

Civil War Letters of Henry Albert Potter

[image—soldier holding a flag]

Ovid, August 7, 1862

Dear friend Albert

Yours came to hand yesterday

I am glad you enlisted when you did, it is all excitement here. Every man that is between 18 and 45 years of age is sick or going to be, or lost a finger, or a thumb, or a great toe. Any thing for an excuse.

One man has been down to get the Town Board together to appoint him Constable so he could stay at home. Another man has offered \$200.00 for a substitute if he is drafted. Another man came 6 miles to tell us that he expected to have the palsy before another winter. It is really laughable.

This morning McIntyre, Knowles, Lounsbury, and Smith have gone. Fishbeck and a number of others are still coming. Charles Herdon has enlisted and a good many more from Dupeis [sic] will enlist in a few days. The first call for 300,000, our quota will be filled this week. Next comes 300,000 more 9 months min. I think we are beginning to awake to the subject. It is time we have something to do to crush this rebellion and the sooner we got at it the better by far to do what we have to do. I read a letter from brother John yesterday. They are having warm times there.

Rubi wrote yesterday that he started with his regiment in two weeks. I do not know what regiment it is. Gustav is in 2nd with Barber. He is trying to get a discharge.

Rubi thinks she will come here this fall. It is lonely enough here. Take good care of yourself. We will try to keep everything straight here.

I should not be surprised if George Shepard, Binck and Button enlisted.

I will not write anymore this time all well

Yours respectfully

W H Faxon

Camp Minty

August 14th 1862

Dear John and Mary

We are having a rainy day in camp, nothing much to do, a line to you will probably be acceptable. We have been in camp now since last Tuesday. I have never felt better in my life than I do now. None of us have been sick except Frank Aldrich and Norman Smith and they are better. There are now five companies on the ground. They are full, I believe. Captain Wells, McFarlan, Fulton, Robbins and Shepard. Captain Horace Gray was our captain when we came here and Shepard 1st LT. but Gray has a major's Commission now which makes Shepard our Captain. Captain Carter 1st LT, Hudson 2nd LT (brevet LT not appointed yet) I have the appointment as First Orderly Sergeant, which will be permanent, I think if I give satisfaction. John Gilbert is 2nd Duty Sergeant. I have been left in command nearly all the time. Shepard and Carter are down town busy making out the paper for mustering, and the bounty money. I keep the roll book. We have two roll calls, one at 5 o'clock am and at Retreat or Sundown. When we get organized we will have three. I give all passes from the camp, detail men for guard-mounting, march them to the guard house and deliver them to the Sergeant of the Guard and have to look after things in general. It keeps me busy all the time, but I don't mind that if I can only keep well. We have passed examination. All of the Ovid boys were all right. We expect to be mustered in this week, but there is no certainty. I hope we will get to drilling soon. Colonel Minty was in camp yesterday. He is a pleasant looking man and well-liked by everyone. Our camp is 1 3/4 miles from the city, up the river opposite the barracks, and adjoining the cemetery on the west. A very pleasant situation – have a view of the city, we can see the boats pass up and down the river. Elmwood Cemetery is a splendid place, there are monuments there that cost from \$1000.00 to \$3000.00. I should judge, some are 25 ft. high. The grounds are kept in good order. Gravelled [sic] roads, flower-beds and 2 fountains which are playing all the time. At the entrance there is a green-house with an artificial rock, flight of stairs and a grotto with vines clambering round it. I can't tell you anything about it only it is very nice. Six Sibley tents are allowed to each Company, besides a square tent for the Capt [sic] and Lt each. Not a drop of rain can get in, we have plenty of hay and have drawn our blankets so we can sleep in the hay. I have never slept better than since I have been here, the tents are pitched in the streets, we are on Clinton Avenue, Ovid Block no. 3. I have bought me a cap downtown. The caps allowed us are poor things. We are credited with all the articles which we do not draw, at a government price. We have not got our

uniforms yet, all of us. 25 have been issued to us, we let those have them that needed them worst. I shall not be home until I get my uniform and bounty money, and get mustered in, can't tell how soon that may be, probably two weeks yet. We are allowed a plate, cup, knife, fork, and spoon. I raised a dollar yesterday, sent out and got some lumber and now we have tables to eat on, and we have plenty to eat, too – bread, pork or bacon, fresh beef twice a week, beans, rice, onions, beets, cabbage, coffee, tea, sugar. No need of grumbling on that score. There was a fire about 1/2 mile from camp day before yesterday, a saw-mill burned – it made an awful blaze. Estimated loss \$70,000.00 – thousands of feet lumber were burnt – riches take wings and fly away. Yesterday there were 3 fires brought out in the city, but the engines were on hand and put them out, -- no doubt the work of an incendiary.

Your letters just came to hand. I was glad to hear from you that you are well. I won't write any more now. Give my love to all, show this to Father if you see him. Mary your needles and pins have come in good play – thank you. There are 98 in company now. Write soon.

Albert

Friday Oct 17, 1862

Camp near Crab Orchard

Dear Father, Mother, and Sister

We are in camp near a village named Crab Orchard. We received marching orders last Friday the 10th at Jeffersonville Indiana. Started from there about noon. Crossed the Ohio for the first time into KY. Only part of the regiment was ready, six companies. Louisville is a handsome city, larger than Detroit. It was rather disagreeable marching the roads were very dusty. The roads in KY are excellent. We took the road for Bardstown. Put up in the woods the first night.

I have kept a kind of a memorandum every day since weve [sic] commenced this march. I will copy a day or two.

Friday Oct 11th

The clouds of threatening rain gave us a little shower last night, just enough to lay the dust. Passed quite a number of Sesesh [sic] prisoners that have been paroled. They are as dirty ragged set as ever I seen. Their clothes are just the color of the ground. They

look half starved. I talked with one who was taken prisoner at the battle of Perryville. He belonged to the 25th Louisiana. Was under Gen Bragg. He said Bragg was not liked by his men and ought to have been in h long ago. Said he lied to them so often that they did not believe anything he said. Said they were 3/4 Union men in the county where he lived but they were impressed in the Service against their will. I asked him if he thought if they would come out ahead. He said they were bound to keep trying. He thought they were [in the] right. I asked if he would fight against us after he was exchanged. He said he knew they would call for him but "he wouldn't be there." He said the majority of the men were tired of the war and would be glad to come back in the Union again but the leaders were not.

Reached Bardstown about 3 pm, quite a pretty village. Passed 4 hearses on their way to Louisville from the battlefield of Perryville. 3 Generals and a colonel were in them. Major Genl Jackson, Genl Tesril [sic] and Col Hewitt were all the names I learned rather gloomy picture. The road is filled with army wagons and trains of 100 to 200 wagons are constantly passing to and fro [sic]. Put up about 5 miles beyond Bardstown.

Sunday Oct 12th

Passed the battle field at Perryville. Saw a number of dead Sesesh [sic] on the field. One lay close by the side of the road. He was shot through the breast his pockets inside out, boots stolen. He had lain there since Wednesday. About a dozen lay upon the hillside. We were told that about 2500 were piled up in a valley out of sight and that the rebels burned 30 or 40 the night after the battle. They take every means to conceal the real number they lose in a battle. This is a hard picture, a war picture, such as I had read about but never seen before. My thoughts were rather serious. Put up at Danville. Carter, Shepard and myself went in a Union man's house and got an excellent supper. He was well informed and flowing over with hospitality. Two little wenches with white aprons stood behind their mistress to pass the coffee and hoe cakes.

Monday Oct 13th

Nothing of importance today. We march by fours. I am chief of the third platoon. Our horses are getting tired out. My horses [sic] back is quite sore and I don't feel first rate myself.

Tuesday Oct 14th

The bugle sounded at one o'clock this morning and we were soon in our saddles on the road after the rebels. They have been retreating since the battle. The last of them passed thro [sic] Danville on Saturday, I believe. We passed the outposts of our forces

about 3 o'clock, a little after daylight our skirmishers drove in their pickets (a regiment of Ohio cavalry ahead of us) Major Parks called in quite a heavy skirmish. We formed under the brow of a hill expecting every minute to hear a cry of charge, but did not. They sent some shell among us but none hit. One shell passed about 20 ft over our heads and plowed a hole in a bank in the rear of us. Luckily it did not explode or perhaps I would not have been writing this. A rebel Lieutenant Colonel was shot instantly by one of the Ohio boys. I don't know whether he is alive yet or not, only one of our men was wounded, an Ohio boy, shot in the arm.

Bragg is trying his biggest to get out of the State. That is now his object. I don't think we will have a battle until we get to Cumberland Gap which is in the South East corner of KY. That is where he is marching for now. The skirmish we had Tuesday morning was only with the rear guard of his Army. He is said to have over 100 thousand men. I think perhaps he has. Buell's army is 150,000 strong divided into three divisions of 50,000 apiece. I understand Wallace's Division is at Cumberland Gap waiting for re-enforcements whether so or not I cannot tell. I hope it will prove true. If we can get there before Bragg I think he will be taken with his army, if he succeeds in getting thro [sic] into Tennessee or Virginia he will make a great deal of trouble yet. The Federals have been chasing him thro [sic] Mississippi, Tennessee, up to Louisville and so far back, and have not caught him yet. He is like the paddy's flea.

Suppose we talk about something else. I have seen soldiers, cavalry, infantry until it is no sight at all. We soon get used to these things and to hardships. I've have had hard crackers and bacon since we commenced marching, and that is all pretty hard fare, I have felt well enough until the last two days. Yesterday morning I was quite sick. It was a bilious turn just the same as I have at home. The hard food and marching was a little too much for me. I did not ride my horse, yesterday but laid in an ambulance. Dr Bacon, our assistant surgeon is a very fine man. I feel a great deal better today. I am taking Swiss Powders and quinine. Today we are lying still waiting for the rest of the regiment to come up and I am very glad. I shall keep still a day or two and then I will be all right again. You know I promised to write if I was sick. I might very easily have kept this to myself.

John Gilbert had the ague last night, he is writing home today. We are writing under an Oak tree on a hill. Neerman, Lounsbury, and Nestrin Knowles are also writing. Those likenesses that I wrote about sending home have not come. The trunk was not sent. I will get them back again when our baggage wagons come. You must have hard work to read this letter. I did not think of writing much when I commenced but kept writing just as thoughts came to me. See what a mixed up mess it is. And I have half done yet. Colonel Minty sent out Lieutenant Carter and 20 men foraging last night. They brought us in 8

sheep this morning. The boys drove about 20 pigs a yard and delivered them to the commissary. 3 men have passed me while I have been writing one had 4 turkeys, one had 2 turkeys and 3 chickens, the other had some geese. If we stay here a day or two eggs will be very high here next season I fear.

Colonel Minty asked very innocently of the cook this morning where he got that mutton. Cook said he didn't know. Twas [sic] brought there last night. The colonel thought it was very singular. The colonel allows the men to get supplies. He keeps an account of it so that if necessary he can sign receipts for the same, if they belong to a union man and he makes complaint. He get a paper to show the facts and the government pays him for all that is taken. If it belongs to a rebel he will probably not make a complaint, for we should nab him. The colonel knows that if he did not allow the men to get forage in this way, that they would get it on their own hook and he takes a wise course.

The country through here is very hilly. All that we have marched over is rolling. Some places very rocky just fit for cattle and sheep and nothing else. Around Perryville the country is all laid waste. Fences torn down. Cornfields destroyed. I never saw so desolate a place. Every house for 2 miles is a Hospital. I tried to get supper at Perryville. Could not get a mouthful. The rebels had impressed their flour mills. They could not get meal nor flour only as they pounded it up as used N[illegible] F[illegible] the water is poor, so many thousand passing through dries up the springs. All we get is muddy and brackish. I have wished many times I could have one good sip out of the spring at home. I have not got a word from you since I left Detroit. I have written this makes three times. Mail is very irregular. Direct to Company B. Fourth Michigan Cavalry near Louisville KY and I guess it will come through. Send the Tribune or Free Press every chance you get. A paper here is a rarity. You must excuse me to Wm Shepard, Elder Bassett and George Binck. I promised to write to them but I do not have time nor place. If we ever get settled in quarters then I will have more time. But now I can't. Give my love to Nancy, Faxon and Family. I will write them as soon as I can. To uncle Em and aunt Phebe, John and Mary. Let George Binck read this if he can and Mary Longor. Give my love to all of Mrs [sic] Longor's folks, Mrs [sic] Gilbert, Shepard, Winfields, and everybody. I would like to and hope to see you all again.

