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"Dear Wife" : the Civil War letters of Chester K. Leach

Chester K. Leach

Anna A. Montague Leach

Edward J. Feidner

Samuel B. Hand

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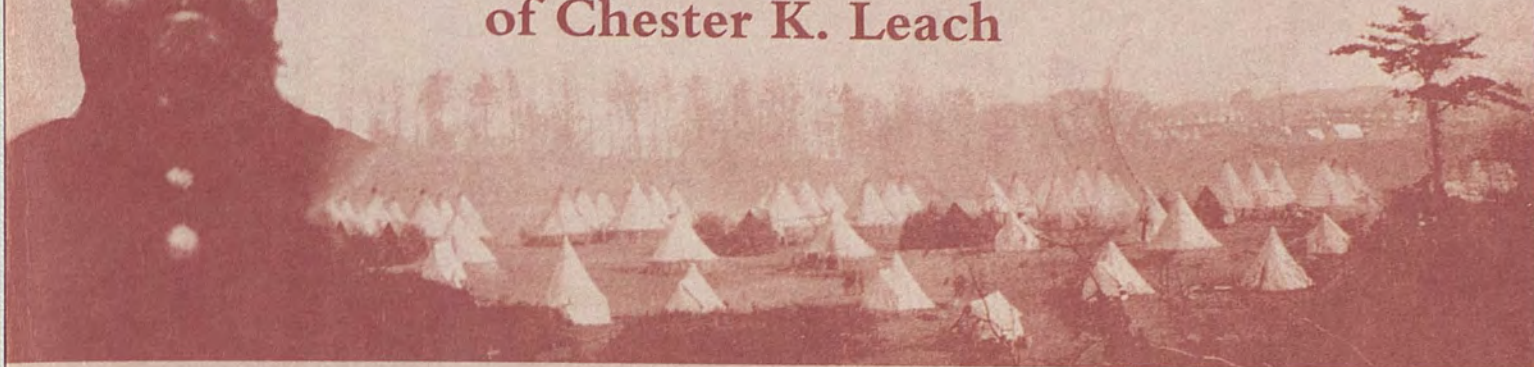
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Authors

Chester K. Leach, Anna A. Montague Leach, Edward J. Feidner, Samuel B. Hand, Connell B. Gallagher, and Jeffrey D. Marshall



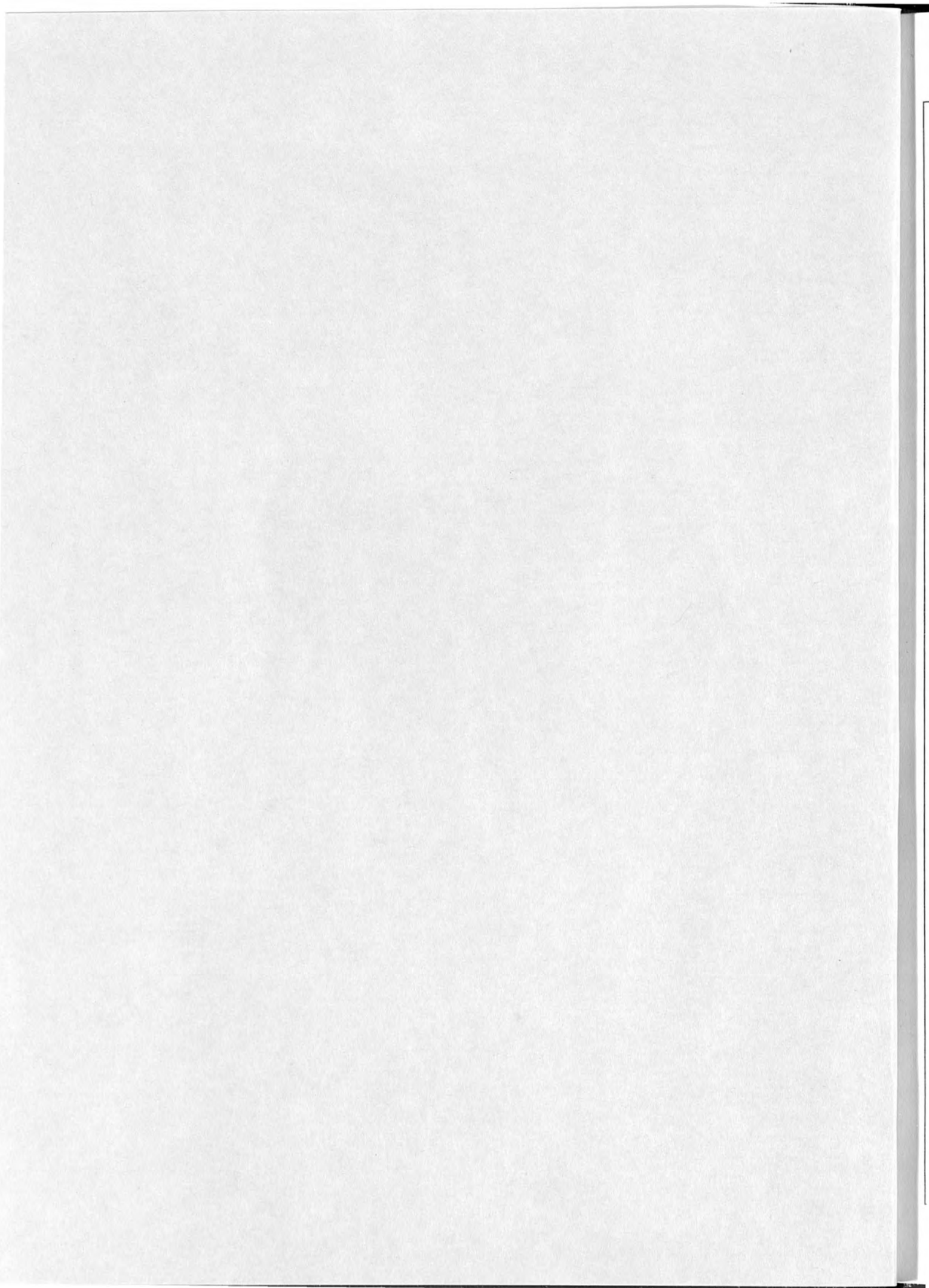
Dear Wife
The Civil War Letters
of Chester K. Leach



OCCASIONAL PAPER #20
Compiled by Edward J. Feidner, Emeritus, Theatre, University of Vermont

CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON VERMONT
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT





Occasional Paper #20

"Dear Wife"

The Civil War Letters of

Chester K. Leach

compiled by

Edward J. Feidner

**Emeritus, Theatre
University of Vermont**



**The Center for Research on Vermont
The University of Vermont
Burlington, Vermont
2002**

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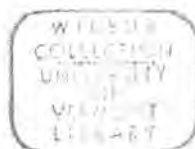
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Photographs from the Leach family album reprinted, courtesy of Edward J. Feidner.



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Foreword

In 1861 men from Chester K. Leach's hometown of Fletcher, Vermont, along with those from the neighboring Franklin County towns of Fairfax and Fairfield, enlisted into what would become Company H of the Second Vermont Volunteer Infantry Regiment. Fletcher, a farming community of 916 souls, was smaller than most Vermont towns. It had declined from 1,084 in the previous census and would continue to decline for another hundred years. Less than half the size of either Fairfax or Fairfield, it contributed so disproportionate a share of recruits as to be referred to locally as the Fletcher Company. Whether it was patriotism, boredom, economic desperation, or a combination that initially propelled Leach and his fellow townsmen toward three years of the bloodiest military engagements in American history, their circumstances were widely replicated throughout Vermont.

Although Civil War veteran and historian George Grenville Benedict's proud boast that Vermont sent more soldiers than any other state in proportion to its population is probably overstatement, its surplus of 697 over all enlistment and draft quotas was the largest of any state. At least one out of every five military-aged Vermont males served at some time, and historian T. D. Seymour Bassett has estimated that "from October 1862 to the end of the war Vermont soldiers on active duty fluctuated between twelve and eighteen thousand." Other common Vermont boasts, most notably that the state provided the Union's bravest troops (epitomized in state lore by General John Sedgwick's order at Gettysburg to "put the Vermonters up front") and that Vermont soldiers suffered proportionately greater casualties than any other northern state, will also doubtless continue to bedevil historians.

Edward J. Feidner's "Dear Wife": The Civil War Letters of Chester K. Leach" attempts to settle none of these questions. Instead the letters document the courage, misery, boredom, hopes, disappointments, fears, and losses that Leach and his companions displayed and endured. That so many from Company H were young men of Fletcher who knew each other's homes and families since before the war adds a special poignancy. The loss of a military comrade was also the loss of a relative, a neighbor, a hired hand. Every misfortune for Company H was a body blow to the small town of Fletcher that doubtless contributed to its decline. Misfortunes occurring in Fletcher were often equally a concern for Company H.

Lieutenant Chester K. Leach was recognized by his peers as a particularly competent man. Yet his residency in a small town imposed limits upon his military and political opportunities that precluded a more visible and more public life. By retrieving Leach's Civil War correspondence to his wife from the University of Vermont archives Edward J. Feidner has succeeded in rescuing Leach from obscurity by providing readers with the lieutenant's articulate and personal recounting of life on and off the battlefield.

SAMUEL B. HAND
PROFESSOR OF HISTORY EMERITUS
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

Foreword

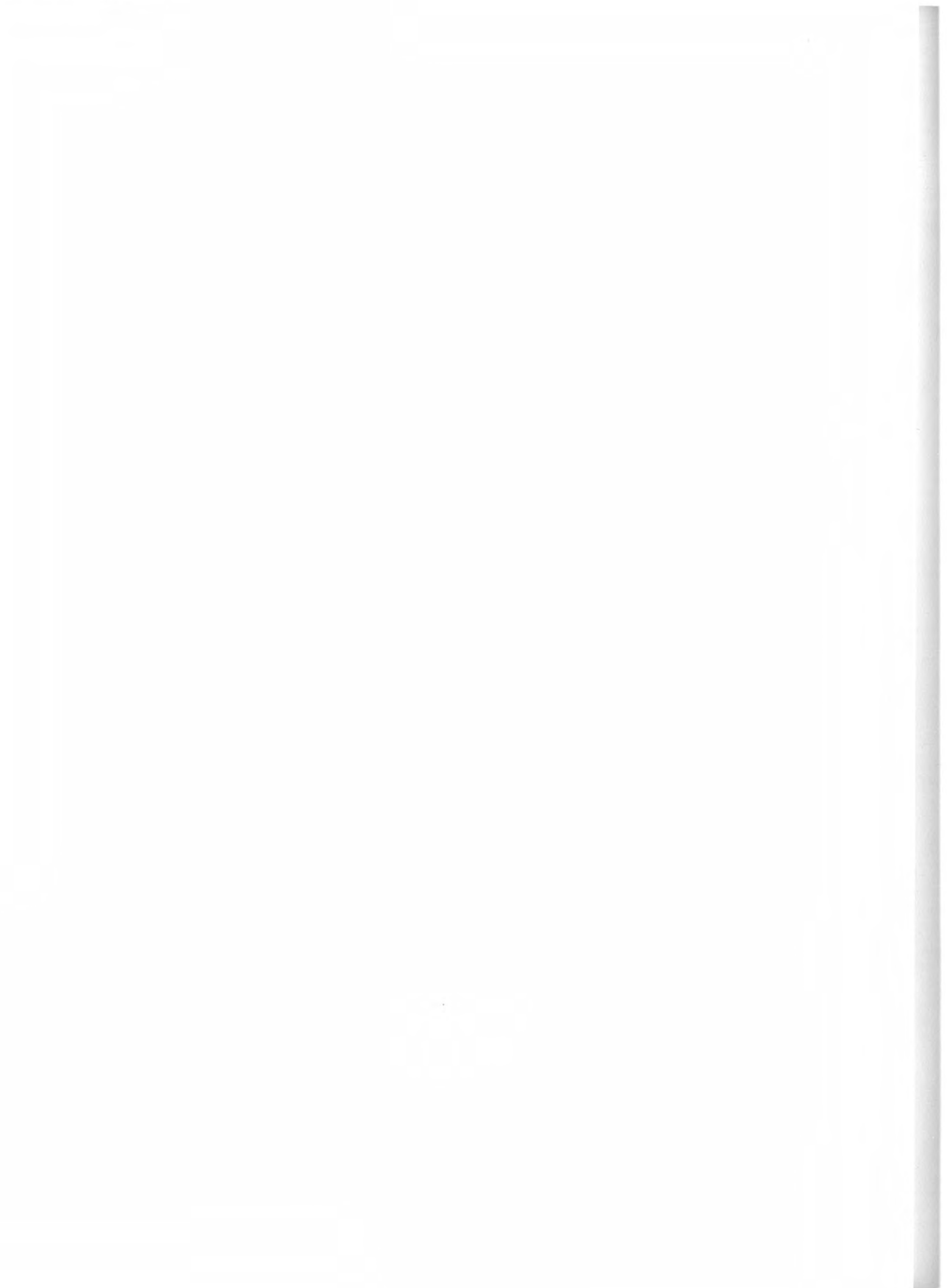
The Chester K. Leach letters to his wife Ann, written from June 1861 to June 1864, comprise one of the finest and most complete accounts of a Vermonter in service during the American Civil War. These letters, mailed weekly from such famous sites as Manassas, Lee's Mill, Antietam, Marye's Heights, the Wilderness, and Spotsylvania, describe camp conditions, military politics, battlefield activities, and Leach's own personal feelings and those of his regiment, the Second Vermont Volunteers. Leach was an officer who was well liked and respected, and this comes across in the 247 beautifully written and detailed letters home that have been transcribed by Edward J. Feidner in "Dear Wife": The Civil War Letters of Chester K. Leach."

The Leach collection, like many of the other thousands of manuscript collections preserved in repositories across the nation, was saved by a combination of circumstances including happenstance and the persistence of the staff at the University of Vermont Libraries. This particular saga unfolded over a period of seven years. One morning in the summer of 1979, a man came to the university library, hoping to sell a box of diaries he had found in the attic of a house just purchased in Fletcher, Vermont. The diaries belonged to Chester K. Leach, a farmer and member of the Vermont Legislature from Franklin County (1878), and covered the years 1865-1908. There were also some papers relating to Leach's service in the Civil War and to activities done on behalf of the town of Fletcher, Vermont. The papers were purchased and added to the library's collection of local history manuscripts.

In the spring of 1980, I gave a talk to the South Burlington Senior Citizens Club, and I asked that participants bring memorabilia for evaluation after my remarks. One lady, Mrs. Pauline Robinson Lamb, handed me a batch of letters tied with string. To my surprise, the letters were written by Chester K. Leach, and they covered the years of his Civil War service. I told Mrs. Lamb about this coincidence and asked that she donate the letters to the library to be preserved with the diaries. She said that she would think about it. On my return to the library, I checked the collection to be sure it was the same individual, and I wrote a follow-up letter pressing our interest in adding the letters. Four years and many collections later, I received a phone call one evening at home. Answering "Hello," I heard a small voice say, "You can have the letters." There was dead silence until my mind clicked back to April 1980. These were the Chester K. Leach letters! I visited Mrs. Lamb the next day and took custody of the wonderful Civil War letters reproduced here, and I mailed her a deed of gift to seal the bargain. Two years passed without response, but we went ahead and processed the collection as our own.

In 1985 Edward Feidner came to the library to show me an interesting photograph album he had purchased at auction in St. Albans, Vermont. He asked if I had heard of Chester Leach. I replied, "Chester K. Leach?" He was taken aback by the familiarity I had with our holdings. I related this extraordinary story, and Feidner's interest was piqued enough to look at the collection and later to undertake the considerable task of transcribing the letters. By the way, the library received an executed deed for the collection, but unfortunately this did not happen until a few years later after Mrs. Lamb's death. Her executor found the deed and my letters and sent the whole to me, thereby ensuring that this important collection would be preserved intact for future generations.

CONNELL B. GALLAGHER
LIBRARY DIRECTOR FOR RESEARCH COLLECTIONS
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT



Introduction

On June 20, 1861, the Second Regiment of Vermont Volunteer Infantry was mustered into the United States' service. It had been organized in Burlington, Vermont, under the authorization of a special session of the Vermont Legislature, which had approved a record \$1 million as Vermont's contribution to the war effort. The regiment consisted of companies formed in a number of communities throughout the state. The tiny farming town of Fletcher combined with the equally small towns of Fairfield and Fairfax to send forth the Fletcher Company, which chose two Fletcherites as its lieutenants.

Chester K. Leach, thirty-one years old, married, and the father of two, served as first lieutenant during the entire three years of his commitment. Leach was a farmer, who had developed his land on the rocky slopes of Leach Hill in Fletcher. He was interested in village, town, and state affairs, serving the town of Fletcher as constable, justice of the peace, selectman, member of the school board, and state senator, representing the county of Franklin in the legislature in 1878. From June 9, 1861, to June 26, 1864, Leach wrote to his wife a series of 237 letters. The letters were carefully preserved by his wife, Ann, and upon his return from the service, Leach transcribed most of the letters into a copybook, with the intention of writing the history of Company H—the Fletcher Company—of the Second Vermont Volunteer Infantry Regiment. Leach never managed to write his history of the company, but he passed the letters on to his daughter, Zelia, and she in turn left them to her daughter, Pauline, and thence to Special Collections in the Bailey/Howe Library of the University of Vermont.

The letters are important in that Leach wrote not only about the battles of the war, which included every major engagement of the Army of the Potomac from the first battle of Bull Run, July 21, 1861, through the battle of Cold Harbor, Virginia, June 1–12, 1864, but also of the day-and-night tedium of the army in winter and summer quarters on the banks of the Potomac. The correspondence also presents his keen awareness of the life and activities of his family, relatives, friends, and neighbors in the towns of Fletcher, Fairfax, Fairfield, Georgia, and Cambridge, Vermont. His schooling ended at the eighth grade in the one-room schools of Fletcher and Fairfield, but his letters reveal excellent penmanship, spelling, and the ability to write in clear, precise language. He displays a dry Vermont humor at the same time that he expresses his hard, cold awareness of the inevitability of the life process ending in death either from disease or the fate of the battlefield. In the midst of battle, he was able to write of setting out the young apple trees in the orchard at home. He was to witness and write of the death of a brother from typhoid fever within a month of the time that Leach had enlisted him into the company, and to bear upon his conscience the knowledge that he must send the body home to four children still mourning the death of their mother but a short time before. He wrote of the long marches in mud and dust up and down the peninsula as well as the good times and bad times among his fellow soldiers whom the *Burlington Daily Free Press* called "the Yeomanry of Vermont, the brawn and sinew of the state, going into the contest with a full understanding of the issue, and a determination to sustain the reputation of the Green Mountain Boys, as fighting men."

The letters tell the story and need but little annotation. A "Who's Who" and photographs from the Leach family album are appended to the letters to help identify the people who appear in the letters and their relationship to Ann and Chester. These resources, taken together, should enable the reader to form a clear picture of this one small company of men, hailing from several small villages in Vermont, and their efforts to answer their country's call, ever mindful of the loved ones at home on the farms of Fletcher, Fairfax, and Cambridge.

The correspondence has been transcribed with few emendations and contains 247 letters from Leach and a number from his brother-in-law, Hollis Montague, fifer musician in the company. Montague was Ann Leach's younger brother and obviously a close friend. Other letter writers include William Leach, Chester's brother whom he recruited

for the Fletcher company, and Jane Montague Chase, Ann's sister and wife of Zina Goldthwaite Chase, who is mentioned frequently in Leach's letters. Chase had joined the company at the outset, when it was formed in Fletcher, but he was released for health reasons before it joined the regiment at Camp Underwood in Burlington.

The letters are presented chronologically—essentially as Chester Leach ordered them after the war.

EDWARD J. FEIDNER
PROFESSOR OF THEATRE EMERITUS
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

Publisher's Note

Every publication is a labor of love, and this description is particularly apt when applied to the present volume. The story begins with Chester Leach and his dear wife Ann. Thanks to Chester's meticulous accounts of his time in the service of the Army of the Potomac, we can see him clearly as he writes faithfully to Ann, whether squatting near the fire in the cold Virginia winter nights or beset by mud and rain or the steamy southern climate, bringing writing materials and precious little besides on marches and numerous hard-fought campaigns.

Although Ann's voice is not present, it is by no means silent for we hear the echoes of her constant love and concern for her husband in the responses he makes to her anxious questions throughout the three years of their correspondence. While the tone of Chester's letters is often matter of fact, his own love and concern for his wife and children are clearly paramount in his thoughts. His letters just as clearly reveal his view of his wife as an equal and a partner as she tends to the needs of their farm and family during his long absence from home.

Our tale of love and labor does not end with the Leaches but continues into the present day with the indefatigable efforts of Edward J. Feidner and his wife Mary. By transcribing Chester's letters and contributing the photographs to this volume, they have brought Chester, his family, and his fellow soldiers to life for the reader. Moreover, Edward Feidner's compilation of information about the people who figure in the correspondence—the "Who's Who" section—adds immeasurably to our understanding of Chester's writings.

A number of people have lent their considerable talents to this project and deserve special thanks. The cooperation and helpfulness of the staff of the Special Collections Department at the University of Vermont were invaluable, especially the assistance of Connell Gallagher, Jeffrey Marshall, Prudence Doherty, and Ingrid Bower. Liza Kiesler of the Center for Research on Vermont designed the cover and the section of photographs and contributed her own artwork to the cover (basing her drawing on a house that stands near the Leach property in Fletcher). Steve Chant of the University of Vermont's Print & Mail Center gave generously of his time and efforts to create faithful reproductions of the cover design and photographs. Kelly Dutra of the Center for Research on Vermont helped proofread, commented on design matters, and was responsible for replicating the bulk of the publication. Ryan Wright and Mousa Ishaq of IBM Corporation offered timely technical assistance. Last but by no means least, this publication would not have been possible without the generous assistance of Wolfgang and Barbara Mieder to whom we owe a large measure of gratitude.

One final note: We have sought to reproduce Chester Leach's letters as faithfully as possible. Because they form such a large part of the publication, however, we have at times modernized capitalization and punctuation for the convenience of the modern reader.

PAUL ESCHHOLZ
KRISTIN PETERSON-ISHAQ
THE CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON VERMONT

A soldier is a sort of prisoner at best & not to be allowed to hear from home or be heard from at home would be like double barring him in.

—Chester K. Leach



Chester K. Leach



Anna A. (Montague) Leach

Camp Underwood

Sunday Morning

June 9th [1861]

Ann I will try and write you a few lines this morning and first of all I am well and all are well but Enos Fletcher.* We arrived here about noon on Friday and took quarters. We are the 6th Co in the regiment. It has been fine weather so far and all goes smoothly. I suppose you will be anxious to know how we fare. Well pretty well. We [have] meat an[d] beans, potatoes (rather poor), good bread, butter and coffee twice a day. We eat in mechanics hall tin plates, knives and forks, spoons, tin cups for coffee, which is brought to the table in sheet iron pails, hot, sugared & sweetened eatables set on the table in tin pans. We march to the table in two ranks and open ranks and take each side of the table. When we eat we sit standing. we have all we want to eat (this before breakfast).

We got our over coats Friday night. They are grey fulled cloth, long with a cape, and a coarse blanket, about one yard & a half square and a rubber blanket about as long & half as wide, & last night we got our caps, & we Officers were measured for our uniforms.

The orders while in Camp: Reveille, call at 5[:]; roll call, police call 5½; Surgeon 6½; breakfast 7; Squad drill 7½ to 8½; guard mounting 9; Battalion drill 10 to 12; Dinner 1; Company drill 2½ to 3½; dress parrade 6 ½; tattoo 9; 10 minutes past 9 lights out except in commissioned officers tents.

I have partly engaged a boy as servant. His name is Cullen Aubury he is a smart looking boy, about 15 years old. I saw his mother and married sister yesterday.

I have not been off from the ground[s] since I came here. As I am writing they are fitting out a company with caps in the rear of our tent by the Cols tent.

I have seen Philander Reed saw him first as we came on the ground. He was on guard. The guard is on duty 24 hours, 2 hours on & 2 hours off. I am captain of the guard from 9 O Clock till nine tomorrow. I dont know what my duties will be. It is now half past 8.

Our uniforms and equipments are going to be furnished us by the state.

Our shirts have just arrived.

Two companies were inspected by the United States officers yesterday & the rest will be inspected tomorrow. I cannot tell how long we shall remain here, probably not a week longer they are fitting out as fast as possible.

Monday Morning I have been on duty since yesterday morning at 9 O Clock slept perhaps 15 minutes have put as much as 25 under guard.

If you come out come the fore part of the week.

this from your husband

C K Leach

*Biographical information about many of the people who figure in Chester Leach's letters may be found in the "Who's Who" in the back of this publication. In addition, photographs of a number of these individuals comprise the "Leach Family Album" section that follows the "Who's Who."

Camp Underwood June 11th 1861

Ann

I received a letter from you just now by Emerson (all well). You want to know where to direct letters & if they are read (Camp Underwood Burlington Vt this last) Lieut. C. K. Leach, Company H. Letters are not read as yet. We received some matrasses last night, so I want you to send some sheets by some one if you can if not send them by express. We got our swords last night, sash and belt too. I did not go to bed last night till twelve O.C. The boys kept running the guard so the Col ordered a roll call of Cos between 11 & 12. Larabee & Walter Chase in our Co were absent. They got into the guard house before morn. Send another pillow case if there is not one in the trunk. Dont worry yourself about me for they are providing everything to make us comfortable. We have a table, Chairs & stationery is found. There is a must[er?] in our company & I dont know how it will end.

Yours truly
C K Leach

Washington June 27th /61

Dear Ann

I take the first opportunity to write to you since we left Burlington. I am well but rather old after a journey of 3 days and two nights. I suppose Zina has told you about our journey to NY. We crossed the river to Jersey City in a boat and there took the Cars. The road was lined with ladies, gentlemen and children till it was dark. We reached Philidelphia about 12 O.C. We crossed the river to Philidelphia on a steamer. The wharf was lined with people. We marched from the wharf a short distance & were furnished with a good supper by the citizens of the place. We must have been in Philidelphia an hour & a half. We reached Perrysville in Md 15 minutes past six Wednesday morning & the cars were run on a boat & we were ferried about 40 rods. Here was the first soldiers we saw stationed on the road. After that every bridge was protected by troops. Reached Baltimore half past nine A.M. Wednesday and marched about a mile through the streets to another depot. The streets were crowded with people but there was no cheering or waving of handkerchiefs but they kept quiet & peaceable & I guess they had better be for there is three regiments encamped just outside of the city one from Maryland, one from Massachusetts & one from NY. We left Baltimore at eleven and did not stop again only to wood & water till we got to Washington which place we reached about 2½ O Clock. We got some dinner about 4 which consisted of Bakers bread & cold boiled pork which answered for supper. After dinner, we marched about ¾ of a mile & pitched our tents. We have a good camp ground, but we have hardly got organized yet. There is 2 or 3 regiments Camped within ¼ of a mile & in sight of us. One Co certain is flying Artillery for we saw them out this morning.

John Wheeler has just been here. He belongs to a NH regiment & is encamped about a mile to the north of us. They arrived in Washington last Sunday. I saw tents and heard drums beat this morning in that direction. It is reported that there is 60,000 troops encamped in or near Washington, true or not I dont know.

It is a pretty warm day here today & very pleasant. We had a swelter marching through Baltimore yesterday.

I know not how long we shall remain here but probably some time. Troops are arriving here daily in expectation of an attack. The Country some part of the way was not very inviting, though the houses looked like whitewashed french huts.

Address Company H, Camp Fairbanks, Washington, D. C.

Yours Affectionately
C K Leach

Camp Fairbanks July 2nd 1861

Ann Dear

As I have leasure time I dont know as I can better improve it than by writing to you. We drill from 7 to 9 A.M. & 4 to 6 P.M. so you see our time is not all occupied. My health has been very good since we came here, except that I have had a very hard cold & cough but I think it is a little better today. My bowels are a little out of fix lately but I guess nothing serious. The drum beats for 4 O.C. drill so I must be on hand.

(Evening) There is three or four of our company sick with the measles. Maxfield, and I believe Sam Royce & Monroe Bingham have them, & a number of others are and have been ailing someway. We had a very heavy rain storm last night (Monday) just before dark a thunder shower with wind. The tents were all afloat but the boys went out and got straw so we got along very well.

There is quite a disaffection among the men towards the Col. They think he is rather cross & severe. The most fault I find with him is, that anyone can get no instructions from him, but when his orders come he wants them done right. The companys all went out to target shoot this forenoon marched about a mile. Our old muskets shoot all over the sap works. The drum beats for roll call. (so out I go) (so good bye for tonight)

(Wednesday morning) I have just been to breakfast, fried pork bread & coffee, but I expect to live better before a great while. The Officers are going to mess together & get a tent & stove & hire a cook, buy provisions & live like folks. The Officers draw no rations with the company so I have got to pay the company for my living till we get to going. The officers draw their rations in money. The companys are making quite [good] cooking places in the ground. The earth is a hard, reddish, clayey substance, so they dig a long hole in the ground about two feet deep, & dig arches in the side & holes up through the surface to put in kettles with a chimney in the rear. I presume we dont get any more war news here than you do, except that we can see the regiments as they come in. They are camping on every side of us. There were two or three regiments broke up camp yesterday and went into Virginia, but I think we shall not be moved till better drilled, without occasion calls for it. Well I have just been down to see the capitol, & it is a great building too, it is all solid marble. There is more of a chance of getting lost in it than there is in a City. I mean to go to the navy yard before long. Our old Col is very strict. He has forbidden all selling of eatables around the camp & our Capt was Officer of the day yesterday & he permitted a woman to sell her stuff so the Col has ordered him under arrest today.

I dont know as I have anything more to write today.

Kiss Zelia for me & give my best respects to all. Tell Zina I shall write to him before long but he need not wait. I wrote to Daniel last Sunday.

Ever yours,
C K Leach

Camp Fairbanks
July 8th 1861

Dear Ann

I have just rec'd your letter and seat myself to answer it. I have not been very well for two or three days. Yesterday, Sunday, I had a griping pain by spells in my bowels but am better today. Night before last was the first time I have been [absent] from dress parade. Today I went to the surgeon and got excused from duty to recruit up as I am rather sore across my bowels. None are excused from duty unless excused by the surgeon.

You may believe I was glad to hear from you, & to hear that you were well, & hope the next time I write to be so myself. You wrote about settling with Keyes Lamb. I wrote of going to Marks, of the balance due to Lamb & I guess left it with you. You gave an account of your 4th of July. Well I will give you mine. We had no drill that day & I guess half of the Reg't were passed out, but I remained in Camp all day, and about all I

did was to write to Norman a letter of 2 sheets. But the next day I went down to the Capitol & saw Congress in session.

But the 4th was celebrated in great shape all around here. I waked in the morning to hear the ringing of bells & booming of canon which continued all day.

(Evening) Hollis & I have been down town since writing the above & got a trunk, cost \$2.87½. The streets are filled with soldiers, all sorts & sizes, drunk & sober. I[t] is no job to get drunk here for there are liquor holes in every direction. You must have more rain in Vermont than we do here I guess, for we have had no rain of any consequence only last Monday night when we had a big one. Last Tuesday was the coldest day there has been here since we have been here. It has been warm weather here. We have larger tents than we had in Burlington with a covering over them which keeps them cool. Yesterday there was a building burned about 50 rods from our camp. It was set on fire by some soldiers from another camp. They say it was a woman house. Of course I dont know. There was 2 or 3 of them burned in the city a few days ago. Our regiment has been pretty sickly for about a week past. They most all of them have had a diarrhea. I think it is the water as much as any thing that does it. And then quite [a] number have had the measles, five or six from our Co. have had them but are getting better.

Meeker has been very sick & Smith is sick with a fever I believe. Taking out sick, guard, and mess there is not more than half of the Co left for parade but I think within a week their health will be better.

Well now I will tell you some thing about our living. We have a stove with a shanty over it and tables under tents. We have a cook not a black one but a white one. Our living consists of potatoes, beef, lamb, chickens, bread and butter, eggs, coffee for breakfast, tea for supper, soup occasionally pickled beets, with blackberries most of the time at supper for sauce.

The Lieut Col is boss of the job. He says he thinks it will cost about three dollars a week for man and servant. I paid \$8.50 today. This pays for stove, dishes and board for about a week and three dollars for the future. We draw, self and servant, \$1.50 per day for rations.

Do you see the Comet. I think that is something we can all see at one time.*

I[t] is talked here that Senator Foot is trying to get the 2nd and 3rd regiments stationed in Washington for guards. Of late there has been quite a mooving of troops from here into Virginia. Two regiments that were stationed near & in sight of us are gone.

(Tuesday Morning) There was a rumor among our boys last night that we were going to move today, & I [don't] know but we are, there was no officer of the Day, or guard, appointed last night or this morning. Why I cant tell.

You say Zina wants to know how we like our captain. Well, he is just as good as no captain at all. He has not done more than two days drill since we have been here except he was officer of the day one day. The next day after he was officer of the day, he was put under arrest, it was said for permitting a woman to sell grocerys across the line, but that was not the cause, it was for being intoxicated while on duty. The Col wrote him a letter, which I copied before he got it giving him a choice of two things either to resign his commission or leave off drinking. I believe the Col has his commission which is to be handed over to President Lincoln whenever he does not live up to agreement.

I should like to be in Vt & get some strawberries for I have not seen any this year only when we were coming to Washington. We stopped at Middlebury, we stopped out of the village & some of us got out & picked a few but we have blackberries by paying 8 & 10 cts per quart. The way farming is done here is to fence just what they cultivate the rest all lies common so you can go any where without going in the road or getting over fences. The railroad track is not fenced out, hogs all run in the streets.

*The Great Comet of 1861, which was later named after astronomer John Tebbutt, was reported to have had ca. July 8 a head of first magnitude with a tail up to sixty degrees long (John E. Bortle, *The Bright Comet Chronicles*, 1998), retrieved May 9, 2002, from <http://encke.jpl.nasa.gov/bright_comet.html>.

You inquire if letters are inspected. They are not. You speak about a drill book. We have new ones.

I feel well this morning. My best respects to Nelson & Miriam shall write to them as soon as I can. I have not wrote to Zina yet. Let him see this. Write often for I intend to do the same. My love to all inquiring friends.

From your friend and Husband
C K Leach

[Before the first battle of Bull Run]

July 11th 1861

direct to Washington for there is no P.O. nearer. This is the 4th letter I have written to you since we came to Washington. I have rec'd one but expect one other every day

Dear Wife

I will improve the present opportunity of writing you a few lines for I cannot tell what another day may bring upon us for we are within a days march of the enemys posts & liable to be ordered to march at any moment & there will probably be a brush at Fairfax within a few days unless the rebels retreat. I should have written you a few lines yesterday morning had I not been on guard & was not released till just as we started. My health is good at the present time & I hope this may find you enjoying the same great earthly blessing. I wrote to Zina this morning so I will not rewrite what I then wrote so I have not much news to write except that the bridge that the two Co's were ordered to defend was burned just as they reached there, & another company is ordered out, Co F.

I have just been out to dress parade & will write a few lines more tonight. We have good water here where we are stationed. I went out this morning & picked a very good meal of blackberries, but I dont expect to have many such chances. I had some minute pudding for breakfast, made of flour and meal mixed.

Ann, this may be the last letter that I shall have the opportunity to send for a while, if it happens to be so dont worry yourself at all about me, only tend to things at home. Write as often as convenient for it is very likely that a great many letters will get miscarried for every mail there are letters come to our camp belonging to the 2nd. Regiment of some other State, so be sure & direct plain. I shall write every opportunity I have. Give my love to all Brothers and Sisters & to all enquiring friends & keep a share to yourself. But good Bye

Ever Yours Truly
Chester K Leach

Well Justin I will write you few lines How do you like your school? & are you a good boy at school, if not try & be after this, & be a good boy to your mother too & not get in the habit of swearing, also be a good boy to Zelia (the little darling) for my sake & yours too. Tell your grandmaams good bye for me, & give Zelia a kiss for Father.

Good bye, from your Father

Now a word to Nelson

Dont get discontented & leave but stay & take care of things just as though they were your own, & be as a Father to the children & may you be rewarded tenfold. Give my love to Miriam

from your brother
C K Leach

Friday July 19th 1861

Dear Ann

I sat myself under a tree to answer your letter which I received last Monday, & should have written the next day if I had time, but when I received yours I was two or three miles from camp & did not get back in time to write. I was glad to hear that you were well & that the children were no worse than they were. I am in decent good health & have been since I wrote you last. We have had quite a march for three days. We marched, Tuesday, till about midnight, & then laid us down to rest. Good water has been a missing article since we started. We started on Wednesday about eight O.C. & marched till about noon, (halting occasionally to rest) & then rested two or three hours & then took up a march again till nearly night, where we stoped & staid till yesterday just at night, when we took a march of about 7 or 8 miles. We are now some six or eight miles from Manassus. I know not the force that is in this vicinity, only that it is large. We did not march through Fairfax but took a roundabout way and came in between there and Manassus, while others came direct by Fairfax. There were two men shot in the 5th Maine regt on Wednesday, accidentally. One was knocking off apples with his gun inverted & it caught on a limb & shot him in his leg near his body. He lived 2 or 3 hours. I saw him buried yesterday morning. We passed a deserted Camp of the rebels Wednesday just before night, & when we stoped for the night the men went back & got flour salt saleratus* & a good many cooking utensils. The rebels seemed to have left in a hurry, for there was barrels of flour with the heads knocked in and rolled over, & bags of corn ripped open, & all in like manner. There is no use of my writing war news for two reasons. One is that we get none & the other is you would get it in the papers before you would get a letter, but we expect hot works within a few days at Manassus. There was some skirmishing yesterday in this vicinity but nothing very serious. Samuel Crown was left behind when we left camp. I believe he had the measles. There was quite a number left behind unwell. Hollis with the rest. I think no one would be allowed to go home now under any circumstances, because they are wanted here just now.

I did not pay Berman for sawing those ash staves that he sawed last winter. There was about six hundred of them.

I think you had better send no berrys at present, but crackers & such things would come handy most any time. Our accomodations for cooking when we are in the field are few & far between. Compare the writing with the place to write and call it even.

Ever yours
C K Leach

[*After the first battle of Bull Run*]

You will find two dollars enclosed which is of no use to me here

Alexandria July 23rd 1861

Dear Ann

The last time I wrote I wrote that we expected hot works & I think we have had it, but thanks to God, *some* of us are yet in the land of the living. I suppose it will be good news to you to know that I am unhurt, but still there are a number missing from our company. Woodbury was wounded in the arm, which was amputated & Streeter in the knee. (But to the particulars) We were ordered to march Saturday the 20th at 6 P.M. but the orders were countermanded & set at 2 O.C. Sunday morning. We were up at half past one & ready to march but there being so many to move it was six O Clock before we got fairly started & it was 12 O Clock or more when we reached the battle ground, & we were all worn out with fatigue & the want of water but we did the best we could. In marching to our place of attack we had to pass over an elevation of ground

*Possibly soda saleratus, i.e., baking soda.

where the canon balls played upon us pretty hard. Woodbury was wounded at this place with a grape shot or rifle ball. One of our color guard was wounded in the knee about the same time by a canon ball. Our brigade made a stand an hour or an hour and a half when a retreat was ordered. The rebels canons were entrenched & their men were concealed in the woods so that we had no chance at all. Some of the wounded were left behind, what their fate is I cannot tell report is that they were all killed, but that is uncertain.

Our Capt did not reach the battle ground at all & after passing where the canon balls raked us so hard Case failed up so there was no officer when we made a stand but me with our company. Our boys feel almost disgraced by the battle. There must be as many as one hundred missing from our reg't.

Some are killed, some wounded and left behind & some probably taken prisoners. Some six or eight from our company are missing but I believe none from Fletcher. It was a disgraceful affair the whole of it. Nearly all of our baggage is lost, & a great many of our guns & almost every thing we had with us.

I have thought a great many times that I was tired but I never knew what it was to be tired before. When we came off the field, I could hardly stand up, but we were 8 or 10 miles from our camp. I reached there about 10 O.C. P.M. & had been there about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour when we were ordered to retreat to Alexandria which place we reached about eleven A.M. on Monday making a march of about 40 or 50 miles & without any rest for about 36 hours. I think some of the missing will probably get in yet.

Write as soon as you get this.

Ever yours
C K Leach

Virginia July 27th 1861

Dear Ann

I seat myself this Saturday eve just at sundown to write you a few lines in answer to your letter which I have just received, which you commenced last Sunday & mailed on Wednesday. I am in good health & have been of late & hope the same will continue. I was glad to hear from you as I always am. I had begun to think that I was never going to have any letters. Up to day before yesterday (Thursday) I had only received two letters from you, but then I received a letter from you & one from Zina & tonight I got another from you & one from Daniel. Daniels letter was dated last Sunday. He had been to Normans, & said Norman was going to write the same day, but I have received no letter from him yet, but shall look for one every day.

We have a daily mail when we are in our present quarters. We are on our first camp ground in Virginia. We came back here on Thursday, we had no tents the first night. We now have peaked topped tents.

I doubt not when you were all writing last Sunday that little did you picture to yourselves the scene that was being enacted by those to whom you were [writing] yourselves & to me it seems more like dream than like a stern reality, but such it seems to have been. It did not seem much like Sunday to me. All Sundays are similar to other days in the military line, perhaps a little more quiet. We have four unaccounted for as yet in our Company. Woodbury we have heard was north of here among some of our Regiments. I hope for his & his wifes sake it may be so. Streeter who was wounded in the legs we have heard nothing from. Alonzo Parris we have heard nothing from, whether wounded, killed or unhurt I dont know, & Norman Dunbar we have heard is at Washington in the Hospital, he is unwell & homesick.

Our Regiment was badly scattered they have been coming in one by one all the week. The orderly of Co E came in yesterday, & one of Co C came in dressed in citizens clothes, they took him two or three times but he got away from them. I think others will yet come to light. The loss in our regiment is not near as large as was at first feared. There were but a very few killed.

I will tell you what a misfortune I had the other day. When we went to Alexandria we stoped at our present Camp ground & got our trunks which were left here when we left, & the first night we stoped at the court house & the next day we changed quarters but left our trunks a short time, & when we went after them

mine was broken open & all my paper, envelopes, gloves, handkerchiefs needlebook & contents, hair brush, & I think one or two pairs of socks. How many fine shirts I had I dont know but I have 2 left & one collar. I care most about my needlebook for it cannot be replaced. They took two volumes of U.S. Infantry tactics & my pocket testament hope it will do them some good. (Sunday Morning) I will now try & finish this out. We received our pay day before yesterday (Friday) up to the first of July. I received for myself and servant \$40.64. I have now about \$50. Our cook Thayer starts for home today or tomorrow & I think I shall send some money home by him. I may do it before finishing this, if so I will inform you, & the amount. I think I had rather send gold that way than in a letter. Cases servant (Cady) has had the measles, he has got through the war & is going home, the Col's servant is going home too. A great many of the sick and wounded are going home on furloughs. Capt Todd of Co C, & Lieut Sharply have got furloughs.

About Robert Fultons account if Zina wants the work and can get it any better than you, let him have it. The sugar was like all of our sugar and the book will tell the price. I guess I will give you my position in writing. Well it is this, squatted on the ground, my legs curled up and writing on my trunk a very good position only I have to shift around pretty often on account of aches.

The 3rd Regt have mooved this side of the river, Sawyer saw them yesterday. The Capt, Case & Fletchers have gone to see them today. I think I shall go some day. I generally take the last chance.

It is going to be a hot day today. It has been very pleasant weather here this summer. Last Monday was a rainy day. It began to rain before we reached Alexandria on our retreat from Manassas & rained all day.

That is about all the rain there has been here since the night we first came to this place, when we had a very good thunder shower. You want to know about our going dinnerless & supperless at that time. I dont know but some did. I bought some cookies on the boat & at night had some bread & sugar, about as good as we have many times.

We have only bread & coffee some times withing buying it at the sutlers.*

I have just sent \$21.22 by Thayer to you, one twenty dollar gold piece, one gold dollar & two ten cent pieces & two cents, use the \$20, but keep the \$1.00 & give the others to the children. Write often for when you are placed in my situation you will know the value of a word from home.

This from your Husband
C K Leach

Bush Hill Virginia August 2nd 1861

Dear Ann

I did not intend to write you in answer to your letter which I received last night, but to lay in camp with nothing to do is rather dull business. I write to some one about every day the past week. Some one goes from here to Washington about every day with the mail & brings it back. I guess there is a bushel of letters goes from this Regt every day, that is more than comes in. It is likely you have noticed that some of the letters are franked, at present I pay no postage. The one that goes with the mail gets some of our Senators to frank them. Probably after Congress adjourns we shall have to pay postage.

When you write again I want you should write whether you received a letter with two one dollars bills in it. I think you must have got it before you wrote last, but probably forgot to mention it also write whether you receive any money by Thayer & the amount. Well Ann I have seen a sight to day such as I never saw before nor ever expected to see, & I cant say that I ever want to see another of the like sort. That is, I saw a man hung. Just after I had commenced writing, orders came to camp that we must be ready at half past

*The sutler, an army camp follower, peddled provisions to the soldiers, although they often complained that sutlers' goods were overpriced and of inferior quality.

one P.M. to march to Fort Ellsworth to see a man executed for the crime of murder. So at the time we were formed in line ready to march, The Capt & Case preferred not to go & got excused so I took command of our company. Fort Ellsworth is situated on the main road from here to Alexandria about three miles from here. We had a regular sweat of it going to the Fort & back for it has been the hottest day we have had yet. We arrived at the place of execution about three O Clock. We were the 2nd Regt on the ground, there must have been some six to ten thousand soldiers to witness the execution. At 5 minutes past 4 O Clock the prisoner was led on the platform, and 5 minutes after he was dropped. He was a man between 30 & 40 years of age, of the 2nd N H Reg't I think, though there are conflicting reports about the Reg't. He marched on the platform perfectly calm, attended only by the executioner. When the rope was put over his head he took his own cap off and replaced it, & put his hands behind him to be tied. I think neither the prisoner nor the executioner spoke a word after they mounted the scaffold. A handkerchief was tied over his face, & then a trap door in the platform dropped & he was done with this world. From the position we occupied we could not see him after he dropped, he dropped about two feet, think he did not struggle much by the looks of the rope. I dont know the particulars of his crime more than this, a woman of ill fame got his money & he shot her, report is among our boys that he paid her before hand & then she run. Probably you will get a correct account in the papers.

I will give you a little sketch of the Fort. It is named in honor of Col Ellsworth who was killed in Alexandria. It is situated on an elevation of ground in the rear of Alexandria, & commands it & also the river below, & finally it is covered with guns on every side. It contains I should think two acres, & is surrounded by a ditch 10 or 12 feet deep & wide & on the outside of this are large bushes with the tops of the limbs cut off[f] & peaked pointing outward & made fast to the ground at the butts. It is a strong place for a small one, the[y] have been increasing its strength of late & cutting trees & leveling walls that were in range of its guns. (Saturday morning) I will try & finish this before the mail goes out, as I dont know certain as it will go tomorrow. I will tell you how ou[r] Co stands in regard to health, those excused from duty yesterday were S. J. Wilcox, L M Bingham, H R Montague, L P Hulburd, thes[e] have had the measles and do not yet able to do duty. They are not much sick but are weak & have no appetite. C W Bingham was sick yesterday but I think is better today. H E Soule was on the sick list yesterday but is not very hard sick. Graves has a bad arm he got it poisoned but is better now.

Fred Marshal & H Maxfield are in the Hospital here. Marshall had a canon ball pass so near him that it most killed him. Maxfield has had a sore throat but was better yesterday, & McCartney is in the Hospital at Alexandria he was wounded in the hip. Mr Ellenwood has been a little sick but is not sick now. Chellis Kinsley was not wounded & guess did not see the battle field. About my washing dont have much to do except shirt & drawers & socks. Those I, or my boy take to the brook & wash them in cold water. My boy is washing some gloves & a handkerchief in hot water this morning. Aubery is a very good boy, dont but I like him as well as I did at first. He is perfectly contented. Cases boy got homesick & went home. Case was perfectly willing he should go. I think we shall all be glad to see some crackers & cheese & the like. We can get cheese here by paying about a shilling per pound, at the sutlers. Everything is high in proportion. They make money! But I shall have to bid you (good bye) for it is about mail time. Got a line from Norman last night, shall answer it tomorrow if possible.

I remain your ever dear husband

C K Leach

[Letter from Sanford Barnes to Zina & Jane Chase]

Write soon

Cleremont-Plantation Aug. 2/61

Dear Friends,

I take the liberty to address you as such though not personally acquainted with the *better half*. Yet I feel a friendly regard for everyone that designs to think kindly of Absent Soldiers. We are all well this morn

(I rec'd yours last night). Our boys from F & vicinity are all here but Woodbury & Parris. Woodbury lost his right arm close to the shoulder. I am not gifted with language to give a suitable description of Bulls Run for all paper reporters have failed to tell the truth concerning the battle. But I can tell what I know. It will be difficult for me to impart to you my ideas as you cannot see the face of the country over which we passed. We started from this place on the 16th at 12 A. M. We were marched & halted alternately till 12 P. M. when we camped for the remainder of the night on a side hill (we had a side hill bed). We were waked at 4 A.M. took a hasty lunch from our haversacks that we carried with us, 3 days rations.

We were marched & halted till noon when we rested in the woods south west of Fairfax Court House. We rested an hour then resumed our "journey in the wilderness" which we continued till about 5 P.M. when we halted & camped for the night within 1 mile of where the rebels had been camped. We visited their camp & such a waste of eatables was wicked. When they found they were so near taken they burned flour, corn bread, pork, beef & tents & etc. We carried some flour & other eatables & cooking utensils to our camp. We fared very well that night. Some killed pigs, some chickens & we cooked them in the tip top of the *Mode*. We stayed here one night & one day till four P.M. We resumed our line of march which we followed till 1 P. M. We then returned to our voluptuous couches on the bare earth, a rubber blanket under & a woolen one over, as we had now arrived within 1½ miles of Centerville. We staid here from the night of the 19th till the morn of the 21st. Our living was not the worst nor the best.

The eventful day of the 21st at last dawned on us. Little did we know what was in store for us. At 1 O Clock A.M. we were aroused & ordered to prepare for a march. We started for Bulls Run but we did not know where we were going now. I tell you if we had we should have been in Vt by this time. We were marched at a very quick time till within 2 miles where we halted for about 1 hour. The cannon were playing vigorously all the while. Soon the orders came for us to forward. We then took a circle around to their rear. In the march we went 2 or 3 miles around. When we got within 2 miles we took double quick to the field of blood. We were ordered to throw our blankets off which we did & soon we heard the balls whistle as near our ears as sounded good or bad. In passing on to the field over which the rebels had retreated our orderly was hit in the arm before we arrived where we *shot*. Some had fallen out from heat, of which Parris was one. Our Capt fell out before. Lieut Case took command till we got most to the scene of action when he fell out from exhaustion. Then the command devolved on Chester K. Leach who did it *nobly too*. He has the unbounded respect & love of all the company. There was but four wounded anyway seriously, two very slightly. Bailey is here all *right*. Has not been *killed* yet though he did not get in with us but got to *Washington*. Orders have just come for us to prepare for company drill. We haint had any since the last time & I cant *tell when*.

Well Ive got around again from drill to be *scribe* once more. We had a good drill under Lieut Leach. Our Col nor Capt were neither of them of any practical benefit in the battle for one was not on the field & the Col was behind a tree. Very many excuses & reasons are given as the reason why we retreated. I do not know why but *we did* & I think twas for want of ammunition for artillery that it first begun: by & by the panic & consternation got in among the teamsters which soon communicated to the officers who ordered a retreat. Our *Col* did order a retreat & he was first to *execute too*.

We had no water that day but such as we took out of *mud puddles* & scarce at that. Virginia is destitute of brooks & springs. All the wells on the way were *minus buckets*. We retreated to our camp this side of Centerville where we started from in the morn, where we stopped for the night as we supposed. But soon after we were *laid out* fast asleep a horseman came in great haste saying we must go to Fairfax as we were being pursued by their *cavalry*. I had not been asleep. Was soon on my feet trying to cheer our tired boys up and try to march. Some said they could not but we soon were all on the way, leaving knapsacks, blankets, overcoats & all but just what we had on our backs. On we came to Fairfax Court House where we halted & laid down to sleep. Laid just ½ hour & were ordered from our camp to another in the woods whither we went, staying about 15 minutes.

Well here we staid for 15 minutes & were ordered to fall into the rear of the Brigade. We did so & never stopped till we reached this camp where we [came] from one week before with far different feelings & expectations from those we entertained then. At ½ past 8 in the morning of the 22nd having been on the march for 36 hours without sleep & but a little to eat & drink we spent a few minutes in looking over our old familiar things & friends that we left in the hospital & vicinity. We staid here about 20 or 30 minutes when news came that we must go to Alexandria but the most joyful news was that we were to ride on the *Rail Road*. We took conveyance & were soon in the city. Were marched to officers head quarters where we sat down for the first time to rest & soon they were nodding all around tho it rained quite hard. We were finally quartered in the Court House where we staid one night and two days. At the second day eve we were marched to the hall over the store in the Mansion House where we stayed till 2 P. M. Thursday when we were marched to Depot. Took the cars & came back here without tents or blankets. But as luck would have it the large tents used as hospital were empty & our Capt for a wonder stirred his *corpse* & secured us a lodging place. We slept as thick as three in a bed.

The next day some old tents & new blankets arrived for us. We live as usual, *beans, meat, sour or bitter* bread. But reports says we are to live better hereafter. I have had a few meals of tomatoes by buying them at 2 cts apiece. They say we are to have more vegetables & fresh meat.

(If you dont get tired of reading this bit of nonsense Ill give up. You have *Patience*.)

Orders were given last night for drills twice a day & we must live better. We were very tired when we got our tents up. We rest now as well as ever we can. Without beds we are to have straw ticks soon.

Our Company are all very well. Dunbar is at Georgetown and Fred Marshall is in the Hospital here. I have not been sick a single day nor lost a roll call. Weigh now 159½ lbs. If there are any particulars you want that I have not written just look in the Papers and you can find most anything you want but the *truth*. Our Capt is about as good as a — stick. He smokes & drinks then drinks & smokes. Then changes the programme smokes & drinks both together. Case is very kind and attentive to the sick. Sawyer is now acting as orderly.

Well I have written more than I ever thought I knew but haint told much news either.

The boys in camp are lying around on the ground in the shade. Some are reading, some playing cards, some cleaning guns. Tis very warm, but not as warm as I expected.

You can do as you please about coming here. We should be very glad to see you & enjoy your company, but dont want you to endure what we have in order to arrive at the honorable positions we have been assigned by the *press*. In all of the notices of the battle our reg't is not mentioned as taking any part in the fight or retreat *but I know we were there* and fired as long as we could. But our guns are poor things. They fell short of the rebels some 5 or 10 rods.

We would like some cheese & sugar & other good things, but we must not tax the generosity of our friends at home too much. Twould cost something to send boxes of Provision here.

We are not full of men in this Co now & whether you & your boys would be accepted by the *powers that be*, I cant say.

I must stop before you get mad. Dont show this to any one.

Yours in bonds of affection

S R Barnes

Aug 3

Write soon direct as before

I offer this to put in a bit of news. I went yesterday to see a man hung for shooting a woman. He was hung at Fort Ellsworth in P.M. yesterday. He was drunk & so was the woman when he shot her two weeks ago. *Served him right.*

All well respects to all

S R B

Bush Hill Virginia Aug 6th 1861

A Word to Ann

How do you do? I should just like to stop in and see. All well I hope. Should like to call in & get a meal & pancakes. We have something here by that name sometimes but they are not the thing. About the sugar. I think it would be a very welcome thing. There is considerable complaint among the boys that they dont get sugar enough. Tell K Bailey that we retreated because we were ordered to & the rest were all retreating before. That is all I know about it.

I wish if you would get the childrens miniatures & send them to me. I want Zelas pretty much. You can have them taken on plates so you can send them in a letter. Have them taken on separate plates.

I am very sorry your neighbor Harriet feels so bad. Hope she will feel better when she gets over it. If you or the children should be dangerously sick just let me know & I will see what I can do about coming home.

(Wednesday morning) The long roll was sounded through the different camps at 4 this morning which means turn out & be prepared. It commenced in the outward camps on the road from Alexandria to Fairfax Court House. We have not yet learned the real cause of the alarm.

I should think it would rain today if I was in Vt. Our Capt is going to resign. He spoke to me about it, had quite a long talk with him. I dont know but my boy will leave me. His mother wants he should come home. He says he dont want to go.

No more at present
C K Leach

Bush Hill Aug 9th 1861

Dear Ann

I received your letter last night which was mailed August 5th, was glad to hear that you were well, but cannot say at this time that I am enjoying perfect good health. Day before yesterday (Wednesday) I believe I had the hardest headache I ever had & I had a hard cough which seemed as though it would tear my head all in pieces. At night I went & stayed where Capt Burnham boards & had a bed all to myself, in the morning my head ache had pretty much left me, but I was weak & sore with a hard cold & cough. I got breakfast with the folks, had toast & warm indian cakes & coffee paid them 50 cts. felt as though it did me that amount of good. The Doctor gave me some physic (extract of senna) to take. I remained through the day yesterday about as in the morning, could not lay down with any comfort because it made me cough the harder. I rested some last night & think I feel a little better today but am not worth much for duty. Our Co is out on picket guard today will not be in till tomorrow unless they are drove in! They are going out three or four miles. There is one Co detailed every day for that duty from this reg't. Co H had the largest mail last night they have ever had. The Fletcher boys all had from one to three. I received one from Emerson & Albert beside yours & one from Zina in Hollis's.

There is no news at all to write, except it is that McDowel reviewed the different regts in these quarters yesterday. Our men have not any shirts & such like yet to replace those lost at Bulls run. A good many have to go without any when they wash theirs, but expect they will have more soon. I have not learned from you yet whether you received those two dollar bills that I sent you, or not. In regard to that \$20, since I sent it I have learned that my boys mother wishes him to come home, & if he goes home he will want some money as his pay which I have not yet received, which will leave me rather short till the next pay day, and no one knows when that will be, & Lieut Case talks of sending some money home. I think if all these things should transpire or be likely to, I will have you let Mrs Case have some money & I will take it of him. If you dont hear anything about it, use the money for anything you want. I am in hopes I shall have enough to pay one note before November. I was glad to hear that Rob had come to help you hay hope it has been good weather,

has been good hay weather here ever since we came here, most too good for comfort. Furloughs are not very easy to be got. The thing run in my head some some days ago & I spoke to the Col about it but he said he guessed I should have to wait a while.

Ever yours C K Leach

Saturday morning Aug 10th

I thought I would write a few words this morning before the mail goes out. There came up a thunder shower about six O.C. last night, which lasted well into the night, had a great deal of heavy thunder. It made me think of our boys that are out on picket guard, hope they may have found some place to shelter themselves.

Got a line last night from Fitz & Webb grocers in N Y informing me that they had forwarded those crackers with the barrel received from Fairfax.

I feel very well this morning except a pretty hard cough.

The Hon. Portus Baxter visited our camp yesterday.

If you please just send me some postage stamps, not but a few at a time. I must close or the mail will leave me.

C K Leach

Georgetown D C Aug 13th, 61

Dear Ann

I seat myself again to write you a few lines in answer to your letter, mailed Aug 9th which I received this morning. Was sorry to hear that you were sick but hope it will prove nothing serious, & that when I hear from you again you may be well. But if you are sick, be sure and write or have someone else.

You can see by the heading of this that we are in new quarters. We had orders by the Col yesterday forenoon to be ready to march after dinner, but owing to Co G being out on picket & not getting in, we did not leave till nearly night. (We are now with the 3rd Regt.) The Col telegraphed to Alexandria for some cars which carried us to that place, & at this time it was about dark. Here just out of the city, we halted for some reason till between 8 & 9 O.C. when we again took up our march up the Potomac on the Virginia side till we reached the long bridge which passes from Washington across the Potomac.

We halted on the bridge till just as it began to grow light in the east, when we again moved on, we rested 2 or 3 hours. We passed over the bridge into Washington, passing Washingtons monument & the Presidents house & continued our march up the river.

We reached this place about 10 this forenoon, when we were provided with a breakfast by the 3rd Regt.

Co H was provided for by the St Albans Co, which is also Co H.

Case and myself were taken in charge by Lieut Cor[a?] of East Fairfield & provided with a breakfast of bread & cheese, coffee & tea & some pie.

After breakfast I lay me down & rested a while, for having done hardly anything for about a week, I felt rather tired & sore. You may believe it was quite a cheering time. Perhaps there was not one but had some friend to shake him. And too it seemed good to [be] with those that are from our own native state. I have not been around amongst them much yet, but who should come spat upon me but Cush Gilbert the same old chick exactly, have not seen Whipple yet.

We are about 7 miles north of Washington near the Potomac by what is called the chain bridge. I suppose we are to keep the rebels from coming into Maryland by this bridge.

It has been a very rainy day here today, a perfect thunder shower some of the time. I have not much more to write as news perhaps the more next time. I direct my letters to Fletcher when I think they will hit the mail & not be delayed otherwise to Fairfax. Just let me know how long my letters are reaching you, yours generally reach me the 3rd day after mailing.

Hoping this may find you well I will bid you good bye for the present

Ever yours

C K Leach

Camp Lyon near Chain Bridge

Aug 14th /61

Brother Zina

I will try & write you a few lines today to let you know that I am well & have not forgotten you. I received a letter from you by Hollis last week but not feeling very well it was hard work to write thus for the delay. We are in perfectly new quarters no resemblance to our old camp at all. We are seven miles above Washington on the east bank of the Potomac so you see we are not now desecrating the sacred soil of Virginia. Our camp fronts to the east with the 3rd Vt on our left & the 6th Md on our right.

The chain bridge crosses the river near the Md Regt. It is a pretty good length bridge crossing the river & canal which runs on this side & some 15 or 20 rods of ground laying between them.

The banks of the river on the Va side are high & steep. On this side only they are not close to the river, the canal runs within the banks. At this end of the bridge our men have a battery placed, & another on high ground nearly against the 3rd Vt Regt besides some field pieces that are stationed here & some small brass guns for scouting purposes. I have not seen the guns at the bridge, only as we can see from our camp. Those we can see are large guns on ground higher than the bridge. They say there are some on a level with the bridge.

I went up to the battery on the hill this forenoon. They have a pretty good view of the banks on the other side of the river. There are 3 heavy guns here, which look as though they might toss some cold iron over the river if the rebels should happen to come this way, saw them firing at a wall of some stone building which has been burned standing at the other end of the bridge this morning, from their battery at the bridge, they threw some balls & some shells. It rather knocked the old thing up, or down rather. Our boys are having quite a visit with the 3rd yesterday & today. There is no guard between us yet & I heard some one say there would be none if the boys kept themselves strait. There are not many in the 3rd that I know.

I saw Whipple this morning. Dont know as I should have known him if I had not been told who it was.

We have not yet received those crackers & cheese but expect them every day. Alonzo Kinsley has gone to Washington with the teams today to see if they are there. They were forwarded from N Y more than a week ago. (I guess though a week today.) We shall probably get them as soon as they arrive for our teams are at Washington every day. I think that Lieut Case did all he was able to at the battle of Bull Run. I expected he was taken prisoner as he did not get in till after the rest did. Have just got word some way that Woodbury & Streeter were at Manassas Junction. I have never thought that Woodbury was killed. Give my love to all enquiring friends, and may we all meet yet again.

This from C K Leach

Camp Lyon near Chain Bridge

August 16th 1861

Dear Ann

Again will I try to answer your letter, which was mailed Aug 12th. It came to hand yesterday a little past noon, was glad to know that you were well again.

My health is very good except a cold which bothers me some. I should have answered your letter yesterday, but I was Officer of the guard & had no opportunity. I know pretty well when to look for a letter

from you. When you mail them Monday I get them Thursday, & if you mail Friday, I get them Monday or Tuesday, & I intend to answer all immediately. Other's letters I answer when I have opportunity.

I told you in a letter before that my boy was going home. I think now he will not at present. He has heard nothing from his mother yet advising him to come home. I think he will stay at least till next pay day, so I think you may use the \$20, as you think best.

Capt Burnham I understand, by the help of Portus Baxter, is appointed recruiting officer for filling vacancies in the 2nd Vt Regt. Some people have a way of getting into some position like that, but still he was a perfect nuisance in the position of Capt, & all are glad to be rid of him for a short time at least, & my hope is that his presence may never disgrace us again.

He was rather down on Thayer on account of a short sketch (in the *Burlington Times* I think it was) of Thayers exploits at Bulls run in which it was reported that Capt Burnham of Co H acted like a coward. He did not like it very much if anyone said any thing in Thayers favor. He told me at one time that this Co had always been a laughing stock for the regt just on account of Thayer. When the Capt got a little tight, he would rip it off good.

Major Joyce is under arrest for writing a letter which appeared in the *Burlington Times* reflecting somewhat upon Col Whitings courage or something. I have not seen the paper therefore do not know the particulars. The Majors wife & little girl came into camp yesterday. We have not yet received the cheese & crackers which you sent us, but are for it every day. I expect the road from N Y to Washington is crowded with subsistence for the army, therefore this private stuff gets delayed. Corp T O Graves had a letter from Woodburys wife yesterday stating that she had received a letter from her husband. He was at Manassas Junction at the time of writing which was July 29th. She said it was written in his own hand and done in very good shape. (he had to write with his left hand, his right being the one that is gone) He said he was well taken care of, & was going to Richmond that night or the next day. It must have been good news to her to know that he was alive and well taken care of, & my hope is that they may yet spend many happy hours together in days to come. We have heard that Streeter was there also. I have never yet believed that the rebels burned the hospital and murdered the wounded as at first reported. They might have hit the hospital with shells in throwing them at our retreating forces, & no doubt to some individuals cases of barbarity occurred, & no doubt too but we have persons in our own forces that would serve them the same.

I have just eat[en] my dinner. It consisted of pork & beans, & bread. I eat perhaps a teacup full of all sorts together. No more would go without forcing. I dont think that I eat more than $\frac{1}{4}$ as much as I used to when I was at home. Our living is not delicious enough to pay for eating more than is necessary. I eat but a very little meat at all. Cushman Gilbert was in our tent a few minutes since. He is the same old chick exactly.

Moses Whipple is in here now has been for nearly an hour, have seen him once before. He seems to be in good health.

The weather has been a great deal cooler for about a week, & a good deal more rain than formerly. Today it is so cool that it is most uncomfortable sitting still with your coat on away from a fire. I think the boys like their new quarters pretty well. There is no guard placed between our reg't and the 3rd so they have a chance to visit.

I have no news to write in regard to the enemy. Pickets & scouts are sent over the river daily. Seventy-two cavalry went over the river yesterday as scouts but I guess they did not see anything of the enemy. These cavalry are stationed near us. I would like to come home & get some of your honey, as the bees have done so extra as to make some box honey. I think they must have forgot what they were about.

I shall mail this letter to Fairfax fearing if I send it to Fletcher it will not reach there on Tuesday. Please let me know how long [my letters are] in reaching you after mailing. My best respects to Nelson & Miriam.

This from thy own C K Leach

[Virginia] August 20th 1861

Dear Ann

I will again write you a few lines, & all of any interest I have to write is the duties we have performed since I last wrote. If the writing looks bad, think of the conveniences for writing. Last Saturday the next day after I wrote last I had to go on picket with Co F up the river about 3 miles, went out in the morning & got back about noon on Sunday, & then the Reg't had orders to go up the river about 10 miles on Monday morning, so at 2 O.C. Monday morning we were routed up but did not get started till six. Our destination was a place called *Big Falls*, to be gone 7 days. We took part of our tents & some provisions with us. Two pieces of artillery & 12 or 13 cavalry men came with us. Our duties I expect are guard duties. Three companys every day are to be detailed for different places, but I will go back to our march & take things in the order they come. In the morning before we started it rained about all the time but when we started it did not rain but soon commenced and kept it up all day. After going about 2 miles, all but 2 companys turned from the direct road up the river to the right as the baggage wagons & artillery could not get through on that road & went a roundabout way about 15 miles. We reached our destination at one O.C. well soaked you better believe. On our march the brooks were raised by the rain which we had to cross on southern bridges that is get across the best way you can, if you can find a stone to step on or any thing to throw across, all right. One stream we crossed on a small log, & the horses went in most all over in the water. The mud sometimes would be ankle deep & no getting around it, they *have* mud in this country when it rains & no mistake. As I said before, we reached our stopping place at one O.C., all wet to the hide. We took quarters for the night in an old two story building which I think was built for quarters when they were building the canal or Washington Aqueduct the head of which is at this place. Through the fore part of the night the rain poured down like a thunder shower. We had to sleep in our wet clothes, which were not dry this morning. A part of our Co were sent out this morning three or four miles up the river under my command, to guard a culvert where a stream passes under the canal into the Potomac river. Our orders are to halt any boats that pass through this culvert and if they have no pass from some U.S. officer to seize them & anything they may have with them. The object of this is I suppose to keep persons from carrying any thing across the river to the rebels. My conveniences for writing are very good, that is to sit on the ground and write on my knees. Whether I shall send this before I get a letter from you or not, I dont know. I expect one from you tonight if I can get it from camp.

We live high here, we own all that comes in our way. The boys swim the canal & get corn to roast & if a cow strays this way, she gets milked. Griffin and Larabee went out & got some potatoes & some butter & the boys are catching bull heads out of the river. We also have some salt that we got of some folks on a canal boat that went up. So you see we have roast corn, boiled potatoe & salt & are going to have some hoe cake when Griffin & Larabee get back again. Wild grapes grow here & we get all we can eat of them. Our boys are perfectly happy today. They say they had rather be out here all the time than in camp. We are between the canal and river. We cross the canal at the camp at the lock.

Have just had some hoe cake & butter, tasted very good.

Nothing is yet heard of the cheese & crackers as I know. I fear it is lost but hope we may yet hear from it. I have nothing more to write at present therefore will bid you good bye.

Ever yours

C K Leach

P.S. Wednesday morning

We were relieved from our post last night & returned to our quarters, where I found a letter from you awaiting me glad to hear from you, but sorry that Nelson was unwell but hope that he is well now & all the rest of you.

I received 12 postage stamps you sent me in your [letter] last night. I think the weather must have been about the same here & in Vermont last week as to coldness.

Alonzo Kinsley has a failing about his lungs he can hardly talk I think his getting hit at Bulls Run in the breast is the first cause & now when he takes cold he can hardly talk, but he will not give up as long as he can stir.

Hollis & some others did not come from Chain Bridge with us.
Nothing more at present.

Chester

Great Falls Friday Aug 23rd 1861

Dear Ann

Once more again I seat myself to pen a few words to you. Nothing of great importance has transpired since I last wrote. My health continues to be as good as usual, & hope it may still continue to be.

My business for the last 24 hours has been Officer of the guard.

Our regiment is very deficient in numbers of commissioned officers, by quite a number being absent on furloughs, thus making the duties of those that are left much harder than it would be if they were all present. I have to be on picket or regimental guard every other day. By Lieut Cases commanding a company, he does not have to go on guard thus throwing it all upon me.

We are quartered close by the canal, close by some locks. Boats pass every day (a number of them) loaded with coal & flour. They are all examined by us at the lock to see that nothing passes that is not all right. Boats that go down with coal generally come back unloaded, then they will bring along watermelons to sell to the soldiers.

We are under the command of Lieut Col Stanard this week Col. Whiting being engaged in a court-martial.

Our mail has just come & I received a letter from you mailed August 19th & one from Nelson & a line from William Kinsley stating that he had heard my boy had left me, & wanted his place, but as Aubery is still with me, I cannot accomodate him at present as I otherwise would. I was glad to hear once more that you were well & hope to hear next time that the children [are] all right or better. I was hoping that you would have a good wheat crop this year but it seems by yours & Nelsons letters that such is not to be the case, especially the late sown. But it seems you have a good crop of hay which I am very glad to hear.

Perhaps if the sick cow is lame to bother her, & you have anything to fat her on, you had better dry her off if you have not already. The calf I should want to keep if it was a good one. Enos Fletcher brought along some red ink & wanted I should try it, the reason of the change, if some one would bring a change of pen, I would be glad.

Our Camp is very short of money, a good many have not enough to pay the postage on a letter. I have opportunities every day to lend money but deny them all. Lieut Tyler of Co C came to me a day or two since & says I hear you are all the one there is in camp that has any money & wanted to borrow some, but I told him I did not know but I should have to get me a coat before I got any more & did not want to spare any. My clothes are getting pretty well soiled & look rather shabby. I have worn my pants that I brought from home, two or three weeks. I have now about 20 dollars and dont know when I shall get any more.

You will see by the writing that some one has left me a better pen. Capt Randall with a man or two with him made a raft day before yesterday & went over the river into Virginia & when they were coming back their raft broke & the Capt got on a rock & had to be helped off with a rope. I guess he came pretty near going for it. I expect we shall go back to Camp Lyons at the Chain Bridge next Monday or Tuesday & some other reg't will take our place here. One company got to Camp Lyons every day & back the next. The distance is about 8 miles.

We have got some new rubber blankets. The cloth is not as good as the old ones were but they are larger and better rubbered with eyelet holes & strings to tie them around your shoulders. They are black & look very

nice. A great many times have I thought of people that were obliged to live on johnny cake & meat or potatoe & salt, & hoped that I should never come to that, but if you could see us some time when we are out on a picket eating potatoe & salt, & sending to a house & getting some hoe cake & calling it nice living, you, well I dont know what you would do, but then, (as the saying is) a man will get used to most any thing. Not but what we have enough, but it is the same over & over again. Why such things are are a rarity. But I suppose there is a good time coming.

Good bye for the present.

Ever yours & the same
C K Leach

Great Falls Md

August 25th 1861
Sunday

Dear Wife

I have just rec'd a letter from you & hasten to answer it. As to my health, it is very good only I was taken with the *back door trot* last night, but am not drove very hard since morning, nothing serious I guess. I did not expect a letter from you till tomorrow or next day, but was glad to receive one so soon. Your letter contained the childrens pictures which I was very glad to receive. Justins look rather cross but Zelias are good I think. I shall give Hollis his as soon as I see him, have not seen him since we left Camp Lyon last Monday. We shall probably go back to camp tomorrow or next day. Our Company are going up the river tonight where we were when I wrote you last Tuesday.

Whether I go or not is uncertain. I had my woolen blanket stole from my bunk the morning I was on guard. I laid it in my bunk in the morning & when I came off guard at nine it was gone. It was one I picked up on the road from Centerville on our retreat from Bulls Run. The blankets that were furnished in place of those lost at the battle are very poor things & small & good blankets are in good demand. You say you are going to stop the *Cultivator* & take the *Lamoille Newsdealer*. Well I have no objections, but look out for some big stories that are written by the boys. There was a letter in it written soon after the battle & giving an account of it written by one George Doty of Co F which was as big a lie as possibly could be in as many words. Sawyer had the paper that contained the letter you spoke of written by L S Hebb but he let no one see it except some few so I knew not what it was. I think you did well enough in having those trees budded, if it was the right time & such like.

I suppose you can sit down on Sunday & write, & all will be quiet. Not so here, every day is the same. I should like to be at home & pass one quiet sabbath. Today while I am writing there is a perfect row all the time.

You say you carried a box of honey to be sent with the needle books. I shall be very glad if I receive it, & I think there will be no trouble if it is sent by express. If we should remain at Camp Lyon long your berries that you have dried would be very acceptable. Sauce is a great addition to bread & meat.

I hope Nelson may have had good luck in getting in his wheat as probably he has got it in before this time, or at least got it set up.

But I will say good [bye] for the present, hoping the time may come when we may all be permitted to greet each other in other ways than by writing.

Ever yours
C K Leach

Camp Lyons

August 27th 1861

Dear Ann

As I am at perfect liberty to do nothing today, I cannot content myself to *do* nothing, & I will improve my time in writing to you. I am well today & hope you may be the same. You will see by the date of this that we are back to our camp again. We came back yesterday. The 7th Penn Reg't arrived at *Great Falls* to relieve us about noon yesterday & five companies started for camp immediately. The others had to wait for the pickets to be relieved & come in, & we being one of those did not get started till nearly night & did not reach Camp till between 10 & 11 O.C. We did not come back the road we went. We came back on the aqueduct road most of the way, which runs just in front of our camp.

Just as we were coming into camp, the N Y Reg't that is [in] our brigade & just on the hill above us, commenced beating the long roll, which was taken up by the rest of our regiments, so of course we had to fall in, in line of battle, in front of our camp. We had to remain in this situation till one O.C. when we were ordered to break ranks. What occasioned the alarm I have not learned but presume it is what I thought it was last night, & that is thinking us to be rebels as we were coming in, they not knowing we were coming in last night. We had a number of baggage wagons with us & they made quite a racket.

I received a paper with a head of wheat in it last night. I suppose it was from you or from Nelson as the paper had my name on it. I suppose it was an extra head but if they are all of decent length & as well filled as that one, there must be a good yield. I let Hollis have those miniatures this morning. Let him have the ones that are on one plate. Justins is the best on that & Zelias is very shy & pretty, but think Zelias on the single plate is the best picture of the whole, but still I liked *both* on the double plate full as well as the others, but as Hollis [would] rather have those, I let him have them.

I will now tell you *why* I had nothing to do today. This morning I was put on as Officer of the day, & I was placed in arrest for allowing the men to discharge their pieces against orders which I knew nothing about nor had any chance to know as we had been gone all the week & the orders were given out when we were gone. A number that fired their guns were also arrested but when it came time for battalion drill we were all released. I did not feel very bad for as I had as [lief?] lay still as to work. We have just received orders to hold ourselves in readiness in light marching order with 24 hours rations. Light marching order means with blankets. Whether anything is up or not I dont know, but I must stop for the present. I will write a few lines in the morning I am here if not I will leave this with Hollis to mail. Excuse bad writing for it has been written in a hurry.

Ever yours

C K Leach

Wednesday Aug 28

Our light marching orders, which we received last night are still in force I guess for we have not yet marched. What the order is for I dont know. All we have to do is to obey orders as they are given without knowing the whys & wherefores. Our new guns have arrived & are given out to all excepting two or three Co's. The reason they are not given out to all is because they have not amunition enough yet.

Capt Eaton of Co K who went home on a furlough has returned fat & hearty. He brought a number of recruits for his company.

Lieut Sharpley has also returned but his health is rather poor yet but I must close good bye

C K Leach

[After this letter Chester became quite ill, and Zina and Ann went to see him in Georgetown.]

Fletcher Sept 26th 1861

Dear Children,

I have come upstairs with my little one. She wants I should set with her so I will improve the time in writing to those who have gone to a *far distant land to defend their country's rights*. In the first place you want to know about the children. Zelia is the best girl you ever see. I went over to Father Chases with her & she was awful homesick. I did not stay but one night for she was so homesick she asked for you a dozen times or more & said she wanted to go *fo*. She did not want to go to her *fo*, but wanted to go to my *fo*, & stay with *Na* until Manma comes back. She has been perfectly contented since we came home. She has been to the line and has got a pair of Zinas socks & is trying to put them on. She did not cough but twice yesterday. Has coughed more today. I suppose Miriam has told you about Justin. I cant tell much about him for he is down there. Guess he dont cough much nights. He said last night he did not cough not once the night before. I wont write anymore tonight wait until I hear from you. Avalina and Clarissa have got along.

(Nine O Clock) I said I would not write anymore. I had gone to sewing. Louise came up & said there was a letter downstairs for me. I went down & found one from Zina & Hollis & Dea Leach had taken pains to come & bring to me. I told you I would go to Fairfax Thursday, but I did not think of getting a letter, for we heard from you Tuesday. Am glad to hear Chester is feeling better. When I was going over to Fathers, they hailed me 5 times to know if he was dead, but we had just got your letter that day. Yesterday Daniel came over. He said he had heard so many different ways, he did not know but what it was so & William came I believe before we had heard from you. Guess Burts folks have not taken pains to enquire. They went Monday to carry Mark out to St Albans. Mrs Leach stayed there Sunday night. She said she wondered why they got up so early, but they did not say a word about going away. She did not know that they went until I told her Tuesday. I am going to tell Lucy that Ex-Sergeant Chase has gone to the Army to get a name for his boy. That Burt wrote about, that he wrote to the whole Army & he thought it likely that they would have a name by this time.

(Sunday Morning) I received your last & glad to hear from you, but did not think of hearing from you that you had got to be such a lady. Guess you are glad that you did not carry any more *caliker* dresses, for I suppose you wont wear *caliker* any more. Mrs. Leach said if she had your rolls, she would spin for your dress, but you wont want it now & it would be clear nonsense to spin them.

It rains like the duce & Ick & Hannah are at home. Ick has not been at home but twice since you went away. Mother is about sick & has been for a number of days. I dont know what Ick has been doing to her, but *he has fixed her so she cant hold her water*. She said they should go down to the city as quick as it came foddering time if they could get a house to go into. He told her the other day that he did not think Abigail would ever let him suffer. She told him that she thought it would be right if the Lord would take away every cent he had, & if he had given more to the Lord, & not quite so much to Wait, he would not [have] been used as he has.

I have not been down to your house since I came from Fathers. Zelia had rather stay up here, so I stay at home. Shall go down some day this week. I told Mrs Leach she must look to M. Said she would. I dont know how she gets along. She said Mrs L wanted she should go ahead with the work, & I hope she will make her enough to get up in the morning. When I was there she did not get up until breakfast was most ready. When her mother was there, she said she was glad Mrs L was coming & so was I for it did not seem as if I could stay there with her no ways. I should stay down there some now, but Mother is not very well.

Have been fixing this letter to carry off Monday.

You said not [to] leave Zelia with her. She would not stay with her if I wanted to leave her ever so much. When I was there, she would run after me every time I stepped out doors. She has been a great deal better than I supposed she would be. She asks for Chester as often as she asks for you. She has not had but one coughing spell today & it is nearly noon. I can hear her. She had got on Mothers shoes I should think by

the noise. You need not worry about her, for she will be taken care of. I have not rocked her to sleep more than once or twice since you went away, & that was down to your house. As quick as it is dark, she wants to go upstairs on Janes bed & she will get something to play with & the first she knows, shes asleep. Last night when we came up to bed, she got a book & began to sing *Pappa gone way off to kill a man*.

Mother wants I should tell you to be sure & put a pocket in your shirt or somewhere else to put your money in. She is afraid you will loose it. Tell Chester I dont think it will be safe to let you & Zina start off with so much money not knowing what you might do. But never mind we shall have the children.

Jane Ferrand, or she that used to be, was buried last Friday. She had a feaver I believe.

I dont think of any more news only the Blaisdells have got back to Vt. When shall we look for you home? When you come I suppose. I must close for I want to write to Zina & Hollis. Give my love to Chester. I began this for you & Zina but got a letter from him & Hollis, so will write to them,

Jane

[Written after Ann and Zina have returned home and before Chester goes to Vermont on leave of absence]

Georgetown D.C.

Sunday Oct 20th/61

Dear Ann

As I have nothing to busy myself about this pleasant sabbath I think I cannot better engage my mind than by writing a few lines to you. I have just been to the Hospital but have heard nothing from my papers yet. My hopes of coming home at present are rather small.

My health since you left has been about the same as before, except something of a head ache yesterday afternoon.

It has been rather lonesome times to me since you left. As Mrs Wright says, it seems like one side of the house was gone.

I hope you may have had a pleasant journey home & free from accidents & delays, & find all enjoying good health at home. The father of Capt Fullam of the same Co as Lieut Parkhurst was here yesterday to see Lieut P. He has been up to camp & says Capt Burnham has resigned. He is acquainted with the Capt & has about as good an opinion of him as the Co have.

He said it was a wonder to him how they came to put such a man at the head of that Co. I told him the reason as much as I could.

