roar and now new sound and with a very good story for me.

The 23rd of August was the fatal day with me. Our battalion headed a charge on the rebels that day and the rebels being with drawn left us a few hundred fighting thousands with nothing but the saber. You can imagine the exciting right and left of the rebel cornet some of the rebel friends from the rear took an opportunity to knock him from his seat when the whole column galloped over me. I thought I was you up there but after they got over me I got up, and as much as ever to try to catch a horse but could not when the rebels again took note of me and sent the balls flying in burning my face clean across and taking off some of the skin the under lip that you used to think sometimes stuck out too far.

But that's nothing. All of our officers were taken and 18 of my comrades our col was killed, our major was very badly wounded and another major taken prisoner. We fought hard last if I remember you I can tell all about it. Among you read and say they surrounded us and took us prisoners and gave us nothing to eat. For the simple reason that they have nothing to eat themselves. I know nothing whatever of the other boys Forell, Forwell and Burr. But rest in the hope that they all came out right.

I have a good deal to tell you but not much time to tell it all, I will write again soon. I hope that these few lines will find you all well and enjoying yourselves finely.

Yours affectionately, I renew.

(A.B. Bower)
Mr. Ryder

Dear Sir,

Your son Alfred was taken prisoner on the battle field of Bull Run, 2nd last Saturday, Aug 30.

We made a charge on the left wing commanded by McDowell. The left had got all ready then turned back at the sight of it. It was matinee to make a charge on the enemy in so strong a force and as strongly supported by Infantry and Artillery, while we were cavalry alone. One Brigade against two of cavalry decide all the rest. We could have whipped out the cavalry. Our boys came up nimbly, not a man flinched. Eleven of our men and 3 officers were taken prisoners. How many of them were wounded I do not know. It was harrying times. I suppose the prisoners will be exchanged soon. We are sorry to learn Alfred is a good soldier and companion, loved and respected by all. We hope he is all right and will soon be permitted to join us.

William Farley's Burr were down to the 24 head yesterday and saw the boys, they are all well but some of them are a little homesick.

Hoping to be able to read you glad tidings of your son.

I am your Obliged Servant,

A.E. Matthews

Orderly, Command Co H.

P.S.

I should have written before, but it has been very harrying times with us. We have run out a whole night's and half another since the battle and have been on the move all the time until last night. We have had the first rest of such the last 24 hours since we left Washington July 15. I am anxious letter and writing to absent soldier friends constantly. Robert Farwick was wounded how bad I do not know.

A.E.M.
Cumberland Md, Sunday morning
Sept 7th 1862.

(Presidio)
New Friends

Again having a chance for a while of handling a pen, I thought that I would write you a few words that you might know that I have still as good foot held on earth. My greatest regret at present is to know how you all get along in this awful world. I am living here from any of you so long since now, you have probably received the letter that I wrote you at Point of Rocks informing you that I was taken prisoner at the battle of Manassas on Saturday 29th of August and was paroled at Stevensville the 1st and arrove at Point of Rocks the 3rd. We were told that we were to go to Annapolis but we were sent here and will probably stay here till we are regularly exchanged.

Although we have been told that we were to have a furlough but as to that I don't trust much in such pleasant ideas. Our regiment is somewhat disorganized probably losing as many officers and men. We found out that we had gaitelot. Yes he was a brave man indeed. He was shot twice through the breast, and also Major Fair, one of the best officers that ever lived were killed and Major Atwood taken prisoner with Capt Magrogan and both your Lieutenants with many other commissioned officers.

How do your Michiganers think our cause stands. As for me, it certainly appears below par, and I know not even how it can advance against such terrible pressure.

Some people have to form an idea of the seriousness of the rebellion I tell you from what I know that their devotion is absolute. Their bonds have more at stake than ours and they take more pains in the pursuit of their work as well as the detection of it. Their officers are more brave and more humble among their men than ours. It is a fact that our officers build too much on their superior stripe and on too much false dignity - and even exercise too much inferiority between themselves.

But its said that we go to Washington to join our regiment this afternoon but I don't know. I feel just as well but I know nothing yet of the other boys.
I'll write again hoping that you may receive this all well.
I remain,

Your [illegible] Forever, A. H. Ryder

evening

We have not yet moved now either as is there so much sign of it as there was this morn. We have had news tonight from our army but I still hope for the best. Write me immediately and probably I shall receive it all right. Direct A.H.R

Cumberland Allegany Co
m.d.
Ohio Camp, March 19th, 1862.

Dear Mother,

Having an opportunity I write a few words and in hopes of receiving an immediate reply.

We came here last week yesterday but I must confess that I have not felt able to write you till today. I have been a little sick with the gauders. I have been suffering from an irregular diet probably. I am here till exchanged and not knowing when that will be. I don't like this garrison in our own country for those who have been so faithful as they know how. There are hundreds of thousands who would indeed be glad to see their friends here but the military require that for one would find my way home if permitted to do so but I can stand the rest. I almost despair of the success of our cause. I know the South is in great command in our army and I know the desperation and wisdom of the rebel officers. It is hard and terrible to believe that the thousands that have been killed shall remain in rebel soil. But I guess it is true. Some of our own men's and the people as much as their own.

But some thing else than war. I am happy, think best of it. He is now a paroled Prisoner also. He is in a Muck Estary and is the same old nice fellow. I have had no news from the other boys since his fight so I know nothing of them. I would be glad to hear of them if you can tell anything of them. Write me soon and tell others to do the same.

The world is full of trials and grief,
Of many work and care,
And sissy and sorrows.
Our portion we must bear.

Your son,

[Signature]

Address: Camp Ohio, near Columbus.

[Address]

[Reg Paroled Prisoner
Mr. W. E. Farnum, Prisoner
or to your best knowledge]
Camp Wallace near Columbus Augst '62

Dear Mother,

Once again I'm allotted a soldier's fare but not the time with which I've a pretty good idea of what was a coming. We got on the track that night as intended and arrived in Cleveland next morning all right. It was said that the Federals were swift but as for myself I slept to soundly & knew nothing of the ride nor its safety to Columbus. But, lo, they were but a few miles away - all gone home. What few of us were left were sent to this camp in care of Lieut. Burt whose about 4 miles north of the city. While we were gone the boys had the good luck to be paid so we'll likely we will have to wait till next payday. But it's no difference to me you know for I have plenty. To begin the thing that the General ordered all to report but I see no more than usual for all are gone that went to and what have the rank. We have tents but they are on very bad ground and probably if it should rain would have to be taken away in a boat. As for myself I can swim out, without odds for anyone. But I think of things go on as usual I shall walk out and hire out to some of the rich farmers. You know I'll have a chance to get acquainted, often times two thirds of the battle of life. Nothing new in regard to an exchange. I look d own as though they mean to exchange us. But as you say as long as we are free we won't be likely to hear any bullets whistle. I don't hear anything new in regard to the Indiana matter expect that they are considering the men back whether it be for anything back or a system in obtaining food and maintaining order I can't tell. But I'm getting sufficiently lengthy. Our mail facilities is very much confused. Tell Johnny to direct Camp Wallace. Write often. Give my respects to all. Godspeed you and the rest I'm very well. You're affectionately,

Forever A.K.

F. With love

[Signature]
Camp Wallace Dec. 8th 62

Virginia

Dear Friends,

I am going to leave this camp probably today. Most of the boys have already left for Michigan there being no hopes of any change and being degraded here being nothing. I don't appreciate the idea myself seeing here in indolence and in prison for no purpose whatever. I shall stay round here for a week or two and work if I can, then if nothing comes on it there now for Michigan hurry quick. I've got my pay for two months in my pocket. Our Co. officer suspended and in Detroit. They tell us now to stay here without our word and if it is possible I wish to go to school this winter somewhere and sell Michigan I guess in the future. I don't like this way of spending well enough to stay here if I have the right to go away.

