



James C. Christie and Family Papers

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Vicksburg, Mississippi August 2nd 1862,

This is decidedly a Beautiful morning, fresh and cool. The sky of that dreamy blue, in fact everything looks as though they had on those Sunday Braws, I individually ^{feel} ~~feel~~ Best and am as you might say fully awake to life and its enjoyments. So I will just victimise ^{me} this blessed morning take you by the button and have you listen to me. So there is no use in you trying to get away. Now you needn't try to listen to that Band up on the ridge discoursing sweet music. Never mind that fellow out there on the road swearing. But just talk to me or hear what ever I may say. Morgan the Horse thief is trapped and taken at last and here Pop this time. Borge still keeps up his Big Skeddadle with old Rosey after him. Johnson has taken a Big run and Sherman after him, and we (that is the seventeenth Army Corps.) are to take care of Vicksburg and vicinity and I assure you we can do it even if there was more danger than there is at present. Our Corps had the severest part of ^{the} job in investing. I might say infecting also, for GrazBucks (Bodg line) are very plenty among our Infantry. The City so we are to have the honor of keeping it safe unto the fall of the year. Then ^{if} I suppose we will have an opportunity to confiscate Chickens, and such trucks, don't think we steal as we march through a new country, no sir however like stealing it may look, we never never ~~never~~ do such a thing. By the By Father once made a remark in one of his letters about those Books he sent home looking or smelling to him as though they had been stole. Poor Innocent soul does he think the little Corporal would steal, or I either for that matter or better still perhaps he meant that they were stole from the clarkies by the men that has there names written on them before we got them, any way he must never be so vulgar again while we are in the army to talk the word steal to us. He should say confiscate, then we will know what he means.

There is much excitement here among us, in connection with the
Charleston news, and every paper is closely scanned, by us to learn
the finale. If I were here I might write or say something
that would be very learned, or interesting. But no matter
you must just take me, as you find me, and if you can see
anything that is not sapient, and so forth, well there you are.
The health of the Battery, is not as good as it could be.
Neither physically, or morally, yet there is nothing serious
in the matter, as far as the Doctor is needed. But I am
half inclined to think that there is much need of a Christian
cure, of our many derelictions from the narrow path of duty.
For we are truly guilty of innumerable sins. That may
gambling is one of the curses that follow after us, and when
those that are so taken up with it, can't play any where else
the cemetery is a quite place and a marvellous tombstone a
very nice table, as on such games as Church Luck, and
Monat John, Twenty one, and other such things, money changes
hands very quick, and of course the men that shake the dice
or handle the cards make the most of it. Love of Whiskey
is another sin that sticks to some, so that they willingly pay
Dollars for about three pints (a canteen full) it is sold on some
of the boats on the river, at the above rates. I need not enumerate
more of the weaknesses that we as a body of men are liable to.
But be glad you are exempt from draft even if you were
age, for if I can read the law right Tom and I are
all Clutter's family would have to furnish. Whatever is the
reason of it we are not getting any mail from the North, that
is the Battery not near as much as we should being we send
so much out. There has been no letter from Alman in a day
age, dog's age. If I were to judge by my own feelings and
set them up against time, I should say, that time for
at least two Methodists had gone past, into eternity.
^{since we had a letter from home.}
There is half a dozen of you and you can't get up as
much as one letter a week, for us standing still down
here, I tell you. I verily believe you are every one of
you committing the unpardonable sin, I am almost
sure of it. But you know there is room for repentance. So

and better post, right off, or I will be under the necessity of
excommunicating the whole set of you. So hurry up these instructions
a new era, or conduct a thing before it is too late. Did you ever
read Voltaire's course of time, if not read, and be careful
don't make you a redged old school Presbyterian, there is
much in it that is very good indeed. But after all I can't say
I like it. It is too full of the wrath of God. He is portrayed
here only as the avenger of sin, to an infinite degree.
Read Baileys Faust either before or after Voltaire's poem.
Perhaps Father would say read neither, and he may be right.
But I don't regret ^{not doing} reading both productions. Yesterday our
section built an oven of brick. So we have three such in
the Battery. The bread that is baked in them is more like
Baker's Bread, than when it is baked in a Dutch oven.
Captain Clayton is ailing, he is at the hospital. Dumb ague
or ague of some kind. There are a number of the boys troubled in
the same way. The Corporal is not in tip top health. He is not
bedfast. He enjoys a laugh and a joke, and as sure as shooting, or I
should say preaching he will be well as usual in a day or two, he
has been living on rather low diet, and is now under my hands
for cure. I have ordered cold water baths ^{every morning, one} three small quantities
of nine each day, and Beef soup. He will write in a day or two
and speak for himself. I know he is only low on account of the
time he had in the trenches, and his ever lasting cold water
and bread. Now mind don't get up and fret yourselves any of you
for I assure you he is not even seriously ill, and is as able to do
all his own duty as ever. I am going to prevent anything serious
by my method of treatment. The other chaps are in the doctors
hands and are swallowing Quinine and of course don't get
better fast. Have you read that letter of Horace's to
Heargin. I think is the name, of the Reverend he writes to on
the evil spirits of the Bible. Old Horace is about as near
right in his opinion as any man can be. On such a
subject, and I haven't the least doubt he is right in his
conjectures. This is the cash current among the sects
in regard to our movements, and being we don't know any
thing about it we are originating Beechburg.

if getting rid of the filth of the place and the hanging of dead rats
and the sending of prisoners off in various directions, is gradually
bettering. Then sir we are lacerating it with a megaphone
Lord a many about a lot o' trigger are in town when how
they do sneer. By the Powers of Good Danced Butter is a stately
a sweet sneering Baron in comparison to a Batch of sweet
Negro Smiles drivers, do let me know all the news
when you write an answer to this, and do be off with your answer
too. That is if you are not so much taken up with the harvest
that don't have time. I'm David dead that he never hear
from him either directly or indirectly. I am actually
run ashore for something to say just now so I will wait a
little while before I finish and so there may be something
to tell. Six come arouse. There is nothing to say, only
dinner is ready, and I must pay attention to the Bell Call.
and have some vittles and drink. Dinner and toll both on
for this day. I shivering in heat and sweat. Unable to
write more than just as I feel, so I will have to leave so
much of this sheet unwritten that it will seem like
waste. What did you have for dinner. I had Bread, Butter,
Apple Sauce, Coffee, with Sugar, and condensed milk in
it. so you see we don't starve. But Lord man wouldn't I
make one of Mother's Pans of milk. Nor eat. if I could
only get my hands on it. But after all man don't live by
Bread alone. even if he has all the other fixings added for I really
would like to get hold of some good work, or another. I should
believe so, or ashamed to say that the Bible is not interesting
to me. That is others may think I should be both. But let
me tell you quietly that I think for myself. ^{What} that very
thing, and I am not troubled about feeling just as I do.
But Lord a many. I will have the page so full I can't have
room to sign my name. if I don't stop soon and then you
might die guessing who this letter was from. Then I would
be liable to get up for a Shewside, or some other arse
Amen N U Tor.

William J Christie

P.S. is that last word Before the writer, name
later Please answer,

if getting rid of the filth of the place and the hanging of dead fish
and the sending of swimmers off in various directions, is gradually
overhauled. When we are done, it will be a very nice
place. I am sure about a lot of things are in town when they
they do. By the way, the power of mud dried butter is a really
a sweet smelling parson in comparison to a batch of dirty
Negro milk. I am sure, do let me know all the news
when you write an answer to this, and do be very much your own
too. That is if you are not so much taken up with the harvest
that don't have time. I am sure that he never hear
from him either directly or indirectly. I am actually
run ashore for something to say just now. I will wait a
little while before I finish and as there may be something
to tell. I will come around. There is nothing to say, only
dinner is ready, and I must pay attention to the blue call
and have some vittles and drink. Dinner and toll both on
for this day. I am suffering in heat and sweat. Unable to
write more than just as I feel. So I will have to leave as
much of this sheet unwritten that it will seem like
matters. What did you have for dinner. I had Bread, Butter,
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Bread alone. even if it has all the other fixings added for I really
would like to get hold of some good work or another. I should
believe you, or ashamed to say that the Bible is not interesting
to me. That is there may think I should be both. But let
me tell you quietly that I think for myself ^{about} that very
thing and I am not troubled about feeling just as I do.
But Lord a mercy I will have the page so full I haven't here
room to sign my name. if I don't stop soon and then you
might be guessing who this letter was from. Then I would
be liable to be taken up for a Shewside. or some other way.
Adieu M A Cor.

William J Christie

P.S. is that last word before the words have
been placed as usual.

Pickensburg, Aug. 12th 1863.

My Dear Sister: [SARAH CHRISTIE, CLYMAN, Vt.]

Why do we get no letters from you of late? you have not taken of-
fense at what I wrote to Father here, and
determined to quit corresponding with your
uncivil brother? if you have I am sorry,
for what I wrote was indeed more in fun
than earnest, and I would be much
grieved if I thought that it had grieved
you as much as your long silence would
seem to indicate. Therefore, I trust you will
"forget and forgive", and continue the correspon-
dence.

Under the influence of good food
and daily bathing I am slowly recovering
from my late attack of dyspepsia, but, although
I am able to do my duty, I am yet far from ~~strong~~
being as stout as usual. But with the good
appetite I have, plenty of exercise, and the
morning baths I will soon be well as ever.

The most of our sick men are con-
valescent, and we may consider our sickly
season about over although there are a few, and
among them Capt. Clayton, who get no better

I hope you sent something by James Fisher. I expect him
dyspepsia, and I hope to hear
for a package by him.

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Pickering, Aug. 12th 1863.

My Dear Sister: [SARAH CHRISTIE, LYNN, VA.]

Why do we get no letters from you of late? you have not taken of-
fense at what I wrote to Father here you, and
determined to quit corresponding with your
uncivil brother? if you have I am sorry,
for what I wrote was pinned more in firm-
than earnest, and I would be much
grieved if I thought that it had grieved
you as much as your long silence would
seem to indicate. Therefore, I trust you will
"forget and forgive", and continue the correspon-
dence.

Under the influence of good food
and daily bathing I am slowly recovering
from my late attack of fever, but, although
I am able to do my duty, I am yet far from ~~strong~~
being as stout as usual. But with the good
appetite I have, plenty of exercise, and the
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The most of our sick men are con-
valescent, and we may consider our sickly
season about over although there are a few, and
among them Capt. Clayton, who get no better

Hope you sent something by James Fisher. We expect him
down soon, and I have
for a package by him.

and feuds are entertained for the life of
one or two. We buried one of our comrades
3 days ago, a member of our Platoon, but
his death was caused by over indulgence
in poisonous whiskey, of which he had con-
tinued to get several canteens full.

His case is a warning to many in the Cam-
pany who are disposed to the same excess.

In one of my letters to Sandy I allu-
ded to re-enlisting for 3 years or the war, but
we understand since by an Order from Gen.
McPherson that no 3 years men are to be al-
lowed to enlist unless their old term is
within 30 days of expiration. So you see that
cuts us all off from the opportunity of enlist-
ing again at present in the "Veteran Volunteers".

Probably this intelligence will cause
your minds somewhat, as I think you do
not wish us to enlist again without com-
ing home. Is it not so?

The 16th Wisconsin came down from
Lake Providence a week ago, and they are
camped not far from us.

Samus Noble and John Schuller have been
over to see us several times, and yesterday
afternoon I went over to their camp and
visited them. Samus has been sick, but
is now recovering fast, and looks very

well. He showed me the portraits of his wife
and child which he carries in a pocket and
presents from his neck, and I must say
that they look as natural as life.

When I showed him your likeness he did not
~~say~~ recognize you at first on account of your
short hair, but after looking at it attentively for
a few minutes, and then looking at me, then
taking another look at the picture while I told
him to guess who it was, he suddenly exclaimed
as if struck with an idea: "Good gracious! it's
Sarah, and I was deceived by the short hair."
I tell you we have good times now that Samus
and John are come, talking of Elyman and
the folks therein, and when seeing if they think
of us as often as we think of them.

John is a first rate fellow and bitter death on
the Elyman Copperheads, his own relatives
among them. He tells me that the most
of them have ceased writing to him on account
of the plain talk he gave them. He also has
been very sick, and is now convalescent.

At his request I answered a letter for him
yesterday from George Ehinger in Iowa.
George sent him some stamps and his letter
has the ring of the true metal. I think that
Young America generally is more patriotic
than the old foggy Conservatives. Is not this true?

your friends all send down Gage, Williams, & Co. to the lake in the morning.

William, I will answer George Ehinger's letter.

Don't to Father and Mother. I am afraid the family has
more to be said than I can say. I am afraid this is the last
I shall see of you. I am afraid it is the last I shall see of you.

I had a letter from Uncle Daniel a fortnight ago and have answered it since I received. He speaks of your visit to Lowell a short time previous to his writing, and I am afraid if I repeated all he says of the improvement the College has wrought in you, that you would be vain, and vanity you know is to be avoided. "Lady-like appearance". "Improved conversation". Ahem! that's enough, but you must take care, as I trust you have, my dear Sarah, that the improvement is not merely superficial, and that your mind is equally improved with your appearance. Now that is sermon enough for one letter. I had almost forgotten to tell you that Anna and John expect to go home on furlough soon, and then they have promised to visit you. I have applied for a furlough myself, but there are so many applying that I do not think my chance will be much. Grant has issued an Order fixing the rates of transportation from here to Cairo at a half cent per mile for a soldier, so that it will cost about \$3.25 to Cairo, and I could go home and back for about 30 Dollars. This I would be willing to pay for 20 days at home, but I have no expectation of being successful in getting a furlough.

Your loving Brother: J. D. Christie

Vicksburg August 14th 1863.