I suppose this will not reach you till after you have written to Mrs Wright. She will look for a letter as soon as Thursday. You had better not write to me till you hear from me again, for there is no telling where I shall be.

(4 P. M.) It has been as quiet a Sunday here today as I have seen, but very little going except Church goers. I hope Zina found himself all right when he got home. Tell him I never was so lonesome in my life as I was that night after you left, the moon shone bright & I could almost see myself traveling.

You may think this an uninteresting letter, for I have no news to write at all.

Give my love to all friends.

Ever yours

C K Leach

[First letter after returning to camp from Vermont]

Camp Griffin

November 17th/61

Dear Ann

How are you today? I am well & in camp as you will see by the dating.

I arrived here a little past noon yesterday & found the Co all in camp, but today Co H is about all detailed for picket and division guard.

I believe I have seen about all of the company except those in the hospital & those are Alonzo Kinsley, L P Hulburt & George Buck.

Alonzo returned to Co quarters & took cold by sleeping on the ground which brought him down again. Buck is gaining they say. Monroe Bingham is rather out of health again. Hollis is hearty & healthy.

I will give you [a] short description of my journey here. I took the cars at half past 8 at Georgia [Vt.], having my baggage marked for N York to prevent its being thrown off at Burlington & when I arrived at the Rutland & Burlington depot, I jumped off with money in hand & got my ticket & got on again just as the cars were getting in motion.

At Rutland the next morning I got my baggage checked for New York. The railroad time since I went home has changed so the cars dont leave Rutland till six at which time I started. Stopped at Troy about half an hour & changed cars therefore it was nearly five when I arrived in New York. Left New York at six again which made my stop very short at this place.

At Philidelphia, we came down the other side of the river and instead of taking the Ferry took a horse car & rode some two miles through the City & there got into the cars & run down a short distance & backed up into the depot where we had to change cars again. On arriving at Washington I took an Omnibus for Georgetown (leaving my baggage at the depot), & got to Mr Wrights just in time for breakfast. They are all well, Mr Wright limps a little but is at his work. They thought I was very as does everyone that sees me. Some say, I should like to go to Vermont if I could come back looking as well as he does.

I gave my checks to the Quarter Master today to send for my baggage.

I took my pillow & doubled it up in my blanket & started on foot for camp & when I had got a short distance across Chain Bridge a man overtook me with a carriage & asked me to ride, which I was very glad to accept as he was going to the Vt 2nd & the wind was blowing a regular gale which still continues to blow making it rather uncomfortable in camp, but I rested very well last night. I have cabbaged one of the knit coats. I found the tent which I left occupied by Sawyer, Smith & Auberry. They have a fire place in the ground like all the rest. They make a very good fire, but the wind has blown so since I got here they have smoked some. The tent we occupy is an old rickety concern, it is thin & full of holes so that the wind blows straight through. I shall make a requisition for a better one soon to the Quarter master. The Co is almost destitute of knives & forks & cups but are going to have more soon. I think I shall make some sort of arrangements for boarding myself.

Smith & Sawyer have cooked their own board lately & they live first rate.

The Co sold something yesterday & bought some potatoes & Smith cooked some steak & liver, with bread & butter goes well so far I dont know but Hollis will have my vest, it fits him very well.

The men are dying very fast in the fifth Regt. About a dozen have died I believe since they came here. Two died in one Co today, whether it is the surgeons fault I dont know. Our Regt have some good surgeons I think.

The pay master is expected this week which makes the boys feel pretty well.

There is a great review expected in a few days some say tomorrow or next day, a number of thousands are expected to be reviewed. I have been told there was an order read on dress parade tonight that the pickets were to have fires, (or the reserve) & those on the posts are to be relieved every four hours.

That will make picket duty a little more agreeable. Sam Crown does not look very healthy but I believe is doing well. The boys all seemed to be glad to see me here & I hope I may do them some good.

But more next time.

Ever yours
C K Leach

[Letter from Hollis R. Montague to Ann Leach]

Camp Griffin Nov. 17th 61

Dear sister

Chester is with us again you see & dont you believe we was glad to see him. I didnt expect to see him quite so soon nor quite so fat but the fatter the better. I hope he will have his health the remainder of the camp life. You wanted I should [write] in particular about Sam Crown. He is getting along pretty well so he is on light duty. I guess he has had a pretty hard time of it.

The ground froze here a little Friday night the first time it has froze. It is pretty cold & windy here today. About sending those papers that you spoke about to keep me warm, we have got new uniforms now so that we keep quite warm & you need not send them unless now & then a newspaper. War news is dry [?], write soon, Good bye

H R Montague

12 have died from the 5th regt

I think by the last of your letter that ——— dont want the stags if he does let him have them.
Of the things you mention that I left at home, the cane & tobacco I left on purpose.

Camp Griffin

November 22nd/61

Dear Ann

I received your letter last night & will now try & answer it. My health is yet good & bids fair to continue so. I was glad to hear from you & that you were all well. You say you had quite a snow storm so that sleighs run some, that must seem a little more like winter than what it does here. It is as warm & pleasant as the last of Sept in Vt (at present). It freezes a little at night but is warm days. Philo Runnels Co H has just died in the Hospital. He has been sick about a week, had the Typhoid fever, has been in the hospital 3 or 4 days.

Yesterday I did (what you might call) my first days work. After the rest had gone to bed the night before & I sat reading, the Sergeant Major came along & ordered us to have the cook prepare dinner for the next day for a march.

Nobody knew what was up till we got started yesterday morning when we saw the baggage wagons all out & ready for a move. We made up our minds then it was a foraging expedition. Our Regt with a Co of Cavalry & two pieces of Artillery went out on the Leesburg Pike about 7 miles from camp to what is called Peacock Hill & there staid till about night & then returned. The object in sending us out there was to keep the rebels from coming down on the foraging party which was somewhere in our rear.

I felt after I got back to camp same as I did after the Bull Run affair, it being about the first marching I have done.

Today we have had another pretty good days work. Gen Smith has had a review of his division. I should guess there was about 15,000 troops, Infantry, Artillery, & Cavalry. It was quite a good sight.

Our Co was paid off today & this evening Joseph Poland the agent sent here by the state of Vermont has been in here taking the money of those of our Co that want to send home. He got about \$650 here tonight. I think he will get \$1,000 before he leaves from this Company. Some prefer to send their money in letters.

With 20 dollars I had of Hollis I let him have \$150, to be drawn by you from the Missisquoi Bank. He pays it to the Bank that the person sending wishes, to be drawn by *whoever* they wish. I calculated to have sent \$150 of my own money but I have grown so fast I shall have to get a new suit of clothes.

I send in this letter the receipt of Joseph Poland for the amount received by him from me. You can probably get the money at Hubbells in Fairfax in the course of two weeks. This is the first Reg't paid so he will not get the money collected in for a number of days. No more at present. I will write every opportunity Dont wait for me for it is rather busy just now.

Ever yours C K Leach

Camp Griffin

November 26th/61

Dear Ann

I will once more endeavor to pen a few lines to you, hoping that before I get done I may receive another line from you.

When I wrote to Nelson in Hollis' letter I wrote that I was going to try picketing the next day. I started out at five O.C. in the morning & got in again about 8 O.C. this morning.

It was rather cold business last night for it was the coldest night there has been. The ground froze hard enough to hold a horse. I was where we could have a fire only from six P.M. till twelve. I do not feel quite as well today as before. I have a bit of a diarrhea, but not as bad as I was last night. I have not done anything today. Hollis is rather down today. Sunday evening he had quite a hard chill & shook pretty good & today he has a diarrhea. He is in my tent.

Hollis says tell Zina not to hurry about sending him some boots, he has quite a good pair that he swapped & got. He will write when he wants them & when his boot[s] come we shall want some butter & other fixings sent. Smith had a box sent to him before I got back here & it was well filled too, a regular buttery, he had tea, sugar, butter, cheese, & a great many other fixings.

The mail has just come & no letter. What is the reason? I looked for one last night, but none has come yet. I hope it may not be sickness that has prevented your writing.

I feel very well tonight. I guess I shall be all right tomorrow. Alonzo Kinsley was in our tent today. He is much better than he was when I got back here. He is very weak & hard work for him to talk yet. Buck is on the gain.

I have settled up with Auberry but he is here yet. When I spoke to him about what I told him when I was in the Hospital he said the Capt told him he would give him a chance if [I] did not want him. He said now he was calculating to go home in about two weeks. He does not feel very well today dont know but he is going to have a fever.

We hear nothing yet who is to be our Capt. There is a number of vacancies to be filled. Likely they will all come at a time. We get no war news lately at all. The boys are all wishing that we might be taken down south. I would not mind going myself. There is a camp rumor that some of the Vt troops are to be taken.

Some time when you think of it pay Nathan Bingham that dollar he paid for me last spring.

Ellenwood has given me one of those blankets so I can sleep very warm in the tent. Picket duty is the worst we have to do. There was about 850 men went out yesterday from our brigade. It takes that number every day. The men have to be on post only 3 hours in 24.

Ever yours C K Leach

Hollis says he wants a bottle of cider when his box comes if it can be got handy

Camp Griffin

Nov 30th/61

Dear Ann

Again do I seat myself to answer your letters, (for I have received two since I last wrote). My health is still good, & am enjoying myself as well as circumstances will allow.

Your letter that was mailed Nov 22nd I received Thursday & last night (Friday) I got another.

I was glad to hear you were well & hope you may all continue so.

Hollis is still rather unwell so he does not do any duty.

I suppose Zina has got a letter from me before this time. I hope he may continue to improve till he is in perfect health.

The Vt soldiers were excused from duty on thanksgiving day after 12 O.C. except guard duty. I gave thanks by having to go on picket, making twice this week. Our Co most of them spent thanksgiving day the

same, but the Col has given them today to pay for it. The Col invited me with the rest of the Officers who were on picket Thursday to take tea with him last night (of course we accepted)

We had for supper Oysters, Biscuit & butter, pie, & berry sauce, & tea, a very good supper. The Col is liked by the Regt much better than formerly. There is not much I dislike now for the winter but picket duty, not that there is any more danger there than any other place, but being out in the cold & marching around these rainy, muddy, dark nights, through mud holes & every other place you can think of. I fell down only three times into the mud, on Thursday night. It is so arranged now that the men are on post but three hours in twenty-four, but it takes out a great number every day. Aubery still stays here he is not very well. I wrote in my last letter how much I paid him & he said he was satisfied but he has since asked me to pay his fare home. Of the \$35 I paid him, he sent \$20 home & it took pretty much all the rest to settle with the Sutler. I have not paid him \$15 just yet. The weather has been a little rainy for a few days. Through the day thanksgiving day it was very warm & pleasant but commenced raining just at night. (Sam Crown is well.) John Crown I have heard was unwell & was getting his discharge.

About the sleigh I calculated to get it varnished last winter but neglected it & I think it would be well to varnish it over this winter.

Those socks that Mrs Bingham sent I have not given to any one yet as Ellenwoods box came at the same time containing a lot of socks which supplied them well, & left some besides for another time.

The boys are well clothed now. The most of them have boots. They cost about six dollars per pr. They are long legged, about up to ones knees. I have not got a new suit yet but shall have to.

I have written to Daniel & Norman.

Ever yours C K Leach

Camp Griffin

Monday Dec 2nd 1861

Dear Ann

I again seat myself to improve my leasure time in writing to you to let you know that I am still on this earth & enjoying the blessings of good health. I judge of your anxiety to hear from me, by my own feelings in regard to letters from home therefore improve my time in writing.

I am not doing much today as I came off picket this morning, & when they much drilling out of me after being on picket they will know it. Yesterday made but three days out of seven that I have been on picket therefore you can see that most of my labors for the past week have been of that stamp. I did not have a very bad time last night as it happened I was where we could have a fire all the time. The wind blew some & it froze a very little.

I will be glad when the regt has a little nearer a full compliment of Officers so that there can be a detail of four or five officers made without taking the same every time. For the three last times I have been when there has been a detail made from this regt, Monday, Thursday & Sunday.

I have just been over to the Sutlers & spoke to him to get me a stove, an oval round one, made of sheet iron with two griddle holes on top, the pipe coming out the back end. Four joints of pipe, two elbows, & a tea pot & kettle & a stew pan with a cover & handle to it. The cost of the whole will [be] somewhere from 4 to 5 dollars.

Hollis does not get any better yet. He has a bad Diarrhea & has some fever & is out of fix all over.

Auberry is rather sick & is here yet, he wanted to have gone home today. Alonzo Kinsley is getting quite smart again he is helping about the hospital I believe Smith has got so he does duty again too he acts as cook in this tent at the present time & makes a very good one.

I suppose you are having sleighing now but here it is good dry wheeling except some mud holes. The ground dried off a good deal yesterday & last night by the wind. Today is a rather a cold, raw windy day. The air feels like snow.

If Nelson should make any trade for a wagon tell him to see if he can trade off that ash lumber.

I hope your wheat may turn out better than did Zinas & the rest you mentioned & I think it must without the rats & mice have destroyed it.

It is getting dark so I will wait & see if I do not get a letter from you. If I don't I may not send this tomorrow. (Evening) I have your third letter tonight. Was glad to hear you were well, but felt sad to know that you were performing out door duties in the storms. You say you had 19 bush. wheat. Did that include what was threshed by hand or not

Our dress parade tonight consisted of hearing the doings of a court martial that has been in session in this Regt the past week. There were between 40 & 50 persons tried, the most of them for not going out on the foraging expedition the first week after I got back here.

Some of them were fined 9 dollars, some five, one sergeant & one Corporal reduced to the ranks, etc.

Some of them for previous good conduct we recommended to the Col for the remittance of their fines which he did. There were two of our Co tried one named Peckham who was acquitted & one Maloney who was sentenced to be reprimanded by the Col. But we have another who I think must take it sometime (one Meanogue). He went to Washington on a pass for the day & did not return till tonight. He got drunk & was arrested by the provost guard with whom he had a fight & came home with one black eye. He lost his cap & 20 dollars in money. (He says he lost his pass the reason the guard took him.)

I will tell you what we had for supper tonight. We had potatoes & sausage, boiled onions & turnip, a very good supper. I want you should save a little butter for this place. I hope to have housekeeping tools in shape sometime.

Ever yours C K Leach

[Letter from Hollis R. Montague to Zina G. Chase]

Camp Griffin

Dec. 3rd 1861

Friends at home

I will attempt to answer your letter which I rec'd in due season but guess I shall fail for my hand trembles so I hardly hold a pen. Ive been sick a week, & am rather hard up today. Was taken with the shakes in the first place & have been down ever since.

The weather is quite cool & windy just now. Have had no snow of any consequence. I would like to have you send those boots as soon as you can conveniently, for these that I have failed all at once. About some cider if you think it will freeze & brake the bottle youd better not send it. But if you think it wouldnt I would like some first rate.

George Streeter has just come into camp. Hes been a prisoner at Richmond & was released when Woodbury was. But he went around by Fortress Monroe & has been in Washington ever since. I think he has a wooden leg but I dont know. I have not seen him yet. You can take that money that ——— has got & pay the express on that box or do what you have a mind to with. Other expenses I will make sometime if I [live?].

I think this will be as much as you can read in one day so I will stop.

H R M

[Chester Leach thriftily used the remainder of Montague's paper for his own letter to the family.]

Hollis has left half of his sheet so I will make a few tracks on it.

Nearly three weeks have passed since I left you & I believe I have held my own very well. I have not got poor enough yet so that I can get my coat around me. They rather put me through last week on picket, I was out Monday, Thursday & Sunday. I spent my Thanksgiving day on picket. I think three times was a pretty good start for the first but I have stood it first rate so far.

Second Vermont Infantry,

Second Division, Sixth Corps.



Mrs C R Leach
Fletcher
Vermont

811



Camp Griffin Dec. 5th 1861
Dear Wife

Once more
am I seated with pen
in hand to inform you of
my health, trials, & tribulations
&c. My health is still very
good, except feeling a little
dull from being out on picket
last night, I have just got
a letter from you. glad to
hear that you are all well.
When you may say to yourself
(I wonder what Chester is doing
tonight) you may just keep
along & say. I guess he's on
picket & you will hit the
mark about once ~~in~~ three
days. If you was within
speaking distance I would ask
you in & show you our kitchen

I received the paper you sent -

Hollis wrote about Streeters getting back & thought he had a wooden leg. But he has not. He cant straighten his leg out & goes on crutches.

Smith & I have just been to the Sutlers & got a stove, tea pot, tea kettle, & another covered dish for serving. We are going to [be] keeping house just as quick as I can get some crockery ware. So send on your provisions.

Hollis says he does not care as much about a cheese as he would some butter. I have not cut my cheese that I brought with me yet. Smith had some so we have eat that.

This day has been a windy, raw day which makes it a little uncomfortable in this old rickety tent. I hope I shall have a new one sometime.

When you send Hollis' boots make a box big enough so that Ann can put in some crackers & other fixings.

I hope to hear from you soon & that you are all well. Write as often as you can spend time & let us know what you are up to.

Chester K Leach

On picket again tomorrow

I received the paper you sent

Camp Griffin

Dec 5th 1861

Dear Wife

Once more am I seated with pen in hand to inform you of my health, trials, & tribulations, etc. My health is still very good, except feeling a little dull from being out on picket last night. I have just got a letter from you glad to hear that you are all well. When you may say to yourself (I wonder what Chester is doing tonight) you may just keep along and say I guess he's on picket & you will hit the mark about once in three days. If you was within speaking distance I would ask you in & show you our kitchen, Parlor & bedroom all in one. We have them all new rigged & furnished. Hollis I think acts a little better today but is rather slim.

Aubery is here yet & is rather poor. I paid him ten dollars more today towards his fare home.

We are having very nice pleasant weather here just at present. Today was a very warm day, just as nice going as I ever saw but expect there is the more storm to come. I was rather sorry to hear that Nelson was going to leave you, but he has my best wishes in his new home. He may have the Cooper tools if he wants them for what new ones are worth if they are not damaged & if they are for what they are worth. I think most of them are as good as new. The saw I believe has the point broke, which takes a little from it. It cost 50 cts. I dont remember the price of the different articles. About that money I think there has to be no draft. If there is to be one probably he will send it. Have you seen Hubbell about it? You say Zina wants I should say how much I want for the use of the place. Well that is rather a hard question to answer. It depends on whether he wants everything or only just the stock & meadow & pasture. If you want I should say what I will I will say I will take one hundred and twenty five dollars, now what will you (Zina) give, will you give any more? I think most years the house orchard & sugar place will pay more than half.

Tonight is the night that you say Addie is going to take Buck; it must be rather strong mutton this time of the year, but hope her stomach is good.

One of our Company Cilley by name, shot a ball through his wrist last night while on picket. (by accident)

Of war there is nothing doing in these parts only picket. Tell Zina to write what he thinks about the place.

Ever yours C K Leach

This looks to be the last run*
I suppose Hollis has written for his boots. When they are sent I want some butter. Zina had better make a tub that will hold 20 or 25 pounds if he sends any. If not you send a small tub alone in his box. I should like a few crackers too to go with Oysters. I should like a box of honey if you could fix it so it would not waste. I got those berries & currants from Wrights but I think they had diminished in bulk a very little. I should like to just take a little bit of a sleigh ride with you on your sleighing. It dont look much like sleighing here yet.

When I got in from picket this morning the boys had got the stove set up, they had taken the beds down & fixed them on each side of the tent with the stove between. We can keep a little more comfortable here now & it does not take as much wood neither. Smith made a table today & is going to make a cupboard as soon as he gets time. The boys in the Regt are making little log shanties all over the camp. I saw a sketch of our Camp tonight which I would like to send you if I could get it, it looked natural.

Our 2nd Lieut Appleton is sick now & has been nearly a week but I think he is a little better. But it is most ten & I was out last night so I guess I will go to bed.

C K Leach

Camp Griffin

December 8th 1861

Dear Wife

How do you enjoy yourself this fine day. It is a very fine warm day with us, but presume you are enjoying the cold of winter.

For three days past it has been very warm here, & when I think that it is the eighth of Dec, I cant help thinking of the difference from what it is in Vermont at that time of the year. This is the climate for anyone that has a dread of the cold of winter. Friday we went out on another foraging expedition. Our regt with two or three others went as far as Vienna. They brought in from 50 to 75 loads of corn & the like. I suppose it is Cessionion** property. Yesterday Sergeant Smith & I went to Washington to see the sights & do a little trading. It seemed natural to get in the Omnibus once more & jog along from Georgetown to Washington.

There was a perfect crowd in Washington, more so than formerly. I got me a new suit of clothes yesterday, paid 26 dollars, rather nicer than the other. We also got some crockery & eatables. We can set a pretty good table now. We got 4 plates 4 cups & saucers, all white, a set of white handled knives & forks, 4 tea spoons, a large bowl & two deep tin dishes. We also got a ham & a half bush. meal & some other fixings. So you can see that we are in a fair way to live. We eat breakfast on our new dishes this morning, which is much better than an old tin plate & cup.

Auberry has at last gone home, he went Friday. Hollis is about the same as when I last wrote, if anything a little better. Nothing dangerous.

I should just like to take a sleigh ride in Vermont today, but cannot say (all things considered) that I wish I was in Vermont for good although I expect to see some hard times before spring, but the winter must be short. I must lay this aside and look around camp, as I am Officer of the day today. You cannot think how warm it is today. Such a day as this you would have your doors & windows all open without any fire. (Monday Evening) Another very warm, pleasant day has past & things remain as usual.

It seems almost impossible to believe that it is December & winter in Vermont, at the present time it seems more like September. It has not froze any for a number of days.

*Presumably this fragment was written by someone other than Leach; the half-sheet of paper bearing this undated letter appears to have been salvaged from elsewhere.

**"Secessionist" or Confederate property was fair game.

I suppose you think that by this time I begin to grow poor, but it [is] not so. I think I am more fleshy than when I left home. I expected a letter tonight but did not get one, but shall look for it tomorrow. Hollis is well enough so that he got our supper tonight, which consisted of Beef Steak, potatoes (sweet), bread & butter, doughnuts & tea, oh yes & turnip, I bought a few days ago, cost a quarter.

We talk of selling our stove & getting one that has an oven in it, so we can bake johnny cakes & the like. Smith made a cupboard today to keep our dishes in which looks first rate. It is a little more like living to have some dishes to eat on, than to use old black tin dishes. I got half a pound of tea at Washington Saturday & some concentrated milk so we can have tea that *is* tea.

I saw Frank St Johns today. He said he did not have quite as good a time thanksgiving day this year as he did last year. You recollect he was at our house at supper.

Our 2nd Lieut is still unwell so as not to be able to do anything he has done but a very little duty in the Company since I got here, he was on a court martial about a week & since that time he has been sick.

We had all of four Officers out at dress parade tonight. There was five on picket four under arrest & some sick & some nowhere. We are expecting every day to have the vacancies filled up & I dont care how soon for it will make the duty lighter on me.

I think I shall send home some of my clothes before long as I have more than I have any place to put them.

It is getting late so I will bid you good night.

C K Leach

Camp Griffin

December 13th 1861

Dear Wife

Again will I try & pen you a few lines in answer to your two letters which I have received since I last wrote. The one that was mailed last Friday I received Wednesday, & yesterday (Thursday) I got another.

I feel today as though I was poorly staid with last night. I was on picket again last night, which makes me feel rather old today. The weather has changed a bit to the colder since I last wrote but it is still pleasant but freezes nights. It was a pretty cold night las[t] night. This morning the ground was froze hard & was covered with a heavy white frost. Hampton Maxfield was in here just now to get a pass to Washington with his brother who has died from the 5th Regt. He is going to send his body home. He died with the Diphtheria. He had been sick with the measles & had got quite smart & begun to do light duty, when he took cold.

I received a letter from Jane yesterday & shall answer it as soon as possible. Jane says Zina dont fat up quite as fast as I did. Perhaps he is not quite as lazy. He got able to work sooner than I thought he could.

I think the interest on that note given Wait Chase was not paid last winter. I had almost forgotten whether it was paid or not but on thinking I guess not. I paid Wait the 8 dollars extra.

About the interest the past year I did not think Uncle Ichabod would demand more than six per cent for this past year as there was nothing said about it. But the next year I suppose he can demand any rate he wants, or the money. Hollis I think is on the gain, for he has got so he eats very well. There is a number getting discharged from our Co, & more that want to be.

Some of the recruits that Burnham got are rather weak chicks. Since I got back I have filled out discharge papers for Andrew J Morse George Streeter & Andrew J Burnham, & now have before me papers to fill out for Lewis H Estis & John G Peckham. We have taken one recruit by the name of Leach from Waterville Vt.

We have two men pretty sick in the Hospital Larabee & a recruit by the name of White. They have a fever. Oh yes, & Hiram Soule is pretty sick. The rest I believe are only sick by the day. Vern Rood though has the dropsy or something. He is rather big, swelled all over.

You say Addison Carpenter is going to do the chores this winter. I guess he will be a good hand to take care of things, hope so at least. I should like to be there this winter to drive that colt a little. Perhaps Addison can drive him, but I expect he will be a tough subject. But if you should sell him it would not pay to break him perhaps. If you should trade him for a wagon I would get a good one.

I am sorry for your sake of comfort that your sleighing has gone off but perhaps you have more before this time. I would like to drop in & see you some of these days but have no thoughts of doing so at present, so you will have to give Zelia one kiss for me. Nothing made me feel worse when I left home than her saying may I do, papa, may I do. The little thing she knew not what she was asking. That is something that I shall always remember.

You want to know whether I receive the papers you send. I guess I have got all but the one you sent Monday, if you sent it as you said you was going to. Your letter came last night, but no paper but it may come yet. I would like to get it if it has the acts of the Legislature in it, for I would like to know what they did this fall.

They are making a log Hospital in our reg't which I think will be a good thing. I dont know the size of it but it is pretty large. I see no signs of moving from this place for they are cleansing & ditching all around the Camp.

We have a brigade drill about every Afternoon lately which lasts from two O.C. till night. I have not been out but twice. I have not been out to drill but a very little since I got back for every time I go on picket takes two days out & there is no drill Saturday afternoon & Sunday & some other days if there is anything to do. The rule is here that any one is excused from drill the next forenoon after being on picket or guard, but I have never drilled *any* the next day. Sawyer commands the co this afternoon.

Smith went out on picket yesterday but came in before night because he did not feel well & he is some sick today. But I will wish you a good night & close.

Ever yours

C K Leach

P.S. I received the paper tonight
beautiful evenings we have nowadays
wish you was here this pleasant weather

Chester K Leach

Camp Griffin

December 15th 1861

Dear Wife

How do you do? Come in & take a seat, & we will have supper in a few minutes. It is a nice Sabbath day with us, pleasant and warm.

We are all well as usual, & Hollis a little more so I think. I have just been to meeting in front of the Col's tent, had a good discourse for a short one. Our Chaplain seemed to be quite animated. The words of his text were these, Faint but yet pursuing. He delivered the best discourse I have heard from his lips. A regular war sermon & applicable to morals.

Every thing remains quiet here, & nothing doing except our daily duty of picketing, drill, & the like. We dont have any drill Saturdays generally but devote the day to police duty, that is cleaning up the Camp & the men also have a chance to do their washing. We have an inspection every Sunday morning when the arms & clothing of the men are inspected & also the tents & grounds of the companys.

I am getting to be quite poor. I weighed myself yesterday & did not weigh but one hundred & seventy two & three fourths pounds. There is a saloon here. I think I will have my miniature taken some day & send it home.

Since I was out on picket on Thursday I have rather sore eyes, but they feel a little better today than yesterday. I would like to go to the Lyceums this winter but shall have to content myself otherwise. Perhaps we may send a few lines occasionally from this quarter for their paper & if it is all right perhaps we might dispose of a few copies of it for the benefit of the Editor. My best wishes for the prosperity of the Lyceum. May they have good order & sensible remarks.

I christened my new suit by wearing it out to inspection. We have had pleasant weather since I last wrote & for comfort I hope it will continue to be.

I should think it was about time to hear from that money that was sent by Mr Poland. I have heard that he has got home. You may have to go to Sheldon after the money (Supper is ready) Monday Evening / I will try & finish this for the mail tomorrow morning. All well as usual tonight & Hollis improves every day. I received a letter from you tonight & was glad to hear that you were all well. I hope I shall never receive any different news. You had better believe we are having fine weather just now. Tonight is just as pleasant as can be & so warm that it will [freeze?] but a trifle if any.

The report you speak of that we are going to move I think is unfounded. There is no signs of any such thing here.

I am for picket tomorrow but if it holds as pleasant & warm as it is tonight I will be satisfied. There are a little different arrangements about picket than what there has been, before the whole division went together but now each brigade covers its own front you know that when I first began to eat sweet potatoes I did not like them but I have got now so I like them full as well as irish potatoes. We have potatoes about every meal. We have to pay 3 cts per pound for irish & 5 cts per lb for sweet. We had a rarity today for dinner for this place & that was pudding & milk. It went first rate.

We got a report here last night that the Governor of Vermont had not Commissioned the persons recommended by our Col but had left it to the Companys to say who they would have but I cant hardly credit it, but I think there is something in the wind which causes such a delay. I know there was some Officers that thought they were entitled to promotion instead of some others that were recommended. If it is left to the Companys to say, I think I stand as fair a chance of being Capt as any of them. I dont know but there is some honor in being Capt but there is a great deal more responsibility resting on them if they do their duty. I have done more little duties (other than drills & such like) since I got back than all summer before. When any little thing is wanted of course the commander of the company has to tend to it, but after any one gets used to the business it comes easier than at first. Our Co are making quite a saving from their rations. They draw what they want & the rest the Commander of the Co can get the money on it for the Co. I think they will save 75 dollars this month. They have an account of nearly a hundred dollars allowed now for the past two months but have not got the money yet.

I think if the blanket you spoke of sending is not very good it would not pay to express it, but you can do as you see fit & have room. I dont know whether Sam has one or not.

As Ever I remain yours C K Leach

Camp Griffin

December 20th 1861

Dear Ann

I received your letter last night & should have written to you had I felt as though I could. To tell the plain truth I have been about sick for two days past. I went on picket Tuesday & when I got in Wednesday morning I was pretty much used up. I had a very hard head ache & was quite fevery. The Dr gave me a dose of salts which operated freely & yesterday I began to feel a little better & today am better still, so much so that I think I shall be all right in a day or two. Today there are cold sores coming all over my lips, which do not feel very funny.

The Regts from this quarter have gone out on a scout this afternoon. The weather continues good as yet, but appearances today predict a storm.

Hollis' health is very good at this present time, so he has commenced whistling again.

Our Band has gone home, now we have no music but the fife & drum. We all hated to have them go, for it will be rather lonesome. Hollis hated to have them leave because they will have to do what the Band did before.

I guess there is something up for there was a party out chopping & they have been ordered in & be ready when called on. I should not wonder if there was a bit of a skirmish before night.

We were waked up last night by some music that sounded some like old times, it was a violin & banjo, they were out seranading. John McCarty, Sharpleys son in law played the violin.

I suppose it is settled who is to be promoted at last. Lieut Tracy of Co K is to be our Capt. Sawyer gets promoted to 2nd Lieut in Co F I believe. I hope for his good he will take a drop less once in a while. He gets pretty well cocked sometimes.

I am glad to hear that it is thought you have a good school this winter, hope it may prove so to be to the end.

I got a letter from Daniel day before yesterday he said they were all well as usual.

He says he applied for the appointment of recruiting officer but was a little too late. If he had got it he said [he] should probably have gone into the service.

As I dont feel in much of a writing mood I will close for the present & try & do better next time.

Please give the order that is enclosed to Vanness E. Chase for Bingham.

Ever yours C. K. L.

dont worry about me for I shall be all right before you get this.

P.S. Our Regt have come in & nothing has taken place only a tiresome march of about 20 miles.

Camp Griffin

Dec 24th 1861

Dear Ann

I received a letter from you last night, which found me in very good health. My throat has been a little sore for a few days, otherwise I am well. I have done nothing since I was on picket one week ago today, but think I shall commence operations again today. We have had rather rough weather since Sunday about dark. At that time it commenced raining & kept it up pretty much through the day yesterday. The wind blew yesterday & last night very hard but today is quite pleasant only a little cold & raw.

There is considerable sickness in the Regt now, almost every day someone dies. They get cold by exposure on picket (a good many of them) which brings on a fever. We have from our Co four or five in the Hospital Sam Wilcox for one, he is just taken with a fever & is pretty sick. Sam is a good boy & I hope he may get along & get well soon. John Ayers is another that has just gone to the Hospital, he was taken with a pain in the bowels. Hiram Soule, Larabee & one White have been in the Hospital some time but all are on the gain. I am afraid that we shall lose a great many by death before it comes warm weather again. I for one shall be glad to see spring come.

I should think it was about time you were getting that money, but probably it will be *good* when it does come. Perhaps I may send some other way next time if it is going to take so long to get it around that way. I will also try & do a little better than before (if nothing happens). I will try & send \$200 without my wants are more than I know of now.

My pay for 2 months will be in the neighborhood of \$240, & I shall have no servant to pay & I hope not a new suit of clothes to buy.

I should think Case was in great business sueing Bona for a few dollars in money but I suppose it is of great value to him.

I am waiting patiently for a letter from Zina, but I suppose he has about all he can tend to. I meant to have written to him before this time. Our 2nd Lieut Appleton has commenced doing duty again but has not been on picket yet. Our Regt have to furnish picket once in 5 days. Friday will be our day. 180 men, 2 captains & 4 Lieutenants is the detail.

I will close & hitch up to the fire & warm me.

I remain C K Leach

[Letter from Hollis Montague to Ann Leach]

Camp Griffin Dec 24th 61

Sister Ann,

As Chester was writing to you today, I thought I would put in a line. But I dont know what to write for there is no war news, & probbably Chester has written what othere news there is. My health is pretty good at the present time, hope it may continue so. It is quite sickly here now, fever rages to considerable extent. Sam Wilcox is quite sick with the Typhoid fever & wants I should write to his folks today. I dont think Sam is dangerous yet but there is no knowing what may come.

We have lost quite a number from this regt with[in] a month. One from Co. B died this morning. If Zina is sick with the measels, I wish you to hurry up those boots or have Nell for I am nearly destitute of boots. You wrote that I ought to be there to go to school. I should like to very much but dont see how I can. I am glad to see the Old grunt improve his opportunity while he can. It shows that he is not quite a fool. But dont let anyone see this for it would make [trouble?].

No more this time
Yours—H R Montague

Camp Griffin

December 27th 1861

Dear Ann

I received a letter from you tonight & now seat myself to answer it. I am well at this present time & so is Hollis also. The weather has not been as pleasant for a few days as might be wished, it has been rather cold & windy for a day or two. I think tonight is the coldest night we have had, the wind blows quite hard. We had a very nice day for Christmas & also had our labors suspended so we had quite a holiday.

I think that box will be very thankfully received especially by Hollis on account of boots. He has worn mine for a day or two.

I hope the tea you spoke of will come along.

I have sold my coat that I wore home to Lieut Appleton or rather give it away. I got six dollars for it. I had not damaged it any except the wear only started the buttons some. I did think of sending it home, but was afraid it would not be large enough next summer so I thought I had better have it out of the way.

There was quite a bad accident in our camp today about noon. We (the Officers) were up to the Adjutants tent, for recitation of tactics & we heard a stir outside & on looking out saw Lieut Tylers (of Co C) tent all on fire. It took fire from the stove pipe which went through the back side of the tent. Clothing bedding & his equipments all went. The loss must be one hundred dollars, quite a loss for this place.

You want to know when we commenced taking the *St. Albans Messenger*. I think it was in (I was going to say December) but dont know exactly, sometime in the winter. I guess it has run two years unpaid.

Sam Wilcox is about the same as when I last wrote (quite sick). Cant tell how he will come out of it of course.

Hollis has written to his folks but has received no answer yet. Quite a number have died from our regiment lately.

I guess I will have to come & eat supper with Zelia if she writes me to come.

I received Justins letter & hope he may write again, he must take yours for an answer to his. I have seen a great many letters that were not as well written or as well spelled as his, that were written by bigger folks than him.

I received a line from Jane by Hollis tonight & will answer it soon, hope Zina will escape the Measles this time.

There were a number sent money by Mr Poland from Fletcher & if they get theirs, you can see them.

I shall have to close & get nearer the fire or freeze. I have not got my likeness yet but am going to if nothing happens.

Ever yours
C K Leach

Camp Griffin

Dec 30th 1861

Dear Wife

Once more am I seated with pen in hand to answer a letter which I received from you tonight. Glad was I to hear that you were all well & hope you may remain the same. I have the good news to write that I am enjoying good health at this present time. Hollis' health is good also. I thank you for your wish to me of a merry Christmas, although it *does* come rather late. I have to say I *did* have a very merry Christmas considering all the circumstances under which we are placed. We had a nice warm day & our labors were suspended so we had nothing to do but to care for ourselves.

Of course we missed our homes with all the fixings connected with Christmas.

I am sorry to say that I fear Samuel Wilcox stands a narrow chance of getting well. He is a *very* sick boy. We have heard nothing from his folks in answer to letters written them since he was taken sick.

I am glad to hear that the box of things is on the way.

You write that you had heard you could get that money hope it may prove true for I think you have waited long enough.

We are just making out muster rolls for two months pay which we shall be likely to get in the course of three weeks.

We have also a monthly report to make out by tomorrow at one O Clock & the division is to be inspected tomorrow so you see we are full of business just now.

I received a letter from Zina tonight which I will answer as soon as I have time.

Daniel C Hulburd is going to Vermont on recruiting service the head quarters of which is at Burlington. Six months is the time he is detailed for, so likely he will have a chance of seeing his family.

You want to know what I call the Colt worth. Well really I dont know, but perhaps it would be better to sell him at the price Nelson named this fall than to keep him through the winter. If I was at home I should rather trade the mare off & keep him, but I suppose that would not answer your purpose.

The drums are beating the tattoo so I must out to roll call.

Give my respects to Mother & tell her I should like to hear from her.

I suppose you are without Nelson now, hope you may get through the winter without any bad luck.

Tell Addison to take good care of things & I will remember him if I live long enough.

Ever the same
C K Leach

Camp Griffin

Jan 2nd 186[2]

Dear Ann

Again I seat myself for the pleasing task of writing to you in answer to a letter received from you tonight. Pleased to hear that you were all well, & also pleased that I can tell you that I am the same. Hollis' health is good. Sam Wilcox is thought to be a little better, some hopes that he will get up again.

I wrote you that I thought likely I should have to spend my New Years on picket & such proved to be the case. Once in five days our regiment have to go on picket, or about 200 of them with 2 Captains & 4 Lieuts Half past seven is the time we have to start & get in again about ten the next day. We had a nice warm day yesterday, such a day as I never saw before the first day of Jan. At night the wind blew rather cold which made it rather uncomfortable.

Had a time playing euchre with Col Stanard & Capt Smith when we were on the reserve. Just about warm enough to set down & play cards.

I got my miniature taken day before yesterday which I will enclose in this if I dont forget it. I sat twice & had them both finished up, as they would do it for a quarter (half price). I will send you both & you can take your choice, will send the second in the next letter. I had heard of Frank Staples death & was speaking to Sawyer a day or two ago about seeing him on the bridge. No one knows who will go next. I have read that in war more died by disease than by being killed in battle, which proves itself more than true. As I wrote you before, I cant tell when the *Messenger* commenced, but it will never stop till arrearages are paid & ordered to be stoped.

Our Regiment were inspected today by a U S Officer, he inspects the brigade & I dont know but the division.

About getting up a wood pile I would not trouble myself about it if I was not going to stay there for the wood is growing & there is none to[o] much & if I hire it out I shall not furnish wood for a family in the house unless I make a bargain especially to that effect. I have not written to Zina yet, but intend to soon.

Did Norman say anything about receiving a letter from me? I wrote to him some time since & have received no answer. Perhaps he did not receive mine if I thought he did not I would write again.

Charles Bingham has just stuck his head into the tent & says that box has come & one for him glad of it. We will view the contents over & send you a receipt in full by the next mail. Hollis has gone for it now with Sawyer & Smith.

Ever yours

C K Leach

I got Justins letter tell him to write again
ask Zelia if she knows the picture

Camp Griffin

Jan 6th 1862

Dear Wife

As I have time today I will pen a few lines to you in anticipation of receiving a word from you tonight. I suppose the first you will ask is, How do you do? In answer to which I must say that my health is very good.

Hollis is complaining that something ails his private parts & we tell him if he had been to Washington we should know what ailed him.

We are having a slight touch of winter, the snow fell last night about two inches deep I should guess, but it is not as cold as it has been before. The ground has been very dry here this winter. Last Friday when we were on brigade drill the dust flew when we were marching so we could hardly see & when we got through we were so dusty we could write our names on our backs. I wrote you in my last that Sam Wilcox was better but since that he has failed, so there is but little hope if any of his recovering. He has been the sickest person I have seen for many a day.

I received a dispatch by telegraph Saturday from Francis enquiring if he was living—if not to send his body home—I sent back that he was better as he seemed to be at that time.

We were calculating to send his body home if he died but it will be hard to raise the means just at the present time for I dont know as there is money enough in the regiment that one can get.

it is so dark I cant see the mark

I reckon you noticed I didnt send my miniature in my last letter. When I got ready to send the letter the picture was in my trunk & the contents of that box piled top of that so I concluded to wait till next time

When you get both give one of them to Daniel.

Those things we received were all very acceptable & in very good shape excepting the crackers which were pretty well smashed. The honey leaked some & mixed with the cracker dust. The crackers ought to have been put in something & then if they had broken they would have [been] confined. We dont know who made the butter but we have all come to the conclusion that it is first rate good butter. The cooked hen we devoured for supper last night. You tell Uncle Ich that when [he] gets to be a soldier I will send him some tea. Tea is amongst the foremost articles of our wants.

As I expected I received a letter from you tonight—glad to hear that you were well & had at last got that money. I think that we soldiers would freeze up if we were set down in Vermont by the account you give of the weather for it is all we want to do to keep warm here, but I have not suffered much by cold yet.

The interest you paid I guess was all right. I hope you will get money enough soon to pay up all interest & every little debt & have some left. I dont remember about promising the place to Ceph if let out but I had as lief he would have it as anyone but I think it would be as well to hire it out.

Sawyer has been detailed as Second Lieut & has gone on picket today (good for him)

I have been Officer of the day today & that was the reason I had a chance to write this afternoon as I did not have to go on drill.

Good bye for this time

C K Leach

Camp Griffin

Jan 10th 1862

Dear Ann

Again I seat myself to answer a letter from you which I received last night. I was glad to hear you was well, but think you was a little excited or you would have signed your name. I thought you must be sick by the looks of the outside of the envelope. My health is good & Hollis too.

Of course you will hear, before you get this that Samuel Wilcox is dead. He died Tuesday the 7th. He was liked by the whole Co who feel to mourn at his death. I think he had as good care as possible for the place. His body is sent as you will [p]robably learn before you get this.

Mother wrote that the result of your leaving so sudden was, Zina had got a boy, you just tell him if he dont treat I will have him Court martialed.

I will wait till I hear further before I say anything more.

Yesterday morning one of our Co by the name of Hewitt was found dead in his tent. There were three others in the tent but they did not discover that he was dead till about nine O.C. he laid on his face.

The Doctor thought he died in a fit. He has not been very well this winter.

Hollis has just read a letter from Florrilla to Sam Wilcox. It was written after receiving the dispatch that he was better. Their good feelings & fond hopes of his recovering must have received a sad shock on hearing of his death. They will ever receive the evidence of all his comrads that he was a faithful boy, never complaining at whatever duty was assigned him & we all feel deeply his loss.

Our winter weather that we were receiving when I last wrote has passed away & we now have plenty of mud. I hope [it] will freeze up again for I had rather have to stir around a little to keep warm than to be wallowing in the mud but I expect that is what we shall get a good share of the winter.

Our Col has gone home on a leave of absence of 30 days, went this morning. One Capt & one Lieut have also resigned & received their discharge today. I suppose you will say, I wish you would do the same, but I will say I have not got ready just yet but perhaps shall sometime.

Some of the boys were saying Bona Case was appointed 2nd Sergeant. That is doing well for him but I guess they are deceived in the person if they have made him sergeant.

We have no Capt yet but hope we may have before long. We have had a deal of business to do lately which the Commander of a company has to do & which I have got about sick of doing. I get ten dollars per month extra but that dont half pay. The Captains say they want to be promoted to Lieutenants.

We had the hen cooked for supper tonight & it was first rate good. There is an old nigger comes into camp every few days with potatoes, milk, turnips & such like & keeps us supplied. Only asks \$1.50 for potatoes, & 12 ½ cts a quart for milk but glad to get them at that price. I received a letter from Rev Lester Warren the other day & am going to write to him as soon as I have time. His folks were well.

I was glad to receive a line from Mother write again.

My respects to all

Chester K Leach

Camp Griffin

Jan. 13th/62

Dear Wife

As I have a very little time this afternoon I will commence writing you with the expectation of finishing tonight after receiving a word from you which I am looking for. I did not go out to drill this afternoon because I was on picket yesterday & did not get in till ten O Clock today. The picket are not excused from drill in the afternoon after being on picket but I have never been out at all the next day. We had a nice warm day for picket yesterday but is a little colder today. My health has been good since I last wrote & hope may continue so for it is a great blessing in these times. News is an article we dont deal in for we see nothing only soldiers & our life is about the same from day to day.

Hollis is well & has taken up a new trade & that is pipe smoking. Whether he is going to smoking or not I dont know. The boys get a sort of root from which they whittle out pipes. We expect the pay master here this week or the fore part of next with another two months pay. You may expect about one hundred & eighty dollars of my two months pay from the Treasurer of the state of Vermont, & whatever more I can spare I will send by letter which will probably be twenty dollars.

I received a letter this morning when I came in from picket from Louis Ann. They were all well at the time of writing. I have [been] so busy of late that I dont answer letters as fast as received. I think I have four on hand now to answer when I have time.

I said I was well but I have a very hard cold, yet I feel well. If you receive both the pictures I sent just write which you call the best. I think the body of one & the face of the other ought to go together.

We that enlisted in the spring are likely to get pay from date of enlisting to the time we were mustered at Fletcher. There is a man here from Vermont for the purpos of learning the time of enlisting. I have written to Capt Strait for information.

(Evening) I received a letter from you tonight & glad to hear that you were well & also that Jane was so smart, hope she may continue to gain. I always thought Zina would come to his milk and think every thing of a child if he should catch one in his trap.

Our boys are in very good health at present. There are some in the Hospital but none very sick.

Sawyer is acting Lieut & waiting as patiently as possible for a commission & why his with others are not along is a mystery. They will have to commission somebody before a great while or we shall be minus Officers. As there is no news to write & it is now nine O.C. & I being out last night you must excuse this white paper.

Ever yours C K Leach

Camp Griffin

Jan 16th 1862

Ann dear

Again tonight did I get a letter from you as I expected. Glad to hear that you were well, & have the same good news for you except I am very hoarse with a cold which I have had since I wrote you last, took cold on picket.

We have had a little more winter since I last wrote. About two inches of snow fell on Monday night & some of it is still on the ground. I have got a new tent, we have been at work all day today in fixing up, it looks like a new house.

We have got a small tent set on the rear & so we can pass from one in to the other. I guess we shall be a little more comfortable.

If Zina is in need of that money and wants it at 8 per cent let him have a hundred dollars. I should not want to let it go less as I am paying that rate of interest.

If you should have any butter to spare this winter just send it to me, it is worth 30 cts per pound here & not very good at that. I guess that cheese is good for I have not cut it yet. Smith had some & we have been eating that. Eatables dont cost nothing here. A nigger comes into Camp every few days with potatoes, turnips, milk apples & such like, he asks 1.50 per bush. for potatoes, 1.00 for turnips, 3.50 for apples & 12½ per quart for milk & all prices according but we are glad to get them at that. I see by northern papers that they were expecting an advance of this army, but I have seen no signs of an advance in these parts nor do I think there will be one before spring at least unless it is to act in connection with an attack on the rebel batteries down the river.

We have recitations in tactics twice a day now from eleven to twelve A.M. & 7 to 8 P.M. It is a very good thing.

About the Colt I would not sell him unless I could get what he is worth. If I was going to be at home I should like to have him kept but that [is] uncertain.

I suppose you will think that tomorrow is my birth day. Circumstances are different from what I have ever experienced at any previous birth day & no telling what the next will be if I ever see that time, but nothing strange if living If I was in Vt

News we have not so you will have to look to other sources for that.

I wish Zina would send his likeness so I could see how dad looks. I suppose he feels as big as Capt Otis.

I think the army is very demoralizing for it is nothing strange to see Hollis with a pipe in his mouth.

I think I have improved in writing

From C K Leach

ginger all safe

Dear Wife

Camp Griffin Jan 19th 1862

(almost nine O Clock) yet I will spend a few minutes in writing.

How are you tonight? Well I hope—& enjoying yourself as well as possible. We are all well here & growing finely. It is rather nasty here just now, has rained pretty much all the time for two days & is getting very muddy. Matters & things move along pretty much after the same sort, we dont drill much now days on account of the weather. Our new tent goes first rate, should like very much if you we[re] here to see us. I suppose you are with Jane yet, hope she has got smart.

Our Camp has been thronged with citizens lately. Harrison Bingham is about here now, is going to Fortress Monroe before he goes home. If any one has any curiosity about them, I think it must well pay the cost. I wrote to Norman a day or two ago & give him an invitation to come down and see us, but dont expect he will do it. We received a letter from Uncle Amasa last night & also a line from Flora to Hollis. They must feel much afflicted by the death of Samuel but so it goes, no one knows who will go next.

I believe there has been no deaths in this regiment for a few days, since Hewitt died. (half past nine, bed time so good night & wait for a letter from you tomorrow night.)

(Monday Eve) Just got a letter from you & Zina & Jane. I believe we are well as yet. Glad to hear you are all well. We are having the worst weather at this time that there has been this winter. The mud is very deep which the boys call Virginia blacking. It has rained pretty much all the time for three days.

I have not been out to any drill for a number of days & the reason is there has been none. The nights here at present are as dark as Egypt, a pleasant time to be on picket. I will be glad to have it freeze up & have it remain so.

The Governor of Vermont does not see fit to act on Col Whitings recommendations for promotion & has written to Lieut Col Stannard in Col Whitings absence that any recommendations he may make will be considered & the Col has had the subject in contemplation today. He has made up his list & will probably transmit it to the Governor at once. I hope the Gov will see fit to act on it for I for one dont like to do duty for others, as it takes the same number for picket whether we are more or less in number, which makes our turn come the oftener. I will say nothing at present *who* are the favored ones only that my name is not on the list, but I will say this that the Col said if I had been present & doing duty all the time I would have been Captain before this. He said Col Whiting spoke to [him?] about that. I have no complaint to make but mind you my turn comes next, & if theres another Capt to be made, I have it or else I am ———. I shall be glad when our Capt takes his place, as I have no desire to do a Capts duty without the name & pay.

I thought this morning I would see how much I had grown poor so I went down to the comissaries & took the solidity of my mortal frame & found it took 174 lbs to balance me. So you see I *yet* hold my own.

Capt Hope went home a short time since & when he came back he brought his wife & girl with him, which must make the hours of camp life seem more pleasant. The Chaplains wife is also with *him*. If we were certain of remaining where we are any length of time, I should be almost tempted to have my vrow make a short call if it met with her approval but cant exactly say considering all things that it would be for the best. The Majors wife & little girl have been with him all the fall & winter.

I will say to Zina in answer to his about the farm that I guess he will have to carry it on at his own offer & would further say that if times are hard he shall not lose any thing by it. One little thing while I think of it, I have a little charge against the Town of about seven dollars for services listing, which I want he should get an order for at March meeting.

I will write again in relation to the plowing on the farm & such like, more particularly. The place to manure & plant is just above the barn where oats were sowed last year, & it is a good piece too & will be good for wheat the next year. I suppose Jane thinks her boy is the nicest, but presume it is nothing such as grow down at our house, but then she will do well in believing it so if she only sticks to it. for want of room I'll stop.

Ever yours C K Leach

[Letter from Hollis R. Montague]

Camp Griffin

Jan 20, 62

Folks at Home

As Chester is writing think I will stick in a word or *ten*. The table is occupied so I have to write with a pencil, but I guess you can pick it out.

What I wish to say is that I would rather you would read my letters & then burn them, than to put them into the papers. I am afraid my letters would make as much talk as L S Hebbs did, & therefore please dont put them in. My health is very good just now I believe. I have not felt better since I have been in the army.

I have nothing new to write, except the mud is crotch deep. It hasn't froze here for a number of days but has rained a good share of the time.

Respects to all H R Montague

Camp Griffin

Jan 23, 1862

Dear Ann

I received your letter tonight which was mailed the 20th. Glad to know that you were well. We are also in the same fix at present but how long to remain so time will tell.

We are being paid off (the regt) today, or night it is now. I think Co H will get their pay tonight pretty much all paper money, but I have a ten dollar gold piece which I can keep to see how it looks.

I have thought that we should not leave this place for a while, but I have come to the conclusion at last that short is to be our stay here. I have come to this conclusion from orders that we have received of late. One & the first is that the men are to have 40 rounds of cartridges in their boxes & when they are sent on picket or other duty which requires them to load one extra cartridge is furnished. Another is that if any clothing or anything is needed to fit the men for a march it shall be furnished.

Col Stannard also told the Officers today that they had better reduce their baggage as low as possible.

No passes are to be granted except on official business. We shall probably move as soon as the going will permit. It will be very nice laying out two or three nights as we shall be likely to do if we move.

You asked in your last about the expenses of sending Samuel home & I forgot to say.

The whole expense including the telegraph dispatch was \$57.28. The undertakers charge was \$26.00, & the express \$30, telegraph 1.28. Smith went to Georgetown with the corps[e] & the undertaker took it to the express office.

Was the Coffin a nice one? It was black walnut.

If any one thinks I am making mony fast, just let them pitch in, they have the same priviledge if the[y] are smart enough to get a good chance. They can have a bone to gnaw if they will run their own risk to get it, & not stand back & snarl because they cant have what is gnawed off. I presume it sounds very well to organize Companys in expectation of a war with England, but fear if their services should be needed it would be about as it was last spring, but perhaps not. This speech making & the like amounts to but little, unless the shackles are ready to put on before they lose the charm. I suppose Zina will stand prominent in the business but I dont doubt his courage for he has been tried & not found wanting.

I think the heaviest of our winter is past & hope it may be so. There has been but about 4 inches of snow in all yet but looks now as though we might get a little more. If I have any chance I will send you the chronicle but you need not think of sending me any stamps or money without I ask it.

Ever yours C. K. Leach

Camp Griffin

Jan 26th 1862

Dear Wife

I will improve the hours of this leasure sabbath in writing to you.

I am in good health at present, & trust I shall remain so. It is a very pleasant day today only the wind blows pretty hard.

The mud that we have been blessed with of late froze up last night but is all thawing out again today, so I think mud will be our portion nearly all the time till it becomes dry again.

When I wrote to you last I told you we were about being paid off & after I finished writing we were paid that night, so I put a twenty dollar note in the letter without saying anything about it, which I hope you may receive all safe. You will probably receive an order (blank) from the Treasurer of Vermont, sometime within the next year. The amount I allotted is \$180., which with the \$20, sent in the letter makes 200. I may send a little more sometime, & may not. I have now by me between 40 & 50 dollars, & also about 50 dollars of Company Fund money, making rather more than I care about carrying with me. If Zina wants a hundred dollars of that money when it comes he can have it, if no one cares about it that I am owing, as I presume he needs it as much as they.

We learn nothing new in relation to an advance & dont expect to till the order comes to march, & we may not move from here for two months to come but are liable to be ordered to move at any hour. I think it depends upon the operations in other places. If you cant read this you may lay it to two things, one is that my table stands against the tent which the wind *shakes some* I reckon, & the other is I have a new gold pen. (reason enough I think)

We sent another of our Co home dead yesterday. His name was Loomis, one of the recruits enlisted by Capt Burnham.

You may look for a box of old clothes & one thing & another in a short time. It will contain my over coat, old grey uniform coat & a pair of pants that I have worn since I got back here, & also some articles that belonged to Sam Wilcox & perhaps some things for others.

You asked some questions in a previous letter about Samuel Wilcox which I neglected to answer. One was about the flag that was around his coffin & I must say I know nothing [about] it anyway but presume it was put on at the Borough. The other was whether he was sick in the Hospital that was lately built or at a house. Well I would say neither one, but was in the hospital tent or tents as there are two or three put together

There has been no use made of the new Hospital for the sick till day before yesterday (Friday) when it was taken possession of.

Chester

Sunday Eve/ I will write a little more as I have got to go on picket tomorrow & shall have no time again till Tuesday & will leave it for Hollis to finish & send out. This is very pleasant eve & is freezing again which will make it better going out in the morning. I have not been on picket since the 12th, fifteen days.

I doubt not you are writing to night but under very different circumstances than what I am. If I could enjoy myself as well as I have the past two months, I would not mind being a soldier all the time, but no one knows when the scene will change, & perhaps the everlasting change.

I rather guess Hollis has been more content since he has been with me than he was before, or at least he seems to be as jolly as any of us, & looks as tough as he ever did.

I think Zina had better get another sap pan for the sugar place as it will [save] the worth of it in labor the first year. I will send money enough to get one, if I send no more.

Well now I will give you the position & occupation of the occupants of this ere domicile at present time half past eight. Hollis sits just at the right of the entrance at the table writing & I am just at his left writing on a three legged crotch with a barrel head on top. This is our center table & answers many purposes. On the left of the tent is our bed on which sits Lieut Appleton, Smith & Sawyer, the first writing on a book & the two last looking over a magazine. Appleton does not tent with us but his gentleman as he calls him is rather drunk & he says he will be damned if he will make a fire for him. Charles Clark is his gentleman.

I have not heard from any one only from Fletcher folks for a number of days, but perhaps the more to come. I have written to Norman again but have received nothing from him yet.

I suppose Zina is getting impatient for a word from me & I will try & do him justice soon.

You must take the excuse for not writing more, disability & the want of more room.

I will leave this for Hollis to mail if he gets one from you for me tomorrow. I will bid you good night, hoping when I get in from picket to have received a line from you.

Chester K Leach

Camp Griffin

Jan 30th 186[2]

Dear Wife

At this late hour (half past eight P.M.) I seat myself to answer your letter which came to hand tonight. I did not get a letter Monday night, & Tuesday the mail did not come, consequently I got a letter last night & one again tonight.

We are all well & enjoying ourselves like a hog in a mud hole, at least we are in the mud whether we enjoy it or not. The weather continues to be very bad, not hardly a day passing but that it rains more or less but generally more. It is impossible to go out of the tent without getting into the mud, but now to answering your letters & the first question is how much I should ask for those pants, as Zina wants them to wear with his Coat. I should have given them to him when I was at home if I had not got them spotted so bad. I thought he would not thank me for my old clothes, but if he will wear them he is welcomed to them as a gift. You need not trouble yourself about getting any butter to send here if you are short, for perhaps we shall move from this place & the more stuff we have the worse it will be, & we have enough to last quite a while yet.

I wrote you in my last that I thought I should send some more money home, but as Sawyer is about to get a Commission, & had not the money to get his uniform & equipments with, I let him have \$55.00 which makes a little difference with my wallet but perhaps I may send enough to get a pan with, but if I dont, get one & use that you have to pay for it.

I dont know as it makes any difference who you let have that money if Zina dont want it now. If there was enough to pay David Shepardson I should say let him have it, & perhaps you had better pay him what you can. I have given Hollis a note for the money I had of him when I was at Georgetown. \$15.00 & \$20.00 the next pay day & for an order of \$20.00 this last pay day, making \$55.00. If you can, by not paying Safford, & with the money on Hollis order, any way make out enough to pay Shepardson I would do it, or pay him what you can & perhaps I will help you some more in a short time.

About the cooper tools I guess William would take good care of them & if he wants them after Zina gets through with what he wants of them let him have them.

I should think Zina was having his share of sickness lately, but hope he may get along.

It is quite comfortable going on picket now especially on the reserve as they are occupying a house, & have fires in it.

There were six ladies from the 5th & 6th regts came out there the other day & made us a call. I reckon they saw some very nice drawings on the walls of the house.

I send the order from Hollis which you will endorse & send it to the Treasurer. Ten O Clock good night

C K Leach

Camp Griffin

Feb 2nd 1862

Dear Wife

Sunday Eve

I think I will spend a short time this evening in putting a few stray thoughts on paper, that when I receive a line from you I will not be long delayed in sending an answer. We are getting along about as usual only one thing a little different, & that is the mud is getting a little deeper every day. We had another bit of a snow storm on Friday night which added to the mud greatly, & helps to add comfort to Camp life, especially when one has any business to do around camp.

Sawyer & I have been over to the 4th Vt Regt today on business pertaining to the pay that we are about to receive from the time we enlisted to the time from which we received pay from the State. The Fletcher boys will get about a half months pay.

I wrote in a previous letter that we were about to have a change in Officers, & a number of promotions to fill vacancies in this Regt, but did not at that time say who the lucky ones, (as I suppose they feel themselves to be) were.

I will now say that as far as Co H is affected, Lieut Tracy of Co K is to be Captain, & in place of 2nd Lieut E W Appleton who is to be promoted to 1st Lieut in Co B will be Joshua P Sawyer.

The effect of the change in Lieuts, whether for good or bad, time will show. Appleton is a very good Officer & understands his business, & also Sawyer is capable enough & I doubt not will make a good Officer, & I am glad he is to receive a Commission.

He will be likely to do well, without he gets on a bender as he does occasionally. I hope it may be the means of his reforming a little, if he sees a possibility of raising in rank. Hollis is in good health & seems to be well contented now. I guess it agrees with him to be waiter, & he makes a very good one.

Monday night, Feb. 3? Another letter from you was received tonight which found us well.

I was sorry to hear that Zina was having so hard a time of it, but hope he may come through all straight.

It has snowed pretty much all day today, & there is more snow on the ground than has been at any one time before, but I guess it will not stay long for I can hear the rain falling on the tent now. It froze up last night, so it has been quite comfortable in camp today.

We got a letter from Nelson tonight, all well.

Nelson said he thought some of going down & see if he could buy the stags, as Armstrong was not likely to get those he had let out. They were having a great snow storm at the time of writing (Jan 26) so it seems they have snow in Jay as well as in Fletcher. A snow drift would be quite a curiosity here.

There does not seem to be as many signs of an early advance at this time as there was a short time since, but perhaps it will come when least expected. I suppose the folks at the north are looking earnestly for some news from this quarter, & wondering why we are so long in idleness, & I cant see myself if this is to be the field of operation, why they are as well prepared now as ever they will be. But I rather doubt that this is to be the main place of attack, unless operations in other places should compel the rebels to withdraw their forces from here, so it would become policy to attack them at this point.

I see by your letter, you are worrying on account of the expectations of an advance, & I suppose of course it is impossible to feel otherwise, but keep yourself a[s] quiet as possible, for it will do no good, & sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

I suppose you have heard from D C Hulburd since he got home on recruiting service. I have heard he was delivering lectures around home. Well I think he would beat Woodbury for I doubt not he has a diary of every days transaction since we left for Washington.

I think it not probable that he will never see any more war, as he is quite old & will get his discharge some way.

I will have to close for this time as it is most 10 O Clock, & have run ashore for words.

Chester K Leach

Camp Griffin

Feb 5th 1862

Dear Ann

Again I seat myself to pen a few lines to you, to send tomorrow morning, not waiting to hear from you. I do this that you may be more sure to get it by Tuesdays mail. We are all enjoying good health at present & hope to hear the same from you. This has been a nice pleasant day & is very much like a spring day in Vermont. Yesterday was the most like winter of anything I have seen yet, with about four inches of snow, but the warm sun today has caused much of it to vanish. We occupied some of our time yesterday & today with target shooting & that is about all that has transpired since I last wrote. Hulburds Son that has been in the army came to our Camp yesterday, he has been out of the service for a while but I understand talks of again enlisting.

Charles Rice was here yesterday & made us quite a visit, he belong[s] to the Bucktails & was in the Drainsville fight. He is about the same chap as of old.

The Noncommissioned officers of this regt have purchased by subscription a nice Sword to present to Brigadier Gen Howard, who was in command of the brigade when we were a[t] Bush Hill. They have Sword, Sash & Belt, the whole costing about two hundred dollars. The privates have also raised money to purchase the same number of articles to present to Col Whiting.

I will enclose an order which you will get cashed for your own benefit. I have paid the worth of it to Meeker, minus some. It is on the account of the order that I send this tomorrow, that you might get it before you sent the one from Hollis.

This from C K Leach

Now Mr. Zina what are you doing these days, hope you have got well by this time, but fear I may hear different. We have very good times here this winter, only it has been very muddy of late. I never knew what mud was before this. We have done nothing this winter but picket & guard duty & getting our fire wood.

I think on some accounts it would have been better if there had been more to do, as you know idleness is the breeder of many vices & the like which are not strictly military. Gambling is one thing that a great many busy themselves about when not otherwise occupied & not infrequently the amount of two months wages is lost within a short time after pay day. The practice is not only among the men but the Officers too, & on a larger scale as their amount is larger.

Perhaps it would have been better to have said nothing, as Ann may think that I do the same, but she may rest assured that I am free from that yet & hope to remain so, & think I will save as much money as the rest then. The Regt is very healthy now, only three excused from duty in Co H, & one in the hospital in Washington, wounded by discharge of his gun.

Yours, etc
Chester K Leach

Camp Griffin

Feb 9th 1862

I dont know as I can better spend a little time this evening than in writing a few lines to dear ones at home, on whom my thoughts are ever dwelling, with good wishes for their welfare. All enjoying good health here in camp at this time, which I hope may be the lot of those that are left at home. I received a line from you Thursday, the day after sending my last & was glad to hear you were well at that time but expect to hear that the measles have got some of you the next time.

Nelson Smith came here this morning & is yet with us. His health is good & has had good health during his enlistment. He has written to Hollis a number of times that he was coming up here as soon as he could get away, and at last did come, he looks healthy & fat and says he enjoys himself first rate. I guess he will go back tomorrow. (Monday)

His regiment is stationed near the Arlington house where I went to the "medical board."

Today has been a nice day, which has dried up the mud some, but there will have to be a great many pleasant days before the mud will all disappear.

Likely you will see accounts of the reconnaissance of our Cavalry before you get this. The Cavalry is stationed near us & two Companys of them have to go out scouting every day, but they went out that day in greater numbers for the purpose of securing their pickets. Some of our Boys saw the prisoners they brought in, & they said they were very shabbyly dressed but well armed. We have changed our guns for new ones (Springfield rifles) but dont know as we have made a great bargain.

At last, we have a Captain, he took command on Friday the 7th—

I will lay this by till I hear from you again.

Monday Evening/ Have received your letter as I expected, which [finds] us still in good health. Today has been a very fine day, quite cold in the morning, & the ground was froze quite hard, but where the sun struck it thawed out today. Nelson Smith went back to his reg't this afternoon.

Col Whiting got back to camp tonight after an absence of 30 days, looking tough & rugged. I guess he will find things altered a little.

I think you guessed wrong when you guessed who our Capt was to be, & you need have no fears of such an act as that ever will take place, for he has not power enough in this regt yet to bring him to that position.

About the position of Capt, if it were not for the name I would as lief have the position I now hold. I have heard some say that if I had "stuck up" I could have been Capt now. I dont take it as disrespect, or that I was looked upon as inferior in knowledge of military matters, that I have not gone up, for I have self conceit enough to think I know as much as the rest of them, & also that the one that made the recommendations thinks so too.

There are no signs of a move at present, as everything has lulled down, & orders that were given a while ago have been withdrawn, but still, we may have to move when we least expect it. We shall have to move before a great while on account of wood, for it has to be drawn quite a ways.

I sent an order in my last which you will probably get, but if not let me know it.

I have a picture of our camp which I am going to send you. The building in the rear is the Hospital when it was partly finished. The camp has altered since that was taken, the trees are gone to a great extent, & the guard tents where are seen the group of men are moved in front to the right.

Ever yours
C K Leach

Now a word to Zina again.

I suppose you are cooeping these days, but that has nothing to do with soldiering. too much work about it, but should like to help you, just for a little exercise to keep my blood in circulation. I never called myself very large & pussy, but think I will avarege with the rest now. Some say I dont look natural, but look more tough & healthy. I took the drum Major down the other day, which made them all laugh.

You must remember to present my account of seven dollars for listing, to the selectmen at March meeting & get an order therefor.

Ann says, *you say* that if you was in my place you would resign. Perhaps you would, but I dont feel as though it was a sufficient excuse for me, at this time, but if I live long enough to see more captains appointed & dont get a chance, I shall do as I then see fit.

Sawyer is right on his dignity now since he is Lieut but hope he will not get *quite* as tight as he has sometimes.

C K L

I received Justins letters & will have to write some to him soon.

Camp Griffin

Feb 13th/62

Dear Wife

Your letter of date Feb 8th & 9th came to hand tonight & was very welcome. We are all doing very well as to health. I have been a little ill about the bowels for two or three days, but feel well tonight.

I have felt a little anxious about the folks at home, on account of the measles, of late, but hope all will be well.

I am not sorry to have the children have them, for I think it better for any one to have them when young, as they generally have them lighter, & again they are not always living in fear of them in after life. I hope to hear, when I hear from you again, that all are doing well.

Not much news from these parts. The most is the coming in of 28 contraband negroes yesterday, mostly women & children.

They arrived at our picket line about day light, & came in with them when they were relieved. They had a two horse team for the transportation of their baggage.

There is a new battery stationed on the ground where the 5th Vt Regt was encamped when you were here. Whether it is looking towards an advance, or for fear of an attack, or merely stationed here, as being a good place to drill I know not.

You will of course hear of the news from Burnside's expedition before you get this, so I will just tell you how the news was received here. There was a rumor about camp just at night yesterday that Burnside was killed & a great number of his men taken prisoners. This you may believe made very sad faces, but in a short time news spread around that Roanoke Island was taken & 1000 rebels killed & 2000 taken prisoners.

Soon there was an orderly call, & they were ordered to fall in the Companies & march them before the Col's tent. This done Col Stannard read a telegraph dispatch from head quarters containing the news, & then three cheers were given, & you would have thought all Vermont was turned loose by the noise that was made.

There is another rumor tonight that Fort Donelson in Tennessee is taken & 7000 Rebels taken prisoners, but that is too good to believe, but pray that it may be true.

You ask if I know anything about Sam Wilcox losing some money. Hollis says he lost his wallet, with three or four dollars in it, out of his pocket.

There are instances, very often, of the men losing their wallets with all their money, which goes to show that there are those among us that might be placed in the ranks of pickpockets. Time & room prevents my writing more.

C K Leach

Camp Griffin

Feb 18th/62

Dear Wife

I received your letter tonight & hasten to write you a few lines in answer. I did not receive yours last night as I expected & did not write, so perhaps this not will reach you on Saturday. Hope to hear next time that you are all well again.

My health is good, as are all of the Fletcher folks. Our time is very much occupied of late with doing nothing except crawling around in the mud.

I expect our winter is about gone. Last Thursday was a very pleasant & warm day & dried up the mud a considerable, but since then it has froze, snowed, rained & thawed so now it is clear mud.

If Zina is getting wrathful & intends doing so rash an act as to write such a long letter as you speak of I will have to appease his wrath by writing him one that will take him so long to read it, as to give him time to reconcile himself a little.

I received a line from Albert tonight, the only letter I have received, only yours, except one from Emerson for quite a while.

Capt Tracy intends going home on a short leave, his papers have gone to Washington but don't [know] as he will get them sanctioned.

Col Stannard is at home on leave of absence of ten days & a chance of extension if his folks are not better, as they were sick, the reason of his going home.

David H Davis of our Company has gone west to go with the Flotilla. Quite a Company went from these parts, taking one in a place of such as wanted to go. I presume they will have something to do when they get there.

Things remain about the same as ever in this quarter, but operations seem to [be] going on quite lively in other parts. The news of late has created much joy among the soldiers.

Capt Tracy was just in & says he is going to start for home tomorrow, as he has got his papers.

Dr Ballou I think is going also. Nearly every Officer of the Regt has been home.

You spoke of having nearly money enough or would have when you got that of the state to pay David. I will try & send you enough to make it up by the time you get that.

Do as you please about selling the colt if you have a good chance. Likely there will be other horses in the world just as good, & perhaps I shall never need one. Hollis says he forgot to take a receipt for the measles. Bed time so good night

C K Leach

Camp Griffin

Feb 24th 1862

Dear Ann

Once more I set myself at the pleasing duty of writing to you. I have just received a letter from you & glad to hear that you are all as well as you represent. My health continues to be good & am enjoying life as well as possible under circumstances with which we are surrounded. Today has been an awful day with us, that is, an awful windy day.

The wind commenced blowing early in the morning, & continued to increase till about noon, when it blowed a regular hurricane, which continued all the afternoon & still blows very hard.

Many of the tents were blown down & the trees were tipped up by the roots, which made a very lively scene for a while. A tree about 8 inches through at the butt fell across our tent, but went so slow that the tent held it up. A number of other tents had trees fall across them. Tonight is a very chilly night & will freeze very hard. There is one thing in which the wind has done good & that is the drying up the mud. I never saw the mud dry so fast in my life.

I am glad to hear that you have got an order from the State Treasurer at last & hope the next time it will get along a little quicker. I think that if you have money enough to pay Shephardson, you had better do it & trust luck for some to buy cows with. Perhaps I can help you some way or other.

I suppose you will find I did not write to you but once last week, but think I should, if I had known you were at home, but as I wrote to Zina I thought it would answer for both.

The Cavalry that is near us went out again on Saturday & took a number of the Sesesh pickets prisoners. There is one that was wounded in the affair, in our hospital.

How do your bees get along this winter. I expect to hear that some of them have starved to death, but hope not. You say in one letter that you have received a Valentine from Washington. I guess I will have to inquire into the matter a little, think some of the Gents must have been fascinated by your charms.

It seems rather odd to hear that you are having so much snow, & not a bit of "that same" here, but then we have had enough mud to make it all up. What has become of all the folks that used to write me. I have only got a letter from Emerson & one from Albert for a long while.

C K Leach

Camp Griffin

Feb 26th/62

Dear Wife

I will attempt to pen a few lines tonight to you to inform you how things prosper in this region. As to myself, I am not feeling very well tonight. I have caught a cold & am lame & sore all over & beside that I have a pretty good head ache. I took cold that windy day I think.

The mud got pretty well dried up, (that is to what it was) but tonight it rains again, so we are not likely to get entirely destitute of the article.

We were ordered this afternoon to have three days rations cooked & be ready to march at any time, therefore you can judge about how we are situated tonight. The weather at this time does not look as though it would be a very desirable thing to move just now, but we may be ordered out before many hours pass.

It will be doubtful whether I march or not, feeling as I do now.

What our destination is to be you can guess as well as I, but likely if we do move you will hear of it before you get this. There was a host of mule teams up from Washington this morning, came up last night. I think they moved some regiment or regiments from the brigade south of us to Washington or somewhere else in that direction. As I have nothing else of importance to write you will have to take the will for the deed, in not writing more hoping that when I write again I may feel a little better.

I remain yours

C K Leach

Camp Griffin

March 3rd 1862

Dear Wife

I feel somewhat disappointed tonight as I have not got a letter from you. Our mail has not come in & it is now tattoo time.

The last time I wrote I was about sick, which has been the case ever since, but feel a little better, so I think I will be all right in a few days.

I took cold at first which brought on a little fever & head ache, but that is all gone, & I am now weak & no appetite, but am gaining. I have lost some of my flesh I reckon.

There has been a great deal of wind here the past week, for besides Monday it commenced to blow Thursday morning very hard & kept it up till Friday night. It about used up the mud, but we have a fair prospect for a little more as yesterday it snowed & today it has rained nearly all day, & tonight rains like blazes. Our Regt are on picket & they must have a sweet time, for it is as dark as you can guess. Capt Tracy got back yesterday & today is on picket.

The order for our three days rations has amounted to nothing, but we were to assist Gen Banks if he met with any resistance in crossing the river. He is now this side of the river so I suppose we will all move together when the time comes.

I am sorry to hear that sickness & death is so near you, but hope you may all escape, but if you should be sick any of you I would try & come home for a short time.

You asked what I paid for my compasses. Now really I cant tell but think it was 50 cts. The Oil stove cost 87½ cts but of course is not worth that now as it is broke.

I will close for it [is] getting to be bed time.

Ever yours
C K Leach

[Letter from Hollis R. Montague to Ann Leach]

Camp Griffin

March 3rd 62

Sister Ann

As Chester was writing to you I thought I would stick in a word or two if I can find anything to write. I have almost forgotten how to write, for I hav'nt had a letter since I can remember & so have not had to write any. The mail has not come in yet tonight but when it does, presume I shall be disappointed as usual. I hav'nt heard from Nell but once since he moved & have written to him three times, but perhaps the letters got *misscarried*, or some other *Miss*. Howsomeever I suppose I shall have to stand it. Tell Mother if she dont write pretty soon that I shant send for any more T. . . I like to forgot to tell you that I am well & growing fat. You wanted I should send my profile to you. I calculated to do so, & would now if I could get it taken. But they have put a stop to their taking any more, here, but perhaps I may have a chance to go to the city or some other place & if I do, will have it taken.

We have been having some of the hardest wind-blows here that I ever saw. Came pretty near blowing down our shanty, & it did blow down a number of tents, & now we are having a heavy rain storm, which will make the mud a little deeper, & make it nice walking etc

I suppose Chester will write what little news there is, so I wont write any. The mail has come & nothing for me as usual, so I am not disappointed. I think I shall swear off & not write any more. What is Em doing. I have [not] heard from him for a long time. Where does he work etc

I shall have to stop for want of gab. My brain is getting exhausted, & paper growing small

H R Montague

Camp Griffin

March 5th 62

Dear Ann

Again this evening do I seat myself to pen a few lines to you, so you can see I am still in the land of the living although I dont feel quite as well as I could wish, but am on the gain every day. I received a line from you tonight in a letter directed to Hollis, which was due on Monday night. I think by your accounts you the great storm was harder on you than us as you had snow to mix with the wind. I would like to be in Vermont but think I would just as lief wait till it becomes a little warmer. I am sorry to hear that you are all feeling some unwell but may it not prove anything of a serious nature, but I suppose our children are just as apt to be sick as anybodys & no more.

The boys are all in very good health now, only 2 from Co H being in the Hospital & they are Celley & Larabee in Washington. Celley shot his hand in the fall & Larabee has been sick most all winter.

Today has been quite a pleasant day but quite cool tonight. I dont expect we will have much more freezing weather this spring but acts as though the wind was going to blow some.

I have a small box packed ready to send home & shall send it soon as I can get a chance to send it to Washington. It contains my old clothes & some small things which belonged to Samuel Wilcox & also Hollis pipes that he made & is sending home.

I will send it to Fletcher if I can & I guess I can.

We are not likely to be paid this pay day before April, for I think they have not the money made yet. I believe Zina wanted some the first of April. Just write how the matter stands.

We have just got some Company fund money & perhaps I could get some of it from the Capt if it was necessary.

I would like to hear from the town election at March meeting, to know who are the rulers of the great republic of Fletcher.

But with good wishes for your welfare I bid you good night

C K Leach

[Letter from Hollis R. Montague to Ann Leach]

Camp Griffin

March 5th, 62

Sister Ann,

Yours of the 28 (Feb) has just came to hand & I suppose it will be for my benefit to write you a line to save a punishment as you threaten one, but what shall I write. We have no news & I am not smart enough to write sentimental, so I will write *nonsense*. I am full of that you know.

I have been writing to Mother tonight but I am afraid it wont be very interesting to her. As you wanted to know how I enjoyed myself, I must say that I never enjoyed myself any better than I have this winter. Perhaps I have enjoyed myself better at times, but to take the time right along every day this winter has been the best & passed off the quickest of any time in my life. When we get tired of playing checkers Eucher etc. we can just step out on to a hill close by & see any amount of soldiers drilling or scuffling etc. etc.

The most sport we have had was the other day when we had a little snow storm just enough to snowball, & you better guess they all improved the opportunity, We have all sorts of ways to make time pass away.

I should think Uncle Levys friends would feel rather droll about his going to the poorhouse to die. But I suppose they dont care as long as their money holds out.

I dont know as I want to be there to find a place to work for there is none that will pay as high wages as Uncle Sam, & let a fellow lay still half the time. No more this time for perhaps you will get sick of what I wrote the last time.

H R Montague

Camp Griffin

March 8th 1862

Dear Wife

Rather late to commence to write but better late than never. It is now ten O Clock but the Camp is all alive with music, which consists of three violins, one guitar & one banjo. It is just as pleasant and nice an evening as ever grew & the mud is about all dried up. I received your letter on Thursday & glad to hear that you [are] all as well as you represent, hope the children may escape the sore throat that is raging around you.

I suppose you will say how are you. Well, I am happy to say that I am well again & feeling first rate. I have done no duty for more than a week, but have not been very bad off for three or four days.

I received the *St. Albans Messenger* tonight which was very welcome.

Binghams box got along today, but saw trials & tribulations in getting here.

The express boxes were all broken open & examined at the bridge to see if they contained liquor & Bings among the rest.

I guess they didnt take much pains in opening them for the tea you sent was all broken open, but only a little was wasted. I sent home a little box yesterday containing my old clothes & some pipes of Hollis's & a number of trinkets of Samuel Wilcox's.

I have in it two coats one vest & three pairs of pants. You may have to go to Georgia [Vt.] after it but I guess not as it is marked to Fletcher. It is sent in your name. Hollis sent for his flute & it came on Thursday. Nelsons folks were well & happy as clams in a snow drift. Nelson sent some gum with the flute. Hollis got a letter from him tonight. good night & I will write you more tomorrow. Sunday March 9th

A very pleasant day we are having today & quite warm. Seems like a pleasant, warm April day in Vermont. It does not seem as though it could be most four months since I left home last fall but such is the case & here we remain at our old post. It has been most as long since I left home last as I was gone from home last summer, but the time has not seemed half as long. How much more time will pass before I shall again see home is uncertain, but have hopes that the time may come sooner or later.

Accounts in the paper this morning that our forces have occupied Leesburg the rebels fleeing at their approach, so it seems the army of the Potomac has begun to move & no doubt will follow it up. We have been expecting that we would have to march towards Leesburg but it seems the rebels make no stand there & it is doubtful to me if they do short of Centerville.

Repairing of Railroads & bridges is going on as far as we have possession of the country.

The presentation of a sword & other equipments with a complete set of horse equipments by the privates of this regt, to Col Whiting came off on Thursday, & was quite an affair. Vernon D Rood was the hero of the day, & made the presentation accompanied by a short speech which was replied to by Col Whiting. I doubt not you will see accounts of the whole affair in some of the Vermont papers.

(two O.C. Monday morning) Rather a droll time to commence writing but as we are under orders to be ready to march at four I will improve the time. The order is to hold ourselves in readiness to march at 4 O.C. with two days rations. I know not our destination, but presume it is towards Gen Banks. It may turn out as did our marching orders last week but guess not.

Alonzo Parris came to Camp last night, & the same old chick too.

The reason he did not get around quicker is he was sick & stopped at Fortress Monroe. If we march I [will] write you again as soon as we get around but must bid you good bye for this time.

Yours as ever

C K Leach

Camp near Flint Hill
Mar 12th 1862

Dear Wife

Accommodations are not very good for writing but I will do the best I can.

I wrote you Monday morning that we were to start at 4 A.M., & start we did, & stopped at this place where we have remained two nights. We are 10 or 12 miles from our old camp & somewhere in the vicinity of Fairfax, & how long we shall remain here you know as well as I do. We hear that the Rebels have evacuated Centerville & Manassas & if that is so, I see no prospect of a fight very soon. It commenced raining soon after we started from Camp & kept raining till we reached this place, & we had nothing but a rubber blanket & overcoats so you may guess we did not sweat a great deal at night. We have some very small tents that the men carry when on a march.