Albert

In the Hospital, New Market

Friday Oct 21, 1862

Dear Henry and Debbie

I will write you a line this morning. As I have time. I have been in the hospital 3 or 4 days with the yellow jaundice. No wise humid away from Louisville and kept on a forced march for 5 days, it was rather much for me. It is nothing but biliousness humor. I am about well now, Dr Bacon of Dewitt, Clinton county is the Asst Surgeon and a very fine man. We are in a Presbyterian Church in New Market, a dirty little village among the hills. There is about 30 sick now, none dangerous, a little rest will cure them. Our baggage wagons are camped about a mile ahead of us across the river on a rich old Sesesh [sic] farm. The Regiment is away after Morgan on a three days scout.

I am sitting in the pulpit with pen and ink in the desk where the word of truth has been preached from Sabbath to Sabbath, where prayers have been offered by pious hearts in time past. When Peace reigned, but now, what a contrast! War makes everything different, a change for the worse, it appears.

There was a Seseh [sic] paroled prisoner buried here this morning. A regiment of Cavalry was encamped around the Church. There was no acrimony whatever, but few even looked for a moment, he belonged to the 6th Arkansas, a poor deceived following of Jeff. There is a rumor in camp that an armistice of sixty days was being reached upon between the North and South, that a settlement may be brought, but I don't believe it. We know nothing for certain never. Rumors of this and that are flying at all times. [illegible] send a paper now and then it is a great rarity to see a Michigan Paper or read the news. You may direct to Company B 4th Michigan Cavalry via Louisville, Kentucky and I guess it will find its way, Headqs [sic] follow us up.

On our march here we passed the battlefield at Perryville. The battle was fought on Wednesday, we reached there Saturday. What a desolation it was Sesesh [sic] bodies were still lying on the field. Some close by the side of the road, dead horses, dead mules, broken wagons were scattered around. Our dead were all buried. 2500 Sesesh [sic] dead were where they lay in a valley yet unburied, they were hurried away without giving them time to bury those killed. One passed 4 hearses on their way back, 3 generals and 1 colonel. That was a picture. I had read about it but never seen it before. It was horrible.

I can write everything and and [sic] I can't write anything this morning excuse me. I shall leave the hospital tomorrow, I think. John Gilbert has been some sick. Write as often as you can for [illegible] get much time. Give my love to all. I hope to see you again, from Albert

I understand that our quarters for the winter will be Nashville, but I doubt if we'll be given quarters at all. Bragg and Morgan are both running as fast as they can. Doubtful if they will risk another battle in Ky and T. [note written in margin]

I have not received one word from home since I left Detroit. Write Henry and tell everyone to write. [note in margin]

New Market KY

Monday Oct 27, 1862

Dear Father

I had a good chance to get a letter in the office today. So I thought I would write a line. I am in the Hospital. I have had the jaundice pretty bad and then caught some cold. My throat has been very sore. I have put Oil of Hemlock on it so it is much better. I am going to get some Wild Cherry Bark and liquor, make some bitters. I guess that will straighten me. I have taken Calomel Rhubarb for the jaundice. Dr Bacon of Dewitt is the assistant Surgeon. A very nice man. We are in a Presbyterian Church. There is sixty sick here. Two or three are dangerous. The regiment is about 30 miles ahead at Munfordville.

We have had about 3 inches of snow here. I suppose up home you have had a foot, perhaps. It is a very pleasant day. The dust which has been very unpleasant has simmered down. They have had no rain here for three months of any account. It is a hard place to get postage stamps here. I wish you would send me a dozen or so when you write. I hope to be with the regiment when we get our Pay for I have not a cent. John Gilbert has been some sick. Bilious as well as myself, but he is with the regiment. I will have to stop. My love to you all and to my friends, Mrs [sic] Gilbert especially.

Write to your [illegible] love Albert

Write direct

Co B

4th Michigan Cavalry

Via Louisville, KY

Saturday November 15th 1862

In Camp near Nashville, Tenn

My dear Sister

Having time this afternoon, I thought I would write a line home and tell you of my whereabouts. I am feeling nearly as well as every only I tire out very easy. I have a good appetite. Have just been eating dinner. Had some fried shoulder, sweet potatoes, cold beans, bread and coffee. So you can see we don't live so bad here. It is only when we are on a scout or march that we have hard feed. Then we take it as we can catch it. John G. is in the hospital at Mitchellsville [sic]. He is pretty sick, or was when I was obliged to leave him. He is not in with the rest of the sick but has a good bed in a house near the Station. As he was rather weak, the surgeon did not move him from the place I got for him and I was very glad of it. I have not heard from him since I left and am some uneasy, but hope for the best. Levi Fishbeck is with him he will see to him perhaps as well as I would. I wanted to stay but the surgeon would not consent so I had to come on here. We are camped just across the river from Nashville, the capital of Tenn. I have been through the city, it is a pretty place, about half as large as Detroit. The State House is a splendid building built upon a hill. You can see it 3 or 4 miles from the city in any direction. The country around here is very fine. Nice farm houses with their little cabins in the rear for the darkies. They have no barns in this country of any account. A great many houses have been burnt along the road. The chimnies [sic] stand as a bleak monument of the desolation of war. I said we were camped, I only meant a detachment of the regiment under Lt Col. Dickinson. The regiment is not here nor has it been. They are scouting around after Morgan. We expect them in now every day. There was fighting night before last about 17 miles from here. We think the 4th was engaged, but have heard no particulars. Lieut [sic] J. M. Carter is sick. He is at home near here. He thinks of coming home to get well. Our captain, Frank Mix is now with the company. They boys all like him first rate. I have not seen him yet.

We gave not drawn our pay yet and I doubt if we get any until the 1st of January. I am clean gone done, no done gone, that's it. I am dead broke. I guess I can stand it though if I don't have it I won't spend it. There is due me now about \$40. Mother, I intend to pay you all up as soon as Uncle Sam pays me. Please send down your acct and I will fork over. There must be a right smart of it by this time, I reckon. When you write again tell me about the farming how much wheat was sown and where? Did they sow Meditteranean [sic] on Rhodes farm? How many potatoes was there? And how much corn? Are the horses fat? And all these little things. They are all very interesting to me.

You ought to see me do my washing. I washed out a couple pairs of socks yesterday and 4 pocket handkerchiefs today. I rubbed them out in soap suds until I thought they were clean. I then rubbed soap on them after wringing them out and boiled them up in the cooking kettle and then rinsed them out in cold water, was that right? And to iron them rubbed them out with my hands. I am very precise about this for I thought perhaps I might make a mistake. I guess it was all right but the cooking kettle.

I send you a Confederate note. It is not the genuine but said to be a facsimile. I sent John a paper printed by the rebel Morgan. It is quite a curiosity.

When we came into Nashville the other day I had no horse. I had been riding in the ambulance but when we got in the City I got out and walked and by that means did not keep up with the rest. A gentleman came along in a carriage and I asked him if I might ride a piece with him. He said yes! With the greatest of pleasure! I got in and finding that he lived near where the regt [sic] was going thought I would ride all the way. He was a strong Union man. Was a member of the legislature when Tennessee seceded. His name is Trimball. He invited me to stay to dinner. I thanked him very much and excused myself, but he urged me so that I went in. And oh! You ought to have seen the style. I hardly dared to step on the carpets with my dirty boots. He introduced me to his wife, son and daughter and Mr. Richards an aid of Gen Negley's was also there to dinner. For dinner we had three courses Soup first, made of mixed vegetables such as we have in the Army. It is a mixture of cabbage, carrot, tomatoes, peppers, beets and other things all cut up fine. And pressed into cakes about an inch thick and preserved in some way. The 2nd course was a pigs-head, souse, snout and all and sweet potatoes. The 3rd was fried beef, wheat and corn bread all the way through. Cold water to drink in silver cups. After dinner I thanked them very much and took my leave. A friend of mine was to the city to see his cousin as it happened his cousin lived in the next house a large two story brick (Trimball's house stands upon a hill, a splendid house and so richly furnished. So much silver plate etc [sic]) and Mrs [sic] Trimball happened in. Had an introduction and in the course of the conversation found out that I was in the same company and sent over a very polite invitation to take tea. Isn't that beautiful! For lo! And behold come to find out Mr [sic] Trimball is Attorney General of the State. I think I shall go over and marry in the family wouldn't you?

Amelia, I have written this little adventure just because I had not much else to write and to show you how the richest families are obliged to live here. On acct of the war sugar is 75 cnts [sic] a pound, brown. Coffee \$1.00 and hard to get at that. Milk and eggs are out of the question. Apples are 10 cnts [sic] a piece, but we bought some a 2 for 5 cnts [sic] in camp today. Gen Rosecrans' headquarters is in Nashville. I have not seen him yet. The mail from the North is uncertain. I don't know when you will get this. I am sorry you

have to stay at home when you might be at school but perhaps it is all for the best. By reading and thinking you may educate yourself to a certain degree but I think you might perhaps get a school next summer! You might set your mark there and try! Give my love to Emma and Anna and to Mrs [sic] Binck and all my friends. I am going to write to Mr [sic] Lancers the next I think. You may send a stamp or two in your next letter as they come very handy. It is about nine o'clock. I am sergeant of the guard to night [sic] and will have to report myself. My love to you all. Direct to Nashville Tenn,

From your brother, Albert

[written around the edge of the letter:]

You must excuse scarcity of news this letter is all stuff. Mr [sic] Gilbert's folks must not worry about John as he has good care I think he will soon be with us again hope so at least. The weather here is very fine. We have had a fine shower lately, just enough to lay the dust. The days are about such as we have home in Sept. The nights are cool. How is the weather up in Mich. [missing text]

In Camp at Nashville

Dec 2nd 1862

Dear Mother

I received your paper today and Amelia's letter last night and have received all of the letters, stamps and papers you have sent me, I think. I am feeling first rate again. We just got in from a three day's scout yesterday. We went out on the turnpike to Lebanon after the rebels but they skedaddled before we got there. Sunday afternoon we came up to their pickets and had a light skirmish, no one hurt. Companies B and A were detailed as picket guard that night and it rained. Oh dear! We were not allowed any fires but had to stand it. I was wet as a drowned rat but did not catch a cold. So you see I am tough. You are foolish to think I am going to get shot or any such thing. Its [sic] time enough to think about such things when you have to. Mustn't look on that side. Well we captured some fine chickens on our scout and consequences was we had an excellent pot pie today for dinner and Lew Wilcox is baking some wheat pan cakes for supper. I must stop until I eat about a dozen or so.

Well those cakes were not quite as good as yours for they were a little heavy being about inch thick. But they tasted very good with sugar. Better than hard cracks.

I heard from John yesterday he is getting quite smart. Able to walk some. By being careful he will soon be with us again. Alf Shepard wanted me to say for him that he was around. Billy Egleston has had a bad earache a day or two. He is well other ways. I don't want you to send me any more money. I was only telling how hard up I was. If rumors are true we will get our pay this week and then I can send you some. Give my love to George Rhodes. Tell him to improve his time at study, he will never regret it. Tell him to make my respects also to Mr [sic] Rhodes family. If Josiah lets old Charley go you must get a mate to Skip, don't go with out a team. There's no use of it. Better get another mare to raise a span of colts for me. We take all the good horses we find on our scouts. It seems rather hard but it is right nearly every family in the country about here to Lebanon are rebels. Company B has not been in any battles yet and is not likely to be very soon. You must recollect there are hundreds of regiments and thousands of companies in this great army. We may possibly serve our three years out and not see a large engagement.

I have sent the likeness. You may send it to Aunt Nep when you get thro' [sic]. I will send another one home when I get a chance. I have no news to tell you this time. Tell GJB I would like to hear from him. I wrote Neiman Lancer a week ago. Write often as you can. I do not always have time to write. I always write every chance.

My love to all
Albert

[written around the margin] I recd [sic] Mr [sic] Gilbert's letter. My love to them all.

Camp Stanley
Near Murfreesboro
January 8th 1863

Dear Father, Mother, and Amelia

I am not dead, wounded, or sick, but, on the contrary, never felt better in my life. Have since I left Nashville. I can say that I have had an active part in as hard a battle as has been fought during the war.

A general move of the army was made on the 26th Ult. The fighting commenced about 10 miles from Nashville the same day and lasted nine days. When the rebels were driven from Murfreesboro. The 4th Michigan has won at least a name and place. On

Saturday 27th four companies under Captain Mix were sent out and came upon a strong body of rebel cavalry. There was about 150 of us we charged upon 200 of them, drove them about 2 miles shot 5 of their men, a no. of horses and took 8 prisoners. One of our corporals was wounded in the side.

January 9th

We have been busy today arranging our tent. We have got a sesesh [sic] stove, Table and Bunk, taken from one of their camps.

Our Company was engaged in Wednesday's fight. We made two charges upon rebel cavalry. Capt [sic] Mix had a splendid horse shot from under him, our quartermaster Sgt was wounded. I have had 3 or 4 narrow escapes, have been where the cannon ball and shells were flying close around me and I must be lucky. I did not think of getting killed at all but I expected to be wounded. We entered Murfreesboro on Monday. The rebs left Saturday night. Our right was driven back on Wednesday with great slaughter on both sides. I passed over the field Monday. The rebels had carried nearly all of their dead, ours were lying in rows as they had been carried to bury. Horses dead and guns and artillery filled the ground. I can't tell you anything of the sight.