I've bought me a good substantial pair of boots and a carpet sack and have got the sack well filled with good government salt. So I'm all right. I feel well and barring no trouble for me if you don't hear of me for a while again I've had no better luck yet back. Give my regards to all.

Yours truly,

A. S. E.
Camp near Alexandria
Nov 15th '62

Dear Sister,

Having a leisure moment I thought I would pen you a few words hoping that they may find you all well. We have a new camp—finedly situated near a little wood on the Potomac river. Vessels of all kinds—war vessels and commercial are passing by nearly all the time making as lively appearance indeed.

I wish more lines missing.

Well Tarley went out with a party of about 30 towards Fauquier the other day and it is reported that they are all taken prisoners, but I hope not. They were to return yesterday but they have not yet appeared. I have no word from the 24th on now from Readin since I came. I hope you will write me and give me the news—write me if you know anything about Johnny or not.

They said when I first came here that I wasn't exchanged but since I have been convinced that I am and have been doing duty since. I hope that I'll have a chance to get to the front before long and then I may see the boys. But then it is hard finding anyone in such a large army.

This makes the third letter that I've written home but no answers yet. But I must go and write my heart. With love.

Give my respects to all.

Yours Truly

A. V. Aydel

Dear Mother,

I have an opportunity to send a few words by mail this
morning as I improve it. I wrote a letter to Abby one day
last week. At 12 o'clock that same night we started on a
march and arrived here the next night. The boys that were here
were in a pretty pretty hard position. The rebels were all
around them threatening them every hour. I wrote about
Turley being captured. It was so. He was on picket with 5
other men and the rebels charged in upon them and before they
could get on their horses they were taken. It was midnight
and of course very dark. They saw Turley's nice horse and com-
menced quarreling about who should have him. And Turley
rolled over a near fence very silly and of course lay very still
when they went off and him taking the other boys with them.
So he's here with us but missing his nice horse revolver and
caber. They got one of the boys that was taken at Bull Run
with us and look for him. We have very good quarters here in
a nice church. The rebels sent word to us yesterday that
they were going to attack us last night. But we slept very
soundly on their street. Flour is worth 15 dollars a barrel
we have sent a piece to take a few barrels and are going to give
a union man 1/2 of it to take it for us. Beans is 95 dollars a
piece. But we don't want any of them.

I feel much better now but am still in the rain scouting yesterday all
day but never felt better. That blanket that you gave me
is worth a thousand army blankets. I'll take good care that
the rebels don't get it too. I don't hear anything from the
St. Pk. Tom has made Harriett a little boy get along. Write and
remember me to your family.

A. S. Ayres
address
1 Michigan Ave. N. W.
New Fort Scott
Washington D.C.
Dear Friends,

I write you a few words this morning to let you know that I can still cut my ration provided I am so lucky as to get them. We are ordered to hold this place an indefinite length of time as we may stay here all winter. There are 600 or 700 here of different regiments, about 70 from my regiment and 15 from my Co. Fortiy is far all right. We are quartered as present in a barn but expect our tents today. We have had a hard time for about a week but expect easier some time. Our army seems to be in rather of a curious shape but maybe it is all for the best—I have partly made up my mind to go in the regular army. I can enlist there for my time and I almost believe that I want to discharge till the end of that way. A number of our boys have not already gone and more will go, in the artillery.

I haven't had any news since I came back from the 24th or from Reading or from home but expect to meet today and may be I'll have some letter.

The sun shined out quite pleasant today as it had been raining for nearly a week. This is but small piece of not more than 20 houses. We are on the right of light and in the advance. This country is fairly clear of forage but what little cornfield articults such as chickens and milk and such the like come across we immediately confiscate. We captured some flour in Gettysburg and sent it to the bakers where we and talked that night we had to renew and leave it so the seat was so much ahead. But we got some meat yesterday and cooked it ourselves so we weren't cheated out of that. Write and tell all about it do the same.

Yours I am ever,

All Right.

Since I wrote the above today the men made some very nice meat sweet cakes and also fresh bake as we are living high. It is a pretty rate cook.
Drumville 27th. 63

Dear Friends,

Your kind letter of the 17th received and I pray you accept the compliment. Tell you when the mail comes each one is anxious to know whether he has any of the valise other than the one who has one. We are rather neat in it for never any way are we being repeated from the command, and still occasionally receiving the mail.

Hence the paper by chance should refer to our regiment in the 24th place and a copy.

Your letter is the first I have heard from Johny since I came back. I don't see why he don't write to me. I have written him more than a dozen letters and never have received one from him yet. You speak of his hardships; yes I can sympathize with him. I know it would be more than he expected.

I am glad to hear that Aunt Mary is better. It don't seem possible yet that mother Skiles is really dead. I should be glad to write to all but it is impossible the way we are placed. Time are busy and full of anxiety. I can tell you. In the army I know where it is I can appreciate that line of the Bible 'No man know what a day may bring forth.' I have been thinking about enlisting in the regular army but I guess now I'll take your advice and not do it.

I'm sorry indeed that Johny tell not receive that money but I'm in hopes he'll get it yet. I suppose the harvest been properly like we. We hope to write till Johny before we go over. Write - tell every one to do the like. I never was better in regard to health. Tell them I hope this may receive you all well.

Yours ever,

Ald. Ryder

I received these stamps all right but they won't go here and might as well return them with just as many thanks as though they would go. Sergeant Waterman is sick with the jaundice. There is a good many sick of that. It is not going complaint. I know it to pity them.
Dear Friends,

Your kind letter of Dec 27 was received yesterday and although its pretty cold writing I send you a few words. I tell you I was glad to hear from you. I was glad to hear from Johnny. I would like to know where he is this cold windy snowy day. It is the first bad weather since I first came back. The snow is two inches in depth. I'm glad you have got your work well along for it must be freezing cold now with you. One asks me if I have any plans. I bought a pair of wooden ones while in Detroit that answers the purpose very well. There are about 200 of our boys there now. Col. [illegible] is acting Brigadier Gen. The winter has come and I think that there will be no more fighting till next spring. Its pretty tough on soldiers in the face of an enemy standing picket there each night. And Johnny all the little comforts you can think of [illegible] mail. As for me I get along as well as could be expected. If you have got a paper with the president message in please send it to me. (Emancipation Proclamation - 86)

We haven't read it in camp yet. Some think that there will be stopped by the present Congress but the first thing I should look for is a bill for a loan of $300 or $400 million, or a proclamation for more troops. We are all well here hoping this may find you the same. Remain Yours Forever

A & Ryder
Dear Friends

Having another chance to pencil out a few lines to you this eve. I embrace it. I was rather tired having been riding all day in search of beef cattle. We found one fellow more lucky than his neighbors by having 5 very nice cows for us. The cow was coming and sent his boy with them over the hills but the Yankee found them at last to his great displeasure. I tell you the people of this country know what war is. It is a satisfaction to me to know that my friends are as free from its afflictions as they are. I wrote another letter to Johnny yesterday in hopes to get a letter from him before long.

I heard from Reuben Farwell yesterday by way of a letter to Farley. He remains about the same. He says he hopes that he'll again be able for duty in a long time.

11th. It's 4 hours since I wrote the above but now I guess I'll finish up. I very gladly received two letters too since I wrote the above one from you and one from Johnny dated Dec. 15 at Fayetteville. He was then well. I tell you my letter to what furnished me with goodly joy, the goodly friends. I have a little each of the chickens with a very bad cold but am getting over both now.

(see on this line meaning) Hours with one and to my benefit too.

12th. Well I told you above that I would finish up but the rest came to go and Dewitt was on parade & after paraded last night. I haven't told you which kind of a horse I have. I have a consider a horse but have traded at times with the boys and now have one well suited to the business — a fine bay fellow. The government presents me with a pair of new buckskin gloves each a quire of a present indeed. May God of our Lord bring with you. Tell him we are all right and expect to remain as long as we live.