Brother Alexander. do you think I am a Surgeon,
or a Topographical Engineer. That you ask me to give you
a full Description of Vicksburg and Vicinity. in every detail
and Point of View. Now I have not the least doubt of it you are
What might be call damned Hot, as you toil in the Harrest
field. But let me tell you we are a damned right Hotter,
as we lay Round here in the Shade, or our tents with No
Bantaloons, or anything else But our Shirts But after all
I will try and give you a look at this City and Surroundings
Provided you do not hurry me this remarkably warm day and just
let me get a few minutes to wipe the sweat off of my Noble Brow.
Hem!!! Well Sir let me inform you in the first Place that this Part of
Mississippi is very rough so that Vicksburg might be set down
as the City of many hills. it contains one Courthouse, which is
near the Centre of the City limits as you can think for. on this Court
house there is a Town Clock with four faces that shows the time of
Day to all that can read the signs of the times and this Clock has
a Bell which strikes the Hours so that all may hear that are not deaf.
The Courthouse and all its appurtenances, are set ~~on~~ on a hill, so
that it may not be hid, and for the easy travel of the Citizens of
this City the streets are graded down so that there are high Banks of
of red Clay on each side of you as you go on your way rejoicing
Past the Cross Guard in the vicinity of said Courthouse, in the sides
of these Banks the die in the last ditch folks of the South made many
small Caves to hide in so that they might ^{be} out of the way of the
Wrath that had come, and let me inform you that since they have come
out of these Burrows, there are great numbers of them going to Better and
happier homes, at least we hope so. seeing these mortal remains are
Being hid away in the Bosom of Old Mother Earth at a very fast rate.

The principal streets of this city run parallel with the river being intersected at right angles by cross streets, so that the whole city is a parallelogram or some such a thing. Every kind of buildings are to be found in this place according to the taste and means of the Builders. Nearly every house has a garden and evergreens adorn the yard, among which are the Myrtle and the Pine. Shallop trees are very common, and black and yellow locust are also very plenty. But the Persea, or China tree is the most common tree in the lot just mentioned. The dark green of its leaves are refreshing to look on, and its wide spreading branches make a splendid shade, and it is literally covered with a beautiful blossom of a lilac color. And it has a very delicious smell. The sweet gum is a very good shade tree also. There are four churches in town that I know of, but I can say very little about them. You have never been in one of them. There are two that steeple on, and one looks like an old Gothic tower. But let us get at the river batteries and as we look at them we cannot see how it ever was that a boat got past these terrible looking guns. Let me tell you of the first Minnesota Battery that manned these guns there is only one that I can think of, that boat would have got past us, and that would have been because they would have come faster than we could have fired. The river sweeps round a great bend, and with the batteries where they are they command as much of the river just like the bend of an S, and as the river was high at the time the boats ran the batteries they had almost straight lines to shoot in so that they could very easily have shot every transport that tried to pass the banks of the river had fifty pits along its front and these large guns had a sweep of some three or four miles. How grim they look behind those works, as they sit there night and day with those black throats often ready to speak in thunder tones at any time.

Trenches are not much to look at nor very much use apparently unless filled with armed men. Trenches are not unlike the great ditches that are made through the marches, only higher and about the same depth the dirt thrown out making part of the defense, and feet of loose earth is more to save men from death by projectiles of war than a civilian would believe possible.

So now just think that the Giants of the Table had these battle in this vicinity and that getting out of water to throw at them they immediately got about 1000 ft. or more high like that one know up you war, as the Hog Back. These they cut off in great chunks and through about in all directions (at their immortal feet of course) and these falling here made this country look as it does now you have just as adequate an idea of the land as you can get that of seeing it, and at some future day we may have a look over the ground in company. Now just think of these great heaps of dirt being covered with piled timber and cane. Breaker men the men made trenches along the crest and across the ravines of a number of these hills and you have the defenses of Vicksburg. Bah how ridiculous this tale be for you are ready and it is like Paddy's Epistle just as clear as mud. Beclan, mine letters are all just so, and I have no doubt they are very interesting as puzzles or enigmas.

Evening has come we can hear the clear hum of the many insects on the wing. The great bright stars are looking down on us. White quills and rapid flashes of living lightning quiver over the deep blue sky. An occasional whistle is heard as a boat at the landing bushes of a back out into the river. But let us listen to the band on that bluff a little to the right of our camp. Hear how the first cornetman rises over all the other instruments and in the full vigor of his power makes a number of somersaults while the band strains in a bewildered way to follow after him only making out in long drawn whistles but in perfect harmony. To keep in sight of others he hear him how he waltzes in glee, and making all kinds of twirlings in his flight steps most with a suddenness of more as would make you think he had broke down. But no sir

again. Seizing the second and third and so on down, to the deep sounding trombone thinks they have got the better of him. Alas they find out their mistake up by degrees he comes and with a sudden thrashing over does his last exertion and comes out conqueror. Yes his very nice to sit and listen to the band, and think each note ~~the~~ represents an Albat, as they are bowed out into the night air.

Well I am getting almost in the notion of having a farewell sometime this fall, if things will permit, and there is not any likelihood of me being away from the Battery when there might be a fracas with Sedsh. I am trying to persuade the Corporal to take one now if he can get it. He is as well as ever but still I think it would be for his good to have the trip round costing about 30 dollars. I believe, Now mind don't strain your eyes looking for either of us, for this is what the very sure sign of either of us succeeding in getting away. The health of the members of the Battery improves, only one Capt. is troubled with again a man of the 17th Wis. who has been in our Battery all winter and this summer died a few days ago. Drunkenness the cause. He is buried in the cemetery close by. And I believe would not have had any better a burial if he had been in Jackson where he belonged. His name was James Bras. By the by did Sarah get a letter from me containing a dollar so that she could send me stamps. Perhaps the letter containing the stamp was buried on the Steamboat Ruth, on the Mississippi about a week ago. I have to tell you you need not send us any more stamps while we stay at this place as we can purchase plenty of them at the Postoffice. There has not a single trap come from Sarah yet. In the shape of needle case or anything else. Her papers came to hand let her keep sending on such things for we enjoy the music very much. I do not sing or practice a great deal for tis troublesome on account of my eyes. And besides I have no view that can do any thing but hollow, and

Scream like a bitch I would really like to hear what Mary has to
say for herself, and how you are all getting along with the summer
work, has the horses been forth coming, for the sixtieth dollars should
be home by this time and the greenbacks are either going to get the
work or the horses. The Sixteenth Wisconsin are here, now
but they are very badly off, much sickness prevails among them
and the long stay at Lake Providence has hurt them and they will
not be able to do much here. Mrs Noble is here and in
tolerable good health, he sends his respects to Sarah, and the
rest of you. John Schaler is all in a fair way of gaining
his ordinary condition of health, the 17th are down at Hatcher
and so is the 27th, so I can't say anything about them,
or the boys in them. I can't learn anything about the 20th
either. Neither can John Schaler. But John thinks if there
was anything the matter with John Frank his Capt.
would write, and in fact I know he would, if the
Franks have not heard from John since you were here. But
ask, (I should say Sarah) tell them to write to Capt.
Hoosle it's a German name they will know how to spell it,
and he will tell them all about John. They should have the
number of the Division and General's name, also the name of
the army corps and then they could learn about the boys any
time. Herroan I believe is the Division Commander of
the Twentieth in it they should also know the name
of the Brigade if not the Commander's name, if those who have
ever been at a loss to hear from their things they would hardly
by writing to the regiment or company commander,

Write or drop or you can I will
write to Sarah in a few days.
Yours By

William J Christie

How do you like a Red envelope?

Scream like a girl I would really like to hear what Mary has to
say for herself, and how you are all getting along with the summer
work, has the horses been forthcoming, for the sextuple dollars should
be home by this time and the greenbacks are either going to fetch
the work or the horses. The Sixteenth Wisconsin are here, now
but they are very badly off, much sickness prevails among them
but the long stay at Lake Providence has hurt them and they will
not be able to do much here. Amos Noble is here and in
tolerable good health, he sends his respects to Sarah, and the
rest of you. John Challen is all in a fair way of gaining
his ordinary condition of health, the 14th are down at Hatcher
and so is the 29th, so I can't say anything about them
or the boys in them. I can't learn anything about the 20th.
Neither can John Challen. But John thinks if there
was anything the matter with John Frank his Capt.
would write, and in fact I know he would, if the
Franks have not heard from John since you were paid
back. (I should say Sarah) tell them to write to Capt.
Hoosle it's a German name they will know how to spell it,
and he will tell them all about John. They should have the
number of the Division and General's name also the name of
the army corps and then they could learn about the boys at any
time. Herroon I believe is the Division Commander of
that the twentieth is in they should also know the name
of the Brigade if not the Commanders name, if those who have
friends in the army only knew these things they would hardly
ever be at a loss to hear from the absent.
By writing to the Regiment or Company Commander,

Write or soon as you can. I will
write to Sarah in a few days.

Yours By

William J. Christie

How do you like a Red envelope?

Vicksburg Mississippi, August 20th 1863

Dear Brother, ^[Dependent] This morning is Rainy. Raw and disagreeable. So you see by every letter I write to you there is always something wrong with the weather. It's either too hot or its opposite, or too wet or too dry, and in fact there is no pleasing of humanity or at least (the small portion of it) that addressing you I believe I would grow if I were going to be hanged, no matter how soft the rope, or accommodating the hangman. So you will soon have the little Corporal among you and one or two others of the Bold Roger Boys. Use them well, and see that they will be well used by the Infernal Copperheads that slip and crawl round among you. Within the past two weeks we have lost two members of our Battery by Death. One of them a detailed man from the 17th Wis. His name was James Brazz. He enlisted at Janesville, Wisconsin I believe was the reason he had to pay some Nature the debt due her. The other died on the evening of the 17th. He was a German a very good man, and succumbed to Dysentery and Ague. So there are great numbers going off with one ailment and another, which might be expected among so many men. Where so few know or understand ^{But} little about the laws of health, or any of the physics laws of Nature. But the Death of a fellow Soldier, is a thing that is not calculated to shock us, very much as long as it is in the field or Hospital. But when the lives of a number of men and some human is taken unexpectedly, and in the shocking manner that a human perishes yesterday, it makes even the most thoughtless of us feel afraid, or something akin to fear, at least it does me. Yesterday morning I was detailed with some other of the Battery to go to the Levee after hay. We had stayed quite a while before we got our hay, and about noon as we were leaving the Levee, I saw a great cloud of smoke flame and steam, and a loud prolonged roar as if a great gun had burst. But we soon learned that it was the City of Madison, a Government transport, that had nearly completed her load of Ammunition. I left the waggons and hastened in the direction of the scene of Disaster, having about sixty rods

As run. What a sight when I got to the Boat. or when she had been
then she lay on what was left of her. a small portion of upper deck and
the Stern besides the right hand Wheelhouse. She was at the time of
the horrible accident getting up steam so that she might stand to
Ketchikan. But as her load was not completed there was a large
Detail of as many as eighty men at work getting aboard the
Boxes of fixed ammunition. When unfortunately some careless or
thoughtless Person let a Box of Percussion Shell fall, and it fell
points down and then men and Boat went up in one great cloud
of smoke and flame. Men mangled, were thrown as much as one
hundred feet from the Boat, and ceased to breathe. Boxes of
ammunition were thrown up to a great height and fell among piles
of the same that were on the pier. I saw the Captain's family were
on Board. Besides the deck hands. One hundred Negroes were in the
hold. Moving away the loading, and in fact I suppose there are
over a hundred lives lost. I may learn more particulars today, if
so I will forward them to you. But the papers will give all the different
stories, afloat, about it. After that I can write about it
with any other feelings than those of horror. The Encl. Walsh a
very large Boat lying outside of the City of Kodiak is a total
wreck as far as her upper works are concerned. There were a
number of people hurt on her, also. There is a great amount
of all kinds of Military Business done here. Large quantities
of ammunition is being shipped down the river and it would seem
by the kind that it was for size purposes. Tom's furlough
and those for the other Invalids are being made out just
now. and it is very likely he will be there with you.
as soon as this letter. Now you will all be troubling
him about how Big Willie looks. As I will just tell
you that he looks about as when you last saw him only
not so many ^{brunt} wounds. in light as he was
then. Not any worse but probably better. I will
so give the lad rest and me too. for I may be up
to see you and speak for myself. for I am going to try

for a regular furlough. I going what am I to fill up
the long (sheet with). Horses is the talk between me and
the Corporal. We have come to the conclusion that one span
of Horses are as easy kept as two yoke of Oxen and seeing
that Father's Place is all under the plow me or rather
I have come to the conclusion he should have a beautiful
span of Blood Mares and seeing there is another year for
me to be in the service of my Country (don't that
sound big) and if it is God's will that I should get
back to old old home. I will want to rusticate as much
as another year, and look round to see what will turn
up. I think Father could not do much better than
just use whatever we may send him to get things
in shape on the Place and he would have time to
attend the Greenbacks at his leisure. There is one thing
bothers me very much and that is I have not anything to
send you. I have not money enough on hand to have
my hair taken. But you can just think you see me
looking at you with a broad grin on, and my hair
displayed to great advantage. Don't trouble the Corporal
with your trisen and signs of X Plus y. and all such
very valuable things let his Brain rest, fault him
round and let him see and be sure you have not
any need to be ashamed of him. I assure you.
If he begins with any of his learned Book truck and won't
stop when you tell him too, and that would be before he has
well begun you up and knock him down. Then have Sarah
maul him with the broom stick. He wanted he says he won't
say a word about Alpha or any other A. of the kind.
So now you know how I have the thing done. Mrs. M. and
John Schaller will be likely to pay you a visit,
and they are both good and useful Soldiers, so do
the best to make them feel happy and pleased among
you. Bear with some of John Schaller's modes of
Expression

and be considerate. You will find Amos a very quiet
fellow, and able to give a very good account of the Battle
of Shiloh, also a pretty good idea of Hospital life, he
having been a waiter or nurse in these places at different
points. He won't exaggerate. John may draw the long bow
a little. Now I said all I can say about these things.