They are about 6 feet long & made so one can be buttoned on the end of another, thus placing them all in one row. There are about 17 or 18 to a Company.

Our baggage is to be reduced to a valise or one small trunk to the three Officers of a Co. I am going to put my stuff in the Capt's trunk & my trunk will be left behind, I shall take nothing but a change of clothes & writing material.

Yesterday was a pleasant day but rather cool, & today is pleasant & warm. I am doing business today that I have not done for a long while & that is Officer of the guard. We have had no Officer of the guard this winter except a sergeant.

I guess we have got done lying idle for we have orders to drill about 4 times a day.

I received your letter yesterday & was glad to hear from you.

It was rather unexpected to hear of Aunt Cynthia's death, but all are subject to death. The soldiers are in very good health now & in good spirits. My health is good, but I got pretty tired marching on Monday, for I had done nothing for nearly two weeks. I don't expect we shall have a permanent camp again, nor any tents except the little ones we have.

Hollis is well & with us. This is the first real soldier's lesson he has had, for he has always been left in camp till the tents were moved, & he has never had to go on picket. I must close & tend to other duties, will send this when I can. hope I can get some ink next time [The letter was written in pencil.]

C K Leach

P.S. March 13th We are still here, with no orders for anything else. There is to be a review this afternoon, rather chilly & looks like rain. Nelson Smith has just been here, his Regt are a mile & a half or two miles from here on the road from Fairfax to Centerville. We shall probably move again when the Generals find where the rebels have run as they have left every place they held around here.

March 13th 1862 Evening

As I have not sent my letter I will write a few more lines.

I received another letter from you tonight & glad to hear from you again. We have orders to march back to Vienna tomorrow morning & there take the cars for Alexandria, where I *think* we shall take a boat, but that is only guess work. So you see it will be hard telling where we shall be when you hear from me again. We may land somewhere down the river, & may go to some southern port. How many are going with us I don't know, but the Vt brigade I think certain & probably many more.

I think most of the boys are pleased with the prospect of a trip south, judging from the amount of cheering there has been since the order came.

You must not be concerned if you do not hear from me twice a week, but I will write so often if I can, but no telling what our situation will be.

I received a letter from Elsie tonight & she says they were all well. Martha Reed also wrote some in the letter.

I am sorry to hear that Justin is unwell but hope it will prove nothing serious.

You must be having an uncommon winter, to have the snow breaking down buildings & such like. Here the ground has got to be quite dry. I saw a man plowing yesterday, & most of the land is dry enough to plow.

It is getting late & I must bid you good bye.

Give my respects to all the good folks.

Yours Ever
Chester K Leach

[Camp near Alexandria]

Sunday March 16th 1862

Dear Wife

I will once more improve opportunity to write you a few lines to let you know where we are & what we are doing & the like.

In my last I wrote that we were to move again on Friday morning but for some reason or other we did not start till yesterday morning (Saturday) & instead of going to Vienna & taking the cars we marched to Fairfax & then towards Alexandria.

We are now about five miles from Alexandria on the road to Fairfax where I think we shall be likely to stay till tomorrow morning & perhaps longer. Yesterdays march was about the toughest of any we have yet had as it commenced to rain soon after we started & rained very hard all day. We started about seven in the morning & reached this place about three in the afternoon, thus making a march of eight hours in the rain, the men carrying knapsacks.

The march yesterday reminded me of the 22nd of last July when we were on our way from [the] battle of Bull Run.

It is on the same road but the circumstances are a little different & rained some harder yesterday. When we reached this place we were pretty thoroughly soaked & looked like hard times when we halted for the night the rain coming down in a perfect shower, but I have been very comfortable for we have a small tent like those we had at Burlington & we have managed so far to get a stove along, so as soon as the baggage wagons got along & we got our tent pitched we were all right.

In our Regt each Cos Officers have one of the small tents, which we got the second day after we left Camp Griffin.

I feel this morning as though I would like to be at home a short time, for it is now ten O.C. & I have had no breakfast yet only a cup of coffee, & cant have till the teams get back from Alexandria which have gone after provisions. A good many of the Officers have gone to Alexandria but I did not feel like going five miles after my breakfast.

Our destination I know no more about than when I wrote last, but think we are to take boats at Alexandria for some place south & presume we shall land somewhere down the river, & it matters but little to me where we are going for a soldier is a soldier wherever he is & liable at all times to be brought into action. (Sunday Evening) Well, I got some breakfast about two in the afternoon, but it was hard bread, that some one begged of some other Regt. Our wagons came with provisions about four, & most of the men went without eating till that time. The reason I did not finish writing in the forenoon was because we had to move our camp a short distance to get on better ground. The signs tonight look more as though we were going to stay where we are for a few days. Some that were unwell when we left Camp Griffin & some that were sent to Alexandria before we came here have all been sent to this place, & if we were to have gone to Alexandria tomorrow I dont think they would have sent them here.

The rain that we had yesterday raised the streams very high. Some say the water has not been so high for twenty years, so you can see what kind of a day we had to march in. I did not get dry till noon today & we kept a fire all night too.

Those that have been to Alexandria today say the city is full of soldiers, & that the road to Alexandria is lined with camps. I dont know but they brought us back here so that supplies would be nearer & not so hard of transportation, but it does not seem as though that could be possible.

Any move that is made will not take us by surprise because we have to move to suit circumstances & our movement will depend on those of the rebels.

I sent my last letter to Fairfax because I thought if I did not you would not get it before next Saturday. I expect our mail will be irregular when we are on the move so you must not look for letters so regular, but I will send as often as I can. Direct yours to Washington till you have different orders.

Ever yours C K L

[Camp in the Field]

March 19th 1862

Dear Wife

Once more I seat myself to write you a few lines which I hope may find you all well

My health is good at present & has been since I last wrote.

We are still at the same place we were when I last wrote, but are expecting to leave soon. yet may remain some days longer, but indications are that we may leave tomorrow.

I understand we are to have two days rations prepared as soon as it can be done but they got to send for mess kettles before it can be done, which I suppose are in Alexandria.

I hear that they are loading boats at Alexandria as fast as they can coal up & such like. We are now camped in the woods, on a side hill facing the north but should not be in the woods if we should stay here a great while, for it is most all cut down now.

We have to drill twice a day while we are here, one a squad drill in the forenoon, & a bayonet drill in the afternoon. The bayonet exercise is something we have practiced but a short time, but the men are getting to be some on it. Our pay for services previous to the 20th of May I expect we shall get in the course of two or three days. The Quartermaster has the order to get the money to pay it, & he has gone to Washington today for the money. There has been a great deal of speculation on the money, as some have sold their claims for almost nothing. It is a small sum to each but will come in a time of need if it comes now for nearly all are out of money. The drum beats for drill so I will have to go.

Well I have got back from drill & will now try and finish this. Some of our tents came here yesterday & as it looks some like rain the boys are putting them up. We have a large wall tent so we are well provided for again. I suppose the folks in Vermont are beginning to think of sugaring, & I would like very well to be there & get a little sugar for the "lasses" down this way are black, some of them.

I received a letter from you on Monday night & were glad to hear that Justin seemed to be better, hope he may be well by this time.

I am afraid it is going to be hard to make out much money for Zina for we are not likely to get our pay before April & there was some Co fund in the Capt's hands that I thought I might get but I guess he has used it up, but if I dont get any now if he [Zina] can get along, till I get my pay, he may have it.

C K Leach

March 19th 1862

To Justin

Well how are you tonight? I hope you have got well. How do you & your mother get along doing the chores? I suppose you are about to commence sugaring. Well I hope you will make good lot, and eat some for me too for I dont expect to get any down here for a maple tree is something I dont recollect of seeing here.

How is Zelia, & do you & her get along without quarreling any? I hope so.

We have had two marches lately & both in the rain & it has rained none except on those days but I believe we all got through it straight.

Perhaps you wont believe it if I tell you that some of the men, after we halted last Saturday, & while it was raining very hard, would sit down & fall asleep with their clothes wet through yet none caught cold as I know of. It rains a very little tonight, so I expect if it dont stop before tomorrow we shall certainly have to march again. I expect the next time we start we shall go on board of a boat & go dow[n] the river a short distance.

We are camped in the woods & you cant go in any direction but you will run on some regiment. The woods is so full that we have been very near smoked out. I must tell you what fun the boys had when we were at Camp Porter. The 2nd & 6th Regiments were both near a piece of woods, which was full of rabbits, & the boys would scare them up, & then take after him & catch him & they would do it about every time for he could run in no direction but some one would be in his way. I saw them have three at a time.

It is getting to be late bed time so I will have to bid you good night.

From your Father

[Letter from Hollis and Chester to Zina]

Camp Opossum

March 21st 1862

Home & Friends,

I will try to answer your letter which I rec'd a few days since. My health is pretty good with the exception of a bad cold. The weather has been very damp & been a bad time for colds. We are encamped about one mile from Rushville at the same place we were when I wrote to Mother. Probably you have seen that letter that I wrote to her.

We have our big tents up & should be pretty comfortable if we only had our stove. We expected to go to a great service today. But it has been so rainy lately that we dont go. It rained most all day yesterday & all night last night. But I had rather it would be rain than snow as you have it up there.

You see how I head this letter. Well the reason I call it Camp Opossum is because I dont know the name of this camp. Dont know as it has any name, but the boys caught an opossum the next day we came here & then most of them call it so.

I have not much news to write only we are waiting for orders to march. Keep 2 days rations on hand. (Or have had orders to that effect at least.) But half the time we have been entirely out of anything in the shape of eatables, even to hard crackers. We never have been so short for rations as we have since we left Camp Griffin. Yet it seems strange that we should be when we are so near the city, for we are only about 4 miles from Alexandria. Troops are being shipped from Alexandria every day as fast as possible & we are waiting for our turn to come but some think that we shant get a chance to go. But I suppose we are liable to go any minute. I hope we shall for I want to see more of the country but dont want to stay there in warm weather. You wanted we should send all the money we could when payday came, but I dont see any hope of getting any pay very soon. Some say that we shall have to wait two months longer before we get any pay. I promised Nelson some a long time ago as soon as I got it. Dont know but he wi!! be all over wanting it before I get it. I promised it to him before I knew you wanted it, so I suppose I shall let him have it this time. But Chester has got some which he is going to send to you. Some that he borrowed of Alonzo Parris until payday. Leon has not gone home & says he dont know as he shall go. He is here with us now.

We rec'd our pay for drilling (yesterday) when we were enlisted on the two years roll. We that enlisted first drew \$8.40. Your name was on the roll. I suppose there is a way for you to get it. Mr. Perkins said you would get it. He was the one that paid it to us. It was a *Godsend* to us for we're most all out of money.

Write often & Respect of H R M to all enquiring Friends,

H R Montague

Proprietor

Chester is well.

Camp near Clouds Mills Va

March 21st 1862

Brother Zina

I will write a few lines & send in Hollis' letter. I am well & doing finely for the times. I suppose you have heard of our marches so I will say nothing about that, only that we have seen rather tough times since we left our old camp, having to march in the rain both days. The weather has been pleasant the past week except yesterday which was a rainy & cold day. The Col marched our Regt down in sight of our old camp ground at Bush Hill today. The reason of it I think was because so many were asking for passes to go there. The place did not look very natural on account of the woods along the brook & railroad in front of the ground being all cut down.

When we came to this place we did not expect to stay but a short time, but it will be a week tomorrow & no signs of moving, but I don't think we shall remain here any great length of time for they are shipping home every day.

When I wrote to Ann last I wrote that I thought the prospect was rather poor of my getting you any money before the first of April, but have since got one hundred & fifteen dollars for which I will get a draft & send you as soon as I can, I think so you will get it by next Saturday.

I hired the money which can be paid when we are paid the next time.

We received our pay yesterday for the time of our enlistment to the time we were paid by the State, most of the Fletcher boys got \$8.40, & that is the amount you are entitled to if you ever get it. I reckon it comes in a time of need.

I have not heard from any of you since Monday when I received a letter from Ann. I looked for another last night, but it did not come nor today either.

My candle is about gone & it is past bedtime, so I will halt & undress & go to bed on some boughs with a rubber blanket spread over them.

C K Leach

Fortress Monroe

March 25th 1862

Dear Wife

Here we are at Fortress Monroe at last. We started Sunday morning & marched to Alexandria & took Boat, which place we left just before dark & steamed down the river a few miles & anchored for the night. Started early yesterday morning again & reached this place just at dark. The name of the steamer we came down on was *C. Vanderbilt*. It is a large boat & a fast sailer, had on board the 2nd Regt & part of the 3rd.

We slept last night on the sand between the fort & the Bay. The Fort beats anything I have ever seen yet in the shape of Forts. I have no time for describing this morning for I expect we will get orders to march soon as I understand we are to go about 3 miles from here for the present. I went to the Hotel & got a good breakfast this morning, & passed in sight of the *Monitor* or Cheese box on a raft as the Rebels call it & it looks as much like that as anything.* We had a good time, as to weather coming down the river & today is a nice warm day. I saw the Nigs making gardens this morning which makes it look like spring.

I got some money for Zina last week but had no chance to get a draft & did not send it so I have put it aboard the express this morning. I did not pay the express on it for I had no coin & they would not take the

*Just two weeks before, on March 9, 1862, the U.S.S. *Monitor* and the U.S.S. *Merrimack* (renamed the *Virginia* by the Confederate forces) had engaged in a battle at Hampton Roads, Va. The encounter between the two ironclads was "one of the half-dozen most famous engagements in American history" for it "dramatize[d] the revolution that had taken place—the substitution of iron . . . for oak" (Henry Steele Cominager, *The Blue and the Gray* [New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1950], 802).

bills so it is unpaid. I think I should have sent it in a letter if I had known I could have sent one before I sent the money by express. I feel a little afraid about it but hope Zina will receive it all right. There is \$115.00.

I think you had better direct your letters to Fortress Monroe Va instead of Washington, D.C. as I understand they will come about one day sooner than if they go by Washington.

I have heard it wished by a great many of our regt that they might go to Fortress Monroe & at last they have seen the thing. I have always had a wish myself to see the place, & therefore cant say I am sorry we are here, but the spot beats all my expectations. The walls are stone about 20 feet high & covered with earth, & surrounded with a ditch filled with water about 60 feet wide. I have not been in the Fort but shall go in if I have time after putting this in the office. I received your letter Saturday instead of Thursday. I suppose the storm you had delayed the mail. When I shall receive another is uncertain but hope it may come tonight.

From C K Leach

[*Camp near James River*]

March 30th 1862

Dear Wife

Again will I pen a few lines to you for I suppose you are anxious to know how & where I am. Well in the first place I am well & have had good health since I last wrote. To tell *where* I am is a difficult thing, but first, we are in a mud hole, that is, at the present time, for it commenced raining yesterday afternoon & rained all night & pretty much all day today & we are on low level ground therefore we are very nearly submerged. We are about two miles north east of Newport News, where the first Regt were stationed when they were out. I wrote you a line with a pencil the next morning after we arrived at Fortress Monroe, but whether you will receive it or not I dont know but think you will, so I will inform you of our movements since that time. I had just finished my letter when we were ordered to fall in, & were marched out some four or five miles & halted & put up our little tents. We were about three fourths of a mile of James river & are now perhaps a mile from the river.

I will try another sheet of paper as the other blew into the water.

In going from the Fort we passed through what was once Hampton & was burned by the rebels last year while the 1st Vt Regt was at the Fort. It must have been a very pretty place & of some considerable size but is totally destroyed by fire as are all the buildings as far as we have been yet, & that is 5 or 6 miles beyond where we now are.

We remained two days at our first camping place which made it Thursday when we took a bit of a march out in the vicinity of Great Bethel where we expected we would have a little fight but there was only a few shots from our skirmishers at their pickets who made tracks in the opposite direction.

Smiths division were all on the same road with our Regt, & we had to pass through a piece of woods, Hancocks Brigade in front, when they got through the woods they came to the rebel pickets. Hancock drew his men up in line ready for battle. The first we knew, we were ordered to halt & fix bayonet when we thought we were going to have a brush & what made it look more like it was, the men were knocking the boards off a board fence that stood in front which sounded like distant musket firing, but as soon as we came out [of] the woods, we saw what it was.

The right wing of our Regt was then sent out in advance on one road, (as there were two) till we came where their picket reserve was stationed, where we found their fire burning, & a bag of grain for their horses & such like showing that they had just left & in a hurry too. Smokes were seen in two directions which we supposed to be some bridge or something else that they were burning. Porters Division went on another road which led more direct to Great Bethel, & report is that he entered that place, but how far he went I dont know. We remained out till next morning & then were marched back to this place, a distance of 5 or 6 miles. The object of the move I suppose was to find out the enemys position & nothing more. The day was fine as was the next, being about like a May day in Vermont.

The night after we got back here our Co & Co E had to go on picket the first for a long time.

I call the country as far as I have seen here the best that I have yet seen in Virginia. We have been a dozen miles from Fortress Monroe & have seen nothing yet that one could call a hill, but it looks desolate to see the chimneys standing, almost the only remains of the once houses that were standing. The chimneys are all built on the outside of the houses so they dont fall.

C K L

I received a letter from you last night which was due last Monday. Glad to hear that you were still well, but sorry to hear that there is so much sickness around you, & especially to hear that Zinas boy was so sick, but hope he may have got better.

I expect every time I hear from you to hear that our children are sick, but hope it may be otherwise.

For fear you will not get the letter I mailed last Tuesday I will say in this that I sent a package to Zina containing \$115.00, which I had no chance of sending before.

We have no regular mail for quite a while & whether I can send this tomorrow or not I dont know.

I saw an order in the paper a while ago that the soldiers that were advanced into Virginia were not permitted to send letters, but dont know whether we are cut off or not. The one I sent Tuesday I put into the letter box at the post office, so I have had no occasion to find out whether I could send a letter or not.

Yesterday was the first mail we have had since we have been here.

(Monday morning) It dont rain this morning, but it has not cleared off yet. I expect to have to send this letter to the office by some person for I guess we have no mail go out.

I got a letter from Emerson & Hollis [got] one from Nelson on Saturday. Nelsons folks were well. Hope I may get another from you today.

I have got to go on as officer of guard today so I will have to close.

Ever yours

C K Leach

[*Camp in the Field*]

April 1st 1862

Dear Wife

I again seat myself for the purpose of addressing a few lines to you in answer to letters received from you, one last night, & another this night which was one day later than if I had been near Washington.

I am glad to hear that you was well with the exception of a sick headache which I presume was of short duration. I am also glad to hear that Zinas boy is thought to be better & hope he may be spared.

You seem to have had a little bad luck with the mare & cow, but hope you may not have any worse.

Hope to hear that Zina is making some sugar the next time I hear from you as you say they have the sugar place tapped.

We have had two pleasant days, which has dried up the mud in our camp very much but it looks like a storm again tonight.

I did not get the letter that I wrote on Sunday into the mail Monday morning as I was a little late, so I sent it this morning, but hope you may get it on Saturday, we have a daily mail now.

Our Brigade was marched out a short distance this forenoon, for the purpose (I understand) of reinforcing another Brigade that went out on a reconnoissance, if needed.

The peach trees in this vicinity are just beginning to blossom, & the trees are beginning to leaf.

Some of the boys picked up a cotton burr while we were out today with the cotton in it & I send some of it in this letter.

There is to be a review tomorrow at ten O Clock of Smiths Division by Gen Keyes the commander of the corps in which we belong. I suppose he wants to see what kind of material he has to fight with. Hope he may not be disappointed in us for the worse.

It does not cost much to live here when one buys his living, that is if you can find anything to buy. Our sutlers have not come along yet. I suppose they think there is not money enough to pay, but guess they will be around by pay day. Butter is 40 cts per lb when you can get it, & cheese 20 cts & other things in proportion.

Speculators make more money than the soldiers in this war for they ask an everlasting price for everything they sell.

Since we left Camp Griffin I have lived just as I could when I could not buy anything I have lived with the Co, but a few of us talk of getting up a mess together & try that for a while.

There is one thing we miss very much here & that is the papers. There used to be at Camp Griffin at least half a dozen daily papers in camp, but now we get no papers except occasionally a New York paper two or three days old. The cry used to be, *National Republican* or something else, & *Latest from Burnside* or *Great Union Victory in Tennessee*, but the sound of their voices we hear no more.

C K Leach

[Before the battle of Lee's Mills]

Camp near Newport News

Thursday April 3rd 862

Perhaps you will wonder at my writing so soon again, but not knowing when I shall have another opportunity I thought I would write you a few lines. We have orders to march tomorrow morning at 6 O Clock & expect we may have a chance to do a little business in the line of fighting before night, or at least within a short time.

The exact place we are going I know not, but expect it is somewhere north of us, in the vicinity of Great Bethel or Yorktown. We have moved our camp today about a mile & are now within a short distance of Newport News & about a quarter of a mile of James river.

I went on the bank of the river this afternoon & saw the boat *Cumberland* which was sunk by the rebel steamer *Merimac* a short time since. It was a sailing vessel & nothing but the masts are visible.

I received a letter from you tonight which you may believe was very welcome although it contained some sad news, one thing was the death of Josey Leach & that there is so much sickness which seems to be on the increase. I am very glad to hear that Zinas boy is nearly well & hope he may be entirely well soon.

We have some sickness among us at this time. Sergeants Ellenwood & Smith are rather unwell & unfit for duty, & some others that you are not acquainted with. Sherman Griffin was left at the Hospital at Alexandria.

We have had pleasant weather lately & today has been a very warm day, a touch of what we may soon expect in the line of hot weather.

There was some very heavy thunder here last night & a bit of a shower.

You spoke of that money not getting along, but I hope it will get along all right. It was sent by Express the same as the box only I did not pay the Express charges the reason why I told you before. I have a receipt from the agent for it, & I think they are holden, as far as their line extends, except losses by fire or railroad or steamboat disasters, against which an insurance is necessary. The report has been lately that we were to be paid about the tenth of the month but how true I know not & perhaps it will make no difference with some of us, but hope for the best.

I will bid you good bye, & hope I may again be permitted to write you & also to see you but time alone can tell.

C K Leach

[Report of the battle at Lee's Mills]

[Camp in Field]

Sunday April 6th 1862

Dear Wife

I will try & write a few lines as I have a little time. We started on our march on Friday as I wrote that we were going to, & went northward, our Regt taking the lead.

After we had passed our line of pickets, Skirmishers were thrown out Cos. A & K on one road & Cos F & H on another. After a while we were taken in & others sent out. We drove in their pickets, which were Cavalry, they falling back as fast as we advanced.

About noon we came to their fortifications at a place called Youngs mills, which were occupied by only a few horsemen who fired a few shots & retreated. One of the 5th Vt men was wounded in the shoulder. We advanced no farther that day, but started again yesterday morning & marched 6 or 8 miles in the rain & part of the time in a thunder shower, passed a place called Warwick Court House & the advance soon brought up in front of the rebels fort. The third Brigade of Smiths Division took the lead yesterday.

It was about noon when the advance came in sight of them, & a continual fire was kept up between the skirmishers & occasional canonading till dark, with two or three killed & some wounded on our side. We were marched into some woods that we have to go through, & halted in rear of our guns, where we have staid since & it is now near night.

The road through the woods is a perfect mud hole & the troops are making a road by placing poles & rails across the road. They bring rails on their shoulders at least half a mile. I guess it is a mile through the woods. The skirmishers have kept up a fire all day & once in a while a canon is fired. One rebel shell burst nearly over our heads.

The place where the rebels are is called Lees Mills, & it is supposed they have some force, but only a few have been seen. I presume by tomorrow we shall have a general engagement, & I have not much fear but we will be victorious.

I had a time of the Cholic last night but feel very well today except being sore. You must excuse bad writing as I have to write on a small piece of board, in my lap which I am not used to doing.

Today has been a pleasant day & the mud has dried up some.

With good wishes I bid you good bye

C K Leach

[Camp in the Field]

Apr 12th 1862

Dear Wife

Nearly a week has passed since I wrote you & I will now try & pen you a few lines, but am not certain whether I will have a chance to send it. We had one mail go out this week but I did not know of it till it was too late. My health has been first rate since I last wrote, & is at the present time.

I received two letters from you last night & one from Zina, was glad to hear that you were all well & ever hope to hear the same.

Our battle that was expected is yet to come, & preparations seem to be steadily going on, such as making roads, surveying the ground, etc.

Monday last the day after I wrote last our brigade was moved around to the right two or three miles & farther from the rebel batterries. All of the troops were also moved back out of their reach, but a strong picket force kept out to prevent a surprise by the rebels. Earthworks were thrown up by our men for the Artillery at their first position, but the pieces are withdrawn & wooden guns mounted in their places, which I understand the rebels dismount occasionally, but the damage is repairable, & they are soon mounted again. Perhaps real guns will take their places when the time comes for action. I have spent the most of my time this week on picket, five companys of our Regt went out Tuesday night, & only rejoined the regt last night, one Co

being on post at a time & the other four held in reserve. Co H was on post Tuesday night, & it rained hard all night. It was the hardest night I have ever seen on picket. We were on post again yesterday & today I am Officer of the Guard in camp, doing my share I reckon. This week till yesterday has been a cold rainy time & ended up with a pretty hard frost, & the ground froze enough so you could see it was froze & the still water skimmed over a little. I am a little afraid it has done some damage to the peaches as the trees are just in the blow. A peach tree is a beautiful thing when it is in full bloom, being a nice pink color, the trees are blown full.

Yesterday & today have been nice days, pleasant & warm & seems more like spring.

You seem to be afraid that you will not receive letters from me. Well how it will be I don't know but before we left Alexandria we heard that our mail was to be stopped, but letters have gone so far, & today again I heard that we were to have no more mail go out, but how true it is I know not, but hope we may be allowed to send & receive letters to friends at home. A soldier is a sort of prisoner at best & not to be allowed to hear from home or be heard from at home would be like double barring him in.

I was glad to hear that Zina's money got through all safe but think the charges were rather high. They told me the charges were 75 cts & I asked how much if not prepaid & was told it would be the same, but of course a little would be added for mail carriers charges, but think a dollar is rather high. Zina says he wants \$85. more. Well if I ever get that amount he may have it but don't see much prospect of it very soon. I am getting rather low in the pocket about this time, for chink.

I guess by your tell, I was not at home last fall to put up things, for I never calculated to have tools laying out through the winter. Sorry to hear that you have lost the old sheep, but if nothing worse takes place I will be content. I had a taste of new sugar this morning that George Buck had come in a letter.

I rather think you *Vermonters* have a hard time sugaring to be unable to draw a tub of sap after it is loaded.

How does the new sugar house go, and the arches, how do they work, & how does the hay hold out, better than our provisions I hope for they are all held out every day & not much but hard bread at that. We just begin to see how a man *may* live when he is brought to it. Our Sutler I guess has left us, so we can get no fixings, hardly tobacco which most every one thinks is indispensable.

We got some papers last night containing the glorious news from the west, & you must not be surprised to hear news from this quarter in time that is equal to anything that has taken place in the west.

I must close & look to my flock of guard. I will try to write to Zina soon if I can.

Ever yours

C K Leach

[*Camp in Field*]

April 19th 1862

Dear Wife

I will again write you a few lines for I suppose you will be anxious to hear from me. I received a letter from you yesterday & was sorry to hear that Zelia was unwell but hope she may be better when next I hear. I am looking for another letter now but our mail is very irregular. My health continues to be good & hope for a continuance of the same. Hollis is well also. I presume you will hear long before you get this, if not before this time, what has been done here in the line of fighting, but I will try & tell you a little something about it.

We received orders on Tuesday night to be ready to march on Wednesday morning but I had no idea that there was to be so much of a fight as there proved to be before night nor do I yet think it was intended.

Well we were marched out nearly a mile I should think & the 2nd & 6th Regts were halted in an open field & it seems although I did not know the position then, that the 4th was sent forward on the right & the 3rd on the left.

Two pieces of Artillery were sent forward & soon commenced firing & in a little while four pieces more went forward. From eight to nine a good fire was kept up & was replied to by the rebels quite smart at first but soon grew less & left their first position, having one gun dismounted, all that was in sight.

There is a small stream in front of their works, which is dammed up at intervals so as to make it almost impossible to get across, & it is all woods on that side except where their works are so when they leave that they are out of sight.

When they were firing we were in rear of our battery just out of range & nearly all the rebels shells burst in sight of us & the pieces came so near some of the time that we thought we would be full as safe somewhere else. There was two or three killed & some wounded by shells in the morning. About two O Clock our Regt were sent back to camp to get our things for the night, but before we got back there was pretty hot work going on. Our batteries had moved up & taken a new position & were pouring a heavy fire into their works & into the woods. We were sent into the woods to the right of our guns but were ordered around to the left to support the 3rd Regt, which crossed the stream, I suppose, at that time & were driven back with considerable loss. We hear different reports but probably from 75 to 100 killed wounded & missing. Co F in our Regt had one man killed by a piece of a shell in passing in rear of our batteries.

After we had passed our battery we were protected by woods which are on this side [of] the stream. We marched down near the woods & halted, the 6th being in front in the woods. Just at night the 4th, part of it, came out of the woods on the right with a yell & at the same time the 6th undertook to cross the stream & partly succeeded but were driven back. The 4th went down into a small ravine & were partly protected by a rail fence.

I knew nothing of the move of the 6th till they commenced to bring out their dead & wounded as they were out of sight in the woods but supposed the firing was across the water.

The 6th Regt lost about 75 killed, wounded & missing. One Capt killed one wounded & two or three Lieuts wounded. The loss of the 4th was I think 4 killed & some wounded.

I never heard any firing yet that compared with that when the 6th Regt crossed the water, a perfect roar of musketry & just about the same of artillery. Since that day the rebels have honored us with but a very few shells, but our men send them their compliments very often especially if they show themselves about their works. The pickets keep up a pretty good fire but with little damage on our side. Co B['s] cooks, 2nd Regt, came out with some breakfast for the Co & thought he must have a look at the rebels & just stepped out in sight & got a ball through his heart, making two in our regt killed & one other slightly wounded.

We have thrown up earthworks for the protection of our artillery, & digging rifle pits for Infantry.

When another engagement will come off is uncertain to me. I think there is no use attacking without some way of crossing the stream without wading deep water.

We have a few Sharp Shooters here with telescope rifles that pick off the rebels whenever they show themselves so if they undertake to shoot a canon they get knocked over but such warfare decides nothing just let them come out in day light & somebody would get whipped in short metre.

The weather has been very nice of late, there being no rain for about a week & the nights have got to be quite warm. There is some appearances of rain now as it thunders.

Gen McClellan came around the day of the action & viewed the place, making quite a call. It is the first time I have seen him to know him.

But I must close, hoping to hear from you again before I send this.

Good Bye

C K Leach

Sunday, April 20th 1862

I received another letter from you today & was very glad to hear that Zelia was better & the rest of you well.

We had a rainy night last night & are having a rainy day today. Since writing yesterday, the rebels showed a flag of truce for the purpose of allowing our men to bring away & bury the dead that were left on the other side of the river in the action of Wednesday. I learn that about thirty bodies were brought over, being of course from the 3rd & 6th Regts. This accounts for some of the missing, & no doubt they have some prisoners that were wounded.

It is supposed that the rebels loss was quite heavy, but there is no way of getting the facts.

We were routed up last night by a sharp firing between the pickets which sounded as though they were forcing their way towards our camp. We marched out a short distance & the firing soon ceased. It was so dark we could not see anything & we could hardly find our way back to camp. We have been routed twice before but when it was moonlight. We have out a fatigue party every night building fortifications & digging rifle pits.

There was a new sort of a gun arrived here yesterday, throwing a ball (as I hear for I have not seen it) about as large as our muskets. The barrel weighs about 30 lbs & is set on a frame & is operated by a crank & firing according to the swiftness of turning the crank. There will be this advantage by it a great number of shots can be fired without exposing a great number of men.

One would think that is not used to war, if he were to be set down here, that there was a battle going on, for there is firing nearly all the time, & very often the sound of a canon is heard followed by the bursting of a shell, & there is no doubt there will soon be fighting that will be in earnest & many must fall in addition to what have already gone, but we all hope for the best. You ask if I received the papers you sent & I have to say that I have. As I have run ashore for news I will close

Chester K Leach

[Letter from Hollis R. Montague to Ann Leach]

This is the first pen I have got hold of for a long time & this is the cup—

Camp in the field New Yorktown

Sister Ann

April 19th 1862

As Chester was writing I thought I would just drop a line. He will write the news & *happenstances* so I will leave that off. My health is very good just now & should enjoy myself first rate if there was not quite so much fighting going on. The sharpshooters have been continually at it for 3 days & also some shelling. We have lost quite a number of men since they commenced. But Chester will probably write the particulars. You wanted to know how I felt since I got to be my own boss. I feel a great deal older. But I wish I could realize that I was my own boss & could do as I chose, but it is far from that. I used to think it was rather hard to do as mother told me & thought how happy I should be when I got to be of age. I am sorry to hear of so much sickness up that way, the most sickness we have here is caused by powder & ball & there is a plenty of that. They have dispensed with music here now & we *musickers* have to do guard duty.

Sunday Night, & I will finish. It has been rainy all day, & it rained most all night of last night. Our pickets got drove in last night & the reg't had to turn out in the rain twice during the night but did not have any trouble. Yesterday the rebels raised a flag of truce for the purpose of burying their dead, & the 3rd & 6th regts went & got some of their men that were killed the other day when they made a charge on the Fort. There was quite a number lost from those two regts but I don't know how many. Our Generals went & met the rebels officers & shook hands & then as soon as they had got their work done the firing commenced again. How strange it must seem to go up & talk to each other & then go to firing so soon. But it is War! War! Perhaps you think this is a queer shaped letter [part of the paper has been cut off] but it is the last paper I have got & I have carried this in my jacket so long it is rather dirty. Tell Justin I would write to him if I had time & anything to write on. Tell him he must be a good boy & help his mother. Our mail is very uneven now, we don't have a chance to send letters out very often & don't get them very often. This paper is so dirty I won't try to write on the other side.

H R Montague

[*Camp in the Field*]

April 23rd 1862

Dear Wife

Once more am I permitted to pen a few lines to you, hoping they may find you enjoying as good health as I am at the present time. We are still in the position we were on Sunday when I wrote you last, & nothing has transpired of great interest. The weather has been bad till today which is a very warm, pleasant day.

On Monday another Flag of truce was hoisted at this point, the object of which I am not informed, quite a long confab was had between the Officials.

I went out where I could see the rebels works when the flag was up, not much to be seen only rebels scattered around, curious to see what was to be seen, the same as ours.

Our time is pretty much occupied in making preparations for future operations & they of a nature to show that a regular siege is expected.

Nights are the time to work in front & in sight of the enemy & a fatigue party are thus employed every night. I was out with a party on Monday night digging a ditch in rear of one of our Batterys so that if shells should strike in rear of our batterys they would explode in the ditch & not be so liable to kill the men at the guns. We have rifle pits also near the dam which crosses the stream just in front of their works. This dam I should think was thirty rods long. Below this dam (to the left) is where the 3rd & 6th Regts crossed, being woods & the land overflowed with water by another dam below.

There has been but very little firing here this week, only an occasional shot, but I hear the rebels made an attack on our pickets to the left yesterday & one or two of our men were killed.

There is some prospect that if we lay here a great while we shall be paid two months pay which I hope may be the case for I for one have nearly run ashore. I have received no letter from you as yet this week, but hope I may get one tonight. Hollis received one from Nelson yesterday. They were well, which I suppose you know as Miriam wrote that she had been writing to your Mother that day.

There has been an order issued by Gen McClellan in regard to the mail in which he recommends that soldiers letters near Washington or south should be directed to Washington, so you may direct there if you please.

I get but very few letters now except from you & write as few. It has been almost impossible to get paper, but yesterday I got a supply. The last letter I wrote I begged the two small sheets & the large half was part of a business letter I received sometime. I will try & write you twice a week if possible now, though I have not heretofore.

Ever yours

C K Leach

[*Camp in the Field*]

Sunday April 27th 1862

Dear Wife

I have just received two letters from you, but have received none before the past week. I thought I would write you a little & just as I had got out my paper in comes the mail & two letters for me. Never has any of your letters been delayed so long before.

My health is very good, only I feel a little old on account of being out in bad weather that we have had of late. Last Monday night I was out with a fatigue party & Friday night & yesterday our regt were out as support to our batterries & it rained nearly all the time from dark till we came in. I expected to have to go on picket today but did not, only a detail was taken from our Co.

There was a skirmish to our right early yesterday morning but will not undertake to give the result as every account we hear of it is different very likely you will get accounts of it in the papers.

Picket & fatigue parties are the order of the day now. Yesterday after coming in after being out twenty four hours, fifteen men, one sergeant & one Corporal were detailed from our Co for fatigue at night, but as

good luck would have it, they were sent back again. It seems by your letter & other accounts that you are having very high water which could not but be expected from the amount of snow there was on the ground but hope there will not be much damage done. I am glad to hear that Addison has made some sugar & it seems he has done as well as most of them. Hope both the cows that Zina bought may prove good, how do the others do this spring, & how is the hay

We have no news here of any importance, only a booming of canon is heard every day & nearly every night but one gets so accustomed to it that he minds nothing about it. I have heard none for two nights yet it is said there was heavy firing, that is heavy guns.

We can hear the rebels drums beat for reveille dress parade & tattoo every day. We have no drumming or music of any sort now & have not had for about a fortnight, the reason I suppose to be that the rebels may not know the amount or position of our troops.

I think by your writing you suffer more from anxiety than we do from fear of being killed, but I hope if I come through all right, I never shall be held right in face of the enemy so long again with the likelihood of a battle at any time. I hope but dare not expect that there will be but small loss of life at this place.

There is some hopes of our getting our pay this week & I suppose you would be glad to get some money, at least I shall for it is money or nothing to eat & not much with money.

C K Leach

[*Camp in the Field*]

April 29th 1862

Dear Wife

I seat myself once more to let you know that I am yet alive & well. Nothing of importance has transpired to my knowledge since I wrote you on Sunday. The weather has been very good since Sunday but there are some appearances of rain this afternoon, & a very little thunder has been heard.

We were called out this morning a little before light & kept in line under arms for about an hour, all the reason I heard assigned was a report that the water in the dam was let out. I have been down to where the water set back in a small run & find the water is some lower than when I last saw it, but whether that is the reason of our being called out I dont know.

Daniel Hulburt with the recruits arrived here this morning. They all look new but I guess that will wear off very quick. I think it will seem rather tough for them to come down to hard bread & meat & coffee so sudden with once in while a meal of beans or rice. There are not a great many among them that I know, but some, Ed Ellis, Jed Butler of Fairfax & Nelson Fasset, & some others that I have seen before are among the number. They can be but of little use here for a while, as they are not armed or drilled, & I should not wonder much if they were sick some, as with the tents we have it is almost impossible for all to find shelter, but we are expecting more tents some time.

We are making out muster rolls today, & tomorrow is the day for muster for two months pay, thus making four months pay due now. We are rather expecting to receive two months pay soon, which I hope may be the case as my bank is broke.

If it is possible to send a Silk Handkerchief in a letter I would be glad if you would get one & send it to me. I lost mine soon after we left Camp Griffin, & it is impossible to keep a white one looking decent. I dont think it would be more than double postage.

We have not had to work as hard at fatigue work for a few days as heretofore, but know not but we shall be put to it again. I have not received a letter from you since I wrote but hope I will not have to wait so long as last week. We have a daily mail now, but somehow or other letters dont find their way through very quick or steady. I presume the reason of your not receiving a letter from me week before last was the high water stopping the mails.

Ever yours C K Leach

Tuesday Evening

I have just received another letter from you, of last Friday mail & will write a few lines in answer.

I am glad to hear that you are all still well, but am sorry to hear that you have not received any letters from me of late, & hope you may have got one by this time. It may be that letters have been held back but presume the high water has had something to do with it. I have hopes that hereafter the mails will be more regular, as it goes & comes here every day regular.

I suppose of course it is not possible for you to feel otherwise than an anxiety for those that are away and exposed to the dangers of war, & it is natural that you do, but I have hopes that I may yet see you again, but if it is otherwise, I pray you may never want for friends. I hope you will continue to write to me if you do not receive letter[s] from me regular.

When Mr. Hulburd came here this morning he was enquiring about the mail & was told we had a daily mail. He says, then write as often as you can for a letter from anyone here is thought more of than all the papers they can get.

I thank you for the gum you sent.

Give my love to Mother & keep as you know you have a share for yourself.

C K L

[*Camp in the Field*]

May 3rd 1862

Dear Wife

I seat myself once more to write you a line in answer to yours which I received last night. I was glad to hear that you were all well & that you had at last received a letter from me. My health is good at present, & am not wounded as you say you heard I was, that is, no bodily wounds, but these times make some skary looking gashes in a fellows feelings sometimes.

We were mustered last Wednesday for two months pay, but we have not received our pay that was due us before as yet, & the prospect is now that we shall not get it before the last of the month when we will be likely to get 4 months pay. After muster on Wednesday we were all turned out to police the grounds & had just got at work when we were ordered to fall in with arms & were sent down to the left about a mile & then on a skirmish in the woods in front of our pickets. Three companys were deployed as skirmishers Co A on the right, Co I in the center & Co B on the left. Three other Cos were kept just in the rear of these for supports.

The skirmishers commenced to pick their way through the woods getting behind a tree till they had viewed the ground & then advancing & get[ting] behind another tree. We had gone some distance in this way when we came to the rebels pickets & shots began to be exchanged, the rebels falling back a short distance, & then for two or three hours till we withdrew if any one on either side showed himself he was sure to be shot at. Co A had three men killed, & that was the amount of our losses, one man being killed in trying to get off one that was shot before. Whether any rebels were killed or not is not known. Quite a number of balls came very near our Co as we lay in rear of the skirmishers. Since I commenced writing I heard a gun in camp, & (being Officer of the day) went out to see who it was & found a man had carelessly discharged his piece some way & shot a ball through his foot. It was a Co A man.

The recruits have been assigned to the Cos & we have seven. E. Ellis is one of them & Layth is another & a Butler & Felton from Fairfax.

You ask about the apple trees. I think it would be well to set them out but I hardly know where I should put them if I were at home. If it was not quite as wet the best place is in the lower corner of the meadow because it is easily fenced & near the house. I think the ground might be drained so it would be dry. Another place is in rear of the hog house which is better ground.

We have had very good weather for a few days & every appearance that there is more to come. I will close this for now but perhaps if all is quiet I will not send tomorrow morning.

C K Leach

Sunday Morning For fear I may not have a chance to send this tomorrow I will write a few words & mail this morning. The sun is not up yet but there is every appearance of a nice pleasant day.

There was considerable firing on our right all night last night & just at daybreak considerable musketry was heard. I think it will not be a great while before operations will commence, perhaps long before you get this. If so you must not be worried if you do not receive a letter so often because there may not be any opportunity to write after the siege commences.

With love to you all I bid you "good bye"

C K Leach

[*Camp in the Field*]

May 6th 1862

I will write you a few lines to let you know where I am & what we have been doing since Sunday, but of course you will hear long before you get this.

Just after I had sent my last letter our regt was ordered to fall in as were all others, & the report was that the rebels had left, which was found to be the case. Our men crossed the dam in front of their works, but soon came back to get ready for a pursuit, which was commenced (with us) about 11 O.C.

The rebels had taken things pretty clean, leaving nothing of much account that I saw, except tents, yet property of almost every description was found but of a damaged character. Our advanced guard came to the rebels who made a charge on ours & taking them by surprise did them some damage.

We arrived in front of their fortifications near Williamsburg just at night where they seemed to be in some force. It commenced to rain in the night & continued all day yesterday making it very muddy & hard to keep powder dry nevertheless there was some pretty smart fighting done through the day. It commenced early in the morning & continued through the day, but our brigade was not called into action. I cannot give you much details of the days work yet. Gen Hancocks Brigade of our Division did a good job on the right of the line where we marched early this morning. The rebels left this place during the night last night.

There is a stream & dam in front of the works on the right, but the rebels had no Artillery here & our men gained the place by crossing below the dam & then crossed in force on the dam. They drove the rebels back & took possession of another works to the rear & left. The rebels just at night thinking I suppose to capture our Artillery made an advance our men keeping very quiet till they got very near when they poured into them & drove them back killing & wounding a great many.

The 7th Maine was just in rear of our battery & did not show themselves (being in a little hollow) till they rose up suddenly & charged on them, & not losing a man themselves.

I went over the ground some this morning & saw a number of dead rebels scattered around & a great many places where the ground & scattered equipments told that there one fell. One would not take them to be soldiers for they are not dressed in any kind of Uniform & rather poorly dressed at that.

Our forces are in pursuit today & no doubt considerable property will be taken & also prisoners.

C K Leach

May 7th

As I missed the mail this morning I will scratch a little more. I took a stroll today to where the left of our line rested on the day of the fight, & there must have been some hot work there. The dead are not all buried yet, but the men are burying them as fast as possible. Our dead are mostly buried but the ground is strewn yet with the rebels. There is hardly a tree in the woods where they fought however small but has one or more bullet hole[s] in it. The woods is full of the rebels guns, which are Springfield muskets, smooth bore which once belonged to the U S

I wish you could see the rebels dress. They have no sort of a uniform, but are dressed in all colors & patterns. I think our men think themselves well clothed after seeing them.

The rebels had one very good fort here & that is called Fort McGruder but you can see at least a dozen at a time but they are new works & I dont think many of them ever had a gun in them.

It looks to me now as though the rebels did not intend to make a stand in these parts but I suppose they know what they are about, but I reckon they have a little fear of the yankees or at least their guns for the prisoners say they can do nothing with their guns against ours. Some one spoke to some prisoners about their dress & one says they had their choice to be furnished with clothing or have 50 dollars a year, & another says he never got any 50 dollars.

I must wind this up, for it is about night. Yesterday & today have been two nice pleasant days & the mud has again nearly dried up.

I am in hopes to receive a line from you tonight.

My health is good & also Hollises, he watched with the wounded rebels last night. Where I shall be when next you hear from me is more than I can tell.

Ever yours
C K Leach

[*Camp in the Field*]

Sunday May 11th 1862

Dear Wife

I will make an attempt to write you a few lines as we are lying by today after a march of two days. We remained near Williamsburg till Friday morning when we were started early towards Richmond I suppose.

We have had two days pretty hard marching as it has been quite warm & we have marched I should think 16 miles on Friday & 10 or 12 yesterday. Our exact position now I cannot tell you but think it is somewhere up against West Point.

The rebels must have had a pretty hard time on their retreat above Williamsburg as the rain on Monday the day of the fight with the Artillery & baggage wagons made the roads almost impassable.

They left many Baggage wagons & two Cassions that I saw besides other property of every description. Many of their wagons were burned & I should judge their contents also. Officers private baggage was left, weighing scales, dead mules, etc. We hear reports of skirmishers in the vicinity of West Point but we get no papers so we can tell but little what is going on. When we remain in one place any length of time we can get N York papers about two days old but as soon as we march we know nothing only what we see.

I have been about sick since we arrived here yesterday a little past noon, but think the rest today will set me right. Every time I have marched lately I have been lame in my left knee. The cause is rheumatism I suppose, but last night it was not lameness.

I received two letters from you on Thursday night, the night before we marched. One of them was mailed on Monday. I was glad to hear that you were all getting along very well.

The fence on Churches line is divided from Demases line over to the brook all beyond that is not divided.

Wait was to build such wall as that built before on that line, without it was the exception of big bottom stone. I helped build the wall on the line but did not do half, & he builds some to pay for what I did, & hope he will do it as he ought.

It is uncertain when I can send this but thought I would write & send when I could.

You ask if I am out of socks. Well I have two pairs with me & one of those are some that I wore last summer & have been darned some I reckon, but I dont know as you could get any to me & I think that when I am entirely out I can get some of the Quartermaster somehow. All of my clothes look a little worse for wear, but hope such times as these will not always last.

C K Leach

[*Camp in the Field*]

May 14th 1862

Dear Wife

I will once more make an attempt to write you a few lines, but not in answer to any received as I have received none this week. As to health I have not been worth much since I last wrote but I am a little better today. My appetite has been very poor & about 3 hard crackers a day has kept me running so I have kept along with the regt when they have marched.

We did not leave the place where we were when I wrote you on Sunday, till near night on Monday, when we marched about 5 miles to New Kent Court House where we staid over night. We started Tuesday morning again but think we did not march direct towards the rebels, but filed to the right off from the main road & went nearly east through woods & all sorts with very little sign of a road. We did not go but three or four miles before we came in sight of a river & boats sailing on it. The river is one of the branches of the York river. The boats bring up provisions & the like. We camped at this place till this morning & were then again started & marched a few miles & are now encamped in a small field of clover perhaps of a couple hundred acres. The clover is just commencing to blow & it is a nice field. Some say it is Gen Lees plantation but how they know is the question. We are still near the river & boats are opposite us. They can run some distance above here.

We had just got our tents pitched today as it commenced to rain & has rained steady since & it is now near 4 O.C. There has been no rain since a week last Monday giving us good weather for marching & I hope we may lay still here till pleasant weather comes again.

We have been through some fine country since we came this side Williamsburg & some fine pieces of wheat have been left behind us which I trust the rebels will not get. Good wheat stands about knee high. I have also seen some large fields of corn which is up an inch & a half or two inches. As we march along at a great many of the houses is hung out a white flag. What good they think it will do them is more than I can tell, for no one would molest them. We are under very strict orders against stealing the property of citizens but a hen or turkey occasionally gets picked but I guess the rebels took the biggest share.

I will have to close this or I think I will freeze for it is a very chilly day & no fire. I never was placed in the position of a beggar untill lately, nothing to eat, no money, & no way to get anything without money without stealing, but I reckon better times sometime.

C K Leach

[*Camp in the Field*]

May 18th 1862

Dear Wife

I will once more try & write a few lines for I suppose you will be anxious to hear from me but I am so nervous I dont know how I shall make out. We are still camped where we were the last time I wrote you & that is in the field of clover. How many troops there is here I do not know, but there is quite an army. This place is called the White House. The river is full of shipping & eatables are sold at about three or four times the amount of City prices, but of course it makes no odds to me. My health has been poor the past week but can say that I am better today at least I ought to be for they have put me on as Officer of the Guard today & I have to steal time to write this.

We had orders to march yesterday & had everything packed & were in line some time when the order was countermanded & we again put up our tents. Then we were to march this morning, but that failed up. Now I understand we are to march tomorrow morning, but may not. I received a letter from you on Friday in which you speak about shingling the house & getting a wagon. I think it would be a very good thing to shingle over the north side of the house. I would get hemlock shingles if possible. About the wagon I hardly know what to say. I know you need a wagon bad enough & if one could be got & not keep all the old trash that is on hand now, I should say get one but to pay the money for one now I a little hate to do it.

I understand that one of our Corpls. has got home. That is S W Barnes. I did not expect to hear that he was in Vermont but it made him sick every time we marched towards the rebels but hope his health may improve so he will be able to come back.

Our Orderly Sergeant Ford has caught the canon fever & gone to the Hospital. He applied for a discharge but it did not come but I was in hopes it would.

I think I will have to close this for I guess there is more now than you can read. I look for your next with handkerchief.

Yours as Ever
C K Leach

Sunday May 25th/62

Dear Wife

I have the liberty of once more writing you a few lines, that you may know that I am still on the earth. I have not written since last Sunday. We were on the march every day up to Wednesday & I was then afraid you would not get a letter on Tuesday so I thought I would wait till Sunday.

We left our camp at the White House about 8 O.C. on Monday morning & marched 5 or 6 miles in the rain & then camped for the night.

Started early again Tuesday morning & marched a few miles & again camped. Started again early Wednesday morning & had a march of about 8 miles & camped where we remained till yesterday (Saturday). We were here about three miles from the rebel lines.

Balloons were almost constantly in the air viewing the rebels.

Yesterday we were marched about three miles & right up in the face of the rebels. There was considerable skirmishing along the lines, but our Brigade had no hand in it. I know not much the effects of the days work. We are now where if the rebels conclude to fight a very short march will bring us to them.

Every appearance shows that they calculate to make a stand here & if they loose much ground here we are on [to] Richmond.

We had quite a thunder shower on Thursday which cooled the good as it was quite hot before.

I received your very welcome letter containing the handkerchief on Thursday. I think it a very pretty handkerchief & I was very to get it. I also received another letter from you last night & was glad to hear that you were all well.

Tell Zelia that papa would like to see her very much. I see you make some calculations about my coming home this fall. Well if I am permitted to live there might such a thing happen as my being at home in the fall, if I did not have such thoughts occur to me. I should very much wish to see home a short time this summer. Yet every thing depends on circumstances & one can hardly tell what they *will* do at a given time.

The great event of the past week with our rgt. was the arrival of the Paymaster on Friday & the paying of the regt. two months pay. They are now paying the other regts of the Brigade.

Above what is allotted I am obliged to use myself (of my pay). The \$180.00 allotted I hope you may receive soon. I have about 40 dollars. I gave a note to W Fletcher for 40 dollars which I think will have to be paid from the money you rec. He will send the note to his Father.

C K L

Camp in the Field]

May 27th 1862

Dear Wife

As I have leasure time this afternoon I will just write you a few words for it is uncertain how much time one may have to write, in a short time. We are encamped where we were on Sunday & probably will stay here

till the time comes of our being ordered the other side of the Chickahominy, where a fight is expected. We are under orders to be ready to march at any moment with three days rations. When we move the men go without knapsacks, & everything is to be left this side of the creek. All baggage wagons are to remain this side the creek & all baggage packed & left with them.

All detailed men are to return to the ranks & carry a gun.

This looks like doing the fighting first & disposing of all other matters afterward.

There has been considerable canonading to our right today but what the effect of it is I know nothing.

One year ago today Nelson moved to our house & it has been much such a day as that was, rainy in the forenoon. One year last Sunday we were mustered at Fletcher & the commencement of the 2nd year finds us in rather different circumstances than we were at that time.

One years service is something of a school to a man & things that would [seem] almost impossible, one becomes used to by having them transpire around him almost daily.

I have no doubt but within a few days there will be a decisive battle fought here in front of Richmond & no doubt a hard fought one too if at all & I hope for the best. My health has got to be very good again but, I am somewhat poorer than I was before.

The papers you send come along all straight though not quite as quick as a letter. We get N Y papers occasionally but have to pay 15 cts for them.

I saw in the St Albans paper that Lyman Hawley Jr was married. I have not heard a word from anyone only by you for a long while. I see the letters that Hollis gets & he hears from Nelson once in a while, but from Daniel, Norman, Joseph C & all the rest are mum.

I have written more than I expected when I commenced & will therefore bid you good bye.

To Ann A Leach

From your . . .

C. K. L

[*Camp in the Field*]

June 1st 1862

Dear Wife

Once again am I permitted to write you a few lines in answer to letters received from you the past week.

When I wrote you last I knew not that I should have the pleasure of writing again, but we are still at the present time in camp where we were when I wrote you last.

I have received two letters from you the past week & was glad to hear that you were all well & hope you may be blessed the same through the summer.

You wrote of thinking of going to Brattleboro. I hope you went for nothing was to hinder as I can see. As you say I should think Burton has had rather hard luck this spring to lose two horses & one cow.

I acknowledge the receipt of a gold dollar you sent in a letter. I have seen the time I have needed it but as you already know we have received some pay so that I had money. I think I will send it back.

It takes a pile of money to buy anything here, except such as commissary stores which are about common rates. Cheese is sold here at the rate of 40 cts per lb, & every thing in about the same style. I paid 15 cts for an orange today.

On Friday & Friday night we had a very heavy thunder shower & I think I never saw so much thunder & lightning in the same time & neither so sharp lightning & so heavy thunder. It commenced near night & kept it up near all night with heavy rain except a short time just at dark. It has raised the water in the Chickahominy river in front of us, which no doubt has altered the movements of the troops somewhat.

Yesterday, there was a pretty hard battle on the left, judging from the amount of firing which we heard. Near night it was almost one continual roar of musketry which closed with the day. As I have not heard much of the particulars of the fight you will likely get it more accurate in the papers.

Just as we were going to bed last night, orders came to pack up & be ready to march at once so we packed up & were marched out by the Col, but when we came to Gen Brooks he told the Col the order was to be ready to march at once & not to march at once as the Col understood it so we were marched back to camp & remained till about 3 O.C. this morning when we were ordered to march. We all expected a fight & I presume would have had it had not the creek raised so much that it would be a difficult thing to cross without considerable labor. We marched down to the creek & remained till between nine & ten & were then marched back to camp since which time our batteries have been firing across the creek at any rebels that show themselves.

I expect every day that we shall be called on to cross the creek & very likely before you get this the fate of Richmond will be decided.

Lieut Col Stannard has left us to take command of the regt that is being raised in Vermont now. Major Joyce will probably be Lieut Col of our regt at least there has been a petition to the Governor of the State to that effect.

You say Zina is very anxious to enlist. I suppose he will do as he pleases about it, but I would not advise him to enlist especially without he could get a good position.

It is getting to be quite warm weather here now but it has not been as warm as I expected to see at this time of the year. Wheat is nearly in the blow & looks quite nice & such fields as I have not been accustomed to seeing. Some fields of corn are 5 or 6 inches high but I am afraid that the wheat & corn will do any body but little good as there seems to be nobody to hoe & harvest. When a house is passed no one is to be seen but a few negroes & those are generally old men & women & children. It is so dark, I cant see the line, so I guess I will close.

to A A L

from C K L

[*Camp in the Field*]

June 4th 1862

Dear Wife

I will once more write you a few lines to let you know what I am about & the like. Nothing of great importance has taken place in this vicinity to my knowledge since I last wrote, yet something a little exciting for a moment.

Five Cos. of our regt went on picket Monday afternoon a short distance from our camp near where there is being a bridge built across the stream. All except about 20 who were placed on post at a time, stacked arms & remained a short distance from the river. About noon the rebels threw a couple of shells at us from a place above us & in the edge of the woods. The shells burst & fell short of us so that they did not make much of a stir.

About half past two a gun was fired from directly in front of us & almost at the instant of the report a ball whized just over our heads the whole length of the 5 Cos & struck the ground just beyond. I reckon the skulking was something like what it would be in a brood of chickens should a hawk come upon them sudden. Only a few seconds had passed when another ball passed over us but a little higher than the first.

By this time our batteries commenced playing on them so they honored us no more but paid a few rounds to one of our batteries & then dried up.

The ground & woods is so situated on the other side that the rebels can bring up their pieces & not be observed till they fire which of course shows where they are, & then our guns open on them & shut them up.

Yesterday was the warmest day we have had yet, & was quite uncomfortable even in the shade. Today is cooler as it began to rain just at night last night & rained hard all night & till about noon today. We had quite a shower Monday night, when we were out, making a great deal of rain of late.

My health is good at present & I hope it will continue so. I think I had something to eat today that is not to be had in Vermont & that was some strawberries. I paid only 50 cts for about a pint.

Blackberries are getting to be of some size & will be ripe in about a month.

I hope I may get a letter from you before I mail this but dont much expect one till tomorrow & perhaps if you went to Brattleboro I shall not get one at all.

With good wishes
I remain ever the same
C K Leach

Sunday June 8th 1862

Dear Wife

Sunday has again come & as has been my custom I again seat myself to write a few lines to you. Sundays are generally, if circumstances will permit a little more a day of leasure than other days & it has so happened of late that I have had a chance to write. As you have a mail but twice a week I intend to write about such days as will best hit your mail. I received a letter from you on Friday, one week from mailing, & shall look for another today. My health is very good & has been with a very slight exception the past two days. I presume you will know before you get this that we, that is, our division is on the Richmond side of the oft repeated & much celebrated Chickahominy. We crossed over on Thursday. About three O.C. Thursday morning, we got orders to pack up for a move of camp & it was a great speculation with us where we were going as a move of camp to the front was entirely out of the question.

We marched down the creek 4 or 5 miles & crossed over where Gen Sumner crossed with his forces on Saturday, the day of the battle near here. We are now camped a short distance lower down the creek on the opposite side from that we left. We are to the right of where the battle was fought & between that & the creek.

A brisk canonading was had across the creek from the place we left the day we left there, the cause or effect of which I am not informed. There are two balloons connected with our army which make ascensions every day on which the weather is favorable.

This morning a canonading was heard a short distance to our left & the firing of muskets was also heard but it was only for a short time. I did not know but we were to have another Sunday battle.

You ask if Zina can trade the old wagon & lumber & the balance in money for a wagon if I think best. I am perfectly willing he should make the best trade he can of that sort.

I should like to have seen Hiram Wood very much as you say he has been there but still there are others that it would give me much more satisfaction to see.

We continue to have considerable rain here which makes it very hard for Artillery & baggage wagons to move on account of the mud. Thunder showers are the order mostly & hardly a day passes but we have thunder. Gen Howard of our Brigade at Bull Run lost an arm in the battle of last Saturday & Sunday & I see by accounts the loss in his Brigade was 536 killed & wounded.

(Evening) Just as I finished writing we were ordered to fall in & the report was that Gen. McClellan was here. We formed in line in front of our camp, but instead of seeing McClellan, Gen Prim of whom so much has been said in the papers was the honored one. He accompanied by Gens. Smith & Brooks & some of McClellans staff rode along in front of us & then passed off to other regts.

Sergeant Smith who was left sick at Yorktown returned to the regt tonight. He has been at Washington lately in the hospital & came from there here. But I must bid you good night

C K Leach

June 10th 1862

Dear Wife

I received a letter from you yesterday morning & was glad to hear that you were all well & hope to ever hear the same. As to my health it is very good only a little disorder in my digestive organs which has been the case for a number of days, but not enough to keep me from duty. I think I shall go to the Surgeon tomorrow morning & get some physic & see what that will do.

I went on picket yesterday morning & came off this morning. Our pickets & the rebels pickets where we were are not more than 40 rods from each other, each being in the woods with a field of oats & wheat between.

The rebels threw a number of shells just at night which I think were intended for the camps in the rear, but some of which burst very near us. The pieces of one fell right among us that were on the reserve but did no damage. Our batteries on the other side of Chickahominy shelled them a while this afternoon, & then the rebs shelled us a little but dont know as any damage was done. It commenced raining near morning last night & today has been a very cold rainy day. It seems we have not had such dry weather as you have had this spring, nor have we had but a very little hot weather for the time of the year.

The weather has been so bad that when we have been some distance from river or railroad transportation it has been difficult many times to get provisions in time so but the men would get short. We are but a short distance from the railroad now.

Perhaps it would be best to sell the colt for 70 dollars. Zina knows how horses are selling there & would know best but if he is sold make the pay sure.

About the money I had of Parris. There has not a word passed between us about it only Alonzo said one day that his father wrote to him that money was worth 12 per cent there & that likely is the reason that the old man wants it. I dont calculate that he will look to Zina for the money & he need not pay any part of it unless he wants to.

I am sorry that Zina could not use the money I sent him but he need not lose the use of it for I will do that myself.

My only light is just burned out so I will be obliged to close.

My respects to all

Ever yours

C K Leach

[In the Field]

June 15th 1862

Dear Wife

Sunday has again come & again I seat myself for the purpose of writing to you, as is my custom when circumstances will permit. I cannot say as I have felt very well today as I have a diarrhea which has troubled me some for a number of days but today I have had rather a hard time.

I have received two letters from you since I last wrote & glad to hear that you were all well.

Everything has been very quiet here as yet only the rebels have shelled us some every day. They generally threw their shells just at night but Friday morning they commenced early in the morning & went to work as though they calculated to do something but getting no reply from our guns at all they soon cooled down to occasional shots which they kept up till about noon. They threw them all to the left of us. One ball that they sent in here Thursday night struck a cavalryman after striking the ground & killed him. One of the same regt while out with the picket was killed by missing the way & getting beyond our lines.

Large details are taken out from the regts day & night building corduroy roads. I was out with a party yesterday forenoon. Our business was cutting logs for road & after they are cut, they are drawn out on the wagons.

We have had very hot weather here for a few days, but today a thunder shower has cooled the air & I guess it will settle into a steady rain as it continues to rain & the thunder has ceased.

Adjutant Ladd who went home on the recruiting service returned today. Also Lieut Weed of Co G who has been to Vermont sick. I have not seen them yet. Lieut Sharply has tendered his resignation for discharge.

You spoke in your last about the sheep. I should think it best to dispose of them this fall for they will always bother.

I received a letter from Louis Ann on Friday, the first I have had from her since I was at home. They were all well.

Well Jane I dont know whether I should be as smart as Griffin or not but it seems his wife is awful lazy instead of his being smart.

Justins letter was in the last one I got & I think he has improved in writing some this summer. I would write some to him if I felt so I could.

I suppose you have that money at this time. You must do with it as is most needed. Nothing strange if we were paid two months more pay soon. But I will close and tend to pressing duties.

Ann

Ever yours
C K Leach

[In the Field]

June 19th 1862

Dear Wife

I seat myself to write you a few lines at this late day of the week not knowing as opportunity will offer itself at all times. I should have written Tuesday but I went on picket and did not get in till Wednesday near noon, and had no opportunity to write that day on account of a bit of a mess that was stired up on the picket line to our left, just at night. In the afternoon too we got all ready for a march, but did not leave.

All has been very quiet in front of us of late but how long all will remain quiet is more than I know but my mind is that it is not to be very long for the signs are that a battle will be fought in a very few days, & we are rather looking for it tomorrow.

The weather has been very good lately but very warm & occasionally a little rain. I hope our marches may be short this summer for it is not very comfortable to be in camp with nothing to do on account of the heat in the middle of the day. We have to get up in the morning at three O.C. & stand under arms till about sunrise every morning.

I suppose you have seen accounts of the rebels, that is a small party getting in our rear & firing on a train of cars & doing considerable other damage & among other things the deplorable loss of a number of Sutlers carts.

Among the number was the one that officiates as sutler to our reg. (our former ones Bailey & Brock, having left us when our money was short & some work to get their things to us) It would not have been much damage to the soldiers & I guess to the country if the Sutlers were all destroyed, yet they are a kind of a necessary evil, some necessary good, & a great amount of unnecessary evil arising from them.

I received a letter from you today & was glad to know that you were all well. My health is good except as I wrote before.

I am glad to hear that the bees are swarming so well. If the season is good they must make some honey. Manufactured honey is sold here by the sutlers at a dollar per bottle that will hold about a pint.

I shall mail this to Fairfax & perhaps you may get it a little sooner than if mailed to Fletcher. This may be the last that you will get from me but I have hopes that I may be permitted to write many times again.

Hollis health is good & so are the rest of the Fletcher boys except E. Ellis who has gone to the hospital.

Ann

Ever yours
C K Leach

Evening June 19th 1862

Brother Zina

I will make an attempt to write you a very few lines tonight & send in Anns letter.

Ann wrote a while ago that you *talked* of enlisting but I guess when you thought the matter all over you would conclude otherwise. If you had come last spring I should have been very glad, but I have no anxiety to have you enlist now but if you could get a good place I should not care so much. If it were not for the place we are in just now it would be nothing strange if you would see me at home soon, but I can not ask it just at this time.

I have been troubled with a diarrhea for six or eight days, at one time feeling very well & at others rather out of rig. This afternoon I have been worse than yesterday. I dread the hot weather more than I did the cold last winter. We are living in expectations of an engagement at any time & nothing improbable that a hard battle will be fought before you receive this & I should most think it strange if there was not. The rebs are just beating their tattoo roll call, for I can hear their drums, I think they dont hear ours for we dont have any music, neither did we when we were before Yorktown.

I suppose you at work at all sorts as usual but I would just like to step in see how you are all getting along. I hope your crops may be good this year, for if I am blessed with life I hope I may get my living with some of you next winter.

The dry weather you are having must hurt the hay crop unless there is a deal of rain to come & then it will be late. Wheat & oats are nearly fit to cut around here but I dont know who will do the work. I reckon a great deal of it wont need cutting. Our camp is in a wheat field, but no signs now that any thing ever grew here, but when we came here we marched right into full grown wheat & pitched our tents. One year tomorrow & we have been in the U.S. service one year, but little thoughts had I then where I should be one year from that.

I suppose you are looking every day for this army to walk into Richmond. Well it may if the rebels should evacuate but I have an idea that a hard battle *may* be fought & victorious to us & still Richmond not taken, if so the taking of Richmond would be a regular seige. But I hope that one fight will end the matter here.

Ten O Clock, so I will end & retire (on the ground) & bid you good bye. Give us a specimen of your penmanship now & then

respects to all
to Zina

Yours etc.
C K Leach

[*Camp in the Field*]

Sunday Eve June 22nd 1862

Dear Wife

Another Sunday & again I seat myself to write you a few lines & send with Hollis letter to Zina.

I received a line from you yesterday & glad to know that you were still all well. I hold about the same as when I last wrote, some of the time feeling well & again not so well. I have not been to the surgeon yet for medicine or been excused from duty.

On Wednesday night there seemed to be a prospect of a fight on Friday, but the orders we were under were countermanded and with us all has remained quiet, but on our left there are skirmishes nearly every day. Last night they had a pretty smart one. Five Companys of our Regt went on picket this morning but our Co was out last Tuesday & did not have to go.

We have had quite warm weather lately & but very little rain for a number of days. It has sprinkled a little tonight & looks as though there might be some rain before morning. It looks rather hard as in the case of John Wheeler to be a prisoner so long away from home, & just as he was getting home, to be taken away

but such are the chances of war. It must have been some consolation to his folks to have his body sent home, yet no doubt their grief found more vent than if they had not seen him.

If you have money so you can please send a dollars worth of Postage stamps to me. Hollis was going to send some money for some & I told him I would take his money & you get the stamps.

It matters but little what you do with that money if it only pays debts, besides what you want to use, that I hope you will take first & pay with what there is left.

How is it with that veal skin that was carried to Scotts last spring. Have you got it or has he used it up. If I was at home I would have a pair of boots made from it, but I could never get them here if they were made. I have got a pair of shoes but they are not boots, but I think I can get along through the summer, some way.

I think I will bid you good night

Ever yours

C K Leach

June 24th 1862

Dear Wife

If I thought you would expect in this any news or in other words if news was the only thing looked for I should not undertake at this time to write as it would only waste time & paper. But as I suppose you are ever anxious to hear from me & having nothing else to do I will try & do a little in the way of writing.

My health remains about the same, although I had to trot pretty well yesterday & last night & have done but very little in the line of eating today.

We had a bit of a thunder shower yesterday, & continual thunder & lightning throug the night & one quite hard shower.

Today has been quite warm but has just ended up with a good thunder shower which makes it more comfortable.

The order for all to be under arms at three O.C. in the morning & remain till after daylight is revoked & one Reg't from our brigade is detailed every morning to be under arms at the right of the fortifications at half past three & remain till half an hour after broad day light. Our regt has to go out tomorrow morning.

We received an order this morning early to hold ourselves in readiness to march at day light, but day light came & has gone again & we are here still. I know not the cause of the order.

As is usual there was a bit of a skirmish last night on our left but we get nothing that is reliable about them.

[No] [n]ews is generally received by us till we get it by the way of N.Y. even if anything happens within the space of a mile of us. Of course we hear all about it & just as many different stories as there are individuals.

You can see therefore that anyone soon learns not to believe anything he hears unless it comes from a reliable source.

I noticed the death of Capt Burnham in the *Times* which you sent. I had also heard of his death before. Orders for being under arms tomorrow morning Countermanded. That is the way with military.

If I could have stepped into your buttery today, if I did not have some milk it would have been because there was none there. I have not seen a drop of milk for three months.

Give my respects to Emerson & will try to write to him & should also like to hear from him.

Ever yours

C K Leach

[Report of the battle at Savage Station]

July 4th 1862

Dear Wife

Once more I seat myself to let you know that I am still alive for I presume you are all anxious to hear from those you hold most dear. We have passed through a hard week for us, but I am happy to say that we as a regt have suffered but little loss.

To give the details of our operations for the week requires more time & talent than I have at my disposal at the present time, therefore I shall write but little but what concerns those nearest home.

As you of course know we are now near the James river having changed front to the rear somewhat & what the operations are to be now time will tell.

We commenced to fall back Saturday, but only a short distance till Sunday, when we made a very good march besides fighting something of a battle in which some in our regt were killed & wounded & the 5th was quite badly cut up. I have heard the loss estimated at two hundred.

In our Co three were wounded one probably mortal.

Vernon Rood was wounded in the leg & is likely in the hands of the rebels. Philip Ward was wounded in the breast or shoulder & Lawson in the leg. This was at a place called Savage Station.

On Monday as we lay in position waiting for the teams to get out of the way the rebels opened a heavy canonading on us, but did no damage as I know.

My health has not been very good of late, hardly eating anything while on the march, but can eat now a little better. I have enjoyed [not a] good days health for more than three weeks, but am not so bad but I do duty.

But I must close hoping I may have opportunity to write you again soon & that I may hear from you.

Yours in love

C K Leach

[Camp in the Field]

July 8th 1862

July 9th got a letter last night from you mailed June 30

Dear Wife

I seat myself to write you a few lines but feel that I shall not write anything very interesting. If I did not feel it a duty to write I should not make an attempt with the means I have.

We are having some very hot weather now. I think equal to any thing I ever saw, & have had no rain since the day we arrived at City Point.

We have moved our camp a short distance from where we were when I wrote you last Friday, but are in the same field. We are now close by a church & in sight of the James River. When we came to this point we camped close by the river & staid one night & then marched out some two miles where we now are. There are a great many troops between us & the river, we being in the front doing picket duty & any amount of fatigue chopping & throwing up earthworks. It is work day & night.

I have not had a letter from you for some time the last one I got was mailed June 27th so you see it is 12 days since I have heard a word. But I hope our mail may come more regular after this. It seems lonesome to get no letters or papers either just at this time. I have seen no account of the move that we have gone through except the evacuation of the White House landing.

Why we dont get papers is a mystery to me.

Our Chaplain left us this morning. He could not get a leave of absence so he resigned. I wish myself as near home & if I live till the 1st of Sept, I think I shall be at home if it is possible.

My health is about the same as it has been for the last three or four weeks, diarrhea running steady all the time, & some days feeling quite well & some quite bad. If you ever get a paper with a list of the loss of

the Vt Regts I wish you would send it to me. The loss of our Co is six three wounded & left behind & three unaccounted for. One John Martin was sick & I think was unable to keep along & one Isaac Layth I guess is all right somewhere but not here. Not much of a loss anyhow, & Hebb unaccounted for. When we arrived at City Point we had 10 or 12 missing but they gradually came in & Layth is probably around somewhere.

I forget whether I wrote you that we were paid off again but you would likely know it if you got an order for the money. Those orders of Hollis you can draw too & use it as best you can. If I felt it possible for me I would like to give you a description of our doings last week, but it would be a great job for me. But hoping I may yet see you all, I can tell what I cant write. Wouldnt I like to see Zelia & all the rest.

Ever yours
C K Leach

[Camp in the Field]

July 13th 1862

Dear Wife

I will spend a few moments this morning in trying to pen a few lines to you & a very few they may be as I have to go on picket at nine. All has been quiet here since I last wrote you, except occasionally we hear reports of canon from the river, which tells that the rebels have shown themselves somewhere on the bank.

We have been blessed with a good rain since my last which cooled the air so that it has been very comfortable since. I hope we shall not be blessed with a great deal of so hot weather as the first of the past week.

A sergeant from Co E was drowned in [a] creek close by us last Tuesday while in bathing & his body was not recovered till it rose to the top of the water two days after. He was taken with cramp & called for help & one got hold of him but let go again. President Lincoln made us a visit the other day or night rather, so I could not see how he looked, as I should liked to have done. The firing of salutes told where he was to be found as he rode from one point to another.

As far as health is concerned I have felt quite well for the past three days, but the diarrhea still holds to me. The way it is with me one day I feel very well & the next perhaps not fit for anything. Hollis has had the diarrhea for a day or two now & is grunting around.

It seems that James Taylor has died at last. Well it seems that life is not sure when not exposed to the dangers of war.

I think you had better get that veal skin for it will be some time before you have any more hides & get them tanned & then if I should be so blessed as to get home sometime I shall perhaps want some boots. Sutlers bring clothing here now but such prices you never could begin to guess. I bought a coat for eleven dollars that is worth about four. Shirts at three to four dollars for any thing that is decent. I have bought two.

Zina asks if there was any money due him for drilling. There was \$8.40 I think but the rolls are probably in Vermont so it is not possible for me to get it. Perhaps he could get some information about it by writing to the Treasurer of the State, John B Page of Rutland as I presume he has the rolls & of course the money.

I received the postage stamps which you sent & if you have not sent the rest you need not hurry about it. Have patience in reading this.

C K Leach

[Letter from Hollis R. Montague]

Camp near Harrisons Landing

July 13th/62

Folks at Home

Tis a hot Sunday but I will write a little in answer to your last which was rec'd a few days since. We have moved our camp a short distance since I wrote before, to the front. We are right in front of a nice little

Church furnished up in good style, all carpeted & cushioned inside with two Organs in it, one of them is locked up so it cannot be got into. My health is not bad, but it is not so good as I wish it was. I have had a bad *diarrhea* for 2 days past, but am well through. Quite a number of the boys were made sick by the fatiguing of the last march. Ellenwood is in the hospital & Sergt Ballard also the latter pretty sick. We had a few of the warmest days here that I ever saw, but we have had a little rain & it is quite comfortable now. It was so hot that anyone couldn't be comfortable by fanning himself.

Uncle Abe came & reviewed us a few days ago so I guess he has not forgotten us but I wish he would think enough of us to discharge us & send us home, but I suppose he wont hurry about it. There was a Sergt from Co E in our regt drowned in a creek close by us the other day. He was bathing & a cramp took him & he went to the bottom, while twenty others were in the water at the same time. His body lay in the water over night. They couldn't find him until his body arose the next day. What a difference between a soldier & a citizen. Should a citizen be drowned in that way, the inhabitants would turn out for miles around. But here, w[h]ere hundreds were sitting around within 50 rods & none thought of going to see him, even after his body was taken out. He was burried near the Church, no cerremonies excepting a prayer made by some chaplin of this brigade, I dont know which one. Our Chaplin has got discharged & gone home, so they had to get one from some other regt. Now seeing our Chaplin has gone I wish we had Mr. Wheelock down here, but I dont suppose he would come anyway, but how I wish he would.

Does Clint live at home now. I have not heard a word from or about him for a long time. I rec'd a letter from Nell the same time I rec'd yours. They are well. Zina if you want a sutlers berth, I presume you might get one in this reg't as we have none here now, & I would advise you if you are going into the army anyway to go in as such. It is the most profitable business of anything in the army, especially when you can sell lemons for 15 cts & Oranges 20, ginger cakes, 10 or 8 for 25 cts this is our prices that we have to pay.

Our Quartermaster has just got in some new clothing, so I guess the boys that lost their clothes will be supplied again. As for me, I am as well supplied as I have been, for I didn't loose anything. But on the contrary found something [as] I found a port-folio with a good quantity of paper & envelopes & a good blanket, & among the rest a miniature of three very pretty females. These are what I think the most of. I am going to send them home if I get a chance. They are in a little round frame inside of a case.

Nothing more now
H R Montague

[In the Field]

July 15th 1862

Dear Wife

I will again try to pen a few lines this afternoon to you although I have not received a letter from you this week. I looked for one this morning.

Today is as hot as it was last week & I reckon that is some hot. A person is very glad to keep in the shade if he is fortunate enough to find one, but the small tents that the men have are about as good as nothing.

The tent that we had was lost on our leaving the Chickahominy & yesterday we got a new one so we are all right. When I was on picket on Sunday I made out to get a few blackberries but had to go outside of the lines to do it. There are so many more men than berries that it is impossible to get one within the lines. I picked all I could eat & a small cup full beside & that will likely be all I shall get. My health continues to be a little better than it was some time ago but I am not free from the *diarrhea* yet & doubt whether I shall be this summer. Hollis is doctoring for his, drinking blackberry root tea. When I have taken anything to check mine it has always made me sick to my stomach so I have concluded to let it run.

Sergeants Ellenwood & Ballard are both sick & in the hospital but are getting better. They have been there but a few days & I think they will be around again in a short time. Lieut Sawyer has been rather sick for a few days but is getting better also.

All has been quiet here as far as I know since my last except once in a while a few reports of canon is heard from the direction of the river & you hear the cause of it soon as we do.

We are having a little more leasure time of it than when we first came here, having now no fatigue work to do, thus reducing our labors to picket & guard except to keep the camp policed, which the Gen is very strict about, ordering that every thing shall be kept in the best order around the camps etc.

All this is necessary for the health of the troops for if they stay through the summer in such numbers as there are here now which looks probable to me, & great care is not taken, it would be an unclean place & not very favorable to good health.

I will have to close or I will be late for the mail as it goes out at 6 P.M.

Going to have a thunder shower.

C K Leach

Sunday July 20th 1862

Dear Wife

I will once more write you a line although I have nothing of any account to write you.

I have received two letters from you since I last wrote & also a line from Zina. Our mail has come very regularly since we came to this place & in very good time. Letters that are mailed Monday arrive here on Friday morning.

My health has been very good since I last wrote & some days befor[e] till the past three days & now I am as bad off as at any time I have been.

Hollis is rather hard up & I should not wonder much if he did not do much more this summer. He is growing poor quite fast.

We had some very hard showers the past week & since that time the weather has been very comfortable.

If the medicine you wrote of making proves to be good I shall be very glad to have it arrive.

There were from 10 to 15 excused from duty from each Co by the Surgeon this morning which tells something for the health of the regt. There were 13 in our Co including Sawyer & myself. Some are lame & one thing & another, but the general complaint is diarrhea.

You spoke about buying some corn if there is no hay to be got & I presume there will not be. I think it will be best to be sure of something.

Gen Brooks has gone on a leave of absence & Col Whiting is commanding the Brigade now for a short time. I will send you a picture of Gen Brooks. He is rather a rough old fellow & no starch about him.

I will write a word to Zina in this.

Yours etc.

C K L

Well Zina I was glad to hear a word from you for I do not get anything from you very often. Glad to know that you were well & hope you so continue.

I should be quite glad to take your advice to come home this fall & perhaps I may, but there is some trouble to get out when anyone wants to.

About your extra pay I spoke of it in another letter, but I dont think Strait will get anything, but there is \$8.40 set to your name. Capt Strait received pay as recruiting officer at that time. The paymaster has nothing to do with it. The rolls & money was sent to Quartermaster Pitkin by the state who paid us & very likely the rolls are in the Treasurers office now. I should like to see my fat horse, but I guess I would be a weak hand [to] break him just now.

C K Leach

[In the Field]

July 23^d 1862

Dear Wife

Another letter received from you today & now I seat myself to answer it.

Glad to know that you were all well & all things going smoothly.

Your Book of Medicine also got along this morning all right & I hope it may prove to be good for what it is made.

I have felt very well for two days except that I have not a great deal of strength as my complaint is still with me.

I have done but very little duty for some time past. About all that I have done since we came to this place is one day on picket, one day officer of guard, & two parts of days out with a fatigue party. There are always some small duties about camp to tend to but of small account as far as labor is concerned.

I am sorry to say that Hollis does not get any better & has today gone to the Hospital. He says he feels a good deal as he did last summer. He has had no appetite since he has been sick at all.

I suppose you will ask yourself what accommodations there are in the Hospital.

The tent is quite large so that the patients lie on each side with their feet to the center.

A very little straw is on the ground & their blankets spread on that constitutes their bed.

About the care they have I know but little except that Ellenwood & Ballard thought they did not live as well as they did in the Co. They have ice water to drink, so there is one good thing.

I think Hollis will get better soon but may have a run of fever.

Our wounded that were left behind are at Richmond as we see by papers including Rood.

Layth I think by a letter that came to him from Fairfax, on which was written at the bottom of the address (Simanary Hospital Georgetown) is in the Hospital at Georgetown. He had a little hurt in the flesh of his hand near his little finger & I presume he managed to get on a boat as wounded & got there. He was always playing sick or something but something to cure laziness would do him good.