The rebels captured and burnt a part of our train and among the rest our company wagon were stolen excepting what I had on. The likenesses and the books are gone. The captains and lieutenants [sic] clothes were all gone. Such as the fortunes of war. John Gilbert was not with us thru the fighting was not very tough and had a [illegible] horse he staid [sic] with the train. Charley Smith is without doubt dead, he died with the black jaundice as we were informed. Herman Lounsbury is very sick. I am afraid he will have a hard time of it if he ever gets well. Charley Starkweather is isolated with a lame back. Alf Shepard and Norman Smith are well. We shall be very busy for a week now making out our payrolls have a good deal of writing. L J Southworth is writing home he is well. I am liking soldiering as well as ever, if only I keep well and I never felt better –

Albert

[written in the margins:]

Give my love to all, and write soon, the news I have not heard from you since I left Nashville.

I sent a sesesh [sic] envelope and some cottin [sic] seed, plant them they will grow. I would have written before but have had no chance to send.

Direct to Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

Near Franklin

Sunday Mar 8th 1863

Dear Father

I have been thinking of home today. Of the pleasure we could all have if I were there with you all a short time. It is a warm balmy spring day. The birds are singing. The trees are budding and Nature is working quiet and harmonious [sic] amid the bustle of the camp. We had a heavy thunder shower last night. But I slept soundly in my little storm tent as dry as a pig. I still keep tough and hearty. I stand camp life and its hardships much better than I thought I would when I enlisted. I believe I feel better than if at home teaching. If I live to come home again you will see me a tough man. This the fifth day out. We started from Murfreesboro last Wednesday morning with a brigade of infantry. We are in the 1st Cavalry Brigade under Col Minty of this regiment but acting brigadier. He will get a star before long, I believe, every body likes him also and he is a rising man. Lt Col Dickinson has resigned. Major Park is now Lt Col. He has not been with us much, is acting inspector of cavalry, I think don't know when he will be with us, if ever. Major Gray and Huston are home recruiting. Have not seen any of their recruits yet. They are not worth anything to us, nor never would be and among the many promotions who else do you suppose has been hit myself, as true as preaching. I was promoted to 2nd Liet. The 27th Feb'y [sic] and transferred to E Company under Capt [sic] Tolton. He is a good military man, well drilled, but is not very healthy. I have been in command of the Comp. ever since have been in it. And expect to be half of the time. J W Mann is 1st Lt but is detached and in command of the brigade provost guard. He will never be back in the Company, probably, I hope not at least. I do not have near as much to do now as I did when Orderly. My pay is \$129 per month, out of that pay \$16 per month for forage for horse. Have to hire a darkey [sic] and find myself in everything. Still I think I can save considerable. I have bought a coat sack for \$15 and vest \$6. My straps I got from my predecessor. They are nice ones. We have been paid up to the 31st of October. I rec'd \$36.25 cts [sic]. Uncle Sam owes me about \$75 yet as an enlisted man. I have to get my discharge papers made out and then be mustered as a com's'd [sic] officer. I have no need to complain but 2 or 3 enlisted men in the reg't [sic] have done as well as I. There are 5 Orderlies that have been such since the reg't [sic] was formed and are likely to stay so. I am the 2nd Orderly promoted over Co. E's orderly and been assigned over him. He is a clever fellow but not very competent. I must use him well. I shall try to do my duty. As long as I do so, I still have friends to help me to anything. I have not got me a very good horse yet. (never had the Bigdon [sic] horse, major Mix owns him.) But shall get one as soon as possible. I can take and receipt for any horse we come across thro [sic] the country and will improve the chance. I want to get a good rig throughout to bring home with me. I am glad you have got another mare. You will have a good way to

get around and go visiting. I don't want you to kill yourself fretting or working, but live as easy as you can. Hiram K wants me to buy his farm and I don't know but what it would be a good plan, wouldn't it? Hiram is not tough. I am sorry poor John I feel lonesome without him. He stood a good chance to be Orderly in Co B if he had not broken his leg. Maybe he can get his discharge. I advised him to, if he could. I think he can. Let Mr. Gilbert read this. I read his letter to John. I have written so much about myself you will think I am getting vain. But I wanted to let you know what my prospects are and have been. Lorenzo is now QM Serg't. [sic] He has done as well as anybody could and he deserves it. Charley S is back with the Co. He is well again. Lewis Coon is dead. He is from [Duplain], I believe. Alf Shepard has been sick a long time. He will be discharged, he tells me. Norm Smith is very sick. If he lives he will do well. He is a good boy. I like Norman and hope he will get well. Oh! how I would like some Maple Sugar. If you think there is any chance to get it to me you may send a little box and anything else you think I would like. Send to Murfreesboro and write before you send. You will have to send by express, if at all.

Now I must tell you about our scout. The first day out we surprised about 600 graybacks, made a charge on them and captured about 50 of them. A capt [sic] and 2 lieuts. [sic] The 7th Penn was ahead with their sabres [sic]. They won't stand the sabres [sic]. They all know the 7th. They call them the fighting 7th and hate them accordingly. We go out in such numbers that unless there is a large force of them they won't stand. I have not had a chance to fire my pistol since the big battle. Our Brigade has captured about 400 since then. I should judge. Now I must tell you some bad news. We had 1500 men captured last Friday. Infantry, Col Gilbert of the 19th Mich was com'd'g [sic] the brigade. He is a new officer and too fast. He was out Thursday and attacked and drove the rebs. The next day flushed with victory, attacked them. They run as usual. He followed them on and on until from each side and behind a swarm of the enemy came out and they were cut off. Fighting was useless and they were captured, the most of them. The Col got away, I believe. A smart man is needed to lean men successfully. Van Dorn is encamped 5 miles from here and Wheeler's Cavalry. They are reported 15,000 strong and are saucy. There will be another big battle before long, I think. 30,000 men are here, so said. But I doubt it we will probably move in the morning and maybe will have a battle, can't tell. I don't know how this letter will get thru! Write. Give my love to all my friends. To Mr [sic] Gilbert especially and Mrs [sic] Longham.

Direct to Co "E" instead of "B". Good bye. I never forget Home sweet Home

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Wednesday Mar 17th

Dear Sis

Having time, I will scratch you a line to tell you of my continued good health and prospects. Am getting along finely in my new company.

Oh! Such splendid weather as we are having at present. At home I can imagine how muddy and disagreeable it is yet. While here the trees are some of them looking quite green. I saw one today fully leaved. They call it box elder. Peach trees are in bloom. I send some buds and blossoms. They grew on rebel soil and I suppose are budding traitors. Their color though is not butternut.

We had a grand review and inspection of all the Cavalry Force in the Department or nearly all by Maj Gen Rosecrans yesterday at 12 M. It was a grand sight. The Review was on a large common 2 miles from town. There was one large flag with the Gen'l [sic] and then the "star" flags of each Brigadier or Commander of Brigade numbered to show which each commanded and then most of the different Companies had their Guidions [sic]. All together made a handsome show with the officers with their full uniforms and white gauntlets and red sashes. Gen Stanley wore a Yellow Sash. The maj [sic] gen wore none at all. Rosecrans is a large well proportioned man, looks about forty five. Is quite bald as I could see when he saluted the Brigadiers. He looks good-natured and benevolent. Has a large Roman nose slightly hooked as he passed us on a gallop with his staff. He said "good morning, gentlemen! I am glad to see you all out this morning." And a little further on "you are the hope of the army. Do you mind that?" and on he went talking along the line and encouraging his men. Mrs [sic] Rosecrans was at the Review also. I was not close to her. She was dressed in black and rode a splendid horse. I believe Gen Rosecrans is the most popular Gen'l [sic] in the army of the Union. He has never been whipped and permit me to say he never will be. The army in this department has the prestige of success and victory and we intend to keep our name good. The rumor prevails here at the present that Vicksburg is evacuated and the army moving up to crush us out. How much truth there is in the report I can't tell. We will be ready for them at any rate. Prospect is that we will get pay up to Dec 31 tomorrow. Will get it this week, I think without fail. The boys in B Co are all well, I believe, I have not heard from John since I wrote you last. Direct to Hospital No 8 Nashville. There at present, have written to Stephan V., Elders Bassers and quite a no. lately.

My love to you all.

I got out in command of a picket guard 7 am tomorrow. Good Bye. Write soon. My love to all
Albert

Sunday March 22nd [1863]

Dear Father

We are having beautiful weather here at present. Nice, warm, growing spring days. Much trees are all in blossom. I am fat and healthy yet like my new company and place firstrate [sic]. I rec'd a letter from John today saying you were all well. I am glad. I often think that before I start home some of you may be taken away from this scene and stage of action. And I feel sad, and how much more you will say. Ought I to think of myself having so much more risk to run but you know how natural it is for man to put all such thoughts far away with the future, and especially the Soldiers, but this is no excuse for any man. Human Nature is not reason which should be used.

I expect to be mustered tomorrow as Lieut. The Col read a telegram from the governor saying that my appointment was approved and my commission would be sent by mail with a no. of others. The Col thinks my commission will date from Feb 16. I will rank from that day but do not expect to draw pay, only from date of Commission approved is rec'd ie. [sic] from yesterday. I intend to be as saving as possible. I am making, now, more than I ever did before and intend to improve it if my life is spared, to benefit all of us. I am earning it easy too. How easily I cannot tell but it does not seem to be I should be killed. I may be wounded perhaps, you have my feelings. I do not feel fearful at all.

I wish you would send me a lot of stamps they are hard to get here at all times.

No use to send me papers. John writes that Mrs [sic] Baker is dead and Egleston very low. How is Lafayette getting along? I have written quite a no. of letters lately I do not think we will make a forward movement right away. I am not sure but that we will have to fight here again but hardly think so. The rebels are getting saucy. Our whole line of pickets was attacked simultaneously yesterday morn but were ready for them.

Give my love to all, and write all that you are doing and going to do.

From your affectionate son.
Albert

Monday, Mar 30, /63

Dear Sis

I rec'd your long and good letter yesterday. I was glad to hear you were all well. Sorry so many are sick or dead. I know Mrs [sic] French is dead. Lt. Co Park arrived here on Friday reported you all are well. Said things were about as usual, you could see Ovid yet for the houses. I have not heard from Norm S. in some time. He is not well yet. Charley Wisler of the Colony is dead. He died suddenly of Fever. He was as faithful a man as I ever knew. He was just promoted to Sergeant in his Company. I send my likeness to day [sic] by Levi Bigelow. He has got his discharge at last. I am glad. The picture is not a good one. Too light but I thought perhaps I would have no better chance. So I send it along.

I have not been well the past week. Had some cold and chills and fever. But am better now. Got a very sore mouth so that I could not enjoy those delicious biscuits and molasses! Oh!

Well you had a very pleasant and interesting acquaintance in your dream. Would not smile or notice you. Dr [sic] Neitch is a villain.

I don't know the use of being lonesome or sad and I don't want you to be. I don't want to come home and see you moping around all you, telling everybody you see, Oh! I wish Albert was home. I wouldn't be at home now if I had staid [sic] at home. Some others would have been here and to shape up these men would have been a drafting in Ovid and I might have been the first one that would have been pleasant. It is right just as it is and it is my duty to be here. Suppose I am killed. I have no wife or children left for others to care for. And you will have the same good care you have always had. But I don't intend to be killed. The rebel was never born that was smart enough to hit me. I may die with disease and so I might at home. I am in no more dangerous place than I was as Sergeant.

You may send that box as soon as convenient. I had a bite of Maple Sugar that Col Park brought from his folks. Just as aggravating send me a couple of cotton shirts for under shirts. I can't wear woolen next to me, and some cotton stockings and anything else good to eat.

I have not heard from John in sometime. That is by letter, I don't know why he don't write. I write him and sent some money but he has not answered. Lieut [sic] Carter saw

him and said he was getting along as well as possible but could not leave his bed yet. I am going to write him today.

There is no need of Mr [sic] Lounsbury's people nursing any hope that Herman is alive. I saw him myself the day before he died just as we all went out on scout. And I did not think he would live then. He was moved to the hospital next day which was too much for him and he died at night. Hiram Knowles went down and was satisfied. There is no signs of a forward movement at present. If you send a box direct Lieut. In care of Lt Col Park and will receive more attention, so also with letters.