And then you see I will have to dig up, and leave all
this paper unused: down comes the rain in copious showers
and old Maury Coats Bleach through the rainwater,
give my respects to everyone that is not snoring, and be
sure you write soon. Love to Mother, Grandmother and
all the rest of the women folk. Good By for the present
and believe me your loving Brother

William J Christie

I don't mean to neglect the men folk in the least.

Good By

Rural Weyfaca. Co. Sep. 6. 1863.
Saturday night. 10 o'clock

Dear Christie

You see by the
date of this that it is past our retiring
hour and, time all lights were put out.
However there is no critic here to peep
under my door and report next Tuesday
morning. I was determined, to snatched
a few moments, even at this late hour, to
write you just a very few lines in answer
to your good long letter which I received
a few days ago; as this is my last chance.

for writing for a few days at least.

My trunk is all packed with books, clothes &c., ready for an early start Monday a forenoon, for Waupaca to attend a Normal school to be taught by Mr. Weirli and assisted by others. It will send you

a circular in this which will explain to you, more fully, the plan of the school, than I can to night.

Now don't you think I am going to have to "catch it" if she studies algebra? Do you remember those awful scoldings I used to get from Professor W. E.?

By the way, I received a circular from them this week i.e. Mrs. & Mrs. G. I suppose you have one of the same.

What do you think of the new arrangement? For my part, I don't see into it. What reason Prof. has to be so angry I call it. I can't see. Or upon whom he is trying to "spit his spite" indeed. I am quite happy to think that

I am in no way connected with either school. You know I always disliked. Don't you think P. M. Reed means P. E.? Do please write me all you know about it.

I think you must have had a real good time at Lowell seeing so many of the girls together. Wish I could have been there too! Poor Mattie

how sad she must feel. I have to day been to see two returned soldiers. Both our old neighbors, one Mrs. Emmons, father of Augusta of whom you have heard much. Several of my old acquaintances are at home on furlough, among them Serg. J. K. D.

Perhaps your brothers are at home or will be soon as I believe they are in Gen. Grants army.

I received a letter from Mattie about three weeks ago. I should judge she was having easy times this summer. She tells me what she

corresponds with both Tommy & Georgie
Leindsay. They have not yet made their
parents acquainted with the fact of their
graduating. Don't you think you would
like to graduate so.

I had a letter from Harrington lately.
She is going off to school in about six weeks
but does not say where. Her brother is
going with her this time.

I have been making
cheese during the last two weeks. Have seven
in all. I wish you could look at them
to night. But perhaps you would rather
eat than look at. I wish could send
you a piece in this. I should like to have
your opinion. After I get started under
Mr. Wernli's strict discipline, I will try to write
you a good long letter and give you a full-
account of what is going on.

Now please don't say O Pshaw! what a short
letter and laugh at the poor writing. But remember
it is late and Van is tired. Until I have
more time for writing I remain your
Please direct your next very true friend
to Waupaca.

S. E. Van Hise

[James Christie] Vicksburg Mississippi Apr 5th 1863

Dear Father, Your long letter to Tom which I have read with great pleasure, is every word as true as Breaching should be. So seeing he is not here to answer it in Person I feel it incumbent on me to do that same to the best of my ability. In the first place, I inform you I am in very good health, and spirits, although a little lonely. My thoughts travel daily to Clyman, and my fancy paints all kinds of pleasant pictures in connection with the Corporal's visit to the untold house at home. Give him my share of welcome and all that, for I am sure now there will be no opportunity for me to get north this season, and next year it will not be necessary for one to have a furlough, unless compelled to by sickness which I hope won't be my case. Now the Corporal again Sandy's letter and your answer to me makes me feel really sorry to think that the old self will stick out so in some respects as it seems to do in Uncle William, But never mind we will get along according to our Deserving, and diligence, in spite of any ones selfishness. So there is not the least bit of use, in troubling ourselves about things we can't help. I had a very severe downfall, not bodily but spiritual, on receipt of Sarah's last letter, I was just foolish enough to think that ~~Mr~~ Berthie's Merchant, had taken into his Christian Canon thoughts for the physical welfare of his Soldier Nephew, and sent them such things as would greatly add to their bodily comforts, thereby acting in a favorable manner, indirectly on their spiritual wellbeing. But alas, Sarah knocked down the beautiful structure ere, about me, that I had built, and my imagination has been wandering barefooted, and homeless ever since. Poor thing I hope the girls now have a house to dwell in, more substantial than the last, Before she suffers the fate of Poor Mary the maid of the Inn, or some other equally interesting Heroine. We are in a highly unhappy condition for I am. At Present, sickness is on the decrease and throughout all the camp, and the very warm weather is past, so I think we may rejoice, at the speedy prospect of a Pleasant campaign. Still there is some considerable debate going on in what direction said Campaign, will be. The prevalent notion seems to be that if Grant gets this ^{Red grammar} Department and all the Gulf States, that we will go to Texas; But I think we will push South and East, well mix come across. Let us hope, we will be well, and able to go wherever we are needed, if should be at the back door of Mobile, or Richmond, &c.

I guessed pretty close to how you would feel in regard to our re-enlisting. But Gen. Macpherson knocked the thing over the head, by prohibiting all those not within thirty days of the expiration of their time from re-enlisting. So you see we are not likely to be a Roger, any longer than the three years. I know I won't if they would give me double the bounty, they offer. The lines of defence round this place are being very much contracted, our camp will be outside the new lines, and the forts that are being built are going to be really impregnable, and the mortar boats on the river would have full swing on any force that could be brought against the garrison which I think will be composed of Black troops, leaving us free to go further south in Africa. There is something in traveling through the country, that makes us all like it, whether it is because we are on the move or because we can pillage a little grub; I don't know, but it makes every man of us wish we had been on the trip to Monrovia. When we hear those Melons and other such trash being very plentiful, besides other things too numerous to mention. There is one thing I would like you to inform me about, that is what amount of money have I really sent home, I do not know, but I think I have sent home ten dollars a month, and I really would like to know, for that is what I really wish to do, if possible. So in the next letter you write to me let me know how much I have really been sending home.

Sunday morning Sept 6th 1863

I am as far as news are concerned, not able to say a word. But I am really anxious to file up this sheet, so I will have to do the best I can. By the way if J.D. is not with you when the letter that addressed to him reaches you open it, and take out the Receipt I got at the express office when I sent home the last money, and then you will get that \$30. repaid. I hope you will come to a proper conclusion about the horses you wish so much to buy, get them this fall, and do up all your plowing, and then in spring you will have an early start with the crop. I am happy to think you are prospering so and getting such a good return for your labor. I suppose wheat will fetch a very remunerative price this season.

But I should judge you will not be under any need to sell any of it this fall, unless you wish to. I suppose you have written to J. Blair, before this time and I hope you will get a satisfactory answer. I expect he will say that I am much inclined to think it won't be this fall. I may be agreeably disappointed; if he don't say now it will be needful perhaps to have another shot made out, and some thing done to make it secure against the homestead law if possible. I do not have so much fear of Blair, as of his wife. I think she is the most cunning of the two, it is too early to think about George Stewart yet. But I am sure you will find him all right at the proper time. Have you seen Amos Noble yet, also John Schaler. Tell me what you think of them. I hope you paid Amos the five dollars. I got from him so that I might send to New York for some boxes of hair tonic. That a few of us thought best to get. So you see that it is all right, and I have not been running into debt for anything out of the way. The stuff has arrived and I think it will do good. But of course I have not tried it long enough yet.

I hope you will, or has already recovered from the effects of the harvest labor, and that you will soon have your grain in the bin, and we will be rejoiced down here in Dixie, that you are prosperous and prospering. But not wishing to go into any thing of a physical, or physical, ethical or any other ical. I will dry up, and close this letter, by sending you all my very best respects, and believe me your affectionate son, William

G. Christie

P.S. I will write to A.D.C. in a few days.

P.P. Official Item: Whole number of those expended by the Bakery since organized:

at Pittsburgh landing:	4.00
Batter. of Corn etc, 3 & 4, Oct 1863:	4.30
Wage of trucking etc:	9.20
Total	4,030

[James Christie] Gettysburgh Miss. Sept 19th 1862.

Dear Father I am much surprised that I have not received a single scrap of writing from home. Since Tom has had time to have been coming you. Even he seems to have forgotten the Battery, and everything else in Dixie. I do not blame him an any of you very much, for I suppose you are having an exceedingly great time over the little Corporal and I hope he has recuperated enough to be able to pick up his heels with the rest of you. for if he has not got his furlough renewed, he is certainly on his way to us by this time. Since my last letter to any of you up there, we have changed camp from the North East of town to the South and has had a very busy time of it, on account of so many being off on furlough, and a number ailing we have our hands full all the time, and so we are likely to be for some time to come. Our Division is still under Gen. Meade's train, but is now Designated as the first instead of the Sixth, and I suppose that the whole Army Corps will be reorganized in pretty much the same way. Two days ago we had a very cold day, and at night we had a cold North wind accompanied with rain. I was on guard and had a very disagreeable night. The weather has continued cold since, and I have on my under clothing, just as if it were winter. Believing a Prevent of sickness is better than a cure. Last night we had quite a frost and I felt about as cold in Bed, as if I had been up North, in midwinter. Nearly every man in the Battery had the same confession to make this morning. We have papers in camp up to the 11th ult. and the News from the Vicinity of Charleston is very cheering, accounts from Burnside, and Rose, are also very much to our liking, and it does look now as though Lee of Virginia, could soon be taken on both sides so that the thing might be finished this

Winter

and us at home Before another year Passed away. But there is not any use in Speculating on the end, or when it may arrive. our only plan is to do our duty, and trust to God for the Proper finishing of the work. for we may be assured he will not leave the work half finished and although every thing looks inspiring and cheering for a speedy ending. yet it may be that Other Powers of the Deity may interfere, so that there may be a wiping out of more evil than we are dreaming of at present. There is a rumor in camp that the French occupy the one side of the Rio Grand. I suppose it must be a Copperhead Bugaboo. Seeing they have nothing else to get up an excitement about. Jeff. Davis. the Darlint has freed the damn Nigger or going to do it. Oh how consistently some of the sons of Erin talk about these things. Poor Misshapen Devils Monkeys dwarfed, and Priest ridden they are in as much need of freedom and pity and education as the Niggers. Well in Gods time the day will give signs of dawning, for poor Paddy and Blood will wash out that Slavery as well as this Slavery, over which we are contending and crushing out of existence. Will the time ever be when such Political Changes as well as morals will be thoroughly initiated and established without blood. Blood has flowed in every Nationality whether its rise for good, or its fall, it looks as though there cannot be Progress, without suffering. let these things be so or not. we move as a Nation, and it really looks as though the world at large moves to a higher grade of Political and Moral Life Daily.

So be it. Longfellow says something about it being grand to live in such a time. Father I believe it must be equally grand or glorious to die in such a struggle especially if on the side of God, and there is not much use in judging what may

be or is the fate of those who are unfortunately on the side of error. Perhaps it is a necessity of these times and for their especial welfare

that they should have their eyes opened by a cannon or a mining Ball. God Purifies Nations and Individuals, and Pulls down and builds up Worlds and it must be that the old, and obsolete must be used up. even if people should get hurt. I so far have been kept safe in the hollow of his hand. Why, I do not know, for it does seem to me that men more powerful for good, and better in every capacity have been taken out of this life in the various forms incident to a soldier's life, while I am still spared. But there is no telling how when or where I may have to change from good to better, and so I live trusting and hoping, from day to day, that I will yet see you all, in the present form and mode of existence. Sabbath morning Sept. 20th

We have just returned to camp from Review, and we are all in very good humor, and feel the invigorating effects of the cold North wind. The river has risen about a foot in the last day or two, and I verily believe the sick season, is over. There are rumors of us going to stay in camp as Garrison all winter at this point. But I hardly think it will be so, although Gen. MacArthur, at present, I have heard that he has been promised his Division being filled up to the maximum No. and be rushed out in the fall campaign. Now I believe that is what the majority of the Division would like to do. I know it is what the Battery would like. This day really looks and feels like a Minnie day. The sky is so clear and blue, after dinner of Buttered toast and coffee, our cook is now on his rounds getting sugar to make fried cakes. don't you wish you had some of them. He makes good ones. There is no mail yet from any of you.

Tom should be here in two days. let me know all about the
threshing unless Tom has all the news of that kind, in his bag
and much more besides. Give my Love to Mother and
Grandmother Bertie don't forget me to Grandmother Ned
and all the rest of the folk. Good By Write soon
and Believe me your affectionate Son

William Christie

Berkshburgh N.H. Sept 21st 1863.

Dear Brother [addressed] I Received A letter yesterday from J.D. and also one from you. Tom's letter had been just eighteen days on the way. Yours so much less as the difference of Date. I am Better Pleased with the tone of this letter of yours than I was with the last. You seem more healthy in moral feeling than you did while under the influence of too much hard labor. I am sorry to learn by Tom's letter that Hobbes's work was too much for him. I hope she has fully recovered from its effects. Before this time. I am very glad he has such a favorable account of the folks in his letter to me of all the old folks at home, and also the young ones. I can easily see that Tom was much lower than any of you thought, and I am happy to think you come to the conclusion to keep him at home. You see I write to you as though he was not with you, for he should be here tomorrow, unless he has had an extension of furlough. Your remarks about Napoleon's Mexican Empire agree exactly with mine. But I see no reason why you think you have no right to think about or speak of these things unless you shoulder a musket or do service in the army. Do not be ambitious to be a soldier, for you have been as useful as any soldier this past summer, and your victories have been of a more pleasing nature than our. Stacks of grain, and Piles of Potatoes. Ricks of hay, and Cribbs of corn. Wile, and her given proof of your Powers of labor and endurance. Instead of battered down houses and Piles of Dead and mangled corpses I know that these things last spoken of must be, owing to the present condition of the Development of the Race. But be Thankfull under your present circumstances, that you has been the victor of the harvest field instead of the battle field. Not that I could or would say don't enlist ⁱⁿ any account, for it may be, if France mixes up with the South in this fearful contest for the right. That every man will have to rise en masse, and drive them both out of the

land. But if not then you will not be needed in the field.
For the very reason that the Rebellion is at the last ditch
and unless some food helps them out for a short season they will
soon die there. In looking over the Map. you see what a fine
opportunity Burnside has for sweeping up the railroad from Keoga
Village to the rear of Lee's army, and with but very little
trouble stopping food for man and beast. from getting up there
may. However I need not speak of these things, for I rather think
it unlikely I can suggest anything new to you, and as my
own own cogitations are generally flat, or but poorly expressed
I will quit. (Don't you see a bait thrown out for a little
flattery) Pray don't gratify it: my love of approbation is voracious.