Hebb & Martin of our Co we have not heard from yet.

The weather since the showers we had has continued to be very comfortable, not so exceedingly hot as before.

Our Chaplain (late) wants to get reappointed, so he wrote to the Col.

As N F has the nomination for States Attorney I hope he may succeed in the election.

I reckon Whipple dont like a soldiers life very well to write home so discouraging. He ought to be turned over to Sesesh.

C K Leach

[In Camp]

July 27th 1862

Dear Wife

As Sunday has again come I will write a few lines this morning before I go on picket as I have got to go out at nine. I have no news to write so you must not expect but a short letter.

My health has been very good for a few days the diarrhea having pretty much left me, & I hope I may not be troubled with it again. I have used but little of your medicine as I was so much better. I had rather do without medicine if possible.

I saw Hollis yesterday & he appeared much better & he has sent up for our cook to carry him down something to eat, so I guess he will get along.

The weather is getting to be very warm again but we had a shower last night that cooled the air some. I received a letter from you on Friday & glad to hear that you were all well etc.

Zelia wants to know why papa dont come home does she, if he wants to see her? Well, thats a reasonable question.

You say Zina has got recruiting papers. I am glad of it if he wanted them. Hope he will have good luck in his new labors.

Today is going to be an awful hot day, by all appearances now.

All has been quiet here of late, not even hearing any firing on the river.

Our asst Surgeon who was left with the wounded, has returned & has a list of the wounded of the VI Regts. Vernon was wounded in the neck, thigh & finger but they were all slight wounds & our wounded were doing well. I hope they may get home before long.

I will close for this time & try & do better next time. You must not place too much dependence on what *may* take place.

Ever yours

C K Leach

[In Camp]

July 30th 1862

Dear Wife

Another letter received from you today & I now seat myself to write you a few lines in return.

I am glad to hear that you were still all enjoying good health & I should also be glad to be there to get some of your cherries you speak of, for all that I have seen was some put up in cans & hermetically sealed the cost of which here is \$1.00 per can that holds about a quart, & they do not taste like cherries either as they are scalded before being sealed.

The reason that the order for allotted pay was sent back from the Treasurer must have been that the allotment money had not been forwarded from Washington as the 6th Regt was not paid till since we came to this camp. If that is not it there must be some mistake somewhere.

My health has been quite good since I last wrote you & Hollis I think is on the gain. He came to the Co yesterday & today also & will be all right in time.

Sergeant Ellenwood has a furlough for 20 days & started for home this morning or last night as he went down to the landing last night to be ready for the boat this morning. We have not a sergeant for duty in our company now.

I read a letter today that Monroe Bingham received from Vernon Rood. He is at Newport News hospital & I reckon is doing well. He arrived there on Sunday the 27th leaving Richmond on Friday. He says there was considerable suffering among the wounded for the want of bandages & lint. I should presume he was glad to get clear of Rebeldom once more. He wrote that he was wounded in the thigh by a canister shot & does not speak of being wounded elsewhere.

Gen Brooks has got back to his post & Col Whiting returned to the regt again. We have Battalion drills now at 6 P.M. & I shall look for an order for Co Drill in the morning every day. It has been a very little drilling that we have done since last winter, but that, that was worse & enough of it.

There is a nice drill ground in front of us for any sort of drill.

There has been about 2,000 head of beef cattle kept just in front of us for three weeks or so, in the clover & corn fields, & a good lot of cattle they are too, & growing fat every day.

Hollis had a letter from Nelson yesterday. They are well & write as though they were perfectly contented. He said they had had a good many visitors this summer. Uncle Guys folks & Reubens whole family were the last that had been there. Move out of town if you want visitors.

As far as living is concerned this summer I get along very well but it costs me about five dollars a week.

Most of the time we have potatoes, new ones now, onions occasionally & dried apples for sauce & pies, flour & meat. Sawyer & I live together, with a man to cook for us. So you see we are not drove so tight as we have been sometimes. The Companys are making ovens with the brick from the wall around the church to bake bread, but how long they will have the benefit of them is more than I can tell.

I hope as much as you that I may be at home to get some blackberries this fall & if I am not it will not be my doings.

Well I have been out to Battalion drill & did not get in till dark & now I will close this up. There are some signs of a good storm tonight for it thunders & lightens & the black clouds show themselves.

We are under orders to hold ourselves in readiness for active service, perhaps an attack is feared. I shall direct this to Fairfax as I have some before & may again. I wrote to Emerson last week & presume he has it now. I think you will not complain that there is not enough of this to make you sick of reading.

Respects to all

C K Leach

Sunday August 3rd 1862

Dearest Ann

Once more again am I seated to write a very short letter to you, although I feel it is quite an undertaking to write any thing that will be interesting.

I received another letter from you on Friday. I know about when to expect your letters & hardly ever am disappointed. Letters mailed on Friday reach me on Wednesday morning & Mondays mail on Friday.

I received a line from Emerson on Friday too.

Glad to hear that you were well & hope that Zinas boy may yet get to be tougher. I have been in very good health lately although I do not feel quite as well today.

Hollis is on the gain & left the Hospital and came to the Company last night.

I have been to meeting today in a meeting house the first time since I have been in the service, & perhaps the last too. While they were singing "The Shining Shore" a funeral procession came along with fifes & muffled drums, so that if such was not almost a daily occurrence it would have been a solemn meeting.

A Salute of three rounds was also fired while the minister was preaching.

I think the death of soldiers equals the worst time at Camp Griffin last winter but I hope for no worse times.

I must say that we have had a little excitement since my last letter.

For quite a while all has been uncommon quiet on the river but as I expected it was not always to last & on Thursday night about one O Clock we were somewhat broke of our slumbers by a heavy artillery fire from the rebels on the other side of the river at the boats in the river & into the camps near the river. For a while they had it all their own way, but after awhile the Gunboats & the Artillery on this side commenced returning the compliments when the matter was soon ended.

We being to the front & farther from the river were not reached although some shots came well towards us. Our troops burned some buildings the next day on the other side of the river that served as a hiding place & place of observation to the rebs. I understand there was but very little damage done to the shipping & a few were killed in the camps. What their next strike will be will be seen when it comes.

Capt Eaton of Co K received a Commission today of Major of the 10th Regt. & will probably leave here this week. Capt Smith of Co E has got his discharge & will leave soon, (cause) unfit for duty on account of ill health.

We got your papers with the tea & also the ginger in the letters. We shall probably receive two months pay the fore part of this week as the clerks have arrived and the Maj (Halsy) comes Tuesday.

We had a good soaking rain today. No more for this time

Ever yours

C K Leach

August 5th 1862

Dear Wife

I seat myself once more to the pleasing duty of writing you a few lines of what is transpiring in this immediate vicinity & to let you know how we are all getting along.

I was happily [not] disappointed this morning in receiving a line from you, being only from Friday till Monday night in reaching the landing, & coming to Camp early this morning.

It seems by your letter that you are enjoying good health yet, & I have to say that I am in very good health also although at times I feel rather out of tune.

Hollis seems to be still on the gain which I think will continue till he is well again.

We are having some weather nowadays that is plenty hot enough for comfort, that is if a man wants to keep cool.

I expect a little expedition consisting of at least one division went out this morning to look thing[s] over in the vicinity of Malverns Hills which is in front of the left of our position here.

I was up about three O Clock & heard them beating the reveille which I thought was very early & early in the morning we had orders to have the men have two days rations & be ready for what might turn up as Hookers Division was going out to Malvern Hills.

About seven O Clock canonading commenced somewhere in that direction & continued for some time, but whether it was from the expedition or the gun boats we could not tell but reckon it was on land. You of course get the details of such matters as soon as we do. I have been out on fatigue duty this forenoon but the 250 men that were out did not do anything at all as tools were not at hand, or at least picks.

I must tell you a little story of something that is in the wind in our camp today. Last winter at Camp Griffin there was an old Vermont farmer from Tunbridge who has a son in Co E, came to camp with maple sugar to sell & then he set up a brown bread bakery & made bread for sale & dealt in anything that he could make money.

He also did a good business in buying state orders of the boys at a discount. Since we left Camp Griffin he has followed up buying orders & selling cheap watches etc. etc. In his trade he has had different sorts of money which was not supposed to be worth much, some on a Nebraska bank & then some on a broken bank of Bennington Vt. As long as he dealt in small bills he got along very well but today I hear that the Provost Guard are after him but he is not to be found. One of our Lts got a ten dollar bill in some way that came from him & it was thought best to fetch him to limerick but I reckon "he smelt a rat," & skedaddled.

I have had no doubt but there was a good deal of counterfeit money in circulation here, but as long as it keeps going it is all right. I have seen confederate notes which I knew were counterfeit as soon as I saw them & some sharp was selling them for a dollar for a five or ten note. A good price for printing. I will have to take the second sheet of paper to sign my name on. Our paymaster has not arrived yet but is expected tonight. I hope that when we are paid this time the allotment will reach home some time in the course of human events.

I am glad to hear that your bees are doing very well this summer & hope I may yet eat some of the honey at home. I am afraid that it will leave the young swarm that swarmed again short for bees so that you will have to look out that they are not robbed.

What object had you in sending a piece of your dress in your letter? Did you think I would take such a fancy to it that I could not withstand the anxiety to see the whole of it?

I should think by the looks of this piece that the dress might be quite handsome but that I would like to see it & the wearer *may* be a doubtful thing to some, but not to *me*.

Nice clothes are a thing that I have long since ceased to have. To dress nice here would take all a man could get to live & clothe himself.

I reckon I have spent about 50 dollars since we were last paid 5 or 6 weeks ago. I sometimes think that it would be out of the question to keep any money if ever I should go home, but then I would not mind going home for all that.

I find that where a man earns money he will spend it. At least when he is compeled to or starve & go bare a—d, which is the case here.

The boys are feeling quite well now on account of having soft bread to eat, which each Co makes themselves & good bread it is too. Butter is to be had too nearly all the time but of course not like good fresh butter that is just made & the cost is only 50 cts per pound.

If you have poor hay weather in Vermont just bring your hay down here & I guess it will wilt in time, but hope they may have good luck in getting their hay yet.

How long are my letters in reaching you, & where are they mailed, & how long after they are written are they mailed.

This will leave camp tomorrow morning at 5 O.C. & I expect takes the boat at 8 (but dont know certain) & arrives at Fortress Monroe tomorrow night.

I will have to bid you good bye for this time.

Chester K Leach

Sunday Aug 10th 1862

Dear Wife

I seat myself to write a few lines & a few I think it will be as it is ten o clock now.

I went on picket yesterday & got in about 11 today & since that time our tent has been full so that I had no opportunity till now.

I received a line from you on Friday which found me in very good health as I am at the present time although yesterday I did not feel first rate.

The weather has been very hot the past week, the warmest that we have had this summer. Our Brigade went out on Tuesday about three or four miles & remained till Thursday. It was a move in connection with Gen Hookers move which I mentioned in my last letter to Malvern hills although we did not go where he went.

Hollis is again in the hospital but I think is in as good health as when I last wrote, but as the sick were nearly all removed from here to the general hospital there was plenty of room & so he has gone back. The removing of the sick & some other things have looked like a move from this point, & tonight we have orders that show that a move is to be made in some direction.

All surplus baggage is packed & at the Quartermasters tonight including the mens knapsacks & if I am good at guessing we shall be farther from Richmond in a very short time than we are now.

If that is to be the case I hope it may not be like our march from the chickahominy to this place.

When I shall be able to write to you again is uncertain, but hope it may be sometime.

We were paid two months pay on Thursday & trust it may get to you sooner than the last pay day which I know not as you have received yet.

Lt Sawyer is going home recruiting & I guess Sergeant Smith also, if they do I presume you may see them both.

I reckon as I did not sleep any last night I will close with my best respects to you & to all enquiring friends.

To

Ann A Leach

Affectionately yours

C K Leach

p.s. We are having a bit of a thunder shower tonight which I hope may cool the air a bit.

[Harrisons Landing]

Thursday Aug 14th 1862

Dear Wife

A letter received from you last night which found us still at Harrisons Landing, so I will try & pen a few lines to you not knowing as I may have a chance at all times.

I was glad to hear that you were all well & enjoying yourselves as well as possible.

We are still remaining at our old camp but are expecting to have orders to march at any moment.

There are a few sick that are not able to march which I expect will be moved away & aside from that there is nothing here but can be packed up & we be on the move in a very few moments.

I think a great share of the troops from here have already gone down the river to transports, but all we know we have to guess at as we are some ways from the landing & on the extreme right & have not much chance for observation.

I hope we may start sometime for it is not so nice to stay here with nothing but your clothes that you have on & a rubber blanket.

I was sorry to hear by your letter that Sergt Ellenwood was sick & did not get home. I was afraid such was the case by not hearing that he was at home by your last letter.

I hope he may yet be able to get home, since he has got on his way.

The weather has been some cooler here for a few days than what it was last week & I hope we shall see no more so warm weather.

The boys from Fletcher are in very good health.

Walter Chase was carried off last week with the sick, but he had been sick but a very short time & I think he will soon be well. Sergeant Royce is rather poor. He has a very hard cough & is very weak.

The papers last night tell of a battle in Gen Popes army & it would be nothing strange if there was some more hard fighting in that quarter in a short time. It seems as though if things keep quiet till the new troops are raised our force will be sufficient to give them a good flogging.

It is almost impossible for one to get out of the service now unless they are unable to do service on account of ill health.

Respects to all friends
Chester K Leach

Aug 12th 1862

Brother Zina

Not having anything on hand to do at this time I will endeavor to write a few lines.

My letter of Sunday night told of an expected move but we are here as yet, but the whole time is occupied in preparing for a move. The knapsacks of the men were packed Sunday night & yesterday the large tents were taken down & trunks packed & all were taken to the landing.

All of my baggage is gone & clothing except a rubber blanket & when & where I shall see it again is more than I am able to tell. For the week things have looked as though some sort of a move was intended & I think has been going on for a number of days.

Two commissioned officers from the Regt & one man from each company have gone home on recruiting service. They started yesterday morning. Lt Sawyer is one of the officers & Sergeant Smith is the man from our Co.

We have been having some very hot weather lately & no rain except a very little on Sunday night so you may think it is some dry here at present.

As to health I am doing very well most of the time feeling well.

Hollis stays in the Hospital yet & if we leave this place will likely go on a boat. He seems to be on the gain, but would not be able to make much of a march.

One night last week thirty five sick were carried away from this Regt & I suppose went on board a boat & the Dr is waiting orders to send more.

I suppose you are in the midst of haying now & if you have as pleasant weather as we are having here you would make short work.

I have not heard from any of you this week so I dont know how you are all getting along. I shall probably not write till next Sunday to Ann unless we should remain here a day or two longer & then I shall direct to Fairfax.

I am expecting every time I hear from you that you are down for the war. But I would not without a good place. I wish you could be here a short time just to see how pleasantly hot it is. I reckon you could get two hay days out of me. I dont know what will become of us if we have to march far in this weather.

There is some canonading on the river today, whether any enemy is in sight or that they fear they may see what is going on I dont know.

Yours
C K Leach

P.S. Things look like a move tonight & I presume we will have to march all night.

Aug 20th 1862

Dear Wife

I again seat myself to write you again in answer to a letter received from you yesterday. We are still where we were when I wrote you on Sunday & that is about 3 miles back from Alexandria, but likely we shall not stay here long as the troops are leaving on the cars very fast.

I received a letter yesterday from Hollis from Point Lookout, Md. He says he is doing well but I presume you have heard from him. I also received a line from Alonzo Parris who is in the hospital at Philadelphia. In relation to that money & if you have not received that allotted money & paid it out, I wish you would pay up that note of Parris when you get the money. I should think it was about time you was getting the money & the next two months too.

I will try & give you a bit of a description of our march down the paninsula. We left camp about 4 on Saturday afternoon & marched 5 or 6 miles & halted for the night. All the baggage wagons had left before we started. Early the next (Sunday) morning we were on the march & arrived at the chickahominy at 2 in the afternoon, marched 15 or 16 miles & felt rather lame. We crossed the chickahominy on a Pontoon bridge & there halted for the night. The bridge was about 125 rods long.

Monday morning we started early again & marched about the same distance as Sunday & with the march the day before felt about used up. Today we marched through Williamsburg & then past the fortifications where the battle was fought when the rebels left Yorktown. We passed the fortifications about 2 miles and then halted for the night again. Tuesday we marched to Yorktown where we arrived about noon & camped near the bank of the York river in front of the fortifications thrown up by our forces last spring.

Wednesday marched from Yorktown to Big Bethel, a distance of about 10 to 12 miles & Thursday marched to Hampton where we arrived at nine A.M. & remained there till Friday when we marched down to Fortress Monroe & took boat. We left the wharf about midnight & traveled all night & arrived at Aquia Creek near night on Saturday & were then ordered to Alexandria so we steamed along & anchored down by Mt Vernon for the night & on Sunday morning steamed up to Alexandria & unloaded. You had better believe we are a dirty set as our clothes were all sent on the boat before we started & have not seen them since. A fortnight without changing & a weeks march in the dust where you can hardly see does not leave one very clean. I must close and write to Hollis.

Yours Affectionately
C K Leach

(Wednesday morning) We moved our camp a short distance towards Alexandria yesterday, but it is not likely we will stay here long.

It is very nice pleasant weather here nowadays but we must freeze nights without any blankets or overcoats.

(Wednesday Morning)

I will write a few more lines this morning before the mail goes out.

It is a very pleasant morning as nearly all of the weather has been lately. I was very sorry to hear in your letter that Sergeant Ellenwood was dead & never reached home.

The Thursday night before we left camp at Harrisons Landing, Joseph Morton died, (he was from Cambridge) of a sore throat.

We expected to start the next morning & we made a box & dug a grave & buried him at night. I have read of midnight burials but never attended one before. I suppose his body will rest all the same.

You say you have about given up my coming home this fall. Well I must say it is not a sure thing as you probably know it is not very easy to get away, but if I could have my wishes, I would a little rather be at home.

Yesterday I suppose you had your Election but I doubt it being so exciting as sometimes it is.

Ever yours

C K Leach

Alexandria

Aug 24th 1862

Dear Wife

I will once more pen a few lines to you that you may know that I am still alive & well.

We have traveled over some distance of land & water since I last wrote & expect that we are not at our journeys end yet. I have not time to give you very minute details of our march to Fortress Monroe & our shipment from there to this place, as we are lying on the ground expecting every moment orders to move to some other place.

Smiths Division left Harrisons Landing one week ago yesterday Saturday Aug. 16th, about 4 O Clock. We arrived at Hampton about two miles from Fort Monroe on Thursday & lay over till Friday afternoon & then marched down to the Fort & embarked at night on the Steamer *Niagara*.

I was broken off very sudden by the drum beating to fall in & we are now about three miles out from Alexandria & not a great way from our *old* camp ground at Bush Hill.

We landed from the boat about nine this morning thus making two nights & one day on the boat. How long we are to remain here is unknown to me but probably not but a short time & just long enough to allow those that arrived here before us to be taken away by rail. The most of the troops I think were landed at Aquia Creek some distance below Alexandria but when we arrived there we were ordered to Alexandria.

We had a pretty hard march down the peninsula & all were very tired & lame. I will try in my next to write more of our march but you must excuse me this time.

I have not heard from Hollis since he left at Harrisons landing but presume you will long before you get this. I believe I have received three letters from you since I wrote you last & were glad to hear that you were well & hope this may find you the same.

It has been just five months today since we left Alexandria to go to the peninsula & I would like to be told what good we have accomplished in those five months. We have done more marching & more labors in fatigue work than before since we enlisted & now we are back again from where we started. It almost seems like home to get back here, but I would just like to go to Washington for a short time. But I will close for this time.

Ever yours C K Leach

Camp near Alexandria
Sept 3rd 1862

Dear Wife

Once more I seat myself to pen a few words to you after a silence of about a week in which there has been no opportunity to write.

Since I wrote you last we have been to Bull Run or nearly there but are now back again to where we started from.

Last Friday morning we left here & marched out towards Fairfax five or six miles & camped for the night & on Saturday marched on towards Centerville which place we reached near night but did not stop there but kept on towards Manassas, where a pretty good fight was going on judging from the sound of Artillery & the cloud of smoke that was rising. After passing Centerville we met many wounded men, some with their hands done up & some with their heads & all sorts of wounds. One man was riding a horse with his right arm amputated above his elbow.

We marched out on the main road past the bridge where we were fired into on our retreat last year from Bull Run & then filed off to the left on a kind of a by road & marched a short distance & halted & after remaining there sometime were faced about & marched back as I supposed to go on the main road but when we got back to the road every thing was moving towards Centerville & I began to think it was another Bull run retreat.

We marched back to Centerville where we remained over Sunday & our division till after dark on Monday night & then started towards this place. There was a hard thunder shower just at night before we started so we had to march in the mud ankle deep & about as dark as pitch to Fairfax some eight miles where we halted till afternoon yesterday (Tuesday) & then marched here.

We saw the Vt Cavalry at Centerville, but I saw but one that I knew & that was Herbert Boomhower & he is the same old chap as of old.

Nelson Smith came to our regt while at Centerville. He looks tough & well. I dont know where his regt is now but presume it is above here somewhere as most of the troops took the road towards Chain Bridge from Fairfax.

The Army is all back on the Potomac but how long to remain is more than I can tell but probably not a great while.

The weather is getting to be quite cool especially nights & the men suffer some as they have no blankets but rubber. The same that we left Harrisons Landing with, but I rather guess the knapsacks will get along tomorrow. I have been in the same condition as the rest. I bought a shirt so as to change but took off my drawers to wash & then put them on again. My shirt I carry in my haversack.

Lt Col Joyces, Maj Walbridges & Asst Surgeon Sawins wives came to our camp tonight & it seemed to be a happy meeting. If convenient send a few stamps.

Yours Affectionately
C K Leach

[Last letter before the battles of Crampton Gap and Antietam]

Sept 11th 1862

Dear Wife

I will pen a few lines this evening but whether I will have a chance to send it very soon is beyond my power to tell. We have been on the move since last Saturday night & are now a very short distance from a small village by the name of Barnsville in Maryland.

The weather has been very nice since we have been on the march till today. We have had a bit of a rainy day.

We have not marched far today only perhaps a mile, just to feel of the rebels a little & find out what they had as they had a skirmish amongst the cavalry here yesterday. We found them not here today only a few Cavalry pickets who exchanged a few shots with our skirmishers & left also.

We left Alexandria a little before night las[t] Saturday & marched by the way of long bridge across the river & through Washington & Georgetown & turned to the right up the road towards Tennallytown. It seemed like home almost to be in Washington & Georgetown although it was in the evening.

We marched 3 or 4 miles from Georgetown & made a halt for the night & did not start again till just at night on Sunday when we made a march of six or eight miles. Monday morning we started at six & made a days march of it only we made a good long halt in the middle of the day, the distance, I dont know.

We passed through a village by the name of Rockville on Monday & it was a very pretty place. Tuesday we made a not very long march, but yesterday they put us through. I am not looking for long marches after this for when we are near the rebels we have to feel our way cautiously & a great many halts must necessarily be made.

We have had but one mail since we left Alexandria & that was on Monday & I was lucky enough to get a letter from you at that time.

Glad to hear that you were all well still & hope you may not be sick as many others are around you.

My health has not been better this summer than it has since we have been on this march after the first day or two, & no time have I eat so much green stuff such as apples, corn & the like.

About election. I knew it was not the day but for some reason the thought came in my head while I was writing & I did not think of my mistake till too late to remedy it.

I suppose you had some more excitement when you heard the rebels were in Maryland, & I hope it may stir them up to enlist a little faster.

It would not be very surprising to have a bit of a fight now at any time & if not with better success than before it will make things look rather dark to me but I trust the rebels have got off their own dung hill.

Ever yours C K Leach

[After the battles of Crampton Gap and Antietam]

Saturday Sept 20th 1862

Dear Wife

After a silence of more than a week I once more seat myself to pen a line to you that you may know that I am yet alive & well. There has been no opportunity to write, or send letters lately if written. I have had no letter from you since one mailed Sept 8th, but got one from Hollis yesterday.

There has been a good deal of fighting since I last wrote but our regt has not been particularly engaged, yet we have been shelled & a number wounded by bullets. Our Corps had a sharp little fight on Sunday just at night at a village by the name of Burkitsville & I reckon the rebs got pretty thoroughly whipped too.

We had one man slightly wounded on the head in our Co.

We took one 12 lb Brass piece from the rebs, & their loss in men was nearly one thousand I think, while ours was very light. Fighting was also going on on our right a few miles, on the same line of hills.

On Wednesday we marched to the right where heavy canonading was heard every day since Sunday & arrived on the ground about 10 O.C. We were first marched to the right of the line & then back to near the center where there had been hard fighting & our forces were pretty well broke up. We got shelled some in getting into position, but no damage done in our regt as I know.

There was but little musketry fighting after we arrived on the field but such an Artillery fire as was kept up all day I never heard before.

We lay in the same place Wednesday night, & till Friday morning, (as there was no fighting on Thursday) when it was found the rebs had left their position.

I dont know the loss in the battle of Wednesday but think it is beyond anything since the war, (that is to the rebels) I think it is the greatest battle yet fought. I did not go over the field much, but I counted 20 dead rebels in a row, in a space of about 5 rods, & it is said they were thicker in other places. The Rebs have crossed the Potomac into Virginia again.

We are now lying on the bank of the Potomac & probably shall cross into Virginia again today.

Nelson Smith has been to see me today. Their regt has seen some fighting & he got a slight scratch on his chin from a piece of shell.

If you have not sent some stamps you need not.

I send a pair of gloves that were picked up & given to me. I thought they were worth the postage.

You must excuse this broken mess & I hope I may be able to do better sometime.

Hope I may hear from you again soon & that you are all well.

Ever yours

C K Leach

Sunday Sept 22nd 1862

Dear Wife

I will again improve a few leisure moments in writing you a few lines.

We are now somewhere in the vicinity of Williamsport Md. On Saturday after writing to you we had orders to march at 2 A.M. the next morning but had only laid down & got to sleep when we were routed up & marched northward to this point a distance I should guess of ten miles.

The rebels were here on Saturday but we have seen none since we came here. I had a little bit of an accident happen to me on Saturday night but nothing serious I guess. It being quite dark I stepped off a little ledge & not knowing I was going to step down it gave me a good jerk which has made me quite lame in the stomach & hurts me to walk or draw a very long breath, but I feel better today than I did yesterday so I think it will not last long.

I received two letters from you yesterday & was glad to hear from you. The letter I wrote on Saturday did not leave camp till this morning & it will be some time before you hear from me, & I expect you will spend a week of anxiety & suspense. I hope I may be able to write oftener after this but when one is on the march daily there is not much chance to write, & if you write it is not certain there will be a chance to send it. When I wrote you a while ago it was sent by the 5th Quartermaster.

I suppose you would like a word about the battles here but to tell the truth I know but little about the fight on Wednesday, but I will tell you what I do know.

There was heavy canonading all day Tuesday to the north west of where our Corps lay & on Wednesday morning as soon as light it commenced again & we were started off in that direction & arrived about ten although I see it stated in the papers that we arrived at one.

We were marched to the right at first where the fighting seemed to be very hard, & soon we were marched back farther to the left & up to the front, under a smart shelling. At this point fighting had been hard & our forces all had been engaged & had become well broken up & scattered.

We were marched to the front as far as possible without being exposed to the batteries & laid down in a corn field, skirmishers thrown out in front. Here we lay the rest of the day with now & then a shell bursting over our heads & the bullets fired at our skirmishers falling among us & now & then hitting a man. The Infantry fighting was mostly done before we arrived at the front, but there was some on our left later in the day, but such an Artillery firing as was kept up all day.

We expected the fight would be renewed on Thursday but morning came & all remained quiet only except the picket firing which was kept up all day. On Thursday night it was evident the rebs were making some move by the sound of Artillery moving all night & in the morning it was found they had left, but when

our men gathered on the rise of groun[d] to overlook the ground, their rear guard sent a couple of shots over our heads as a reminder that they were still in existence.

A number of wounded lay on the field between our lines till Friday morning that were wounded Wednesday morning. Their cries for help could be heard but help was out of the question, without risking your own life.

I saw nothing of the field only in front of where we were, but that contained the dead bodies of a great many rebels. One narrow road that run in front & was lower than the surface of the ground so that it formed a protection & which must have contained a brigade was filled with dead rebs by our men charging on them & I reckon drove them out as a number of our mens bodies were found beyond that.

We marched through the village of Sharpsburg after the rebs & there is hardly a house in the village but shows the signs of shot & shell. The villagers must have felt rather nervous I reckon during the battle, but they seemed to be alive with joy when we marched through, flags flying from nearly every house & one where I suppose they had no flag they had pictures of Lincoln & McClellan hung out. When you want to see joyful faces, go into a village after they have been under fire and the danger has passed, & if you want to [see] anxious faces look at villagers while shot & shell [are] coming among them as was the case when we marched through Burketsville on Sunday the 14th & the rebs shelling us.

Some were in the street & some looking out from behind half closed doors, some wishing every rebel killed, some offering any thing they could do & others offering to take care of the wounded if they would bring them there etc etc. The rebs at this place were on a high rocky wooded hill & could see us as we advanced for many miles, & we had to approach them directly under their fire of shells, but I do not know as a man was injured by them although they fired very close every time. Their stay was very short at this place after we arrived in front of them & their loss was heavy for the amount of fighting.

One man Loomis was wounded in our Co while we were lying down in the road just as we left the village. Others were wounded in the regt at the same time, but I guess none mortally.

The rebs left in such a hurry at this place that they left their blankets & everything & I made out to get a good new woolen blanket & a nice one too. It is a U.S. blanket & I presume was taken at Bull run this fall from our men. Some found revolvers & all sorts of stuff.

I wrote that you need not send those stamps but they came yesterday. I took some for change after writing to send them so I had a plenty, but I sold them to Alonzo K. I dont know but I shall have to send for money yet for our muster rolls are not made out yet & of course we shall not get pay very soon.

I dont see why you cant get that money as long as they have had it paid to them. I think a line to the Treasurer would do no harm asking the reason. This being seven months behind hand I dont think much of. Tell Zina I thank him for his letter & hope he will continue the work.

C K Leach

Letters yesterday for Hollis from Neils & Clint K which I read & forwarded as directed.

Sergeant Royce was left sick when we left Alexandria so we have not a sergt now & only four corps.

Sept 25th 1862

Dear Wife

I again seat myself to pen a few lines to you although I have nothing of interest to write.

As far as health is concerned I have not enjoyed the best since I last wrote you but I am not very bad off. I have not got entirely over my hurt & then I have got a touch of the Jaundice, but think I am a little better today than yesterday.

We are a few miles further south than when I wrote you last, made a short march on Tuesday, day before yesterday, when for the first time on a march I rode in an ambulance. I have taken today 10 grains blue pill, & have just taken a good dose of oil so I guess when it operates I *ought* to be better.

I understand our new Chaplain has arrived today but I have not seen him & therefore know nothing about him.

I am waiting very anxiously for another mail, (as we have not had one for some days) hoping I may receive another letter from you. I hope we may get somewhere where we can have better facilities for mail than we do now before a great while. I have not heard from Hollis very lately & I presume I do not as often as you.

We have had very nice weather since we have been in Maryland but we had a little rain yesterday & it was a little cool last night but is pleasant again today.

Col Whiting I hear has a leave of absence of 20 days & has gone home.

There is but one Col with his regt in our brigade & that is Col Hyde of the 3rd Regt, & but 2 Lt Cols I think. Maj Walbridge commands our Regt.

Our Capt has been sick a day or two as well as myself, so we have corporals to boss the job & but a few of them.

I will lay this aside till night hoping we may get a mail & a letter from you.

Evening & no letter or mail of any sort, so I must content myself without.

I feel rather mean tonight but hope to feel better when the oil has worked itself off, as it is now doing.

Today is very cool & makes one think of fall.

Ever yours

C K Leach

Camp near Hagerstown Md

Sunday Sept 28th 1862

Dear Wife

I seat myself once more to pen you a few lines, but I have not rec'd a line from you yet. We have had no mail for a long time. You will see by the date of this that we have moved our camp again.

We are now about 10 miles northward from where I wrote to you before. (that is, our Brigade.)

Our Brigade was sent here on Friday for what purpose I dont really know but think it is for the purpose of guarding the place. I have not yet been in the town but understand it is a place of 4 or 5 thousand inhabitants, is the terminus of a railroad, contain[s] three or four churches & is quite a smart place.

We are camped just out of the place & can hear the cars, town clock strike, bells ring & such like. A guard was sent from our regt into the place today & I expect guard will be our duties as long as we remain here, which may be some little time.

My health is a little better I think although I am not over the Jaundice yet entirely. The weather is fine here nowadays, & such has been the case for a long time.

I see no prospect of our getting any pay very soon, so I shall be compeled to send to you for money to enable me to live. It is a thing I hate to do but I see no other way. I am not yet entirely out but by the time you can send some I guess it will come to an end. I hope you may get that from the state but if not I want some if you have to go to the Bank to get it, which if you have to do, get 25 or 30 dollars & send in sums of 5 dollars say, in your letters. I had rather have small bills as it is hard to get large ones changed, & then there is so much bad money going here, you dont know when you are getting good.

You never said whether you got that veal skin from J. Scotts or not but if you did I reckon I will have a pair of boots made from it, & if we ever get anywhere that I dare risk having them sent I will send for them. Boots that are anything cannot be bought here for less than 7 or 8 dollars & then perhaps not good for much.

You need not do anything about the boots till you hear from me again but some money I shall want.

I would like to make you a visit this fall, in the absence of anything better, but I presume it is out of question.

You had better believe we have a nice place to get water now, it is a mess of rocks & the water runs out all around. It is dammed up & a mill set below the city is supplied with water from here also. It seems clever to have good water.

But I must close

From C K Leach

P.S. Sept 29th Too late for mail last night. All quiet today & quite warm. No mail received yet. Health improving. One hours drill each night & morning.

C K Leach

Hagerstown

Oct 1st 1862

Dear Wife

I will pen a very few lines today, for the reason that I hope they may reach you on next Tuesday, as I intend always to write you so you will get a letter each mail, when it is possible.

We have received no mail yet since we came here, & not since one week last Sunday, today being Wednesday, but we begin to have hopes of a mail in the course of a week or two.

We are having the most easy time now that we have had for many a day, an hours drill night & morning & Camp & City Guard. Camp guard is done by Brigade, each regt furnishing guard in its turn. The City guard is also furnished the same way. I have not been on either yet.

I made a visit to town this forenoon partly to see sights but mostly to make a few purchases which I did to the extent of my means.

The bulk of my trade was a small trunk, a vest & a cap. I intended to have got a leather valise, but not finding the article I bought a small trunk, for which I paid \$3.30, vest \$4.00, cap \$2.00.

Hagerstown is a place as large & perhaps larger than St Albans, but still does not have a lively appearance like that place. As in all places in this part of the country everything looks old.

I did not travel over the place but very little as my pass ran only three hours & my trading to do in the time.

The weather continues fine which no one knows more how to enjoy than the soldiers, especially when they are provided with the sort of tents that we are now in possession. The men have the small tents & with us, the Co Officers have a fly belonging to a wall tent to each Co, which serves but little, except an overhead covering.

The men have soft bread dealt to them now, which is an improvement on bread, to the hard crackers that they have had to live on most of the time this summer. One can live just as well here as he has money to buy, for there is any amount of small peddlers in camp with almost everything to sell that you can think of.

There is one thing lacking to good living & that is the conveniences of cooking, & such like.

My health is good at this time & I hope it may continue thereafter.

This makes four times I think that I have written since I have heard from you but I trust we will get a mail before I write again.

Our mail goes out from camp at night & is mailed the next morning at six at Hagerstown & goes direct on the cars, so I think you receive them in good time.

I have a bit to write about the promotion & appointment of Non-Com Officers in our Co, a day or two since, but have not time now.

With respects to all, I bid you good bye for this time.

C K Leach

Hagerstown Md Oct 4th 1862

Dear Wife

I seat myself once more to pass away leasure time in penning you a few lines, although I have nothing of interest to write.

We got a bit of a mail day before yesterday & I got one letter from you that was mailed Sept 19th being nearly two weeks on the road & if you have sent any since they are not rec'd.

I am sorry for Cephas folks that they have lost their boy, as such you write to be the case, but no one knows who it will be next.

You wrote about Mrs Bingham being quite anxious to hear from Charles & I presume she has heard from him before this time. He has not been very tough but has kept along when we have marched by picking his way along or riding in the ambulance but I believe he is getting a little better for a day or two. He was sent back with others to Burketsville once but Dr Ballou who was in charge of the sick & wounded at that place said he could not accomodate them & so they came back to the regt to do the best they could.

Our boys were never so destitute of clothing as now, their knapsacks being sent back when we were at Rockville about three weeks ago & the men having only the clothes on their backs they have got to be very ragged & a great many just about barefooted.

When they wash their clothes they have to go without the articles till they are dry without they dry them on their backs. The knapsacks are expected here every day & why they are not along before this I cant tell.

Perhaps you think it strange that I should buy another trunk but the one I had is larger than one man is allowed to carry, & it was sent back with other baggage at the same time the knapsacks were, & I took only a clean shirt & drawers & a few small articles such as needle case, writing materials & such like. I hope the trunk will come with the knapsacks that I may get some more things I want & the rest I may send home by express.

We are having some very warm weather here now & have had for some days, but there are some signs of some rain now which very likely will cool the air some.

About the promotion of Non Commissioned Officers Ford, Ellenwood, Smith, Ballard & Royce were our sergeants. Ford has been absent all summer & Ellenwood is dead. Smith is at home & Ballard & Royce are absent sick, & Wells, first Corp sick too. Ford is reduced to the ranks thus leaving two vacancies the 1st & 2nd Sergt & Capt Tracy instead of raising the other sergts, has put Hulburd 2nd Corp over the whole into the orderlies place, & then raised the other sergeants one rank & then jumped Meeker over Wells to be a sergt.

The promotions give universal dissatisfaction in the Co & if the Capt had any interest in the Co further than his own interests are concerned, would have been different. Ballard left us when we started for Centerville & Royce when we came into Maryland & Hulburd has been acting Orderly since that time & ever since he was promoted he has been sick so Capt Tracy is minus his orderly just the same.

One other thing was jumping Meeker over Wells because he was sick & absent just at this time. Ballard & Royce both did duty long after they were unfit not wanting to give up & because they were sick & obliged to leave to be jumped is not right at least so it looks to me, and Hulburd could have been sergeant & done orderlies duty just as well as had others all summer.

Evening | I had to stop rather sudden as we had a wind squall & some rain which shook things some, but it was of short duration, but looks as though we might get some more rain yet.

It was just about one year ago that I first begun to get out of the hospital, & little could one tell what scenes & changes would be gone through in that short year. I had but little thought then that I should be in the army at this time & in the condition I am, that is well & not any nearer (as it seems) the end of the war.

The sick that have been left behind, begin to come in. Four or five came to the regt today & some a day or two since. I think there are a great many away that are better able to do duty than many that are doing duty every day. It is a seldom thing that when one is sent off to a hospital that he ever gets back to the regt again, but one may be sick in camp & soon be on duty again.

I will lay this aside & try & finish it tomorrow.

Sunday Oct 5th | I will try & pen a few more lines to finish up. A very pleasant day today but a good deal cooler than what we have had before this. It is very comfortable in the sun today but before this, the shade was necessary for any one to enjoy very much in the middle of the day.

Nothing new has turned up with us since yesterday. No mail matter has come to us yet & I am a little fearful we shall never see some of our mail but it may find its way to us sometime.

I hope we shall get our letters more regular soon for if you send some money, I should want to get it sometime this fall.

I am dead broke for money now, & have got to live on credit or borrowed money, if I am lucky enough to find any to borrow, which will not be very easy as money is very scarce among us, a great many of the Officers having run ashore & sent home for money or borrowed all that could be got. The boys sell their State pay to get money & a very lively business has been kept at too. The Quartermaster of the 6th Regt & our Quartermaster have bought till they are out of funds. There has been a good deal of money made in buying State Orders, paying five or six dollars for seven.

Any one with five or six hundred dollars here now could make a hundred or two dollars in a fortnights time.

I have had orders of seven dollars offered to me for five a number of times.

I suppose you are all fixing for winter, getting in corn, potatoes & such like, but it dont look much like winter here yet. Corn is mostly cut up here & I have seen farmers sowing wheat amongst their corn. All kinds of fruit is plenty in camp & good too.

Ever yours

C K Leach

Hagerstown Md

Oct 8th 1862

Dear Wife

Once more I seat myself to pen a few lines to you that you may know what we are doing at this time.

It is almost like talking to the dumb, this writing without hearing a word in answer, not even knowing whether mine are received or not, but presuming that they are. I suppose you are just as anxious to hear from me as though I heard from you in the time. It seems like letters for the Vt Brigade is a thing that was, but is not now & no signs of being again.

The weather is very hot again being quite uncomfortable in the sun in the middle of the day. There is a good breeze of wind today which tends a little to comfort.

Aubury that was with me last year has come to camp again. He came with a fellow we call Tommy that came out with Capt Drew of Co. G. & after he was taken prisoner, remained with the regt, doing one thing & another till this past summer he went to peddling newspapers.

When we got to Harrisons Landing he had got rich enough to look a little higher, so he set up a sort of sutlers shop down at the landing in co with two other chaps & just before we left there (we having no sutler at that time) they got permission to sell to the regt as sutler.

When we left the paninsula their concern broke up & Tommy has been home to Burlington & has now come back & Aubury with him, I suppose for the purpose of sutlering.

We have two sutlers shops now so I guess their chance is small. One of our sutlers is Chandler who lost his team & goods when the rebels got in our rear when we were up near Richmond.

Aubury says the recruits are on their way here & a number that have been sick. Wells & Hollis from our Co. They were at Harpers ferry day before yesterday & we are looking for them now all the time. Our teams have gone to Harpers Ferry today after the knapsacks & baggage. It was brought from Washington to

that place on cars & the teams are now after it & will be back in about three days. The men have never been so dirty as since we left Harrisons landing not having any change of clothing but a few days at Alexandria so if they have washed their clothes, they have had to do as I have heard them tell about but never saw done before.

A lot of express boxes came to the brigade this week, sent to the soldiers by their folks at home. Nearly every box had more or less eatables in which in nearly every case was entirely spoiled. Charles Bingham had a box & it was almost entirely worthless. Sam Crown had a good pair of blue flannel shirts in someones box which were worth sending. Most of these boxes were directed to Harrisons landing, so they must have been as much as two months on the road. There is no use in sending eatables in hot weather when you dont know one day where you will be the next.

Hoping I may hear from you soon I send my best wishes
C K Leach

Camp near Chambersburg
Penn Oct 12th 1862

Dear Wife

You must excuse this pencil writing but circumstances are such that it must be pencil or nothing.

Of course you will have heard long before you get this of the Rebels crossing the river & entering Penn. to this place & what they did etc.

Well our regt & the 5th left Hagerstown last (Saturday) night just after dark & were brought [to] this place on the cars arriving here about 12 O.C. and camped about a half mile from the city on the road which the Rebs took on leaving.

Two pieces of Artillery came with us.

You will get full particulars of what was done in the papers before you get this so there is no need of my saying much about it, but they destroyed quite an amount of property. Depot buildings, Machine shop etc. with 4 Engines & some cars. They got an amount of Government clothing & arms, all they could carry of such & destroyed more.

We have reports tonight that 800 of the rebs have been captured but I have [no] faith in it & expect nothing but they will get away all safe. We were also marched out from Camp night before last about six miles & lay in a newly sown wheat field in the rain, but I will write you a letter as soon as I get where I can giving more details of all.

Hollis came to camp just after I put my last letter in the bag. Recruits have also got along.

Our back mail also got along yesterday. The letter containing 5 dollars was received on Friday.

I will answer all as soon as possible.

Weather cold since the rain on Friday night. The papers you send are received. Look for the black trunk I brought from home, by express soon.

Yours as Ever C K Leach

Chambersburg Penn
Oct 15th 1862

Dear Wife

I will again try & scribble you a few lines that you may know that I am still kicking.

You will see by the date that we are still in Penn, with some signs of staying a day or two longer. We *were* camped on a road leading east from the city, but last night we marched to the west of the place about a mile & are now on their fair ground.

The weather is very cool here now & seems something like fall, considerable of a change since last week.

I thought I would be able to answer the many questions you asked in your letters which I received just before leaving to come to this place but as we brought nothing with us, I left the letters with my trunk in Hollis' care. The recruits & the sick (excused) were all left at camp at Hagerstown & Hollis was left to take care of our stuff. I presume he will send you a line before I get back there.

Give my respects to Charlotte if she is not gone before this reaches you.

The baggage & knapsacks got to camp the day before we left Hagerstown my black trunk that was left at Camp Griffin with the rest. It had been pretty well picked over & whatever someone thought they wanted was taken out. Hollis boots & flute are among the missing articles. My trunk that was sent back from Rockville was also broken open & a revolver & some other articles including Hollis & my spoon knives were taken out. The revolver was not the one I got at Burlington but one that was found.

I got me a Sabre last Sunday. A Lieut & myself went down to the city & found that when the rebs took & destroyed the arms, the citizens got some of the sabres, so we hunted around & found some & got each of us one. They are steel scabbard cavalry sabres & cost us nothing but the taking.

We got a report here on Monday that the rebels were coming back this way & the citizens turned out with their guns, some on horses & some on foot. Not much like the citizens in most of the places we have been in this summer. Chambersburg is a very pretty place & something in size has six or eight hotels, has good water privilege two streams running into & uniting in the place, one the falling spring, & the other, the Conococheague river.

The Officers go to the city mostly after their meals. Therefore we have lived very well since we have been here. Get a good meal for 25 cts. The citizens are very free hearted here & feed the men when they have a chance.

There was a mail for the regt yesterday but I did not receive a letter but hope to soon. I hope [you] may have received that money as R F Bingham wrote to Monroe that he heard that it was at Fairfax [Vt.].

C K Leach

Camp near Hagerstown Md
Oct 18th 1862

Dear Wife

It is late in the evening, but I will try & write a few lines before I go to bed if going to bed you call it.

Sitting down in a tent tonight makes me think of husking corn, cold chilly nights. Last night we had a good white frost, the first we have had this year, yet the nights seem very cold as we have to live without fire in our tents.

We came back from Chambersburg day before yesterday (Thursday). Started about noon & were about two hours on the road. Found a letter from you on getting here mailed at Troy, & were glad to hear that you were well at that time. My health continues to be very good as also is the case with Hollis.

I was a little sorry to not find any money in your letter for I was rather short having used the first up pretty well on credit before I got it, but it will be all the same in the end.

Now I will try to answer some of the questions asked in your back letters, but the one that contained the money is lost so perhaps I shant answer them all.

The first is in relation to the black cow. I think perhaps it will be well to fat her. You say Zina will fat & sell her instead of wintering, or will [get] a yearling heifer next spring for her. I think the cow fatted is worth more than a yearling, but perhaps I dont get your meaning. I gave four dollars for the old sheep & three dollars for her two lambs, which are the two short tailed ones now, the long tailed one was raised from the old sheep the next year & was two years old last spring. The last of the old breed was killed two years ago this

fall, two ewes, sold their lambs to Boutwell in early fall. If there were any lambs wintered last winter I know nothing about them only they must be Ichabod breed.

I reckon I will take a smoke *aunt Jemima* & go to bed, I have a small tent by myself now. Hollis has just commenced to act as housekeeper, had a fellow by the name of Sleeper this summer, not very neat in looks or otherwise. Come down Zina & stay with me this winter give you \$100,000 or half I am worth.

Good Night All

Sunday Evening Rather cool again tonight but I will try & write a few lines. We had a little bit of rain this afternoon which makes it colder than before. Had a review by Gen Brooks this morning of the Brigade which pretty nigh used up the forenoon. We have a new regt in our brigade now, the 26th New Jersey, nine months men.

I have looked for a letter from you today but our mail has not come.

You say that the 5th Sutler told Zina that the rebels bodies were burned, I have yet to see different from what I have seen to make me believe it. We did not remain to help bury the dead after the rebels left but dont believe their bodies were burned.

Shirts drawers & socks I have a plenty just now, bought one pair socks that come from Vt paid 50 cts, & one pr drawers \$1.50, & have also bought 3 shirts this summer for which I paid 9 dollars one of them went over the left at a certain time & the others I have yet.

In the black trunk I had one pair socks, 1 Pr drawers & one of my red shirts which I got so I am well supplied just now. My Burlington shoes were taken out of the trunk with the rest that was gone. I wrote the other day that you might look for the trunk by express. I have not sent it yet but shall as soon as possible. There are some things in it that are not worth much but as the trunk is going I put them in. I will write more if you get it. Chillis Kinsley has got back to the regt & looks tough & hearty. Wells, (W^m) came back with Hollis but did not look very well & now he is down again & in the hospital, have not seen him since he went to the hospital.

I think if you keep the colt it would be a good plan to have him broke by somebody. Perhaps Zina could do it or *would* do it. You want my advice about a wagon. Well if Zina can make a good trade by buying this fall & you can spare the money I should say get one, but get a good one, one that you can see your face in, trade where you can do the best with the money. I hope to hear that you have that money when I hear from you again. We have most four months pay due now but whether we shall get any till we are paid for four months or not, I cant tell. The muster rolls are made out for two months & I am in hopes to get two months pay the first of next month for I am in need of a coat & pair of pants but no money to get them with. While we were at Harrisons landing I lent 15 dollars to one of our officers & have not got it yet, but I hired 20 dollars of S Royce to use in the place of it & give him my note so if it should so happen that the note comes around you will know what it means. Whether I ever get the 15 dollars or not time will tell, only borrowed it for a day or two, & now it is nearly three months, yes, nearer four, but I have the promise of it next pay day.

Hollis says he wrote to you to send some dried fruit & such like. If they would ever reach us, such would be very acceptable. If you can send a pair of boots I would be very glad, & if you get some made, have one sole & a tap for bottoms, & made up in good shape, if I dont forget it, I will send a measure of my foot in this. Send them by mail if you can so they will come quicker & more sure.

If you have a mind to put up a small box of things & send by express such as dried berries & something that is useful & come safe, send them along. I would like some honey but put it in tin & solder it up. A little butter would not go bad. But you know what would be good here & pay to send. Anything that will leak put in bottles or cans.

I will close for tonight & write a few words tomorrow as I cannot mail till tomorrow night.

(Monday) All well as usual. Pleasant day but very cold last night. I have the trunk all packed to send home & shall send it today if I can get to the office. There is a book (*First Year of the War*) belonging to B K Chase, & a pistol owned by John Ayres which you can send to Bakersfield by some one, two cap boxes, one

for Zina & one for Emerson, cartridges & part of the caps for S. E. Chase. Zina, keep the rest. Two canteens which want to be covered & one the snout fastened in one for Zina if he gave his to Emerson & you keep the other. Spy glass belongs to me. Two water filters of not much consequence. The big one Bing Chase sends to Justin. The other is mine.

The glass ware belongs to J P Sawyer but he left it at Harrisons landing, & I had either to throw it away or take care of it & now I send it home. He bought them to drink a basket of Champaign in which he bought on a bet. He bought a dozen but some were cracked & some he gave away.

You will find a note going to Hollis. It is for the orders I sent home in July & for three months state pay which I bought of him today. I sell it at the Hagerstown Bank at 5 per cent discount, being \$1.05 on \$21.00. Hollis takes up one months pay also.

I got this money because I need some clothes right away, coat & pants. I presume you will have money enough on the way by the time you get this to go me till I get some pay.

I shall pay the express on the trunk if they will take it & I guess they will.

I was glad to hear that the gloves were a fit, for a few stitches will make them quite gloves.

Gen Brooks I understand leaves this Brigade tomorrow to take command of Slocums Division. Some speculation as to who will command this brigade. We have another Asst. Surgeon now. I dont know his name, a young man.

The clothing in the trunk you will [find] rather dirty, most of it. Give Zina one of the knit blouses to work in. The trunk is sent in Zinas name. No more at this time.

Yours etc

C K Leach

Hagerstown Md

Oct 22nd 1862

Dear Wife

Once more am I permitted to pen you a few lines but not in answer to any received from you. We got a mail yesterday but I did not as I expected hear a word from you, & I believe none of the Fletcher boys got any from that place so I think the Fletcher mail must have been delayed somewhere or else none of you wrote & mailed last week. Monday I received a line from W^m Scott of Cambridge mailed the 13th so I guess the Fletcher mail did not start. We have had a good deal of wind yesterday, last night, & today, & a little rain last night. The air has been full of dust all the time which makes it very nice for ones eyes & smelling apparatus.

Hollis & I have been down to town this forenoon. I went down to see what I could do in the clothing line but found it rather hard picking. Can get nothing of a dress coat short of \$20, so I bought a sack coat for 10 & a pair pants for 5.

I wanted something for everyday wear this fall in the mud, & thought I would wait a while longer before I got anything very nice.

I sent that trunk down to the office Monday night & yesterday they sent word up that they could not send it, that they had orders not to send anything from the army. I suppose the reason is that many articles belonging to Government are sent off in that way, articles picked up on the battle field & such like.

Today when I was down I went to the office to see about it & they said they had sent it along, so I hope you may get it all safe. I guess it started this morning. I will send the key in this letter. There is a pipe bowl in the trunk belonging to Bingham Chase which he wants given to some of his folks to keep for him. Bingham's Book you can do the same with after reading it if you think it worth reading. It is a sesesh book he picked up that the rebs left at the fight at Burketsville Sept 14th. If I thought we would remain here anytime I would have you direct a box (if you send one) to Hagerstown Md & have the boots put in it. We should then get it in

a few days, but if sent to Washington, no one knows when it will reach us. I think if you see no accounts of a general move of the army in the daily papers when you get ready to send it would be safe to direct to this place. Do not put the boots in an express box if directed to Washington.

I like to forgot to tell you that I did not pay the express on the trunk.

There was a review of this brigade at four O.C. yesterday afternoon by Gen Smith. The most of a parade I have seen for some time.

The man that I told you I lent 15 dollars to has got his discharge so I dont know whether I shall get it or not. He makes good promises. It is Lieut Campbell of Co. C, discharged under charges.

Col Whiting is commanding the brigade now, but whether he will get the appointment or not I dont know. Lt Col Joyce has got back to camp. He has been gone since the day before the fight at Burketsville sick.

Hollis asked Dr Ballou about W^m Wells today when we were down town & he said he was going to die. He is in the hospital at Hagerstown.

Ever yours

C K Leach

Camp near Hagerstown

Oct 26th 1862

Dear Wife

I seat myself this cold rainy day to pen a line to you in answer to two letters received from you last night, & also to let you know what we are doing at this time. One letter received was mailed Oct 13th & the other the 17th, & received the 25th. I was a little disappointed in not finding any money in either of them, but still I do not wonder much as you did not know as any of your letters had found their way here. Every letter you have sent have arrived all safe as yet, only if you sent any the past week they are yet on the road.

The weather is growing cold every day & is getting to be quite uncomfortable in our tent without any fire. It has been very dry & a cold wind has blown for a number of days, but last night & today it has tried very hard to rain, with every prospect of success.

I wrote you in my last that the Dr said W^m Wells was going to die & it proved true as you have no doubt learned long before this or before this will reach you. A telegraph dispatch was sent to Elias the day I wrote, but he died about eleven that night & the fact was again telegraphed & his remains sent home by express.

Our Capt's (Amasa S Tracy) wife came to camp yesterday, but I only got a squint at her. I expect they stayed down *town* last night. He has been looking for her for two or three days I reckon for he has been down to the village every night but I knew nothing about it till some one said he was expecting her. She has a little girl about three years old with her. She has a look like Stephen Kinsleys wife.

Our boys got some overcoats yesterday. They were all furnished with them last spring before going to Fortress Monroe but they were pretty much all gone. A few from Fletcher & vicinity sent them home but more of them were thrown away when on the march.

I have made a draw of a very good overcoat so I think I can keep a little mor[e] comfortable these cold days & evenings. There was also a few rubber blankets come yesterday for the recruits that joined us las[t] spring. The blankets were sent to them when we were up near Richmond but had to be sent away without being delivered. The men are pretty well clothed now, a few more pants being wanted, but they will be along this week.

If you want to know how I feel while writing this, just go out in the shed or somewhere away from the fire some cold rainy day & write a while yourself, & when your fingers get so numb you cant hold your pen, go & warm them, as I am going to, only I have got to go out in the rain to the cook stand.

Well I have been & warmed myself & feel much better.

One year ago yesterday I got home, & I wish I could spend three weeks at this time as pleasantly as then, but it seems I am not at liberty to do so just now, but have not given up all hopes of again meeting dear friends at home, & I hope the time is not far distant for if possible I shall make a visit if no more this winter.

I received a line from E H Wells yesterday & also one from Rev. Lester Warren. All well.

Nothing more of interest therefore must close.

Zelia dreamed papa come home, did she?

Ever yours

C K Leach

To Ann

Camp near Hagerstown

Oct 28th 1862

I will pen a very few lines this afternoon to you & you must not expect any news for there is none to write. My health is good at this time & has been for some time past.

I have received no letter from you since I wrote you day before yesterday (Sunday).

It cleared up yesterday & last night was a clear cold night, there was a very heavy white frost & the ground froze a very little, just enough so you could see it, & today is a nice pleasant day. Our time is pretty well taken up now in drilling, four drills per day of one hour each, two for the whole & two for the recruits separately. I wrote you last week to send a box & boots. If you have not sent any boots yet you need not till you hear further from me, but the box you can send if you wish, as I wrote you before, & the boots can be sent by mail when I write for them.

We had a report a day or two since that we were going to leave this place soon, but how true it will prove to be I cannot tell. It may be that my next letter will be written from some other place from this. If any thing is to be done in this quarter this year it must be done pretty soon for cold weather is creeping on us very fast, & much suffering must be experienced on a march & camping out nights. Men can hardly carry enough now on a march to keep themselves from freezing & it is growing worse every day. I have laid cold some now & have more than I should want to carry any great distance. I will close & you must excuse the briefness & perhaps next time I can make it up. Remember what I say about the boots.

Yours as Ever

C K Leach

P.S. Our mail has come since writing this & I received a letter from you, containing five dollars. Glad to hear that you were all well. You say you had some dispute about the date of my leave of absense. I should say it was dated Oct 15th at McClellans Head Quarters & Oct 18th at Gen Smiths. No more at present.

C K Leach

Camp at Berlin Md

Sunday Eve Nov 2nd 1862

Dear Wife

Your letter of date of mail of Oct 27th has just come to hand and I seat myself to pen a few lines in answer. By date you will see we have left Hagerstown.

We left on Wednesday the 29th Oct & marched to the vicinity of Williamsport where we remained till yesterday (Saturday) morning when we marched about 11 miles & camped at night near Boonsboro which is on the pike between Hagerstown & Frederick. This morning we started early & marched about 14 miles & are now at Berlin on the Maryland side of the Potomac river & about 4 miles below Harpers Ferry. We passed today the place where we had the fight Sept 14th at Burketsville.

Tomorrow morning at half past six we march again with three days rations when of course we shall enter Virginia again & no doubt shall see some fighting in a short time.

There must be one back letter that I have not received from you. This one contained five dollars, one three & one two dollar *bill*, & by the money being new & by your writing I judged you had got that money & mentioned it in your letter which is not rec'd.

We were mustered on Friday for two months more pay but how long it will be before we get the previous two months I dont know.

Hollis received a letter from Jane containing the baby's likeness which was all safe, but he is so tired he said he could not write tonight.

My health is very good at present only rather lame from two days hard marching, & feet somewhat blistered.

Glad to hear that the trunk got through safe if it is worth the express for I could do nothing with it here. The Spy glass I got of Capt Tracy, he had it of Col Stannard. Can you see through it? What do you think of the glasses? I would have had a revolver to send home if some one had not hooked it out of my trunk. Stealing is the trade in the Army, & the one that can steal the most comes out best. Locks have nothing to do with safety of any thing.

I hope you may not have sent a box to Hagerstown for we are now near 30 miles from that place & probably will be further soon.

I will have to close for it is bed time & we have to get up early to be ready to march at ½ past six. Excuse the briefness & accept the more in thoughts. Capt Tracy's wife has gone home again, but I did not hardly get a sight at her. The Capt has not exchanged a word about her with me either before or since her arrival. Did not know as she was coming, only as I heard it from other sources.

Yours in love

C K Leach

P.S. A letter received from Florilla & Justin which I forgot to notice.

C K L

Nov 8th 1862

Dear Wife

I seat myself once more to write you a few lines. I made one attempt Wednesday & gave it up calling it a bad failure, but Hollis wrote to Zina, so you would hear from me.

We are now just south of the Manassas Gap Railroad, near a village called White Plains, but how far it is from anywhere or in what direction I know but little, but it is somewhere between Bull Run & the Blue Ridge.

We came to this place day before yesterday (Thursday) & expected to move again the next morning but we did not & have not moved today.

The weather has been very cool since Sunday when I wrote you last but there has been no storm till yesterday when it snowed all day & the wind blew making rather an uncomfortable day. This morning I should think there was two or three inches of snow on the ground but it has cleared away some today & the snow has pretty much all vanished.

We crossed the Potomac on Monday morning on a pontoon bridge at Berlin & made a good march & camped for the night & started again Tuesday morning & made another good days march when we camped again & Wednesday we had no orders to march till two O.C. P.M. & did not march but a few miles that day but Thursday we started early again & marched to this place. We have marched from 12 to 15 miles for six days in succession but one & then but 4 or 5 miles.

We have heard firing nearly every day & passed one place on our march where there had been a bit of a skirmish & about 150 wounded rebels were left in a hospital (so I heard). I undertook to write to you on Wednesday forenoon, but marching so much, & pounding walnut trees with a heavy stone to get the nuts had made me so nervous, I had to give it up for as soon as I commenced to write I could not do anything.

In my last letter I wrote that I thought there was one letter behind that I had not received & that you wrote about getting that money in it. It came to hand on Thursday & I found it as I thought. It contained five dollars all right. Have received 20 dollars from you now.

I have just been out to an inspection & now I will write a few words more. You ask if you shall hire some money for Parris. If he should call for it & you can get it, get it & pay him. If not, do as you please.

I calculated there was two notes due to Wood one this fall & one next. I wrote a while ago not to send any boots till you heard from me & I see no way but to have you send them along if you can send them by mail, otherwise not send them & I will buy some, some way.

The berries you sent came to me Thursday with the letter I received.

Any one that thinks I am forgetting the children because I do not mention them in my letters, know not what they say, for my thoughts are ever on *them* & others that are at home, & quickly should I be with them, if I could be at liberty so to do. You ask in one place, What say I to your coming here this winter? That is a question that I can not answer at this time.

Yours as ever

C K Leach

It is hard crackers or nothing here for neither flour or soft bread can be had.

Crackers Beef & coffee

Nov 11th 1862

Dear Wife

I seat myself once more to pen you a few lines in answer to two letters received from you today & also that you may know that I am still alive & well.

Since writing to you last we have marched one day a distance of about 8 miles over a very hilly country & stony as you please & where there was the least bit of a road. We are now some miles from Warrenton on the Alexandria & Orange railroad & but a short distance from a small place called New Baltimore, came here on Sunday. Yesterday (Monday) was a nice day & quite warm compared with the weather that we have had for some time past. Yesterday we were called out about 10 O.C. & marched out in a field & got in line & soon Gen McClellan with his suit came riding along, the first we knew what was up. Each Regt gave him a hearty cheer as he came along.

We have reports that he is out of command but get no papers & I have not heard it so I can rely on it.

Today has been a pleasant day but not quite as warm as yesterday on account of the wind.

I received a letter from William today with yours but I suppose you have been there before this as you wrote that you were going. If you wrote & sent a letter on Monday before you were going to Joes & Williams I have not yet received it but got the one you mailed at Fairfax on Wednesday. Received another five dollars from you today, making 25 dollars in all & have 11 dollars of it now but have lived over a month on the rest.

William says Wesley Spauldings folks have lost two babys a boy & girl, doing well for the first time I reckon, only to lose them is bad. You can do as you please about letting Addison Carpenter have that knit sack. I guess two dollars is all it is worth. I think the Army price is \$2.65 when new.

I never knew but Albert Graham was with his regt till I received your letter today but find he has been gone some time. There has been a great many dropped from the rolls as deserters in our regt that were sent to the hospitals & have been gone some time, ten or eleven from our Co, Barnes & Walter Chase were two of them.

I think it is not doing justice by a great many that very likely have been unable to return to their regts since they were sent away, & some perhaps almost disabled for life by some disease contracted while in the Army. Barnes I suppose is discharged, so he wrote to the Capt Griffin was another that was dropped. If he was ever discharged we have not been notified of it.

You wrote in one letter that Dr Hawley thought I had a hand in the promotions in our Co. I rec'd a letter from E H Wells some time ago enquiring into the matter & I thought by what he wrote that he thought I had something to do with it. He wanted an answer but I have not yet wrote but should before this only I received his just after William died.

C K Leach

If you do not get a letter soon after this dont be alarmed for sometimes when we are on the move the mail does not go out for some days, but we are near the rail road now & hope it will be regular

Nov 15th 1862

Dear Wife

I will spend a few moments this evening in writing to you & hope that this may find you well.

I have received two letters from you since writing to you last, one containing 5 dollars that did not reach me till after one that was written afterwards. The 30 dollars have all got throug safe & I trust I shall have no need of more till we are paid.

I got a letter today that was written in the midst of the snow storm, rather early for so much snow but I think you will see more bare ground yet before winter sets in for good. I think it was no more than we had here at the same time, for the difference in the two places, but we have had some very nice weather here this past week since the snow. We are in the same place that we were in when I last wrote you, coming here last Sunday making one week when tomorrow comes, when we leave again, so I hear the orders are.

I suppose Burnside has looked the thing over, & found out who he has got & where they are & is now ready to move along. There has been Artillery firing in front nearly every day, but I know nothing of the results. Two days this past week we have had Battallion drills & yesterday a Brigade drill & today it has been inspection all day of the Brigade, but I had the pleasure of staying in camp as I was detailed as Officer of the day & had nothing to do.

I received a letter from Louis Ann the other day & very glad to hear from them, she wrote a good, kind letter, & perhaps seems the more so because I do not get a letter very often only from you, from whom they come often & are very welcome.

You spoke about having offers for the colt one from N. F. W but just buy hay & winter him before you sell him for less than he is worth. Dont borrow any trouble about wintering any thing as long as there is hay to be bought. If you have a good chance to sell the colt let him go if not keep him & get him broke. If I were at home I should be for selling the mare instead of the colt, or him too as far as that is concerned.

I think we shall get two months pay before long & probably four months before a very long time if we are where it is possible.

I would be very glad if I had the boots now that you have made for I have to wear army shoes, but for marching they are the thing. Dont send the boots in a box, if it is possible to send by mail for it may be two months before a box would reach me. Perhaps you thought strange for me to write in one letter to not send the boots & then in the next or second to have them sent, but I had reasons of my own which if I could see you I could make all plain.

I was sorry to hear of Horatio Fultons death. When I used to see the statement that in war there were more deaths by disease than by being killed in action I could hardly believe it, but so it is more than twice over. I can count 17 that have died from our Co, & not one killed unless it is David Davis who went to the

Mississippi Gunboat Fleet last spring on the Boat *Mound City* on which he was, was blown up killing many & we have never heard from him since.

Ever yours C K Leach

[Letter from Hollis Montague]

Camp near Warrentown, Nov 15th 62

Home

Last night Chester & myself re'cd letters all huddled up in one envelope & to night we are fixing to do the same thing. My health is very good just now & we are having some of the nicest weather for the time of the year for soldiering that you ever saw. We have had one snowstorm but it dont [look] like another very quick. I hear tonight that we are to move on again in the morning so I guess by that, that Burnside has got the reins into his hands, (as the paper says). I presume that some of our northern people are glad to hear that McClellan is superceded, but I can tell you that none feel very well about it here. If you ask some of them what they think of it & they will say they dont care wheather the army is successful now or not & I was agoing to say so myself but guess I wont though I think it is a horrid shame. He, Mc, came around & reviewed the troops before he took his departure.

I had a letter from Mother tonight & also from Milo, & he sent me his little girls Photographs. They look first rate. I suppose you saw the one that Nelson had. He has taken another one now which I think looks a little better than that one. She is 10 years old. Says they are well etc etc. If the pictures of my nieces & nephews keep coming, I shall have a *slew* of them by & by! (that is if they keep making them) I expect to see one from Jay soon. I have got five by me now, got all but Clarences.

Our rations consist of coffee crackers & meat & meat crackers & coffee & you had better believe that those berries went good.

I guess you would laugh if you could look in here tonight. We have got an old cracker box tipped up on the end & Chester is writing on that & Zaddock Ufford sits writing on his portfolio because he has no candle & I am sitting on our Grub box writing on the Co Clothing book we dont all cover the space of two feet square. I took a stroll off around among the troops yesterday to find Nell Smith but I failed to find him & I made up my mind I could find him quicker with the pen so wrote to him last night.

Perhaps you may think I am short on for paper the reason of my being so saving, but that isn't the case. I have plenty of it, but this is a half sheet that has been around in my way for a long time & I thought I would get rid of it. Samuel Royce, we think, is going to get his discharge, as he has sent for his descriptions. How does E R Smith get along recruiting do you know how many he has got etc.

Love to all,
Hollis

Nov 23rd 1862

Dear Wife

Again do I seat myself to pen you a few lines. All well as usual & have been since I wrote you one week ago yesterday, but whether that will reach you or not I dont know, at least not in very good time for it did not leave camp till very lately.

We are now near the Aquia Creek, eight or ten miles from the Potomac River & some prospects of staying a few days longer here.

Left our camp in the vicinity of Warrentown last Sunday morning & arrived at this place on Tuesday. Camped Sunday night about two miles from Catletts Station having crossed the railroad at that place.

Monday night we camped in the woods near no place as I know of & arrived here Tuesday a little past noon.

There was a very little rain on Monday & Tuesday but not enough to do any damage to the roads, so but we had a very good time.

Wednesday just at night our regt was ordered to go to Aquia landing as guard to a train going after provisions, so we started out & crossed to the north side of the creek & there had to wait till about nine O Clock before the wagons were collected ready for a start. The right wing of the regt went with our division teams & the left wing was left to go with another divisions which did not come that way so they went back to camp the next day.

We went that night to within sight of the Potomac River & halted till daylight, & then went down the river to the landing, or to the other side of the creek from the landing for the landing is on the south side & we were on the north side.

The provisions were on boats anchored in the stream & had to be loaded on a flat bottomed boat & then poled over to the shore & something of a job to load 68 teams that were with us.

We worked all day Thursday & at night there were about 20 more to load, so we all had to stay over another night. It commenced to rain the first night we left camp & rained all day Thursday & Thursday night, but we had a deserted house to stay in so we got along very well, but I guess the house will need some repairing before anyone lives in it again for it furnished shelter & wood also.

We all got back to camp just at night on Friday, & glad to get back too. Yesterday it cleared up again but is rather cool today.

We have had no mail the past week but hope to get it again soon as I hear it is at the landing on a boat.

I hope those boots may get along when the mail comes but dont know as you have sent them. Tomorrow is Zelias birthday, & if I was there, I would give her a licking or something else. It is not quite such weather *here* now as there when she was born. You will do well if you can read this. I hold my paper in my hands & write.

Ever yours C K Leach

Nov 26th 1862

Dear Wife

I seat myself once more to pen you a few lines. There is nothing of interest to write for thing[s] remain about as they were on Sunday when I wrote to you last.

The weather has been the coldest that we have had this year.

Sunday & Monday nights the ground froze considirable & a heavy white frost & last night it rained all night & today is rather a cold windy day, which is worse than a still cold day for we have no fires only in front of our tents & in a windy day it is not very comfortable.

My health is very good as is the case with Hollis. Charles Bingham is not very well & seems to be growing worse every day. He is getting so he has but little use of himself, can hardly raise his arms to get his hand to his head, would have gone into the hospital yesterday but there was no room, having but one hospital tent for the 2nd & 4th Regts. Preparations are being made for the sick at Stafford Court House which is about four miles from here.

We have got no mail since Sunday, the time I wrote last but we are expecting it again soon, perhaps today. I am a little anxious, for I hope those boots may get along.

In regard to the matter I wrote about on Sunday I have heard not a word. It has been two weeks today & why nothing is heard from it is more than I can tell.

We are in the meanest place we have been in for a long time, to get anything that one wants. There have been but one or two Sutlers here & their stock was very small. It is almost impossible to get any tobacco &

when any can be found \$1.50 per lb has to be paid. Eatables are out of the question as far as Sutlers are concerned.

I have heard that tomorrow the 27th was thanksgiving day but I have seen nothing in any paper or letter, that there was any day appointed but it is all the same to soldiers only to think what they have had or might have at home. Here we have our thanksgiving dinner every day.

I will lay this aside & see if I do not get a line from you tonight.

(Evening)

Our mail came today but for some reason or other I did not get any letter from you. Neither did Hollis get any letter from any one at home. The Bingham boys & Blair got letters from Fletcher so I think you did not write or else it was miscarried.

I got a letter from S. W. Royce today. He is in the hospital in Washington, & says he is very weak yet & thinks it will be some time before he will be able to join the regt again. I saw the Gov's proclamation today, & find that thanksgiving is Dec 4th instead of Nov 27th. Wish I might be with you at that time.

Hope I may hear from you soon.

As ever yours

C K Leach

To Ann A Leach

Camp near Stafford C.[ourt] H.[ouse]

Nov 30th 1862

Dear Wife

I seat myself to write you just a line today. I cant write more than that for I have nothing to write & if I had I do not feel very much like writing as I am rather out of fix as to health today. Sour stomach, Sh—ts & today something of a headache, but I think I shall be all straight again in a short time.

I was Officer of the Brigade Guard yesterday but my labors were not very hard, & went to my tent & staid at night, but did not sleep much because I had to get up so many times for my own benefit. I have not been on guard before since we were at Chambersburg Pa, & have not been on picket since Thursday night at the battle of Antietam.

The weather is very good now, no rain of any amount since we went down to the landing.

We have moved our camp a short distance to get on better ground, the rest of the brigade have moved too for the same purpose.

You would think by the way that most every one is fixing up his tent that we were going to stay here some time yet.

The way that most of them are fixed is to lay up logs two or three feet & then put the tent tops. I have not fixed mine yet but think I shall if we stay here many days.

On Friday I got two letters from you, but the boots did not come with the one that was mailed at the time you said you were going to send them, but packages or papers hardly ever come through as soon as letters do so I shall look for the boots every mail now.

I got another line from S W Royce & he is going home on a furlough but likely he will be there long before this if not at this time, & he wants some money but we have not been paid yet & probably when we are I cant get that that is allotted, & therefore cant send any *unless* we are paid four months which I *think* will be the case. He will probably tell you the same that he wrote me so I need not write it. If you have any that you dont want to use let him have it. I will have to wind up for my head aches rather too hard. Where did you find your name for Zina? Is it a military name?

Hollis says he dont care anything about the arithmetic so I guess Justin can have it.

Dont hear a word yet from headquarters. Yours etc.

C K Leach

[Before the first battle of Fredericksburg]

Dec 10th 1862

Dear Wife

I will now try to write you a few lines after a pretty long silence for me for I have not written since a week ago last Sunday.

Our regt went on picket Wednesday morning, prepared to stay three days & after that rations were sent out & we had to stay till ordered to leave, which we had orders to do yesterday morning at 5 O.C. The troops all left the place but two or three regts soon after we went out on picket, & marched to Bell Plain, some 12 or 13 miles from our camp on Aquia Creek. We left camp as soon as we could pack up after getting in from picket, but when we had marched a few miles & crossed the rail road at Brookes Station we found the road full of teams, & we camped for the night, it being impossible to get along. We pitched our tents on the ground where the 13th Mass had just left & by some that were there I found out where the 6th Wis regt was & so Hollis & myself started just at dark & went & saw Nell Smith, about two miles we had to go. We found him well & looking the same as ever. This morning at six we started on our march again, & came up with the Brigade before noon.

We find the pay master here waiting for us, he having paid the rest of the brigade, four months pay is what he pays at this time. We have got the pay rolls all signed & all that he has to do now is to count out the money.

Officers have a small tax to pay, under the revenue laws all salaries that exceed six hundred dollars per year are taxed 3 percent on the excess of six hundred. My tax on four months is \$3.56.

I had some hopes that I could get the allotted pay but I guess it will have to go as before. I got a letter from you while we were on picket, or rather two letters in one & also the pictures, which I did not anticipate, but I was glad to get them.

I can not see the reason why those boots could not be sent by mail, for Graves had a pair come at the same time that your letter did, & they are quite heavy boots too weighing four lbs which must be heavier than those you have for me.

I hardly know what to do about boots now, for I need them now if ever. I think there would have been no trouble about them coming if you had paid a cent per oz & put them in the mail bag. I think I will have to buy some if I can find any among the sutlers but will have to pay about eight dollars for thick boots made up in good shape.

The weather for a week has been cold so that the ground is froze solid, & holds up teams. Three or four inches of snow fell & most of it is on the ground yet. I reckon there is something going to be done in fighting very soon.

To Ann

Ever yours

C K Leach

[After the battle of Fredericksburg]

Camp near Fredericksburg

Dec 15th 1862

Dear Wife

I will pen a very few lines today as there is an opportunity to send a letter.

I got two letters from you today both mailed Dec 8th glad to hear that you are all well.

When I wrote you last I wrote that we were going to be paid four months pay, but we were not paid that day & the next morning we were marched to Fredericksburg & there has been no opportunity for the paymaster to pay us since & I am afraid we shall have to go without it. The rest of the brigade are paid.

I will tell you about what we have done since we came to the river on Thursday morning. We laid near the river during the day Thursday, while our batteries were playing on ——— and the bridges were being put

across, the rebs replied but little [several words are indistinct here] some of our forces crossed & a very little skirmishing was done. Friday morning the troops were pushed across & a position taken. Our brigade lay in the rear during Friday & Friday night but Saturday we were put to the front, skirmishing & a pretty hot time we had too. When our regt was going to the front the rebs shelled us & one shot went through Co A killing two & wounding two or three more. The rebs advanced once in line of battle on the 3rd regt which was on our right but they soon cut & run again.

We have had so far three wounded in our Co & some 50 or 60 killed & wounded in the regt.

On Saturday there was pretty hard fighting to our left but I know but little of the particulars. Yesterday (Sunday) we lay in rear of our batteries for support & this morning our division was relieved & are now in the rear. All was very quiet yesterday & has been so far today, only a little shelling now and then.

We are below the city about a mile but partially in sight of it. The rebs have a strong position & act as though they were going to try & hold it. The three wounded in our company are Brooks McLoud Capt Burnhams old servant in the cheek, James Doran, a recruit slightly in leg by piece of shell he has lived with David Carlton, Loomis slightly in shoulder, he was wounded at Burketsville on head.

The weather has been very good, pleasant & warm, but we are going to have a storm before long.

There are no teams this side the river & we have nothing but what we carry on our backs, two woolen & one rubber blanket is my load besides haversack & canteen.

I received a line from S W Royce today but fear it will have to go unanswered.

My health is good at present and so is Hollis'.

I will close for this time, hoping I may be allowed to write you again.

I remain ever yours

C K Leach

Thursday Dec 18th 1862

Dear Wife

Again am I permitted to pen you a few lines in answer to one received from you yesterday. Yours found me well & hope you may be the same.

On Monday night after I wrote to you last, just after dark & we were ——— preparing to rest as well as possible we were ordered to pack up & fall in, something that was very unexpected & we could form no idea of where we were going at that hour unless it was to go to the right or left & be prepared for an attack early the next morning, but instead of that we were marched back over the river & a short ways from it & there stopped for the night. Even then I could hardly believe we were abandoning the other side of the river but daylight proved such to be the case & we are now laying here wondering what is going to be done next. Hollis was not with us when we came back over the river & did not know it till daylight & he and John Ayres had to cross over in a pontoon boat the bridges being all taken up. They thought they were goners.

We had a little rain the night we came back over the river & since then it has been a little colder than for a few days before.

None of our baggage has come up yet only a small tent for each Co officers, & what is going to be done is more than I can tell. Fearing that we were not going to be paid very soon I have borrowed 35 dollars of Perkins of our Co & agreed to have it paid to his wife who lives in Fairfax. I was sorry to have to do so, but it is hard to get along without money & I thought that would be much better than to send home for it. Perkins got his pay because he left Aquia Creek before the regt. If it is possible for you to get the money for Mrs Perkins I wish you would do it. I hope we may be paid yet but am afraid we will have to wait till next payday. You wrote some time ago about getting either a cloak, furs or dress, get the one you need the most this winter & dont go without because your money has been called for another way.

Perhaps in time you can have the whole of them. For the money I had of Perkins I gave him a receipt written with pencil.

I reckon Albert is a little too smart for war times & will have to put on the brake a little sooner. I should think Royce gave the Officers a good name by saying they were all drunk (or nearly all) last thanksgiving. I dont know how many were drunk for I was on picket but presume a good many wet their whistles a little for soldiers are scarce that wont.

I think you will not do better than to let Ichabod have the colt if he will give what he offered.

I see no signs yet that I shall ever want him for I hear nothing lately. (Evening) Since writing the above our baggage has come to us, so we are all right on living again. I have also bought me a pair of boots, paid 7 dollars, a pretty good price but cheaper than most of the sutlers goods. You can keep those you have made till further need, if you have not sent them.

Nothing more to write so I will say good bye

Yours as Ever
C K Leach

Saturday Dec 20th 1862

Dear Wife

I seat myself once more to pen you a few lines.

We are back again where we were before we marched down to the river, we came back yesterday, so it does not look like anymore fighting just at present.

The night after I wrote you last our paymaster came & paid part of the regt that night & two Companys yesterday morning & the rest last night after we got here. I got 60 dollars of the allotted money, leaving 300 dollars, & I will send you \$100, I guess so you can pay that I borrowed of Perkins, & that you borrowed for Parris, & have some to use yourself, to get you a cloak, dress or furs as you see fit.

Yesterday was a very warm day but today is cold enough to make it all up, yet it would not seem half as cold if there was any convenience for keeping warm, but with a fire in front of your tent you can not keep any too warm.

I reckon if you have a couple pairs of socks that you can send me they would come in play now as mine are getting no better very fast. If you send any send by mail.

You asked the question once, why I did not want the boots sent in a box by express? The reason was because I knew a box would not reach me for a long time & that I should want some boots before I could get it. We never get any express when we are on the march, nor unless we remain for quite a length of time in one place. At Harrisons landing we got express, & again at Alexandria because we were so near Washington & again at Hagerstown express was forwarded from Washington to us. We have got none since nor shall we unless there is a prospect of our staying some time in one place. You can see therefore that any thing that one stands in need of he dont want it to go to Washington & lay two or three months.

I presume that it will be forwarded to the regt now if we should stay here some time but whether that is to be the case or not I dont know.

You speak of Braily & others getting home. There has quite a number deserted lately from our brigade & I presume from other brigades also, & now that they are paid 4 months pay you may look for a greater number. A good many would have gone before this if they had not had so much due them. There has one or two Officers gone from the other Vt regts, they tried to get their discharges & could not, so they have left without one. To tell the plain truth the soldiers are getting about sick of fighting. If they could be assured that a hard fight would end the matter they would work with a will, but when one battle is fought & he comes out safe all he has to comfort himself with is that he has got to try it again. I can hardly conjecture what will be the next move of this grand army, it has tried & failed & whether they will try again in front or try & come

the stratagetic on them, or not try at all is more than I can guess. I dont find fault with our leaders, nor never have, but think the contract is greater than the many taken to fulfill it. I will enclose 50 dollars in this.
To Ann A Leach From C K Leach

Monday evening Dec 22nd 1862

Dear Wife

I will pen you a few lines tonight, although it is rather late to commence, fearing something may hinder tomorrow.