I must close. Give my love to all my friends and all write
Good bye, Albert

Headquarters Co H

Apr 3rd 1863

Father

I suppose I should inform you of all my good luck, well then. I am now a 1st Lieutenant and in command of "H" company. The Capt [sic] is a prisoner in Atlanta, Ga. and will probably stay there some time. I am in full command and will be responsible for [illegible] the same as Capt. I take Lt Leach's place, he is now Capt [sic] of Company "A" There are few who are doin [sic] as well as I am and I have friends on every hand. Pay is the same as 2nd Lt. With the addition of \$10 extra as Com'd'r [sic] of Company. I was not expecting another honor so soon and it took me entirely by surprise. I do not like to take so much responsibility but can do it, if I must. I have a good lot of boys. I will get along without any trouble.

I have not been well the past week, was taken with chills and fever and fearing it would end in a regular course of fever, I took a heavy dose of Calomel and now I have a sore mouth. It is much better than it was and I feel better myself, shall soon be as well as ever again.

The Brigade and Regt are out on a five day scout. I was not well and therefore did not go. It is the first one I have missed in a long time.

What are your sentiments as regards conscripts law and the prosecution of the war. I cannot believe are opposed to either altho [sic] claiming to be a Democrat.

I tell you the men in the army are death on the Copperheads. By these I mean men who are opposed to every move of the government and are crying for peace and compromise. What Peace can we have? What Compromise can we make? We can have peace by recognizing them as a government. We can have compromise with them in no other way and then they will claim Ky and Tenn are the people searching for such a peace as this would be? Are they satisfied with such terms?

Then why not rise in union and crush them out. Is this the time to argue about politics? Verily, no! The business of the North should be to stop their traitorous mouths and let not another word go in the hungry ears of the South and to send us more men. They can hold out no much longer, I believe things are approaching a crisis already and ere long the affair will be solved. Right will triumph.

My love to all. If you could send me a small trunk instead of a box it would be better as I need one very much. From Your Affectionate son Albert

Direct Lieut [sic] H. A. Potter Com'd'g [sic] Co ""H"

[In the margin of the letter is the following]

Mother, I would like to see you. Oh! How well and hope is ere long. I am getting real gray hairs are honorable, you know, especially for [illegible]

[written vertically on the 3rd page is the following]

It's generally supposed that I wear about as many bars as that great man you saw in Detroit Lt Carter He is yet a 1st Lt, he was promoted to fill Shepard's place and it affected him so that another promotion it is thought would prove too much for him. He is troubled with "promotion on the Brain" a very serious disease say nothing about this he always uses me well enough.

Headquarters Co. "H" 4th M. Cav

Apr 14th 1863

Dear ones all

I rec'd a letter from home tonight. We just came in from a scout. Have been out since last Thursday morning. Our Brigade has not done much. We were over near Franklin. Van Dorn is hovering around to see what he may devour. He made a dash into Franklin on Friday. But got rather severely handled. We killed about one hundred, officers and

all, while our loss was but a trifle compared to theirs. The Fourth Regulars captured a Battery of six pieces but they were not supported and consequently were obliged to give it up again. Although they succeeded in disabling a part of it by cutting the spokes in the wheels.

I am feeling firstrate [sic] again. I got a letter from John Gilbert also today. He gets along slowly. I'm afraid he does not have as good treatment as he should, would like to go him but cannot at present. He has a good appetite, but can't get enough to allay it.

We have had several nice showers and the woods are beginning to look quite green. Apple and Plums trees are in blossom. The fields of wheat and grass are starting up. And all nature is looking pretty. You well see the negro women out in the field planting corn and holding plow. I've got used to it all here but it would seem odd at home.

I am sorry to hear that Ovid is so far gone. Although I think the Democrats of Ovid are generally loyal and vote accordingly. They still cling to the old ship "Democracy" not knowing seemingly how rotten a hulk she now is. They seem to think that the NAME is sufficient to carry them safely through but after having been afflicted with a dry rot ever since 1850. And running into the old ship Constitution at Charleston, thereby losing the most of their important machinery and causing such a leak, That ever since they have been going down. I should think the passengers would be getting uneasy and want to take passage in a safer boat. Such a one for instance as the "Liberty Union" a double decker capable of carrying more than any other boat in the world. And sailing the fastest with or against the current. Passengers on board this boat have confidence in their pilot as his compass never fails and they are certain of reaching their destination sooner than any other boat for they have taken the nearest route. Consequently they have no reason to argue among themselves or to find fault with others who are doing better than they can do.

I would like to have seen H C Smith elected as Supervisor and John Gilbert a justice, they deserve it. They are unconditional Union Men. Wm Shepard is not safe he is running fast but he is in a wheelbarrow running on the planks of the treacherous ship "Democracy."

I am sorry you can't send a box. I had got my mouth fixed for Maple Sugar. Hiram Knowles is getting better. Alf Shepard also Billy Egleston is tough as ever. Lorenzo is now first Sergeant of Co "B". I commenced on nothing and am now spun out. Write often. My love to all my friends. Tell Frank Shepard to write me a letter.

I remain as ever

Your Soldier boy
Henry Albert Potter
Lt Com'd'g [sic] Co. "H"

Headquarters Co "H" Near
Columbia Tenn Apr 20 [1863]

Dear Sis

I rec'd your letter today acknowledging the receipt of the likenesses. Glad to hear from you. Ben Shepard is not worth a decent man's notice and he makes such remarks. I don't care what he or any of that stripe say about me they can't hurt me. Their ravings cannot be helped. The expressions they get off about me is but the scum and foam from the large amount of Copper and Malicious Jealousy, mixed together of which they are mostly made up.

Mrs [sic] Longcor need not be alarmed about my boy Ed's coming up north. I sent his likeness up to you more for the novelty of the thing than anything else. Thought it would amuse you. but if I should bring him Yes! Suppose I should commit such an awful act, whose business would it be but my own! – I don't believe I think more for the negro, than Mrs [sic] Longcor but I do believe and say they ought to have their freedom and they shall have it not only because they are human and have souls, but because their masters have forfeited all right to them and their loss is our gain And again they make good soldiers, good Fighting soldiers, and I say let them fight. They are no better to stop a ball than I am – If working men are so opposed to arming the negro let them take the musket out of their hands and come along.

Show one a man, who is down on our negro soldiers and who keeps hanging back and shirking and I will show you a coward. Yes a moral coward and I believe God hates a coward.

I am expecting some photographs, soon, I will send you one when they come. We have a very pretty camp here. Know nothing of the prospects of moving at all.

How many people have died since we left Starkey and how many since I left Ovid. of those that left and those who staid [sic] we all [illegible] away and know not our own time may arrive.

My constant love to you and mother and father

Albert

Headquarters Co "H" 4.M.C.

Camp Minty near Murfreesboro

Sunday Apr 20th 1863

Dear Folks

I must write and tell you that I am well although nothing else of interest presents itself. I have rec'd no letters from home in some time. None I believe recognizing my promotion and change to another company. The regiment has been out since last Monday. I was about half-sick then and did not go, but I feel all right now and am having a long rest with nothing else to do but write or read.

I enjoy myself firstrate [sic] have a wall tent all to myself. Good bunk etc. and I am living well too. Good bread and butter ham potatoes onions tea and coffee. And we get mackerel for supper sometimes which is very nice.

I have not been mustered yet as an officer and have only rec'd pay up to Dec 31. As I was mustered in the payrolls before I had really rec'd my commission. They refuse to pay me. But as soon as I am mustered as an officer I will get my Discharge papers as an enlisted man and draw pay on thru up to the date of discharge. Which will be up to the 6th of April as I rec'd my commission as 2nd Lt. as that day. I also got my 1st Lieut's [sic] on April 15th after I mustered and have no need for them I will send them home and you may have them framed if you like.

Our fine weather still continues. The trees are newly leaved and grass has quite a start.

I sent you a Nashville Union some time ago. There is a letter in it that will perhaps prove interesting. I have also written to the Clinton Paper and sent them some exchanges. The copperheads get a slight touch, but not as much as they deserve. You may be assured they have no sympathy here. The Traitors! And if they forcibly try to miss the conscript in any other legal law they will bitterly see the day. If they have a spark of Patriotism left they had better at once enlist to save their own doubted loyalty and honor. There is no use of their trying to oppose the great fact that this Union will be preserved and that the Sacred Constitution will suffer if it is not actually destroyed and the more they oppose this fact the more will they be left out in the COLD. I can see it plainly.

I just rec'd your letter Amelia, and was glad to hear of your health, but was pained to hear of the loss in George's family. I sympathize with them sincerely. They think so much of their children and I am also very sorry to hear of Aaron's death. He was always apparently hearty. He was a good hearted boy and I am glad of the protracted meeting. I hope it will do much good. I would like to be at her school house and hear a good sermon and see all of my friends. It would be a Pleasure.

Aunt Nep is very foolish. I hate to hear a woman talk so. I supposed she had more faith in the People. She seems to think the whole country is utterly depraved. Entirely sinful. She is mistaken and is getting to be a real croaker. Don't tell her so, for pity's sake.

I will look for the Box now soon. Hiram is getting better. Billy is well as ever. As soon as the Col gets back I am going to try and see John. From what I hear and he writes he is not getting along very well.

Give my love to all. Sam, you must write, tell Hiram and Mary Longcor, I don't like them at all because they don't write [illegible] and never wait for

Albert

Headquarters 4th Mich Cavly [sic]

Camp Minty Murfreesboro, Tenn

Wednesday May 6th 1863

Dear Sister

I received your letter some days ago, but have not written as I thought I would wait until I rec'd the box you sent. It has not arrived yet so I will write a line today.

I am hearty and well, never felt better. It is [illegible] today and cloudy with some rain. I am "officer of the day" we had a Brigade Inspection and Review yesterday. Everything went off well. Gen'l [sic] Turchin is com'd'g [sic] the cavalry in lieu of D. S. Stanley Brig Gen Now Maj Gn.

I was glad to hear of our good luck in Virginia and at New Orleans in Bank's command. I think we will have a battle here [sic] long whether we advance or the rebels attack us is not certain. Probably we will advance, the confederates are receiving reinforcements,

we understand, but there is no such thing as getting whipped in this Army we are bound to push our way through until Tennessee is reclaimed from the hand of her enemies.

Doct. [sic] C. T. Armstrong maybe you will see him. He will tell you how I am getting along. Stephan Nyman was here last night. He is in the 22nd Mich Inftry [sic], is well and tough.

I have not heard from John Gilbert since I wrote last. Hiram Knowles cannot live long he has got the consumption or very near like it. His is at Gen'l [sic] Hosp. in town, has a comfortable place but he cannot stand it long. I did not know he was so bad, he is a skeleton. He may possibly get well, but, in my opinion, cannot. I am sorry Hiram enlisted he was better off at home. George McClintock is dead of "B" comp. he lived in Ovid near Fitcher, I believe.

I wonder sometimes that I am well and hearty, while those much tougher are dead, I believe I shall come home safe and sound. I have not been mustered yet and therefore have not rec'd any pay as Lieut. I am paid up to Dec 31. US owes me about \$175 now but I have had to borrow some. There are so many paper to get out for a muster, it takes some time. I am waiting now for any, in the company muster roll it shows that I have been mustered as an enlisted man, it is in Detroit. It has been sent for. I just got a letter from Ben the folks are all well. I will write to him this day.

Our camp looks very nice. We have rows of cedar trees set out between the tents and around my tent I have got quite a bower of trees and bushes. The tent poles are twined with a wreath of cedars, you know I like to be fixing such things. My quarters are as nice as any of the officers and as clean. I had no news to write today, just wrote to let you know I was well. Mother, I want to see you, I'm coming home in the fall
Albert

[the following written in the margin]

I send you a card that I had made for you with the Lord's Prayer written in the size of 3 cents. I paid 25 cts [sic] for it.

Headquarters Co "H"

Camp Park', Murfreesboro

Thursday May 14, 1863

Dear Sister

I must write you a line today. We have moved our camp farther from town in a nice piece of woods, cool and shady. We call it Park' Camp and like the name it is appropriate, it is a park and we like to Honor our Col that soon will be.

I am telling you the same old story. My continued good health, but you don't get sick of it do you? It is a good story. I hope I may always hear the same from home and be able to write it every time. But with my health I must tell you of death. Hiram Knowles is gone! He died Tuesday morning. So we pass along! Consumption was his disease as near as I could judge. I visited him last week. He looked very bad. Coughed and [illegible] a good deal and was weak. His discharge papers were made out some time ago and forwarded, but nothing has been heard of them since. He won't need them Now. He was anxious about them when I saw him. Spoke of home and did not seem to think he was going to die. I could not bear to tell him. He was worried about the [illegible] I told him it would be all right and not to worry and not to be uneasy. I shook hands with him and said Good Bye I knew it would be the last time. But He did not.

Father,

He spoke about buying his lot. I wrote to you about it. You can use your own judgement. I hardly believe we want it. Do as you think best. I will see that his business is arranged as much as I can. I will speak to Lieut. Carter about it. He has not drawn much pay. I don't know how much is due him – quite an amount.