(Several more lines meaning)

Yours Truly

A. E. R.
Dranesville Va
Dec 12th, 62

Dear Mother,

Your kind and welcome letter of the 2nd is duly received. I was glad to hear that you are all well. I'm very well now but feel very sleepy having just come in off from fitchet. I told you about receiving a letter from Jonny in my last home. It's a very busy time with new keys and there for I don't get much time to write any letters home. I'm saving a good many letters but shall feel a little guilty to pay for the present. I've reported that they are fighting down at Fredericksburg and I now hear from where I saw the semblance of distant cannon. In all chance there will be an awful fight down there and I hope it will be decisive for the war has lingered long enough. It's very pleasant weather here with dry days almost like September in Michigan. You write that Jonny is sick. I hope too that he soon will be well. For this is my life & the sick one. I'm glad he got that money & that it will be of great benefit to him if sick. You speak about my money having run. I wouldn't give anything for money now. If you have a few 3 cent stamps & some please put them in your next. Write about how that lawsuit comes out in your next. If it rather of a curious case I should think to be stated on. If Grandma is with you tell her not to worry for all you hear about and thinking accounts among the people) the world and it is best we good ever to keep head from nothing and coolness from reading etc.

Give all my best respects. Write soon and remember me.

Your ever,

C. L. Ryder
Dear Father,

Having some little time to myself, I thought I would write you a few words. I am well, but rather sleepy having been on a freight last night. You may think that this is near Washington to have trouble with rebels, so be even anxious about them, but it is a fact that we have a good fight with them nearly every day. Our command fought last night. All there is left is in this direction from Washington is only about 600 cavalry. This place is remarkable for a very bad fight over a year since between Stewart and McColl. I counted over 70 trees that were struck by cannon balls so of them now cut down, but little way from here.

I received a letter from you yesterday stating that your health came out all right. It was a curious one, as I should have heard nothing of you from home for a week. I am very thankful for the letter sent me, and some papers and envelopes both of which I was such as John is acting orderly for old Tom, Abercrombie near Alexandria and will probably stay there during the winter. Burr also is orderly for some men. How are your health at Fredericksburg? I cannot see him since the first day I came back. Farley is with me yet. Probably we will be commanded sergeant and then will have to return to camp. I wish that when you went to town you would have the Weekly Advertiser and knew something what is going on in the world. Write near 7th Street Washington, D.C. I hope this will greet you well.

Yours forever,

A. E. Byler
Dear Mother

Having some little free time I thought that I would answer your kind and welcome letter which I lately received. I found the letter well filled with things that are very essential in soldier life.

I received another letter from Janny today, dated 5th of Dec. He went well. I have written to him of late. I hope he will receive them. He was at Rock Station. He says that Charley Boyd was Capt, nearly having recognised. Tomorrow is Christmas. Well I wish you all a merry Christmas. As for myself I shall likely continue myself to soldiers duties. Lord guard us from it. But I know the to to the man an opportunity to enjoy them will be as. I shall turn now I believe how to appreciate a few life if I ever again pass it. It is said that it requires sickness to enjoy health and I don't know but it requires some hard tonic to enjoy good times.

We are all well that's one happy thing for us. Well another Christmas and see hare as not that's the question. Hope all right. Write soon. Give my respects to all and a merry Christmas.

Yours Truly

[Signature]

Mrs. Char. S. Ryder

Dear Brother

I expect you are going to school now days. You must study hard and learn all you can. Well Char. do you wish that they would go farther off as you wouldn't want to go to that office. I just received another letter from home some green tea in. I tell you Char. I am glad to get it. I hope you will never have to go to war. I hope Janny will come home if he can. I am glad indeed that me (?) finished up that letter. I have got over the rheumatic and good buy. Char. Write as soon as you can.

Yours Truly

[Signature]

I hope Char. you will get a good gift from old Sandy Black tonight. Your stories full of good things. Tell Char. that I
Camp Broadhead
New Year's Eve, '62

Dear Friends,

The day is past and withal we are yet away from home we have enjoyed all partly well. We have had a grand dinner—turkey, chickens with other delicacies too numerous to mention, and you can believe that I took charge of all that I could accommodate. I was provided with the prize of returns that now had been drawn. The turkeys alone 14 kilos, theider about 10, the quarter master arranging the affair. He is a son of greatwell Matthew and a partly shrewd fellow. I can tell you I feel first rate again weighing 140 and probably gaining every day. It's a good business for giving a person a good appetite.

Yours truly.

A. S. Ryder.
Dear Sister,

I received your kind letter when at Brannville a few days ago and also one from Pa but have had no time till now to answer it. We were relieved yesterday and came in but I don't know how long we will stay perhaps till we are paid. I received a letter from Johnny last 2 or 3 days or two ago. He is getting better fast. I hope he will soon be all right. I am sorry for the poor fellows that were killed that you mention and glad indeed for them that escaped.

It seems hard to believe that there is not a soul that pieces but what marched many many to their graves. But it certainly true. I am sorry to hear that Aunt Mary and Angeline are sick. I hope them soon well. Write in your next about them. I hope Grandma Plants is well yet. Seems to me that you are doing good business in having more drugs in Old West. But I assure you there will have to be something to keep up the excitement and it don't matter what war in or love in.

Tell you that I gladly received your package of stamped envelopes. Reading is now in camp and so much better than I expected to find him. He has had the ball take out of his shoulder, he has two of the balls that shot him now. He says that he is going to put them in a shot gun and shoot them back at the Rebels. Give my respects to all. I hope this will find you all well. Yours forever.

F. E. C. V. Ryder
Dear Mother,

Being unoccupied tonight I thought that I would have a little talk with you and by the way answer your kind letter of the 6th. What a joy it is that we are blessed with the privilege of speaking with each other so often and knowing certainly that each is well. I'm glad to hear so much of all the folks in your letter, of Grandma & Uncle Williams and all. Give me good-long letters and give them often too - the oftener the better. You kindly wish me home & partake of what you had found for New Year. I don't think that it would come amiss to either Johnny or myself. I begin to feel as though I should be glad to have that day hasten that drew me from the service. I doubt our final success. And why, with it longer? It don't seem as though our officers designed to bring the war to a close but merely prolong it for the pay. The lives of millions seem to be nothing in the balance.

I have written twice to Johnny daily. I give him all the news possible and advised him to get his discharge as soon as he could. Between you and I, I don't believe that I shall kill myself with duty, at all events. Tell me some profit of that. You say that after you succeed in getting Johnny you would be glad to try for me. I hope to hear you will get Johnny, but as you don't worry, for I'm tough and rough enough for any place. I have enough of friends and want for nothing that they have. I believe in making a friend of every one. The meanest man will some time do the most for one in spite of himself, and when it's most needed, too, for I've found that true. Farley is in camp near Ft. Scott. He came near losing the lockjaw the other day. He was taken possession. The couldn't move his jaw or his tongue or couldn't speak. They couldn't even swallow till he couldn't see out of his eyes. But this glad to hear that he's gotten well that he'll soon join us. Farley is a tried friend at all times and all places. He is a duty sergeant now.
Well, Mr. How are they doing on the corner. I glad to hear that they are down on me. I'm a rascal not worth notice according to their view. You know that I didn't frequent while at home foreign places much as I hear loud things the war the many. They say that I got so that I swore - so. It's to bad. But enough of that. Give my respects to all. Your envelopes that you sent me very thankfully received. The paper I also received. Just as well to send them some time from home as from the office. You speak of sending me a box of provisions it would be rather too much of a risk and not out of my money. Good gracious my money so no object not in the least. Use it for I don't know as it will be worth anything after the war. Yours forever.

A. B. R.

near Ft. Scott
Washington D.C.
Camp near Occoquan river
January 24th, '63

Dear Father,

I just received a letter from Johnny dated 16th. He says he is recovering from his recent illness. They have marched about with 5 days ration. In fact I suspect the whole army is on the move that is the active army. We are in railroad Corps and he is in the defense of Washington. So probably shan't have to move for a while at all events.