I am well & kicking around about as usual. We have been fixing up our tent today, have not got it done yet quite but enough so we occupy it tonight.

We dig a hole in the ground a little larger than the tent, about 2 feet deep & log it up from the bottom with pine logs split in two, the flat side in, & then set the tent top of that. We have ours logged up about as high as the top of the ground, but are going to put on another joint. We then have a hole cut through the logs on the back end of the tent & a fire place made in the dirt. The ground is hard enough that all it needs is to dig it out in the shape you want, & lay up a chimney of logs over where it comes out of the ground.

I am in the tent with the Capt now, & shall probably remain so.

We have not done much since we came to this place but expect every day to have to go on picket on a two or three days tour. The 3rd went out the day we came here & the Jerseys the next day, & they have but just got in.

There was a bit of an inspection of the brigade today, or rather a review, as all the Officer did was just to ride along in front & rear of the line & look us over a little. We supposed it was to be a general inspection of arms.

I received a letter from you just after I sent my last to you, & was glad to hear that you were still enjoying good health.

I got a line from Franklin Bingham a few days since but have not written in answer yet. Charles I think will have his discharge soon, but dont know how well he will succeed in getting home as he is now (My candle has failed so I will have to wait till morning as I have no more.)

(Tuesday) A warm pleasant day. Not much like the last of Dec in Vt. Nothing new has turned up since last night. Have got our tent fixed, only lacking a bed.

Charles Bingham wants some money if he gets his discharge so I will not send any this time. He did not get his pay. Use what you want of the \$50 I sent before.

C K Leach

Camp in the Field

Dec 26TH 1862

Dear Wife

Two letters have been received from you since I last wrote, the last one today that was mailed on Monday the 22nd. I was glad to hear that you were all well, but sorry that you were then still in fear as to the fate of myself & others.

Yesterday was Christmas & a very dull day to me, although the weather was very fine. Nothing was going on in camp & I felt lonesome all day.

Another man of our Co died last night. His name is Doane of Bakersfield. He has been failing for some time but kept with the Company till yesterday morning at surgeons call they took him in the hospital & just after dark he died. I think his body will be sent home.

Deaths of soldiers are very frequent at this time. I think the loss by death since we came back from over the river has been as great in this brigade as it was in killed while in the battle.

Charles Bingham has not got his discharge yet but probably will in a day or two if at all, as his papers were started two or three days ago. I have known some to get around in three days.

I was rather sorry to learn that Ichabod did not take the colt, but hope you may have a chance to dispose of him yet, for he is to you a useless piece of property.

I sent you 50 dollars in a letter & was then intending to send 50 more in my next, but Monroe spoke to me about Charles wanting some, & another thing, I have just commenced living in a mess & dont know what the cost will be so I thought I would wait a while before sending any more money. If you want some for your own use take it out of that I sent, if there is enough after paying Mrs Perkins. I have by me now about a hundred dollars which I hope I shall not spend before we are paid again, unless I should get some clothes.

I should have written to start a box of things if I had been living alone, but as I am now it would not be of so much use to me, unless I eat it between meals.

I suppose Hollis would be glad to have something sent him in the eating line.

If you should send a box & have not yet sent the boots, send them in that. There has [been] some express come to us since we have been here & if we should remain there will be a chance to get it to us.

The weather for a few days past has not been very much like winter, it has been pleasant & warm, the ground has not froze any for three or four nights, & in the day no fire is wanted to keep warm. It is not much such weather as the week we were on picket at Aquia Creek before the battle & I hope to see no more this winter.

I see by rereading your letter that the boots are probably on their way. I presume if they dont fit & are good ones I can sell them for 10 dollars.

I saw Cora of East Fairfield the day we came back from the river, he was promoted to Capt but I learn he handed in his resignation again on account of some dissatisfaction of his appointment.

I reckon we will get a storm soon, & then it will be mud up to your a—soles.

Yours
C K Leach

Dec 27th 1862

Dear Wife

I seat myself, although it is rather late in the evening, to pen a few lines to you once more & hope they may find you well. My health continues to be very good, only I feel a little bit out of fix about my bowels. Those boots came along today but I did not get them till just after I had put my letter to you into the mail bag. They are very good boots, but I am sorry to say they are a very little too small for me, so much so that I thought it would not be best to try to wear them, so I have sold them. I could get them on but it was all I could do. They were also a little too narrow across the ball of the foot for army purposes. I would not have sold them for any price if they had been a little larger, & sold them full cheap too as boots are selling by sutlers. I sold them for eight dollars. I reckon I will send ten dollars & have you get another pair made. I dont want too tight a fit, especially on the ball & toes, but still want them made in a workmanlike manner. The weather continues warm yet & without storm although it is cloudy all the time so you can see neither sun nor moon, & now & then a few drops of rain.

It is very dull in camp, having such nice weather & nothing going on to stir one up. Many pass a good deal of their time in playing bluff, a name of a game of cards at gambling, & now while writing I can hear it going on although it is ten O.C. I have no doubt there are from 25 to 50 boards going all the time in this regt when there are no duties to call the men out, except at night & then sometimes it is kept up pretty well.

I dont know as any one that came from Fletcher gambles or ever has except Vernon Rood, he used to at it a good deal.

Doanes body started for home today. Lt Brigham a cousin of his, in the 3rd Regt has gone to Washington with the body to see it sent home.

Cora got his discharge & also started for home today.

You will have to excuse me from writing more as it is getting late, & another *good* reason, that I have nothing more to write.

To Ann A

Chester

P S. Sunday Morning. Pleasant this morning. We have an inspection at nine O Clock.

If you could one good pair of woolen drawers & send me I would like it. I have two pairs but one are very poor timber & will not last but a short time. Those furnished the regt at Burlington were the best drawers we have ever got, being fine & soft & wore first rate.

C K Leach

If Zina has a good tub of butter or if one was to be had handy, you might send it by express if you pleased. I would put it in the mess. It is worth 50 cts here & not first rate at that sometimes. If you send it fasten the cover on solid & mark on top. I am going to send my old diary of 1861 by mail. There are some dates I want to keep & am afraid it will get lost some way or other.

C K Leach

Bell Plain Landing

Dec. 31ST 1862

Dear Wife

I will pen a few lines tonight but only a few as my light is pretty much gone.

We have moved our camp as you will see by the date, but whether it will be for a very long stop is hard to tell, for all are under marching orders, we with the rest.

Our regt is temporarily detached from the brigade, for the purpose I suppose of doing guard duty & whatever we are needed for here at the landing. It was brought about by Capt Pitkin, our former Quartermaster, who is at this place. It looked rather hard to leave our camp just as we had got fixed up so as to [be] comfortable, but we are again nearly as well rigged as before.

I was glad to see Frank Bingham on Charles' account especially, but had but little time to talk with him as he got in camp in the evening & we left at eight the next morning, & then I saw him a few moments yesterday when he was on his way home. I have seen Nelson Smith since we came here. Hollis went and saw him, & then he came here yesterday. He is well.

Edson Rood was here also today. He is in the 31st N.J. Regt & are about a mile from here now. I also saw John Law the day we came to the landing, he is in the Sharp Shooters, & is going to have a Commission shortly. I also saw him the day we went over the river at Fredericksburg. About the marching orders, Nelson Smith said they had orders to be ready to march with three days rations in haversacks & eight more in teams, but how many days rations we are to have I dont know but the order is to be ready to march at 12 hours notice. Many think that we shall go nearer Washington but that is uncertain, but I hear Capt Pitkin says this landing is going to be given up &—.

Jan 1st 1863. I will wish you a happy "New Year." My light went out suddenly last night so I could not finish. It is pleasant this morning but a little colder than it has been for some days past.

We were mustered for two months pay yesterday, & hope that we may get it in better time than we have for some time.

I told Frank Bingham to tell you if you could get some flannel handy & were a mind to you could make me a pair of shirts & send me, & also send some drawers. I have three shirts but one is shrank so it is very small. One is part cotton & is not very good & the other is one of the red ones I brought from home & some faded. If you should make any, get some good flannel & not too coarse, & make without any collar, only a binding not more than an inch wide.

I stand in most need of some drawers just now, having but one pair that are worth anything, if you could buy some ready made, they are generally good setting. Dont get red for shirts but grey or something as handsome as you please.

The boots you need be in no hurry about unless you should wish to send them with other things by express. I will send a measure of my foot again, & also some more money I reckon. I have not received a letter from you for some days but expect one today, & hope to hear that you was feeling better in mind than when you wrote the last I received. My health is good at present, as good as it ever has been since I have been in the service. I weighed a few days since 170 lbs rather more than through the summer by a few.

To Ann A Leach
C. K. Leach

Sunday Eve Jan 4th 1863

Dear Wife

I seat myself once more for the purpose of writing you a few lines in answer to two letters received from you since I last wrote, one yesterday & one the day before. Glad to hear that you are still enjoying good health & may I never receive any different news. I am still enjoying good health & getting along about as usual. The socks came yesterday with the letter & also the papers.

I was out yesterday all day on fatigue with one hundred men. Our business was cutting & carrying out poles for corduroy road, not very desirable business I reckon, but then you need not think I strained my rigging chopping or carrying, of course all I did was to look on & see the rest work. Neither do the men hurt themselves generally for if you succeed in keeping them at one quarter of the time you are doing well.

The weather continues warm but we have every appearance of a storm, the wind has blown quite hard all day & the clouds look tonight very much like rain. I dread rainy weather for it will be so everlasting muddy.

Edson Rood has been with me most all day today, & we had quite a visit. We went down to the landing & looked the property over, went on a boat & such like.

There is a heap of eatables there such as hard crackers, flour, pork, beef, sugar, coffee, vinnegar, & such like. There are three landings in this vicinity. They are on the south side of Potomac creek near where it empties into the Potomac river. They are some ways apart & on points of land that extend out into the creek.

The upper one, the old Bell Plain landing is used most exclusively for forage, hay & grain, we went there after tools yesterday. The middle one is used for Commissary stores, & the lower one I have not been to but understand it is used for clothing.

The two outside ones are at least two miles apart & nearer four by land.

I was glad to hear you got the 50 dolls, it was rather large to risk in a letter but thought I would try it. I have sent ten dollars in each of two letters since which I hope will be all safe.

I suppose Charles Bingham has got home by this time, & hope he may get better.

If Zelia can spell lady, can she *be* lady? I would like to see how much of a lady she is.

I hope Uncle Guy Kinsley & R T Bingham will not give up coming down here for it seems good to see someone from home.

I will close for tonight & try & write a few lines to Justin.

Monday Morning / I will finish this up now. I wish you would send a few postage stamps. I wrote to Emerson to tell you for I thought he might see you before you heard from me again.

Another detail has gone out this morning to work on the road which we cut logs for Saturday. Our Capt is out today with them.

Our regt got another small lot of express boxes yesterday, three came to our Co.

I found some drawers on Saturday at a sutlers, but they only asked \$2.50 per pair so I thought I would not buy them. They were white & very soft & nice, but dont know as they would wear any. I shall wait till I hear from you before I get any, for if you can send some I had rather get them that way.

Ever yours C K Leach

Jan 4th 1863

To Justin

I received a line from you yesterday & will now write you a few lines. I am very glad to see that you have improved much in writing, for it is done in verry good shape. The spelling is also verry good & the composition not bad, hope you will try & improve as fast in future [as] you have in the past. I think you have done very well in your arithmetic, & if you understand what you have been over, it will take but a short time before you can go through the book. As to size I think you are getting along very fast, as large as I was when I was 17 years old.

This evening is as pleasant as pleasant can be, through the day the wind has blown & every appearance of a storm, & it did sprinkle a little, but since dark the wind has gone down, & cleared up, & it is almost as light as day, & warm so I think there will be no freeze nor frost.

The men have mostly got their tents fixed up so they are quite comfortable, that is, for soldiers to live in. I think the Capt & myself have about as good quarters as any of them. It is eight or nine feet square, laid up with split logs about three feet, & the tent set on top of that. We have a fireplace dug in the center of one end & our beds on each side. The ground is of a clayey nature so when dug down square a fireplace can be dug in the side, & is just as good as if laid with stone, we have to cut the logs out where the fire place is, it is better than a stove for it takes up no room. Our boys have a nice place to play, just in front of our Co, there stands a large tree on a steep side hill, & on this tree there is a grape vine hung in the limbs & does not touch the tree any where else, so the boys have cut it off at the bottom & use it for a swing. They will take hold of the bottom & get as far up the hill as possible & then swing off, & when they get below the tree they are a great distance from the ground, the vine is two inches through at the bottom I should think.

I have seen grape vines many times on very tall trees, & they would not touch the tree only in the limbs 50 or 60 feet from the ground, how do you suppose the vine gets in that shape.

I should think old Santa Claus did very well the first time but not so well the 2nd. I dont think he came this way & if he had he would have found the socks all on our feet for if we take off our socks for Santa Claus Jack Frost comes in & nibbles our toes. Santa Claus or some Claus comes around sometimes & covers up the chimneys with something which makes it smoke dreadfully, it has not been done on ours yet but expect it. Give Zelia a kiss for me.

This from your Father

to Justin S Leach

Bell Plain Landing

Jan 8th 1863

Dear Wife

I think I can pass off time no better tonight than by writing to you a few lines. I received a letter from you yesterday & glad to know that you were still in good health. Mine is also good as yet & that is about all of interest to write. I am sorry to say your hopes, which you kept so high, are by no signs likely to be realized at present at least. The weather here continues to be good. We had a very little rain, two or three days since, but it has become pleasant again only it is rather colder than before, & the ground is slightly frozen. The doings in our camp are not very stirring only a detail of one hundred men daily for some days for fatigue work, & once in a while we have a dress parade which take[s] about half an hour.

Sutlers Stores have been plenty here since Chandler our sutler brought down a Schooner load from Baltimore which he did three or four days since. He goes to Washington tomorrow morning again & I have sent for a pair of pants which probably will be about 10 dollars. When one wants to get a good position in the army let him get a sutlers berth. It makes no odds what price is asked for an article soldiers will buy, that is, when they cant steal.

Apples we get, all the way from three to seven for a quarter & other things in proportion.

I received another letter from S W Royce today & he says he thinks he shall be back to the regt again soon, but dont think he will be able to do hard duty very much. Our Lt Col Joyce has got discharged & starts for home tomorrow morning, he is discharged on Surgeons Certificate of disability. One Lt Stone is discharged for same reason. Our Chaplain has also got his discharge & all start for home together.

Col Joyces wife has been with him since we came to this place. Maj Walbridge & our surgeon Sawin have their wives here at present. I should be very much pleased if I could see my wife here & if I knew we should stay here some time I should ask you to come down, for I see no other way of seeing you at present.

I guess you are not going to have as much snow this winter as you did last & here there has been no snow at all but twice, once the 7th of Nov. & again that cold week the first of Dec. when we were on picket at Aquia Creek. It looks a little as though we might get a little snow tonight.

I reckon they are having a concert in Co F tent by the noise. The voices are numerous & the discords well put in, accompaniment played on an accordin. I guess it is all spiced with a little whiskey, such things are done sometimes.

Ever yours

C K Leach

Friday Morning

No storm yet. I have something of a headache this morning, which is caused by a cold.

Bell Plain Landing

Jan 10th 1863

Dear Wife

I seat myself tonight again to write you a line although I have not been lucky enough to get a letter from you since I wrote last. I expected one by your mail of Monday the 5th but for some reason I am disappointed.

Monroe Bingham got a letter today from his father mailed at Fairfax, by which I see Frank Bingham & Charles did not get home last week as he thought he might.

We are having a little of the beauties & pleasures of Virginia mud today. We have had many signs of rain for some time but all have failed till today it has fairly got to raining. It commenced about noon & rained all the afternoon & rains yet, with some prospects of continuing for some time to come— We have had nice weather so far this winter & can but expect to have some bitter with the sweet.

Yesterday Hollis & myself went & saw Lieut Rood. His regt have been doing about the same duties that we are here, & have never been brigaded, but now they are put in a brigade in the 1st Corp. & same division that Nelson Smiths regt is in.

Roods regt are in log huts that were built by the rebels last winter while they were blockading the Potomac. The rebs were great on log huts for wherever they wintered last winter you will find their shanties. I presume they built them partly on account of not being well supplied with tents.

The rebels had fortifications at this place, one small fort just on the bank of the creek at the lower landing, & a still smaller one on the high ground a little ways back.

Business is quite lively around the landing now—yesterday they were unloading horses—a number of boat loads were unloaded.

Boats loaded with sutlers goods are also getting to be quite plenty. Until lately sutlers could not get permission to bring goods here, but now that they are allowed the priviledge, the boats begin to arrive—they are mostly schooners—but some small steamers. Our sutler was the first to get in & he sold out in a day or two & has now gone to get another load. He hires his boat & hands by the day. Sutlers boats do not come up to the landing but have to unload by bringing off in small boats—teams drive out as far as they can—goods come from Baltimore mostly, here.

I received a letter from N F Wood today—they were all well & full of business.

Our regt have to work some now I reckon nearly every man was on duty today some building corduroy road—some unloading boats—& some guard. I have had the arduous duties of Officer of the day, today.

Hollis is writing & I will send with him.

We were talking about his money affairs tonight, & he can hardly tell who has had his money at different times, & I have forgotten how much I have had of him, & he thinks it would be as well if his notes were in different shape, & I think I should want them to be if they were mine, so he has written to find out what he has got. I would just as soon have what I owe him in one note, & if I find out just how much it is, think I shall do so, & have the others taken up.

To Ann

Yours C K Leach

Bell Plain Va.
Jan 16th 1863

Dear Wife.

You must excuse me for not writing before this week, but circumstances were such that it was not convenient till it was so late I thought you would get it just as soon if delayed a day or two longer.

My health has been good since I wrote you last, with the exception of a slight sore throat, which is nearly well.

I got a letter from you today & glad to hear that you were still well.

We have had all sorts of weather here this week except very cold weather. For a day or two there has been a heavy wind blowing & in the night, last night there was some rain fell, but tonight the wind has worked around to the north & is a little colder.

There is some prospects of our leaving this place soon, but cant tell how it will come out. We have orders to be *ready* to march at an early hour tomorrow with three days rations in haversacks & two days in teams, but the orders to *march* may not come.

Where we are to march I dont know, but it is to be supposed of course that it is over the Rappahannock. I understand that if our Division moves it is not certain that we move, & again it is not certain that the Division will move.

We have taken too much pains in fixing up our tents to be *very* anxious to leave them this soon, but suppose if the order comes we will have to budge.

Lieut Sawyer returned to the Co last Monday & is as fat as a hog, some different than when he went away. The recruiting officers have all been ordered to their regiments, & I guess [it] might just as well been done before for all the good they have done. We had to put an addition to our tent when he came, not to occupy more ground but made it a little higher, & the Capt sleeps in the upper story, have also set up our stove which we had on hand, a very small cast iron box stove.

I guess I have had two letters since I wrote. You say the colt is gone, well I am glad of it for as he was he was eating himself up.

I think we will not march tomorrow fo[r] a detail is ordered of a hundred men for fatigue at the landing & I have to go with them. I was on fatigue Tuesday of this week with 75 men unloading hay. Quartermaster Stone who has charge of the landing at present in place of Capt Pitkin who is absent on leave is going to telegraph to Col Ingalls that our regt can not be spared from this place, & our Maj, who is in command of the regt has some interest in staying here as his wife is with him, so I think we shall not leave tomorrow morning.

I will send in this two state orders of 21 dollars which you can get the money on, & I presume I shall want the amount I paid for them before we are paid anymore. Get the money & you may have the amount above what I paid which was \$15.50.

Yours as ever
C K Leach

Belle Plain Landing
Sunday Eve Jan 18th /63

Dear Wife

I will pen just a few lines tonight to pass away a little time. You see we are at the landing yet, but we may have to leave tomorrow morning & for this reason as much as any I write you so soon again.

The division did not move on Saturday but are ordered to be ready Monday morning, so perhaps we shall have to break up our camp & leave.

R T Bingham arrived here last night just before dark, he came alone as N R & Uncle Guy could not get passes from Washington. I should have been very glad to have seen them also, but am glad to see Tyler.

It is some colder here now than it has been for some time. Yesterday was a raw windy cold day, & I was where I could judge of the weather being at the landing unloading hay & corn from canal boats.

Today has been pleasant but not very warm.

Some express boxes came along today for the soldiers, a number to our regt, & if we have to leave tomorrow morning the contents of the boxes will not do as much good as if we could stay longer.

The box that Tyler brought down is at Aquia creek yet it was not where he could get it in time to take the boat to this landing from Aquia Creek, so he left it, & is going up & get it tomorrow if we dont leave here. if we do I am afraid it will never find us, he would have gone today but for a little delay in getting a pass from the Provost Marshal, so that it was too late.

I looked for a letter from you today but did not get one. I hope when one comes it will contain some postage stamps, or else I am afraid you will not receive any letters till some do come, unless I can find somebody rich enough to lend me one.

I was thirty-three years old yesterday, getting to be rather an old man, but I guess I have grown fat as fast as old lately. No more tonight.

Yours
C K Leach

Monday Morning / No orders to move yet, so I guess we will not march today. It is pleasant this morning & the ground is froze quite solid.

C K L

received a letter from Louis Ann yesterday. All well

Jan 25th 1863 (Sunday)

Dear Wife

I again seat myself to pen you a line after a silence of a week, circumstances being such that I could not write. My health is still good & am as fat & lazy as ever. We are now with the brigade near where we were camped before we went to the landing. Our regt left Belle Plain Landing Tuesday afternoon to join the brigade on the road to Falmouth. We marched till after dark & not knowing where to find the brigade halted in a piece of woods (or rather where there had been woods) for the night. It soon commenced to rain & rained all night, & you can guess it was nice, being without tents or blankets, but Hollis & John Ayers fixed up their little tents so they shed off the rain & we kept alive by building a brush fire. The next day (Wednesday) the Major sent off some one to find the brigade & also our teams which could not find us the night before although they passed but a short distance from us. The teams were found & came to us but the brigade was not found till the next day. We put up our tents when the teams came & staid there till Friday, when we were ordered back to the old camp of the brigade, which we did not reach till after dark, & then received the pleasing intelligence that we must go on picket. I cared nothing about that except the three or four miles extra march in the dark & mud, for we did not expect the teams could get along that night & we should have to sleep out of doors, so we would be better off on picket where wood was plenty than near the brigade where

wood is scarce. We were relieved from picket yesterday (Saturday) & found a place for camp & (if we stay here) when fixed up will be a good one.

We have some expectations of going back to the landing again but dont care much whether we do or not, only there is no night work there such as picket & guard. Of course you know the reason why the troops came back to their old camps after they commenced to move, if not, you would know if you could have seen every thing stuck in the mud. It was almost impossible to get horses enough on a piece of Artillery to move it. But for the mud there doubtless would have been ere this another hard battle fought on the Rappahannock. When we were coming back we met a squad of men going back after Artillery which was stuck in the mud. I presume R T Bingham can tell you something about an army moving in the mud, such as Virginia boasts of.

I got those things all right that you sent by Bingham, also the letter. I got two letters from you yesterday & glad to know that you all were in decent health.

I have sent you in two letters 20 dollars 10 dollars in each & I can not tell by your letters whether you received both letters.

I was sorry to hear of Uncle Giles death but perhaps it is all for the best.

I think Tyler Bingham will start for home tomorrow & I shall send this by him, & should send some things if they would not be a bother to him.

Today has been a nice warm day, needing no fire to keep a fellow warm. I shall look for the shirts & things by next Sunday & hope they may come safe.

The postage stamps were all right. Sergt Ballard & George Buck have got back to the Co.

C K Leach

Jan 28th 1863

Dear Wife

I will try & write you a few lines today but dont know how I shall make out as it is rather cold uncomfortable writing. We are just as we squatted when we came off picket & today is a cold stormy day. It commenced snowing last night & snows yet, a very damp snow, almost rain, & the wind blows some too, so it [is] rather uncomfortable as all the way you can keep warm is to huddle around our little stove. I should think the snow was two inches deep now (at noon) with a fair prospect of getting a *few* more.

We should have fixed up our tent before this, only we had some expectations of going back to the landing again, but that is played out I reckon, but expect our regt has got to move again soon, if we dont go to the landing. We received an order yesterday detaching us from the brigade to form a new brigade, with the 5th Wis, 6th Maine, 31st N J, & I believe another regt, to be called a light brigade. The 4th is very anxious to take our places & I dont know but the change will be made.

The commander of the brigade is to be Gen Pratt of the 1st Brigade of our division. The particular duty of the brigade I dont know but suppose to reconnoitre & quick marches & the like.

Tyler Bingham started for home on Monday, & I sent my revolver by him. It was a heavy thing to carry around, & I was afraid of losing it so I thought I would send it home. If I have a good chance I may buy another if I should want one. I have carried that one in my trunk lately. I sent it loaded & if you get it so Zina can shoot it off & clean it up. It has been loaded ever since we were at Yorktown last spring. I shot it off then & that is the only time since I loaded it at Rutland on my way back from home more than a year ago.

Hollis has written a note of the whole amount of the note given him before, & the interest up to the first of Jan 1863, excepting nineteen cents, as I made the interest \$7.19. If there is no mistake about it, put this one in the place of the others & those destroy or tear off the name. Hollis wants to know whether Tyler Bingham got a holder to a pen he sent by him, if so he wants to send the money to pay for it. When you get the money on those orders I sent you (if you can get it) you may send it back by mail unless I write you different. I hear we will not be paid again before the last of Feb or the first of March.

My health is good at present only a pretty bad cold which has worked itself into something of a cough, & makes my head feel rather bad.

I will have to close or the mail will be gone. The Snow & wind is increasing & I guess we will have a tough time of it, & the regt are not fixed a bit for it.

Yours Affectionately

C K Leach

To Ann A Leach

Camp of 2nd Vt Reg Jan 30th 1863

Dear Wife

How do you do this evening? Well I hope, it is a very pleasant evening with us, that is as far as weather is concerned, but think I should feel full as pleasant myself if I could spend the evening at home.

The snow storm which we were having when I wrote last, made out to be *some* on snow, for it fell about a foot deep, the most I think that I have ever seen at a time in Virginia.

Yesterday & today have been pleasant days so the greatest part of it has gone off again, so we are likely to be supplied with mud for a time.

I have been troubled with a very bad cold for a few days which you know makes one feel rather out of sorts, but otherwise my health is very good.

We still live with our tent set on the top of the ground but if nothing happens we will have different tomorrow night, for we have a log pen built, & will get the tent on it tomorrow.

We should have done it before only we did not hardly expect to stay here any length of time. Our regt are not to be detached from the brigade as I wrote before as the 4th are taken in our place, & we remain with Col Whitings Brigade. We some expected to go back to the landing but I guess that is played out, but we shant have as much to do here as we should there, yet I think I had rather be at the landing, for then if there is any express we can get it without any trouble, & also get rid of picket duty.

As the roads are now it is about all the teams can do to keep the army supplied with provisions & forage, so the express matter has to lay by till more convenient.

I received a letter from you yesterday mailed Jan 23rd & glad to hear that you were well, hope I may never hear worse news from you. I hope you may be fortunate enough to get that allotted money sooner than you did the last before. You did not say in your letter whether you had sent the shirts, butter & other fixings or not, but hope they are on the way.

Perhaps you would like to know how I spend time. Well I will tell you how it is generally. In the morning I lay abed till called to breakfast which is generally somewhere from eight to nine, & then till noon, it is playing euchre, reading novels, (when any is to be had) & newspapers also, (smoking thrown in) noon, dinner, & then the afternoon is spent like the forenoon, supper just at night, & the evening goes about the same as the day. Of course there are all sorts of little fixtures mixed in, but these are the bulk when I do *anything*.

Labor is generally out of the question although I helped bring poles today to fix the tent with. Yesterday we had a regular old fashioned snowballing scrape, & I feel some lame from it today too.

I did not mention the change of Generals in command of the army, changes are so frequent that I did not think of it before, but likely you knew it nearly as soon as we did. I suppose Hooker means fight Gen Smith is in command of the Left Grand Division.

C K Leach

P.S. You say Zina is anxious to know about the farm. Well all I have to say is that I want he should take care of it, & give what he can afford to for the use of it. I believe one of you wrote something about what he thought he could give but I have most forgotten what it was, but believe it was \$100.00 & not pay the taxes—well if that is the best he can do, so be it— Will he take the stock as it is? I suppose there is a heifer

that will not be likely to give milk this year, as she was small, & the keeping will be loss to somebody, unless she is sold. I should presume the sugar place might do better this year than it did last, but the orchard will probably not do as well, & I think the prospects for butter are full as good as last year. I want he should think of the matter & say just what he thinks he can afford & then go ahead, & I guess if he can stand it I can.

Taxes I know are going to be very high & of course should come out of whoever owns the property, unless the price paid is low enough so they could be included.

If you can read this you will have to take more pains than I have in writing I reckon I would like [to] hear a word from Zina, & if he dont write to me before a great while I shall write to him worse than he did to Hollis—tell more truth anyhow— It will do for dogs to stand back & bark & growl, for when they get too near danger their tails are apt to grow the wrong way & their voices change somewhat to a ki-i.

I reckon you may let Zina read the last part of this & just say to him it is addressed to *him* & it may have the effect of bringing about a reformation of the old cripple.

C K Leach

Sunday Evening Feb 1st 1863

Dear Wife

I seat myself tonight again to pen a few words, as I can not pass the time more pleasantly. I am suffering under the *pleasures* of a very hard cold at present, which keeps me blowing, sneezing, coughing & such like most of the time— We have got our tent fixed up again & are a little more comfortable once more.

All are as well as usual I believe, & nearly all have their tents rigged in very good shape again. The snow which we had is nearly all gone, & the weather has not been very cold. Today the wind has blown & it has rained a very little & looks as though more was to come.

I received a letter from you yesterday, (Jan 31st) which was mailed the 26th in which you say you had not heard from me for some time, but you heard from Hollis & he said Tyler Bingham had got here, & that the last one you had received from me was date of Jan 10th. Now Tyler B. arrived here the 17th & I wrote to you the 16th & again the 18th the next day after Tyler arrived here, & I should think by this that letters took their own time in going through. I hope the one of the 16th may get through safe (some time) for it contained state orders for three months (or 21 dollars).

In your last letter you say those things were started the Monday before which will make two weeks tomorrow since they were started, & if express matter can be got here from the landing I shall probably get them before long.

The roads are in an awful condition now & it may be some time before I can get the things but presume they will be just as good when they do come.

There is some prospect of the Officers & men, to a certain amount, having a chance to visit home this winter for a short time, & I should like to be one of the number, but when there is a shade of a chance, the applicants are like the crowd around a sutlers cart when it comes into camp, & such a thing has not been seen for some time—all eager to be served first lest there may not be enough to go around, & generally in such cases a good deal of partiality is used by those having the dealing out of the article. 15 days is the longest that leaves of absence or furloughs will be given, & that to two officers in a regt at one time, & two men from every one hundred for duty.

An officer in a regt therefore stands a chance of about one in fifteen in number, all other considerations being equal.

I reckon Hampton Maxfield will go from our Co if anybody, his furlough having been sent to Brigade Head Quarters. If he does get home you must make it in your way to see him if possible. Hampton is a good sort of a fellow if he did visit Molly & get into some other little scrapes in bad Co. He has been anxious to go home ever since his father died & I hope for his sake he may have the chance.

I received Justins letter & will try & answer it before a great while.

If I had thought of it before you sent that box I would have had a Grammar & an Arithmetic sent in it. I think I might pass away a good deal of time profitably if not pleasing in studying them. If you should have any chance to send such, I wish you would do it. *National Arithmetic* or something as good & a good grammar.

Ever yours
C K Leach

Feb 5th 1863

Dear Wife

I received a letter from you today mailed Jan 30th which found me enjoying good health & I was glad to hear the same from you.

I was called to supper & now I will commence once more. Perhaps you would like to know what I had to eat for supper, so I will tell you. It was boiled potatoes, fried ham, biscuit & butter, & coffee. That is about the way we live only different sorts of meat & occasionally baked beans, & baked pudding, pancakes, & sometimes pie. There is about a dozen in our mess & when we are in camp live in very good shape. We had to move just after I got that honey & I gave Hollis some, & Sawyer some & the rest I put into the mess & they allowed me two dollars for it. There was some express came to the regt yesterday but the stuff you sent did not come although I some expected it hope it may get along before a great while.

The weather of late has been very changeable. For a day or two it has been cold & windy. Yesterday morning a little snow, & today it snowed all day till near night & then turned to rain, which it is now doing in very good shape.

The ground is frozen solid but I guess this rain will thaw it out again.

It seems you have been to St Albans & done a little trading & if you have suited yourself, I have nothing to say.

Col Stannard was here last Monday a short time to see the folks & we were all glad to see him. He has been home & is on his way back to his regt. They are exchanged & going to do guard duty a while at Chicago. Felton of Fairfax has just gotten back to the company—he has been away since we were at Harrisons landing, & went to the hospital at the same time Hollis did.

Col Whiting I understand has tendered his resignation—& the reason for it is I believe that the Eagle that sits on his shoulder cannot be made to sit a Star, to take the place of the Eagle.

There is an order from Gen Smith, Commanding the Corps, that each regt shall have a camp guard, that is a chain of sentinels around camp, something that we have not had for some time. The reasons for the order are the great number of desertions that are continually taking place. I very much doubt a camp guard preventing a man from deserting if he is bound so to do. It will make employment for from fifty to one hundred men daily to each regt & that I think will be the most it will do.

Did the letter you received when you received the paper contain some state orders to the amount of 21 dollars you said nothing about it & I dont know as the letter containing the orders has reached you.

When you get money, orders & such like in letters just mention the fact in language that I can be certain that that they are received.

In regard to the money I sent you after pay day I could not tell whether you received one or two letters containing 10 dollars each, only that the amount you had, including that for the colt amounted to what I had sent. No more this time

Ever yours C K Leach

Feb 9th 1863

Dear Wife

I will write you just a line today that you may know that I am well, & getting along about as usual.

I received a line from you on Saturday which was sent in a letter directed to Hollis, & glad to hear that you were all well. I learn by your letter that the money & orders are all right, which I had but little doubts of before.

The weather yesterday & today is as pleasant as May & about as warm as it generally is in Vermont. Sudden changes we have had of late in the weather.

Hampton Maxfield started for home on Saturday, also a number of others from this regt.

I sent a coat by Maxfield & should have sent it to Zina if he had not got one, but dont know now as I have any particular directions about it, but as I had it & could send it home, thought I would do so.

George Bucks father came to camp on Saturday & is going to stay a few days. There are a number of visitors to the army of late.

Gen Smith has left the army of the Potomac, a number of officers of this Division went to visit him yesterday as a final leave taking. Excuse this briefness & I will do better next time.

Yours C K Leach

Feb 14th 1863

Dear Wife

I seat myself this evening to write you a few lines in answer to two letters received from you since I last wrote you. Last Wednesday our regt was detailed for picket for three days, for which reason I have been from camp & have not written to you for some days. Three days is the time each detail for picket stays, & being for the Division, brings the detail from each brigade every nine days. We had a very good time, the weather being very good, only a little rain the first day, but with bough houses & rubber blankets we did not mind it.

Col Whiting, as I wrote before was going to, has got his discharge & left us, he started for home last Tuesday. Col Morrison of the 26th N J which is in our brig, is in command of the brigade at this time, but when Col Grant of the 5th Vt, who is absent on leave, returns, the command will devolve on him as senior officer, but who is to be our brigadier General when one is appointed is yet to be known. I have heard some say they thought Col Stannard would have the command of this brigade, but think it is only guess work.

Col Morrison reviewed the brig on Tuesday, the day before we went on picket, the only thing I have seen of the kind for a long time. Our regt is at this time in command of Capt Tyler of Co C, our Lt Col Walbridge being absent on leave & our Major Stone being detailed as Division Inspector. Surgeon Sawin & two captains are also absent on leave.

We had notification today that S W Royce was discharged. It is no more than I have been expecting to hear. I presume he will now put himself in a way to put a few young Royces sprouting, which will be rather different from doing picket duty on the battle field. I am afraid his picket is a gone sucker now.

I received the piece of your dress but dont know whether to call it handsome or not, as I have lost all recollections how a dress should look to be handsome, it has been so long since I have seen one, so you will of course excuse me from passing my judgement on it.

I received a letter from Zina today & one from N F Wood. Tell Zina (if I dont write to him) that he can get to work, calculating to carry on the place. I have no objections to Andrew Chase going into the house, but should not want every one in it. That express has not got along yet & dont know how soon it may, but shall look for it when they go after any more express matter.

I think P O did very well, but if he & some others would just come down here & dance to the music we have sometimes it would do them good, & I reckon some of them will have to yet. They can also have a great

feast on hard crackers, very good eating if the worms do happen to be an inch long in them, as I have seen sometimes.

Mr Buck left for home last Wednesday & I guess well satisfied with his visit.
No more tonight.

Ever yours
C K Leach

I have just got a letter from you containing one from Royce & will write you again soon. The arithmetic, for some reason has not yet got along. hope Justin may be well again by this time.

Saturday Feb 21st 1863

Dear Wife

A nice pleasant morning it is with us this morning, although we have had some very bad weather since the last time I wrote to you, which was one week ago tonight.

Monday was a pleasant day, & in the afternoon some of the officers, me among the rest had a game of ball. Tuesday it snowed all day, & at night there was quite a body of snow on the ground. I had a nice time being detailed as officer of Brigade guard, & there was no shelter at all from the snow.

There are 14 prisoners for the guard to take care of, & then there is another sick & in the 6th Vt hospital. They are all in for desertion.

Wednesday it rained all day, & therefore our snow was all taken off again, & since that time it has been pleasant weather.

I received a letter from you day before yesterday (Thursday) & if you mailed one on Monday shall probably get it today before this goes out. I generally get your Fridays mail on Thursday & your Mondays mail, Saturday. The arithmetic which you said in your letter you would send has not got along yet but perhaps it will come today.

I would liked to have been at home when Uncle Moses & the rest of the Highgate Folks were there, or if they were not there I think I could manage to pass time some way for a little while.

I dont know when that express will get along for the roads are so bad, before they get hardly passable after one storm, another comes on, & it[s] about all the teams can do to keep supplies of rations & forage & clothing on hand.

Hollis says he dont want any silk handkerchief sent him, for the reason, I believe that he has got one. I have had rather bad luck with silk handkerchiefs the past year. Just after we left Camp Griffin, I lost one & sent to you for another, that one I lost while we were at Harrisons landing. One night we marched out from camp & while resting I took it out to wipe the sweat from my face & expect I did not put it back in my pocket. I then went without one till we were in Md, the day before the battle of Antietam, I bought one of our Co, paid 50 cts. & I lost that one some time ago, so I have had none for some time. I thought three was enough to lose in one year, & I would go without for a while.

I have lately got me a new pair of pants privates pants, gave John Ayres three dollars & the pair I got at Hagerstown. When we want government clothing we get some man to draw it & receipt for it & then pay him the money. The price of Government clothing has been raised of late so it [is] much higher than it was, & the men are not allowed any more per year for clothing than before, 42 dollars per year, so the increase of price will come out of the men, for if they draw to exceed 42 dollars it is put on the muster roll & taken out of their pay. I am still able to kick around as usual If I get a letter today I will write in this.

Ever yours
C K Leach

Feb 23rd 1863

Dear Wife

I will write you a few lines this morning in answer to yours which I received last Saturday, the day I wrote last. We have had rather tough weather since that time. It commenced snowing about nine Saturday night & kept it up at a "right smart" rate till last night. The wind blew pretty smart & we found ourselves yesterday morning pretty well covered with snow, the tent not being tight enough to keep out the wind, & we had to tend fire pretty close yesterday to keep in running order. I think it has been a little the worst storm I have ever seen in Virginia. The snow is very solid & I should reckon about a foot deep.

For the first time this winter mule teams were used to draw wood for this regt yesterday. I have seen the men of some regiments back wood at least half a mile, but our regt has been nearer wood, as we have moved more times.

When I sent my last letter that Arithmetic had not got along but when the man returned from carry[ing] out the mail he brought the Book so it is all right. Our mail comes in about 10 O.C. A.M. & goes out about 2 P.M., so when a letter is written in the evening it does not leave the regt till 2 the next day, or if it does, goes no further than the Brigade.

Maxfields time was up last night but he has not got back yet nor have any that left at the same time, but presume they will be back today.

I expect if the order hold good allowing leaves of absence & I dont get damaged any way I will get a chance to go home about the 15th time, & reckoning the time it takes to get a leave with the leave itself, my turn will come about a year from this time, so you see I think a good of the chance I have of going home.

You wrote about the stable. I know it has needed to be shingled for some time, & bad too, & ought to be done, & would be much warmer I know if it was boarded over & if the boards can be got think it would be a good plan to have it done, the roof will have to be boarded also as there are no boards on it now. The roof ought to [be] covered if it is possible to get any thing to do it with.

Col Grant of the 5th Vt Regt is commanding this Brigade now, but I hear that he & Col Morrison both claimed the place, their commissions both dating the same time, but the case was decided in favor of Col Grant, or Aunt Lydia as he is called.

I sent a receipt in my last letter from W^m Minogue which Royce wanted I should pay him, so that will explain the receipt.

People that talk of any one that gets discharged had better come down here themselves & try it, but no, those that wont come themselves are just the ones to say the most because somebody else dont go, or if he comes home after he has been here for a while.

C K Leach

I guess I shall have to trouble you again by asking for some more postage stamps
mine are drawing to a close Maxfield has got along

Thursday Eve Feb 26th 1863

Dear Wife

I will write you a few lines in answer to yours of the 17th inst which came to hand day before yesterday the 24th. I received the grammar also at the same time.

Your letter contained 5 dollars, & the State order of 14 dollars. I will return, enclosed in this the State order accompanied by a [statement] from the Capt addressed to the State Treasurer, which you will endorse with the order & send it to the Treasurer once more. The Capt thought it was rather disputing his word to deny the order & send it back & wanted the same one sent again.

You say that if you get the allotted pay you will send me money if I want. I have a plenty just at present. I have now 38 dollars but owe one months board which will be 9 or 10 dollars, & owe the sutler 2 or 3

dollars. I came very near getting some clothes, a coat & pair of pants, but the coat did not fit perfect, & thought \$18.50 was too much to pay for a poor fit, & did not want the pants without the coat. They were 10 dollars.

We are not going to be paid again till we are paid for four months & will not be before about the first of April, so I may run short for money before we are paid. Your sliding down hill is about equal to the officers here getting to snow balling. It is generally a perfect shower of snow balls here when the snow is in good condition. The other regiments in the brigade turn out one against the other & go in for a regular battle.

What has become of Maxfield? His time was up last Sunday & he has not got back yet, four days over time. He would be the last one any body would suspect of deserting. James Hutchinson goes next from our Co, he is from Montpelier & is one of the Camp Griffin recruits by Capt Burnham.

Today has been a very rainy day, commenced before light & rained steady all day, & it made our snow nearly all disappear, but not so with the mud.

William you say has got back into the woods, well, I hope he will not have worse luck than common for getting rich very fast there I reckon pretty near out of the question, but hope for the best.

We have an addition to our tent another old tent fixed on the front so we have more room than before.

Our stove & table in the front or "setting room" & the back part is our sleeping apartment. We have a swing table that is hung by leather on the back side & a stick set under the front to hold it up, so when we dont want to use it, let it hang down by the side of the house & it takes up no room.

I hear nothing from that express yet & am afraid I shall not till the mud dries up some.

No more tonight.

Ever yours

C K Leach

Monday Morning / Capt Tracy is detailed as Superintendent of road building for the Division & Sawyer is acting adjutant at present. Very pleasant day today. I put on one of those shirts last night & find the sleeves rather long, but they will shrink.

March 1st 1863

Dear Wife

I received a letter from you today & I now seat myself to pen you a few lines in answer. Your letter found me well & I am glad to hear that you are still enjoying good health.

Your letter today contained 5 dollars which I did not expect but cant say that I am sorry to get it. I am glad to hear that you have got the allotted pay, which enables you to square things around home. I presume it will be some time before you get any more, for it probably [will] be a month now before we are paid & then some time before you get it.

I have been rather disappointed since I wrote you last in getting that express box. Hollis has written & likely has written about his things & I will only speak of mine. The boots are a very good fit only the legs were so small they go on & off rather hard, yet I am very well suited with the boots.

I was rather taken by surprise with the shirts, they being something that I was not looking for in the shape they are, but I must say that I think they cant be beat in these diggings. The cloth is very nice & the flummy-diddles* are really charming & there is only one trouble that I can see & that is my desire to have them seen may make me forget to put on my coat and vest sometime & thereby suffer with the cold. Perhaps you think I dont like them, but I do and they are much better than I expected.

*Defined as "a frill, bauble, bit of finery" in the *Dictionary of American Regional English*, edited by Frederic G. Cassidy, vol. 2 (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1985), 500.

My butter is sold out for 50 cts per pound but have not got the pay all down. Hollis sold his to the mess that I am in, so I sold mine out to the boys.

How much was the express charges on the box, I believe you never said anything about it & Hollis wants to know.

Hampton Maxfield has to lose ten dollars of his pay for not getting back when his time expired. Some others were in the same fix, & the non-commissioned officers were reduced to the ranks & have to do a few terms of extra guard duty. Military life is not civil life when one can go & come when he pleases.

I have a bone ring which I am going to send to Zelia in this & hope it may fit her. Isaac Smith from Burlington made it & gave it to me, he had one that he had made for his little girl, & I wanted one & he said he would make me one. Smith or his wife is cousin to Royce, S. W.

If I knew the size of your finger I would get you a ring made. I have worn a bone ring since we were at Harrisons landing till a few days since I broke it by striking Sawyers knee.

I should think you & Jane got in a fit of writing when you wrote to Hollis & I think he will or wont write after this. Our weather continues to be rather poor, rained last night and leaked in and wet my head, and today the wind most blowed our house down. Nothing more tonight.

C K Leach

Camp near White Oak Church Va
March 6th 1863

Dear Wife

I will try and pen you a few lines this morning (if I dont get smoked out) in answer to yours of mail 27th Feb, which I received yesterday. I am glad to hear that you are well & I can but say the same of myself. Today is the third day that we have had a Strong cold wind blowing which makes it very uncomfortable in our tent as it is not so tight since we put on the addition, & sometimes our stove draws the wrong way & the fire will stream out a foot in front of the stove, which makes a fellow cry: because he cant see his grandma or something else. The past two days we have had a brigade drill in the afternoon, something which we have not done for some time before, or drill of any sort.

Col Grant wants to practice a little I suppose to see if he knows how to manage a brigade.

Our Co is on the right of the regt now, we have been in all manner of places in line & at last have got on the right. We have been the Color company for some time past, which is the 3rd in rank but changes have taken place so that Capt Tracy is first in rank of the Cpts. We are now in the easiest place on a march, without they march left in front, but if there is any skirmishing to be done on a march, the first Co generally has to do it. I expect we will have to go on picket Sunday & if so you may not get another letter from me till a week is gone past, but I shall look for another from you tomorrow & if I get one I will try & pen you a few lines tomorrow night.

I should think the folks in Fletcher were getting to be quite boyish, going to dances & such like, but I reckon some of them will dance to different music before another winter, for if there is not a few hundred thousand more soldiers called for before a great while I will guess again.

We had one officer leave us this morning, having got his discharge, Lieut Weed of Co G. He has been trying for about six months, & at last by the aid of the commanders of the regt & brigade he has got them accepted & started for home.

You speak of a slate in your letter. Hampton brought one down with him, so you need not do anything about it, he brought his old one.

I wish you would write to me how much there is of debts standing against me & how much if any there is the other way, & did you ever get a note that I gave to Hollis & sent in a letter. It was in place of what I was owing him.

One more thing, I advise you when it comes summer & you have that wagon to not make a practice of lending it. The other one was worn out at first as much by lending as by using ourselves.

You ask why not give that coat to William. I think you will find it too small for him if it was not I have no objections to his having it.

I am learning to play chess. I have seen it played some, but could not tell nothing by looking on, so I thought I would try & learn. Capt Tyler, or Major now has a set of Chessmen.

I will bid you goodbye for this time hoping to hear from you again tomorrow.

Yours Affectionately
Chester K Leach

Camp near White Oak Church Va
March 12th 1863

Dear Wife

I seat myself this evening to pen you a few lines that you may know how I fare. It has been a week since I wrote to you, for the reason, that we went on picket Saturday morning for three days & therefore had no chance to write before Tuesday.

I got a letter from you Sunday & expect another tonight, if the mail comes in.

I was glad to hear that you were all well, & I have the same to say of myself. We did not have a very pleasant time on picket although it was not as bad as it might have been. It rained some each of the first two nights & the third it commenced snowing & raining & kept it up till we got into camp about noon.

I did not get wet any as we had a shelter made of rubber blankets which kept us dry. The weather has been changable for some time, rain, sunshine, & wind all mixed up together & sometimes a little more wind. The wind blows tonight & also it did last night so we can hardly burn a candle in our tent.

The mail has just got in but there was no letter for me, so I shall have to wait till some other mail.

We had a brigade drill today. Col Grant is bound to put us through. It seems the rebels have got a new trade, that is, stealing Brigadier Generals. I think they done it up first rate. The 2nd Vt Brigade will have to put in a requisition for another.

I see by the papers tonight that Col Stannard has been appointed a Brigadier & confirmed by the Senate, hope he may be assigned to the command of this Brigade.

I dont know as Gen Hooker intends to move very soon, but he has issued orders to have the troops ready for service at any time, which looks as though he intends to move whenever the weather will permit & there seems to be a chance of success.

I was sorry to hear that Daniel got so bad a hurt but hope it may be nothing serious. I had a letter from Sarah Jane & Mother a few days since, they were well at the time of writing. Norman was absent on business. The Small Pox is around here some as well as in Vermont, & all are being vaccinated that have not been or have not been for some time. There is a tent over by the 6th Vt marked small pox.

How would you like to have me send you a nigger boy if I could find one & could get a chance to send him, they are "right smart" I tell you.

Dont you think it would be a good idea to have the Sugar house insured. I dont know what the old wagon is worth & think if I at was home I should have it fixed for bad weather.

No more so good night
C K Leach

Sunday Evening March 15th 1863

Dear Wife

I seat myself this stormy evening to pen you a few lines in answer to one, what? a letter just received from you, & also one received on Friday evening.

We are having a very stormy night, hail & rain pours down in good shape. It has thundered occasionally all the afternoon & just at dark it commenced storming. The weather has been quite cold for some days, a cold wind blowing nearly all the time, & the ground has frozen a very little.

Your letter of Friday contained five dollars & some postage stamps which I was very glad to receive, as I was entirely out. My health continues good & am glad to hear the same from you.

I yesterday was measured for a suit of clothes, which are to be made in Rutland Vt. None are to be had here at present & I can get better & cheaper by sending to Vt. The price of the suit will be about 35 dollars. I am going to have some one that is going home, bring them down if I can, if not have them sent by express. I dont have to pay for them till I get them, so I shall not have to pay for a few days yet.

You sent a bit about the Jerseys stealing the dog meat, it was a thing that happened some time since, or so the story was & I think it was true. I reckon Hersey Ellsworth has done very well in getting married, but I did not mistrust any such thing. I have no news to write except that every thing seems to be looking towards a move as soon as the weather will permit, & every thing is ready. All have orders to be ready for service at any time, & we expect it as soon as a move can possibly be made.

There are no signs that we will be paid very soon but probably we will get 4 months pay about the 1st of April. You want to know if I am willing you should have your pictures & mine taken to send to Aunt Sophia. I hope you dont think I would object to any such thing as that, & hope when you want to do any such thing, you will do it without asking.

It is cold & the wind blows in & it is past ten so I will close for tonight.

Ever yours

C K Leach

Monday Morning, Rather cold today, the ground is covered with round snow about an inch deep. One year ago today we were near Alexandria after our march back from Flint Hill, & with nothing to eat.

I have received all the money you have sent me, 13 dollars, & am not in need of more unless I should not be paid before my clothes come, which I do not think will be the case.

(My ink is awful poor.)

C K Leach

Camp near White Oak Church Va
March 19th 1863

Dear Wife

At this late hour of the evening (nine) I seat myself to do a little scribbling in answer to a letter received from you, mailed the 13th which I received the 17th, the quickest time in which I have got one for some time.

As usual, yours found me well, which, I am happy to say, is the case at the present time. I found Five dollars enclosed which makes 20 I have received in all. I guess I shall need it all before I get any more from the Pay Master, as he has sent some of the Muster Rolls back to be corrected, so it will probably be some time before he gets around to pay us.

The weather continues to be very cold & raw for the time of year. A pleasant warm day we have not had for some time. We had no snow or freezing weather last year after we left Camp Griffin, the 10th of March, but this year it is entirely different, the ground has been froze most of the time every little while is covered with snow. It has snowed a very little this evening.

Of late we have been kept busy most of the time with drills. Company skirmish drill in the forenoon & Brigade drill in the afternoon. Today we had a Division Review in the forenoon & a Battalion drill in the

afternoon, & this evening we have had a recitation of Tactics, which I suppose will be in order for the time to come. At the review the whole Division was out, except what was on picket. I have not seen any Artillery hitched up since the famous "stick in the mud" till today at the review.

I was glad to hear that the ring was a fit for Zelia, & hope she may not lose it. I will send something to Justin whenever I get something that is worth the sending.

Loyal Hulburd started for home this morning on a furlough of 15 days. I hope the order may be kept up & then nearly all that wished could have a chance to go home.

I think the granting of furloughs has done much good to this army, desertions are less in number, & it also has a tendency to make the men try & do well, for they know that if they dont their chance for a furlough is slim. I think this army would be worth more in the field today with from 6 to 15 from each regt absent, than it would be if they were all here & no furloughs had been granted. It is not the numbers entirely that wins, but the determination of each man to do his duty. It is almost impossible to get some into action unless you keep in the rear of them & drive them to it. Such soldiers are not worth much, & cannot be trusted. I will have to close & warm my toes. (good rhyme)

Yours
C K Leach

Camp near White Oak Church Va
March 22nd 1863

Dear Wife

I seat myself this Sabbath evening to pen you a line or so, but not in answer to any letter received from you, for I failed to get one, & as other letters came from Fletcher on Friday night I conclude you did not send one for some reason. Hollis got a letter from Emerson so I conclude you were all well as he said nothing about it.

The weather was stormy Friday & Saturday, but today has been pleasant & quite warm. Yesterday there was about three inches of snow on the ground & very damp, & we had some exercise snowballing.

I will give you a bit of a description of one of our scrapes snowballing. About noon Capt Tracy & myself went out commenced throwing at Co E Officers tent. We threw a long time but could get none of them out. They kept quiet till just at dark they sent a boy up on some errand but to find out if we were in our tent, & at the same time threw some pepper on our stove, & then they commenced snowballing our tent, & gave it a good pelting, & asking if we would surrender. Someone held the door so we could not get out at first. After we went out we all started and bombarded the tents & made the inmates fall into our ranks. All went well for a time but some of them saw what was coming & just got their men out & hid behind their tent & when we came up they lit into us, & we had to retreat.

When there is snow on the ground, one can hardly show himself without getting a snowball after him. Capt Tracy got one right between his eyes & he could hardly see last night.

Today the snow has nearly all disappeared & it will be doubtful whether there is any more snow falls this spring. There was none last year near as late as this time of year.

Well I have just got a letter from you and it was mailed at South Hardwick on Wednesday the 18th so that tells the reason I did not get it before. Sorry to hear that the folks were all out of sorts with colds & the like & hope to hear better news next time. I reckon you had a few visitors about the time you wrote & I wish I could just drop in and add one more to the number.

I will send Justin a scrip holder in this letter. It is not worth much & still is very handy to keep postage currency in.

No news to write only "all is quiet" as far as I know, but how long it will remain so time will tell.

It is getting late & I will close for this time bidding you a Good night

Yours C K Leach

P.S. It will soon be Listing time with you & you must look out & not have the stock put in the list & nothing to offset against it, as I presume they will want to do. C K Leach

Friday morning. It snows quite hard this morning & is colder than Greenland, grows worse every day

Camp near White Oak Church Va
Thursday Eve, March 26th /63

Dear Wife

I received a letter from you last evening & now I seat myself to write you a line in answer. You say you are all suffering from hard colds. I am sorry to hear it, but hope you may be better when next I hear from you.

I would like to step in & keep you company a while, when you are at home, but such cannot be. Yet I have hope that I may at some time be permitted to see home & friends again. As to health, mine is good. I think I never enjoyed better than I have this winter, since I got well of my Chickahominy. Except a cold when we first came to this camp I have been in good running order all winter. I am very fleshy, more so than I ever was while I was at home, owing I suppose to the small amount of hard labor I perform. I weigh 175 lbs.

Glad to hear that State Order was found all right & cashed.

The Order allowing leaves of absence & furloughs is revoked. So there will be no more going home at present if ever except on account of sickness.

I presume that before you get this, we shall be on the march, for all signs seem to indicate a move in a very short time, unless the weather should be very unfavorable. Each Regiment has two mules, called "pack mules" to carry Officers "rations" & shelter tents for Officers, one tent to each Officer. I reckon it will be a good thing, for many times while on a march the baggage wagons are unable to [get] along till very late & therefore Officers are without shelter & something to eat. The mules will be able to keep with the regiment at all times, & the march will not have to be delayed in waiting for baggage wagons. We have an order tonight to make a requisition for all clothing, & camp & garrison equippage sufficient for a month to come. The mules are to carry on a march five days provisions for officers, so I reckon when we start we will whip or get whipped before we eat up our rations.

The weather here changes very often, night before last it rained nearly all night, but yesterday was quite a nice pleasant day & the mud dried up, & the birds & frogs made it sound something like spring, this forenoon it rained & snowed some & then cleared up again so it is pleasant tonight. There is but very little mud anywhere near our camp, & expect it has dried up a good deal on the roads.

I got the papers tonight all right. Hollis is well, also all of the boys from Fletcher. Bingham Chase is not with us, & has not been this winter. He is at Division Head Quarters detailed as butcher, but drives cattle instead of killing. No signs of the Pay Master yet, & guess we will have to go to Richmond first. I will bid you "good night"

Chester

Sunday Eve March 29th 1863

Dear Wife

I will spend a few moments this evening in writing to you, hoping the same may find you in good health, & also the rest of the folks.

I received a letter from you on Friday night, & glad to hear you were better as to your colds, except Zelia, who I hope to hear is better when next I hear from you.

I am well & enjoy life as best I can under the circumstances. The weather since I last wrote has been this, Friday was a very pleasant day, yesterday (Saturday) was a rainy day, commenced before light & rained

nearly all day. Today has been pleasant but rather cold & very windy. There was some thunder yesterday which I suppose accounts for the change to colder today.

About all that is heard here now is something in regard to the preparations making for a move. A great amount of Surplus baggage has got to be sent away, & ours has to go tomorrow morning. I have not much, but as I learn, it can be sent by express if one wants. I think I shall pack up some & send it home. I don't wish anything with me only what is really necessary, & I had just as lief throw it away as to be taken to Washington to be stored. Therefore if a box should come you need not be surprised. Some other body may put something in if sent.

I rather expect we will have to go on picket Tuesday & if so you may not hear from me again as soon as if I was in camp.

I hear that the Pay Master is expected down here the last of this week, & I hope it may be true that he will come.

I think I shall send home my memorandum book of last year. I should like to keep it with me but am afraid I shall lose it & there are many dates that I should not wish lost, in case I should ever get home again.

You seem to be very anxious that I should get my discharge. I should be as pleased as any one could be if such could be the case, but no man, in good health, unless he is endorsed as being worthless to the service, can very well get a discharge. Now supposing that I could have such an endorsement put on my resignation & thereby get a discharge, I do not see fit to do it just at this time. I have seen too much service to wish for a discharge, unless it be in an honorable way. I have seen the time that I should have cared but little how it was done, only to be discharged, but not so now.

I sent a paper to Justin the other day with some suspenders in it. Not worth much but thought [he] would like them.

good night C K Leach

Monday Morning. I sent away a box this morning to be sent home by express but whether it will get aboard or not, that is the thing. I put in the Arithmetic you sent me, for Maxfield brought Hollis one, & I am going to carry that. Hollis put in his canteen & kept the one that Zina sent.

I did not have enough to fill the box quite full & presume it will get stored up some. If the box ever reaches you, you will find your letters written since we left Hagerstown, you can burn them or do with them as you see fit. I burned all up to that date before I left Hagerstown. The box has a lock on it, & I will send the key in this letter. You will find all sorts of things in the box packed up at one time & another. I believe I will have you send me another Silk handkerchief, *if you please*.

No more this time

C K Leach

Camp 2nd Vt Regt

Thursday April 2nd 1863

Dear Wife

I will pen a few lines today in answer to a letter received from you last night. I am glad to hear that you were well, & also the children.

I did not have to go on picket as I expected. The men, nearly all had to go, but only ten Officers went, & as the Capt & Sawyer were both detailed on a Court Martial, I was left so as to have one Officer from a Co in camp.

I did not feel very bad because I did not have to go, for it was very stormy the day they went out, both snow & rain, & since then it has been cold & very windy. It seemed as though the wind would blow our tent down, some of the time today. It is fixing for another storm I reckon.

I have caught a little bit of a cold & have felt a bit out of sorts for a day or two, but feel better today than yesterday. We are still in our old quarters, & I think there are more signs of our staying here a while longer than there was a week ago.

The Leaves of Absence & Furloughs, which were suspended a few days since, are now ordered to be granted again, in the same ratio as before, so the order of suspending has not hurt as much for those that went last are just returning.

Hulburds time is up tomorrow & I guess the Capt has promised John Ayers next time. There are but few that have asked for a furlough, because they have not the money to go home with, but after pay day there will be a general rush.

The Pay Master is expected here tonight or tomorrow, & then we shall be in running order again. Some think that "Green Backs" will be good for sore eyes, dont doubt it much myself, & it is the only money we have that is considered "all right" by everybody.

I am a little afraid your sugar season is going to be bad this year, for it is getting to be so late, unless it is very good weather, the amount made will be small.

I think Whipple has done the best thing he could do, & think his wife must feel so too, for if he was never arrested, it would always be a dark spot to mar their happiness through life.

If leaves of absence are continued I have hopes that I may get home by June or July, that is if I cant get there before. I think I ought to stand a chance before a great while, but had rather go after it is good wagoning.

Sorry to hear that you have lost some of your bees, but I have found they are a delicate thing to winter when they have to be fed & have to be tended to very close. Albert it seems did not get very rich out of his either.

Love to Mother C K Leach

P.S. Friday Morning / A very pleasant morning but rather cool. We did not blow away yesterday & last night but I thought we should, for the wind *did* blow hard. We had to set a pole against each side of our tent to keep it right side up. My cold is much better this morning, & I feel all right. Two officers start for home this morning on leaves of absence.

C K Leach

Camp near White Oak Church Va
April 5th 1863

Dear Wife

Again I seat myself this Sunday eve to write you in answer to a letter received from you last night which found me enjoying good health, but found us in the midst of a pretty hard snow storm. The wind blew a hurricane yesterday nearly all day, & just at dark it commenced snowing, & did not stop till nearly noon today. I think the snow was about six inches deep this morning, but a good share of it is gone now.

We have had no such warm weather as we had last year before this time. A year ago yesterday we left Newport News going up the paninsula & one year today we arrived near Yorktown, & began to hear a little music.

Last Friday was a pleasant day & Gen Hooker reviewed our Division, & I should think all the Generals of the army were here. All passed off very well, & gave a good opportunity to see the Gen.

Our Pay Master had to go to Baltimore to a wedding, so he adjourned coming down here to pay us off, dont know when he will come now.

I received a bill of my clothes last night from Rutland. The Suit is \$36.00 & \$1.25 express charges, they were sent March 30th & shall look for them before a great while.

I reckon they will not get paid for till after we get paid. Some straps to go with the coat will make the whole about \$40.

Tell Zelia Papa has got her sugar, & wish I could be up there & get a little warm sugar this spring, but dont see it exactly. I dont want any sugar sent by express, it would not pay the cost.

I am glad to hear that you have got over your colds, & hope you all may continue well.

Capt Tracy got a letter from home last night, & his wife has been sick abed about a week, & it is a hard place to be in to have ones folks sick & no chance to even visit them. I hope I may never be placed in the same condition but just as likely to as anyone.

We have a Muster the 10th of this month to find out how many is wanted to fill up each regt. so I expect a draft will be made for that purpose instead of forming new regiments. There are some that I should not feel very bad to see coming down here & others that I should rather would stay at home.

Hulburd got back Friday night from home & Whitecher goes next time from our Co.

I hope the order may be kept up for it will give nearly all a chance to go home that want to, some would not go home if they could, not till they go for good, but I think I would. I think the furlough business will keep many two years, & nine months men in the army that otherwise would not reenlist, but presume they may keep enough in many instances to keep up the organization of the regts.

I will bid you Good Night.

C K Leach

P.S. (Monday Morning) a nice pleasant morning. The ground froze a little last night, & seems like a Vermont sugar morning.

C K Leach

My postage stamps are running low again. No Pay master yet but dont know but he will come tomorrow, he sent word that if he did not he would telegraph, rather consoling

Camp 2nd Vt Regt

Friday Evening Apr. 10th 1863

Dear Wife

I seat myself to answer a letter just received from you. I am in good health & glad to hear the same from you.

You enquire about the chains. I hid but the Cable chain & a one hooked chain, the one that Burton claims is one that belonged to Mother & was left there when Burton brought his staves for his buckets that I made him. It was a light two hooked one.

Now for what has transpired with us since I wrote you last Sunday Evening. The weather has been very pleasant all the time & today has been quite warm.

President Lincoln has been reviewing the troops composing this army this week. Monday he reviewed the Cavalry but I did not see it, but a number from our regt went. Tuesday he was going to review our Corps, but on account of the mud (I suppose) made by the snow storm of Sunday, it did not come off.

We were all out though & Col Grant drilled the Brigade a while in the morning & our regt spent the rest of the day in fixing up our camp.

I dont know as I can tell you how we have fixed our camp but will try. Each Co fixed their own street, they dug a small ditch each side & made a sort of turnpike of them, & then set small pine trees on each side. At the head of the streets we have an arch covered with cedar boughs with the letter of the Co in it, & some of them the name of the regt. Col Grant thinks it very nice & is having his Quarters fixed up in something of the same style. Tuesday night I got my clothes by express from Rutland. It is a good suit & is also a good fit. The whole including \$1.25 express charges & the shoulder straps amounts to \$39.50.

I was glad to get them when I did for I had them to wear to the review which came off on Wednesday. At eight O.C. Wednesday morning we started for the place of review which was some five miles from our camp towards Falmouth, & which made a very good days march by the time we got back.

The three Divisions of our Corps were formed in three lines each Division by itself one in rear of the other. Each regt was closed in mass by division thus presenting a front of only the length of two companys.

making the le[n]gth of the lines very short The President rode in front of each Division, & then we all marched past him by Battallion closed in mass, so it took but a short time to go through the whole performance. It was the first time I have seen the President & I think he looks like a good many of the pictures of him. He reviewed one or two Corps after he did ours the same day. Thursday we were inspected by the Brigade Inspector, which he does three times every month. Today we have had a Muster which was done for the use of the Provost Marshal, so he would know how many men each Regt requires to fill it up, so it seems the old regts are to be filled instead of forming new ones. No more tonight.

Yours C K Leach

Camp near White Oak Church Va
Monday morning Apr 13th 1863

Dear Wife

You must expect but a few lines from me this morning, but I will write a little before the mail goes out. I should have written last evening but we were otherwise engaged. The Pay Master came down here Saturday, & yesterday afternoon & evening he paid our regt. Our Co was paid in the evening. My pay is not just as I wish it was, for I could get none of the allotted pay, which leaves me with less than I wanted. I shall borrow some though as it very plenty just now. There is \$360. allotted for the four months which we were paid. I received \$66.00 & some cents. My tax was between seven & eight dollars. After paying for my clothes, & settling all debts I shall have left 40. or 45 dollars. Yes, & I have just got \$100.00 of Sawyer so I guess I will do, dont you? now if you want some money I will send you some. Perhaps you think I dont need so much money. I dont think I shall either unless I can get a chance to go home, & in such a case I wish to be provided for, & probably we will not get paid again before four months.

Your letter, mailed Apr 6 came to hand Saturday night & glad to hear that you [were] well, & all with the exception of Mothers cold. The papers came along with the sugar in them. Monroe Bingham got his express box yesterday, & Charles Bingham sent me a small cake of sugar in that. Express comes through very quick now, on account of there being but a little sent I suppose, & it is forwarded from as soon as it arrives *in* Washington.

I reckon Cephas made a good strike with his sugar, give me him for calculation.

The weather has been very good since I wrote you last, only it rained a very little last night, just enough to lay the dust. It has got to be quite warm here. So we dont need any fire most of the time to keep warm. The mud is nearly all dried up so it is good getting around. We have no mud hardly around our camp this winter for we were away from all travel, not being camped very near the other regiments. We can see from our tent the rebel camps on the other side of the river, & with a glass can see their teams moving around. The camps seem to be pretty thick for you can hardly look in any place where you can see the other side of the river without seeing a rebel camp.

I see no signs of a move at present on our part. We have an order for target firing & expect we will have to go out today. My health remains as good as it has been, & I am able to eat my rations good. Did Walter Chase & Edgar Ellis get their pay to the time of their discharge? They ought to have it but was afraid it would bother them to get it. Those that were dropped from the rolls are nearly all back here, or discharged. (from our Co.)

Well I guess you will think I am not going to write but a little this morning. I have gone beyond my expectations. Hope my handkerchief will come soon.

Yours Ever
C K Leach

Camp near White Oak Church Va
April 14th 1863

Dear Wife

When I wrote you yesterday morning, I said there were no signs of a move at present, but things have changed some since that, & the prospect is very much different from what it seemed to be then. This morning orders came to have the men have their rations in haversacks tonight & be ready for a march at eight tomorrow morning. Three days rations of meat & eight days of bread, coffee sugar & salt. Five days rations of meat is to be fresh beef & will be driven on the hoof. No teams are to go with the troops, therefore all that the Officers have of eatables or bedding they will have to carry on their backs.

Our cooks though are going to carry our sugar & coffee & make the coffee, so that will take a little from the load.

I shall carry two woollen blankets & a rubber, three days of meat & eight of hard crackers, so you may judge something of what a load it will be to carry all day. I am going to carry two haversacks, & they will both have to be full. The men have to put theirs in their knapsacks. I almost forgot our houses. We have got to carry our tents also, or go without. Our A tents are all taken away from us & we have nothing but the little shelter tents.

We have been busy today packing up our surplus baggage to be sent away.

The men have nearly all packed their overcoats, & only have one woolen blanket, rubber, & tent, besides their underclothes.

I fear we will have to march in the rain tomorrow if we march at all, for there are strong signs of a storm. Our destination I dont undertake to guess for I know nothing about it, only that it is where the rebels are, or where they will be. I dont think we are going to cross the river in the vicinity of Fredericksburg, but probably above. I hope wherever we may go it will prove to be a success on our part, & I think I have faith that it will be, & therefore am ready & willing to go, as much so as though we were to lay here six months longer.

Hoping I may be permitted to write you again, & from a field of victory, I am ever your dear husband

C K Leach

Thursday Eve, Apr 16th

It turned out that we did not move yesterday as was expected. It commenced raining in the night & rained very hard all day yesterday & the wind blew too, so it was rather rough day. Today has been a cloudy day with now & then a slight sprinkle of rain. I can not tell whether we should have moved or not if it had not rained yesterday, but rather think we should.

I know nothing about where our destination is, but hear all sorts of rumors. Nothing is doing in camp, only all seem to try to see how drunk they can get.

Since pay day liquor has almost run the camp.

I expected to get a letter from you tonight but did not, but there was no mail came except a few papers. I think I shall send a little money home after the crowd is over a little. A great many are sending money by mail just now, & money would not be as safe as when there is not so much aboard. I have more by me than I care about having, but want it where it can be had whenever wanted.

I will bid you good night & go to bed,

C K Leach

Friday April 17th

We are yet in camp, & we have received no orders about moving.

It is a cloudy day and rather cool. I rather think we will not move till the fore part of next week, but perhaps we shall. If a move is made of course you will hear about it before you receive this.

C K Leach

Camp near White Oak Church Va
Monday April 20th 1863

Dear Wife

I will spend a little time today in writing to you, but perhaps I shall run ashore for anything to write before I get this sheet filled. You will see by the heading that we are still in our old camp, & I know not when we shall leave it. The weather has been very nice, pleasant & warm, for a few days till today, & now it rains "right smart I reckon."

We have been doing nothing of late except the necessary camp duty, with the exception of a Brigade Dress parade Saturday afternoon, & after that the Officers of the Brigade were called together to see what could be done about getting a Band. All seemed to be in favor of one, & willing to put in their mite towards paying the expense of it. Government allows a Band to each Brigade but the pay is not enough to induce any one to organize one for that purpose, so by the Officers paying a small amount in addition to that allowed by Government, a band can be raised & also get good musicians.

A bit of a row occurred night before last out a short distance from camp in which one man got shot, so it is thought he will die if not already dead. About a dozen boys from the 5th Vt went out to a Nigger shanty where there were two or three wenches for the purpose of blacking their "canes" or "dressing them in mourning," if it is more proper. They drove away the guard that was stationed there & then "went in." The guard went to the picket reserve & an officer & some men went from there to set matters straight, & in the row some of the rowdies got shot. Since pay day Liquor has been freely used & a great deal of rowing & noise has taken place. Hardly a night till last night but there has been some drunken row in our camp, & yesterday morning Col Grant ordered an inspection of each regiment, suspecting there was a quantity of liquor. I was Officer of the day in our regiment & had the honor of going to each tent in this regt to see if there could any be found. I found one bottle about half full & that was all, but enough empty bottles.

Well this has laid by till near night, & now I will try & finish it up. It has rained nearly all the time through the day, but does not rain now. I received a letter from you last night, mailed the 10th & shall look for one tonight of last Mondays mail. For some reason our mail of late has been some time in getting through, longer than general. I am glad to hear that you were all still in good health, although many were sick around you. Hope you may be blessed with good health in coming time.

You speak of going to a sugar party. I reckon I would like to do such a thing myself, & perhaps I might if I had tried hard enough, but 15 days are soon past, & if I could have the chance to go home now, I would rather wait till the roads would be in better condition, & for that reason I have not tried, for there was no chance at first, & after that I did not care much about it for the reason above stated.

Well I have just received & read another letter from you, with the good news of good health, also a paper containing some sugar, as I have done once before. I should guess by your description of how things look around home, that it looked as though the folks were gone from home. I hope you will tend close to the bees & not let them starve to death.

We got a story here today that Gen Hooker had met with an accident in which he had got badly hurt, but I have but little faith in the story & hope it is not so, if it is you will hear of it as soon as you get this. He met the President, Secretary Staunton & Gen Halleck yesterday at Aquia Creek, & we heard he got hurt on his return to his H^d Quarters. I presume we shall know in time what conclusion they came to in their consultation, whether to move or not to move.

I presume that box was not put aboard the express but stored with other baggage that was sent away for that purpose. The contents were not of any great value, but contained some little things that I should have not put in if I had thought it would have been left in Washington, but perhaps I may get it again sometime.

It is getting so dark I can hardly see therefore I will bid you good night.

I remain ever yours

C K Leach

Camp 2nd Vt Regt
April 24th 1863

Dear Wife

How are you this evening? Well, I hope.

I can say that I am well as usual & glad to have the privilege of saying the same.

I have no news to write, nothing of importance having transpired since I wrote you on Monday the 20th inst, only that the weather has been very bad for the past two days, having rained nearly all the time. Yesterday it rained a perfect shower nearly all day, & must have raised the streams a great deal, & I reckon there will be no fording the river for some time to come. Today it has not rained as hard as it did yesterday, but has rained very steady & with a very hard wind from the north west. Signs of spring begin to show themselves such as peach blossoms & the like, they being now in full bloom, but they are a great way behind the time of flowering last year.

I received your letter containing the handkerchief night before last (Wednesday) & another tonight with postage stamps enclosed & a revenue stamp.

The stamps I am glad to get, as I am just out, had just one for this letter.

The handkerchief will do, but is not as good as I wish it was. It will answer for the present. I think you asked in one of your letters what the Capt. & Sawyer were Court Martialed for. They were not court martialed, but were members of a court martial for the trial of others.

I hope you will have no trouble about the wagon, but shall feel a little concerned till I hear that all is right.

I am very sorry to hear such news about those little apple trees, for I had thought a good deal of having young orchard growing, but there is many a slip twixt the cup & the lip. I think you had better set the remaining ones in the orchard.

I dont exactly fancy the way you say Cephas takes charge of things. When I was at home I lent him the plow to break up with & told him to go & get it when he wanted, but did not suppose I gave him leave for all time to do his plowing with, but he is a man after *his* own heart that is, if he has got any.

If Zina wants any of the tools to use it is all right. I want he should, but dont know as I have any particular anxiety for other people to make a business of using them because I am not there to want them just at present.

I got a letter from Emerson tonight & he says Cutting has sold that colt for \$150.00. I reckon that is doing pretty well. I reckon he would not have had the chance to make that trade if I could have been at home to use him myself, for I have fancied myself riding after him a great many times.

Nothing more tonight so good night

From C K Leach

Saturday morning: I will write a few lines this morning. It is pleasant this morning, but the wind blows & clearing up, as it did, in the night I think it will not hold pleasant a great while.

I will send back that revenue stamp in this letter & will leave the date for you to put on, as I could not swear as to the date, although I am sure it is Jan 1st 1863. You can put it on just as well.

We dont exactly keep a beer shop here but if you had just stepped in, within the past two days, you could have had all the ale you wanted to drink.

Sawyer bought a whole keg of it day before yesterday & run the machine for awhile. It is impossible for him to have money & not have a bust occasionally.

Our move that we were going to make hangs fire, or else has flashed in the pan & is not going off at all. I reckon Gen Hooker sees too many rebel camps across the river, to think it would be policy to pitch into them at present.

If ever I can get a leave to go home I think Hollis will get a chance too. I shall do what I can to help him.

He has been teasing me to intercede for him & I told him he had better wait till I went home & I guess the thing can be arranged. The Capts consent is all that is needed.

Yours
Chester

[Letter from Hollis included with Chester's]

White Oak Church Va. April 25th 1863

Dear Ann

Fletcher mail arrived last night & with it came your letter in Chesters, & so I feel duty bound as I also feel it a great privilege to answer it & I will improve the present opportunity in doing so. I have no news to write, so you wont find it very interesting.

About the *clothing* you spok[e] of, I had never thought anything about it but I can see now just how the thing is going, & I will find a remedy for it if I can, & I think I can. We have had very bad weather here lately, it has rained most all the time for three days past, but it has come off pleasant now, & I am in hopes it will keep so for awhile. You spoke of my coming home on a furlough with Chester. I should like to come first rate but I am afraid I dont stand much sight to come, there are so many others that want to go, there is one started from this Co today, he is a recruit from Montpelier, came out one year ago last fall. The recruits seem to stand the best chance in this co. I hardly think that the furloughs will be kept up much longer, but dont know. About that *school*, nothing would please me better than to go "one term" but I dont think there is so much chance for "improvement" there, as there used to was, do you?

I had a letter from Nell [?] a few days ago, he seems to feel very bad about those children, & I dont wonder at it for I think they were both very pretty. The one that died was from Windsor Vt, Janes native place. Her name was Mattie L May.

I think I shall send for that black hat of mine, if it is all right, but I will send to Zina & send him the money to pay the postage.

Hollis

[Before the battles of Marye's Heights and Salem Heights]

Camp of 2nd Vt Regt
April 26th 1863

Dear Wife

I seat myself again this very pleasant Sunday evening to spend a time in writing to you in the absence of any other mode of communication. Today has been a very pleasant day, just such a day as in the absence of any duties to perform makes one feel lonely & wish he could spend the day at home with those from whom he has been long absent.

When I have some duty to perform, there is something to occupy my mind, but on such a day as today, when it is too pleasant to stay hived up & nothing out doors to do except to loiter around camp, I can but say, I wish I could spend the day at home.

We all have to work hard of late (over the aft) [?] performing perhaps as much as one days duty in the course of a week. I was Officer of the day last Sunday & that is the only duty I have had assigned me since I went on picket more than a month since, except our camp duty & what little drill there has been, & now & then an inspection.

Nelson Smith has been here today, he staid but a short time, & he looks tough & rugged as ever.

Have you heard of the new Genral that the rebel pickets say they have & who they say is very severe with the soldiers

They asked our pickets if they had heard of their new Gen, & when asked who it was replied, "General Starvation by God." I should think such a "general" must be pretty hard on the rebel soldiers, & not such a "general" as I can wish to have any thing to do with our army.

You wanted I should say what I thought about your getting a book. I am sure I am willing, if you want it. I can say nothing about it for myself for whether I shall ever want a book is more than human can tell.*

I wish to ask you whether I ever sent my Commission home, the last one or either of them, if not, I have lost them. I think I have sent them home but have no certain recollections of so doing.

Dont you all begin to grow impatient to have Hooker move? We did not expect to remain idle so long as we have, but we wait the good pleasure of Hooker, with as good grace as possible.

All are in good health that came from Fletcher & in fact all of our Co are well of those that are present only one being excused & that by a sore eye. The surgeons report for today was 6 in hospital & 10 in quarters, making 16 for the regt. We have reported absent sick from our Co, 7. We have a new Asst Surgeon, by the name of Noyes, rather young & green.

C K Leach

Monday Evening April 27th /63

As I did not send my letter away today I will make an addition to it. We have orders to be ready to march at an early hour tomorrow morning, with rations as before, only ten days instead of eight. I rather think we shall march tomorrow, for today has been a nice day with every prospect of the same tomorrow. I can but say I am ready & willing to move at any time that we are ordered so to do, for I consider it my duty.

Hoping for the best I remain

Yours

C K Leach

Tuesday morning, Eight O.C. & no orders have been received as yet to march, & I think it a little doubtful whether we move today, for it has every appearance of rain & that before night.

C. K. L.

[After the battles of Marye's Heights and Salem Heights]

Camp in the field
May 6th 1863

Dear Wife

I will send you just a line to let you know that I am yet alive & unharmed, but have had some rather tough work since I wrote to you last.

Our regt has had two hard fights, one & the hardest in charging on & taking the heights at Fredericksburg & the other the next day, & our loss is quite heavy.

Capt Tracy is wounded in the leg, & the loss of men in our Co is one killed, Sumner Parker, & ten wounded. Monroe Bingham is one of the number.

I have not seen Hollis since we went across the river on Saturday but guess he is all right somewhere. Musicians are apt to keep in a safe place.

We crossed back this side the river on the night of the 4th & reckon there will be no more fighting unless the Rebels cross the river themselves.

We have not succeeded in routing the rebels, but I can say that I am not ashamed of the actions of the 2nd Vt Regt in any thing they have done.

I will write you as soon as I can, & give you particulars, until then good bye

C K Leach

*Perhaps the reference is to a diary or daybook.

Camp 2nd Vt Regt
May 9th 1863

Dear Wife

I will make an attempt to write you a few lines this evening, but dont know as I shall make out much as it is about bed time now. I will tell you something of our doings since we left camp which we did on Tuesday the 28th April about noon. We marched down to within about a mile of the river at the point where we crossed in Dec, & halted for the night. The pontoons were carried to the river by hand & at day light Wednesday morning Gen Brooks threw some of his men across the river in the boats & drove the pickets away & held the place till the bridges were laid & then his whole division took a position across on the other side. Only the 6th Corps was at this point, the 1st Corps was two or three miles below, until Saturday when they marched up the river & only our Corps was left below the city. Just at night Saturday Brooks Division advanced their lines & the whole corps crossed the river. Sunday morning we took position on the right of Gen Brooks & the Light Brigade entered the city soon after daylight. We did not do much only skirmishing & canonading till about noon when a grand charge was made for the heights. The light Brigade was on the right & charged direct from the city, another column on the left of them & we were on the left & in rear of the 26th N.J. Regt, but before they got to the foot of the hill, they all broke up & our regt passed by them & pushed on all alone. When we arrived at the bottom of the hill we were out of danger of their Artillery & no Infantry was in sight.