I have to borrow all the money I use. I have not been mustered. I have Pay due me from Dec 31 and Lieut's [sic] pay from Apr 6th. I have bought a new sash, \$10.00 and a new Dress Coat and Straps. I have not got a Bill of that yet about \$35, I expect.

I was out on Picket last Sunday and had quite a little adventure. Captured 3 Rebels and their Horses and Saddles and arms complete. Quite a feather in MY cap. Several of the rebs had been seen for 2 or 3 days back, on the road in front and they nearly all stopped at a home about a mile beyond my videttes. I thought perhaps I could nab them, so I took a Relief, mounted, and went to our outpost a little before Daylight. I then dismounted tied my horse and had seven of my men do the same, ordering the remainder to come to our support if they heard firing. We went down cautiously to the house. I sent a man to the left and right of the road, for you know, we were outside of our lines and did not know what we would come across. We got to the house about daylight, surrounded it. No one there, but, the owners, strong old sesesh [sic], Alexander by name. Presently we saw 3 horsemen come up the road. We secreted ourselves so that if they came to the house we could surround them. They came on, my

men ran out in the road in the rear of them cried surrender. One of them, who had had his gun in his hand all the time, raised it as if to shoot. When quicker than thought my boys fired. One ball struck his hip and came out just below his belt in abdomen. Another on [sic] struck his wrist another one struck his horse. I hollered at the men to stop firing or they would have killed him. I felt sorry for him, smart good looking, if he had not raised his gun the boys would not have fired. He died in a day or two. I expected the firing would draw more of them upon us and when the ambulance came, I took 20 men with me and went down. But no one came in sight. Since then they have kept a [illegible] fire there all the time.

I must close if my letter is published in the Clinton Rep., send me a copy. My box has not come. I am asking for it. Write soon.

Albert

Camp Park 5-17-1863

Dear Father

I like to get letters from home. I like to hear that you are sorry if there is any one offended by my letters in the only stated my own individual opinion and in saying that the army as whole concurred in those views. I told the truth, but the not prudent at all times and especially in these dark times in politics. Here in the army we all think alike in regard to the ones as a balm for their grief, I would respectfully recommend conscript law. Let them come. They need enlightenment.

I am well. We are enjoying a rest here in our Brigade. Had a Scout since McMinnville. Only Picket and guard duty to Horses are feeling nice. We take them out once a day to graze, oats and corn they get. We are ready to move at a moment's there are no signs of it at present. Our position in Virginia changed a great deal. There seems to be a clog somewhere in do you suppose it is?

The Band have received their new instruments. They are play every evening here in the woods. It sounds so nice.

I am sorry that there should be any feeling shown of the kind exhibits. It looks very much like jealousy if he were in my also have a "nigger waiter". I wrote to Esquire Shepard not expect a heavy shot. That is if he deigns to answer at all not. Why don't Mr [sic] Gilbert write me a letter of (my letter) Rep[ublican] I have almost forgotten what I did write. I am again soon. What did you say about Josh Rapler.

I was not surprised for I expected it, but I did not know that Gilbert, [Ovid] leg had been amputated. It is awful. I can it. He has not wrote me in a long time. I suppose he has not been to. I have not rec'd my box yet, am looking for it still.

Do you suppose that Mr [sic] Gilbert's people blame me for enlist? As it has turned out, I am sorry he did and poor Hiram too.

Thank you Frank, for the flowers but we have all kinds flatter yourself mother on an early closing of the war. I my three years out. But I am coming home this fall, if possible, things work well, I am going to have my likeness taken again to [sic] before long. Give my love to all my friends, if I have any and write

Your affectionate son
Albert

The stamps came good
Write often.

Camp Park, Murfreesboro

May 26th 1863

Dear John

I will write you a line tonight telling you I am well. I have not been feeling firstrate [sic] lately, caught a bad cold which [illegible] some and I have rather a bilious turn not much appetite but I begin to be all right again. We are getting glorious news from Grant if it is only true. We have the word here today that Vicksburg is ours with 20 or 30,000 prisoners. I do hope it is so. But he has certainly done a big thing if it is not so and everybody is encouraged.

We are ready to move at anytime and I believe the army here will do something soon. There is a possibility that the 1st Cavalry Brigade will be stationed here thro' the campaign but we know not for a certainty. We have had orders to burn a supply of charcoal to last at least two months. That looks like staying.

We done a good thing the other day down at Middleton near Shelbyville. You will see it in the papers. We traveled all night through the roughest country you ever saw and came on them at daylight, the 1st Alabama and 8th Confed found them in bed and such a scampering but I was not there, but was sorry I was not well enough. We captured

over 100 prisoners and all their camp and some fine horses, 200, I believe. We got their colors (1st Ala). Some of Co B's boys had a hand in that. Lew Wilcox was one of them. We are going to send it to the governor of the state as a relic. With some resolutions which you will also see in the papers. It was a good strike. I hear that the account of the capture of the 3 rebs that I took is in the Tribune. I have not seen it. It is in the 19th.

Our captain Abeel is back to the company again. He is tough and fat, so I am not in command now. The boys do not like him very well. I don't know how I will like him. But Col Park [Josiah Park] told me he was going to transfer me to the command of "M" Co for the present as the officers in that Co are sick. I don't know how it will be – don't care much but I like this Co firstrate [sic].

I wish you could come down and see us, we have warm weather, rather too warm now but such nice nights. Moonlight now. Maj Gen Stanley [David S Stanley] visited us and is visiting with the Col now. The band are getting out now to serenade him. We have got the new instruments. Silver. I will tell you they are handsome. Our band is going to be the best in the Dept. The instruments cost \$800.

I believe this thing will be nearly wound up this summer. All things look bright now. If Hooker would only do something to count. You see the rebs are pressed at every point. They are in hot water. We are on every side of them and it does look as if they could not stand long against us.

Col Park told me he wrote you a long letter, have you got it? I have no news to tell you and will wait till morning before I finish Next Morning

Write soon all the news
Albert

HeadQuarters [sic] 4th M.V.C.

Camp Park, June 17/63

Dear Father

We just got in from our 6 days scout and it has been a hard one – I tell you. We did not start until about 3 pm and went to Lebanon 28 miles distant that night. We traveled out six miles from town where we halted and fed. We had heard from our scouts in that direction that there was about 1000 or the rebels at Lebanon and we intended to clean

them out. On dismounting, when we halted, one of the 5th Iowa boys was almost instantly killed by his comrade next to him. His Carbine caught in some manner on the saddle or stirrups and went off. The ball passing thro' his left lung and out on right side cutting one of the large arteries. Poor Fellow! He never spoke. One cannot be too cautious [sic]. I would hate to be killed by my friend or by myself.

After feeding at about ten o'clock we started again. We had about 1500 all told. We had a passable road and went along pretty good jog. Got into Lebanon just daylight. No rebels there. All went away last night was what the citizens told us. Went off on the Alexandria Pike. It is a mystery to me how they get their information for they heard of our coming even before we knew where we were going ourselves, for we never know where we are going until we move. But they did. We followed after them on the Alexandria Pike came upon their rear guards about 11 am had a little skirmish in which one to the 4th regulars was killed. Then went back a short distance and fed our horses, gave them wheat in bundle about noon we started again. It was a very hot day and our poor horses were tired in the forenoon our Reg't [sic] was on the left as skirmishers and the ground was very rough, stony and hilly. We moved cautiously skirmishing all the way about six miles into a nice valley with good feed and the Col concluded to stay there all night. We had orders to move only to Lebanon and our coming any farther was at our own risk. Well, we posted our pickets in front and in the right and left strongly and were settling down to rest when Bang! Bang! Came their artillery from a hill. Our pickets rushed in letting us know there was quite a force in front with 5 pieces of artillery. They were mountain howitzers I tho't [sic] by the sound. We immediately formed and went out to see what was there, but they had run back again and it was growing dark. The Col had also learned that they were about 4000 strong with artillery at Alexandria and so of course it would not be prudent to move after them and their demonstration in front was only to divert our attention while they were trying to FLANK US on BOTH SIDES. So we moved back after calling in our pickets by a cross road and an ugly one too. Baird's Mill on the Lebanon Pike 21 miles from Murfreesboro. Got there 3 am this morning as tired a lot as you ever saw – not a wink of sleep had we. I never was so sleepy in my life and when we got to the Mill I just lopped down on the ground and slept about two hours as sound as a log. When we moved on and got into camp about 3 pm tired and dusty –

Wheat is ripe, partly cut, corn is growing very fast. I saw some drawing in hay as we came along. Their wheat is poor. It is very dark and I will stop. I am well until now

Albert

I got a letter from Amelia today, it is as you say. I don't get all the letters you write and you don't get all that I write. I have not got the box yet.

Albert

HDQRS. FIRST BRIGADE, SECOND CAVALRY DIVISION,
Camp near Murfreesborough [sic], Tenn., June 18, 1863.

SIR: In accordance with orders received from Major-General Stanley, I marched with the First Brigade at 5 p.m. on the 15th instant, taking the Lebanon pike. I arrived at Stone's [sic] River at 7 p.m., fed horses, and halted until 10 p.m., so as to strike Lebanon by daybreak. At Baird's Mills the enemy's picket fires were found burning, but evidently the posts had not been occupied for some hours.

I arrived at Lebanon at 4 a.m., and had some difficulty in learning anything definite about the enemy. I at [last] learned from some negroes and a Union family that the rebels, about 600 strong, under Colonel Duke, had left Lebanon at about 5 p.m., the 15th, by the Sparte (or Alexandria) road. I immediately followed them to Spring Creek, 5 miles out, watered the horses, and dismounted to feed, when the rebels attacked my pickets from toward Alexandria, driving them in, and following them sharply with about 300 men, mounted and dismounted. I sent Lieutenant-Colonel Sipes, with the Seventh Pennsylvania, to the right, and Major Mix, with the Fourth Michigan, to the left (directing them to keep a little in advance of the head of the column on the pike), the Fourth Regulars on the pike, the Fifth Iowa in reserve, and the battalion Third Indiana guarding the ambulances. My advance was necessarily slow, on consequence of the rough nature of the ground over which the flanking columns had to pass. The rebels retired slowly, fighting stubbornly, until near Shop Spring, where the advance of the Fourth Regulars, under Lieutenant O'Connell, charged and drove them from the fences, from behind which they had been fighting. Our horses were tired, and those of the enemy apparently fresh, so that the only result was to drive them. Having now arrived at the junction of the cross-road leading to Baird's Mills, which gave me a good line of retreat, I took a position on the right side of the road, to allow the men to get their breakfasts. Unfortunately, there was no feed to be had for the horses.

At 11:30, I again moved forward, the Seventh Pennsylvania in advance, followed by the Fourth Michigan, Third Indiana, and Fourth Regulars, the Fifth Iowa on the flanks. We drove the enemy as before. At about 2 o'clock I arrived at Watters' Mill, halted the column, and sent Colonel Sipes, with the Seventh Pennsylvania and two companies of the Fifth Iowa, 2 miles to the front; threw out strong pickets 1 1/2 miles in every direction, and fed horses.

At Lebanon, and at all points along the road, I received information that Morgan was at Alexandria with 4,000 men and from six to twelve pieces of artillery. When Colonel Sipes returned he brought confirmation of these reports. Skirmishing was kept up with my pickets on the Alexandria road at intervals all the afternoon. At 7 p.m. a courier came in from the front, reporting that the enemy was advancing in force, and immediately after they opened fire with their artillery. I sent the parties from both the right and left reported that a heavy column was moving down each flank. I immediately doubled my pickets, and remained in position until 9 o'clock, when I fell back, taking the crossroad from Shop Spring to Baird's Mills, at which place I arrived at 2:30 a.m. without molestation.

Up to this time we had marched 56 miles. Some of the men had had one hour's sleep, and the others no sleep whatever. At 6.30 I resumed the march for Murfreesborough [sic], arriving at Stone's [sic] River at 10 o'clock. I halted for a couple of hours to rest the horses, and then returned to camp. Captain Davis, Seventh Pennsylvania, who commanded the rear guard from Baird's Mills, reports that a strong force of the enemy came into that place from toward Lebanon as he was leaving it, but attempted nothing further than an exchange of shots.

If I had a couple of pieces of artillery, John Morgan should either have given me battle or Alexandria; but without them, I felt that I would be fighting at too great a disadvantage and uselessly sacrificing the lives of my men. I therefore considered it my duty to retire.

I am respectfully, your obedient servant,

ROBT. H. G. MINTY,
Colonel, Commanding.