Laz has the corporal been making any crack shots, or romances,
any, about his life as a Roger, Laddie, if he has I hope you took him
down a peg or two, and made him feel as though there were things
in woodcraft he had forgot, or never learned. Well the newspaper
does make blunders, of the most stupid kind, for you can see by the
heading of this letter that the trip to Salisbury has not taken
place yet, and what is more was not intended, although it may
be if it is we don't know anything about it. neither do the
correspondents, to papers. The organization of Grant's army is
going on rapidly but there has nothing leaked out yet. that gives
any index of our real movements, in the future. It's only surmise
and mere speculation. The infernal Copperhead journals are trying
now to make out of Grant's interference, all they can. to hinder
and destroy all other. Being Jeff Davis and co. has turned
or is thinking of turning Abolitionist. Let them howl and be
just as they are. More to be pitied than blamed but they will
have to stand firm under, or they will get crushed.

I wait patiently for further communication from you.

Why don't David write the ones me one. Give my love
to all and believe me yours Loving Brother

P.S. is David's hand palmed.

Willie

[T.O. Christie] Vicksburg Miss Sept. 27. 1867

Dear Brother, your Notification of a need of twenty days more of furlough came to hand yesterday evening, and I was glad to learn of your where abouts, for I was getting uneasy about you. Captain Clayton has been up north since about the beginning of this month, and Lieut. Hurter has been back with the Battery since a day or two after the expiration of his time. We were out on review today, and got along very well, seeing we were so short of hands, we have to take a turn at driving or taking care of horses now as though there was no such thing as cannoniers and on that account we don't get on as well as we might, in making move on the field. Lieut. William C. F. Keothe was in command of the Battery, for a short time after Capt. Clayton left us, and he got along very well. By the way let me tell you how you will find the Battery after you come to town. You know the Railroad Depot, make for that follow the road over the Bridge south and a little east of the Depot and pass Wright along the Road until you have passed two Negro Regiments turn then on to the first left hand road, and follow that and you will be at the Battery. The Iowa Brigade is on the right to our front the Blues being limbed and the sixteenth Wis. is on the left of said Brigade. You will see by my letter to Sarah he hear rather that Hazwood is the only one of your Chaps that has returned yet. We heard from Jennie Conner yesterday, in the same way he did from you. I have two letters for you, one from the East, and one from the West. Of course I have not appeared either and so I have nothing to say about either. Only now that if I had thought you would have staid so long up there I would have sent the one from the

last to you But I dropped a line explaining. As it is all
right there, I know the Direction by reading the Postoffice
Stamp. as either the west of the Stamp. Will be in
at the Hospital. Well, Ditto. The last named, is a
cunning fox and sticking to think about. Nelson
is taking his furlough in the company. Some others ditto
having nothing but their words for their references for duty.
Lieut. Fiedke says you are knocking round among the
girls up there and of course you have not time to write
to any of us on that account. just think of it gone a month
and only one letter in that time. I have no news only
that there are troops going up the River, said to be
for Rosecrans. The Rebels are it seems massing their
forces in his front and there are rumors in camp of his
getting driven back, with considerable loss.

Love and respects to all, and sincerely hoping you
will be fit for duty when your time is out. I sign
myself your loving Brother

William J. Christie

Vicksburg Miss: October 2nd 1863,

Dear Brother ^[Alexander] I Received yours: of 20th of the ^{month} ~~past~~ the
~~the~~ month day from date. I of course should have answered it
before this. But I never having much to say even when at
High tide or full flood: could not be expected to do anything
when at Low water brought on by excess of drought.
But seeing old Mother Earth is smiling once more after
having her face washed, and that the Sky looks bright
~~tell me~~ ^{whenever}, and I feel after yesterday Review that I might
possibly write a few lines that you might think readable.
Being partial to said writer of these lines. Yesterday morning
after a Blustering Northwester which had squeezed out all
the moisture out of the rain clouds that had come in on
us from the East. finally rolled them up like a scroll
and last night everything looked outside of the camp: as
though we had a new Heaven and a new Earth. The Sky
was so Blue, the Stars so Bright, and the air so Bracing
if cold: at eight o'clock in the morning we went out on
Review, not only the Batteries But all of the Division
that was here. The Iowa Brigade (three regiments (the fourth
one being up in the City doing Provost duty) did not come)
four companies of the first Kansas infantry. mounted.
The Batteries three making in all about 2000 men. The
Sixteenth Wisconsin Vol: has gone out to do guard duty on the
road between this Point and Black River, where some guerrillas
had the audacity to capture some trains going out to our
extreme point on Black River, and the second Brigade which
is in or about Vicksburg. Besides some of the first Brigade.
so you see that the first Division is pretty well scattered

Vicksburg Miss: October 2nd 1863,

Dear Brother ^[Allaypouder] I Received yours: of 20th of the ^{month} ~~past~~ ^{the} ~~month~~ day from date. I of course should have answered it before this. But I never having much to say even when at High tide or full flood: could not be expected to do anything when at Low water brought on by excess of drought. But seeing old Mother Earth is smiling once more after having her face washed, and that the Sky looks bright ^{serenely} ~~serenely~~, and I feel after yesterday Review that I might possibly write a few lines that you might think readable. Being Partisan to said writer of these lines. Yesterday morning after a Blustering Northwester which had synerged out all the moisture out of the rain clouds that had come in on us from the East. finally rolled them up like a scroll and last night everything looked outside of the camp: as though we had a new Heaven and a new Earth. The Sky was so Blue, the Stars so Bright, and the air so Bracing if cold: at eight o'clock in the morning we went out on Review, not only the Batteries But all of the Division that was here. The Iowa Brigade (three regiments the fourth one being up in the City doing Provost duty;) did not come. four companies of the first Kansas infantry. mounted. The Batteries three? Making in all about 2000: men. The Vi-Neckth Co (Wis. Vol. has gone out to do guard duty on the Road between this Point and Black River. where some guerrillas had the audacity to capture some trains going out to our extreme point on Black River, and the second Brigade which is in or about Natchez. Besides some of the first Brigade. so you see that the first Division is pretty well scattered

There are twelve Regiments of Black Troops here in the way of being filled up. Some are already full up to the maximum and have been in service quite a while. The old regiments are about one thousand strong. The new ones are to be two thousand strong. I heard they are going to receive their first pay today ten dollars per month. Some of them will get five months. How proud they must feel. Well what do you think of C.D. and is he still with you to such times as Tom Leary.

I am happy to hear that Father's crop has paid him as well for your labor, and that he still continues to take the best yield off of the same amount of ground. Taking the Beef into account you have not paid over much for the ox that you bought of Connor, and now since you have got the horses, or is going to get them, you will be able to make thing hum on the old farm. But it is too bad that Father has to pay a Premium to get anything like his rights, even from his own Brother. But even if these things are so and I believe they are, Father seems to get along better than those that grip him so hard. So never mind his eighty acres of land, horses and reaper with what he has got. Beef will thrive with him, so he will get along just as well as Ramsey, Rogers, No. one or No. two. So must it be. But I am not so sure that Uncle William may back out of the offer as it stood when you wrote to me. It would only be in accordance with his past plans and proceedings. So if he thinks he is not making enough he will squeeze Father a little more. Provided he thinks or finds he can't come it on Ramsey.

We have received no papers from the North of a very late date. But the Rumor is prevalent in camp that Rosecrans and Burnside has whipt Bragg's forces at or near Pigeon into Georgia. Close by Chattanooga. If this Report proves true I think the war is nearly over, and we likely be on our way home by next summer. Afternoon I have waited for a letter but waiting has been in vain. No letters and only one paper the Chicago Daily Tribune of the twentieth in which we learn about Rosecrans falling back to his stronghold, Chattanooga. Also the very same paper up North has come to the conclusion about the Army of Virginia, that the stupid soldiers down here has had for the past year, that is that it seems to make it its business to be idle while our western armies has time to fight and when if loosing ground whip the Army of Jeff Davis and co. that should have been knocked out of existence by them long ago. Well I need not say any more about this. But I am serious. Can the people & government see these things and try to hinder them from happening again. Oct 3^d This morning and last night there is a Rumor in camp that a colored Regiment has been taken by surprise at a Point on the River opposite Vicksburg and badly cut up by a Body of Rebel Cavalry. Mind it is only a Rumor. The limbers ~~has~~ been taken out behind the horses to the flat by the River, so that the men and horses may drive. We expect a set of new guns carriages, and fixers complete, in a few days. The Rodman Gun is the kind made

of wrought Iron and bored out. They are very long range
guns, and effective. The Pieces we have now are Bronze,
called the James Rifle. The Howitzers are Brongze also.
But no Particular Make from other field Pieces of the
same Calibre Twelve Pdrs. all the Batteries are on
hill or in the Br. I am on detail to go with the quarter
master after clothing and ordnance stores. Capt
Truck for Sadler and Blacksmith. Health is
returning, or rather we are returning to Health.
Give my love to all and Believe me your
affectionate Brother

William J. Christie

Monroe Oct. 4th '83

Dear Christie! [Darab]

Long long ago I received a letter from you - when it came I was in Missouri visiting Otto or I am sure it would have been answered long ere this - But is it not better late than never? I have, not by any means forgotten Christie - the many pleasant reminiscences of the past - how many acquaintances we form - that are destined to be of short duration coming like a ray of sunshine to cheer our lives - soon the hour of parting comes clouding

for a season our bro-
-time intervenes we make
new friends - become reconciled
to the loss of old ones -
perchance at times we
get so meditating look
back through the vista of
time and many pleasing
remembrances arises of hours
spent with absent friends
causing us to wish that
chance would again throw
us together - such is my
experience - there are a
particular few which
I became acquainted with
during my sojourn in Fox-
town whom I would love
dearly to see again - Christie
is an important one of that
number - dear Dan I would
love to see her I should
expect to find her the same

many years hence (as you
say) she never changes - she
desires to be happy in this
World she certainly will
be in the next - do you
correspond with her now?
if so give her my love and
say to her that Elfring
would be very happy to hear
from her - I suppose
you have heard yet this
that Humphreys' Charley
has resigned his position
returned and they have
finally settled down at his
Fathers for the Winter - she
has changed some since
you last saw her "erring
vents cast their shadows
before" I hardly think either
of us will constitute a
member of the F. L. female
Seminary this Winter Prof

wrote her to either come
or send a substitute she
may in the course of
human events - Jane is at
home now - she may go
back to Fox Lake - And
where will Christine be peruse
ing the path of knowledge
some place I presume I
know what your ambition
was in days of yore I
presume it is the same
at present - the more one
acquires the more insatiable
becomes ones thirst for
knowledge - When are the
dreams of the Castle on
the Rhine to be realized
do you remember the pictures
drawn & by the way I am
afraid the final consumma-
tion will not be with the
hero of our romance

for dont you think he
has "went and gone and done
it" I told you he antici-
pated going to Europe - he
started soon after my
return from F.L. not
long since news greeted
me that he had launched
on the Ocean of fate and
is now on his Bridal tour
to America "mit Quin
Toun" he will settle some
place in America - Now
Christie dont take it to
heart too badly - you know
the old adage "thurs as
good fish in the sea as
have been caught" - I may
perhaps light on some one
else if I do I shall kindly
inform you forthwith in

the meantime be reconciled
to your fate - I am still
living with my Sister enjoy
myself as well as can be
expected under the circum-
stances - I have been rather
dependent of late Otto was
expecting to come home
soon on furlough - and
now has been ordered to
New Mexico will be gone
six months - now Christie
you must write me a good
long cheering letter as soon
as you get this I will
promise to answer it -
don't disappoint me I am
very anxious to hear from
you - I am going to
Jannoville to have some
Photographs taken and I
will send you one - Hoping
to hear from you soon. I
will close - Your friend Mary

No 1-

Waterbury Oct^r 11th 1863-

Friend & Brother,,

"It is almost
- a year since I heard from you
and now think it is time we
- should resume our former Coris-
- pondance, I wrote to you from
Shipisland last Jan^y. Giving you
an account of my Passage out &
- I have not Recv^d an answer from
you yet. So I now have to inform
- you that I have Returned Home
about Six Weekes ago, our Regt^y
- Came home By the Missisipi
- River Landed at Cairo in Ill^y
- & By Rail Home - we had a verrey
Pleasant time of it. Up the River
& I had the Pleasure of Visiting
the Principal Citys in the Southwe
- St. I was taken Prisoner in the
trenches at Bayou Beoup Louisiana
on the 24th of June Making But