It's very muddy now having rained for 48 hours without intermission. It's been very wintry; night before last a heavy pine from a tree through the trees, across our tent, carefully dropped down within a foot of there that slept above us on some boards. If it had struck them their discharge from the service would have been certain well I have done very well today have washed and tanned my boots. The toes of the other boot being worn down like the one before I left. When we get home we will do all to trade and, meet of some. The sun begins to shine out quite pleasantly although it rains considerably we shouldn't complain of the weather for it's generally very mild for this season of the year. The bluebirds are singing.

I haven't received mine's back of goods things yet but probably shall before long. If they come forward them to Alexandria connected I fear that some race will take the advantage of it and get them for such. The trades are often carried out there.

(1) I hear heavy cannonading in the direction of Mt. Rhodehamel. I don't know what they are doing, maybe begin to have a fight. Tell Charlie that I should be glad to have him send me a letter too. Johnny says that he sent them one to give my respects to all.

Love forever.

A.

I have just received another paper well filled with news. Are the people generally in favor of Chandler.
Dear Frank,

We had finished the work by 10:00 a.m. today and went to St. Francis. I rained all day long but it didn't stop. We had a very wet ride back to camp. I was very cold and hungry when we arrived.

I went to the office in the evening, and when I got there, I was very tired. I had a very hard time writing. I was very cold and hungry. I had to write the letter to you.

I have received your letter dated the 10th of June. I was very glad to hear from you. I am enclosing my letter to you. I hope you will like it. I am very much looking forward to your visit. I hope you will arrive on time.

I have enclosed some photographs of the town. I hope you will enjoy them. I have also enclosed a letter from my father. He is very well and he sends his regards to you. He also sends his regards to your family.

I hope to hear from you soon. I am very much looking forward to your visit.

Yours truly,

[Signature]

P.S. I hope you will arrive on time.
Dear Father,

I received a letter from Mrs. lett last night stating that she and you are going to visit York State - she going right away and you in a few days. But I can hardly believe my senses therefore I dare not write to her now and direct Fairport till I get word for a certainty. I hope truly that nothing will come up this time to hinder going. It would seem like commencing life again to go to the spot where you were born. When I learn that she has gone I will write. It is partly cold and disagreeable here now days and especially for our line of duty picketing. We are on picket every third night and watchin nothing for there is no rebel head from this cold weather.

Of course they are all froze up and there is no sense looking for them till they thaw out. Walter Doolas has got a furlough and started for home to day. He says his wife is very sick or at least that is the plan he got his leave of absence on. He is a pretty cunning fellow. He has only 10 days to regale himself in. He's a good fellow & lucky to him. And I hope you and me will go this time. Don't you come back without going to Wayne Co. Write soon.

Yours forever,

ACL

And my best wishes to Uncle and Aunt Hothin.
Camp near Bull Run  
Feb 18, '63

Dear Father,

Another letter of your remembrance came at hand night before last and I thought to while away a leisure hour I would write you a few words this eve although I wrote you the 13th. I fear the icy death among you with deep surprise and I can't help saying with sadness who ever could return retain untoward thoughts beyond the grave how ever grievous his cause might be with the living. Death is a hard master unto whom we all shall hast to find sooner or later.

I wrote last eve to Joe and God joining the same time I received yours. He's well. He has received his box of provisions. I received mine 3 days ago as I'm living well now. I have one tent mate left he is a good fellow named Bradford in his name. No news from our last one. 21 of our regiment are gone some killed and the rest taken prisoners.

Between my love and myself I got my face scratched by the fence and he his leg cut by a bullet.

I hope you'll have go down after me.

I hope that this will find you all well. Give all my love and respect to my best relations and especially Josephine.

Write again. Yours I remain.

Abi.
Dear Father

I hasten to reply to your letter of the 16th hearing the hard way of Charley sickness. I wish you that I was there with you that I might render what little help I could although I well know that you will do all in your hands possible. This sickness is indeed alarming but I hope Heaven will soon come to well. I'm glad that you have so good help. I hope Aunt Martha will stay any way till he gets back.

But if Charley does get well you of course will not fail to go after him. But the chance seems to be against his getting well soon enough. It's a hard strike. You spoke about officers and truly said that I concluded it as not worth mentioning. One of our men was killed in the skirmish the other day. Two men deserted the rebel and came in here this morn and report that there are 70,000 in Rappahannock. It's about 25 miles from here. But I'm sure that they are only spies. I wonder what the people are getting tired of this war and it's very thought of war and name. But it and looks from here a long way off. I'm not sure to that the Democrats ought to drive the Republicans from Washington for they are truly getting to be an abomination in the sight of truth and law.

But I hope that Charley will soon get well and that all the rest of you will continue so.

Write again soon for I'm anxious to know everything.

Yours Truly

[Signature]

Where is Eliza that she don't ever write.
Camp near Bull Run, Va
March 12, 1863

Dear Friends,

Having some little time to dispose of some way this morning I thought I would pen you a few lines. I suppose you have heard of the great scare up to Fairfax Co., the other night. The rebels came and took out of bed about 1 o'clock in the morning. Brig. Gen. Stetson, it was the scariest thing you ever heard of. They came to town and sent the guards to their quarters and ordered the prus to saddle up for a ride, and then fell upon and marched them off as prisoners. It was good enough for the time for he was putting on a site in town when his command was long away off. Everybody here is glad of it. If they would take the pains to gobble up some of ourattacking officers every night it would be a good lesson for them.

Farley is here with us now so we are all together once more and I'm very glad of it.

Reuben and Burr are on 5 hours' picket now. I received another letter from Jenny. She is well with the exception of a cold. We all have very hard times here it being very damp weather. But I think that we will be freed from that when warm weather comes again.

Write often. Yours Forever,

Alex
Camp near Ft. Scott Va 16
In Hospital March 19 63

Dear Friends,

I am just getting a little better from being some sick a few days. I had pain on my jaw due to one of my teeth being rotten. My back tooth. I had it pulled and then I had a sort of fever, lasting for a few days but am getting better now although I am very weak now.

I suppose of course you have heard before this time of Reuben being taken prisoner. But I hope he is not hurt otherwise and he will come out all right in the end.

I have had no letters lately.

Yours forever,

A.J.
Camp near Ft. Scott
March 25th - 1863

Dear Friends,

Received a letter from Parley yesterday and I'll undertake to write a few words this morn. in reply. I wrote a few words with a pencil the other day which you probably have received. I'm in the hospital yet. I was sent here the 15th and getting well fast although somewhat of course. I was sick about a week before I came in. They take good care of the sick here. They give me wine & drink, victuals or anything I have a mind to eat for & eat. Our regimental doctors name is Smith and a fine fellow indeed he is. I shall be well in a few days and out with the rest of the boys.

Rechen has got sick from Richmond all right. He fell and nearly. The put up while in Richmond at the old Libby Hotel, didn't like the fare very much and was glad to get away after staying two nights with the grey hares.

I received a letter from George Bird last night. He is down at Nashville. He is orderly sergeant in the 3rd Cav. Co. F. I also received a letter from Grandma. The boys sent in a lot of Rebus that they captured yesterday this morn. They came very near capturing the famous Capt. Mady as I hear. They don't care much about fighting with our reg. Rechen says they told him. But they say that it's fun to chase the Pa. fellows for they will run like sheep most always.

I expect that the draft is making lovely times with your new boys. But if they do their duty they will call out another bunch of hundred thousands and have them drilling.

I expect that there will be heavy fighting before long every where, at least when the roads get passable for heavy artillery and train wagons.

But write soon and give my respect to all and remember me.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

W.R.
Dear Father and Mother

Your welcome message came at hand last week, and I can't forgo the chance of penning you a few words this evening. I see that you have'd yet received my late letter but most likely you will. I expect the shipment you speak of here about, but hardly could think that any man would seek to avoid their lot by flight from their country. I hope to that the authorities will call out, as old Hull said, 'enough to look down all opposition' and then we might look for the end of the war with some considerable hope. We can stand it however 'without fear or trembling' as it may. We hope for the worst and if better come we know something to be thankful for.