HeadQuarters [sic] 4th Mich Cav. Camp Park

June 19th 1863

Dear Sister

It is after Taps and I am all alone in the office so I will write a line. I received your letter and Mary Longcor's by today's mail and of course was glad to hear from both of you. Mrs [sic] Longcor need not be ashamed of her letter I am sure, for I seldom get a better one. I am well and contented as long as I am so. We were out on a scout this week but I wrote to Father about that the day after I got in. We are all just as glad to get back to camp from a scout as I used to come home from a hard jaunt or a day's work in fact it is

our home. I got my box yesterday. I am sorry to tell you but in the butter it was all oil and run over everything. Spoilt nearly all the paper and greased and scented the shirts and handkerchiefs most beautifully. But it is all right. Dan's sugar was nearly all dissolved, the apples were rotten but, hold on, I am telling the bad side. The Maple Sugar was all right much obliged to Mrs [sic] L for the plums and to Malbone and John for the Paper and envelopes. The tie is very nice. Tell Emma, the one I did have was burnt with my things. The coffee and Tea, combs and pencil suspenders [rest of letter missing]

[On outside of letter] Headquarters 4th MVC June 19th 1863 Potter Lieut [sic] and Act'g [sic] Adj't [sic] Writes home sending love and acknowledging rec't [sic] of box = and letter etc etc. Respectfully forwarded "via" Uncle Sam

Camp near Salem Tenn

July 23rd 1863

Dear Sister

You are doubtless anxious to hear from me and perhaps uneasy for fear of my safety. At last we are encamped but for how long I cannot tell. We have been constantly on the move since June 24th. The day the army moved from Murfreesboro. I am well as usual excepting a bad cold, but am feeling well at heart. When I wrote you last I was at Murfreesboro in hosp. I was there about one week. My poison is cured. We are about ten miles from Winchester near the Fayetteville branch of the Nashville and Chattanooga RR. The cars run down to Descherd's [sic] Station about 12 miles from here and I understand there are no obstructions as far as Bridgeport. Our Brigade has been to Huntsville, Alabama. Just came back this week. There are no rebels this side of the Tennessee River excepting a few guerillas in the mountains. They dare not show themselves. Centerville is the prettiest place I have seen in the South. The news we are getting daily is most Encouraging I have had read since the war commenced, for a speedy termination. Vicksburg and Fort Hudson are ours giving us clear sweep of the great River and loosing [sic] our large army there. I believe by this time Jackson is ours and General Johnson is whipped at Charleston we are doing nobly. We will take the place no doubt. Bragg we know nothing about, He has, I think, divided his Army and Morgan is reported captured, while Lee's army is very much demoralized. The army here is highly excited over the good news. Our star is in the ascendant again. There is a rumor here that Jeff Davis is dead but whether so or not can't tell. The old scamp would die, it might save him much disgrace and humiliation and a blessing to the distracted Country. I have rec'd the likeness at last – they are very good. I must close. Write some. I rec'd yours of the 13th. I will write oftener now.

Yours affectionately
Albert

Courier Station No 4
Sunday, August 30, 1863

Dear Father

I have no news to tell you this morning only that I am well. It is a cool sunshiny morning rather too cool, in fact, for comfort. I don't see that but you have as warm weather at home as we do down farther south. I am stationed on the courier line yet, don't have but little to do as the whole company is here. I have written aunt Sarah Ann this morning. The people here are a poor and ignorant set as you ever saw. They are to be pitied more than blamed for their disloyalty. They have always lived in the mtns and know nothing of what transpires outside of their own little world. They were told by leaders that there was no Union or government and as we had no advocates or army here, what could they see? They believed it. But now they see they were mistaken, nearly all have taken the oath of allegiance once more and glad to have their property and persons protected from confiscation and conscription. How long we will remain here I cannot say. We are liable to move at any time. I think we will move as soon as we get sufficient supplies to reach Chattanooga. I will write as often as I can write.

I remain, as ever,
Yours in love,
Henry Albert Potter

Murfreesboro Oct 8th 1863

Dear Folks

I am in the above place in chase of Wheeler. Have been after him from the Tennessee. They are making a big raid. Have cut communications with Chattanooga now. Have had a couple of fights. Think we will succeed in gobbling all of them. We have enough to do it. I am tough and rugged.

In love and haste
Albert

Headquarters 4th Michigan Cavalry

Camp near Maysville, Alabama

Sunday Oct 25th 1863

E M Potter

Dear Sir

This is a cold wintry uncomfortable Autumm day and I feel ill-natured but I am going to scratch off a line to you, for it is has been a long time since you have heard from me – or I from you. I wrote a letter to John the other day and one to father. They are the only two I have written this Month.

My Health has been excellent except for two or three days last week I caught cold but feel better now. We have had a very different Fall from what we had last. It has been cold cloudy, windy and rainy mostly all the month – decidedly uncomfortable. The brigade has not seen a wagon or piece of a train since it left Washington, East Tennessee Sept 30, 1863 to chase old Wheeler day and night from that place to Pikeville in the Sequatchee [sic] Valley, to McMinnville, to Murfreesboro, to Shelbyville, Lewisburg, Pulaski from there to the Tennessee river at Lamb's Jenny 3 miles above Muscle Shoals where they got away from us. I rather think they got worsted. We captured mostly all their artillery and took about 600 prisoners and killed. I have not seen a clean shirt or pr of drawers or socks since the 30th ult. The consequence I need not tell you for Oh! I feel I feel a louse in my pantaloons this minute.

[illegible]

True as preaching by Hokey

We have not had any news that can be relied upon in a long time. We hear Rosecrans is sent to the Potomac and Grant succeeds and that Stanley is relieved of his command. I know that Col Minty is under arrest for not moving the brigade up in time at the fight with Wheeler and Wharton below Shelbyville, but he had r'cd [sic] orders, they want to make much of him.

I would hate to be a citizen living in this country about this time. We have moved so fast and so meteor-like Uncle Sam couldn't touch us consequence was didn't draw any rations and Uncle Jeff had to suffer. We had to forage on the country. We lived well but I

admit the thing went almost too far with some. A great many have been ROBBED OUTRIGHT of everything but it is stopped now.

We have lost one good Officer this month. Lieut. Tucker wounded in skirmish near Washington Sept 30, died at Chattanooga seven after he was a 1st Lt and comdg [sic] Co. I am now in command of two Co.s [sic] H and B. Lt Carter is sick and at Murfreesboro. I presume Mrs [sic] Carter has heard from him.

We have four month's pay due us Nov 1st I am going to apply for a leave of absence as soon as we are paid. Going to try hard to come and see you. Can't tell how it will end. Suppose our folks would like to see me don't know.

Maysville is about 10 miles north east from Huntsville, Ala, near the line of the Charleston and Memphis RR. The cars run now as far as Paint Rock 15 miles from here and 35 miles from Stevenson where the road intersects the Nashville and Chattanooga RR.

Malbone, write and tell me what you are doing and what you intend to do next year. I think some of resigning but only think of it at present don't mention it. I am doing well here and my chance for promotion is good as soon as there is a chance but sometimes I think I would rather be home doing something there but I am only writing this to fill it with,

Love to all,
Remain, affectionately yours,
Henry A Potter
(Direct as before)

Camp near Chattanooga

Monday November 23rd 1863

Dear Father

I have not had a chance to write a word in some time and now the first opportunity. Our regiment left Maysville the 17th destination unknown. Only it was thought a big raid was contemplated. We were paid up to Oct 31st the day we left. We passed thro [sic] Stevenson the 19th. I sent you \$400 by Adams Express. The agent informed me the line

was clear and had not been molested in some time. It will reach you all right, no doubt. I did not pay charges. I have a Receipt for it with me – write me on reception of it.

My Health is excellent – can eat bacon and hard tack right smart. I don't want to say another word about coming home for I don't see the smallest chance at present. Even a certificate of disability comes back disapproved, unless it is necessary to save a life. So you see my hopes of home are slim and I don't want to disappoint you. As long as I keep well you must be satisfied.

I believe there will be the biggest fighting done near here that there has been on the continent and the day not far distant either. Our communication must be made good at all hazards, that is the first important step. At present we run up rations by rivers to within about 8 miles of Chattanooga. From there by wagon Train crossing the river twice on Pontoons. The rebels hold the point of Lookout Mountain, which runs to the river. I have made a sort of map by which you can form an idea of our lines and also the rebels. You will see the road our supplies have to come over by water to the jenny then by train the rest of the way. Crossing the river twice by pontoons. I was on Raccon [sic] Mountains yesterday at the signal station which is marked from there you have a grand view of both Armies. You can see the rebel tents and earthworks plain. It is about 2 miles air line from the top of Raccoon to Lookout Mt with a glass you can see the rebs' quite plain. They kept up a cannonading all day yesterday. You would see the smoke from our Batteries fifteen seconds before you heard the report. Amelia can you figure how far off? Sounds travels 1142 feet per second. The rebels have a very large Army. We could not see all of it. A part being hid behind Lookout and Missionary Range. Sherman was crossing the river all last night with his Corps. We are encamped opposite Chattanooga a mile from the river. I will mark it. The view from the signal Station was the grandest sight I ever saw. You can see the mountains of North Carolina and north to near Cumberland Gap, Kentucky. Then to have spread below you the two great armies in the world, seemingly within reach of each other. You can imagine I cannot tell you anything about it but I must close. I will write every opportunity. Write as soon as you receive the money.

Yours affectionately
Henry A Potter
Love to all

You can see the necessity of getting the Rebels off Lookout – as they are now they hold the railroad. We must have that at all hazards. Besides the river they have a good line but Grant will out-general them.

Courier Station near Cleveland

Friday Dec 18th 1863

Dear Father, Mother, and Sister

You are doubtless very anxious about me and think I am killed or captured sure but I am neither on the contrary am alive and well as ever. Have had excellent health since I wrote you last at Chattanooga. Since then we have been here and there and everywhere. Away from everything and everybody part of the time working in rear of the rebels and chasing their trains.

I believe when I wrote you last I told you we expected a battle soon and sent you a sketch of the two armies as they appeared from Raccoon Mountain and also of a pontoon across the river above Chattanooga in the rear of the rebel line. Well it came to pass as I anticipated. Our Brigade crossed the Tennessee Tuesday the 24th Nov with Sherman's Corps and following the line of the Knoxville RR burnt the bridges and destroyed all commissary stores which we found. When we reached Cleveland 30 miles from Chattanooga, we had captured and burnt 65 wagons and taken over 200 prisoners, burnt all bridges of importance, cut telegraphic communications between Bragg and Longstreet, -- which was our intention when starting on the raid. We started on the 27th, captured about 260 hogs, a first thing for us and destroying the Copper Rolling Mill, their only factory of 'caps' in the Confederacy. It was the grandest sight I ever saw, we put 50 boxes of shells and torpedos [sic] in the walls before firing it and such explosions you never heard. The rebels hurried us out quite unceremoniously. Our regiment was guarding prisoners. They fired into us too fast altogether to suit me. I had one man wounded and a horse shot but further than that all got out safely. We then went back to Chattanooga and moved out with Sherman to reinforce Burnside at Knoxville. Went as far as Loudon when hearing that Longstreet had been repulsed and was retreating, we turned off to Marysville. From there our Brigade moved over the Alleghanies in North Carolina and a hard trip it was, I tell you. Rain and cold on the mountains making things disagreeable. I have crossed the Cumberland and Alleghany Mts and been in five rebel states and expect to be in all of them before I get thru with it. KY Tenn Ga Ala and N.C. We found plenty to eat in NC plenty of apples and peach brandy. No army had ever troubled them of any size. Lots of them never seen a Yankee, as they call us, before. They are ignorant and simple -- but nearly all stick to the old Union, also many have been conscripted most of them were glad to see us.

I might write you in detail a dozen sheets full but it is not necessary the 4th Mich is now on courier duty between Charleston and Chattanooga. I am half-way between

Charleston and Cleveland. I live in a house have a room by myself and board with the family. The are nice folks although a little tainted with secession.

Did you receive the money I sent you. I have not a word from home since the 16th of Nov don't know when we should get any mail. Write as often as you can. The great battle was fought while we were raiding in Bragg's rear. I never saw the cause so bright.

Love to all
Albert

[Written over the other letter]

This is a poor letter but it is better than none. We have been busy all the time. I have no time to even think of coming home at present. Have not even seen camp since the 17th Nov when we left Marysville, Alabama. The people are nearly all Union here. We have plenty to eat. I am a little anxious about the money but think it's all right.

[written around the edge of the letter]

You want full accounts of the battle. It was the greatest thing. The rebels had a splendid position. Our victory is decisive.

Courier Station near Cleveland Tenn

Friday Dec 18th 1863

Dear John

I am not killed, wounded or gobbled as you imagine I must be before this, I suppose, because I have not written. But this is the first chance have had to write a word and, even now, I don't know as it will ever reach you. We have since the 17th Nov been pushed here and there and all over from Marysville, Ala to Murphy, North Carolina and into Georgia – but I have enjoyed it first rate. Never had a better time and now when we are settled down on a courier post – I [sic] living in a HOUSE, eating on a TABLE, and sleeping in a BED, am not as well suited as if on the move – it seems too tame – but I can stand it.