Little Resistance to So Superior —
force as came against us. We were
216^{en} Men Under arms and in the
night of the 23rd We were Surrounded
By 4000 - Mexicans - Under Gen^l Green
our Regt. Lost 21 Killed & 38 Wounded
the Enemy as many if not more.
The Officer in Command of us his
name is Colonel Dugan of the 176th —
New York Regt. he sent a flag of Truce
to the Rebel Commander Surrendering
us — to him — Giving it as a Reason
us Being Cut off from all Resources
or Reinforcements & to Save the further
Effusion of Blood as if we had held
out we would all have been killed
or wounded, However we were ordered
out of the Trenches By a Rebel Officer
to Stack our arms. & hang our accou-
traments, on our Baynets, our
Knapacks & Every thing But what
we stood in the took from us —
We were then Marched off to Brushy
City & Confined in Forte Buchanan
Where we were kept 4 Days. & then
gave our Parole not to take up
arms against the Confederate States
until Leageley Exchanged. We were
then Marched to Algiers across the
River opposite New Orleans. We had
10 Days — March the severest I ever
went through in my life — Some
Days we marched 20 Miles. Under the
Burning Sun of Louisiana. Had not
anything to Eat But a Watermelon
& the Water of the Swamps to drink
on the Morning of the 1st of July —
I was attacked with Fever & Ague
and it continued more or less
to trouble me during the Remain-
der of the march, on the Glorious 4th
We arrived in Algiers Where we were
put into the Belville Ironworkes-
Prison and a Strong Guard over us
to keep us in. I was so Sick I lay
Down on the floor which was —

-Swarming With Fleas - & other Vermin
I remained 2 Days & Nights in a Raging -
Fever Before Medical Attendance
Could Be Procured at Last a Doctor
Came & ordered Me to the U.S. Barricks
Hospital New Orleans - I was there
12 Days Was Well Cared for and Sent
Back to Prison Was 5 Days there When
the Fever Came on Me again With
all its former force two Days after
Was Sent to the Parole Camp at
Ship Island Went into Hospital -
on My arrival there I Remained
a Week there When our Regt. Was
ordered Home We Prisoners Were
Sent to New Orleans - on the 5th of
August - Left it on the 7th & Went
up the River 40 Miles to Boney Carre
Where our Regt. Was Stacioned Went
on Board the Chancilor Steamer on
the 9th and Reached Baton Rouge -
Next Day Sailed to Port Hudson Where
We Remained two Days - While here -

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Tacksburg, Oct. 20th (1863)

My Dear Brother, [Alfred]

~~Letter to Father~~

I sent off a letter to Father this afternoon, but, as it was but a short one I must write again to tell you some of the incidents of our journey.

At Cairo we embarked on the stern-wheel steamer Emma, bound for Memphis, taking with us some bread, butter, and bologna, for grub. The latter article was declared to be fresh by the storekeeper: "yes," said Sam, "I know it must be fresh, for I heard the dog howl when you threw it down on the counter just now." This bit of the supposed composition of the sausage was received by the crowd of soldiers standing around with an appreciating laugh, and by the injured vendor with a look of disgust and indignation.

The boat was crowded below, so we went up to the hurricane deck and picked out a place to sleep aft of the smoke stacks. But when the boat

Vicksburg, Oct. 20th (1863)

My Dear Brother, [Alexander]

~~Letter to Father~~

I sent off a letter to Father this afternoon, but, as it was but a short one I must write again to tell you some of the incidents of our journey.

At Cairo we embarked on the stern-wheel steamer Emma, bound for Memphis, taking with us some bread, butter, and bologna, for grub. The latter article was declared to be fresh by the storekeeper - "yes," said Sam, "I know it must be fresh, for I heard the dog howl when you threw it down on the counter just now." This bit of the supposed composition of the sausage was received by the crowd of soldiers standing around with an appreciating laugh, and by the injured vendor with a look of disgust and indignation.

The boat was crowded below, so we went up to the hurricane deck, and picked out a place to sleep aft of the smoke stacks. But when the boat

started the coals from said smoke-stacks
fell in showers all over the deck; some
of them as large as ~~a~~ walnuts. We were
in a fix, the coals burned our blankets,
our clothes, our hats. (I would like to send
you a photograph of the crown of Davis white
felt, it has about 20 black holes in it.)

Suddenly, while we were wondering what
to do about it, a happy idea struck us so
hard as to knock us endwise; we went
to the steamer's life boat, which was turned
bottom up on the deck, tipped it up on
one edge and propped it with a board,
and then crawled under, bidding defiance
to the fire. Here we slept during the
voyage, (nights I mean, not all the time) and
the large boat gave us good protection a-
gainst coals, wind, and rain.

Davis' rubber was ruined however,
it being in much the same condition
as my hat.

We stopped at Columbus
the first night. (You must know that the
river is navigated only in the day time
on account of the sunset boats and guerrillas.
The boats anchoring at night in the
stream.) At Island No. Ten we stopped some
time to discharge freight, and I took a look
at the old Rebel fortifications, and the old

spiked guns in some of them; they are truly
formidable. Stopped at New Madrid also,
to take on live hogs for the Memphis market,
and here we saw some fun.

About 200 citizens, deckhands, and young darkeys
were engaged in driving the crowds of fright-
ened porkers down the steep bank and over
the gang way on to the lower deck of the vessel.

They would drive very well until the
planks were reached, and then they would
scatter, and break through the heterogeneous
crowd that surrounded them, tripping up
long haired citizens, active youths of African
descent, and swearing Roastabants.

Each man would try to secure a pig as
they broke through, but abused shins were
all he could generally get, although some
fellows would hang on to legs or ears and
be dragged for rods before assistance would
arrive and the vanquished resistant
dragg^{be} hauled aboard fainting and squeal-
ing. One of the hogs being cornered at the
river edge actually took to the water
and swam half way to the opposite
shore where he was overtaken by a
boat, and compelled to relinquish the
idea of leaving the State.

One of our fellows shouted to the owner

When you say your "it's tell me how the boys get along" and everything about the farm, farming, hunting, &c.

of the hogs that he never could get - there should so long as they saw so many soldiers are the hurricane deck. "Those hogs," he says, are not to be fooled, they know the blue coats. You must not suppose that these animals resembled your sober, fat, Suffolks. No, they were fine active characters, lean and light-footed such as you would pick out to run a race and win, in fact some of them would need a knot-tie on their tails to keep them from going through a fence.

When the last protesting victim had been remorselessly dragged over the planks, the line that held us to the shore was let go from the stump. The gang way was hauled in, and we proceeded down the greenbanked river. The monotony of the voyage broken only by the passing of a steamboat upriver bound, or the shout of a "butter-milk" in his canoe as he approached the steamer. "Throw me a newspaper overboard, please." A paper would be folded up and thrown into the water, and he would raise it on his paddle with a care that showed how much dependent he was on this precarious mail for all knowledge of what was going on in the civilized world.

None would be surprised to see the dexterity with which he would manage his canoe among the fierce waves that followed our paddle while, when a single false stroke of his paddle would capsize him into the water. After a tedious voyage of 3 days we arrived in Memphis, and our journey from there is not chronicled in the letter that I shall write soon to Sarah. My last despatches from the Big Black, brought by Co. "C" 1st Mo. Artillery, which came in tonight, is that our fellows are on the march to this place, and night. T. J. Christy

Ticksburg, Miss., Oct 21st (1863)

My Dear Sister. [Sarah J. White]

As I have a little leisure today I must let you have the rest of our voyage as promised in Sandy's letter yesterday.

As we turned a bend in the river we saw Memphis, seven miles away, an irregular looking mass of red brick and green trees surmounted by the capitol of the Overton House and half a dozen church spires.

In three quarters of an hour we were landed, and picking our way through the crowd of men, women, and children crying their wares. "Apples, four for a dime." "Here's the late Chicago, St. Louis, and Cincinnati papers of the 10th." "Here's the Memphis Bulletin and Argus, all about the fight at Collierville." we took refuge in the New Orleans eating house where the first man we met was Corporal J. G. Colman of our company, who had started from Lewis a day later than we did and arrived before us. Jo was alone and consequently very glad to see us which was evidenced by the kicks, slaps, and handshakings that he bestowed liberally upon us.

Jo is a good fellow, but very rough, having been educated in the woods and an "drive" as a lumberman. Jo's delight at seeing us was so great that, volens, volens, we must have dinner at his expense. So, in partaking of a good dinner, served up by Monsieur Choteau in his best style, and in telling our several adventures and home pleasures the time passed pleasantly enough till five O'clock when we again took our baggage under our arms and went on board the Steamer Westmoreland, advertised to start at five. But when we went aboard we ~~were~~ were told that she would not start till the next morning, as there was some Government freight to take on, (hay and beef cattle for the troops at Helena.) So we picked out a good place, and slept on board that night, the boys except myself, going to the theatre.

We had chibbed together and bought 12 loaves of bread, 2 pounds butter, a canteen of syrup, and some cheese and dried beef, and were therefore very well provided for as far as Helena. Besides this we bought a tepal, and I furnished the tea from what I had to take to William. Sam was duly elected "chief cook and bottle crusher," and in this position gave universal satisfaction, although one precaution was not adopted by the other corporals

strated once with him, when he was drinking some cold tea from the tepal; and stirring up the leaves with his cross. ~~Before~~ ^{Before} ~~after~~ ^{after} we left Memphis, the soldier passengers, of whom there were about 300, were mustered on deck, their names and rank taken down and then divided into Companies with a Captain and orderly Sergeant to each, and a Lieut. Colonel in command of all. This was on account of danger from guerrillas and incendiaries, and it was announced to us that there would be a regular guard kept up during the voyage.

Sure enough; the first one detailed was myself, and I mounted guard that morning as corporal of the first relief. The guard detail consisted of a Captain, as Officer of the Day, a Lieut. enant as Officer of the Guard, a Sergeant, 3 corporals and 18 men, - 6 on a relief.

Receiving my instructions from the Officer of the Guard I at once posted my relief, 2 men at the forward gang way to keep the men aboard, 2 at the cabin doors to allow none but cabin passengers inside, and 2 aft of the engines below, to look out against fire.

My men were all strangers to me, so, to enable me to find them when I would have to put them on again, I took down their names and also the place where they slept. This latter

Remember, this is no private letter, but for all the family to read, and appropriate

so that when they were looking up their men at night they would make up almost everybody to find them.

"Ho, Secord Relief, does Bellville sleep here, or Murphy?" Then you would hear the man awakened by mistake, cursing the corporal, Bellville, Murphy, and all the rest for breaching his ~~rest~~ sleep, and ^{with the sentries} wishing the whole guard in the hot place.

My foot went at the gangway planks at it and the most important place - men showing passes to go ashore, or those who did not have passes trying to get by the guard without them continually. You see I thank not get away from Memphis yet! As I stood there examining passes I remembered that when we went down the river last spring I was doing the same thing, and then I thought of the changes that had taken place, and of all I had seen since that time. I thought that if I had been told, when I stood on the bow of the pinnace Secord last January, of all the things that would happen to me, I would not have believed the tale.

But soon the whistle of the boat gave signal of our approaching departure, a crowd rushed aboard, the line was let go, the planks hauled in, the 2 guards changed their posts to the hatchways, and the great vessel backed out into the current. Soon we swept down by St. Pickens with its black guns trained down on the city, so that if an insurrection broke out the tower could be knocked to pieces in an hour; down by the high bluff where tradition says Jeff Thompson stood and watched the battle between our gunboats and the rebel fleet, till the only surviving vessels turned bow down stream and fled by night, when he turned, and as he mounted his horse for flight exclaimed, "curse those Yankee mud turtles!"

Poor fellow! those Yankee mud turtles now guard the river from St. Louis to the Gulf, and there is not a chance for a Rebel ship to cross even.

I will have to write again later, to finish the voyage so I will now turn to other things.

I found both Kelly and Bill Miller sick when I came, but they tell me that William is still untouched, and is as well as ever. I expect to see him today, as they are coming in from the Big Black. I heard yesterday that Ransom's Brigade is in town, and I will go and see the 17th soon if it is so. I also heard that the 17th has been dismounted again, but I cannot tell much about anything till I see them.

You must write as soon as you get this and tell me all about your search for a school line everybody my love, and tell grandmother Riel that I must find the address of the 27th at Headquarters before I write to Tom Reid, this I will do as soon as I can get to town, which is almost 2 miles north of us now.

Tell grandmother Riel that the apple she sent to William is so well as now that I dare not touch it for fear of its falling to pieces. The boys tell me that W. was not very well pleased at receiving so few letters while I was gone, your loving Brother, S. Christie

Ticksburg Oct. 2nd 1863

My Dear Father; [James Austin]

William came in with the rest of the boys on the same day that I posted my letter to Sarah, and you may be sure we were glad to see them all, as they were to see us. William is looking as well as ever, only a little more so, and of course was eager to hear from home. He was, and is yet, very much incensed at "you all" for not writing while I was up there, and you must try by diligence and promptitude to regain his good graces.

My health continued good notwithstanding the long voyage, and hard work since I came. But we have got our tents all fixed up now and will not have anything more than the ordinary duties to do after this. It is said by those who ought to know that we are to stay here all winter, and if so we shall make ourselves comfortable.

Capt. Clayton came down yesterday looking much better: he says he had a hard

time of it at Minnesota with typhoid fever. He was married before coming down, and his wife accompanied him to Chicago.

Southwick and I have been very busy the past few days in arranging our tent and putting up a fireplace and chimney. He is our tent man with Kelly and me, and we have got things comfortable as could be.

We had a cold rain a few days ago and frost after it, ice $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick, - this cold spell continued 2 days, and it set everybody to chimney building.

Oct 2nd

This day over an account of work I had to do, would to get out of the swamp, horses to bring from a town, &c. I cannot finish it now, as I got three of the fingers of my right hand bruised yesterday by an ammunition chest falling on them, as we were lifting it off to clean and paint. A chest containing 40 rounds of 12 ga shell coming down on a fellow's knuckles is not what it is cracked up to be if said cracking

was indicated that the operation is pleasant. The accident did not happen by my carelessness. I had hold of the handle of the chest, holding it on at one end while the other was being lifted to the ground, the doing this the man holding the pole of the limber let it swing round and down came my chest of the chest in consequence crushing my fingers between the handle and the end of the chest of the limber body. I thought that bones were broken but there is nothing damaged except the flesh.