Our Co was deployed as skirmishers in front & pushed on up to their earth works where we came in sight of the rebs artillery but they soon hauled off on a double quick & took a position farther back. We advanced over the hill & soon came in range of a line of Infantry & it was rather hot work for awhile, & I began to think we would have to retreat but we held out till other regts came to our support & then the rebs had to give away. I never got into a place where the air was quite as full of lead as it was for a short time after we got on top of those heights, & it almost seems a wonder how so many remained unhurt, & another wonder is how one regt stood alone as long as ours did before we had any aid.

Monroe Bingham & H Maxfield were wounded by shells before we came to the heights, & the rest, 10 in number from our Co after we got to the top. Our regt lost 108 in killed & wounded full one quarter, but the killed was only 11, very small in proportion, & some of the wounded were very slight, 4 of our Co being with us now. Capt Tracy has rather a bad wound in the leg below the knee, & Hiram Soule I learn has rather a severe wound in the side. Seargt. Ballard was wounded in the arm but is not going to lose it as at first reported. Three officers were wounded Tracy, Capt Crossman of Co F, wounded in knee & leg amputated, & Lieut Clark, acting adjutant.

We went back from the hill to get knapsacks & haversacks which were left before we made the charge & then marched up through the back part of the city on to the plank road & followed this road out, Gen Brooks Division in the front, & about three miles out he came upon the rebels & had rather severe fight, getting drove back at first, his loss was quite heavy.

The next morning we found rebels nearly all around us, having come around to our left & occupying the hill on which we had the fight the day before & getting between us & the city. We got into position as soon as possible expecting to be attacked, our brigade formed the rear line of our Division, & were some distance in rear of the first line. About 6 O.C. the rebels started on a run & a yell & the ground was fairly covered with them, being in so great numbers. They drove back our first line & came rushing on till they were almost in our faces when we opened on them & they were compelled to put back about as lively as they came up. We got a number of prisoners when they turned tail to us, & lost none from our Vt Regts. If they had forced us back they would have been in the rear of Gen Brooks & between him & the bridges & I reckon the 6th army Corps would have been about gone up, but they run on a snag that was not easily got out of the way. The loss of our regt at this time was 25 killed & wounded, one from Co H. Our Co did not suffer as the ground was so that it formed a protection to the right of the regt & two or three Cos. sustained nearly the whole loss. Soon an

Aid[e] came on the run & said the rebels were coming up a ravine on our left so our line had to be abandoned & a position taken farther back & to the left.

Our artillery soon got in position & if there were rebels in front they must have suffered, for they poured a terrible shower of Grape & canister into the piece of woods which was in front. At the same time that they made the charge on us they got some artillery in position & shelled our bridges, & came very near destroying one of them, so you see they thought they had us sure for they knew their numbers were far above ours. We withdrew across the river during the night, the last of the Corps crossing just at daylight.

Our Co. with others was out on the skirmish line & was not taken off till all the troops had crossed the river & when we were called in, we could not find the bridge for some time, & when we did find it it was not there, & we had to wait some time for a boat to take us across.

You can guess something how we felt, for we were expecting every minute to have the Rebs down on our heels. We found the regt about a mile from the river, & I reckon we were all glad to get a little rest, but the Rebs commenced shelling us & so we moved two or three miles towards Falmouth, where we staid till Friday, & where we were when I wrote you last with pencil. We came back to our old camp on Friday, but Gen Howe has moved his Division back about two miles, so we only got a sight of our old camp.

Our regt is going to move again from where we are now for better ground. Should [have] yesterday, only we were very busy with work.

I have not seen full accounts of the doings of the whole army, for when we commenced our move all papers were shut out of the army, but from all I know, I think it the greatest fight this army has ever made.

I have received a number of letters from you since we commenced to move, which I will answer soon.

Yours C K Leach

Sunday Eve May 10th 1863

Dear Wife

I seat myself this pleasant evening to pen you a few lines in answer to letters which I have received from you since we have been on the march. In the first place I will say that I am well, & Hollis's health is good also. Yesterday & today have been very nice pleasant days, & very warm, especially today.

For two or three days after we crossed back this side of the river we had considerable rain, but as it happened we had no marching to do till the rain was over.

About apple trees, if it is not too late, I am perfectly willing you should get some & have them set, if you could get them without any trouble. The old orchard is getting pretty well run out & I would like a new one growing. I am glad to hear that the wagon is all right, but I should not care to have it run around in the mud a great deal.

Our men that went home on furloughs last have got back & another set are on the docket, some have gone, & others will start in a day or two. Those that went last were rather lucky in getting out of the late fights, but as it has turned out with me I am glad I was there.

No sight for me a leave of absence this time but I reckon the time is not far distant.

I am alone with the Co at present, that is the only officer, the Capt being wounded & Sawyer is acting adjutant in place of Clark who was wounded also. There is a good deal to do at present, everything getting behind while we were on the move, & it will take about a fortnight to get things straightened out. After a battle more reports have to be made out than a horse can draw, & the men get out of clothing, & some things are lost, all of which has to be supplied new.

I lost nothing in the late move but have got a number of little notions which belonged to the rebels. One is a canteen & a nice one, the mans name worked on one side & the rebel flag on the other. I shall carry it home if ever I go home. I also got a good pair of socks out of one of their knapsacks. I foraged a little on purpose to see what I could find. If you have not sent another handkerchief you need not at present for this

one will answer till I come home or till I write you for one again. When the rebs got around between us & Fredericksburg, we supposed our baggage was all gone up, but it did not prove to be so. I thought my new clothes had gone for it, but it seems they did not enter the city, & nearly every thing that was there was taken back across the river. If they had entered the city in the morning they would have taken all the wounded of the day before, & a great many that were not wounded. I expected Hollis was taken, till I heard they did not go into the city.

When we crossed back this side of the river, about a dozen of our company got tipped over into the river, but they were near the shore & no damage was done only lost three guns from our Co, & that will be a loss to Uncle Sam. If I think of it in the morning, I will make out a list of the killed & wounded of our Co & send you. I have seen Philander Reed since the fight & he is all right. No more tonight.

Ever yours C K Leach

A list of Casualties of Co H in the late battles

Capt Tracy	wounded in leg badly
Seargt Henry L Ballard	wounded in arm
Corp Sumner E Parker	killed
Corp Adrian J Merrill	wounded slightly, now with Co
Private L M Bingham	" badly in leg
" H E Soule	" " in side
" George A White	" slightly, now with company
" Hampton Maxfield	" " " "
" Jerome Cutler	" " " "
" Norman E Lawson	" in foot
" Theodore Merrill	" " hand
" Robert N Worthing	" " leg badly
" Lewis H Estes	" slightly in head, second day

Camp 2nd Vt Regt
May 15th 1863

Dear Wife

I again seat myself for the purpose of writing you a few lines, in answer to letters received from you, one day before yesterday & another today, & also that you may know that I am still in the enjoyment of good health, & am pleased to hear the same good news from you. I hope you have received my letters before this time, so as not to be still in doubt for my safety. Nothing of great importance has transpired with us since the last time I wrote to you.

Our regiment has moved its camp into the woods about a quarter of a mile from where we were when I wrote you last. We will have a very pretty camp when we get it fixed up, but it takes some work for part of it had been burned over by fire running in the woods. We all turned out & worked on the ground a while before moving in & have been making improvements for the past three days, & still there is a chance for more.

We had a Brigade review on Tuesday, reviewed by Col Grant, & that is all of anything of the sort we have had.

The weather has been very warm this week, starting the sweat out of a fellow if he exercised any, but except the review & what labor we have done in our camp, little has been done by myself. Business has not been as driving of late as it was for a time after we came back from over the river. I get off from some duties requiring one to be absent from the regt on account of being the only Officer with the company.

We have to do a good deal of picket duty now, & the reason I suppose is because some of the regt[s] of our Division have gone home, their term of service having expired. One regt started this morning, the 33rd N.Y., & not a day passes now but one or more regts. leave the army. I reckon the 33rd did some tall cheering this morning just before they started for home, but the recruits that have joined the regts take it rather hard.

Furloughs are kept up yet, about a dozen, including two officers started from our regt Wednesday morning the 13th. John Ayers went from Co H. Another batch will be likely to go about the 1st of June.

I have heard nothing from our wounded except Monroe Bingham. Charles Blair got a letter from him yesterday, & he says old "Hans" is alive & smoking his pipe. The boys have called him Hans for some time.

I am glad to hear that you have got the wagon home, but should want him to finish it according to agreement.

It seems that Francis W has at last got married, hope he has got him a good wife. No more tonight. Saturday Morning / A pleasant day today, but quite cool. I have just been out to inspection, regt inspected by Brigade inspector, a thing we have done about three times a month.

Bing Chases Badge came in a letter last night I guess, for there is something in it but he has not been after his letter yet. I have one that came from N.Y. cost 50 cts got it the day before we crossed the river.

I guess I never told you that I have a watch. I bought one last summer, cheap one, & lately have made two swaps & have now a large Patent Lever one. Cost some less than \$30.00. We have just completed the Muster Rolls for March & April, but dont expect to get paid before 4 months are due.

Ever yours C K Leach

May 19th 1863

Dear Wife

A few moments this morning I will devote in writing you a line. Very pleasant weather we are having now, & very comfortable, not as hot as it was awhile ago when it was hot enough to roast niggers.

It cooled off with a thunder shower & a smart sprinkling of wind, which at first rather made the dust fly.

I have to say once more that I am well & will be very glad to be able to say the same in time to come.

Hollis is well. He went & saw Nelson Smith a day or two since, found him well. Nelson says that their Corps did no fighting in the late battles after they went up from below Fredericksburg to the right. They did but a very little below, only to lay the bridges & occupy the other side of the river.

The Officers of this Brigade have procured a set of Silver plate to be presented to Gen'l Brooks. The cost was \$500, or at least that was the amount to be raised. I saw it at Col Grants quarters yesterday. There are eight pieces of it, a teapot, pitcher, cream pitcher, sugar bowl, poy or punch bowl, two goblets, & a Salver. Each piece has the initials of his name & also one of the engagements which he was in with the brigade. At first a horse was to be bought, with equipments, but something that would always last, suited nearly all better. I have an interest of two dollars & fifty cts in the set. Gen Brooks is gone at present but as soon as he returns the presentation will take place. It is to be presented by Col Grant. I hope it will be my fortune to be present at the time. Some pretense will be gotten up to get him to Col Grants H^d Quarters & we will all be notified of the time he is to come.

A large fatigue went out from this regt as well as others, yesterday to prepare ground for Gen Hookers H^d Quarters. He is going to move from where he has been all winter, & establish himself about a mile from our camp. It does not look like an immediate move for him to be moving his H^d Quarters & laying out so much labor in preparing the ground. Ever since we came back this side of the river, some folks have had us gone or just going over again, but I never could see it. Every day now regiments are leaving as their times having expired, & I can see no signs of anything being done to keep the army good in numbers, but perhaps the work is going on. I hope so.

All is quiet on the Rappahannock, except occasionally a slight skirmish brought about by parties getting down a little too much whiskey, quite a battle yesterday on those grounds, parties not belonging in the ranks, it takes more money than most of them have to get up a big row.

Yours Ever
C K Leach

Camp 2nd Vt Regt
May 23rd 1863

Dear Wife

I got into camp this afternoon from a three days tour of picket duty, & found two letters from you on arriving in camp, glad to hear that you are well. My health is good which is as good news as I have to write.

The weather has been very hot for some days past, & the hardest part of my picket was going out & coming in again. The duties on picket are not much only being out three days, but the weather was nice & I did not have a bad time, got bit by the mosquitoes some & took a couple of good sweats marching out & in.

We have to go about three miles & our picket line runs from near Belle Plain Landing towards the Rappahannock we being on the left next the Landing.

I was absent at the presentation to Gen Brooks of the Silver Set by going on picket.

Our Division was reviewed by Gen Sedgwick on Wednesday morning. I went to the review before going on picket. Our reg never marched better than at that time.

I find some improvements made about our camp while I was gone, they have policed the ground all around the camp, & find bough houses & arbors growing everywhere.

I hear that Capt Tracy is bad off & is not expected to live. This hot weather is bad for wounded men.

Charles Blair got a letter from Monroe tonight, from Brattleboro Vt. Ballard is there also.

Charles Blair is doing what little work I have for him to do at present. I think there is a chance for him to go home, sometime if furloughs are continued. I can not tell exactly when (if ever) I shall be home.

I am glad to hear that you have got the allotted money or probably have by this time. There is some prospect of our being paid again before a great while, two months pay.

Unless you can get money if needed I think you had better keep a small amount by you, yet I am in hopes that I will not have to call on you for any, especially if we are paid soon. I have had to pay out some for the Co for rations that run short by carrying eight days on the march. I have about a hundred dollars yet but owe a months board or more out of it, & expect every day that Sawyer will be calling for some.

Capt Tracy has Co Fund in his possession to pay for all I pay out for the Co & I wish I had some of it.

I got a letter from Florilla Leach today & also one from Estes who was wounded from our Co, he is in Washington & doing well, he was wounded slightly in the head. Hollis got a letter from Nelson M. They are all well. Nelson Smith was here yesterday but of course I did not see him. I hope you may be able to read this. No more this time

C K Leach

[Letter from Nelson Smith to Cousin Jane Chase]

Camp near White Oak Church Va
May 23rd 1863

Cousin Jane,

Your letter came to hand yesterday. I had just returned from a visit to the 2nd Vt. I saw Hollis but Chester was on picket so I did not see him. We are camped about two miles and a half apart and if we do not move soon I intend to visit them pretty often. You wish me to give to you all the particulars of the late battle

here. I will tell you all that I saw. As to what other commands done I know not only from report. Our Corps commanded by Reynolds was ordered to cross the river below the 6th Corps about 1 mile and a half. The balance of the army having crossed river a long way above Freds'bg. The 6th Corps effected crossing some time in the night or early in the morn. They had very little trouble in getting across as the rebs were not very anxious to molest them. The night was quite dark and a dense fog made everything look dismal. From a conversation I heard tell between the Gen and our Col I learned that our regt was to take the lead in crossing and that everything must be done as quietly as possible for the rebels had entrenchments thrown upon the south bank of the river and if we could not crawl on to them and surprise them they would be apt to give us some trouble. But it is impossible to move a heavy pontoon train without considerable noise and I was not surprised when they were attempting to launch the boats to hear the report of a score of rifles and the merry whistling of as many balls. It was nearly daylight and as we found we could not catch them napping. The Gen concluded I guess that he had better wait until it was light enough so we could see what we had to contend with as no further attempts were made then to cross. When the light of day came it revealed to our admiring gaze a long line of rifle pits on the opposite bank and a host of heads stuck up above the parapet. Our regt and the 24th Mich of our Brigade were drawed up in line along the bank on this side and were ordered to give the rebs a volley or two which they did.

The rebs returned the fire with spirit and it was found to be of little use to engage them that way as they were on a higher bank than we were and had the advantage of rifle pits.

The infantry was then ordered back out of range. One regt however had got a good position on a little knoll and they peppered away at the rebs whenever one showed himself. One of our batteries was then ordered to open on them which they did and such getting up and dusting you never saw. About nine O Clock the battery had got the rebs scared so that they made but little stir and their shots were few and scattering. Our men seized this as their best chance to cross. Accordingly one regt was detailed to launch the boats for our boys to cross in. The boats were run down to the waters edge in less than five minutes. After they started with them they had no more than touched the water before our boys were into them and shooting across to the other bank like arrows. It was not to see who should stay behind but who would be the first across. The company to which I belong won the laurels. About the youngest boy we have in our company was the first on the other bank and our Lieut was the second.

When the rebs saw our men making another attempt to cross they tried to drive them back but they did not know they had the old Iron Brigade to deal with. A good many of our boys were wounded in the boats. One fellow belonging to Company K got shot through the head and he fell over backwards into the water. It was the last that was seen of him.

As soon as our boys reached the other bank they charged on the rebs killing and wounding some and taking a good many prisoners. By the time our boys had cleared the rifle pits right in front the 24th was across. Then come the fun. The rebs above and below seeing we had taken the rifle pits in front of the landing thought their safest plan was to retreat and off they bolted like so many wild sheep but the Wisconsin boys legs were most too long for them and they were overhauled before they got far. We captured upwards of two hundred prisoners and buried 27 of their killed. Our regt lost 16 wounded and 3 killed. It was not long before the pontoon bridge was put down and a sufficient force across to hold the position we had gained.

Our pickets were thrown out to within a quarter of a mile of the Bowling Green road the rebel pickets holding the road. On the night of the 30th our men threw up entrenchments and were told that if they would hold that position until twelve O Clock the next day Gen Hooker would have them fast. The men said they would hold that place or be buried there.

We were not molested however by any of the rebel infantry. Their artillery tried their range on us every little while but they were not good shots for they never hurt a man in our regt.

The morning of the 2nd we were ordered to recross the river and join Hooker near Chancellorsville. We marched until ten that night, got up again at 2 in the morning of the 3rd, and crossed the river at U.S. Ford. We

reached the front lines about 4 O Clock. They were having a pretty severe fight and I expected our boys would have to go right in but they did not and from that until we left on the 6th we never fired again. There was firing going on all the time but they did not need us. If we had been left where we first crossed we would have saved Sedgwick a good many men after he had taken the heights we could [have] held back any force they had to bring against us.

We probably would not have been called off if the 11th Corps had behaved anything like soldiers. But they broke and run losing all the ground and available positions that the other troops had gained. We started back on the 6th and if ever I was tempted to sell my birthright for a mess of potage it was that morning. It had rained the night before and the mud was half knee deep. To keep out of it was an impossibility. The best one could do was to keep from falling down.

I saw several boys in our regt fall down and I would have defied anyone to tell what kind of clothes they had on. The mud was thin and it was just like falling into water. You may well believe we were a sweet looking set when we halted that night.

On the 7th we reached our present camps. Four regts of our Brigade have gone somewhere on an expedition. They took three days rations with them and last night there was three more sent to them. I do not know where they have gone more than they started in the direction of Port Royal on the Rappahannock.

I am sorry that you feel discouraged about the war for despondency at home soon breeds discontent in the Army. The Army of the Potomac has got too much confidence in the abilities of our present commander to lightly consider the consequences of any move he makes.

They know well enough if we were not victors in the last struggle it was no fault of Gen Hookers. The campaign was a short one but it revealed the fact that Hooker is a brave and able General worthy of the esteem of every true patriot let him be soldier or civilian.

No one except the confounded nine months and two years men whose time was nearly out had at the time of our retreat or even now anything to say against Gen Hooker and even among them there is some generous enough to give him his just dues.

I do not consider we were whipped for they never could drive us from the position we held on the last few days of the fight. The heaps of their slain in front of our rifle pits and batteries will fully prove this assertion.

The loss of the Army must be heavy but I do not believe it is as heavy as the enemies. Our army is growing smaller every day. Nine months men are leaving and every day or two some of the two years men leave. We cannot do much with our present force but whenever old Joe gives the word forward he will be answered by a cheer of consent from his men. Our Brigade is commanded by Gen Meredith and the division by Gen Wadsworth. The name Iron Brigade was given us by Gibbons when he commanded us and the Governor and people of our state have since known us by that name. We are 4th Brigade, 1st Division, 1st Corps Army of the Potomac so it brings us on the extreme left of the Army. If our boys come back all right and they meet with any rebs I will tell you in my next. They left us drummers to guard the camp while they are gone.

Dont write to me about your letters being tedious after this for they are not. I dont care how much you write and if they are not pretty long I shall read them over two or three times so you will gain nothing by writing a short letter.

Nell Smith

May 26th 1863

Dear Wife

I have no news to write from this quarter, but thought I would write a little that you might know that I am still well. Our hot weather caught a very sudden cold Sunday night, & yesterday was almost cold enough

to make a fire necessary to keep one comfortable. We had no rain here, but there must have been some somewhere to make such a change in the weather. The wind came from the east, so I reckon it was to the east of us.

The news from the west for the past few days has been good, & I hope we shall not be compelled to deduct any thing from it hereafter. What an everlasting dust is being kicked up. The whole regiment are turned out sweeping the camp, & I can hardly see or breath[e], & covers my paper so that it makes big marks.

We commenced yesterday to have Company drills, have got to have two per day.

I have got me a ivory ring made, & I call it very good one, making cost one dollar, made of a whales tooth, but I presume you will say "thats a lie," truth, nevertheless, the tooth I mean, not the lie. Our paymaster sent a line to Col Grant the other day saying that if sickness did not prevent he should be here the first of this week to pay us. I hope & pray that his health may be preserved. No doubt but we shall be paid within a short time, so whatever I said about money in my last letter you need not mind, for Sawyer will probably not want his if he gets paid soon.

Our absent furloughed men will return on Thursday, that is if they come on time. I am in for a shake next time, but cant say whether I shall get it or not, for I expect a number will try for it. So unless I come home about the time you get this I shall not come for some time.

I will close for this time.

C K Leach

Sunday Morning

May 31st 1863

Dear Wife

I seat myself again this morning to pen you a few lines that you may know that I am still well.

The last time I wrote I said unless I got home about the time that reached you, I should probably not be home for some time, all of which seems to be in a fair way to be very correct. You will know very well that I did not get home, & I know very well that there are no signs that I will be home very soon in future. All leaves of absence & furloughs have been cut down, except on Surgeons certificate, to five days, & then only in very urgent cases. You can see, that unless a new order is issued in relation to the matter, going home is played out. I hope the thing will be continued again, & rather think it will.

We have been paid two months pay since I wrote you before, but we were not as much in need of it as most of the times we have been paid. Money was neve[r] so plenty with us before pay day as it was this time, of course some were out & always will be a week after being paid.

I only got \$34.94, but I have a plenty unless Sawyer calls for his that I borrowed of him. Nelson Smith was here again yesterday, well.

The wind has blown hard since yesterday morning & the way the dust flies is not slow. Some of the time you cant see two rods, & it is impossible to keep clean by washing & brushing all of the time.

I received two letters from you Friday night, mailed Friday & Monday before, glad to hear that you were all in good health. I received a letter from Monroe a day or two since from Burlington & one last night from Vernon Rood, he is at Hampton & Ward Master in the Hospital. I guess he calculates to serve the rest of his time there if possible. We have two or three absent from our Co the same way that he is.

No more this time.

C K Leach

P.S. By the prospect of going home being gone, I shall have to send for some more postage stamps.

[Before the second battle of Fredericksburg]

Camp 2nd Vt Regt
June 2nd 1863

Dear Wife

I once more seat myself to drop you a line to let you know of my health & C. My health remains good as yet, & every thing seems to be moving along about the same as usual. We have had an awful time with the dust for the past three days, & whether today will be as bad remains to be seen, but there is some wind this morning & a little increase will make the dust fly again. Windy days & still nights has been the order, & as nice nights as were ever seen. I saw an eclipse on the moon last evening.

Our Band has at last arrived, came on Sunday. Yesterday morning they officiated at picket guard mounting, & last night they were present with our Regt at Dress parade. I guess they will be good when they have a little practice. I guess they are all good musicians but need practice together to make all things lovely. It will be pleasant a great many times to have a Band to make music.

There is nothing new in regard to furloughs & may not be at all. I am sorry that they were cut down, for I had got my mind made pretty strongly that I was going home, but the disappointment I feel is not half as bad as the feelings I have had sometimes.

I suppose it will all be the same in the end.

The wind increases & the dust begins to fly, & I reckon we are going to have another nasty dusty day.

Our boys have a swing to amuse themselves with. They have got a large pole about 30 feet from the ground between two pine trees, notched in at the ends, & a swing made of old trace chains picked up around the old camps, hung from that. It is just in the lower end of our Co street. The boys pass off many hours with it.

I wrote you a while since that Capt Tracy was not expected to live, but we hear since that he is doing well. I got Vouchers for Co savings from him lately which I shall try & get the money on, he sent me 7 month & I have got two more since he was wounded, & the whole must amount to four or five hundred dollars, which if I can get, will be of use to the Co.

Sawyer is acting adjutant yet but I am afraid he will have to come back to the Co. I hope not for I had rather be alone. Lately he keeps himself perfectly pickled with Liquor all the time, & if he dont hold up, I guess he will leave the adjutants office.

I wish you would send me a few one cent postage stamps. I had a few papers wrappers but they are all gone, & sometimes I want to send papers.

Sorry to hear of Uncle Sherwoods death, but he leaves no small children that were dependent on him for support. Hollis is well, & has occupied his time a good deal this summer in keeping fife makers in employment. No more this time.

C K Leach

[Report of the second battle of Fredericksburg]

Camp near Falmouth Va
June 8th 1863

Dear Wife

I again seat myself for the purpose of writing you a few lines. We are now on the north side of the river near Falmouth, came from the other side last night, were relieved by other troops, who took our position.

We left camp a little past noon on Friday & marched to the river at our old crossing place. Our Division were all the troops there except some engineer regts that were there with the pontoons before us. Soon after we got to the river the Artillery was got in position & a heavy fire opened on the rifle pits on the opposite

bank of the river. Soon after a heavy line of skirmishers were sent to the front, which was soon followed by the pontoons. At this the rebels commenced a musket fire from their rifle pits.

The boats were got into the river & some of the 26th N.J. & 5th Vt were put across & made a rush up the bank & on their rifle pit, & took nearly all there was there prisoners, some where in the neighborhood of 75 in number.

Our Brigade were all put across in boats & were all the troops over that night. There was some skirmishing on Saturday, & the 6th lost some. The rest of our Division crossed over on Saturday & yesterday (Sunday) another Division crossed over & we came back this side after dark.

I have not heard of any one being hurt in our Regt.

All seems to be quiet today each party watching the other. I hardly think we shall attack the rebels unless it is thought they have sent away a considerable number of their troops, but they may take it into their heads to attack us & try to annihilate what little force there is over the river, but if they do they will have to employ a much larger force than ours, & sustain a great loss in doing it.

Our men threw up rifle pits last night so it will be better than when we were there. Our move was rather a surprise to us & I rather guess it was also to the rebels, & they seemed to be very lively the next day after we crossed.

The weather has been quite cool since we had a thunder shower Saturday just at night.

I have received two letters from you since I wrote last, & glad to hear of your continued good health. I should think your bees might do well this year, if the weather was good for them, they are swarming so early.

I dont know whether we shall go over the river again or not unless an attack is made on the rebels. Our Corps I think is all that have moved as yet.

I shall write as often as convenient.

Chester

Fairfax Court House
June 18th 1863

Dear Wife

Perhaps you think I have forgotten you because I have not written for so long a time, but circumstances have been such that I could not very well write.

After writing to you last I went on picket down the river on the north side & remained out four days, came in from picket Friday night about midnight, & Saturday night just after dark we started on our march northerly & find ourselves about a mile from Fairfax Court house on the road to Centerville.

It will be impossible to give details as I would like to but will do the best I can. We had a very good time on picket. The right of our line was opposite the left of our skirmish line on the other side of the Rappahannock, & extended down the river to where the 1st Corps crossed the 1st of May. The most we had to do was to keep the pickets the right side of the river, for the men would swim over to exchange papers, coffee tobacco etc. Two or three of Co H swam over, & we kept posted on the news from Richmond as long as we were out.

We had a thunder shower Saturday night just before we started from Fredericksburg & we had rather a muddy time of it for a short distance & we were rather a rough looking set of men the next morning. We halted near the railroad at Potomac Creek & remained there till Sunday night when we marched again & made no halt only for rests till we got to Dumfries in the afternoon. We passed our old camp on Aquia Creek where we first camped when we went to the vicinity of Fredericksburg.

Monday was a very hot day & a great many were compelled to fall out, & we got stories of a few dying from the effects of the heat. We left Dumfries early on Tuesday morning & made a march of 20 miles

arriving at Fairfax Station at dark where we remained yesterday, & marched here this morning, a distance of 4 or 5 miles.

We passed the camp of the 14th Vt Tuesday where we made a halt of a couple of hours, but I did not find a man that I knew, but yesterday I saw a number from the 13th 12th & the Cavalry that came from our part of the state. I saw H Nichols, Henry Parsons, Sanford Wells, Lester Warren, Wallace White, & today Cornelius Ellis & H Boomhower have been here. I saw many others that I knew, they had to come 5 or 6 miles but our camp was full all day, & I guess they thought we were a tough lot of men, for Whiskey was plenty & a great many drunk.

Today is an awful hot day, no shade will keep a person cool so but the sweat pours out.

I have received your letters all regular, got one yesterday & glad to hear from you as yet being well, the postage stamps came all right, the one cent yesterday.

You want to know what I think about letting Cephas Carpenter have some money. I am willing if you can get together 300 dollars or any amount he would take that you have, perhaps I could send you enough to make 300, if I knew how much you wanted. I have 75 dollars now & have paid Sawyer 20 that I owed him & have paid out about 20 for the Co which I shall have if I ever get the Co Savings.

A squad of Rebel prisoners have just gone by here, they were taken this morning somewhere in the front, there was towards a hundred of them.

I suppose you are getting exciting news about this time of the Rebels in Pa. & Maryland. It is nothing more than I have expected, & if they would only kill a few thousand of a certain class, I think it would be a good thing, & I guess it will bring the north to their senses a little as it is.

It would be impossible to tell where we will be in a week from this time for it will depend entirely on the movements of the rebels, & I dont suppose it is exactly known what they do intend to do yet, whether they will move their whole army north or only their Cavalry just for a Raid to destroy property. I rather guess they will try & capture Harpers Ferry again but reckon they will have to fight some though before they get it. Robert Worthing one of our men that was wounded, died in the Hospital the 7th of this month, he was from Bakersfield.

There is every appearance of a shower tonight for it thunders all around, & begins to get a little cooler than it has been. It will also do some good to lay the dust.

I believe I will close this & you must excuse the writing for I know it is awful bad, besides being wrote with a pencil.

Ever yours, Chester

Fairfax Court House
June 20th /63

Dear Wife

I write you just a line today. We are at the same place as when I wrote last but expect to move every minute.

We had a pretty hard shower last night & also night before, & it is cool today. I got a letter from you last night.

I will enclose state orders to the amount of 35 dollars, which you can get the money on.

The mail is just going out & I will have to close. Yours C K Leach

Bristow Station
June 22nd

I was a little too late to get this in the mail, so now I will put in a little more. You can see by the heading that we have moved since I wrote the first, marched soon after I wrote, & went by Centerville & from there to Manassas Junction then down the Railroad to this place which is the next station below Manassas.

I dont know as there is anything but our Division here & think there is not. There was a squad of Cavalry here when we came but they left the next morning.

I think it is for a reconaissance, the 2nd Corps went on the old Bull Run road & heavy canonading was heard in that direction all day yesterday, so I reckon they found a few rebels.

On the march here our regiment was in the front & our Co 30 or 40 rods in front of the regt, but as we found no rebels we could not display our fighting qualities.

The Regt had to go on picket at night after getting here & staid out till last night when we were relieved by the 5th Vt.

The Occoquan Creek runs just in front of us & the pickets are on different roads on the other side.

I believe you asked in one of your letters whether Sawyer had ever acted adjutant before. He acted adjutant while Clark was gone home on Leave of absence last winter 15 days. Our Adjutants name is Edgerton & is now on Gen Howes Staff. He has not been with the regiment since Gen Brooks left this Brigade. Co Whiting, on taking command of the Brigade, took him for his A. A. G. (Acting Assistant Adjutant General)

When General Howe took command of the Brigade he kept him as Aid De Camp, & has kept him as such ever since.

If you get the money on the orders you can keep it & use it unless I should send for it. All are well
C K L

[Letter preceding the battle of Gettysburg]

Wednesday July 1st 1863

Dear Wife

I will improve the few leasure moments that I have this morning in penning you a few lines that you may know I am still alive.

I presume I can not tell you where we are so you will know much about it, but we are not far from the State line between Maryland & Pennsylvania, 4 or 5 miles south in Maryland.

We came here last night & expect to march on again today. I dont know any thing about the army except the 6th Corps. Our Brigade led yesterday & will have to bring up the rear today, but the front has not started yet.

We left Bristow Station last Thursday night just at dark, & marched to Centerville in the rain & dark. Friday morning we started very early, & marched north & camped at Drainsville, a pretty hard march as we had but little rest the night before & then it rained nearly all day. We saw the 2nd Vt Brigade in the morning, we passed by them, & they passed us the next day at night.

Saturday we marched & crossed the Potomac river into Maryland at Edwards Ferry & halted there over night. Sunday we made a long march but where we halted or where we marched I cant tell, but we passed a number of villages, & marched some on the same road that we did last fall. We passed through Poolesville, Barnsville & Hyattsville.

Monday we made another long march, & passed through the villages of New Market & Ridgeville, crossed the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad at Monrovia Station. Yesterday we passed through but one village & that was Westminster, and a very nice looking place it was too & pretty good size. The rebels were there the day before. We are now about two miles from the town of Manchester.

We have never done such marching before, but our men have stood it first rate, only it makes them foot sore. The weather has been very cool, but it has rained some nearly every day so it has been disagreeable under foot & some of the time quite muddy.

I never stood marching so well as this summer, healthy and hearty all the time.

There is not much to be found on this march except cherries & those are very plenty, they are larger than black cherries & a good deal better, some are black & some red.

We have had no mail since we came into Maryland, & no time to write. I shall put this into the first village Post office I come to. We get no papers & therefore know nothing what is going on around us, only just what we see. My last letter I sent from Bristow Station & sent some State orders in it, hope you may get it.

C K Leach

[After the battle of Gettysburg and before the battle of Funkstown]

Near Boonsboro Md
July 9th /63

Dear Wife

I will pencil a few lines to you that you may know I am still alive and well, but cant say what is before us yet to come.

I sent you a line from Manchester, but dont know as you have received it. Since that time there has been hard fighting but we did not have any hand in it although we were on the field. July 1st our Corps started from Manchester at dark & marched that night & arrived on the field about the time the fighting commenced the 2nd. We marched about 30 miles during the night & day. The next morning our Brigade was placed in line on the extreme left & in position to prevent the rebels coming around on the left flank of the line. We remained there all day and through the fight and only a few stray shells came anywhere near us. I think I never heard such canonading as on the 3rd of July, but the particulars of the fight you will get from papers. We kept in the same position till Sunday the 5th when our Corps was sent to the front to follow the rebs. We came on their rear a little before night and waked them up with Artillery. Every house & barn for three or four miles from the battle field was filled with their wounded which they had to leave behind. Monday the 6th we did not move till dark, when we took a road to the left & marched to Emmetsburg where we found 2 or 3 other corps.

Tuesday we marched towards Frederick but before we got there turned to the right & took a kind of a cow path & marched over a mountain, the like of which we never did before. I[t] was rough dark & muddy, & rained hard, one could not see a man four feet from him.

Yesterday, (Wednesday 8th) we marched six or eight miles to Middletown and today crossed over the mountain to Boonsboro, & where and when the next move will be I cant tell. The cavalry were fighting near here yesterday but have heard none today. The whole army nearly is in this vicinity & perhaps another battle is before us. I got a letter from you the 1st & we have had no mail since.

I have had a diarrhea a few days of late but am well now. The 13th Vt started for home today, they will have big stories to tell. I saw a number of them yesterday & they were feeling first rate to think they were going home. I sent my rebel canteen by Julius Safford, I did not give it to him myself for I did not think of it when I saw him but sent it to him by another & if he got it I guess he will get it home safe & you can get it there.

Sanford Wells I hear was wounded but I think not seriously. Lately we have seen the 2nd Vt Brigade & Vt Cavalry very often & today we came by the 12th Vt.

I reckon the Rebels howl about as bad as they made Pennsylvania howl, & rather guess they will stay in Virginia for a while when they get there.

Vicksburg is reported as taken & if so they have received a hard blow all around. I did not see much of the battle field at Gettysburg but what I did see told of hard fighting, but a good share of the rebels had been buried, all that were where they could get them.

The rebels on their retreat burned nearly all the fences near the road for five or six miles & made it look rather desolate.

General Stannard was wounded but dont know how bad, wounded they say with a nail.

There has been a great deal of rain lately & mud has been plenty, but we have had the advantage of cool weather during our time of marching. I hear that we are going to have a mail so I will wait & see what I get.

I got a letter mailed June 26th from you and glad to hear that you were all well. I also got some papers which I have not yet opened. It is now near dark & I can hear skirmishing at a distance in front. I will close hoping for the privilege of writing again.

Yours C K Leach

[After the battle of Funkstown]

July 13th 1863

Dear Wife

I will make an attempt to write a few lines today but presume I will not have time to finish before it will be "pack up & be ready to move," for that is the order nowadays. We are now in the vicinity of Funkstown a village about two miles from Hagerstown towards Boonsboro. Came here yesterday afternoon from a short distance below Funkstown.

The next day after writing to you at Boonsboro we advanced along the pike, the cavalry in front & our brigade the first of the Infantry. We advanced five or six miles, the cavalry dismounted & skirmishing & drove the rebels to near Funkstown where they were found in stronger force, & our Brigade relieved the cavalry. There was some pretty severe skirmishing during the day but the number of casualties was not large. Six or eight killed & 40 or 50 wounded in our Brigade, one killed in our regt. from Co K. Co H was not engaged, but with two other Cos. were supporting a battery till dark, when we went out as support to the line & at midnight relieved those on the line, where we remained till the next day when another Brigade took our places, & we went back to where the troops were camped, there was no firing while we were on the line. Afternoon) As I expected we have had to move & have been building earthworks in front of us.

It is a rainy nasty day today, & yesterday it rained hard while we were marching, but for three or four days past it has been very hot.

I will be very glad if we can ever again have a chance to camp & rest, & have a chance to clean up. I have not seen my trunk since the 1st & have no change of clothes, but I went to the creek day before yesterday & washed my shirt & drawers & put them on again wet. My boots & socks gave out & I have got some government shoes & socks & also a pr. of some drawers. I received two letters from you last night, & one more after writing at Boonsboro, so I have got them up to date of July 4th.

I am sorry to hear that Zina is so bad off but hope he may come out of it all right. I shall be very anxious to hear from him again & hope I may have the luck to get your next in good season.

Gen Smith was here yesterday & I suppose he has some force somewhere in this vicinity, as he has command of a Militia force. The 3rd Brigade of our Division rejoined us yesterday. They left us after leaving Gettysburg, they following the rebels & we going to Emmetsburg & coming down east of the mountains.

I must close if I wish to send this out, for now there is a chance.

Yours C K L

Near Boonsboro Md

July 15th /63

Dear Wife

I seat myself again to pen you a line not knowing when I shall have another opportunity. We marched to this place today from Williamsport & a very hot day it has been too. Yesterday morning it was found that the rebels had left our front & so we marched to the river at Williamsport.

Our Cavalry came on some of them on this side of the river & captured a few hundred of them & two pieces of Artillery. They kept their doings a secret or I reckon they would have not got over as well as they did. I suppose some will blame Gen Meade for letting them cross the river, but it is impossible to tell the doings of an enemy unless you attack them in force or have means of getting around them, for 25 thousand will show as good a front as 100 thousand.

I dont know what our movement will be now, but make a guess that in a week we will be in the vicinity of Centerville or Fairfax. The 1st Corps was near us last night so Hollis & I went to see Nelson Smith but did not find him as he was taken prisoner at Gettysburg. He was taking care of wounded men in Hospital.

I saw a sight yesterday that beats all I ever saw. A Negro boy that the rebels left in a barn, entirely naked. His breast & bowels were scratched or cut & the Drs said that turpentine had been put on him, & also his privates had been cut off. I went in the barn to see him but it was rather dark. He lay on his back, his legs bent knees up, & grating his teeth & frothing at the mouth & seemed to take no notice of anything, & his breast & bowels looked as though they had been cut & then burned all over. I understood the reason of the act to be because he would not go over the river with them.

I have just got a Baltimore paper of today & the news is good except the riot which they are having.* Rumors today of the surrender of Port Hudson with 18000 prisoners, which I hope will prove true. Charleston is also getting another smell of burned powder & some of their batteries taken.

You said in one of your letters that Ceph wanted a stone that was in the lane. I dont know as I care about letting him have it. I shall probably have use for it if ever I get around home. I was glad to hear that you had rec'd those orders for I was afraid they were gone. I sent a letter to William when we were at Bristow Station which I hope he may get for it had 5 dollars in it which I sent him, thinking perhaps it might be more benefit to him than to me. I have got no letter from you since I wrote last.

C K Leach

Camp near Berlin Md
July 18th 1863

Dear Wife

I again seat myself to pen you a line to let you know that I am well. We came to this place day before yesterday from Boonsboro, where I wrote you last, a very good days march, & pretty warm too. We came through Middletown, & passed not far from Burketsville. Yesterday it rained nearly all day & we busied ourselves with making Muster Rolls & such like. We have had no time to make our muster rolls since the last of June, the time of muster until now, & I hope we shall get the pay on them as soon as possible.

We expected to cross the river today but it is now near noon & no orders. I am afraid I will not be able to march for a day or two on account of a sore heel made by my shoe rubbing off the hide.

Wakefield came here yesterday, & I had quite a visit with him, he is with Quartermaster Pitkin, who is now at Berlin. I have received no letters of late, but perhaps will be lucky enough to get one tonight.

We got a sight of our Baggage since we came here the first time since the 1st of July, but it only makes the more work to do, for it has been so long since we have had any chance to do any thing, or any thing to do with, it all comes in a heap. I worked till morning till night yesterday with a good deal of help, & then hardly got straightened up. Now we have clothing to get & deliver to the men. I hope we will march from here soon, so we will get where there is a prospect of a short rest. No more this time.

Ever yours C K Leach

*Rioting against the draft was particularly widespread in New York City in the summer of 1863 (Jeffrey D. Marshall, ed., *A War of the People: Vermont Civil War Letters* [Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1999], 165).

Camp near Warrenton Va
July 26th 1863

Dear Wife

After about a weeks marching I have the privilege of *commencing* a line to you, & hope to have a chance to finish it.

We crossed the river into Va last Sunday, one week ago today & have marched every day since but one. till today & perhaps will have to now before night. We came the same route that we did last fall, untill we got in the vicinity of White Plains & then kept to the right down near the Blue Ridge, & marched & counter-marched till yesterday, when we came here. The 1st Div of our Corps has not been with us since we were at Salem near the Manassas Gap Railroad & only two Divisions of us have been together & I suppose we were sent to support the Cavalry if needed but we only got within hearing of canonading once or twice.

We have had some very hot weather lately to march in & I presume a great many are in the rear yet unable to pick up, we have one from our Co. We lost two men from our Co while in Md, one of them deserted, a frenchman, & one got a pass to ride in an ambulance & has failed to make his appearance since, his name was Start from Bakersfield.

I received 2 letters from you while at Berlin after writing to you, & was glad to hear that Zina was on the gain & hope he may be well nearly by this time.

We have had no mail lately nor papers or any thing else & therefore know nothing of what has transpired for about a week. I saw a list of the drafted men, that some one had sent in a letter, of Fletcher, Fairfax Fairfield, & Bakersfield, & see they got Zinas name & also Brother Waits, & that is rather hard for him, but as for Zina I should think after one has offered their services & they had been refused, they ought not to be hauled over the coals again, & hope he will get clear of it. I find N F Woods name amongst them too, but I suppose \$300. will clear him from it. They were rather hard on the Carpenter family to take three, & I would like to be where I could see the flying around there has been since the draft.

We have a detail of men after the drafted men & expect soon to see them down here, & then more work for us.

Our present camp is three or four miles nearly west from Warrenton, which is in sight of us. The 5th Corps came in & camped near us today.

We expect a mail tonight & hope I may get one from you. All are well, but I have marched with a pretty sore heel & is sore yet.

C K L

Camp near Warrenton Va
August 2nd 1863

Dear Wife

I seat myself once more for the purpose of penning you a few lines hoping it may find you in good health. For different reasons I have not written since last Sunday, one week ago today, one reason was that I went on picket Tuesday & was out till Friday (3 days) & then Saturday (yesterday) we had to move our camp about a mile. Our Div all moved camp about a mile farther from Warrenton than they were, in a south west direction on a Pike that leads somewhere but I dont know where. Our camps are near the branch of the Rappahannock river, & our Regt has one of the hottest holes we have ever been in for a summer camp, in a hollow with hills all around us.

Yesterday I think was the hottest day I ever saw, at least I felt the heat the worst, not a breath of air & it was just about as bad in the shade as in the sun.

We have all spent the sabbath today in making houses, & have now got fixed up so it looks more like liv[ing] than for a long time before. I have the great luxury of a table to write on tonight, constructed out of

rough dirty boards, a privilege I have not had for nearly two months. Our house too is on a grand scale, the ridge is so very high that a man who does not boast of a greater height than myself can stand entirely upright in it. The walls of it are made by nailing boards on four stakes driven into the ground & are about three feet high. The roof of course is a shelter tent which is hung over a pole supported at each end by a small crotch. Both ends of our house is almost entirely open, & now you know about what we live in.

Some might ask where the boards come from that are used to fix up tents. The same person if ever acquainted here, & should ever travel this way again might ask another question, & that is, where are all the buildings that once stood here?

Our Brigade have torn down since yesterday noon some four or five buildings of considerable size. Of course they were not occupied houses but every unoccupied house, barn or shed has to contribute to the soldiers comfort.

All citizens that are found here now are strong secesh, the country is almost entirely destitute of anything growing in the grain line, & I dont know how the inhabitants that are here get a living. I have received three letters within the past week from you the last one mailed last Monday & got to the regt Thursday night, the soonest I have received one for a great while. If you sent one the Friday before, I have not received it. I am glad to hear that Zina was on the gain, & hope that by this time he may be able to (get clear of the draft).

My Candle is going out & the mail goes out early & I am obliged to cut this short.

I believe you wanted to know if I wanted you to let Cephas have more than \$300.00. I am not particular, according whether that was best chance that offered when you get the money, if that event should take place.

For want of candle Good bye

C K Leach

Camp near Waterloo Va
August 4th 1863

Dear Wife

I would just like to step in & see how you all are passing time this evening, but as I cannot do that, the next best way for me to do & the only way is to Squat myself on this board, & tell you a little how I, & the rest of the folks here are passing our time.

You may think by the heading of this that we have moved camp from where I wrote you on Sunday the 2nd but we have not, but I have learned the free Nigger huts that stood near our camp boasted of the name of Waterloo, but Waterloo is about played out.

The weather continues to be very warm, & I do not expect any other, but today there has been considerable thunder & some heavy showers around us, but none here till since dark it has settled into a steady rain but not very hard. I am busying myself nowadays with making out Quarterly Returns of Ordnance, & Camp Equipage. It is something of a job for I have [no?] former Returns to work from, but I will fix them out if they will let us lay still long enough. We have to drill an hour every morning now, company drill but I have managed to keep clear of it thus far. There is no ground here that is fit to drill on but a drill is ordered & it must be done. I sent a pack of cards a short time since by mail to Zina, they were some cards that Nelson Smith brought me when I thought of going home sometime, & was going to send them to you folks by me, & so I thought I would send them along to Zina, I presume they are nothing new to you all. I sent the directions for them in my last letter, the four spot of Stars, (I believe it is) is gone & was when he brought them to me.

We some expect the Pay master here again in the course of a week or two to deal out a few green backs to us. It wont do much good here for there is nothing to buy, nothing in the country & no sutlers yet but probably they will be thick enough as soon as the Pay master comes, they know when to suck.

We hear canonading yesterday & today but dont know what was done, likely a Cavalry fight somewhere. I have got no letter from you this week yet but shall look for one tomorrow.

All are well at present.

Yours

C K L

Wednesday morning Aug 5th

It is a little cooler this morning but has partly cleared up, but some signs of more rain.

Did I tell you in my last letter that Lt Clark had got back, he was our acting adjt before he was wounded, & now he has got back Sawyer has to come to the Company. It is handy to have a little help sometimes but considering all things I must say that I had rather be alone than to have his company, but then I dont have much trouble with him for I cal[c]ulate to mind my own business & let him do the same.

Justins letter & Composition I received all straight & will try & write him befor[e] long. I should think he was rather down on Cows & milking by the way he wrote his Composition.

Afternoon Wed Aug 5

I must now say that we have moved Camp again, have moved back near where we went from, only about half a mile in front of it, that is south. It is rather vexing to have to move camp so often for we have only about time to fix up, & get a little comfortable & then it is pack up & move & by the time we get fixed up it is move again.

I carried this letter in my Memorandum Book & came very near spoiling it, spoiled the envelope, it was a little longer than the book.

No more

C K L

Camp 2nd Vt Vols

Saturday Evening August 8th/63

Dear Wife

Once more in a passably comfortable condition for a house after our last move & I hope we may be allowed to enjoy it a very short time.

We have our tent fixed as we did when I gave you something of a description of it.

Our camp is much better than it was before, being in a small piece of woods just large enough for our camp, & a good shade it is too. Our Brigade is scattered around pretty well, no two regiments being very near each other, which seems to indicate that we might remain here some little time.

We had a Division Review yesterday, we had to march about a mile. All passed off well only it commenced to rain shortly after we arrived on the ground & before we got back to camp we got caught in a hard thunder shower which soaked us up good. I have not been so wet for a long time, but today has been a nice pleasant day & I have got dry once more.

Tomorrow I suppose we have got to go to the same place again for an inspection, Division inspection, & I presume it will occupy a good part of the day, as we go at nine A. M.

We have been looking for the Pay master for some days but he has not made his appearance yet. Some are very anxious to see him, but I have not suffered yet for the want of his green backs. I have a 20 by me yet, & no use for that, for there is nothing that a person can buy around here, either eatable or drinkable except that which comes through the Commissary Department.

I received a letter from you yesterday morning, & one on Wednesday, the day we came to this camp (but I dont know but I mentioned that one before) & was glad to know that you were still in good health.

You speak of berrying, have I told you of the black berries in these parts, if not I will say that I never saw any black berries till this year. Nearly all of the ground that is not under cultivation is covered with

berries or has been for they are nearly all gone now. They are mostly a low running vine & grow down amongst the grass if there happens to be any. They are called dew berries by the folks here, who think that the high bush berries are not fit to eat, or worth only to make into preserves. Our boys have had quite a time catching Eels for a day or two past they drew off a mill pond & dug them out of the mud, some good ones too.

The first time I have been on any parade or duty since we left Bristow Station where I have had to draw my sword was night before last at Dress Parade. Perhaps you want to know what I did with a sword. I used mine to carry on my shoulder to carry a rubber blanket on, & we have done nothing but march, nearly all the time. I blistered my hand carrying my sword on my shoulder, tough hand I reckon.

Good night C K L

Rumors are that they will to U S. Grant a victory. I reckoned we would be asked to take a little more Meade
Tuesday Evening Aug 11th/63

Dear Wife

How are you tonight? Well I hope,—Since writing so much our mail has come & I was lucky enough to get a letter from you & glad to hear that you were well but a short time since & hope you are still. Your letter was mailed last Friday the 11th [7th ?], so you see, I got it in very good time.

I am very glad to hear that Zina was mustered out, yet I had no fears that it would be otherwise, for we have had men discharged from our Co on account of breaches that were not as bad as his is. The others that were mustered out I did not feel so much interest in, & to tell the plain truth I would just like to see some of them here or have to pull their weasel to the tune of three hundred.* We are having some weather nowadays that pulls the sweat right out of a fellow, but we all take it as cool as possible.

As I wrote you on Saturday, that we were to have an inspection on Sunday, it came off & was about the hottest time we have had yet. After having each Brigade formed in line ours in rear of the 3rd Brigade Gen. Howe ordered Brigade, Regimental & Company Commanders to the front & center, & lectured us for about a half hour, & then Commanders of Cos. inspected their Cos. superintended by the Brigade & Regimental commanders. It was an awful hot time & many had to leave the ranks, nearly gone up. Gen Howe is putting things to us rather tight just now & in some things that the officers are interested in to some extent.

I dont know how the thing will end but expect to get tucked on it a little, as well as all the rest.

An hours drill each morning, necessary guard, & a Dress parade constitutes our daily duties, except such as always fall to those that are in command of a Co or the like.

An inspector is coming here tomorrow to inspect such articles of Camp Equipage as are worn out & unfit for use that they may be condemned otherwise, except they be unavoidably lost, either the soldier has got to pay for them, or in time the Commander of the Co has them to account for & if he cannot do that then *he* will have them to pay for. I have spent my leasure time lately in making Returns, & have not got done yet. It is more work than if I had been in command of the company heretofore for now I have nothing to work from only the property I found with the Co. That Pay master dont show himself here yet & neither do we hear from him. Other parts of the army are being paid off & I guess ours will come in time if we live long enough. Hollis has a letter from Jay, with Miriams writing on it. It is not yet opened but lays on the table in front of me, so I dont know what is in it. Our Dr has his wife with him again, she left when we left the Rappahannock.

C K L

*Here "weasel" is probably short for "weasel-skin" or "purse." The phrase "to the tune of three hundred" may refer to the \$300 commutation fee to avoid service (Marshall, *War of the People*, 9).

Alexandria Aug 16th

Dear Wife

I seat myself this hot day to pen a line to you that you may know I am alive & well.

Our Brigade came here day before yesterday (Friday) & expect to leave today for some place, to me yet unknown. We knew nothing of a move till about 3 O.C. Friday morning, when we were waked up & ordered to be ready to march immediately. All sorts of rumors were soon afloat, some were going to N.Y. some to Charleston etc. We got started soon after light & marched to Warrenton Junction arriving there in the afternoon, taking the cars about 10, & arrived here about one O.C. at night. We expected to have gone aboard of boats yesterday but did not, & expect to take boat today.

We lay near the Depot just out of the city & the boys are doing a great run of business, for we got two months pay yesterday, & having been so long away from any thing they all pitch in. Our pay master got as far as Warrenton to pay us but on meeting us turned around & came back.

I went into the City last night to get some supper, & to get a few clothes, & then went to the Theater, but I did not think the concern was anything extra.

I bought a pair of Pants, a shirt, pair of Shoes, & a few smaller articles.

Quite a number of troops are being sent from the army at present, & all seem to be ignorant of their destination.

A Division of Regulars from the 5th Corps came here the same day that we did & some regiments from nearly every Corps have been sent away, & most of them are Regts that are well reduced in numbers & for that reason I cannot think they are going to Charleston or any such place. We were sent by order of Gen Meade the order coming direct from him & we are all in a straight to know where we are going. I expect it will be by boat whether we go to N.Y. or Mexico.

The amount of money I got yesterday was not very great (\$53.70), & I presume that I shall run ashore before another pay day. I made a good hole in the pile yesterday.

I will write again as soon as I can but presume it will be some days before an opportunity occurs.

We get no mail now.

Yours
C. K. L.

[On the way to New York City for draft riots control]

Off New York
On board Ship *Ericssen*
Aug 23rd 1863

Dear Wife

We left Alexandria Wednesday morning going on board the Steam Ship *Ericssen*, & started down the river about nine O.C. A.M. Did not get out of the river into the Bay before night & therefore had to anchor till Thursday morning when we again started, passed // into the bay about nine & ——— Cape Charles just after dark which gave us the broad Ocean to sail on and it soon began to effect the interior of a great many on board.

Friday was rather a windy day & the old boat rocked good, & a great many had to heave up. I felt somewhat dizzy but was not much sick. Yesterday was a very nice day & we had a nice ride coming in sight of land in the fore part of the day, & arriving on the river between N.Y. & Jersey City just after dark where we are yet anchored. We had a fine view of the harbor & Forts as we came in here it being pleasant & clear. Are expecting to go ashore today & as soon as all arrangements are made.

The 2nd 5th & three Companys of the 4th Regt are on this boat, the rest of the brigade going before us & none being here.

Our Regt I understand is going to Washington Square, the 5th to Madison Square. I got one letter from you while at Alex— but one before that I have not got.

I dont hardly know how to have my letters directed now, whether as before or to N.Y. with just my name, but think they can be directed to New York & save them going to Washington. If you have not disposed of your money just keep it by you till you hear from me again, for I shall want some, & if possible I mean to see you before we leave this place. I dont know as there will be any leaves granted, but you can come here without getting leave of absence. Excuse the bad writing & I will try & do better next time

C K Leach

New York City
Camp in Washington Parade Ground
Aug 26th 1863

Dear Wife

I seat myself again to pen you a line that you may know how I am prospering, & also in answer to two letters received from you today: one mailed the 10th & one the 17th of Aug, which found me in good health & enjoying our City soldiering as circumstances will best admit.

We came off the boat soon after writing to you & marched to this place, & a very nice place it is too. The grounds contains 5 or 6 acres, crossed in all directions with paved walks, & having shade trees set all over the ground. In the center of the grounds is a pool of water, & when the water is let on it will rise from the pipe to the height of 30 feet.

The ground is enclosed by an iron fence, & the only fault I find with the place for a camping ground is that it is not large enough for the number of troops here encamped, there being the 4th Vt & a regiment of Regulars besides our regt.

It is in a good part of the City & only two blocks from Broadway. I went out with others last night to the Theatre at Winter Garden & a very good performance I called it. Mrs Bowers was the most prominent of the actors.* After the Theater we inspected Broadway pretty thoroughly & some that want Broadway.

Now for business.. If you have somewhere from one to five hundred dollars to spend & can arrange matters I should be glad to have you come down here for I see no great prospect of getting a leave, & then I presume you will never have a better chance to see the City. I dont know what may stand in your way but if there is nothing to hinder I think you had better come. You must expect to use some money in so doing & will need to bring it with you, for my funds are rather small.

If you come please write me as soon as you get this & let me know when you will come & I will meet you at the Depot, unless you should wish to come before having time to write. Do as you see fit about bringing Zelia, but I would like to see her. I think places enough can be found to board although I have not enquired. Perhaps you can find some one coming down to see the soldiers & so have company on the road.

We have things in camp more comfortable than before for some time. The officers of each Co have a wall tent, & this morning I bought a second hand desk & two chairs, so I can sit down without sitting on the ground.

The officers get their meals at Restaurants, the price of meals according to the fashionableness of the place & what you eat from 15 cts to 75.

C K Leach

*Elizabeth Bowers (1830–1895) was an actress and manager (George B. Bryan, comp., *Stage Deaths: A Biographical Guide to International Theatrical Obituaries, 1850 to 1990*, vol. 1 [New York: Greenwood Press, 1991], 148).

New York
Aug 27th 1863

Dear Wife

You must excuse me for writing so soon again, but it is only in addition to my letter of yesterday. In case you should come down here, I thought perhaps you might be at a loss to do with yourself after getting to the Depot, & finding no one to attend you, or direct you where to go. The best way to do, unless you can inform me when you will be here, will be to go to a Hotel & then write me a line, & send by a carrier.

The Lafarge house is the nearest to our camp, & you can go to that or the Metropolitan. Both are on Broadway.

One Lieuts wife came last night, sending him a line from the Metropolitan some time in the night. He has procured a boarding place today, & enough such places are to be had.

If the want of money should hinder you from coming get it somewhere & not let that hinder. Perhaps if you could stop at the Treasurers Office in Rutland you could get the last allotted money 180 dollars.

Most of the officers that are married are having their wives come down here now, & some had them at Warrenton.

My health is good as yet, except I have a cold which has settled in my head. I went out to the Theater again last night, went to the same place as the night before but it was a new play. Mrs. Bowers is a good Actress, & performs her part well.

No more this time

C K Leach

Alexandria Va
Sept 17th 1863

Dear Wife

I seat myself at the Marshal House to pen you a line.

I am well as ever although I have had the s—ts one day since I left you.

Our regt is about a mile from here & going to start for the front tomorrow morning, shall be some days on the road as we have got to march there. We arrived here yesterday afternoon by boat from Washington.

I would like to give you a full description of our journey to this place but can not at this present time.

After going to Camp from Mr Dudleys I got a letter from Justin & Jane, did you get it? I hired a boy at the landing to carry it up to you. It contained a piece of cloth.

We did not leave Poughkeepsie till noon & came very near going up to carry the letter myself.

No more this time

Chester

Camp near Rappahannock Station
Monday Sept 21st 1863

Dear Wife

After a days march I seat myself to pen you a few words.

We have been on the march four days now & expect one or two more to come. Our Brigade left Alexandria Friday morning at 8 O.C. having with us one hundred mule teams going to the army, we acting as guard to them, & they carrying our baggage for us.

We marched about 10 miles that day, & I believe I never marched in a harder rain than we did that day, it made me think of our march from Fairfax Court House to near Alexandria one year ago last spring just before we went on the paninsula, only it was not quite as cold this time.

Saturday we marched to Centerville & it was a nice day for a march for it was cool after the rain.

Yesterday (Sunday) we marched to Catletts Station, marching from Centerville to Manassas Junction & then followed down the railroad, halting for dinner at Bristow Station, Catletts being the next below, & making a march of at least 18 miles. Today we have marched 14 miles I should guess, passed Warrenton Junction, Bealton Station, & halted tonight near Rappahannock Station which is on the Rappahannock river which we have crossed, so you see we are so soon again across the old Rappahannock, but there was no one to hinder this time, & it was also a very different spot. We shall probably be near Culpepper tomorrow night, & where from there I dont know.

The weather has been very cool for the past three days & has been a good time for our march but not very comfortable sleeping at night, for I have laid rather cool.

I promised, & perhaps you would like to know something of our trip from Poughkeepsie to Washington. When we got to the river there was no boat & it did not come till near noon, & when it did it had on board the 5th & 6th Vt regts. Having to wait for the boat, the boys got pretty well set up, a great many of them, & when we got on board we found the other regiments about the same.

I came very near going back up to Mr Dudleys but just as I had made up my mind to go the boat came in sight. We got to New York at 8 & went from the *Knickerbocker*, the boat we were on, to the *John Porter*, a Ferry boat, bound for South Amboy, New Jersey, but one thing & another hindered & we did not leave New York till near noon on Monday, & while we were waiting I went up street & got me a hat & also an Overcoat.

We had a very pleasant ride to South Amboy going between Staten Island & the Jersey shore, & all the way the people were out waving flags & handkerchiefs & the like. A[t] South Amboy we took the Cars & arrived at Philidelphia about 10 at night & got a good supper at the same place we did when we first came out. Every regiment that passes through there is treated with refreshments & that which is good too.

We arrived in Baltimore just before noon, Tuesday & were treated to a dinner nearly the same as at Philidelphia. Arrived in Washington at 8 Tuesday night, & marched the men to the Government refreshment saloon for supper, but the boys did not appreciate the fare very much after being treated so well in Philidelphia & Baltimore, & the 6th smashed things up pretty well. After supper the men were put into barracks & most of the officers went to town for supper & lodging. I got supper for 75 cts & lodging for one dollar, (very cheap) but that is Washington prices. I made up my mind I did not want to live in Washington long. About noon on Wednesday we took boat for Alexandria where, according to my mind, you find the most miserable place out at this time, Washington prices & nothing that you want at that. It is full of northern speculators of the meanest sort who like to get a persons money & give nothing in return, but I must close for it is bed time & my paper is about full. I hope to get a letter from you when we get to the Corps.

My health is good & I stand the march first rate.

Yours Chester

The weather continues to be very cold, & pleasant, my fingers have got very cold. We have a house on the picket line where dwell 2 ladies (young) where if one wishes he can call & pass off the lone hours. They are not bashful to ask you into the parlor if you are a perfect stranger. They had never seen a Vermonter before but had heard them spoken of as very brave & good soldiers.

Saturday Sept 26th /63

Dear Wife

I seat myself, back against a tree to scribble a few lines to you.

I am out on a two days picket tour, the reason of my writing with a pencil, came out yesterday morning, will be relieved tomorrow morning (Sunday).

We are again with the Army of the Potomac, in the same position as regards Division & Corps, as we were before. Our Corps lays three or four miles west of Culpeper, & I think the right of the army as when we

left. We joined the Corps the next day after I wrote you at Rappahannock Station, marched to Culpeper, & through the place & then to the Corps.

The 3rd Brigade were paraded & presented Arms, with Band playing as we marched in, & all sure to be glad to see us back again.

We arrived only to find them all under marching orders with 8 days rations. Where are we going? is the speculation now. Some say to the front, some to the rear, & some to Fredericksburg, the latter seems as probable as any to me. Our line of communication is altogether too long, & requires a great number of troops to guard it properly. Our Recruits joined us the next day after we got here, there is about 165 for our regt after all losses by desertion & otherwise.

Co H got 17 & it makes the Co look a little different than it did. I got none that I ever knew & have seen none except William Slater, he is in Co I.

A great number of them are Foreigners, of all sorts. We have some of them out doing their first picket duty.

I got my first mail since I saw you, day before yesterday, got two letters from you, mailed 18th & 21st, & one from Jane. Glad to hear that you arrived home safely, & have only to hope that in time I may do the same & find you all alive & well. I think by your writing that you did not get Janes letter containing the piece of cloth before you started for home.

If there are any more ——— up your way that have got sick of life they had better come down here & let the rebels shoot them. It would save them much trouble, besides being a much more honorable death, but let them die some way by all means.

The postage stamps that you sent came all right. Do you remember I told you Sawyer would come back without money? We found him in New York & the same day he asked me for money. I payed him the 40 dollars & he owed nearly all that, & now he is without money entirely, & I have lent him 3 dollars. He lost the note I gave him, so he gave me a receipt for the \$100.00 which I am going to send to you to take care of in case the note should ever turn up.

C K Leach

Tuesday Evening Sept 29th 1863

Dear Wife

I once [again] seat myself at rather a late hour to drop you a line in regard to our doings for the past three days, since I wrote you while on picket, & as we have done nothing you will not be troubled with reading a very long letter.

I came in from picket on Sunday & have done nothing of any consequence since only our regular daily Camp duties, a drill of an hour yesterday & a dress parade each night, but tomorrow there is to be an inspection of each regt of the Division, & I expect the thing will be very close to see that every body is armed. Our Corps & Division Generals are getting to be very strict in regard to every thing.

After Taps, at night, the Provost Guard visits all the camps to arrest all breakers of the peace, & I will tell you a trick the boys of our regt played on the Guard, in our camp. They bent down a tree & attached a snare to it some way so that when the Guard came along it caught two of them by the legs & swung them up so they could but just touch their fingers to the ground. The boys of course were all asleep about that time but made out to wake up to help them down after a while.

Orders come into us by the cart load so it keeps a fellow busy about something or other nearly all the time. Yesterday about 20 of our regt were tried & fined 10 dollars each for being absent since we left New York only getting back day before yesterday.

Our Co had some left but they were all here before we were. The weather has been very nice since we got back here, no rain since the day we left Alexandria when it rained so hard. The days are quite warm but

the nights are cold & I have slept cold every night since we came to Va. I guess our eight days rations have played out for I hear nothing lately.

I suppose there has [been] two or three Corps of this Army gone to some other part of the Country at least they have left us, & I suppose any one can guess where they have gone. Such being the case it does not look as though an advance was to be made from this quarter. I think by accounts the rebels came very near using Gen. Rosecrans army up, but if he is able to hold them now they will have gained nothing except what artillery & other articles they captured, & in turn may have to fall back themselves again. I hope for the best.

I wish you would send in your letter some sewing awls, without handles, say four, 2 straight & 2 crooked & of middling size, & of a little different size. They will be very handy in mending equipment where a few stitches makes a new thing of them. If the cost will not be too much, also send a ball of shoe thread by mail, & a little wax if you can send it in a paper someway. I might have got those things, if I had thought of them in Poughkeepsie. Almost 11 O.C. so I guess I will bid you good night,

Love to all Chester

Camp near Culpeper Va.

Oct 4th 1863

Dear Wife

Once more I seat myself for the purpose of writing you a few lines that you may know I am still alive & well. It is just at sunset now & the Brigade is out for a Dress Parade. Col Grant wanted to see how they looked, I guess, so he thought he would have a Sabbath Eve. Dress Parade. Today has been a very nice pleasant day, & so has every day since we left Alexandria except the day we left there, & day before yesterday, which was a very rainy day, raining hard & steady, & it caught us, as you might say, with our *britches down*, for we made a bit of a move that day & it commenced to rain just as we got to our new camp, & got us well wet before we could get any shelter up, but we got up a good tent before night rain or no rain.

The reason of our moving was, that the 3rd Division of our Corps was sent back to guard the Railroad, & so our Brigade moved farther to the right to take their places, we only moved about half a mile. Our Division were ordered at first to go back to guard the road, but the order was soon countermanded & the 3rd Division ordered to go, & for the reason I hear that a Division was wanted that had 3 Brigades & ours has but two.

We have orders to be ready to move at an early hour tomorrow morning, & it is reported that we are going to relieve the 2nd Corps, which is somewhere south of Culpeper & well to the front. You will probably learn where we go when you hear from me again. It is rather annoying, after we have worked for two days to make ourselves comfortable, to be ordered away as soon as we get fixed up. I have got my tent floored, & old grain bags nailed on poles, the top one of which is on crotches, for the sides, & covered with 2 shelter tents so it makes quite a wall tent of it, but will get but three nights rest in it.

I received three letters from you Thursday night & was glad to hear that you were well & hope you may have had a good visit at Highgate if you went there as you thought of going. We have got to take with us tomorrow morning 8 days rations of every thing except meat & five days of that I suppose will be driven on foot. Perhaps we may have a skirmish with the Rebels before we get through with our move, & I may not perhaps have a chance to write again for some days to come.

I have just this night received a Check on the U S Treasury for one hundred & Sixty four dollars & thirty nine cents for Co. Savings on vouchers that I sent off while we were in New York. This was for four months. I have since sent eight months more, & I shall look for that soon, & if it comes may perhaps send some of it home.

I sold my pipe day before yesterday to Bingham Chase got eight dollars. I suppose you will say it was a very foolish trade for me, but if I ever buy another I shall buy a more costly one. I am going to have a State Order of Bingham for seven dollars.

Our Sutler arrived yesterday, the first time we have had a sutler with us for a long time.

I wrote a little to Emerson today & put in Hollis letter & after I wrote that we got our orders to be ready to move, so if this & that dont agree you will know the cause. When we received our orders today we thought we had got to go to Tennessee to join Rosencrans. We have been so long in Virginia we have a great attachment for the sacred Soil & rather want to stay here. Two Corps I suppose have gone, & I hope they may do some good by going. I must go & instruct the guard to have the Reveille at 5 O.C. in the morning so I will bid you *Good Night*.

Ever yours
C. K. Leach

Friday Eve Oct 9th 1863

Dear Wife

I again seat myself to inform you of our whereabouts, doings, etc. I have not written since last Sunday, when we were under orders to march the next morning, which we did, marching south along the railroad to near the Rapidan River, where we took the place of the 2nd Corps, they being some miles in advance of any other troops. Our Corps relieved them & they went back to Culpeper or somewhere else. Our Corps are the only troops here & our duty is to do picket duty along the Rapidan & Robertsons Creek, which runs into the Rapidan from the north. Our pickets are in sight of the Rebels, & in shooting distance but all have kept quiet thus far, talking to each other & occasionally meeting & exchanging papers.

We have had some expectations that they would give us a brush before now, but they have made no signs of it yet. We have none of our baggage with us except our messes which one team can carry, all else we will have to carry on our backs supposing the rebels should make a raid on us.

What the main army are doing or how long we shall remain in our present position is more than I can tell, although we hear all sorts of Stories. I should not be surprised if some morning we found ourselves some distance back from this.

Lieut Sawyer has got a Commission of 1st Lieut in Company C, but the Col. has assigned him temporarily for duty in Co. H, Co C having two Officers with it already, & myself being alone if he went out. Who the lucky one will be to get his place, I do not yet know, but some expect it will be the Sergeant Major, late orderly of Co C, Prouty by name. I told the Col I thought it ought to be from our Co, & he said he thought so too but I have but little faith in his word as for that matter.

We have had about 50 more recruits for our regt this week five to a company. Brush of Cambridge is one of them in our Co, Dr Brushes Son. I hope he may get a better place than serving in the ranks before long. They were a good lot of men, much better than the first lot we got, they being mostly foreigners, of every description.

I received today your letter written last Sunday, & you say Sept 4th but I guess you meant Oct.

I am glad to hear that you had a good visit at Highgate & that you were still in good health. I am still blessed with good health, & hope for its continuance. Hollis is getting along after the old sort, which is the case generally.

Yours C K Leach

Saturday Oct 17th 1863

Dear Wife

After a weeks Silence I again seat myself to pen you a few lines.

When I wrote last I said that I should not be surprised if some morning we found ourselves some distance back from where we then were. I wrote Friday night & the next morning we were ordered to pack up

ready to move, & so remained till after dark & then started & marched back to Culpepper, getting there just before daylight. We rested a couple of hours & then were again started north, the whole army being on the move, in different columns. We all got north of the Rappahannock river that day & night. The Cavalry had a skirmish just a[t] night at Brandy Station with Rebs that followed us up.

Monday morning as soon as light our Division was sent back over the river & took a position where we remained till after noon when the rest of our Corps joined us, & some Cavalry also took the front. The Cavalry drove the Rebels back to Culpepper, we following as far as Brandy Station. Staid there till 12 at night & then marched back to Rappahannock Station. Tuesday, started again early & marched nearly to Bristow Station, making at least 25 miles from the time we left Brandy Station at 12 at night. We halted & got our dinner at Warrenton Junction, marched side by side with the 1st Corps some distance & saw Nelson Smith a short time, he did not look as well as when I last saw him.

Wednesday we started again, & arrived at Centerville in the afternoon, but just at dark our Corps was again marched four or five miles north to a road that leads from Fairfax Court House to Aldie, & the one which the Rebels used in getting in Popes rear last year & capturing some of his train, at the time Gen Kearny was killed. We are on that road now & about two miles from a place called Chantilly. I do not think we will remain here a very long time but still I dont know.

The 2nd Corps had something of a fight Wednesday the day we got to Centerville but the particulars we have not got except that they took about 500 prisoners & five pieces of Artillery from the Rebs, which looks as though they licked them some.

The guerrillas did something of a business in our rear yesterday in taking Baggage wagons & stray soldiers, they got ten or twelve wagons & I dont know how many men, but I hear they got one from our Co that was teaming. All of our Regimental baggage is somewhere back & we have nothing but what we carry on our backs. We have no tents, & yesterday we had a rainy day ending with a thunder shower after dark, so I had to lay in the water last night. I hope we may get our tents & baggage before long. I had rather a sick time of it the day we got to Centerville but I have got all over it now.

I got two letters & two papers with the awls & thread last night, glad to hear that you are well. The awls are rather small but will be better than nothing.

You say William wants some money, & I think I ought to accomodate him if any body so you may tell him I will let him have a hundred dollars when I get it or if he is in a hurry for it I could let him have 50 dollars any time for I have about 175 dollars by me now & 20 more due me, lent out.

I dont know whether it would be best to get a whole or a part of a hog or not. I suppose of course, it will come in play sometime whether I ever need any but Uncle Sams or not. You can do as you see fit about it. If you do not have money enough to settle up around & to use, let me know it & I will send you some more. I expect to get about 300 dollars more Co money before long & I dont care to carry it with me only as I want to use it for the Co, which I shall do when we get where I can.

You must excuse this writing, for I have had a very poor position for writing. We have been on the move ever since we got back to Va & I hope we will get settled sometime.

C K Leach

Camp near Warrenton Va
Oct 24th 1863

Dear Wife

Once again am I permitted to pen you a line in answer to 2 letters which I have received since writing to you last which was last Saturday one week ago today. You will see by the heading that we have been on the march since then, which I suppose you knew very well before this time. We left Chantilly Monday morning & marched to Gainsville which is on the railroad from Manassas Junction to Front Royal. We passed over the 1st

Bull Run battle ground, the first time I have been there since the battle. We went a different road but I knew the spot as soon as I came in sight.

Tuesday we marched to near where we are now, only halted on the other side of the town & staid there two days & then came here which is about half a mile south of the town.

Gen Meades Head Quarters are only a short distance from us being between us & Warrenton.

We are under orders to march at short notice now, got them just before dark tonight. I hear that the Rebels are crossing the river below us somewhere, the reason of our marching orders.

We are having some very bad weather just now & as we are not fixed up any it comes rather tough. It commenced raining yesterday & rained all night & all day today, very cold rain & a deal of wind. It is so cold here tonight I can hardly write although I have a little fire.

As far as health is concerned I have been out of sorts some of late, enough to keep me from feeling very well any of the time. I have a diarrhea which troubles me some almost every day. I had to get up three times in the cold & rain last night which made me feel as bad as any thing. I think it was change of diet that brought it on, for it did not trouble me till we started on our late march.

That 10 dollars of Hollises you can keep for he said he was going to have you send it to him, so I told him I would give it to him & you could keep it.

I got another Check on the U S Treasury of \$282.91 last Sunday so I have all the money I want to carry with me. If William wants some I can let him have it any time to the amount of a hundred dollars.

It is almost Muster time for another pay day, but it may be some time before we are paid.

I was glad to hear that you & the children were well & hope you may be the same at this time. I am very thankful for the gum I found in my last letter. I got the letter Thursday night while I was on Brigade Guard, & it helped to pass off time. I should be very glad if you could send me a pair of socks for mine are about gone except those you knit at Poughkeepsie.

No more this time C K Leach

Saturday Eve. We had a rainy forenoon so our review did not come off, but we were mustered for pay. It has come off cold since the rain, & tonight the wind blows so we can hardly keep from freezing. Our house is not tight enough for windy weather. I find that Hollis got a pin cushion in his letter last night so I take charge of the one in the paper. Jane thinks you was afraid some of the girls had given me one, the reason you sent me this, so I need not keep theirs. Very thoughtful you are indeed, the girls are very free with their pin cushions, & it is to be supposed that I would want as *much* as one, & if you dont furnish me I would have to look elsewhere. I wish you could just step in here & see how nice our fire place does smoke every little while. It draws right the wrong way, but there is one advantage, & that is, none of the heat goes up the chimney, but it makes a fellow feel as though he had lost his Grandmother. Tell William he is just as welcome to the Coat as he was obliged. Tell Zina to lay by a little cider so I can have a drink when I come home. I hear the man after the mail to go out, so good bye for tonight.

C K Leach

Camp near Warrenton Va
Friday evening Oct 30th 1863

Dear Wife

I have just received & read a letter from you, & also received one last evening, & now I seat myself to write in answer. I am glad to hear of your good health which I hope may continue. I can say too that my health is good at the present time, a very little improvement since I wrote you a week ago.

Perhaps you think I am getting to be rather slack about writing. I did not calculate to let this week pass by without writing, but it seems I have. Our regiment went on picket Sunday & staid till Monday & since that

time when the weather has been warm enough to do any thing I have been very busy. Since we started for New York every thing has been left undone because since we got back here we have been on the move nearly all the time, just stayed in a place long enough to get fixed up a little & then move to some other spot, & now we find a great deal of work to straighten up which ought to have been done before.

Returns of Clothing Camp & Garrison Equipage have to be made every month to the Quarter Master General, & Returns of Ordnance every Quarter to the Chief of Ordnance, & this week is the first chance we have had. In addition to this, we had a Division drill day before yesterday, & yesterday a Brigade drill & today a Brigade review & tomorrow is Muster day for two months pay, & Gen Howe is going to have the Division paraded for Review & inspection before Muster, so I reckon the day will be mostly used up.

The weather has been cold here for the past week & being in the condition we are as to houses, it has been all we could do to keep from freezing. Our camp is on high ground about a half mile south of Warrenton & in sight of it. We can hear the Town Clock Bell strike the hours very plain. I have not been in the place only as we marched through when we came here.

Wood, a very necessary article nowadays is very scarce here & for that reason & that it is a cold place I wish they would move us somewhere else.

In regard to your questions about what to do next year with the place & such like, is rather a puzzling subject to answer just now, it is making calculations on your poultry before your chickens are hatched, & it is a subject that I think of as little as I possibly can, although my great wish is that I may once more be surrounded by the comforts of *home*.

You are the one that will be most interested in the matter going down there & hiring some one to carry on the sugar place & do the work till I get home, or hiring it out as we have done, or letting it out. If you think you had rather go there yourself in the spring, you had better get some pork & it will not be lost property if not used that way. I presume some one can be hired to do the sugaring that has a team or perhaps a team could be hired. I can not tell what will be best because I cant tell what next year will bring forth.

I will send you a hundred dollars as soon as I can get the last check cashed. I have used for the Co, & lent so the first I got is pretty well used up. While we are on the march the men use more than their rations of bread & now we have to buy of the Commissary to bring the rations to time. I have paid out about 20 dollars the last two days for the Co, bought two boxes hard bread tonight, & I expect more will have to come.

I found a pin cushion in a paper tonight. I dont know whether it is for me or Hollis but think I will keep it till I find out. It is rather pretty.

I can hear the cars whistle as I am writing so I reckon they will run to Warrenton befor long, & then I hope we will be able to get something more to eat than we have had of late. We have had to come down to soldiers fare because nothing else was to be had. Sutlers goods are almost unknown here now, cant as much as get a match to light a fire with.

Some of our mess got a couple of pounds of butter yesterday by paying 70 cts a pound, but it was strong enough to be worth the money, also bought a little cheese for 50 cts a pound. I tell you a person can live cheap in the army. They bought a few biscuits in town for 50 cts per dozen. It is enough to make a person think of the cupboard at home. There is one advantage in eating "Hard tack," you get an extra allowance of fresh meat in the way of worms.

I got a letter from N F W. & wife & mother wrote a few words. Sarah Jane said she saw your photograph in [New] York State. N F says he talks of coming to Washington this winter & if he can run the pickets he will call & see me, hope he will come. Capt Tracy is detailed on a Court Martial in Washington. He will keep away from here as long as possible, I will warrant you, & hold his position as Captain. No more tonight, this will not go out till tomorrow night.

C K Leach

Review tomorrow by the Corps Commander at 2 O.C. P.M. Perhaps you think this aint very fancy paper to write to Ladies on, but it saves turning a great many corners.

Camp near Warrenton Va Nov 3rd 1863

Dear Wife

I again seat myself to pen you a few lines, not in answer to any received from you for I have got none since I wrote you last. Yours generally reach me Wednesdays, Thursdays & Fridays after mailing Friday & Monday, so if I write more than once a week I cannot wait till I get yours, for then it would not reach you in Tuesdays mail. Nothing of importance has transpired here since last writing, to my knowledge & we remain in the same camp, but full of business all the time, & as if they were afraid somebody would have time to do a little business of their own, the Division & Brigade Commanders keep us toting on Drills & Reviews nearly all the time. Not being able, on account of the weather, to get us out on a Review Saturday, Gen Howe had a Review Sunday at nine O.C. A. M., & then had a Division drill Monday afternoon, & we also had to have a Co drill in the forenoon, & today had a Co drill in the forenoon, & had orders for a Brigade Drill in the afternoon but, Col Grant condescended to postpone it, to allow Co Officers to complete their Muster Rolls & papers, but ordered a Co drill by a Lieut or a competent sergeant.

I did not bother myself with the drill yesterday & today was detailed as Officer of the Day, so I was free from drill. I should have had to gone on picket yesterday morning if it had not been that the Muster Rolls would have had to [be] laid by till I got in again, 48 hours is the time the detail is to be out on picket.

The weather is good nowadays, pleasant & comfortable without a fire in the middle of the day, but the wind blows tonight, so I dont know but another storm is near at hand. You say you hear that Pat Ryan was shot for deserting. I could tell you nothing about it for I have never seen him or heard any thing about him. I know that a great many that come out as Substitutes have deserted, & I think shooting is a very appropriate medicine for them, as a cure for them & a preventative to others.

We have had two desert from our Co, since we started from Centerville to come back here, one of them was once a Rebel soldier, & others of the lot were & nearly all have deserted.

E R Brush of Cambridge who was drafted & joined our Co has got a Commission as Asst Surgeon in our Regt. I recommended him to our Surgeon, who in turn has done what he could for him, through Dr Thayer of Burlington, & he now has a good position.