I'm sorry Dr. Travis'sen is going to move away for he's a good neighbor.

I received a letter from Johnny last night dated the 21st. He says he was never better in the world with the exception of a cold. You speak of my rheumatism, it don't trouble me now any. Rebekah Farrell has gone to the federal camp at Annapolis. She started yesterday morning, and a letter arrived for her at once from home. I think I will forward it today to her. You ask about my being paid. I have not been paid yet but I expect to every day. I didn't sign the last pay-roll for they had me charged with transportation from the train but I expect I mayes well pay it now as ever for I think that the charges will be continued on all payrolls until it is paid. It was the boys that are charged me very much, believing it to be the work of petty officials over flowing with meanness.

I answered the letter I received from Grandma very gladly and hope that she will write again.

I'm glad to acknowledge the receipt of the paper that you send whereby I can tell what's going on among you to some degree. The things you enclosed in your letter come in...
play and I am very grateful for all. I hope this will find you all well. I shall be soon out of this with the boys again. Write often.

Yours sincerely,

A. M.
Camp near Fairfax
April 8th 63

Dear Friends,

I received a very welcome letter dated 27th and having a
fine chance for a little while to reply I gladly took it.
You see that we have moved camp from near Ft. Scott.
We are in sight of Fairfax & H. with our 6th, 6th, and 7th
Cav. near Ly. I am out of the Hospital now with the Co. but
am not doing duty at present. The Capt. is very kind & we
always insisting that I in no need to go to the front yet.
But I am just as well as ever & feel quite as strong.

I hear we have seen & We live just rate. I went out to see
the 4th yesterday. They feel pretty well. drew is singing
Friends your loved in the Bo. He makes a very good effort to
I should think. friends I lost over here little while ago.
the best one of his fingers by accidently shooting it off. We
expect the boys out of Union mills will come in here and join
Camps. I hope that they will. Your need must be alarmed
but what I can see of myself well enough to with the
help of many good friends. When I came in the army I
determined to make very few enemies and as many friends
as I could. And by good grace I believe I have no enemies
here and very many good friends that would help me at any
time. And by being prompt and to one's place the officers
will lend friendly aid to anyone. I'm not in need of any
thing at present as you might imagine but one just as
thankful as though you had sent 10 dils worth. I often
receive these papers you send but haven't yet got that
paper and speech you spoke of in your last but likely will yet.

I'm writing out arow and it begins to rain so I'll
have to stop by wishing this may find you all well.
Write how charley is getting long. Yours Forever.

AL
Dear Sister,

Although I don't see you a little employment in my best antelipse I shall write you a few words. It is a cold bleak day but I'm comfortably housed at present in a large chilly tent only occupied by our quartermaster, usually.

But as the cold wind shone the canopy I think of the many thousands exposed to its chilling piercing blasts. These very moments and for the coming night I'm expecting a good deal tougher duty these days by not being with the boys at Union Mills. But I've offered myself for duty and the Capt don't send me yet. He acts over friendly with me lately something that I always thought as beyond his nature.

The cavalry about have fighting nearly every day. Pa said in his last letter that he hadn't heard of any fight that we had been in these fighting nearly every day, but the paper misinformed him in regard to our going out with the 5th and 6th Cav. Wearing out horse flesh and C. none of our regiment was along.

There is a large army here now 3 brigades of Cav, and a corps of inf't with lots of Artillery. I guess that we will give the ride a hand before long. I began to feel faint rate. I haven't received a letter from Johnny for a week or so but may good luck be with him. I want you to write often. You can't tell how a letter cheers me up. It throws some light in many dark places by carrying our eyes to these dark distant义 new scene.

How does Charley get along? But it's getting late. So good night and may joy to you all.

Yours forever,

A. A.
April 13 '63

Dear Friends,

A good chance for writing you at this (weeks) presents itself, and I send this by although you all owe me.(?) I'm well and comfortable as usual. Our boys have all come in from Union Mills so that we are all together again in one camp. Farley is sick in the hospital at present though he is fast recovering. Eckel, Pickle, and Burr are with me intent new all good tent mates. I have been called in from picket duty and Lopez's brigade has been sent out in our place for 30 days. Then another brigade will come in before our turn again. We are drilling, or as it were, finishing up our military education next week.

Col. Bullen Burnham commands our Brigade and Law, staff the division. I foresee that we shall have the privilege of seeing something besides drill before long. Col. Cally's division started this morning for Fredericksburg. We are all well clothed but we have to pay for them. Our pants each 6 dol. Our jackets over 6 and everything in the same ratio. Some in debt last year over what the government allows a year for clothing $11.40 but some of our Co's. were as high as 30 dol. in debt. The government though owes over 20 dollars on this year and I shant draw any now. The price of some articles such as shirts have lately risen over 50 percent.

Since I wrote the above I have been on review. That is the regiment was reviewed the first of this afternoon. We gave us great credit for discipline &c.

I received an Advertiser & Tribune last evening and am very thankful for the same. Don't you think though that there is rather too much undue denunciation of the Democratic Party contained therein? Three hundred of Democrats in the ranks and when they see the invective applied to the past in general it makes their breast ruffle with hard feeling.

It's not right to condemn a church for the sin of
one of its members now to condemn a whole party for the treason of a part. Traitors don't deserve the name of Democrats, I'm sure, and slang applied to the loyal faction in such columns could be well dispensed with. Don't you think as keen friends, our 1st Irish Bellman has resigned and will soon go home to Dublin. He thinks some of being teaming business being a poor man and broken well down by hardships. And he may by chance come out toward Plymouth occasionally. If he does I have asked him to call on you. You will find him one of the most agreeable story telling Germans you ever saw. Give my respects to all. Except this dreadful fire some letter but my penknife so easy I couldn't slip.

Yours sincerely, A.G.
Fairfax Co.
April 18 '63

Dear Father,

Writing affords me about the best means of such that I know of, so I will occupy myself for a few moments by scribbling to you. Our boys are all well with the exception of Parly. He is in the hospital yet and is in camp. A re-union has been in our natural impress on him toward party firmly. The doctor says that he is better in all ways but I'm in hope that he will come out all right. I'm going to drill in a few moments. We are preparing for a grand review by Gen. Rich. Our Col. Town has promised again. He made a great speech to us yesterday on dress parade, saying that the coming campaign was about to open and many who were present would never greet the return of the coming events. The Col is near gone with the consumption. He says that he knew he was but a short time to live and that he would like to die at the head of his regiment. He is a desperately brave man beyond question and now besides a coward with him, it was said that our regiment was going to be filled up with drafted men and that even some were started for us but we have not seen any of them yet. I'm glad that they would have had time in & C with valianture. There is a good deal of men that would find sent in their presence although 'would be well full I expect.

I received a letter this morning from Jimmy they are all well and comfortable down there. He says that they have enough to do, review and parade &c. etc. And I saw his thanks for receiving an Advertisement and Tribune. I have got a pretty good little house again now. I turned in my house when I was sick and when I returned they gave me the one that 1st. Regiment had. He is not very fast but more pleasant to me an easy driver. I have been rather unlucky in one respect regard that is in getting hard riders. Hard riding horses are not very good for the side.

Yours truly, (R.S.)
Dear Friends,

This Sunday morning, therefore we had no drill to-day and I have nothing to do as I thought that I would have another little talk with you this morning to pass away the time. I was on guard last night here in camp. We expected old Macky might call on us last night but being inside the lines somewhere with his command and our boys being most set all out on scout. But they were afforded of his move while down by Warrenton and started on their return and arrived here about 10 o'clock, swimming the Bull Run each one getting drowned and wet in the operation. I'm glad that I was spared from getting so wet this cold chilly weather for it fare ill to ones health these times. One of our Co. is in the Hospital with the typhoid fever and expected to live. Fairley is getting better, will soon be with us again. Burr is drying his clothes back today. Henry Sears was over to see me the other day. He looks better than he used to as for health. The boys say that Hen. Stoneman is in Warrenton with 20,000 cavalry.