You must not expect me to write any more till my hand is well, as it hurts me much to scribble with my forefinger and thumb as I do now.

Your loving Son
T. D. Christie

Now Christie, I don't know whether you will like this letter or not. I have just filled the whole about describing our school. What are you going to do this winter though? I think you told me you went going to teach. How long school have you and what wages.

I am going to teach in our own district and board at home. I have three months school at \$4 dollars. They are giving more in some parts of the Co. but I choose to take this school on account of being at home.

I received a letter from Gary last week. He was at Randolph. I tried to be enjoying herself which I thought of good. Long letter from Ellen. I got this week. She is at Detroit Mich. acting as governess but does not like her situation and is going to return to Mo. and teach near Watterston. Perhaps she will be near you. The wagon did not come for me and my friend as I have had a good time. I am going to write my letter. I have written soon. I have written me to write your letter. I have written me to write your letter.

Waupaca Oct. 30th 1863

Friday evening, 7 o'clock 30 min

Dear Christie

Our school has been invited out to an ice cream party tonight. I am all ready and waiting for the wagon which will carry Miss Katie Ashmun and myself to the place intended for the party. My time is precious during these days, so I have seated myself to commence a letter in answer to yours of the 1st inst. which I received about two weeks ago.

I need not tell you it was gladly received for you know that they, i.e. your letters, are always welcomed with joy by your old chum. And not by her alone for mother always enjoys hearing your letters almost as much as I do myself.

I really rejoice with you that you have enjoyed a visit from your brother. How very glad you must have felt to have him at home with you once more.

I am, as you supposed, still under the strict discipline of Mr. Wernli. School is progressing finely. To night I read the sixth & 8th week. We have but five more.

We expect Mr. Mc. Munn in three weeks to examine the class. Mr. Wernli is proving himself to be a most excellent teacher. Perhaps you would like to know something of the order of the school.

Well we meet at 9 o'clock as in all schools. Mr. Wernli rings a nice little bell, the sound of which has the effect to send us all to our seats.

A portion of scripture is then read, Mr. W. reading the first verse, and the school the second in concert.

After this all join in repeating the Lord's prayer. Then comes Mental Arithmetic twice a week, and Written three times a week. An hour is spent with each. A long black-board and plenty of crayons are continually on hand and called into almost constant use during the recitation in Written Arithmetic. The next half hour is spent with Geometry. There is quite a large class in this. Ten in all I believe.

Next comes recess which is enjoyed by all. The first half hour after recess is spent with Grammar three times a week, and Physical Geography twice. The last half hour of the fore noon is spent in singing twice a week.

Mr. Buernam is our teacher in this. Three times a week. The last of June. They are very warm and I think a great deal of them. so the birds are making nests and making a very nice place in the shade.

I should like very much to send you my photograph. I have not had one taken yet. I have compositions at this hour. And O Dear this is where I fail. I know I get some black marks in this. You know Christie how much I used to dislike to write, and I have not got over it yet.

Well I believe I had given you the programme for the fore noon. We have an hour and a half to eat our dinners, exercise &c. At half past one the jingling of the little bell is again heard. The first half hour is spent with Geography. We have finished North America, and today commenced the study of S. A. with a beautiful new outline map. It is the finest one I ever saw. Next in order comes Algebra. Mr. Mc. Gregor is our teacher in this and a very good one too.

Then comes Philosophy, in which we have a class of 13. Mr. Mc. Gregor is our teacher in this also. We are now to page 323. Optical Instruments. O Dear! these Optics trouble me yet. But all that we have passed over before this has appeared much easier and plainer to me than it did last winter.

Well to proceed with my programme, the next thing is recess. After this comes United States History three times a week and Physiology twice. Forty five minutes are spent with each of these recitations. Then from four o'clock to half past we listen to a lecture from Mr. Wernli on.

I am, as you supposed, still under the strict discipline of Mr. Meranti. School is progressing finely. To night we had the sixth 8th week. We have but five more.

We expect Mr. McWynn in three weeks to examine the class. Mr. Meranti is proving himself to be a most excellent teacher. Perhaps you would like to know something of the order of the school.

Well we meet at 8 o'clock as in all schools. Mr. Meranti rings a nice little bell, the sound of which has the effect to send us all to our seats.

A portion of Scripture is then read. Mr. M. reading the first verse, and the school the second in concert.

After this all join in repeating the Lord's prayer. Then comes Mental Arithmetic twice a week, and Written three times a week. An hour is spent with each. A long black-board and plenty of crayons are continually on hand and called into almost constant use during the recitation in Written Arith. The next half hour is spent with Geometry. There is quite a large class in this. Ten in all I believe.

Next comes recess which is enjoyed by all. The first half hour after recess is spent with Grammar three times a week, and Physical Geography twice. The last half hour of the forenoon is spent in singing twice a week.

Mr. Burnham is our teacher in this. Three times a week. The other half hour is spent with each of these recitations. Then from four o'clock to five we listen to a lecture from Mr. Meranti on

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Well to proceed with my programme. The next thing is recess. After this comes United States History three times a week and Physiology twice. Five minutes are spent with each of these recitations. Then from four o'clock to five we listen to a lecture from Mr. Meranti on

My mother never knew how to write and she was a very poor writer. She was very kind and I think a good deal of her. I hope she is in the shade.

theory of teaching. His remarks are very good. And
with, I think, will be of much benefit to us during the
coming winter.

I had forgotten to mention that
we have a journal, read in our school every morning
of the proceedings of the previous day. They are written
by the pupils. But it is seldom known who is the
journalist, except by one or two. Most of these are quite
interesting.

You wished to know something about
gymnastics. I am sorry to say that I can not inform
you. We had bean bags the first few days of school
but they soon came to be an old story. As soon as a
fine warm day made its appearance, all seemed to prefer
a game of ball out in the open air.

And now about the girls. You wish
to know if I like them as well my schoolmates of last
winter. I must confess that I do in some respects.
Many of them are old acquaintances. I think I never
enjoyed going to school so much before. But the great
reason is that I am so near home. I go home once
in two or three weeks, and see some from there every week.
Which, you know, is quite different from being seventy miles
from home.

I have one of the very best of boarding
places. No children. And Mrs. Edwards, the lady with whom
I board, one of the finest of ladies. An excellent housekeeper
and cook. There are three boarders here beside myself.
Miss Alice Ashman, of whom you have heard me speak, and
her sister. Also a young Mr. Farley of the north western part of the
Co.

them of teaching. His remarks are very good. And
will, I think, ~~all~~ be of much benefit to us during the
coming winter.

I had forgotten to mention that
we have a journal, read in our school every morning
of the proceedings of the previous day. They are written
by the pupils. But it is seldom known who is the
journalist, except by one or two. Most of these are quite
interesting.

You wished to know something about
gymnastics. I am sorry to say that I can not inform
you. We had been bags the first few days of school
but this soon came to be an old story. As soon as a
fine wind came, made its appearance, all seemed to prefer
a game of ball out in the open air.

And now about the girls. You wish
to know if I like them as well my schoolmates of last
winter. I must confess that I do in some respects.
Many of them are old acquaintances. I think I never
suffered going to school so much before. But the great
reason is that I am so near home. I go home once
in ten or twelve weeks and see some from there every week
which, you know, is quite different from being seventy miles
from home.

I have one of the very best of boarding
places. A school here. And Mrs. Edwards, the lady with whom
I board, is of the first of ladies. An excellent housekeeper
and cook. There are three boarders here besides myself.
Miss Mary Ashmun, of whom you have heard me speak, and
Miss Maria. Also a young Mr. Bailey of the northern part of the
Co.

Richburg Miss. November 4th 1863

Dear Brother, [Alfred] Two years ago today since I first entered the service, of our Country, and I having but little to do feel like giving you a few thoughts of mine in connection with the life of a Soldier now in contrast distinction to my ideas about ~~this~~^{it}, this time two years ago, and previous to that time, My impressions, When I first saw great masses of men at Fort Snelling going through the first steps of Initiation in their duties as Soldiers. ~~It~~ looked like mere child play to ^{see} bodies of men marching hither and thither, without arms in their hands and apparently without object, there was such holiday appearance about the whole thing, in fact it looked like a huge joke, People were so full of animal spirits and good nature, it was hard to realize that they had gathered to save the life of a Nation at the risk of their own, But after a short stay among the vast throng you would observe a growing earnestness among them, not seen at first sight, But made apparent by the strong desire to assume the garb ~~and~~ the arms of a Soldier, the desire also to reach the nearest point of contact with the enemy; Being ~~with~~ the wish of nearly everyone of the throng, Then in our green state we thought we would be always on the move, and that there would scarcely be a day or at least a week without a fight, But how different the realities of the past two years from all our suppositions about them while yet in the future. How few our actual conflicts with the enemy has been, only three battles in two years, and yet how much has been gained by those fights, to the cause of Liberty, and God. Pittsburgh Landing, (or Shiloh) was not a victory, that seems to be much spoken of at present, and I have even seen it mentioned, by some writer as a fight that brought us nothing, But a mass of dead and wounded men, But it was

than the mere possession of the Battle ground of our faces after the second day fight. it was the keeping of all the Victories Previous to that time ^{in the South west,} and was actually an acceleration of the gaining of Island No. 10, and gave us Corinth without a Battle, in as good a known a short time after, of our long rest at Corinth after it became ours. our drillings, and marching for short distances hither and thither, our clearing up of almost everything fit to eat. every man becoming a thief as you might say, as well as murderers, according to the Copperhead Creed. But in reality (as things were then and are now) true Patriots: serving their government, not any too well, but often better than the officers ^{of bad government} ~~whipped~~ them to do. Of hopes and fears, of mourning over legions of men carried off by sickness, and wounds, and laid in hastily made graves, with their Blankets as a Coffin and a winding sheet, to be ~~looked~~ ^{looked} for in vain by friends in the North and perhaps forgotten among men, in a few passing years. how indifferently you would think soldiers ⁱⁿ to life, and I believe as a general thing we are, for as a general thing, we might be considered gamblers with the chances increased by two hundred fold against us, even and above what they would be in civil life, so if the drum and file precede the earthly remains of a Brother soldier to the graves with Dolorous woe and low muffled sound, do they not as soon as dirt is heaped over the Body, lead back to camp giving out the heart inspiring notes of a march or a quick step. So with jostling Grief, and Life and Death Pushes along through the world, jolly rollicking Life a few steps ahead of old Death, and thereby gaining, on the old Barkeepers in spite of all he can do. He you know after being at Corinth all summer

came nigh smelling Blood at Iuka Missing it by only an hour's march or rather by Roseengranger's precipitating matters a little quicker, and bringing on a row that was the means of Price getting away from that place. At Corinth we did have our second row and by repulsing Van Doran Price Villepierre and Co. broke up one string of Jeff Davis's Plan of driving back the Vandal Hordes, of the North. I wonder if he ever read History, if so, did he think the lying, women-whipping cutthroats of Slavery could do what the Legions of the Old Roman Empire failed to accomplish? Poor wretch if he did, how foolish he must feel, just now at the poor success of his Plan, after the Battle of Corinth a winter of marches and counter-marches: interspersed with the excitement of passing through a portion of country abounding with corn, Beef, Pork, Chickens, and too many good things to mention, Cotton Gins and other out buildings giving out huge volumes of smoke by day, and vast pillars of fire by night, long lines of burning fences marking the road the army had traveled, and occasionally a dwelling house adding its lustre to the blaze; then our trip down to Youngs Point, thence up to Lake Providence, hence to Milliken's Bend. The march of three Army Corps, from that point to Grand Gulf, through a land abounding to the first powers with meat, milk, and honey, corn, and cotton abundant for all comers. The glorious victories of Port Gibson, Raymond, Champion Hills, Black River Bridge, and finally the capture of Vicksburg. Why Sandy I do think sometimes, I have not lived in vain, ~~when I~~ ^{from the fact,}

Wicksburg, Miss. Oct 10th 1863

Dear Brother,

The now sixteen day since the sick
Corporal left them digging for the North, and it seems to me
sixteen weeks. I have not got the wrap of a Pen from him
since he left the Battery, but expect a few lines today seeing
a Boat came down from Memphis yesterday. And now I am
at a Perfect Stand still for some thing to write about, so that
is the reason you have the Article Preceding this one. And
article having gone north to be Published in some
Part of that State, so you see I to will appear in Print
over the name of Verracitz, having got up at the last
tenth of said article. The other third being the Production of
Doctor Sneter of our Battery. At this Present time we
have nothing to do and are doing it with all our might having
very Pleasant weather for such a job. To time there are lots of
the men Pitches ~~cards~~ Others Play cards, some read and
Others gamble, and so day after day. Hides Pass, and we
are hardly aware of the Passage of time, Capt. Clayton leaves
today on a furlough, he has been seriously sick for a long
time, and is now going into Ohio, to recuperate again.
We have a very warm streak of weather just now, and
it would be splendid for hay making, if there were any to
make, But no we have none to make. There is an end to it
I am very happy to be able to congratulate you on account
of your Peaceful victory in the field, where you were
cut down and set up again, with so much perseverance
and finally Round over to be thoroughly threshed, and
exchanged for Greenback, Oh what more wonderful such and
Better are such Victories are yours, than the Victories of a
Soldier ever can be, and I know you must have done
your duties faithfully and well. Now I am thinking I will get
a letter today from you, and if so I will give it as soon as
this letter. So I will cease for the present. ~~Oct 11th~~
No news from you or the corporal so I have just to
pen with this sheet as well as I can. We are having very