My health is tip-top and that accounts for everything being all right. I am getting fat on good living: apples, and Peach Brandy.

You have, no doubt, rec'd an account of the Great Battle before Chattanooga – well I have not had any detail of it at all – but I know Corporal Bragg, as the rebels call him,

was awfully whipped and cut to pieces. I had a grand run of the armies on Sunday before the battle from a signal sta [sic] on Raccoon Mts, could see the whole rebel line their tents and batteries on Mission Ridge. They had a grand position. It looked like an impossibility to drive them from it. But old US done it and the result is that the Confederacy has gone up. During the battle a detachment from different brigades, the 4th Michigan being one, under Col Long crossed the Tennessee above Chattanooga and more than slayed the RR to Knoxville, cut the telegraph, thus destroying all communications between Bragg and Longstreet and forever keeping them apart. We staid [sic] at Cleveland, the junction between the Eastern and Ga RR with the road to Chattanooga, a couple of days. Burnt a train of wagons for them, loaded with QM's stores and sutter's [sic] goods – Rebel uniforms were at a great discount I tell you. Over 200 prisoners and between 4 and 500 of the best of their mules. Since then we have been bothering Longstreet, chased his train over the Alleghaney [sic] Mountains into N.C. but did not get it. They had too much the start of us. Had a hard trip over the mts but found plenty to eat over there and lots of Union people.

The 4th Michigan is now doing courier duty between Charleston and Chattanooga. I am stationed 6 miles from Cleveland. There is some rebels [illegible] at Benton, 15 miles from here, but I don't anticipate any trouble. I keep a good lookout for them.

Don't think about seeing me for I can't see anything that is the least encouraging on that score. I haven't had a letter or paper since the middle of Nov.

Write Soon. I will write often now – if I stay here.

Love to all
Albert

Morrison's Courier Station Tennessee

Thursday Dec 24th 1863

Dear Uncle

I am enjoying good health, have plenty to eat, roast turkey for dinner today, sleep in a bed, smoke 'Confederate' tobacco, and expect to be gobbled every day – "to be gobbled or not to be gobbled" is now the question, the momentous question at issue. I have taken the negative and if the "rebs" don't Take me, think I shall come out ahead.

I am on Courier duty posted between Charleston and Cleveland at a farmhouse. The 4th Michigan is strung out from Chattanooga to Calhoun on Hiawasse River. 40 miles

away along the line of the Knoxville RR. We are all exposed to "raids" at any time by the enemy. I came very near being captured – went down to get my horse shod, had left one of my men at the shop, about 5 minutes when they charged in captured him and horse drove the Couriers away and got 2 or 3 of our rifles, revolvers and blankets – when getting scared they run back, leaving a man shot thro' [sic] the lungs. We had one wounded buddy, both are alive yet. We are not strong enough to fight them so we keep ready to run at a moment's warning. Expect them to dash on me next.

I have not heard one word from home since I left Marysville, Ala Nov 17th. Sent some money home the 19th and wrote a letter about the 23rd since which time have had no time until within a few days since on this duty. The people here are nearly all Union – still there are some Bitter Rebels. I know not how long we will be kept here. News I have none. I know that we are all right. The Battle at Chattanooga has decided, in my mind at least, that the war cannot last another year. Do not be impatient. I have seen some editorials in Northern Papers asking why we do not press on and force battle and bring the thing to a close at once. They don't know what they are talking about. If they had seen the poor barefooted soldier, half-naked, marching from Vicksburg to the Tennessee fighting the great battle at Missionary Ridge their coming to Knoxville and driving out Longstreet. If they had seen him on the frozen hubs – or better had been in his place, they would not ask WHY? They would know that they are not only foolish but wicked. The soldier must have some rest, he must have shoes, he must have clothes. Let them go into camp a few weeks, get them shoes, get them clothes, and plenty to eat, let them recruit a little, and then they chafe, if you keep them back. Let the Patriot be patient and all will be right.

Tonight is Christmas Eve but it is not the Home Christmas to me. I trust I may meet you next Christmas in Peace.

Give my love to all and
Remember your nephew,
Albert

Morrison's Courier Station, E Tenn

Thursday December 24th 1863

Dear Folks all

I again sit down to tell you that my health remains the same. It is rather dull and lonesome, otherwise we are enjoying soldier's life well. Still I had something to enliven

the time on Tuesday and you may congratulate me on my good luck; that I am not now on my way to Richmond – that delightful place for poor Union Soldiers. I am now stationed six miles from Cleveland. I went up there Tuesday, took a man with me, to get my horse shod. I took two men with me instead of one. There is a Station in charge of a lieutenant. He had about 25 men. It is a very exposed point and subject to raid by the rebels. Citizens had told Redtelyon that they would certainly surprise him. The pickets had been fired on several times; but, for the last few days, everything had been quiet – no disturbance and I thought there was no danger. It was a beautiful day, warm as summer. I had just left the Blacksmith shop and my two men there and reached the building occupied by the Couriers, tied my horse, leisurely lit my pipe and commenced smoking, when I heard the darndest yelling that ever issued from any human being – apparently from a thousand in the direction of the Dalton Road. I sprung for my horse, a picket came flying and told us the Rebels were on us in strong force. The yelling came like the wind and by the time I had mounted, they wheeled the corner by the Court House about 30 rods away and I blazed away with my pistol and some of the boys fired which checked them a short time until the boys had mounted their horses – most of them with only a halter – the lieut [sic] thinking there was no use of trying to stand. We moved away slowly firing at them as they came up. They did not expect we would fight them and seeing we were not disposed to run they got frightened and some of the citizens union, telling them they had better get out as quick as they could for we had reinforcements, they skeddaled [sic] back about as fast as they came in. They got some of our guns out of the building and blankets. They left one man shot through and we had a man wounded. Both are alive yet. There was 75 came in town and they had a reserve of 100 out in the woods. One of my men at the shop got away – the other was captured. He was one of my best men named Broman

We came back and held the place until a company of 80 men came from Charleston. Col Long's He'd Qrs [sic] to reinforce us. As a courier was sent immediately after they had surprised us – 11 miles – They evaded the picket and came very near cutting them off. Just came in ahead of them, consequently, had no warning at all – this route is very much exposed. We are liable to be surprised and captured at any time. I have only ten men and cannot keep pickets out far enough to give much warning. So don't be surprised if I go to Richmond, but rest assured, I am not going if I can help it. I am in a good house and have all I want – Roast Turkey for dinner.

Write to your,
Albert

Courier Station East Tennessee

January 1st 1864

Dear Father

I am still doing courier duty and am as well as usual – it is a clear cold and windy day – The ground is frozen quite hard. We lack snow to make it [sic] seem like New Year's. I have been out to the wood pile chopping wood. I came near freezing my ears off, too. The people in this country use fireplaces altogether – don't know what a stove is hardly, they are about 50 years behind the times – but they are clever and hospitable and UNION through and through. A man by the name of Burton brought us a basket-full of cold chicken biscuit, cake and pies this morning as a present. It came very acceptable to the boys – we gave him a lot of coffee and sugar a great handy for a person to have in this country. Some families here have a son in the Federal Army and one also in the Rebel Army. It is no uncommon thing to see a father staunch Union and a son strong rebel. It is a bad thing to make the best of it, when one army holds the country awhile and then the other. It gives the little neighborhood jealousies and spites a chance to revenge each other. Great time to settle old scores. There are always enough mean ones you know to take advantage of such things on both sides. Makes a very unpleasant State of Society.

We Have not been disturbed yet at our station. There was a large train of wagons went up the valley to Knoxville last Sunday. Wheeler, who has been raising ned' [sic] with us all the time at Cleveland, heard of it and the wagons were only guarded by about 250 infantry, thought he would have a Nice Time and get some sugar and coffee for his boys. So he came on after it with about 1500 cavalry and 3 pieces of artillery. The train passed on the same road as the courier line is on, but Wheeler came up the valley road east of us about 1 1/2 miles only. Two little boys from that valley came running over early Monday morning to tell us that the rebel were swarming up the valley (it's a good thing to be among your friends). We saddled up and moved upon a hill nearby where we could see a 1/2 mile in any direction and staid [sic] there all day expecting every minute to see a company of Rebels come dashing after us. We didn't ask any odds of them. They couldn't catch us anyhow – but they didn't come – for they had plenty of fish to fry. Instead of 250 men with the train we happened to have between 4 and 5000 and Col. Long at Calhoun had 500 Cavalry. A dispatch had gone thro' [sic] telling him Wheeler was coming. So they were ready for him. Wheeler's men had said while going up that "Wheeler was H-II on Wagons" and they would get all the sugar and coffee we had. Well – when about 2 miles from Charleston Wheeler saw the train and ordered a charge, the Rebels yelled and plunged forward each man trying to be first. But presently crack! crack! whiz! bang! A line of smoke 200 yds long rises from the grass on their left and the

cedars on their right – ah! my boys what makes you falter! Why don't you go on and sweeten your coffee – they halted amazed, fired a few shots, whirled their horses, run back a quarter of a mile, and formed in line of battle. Their Artillery they thought would be up soon and the wagons would be theirs – but Fate was against them. The artillery was stuck in the mud and didn't come at all. The infantry were moving slowing upon them and at that moment Col Long with his gallant little 500 were seen with sabres [sic] drawn – coming up like the wind – at the command Charge! Boys Charge! The Infantry gave way and Long was upon the like an avalanche, cutting thro' [sic] their line and in their rear the work of death commenced, in 15 minutes we had 140 prisoners and had killed 30. The rebels were flying from the field in every direction terror stricken and helpless they threw away over 400 guns. Wheeler only had 40 men with him when he went back, the rest were scattered. He was never so badly whipped before or so badly misinformed – in fact he got his foot in it sure. Prisoner say he is superseded – they haven't bothered us since.

Love to all, write often, I have not had a word yet since Nov 15
Albert

Morrison's Courier Station

January 4th 1864

Dear Sister

I wrote a letter to Father on New Year's Eve and have written to you several times since here. But thought I would keep on writing and maybe you would get part of them at least. There are troops passing here nearly every day. There has been no disturbance since Wheeler came up and got whipped last Monday at Charleston. He wanted some coffee and sugar so badly but he didn't get any but expect to be relieved from duty here in a day or two as couriers as they are getting up the telegraph wire. It is in working order now as far as Charleston from Knoxville and as fast as that is put up the couriers are taken off. I don't know where we will go but expect to join our own brigade and Division at Marysville or Huntsville Alabama. I must have a bushel of letters by this time at that place and as you may judge am somewhat anxious to go there and besides we are all needing some clothes. I hardly brought a change of shirts with me as we did not expect to be gone more than three or four days when we started. I have got a valise packed full of good clothes back in camp. But they don't do me much good. I'm saving them you know until I come home. The rebels got one of those cotton flannel shirts you sent me and some blankets when they drove us from Cleveland. But I have got enough left yet.

My health is good as long as it is so. I am satisfied when I begin to be sick. Why? Then I shall come home sure. I have had no chance to made an application for leave of absence since we have been out.

Is there many enlistments up north now? How does Uncle Abe's message and Proclamation suit them up there? I'm afraid his Proclamation will work such havoc with the Rebel Army they are deserting all the time. I believe it to be Just The Thing. The citizens down here like it. I think Tennessee will be back in time to vote for the next president. Who do you think will be nominated? Do the people begin to talk about the matter? I go in for Abraham, if he will accept, if not, I will vote for U S Grant. He would be elected if he run and is the Right Kind Of Man All Over.

How did you enjoy yourself Christmas and New Years? Where did you go? Do you have sleighing at Home? How are you getting along at school?

Everything looks encouraging to us down here. Old Jeff has made a call for all men from fifteen to sixty-five to join the army. That I believe is the Last Call he will ever make. The confederacy will bust up. In less than twelve months so must it be.

You can see by this time that I have nothing to write. Only to ask questions. So I will close. Remember me to all my friends. Tell them I am the same as ever. Write often.

Henry A Potter
Lieut [sic] 4th Mich Cav

Headquarters 4th Mich Cav

Near Nashville April 10th 1864

Dear Sister

I rec'd a paper from you this morning a Cincinnati Times but letters are out of the question it appears as I have rec'd but one from P. le. Blaskett since in Nashville.

Our regiment came from Ooltawah [sic] on the cars. At Decherd I stopped for breakfast and who should I see there but George Rawlings of Red House and Cherry fame. He is doing a smashing business at that place. His wife looked as natural as life as well as himself. Had a good meal ended with a real old doughnut twister just such as we have at home.