We are ordered out with 5 days rations since I wrote the above on a scout.

Yours Forever

(unsung but written by G. G. Ryder)
May 18th, 1863

My Dear Friends,

Each Sunday Decoration and partly finished a letter to you, but was called off our reach. We went out to theavana around about and returned all right last night. We went about to rest without any accidents to me. Gen. Hunt had command of the division and Col. Town of the Brigade. The gave Col. Town great credit for his skill in handling the men. Last night was the first night in 5 that I've had much rest we have been marching the night as well as the days. We are all doing well.

It's a very fine day and I think that we will be out again soon. It's not hadreceived in fine weather by any means. I received a letter from home the amount before I started the other day. We have just been writing a petition to the Col. to transfer Lieut. Matthews to our Co. Everyone in the Co. signed it. whose name was worth having, and I hope that we will succeed in getting him for the friend that we have now is a perfect doghead (?), although he is good natured and will make a good citizen.

And now may the best blessings of health be with you all.

Yours Forever A.Y.
Dear Frank,

I received a letter from home yesterday written last night and am glad to hear that you are all well. I am well and living well and as usual as usual.

We were ordered to be in readiness to move our relief (?) yesterday and we were ordered to be in ready in case they followed up. The boys are all together again.

I hope that they will soon be free. The Plymouth boys have been very lucky. None have been killed and only two discharged on account of wounds received. They began to get somewhat scared here with the belief that the rebels may drive us in back. I heard they were stockading the streets of Alexandria against an attack on the place.

I of course get the things that were sent by you. They came in the right time and in the right place.

I expect that it is very harrowing times now in old Nebraska. But the illnesses here are almost beyond endurance except when we are sick.

I hope that this will find you all well.

Yours truly,

L. L.
Dear Grandma & all

Your very welcome letter came duly at hand. I was glad to hear that you were so well and that Uncle L. was getting better. This is the last time I the year you know for health though we are very well here. I never was in better health in any life than now. We have got a good dry camping ground for one thing. I don't see how that letter got delayed what I sent you. But that's nothing, I'll write enough more. I like to write it to my chief amusement.

Tell Uncle William that I have got a little Canadian French horse. Not very smart though but good natured and an easy rider. I've just come in from a 5 day scout. We went up in the mountains and caught to rebels and a good many of them officers. They don't like the Yankees very well on their short acquaintance, but maybe that they will like me better when they see more of them. They say that they will whip me yet. But I will have to go on inspection of some more so expect me this time. And now may the fulness of the blessings of health be with you all.

Write again soon.

A. H. Ryder
Dear Mother,

I received your letter of April 17th yesterday, although I was very glad to hear from you. I am speaking today, and to write the way you speak. I know not whether you will receive this, but if you do, I think that you will understand what I mean. I have written a number of letters of traveling explanations, for you have them in the other letter. You have seen that I am planning to make haste & travel in my own country. Please I am planning to make travel in my own country.

For the contrary, I feel better satisfied with myself every day I live. I may hear that my idea needed to be first of all, an education. That was in my mind constantly: whether at work or elsewhere, that was my chief thought, and I remembered every thing else by the main source of that. And I thought in order to know anything, it would have to be classically learned. But I believe now, that if I live, I shall not in the end be the least in regard to that. I'll tell you that one can't profit in this world from observation; and I believe it's remarkable for it facilitates in that line of learning. And, in that, we have plenty of books in the library, which we often in our leisure hours improve by reading.

Your advice relative to me sharing the battle of Yorktown, so although well and sick, seems uncoupling now. It reminds me how little you realize the losses of the army. You can believe very truly that she is entirely at the disposal of "Uncle Sam" and will instantly want to be "up to town", whereas they so longed to send me W. There was no reported dead, but is quite well, I believe. Rutter Forestell is well, and operated, but probably live. He frequently looks over the mountains toward Michigan and thinks of the letter you spoke of with stamps, but right now that letter seems more for they don't grow in this country. The fact, although it is a broad country, yet there's nothing but persons, cities, occasions, & it grows well. Some farmers have a hundred yolks, but they don't want all well and well.

With all, remember all.
Rochester, May 1

Dear Mother,

Please and take care of them - let no one search mainly through them but place them with myatus and let them remain in peace.

All Ryder

To A. A. Mich.

Page of letters from Ryder's

1st child

C.

For care of

Mrs. George Ryder

Newcomb P.O.


P.S.

yours truly,

[Signature]

End of letter
Dear Friends,

I have a few moments to write this morning. I received a letter from home the other day and am glad to hear that you are all well. As you see, I am very well and so are the other boys. As you see, that we have nothing to complain of good clothes as much as we can soldiers could expect. We expect to leave here again in a few days whether we are going on picket or scouting duty, I do not know but that we are. I suppose South was just over here. He is duty and ragged as usual. He is on picket duty out toward Chantilly (?) that is his line, with I think commanding. Our paymaster is in camp as we will be paid before long you see. I shall send a check of 60 or 70 dollars home this time may be not right off till the time gets over for you know that much expeditious might get the better of their honesty if they had a good chance.

Farley wants me to speak to you Par in regard to keeping in store his money. Charley Hopkis has kept his money till now but you know that life is very uncertain in his position. Farley wants his money when he gets out of the service and he would like you to have him and say to him. He will have a fairly good place this time. He has pay for the use of his horse and you know that he has devise ways of making money unacquired by me. He will have probably 300 dollars to save. Burr}$ has pay for the use of his horse almost a hundred dollars.

It's very warm weather these days the fruit all green as a leek. I expect that you are pushing the farming business now days. Joseph says Ol' Land its awful hot. But in about two months he will have something to think of. I haven't heard from Dennis since the battle down there but hope that he came out all right. I see that his corpse wasn't very hardly used in
the fight but no one knows what a day may bring forth, in such times as these.

We are inspected this afternoon by the Inspector Gen.
quarters arms and person are in for it. I am glad of such inspections for it keeps all things right side up in camp.

Lt. Matthew is in the tent talking of old times while I write. Lt. Billings has gone home. I wrote you before. I believe I receive papers occasionally from you that give me some idea of what goes on among you. I also received that letter with 60 cents in. I wish that it had been in postage stamps for it is very difficult here to get them. I shouldn't be surprised to hear that Readon was at home now. He was in C---- or was the last time I heard. I don't think that he will be exchanged in a long time and if I were he I would stay till I was exchanged. Well you will do well if you read it as good by this time hoping that this may find you in the fullness of health.

Yours Forever A.B. Ashley
Dear Mathew,

The day is just wearing away and I thought that before it closed I would send a few words to you hoping that I may find your hands even as well as it leaves mine. For I couldn't be better in regard to health. I take out of the way pains to keep my health, keep my clothes washed up as well as possible.

I returned last night from another 3 days' work. Burr was taken with the ague the first day out and was sent back to camp. Each evening Farley was taken violently ill and had to be returned to hospital in the ambulance. I have just been up to see him. He is still very sick as in great pain.

But I hope for the best for him. If I should lose a great and needed friend in him. I received a letter also from Jenny stating the sorrowing news that I read in the Herald was more also one from Abby to the same effect. I tell you it is hard to lose so good a mate from ones associates few of all places the hardest.

Dear Mathew, I take this chance of sending a check. I believe that it would be less subject to be stolen in a letter to you than to Pa. Send me a letter as soon as you get this so that if possible it is back I could get another. Give my respects to all. I received a letter from Rebecca this morn and also one from Pa of the 12th.

Write often.

Yours Forever,

A.H. Peck
Dear Father

I received your kind letter of the 10th and was glad indeed to hear from you again and to hear that you were all well. You hadn't heard from Johnny but of course you knew that. I received one letter from him containing a full account of the death of Forest Brown and how the bullet went. You speak of the fate against the Potomac army. That's true. Rivalry and jealousy and love of money destroys every attempt at success.