Wicksburg, Miss. Nov 10th 1863

Dear Brother,

It is now fifteen days since the rich
Corporal left these clippings for the North, and it seems to me
sixteen weeks. I have not got the scrap of a Pen from him
since he left the Battery, but expect a few lines today since
a Boat came down from Memphis yesterday. And now I am
at a perfect stand still for some thing to write about. So that
is the reason you have the Article Preceding this one. Said
article having gone north to be published in some
Part of that State, so you see I to will appear in Print
over the name of Verraziti. Having got up at the last
two-thirds of said article. The other third being the Production of
Doctor Snider of our Battery. At this present time we
have nothing to do and are doing it with all our might having
very pleasant weather for such a job. To time there are lots of
the men Pitches points. There Play cards. Some read and
others gamble. and so day after day. Hides Post. and we
are hardly aware of the Passage of time. Capt. Clayton leaves
today on a furlough. he has been seriously sick for a long
time, and is now going into Ohio. to recuperate again.
We have a very warm streak of weather just now and
it would be splendid for hay making. if there were any to
make. But no we have none to make. There is an end to it
I am very happy to be able to congratulate you on account
of your Peaceful victory in the field. where you were
cut down and set up again. with so much perseverance
and finally Bound over to be thoroughly threshed. and
changed for Greenback. Oh what more useful such and
better are such Victories are yours than the Victories of a
Soldier. ever can be. and I know you must have done
your duties faithfully and well. Now I am thinking I will get
a letter today from you. and if so I will give it an answer in
this letter. so I will cease for the present. Sept 11th
No news from you or the corporal so I have just to
peruse this sheet as well as I can. we are having very

weather. A report has just reached camp that Gen
W. A. Grant has been severely hurt in New Orleans
his horse having thrown him. Breaking an arm and caus-
ing severe contusions besides. Now if this is a fact
which I hope it is not. There is scarcely a man in
this whole army that will not feel sorry on his account
and there own. Whereas if such a thing had taken place
immediately after the Battle of Shiloh. There would
have been but few to pity him. The Dailies that have
reached us are up to the fourth, with and on the whole
the news are encouraging, and cheerful. It seems that
the Union feeling predominates in Ill. and the
strongest emancipation Policy rules in Mass.
Beside it seems that Rosecrank has crossed the Tenn.
and flanking Chattanooga; and there is report of a battle
coming off there soon. Let us hope it will be on our
side. Charleston is a hard nut to crack so far and it
seems that Dahlgren and Gilmore are at logger heads.
Believing you will have a tough time reading what I
written. I will quite. By requesting you to give my
kind regards to all. Cordial included if their state then
when this reaches you. Tell Sarah I will write to her
soon; and that I think she has no reason to speak
about me as though I could neither forget or forgive.

Love to Mother, Grandmother and all the
flock of Friends. and believe me your stupid,
But loving Brother Wm. J. Christie

Mr Editor Smith. Sir. I notice in the
papers mention made of the "Bear", men and acts, in, and
done about this place, and the many escapes, and incidents of
the reign of this place will go, ^{into} oblivion unregistered
unless some friendly scribe, furnish the "Key" to some of the facts
leading to the developments of the germ that will chronicle the
Chronology of some of the Officers of some of the Ill. Regiments. My
position as a faithful sister of charitable nature "admonish me to
propose a suitable reward and tribute to the Comd'rs of the 95th and
112th Ill. Regiments, for the valor displayed by them on the P.M. of the
22nd May 1863. While ^{from} Patriotic motives they were dreaming of
men with cotton in their eyes for their reputation defending the Liberties
of the free institutions of the North. These Col. Boddie took their place
in command of these respective Regiments, and followed in the charge on the enemies' breastwork. How nobly
the Comd' of the 112th made slow progress in the charge and Hero-
ically fell between the sheltering logs. Being that is the neck he
lay down calling out "Let me die by the Flag Boys". His
equally brave Brother in arms, after many soldierly sagrations
and accretive feats. Suddenly ducked in behind a convenient log.
But horror of horrors he found himself between the fire of both
Friend and Foe, and he feeling as though both parties were equally anxious
and energetic to put a bullet into his Patriotic Rod, finding himself
on the death side of the log he played possum, and the rebels think
he was shot enough. Let him rest. ^{help} ^{the} night with her
darkness covered the battle. Then crawling forth he searched for his
Brother through the horrors of the feast day, him he found in his retreat
in the embrace of Mosses, guarded by the strong arm of the Jolly
Old Bacchus supported by Cerberus on the left who who will
describe the sufferings of the really brave men of these regiments nothing
told those their Beloved Col. fell. Ah said one Col. D. fell shot
through the head another exclaimed our Col. fell off a log pinned
through the body by four or five bullets. And after lying all day in
brilliant sun large numbers of the respective regiments went out
in the darkness to search for those bodies. These they found in

in
excellent state of preservation, one being slightly under the influence
of the water, he had drunk, was carried ^{out} of the Prisons Position
he occupied among the Logs. The other one, log being too short, and
he being like Achilles, "Vulnerable in the Heel" leans on the shoulder
of his deliverer. Now Mr Editor what mark of esteem should
the Board of Trade give to the "Barne" Col. of these regiments I
think they should call a meeting forthwith, and Pass a
Resolution to provide a coat of arms for said Col. Let the ground
be white, with a Bar sinister; of yellow, a Bottle rampant
and a full bumper. With the motto: Over all "Let me sleep, drunk
By the Flag Breeze". The State should make a similar Present of a
Coat of arms, to him of the 95th. Having a large log in the fore
ground, a Pair of Crutches Crossed; and the motto, Had I had
these I would have done well. ^{The State} They might also refund the money
expended for Poultries, Bandages, and Stimulents used in curing
said wound, with the list also include a large Item for Stimulents
used to keep the system in proper tone, while suffering
the excruciating Pain, of said wound. And hoping Sir I
may have done my duty in a truly Christian manner, I sign myself
Respectfully An Old Friend, Sister of
Charity of the Hospital of Conscience
Town of St Pargemall. Here,
Holloway
Paradise in the East
Kingdom of Knochenmoss.

The above corrected by myself, author of
two third of it I may say the whole has been sent by
our Doctor, to an Ill. Paper, and has already
come out in print. The doctor also sent along a
mug of the Log or the Col. of the 95th Log behind
us will make a handsome talkpick. The crutches are
in allusion to his weakness, in the knee under fire.
You have seen a great many that in the neck,
that were not in a Battle. The water you see too
was said, poor fellows,

Dover November 12th 1868

Mr James Christie

Sir I understood William when he left here he was to leave my note with you, I have been calculating all this past summer to pay it all up till lately I changed one of my horses an old bawky mare that bothered me & I had to pay seventy five dollars on the trade now I cant see my way clear that I can pay the note all up this fall if you will have the goodness to let me off with paying fifty dollars & the interest this fall till I raise another crop you will oblige me very much, & as soon as I can sell my wheat I will raise the money please write to me as soon as you get this & tell me the news from your boys I have not heard from them this long while tell Sarah Jane Robison is married I hope you & your family is well

I Remain yours with Respect

James Blair
St Charles Winona Co
Minnesota

Chicksburg, Miss. Nov. 14th 1869.

My Dear Sister. [Sarah J. Chaestie]

No mail yet for me since I came down, although you have had plenty to write about up there. I expected to have seen a description of your visit to Trinton, before this, and how our old schoolmates live and look. I think you made a very good bargain about the school, and I hope that Father is satisfied. But I do not like the notion of your running in debt as it appears you have. Why could you not have told Father what you wanted, and I know if you had really needed the articles, he would have obtained them for you. It will be difficult for us to send you the money at the next payment, but I suppose we must manage it somehow. My transportation has to come out of my next pay, and it will leave me pretty short, but it can be borrowed. I hope you will take a lesson from this, and never be so foolish again. It will not do to be always ahead of your income. Have you got any letters from Helen yet? I want you in your next letter to her to

tell her to write to me, and you must give me her address. I want a share of the Boston good things, as well as the rest of you.

Tell Grandmother Reid that I have written to Cousin Sam, telling him what she wanted, and all the news from Chasman, but she must not expect a letter from him for a month almost, as ~~his~~ his Division is in the interior of Texas somewhere. William and I are well and busy,

he is taking care of a team for McGuinnis, who is sick, and I am attending to the business of the Squad, for Rogers is sick, and Gordon is gone on recruiting service; this throws the whole duty on my shoulders, of making details for everything there is to do, dividing out the rations to the drivers, drawing rations from the Quartermaster, and everything relating to the command of 20 men.

I made out yesterday a voucher to draw my commutation of rations while on furlough on, which will be about four dollars and a half. 30 days at 15 cts per day, the cost of the rations. Small has not come back yet, and we hear of him as springing around

Winona in great style. O'Hara came back about 10 days ago, having been detained and compelled to do duty at Schofield Barracks, St. Louis. Santhorpe's wounds are completely healed up in consequence of his pulling out of them a large piece of cloth which had been driven in by the bullet, five months before. It was about an inch long, and since its extraction the wound had healed rapidly.

We must out on inspection day before yesterday, and expect soon to go out on picket about 12 miles south of camp. Gen. Logan reviewed his Division yesterday, and made his men a farewell speech, as he is going, we hear, to command the 18th Army Corps, Sherman, who is its old commander, having been assigned to the command of the Department and Army of the Tennessee. From the tone of Sherman's General Order No 2 read to us a few days ago I am led to think that we will not engage in active operations until Spring. But I was speaking of Gen Logan. He made an excellent speech to the men, calling them his "Boys." "It is to you," he said, "my

I have copied some of the English and sent them to Uncle Sam & son,

"brave boys, that two Generals owe their promotions, and I hope to God that the Third Division will make as many more, for it has the material in abundance." "On every battlefield of the West you have made your mark, and your standards have never been borne in retreat. Thirteen battlefields have recorded your tread, and are marked by the graves of your comrades of the Third Division." Thus he went on, recounting their past glorious deeds, and exhorting them to maintain their present high reputation by soldierly bearing and intrepidity, in the face of danger. Logan is an eloquent speaker, and the occasion was such as to draw out his best powers.

Quethwick picked a rose yesterday, and I send it with his compliments.

Bill Derrough is home on furlough, have you seen him, and if so, how does he talk,

Love to all, Your affectionate Brother,

Thos. Christie

P.S. Tell Sandy to write and tell me all about the horses, the ploughing, the weather and the price of wheat. Weather changeable here, &c.

New Iberia, Louisiana
Nov ^{10th} 26 - 1863

Dear, Cousin, [Thomas Chester]

yours of The 14th Inst
came to hand safe yesterday I was
very much pleased to hear from
you and to hear that you was
in good health I am well and
old Regt is in the best of health
at this time Dear, Cousin I will
here inform you the distance from
here to New Orleans is about
145 miles and the way our mails
come is from N. Orleans, to Brashear
city. By Railroad is 80 miles and
from Brashear city to New Iberia
is 65 miles and the mail comes
by Steamboat up Bayou, Leche,
which is deep enough and broad
enough for a good size Steam
boat. Dear, Cousin, you will please
tell Grand Mother from me although

I am far away from her at this
time tell her I have not forgot
her kindness towards me and
the very first opportunity I shall
send her some money, and that very
soon, Dear, Cousin, I am glad to hear
that Sarah has got a School teacher.
I think 18 Dollars per month is good
pay I hope she will enjoy good
health and I also hope she will like
the situation Dear, Cousin I was glad
to hear that you had heard
from Uncle Robert, and that he was
mustered out of the Service.
I am also please to learn that you
have heard from my father
and my Bro Robert. I am glad
that they have escaped so well -
in all the charges they have made
on Ft. Wagner, Dear Cousin
you request me to write more
frequently I will do so and keep
you posted of our whereabouts

Dear, Cousin, I must tell you -
how we deal with Rebels down
here two or three days since we was
ordered at Rock ball to be ready at
4 o'clock in the morning with one
day's ration we knew right off
we was bound on some expedition
we was ready at the time appointed
and our first Brigade with 2 regts
of Cavalry went back to our
old camping ground distance
from here six miles and before
Mr. Reb was up out of his bed we
had them surrounded, we had a
sharp Skirmish with lost 1/2 an
hour and all was over we took
96 Privates and 12 Officers of
The 4th Texas Rangers, and only
one Private and one Major
escaped. The Colonel commanding
The Prisoners said his name is
~~General~~ ^{General} Lee, and since then we
have taken 75 and again 50.

in a short time what few Rebels
 There is here we shall gobble them
 all up at this rate They not stand
 and make a fight but will linger
 around and cut off supply trains
 that is all they can do and that they
 begin to find a risky business
 Dear Cousin I have see a good many
 Boys of the Coorn, Regiments
 That I knew in old Hartford
 it is rumored that we are going
 to Texas but we are not certain if
 we shall go or not, Dear Cousin
 This is a beautiful Country and
 there is very large Prairies of the best
 kind of land plenty of good timber
 and plenty of water and a large
 amount of the land under cultivation
 Dear Cousin I must now conclude
 with very best respects for your
 present and future happiness

Thomas J. Reidy

29 Regt. Mo. Vol. Infy -
 1st. Brigade Third. Division
 13. Army Corps New Orleans -
 Louisiana

Victory the 4th
 I have just recd this from
 your and much love
 Love to aunt & grand
 mother

Write to you tonight

Vicksburg Miss. Nov. 28th 1863.

My Dear Sister; [Sarah Christie]

At length I receive a letter from home after waiting for it so long. Yours of the 6th came to hand this noon, and I answer without delay. William also got one from Sandy, and one from —.

The continuation of the "tale" of my adventures coming down from Memphis you will have to wait for till I come home, as there did not enough of interest occur on the journey to make it worth recording.

William and I are both in good health as you will readily believe when I tell you that my weight today is 154 pounds, without overcoat. I am very comfortably

situated at present in the Orderly Sergeant's tent, but still must in the Squad, and do duty there. Southwick is well and hearty, and he and I mess together, that is, we buy and use butter, cheese, etc. in common.