Unexpectedly I have just got a letter from you, but it was not unwelcome, glad to hear that you was still well. I think you did well to caution me about again entering the service for three years, for I have had very serious thoughts about the matter for some time. I dont know but the army is the best place to be in but I would just like to be free & my own man awhile to see how I *did* like it. I understand that all that are promoted & commissioned now have to be sworn into the service for three years.

Good Bye for tonight

C K Leach

Near Brandy Station Va
Monday Nov 9th 1863

Dear Wife

I seat myself to drop you a few lines to let you know that I am still alive & well after the little fight at Rappahannock Station on the afternoon of Saturday the 7th.

Our regt was not engaged & none of our Brigade I think unless it was the 5th who were on the skirmish line on the right, & I hear found a few of the Johnys. The 1st Division of the 6th Corps did the most of the fighting & made a very nice thing of it too, as you will learn by accounts in the papers. The rebs were fortified north of the river & it was after dark when the charge was made on them. We got some shells pretty near us

but no damage done, only one 20 pounder struck just under the feet of one man of the regt, & tipping him over, & scaring him some.

I went on picket Friday & was on picket when the regt left camp at Warrenton, joining them on the march.

Yesterday we crossed the river & marched to this place, some 4 or 5 miles, today there has been no move, only the Cavalry coming in & going to the rear, saying there are no rebels to be found.

(Tuesday) I had to stop yesterday for a move, we are now farther up the river, on the south side but how far from it I dont know but think the right of our Corps rests on the river. Other Corps moved also but where they are I cannot tell, but none moved any farther to the front than they were yesterday. Nelson Smith came to our regt yesterday while at Brandy Station he looks well again, some different from when I last saw him. We find deserted Rebel camps all around here, & they must have been some scared or they would not have left so very sudden, they must have had quite a force here around. Yesterday was the coldest day we have had, a few flakes of snow fell, & enough on the mountains to make them look white.

The roads are first rate now which with the cool weather makes good marching, but we have to shiver some nights. I got a letter from you Thursday night, glad to hear that you were well. You say you have bought a set of furs. I suppose you suited yourself in so doing, therefore I will say nothing about it.

I reckon I am about smoked so I will quit for this time

Yours C. K. L.

Camp near the Rappahannock
Sunday Eve. Nov 13th 1863

Dear Wife

At last I have got time to sit down to make an attempt to write to you once more. We remain in the same place where I wrote last, but in fixing our tents to try & live comfortably, & other duties my time has been pretty much occupied, but I trust I have got nearly caught up in my business, so that if we should remain here much longer (which I dont suppose will be the case) or when we again make a halt I will have more leisure time.

We were waked up last night, with, Be ready to march at a moments notice, a very pleasing sound to wake to, but we have not marched yet. We heard some canonading this forenoon, so we guess the Rebels showed themselves somewhere, but what was done we have not yet heard. We had a heavy thunder shower last night, just after dark, & this morning a very bright rainbow was to be seen, the weather has been quite warm this week & pleasant, in the middle of the day it was full warm enough for comfort without fire, but the nights are cool. The old clothing that was sent away last spring came back yesterday, or part of it, & now some of the boys have Over Coats & extra blankets. A lot of new clothing also came which makes the men more comfortable than they have been, although Coats & Over Coats are yet lacking, only about half enough under coats & only four Over Coats to a Co being got.

I got a letter from you last Tuesday & another last night & am sorry to hear that Lorinda is so low. I shall expect to hear that she is dead the next time I hear from you.

I had hoped that I might see her yet again, but it seems as though it would be otherwise.

Some time since I sent a State order (\$7.00) to the Treasurer, J B Page, requesting him to pay the amount to you, perhaps you have got it before this time. I calculated to have sent some money to William before this time but I have not been able to get the last "check" cashed yet, & I found use for what I had on hand. I have to pay out for the Co, & then I have had to advance some in our mess arrangement, others being short for money. I must close or this will be late for the mail.

My health is first rate good.

Yours C K Leach

Camp near the Rappahannock Va
Nov 21st 1863

Dear Wife

Another week is passed, & we find ourselves in our old position on the Rappahannock, & I think it is an unexpected event, for all seemed to think that we would be on the move again before this time. Appearances now are that at least another week may pass & still find us here, for today has been a rainy day, steady rain all day, & still it rains, at dark.

I received a letter Tuesday evening telling of Lorindas death, & it was not unexpected, by accounts of her condition in your letters before that.

It must leave William in a bad condition, but hope things may go as smooth as possible. I received another letter from you last night & glad to hear that you were all still in good health. I have the same to say of myself.

In regard to the mustering for three years I think is only a story that was circulating at that time. I guess Officers are mustered for the unexpired term of the Regt as usual.

The weather for the past week has been very fine, pleasant & warm, different from what was expected after the thunder shower of last Saturday night, but should not wonder if we got some cold after this rain.

Drills, Inspections, & Reviews have been the order of exercises this week. Two Division drills, & at one of them, two soldiers were branded with the letter D as punishment for desertion, one on the hip & one on the shoulder. It was done before the Division. Yesterday this Corps was reviewed by Gen Sedgwick accompanied by some English Officers. I was not out being Officer of the Day at that time.

Sawyer has left our Co at last & is now acting Adjutant in place of Clarke who has been made Captain of Co F, the Co that Lieut Worcester is in.

We have also a 2nd Lieut in our Co, joined us today, his name is Prouty, promoted from Sergeant Major. Ufford of our Co is acting Sergeant Major now & think will get the appointment. Hulburd dont like the arrangement I reckon.

Monroe Bingham & Loveland came back day before yesterday, looking all right, & another recruit has joined our Co. Brush has got his position as asst. Surgeon too, all straight, so you see we have had some changes of late. Somebody is going to Vt recruiting & if I belonged to the favored Class, I might possibly stand a chance. 2 Officers from a Regt & one man from a Co. is the number.

Please keep your patience in reading this.

Yours C K Leach

Camp near the Rappahannock
Nov 23rd 1863

Dear Wife

Still in our old camp, but with expectations of an early move, probably tomorrow morning. A great move seems to be in store for this army this fall & I hope it may accomplish something. I dont think we are going to advance here & cross the Rapidan but where the army will finally bring up & is beyond the reach of my knowledge at this present time. The appearances are that it is calculated to be more marching than fighting just at present, for the amount of ammunition in *teams* is diminished and the rations increased, that is, some of the teams heretofore carrying ammunition have been loaded with provisions, five days are all that the men are to carry with them.

It is my opinion that this vicinity [is] to be evacuated entirely, but the precise point to which we are going is not known, & if it was it would not be best to tell it, although you will probably learn before you get this. It has been quite warm after our rain storm, but is a little cloudy tonight & perhaps we may get another storm to hinder our moving.

The Division was paraded again this afternoon to witness the punishment of two deserters, which was branding in the palm of the hand with the letter D. After the performance Gen Howe gave the following order, Field & Staff, & Co Officers to the front & center.

Orderly Sergeants, march off your Companies.

All supposed that we were going to get a blowing up, but all he said was, I have a thing of art & Science at my quarters which I wish you all to call & see, which of course we did. It is a nice Sword, Sash, & Belt presented by the Officers of the Division, & a nice one it is too. I have two dollars in it. He knew nothing of it till it came this morning.

I sent a paper to you having my old silk neck tie in it, & I also sent back that Arithmetic by mail, otherwise I would have to throw it away. Did I ever tell you I got the socks? if not I will now say that I have. Nothing was done with Hulburd Ufford for being absent. I have something I would like to tell you, but will not write it, at least at present.

Yours C K Leach

[Chester Leach was chosen for duty as a recruiting officer and spent December 1863 in Vermont.]

Brattleboro Vt

Dec 23rd 1863

Dear Wife

As I have an opportunity today I will drop you a line that you may know how I am getting along, & what I am doing. I arrived here as I expected, Monday evening & reported immediately to Maj Austine, & he told me to report the next morning to Capt Jennie in charge of the barracks, so I came up to the barracks yesterday morning about nine O.C. & took quarters with Capt Bartlett of the 9th Vt.

My duties will be acting Officer of the Day occasionally & to go with recruits to Washington.

I shall probably remain here some time, & shall try & get a chance to come home sometime.

I shall likely have to go to Washington this week & may be gone when the Fletcher boys come down, but I want they should all be sure & go to the 2nd Regt. There is a deal of working & pulling here by Officers to get men to go to their Regts, but I want the boys from Fletcher in our Co. The 11th is full so none need try to get in there, & as far as the regts are concerned they will be used as well in the 2nd as any. They will have to choose their regt at the time they are mustered, or soon after.

The snow is deep enough here to make good sleighing & it is crusted over so as to hold up a man.

I guess you had better get some cloth & make some shirts & I will try & come up & get them, & also if Zina gets some boots made be sure & have the legs large enough, so I can tuck my pants legs in, & also have them good long legs.

I eat, sleep, & do all other duties that are required of a soldier up here in camp.

I have seen none that I knew here except Ich Chase, the others having gone to their regts.

I expect to be Officer of the day tomorrow if they dont send off some men & I have to go with them. I wish I had brought down my blankets with me, & could you not send them down by William, they will help keep him warm.

No more this time

Direct to Lieut C. K. Leach

Brattleboro

Vt

Brattleboro Vt
Dec 24th 1863

Dear Wife

I will spend a few moments again this evening in writing to you, but I hope you will forgive me for writing so soon again.

I suppose I shall start for Washington tomorrow with a lot of recruits, & will be gone nearly a week & that is the reason I write again tonight. I expected to have gone today, but the men could not be got ready. I wish I could go to the regt when I get as far as Washington, that is for a short time.

As soon as the sleighing gets good I shall try & get home a few days so as to go to Jay, & also to Carrolls. I reckon by appearances that a snow storm is near at hand but perhaps it will turn out rain.

I have had the task of Officer of the Day today, not much to do, only every thing is new to me & dont hardly know what to do, so I keep as still as possible.

Dont forget to send down my blankets by William or somebody else, mine are the newest one & one that is burned a little I believe.

I must go and visit the Guard as it is after "Taps."

Well I have been around through the barracks & find them all right, except a few that have got a little too much liquor down, & they had better quiet down or they will have the privilege of spending the night in the Guard House.

I went down town yesterday & left my watch to be fixed & am going again as soon as I can to get some Photographs taken, but aint going to take any body else photograph.

How would you like an Album, if I should get a chance to come home I think I will bring up one, if you would like one.

I wish I could spend Christmas & New Year with you, but as I cant I will wish you a happy time.

Write as often as you can & I will do the same.

Yours
C K Leach

the box of clothes that the boys sent back is directed to Zina & they want it opened at the center so as to take out that that belongs there. In directing your letters leave off the *recruiting office* it does no good

Brattleboro Vt
Jan 1st 186[4]

Dear Wife & all the rest

I am sorry that I could not be with you today, for nothing could have suited me better.

One week ago today I started for Washington & only returned today, just in time to see the Fletcher boys before they left for the regt. They took the cars about 3 O.C. today, all seeming to feel well.

I went down & saw them off.

I found a letter from you on getting back here & glad to hear that you were well, but it was rather unexpected news to hear that Hollis was at home but am very glad for him, but I am afraid I will not get a chance to see him, which I would very much like to do.

It is very busy times here just now & it is very doubtful that I can get a chance to come home at present, but I shall try to get leave to come up tomorrow (Saturday) evening & stay till Monday, but dont expect I can make a raise of it. I presume I shall have to go with another squad to Washington sometime next week, & I must say it is not a very desirable job, for I have not slept more than half of any night since I was gone & some nights hardly none, except what we could catch on the cars.

I will give you a bit of a description of our journey down & back took the cars at 3 P.M. Friday, took boat at New Haven at 11 P.M. arrived in New York Saturday morning where we remained till near night took cars & arrived at Philadelphia at 11 P.M. & there remained over Sunday & till near night Monday then took cars for Harrisburg where we arrived Tuesday morning, then started for Baltimore where we arrived at night, took freight cars for Washington about 12 at night & arrived there about 10 A.M. Wednesday & there turned the men over to another man.

Traveled Washington till 8 at night & then started home, arrived in New York Thursday morning too late to take the morning train so we traveled the City till 8 at night. Took the cars at 8 P.M. arrived in Springfield at 2 A.M. Friday, & there had to wait till 8 & arrived here at 10. In New York we went to Central Park, & then hired a carriage & took a drive around Five Points to see how the folks lived & poverty shows itself as plain as any place I ever saw.

I got my blankets & shirt by William but the socks he had in his knapsack every thing being in a whirl forgot to take them out, so I am just as well off as I was before, but if nothing worse ever happens I wont cry. I spoke to the Capt in charge of the barracks, today about going home & he said he could give me no encouragement, but I could speak to Maj Austine about it.

If it was not for cutting Hollis stay at home short & his transportation was good on this road (if he has any) I would like to have him come this way & I hope one day if I cant come home.

I enclose an invitation card, did not attend for two reasons, didnt have any ladies nor was I in town myself.

Yours C K Leach

Brattleboro Vt

Jan 7th 1864

Dear Wife

I will spend a few moments this evening in scribbling a few lines to you that you may know that I am well & yet in Vt. I got here all safe a little before light Tuesday morning & had a very unpleasant ride on the cars too. When I got on the cars at Georgia [Vt.] they were crowded so I could get no seat, & did not till I got to White River Junction except on the wood box.

The train was very large & nobody seemed to be stopping anywhere, but all were through passengers.

I found Lyman & Benjamin Leach on the cars & Lyman is here now.

I might have staid at home till after Tuesday for all of any duty I have had to do yet, for I have not as yet been detailed for anything. A detachment of 250 recruits left here for the army of the Potomac yesterday & I think another lot will start Saturday or early next week.

Something of a fire took place down town last night, but I knew nothing about [it] till morning. A large Melodeon Factory was burned down, & one man was killed & not found till this morning & one other was wounded so they say he must die.* I went past the ruins this afternoon & it was then rather hot.

I presume you all had a good time Tuesday night & I reckon I could have passed the time myself without being homesick. We had a bit of a snow storm Tuesday so that the sleighing is now first rate.

I expect the rush is nearly over with here, but there has been a rush for the past few days, & our room has been full from morning till night after furloughs, which Maj Bartlett assists them in getting if they will go in the 9th regt, & I will be glad when they are through with, for one can do nothing when there is such a crowd.

*Jacob Estey & Company later rebuilt the structure, naming it Brattleboro House after an earlier building. William Nichols lost his life in the fire (Mary R. Cabot, comp. and ed., *Annals of Brattleboro, 1681-1895*, vol. 2 [Brattleboro, Vt.: E. L. Hildreth & Co., 1921-22], 633, 848).

I found N F Wood in town when I got back here, & staid with him at the Revere house Tuesday night. I lent him ten dollars for a recruit & if I do not see him again, he will pay it to you, but I hope to be home again before I leave for Dixie.

Good Night C K Leach

Brattleboro Vt. Jan 20th 1864

Dear Wife

Twenty minutes to eleven is rather late in the evening to commence a letter but I will try it as I am alone & nobody to bother me. I reckon nearly all the Officers are down town this evening to a ladies festival, which is being had at the Town Hall this evening. I thought I could spend the evening more for my interest if not for my pleasure by staying in camp. It is a very nice pleasant evening but the sleighing is just about used up, with the rain that we had yesterday.

I arrived here safe & sound just at daylight yesterday morning, & was put on duty as Officer of the Day, which they said was reserved for me.

A lot of recruits were sent off for the 11th on Monday, & those for the 9th were going tomorrow but I hear that transportation is not ready from New York so I think they will not leave here before next week, & in that case a squad may be started for the Army of the Potomac when I shall expect to leave.

I went down town today & got my Coat & left my old one to be sent home, & in a short time I thought I would not send it just now & perhaps might send the new one, but on going into the shop they had sent it to the Express office, so I said let it go.

I am going to get about 27 dollars that I had not the least thoughts or expectations of & that is Commutation for Quarters & Fuel from the time I left the Regt to the time I came here. It will help a little towards paying expenses.

I found Helen, Lyman's wife, here in camp yesterday having come down Monday. Frank Barlow came with her.

I found a letter from Hollis & Charles Blair when I got here & also a line from William. All well except that Hollis said Edgar had got a cold. My cold is about the same as when I left, not any worse, feeling very well otherwise.

Our 2nd Lieut is in town somewhere but I have not seen him but hope I may.

I will close & write again tomorrow evening & perhaps I can tell you then something about when I shall leave here.

Chester

P.S. The coat was directed to Zina. I got it burned a little while going to Fairfax from Fletcher.

Brattleboro Vt. Jan 21st 1864

Dear Wife

I seat myself once more to pen you a few lines that you may know that I am still kicking.

Today has been a very nice, pleasant, warm day, & I have improved it by going down town, once in the forenoon & once in the afternoon, did a deal of choring around, got the money I spoke of last night, only I got but 16 dollars at last after getting it the second time, put my army regulations aboard the post office, got a negative taken for some photographs, something to fix my trunk handle, & got my name marked on my cross, & also got one marked for Hollis that he sent by Westman, so you see I have done a good many jobs if they are small. I am informed tonight that I start tomorrow afternoon for North Carolina with the recruits for the 9th Vt, shall probably be gone from a week to a fortnight, & shall come back here again, & possibly may come home once more, but dont make any calculations for any such thing. I sent the book today in Zina's name.

You can write me here while I am gone, & I will get them when I get back, & then I will know how you are getting along. If Emerson was here now, I could get him on a trip to sea, but I did not expect it till I was told tonight that I was booked for Newbern [New Berne, N.C.], & I hope we will have a good time after we get on board, for the Officers will have a State room, so it will not be like going on the cars. I must close & write a line to Hollis & send him his cross. Tell Zina I have not had time to copy that letter yet, but will as soon as I have time. How did he find that acct with Gant. No more tonight

Yours
C K Leach

All right this Friday morning, start for N.C. this afternoon

Brattleboro Vt
Thursday Eve, Feb 4th 1864

Dear Wife

Around again, once more, & now I will pen you a line in answer to a letter which I found awaiting me from you. I got back to this place today, just at night, & am glad to say all safe & sound & in good health. I had a very good time of it, only was some sick one day going down.

We left here Friday 22nd as expected, got in N.Y. Saturday morning, remained there through the day, & went aboard boat near night. *T A Scott* was the name of the boat.

Sunday the water was some rough, & a great many were sick. I was not very sick but did not eat anything, & only drank a cup of tea at supper time. I vomited a very little once or twice, but it was pulling where there was nothing to pull.

Monday was rougher still, but it did not make me sick at all.

The boat rolled some of the time so a person could hardly stand up unless he had hold of something, on account of slipping. Tuesday was a stiller day, & all passed quietly. We landed Wednesday morning at a place called Morehead City, & went on the cars that afternoon to the regt a distance of about 10 miles. We found the greater part of the regt gone out on an expedition & were gone three days. I went to Newbern Friday, about 30 miles from the camp, to see the place. The railroad runs from Morehead City to Newbern & the camp of the regt is on the road.

I saw but one thing there that I thought was an improvement on other places where I have been, & that was the warm weather at this time of the year. It was about like May weather in Vt, but I dont expect it is as warm every day, as it was very pleasant while we were there. The soil is the poorest of anything I have before seen, & I should not think they could raise a decent living. The soil is sandy & a good deal of it white sand, & is nearly all covered over with pine forest. It is a great turpentine country, & I think if but for that the more land a man had, the poorer he would be.

We started back Saturday but only got on board boat that day, for the boat we came on (*S R Spaulding*) towed up the one we went down on she having her Screw loose, & it could not get out over the bar till Sunday.

We came by the way of Fortress Monroe & arrived there Tuesday morning & as we could not leave there till night we went over to Norfolk & Portsmouth, which is just opposite the river from Norfolk. The navy yard that the rebels burned & destroyed at the taking of Norfolk, is at Portsmouth, & we spent some time in looking that over. The rebels pretty effectively destroyed it too. Took boat at 5 Tuesday night for Baltimore & arrived there yesterday (Wednesday) morning, & took the cars for N Y, arrived there about 6. Staid overnight & went to the Bowery theater took the cars this morning from N Y by the New Haven route & arrived here tonight. I find things much different here than when I went away, for all the recruits are gone & every thing is still & quiet. The next question is where shall I go next, & when.

I have seen no one since I got back that knows any thing about affairs, but I am going in the morning to see when I have got to start for the regt, & also to try & get leave to go home till the first of next week, in case I do I shall bring this up otherwise send it by mail.

I was glad to hear that you were all well & hope you may be so at this time. As it is bed time & not much sleep last night you will have to accept some blank paper this time.

Yours C K L.

[Letter from William Leach, Chester's older brother, upon his recruitment, to Zina]

Camp near Brandy Station

Feb, 1st 1864

I set myself to write a few lines to you to let you know that I am well and hope these will find you the same. It is some rainy today. The weather has been very nice the most of the time since we got here. One month has passed since we left Vermont & the time has not seemed very long to me only I have been anxious to hear from home as I have not heard from you. I thought I would give you a bit of a try. We have a first rate time here but it was somewhat tedious getting here for we had to ride in all sorts coming. Rob has been sick with the disentry but is better now. I am growing fat & lazy.

The boys all seem to enjoy themselves first rate & seem contented. We have not received that box yet but are looking for it every day. We have had no express since last Thursday so I think ours will come next time. There is some Rebs coming into our lines every day or two & they look pretty tough too.

My writing desk is not very good for it is on my lap. There is not boards enough here to make a stand. We had to wait till we could get a hard tack box to make a dore.

Oh have you got that money yet? If you have, write and tell how much and what you have paid out. I wrote to you what I wanted you should do with it, but I dont know whether you got it or not and about that is concern.

I wrote to you that I wanted you should pay that rent due on that land and pay ——— what is his due. If Chester dont want that money that I sent home by him you may pay that town note that your name is on with mine and Taylors, and write & tell me what I will have to do to have you draw the State pay. I sent 65 dollars by C K I think. 200 by Blasdel, one to Farmington, one to Ann.

There is not much going on here so there is not much to tell.

How is the prospect about hay in Vt.? There will be some taxes. Please pay them and charge me with your trouble.

Please write. Yours Truly,

Wm H Leach

Have those grave stones come yet? Alden I would like to hear from you. How do you like your school this winter? I heard you had a good school. I am glad to hear that and I hope you will improve it to advantage. You must be a good boy and not let me hear any fault about you for I think if you are good they will be good to you.

Alden, you must write.

This from your Father and Well Wisher.

Zina, if you cant hire that place out you had better let someone into the house, if you can find someone that wont eat it up.

[Chester visited in Fletcher for a short period before his return to camp.]

Brattleboro Vt
Feb 9th /64

Dear Wife

I will drop you just a line at this time to inform you that I start for the Regt today. I got through safely, & nothing of interest occurred except that I had the pleasure of riding with Mrs. Blood, or the Widdy, as she said she was to the Depot, but perhaps I will not tell you all that was said for fear of a row in the family, but she was very sociable & jolly. I cant write more as I must go down town before starting & it is now afternoon. So good bye till I get to the regt.

Yours C K L

Camp near Brandy Station Va
Saturday Eve. Feb. 20th 1864

Dear Wife

I received yours of the 14th last night & glad to hear from you & also to hear that you were all well & getting along very well. I wrote you a letter one week ago tonight, & it left here on Sunday, the next day, but as our mail was robbed at Brigade H^dQrs that night I dont suppose you have got it this night as you probably would have done. I went on picket the next day, Sunday, & was out till Wednesday so I have not written since.

The weather has been very cold since I have been here & I have suffered more from the cold than I did all winter at home. I went on picket last Sunday, the day you wrote your letter, & the wind blowed very hard, & Monday it snowed all day & Tuesday, turned around as cold as Greenland & has kept so ever since, till today it has been some warmer & very pleasant

One more picket tour on top of the one I had would convince me that I had soldiered about long enough.

William & Albert have gone on picket today, for the first time. It is a Sabbath days journey to the picket line.

I got through here all safe, & I left the Widdy in Vermont all right.

In my letter of last week I gave the details of my journey from Brattleboro here but dont expect you got it, so perhaps I will write it over again tomorrow.

I got to camp Friday night after leaving home & found things about after the old sort. Lt Drury was gone home on a furlough & Lt Prouty was out on picket, so there was no Officer with the Company just at that time.

Saturday I got my pay for Nov & Dec, \$222.71 so I could get along without getting that of E O Safford, but I like to be on the safe side. Whoever it was that robbed our mail took it just after the Brigade had been paid & then too on Sunday night, when there would be more as all were writing on Sunday, there being no drill or fatigue work on that day.

I did not happen to have any money in my letter & very glad of it.

I find the recruits all getting along very well that are in our Co, but Amos Warren is pretty much down at the heel, & has gone into the Regimental Hospital since I got here. I fear he will be but of little benefit to Uncle Sam, if he dont go under the sod. Six more men from this Co started for home the next day after I got here having reenlisted for three years. George Buck & John Ayers were two of them, yes & Orsen Westman was another. If it was not for the Girl I left behind me I presume I might be getting in the same fix.

Tell Zina if he wants to make any trade & holds back for fear of not getting the money, to get the money of Safford & I will send some before a great while. I want to turn it into State orders if I have a chance.

I saw Lyman & the rest of the Fairfield Sharp Shooter boys last Saturday. They came over to our Company. Lyman looks rather poor, as though he had been some sick but I guess was feeling well at that time. Perkins poor fellow has gone up, after passing through many dangers of battle was killed by accident, through the carelessness of someone, so the world goes. Lt Robbins' wife came to camp today & I suppose will see some of the beauties of Camp life, (about tonight). He has been home on a 15 day leave this winter, & nearly all the Officers have been home either on a 15 day leave or gone in for three years more & go home for 35 days. thats my ——— over the left. I will quit for tonight, freeze the ink a few times more & it wont make a mark at all.

Yours C K Leach

[Last known letter from William, written to Zina]

Camp near Brandy Station
Half passed 2 Sat Morn, Feb 20th 1864

I seat myself to answer your letter that came to hand last evening at this early hour as I have been called out on picket. So I thought I would take the advantage of the times to return yours. I am glad to have the opportunity.

I am well at this time and getting to lazy to be fairly comfortable. I was glad to hear that you were all well and hope these will find you the same.

C K has got here but I have not seen Lecta yet. He said he had the honor of riding a piece with her so I guess he must have used her up. About my ——— I wont say what. I am all right yet some of those old veterans could show you how it is did I reckon. You said you had not paid that town note. Let that rest a while if you have some money.

I would like to have you buy sugar and send here. I can make enough to pay that note in a month if I had sugar to sell. It would sell for 40 cts per lb put up in 4 or 8 ounce cakes. I wrote to Esq Taylor for some but probably he wont send any. Perhaps you can buy some of him if you will send it. I will go you halves on it or I will give you 20 cts per pound on delivery. N F Wood has some in about the right stile. If you send send it soon & put it into 50 pound boxes (keep shady) about one per week, make strong, direct to C K. Write me how much and when started. I will write you as often as once a week. Tobacco is a paying thing here. They are selling such ——— tobacco for one dollar. Rob and I sent to E O for some. I see his letter last night he said it was on the way. You will please settle the same for me, 5 lbs. some paper. I will send you a State order soon. Write as soon as you get this.

Yours Truly
Wm H Leach

You spoke to me something about wanting to use some money before I left. If you want any let that town note rest if it will do you any good.

Tell Ann I will write her as soon as I get in from picket. C K is well. His letter probably went up last Sunday night in the mail. He said he had one in.

I had in 2, one to T E Chase, one to Lil I think. Ask Alden if he knows where my plough cutter and clasp is. I dont remember of carrying it away from home. It was on the old house sill the last I recollect.

Tell Wallace to not spoil the Widow.

Give my Love to all the good folks—gramman and all that family are well as usual.

So good bye for now.

Camp near Brandy Station Va
Sunday Feb 21st 1864

I think I can pass a few of the lonesome minutes today in writing to you as well as any way I know of, so here goes.

It is a very pleasant day today & the first comfortable day I have seen since I came here. Not much fire is required to keep warm, but heretofore, it was impossible to get fire enough to keep warm. The situation of our Camp is rather poor, being on rather low land, & not enough sideling to get a good drain on it, but it is perfectly dry now, as it has been frozen hard ever since I got here, but it shows signs of mud before this. Our Camp is laid out in good shape, & all have very good quarters, & seem to enjoy themselves as well as I ever saw them. I can see a change in one respect since I left last fall & that is in drinking, much more of it done than when I left, both in Officers & men. It used to be that Liquor could only occasionally be got but now it seems all that is needed is the will, & the money to pay for it & any amount can be had, & it is got & used every day, & pretty free too.

Well I have just been to church where a man can carry his own seat or stand up, that is if he cant find a stump to sit on.

I expect Capt Tracy will be back to the Company before a great while & I hope he will or else get out of the way entirely. If he comes back he will be in command of the Regt at present, for our Col is at home Lt Col on Gen Howes staff & Maj on a Court Martial so it leaves a Captain in command of the regiment.

I have been doing some work for the three past days that ought to have been done some time ago, but you know it was not a very good time to sit down to write a very great while as long as I was in Vermont. I have got my Returns of Ordnance for the 4th Qr 1863 made, but have got some more for Camp & Garrison Equipage to make & by that time it will be Muster Rolls to make for Jan & Feb.

Two of the 1st lot of reenlisted men of Co H did not return from their furloughs, their names are Boughton & Fitzgerald. I think you will recollect Fitzgerald coming into my tent with his sister at Poughkeepsie, & pretty well soaked he was too. He has had a great many sprees & been court martialed, but it did no good he would always have a bust when he had an opportunity. Nineteen in all have reenlisted in this Co & I think about the same number have in other Companys, & there will be more as soon as they have served two years, & are allowed to reenlist. Officers that stay another term have three years to serve after their present term of enlistment, they dont get the benefit of the remaining portion of their first three years.

Well, about what is being done here now. A Company drill every forenoon of about an hour, when the weather will permit, Sunday morning inspections, & the picket & guard duty is about all, except now & then a Review, one of which we expect every day, & likely it will come as I hear that Gov Smith, Senator Morrill, & Ex Adjut & Inspector General Baxter are coming here in a few days, & a review will be the natural consequence.

About the way I live now, I found the mess running about as I left it, & find them keeping a very good house, board costing about 4 dollars a week, have fresh fish as often as we please, potatoes most of the time, & apple pie every day yet since I have been here, so you see we have something to eat.

The Sutler brings up anything that an Officer has a mind to order & can bring nothing else, so of course their wants are supplied. Wood is about as scarce an article as anything here now, it has to be drawn two or three miles, & if it should come muddy, it would be hard to get it.

If Zina is making any big tubs & can make one for us you had better have him do it, if he has not got it done now, & supposing he can get the timber for it, & as large as the old one certain. I reckon I will call this enough for this time.

Yours C K Leach

Camp near Brandy Station Va, Feb 23rd 1864

Dear Wife

A nice, pleasant, warm day we are having today as was also the case yesterday, something of a change since last week, when it seemed like the coldest weather I had seen this winter. I suppose you had very cold weather in Vermont by accounts that have appeared in the papers of the cold weather at different places. It needs no fire here today in the middle of the day to keep comfortably warm, & at night it freezes considerably, but such beautiful moonshiny nights as there has been since I left home, seems almost too pleasant to go to bed.

Our Corps is being reviewed this afternoon, & I am nearly alone in camp that is for officers. The reason I am not out is that I was detailed this morning for Officer of the Day, & necessarily have to stay in camp. I should liked well enough to have gone out, but they will have to march as much as eight or nine miles before they get back, so I did not feel very bad to have to stay in camp. William & Albert have just got in from a three days picket tour, their first time at it, & they saved the review by coming off picket today. Robert Fulton is on camp Guard today so he saves the march. I have heard no complaint of sickness among the Co H recruits of late, so I reckon they are all on their "Tiddleinktum."

I dont know how Amos Warren is getting along since he went to the Hospital, but hope he may gain with better care than he had in the company.

I think I can say that I am all right as to health except a hard cold that sticks to me like brother. I have been troubled with night walking some of late, that is get up & walk, or Shit a bed, but I reckon that will come all straight soon.

Yesterday was a kind of a holiday here if possible to make it more so than all days, by its being Washingtons Birth day, & serenades, oyster suppers, & almost every thing you can think, was in order last night, to say nothing of some getting rather drunk to top off with. I reckon Sawyer runs the thing about the hardest of any officer in this regiment but his money will soon be gone, & then he will have to drive slower, but as long as his money lasts, the price of anything is of no account, come it must. Speaking of money, I got back about \$90.00 of the money I sent to Lt Drury this last winter & now I have about all the money I want by me.

I reckon I will put a little in this letter & send you, & shall send more soon, but if Capt Tracy comes back to take command of the Co, I shall turn some over to him.

The Regt has just got back from the review, 4 O.C. been out since half past 11 A.M. Reviewed by Gen Sedgwick so they say, & a host of women as spectators. I believe there are 3 women in our regiment, Dr Sawins wife, Capt Cadys & Lt Robbins wife, but in some regiments they are full of women. I have not seen Robbins' wife yet but am going to call in one of these days & see if all is straight.

Express comes in here now every few days, & generally a big drunk is had after every lot, but today I hear it is being inspected, & all Liquors confiscated, & a good haul is made from some of it too. Three dollars a bottle is the price that is generally asked for liquor here now & many send for it to sell again to make money.

I expect a letter from you tonight & hope it may come for I have had but one letter & that from you since I got back.

I saw some Rebs marched in this morning, 25 or 30 of them I should think, going to Gen Pleasantons Head Quarters. I suppose they were picked up by the Cavalry somewhere, they most all had on our Over Coats, & nearly new too.

Evening, I have just received a letter from you & glad to hear of your good health & that all things are getting along smoothly. You say you have made a bargain with Wallace to work this spring, I am satisfied well enough. I could think of no one but Otis that I supposed could be hired when I was there. I think Zina sold his oxen very well but I suppose he will have to pay in proportion when he buys again. You say the stags are not sold. I dont care much whether they are or not only if they could be sold well, & get a pair of steers

there would be more growth on them & would probably sell quicker when they are to be sold. I paid for the handkerchief I got in Newbern 60 (sixty) cents no more & no less. William got an Express box tonight from E O Safford I suppose, contents tobacco, pipes, paper, & such like. The boxes were all opened & the spiritous all confiscated, for the use of Head Quarters, or at least I presume most of them will want to taste to see if it is a good article, & after they are satisfied it goes to the Medical department.

Your advice about reenlisting is borne continually in mind, nevertheless my thoughts about re[e]ntering are very strong, but mostly that I shall not, my reasons I wrote you in my last letter.

I dont expect you have heard from me yet since I left Brattleboro & presume you are thinking I have forgotten to write, but I reckon I can write enough to make up the one that was stole, if stolen it was. I saw B K Chase today for the first time since I got back, he is looking well, but dont see the reenlistment. I will have to close for want of material to write about.

Yours C K Leach

Camp near Brandy Station Va
Friday Evening, Mar 4th, 1864

Dear Wife

Again I seat myself to pen you a few lines. I received a letter from you Wednesday when we got back to camp from our march, which in my last I wrote we had orders for, & was glad to hear that you were all well. It is time that I got another from you of Mondays mail, but as you wrote that you was going to wait till you got a letter from me before you wrote again, I dont know as I am to get one this time, but trust you will be satisfied that it was not my fault that you did not hear from me sooner, when you got my second letter, as I suppose the first did not go, sure. I believe I have always been punctual in writing, & since I got back I have written twice a week except when I was on picket & could not, & again the past week when we were gone on our march, & the first one I wrote the next day after I got here from home, & it is my intention when I am situated so I can, to write twice a week as long as I remain in the service.

I hope you will not get your back up & stop writing because for some reason you happen to not get letters regular, for (my word for it) you will get them so if writing will do it, circumstances permitting.

All are well here except William & he is quite sick & I am rather afraid he is going to have a run of fever before he gets over it. He said he was not very well when we started on our march & I told him to go to the Surgeon & get excused & stay in Camp which he did, but when we got back I found him quite sick. He stays in his tent yet but if there was room in the Hospital I think it would be best for him to go there for he could have better care.

Capt Tracy has at last got back to the Regt, came this week Tuesday, he is a little lame yet, dont know yet whether he will take command of the company or not. We have but one Field Officer with the Regt & probably he will act as such.

I presume you will want to know what we did, & where we went while out from camp.

We left camp at nine O Clock Saturday morning & made a very good march, passed through Culpepper, & then took the road towards Madison Court House. Camped near Thoroughfare Mountain at night, & started again at 8 Sunday morning & before we had gone half a mile, our Co & Co G were detached from the regiment & sent with a signal Officer to the mountain. The two companies were sent as guard for the Signal station, which was to be on the mountain. About half of one Co was sent on top with the Officer & the rest stoped at the foot of the mountain, & relieved those at the top every day. I expect all we gained by it was to save one days travel & that was something when a man is so foot sore he can hardly go.

It rained Monday night all night & Tuesday all day, & Tuesday night snowed about an inch, so it was not very nice being out. I had a little tent carried, but the men did not have any with them, but there happened to be a straw stack near us, so all got along very well.

Our Corps went 6 or 8 miles beyond where our Cos went & remained till Wednesday, when we all came back to camp. We heard a very little canonading, & that was all we knew of what was being done, & we have to hear yet what is being done by Gen Kilpatrick.

Since commencing this I have been so fortunate as to get another letter from you, & as you had received one from me I suppose all suspicion of my negligence is gone.

I am glad to hear that [you] are all still well, hope it may so continue.

I sent 10 dollars in a letter some time since, & hope you may have received it. I have calculated to have sent more, but I have not, shall send some, some way before long.

I got some more Photographs the other day, & will send three home, & also some of the Officers of the Regt that I have got & shall send more of them as fast as I get them. You just keep them safe & clean till they can be put in an album. I got enough to make 24 of mine & am going to send for another dozen.

I will close for tonight & as it will not leave here till tomorrow night I will write more if there is anything to write.

Good Bye

C K Leach

Saturday Eve, 5th. William is about the same as yesterday, no better at least.

Bingham Chase I hear is in the regimental Hospital, but nothing very dangerously sick. I have not seen him, but heard he was taken to the Hospital while we were on our march.

I will not send but two of my vignetts & if they are better than the one you have take your choice, & then do with the others as you want.

No more, C. K. L.

Camp near Brandy Station Va
Monday, March 7th 1864

Dear Wife

Once more am I seated to write you of matters & things as I find them in this memorable part of the land. I find myself about as usual, in good health & passing off time as well as possible. I was sent on Brigade Guard yesterday at 8½ A.M., & was relieved today at 1 P.M. The reason I was not relieved at the same hour I went on was that Col Grant had a Brigade Review at 10 & did not have the Guard relieved till after review. I expect the review was on purpose that his wife might see how Grand an appearance his Brigade could make. They were married this winter & she has been here but a short time. After the review he maneuvered the Brigade a while & concluded with a *Grand Charge*. William went to the Hospital this morning while I was on Guard. I have not seen him today but Rob says he was no better. He is so weak that he could not get out to walk without help, that is, not very well. I dont know yet what the Dr calls the matter with him.

Bingham Chase is better, so he thinks with a few days rest will set him all right. He was in our tent today.

We are getting fine weather nowadays, very pleasant, & quite warm through the day, & a very little freezing at night.

I received a box of Sugar from N F Wood last night of about 200 lbs & Albert has sold a very little of it today, got about 35 cents per pound. His box is rather too large, if[t] is broken worse than if it had been in a smaller box.

We have a new Commander for our Division. Gen Howe has been given a new command as Inspector Gen of U S Artillery, & Gen Russell is assigned to the command of our Division. He commanded a Brigade in the 1st Division. I suppose he is a good Officer, at least has a good record.

Julian H Dewey is in Camp & I think I shall send 50 or 100 dollars home by him. I dont like to send by mail just now. / He has just been in here & I have sent 100 dollars by him, he may send to you by Express or

by some one that may happen to be there from town. You can pay Safford when you get it & do with the rest as occasion requires.

I sent some Photographs in my last, which I hope you may get safe. I will also send two in this, & more as I get them.

No letter from you tonight, as I some expected, but shall expect it tomorrow night.

As ever Yours C K Leach

Camp near Brandy Station Va
March 12th 1864

Dear Wife

I seat myself again to write you a line hoping it may find you all in good health.

All well here except William, & he is very sick. The Dr says he has the Typhoid Fever, & I am afraid he is not going to wear it out. He has very bad spells, when he can hardly breathe, or talk, & wants water to drink all the time. The first one he had was the 2nd night he was in the Hospital, & he sent for me, but he was out of it before I got there. Today I went in about 11 O.C. & he was having one of them then. He thought he was gone for it sure when he had the first one. Before you get this he will probably be better, or else I fear he may never be better. He wanted to know the other day if I had written anything to his folks about his being sick. I told him I had written to you, & the rest of the folks would hear of it by you. I have also written to Daniel & am going to again.

I have received two letters from you since I wrote to you one Tuesday night & one Thursday night.

I was glad to hear that you all were well & hope you may not any of you get sick by moving into a cold, damp house.

I hope you may enjoy yourself living at home until my return, which, providence permitting, I trust will be in about three months from this time.

Nothing special doing here just now. Col Grant has had a few more visitors & of course had to get the Brigade out for a review, so they could see how we looked. I reckon Col Grant thinks we are a nice Brigade, & make a fine appearance, or else he would not parade us before every one that comes from Vermont. Our last review was Thursday, & ended in a rain storm, so we all got pretty well wet. I dont recollect who the distinguished visitors were, as his Order said they were.

Thursday was a very rainy day & Friday was not far behind & topped out with a thunder shower, & today is a nice pleasant day & is drying up things nicely.

An order has been issued that in consequence of the nearness of the time when this army may resume active operations, all females are ordered to be removed beyond the limits of this army except such as are connected with charitable institutions & the like.

I presume there are six or eight hundred women, wives of Officers, now in the army, & I presume a great many that are not wives. Every time there is anything going on more or less Females are mixed with the spectators. We have but three in our Regt & those are Dr Sawins wife, Capt Cadys wife, & Lieut Robbins wife. Robbins wife you know & Capt Cady was the one that was married about the same time & had his wife at Poughkeepsie.

No more this time for I must write to Daniel, & N F about his sugar that he sent me.

Yours C K Leach

[undated second sheet]

I enclosed one Photograph & also a ring. If the ring is no fit for you, you can send it back & I will get one that is, or if it will fit anothers finger let her have it, & tell me whether it is too small or large for you & I will get you another. I presume it is small for your 3rd finger. It is made of the same as mine that I had when at home.

I have not seen William since just before noon, but Albert was there this afternoon, no perceptible change. I reckon we will be sweet for some time for I had two more boxes of sugar come tonight & I have not got rid of all the first box. It is little too late after Pay day to sell sugar fast & the weather has been rather bad for operations. I hope Zina may get some lumber to make a store tub of so to be sure of enough Storage. I wrote in my last about sending \$100.00 by Mr Dewey & hope you may get it.

Capt Tracy has nothing to do with the Co since he got back & I guess will not have, so it is the same with me as before.

Did I tell you in my last that I had sent for 12 more Photographs I guess I did. I am going to send home my Cape if I have a chance for I shall not need it when it gets a little warmer. Fannie Safford says in Hollis letter "How *do* you do," to me. Just say to her that I do well, but should like to play just one more game of euchre so as to come out square.

Those cows that you say are farrar* are not dry are they, either one of them. I know Zina said the red one was farrar when I was at home. I should judge by your list of articles that you bought that you were going to housekeeping. Have you got your hog yet, I suppose not. I should not feel very bad if I could have the privilege of stepping in tonight to see how you get along. I presume I could not stay all night. Oh no, you would not keep stragglers.

I can hear the man that carries the mail around after it to go out so I must say Good Bye
From Chester

Evening) I have been up to see W^m again & find him about the same as before, or morning, but he is very sick he had a very hard night last night, have just got a letter from you but have not read it all. The mail is just going out & I must close.

Camp near Brandy Station Va
March 14th 1864

Dear Wife

I have a little time just now, (Monday afternoon) so I will improve it by writing to you. The Regt is out for an Inspection but I being Officer of the Day am compeled to stay in camp. It is a pleasant day today, & not very cold but quite windy, yesterday the wind blew quite hard. William I must say is no better, & yesterday (Sunday) he was much worse, not resting but very little, & last night or late in the day was taken with Hemorrhage of the bowels, & by his looks & actions at 9 O.C. last evening I should not have been surprised if he had not lived till morning. This morning he was easier so of course appeared better, & I have just seen the Hospital Steward & he says he has been easier all day today, & that he has not had a passage from his bowels today, but this morning they told me that three pints of blood came from him last night.

When I was in to see him last evening he called me by name & when I went [to] his bed he took hold of my hand, & says, wont you send me home. I asked him why, & he says, I want to lie by the side of my woman.** I told him yes if it was necessary, but told him he must not think of any such thing, but keep up good courage, & the Dr told him he was not going to die, but was going to be up around in a short time, but the last word he said before I left was Now you remember what you promised me.

I hope I may not be under the necessity of sending a brothers body home, but at that time I could have but little hopes of anything else.

Today he wanted a roasted apple but they did not want him to have any, so told him they were all gone (I had carried him some before) and he says Chester will be up & then Ill see if I cant have an apple, so

*Farrow, i.e., not pregnant.

**His wife Lorinda had died that winter.

before I saw him the nurse told me how it was & wanted I should tell him there were none at the Sutlers. As soon as I saw him he asked me if I could not get him an apple, he wanted one roasted. I told him I would see, but thought the sutler had not got any. He said he thought he had some of those I carried him before, said he had not eat but two or three. I told him perhaps they had given them to some other of the sick ones, & he says perhaps so.

If he holds out a few days longer I shall have some hopes that he may get well, but at this time it looks doubtful.

I have no news at this time at all, for nothing has been done here to my knowledge since I last wrote. I look for a letter from you tonight, & hope I may get it before I send this. I will see W^m again & if there is any change will tell you.

C K Leach

Our old Song-singer that has been reported hung as a Rebel spy has again come to camp full of his songs & stories.

Camp near Brandy Station Va

March 18th 1864

Dear Wife

I received a letter from you last Monday evening, but had not time to read it before I had to send mine that I had just written. I will answer it now.

I suppose in the first place you will want to hear from William. Well I am happy to say that he is better or at least appears to be, does not have such hard spells, & is not out of his head, & is gaining strength. I have great hopes now that he is going to get well. He is not so down hearted as he was at first, & I am glad for that.

One more thing before I answer your last letter, & that is that we are under orders to be ready to move at Short notice with three days rations, & now you know all I know about it, but I dont hardly think we will move at all. I reckon the Rebels are making a move somewhere, & we are held in readiness. The order came about 4 O.C. this afternoon & now it is just dark.

I am very sorry to hear that Justin had cut his knee so bad, for I am afraid he will not be able to help Monroe in sugaring, & also it will be so much worse for you doing the chores, but hope he will get better soon so as to help you some.

You are worrying about the sugar weather passing, & no one to make the sugar. I hope all is right before now. You seem to fear that what the men might say to me about staying longer than till June might make a difference, but not so, if I stay it will be because I think best but no urging will make any difference. The *point* of staying is not perceptible to me at this present time.

I reckon the boys are having a time with the boxing gloves, by the noise. The women for our Regt, & I guess from the Brigade all left for home yesterday, so much encumbrance gone.

We are just getting up a thing that I shall think much of & that is a record of the Co, to be printed, & when set in a frame will be an ornament as well as a history of the Co, cost one dollar, paid with Co Fund, get one for every man in the Co and some beside. Not much done this week except a Div Review yesterday at noon by Gen Neil Com'dg Div. Gen Russell was assigned to this Div but the order was countermanded.

Weather has been pleasant but very cold for this season & very windy, freezes nights quite hard.

George Crown has had the measles & in the Hospital yet, & now Charles Spaulding has them & in the Hospital. Aldrich E Montague & Ed Smith have been a little out of sorts for a day or two. I will send three Photographs in this, among the[m] the Honored H H Prouty of Co H, 2nd Vt Vols, pretty good looking. I expect a letter from you tonight, hope I will get it. How is the ring

Yours C K Leach

Saturday, March 19th

As I did not send my letter out last night I will put in a little more today. No move yet that we were ordered to be ready for yesterday, & neither did I think we would move.

We can hear canonading now & have nearly all day but dont know whether it is practice firing or something else. It is a very pleasant warm day today, & the ground is getting dry again after the rain that we had last week.

I have not seen William today but the Dr says he is doing well, shall go & see him this afternoon.

I did not get a letter from you last night as expected, neither did any one get a letter from Fletcher so I reckon I may get one tonight.

Thursday is the time that your Mondays mail generally gets along & now it is Saturday. The mail that was robbed at Brigade Head Quarters some time since, has lately been found, & some are getting things back that had them in the mail. Something that was overlooked, or that the robbers did not want, such as Photographs & the like. One man in our Co got back 10 dollars that they did not find.

The mail was hid in a stone wall I believe. No more now
Yours C K Leach
P.S. I have seen W^m & he acts quite smart, but has something to do before he gets well. Preparations are being made for a great review, I suppose by Gen Grant, when he gets here. A large detail has been today preparing the ground. I suppose people think that the Army of the Potomac will do something if Gen Grant is with it. I hope it may make a difference.

Sunday March 20th 1864

Dear Wife

As my time is not occupied this afternoon I will improve the opportunity by writing you a few lines in answer to two of yours which I received last night, one mailed March 14 & one March 10, at Fairfax. I should think it was a nice fix to be in to have the mail stop entirely, how happens it, does the mail go direct from Cambridge to Fairfax, or has all communications been cut off between the two places, direct?

I see you are in for speculation by the way you have been selling & buying cattle, I presume it will be for the best for the stags would be an unhandy team all the spring, & there cannot be much loss as to value.

Sorry to hear that you had so much trouble about them, & other things, but hope all will come straight in time.

I should not think people would grumble much this spring about butter not selling for a good price, or sugar either, they will beat army prices by and by.

You say you want some money to pay Zina. I sent a hundred dollars by J H Dewey, & when you get that, you can use that to pay him & I will try & furnish you with enough to pay Monroe, & Safford as soon as he wants it. I have somewhere in the neighborhood of two hundred dollars by me now, & expect about fifty more soon & if I am not called upon too loudly I can spare some more if we should not happen to get paid off very soon, & if we should be paid soon I can certainly let you have it.

I have been up to see William today & find him on the gain, & think he will get along now all right.

Col Walbridge came back yesterday, he has been absent some time on a sick leave, I dont know whether he has got well or not, if not he will probably resign & give some one else a chance.

H P Nichols is in camp but I have not seen him yet but expect to before he goes back to his regt.

John Ayers got back yesterday, reenlisted & has been west, to spend his furlough. Five more that are expected back today from Co H.

That big review I spoke of yesterday in my last letter I suppose will come off the first of this week, presume we start for Richmond immediately after it comes off. I wrote that Ed Smith was unwell, but he has got well again. Aldrich is not much sick.

You ask if I got the two cent stamps, I dont know whether I have said anything about them or not, but I got the stamps, & am much obliged to you for them. Our mail carrier keeps stamps generally & I have got my three Ct stamps of him.

The weather continues dry, & the wind blows every day—so it most shakes my house to pieces, appears like rain nearly every day but hangs off wonderfully.

When you get Photographs that I send, tell me whose they are that you receive, so I may know that all get along safe. I want to get all the Officers in the regt but some of them have not got any now. Four more of our men have got back today so there is only one absent now on furlough.

Monday) I sent home yesterday by H P Nichols my Cape to my Over Coat, & fifty dollars in money so you can pay up some of the dues. Nichols was going to start for home today on a furlough of 15 days, & I thought best to send my Cape home. I hardly knew whether to send the money or not, but thought it would be all right. He may not see you unless he goes on purpose, so you had better go & see him when he gets home. William is about the same today but has considerable fever yet & very easily excited. I presume the sick will all be sent to a Gen Hospital before he gets well, & in that case I can not see him every day as now. Crown & Spaulding are doing well. Pleasant today but cold last night.

C K L

Camp near Brandy Station Va
March 26th 1864

Dear Wife

I seat myself once more to write you, but I have not such news to tell as I could wish I had, but probably before this reaches you you will learn of Williams death. For some days after he entered the Hospital I had but very little hopes of his recovery, but after that he appeared better, & was called so by the Dr, till last Monday I could see plainly that he was not as well & the next day Tuesday I could see that he was much lower. Wednesday he was very nervous & on the move all the time, and at night did not hardly think he would live till morning, & left word with the nurses to call me if there was any change for the worse before morning.

Thursday morning, the flush had gone from his cheeks & a more death like color was on him, otherwise he appeared about the same only weaker, & the nervousness of the day before had left him. I saw him last about 11 O.C, & about 2 they sent down that he was dead.

I started as soon as possible to make arrangements to send his body home. I learned that there was an office for embalming at Brandy Station so I got an ambulance & went there Thursday afternoon, got a coffin to take the body in & sent it to the Station that night. Yesterday (Friday) I went down again & selected a coffin, although I did not have much choice as the one I got was the only one there except some that were not lined at all, & the body is to be sent this morning.

I sent a telegraph dispatch to N F Wood from the Station but am afraid it will not reach him, but if it does not, the man said the body would not take any harm.

I wrote to Norman Thursday night & he will get that by the time the body arrives at Georgia, as it will not probably leave Washington before next Monday.

I sent to N F as being the one that a letter or dispatch would be most likely to reach, there being a daily mail. The expenses, including telegraph dispatch, were ninety-eight dollars & eighty cents (\$98.80), 45 for coffin, 36 express charges, 15 for embalming & 2.80 telegraphing.

I would very much liked to have taken the body home myself but I knew there was no use to try, therefore I have done all that I can do, & hope it may reach home without any accident. There will be some of his clothes in the box, & if I had thought about it before I went to the Station I should have sent everything he had that was worth sending, as it would cost nothing, & help hold the coffin steady in the box.

We have had very rough weather since I wrote you last, have had about as great a snow storm as I ever saw in Va, which came Tuesday March 22nd, & a very little of it is yet on the ground. It must have fell nearly a foot deep. Thursday, the day W^m died, was a very nice pleasant day & reminded me of a first rate sap day in Vt after a big snow storm. Yesterday it commenced raining in the afternoon & rained very hard nearly all night last night, & today the wind blows very hard, & if you find some marks in the wrong direction in this letter you must lay it to the wind shaking the tent & table which is fastened to it. I can hardly keep my pen anywhere some of the time.

I have received two letters from you since I wrote & glad to hear that you were well, & hope Mothers & Zelas cold will get better soon. I am glad to hear that the ring was a fit for your finger, for I expected it would be too small. I should very much liked to have been present at your sewing circle, & presume I should have enjoyed it much more than the scenes that I was compeled to witness here on that day.

My health is good & has been since I wrote last, & Alberts health is good also. Crown has got better of his measles & got back to the Co, but Spaulding & Edgar are in the Hospital now with the measles, but Spaulding came down to the Co yesterday on a visit.

I got a letter from Florilla last night & shall write to her today. I wrote to her a few days since, when W^m was not so bad but she had not got it when she wrote to me. I have some little things of W^m's that I shall send to the Children as soon as I have an opportunity, a gold pen which I think I shall send to Florilla, & a knife to some of the boys, a memorandum book also to Florilla.

You want to know if I am coming home for good in three months. Well I must say that such has been my intentions all along & intend to now, unless I should change my mind. Capt Tracy asked me the other day if I was going to stay. I told him I thought not, he said there was going to be a chance for me to be made Capt for if the Col did not resign so that he could be Maj, he should resign because he could not march with the Co & he did not want to stand in my way. I told him I did not care much about being Capt now for I should have to be mustered for three years, but I did not want to have him resign & some one else put in Capt over me because I would not stay. He said he knew there would be a chance for me if I would take it.

I would be very glad of it if I could have it for the unexpired term, but looks like paying dear for the whistle to stay longer. I do not write this to ask your opinion for I very well know it already. I write it that you may know how matters stand.

That big review has not come off yet, for two reasons I suppose, one is that Gen Grant only came here day before yesterday & the other is that the weather has not been so that it would be possible to have a review, & will not for some days to come. I need say nothing about the reorganization of the army for you will get the order in the papers, but the 3rd Div of the 3rd Corps, which is attached to the 6th Corps has the 10th Vt in it.

I hope Sylvanus may get up a tub as you say he thinks he can. I suppose you will get rich making butter this spring it is so high, & you have such a large dairy.

I will have to bid you good bye for this time the tent shakes so it is very nice writing

Yours C K Leach

[Letter from Chester to Zina]

Camp near Brandy Station Va
Sunday March 27th 1864

Bro Zina

I will pen you a line to let you know that I am well and also for other purposes.

As you have had the handling of Williams money & other affairs, I will send to you three dollars, the amount he had in possession when he died, & you can take care of it till called for by authority or is needed for some purpose.

I presume his body will reach home before you get this, & hope it may look as natural as when it left here, but dont expect it will. His Soldier life has been short & probably it has been the means of shortening his life, but the future is dark & no one can tell what is to be his fate.

I was fearful of that he would not live at first, but after that for a time he appeared better & I had strong hopes, but when he commenced to fail again I cannot say as I had much hopes of his life.

It was his wish when first sick to be sent home but I should have done it if it had been in my power if he had not requested it.

He died Thursday the 24th of March about 2 O.C. in the afternoon, & I hardly thought he would live through the night before. The expenses of sending his body home were in all \$98.80, including telegraphing which I am afraid never went through.

There has been more sickness in Co during the past month than I have known for a long time, four being in the Hospital at this time, Edgar M & Chas Spaulding being two of them, they have the measles.

Rob & Albert are both well as usual.

Three months more if my life is spared will bring me to the end of three years service for Uncle Sam. I presume I shall serve some one else for the next three years, but presume he would keep me if I was willing.

How is the old gal? (Write.)

C K Leach

Camp 2nd Vt Vols
March 28th 1864

Dear Wife

Again I seat myself to write you, hoping it may find you in good health.

Hollis received a letter from Jane last night that was sent to Cambridge to be mailed in which she said that Justin had had a fall from the beams in the barn, & hurt him considerably. I hope it may not prove to be any thing that will be injurious to him or lay him up any great length of time. I look for a letter from you tonight & then I will get the particulars of it.

Albert is complaining today of not being very well, having a headache & feeling feverish. I hope he is not going to have a run of the fever. I will find out how he feels tonight before I send this out.

I sent [a] Photograph of Capt Bixby in my last letter, but suppose you would know it when you got it if [I] did not say anything about it.

I expected to have had to go on picket yesterday (Sunday) but did not so I expect to have to go about Wednesday the day for the next detail & will have to stay out till Saturday, three days.

Prouty, our 2nd Lieut is just about sending in his intentions of remaining in the service, & requesting a leave of absence of 35 days, wouldnt you like to see me home on a leave of absence of 35 days?

Today has been a pleasant warm day but it looks as though we might have another storm before a great while. The ground has got dried off pretty well again since the big snow, & rain storm that we had last week. We have had wind enough of late to dry up any amount of mud, today is the first still day that we have had for some time, & now the wind begins to blow some. Two drills today Co drill from 10 to 11 which I attended, & Brigade drill at 1 O.C. which I did not attend. Target firing is ordered by Gen Meade to the amount of 10 rounds to a man, no weather that would admit of it yet.

I reckon Zina has not done bad in trading oxen. Jane said in her letter to Hollis that he had bought another pair for \$140.00 so he saved no money out of his last trade but perhaps got a better pair of oxen.

The boys have great times playing football, there being three balls in the Regt, & all turn out sometimes & have a general kick. I have just been to supper & saw Albert & he says he feels a great deal better so I guess he is all right. Appearances are that a big move is to be made from here before a great while, new troops coming in & sending away surplus stores of one kind & another.

I have just received a letter from you & now I will finish this up. I should think that Justin was very used up for a time by your tell, but hope he will get along all right in time & also learn him to be a little more careful in the future.

Glad to hear that you got the Cape & money all safe by Mr Nichols, & also that you are not in want of more money now for I could not send it if you were for it lessened my purse some in sending Williams body home. Sorry to hear that there is so much sickness around, but it is about the same with us, just at this time.

Does Zelia have the ear ache often or is this her first time of having it.

I hope Mothers services will not be required by any one else, so that she may remain with you, at least till you have some other help, but I am afraid she will overwork herself by having so much to do.

One more man has reenlisted from this Co, Edward Snow, & more of the /62 recruits if they were allowed to, but they have to serve two years before they can reenlist.

I think I will have to write to Zina about his letter.

Yours C. K. L.

Camp 2nd Vt Vols

Apr 1st 1864

Dear Wife

Once more am I seated to pen you a few lines in answer to one received from you last evening. My health is good as yet, & I believe the rest of the boys are as well as usual. Edgar & C Spaulding are on the gain, & well enough so they came down to the Co today, a distance of 50 rods I think. The weather continues to be bad, has rained nearly all day today & is getting to be quite muddy. We had a Brigade drill yesterday afternoon, & during the drill witnessed a horse race the first race I have seen for a long time I dont know the amount of stakes on the race but there was something. One of the horses belonged in the 2nd Corps & the other at the Hd Qrs of the 6th Corps. The 6th Corps horse won the race very handsomely.

Just as we got back in camp the Pay Rolls were handed around to be signed & today our regt has been paid off for Jan & Feb. I think I shall ask you to take a little more money now. I have a Check of one hundred dollars made payable to your order which I shall send before a great while.

I was very glad to see the Pay Rolls come for money had got to be scarce, & I have not got N Fs sugar all sold, & I had trusted out a good deal that I had sold, so now I think I am all sound on the sugar question.

I expect to have to go on picket tomorrow & if you dont get another letter till a week has passed you will know the cause. My pay today was \$213.49, & I also got a check on the U S Treasury last night for \$63.39, Co savings for the month of Feb.

You say in your letter that Norman & Daniel were there on Sunday. I was glad to hear that you all got notice of W^ms death so soon for I was a little afraid that the dispatch would not get through, but I dont think the body would get along before Wednesday night at least. As you say it will be a sad sight to see those children following their only Parent to the grave, for all that I know you may have followed his remains to the grave this day, how different the scenes from what I have passed through here today.

Lt Prouty starts for home tomorrow on a 35 days leave having signified his willingness to remain in the service after the expiration of his present term of enlistment. 35 days is long enough to run out his present pay day, & as much more if he had it, he is about after Sawyers Style, go it strong as long as his money lasts.

Sawyer is going on a 15 days leave also but presume he will not go farther than N York or some other place where he can have a time.

I have sent & got another dozen of my Photographs, they came last night. You say Zelia stood for a negative. Just send along one of the whole batch of you so I can see how you all look. glad to hear that Justin is doing well, & that you are making sugar. good Bye for this time

C K Leach

Camp near Brandy Station Va
April 4th 1864

Dear Wife

As I did not have to go on picket as I expected I would when I wrote you last, I am permitted to write you at this time, but shall expect to have to go on picket tomorrow. As usual it snows today, & nearly half of the time it snows or rains. Friday it rained nearly all day & snowed Saturday, but yesterday was a pleasant day & dried the mud a little but today it has got around again to snow. I reckon a move will not be made very early this spring unless it dries up pretty soon. Nothing is being done here now except camp duties & picket duty & such like.

Col Walbridge started for home Saturday having resigned & got his discharge. Rheumatism I believe is the trouble with him. Lt Prouty started on a 35 days leave Saturday & Sawyer went on a 15 days leave yesterday.

I think nearly every Officer has been home this winter, & this is the 2nd time Prouty has been. I should not think it would pay very rich to go for 15 days now if they were going home in June for good. Do you know whether William sent his miniature to Florilla or any one else around home or not. I ask this because if he did I would like to have you get some taken from it. I think Photographs could be taken from one if there is one to be found. He had one taken certain, but dont know as only one. If you can find one I wish you would see if you can get it Photographed.

I shall send you about 150 dollars as soon as I get a chance to send by someone & you can hire it out if you get a chance. I reckon I would pay up all little debts that may be due first & then hire out the remainder. The debt for the Steers I guess can be paid when it comes due. How is it with the Listers this spring, did they put any money in the list, if so how much. I calculated to have written you about it before listing time but it slipped my mind, dont let them tack it on too hard. I suppose you are all busy nowadays making sugar, hope you will make enough to get your tea & tobacco, & the baby a new dress. How do you & brother Waits folks get along this spring, all right I hope.

Has Wallace got married? If he has I am afraid your help this spring will come short.

Albert is well & I believe all the Fletcher boys are on the gain. Edgar is nearly well again, & so is Chas Spaulding. Geo Robinson was a little out of sorts yesterday have not seen him today. Rob is about as usual, went out on picket the other day in the rain & guess he had a good time by the way he swore when he got back, they had to go nearly 10 miles. Our Regt has farther to go than others being so far to the rear of the others. I expect a letter from you tonight so I will lay this by till the mail comes.

Yours C K Leach

Evening

The mail has got in but I received no letter from you perhaps you did not write on account of W^m's body being there about that time & you would have no opportunity. It rains & has all the afternoon, have not been detailed for picket yet but expect it.

Camp near Brandy Station
April 9th 1864

Dear Wife

Once more I seat myself to pen you a few lines in answer to yours, received last night & also one that came Tuesday night which I got yesterday when I got in from picket.

As I expected when I wrote you last Monday, I had to go on picket the next day, & about as rainy & nasty day as you very often see, & as we have to go about 6 miles to our picket line, it is a very desirable job in a rainy & muddy day. After the day I went out it was pleasant & so I had a good time to come in yesterday, only it was quite warm. The old cow bell rings for supper so here goes for it.

Did you ever see a day when it rained a perfect shower all day, if you did you will know about what kind of a day it has been here today. The wind blows pretty hard & the rain beats through our tent so we have to keep everything pretty shady. Nothing of importance is being done here now except that an order has been issued to have all extra baggage sent away & such like. I think my extras are rather small this year & therefore it will affect me but little. All are as well as usual here I believe. My health is good as yet & so is Alberts I believe.

I am very glad to hear that W^m's body got through in good shape & that you were satisfied as to the manner in which he was sent. I only did as I felt it my duty to do in sending him home let the cost be what it might.

I would have given most anything to have been at the funeral but that was impossible.

Dr Brush went home the other day & I sent home by him \$250.00 which I presume you will have to go to the Boro to get, he is only on a 15 days leave & unless you go soon after you get this you will not see him, but he would probably leave it with his folks. There is one check of \$100. to you & one of \$50. to N F Wood & one hundred in *Green backs*. The check of 50 dollars & 50 dollars of the money is for N F Wood, leaving for you \$150.00. You can do with it as best you can, hire it out in good place if you have a chance.

I am suited well enough about the insuring but should think he asked a good price, what is the amount that they are insured for, more than would be allowed in case of fire? You speak about Ceph wanting to buy the sugar, of course you know better than I do about the quantity made, & whether it would be best to sell it. If farmers dont get rich this spring it will be because they have nothing to sell, but likely butter will come down some before a great while.

I shall send some more Photographs in this letter, & wish you had an album to put them in.

I was not disappointed in what you wrote me in answer to mine about the way affairs were here, but things stand yet as before. I have a bit of a ring that E R Smith made & gave me, he said for my wife. I told him I would send his wife something if he did not look out. Hollis got a letter from Miriam the other day, all well.

No more this time. C K Leach
weather worse every minute.

Evening. The mail has come & a letter from you containing the childrens Photographs, glad to hear that you are well, you said you was going to send your Photograph but I did not find it.

Camp near Brandy Station Va
April 12th 1864

Dear Wife

Again am I seated with pen in hand to inform you of my condition & doings.

Good health is my portion as yet & I believe also the same with the Fletcher boys, those that have been sick with the measles are again on duty, & our sick list is not as large [as] it has been for some time.

The last time I wrote you it was raining hard & it continued nearly all night & raised the streams so much that some (I dont know how many) of the bridges were injured or carried away, so that we have had no mail since, & probably the letter I sent out then did not go to Washington till today. I hear that trains have come through today & think they must as we got papers in camp this afternoon, & I hope we may get a mail tonight.

I am very glad to hear that you have a different arrangement about mail, & I shall not hesitate about writing when I have an opportunity fearing it will not hit the mail & have to lay over three or four days.

I had the pleasure of going on Brigade Guard Sunday, the day after the big rain, had no objections only that I came in from a three days picket Friday about 2 P.M. & it seemed to me like asking a little too much, but

I got through it sound, & I trust it is the last of the like that I shall do for Uncle Sam, or Col Grant, whatever other capacity I may serve in. At 1 P.M. this afternoon our Brigade was reviewed by Gen Getty (dont know whether that is the way to spell his name or not) our Div commander. I have never seen him before. Nothing more than at all reviews except that all had on white cotton gloves, got expressly for the occasion. Bought 18 dollars worth of gloves for Co H. The gloves were ordered when the expected great review by Gen Grant was to come, but as that did not come they got the gloves for our new Div commander.

We all packed up our extra baggage yesterday to be sent away but it has not gone yet. I had not much that I wanted to send away for storage but I sent some few thing[s] of W^ms & I guess they will get through when the old men go home, for it is supposed they can get their stuff when they go home. Of Williams I put in with others an old Over coat, Rubber Blanket, a pair [of] drawers & some other smaller articles.

Yesterday it did not rain & that is the only day for some time. Monday there was a thunder shower only not much of a shower, & this afternoon it is trying to rain some but has not made out much yet.

In my last letter I sent some Photographs & a ring, in this I shall send Photographs or a silver cross, or both. The cross is for you, that is if you will accept it, & not be ashamed to wear it or anything else. I had it made on purpose, although nothing very nice. No more this time.

hope I may get a letter tonight

C K Leach

Camp near Brandy Station Va
April 16th 1864

Dear Wife

I seat myself once more to answer a letter from you which I received last evening date Apr 9th & 10th, & mailed the 11th. Glad to hear that you were all well, & hope you are still the same. I received 2 papers also last night. My health is good at this time, I am happy to say, & hope for a continuance of the same.

The weather has been good here for some days till last night it commenced raining again about 9 O.C. & continues yet to rain steadily at 11 O.C., A.M. Drills have been the order of the day through the good weather three drills a day, two in the forenoon, Squad or Co drill, & one Battalion or Brigade drill in the afternoon. We have a fine drill ground just in front of our camp, far enough one way to form our whole Brigade in line of battle & about half as far the other way. No stones, stumps or wet places on it, & but very unevenness in the ground. All our Div. & Brigade reviews take place on the same ground. In your last letter before you sent Justin & Zelas Photographs. Justins is a very good picture but I never saw such dark background as Zelas, although the picture looks like her. I have sent for one dozen more of mine, making four dozen in all. I have some to send you in this of Officers in the regt.

You say the red has worn off your ring. I dont see the reason. I bought one of the same at the same time & have worn it since & it is the same as new yet. Hot water & such like must affect it I think.

I dont see how I can accept your invitation to attend the evening party at Ben As, for one reason in particular & that is that I did not get the invitation till after the performance was over, & so I guess I wont tell you whether I would have gone or not.

Our Sutler left yesterday as did all the sutlers around that had not gone before. After today their goods were to be confiscated & their employees put at hard labor, so I guess you will not find many of the sort here now. I dont know what we are going to do for some things that are necessary, but I suppose we shall get along some way.

I see by the papers, & have heard before that Maj Bartlett of the 9th is dead. He & I staid together while at Brattleboro, & made the journey to North Carolina & one to Washington together & I am sorry to hear that he is dead, but no one knows what is before them.

Our boys are all well now I believe except George Robinson, who got his foot run over while out on fatigue & is now hobbling around on crutches. All are around that have been sick with the measles.

Justin must take this as an answer to his letter which came in yours, for I have written all that I can think of that is worth telling.

C K Leach

Camp near Brandy Station Va
April 19th 1864

Dear Wife

Another letter was received from you last night & I will improve the little time I have at present in writing you in answer. (Well a little time it was & after three or four hours, I will try again now.) Every thing to do just now, & if a man can sit still 15 minutes without being called on he is doing well. In the first place, I am Officer of the day today & that takes some of my time, & we have had three men reenlist lately & I have had 14 Rolls to make 7 muster out & 7 muster in Rolls for them, & have papers to make for those that have been home on 35 days furloughs, for them to get pay for rations not drawn while on furlough which have to be made in duplicate for each man, also Inventory & Inspection Reports of property that needs to be condemned, one set for Camp & Garrison Equipage & one set for Ordnance, each in triplicate, so you can see for yourself that it must take some time, & being mixed up with every day duties of Camp, it takes much more time.

There is always more to do just before & just after a march, than at other times, before a march to get ready for a march & after, to do what has been left undone through the march.

Jed Butler & Felton of Fairfax & Greenleaf are the ones that have reenlisted. Our Corps was reviewed yesterday by Gen Grant but I did not go out, having to go as a witness on a trial by Court martial, but should liked to have seen the Gen'l.

The weather has been good for two or three days now, & if it continues we expect to start from this in a short time, perhaps before you will get this, & if I guess right we will have to take up when we start. I bought me a new gold pen, & silver holder yesterday, & am writing this with it but dont judge the pen by the writing for the pen is a good one. It is about 8 inches long, holder & pen, when drawn out, but it took as many more inches of Green backs to pay for it. I paid \$4.50 for it but I dont think I shall be sorry I bought it. My health continues good, also all the rest are in good health.

Now for answering your questions. In the first place I think you will lose nothing by keeping the sugar & rather think it best for a while at least. I dont wish Williams likeness sent here, only I wanted it at home. If Monroe wants the plank, he can have it for what it is worth, for I dont know as I have any particular business for it.

I presume if you got those little trees set that you have you will not want to bother with more, but if you think you can get them set without much trouble you can do as you have a mind about getting more.

If you let Emerson have some sugar trade with him as you would with any body else. I reckon it will be a very good plan to have a new cart body made for it has been needed for a long time, & even before I left home, probably it will take something to pay for it.

I got a letter from Florilla last night & wrote her one in answer & sent her the gold pen of W^ms.

The most of his things I put in a box & sent away with the baggage that was sent off a few days ago for storage but think it will get home when the Regt goes home. Do you know whether W^m's debts were all paid up or not with what money he got when he enlisted? I dont know whether they will pay that hundred that I let him have, if not & Daniel thinks the children ought to have all there is, I am willing to lose my share of it with the rest of them, otherwise I think it should be paid, but there is time for that yet.

Today an order came around to send away all that would not be able to march, & George Robinson was called for, for examination by the Surgeon but dont know whether they are going to send him away or not. I wrote you that he hurt his foot, & gets around on crutches. Our Regt is just now being inspected to see

the men have not got more clothing & other stuff than they ought to carry. One Woolen blanket, one rubber blanket, changes of under clothing, & shelter tent is all that they are to carry. Rations will have to be carried in their knapsacks, so says the order, but dont tell how many days rations they will have to carry. Perhaps you will think by my writing that we are under marching orders now, but not so, this is all in preparation of the *intended* march as our orders say, & I have not the least doubt but that it will come, & that before a great while, & hope it may amount to something when it is over with. I have just closed out N Fs Sugar, have sold over six hundred lbs for him, dont know yet how much I got for it all but it will figure up somewhere between 25 & 30 cents per pound, could have sold it better if I had not been afraid that we would have to march & not have it all sold, but I reckon he cant grumble much & if he does it wont hurt anybody.

It is about mail time & I will have to close up this. I presume I shall not have an opportunity to write many more letters in this place, but hope I may have a chance somewhere. I can hear the mailman singing for mail to go out, so I must say Good bye.

Ever Yours
C K Leach

Camp near Brandy Station Va
April 22nd 1864

Dear Wife

I will spend a little time today in writing you in answer to a letter received from you last evening, which found me well, & glad to hear the same from you. I should think by your writing that Justin was troubled with the sick head ache a good deal, sorry to hear it.

We are having very pleasant weather just now, & the prospect is that it will continue now, & if so we may expect to be on the move before long.

Capt Tracy met with a very sad accident yesterday. He was detailed on a Court Martial which met at the 4th Regt & while riding on horse back near Brigade Head Quarters, his horse stumbled & fell & threw Capt Tracy off, striking his leg, (up next his body), on a stump, cutting a large gash, & tearing the flesh down from that three or four inches. I have not seen it but they say it is an awful ugly wound, & of course will lay him up a great while, & also there is some danger of his life as it left the main artery bare & if the flesh should mortify it might injure the artery. He left this morning for Washington & will go direct home if he is able to stand the journey. He had just got a 35 days leave having signified his willingness to remain in the service, after the expiration of his present term of service. He has been expecting the appointment of Major for some time, but for some reason, his Commission & also the present Lieut Col & Majs who expect to be Col & Lieut Col. Now if the Capts Commission comes I dont know as he can get mustered & therefore will remain reported as Capt. I presume he will not be able to do duty & join the regt again under three or four monthis certain.

I sent home by Joseph Felton of Fairfax from our Co, who has gone home on a 35 days furlough, a pair of Pants, Williams Knife & scissors, & my old gold pen & holder. He will leave them at Wells Store I think. The knife you may give to Willie. My pen I never use & now have another one & so thought I would send it home. It is a good one only too coarse for me, but the pen is of good material & has a very smooth point.

I would give it to Justin if he could use it, but suppose he would make big marks with it. I am glad to hear that you have got the money I sent by Dr Brush, although I had no fear of its safety. Brush is back here now, got back day before yesterday. You may receive a Check from the State Treasurer some time of \$28.00, for I have an order that I am going to send him, to be paid to you.

I would not want to let that money go unless it was made perfectly safe in some manner.

I presume \$300.00 in the List is greater in proportion to the amount than a great many put in but I guess we can stand it for one year. I would like to get hold of some of the fresh fish, have got a few here

occasionally, but have to pay dear for them. Every thing that we eat is very high & costs us a pile to live about double what it did at first, since I got back here, my board bill in the mess has been Fifty dollars & over, & to that add the cost of Clothing & other necessary expenses, & one can not get along without using a pile of money. I presume I dont spend half as much as many do, except the mess bill, which of course is alike for all the mess, & I find that I can hardly account for my money & tell where it has gone.

Drills are the order of the day now, have three a day & sometimes the 3rd one is a Brigade drill, the worst of all. Yesterday we had one of them, & may have another this afternoon but hope not, it is too tedious. How is Emerson getting along. I dont hear nothing from him, & very seldom from any one but you. Zina makes out to write once in a while, & N F Wood writes just a line occasionally but presume when his sugar is all squared up he will be too busy to write again. I have written to Daniel two or three times but cant get a word out of him. Louis Ann has done better. I presume I can stand it as long as they can but I may bother them with a letter once in a while if they dont write me.

It is near night now & there is every appearance of a rain storm. It has been quite warm today, so it made a fellow sweat some on drill which came off at 2 O.C. We had a Battallion drill, & not very long. The Pants I sent home by Felton are new ones. I sent for some for every day wear & got those, & thought they were most too good for that, & having my others very good yet, I thought I would lighten my baggage by sending them home, & then if I lose my trunk on the march, the loss will not be as great.

I would have sent my Coat home too only that my old one is getting rather rusty, but if I had had a Blouse I would have sent my old one home, for it will be rather warm to wear on a march in hot weather. I have been dividing a little over a hundred dollars of Co Fund, today among the old members of the Co. those that were at Camp Griffin, & money that was saved there, give 37 men three dollars each, making \$111.00.

I am glad to get rid of it, for if any thing should happen to me I dont [have] so much money to lose. It leaves me with a little over a hundred dollars now after I send you the order of 28 dollars which I gave 25 for.

It has commenced to rain or to sprinkle & the wind is rising, every appearance of a rain storm. If you have small sugar cakes I would keep them & have them sent to the army sometime & if in good shape it can be sold for 30 or 35 cents easy. No more good night C K Leach

Camp near Brandy Station
Sunday April 24th 1864

Dear Wife

Nothing to do today so I will pass a little time in penning you a few lines hoping they may find you, as I now am, enjoying good health.

It is quite warm today, so that to keep more comfortable I have laid off my coat & sit writing in my shirt sleeves. The weather has grown warm for the last few days, & no rain although we have signs of it now & frequently before. Yesterday was a very windy day, & at some times the dust flew so you could not hardly see two rods. It was a very disagreeable day every thing being covered with dust.

No more signs than heretofore of a move & some offer to bet 10 dollars that we will be mustered again in this camp. The 30th day of April is the day for muster, & we have got to start soon if we are to leave before that.

Two months Campaign is all that can be got out of the old men that have not reenlisted, & every day that passes now makes the time so much shorter. I dont see any prospect of anything to hinder my coming home then, unless I get mustered out of existence before that time.

I reckon I have caught a little cold someway for I feel sore all over today & dont know as I have labored any to make me sore & lame.

As to news, the thing is rather scarce just at present, neither doing anything ourselves or hearing of any one else doing anything. Some one manages to get up a horse race once in a while, but I have never

attended one except the one I wrote about some time since. Yesterday we all had to carry some old stuff to Brigade Head Qrs to be inspected and condemned, & today we have been turning over some surplus Ordnance.

Saturdays & Sundays we have no drills but other days we have three.

Last night I got 12 more of my Photographs, just the same as the others, hope I shall want no more. Sawyer got back day before yesterday, two days over time, he went no farther than New York & spent most of his time in Washington, & probably most of his money. Now that Tracy is gone I am alone with the Co again, & only at times when there is a great deal to do, I had rather be alone than have Company, unless I could pick my Company. E R Smith stays in the tent with me now & he has done nothing since we came back from Vt only around my tent, writing & such other work as is needed. My John is a *Corporal* now. Prouty had Butler [?] but I dont exactly like the style.

C K Leach

Camp 2nd Vt Vols

April 27th 1864

Dear Wife

A letter from you mailed the 21st was received the 24th, & found me well & glad to hear the same from you. All remains quiet in regard to a move as yet but the weather is good, & has been for some time except a little rain Sunday night which about all dried up the next day. I wrote you Sunday & enclosed W^ms Handkerchief & hope it may go safely.

Nothing is going on here now except we have our three drills per day regularly. We all had to turn in all the old tents that were not needed on a march & so I had to cut down our tent one half, so now it is about 7 feet by nine. I had an A tent till a short time ago, & when they took that, I fixed it up with small tents & now have to give them up or lose them, but a small house well filled is the thing to have.

It is nearly muster day & all are making their Rolls, & I guess will have them all done before the muster, & unless we are on the move we may get paid off in good season. It is no fool of a job to make out these Rolls, five to each Co having to be made, & every thing of course must be just right, or else there is trouble in camp.

E R Smith is making mine, it is about three days steady work to make them all.

Capt Tracys Commission came the other day as Major, but as he is not here to be mustered in as Maj, he will have to remain as Capt of Co H, a while longer. The recommendations were sent up long ago & I began to think perhaps something was the trouble, but as the 4th has just had a Col appointed I reckon the Commissions for our Field Officers were delayed to give the 4th 1st in rank, a small affair you may think but sometimes rank makes a great deal of difference if it is only a few days.

Our present Cols, Lt Cols, & Capt Tracys Commissions as Capt's came all at the same time but with one days difference in each of the date of Commission, & that difference is now very perceptible now, as they were promoted by rank.

I presume there will be a Commission along for me, soon but it will do no good or harm, for as long as Capt Tracy is not mustered as Major, no other Capt can be mustered. Lt Robbins I suppose was going to be put in my place but he says he shall not accept it now if he had a chance. You can rest assured that if I remain in my present position till the 20th of June, I *think* I shall be at home, & the prospect is fair that I shall. If you have a poorer pen than mine, send it down to me. Gold one is making Muster Rolls.

C K Leach

[Letter from Chester to Zina]

Camp near Brandy Station
April 28th 1864

Brother Zina

I have just this morning received a line from you date of April 24th, but now I will try and write just a bit in answer, glad to hear that you are well & have the same to say of myself. The weather here is very good now, and but a very little rain for some time past. It tried to rain some last night but did not succeed much, commenced with a gale of wind that made the dust fly good, but did not make out to rain only just enough to lay the dust, but this morning the air was pretty cool. The wind & dust & rain succeeded in breaking up a Brigade Dress Parade that Col Grant had got us all paraded for, & so we had to march over to Head Quarters again tonight to have the Parade.