I'll tell you there are as many scalawags that are worth a cent before in money or character and now doing nothing except laying up a good fortune against the time it comes. And a good sight of the J. P. council can be traced to them.

I am glad to hear that Capt. Hoyt has started on his return for the boys will gladly receive him. Also I'm glad to hear that Quarlin has returned to great his friends again. It's reported here that he is exchanged but I should think that if it was so he would be apprised of it in the newspaper.

The was rather fully received by the paper in reference to Richmond being taken. I received the paper you sent with the account of its being taken. It's fine growing weather now I expect that you are improving it by getting in summer crops.

I sent 60 letters home by little a few days ago. I addressed it to you, and likely it had arrived before this time. Let it any way you wish. Farley is better and has returned to our tent. Burr is yet quite unwell. And I am off duty today with an epi of a sore throat. But not very bad however, I hope that you will receive this all well.

Yours

C.H.
Dear Mother,

I received your letter of the 18th this morning and also the one that I wrote on the 17th. I saw that you have received the check all right which I am glad to know. Ruben I expect is exchanged and I hope that he will come through without any trouble for you know that the boys are ready to press any little advantage they may have of a fellow.

Gov. Blair was here a day before yesterday and reviewed us. And yesterday eight men were taken from each Co. as an escort for him. I was among them. We went down to the Potomac Falls and returned here last night about 12 o'clock. We have good roads from the West but it may receive us as bad as the capture of Richmond. I received a paper this morning also. Read a presentation of a pen (?) to Col. Hind and the remarks of the editor.

They say that he is more accustomed to fighting than speaking alto laudable to read as he never said a fight yet only at a distance and I don't believe that he will be apt to. The boys are all well. I am well. I had a sore throat but have got over that.

The fine growing weather here the corn is up what little there is planted. I hope that this will find you all well. I sent a couple of pictorials to Charley so that he will have something to interest him in going to the office (post?)

Write again soon.

Yours ever,

Robert Forward

Act.
Dear Mother,
your kind letter came at hand yesterday. I am glad to hear that you are all well. Farley is well again as that needed trouble his mind. He did write a letter to me very solicitous in his welfare. I answered it of course. But I hardly know how to talk to him. Received a letter from Johnny yesterday stating that they had been on a long scout. I saw it in the paper though before I received his letter. Johnny spoke well of you in his letter that you speak of before the last battle. That's the way every good soldier should feel. We don't hear anything from Saul but hear new songs though we expect him every day. I sent some pictures of my picture to Charley so that he could have something to go to the office for.
I returned yesterday noon from a scout. To coming back we marched over the old Bull Run battle ground. I saw the spot that I suppose Farrar now. The Ferlare received his death wound on. The ground is thickly strewn with human skulls, legs, and full skeletons. Some never were buried and some were dug up by dogs and hogs, etc. We dug some of them for his own use. And as you the world on the people in it. We passed over the spot where we had the teams and saw the graves of our boys.
It's fine growing weather now. I hear that everyone is hurrying up with their work. I seem to have to lay around as much as we do. We're doing nothing of any account. But we will have to put up with it for a while at any rate. We are feeling first rate. But I'll quit by bidding you be all joyous and happy.
Yours, Forever
A.A.
Dear Mother,

I have just returned from a 12 days march and found your kind letter to welcome my sight.

You speak of receiving a likeness from me, I was going suddenly away and Burr sent the likeness for me one key as that accounts for the mystery. We have had the hardest march that we ever had this time. We are under marching orders again but hear that we have got to go to Md to drive the rebels out but I don't know.

I am well as usual and expect to remain so. I have got a good horse. Tell Charley that he is a fine dark bay fellow and better than he looked in the picture although he is getting a sore back from hard marching but he will have to stand it.

Reuben is getting ready for marching and guess that I will have to follow his example. Be good boys for this time. I hope that I will have another letter from you when I return. It is perfectly deadly marching almost suffocate us. Sometimes we don't see our file leader the dust is so dense, may health and cheer be with you all. Yours Forever,

A.G.
Dear Friends,

I've nothing to do this morning so I'll write something to do by writing you a few words. We have been expecting to march again but I guess now we will have a time I think so. Alfred Hobbs says 'marching orders and orders to march on two distinct orders altogether. Some of our troops have just returned from a trip to Winchester. They had little fighting and getting through but no one hurt of sure.

I received a letter from Jimmy dated the 5th. He was then on picket. It's still very warm weather and dusty as ever.

We have just signed our pay roll for two months and expect to get it in a day or two and all are well as usual. Nothing going on but here these days in camp growing or nothing much to remind one that there ever was any war lived round but just like rain. We passed on our march the other day through the little village of White Sulphur Springs. It was verify the finest little place before the war in the world. The proprietor of the buildings said that he used to have 1700 boarders from all over the States.

I hope that this will find you well.

Yours Truly,

A.S. Ryder
Dear Friends,

Having a few moments of spare time I thought that I would improve it by writing a few words. It's pretty busy times now down here. I have been up now two nights in succession in the dust and of course, I don't feel very good natured. Either way, I'm very well. Hooker's army is on the go. Part of it is here, that is the reserve, Scren's corps. Then the 1st corps, now down at Manassas but I don't know if it is. If I can secure I would try and see Janny but it's beyond mortal anything for one to get a pass in such a bustle and confusion almost. But I'm in hopes that I will see him yet. There are active times something is going to tell on the way before long. If the rebels are triumphant in their move it's going hard but if not I think that it will show things to a point and the sooner the better. I'm tired of lingering. If fighting is to the bone better let's know that it's over for weakness to destroy the enemy. I get pay today and enclose a check for $50 dollars. (Rest of letter missing)

A.G.
Dear Mother,

For the first time in 5 days I have a little time to myself. We have been on the march night and day. And one day we went near a hundred miles—that is in 24 hours. Do you see that I am some tired and sleepy for we march every night. Other wise I am just right. The boys are also all well. Now I expect that I passed last night within 3 miles of where Jenny was but I didn't know it till after. The cavalry are having pretty hard times just now and I don't know whether I will be able to get a pass to see them or not. We are under marching orders all the time that we are not on the march. We were sent up to the rear of the rebels while the main force under him, Pleasanton attacked them in front so you see that we didn't get in the fight the other day. We turned into quarter master's tents so we have none any more. It is said that our reg. is going to [MILITARY] but I don't hardly believe it yet. But it's no difference it is all the same everywhere. Our foragers headquarters are in sight of where I am writing but his army are all over the country for 15 miles around. We find in our travels thousands and thousands of their coats and blankets that they throw away.

I hope that this will find you all well. Write oftener if I don't any see of I don't it. Because I can.

Yours Forever
Add
Camp near Frederic, Md
June 25th 63

Dear Friends,

I take this hurried opportunity of sending you a few lines. I am well. I have received no letter from home lately. We crossed the river on the 21st and I have had the great privilege of seeing & visiting with Jonny twice. I left him this morning at Middletown that is I saw him and Alfred H. this last night. Jonny is well so is Alfred. Jonny looks poor but says he is very healthy. They expect that we will have a fight in a few days at all events.

I don't know whether you will receive this or not. Everything here is confusion. We seem to be advancing in the rear of the retreating army and the results may shortly follow. The two other Brigades of our Division have taken up our line of march and we will follow soon, so excuse me this time. Remember me to all. The boys are all well.

Yours Forever,

A. H. R.
July 8th 1863
Gettysburg, Adams Co.
Pennsylvania

Dear Brother,

I have desired a friend to say to you I have been in the last fight we have had; it was in and around Gettysburg near the Penn and Maryland line. I was wounded in the side by a ball. I am not without hope, the Lord willlith all things for good. I am in a hospital in Gettysburg. I hope you are all well and happy from your affectionate son.

Alfred E. Rigler.

Brother John is here also in one of the hospitals but not badly wounded.

(On back of letter)

Direct

Gettysburg

Adams County

Pennsylvania

William C. Way, Chaplain 24
Chaplain 25th Mich Vol

Gettysburg, Adams Co.