My health is a little below par, we have had very unpleasant weather, rainy and windy. I have taken cold in some way but it won't last long. I have been down town several times attended the theater saw the great [illegible] and his daughter in the play of the Returned Convict. There is a rumor that we move to Columbia soon. Division Head Qrs [sic] are there now. 38 miles from Nashville. Col Park is in command now and is in good health. Carter has been back some time.

I suppose you are making lots of maple sugar about this time. I wish I could be there to get some today – never mind. Some of these days I'll pop in maybe but I don't think it will be very soon. I believe I am unlucky but maybe all for the best. I rec'd a letter from Elder Bassett, a very good one too. I have not answered it yet. Haven't anything new to write to anyone. My love to you and to all. Write as often as you can to Your Brother

Henry A Potter
Direct
Co H 4th Mich Cav
via Nashville

Columbia Tenn

May 3rd 1864

Dear Father

I rec'd a letter from you a few days ago, but have lost it. Am glad you are all getting well again. I am not very tough at present but am feeling better every day. The regiment and Brigade has moved to the front, I think to Chattanooga as soon as they get where I can rejoin them, I shall do so by rail. Col Park told me he would telegraph me to what place to come. Lt Carter is with me. We are boarding at a [illegible] house, a Mr [sic] Shepard, very nice people especially Mrs [sic] Shepard. We have plenty of music and singing, a piano and plenty of girls. They are all Southern here at heart but they are loyal with the tongue. The girls sing us Southern songs with our permission of course – we allow them to sing what they choose. They have a brother in the Southern Army and they feel a certain sympathy which is natural and right. I think of my own home very often and how anxious you all are and I can but admit that if we had all been born and lived down here that probably we would have been just as these people here are, Rebels. Perhaps you will think I am getting tainted with treason myself but you know me better than that. I do not approve of the course Tennessee has taken. She has brought ruin and desolation [sic] upon herself, but people here are so different. The flower and the pride of

Tennessee is in the Rebel Army. Her educated and enlightened class are there and I believe them to be conscientious. They think, or thought, they were right and now their Pride will not let them come back. I cannot blame the mother or sister who will sympathize for the cause their sons and brothers are engaged in under the circumstances.

You must give up the idea of seeing me before Autumn. I cannot come if my health is good. The army has a great deal to do this summer and I have a company's responsibility to attend to. I cannot come. I believe the rebellion will be ended this summer. I have all confidence in Grant. If Lee outgenerals him on the Potomac and we cannot get Richmond, I believe the Rebels will be recognized by foreign powers. But Grant knows that as well as anybody. This summer will tell the story.

Write as often as you can. Direct as usual via Chattanooga – Albert

Love to all – the stamps prove very acceptable.

Columbia Tenn

May 3rd 1864

Dear Sister

I have written one letter today to Father but I will also write a line to you. We are having very pleasant weather but rather cool. My health is not extra but gaining. Our regiment has moved. They went on last Saturday. I got permission to join them by railroad. I expect they are going to Chattanooga, it will be much easier for me than to march all the way on horseback. I expect to be here nearly a week yet. You must give up all ideas of me coming home this summer. It is impossible. I am in command of a company and am responsible for the Property and now the Army will move soon. You must wait until next autumn.

Columbia is a real pretty place but nearly all Sesech [sic]. Gen Pillows' [sic] place is only about six miles from here. The Rebel. Our government has taken possession of it, I believe. I must close as I am writing nothing of any consequence to anybody. Write as often as you do to your brother

Henry A –

Columbia Tenn

May 7th 1864

Dear Sis

I am going to the front today to join my reg't [sic]. Expect to find it at Chattanooga. Rec'd a telegram last night from Stevenson. Carter is going with me. Don't know when I shall have a chance to write again. There has been some hard fighting already – near Ringold and Dalton. I believe the future of this once great country will be decided this campaign. I am feel as well as ever and am anxious to join my company. Do not look for me home until next Autumn. I shall come then CERTAIN. Give my love to mother dear and father and all my friends at home. Write to me often this summer.

I send you a Recipe for making a Pudding and waffles – the last are excellent.

Love to you
Your affectionate
Brother Albert

The recipe is from Mrs [sic] Shepard where we have been boarding Very nice woman

Camp 4th Michigan Cavalry
Near Villanow, Ga May 13/64

Dear Father

I wrote home last from Columbia, Tenn. And a letter to John [John Gilbert, Ovid, Mich] from Chattanooga on Sunday the 8th. I started from Columbia last Saturday for the front by the RR. Reached Stevenson that night about 2 1/2 pm Staid [sic] at Soldier's Home the only hotel in that place and that was kept free of expense by Uncle Sam. Reached Chattanooga at 5 pm Sunday found our Train then but the regiment was at Lafayette, Ga. Staid [sic] all night and part of Monday when we moved out to Rossville and camped for the night. Tuesday marched all day steady – found the regiment at Lafayette about 5 pm. Got a letter from Amelia. From [there] we marched that night 11 miles over Taylor's Ridge to Villanow where we are now. We had the most terrific storm of rain, thunder, and lightning I ever experienced that night. The column marched very fast which kept the rear on a trot. The darkness was so intense you could not distinguish

ANYTHING above or below. The rain pound down so that gullies were formed even under the horses [sic] feet. The road was rough, steep, and rocky. The poor horses, urged onward by the men and blinded by the vivid and incandescent flashes, were totally bewildered. When the lightning flashed and lit up the path they would make a rush for the horse ahead of them, when the darkness, thick enough to be felt or cut, closed down they would stop like stocks or, still goaded, would pitch blindly into the bush on either side. The road in the morning was strewn with hats, caps, canteens, haversacks, rubber blankets, etc. with here and there a poor horse or mule who had given up the ghost. I cannot tell you – it was the worst night I ever saw of the kind. I have suffered with cold and hunger many nights, but this was ahead in honor and grandeur, in light and blackness in cursing and laughing that I ever saw or hope to see.

We have had no fighting yet, but are kept in readiness to move at a moment's notice. I send this by Dr Armstrong who has a leave of absence granted. There has been more or less cannonading at Dalton for 3 or 4 days. What the result is I do not know. The report is today that the Rebels are evacuating the place. By looking on a map you can see our position. We are SW from Dalton 12 miles. McPherson is reported in Sugar Valley near the RR to Atlanta at Resaca. Gen. Thomas Hd [sic] Qrs [sic] are within a mile of here. Sherman is near here. I believe we have the advantage of them at every point. Last night we recd [sic] a dispatch from Grant that he was within a mile of Richmond with 25,000 prisoners. I can hardly believe it is so. It is too early to speculate much yet. One more week will tell one way or the other. We are expecting to move every moment. I am feeling firstrate [sic].

Love to ALL
Yours Affectionately
Henry A Potter
Lieut [sic] USA

[written at the top of the letter]: (For Morris H Palmer from his grandfather)

Headquarters 4th Mich Cavalry
Camp near Kingston Georgia
Sunday May 22nd AD 1864

Dear Sister

I wrote a letter to John a few days ago telling of our hard fight the other day. But to day [sic] as we are in camp I will write to you. My health is good. We are having very warm weather at present. Our Division moves tomorrow with 20 days rations, as does the whole army. I believe.

I send you some Photographs. My company was in the extreme advance the 18th. I had my men deployed as skirmishers on the left on a hill our attention all directed to the front when a regiment of rebels came charging around to my left and near. Yelling like incarnate fiends. My men saw the situation as soon as I and giving orders to fall back to the road we succeeded in reaching amid a perfect shower of leaden hail which cut the boughs and twigs above my head in every direction. We had run upon two Brigades of Confederate cavalry and with in [sic] 1/2 mile of their permanent camp. The road runs between two hills all the way we had no support (that was the [truth] of it) for four miles back. But were obliged to fight it out alone. They flanked us badly and had us entirely surrounded all but breaking the column. I did not expect to get out without being wounded or captured. But the bullets slighted me that time. Billy Egleston was wounded in the fight near Rome, nothing serious however. Carter is doing well I hear and on his way home. I had one brave sergeant shot dead. I have some of the coolest and bravest men in any Co I ever saw. I saw many a rebel bite the dust from their shots, well-aimed. They lost a Col killed 2nd Georgia.

We are resting today. The Army will advance in a day or two. The Trains are running regular to Kingston four miles north of us. We are about 60 miles from Atlanta. Report says Johnson [sic] will make a stand not far below here. No betting. We will know when we try them. We have flanked them out of Dalton and Resaca, two very strongly fortified places, naturally and artificially and we can flank them again or, if they will fight, we can whip them. They say Johnson [sic] is reported to have said if he got whipped again he would retreat to Atlanta and hoist the stars and stripes.

I have not recd [sic] any letters in a long time. Don't know where they are. You must keep writing.

We are encamped in a good place. Plenty of shade and a beautiful spring of cool water near. Whatever the rebel have preached and said about holding this country against the whole Yankee army. I know one thing, the citizens have lost all faith in them or their army, as is proved by the fine deserted residences, beautiful gardens or flowers, superb carriages and plated harness left in the flight from the 'invader.' I tell you Southern Aristocracy is "played out" after this war is ended this country will be peopled by a different set of people.

Write to your Brother
Love to one and all
Albert

In the field near Dallas Ga.

May 30th 1864

Dear Father

My health is good but we are all about tired out. The Cavalry has never had such had wor [sic] or so much fighting. Our horses have not had a feed of grain in four days. They cannot go much further.

The whole rebel army is in front of us. They are determined to drive us back or die. Night before last they made an assault upon our lines but were repulsed with a loss of 800. Last night there was the most terrific fighting I ever heard. The whole rebel army I should judge was charging upon our lines. I have had no report of the result yet. Only that we held our line firmly. Their loss must be terrible. Such firing and crashing and moaning was never heard. Our Cavalry fell back to the left and we were four miles in the rear when the assault was made. The whole sky was lit up as if the world was on fire. A sullen and continuous roar was heard. The sound would rise and fall like the waves of ocean. The earth fairly trembled and shrank from the shock of hundreds of cannon. I am confident of success. We CANNOT fail. Our Army large, larger than you imagine and our cause is just. From the Potomac I hear nothing. The 4th Mich has been in four fights at Kingston, Rome, Dallas and near Pumpkinvine Creek. We have had one Maj. captured. Our Maj. Robbins wounded, one Capt severely wounded and Lieuts. [sic] Carter and Randolph. Carter is coming home, he is badly wounded, but not fatally. Our loss may be near 75 men, killed, wounded, and missing, 5 officers and about 100 horses.

I have not had but one nights [sic] good rest in a week. We marched all last night. I am tough or I could not stand it.

We are receiving reenforcements [sic] enough to more than make up for their loss. Gens Howard and Johnson were wounded day before yesterday.

The rebels were cut to pieces with grape and canister when they charged. Dallas is full of rebel legs and arms. They were struck in the thigh and bowels mostly.

Joe Johnson says if whipped here he will raise the stars and stripes in Atlanta.

Thomas is the center. McPherson the right. Schofield the left and our cavalry has been on the right.

Our Army is now concentrated.

The war will close in 1864.

Write when you can.

Yours affectionately
Henry A Potter

Camp on the Etowah River

Near Cartersville, Georgia

Sunday June 5th 1864

Dear John

I rec'd your humid letter Friday. It was the first from Ovid in some time. Am sorry to hear of the brave boys of the 27th so many wounded and killed. It is hard. Has George arrived home yet? I suppose Lieut [sic] Carter is home ere this. He was badly hurt, but I hope he will get along well. He fought well and is a brave man. He will tell you of our fighting. Our loss has been 4 officers wounded, 1 captured, and about 50 killed and wounded enlisted men. Billy Egleston was wounded, but slightly in leg. We have a great many horses shot, have been in two fights since Carter was wounded. I have escaped without a scratch so far. Our Cavalry has suffered much. We have been eight days without forage for our horses excepting green wheat which is bad and weakening.

Stoneman went out with 4000 splendidly mounted men. I understand he has but 1500 now. We have been nearly as bad off. My health is good – first rate. I live well now. Have had young potatoes, green peas, strawberries.

If report is true, our forces are now in Marrietta. We are somewhat to the rear now. We had to get back on [illegible] of our horses, are guarding an important Gap in the

Allatoona Mts and protecting the RR. The cars run down to the River now. As soon as the Bridge is built we will have clear sailing to the Chatthoochee [sic].

Everything is working as it should. I believe by the 4th July our Army will be in Atlanta and Grant in Richmond. If we whip them thorough, I hardly think they will concentrate again. They may make a show until after the election in hope that some other man will get into the presidency than Old Abe, but they will be disappointed and this I think will [illegible]

I have rec'd but 3 letters in over a month. Write when you can and tell E M and to write. I am well.

Yours Affectionately
Henry A Potter
Lieutenant