You speak about W^m's affairs & the money I have. In regard to the expenses of sending the body home it is all square & I shall ask nobody to pay it, but the note I hold. If any debts are paid I dont know but my claim is as good as anyones else, for it was money lent & no old trade dicker, but if the Judge gives it all to the children, & Daniel & the rest of them think I ought to lose the whole of mine so be it. Ann wrote about Isham getting some of the pans, & if they are going to paying old debts with what there is, I think the rest of folks ought to share my loss with me. Ann says that she & you did not agree as to the amount William owed me. I paid him the money for the Stag & hay except 2 dollars & everything that Ann had she paid him for, so the \$100 note stands as it was given.

I am very glad to hear that you are about getting some Hay Scales, & to help the thing along I think I will have to give my mite. If the people of the State of Fletcher make a move in the direction of improvement I think they ought to be encouraged by every one lending a helping hand. I dont know the cost of the scales nor how labored they all are, but you may put my name down for an amount not to exceed five dollars according as the rest go in on their muscle. I would think I had better buy a State order if I am going to send home & therefore have a dollar or so in the trade. I can buy orders by giving six dollars for seven & that is better than to send the money.

I am glad for you that you have got your letter. I must ask Jane not to feel bad because I wrote about it, but I did it on your account.

Stick a Pike into you for me.

C K. Leach

Camp near Brandy Station Va
April 29th 1864

Dear Wife

Rather late in the evening but nevertheless I will write you a few lines before I go to bed. It is most 10 O.C. now but that is early bed time for me. The Band at the Cavalry Regt just in our rear make so much music I dont know as I can keep my thoughts on my writing. Today has been a nice pleasant day, rather cool in the morning but just about right in the middle of the day. We had a hard wind night before last just before dark, blew a perfect gale for a short time, & you better believe it made the dust fly till it commenced to rain which it did just enough to lay the dust.

Col Grant had just got us all paraded for a Brigade Dress Parade when the wind & dust began to blow, so we had to go home & make another journey over the next night for the Dress Parade. Tomorrow at 8 A.M. we have our Muster for pay again. The Rolls for our Co are nearly all finished, & can be started for the Pay Master in a short time. It is a job to make them out as there has to be five made out, one to send to Vermont, one to keep here & three for the Pay department. I received a letter from you last night, mailed the 25th & glad to hear that you were all still well. I have the same to say in regard to the folks generally

here, myself in particular. I got a letter from Zina last night & wrote him in return, & about the note of W^ms.

In regard to the expenses of sending W^m home it is all right & square. I never thought of having the expenses paid out of his property or by any of the rest of the family. I shall take it out of the Co Fund that I have in my possession, otherwise I would be willing to pay it myself. But in regard to the note, if any debts are paid I think my claim is as good as the rest, & if none are paid I think that it would be no more than fair if the rest of the family shared the loss with me, but if they dont think so they can do as they please. I am willing to do as much as the rest, that the children may have as much as possible, should think it but my duty to help get him some good grave stones, & will do as much as the rest for that purpose.

I feel a little delicate about sending my pin so far in a letter & then to *such* women as you say wants it. What *shall* I do?

But as I suppose they want a silver cross pin, I would be happy to meet their wishes if I could get the things to do it with.

I should think you could let them state their wishes themselves, & then I could tell better what to do. Tell Miss Fannie if she will write a good long letter to me, I will do the best I can for her. Well, as it is 11 O.C. I will bid you good night & go to bed, no, not much of a bed, but a kind of a tick made of old grain bags, filled with straw laid on some boards, & five blankets for two of us, E R S & C K L sleep together. Saturday, April 30th. I will now try & finish, seal, & be ready to deliver this to the mail man tonight. A bit of a change in the weather since yesterday.

It has commenced to rain, slowly but the more signs that it will rain longer than if it had commenced more furious.

We had our Muster at 8 A.M. as ordered & our Rolls are ready for the Paymaster but presume some of the Cos are more behind. A few days more in camp & I will have my business pretty well up, & ready for a march. We had an order read us today that no fires would be allowed on the march & if that is carried out we will have to drink cold water. I reckon when we start we will go around the rebels somewhere & not attack them in front & in their fortifications. Everything that can be spared is being sent away, & one thing is certain, that there never was a spring that so little old property was wasted as there will be this spring. After troops have been in camp all winter, they have accumulated a great amount of Property that it is impossible for them to carry on a march, & generally a great deal has been thrown away, but this spring every thing that is good for any thing, is turned in to the Quartermasters department & sent off. Old tents are used for paper rags I suppose, & our old knapsacks are turned in but for what purpose I cant guess unless it is to save the straps & buckles that are on them, for I suppose they must be half the cost of the knapsack.

George Robinson was sent off to a Gen Hospital this morning so he will get out of the spring campaign. I dont know how bad his foot was hurt, but he did not pretend to touch it to the ground, but hobbled around on crutches. Riggs has been out of sorts, & in the Hospital for a few days but is again with the Co. Another of our men was sent off to Washington today, was hurt by scuffling with L M Bingham, he fell & Bingham top of him & entirely knocked the breath out of him for a while, & they thought he was dead. I have a Photograph of Monroes that I will enclose in this.

I sent an order of 28 dollars to the State Treasurer a few days ago directing him to pay to you. I have a good mind to send 50 or 60 dollars more home, & would if I thought we would get paid in the course of the month of May, for I have, with a little that is owing me, about \$150., rather more than it is safe to carry around at all times, for if he is killed or taken prisoner, it is gone up. I will have to close for want of room.

Yours C K Leach

[Before the battle of the Wilderness]

Camp near Brandy Station Va

May 3rd 1864

Dear Wife

Another of your letters was received last night which found me well, as I hope this may find you.

We are still in our old camp but living under the expectations of being ordered out every day.

Last week we thought we would have to start the fore part of this week, but Tuesday has come & here we are yet. The troops north of the Rappahannock that were guarding the railroad have broke camp & moved to the front somewhere, during the last of last week. A report was around that they were relieved from guarding the railroad by Burnside's troops, & I rather think it is so, but don't know whether it has taken all of his troops or not.

One Division of our Corps moved Camp yesterday or day before, they were across Hazel Run & they moved this side so that the Pontoon Bridge could be taken up I suppose.

One hundred men were sent off last night from our regt on fatigue with six days rations & taking all of their duds & though they might not come back before we moved, I don't know what they are going to do but have heard that they were ordered to report at Brandy Station, Loading & unloading Cars perhaps.

Last night just before dark we were blessed with another strong blow of wind, & any amount of dust. At first I thought there was a fire somewhere as the cloud of dust over the hills looked like a heavy black smoke, but soon it broke over the hill near us & it was very plain to see what was the trouble. It ended in rain, with some thunder & lightning & today it is rather cooler than it has been for some days.

I wrote you in my last letter that I thought some of sending some money home, but I have had occasion to use more than I thought I should & think I had better keep the rest. I bought a Blouse Coat 12 dollars & some other little notions, & then our mess had some eatables come that took about 12 more for my share. As I have a Blouse I would send my old dress coat home if I could get a chance. I thought it would be too warm to wear on a march in hot weather & then it is getting so dirty it is hardly fit to wear. Last night one of those Memorials came in the mail & a letter stating that 101 were ready awaiting orders, but as we are about to move I dare not order them sent just yet. The cost of the one hundred & one is 100 dollars. [It] makes a good picture besides being a good history of the Co from its organization.

I reckon it was all right paying for the Steers, might as well pay up as any way if possible. Glad to hear that the thing I sent by Felton got along safely. William had a diary that I would have sent if I had thought of it. Good Bye.

Yours C K Leach

Afternoon. At last we have our orders to move, at 4 O.C. tomorrow morning, with six days rations, & 50 rounds of cartridges to a man.

It will be impossible to tell when or where I may be allowed to pen you a line again, for none of us know not what a day may bring forth.

One year ago today we were engaged at Fredericksburg Heights, since that time our regt has seen but little fighting although we were in a number of skirmishes & a few men were killed & wounded. Hoping for the best I bid you Good Bye

Yours C K Leach

Please give the ring to Florilla. It was Williams & she enquired about it & I did not rem[em]ber anything about [it], it was in his wallet.

[Report on the battle of the Wilderness]

Camp in the woods
May 13th 1864

Dear Wife

As we are to have an opportunity to send out letters I will just drop you a line that you may know that I am still in the land of the living. I can say but little what we have done, or who is killed & wounded, only that about two thirds of our Co, Regt, & Brigade are gone. Seven have been killed, & one died from wounds from our Co, making 8 in all dead as far as heard from.

E W Squires is the only one from Fletcher that is killed, but a number are wounded, L M Bingham, C Spaulding, Rob Fulton, Nathan & Wait Scott slightly, were wounded.

We have but five or six Officers left out of over twenty when we left camp. Col killed, Lt Col wounded, one Capt killed, Capt Bixby Co E, only one Capt left with the regt. We were in a fight nearly all day yesterday & I dont know what the loss of our Co was yet for they were mixed up with other troops, & when we were relieved by other troops I could get together but six, & now I have but 4 privates, all told, but they will find the regt in time. Fred Marshall was killed yesterday.

It is impossible to tell how long the fighting will last, but if we keep at it as much longer & we have there will be nobody left to fight.

We have had no mail since we left camp, and know but little what is going on only what we see.

I have had good health & have got along first rate, has been nice weather till within the past two days, it has been rainy & nasty. As my accommodations are poor for writing I will say Good Bye for the present trusting that I will have another opportunity.

Yours C K Leach

[During the battle of Spotsylvania]

have patience in reading

May 16th 1864

Dear Wife

Once more I have the privilege of penning you a line, just to let you know that I am still alive & well. We have had no more fighting since I wrote you a line the 13th.

Our Brigade is on the extreme left of the army at present just north of the river Ny near Spotsylvania Court House. The 3rd Div of our Corps is across the river but how far advanced I dont know. We came to this place day before yesterday & then the rebels wer[e] on the south side of the river but guess not in force. I think they have fell back some for I have heard no firing yesterday only a very little canonading. I have not time to give you any details of our doings, only that the regt has been in four pretty good fights as a regt. I was on the skirmish line one day, making five times that I have been under right smart fire. The first was the 5th when we lost over half of our regt, & the next, the 6th when we lost 20 or 30 more.

On the 8th we all moved to the left & left the wilderness entirely & met the rebels again in the vicinity of Spotsylvania Court house where our lines were again formed & earthworks thrown up, & more or less fighting all the time. On the 10th 12 regt from our Corps made a charge on the rebs works & took a lot of prisoners but had to get out of there again. The 2nd, 5th, & 6th Vt Regts were in the 4th line so we did not suffer as bad as the first lines. Our men charged on them without firing a gun.

We lost 30 or 40 in our regt in this fight. May 12th another charge was made by the 2nd Corps farther to the left & we were sent to their support, & fought about 8 hours in one spot losing 40 or 50 more from our regt, & now we are about played out as a regt.

Our Co went into the first fight with 63 guns & the killed & wounded have reduced us to 19, but two or three of them are slightly wounded & with us & about able to carry a gun again. Wait Scott & Sam Crown are two of them.

Yours C K Leach

2nd Vt Vols, May 21st 1864

Dear Wife

I will try & scribble you a few lines once more that you may know that I am still alive & well. We have had no heavy fighting since I penciled you a line on the 16th, except on the night of the 17th our Corps moved to the right where we had the fight of the 12th, & the next day (18th) there was some fighting but mostly artillery & our regt got damaged some but none in our Co. One shell killed two or three & wounded 5 or 6 more, mostly in Co G.

We moved back to the left in the afternoon & crossed south of the Ny River & on the 19th advanced a short distance & have been busy since building fortifications. I went on picket the 19th & was not relieved till about 10 last night, the 20th. The Rebs are fortified within half a mile of our fortifications & the picket lines are between & within shooting distance of each other. The 9th Corps has moved on the left of ours & is fortified on the same line. The indications are that the fighting will be different than at first, both acting more careful.

It would take but a short time to use up our army if fighting continued as we began, & I presume it is the same with the Rebs.

We got our first mail on the 18th & the 19th we got a pile of back mail, & yesterday I got a letter from you mailed the 16th so you see I got it in four days.

I am sorry to hear that you have worried so much about my staying longer than my present term. I have a Commission as Capt, but have not the least intention of being mustered on it, it came in the mail day before yesterday.

May 23rd. An order came to pack up & be ready to move & now two days have passed & now we are awaiting orders to start which may come in five minutes.

On the 21st we left our rifle pits & moved back about half a mile to another line & placed our skirmish line in the front line. The troops on our right were moving to the rear & to our left all the afternoon. The rebs made a charge on our skirmishers just at night & drove them back taking a few prisoners & I presume wounding a few as they had to leave in a shower of bullets. One man from Co H is missing, William Ryan, none wounded.

After dark we all moved to the left in a southern direction, reaching a point on the railroad called Guinness Station about 10 A.M. yesterday, the 22nd. Here we rested till about 4 & then moved on crossing south of the river just below where the Ny & Po form a junction, & marched about 5 miles & halted for the night & where we yet remain at 8 O.C. I suppose we shall move on to Richmond till we are brought to a stand by the Rebs.

You ask if it is my wish that you would dress in mourning. I suppose it would be all right to do so, but still I am not particular about your doing so unless it is your wish.

I had a letter from Daniel the other day & he said I had better present my claim if I had any, to the commissioner of W^m's estate. You had better tend to it in time he said he did not know what would be done with the estate. You had better see Daniel about it. The Bugle has sounded for a fall in in the 4th Brigade & we follow them so I will have to close soon.

I think it would be best to have the Steers pastured & if Uncle Ich will do it, they will be as handy as anywhere you can find. Did Sarah Jane say any thing about N F receiving any money by mail from me I have sent him 50 dollars but dont hear a word from him. I told Zina I would give 5 dollars towards the Hay scales & if he gets ready to use it before I send any you can let him have it if you have it to spare.

Good Bye for this time

C K Leach

2nd Vt Vols May 25th 1864

Dear Wife

Three years ago today we were mustered into the State service, & less than a month will see us three years in the U S service, but that month, what may it bring forth.

We are now just south of the North Anna river, marched day before yesterday, 23rd, from where I wrote you last, & halted after dark north of the river & crossed south of it yesterday morning, & lay idle all day. The 5th Corps had a fight here the 23rd, the day we marched here but yesterday all was quiet here but canonading was heard all day to our left, the 2nd Corps is there, I suppose. We had a hard march the 23rd, it being warm, & a great many were laid out by the side of the road. I saw none dead, but some say they saw some lay dead by the side of the road. It tells on the 11th as hard as any, their living probably not being as good as they are accustomed to, & then not being used to marching.

I have stood it well so far, but have got rather tired sometimes I reckon. We had orders to be ready to march at 5 this morning, but now it is seven, & no march yet.

Nelson Smith was here yesterday tough & rugged, it was his Division that fought here day before yesterday.

We are but a short distance from the Virginia Central Railroad & I hear have command of it.

Albert is out of fix a little, has rather a bad sore on his heel, but would be all right if we could have some rest, but that we dont expect. I heard yesterday that 400,000 more men were called for but have seen nothing of it, wish we had that number of men with us now.

We have men leaving us every day now their time being up, but it is generally a few from a regt. We have but a very few to go home from our regiment when three years is up, only three or four now with our Co. Charles is about the only old stand by we have that has been in the ranks all the time.

I will close for this time.

Yours C K Leach

26th. No chance to send this yet so will write a little more. We have moved forward two or three miles from where we were yesterday morning when I wrote the first of this. We crossed the railroad at Noels Station & then marched nearly parallel with it. We find the Rebs on the south side of a small stream called Little river, we have a line of battle on this side & where we are it is open field so we can see the Johnys on the other side.

Some skirmishers down the river to our left yesterday. We built a rifle pit all along our lines last night. I hardly think there will be any fighting in front of where we are now.

We had a bit of a thunder shower last night, & by this morning we had a right smart one, the hardest rain we have had since we started on our march. Albert is better than he was yesterday morning & is all right now. Our mail communications are rather poor now, & we dont have a chance to send letters very often. I gave one to the carrier two or three days since but dont think it has gone from the army yet.

Your letter mailed the 16th is the last I have from you, but have had only one mail since. We are on a large, nice plantation where the man seems to have things that most of the southerners dont at this time, the boys found a barrel of salt & confiscated it. I would hate to have an army on my plantation.

Yours C K Leach

[Before the battle of Cold Harbor]

Camp in the Field
Sunday May 29th 1864

Dear Wife

I am permitted to write a line this morning, or have a little time, & will improve it.

Thursday night the 26th we left our position on the Little river, marched back over the North Anna & took our way down the northern or eastern side, marched all day Friday & about five miles yesterday & about 9 O.C. crossed the Pamunkey & are now about a mile from it. We have had the hardest march this trip of any we have yet had, for just before we started we had a smart thunder shower in addition to the one we had in the

morning, & I reckon we found some mud some of the way. For about two miles the mud was from six inches to a foot deep, & there was no way to do only to march straight through it. We halted about daylight near the railroad (Fredericksburg road) at Chesterfield Station where we had one days rations issued, & after that the roads were good & I reckon we made good time through the day. The 6th Corps led & crossed the river first here except the Cavalry which crossed the day before & had a bit of a fight with the Reb cavalry. We are not over 15 miles from Richmond now but I am afraid that distance will be hard to travel. We threw up earthworks yesterday afternoon, & the signs are that we will rest a day or two. The weather was very hot yesterday & day before but last night there was a sudden change & this morning it was cold but is warming up some since the sun got up.

I suppose our supplies will come by the way of the White House now as we are about 10 miles above that landing now.

All are well here & the only trouble just now is to get enough to eat. Six & eight days rations have been kept on the men, & have been issued to three days after today but nearly all are about out of any thing to eat, so we find ourselves three days short. Fresh beef is issued every day. I had to drink my coffee last night & this morning without sugar, which dont suit my taste first rate. Hard bread, fresh beef, & coffee without sugar is our living just now. I presume you would not like it.

We have had no mail for some time but get a chance to send out a letter occasionally, but I guess our mail will come again soon, hope so at least.

I hardly thought when we started on our march that we would be on the Paninsula so soon but here we are.

A very few of us are looking forward very anxiously for 22 days more to pass away, & then Good bye to the army.

Hoping I may get a letter from you soon I will say good bye,

C K Leach

[During the battle of Cold Harbor]

2nd Vt Vols June 4th /64

Dear Wife

As I hear a mail is to go out tonight I will try & send you a line that you may know I am yet alive & well.

I got a letter from you a few days since, mailed May 23rd, & glad to hear that you were well & had received a letter from me. Since I wrote you about a week ago we have been on the go nearly all the time either marching, doing picket, skirmishing, or charging on Rebel works. After writing last Sunday I had to go on picket & came off next morning to join [the] Regt on the march, & at night after dark the regt had to go on the picket line, & next day (Tuesday) skirmished about a mile through the woods, were relieved about 10 at night & Wednesday morning at daylight started on the march & the worst march we have had this year for heat & dust for it was awfully dusty & hot.

We halted in front of the rebs in the afternoon & near night were put in a fight but as we were not in the front we suffered but little, worked all night building earthworks in which we remained till about noon the next day & were then relieved by the 2nd Corps, or the 2nd Div was, & was moved to the right where we had to build more earthworks. Yesterday we expected a big fight but it did not come off. We lay right under the rebs noses & I reckon have to keep shady, & down behind our works for the balls pass over us every minute. Lieut Bailey was killed yesterday by a piece of shell & a number wounded in the regt & two were wounded in the Co on our left this afternoon.

C K L

got a mail today but no letter from you.

We are not a great distance from the Chickahominy & I presume the 2nd Corps which is on our left reaches it on the left.

In the fight of June 1st the 11th suffered some & Byron Chase I hear was killed.

The whole Corps was engaged & I think took a line of the rebs works on part of the line but not on the extreme left where we were.

Yesterday the fight commenced at 4 in the morning & continued all day, & our Brigade suffered a considerable [loss], I reckon, some less than a hundred & a great proportion killed compared with losses generally, no losses in our Co lately. Our regt has to take the front line tonight & do the picket duty. It rains & will be rather nasty. If I live Uncle Sam can claim my services 15 days after today & then I shall bid adieu to the army, but it will be a long 15 days. This campaign is enough for three years service. I have changed my clothes once since I left Camp, & would like to again. C K L.

Glad to hear that you went & saw the little folks. I have never seen them yet.

2nd Vt Vols, June 6th /64

Dear Wife

Once more am I seated to write you a line to let you know that I am thus far unharmed & in good health except a slight touch of the diarrhea, but which I have no fears of being anything very serious. It is the consequences of living almost entirely on fresh beef for meat, eating soon after being killed, & the water being poor that we have to drink.

I wrote you a line the 4th just before we had to go on the front line, & we remained out till about noon today, when we were taken back to the rear a half mile or more & if all remains quiet will have a few hours of rest.

For the last three days we have been where one could not stand on his feet unless he run a risk of getting a bullet through him. The first night out we worked on a rifle pit in front of the rest but did not get it completed at day light so of course had to leave it & the 11th regt finished it last night. The rebs works in front of ours are about 30 or 40 rods distant across an open field so you can see it would not be very safe for a man to show himself a great while at a time.

A few get hit occasionally by get[ting] above the works or by a ball glancing & falling close by the pits. Co A lost two yesterday.

I cant tell what the operations are to be whether to siege them here, or some of these nights get up & get out of this & try & strike a little nearer Richmond.

I received a letter from you yesterday mailed at Fairfax May 28th, & another today mailed May 30th. I am sorry to hear that Justin has so bad a leg on his account & also that you need his help. I hope he gets along without being any worse. Get someone to help you about the work if possible rather than kill yourself out by doing more than you are able to do, & I trust & pray that I may be home ere long, to care for things, & do the work myself.

The time is so near at hand that it is counted by days, & if we are given as much time as some have been, some of us may be on [the] way home by the time you get this. 13 days after today is all they can claim our services at the longest.

Charles Blair is the only one with a gun that is to go home this June, & there is but nine I believe in or around the army, 5 with the regt and 4 detailed as teamsters. (I mistake Sergt L P Hulburd is with us)

Sergt Hulburd was slightly wounded & has been absent for a time, & has now returned for duty, & says two more of Co H died that were wounded, George A White and John Laird, making ten in all from our Co that have lost their lives in this campaign. I hope there may be no more.

Hollis says send those Photographs of his along as soon as completed & direct them to Joseph Mears, for Hollis will probably not be here when they come.

Joseph Felton has just returned to the Co from a 35 day furlough, but has been gone as much as 45, not a bad time to be gone in such a time as we have seen. Jed Butler & W^m Greenleaf have not got back yet. Edgar Montague is sick & gone to the Hospital & Riggs is not very well but yet around with us although not doing duty.

No more this time.

Yours C K Leach

2nd Vt Vols, June 8th 1864

Dear Wife

A rather short time since writing but as I have time I will write you a line for tomorrow or next day I may not have an opportunity. Our regiment remains in the same place that it was day before yesterday where I wrote you last & have done nothing except to send out a picket detail last night, but I expect we will have to go to the front again tonight.

Today is the stillest day thus far that I have seen for some time there being but a very few shots heard on the lines but the Artillery keep up a straggling fire. The shells burst around & over us pretty freely yesterday & one man was wounded from the regt in the foot. The most of the shells were from mortars & could be heard some time before they came along, so a man could tell about where they were going till they burst & then a man aint safe anywhere. Our men as well as the rebels are busy fortifying, but it dont seem to me as though Grant could be calculating to drive them from here by sieging them for if he does he has a long job before he gets to Richmond. Perhaps when he is fortified suficiently he will withdraw a great portion of the troops & make a strike nearer Richmond on the other side of the Chickahominy & then abandon this line entirely.

I have not felt quite as well for two or three days past as I have before but yet I am not what you might call a sick man, but reckon I shall straighten out in a day or two. I saw my trunk last night for the first time since we left camp the 4th of May, but only took out some paper and such like last night. I had borrowed a shirt & drawers to wear while I got mine washed so did not need any clothes now.

I never saw the men much more ragged than they are now but some clothing is expected up in a day or two. I am about as ragged as the men, but will have a pair of pants when the clothing comes. I wear yet my light blue ones that I had when at home, & my old dress coat, & they are both about played, with rags & dirt.

I was sorry to hear that Lyman is so sick & glad that he has got home, hope he may not have to go back untill he gets entirely well.

Missing You
C K Leach

2nd Vt Vols, June 11th 1864

Dear Wife

I will spend a few moments in writing you a line in answer to a letter received from you yesterday, mailed the 6th inst.

Glad to hear that you was well & also very glad to hear that Justin was so much better & able to help you once more. I have to say in return that I am well & free from the slight diarrhea that I was troubled with a few days since. I wrote you a line on the 8th & that night our regt was sent to the front & occupied the 2nd line of rifle pits, & at night on the 9th went into the front line & remain there yet making three days that we have had to lay in the dust & dirt to keep our heads free from a rebel bullet.

The first two nights the rebels fired a shell about every half hour during the night a piece of one of the first killing Joseph C Felton of our Co from Fairfax, & wounding Henry Chonian a frenchman, (substitute). Felton had been back from home but two days, having been home on a reenlistment furlough.

Philander Reed I have heard since I wrote you last is dead, dont know whether he was sent to Washington before he died or not but think he died at Fredericksburg or Port Royal.

Albert was a little unwell when we came to the front & I have not seen him since & so dont know whether he has got all well again or not. The musicians, cooks, & such like generally keep well in the rear unless there is no danger in going to the front.

The rebel Sharp shooters have got a place somewhere on our right where they drop the bullets around us pretty freely but have hurt no one yet. They cant touch us direct from the front as we can keep below them, but where the line is crooked they take it at long range & get them to fall behind the works.

Did not Reeds folks ever hear from Philander? He was wounded in the 2nd days fight, May 6th in the thigh, we were all laying down & I lay where I saw him when he was wounded, & was in hopes it was not very bad, but it seems it was bad enough to take his life.

I think Zina has done very well in trading oxen but presume if he had kept his first ones he could have sold them for more than he did by this time. I presume the steers are worth more than you gave for them now by some.

I expect that we will move from this place before long, but may not till after the 20th but expect it. I supposed we will be relieved from the front tonight & have a chance to straighten up & wash off a little of the dust & dirt.

I wish you could once see how we are situated here, ditches dug around for men to travel in, & holes dug to stay in. I dont know but a man would learn to live under ground after awhile so he would like it but dont believe it but can do it to save his pate from the bullets & pieces of Shell.

Yours C K Leach

Camp near James River
June 15th 1864

Dear Wife

I thought I would write you a line once more before the 20th of June, for if we should start at that time I presume it will be some time before we reach home.

As I thought it might be at the time I wrote last we have left our position near Cold Harbor & now find ourselves in the vicinity of Harrisons Landing on the James river. Our Corps is near Charles City Court House a little below Harrisons Landing, but only a short distance from the river, can hear the Engine whistles on the boats very plain.

We left our position at dark on Sunday the 12th & at dark the next day, (Monday) crossed the Chickahominy at Jones Ford having marched nearly all the time for 24 hours & if ever I was about played it was then. Yesterday, the 14th we marched about 6 miles to near the Court house, & camped till today, & today we have moved about 2 miles farther towards the river, & the appearances are that we remain here till tomorrow at least.

Our Corps was all that marched on the road that we took, but I suppose the army is all somewhere around here, but farther up the river I have heard a very little distant canonading today, & I should judge it was on the south side of the river & also up it from here.

We have just got an order to entrench our positions again so you see it is *dig* wherever we are. I hope we will not be molested in our digging for the next four days after today.

The health of the Fletcherites is about the same as usual, good except Riggs who has been in the ambulances since we started on this march, & has got back to the Co. He has a diarrhea & is not very strong.

My health remains good but since we have been on this campaign, I reckon some of the flesh has left me, but there is enough left yet to make a shadow.

I have received no letter from you since the 10th, mailed the 6th but if we should get a mail tonight I hope I may hear from you. I sent 2 Photographs in my last letter, Capt Cadys & Hampton Maxfields. I shall not get all the Officers of the regt as I wished to as they are mainly all absent now and had none before.

If all go home that expect to the 20th there will be but three Officers left with the Regt, one Capt & two Lieuts, not much like the 2nd Vt Regt of former days.

Hoping to see you soon I will bid you good Bye

C K Leach

Thursday 16th / I have had no chance to send this off yet & will put in another word. I think the troops are all across the river except our Corps, & we are in line across a bend in the river & most of them are fortifying. We did not fortify any yesterday as we had orders to do at first, & today we have moved back about a quarter of a mile, & took up a new line. We have a Pontoon bridge across the river on which the teams are crossing & troops are crossing today on Transports. I hope we may stay this side till after the 20th. We got no mail last night.

C K L

Brattleboro Vt Sunday Eve June 26th 1864

Dear Wife

I received a line from you yesterday & will now pen you a line in answer.

I presume you are well aware by this time that we did not arrive in this place as soon as the papers reported us, but we got along about 9 O.C. Friday night safe & sound & the next day I got your letter. It is impossible to tell at this time how soon we can get away from here, but I think not before Thursday or Friday certain. I will try & let you know when we will be at the Depot, & will write Mr Strait at Cambridge as soon as I find out when we can leave.

We have just commenced the Muster out Rolls today & possibly may get mustered out Tuesday but hardly think it as some of the Cos have no Officers, & hardly any records to work from & dates & such like will have to be obtained of the Adjt Gen. We also have our property to turn over & then the payment of the State & Government pay will take some time.

I shall have all that go to Cambridge & Waterville go by way of Fletcher if I can & I think there will [be] about nine or ten of us.

I have been to a lecture this evening delivered by Rev Mr Channing, Subject, Sanitary Commission.

Last evening the people of this place got up a reception at the Town hall, had a variety of articles to eat ending with Ice Cream, & then gave a number of Toastes which were responded to. Tuesday evening they have something else, Soldiers aid meeting I believe admission 10 cts. Is it hot in Fletcher or is the hot weather all in Brattleboro? It is hotter than Virginia here.

Good Bye for tonight C K Leach

Afterword

What courage and faith it takes for a man to leave a settled and prosperous life, to leave his wife and children in the prime of his life, to face the uncertainties of war, few of us can know. Chester Leach, Company H, Second Vermont Infantry Regiment, could not have known in May 1861, how bad it would get: the epidemics that would claim the lives of a dozen men in his company, the battles that would take the lives of another twenty, the mud, lice, bad weather and food they would endure for three long years. He could not have foreseen the grim day in May 1864, when he could muster only four privates in his company, recently sixty-nine strong.

The Second Vermont Infantry served longer and suffered more casualties than any other unit from Vermont. It saw action from Bull Run (July 21, 1861) to Saylor's Creek (April 6, 1865), and in most of the major Eastern battles between. While the Union armies overall suffered twice as many deaths from disease as from battle wounds, in the Second Vermont the ratio was nearly reversed. The regiment's roll of men who died of wounds or were killed in action totaled 233, while 136 died of disease.

Perhaps if he had foreseen these things, Chester Leach would have thought twice about accepting a first lieutenant's commission. Clearly, it was not in his character to back away from a commitment, and unlike many officers worn out during the first year and a half of war, he did not contrive a resignation when it was relatively easy to do. Part of the reason for his commitment, no doubt, was his standing as a leading citizen of Fletcher. He probably knew all of the eleven Fletcher boys who left with him for the front on June 24, 1861, and he undoubtedly felt obligated to serve out his term with them.

Little of the true horror of the war emerges in Leach's letters. He did not hide the deaths and injuries and hardships, but instead transformed them into ordinary events. Rarely does a battle receive more attention in one of his letters than some question of farm management at home. Maybe this was how Leach maintained his sanity, or maybe it simply reflected the confident air of an officer who was expected, above all else, to remain steadfast in the face of chaos. Undoubtedly, he yearned for home as badly as the young privates in his company. But unlike most of the privates, Leach had a home life to return to, while the younger men had only memories of a childhood that they would find—if they returned—had vanished. While Leach may have shared some of their youthful spirit of adventure when he left Fletcher, what kept him going was the knowledge that he had much to look forward to when he returned.

Nearly all of the officers present for duty in the Second Vermont Infantry were wounded or killed in May 1864. Chester Leach emerged from the terrible spring campaign unscathed. He had received a captain's commission, he wrote to his wife in mid-May, but had no intention of accepting it. After three years of war, and the expiration of his term, he meant to go home, and that is what he did.

Chester Leach was the quintessential citizen-soldier who dropped his plow to shoulder a musket, and when he had fulfilled his obligation, he returned to the plow and the family that depended on him. After the war he was active in town and school affairs, and served in the state legislature. He died in 1909, having served his town, state, and country with distinction—and remarkable luck.

JEFFREY D. MARSHALL
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT ARCHIVIST

Note on the Compiler

Edward J. Feidner is University of Vermont (UVM) Professor of Theatre Emeritus. He joined UVM's Department of Speech and Drama in 1958. During a teaching career that spanned thirty-six years, he directed, produced, or acted in more than 125 theatrical productions, including all but three of Shakespeare's plays. Shortly after arriving at the university, Feidner affiliated himself with the newly created Champlain Shakespeare Festival, which gained international renown, and became the first producer and artistic director of the festival, a post he held for the next eighteen years. In conjunction with the festival, he created and served as executive director of the first interdisciplinary program at UVM: the Institute on Elizabethan Arts and Letters, which brought renowned national and international scholars to the campus.

In 1965 Feidner was named the university's first director of drama; in 1972 he became UVM's first full professor of theatre; and in 1977 he was named the first chairperson of the department. He received the first George V. Kidder Award, established at UVM in 1974 to honor excellence in teaching. He has also received citations by the New England Theatre Conference and the Vermont Academy of Arts and Sciences. On the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Vermont Council on the Arts in 1989, the council awarded Feidner a Silver Citation honoring him as one of Vermont's top twenty-five leaders in the arts. In 2002 the University of Vermont conferred an honorary degree on Feidner in recognition of his extraordinary contributions to the Vermont arts community.

A member of the Center for Research on Vermont since 1975, Feidner has presented his research about Chester K. Leach in the Research-in-Progress Seminar Series. His interest in Vermont history has been widespread and eclectic, ranging from the theatrical photographs of Edward Thayer Monroe to his own acclaimed performances as Ethan Allen.

Who's Who in the Letters of Chester K. Leach

compiled by Edward J. Feidner

Aldrich, Caleb A., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fletcher; mustered out, July 15, 1865.

Allen, George E., sergeant, Company E, Second Vermont Regiment; from Chelsea; drowned July 1862.

Allen, James,* first lieutenant, Company E, Second Vermont Regiment; from Tunbridge; enlisted as sergeant, April 22, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; promoted to first sergeant, February 10, 1862; commissioned first lieutenant, August 4, 1862; wounded May 5, 1864; mustered out, June 29, 1864.

Appleton, Edward W., first lieutenant, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Bennington; enlisted as first sergeant, Company A, May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; commissioned second lieutenant, Company H, September 14, 1861; promoted to first lieutenant, Company B, January 25, 1862; discharged for disability, September 25, 1862.

Armstrong, descendants of one of the earliest settlers of Fletcher, Reuben, who came before 1791. The Armstrongs intermarried with the Montagues. Sophia Armstrong was married to Samuel Royce.

Aubury, Cullen, from Burlington; servant to Chester Leach; returned home to Burlington, then returned to Virginia as a sutler.

Ayers, John, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Bakersfield; enlisted May 17, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; reenlisted January 31, 1864; promoted to corporal, May 5, 1864; wounded May 5, 1864 (Wilderness).

Bailey, Hiram, first lieutenant, Company B, Second Vermont Regiment; from Brandon; enlisted as corporal, May 17, 1861; promoted to sergeant,

March 7, 1862; commissioned second lieutenant, November 24, 1862; promoted to first lieutenant, December 20, 1862; died in action, June 3, 1864.

Bailey, Jehial S., Jr., corporal, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Waterville; enlisted May 24, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; promoted to corporal; wounded May 12, 1864; discharged July 29, 1864.

Bailey, K., possibly a farmer in Fletcher.

Bain, John J., Jr., first lieutenant, Company G, Second Vermont Regiment; enlisted as sergeant, May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; commissioned second lieutenant, July 5, 1862; promoted to first lieutenant, March 10, 1863; wounded May 5, 1864; mustered out, June 29, 1864.

Ballard, Henry L., sergeant, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Georgia; enlisted as corporal, May 18, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; promoted to sergeant; wounded May 3, 1863; wounded May 5, 1864; discharged October 2, 1864.

Ballou, Erastus G.,* major, Second Vermont Regiment; from Boston, Mass.; first sergeant, Company I; promoted to sergeant major, October 14, 1861; commissioned first lieutenant, Company K, January 27, 1862; promoted to captain, Company K, August 4, 1862; brevetted to major, August 1, 1864, for gallantry (Wilderness and subsequent engagements); wounded May 3, 1863, July 10, 1863, May 5, 1864, and April 2, 1865; mustered out as captain of Company K, July 15, 1865.

Barnes, Sanford R., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Bakersfield.

*Photograph in the "Leach Family Album."

Bartlett, Amasa, major, Ninth Vermont Regiment; from Irasburgh; captain, Company E; promoted to major, December 21, 1863; died of disease, March 16, 1864.

Baxter, Portus, congressman from Vermont, 1861–1865; from Brownington; died in Washington, March 4, 1868; was called “the Soldier’s friend” (*Men of Vermont* [Brattleboro, Vt.: Transcript Publishing Co., 1894], 156); the same source described him thus: “During the ghastly days of the Wilderness campaign and fight he was at the front at Fredericksburg to minister to the wounded and suffering, and all that summer, both he and his wife remained at their post of tender duty until they were themselves prostrated, and sickness only made an interval in their labors” (ibid.).

Beales, Charles, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Shaftsbury; enlisted and mustered in, August 18, 1863; wounded May 5, 1864; mustered out, July 20, 1865.

Billings, Stephan, Jr.,* private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Cambridge.

Bingham, Benjamin Franklin, father of Charles; born May 30, 1819; married Maria Smedly.

Bingham, Charles W., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fletcher; enlisted May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; discharged for disability, December 31, 1862.

Bingham, Harrison (William Harrison), from Fletcher; possibly a farmer; brother of Royal Tyler and Nathan Bingham; uncle of Charles and Monroe Bingham.

Bingham, Monroe (Leroy Monroe),* corporal, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fletcher; enlisted May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; promoted to corporal; wounded May 3, 1863, and May 5, 1864; mustered out, June 29, 1864.

Bingham, Nathan R., son of Elias and Martha, brother of Royal Tyler.

Bingham, Royal Tyler, born August 10, 1810, in Stowe; died in 1891; son of Elias and Martha; father of Monroe; named for Vermont Supreme

Court justice and first important American playwright.

Bixby, Orville,* captain, Company E, Second Vermont Regiment; from Royalton; commissioned second lieutenant, May 21, 1861; promoted to first lieutenant, January 11, 1861; killed in action, May 5, 1864.

Blair, Charles R., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fletcher; enlisted May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; mustered out, June 29, 1864; cousin of Delia Blair, who married Hollis Montague.

Blair, Delia,* daughter of Charles and Amira Blair; cousin of Charles R. Blair, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; wife of Hollis Montague.

Boomhower, Herbert, private, Company I and Company D, First Vermont Cavalry; from Hyde Park; blacksmith; originally private in Company H but not mustered into Second Vermont Regiment; discharged, November 18, 1864.

Bridgman, George W., second lieutenant, Company F, Second Vermont Regiment; from Hardwick; enlisted as sergeant, May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; promoted to first sergeant; wounded May 5, 1864; mustered out, June 29, 1864.

Brigham, Sidney S., lieutenant, Company A, Third Vermont Regiment; captain, Company H, Third Vermont Regiment; from St. Albans.

Brooks, Lewis, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Ferrisburgh; enlisted October 4, 1861; mustered in, October 28, 1861; reenlisted December 21, 1863; killed in action, May 5, 1864.

Brooks, William T. H.,* brigadier general.

Brush, Dr., from Cambridge; father of Edwin Brush.

Brush, Edwin,* private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; son of Dr. Brush from Cambridge; drafted; promoted to assistant surgeon, Second Vermont Regiment, October 15, 1863; mustered out, July 15, 1865.

*Photograph in the “Leach Family Album.”

Buck, George, first lieutenant, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fairfax; enlisted May 14, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; promoted to sergeant, August 1, 1863; promoted to first sergeant, September 1, 1864; reenlisted, January 31, 1864; wounded May 5, 1864 (Wilderness); commissioned first lieutenant, December 24, 1864; mustered out, July 15, 1865.

Bucktails, company in the Thirteenth Pennsylvania Regiment; Charles Rice was a member of this company.

Burnham, Andrew J., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Montpelier; possibly relative of Captain Burnham; enlisted August 20, 1861; mustered in, September 13, 1861; discharged for disability, December 17, 1861.

Burnham, William T., captain, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Montpelier; commissioned May 23, 1861; resigned October 25, 1861.

Burnside, Ambrose E., general.

Butler, Jed C., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fairfax; enlisted March 22, 1862; mustered in, April 12, 1862; reenlisted April 18, 1864; mustered out, July 15, 1865.

Cady, Case's servant.

Cady, William H.,* captain, Company A, Second Vermont Regiment; from Bennington; commissioned second lieutenant, May 16, 1861; promoted to first lieutenant, January 22, 1862; promoted to captain, May 21, 1862; wounded May 5, 1864; mustered out, June 29, 1864.

Campbell, Henry C., second lieutenant, Company C, Second Vermont Regiment; from Putney; resigned October 19, 1862.

Carpenter, Addison, born 1842; tenth child of Jesse and Elizabeth (Chase) Carpenter; married Nancy P. Holmes of Johnson; farmed in Irasburgh; helped Ann Leach on the farm through 1862.

Carroll, Henry, second lieutenant, Company K, Second Vermont Regiment; from New Haven; enlisted as sergeant, May 15, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; commissioned second lieutenant, July 23, 1862; wounded July 10, 1863; taken prisoner, May 6, 1864; escaped November 1, 1864; mustered out, January 6, 1865.

Case, Bonaparte, sergeant, Company F, Eighth Vermont Regiment; from Fletcher; enlisted December 16, 1861; mustered in, February 18, 1862; died of disease, June 30, 1863.

Case, Jerome B., first lieutenant, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fletcher; commissioned May 23, 1861; discharged for disability, September 14, 1861.

Celly, Charles M., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Berlin; enlisted August 20, 1861; mustered in, September 13, 1861; discharged for disability, September 1, 1862.

Chandler, sutler for Second Vermont Regiment.

Channing, Rev. Mr., lecturer on Sanitary Commission, Brattleboro, June 26, 1864.

Chase, Andrew, born October 12, 1827; older brother of Zina.

Chase, Bingham W.,* private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fletcher; born August 30, 1832; cousin of Zina; one of seven children of Lyman and Betsy Kinsley Chase.

Chase (Byron) Charles B., private, Company C, Eleventh Vermont Regiment; from Bakersfield; killed in action, June 1, 1864.

Chase, Hollis,* born December 1861 or January 1862; infant son of Zina G. Chase and Jane Montague Chase; named for Jane and Ann's brother Hollis Montague.

Chase, Ichabod, cousin of Zina; second husband of Hannah Montague, mother of Ann and Jane; Ichabod's first wife Abigail Scott died in 1859. Ichabod married Hannah on May 30, 1861.

*Photograph in the "Leach Family Album."

Chase, Jane (Montague),* born June 5, 1835; sister of Ann; wife of Zina; daughter of Samuel and Hannah (Thomas) Montague.

Chase, Phillip E.,* captain, Company G, Second Vermont Regiment; from Mt. Holly; enlisted as sergeant, Company I, May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; promoted to first sergeant, October 15, 1861; commissioned second lieutenant, Company A, January 24, 1862; promoted to first lieutenant, Company A, May 21, 1862; promoted to captain, Company G, October 17, 1862; wounded May 5, 1864; mustered out, June 29, 1864.

Chase, Wait, possibly cousin of Ichabod Chase.

Chase, Walter, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fairfield; cousin of Zina; discharged for disability, March 25, 1863.

Chase, Zina Goldthwaite,* son of Alden and Abigail (Brown) Chase; born August 9, 1830; died July 12, 1893; married Jane Montague in 1856; Zina and Chester were each nephews of Lovinia (Chase) and Jacob Leach; Zina's cousin Ichabod married Jane's mother, Hannah, widow of Samuel Montague.

Clarke, Dayton P.,* captain, Company F, Second Vermont Regiment; from Montpelier; enlisted as sergeant, May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; commissioned first lieutenant, Company D, June 29, 1862; promoted to captain, Company F, November 3, 1863; mustered out, June 29, 1864.

Corey, Waterman F., captain, Company H, Third Vermont Regiment; from Fairfield; commissioned first lieutenant, June 3, 1861; promoted to adjutant, Third Regiment, September 1, 1861; resigned July 4, 1862; promoted to captain, Company H, November 20, 1862; resigned December 25, 1862.

Crossman, Horace F., captain, Company F, Second Vermont Regiment; from Montpelier; wounded in knee (leg amputated), May 5, 1863; discharged for disability, October 30, 1863.

Crown, George, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Grand Isle; wounded

May 10, 1864, and September 19, 1864; discharged for wounds, June 6, 1865.

Crown, John, private, Company A, Fifth Vermont Regiment; from Swanton; enlisted September 12, 1861; mustered in, September 16, 1861; discharged for disability, March 2, 1862.

Crown, Samuel, corporal, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fletcher; enlisted June 3, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; promoted to corporal, November 1, 1861; reenlisted December 21, 1863; wounded, May 5, 1864; mustered out, July 15, 1865.

Davis, David, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Belvidere; transferred to the western gunboat *Mound City*, where he was killed, June 30, 1862.

Dayton, Durell W., chaplain, Second Vermont Regiment; from Middlebury; enlisted August 18, 1862; resigned January 6, 1863.

Doane, Oramillo W., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Bakersfield; enlisted May 17, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; died of disease, December 25, 1862.

Doty, George, corporal, Company F, Second Vermont Regiment; from Morristown; enlisted May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; promoted to corporal, October 1, 1861; wounded December 13, 1861; discharged June 29, 1863.

Drew, John T., captain, Company G, Second Vermont Regiment; from Burlington; taken prisoner, July 21, 1861; paroled August 12, 1862; resigned October 8, 1862.

Drury, Eben N.,* first lieutenant, Company K, Second Vermont Regiment; from Vergennes; enlisted May 15, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; promoted to first sergeant; commissioned first lieutenant, August 9, 1862; wounded July 10, 1863, and May 5, 1864; mustered out, June 29, 1864.

Dunbar, Norman, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fairfax; enlisted May 21, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; discharged for disability, September 14, 1861.

*Photograph in the "Leach Family Album."

Eaton, Solon, captain, Company K, Second Vermont Regiment; from Addison; commissioned, May 28, 1861; resigned August 4, 1862.

Ellenwood, Eli, sergeant, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; born in 1815; from Cambridge but farmed in Fletcher; married Avaline Hook in 1837; enlisted (age 46) May 25, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; died of disease, August 5, 1862; buried in Fletcher's Binghamville Cemetery. According to *A Genealogical Study of Some Families Who Came to Fletcher, Vt. Before 1850* (Burlington, Vt.: Vantage Press, 1981), "Eli was a well known vocalist and singing school master, an enthusiastic, popular and patriotic citizen, and long-time resident of Fletcher" (25).

Ellis, Cornelius, private, Company H, First Vermont Cavalry; from Fletcher; possibly brother of Edgar Ellis; enlisted October 2, 1861; mustered in, November 19, 1861; mustered out, November 18, 1864.

Ellis, Edgar, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fletcher; possibly brother of Cornelius; enlisted February 20, 1862; mustered in, April 12, 1862; discharged for disability, March 30, 1863.

Estes, Lewis H., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Elmore; enlisted June 3, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; discharged for disability, December 25, 1861.

Estes, Otis V., second lieutenant, Company A, Second Vermont Regiment; from Bennington; enlisted as sergeant, May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; promoted to first sergeant, May 21, 1862; commissioned second lieutenant, October 17, 1862; wounded May 12, 1864; mustered out, June 29, 1864.

Fassett, Nelson, first lieutenant, Company E, Second Vermont Regiment; from Jericho; enlisted February 26, 1862; mustered in, April 12, 1862; promoted to sergeant, October 18, 1864; commissioned first lieutenant, January 7, 1865; mustered out, July 15, 1865.

Felton, Joseph C., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fairfax; enlisted March 5,

1862; mustered in, April 12, 1862; reenlisted April 18, 1864; killed in action, June 8, 1864.

Fifield, Edson H., * first lieutenant, Company B, Second Vermont Regiment; from Poultney; corporal in Company B; promoted to sergeant, March 7, 1862; promoted to quartermaster sergeant, April 26, 1862; commissioned first lieutenant, June 20, 1864; mustered out, July 15, 1865.

Fletcher, Enos, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Waterville; enlisted May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 29, 1861; discharged for disability, October 18, 1861; reenrolled in Company E, Seventh Vermont Regiment, December 1, 1861; promoted to corporal, November 27, 1862; reduced in rank, February 21, 1864; mustered out, August 30, 1864.

Foot, Solomon, senator from Vermont; president pro tem. of the U.S. Senate throughout the Civil War; born in Cornwall, November 15, 1802; graduated from Middlebury College, 1826; studied law and was admitted to the bar, 1831.

Ford, Abram, sergeant, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Montpelier; discharged for disability, November 25, 1862.

Fullam, Volney S., lieutenant colonel, Seventh Vermont Regiment; from Ludlow; captain in Company I, Second Vermont Regiment; promoted to lieutenant colonel, Seventh Vermont Regiment, January 18, 1862; resigned August 26, 1862.

Fuller, William, private, Company F, Second Vermont Regiment; from Addison; killed in action, April 16, 1862.

Fulton, Horatio, private, Company H, Ninth Vermont Regiment; from Fletcher; enlisted June 10, 1862; mustered in, July 9, 1862; died of disease, November 2, 1862.

Fulton, Robert M., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fletcher; possibly brother of Horatio; enlisted December 11, 1863; mustered in, December 30, 1863; wounded May 5, 1864, and September 19, 1864; mustered out, July 15, 1865.

*Photograph in the "Leach Family Album."

Getty, George, general; from Washington, D.C.; head of division, including Vermont Brigade.

Gilbert, Cushman, private, Company B, Third Vermont Regiment; from Coventry; enlisted June 1, 1861; mustered in, June 16, 1861; discharged for disability, July 19, 1862.

Glougie, John R., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Cambridge; enlisted August 16, 1862; mustered in, September 22, 1862; wounded May 5, 1864; discharged February 22, 1865.

Graham, Albert, sergeant, Company K, Fifth Vermont Regiment; from Fairfax; taken prisoner, June 29, 1862; paroled August 5, 1862.

Grant, Lewis A., major general; from Rockingham; promoted to lieutenant colonel, Fifth Vermont Regiment, September 25, 1861; promoted to colonel, Fifth Vermont Regiment, September 16, 1862; wounded December 14, 1862; promoted to brigadier general, April 27, 1864; promoted to major general for gallant and meritorious services, October 19, 1864.

Grant, Ulysses S.,* general.

Graves, Thaddeus O., corporal, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Wolcott; enlisted May 25, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; reduced in rank, October 1, 1861; discharged May 27, 1864.

Greenleaf, William H., corporal, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Bethel; enlisted March 22, 1862; mustered in, April 12, 1862; reenlisted April 18, 1864; promoted to corporal, September 1, 1864; mustered out, July 15, 1865.

Griffin, Joel L., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Stowe; enlisted June 1, 1861; mustered in, July 16, 1861; transferred to Fifth U.S. Cavalry, October 30, 1862.

Griffin, Sherman, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fletcher; discharged for disability, May 28, 1862.

Hayward, Henry R.,* second lieutenant, Company E, Second Vermont Regiment; from Tunbridge; enlisted as sergeant, April 22, 1861;

mustered in, June 20, 1861; promoted to first sergeant, August 28, 1862; commissioned second lieutenant, November 24, 1862; mustered out, June 29, 1864.

Hebb, L. S. (possibly Louis S.), private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Cambridge; enlisted June 17, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; taken prisoner, June 29, 1862; paroled September 13, 1862; discharged June 20, 1864.

Hewitt, Orrin D., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Warren; enlisted August 20, 1861; mustered in, September 13, 1861; died of disease, January 9, 1862.

Hight, Bradbury W.,* second lieutenant, Company C, Second Vermont Regiment; from Burlington; corporal in Company C; promoted to sergeant major, February 22, 1862; commissioned second lieutenant, March 17, 1863; mustered out, June 29, 1864.

Hooker, Joseph, general.

Hope, James, captain, Company B, Second Vermont Regiment; from Castleton; commissioned (age 43) May 16, 1861; resigned for health reasons, December 20, 1862; artist who painted panoramic view of the battle at Antietam.

Howard, Isaac, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Burlington; enlisted August 20, 1861; mustered in, September 12, 1861; wounded May 5, 1864, and May 12, 1864; mustered out, September 13, 1864.

Howard, Oliver Otis, general; commanding officer of brigade; lost his right arm at the second battle of Bull Run; after war was in charge of Freedman's Bureau; founded Howard University and a number of other schools for African Americans; retired to Burlington, Vt.

Howard, Wells, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Jamaica, Vt.; drafted and mustered, July 13, 1863; wounded May 5, 1864, and May 12, 1864; died of wounds received on October 19, 1864, November 1, 1864.

Howe, Albion P., general.

*Photograph in the "Leach Family Album."

Howe, Henry, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Jamaica, Vt.; drafted and mustered, July 31, 1863; killed in action, May 5, 1864.

Hubbard, George W., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Cambridge; enlisted August 16, 1862; mustered in, September 22, 1862; wounded May 5, 1864, and May 12, 1864; discharged for wounds, February 6, 1865.

Hulburd, Daniel C., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Waterville; brother of Loyal P.; enlisted May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; discharged for disability (wounds from Wilderness), October 14, 1862.

Hulburd, Loyal P., sergeant, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Waterville; brother of Daniel; enlisted May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; promoted to sergeant, September 1, 1862; wounded May 12, 1864; mustered out, June 29, 1864.

Hutchinson, James, sergeant, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Roxbury; promoted to corporal and sergeant; killed in action, August 24, 1864.

Jarvis, Charles,* major, Ninth Vermont Regiment; from Weathersfield; commissioned captain, Company D, Ninth Vermont Regiment, June 25, 1862; promoted to major, May 24, 1863; killed on scouting expedition, December 1, 1863.

Joyce, Charles H., lieutenant colonel, Second Vermont Regiment; from Northfield; commissioned major, June 6, 1861; promoted to lieutenant colonel, May 21, 1862; resigned January 6, 1863; born in England in 1830; came with parents to U.S. in 1836; admitted to the bar in 1852; U.S. representative from Vermont, 1874-1880.

Keyes, George Erasmus (Erasmus Darwin), general.

Kilpatrick, Judson, general.

Kinsley, Alonzo, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fletcher; cousin of Ann Leach; enlisted May 7, 1861; mustered in,

June 20, 1861; wounded July 21, 1861; discharged June 21, 1864.

Kinsley, Cephas; born October 30, 1816; died February 11, 1881; from Fletcher; son of Samuel Kinsley II and Celenda Montague; cousin of Chellis; distant cousin of Ann Leach.

Kinsley, Chellis, musician/drummer, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; born 1809; enlisted May 18, 1861; mustered in (age 52), June 20, 1861; discharged June 27, 1864.

Kinsley, Guy, born May 8, 1800; son of Daniel and **Lucy (Montague) Kinsley***; Guy and Chellis related to Ann Leach through the Montagues.

Kneeland, George A., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; substitute for L. C. Kendall of Enosburgh; enlisted and mustered in, July 28, 1863; killed in action, May 6, 1864.

Kneeland, James, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from St. Albans; enlisted and mustered in, December 31, 1863; wounded May 5, 1864, and May 12, 1864; deserted August 3, 1864.

Ladd, Guilford S., regimental adjutant; from Bennington; commissioned June 11, 1861; resigned July 17, 1862.

Laird, John, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Braintree; enlisted August 20, 1861; mustered in, September 12, 1861; wounded May 5, 1864; died of wounds, May 18, 1864.

Lamb, William Keyes, born September 7, 1827; Zelia's daughter Pauline married his grandson Walter.

Larabee, Lyman H., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Underhill; enlisted May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; discharged for disability, September 17, 1862.

Law, John F., second lieutenant, Company E, U.S. Sharpshooters; from Cambridge; sergeant in Company E; commissioned second lieutenant, September 17, 1862; wounded July 3, 1863, and June 18, 1864; discharged for wounds, July 30, 1864.

*Photograph in the "Leach Family Album."

Lawson, Norman C., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Woodbury; enlisted August 20, 1861; mustered in, September 12, 1861; wounded and taken prisoner, June 29, 1862; paroled August 3, 1862; wounded May 3, 1863; discharged September 20, 1864.

Layth, Isaac, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fairfax; enlisted March 13, 1862; mustered in, April 22, 1862; deserted August 5, 1862.

Leach, Albert,* born June 7, 1839; brother of Chester (who enlisted him with their brother William in 1863); private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; enlisted December 19, 1863; mustered in, December 30, 1863; wounded October 19, 1864; discharged for wounds, May 12, 1865; married **Celestia Carpenter*** (also from Fletcher); died in 1912.

Leach, Anna A. (Montague),* born April 24, 1831; daughter of Samuel and **Hannah (Thomas) Montague**,* she was the granddaughter of Rufus Montague, the only original proprietor to actually settle in Fletcher; she died in 1927 in Fletcher and was buried with Chester in Binghamville Cemetery.

Leach, Chester K.,* born January 17, 1830; son of Joseph and Olive (Burton) Leach, sixth of eight offspring; married Anna A. Montague with whom he had four children (Justin, Zelia, and twins **Myron*** and **Byron**,* who were born April 20, 1870); he died in Cambridge, Vt., February 17, 1909, and was buried in Fletcher's Binghamville Cemetery.

Leach, Daniel, born September 15, 1819; oldest brother of Chester; married Rhoda Stratton Carroll.

Leach, Florilla; born November 24, 1849; oldest daughter of William (Chester's brother) and Lorinda (Taylor); married William Slater (he was a substitute for Andrew Lamb from Fletcher in Company J, Second Vermont Regiment; mustered in, July 31, 1863; wounded May 12, 1864, and April 2, 1865; promoted to corporal, August 4, 1864, and later to sergeant, February 16, 1865; mustered out, July 15, 1865).

Leach, George W., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Waterville; enlisted December 19, 1861; mustered in, December 30, 1861; discharged for disability, February 21, 1862 (possibly a distant cousin of Chester).

Leach, Justin,* born in 1852; son of Chester and Ann; died in 1925; buried in Fletcher's Binghamville Cemetery.

Leach, Lorinda (Taylor), born September 23, 1832; daughter of Giles Galusha and Lydia (Chase) Taylor; wife of William (Chester's brother); mother of four children; first cousin of Zina Chase; died October or November 1863.

Leach, Olive (Burton),* mother of Chester; married Joseph Leach, November 15, 1818; mother of eight children, six sons and two daughters.

Leach, William H., born April 30, 1828; Chester's older brother; married Lorinda (Taylor) Leach; had four children; private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment. William, whose wife had died in October or November 1863, was recruited by Chester in December 1863; he died of typhoid fever, March 29, 1864. His children were Florilla, born November 24, 1849; Alden Chase, born January 19, 1852; Sidney Holie (Hawley), born July 15, 1853; and Hiland Eugene, born April 25, 1855.

Leach, Zelia,* born November 24, 1859; daughter of Chester and Ann; married Deforest Robinson and had one daughter, Pauline, who married Walter Lamb. Pauline became the custodian of Chester's letters to Ann.

Loomis, Alden C., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Roxbury; enlisted August 20, 1861; mustered in, September 12, 1861; wounded September 1862 (revised roster says December 1862); discharged November 1865.

Loomis, Osmond E., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Braintree; enlisted August 20, 1861; mustered in, September 12, 1861; died of disease, January 23, 1862.

Loveland, Lucius V., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fairfax; enlisted May 15, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; wounded May 12, 1864, and August 21, 1864;

*Photograph in the "Leach Family Album."

deserted December 22, 1864; returned February 1, 1865; discharged February 27, 1865.

McCarty, James, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fairfax; enlisted June 1, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; wounded July 21, 1861, at the first battle of Bull Run; discharged September 14, 1861.

McCarty, John L., Company G, Wagoner Company, Second Vermont Regiment; from Burlington; enlisted May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; mustered out, June 29, 1864.

McClellan, George B., general.

McDowell, general.

McLoud, Brooks D., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Woodbury; enlisted August 20, 1861; mustered in, September 12, 1861; wounded December 13, 1862; killed in action, May 5, 1864.

Maloney, Thomas, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Montpelier; enlisted August 20, 1861; mustered in, September 12, 1861; wounded May 5, 1864 (Wilderness); discharged September 12, 1864.

Marshall, Frederick, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Waterville; enlisted May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; wounded July 21, 1861; reenlisted December 21, 1863; killed in action, May 12, 1864.

Martin, John, Jr., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Westfield; enlisted May 20, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; taken prisoner, June 29, 1862; paroled September 13, 1862; wounded May 5, 1864; mustered out, June 29, 1864.

Maxfield, Arthur, private, Company K, Fifth Vermont Regiment; from Fairfax; brother of Hampton; enlisted September 9, 1861; mustered in, September 16, 1861; died of disease, December 12, 1861.

Maxfield, Hampton L., sergeant, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fairfax; born 1836; brother of Arthur; enlisted May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; wounded May 3,

1863; promoted to corporal, June 1, 1863; reenlisted December 21, 1863; wounded May 5, 1864; promoted to sergeant, September 1, 1864; mustered out, July 15, 1865.

Meade, George G., general.

Mears, Joseph, private, drummer, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Poultney; enlisted August 12, 1862; mustered in, September 15, 1862; mustered out, June 19, 1865.

Meeker, Henry V., corporal, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Cambridge; enlisted May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; reduced in rank; mustered out, June 29, 1864.

Merrill, Adrian J., sergeant, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fairfax; enlisted May 20, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; promoted to corporal; promoted to sergeant; wounded July 21, 1861, May 3, 1863, and May 5, 1864; discharged June 29, 1864.

Minogue, William, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Rutland; enlisted August 20, 1861; mustered in, September 12, 1861; killed in action (Wilderness), May 5, 1864.

Montague, Avaline Scott, born April 20, 1836; daughter of Levi and Eunice (Nichols) Scott; wife of Emerson Montague, Ann's brother.

Montague, Edgar Kinsley, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fletcher; son of Ben Alva and Catherine Montague Kinsley; adopted by Rufus Montague II and Elvira (Scott) Montague; married twice: (1) Louisa Sherwood, died 1868, and (2) Annette Blair, sister of Delia (Blair) Montague; enlisted December 14, 1863; mustered in, December 20, 1863; mustered out, July 15, 1865.

Montague, Emerson, brother of Ann; born March 23, 1833; married Avaline Scott.

Montague, Hollis,* musician (fifer), Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fletcher; Ann's youngest brother; born April 7, 1843; married Delia Blair; enlisted May 10, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; mustered out, June 29, 1864.

*Photograph in the "Leach Family Album."

Montague, Nelson,* brother of Ann, who stayed with her the first year of the war; born October 7, 1837; married **Miriam Armstrong.***

Morse, Andrew G., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Elmore; enlisted August 20, 1861; mustered in, September 12, 1861; discharged for disability, December 25, 1861.

Morton, Joseph, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Cambridge; enlisted May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; died of disease, August 14, 1862.

Nichols, Hilliard P., private, Company M, First Vermont Cavalry; from Fletcher; enlisted September 22, 1862; mustered in, December 30, 1862; discharged for disability, May 22, 1865.

Noyes, Luman A., assistant surgeon, Second Vermont Regiment; from Tunbridge; resigned May 27, 1863.

Page, John B., Vermont state treasurer; from Rutland; served as state treasurer, 1860–1866; responsible for disbursement to Vermont volunteers of an additional \$7.00 per month per man for a total of \$1,635,150 in state funds for the war; elected governor of Vermont in 1867; reelected in 1868.

Parker, Sumner, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fletcher; enlisted May 15, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; killed in action, May 3, 1863.

Parkhurst, Sherman W., first lieutenant, Company I, Second Vermont Regiment; from Cavenish; resigned November 9, 1861.

Parris, Alonzo W., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fairfax; enlisted May 20, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; wounded and taken prisoner, July 21, 1861; paroled February 20, 1862; died of disease, August 26, 1862.

Parsons, Henry, captain, Company L, First Vermont Cavalry; from St. Albans; wounded July 3, 1863; discharged January 4, 1864.

Peckham, John G., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Burlington; enlisted

August 20, 1861; mustered in, September 12, 1861; discharged for disability, January 4, 1862.

Perkins, Lafavor C., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Essex; enlisted May 25, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; reenlisted December 21, 1863; died of wounds received on railroad, February 6, 1864.

Pitkin, Perley P., lieutenant colonel, quartermaster, Second Vermont Regiment; from Montpelier; promoted to captain & assistant quartermaster, U.S. Volunteers, February 19, 1862; promoted to lieutenant colonel and quartermaster, August 2, 1864; resigned November 7, 1864.

Pleasanton, Alfred, general.

Poland, Joseph, agent sent by the State of Vermont (possibly related to Luke Poland, who was a senator, congressman, and supreme court justice of Vermont).

Pope, John, general; relieved of command after the second battle of Bull Run.

Powers, Charles, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Milton; drafted; wounded September 19, 1862; mustered out, July 20, 1865.

Pratt, general of the "new" brigade (light brigade), which included the Second Vermont, Fifth Wisconsin, Sixth Maine, and Thirty-first New Jersey regiments.

Priest, Ethan A., first lieutenant, Company I, Second Vermont Regiment; from Mt. Holly; enlisted as sergeant in Company I, May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; wounded July 21, 1861, and June 27, 1862; promoted to first sergeant, January 20, 1863; commissioned first lieutenant, February 10, 1863; wounded May 12, 1864; mustered out, June 29, 1864.

Prim, general.

Prouty, Henry H.,* captain, Company B, Second Vermont Regiment; from Brattleboro; enlisted as sergeant, Company C, May 1, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; promoted to sergeant major, April 14, 1863; wounded May 4, 1863; commissioned second lieutenant, Company H, Novem-

*Photograph in the "Leach Family Album."

ber 2, 1863; promoted to first lieutenant, April 24, 1864; promoted to captain, Company B, December 24, 1864; mustered out, July 15, 1865.

Randall, Francis V., captain, Company F, Second Vermont Regiment; from Montpelier; commissioned May 20, 1861; resigned to accept promotion to colonel, May 9, 1862; Thirteenth Vermont Regiment, September 24, 1862; mustered out, July 21, 1863.

Reed, Philander, private, Company G, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fletcher; enlisted May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; reenlisted June 20, 1864; died June 19, 1864, of wounds received May 5, 1864.

Reynolds, Philo, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Belvidere; enlisted May 20, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; died November 22, 1861.

Rice, Charles, member of Bucktails.

Riggs, Alfred, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fletcher; enlisted and mustered in, December 26, 1863; mustered out, May 13, 1865.

Robbins, Augustus J.,* second lieutenant, Company B, Second Vermont Regiment; from Grafton; enlisted as corporal, May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; promoted to sergeant, January 16, 1862; commissioned second lieutenant, December 20, 1862; wounded May 12, 1864; mustered out, June 29, 1864.

Robinson, George, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fletcher; father of Deforest Robinson, who married Zelia; enlisted December 19, 1863; mustered in, December 30, 1863; mustered out, July 20, 1865.

Rood, Edson, Thirty-first New Jersey Regiment (presumably related to Vernon Rood).

Rood, Vernon, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fletcher; enlisted May 16, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; wounded and taken prisoner, June 29, 1862; paroled July 25, 1862; discharged June 27, 1864.

Rosencrans, William S., general.

Royce, Samuel W., corporal, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fletcher; enlisted May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; discharged for disability, January 14, 1863.

Russell, general.

Ryan, Patrick, private, Company I, Third Vermont Regiment; substitute for Percy M. Frost, Springfield; deserted to the enemy, December 10, 1863.

Ryan, William, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; substitute for W. Brown, St. Albans; enlisted and mustered in, July 31, 1863; taken prisoner, May 21, 1864; mustered out, May 25, 1865.

Safford, E. O., merchant of Fletcher.

St. John, Frank (Francis), private, Company D, Eighth Vermont Regiment; from Cambridge; enlisted September 1, 1861; mustered in, September 16, 1861; taken prisoner and paroled, June 28, 1862; discharged October 31, 1864.

Savory, John H., private, Company B, Second Vermont Regiment; from Clarendon; cook for Company B; died April 18, 1862, of wounds received April 16, 1862.

Sawin, William J., surgeon, Second Vermont Regiment; from Chicopee Falls, Mass.; transferred from Tenth Massachusetts Regiment as private to Company E, Third Vermont Regiment; promoted to assistant surgeon, Second Vermont Regiment, June 21, 1862; wounded and taken prisoner, June 29, 1862; paroled July 22, 1862; commissioned as surgeon, December 18, 1862; mustered out, June 29, 1864.

Sawyer, Joshua P., first lieutenant, Company C, Second Vermont Regiment; from St. Albans; enlisted as sergeant, May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; commissioned second lieutenant, Company H, January 25, 1862; promoted to first lieutenant, Company C, September 26, 1863; wounded May 5, 1864 (Wilderness); mustered out, June 29, 1864.

*Photograph in the "Leach Family Album."

Scott, Wait, corporal, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fletcher; enlisted December 19, 1863; mustered in, December 30, 1863; wounded May 5, 1864; promoted to corporal, September 1, 1864; mustered out, July 15, 1865.

Sedgwick, John, general, commander of Sixth Corps.

Sharpley, David L., first lieutenant, Company G, Second Vermont Regiment; from Burlington; commissioned May 20, 1861; resigned June 24, 1862.

Shephardson, David; born September 19, 1822; son of Joel and Huldah (Goodrich) Shephardson; third of seven children; farmer in Fletcher.

Shonian, Henry, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; substitute for Henry C. Mooney, North Hero; enlisted and mustered in, August 7, 1863; wounded June 9, 1864; discharged for wounds, May 17, 1865.

Smith, Claudius B., chaplain, Second Vermont Regiment; from Brandon; enlisted and mustered in, June 6, 1861; resigned July 8, 1862.

Smith, Edwin R., sergeant, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Cambridge; enlisted May 23, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; reduced in rank; mustered out, June 29, 1864.

Smith, Isaac L., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Burlington; cousin to Samuel W. Royce; enlisted August 30, 1862; mustered in, September 15, 1862; mustered out, June 19, 1865.

Smith, John Gregory, governor of Vermont, 1863–1864; from St. Albans; cousin of General (Baldy) Smith.

Smith, Nelson, drummer, Wisconsin Regiment; related to either the Chases or the Montagues.

Smith, Richard, captain, Company E, Second Vermont Regiment; from Tunbridge; commissioned May 21, 1861; resigned August 1, 1862.

Smith, William F. (Baldy), general of division; from St. Albans; cousin of Vermont Gov. John Gregory Smith; graduate of West Point; promoted to

major general, July 4, 1862; resigned November 4, 1865.

Snow, Edward, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Milton; enlisted June 17, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; reenlisted March 20, 1864; mustered out, July 15, 1865.

Soule, Hiram, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fairfax; enlisted May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; died July 7, 1863, of wounds received May 3, 1863.

Squires, Ezra W., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fletcher; enlisted December 19, 1863; mustered in, December 30, 1863; killed in action, May 5, 1864.

Stannard, George J., major general; from St. Albans; commissioned June 6, 1861; promoted to colonel, Ninth Vermont Regiment, May 21, 1862; promoted to brigadier general of U.S. Volunteers, March 11, 1863; wounded July 3, 1863, June 3 and 15, 1864, and September 30, 1864; brevetted to major general, October 28, 1864 for gallantry and meritorious service at Fort Harrison, Va.; resigned June 28, 1866.

Staples, Franklin, corporal, Company D, Fifth Vermont Regiment; from Hyde Park; enlisted August 19, 1861; mustered in, September 16, 1861; died of disease, December 14, 1861.

Start, Storrs W., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Bakersfield; enlisted June 17, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; reenlisted March 20, 1864; mustered out, June 29, 1864.

Stone, James L., second lieutenant, Company I, Second Vermont Regiment; from Northfield; commissioned December 14, 1861; resigned January 6, 1863.

Stone, Lauriston L., quartermaster, Second Vermont Regiment; from Stowe; promoted to quartermaster sergeant, January 16, 1862; promoted to quartermaster for Second Vermont Regiment, April 3, 1862; taken prisoner, October 26, 1863; paroled December 10, 1864; mustered out, April 16, 1865.

Stone, Newton, colonel, Second Vermont Regiment; from Bennington; commissioned first lieutenant, Company A, May 16, 1861; promoted to captain, Company I, January 22, 1862; promoted to major, January 8, 1863; promoted to lieutenant colonel, February 9, 1863; promoted to colonel, April 2, 1864; killed in action, May 5, 1864.

Strait, Zerah W., captain, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; elected captain of the Fletcher Company by the men of the company; name appears on the original roll of the company but did not go with company to Washington.

Streeter, George, private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Colchester; enlisted May 25, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; wounded and taken prisoner, July 21, 1861; paroled October 5, 1861; discharged December 16, 1861.

Sumner, Edwin V., general.

Taylor, Cynthia (Leach), born in 1793 in New Fairfield, Conn; married Giles S. Taylor, first blacksmith in Fletcher, who died at age 69; Cynthia was sister to Chester's father, Joseph; died March 4, 1862.

Taylor, Giles S., husband of Cynthia Leach; Chester's uncle by marriage.

Taylor, James B., born May 30, 1834; son of Giles Galusha and Lydia (Chase) Taylor; brother of William's wife, Lorinda; cousin of Zina; from Fletcher; married Emily Sherwood; died June 30, 1862.

Tayer, John C., cook; from Fairfax; according to a report in the *Burlington Daily Free Press* of July 30, 1861, as a theological student, he had tried to enlist but was rejected due to a stiff wrist. He was, however, taken along with the regiment as a cook. The newspaper reported, "When the charge was made, he came face to face with an officer of the rebels. 'Surrender,' said the Officer. The Volunteer replied by shooting him, taking his sash, sword and opera glass, and retiring in safety. He wore his cooking frock, a blue blouse; four bullets passed through it. He also had one through his hat, yet escaped to continue his cooking unharmed."

Tilden, Eldon A.,* second lieutenant, Company D, Second Vermont Regiment; from Barre; enlisted as sergeant, May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; promoted to first sergeant of the regiment; commissioned second lieutenant, November 20, 1863; mustered out, June 29, 1864.

Todd, Edward A., captain, Company C, Second Vermont Regiment; from Brattleboro; commissioned (age 22) May 17, 1861; wounded July 21, 1861 (first battle of Bull Run), resigned January 8, 1862.

Tracy, Amasa Sawyer,* colonel, Second Vermont Regiment; from Middlebury; first lieutenant, Company K; promoted to captain, Company H, January 24, 1862; wounded May 3, 1863; promoted to major, April 2, 1864; promoted to lieutenant colonel, June 17, 1864; wounded October 19, 1864; brevetted to colonel, April 2, 1865, for gallantry at Petersburg; mustered out as lieutenant colonel, July 15, 1865.

Tyler, John Steele,* colonel, Second Vermont Regiment; from Brattleboro; commissioned first lieutenant, Company C, May 17, 1861; promoted to captain, January 23, 1862; promoted to major, February 9, 1863; promoted to lieutenant colonel, April 2, 1864; promoted to colonel, May 6, 1864; died May 23, 1864, of wounds received in action May 5, 1864 (Wilderness).

Ufford, Zaddock, sergeant major, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fairfax; enlisted May 18, 1861; mustered in as corporal, June 20, 1861; promoted to sergeant, Company H; promoted to sergeant major, December 1, 1863; killed in action, May 5, 1864.

Wakefield, Arrington C., first lieutenant, Company C, Third Vermont Regiment; from Rockingham; enlisted June 1, 1861; mustered in, July 16, 1861; promoted to sergeant, Company I; commissioned second lieutenant, Company C; promoted to first lieutenant, Company C, May 10, 1865; mustered out, July 11, 1865.

Walbridge, James H., colonel, Second Vermont Regiment; from Bennington; commissioned as captain, Company A, May 16, 1861; promoted to major, May 21, 1862; promoted to lieutenant colonel, January 8, 1863; promoted to colonel, February 9, 1863; resigned April 1, 1864;

*Photograph in the "Leach Family Album."

brother was Henry Walbridge, wheelwright in North Bennington.

Wales, Elijah,* major, Company C, Second Vermont Regiment; from Brattleboro; enlisted as sergeant (age 32), May 1, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; commissioned second lieutenant, January 23, 1862; promoted to first lieutenant, October 20, 1862; promoted to captain, March 1, 1863; wounded May 5, 1864; brevetted to major, August 1, 1864, for gallantry (Wilderness and subsequent battles); wounded August 14, 1864; mustered out, July 15, 1865.

Ward, Phillip (Mitch), private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Burlington; enlisted May 23, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; wounded and taken prisoner, May 20, 1862; paroled August 3, 1862; discharged for wounds, January 5, 1863.

Ward, Rollin C.,* captain, Company B, Second Vermont Regiment; from Castleton; enlisted as sergeant, May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; commissioned first lieutenant, October 1, 1862; promoted to captain, December 20, 1862; wounded May 12, 1864; resigned September 14, 1864.

Warren, Amos, private, Company C, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fairfield; enlisted by Chester, December 23, 1863; mustered in, December 30, 1863; discharged for disability, March 21, 1864.

Warren, Lester, Rev.

Weed, Anson H., first lieutenant, Company G, Second Vermont Regiment; from Hinesburg; commissioned second lieutenant, May 21, 1861; promoted to first lieutenant, July 3, 1862; resigned March 5, 1863; married Helen Pease from Charlotte in 1842; returned to Hinesburg where he farmed on land now known as Rocky Ridge Golf Course; died in 1903.

Wells, Elias, possibly father of William Wells from Fairfax.

Wells, Sanford, private, Company E, Thirteenth Vermont Regiment; from Cambridge (possibly cousin of William Wells of Fairfax); enlisted September 8, 1862; mustered in, October 10,

1862; wounded July 3, 1863; mustered out, July 24, 1863.

Wells, William L., corporal, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Fairfax; enlisted May 14, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; died of disease, October 22, 1863.

Westman, Oscar C., second lieutenant, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Cambridge; enlisted May 25, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; promoted to corporal, September 1, 1862; promoted to sergeant, September 1, 1864; promoted to first sergeant, February 8, 1865; commissioned second lieutenant, June 7, 1865; mustered out as first sergeant, July 15, 1865.

Wheelock, Mr., minister from Fletcher.

Whipple, Moses, sergeant, Company E, Third Vermont Regiment; from Morristown; married to Lucy Church of Fletcher, April 3, 1860; enlisted June 1, 1861; mustered in, July 16, 1861; discharged for disability, January 25, 1864.

White, Daniel S.,* captain, Company I, Second Vermont Regiment; from Cavendish; enlisted as sergeant, May 7, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; promoted to first sergeant, February 9, 1862; commissioned second lieutenant, January 8, 1863; promoted to captain, January 26, 1863; wounded May 5, 1864; discharged October 24, 1864.

White, George A., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Woodbury; enlisted August 20, 1861; mustered in, September 12, 1861; reenlisted December 21, 1863; wounded May 3, 1863; died May 25, 1864, of wounds received May 12, 1864.

White, Walter, private, Company E, Twelfth Vermont Regiment; from Fairfield; enlisted September 1, 1862; mustered in, October 4, 1862; mustered out, July 14, 1863.

Whiting, Henry, colonel, Second Vermont Regiment; from St. Claire, Mich.; commissioned June 6, 1861; resigned February 6, 1863.

Wilcox, Samuel J., private, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Cambridge; enlisted

*Photograph in the "Leach Family Album."

May 25, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; died of disease, January 7, 1862.

Wood, Norman F., * husband of **Sarah Jane Leach,** * Chester's youngest sister.

Woodbury, Urban A., sergeant, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Elmore; enlisted May 25, 1861; mustered in, June 20, 1861; wounded (lost arm) and taken prisoner, July 21, 1861; paroled October 5, 1861; discharged October 18, 1861, for wounds received July 21, 1861; governor of Vermont, 1894-96; earned M.D. degree in 1859 (wrote his thesis on the liver); according to family members, there is no record that he ever practiced medicine.

Worcester, Almond J., Jr., * first lieutenant, Company F, Second Vermont Regiment; from Warren; enlisted as first sergeant, May 7, 1861; mustered in, May 20, 1861; commissioned second lieutenant, August 4, 1862; promoted to first lieutenant, October 1, 1862; wounded May 12, 1864; mustered out, June 29, 1864.

Worthing, James M., corporal, Company H, Second Vermont Regiment; from Bakersfield; enlisted August 7, 1862; mustered in, August 30, 1862; wounded May 12, 1864; mustered out, June 29, 1865.

Wright, Mr. and Mrs., of Georgetown, D. C., apparently ran a boarding house where Chester and Ann stayed in September or October 1861.

**Photographs
from the
Leach Family Album**



First Lieutenant James Allen,
Company E



Captain Erastus G. Ballou,
Company K;
Major, Second Vermont



Private Stephan Billings, Jr.,
Company H



Corporal Leroy Monroe Bingham,
Company H, Second Vermont



Captain Orville Bixby,
Company E



General William T. H. Brooks



Edw. Brush

Edwin A. Brush,
Assistant Surgeon, Second Vermont



Captain William H. Cady,
Company A



*Respectfully Yours
Dayton P. Clarke*

Captain Dayton P. Clarke,
Company F, Second Vermont



Mr. & Mrs. Bingham Chase

Mr. and Mrs. Bingham Chase



Hollis Chase

Hollis Chase



Jane Montague Chase [?]



Captain Phillip E. Chase,
Company G, Second Vermont



Zina Goldthwaite Chase [?]



First Lieutenant Eben N. Drury,
Company K



First Lieutenant Edson H. Fifield,
Company B



Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant



Second Lieutenant Henry R. Hayward,
Company E



Second Lieutenant Bradbury W. Hight,
Company C



Major Charles Jarvis,
Ninth Vermont



Lucy (Montague) Kinsley



Albert Leach



Celestia (Carpenter) Leach



Justin Leach



Myron & Byron

Myron and Byron Leach



Olive Burton Leach

Olive Burton Leach



Myron & Byron Leach

Zelia Leach



Abraham Lincoln



Mary Todd Lincoln



Hannah (Thomas) Montague

Hannah (Thomas) Montague



*Miriam Armstrong
Montague*

Miriam Armstrong Montague



Nelson Montague

Nelson Montague



Delia (Blair) and Hollis Montague [?]



H. H. Prouty

Second Lieutenant Henry H. Prouty,
Company H;
Captain, Company B



A. J. Robbins

Second Lieutenant Augustus J. Robbins,
Company B



Second Lieutenant Eldon A. Tilden,
Company D



Captain Amasa S. Tracy,
Company H



Colonel John Steele Tyler,
Second Vermont



Union Soldier



Union Soldier



Union Soldier



Union Soldier



Captain Elijah Wales, Company C;
Major, Second Vermont



Captain Rollin C. Ward,
Company B, Second Vermont



Captain Daniel White,
Company I, Second Vermont



Norman F. Wood [?]



Sarah Jane (Leach) Wood [?]



First Lieutenant J. Almond Worchester,
Company F



Ann and Chester K. Leach

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