Penn
Mr. George Ryder

Dear Sir: — Perhaps from other sources you have
heard of your son — both of whom are in the service of their
country, and both of whom I fear have been sacrificed upon its
altar. John went with me in the 2nd and was killed on the
1st day of July near this place, and I buried him with my own
hands. In my labor among the wounded at this place in the
various hospitals, I found Alfred of the 1st Cavalry, who was
wounded, I believe on the 3rd or 4th, now lying in a dan-
gerous condition in a hospital at the Union School House. I
conversed with him for a long time. He does not expect to live. He
is wounded through the left lung, and it is with some difficulty
that he breathes, and has lost the use of his limbs almost
entirely. I asked him if he had any word to send home. He gave me
his testament to give his mother. He has carried it with him through
the war so far. He also said, "Tell father to "do well by my
brother, and when you look on him, remember me." In regard
to dying he seems to be quite resigned, and said "The Lord
knows all things well." He seemed to realize the need of a faith in
Christ evidenced by works, and is trying to prepare for the worst.
He wants to meet John in heaven where he has gone exchanging his
battling world for a better home above. He told me to tell you
that William Farley had been a friend to him and had supplied
him with some money. I deeply sympathize with you in your
sorrow. I shall do all I can for Alfred while I remain here, which
may be a week yet and if the lieve will see him decently buried.
I am going soon to see him again and will convey him some lemons.

You can address me here perhaps for two weeks. Alfred said he hoped to meet you all in heaven.

I am Respectfully Yours,

William C. Way
Chaplain 21st Mach. Vol's

If Mr. West goes home soon I will send the testament by him.
Gettysburg, July 12th, 1863

Mr. Lee Ryder,

Your place I am happy to inform you that notwithstanding the expressed opinions of several surgeons to the contrary, your son Alfred is decidedly better today. I saw him this afternoon, and learned more of the character of his wound, and find that he is not in much danger from his wound as from an injury of his spine occasioned from a fall from his horse. Today he is getting more feeling in his legs than heretofore and Dr. Johnson the Medical Director has much more hope of him.

The news quite cheerful and his good care, and told me that he knows nothing that he wanted the way; not furnished except as mother care. I am very much encouraged myself and felt anxious that you should know first how he was. I shall see him often and will do for him as I would for my own brother.

I buried John and knew marked his grave as that I shall know it, and will have it marked so that anyone one else can find it.

Will you say to Mr. Slocum that his son was all right and with the regiment after the battle. There has been heavy firing heard in the direction of Goetztown to day. We have received from the front. Rebels are constantly passing through town on their way to Washington. Now about 1,500 in two hospitals about four miles from here. The Lord be with you all.

William C. Way
Mrs. George Cilley

Dear Madame -

Your husband is here and in attendance upon Alfred who is very low, and from all appearances is sinking fast. I saw that his groans were very loud, Mr. Cilley spoke about writing and I know that he did not want to leave Alfred and I volunteered to write for him, which he said he would be glad to have me do. I happened to be at the case when he came in town and recognized him as he was just about passing by me, and having seen Alfred several times, I turned back and went with him. It seems so strange that he had not received my letter to him, written long enough ago to have reached home before his left, in which I had told him of the death of John and the condition of Alfred. Upon hearing the facts of the case, his cup seemed to be full - and very bitter. I am glad that he came and found Alfred alive. I presume he will remain with him until he improves. I shall be here until he shall have heard of his life. For his country's regeneration.

Alfred seems to be as patient, so calm, so considerate, that my heart is all enlisted for him. I have conversed with him several times upon the subject of the future. You know what his opinion has been, but I think he looks at things in a different light now, and is far prepared to go on top. I shall see him again this evening. I presume Mr. Cilley will write you himself soon and say to what of course I cannot say. You have probably received my letter before this. If Mr. Cilley is able to write I will again tomorrow.

May God, who "tempered the wind to the straw lamb" give you grace to bear your double load of grief. Ah, how upon him in this your darkest hour and bow him and say "my grace is sufficient for thee." God bless you, my dear friends and give you the assurance of hope that one day you will see John and Alfred again, John is in heaven - now joining in the praise of the Church Triumphant - praise God for it. I think Alfred will join him soon.

I am sincere in sympathy in your affliction.

William A. Way, Chaplain
Mr. George Rider
New York

I took three bodies to day and found the boxes by laying in the ground as long all sturcted so that I was compelled to have two new zinc coffins made and also rough boxes which just cost me coffins boxes taken up and delivering at the depot $32.00 thirty two dollars which would leave just $20.00 owing me which you will please send me by Express for my trouble. I make no bill only what it cost me. I should have sent the bodies to morrow morning but I had to get these coffins made which will prevent me from sending before Thursday morning as they will start on the 19th. from here.

I have one request to make and that is if you have the picture send me one of each of them their small race photographs. I have sent forty to different parts and would like to have these pictures I have now already the most of them.

Yours Respectfully
John D. Frey

P.S. I was compelled to do as I did as the Express agent would not Express the bodies without it.
Gettysburg, Dec 3, 1863

Mr. Bider

Dear Sir,

I wrote to you some time ago so when I sent you the box of your goods that the box was all closed open and that I could not be sent without having zinc and tight coffins and rough boxes and sides. My bill which I told you in my first letter was for Rough boxes and taking up and delivery at the depot which was just what it cost me but when I had the boxes taken up I found that there would have to be new ones out and inside which I got which makes the bill just twenty dollars more which if you have not sent yet you will please send soon as convenient as the person I had employed to furnish the coffins and rough boxes is going to move to Ohio and wants his money and I will be obliged to advance it for him, which I will do as I hope you have received the boxes in good order.

Yours Respectfully

John Y. Frey

Gettysburg
Pa.
Gettysburg Dec. 3rd (1862) 56

Mr. Alex Ryder

Your 7th the 36th was received today; Papa being recently engaged her directed me to answer it. You stated your son Albert and John had been buried in the German Lutheran graveyard and according to your request went to the graveyard and found the graves marked, so if you wish their bodies sent home at all you had better have them sent now, as they have commenced to remove all who fell at Gettysburg to the "National Cemetery," which is a piece of land the state have bought in which to bury their dead and the bodies. Your sons might be taken up before Papa would know of it and be buried in the N. Cemetery after being buried in these they cannot be removed out of it. The coffins that they are in now will answer only if they will have to be enclosed in rough boxes for which, and the taking up and delivering at the depot Papa will charge you 50 and the 5th passage to DC will be 40 to 50 a piece, they cannot be removed "freight" unless there is some one present to accompany them, and it is very uncertain of their arrival if there is no friend accompanying them.

Please answer by return mail if it is possible.

With great respect,

John F. Frey
Gettysburg
Gettysburg, January 12, 1864

Mr. George Riddle
Dear Sir,

I have received your letter by express with the photograph of your son which I am much obliged. I will present you with a map of the battlefield at Gettysburg which I am selling. This map will also send to you to any part of the country if any of your friends should want it. Please send me an address for the map to you. The map at the top is the 1st map drawn by Rebel Maj. Gen. Trimble while a prisoner in our Seminary and the center is our county map giving the names of all the houses on the battlefield and hospitals and the number of the Rebels given in their own account. I hope you will receive me few next writing sooner than now but remain,

Yours most respectfully,

John S.

[Signature]
4th detach Co. C  Camp Chase Sep 17, 1862


Albert Franke (?)
Sergant (sic)
Accr Earl paroled prisoner
4th detach Co. C.  Camp Chey. Sep 17. 1862

Whereas, Private Alfred G. Ryder, member of Co. H
1st Mich. Cav. regiment, taken prisoners at Bull
Ran. August 29th '62 and paroled at Danville
by Brig. Gen. Stewart of the Confederate Forces on
the 2nd of Sep. I witness to the truth and certify
with my name.

Albert Franke (?)

Sergeant (in)

Acc. Carl, paroled prisoner