Kanner is not any better, to say the least, than he was when you saw him, as his diarrhea still continues bad, and the change of climate and mode of life has done him no good. Sam is stout as ever and in a fair way of getting rich fast, as he buys apples by the barrel in town and sells them out in the Company in such a manner as to gain about five dollars per barrel (out of pocket.)

This extraordinary result may be attributed to the fact that like Cotton in his grocery, he is his own best customer.

We have a way here of what we call "saddling the horse."

for the apples. The *modus operandi* is this. - Suppose there are 5 of us who go into it; a slip of paper is marked on one side with the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. - and on the opposite side is marked, in secret, one of those figures, the paper is then handed to each one and he selects one of the five figures by ~~cross~~ crossing it with his pencil. Whoever crosses the figure which is also put down on the other side has to pay for the apples for the crowd. This mode of making a merry stand treat is much in vogue in our squad, and as Sam comes around pretty often with his faithful of apples to peddle, we generally manage to inveigle him into it, and, as he has miserable luck in snatching, he almost invariably has to come down with the fruit. - Yesterday evening Sam came around, as usual, to Southwicks tent where I was, and I, being the prime mover of all mischief of this kind; immediately proposed to "saddle the horse" for a quarters worth. This they all agreed to, Sam included, and we all marked our figures, throwing the treat on the luckless Wholly. This did not suit him, and he proposed to try it again when we had eaten the first treat. His object was to get it on to me, as I had been having a good many apples at his expense, and had not been saddled yet. - So we went through the operation twice more, and, singularly enough, he marked the fatal figure each time, so that he went away with an empty pack and minus the gayaway greenbacks which he should have realized by the sale of his apples.

We have got a society in town called the Niskaburg Union Literary Association, and Ward and I are members of it. I joined only last Tuesday evening, and have not taken any part in the proceedings as yet, but Ward has taken an active part in two debates, and is the leader in the one to come off next Tuesday. The proceedings of the weekly meetings are, Debate, Reading of the magazine published by us, and delivery of an Essay by one of the members, the meeting opening ~~by~~ with prayer and singing. If we stay here all winter we will have a good time, for besides what I have mentioned, we attend Divine Service every Sunday, and I have heard some of the best sermons here that I ever heard in my life. There is a young fellow in the 10th Ohio Battery, Supt. Sage, who visits us sometimes and I like him very much, as he is well educated, a good conversationalist, a good singer, and can draw first rate. He was in our tent last night, and we were all enjoying ourselves very much, when one of our boys came to the door and looked into the tent for a long time, then, to excuse his standing listening to us, he suddenly asked if so and so was in. Sage very soberly looked under the bunks, pulled out a drawer in the Chelby's desk and peered into it, and lifted up the large Roster Book and looked under it, then turning gravely to the ears dropper said he thought so and so could not be in, as he could not find him anywhere. The chap turned off, perfectly satisfied that the man he wanted was not in our tent at least.

We made a chessboard and men a short time ago,
and I have learned to play quite well. We have some
good players in the Company and I will have a chance to be-
come a pretty good player. It is a much deeper game than
chess, and we sometimes are 2 hours at one game.

William and I sent home 65 Dollars a few days ago
with a request to Father to pay your debts at Lowell and
Watutsum, and he will probably do it.

You must give me a description of your new school and
the people of the neighborhood in your next, and give my
respects to our old schoolmates, the Foxes.

The Bugle Call which you sent Brown is much ap-
preciated among the singers here, and "The Gun Boat Song"
and "Come to the War" are special favorites. We sometimes
have great old songs in our tent, when half the Company
will come to hear us. My new tent mate, Sergt. Heywood
is an excellent singer, and a good fellow altogether.

Kelly is now in the hospital, sick with the fever and ague
and he has not been well since he and I were taken
sick together last Summer.

We had a note from John
Schaller yesterday, telling us that he is with his Regiment
at Red Bone some 12 miles south of here, and wishing
us to come out and see him, we will go out on Monday.

I am on guard tonight, and it is awful cold, we have had
some rain lately and many now expect a cold spell, but last
week the weather was just like Indian Summer.

Write promptly in answer to this and then you may expect a
like virtue in me no more. Your loving Brother J. Christie

Vicksburg Mississippi November 29th
1863

Dear Brother [Gale] 2

Dear Brother I received a letter from you at last, and have
Occult Proof that you were yet an Inhabitant of this mundane
Sphere, at the time of dating and inclosing said Epistle I hope
you yet continue to walk the Earth in the full enjoyment
of all its blessings and maintaining with ^{your usual} ~~firm~~ ^{that} ~~firm~~ ^{firm} Union
is the life of this government now henceforth and for ever
and that old Uncle Abe. shall be the man to unscule
Samuels Business for the term of another four years, after
he has done with his present term. I say Mister what do you
think of Kingmans Blair speech in Ladys Prices Mary
Sands as Blasts word say. if that Individual had heard Uncle
Abernaseth go, but I think it was rather a sell, Oh Blair and Co.
When old Abe, said so very plainly Blair you lie. I never
told you that I would conduct the affairs of the Station in
that manner, tis true he did not speak these words But he
might have done so. But I suppose it would not have done
to be so vulgar, I see the weather changes up your way, well
sir it changes down here ^{also} and is as fickle as the wind or a
weather cock, not to say anything to the disparagement of the female
sects of our own species, by comparing them to anything easily
moved as the article last mentioned, fortnight hours ago we had summer
weather, accompanied by a genuine thunder storm with all the com-
piment parts of such an Article thrown in, with great abundance
with the storm roared went the wind and for the thirtysix hours
we have had a blustering jolly howling Norwester, clearing
the atmosphere of all superabundant vapors and making
the sky look so beautifully blue, (quite with our noses, last item
not by any means desirable, and not in the least conducive
to comfort.) and the ground froze under foot quite firm. The derige-
fications, Progress rapidly towards completion round this ever famous
City of Vicksburgh. I need not tell you they are hard things to
look at if they are made of dirt, and the poor Deluded Brethren
of the South that remain here in duration vile, or in hospital
say that the Yankees are the greatest liars to gossip they ever
saw or heard tell of, they think we throw up dirt right smart

and swearing they wouldn't do it, while there was so many things
to do it. I think our government is conscripting all citizens in town
that are able to bear arms, making that a condition of their right
to our protection and pay for themselves and families. That they
shall serve in our armies. We are not dead here, no siree. We
have a Lyceum in the City, I am a member of the Society.
It is styled the Pickensburgh Union Literary Association.
There is quite a number of the soldiers interested in the paper
management of the concern. We are going to send five hundred
Circulars to the Paper Parties so that we may have a Library
and in about a few days I will likely send you one or perhaps
two so that Sarah may forward one at least to Fort State
College. I believe the Circulars will be distributed to us
next Tuesday evening, that being our ^{regular} night of meeting
on Monday evening (that is tomorrow) we are going to have
a Business meeting for the purpose of revising the Constitution
of the Society, and Perfecting arrangements for a social to
be held by the members on the first Monday in December
for the purpose of making the members better acquainted with
each other. I am sorry to tell you the machine has running
from weeks before I knew anything about it, and as I miss
so much that was both instructive and amusing. The question
for discussion on Tuesday evening is, Resolved that
Soldiers ought to vote out of their States. I am chief on the
affirmative and of course the subject will be conducted in a
very "hem, ah, manner. There is also a weekly paper in connex-
with the Society and there has been some able articles
contributed by the members of the Club. I will appear
next evening myself, that is not me, but an article of
mine entitled Our Country. I think some of coming
out too in a descriptive humorous sketch of some kind.
mine is historical being a compilation, and is to be continued
if you will agree not to throw the MS. in the fire I will
send it along to you to laugh over, or perhaps cry over seeing
it is so worthless. Ah I really wish I could have you at our
social, at which according to ^{of the} Resolution ninth as it
of the Report.

was drawn up by the Chairman of the Committee, that every
man has to be as social as he can. The first evening of my membership
with the other members of the Society received a comfort bag
all the way from the State of Maine. The bag ~~was~~ ^{was} neatly made
of strong cloth and contained the following items, one infusion of the
Best green Tea, Sugar to sweeten the same Tea, a small package of thin
one of Carrots seeds, some ground ginger, a little Blackpepper ground,
a small quantity of Blue swollen yarn, and darning needle, also a small
quantity of Black linnen thread, a few Buttons, half of a Black lead Pencil
and last but not least a letter also some extracts, or rather clipp-
ings from some newspapers. I will enclose the letter and extracts
in this, and I wish they may be kept safely for me especially
the letter. I. D. is faster for remembering than I am. I believe
when there is an opportunity to do so, he will do it with or
without, as it is very likely he will both remember and perhaps offend
Father very much. But why should any of you object to us going
in again he would not be at rest at home if the war still continued
after our other years here out, and besides he would be liable to be
drafted after he had been at home but a short time, if the government
needed men, ^{if we were out} you would then be liable to come into the service,
and I am well satisfied you would not stand a Southern claimant
but a very short time. I believe they cannot draft out of a family, if
there are two in the service of that family already. I wonder
what sin the Christians have committed in times past. He be set
down in such a hellhole as Olizman, Copperheadism, Romanism
and every sin. But the Progressive Sam and Patroonism seems
to thrive around you in full power making a great blotch
of moral darkness on the face of the Earth. I am or rather I
should say we are glad to learn you have done so well with the
farm work. Putting so much of it past. I really feel happy you
are so pleased with the horses and if the stable is warm. It will
cost you so very much to keep them growing and in good condition
remember a horse grows when it is seven years old if not overworked
in any way, after that age they gain in height and fill
up all muscular parts to their greatest capacity, I wish I
with a shorter line than Charles, and not a whip on him until
he learns to do his duty if he is a heavy slow horse and stronger

than the more, give her a little the advantage in the evening.
 As for the wheat. I am very glad I have got such a good price,
 and now since you have got the corn threshed and has such a great
 number of Bunches of "Luss" we desire to hear from you oftener
 than we have been doing. As for the Bunch of Carrots you speak of
 round Clyman I say to the Devil with the whole of them
 it would make a dog vomit. But them on a comparison of the
 was capable of feeling the insult. Such things ought to be compe-
 -ed to live among the Hatterets, or New Trainers, for things
 they may get report and be said, but I do not envy them the position
 they occupy. Now, in your next letter to me send me a list
 of the names of the Presidents of the United States, their places
 birth and all such. You will find the information in one of those
 maps or charts in Helen's room at Uncle Williams. I need tell
 on account of the articles I am getting up for the paper, and
 if you respond to my request as quickly as possible it will reach
 me in time to be of service. In this letter you say nothing what-
 -ever about the receipt of a Hair Chain I sent you I posted it on
 the 26 of Sept. it was for a watch guard I had it Braided by one
 of our Boys it was of Black and white horse hair, a ring of each
 alternately. if you see any such a thing round Clyman. You may guess
 where it came from, it must be you there and go it or you would
 have spoke of it, well mix differences. Let it go. I have to dig up
 for want of something to plant about. Who teaches school in Clyman
 this winter. Or has the old devil persuaded his pups to do without
 a school this winter. I guess Father will live through the winter
 or blame of such a set as the Cottons

Write soon Good Bye
 I am your affectionate Brother William J. Christie

For the Tract Journal.

THE LITTLE SOLDIER.

"Oh would I were a soldier,"
 Cried little Bertie Lee;
 "If I were only older,
 How very brave I'd be:
 I'd fear not any danger,
 I'd flee not from the foe,
 But where the strife was fiercest,
 There I'd be sure to go.
 "I'd be the boldest picket,
 Nor fear the darkest night;
 Could I but see a rebel,
 How bravely I would fight.
 I'd nobly do my duty,
 And soon promoted be,—
 Oh, would I were a soldier,"
 Sighed little Bertie Lee.

"But when I'm grown to manhood,
 This war will all be o'er,
 I can not join the struggle,
 Our dear flag to restore.
 I may not bleed for freedom,
 That glory's not for me,
 My name will not be written
 The hero, Herbert Lee."

Then answered Bertie's mother,
 In tender, loving tone,
 "My darling little Bertie,
 You need not thus bemoan.
 A nobler strife awaits you,
 'Tis even now begun,
 And you may gain the victory,
 If brave and true, my son.

"You are a little soldier,
 A picket guard, my boy,
 To ward off every evil
 That may your soul annoy.
 No earthly foe need vex you,
 No midnight sounds alarm,—
 With Jesus for your leader,
 What could my darling harm?"

"The noblest of all soldiers
 My little son may be,
 His name in heaven recorded,
 The hero, Herbert Lee.
 That were far higher glory
 Than any earthly fame;
 God grant the list 'Promoted'
 May bear my Bertie's name."

Dewdrop.

AFFECTING INCIDENT in Plymouth Church.

On Sunday morning an incident occurred in Plymouth church, Brooklyn, which suddenly drew tears from the eyes of nearly all the great congregation. The ceremony of baptism of children had been appointed for that morning, and, as the weather was unusually beautiful, a large flock of little ones was gathered round the pulpit, held in their parents' arms, to be baptized. When the audience supposed that the ceremony was ended, Mr. Beecher carried up into the pulpit a little girl about five years of age, of sweet face, large eyes, light hair, and fair as a lily. Pausing a moment to conquer his emotion, he sent a shiver of horror through the congregation by saying, "This child was born a slave, and is just redeemed from slavery!" It is impossible to describe the effect of this announcement. The fact seemed so incredible and so atrocious that, at first, the spectators held their breath in their amazement, and were then melted to tears. We give the story in Mr. Beecher's words, which were spoken in a tremulous, broken voice that struggled hard to keep a steady utterance;

"A benevolent woman, who was nursing our sick soldiers in the hospitals at Fairfax, found this child, sore and tattered and unclean, and requested the good sister who has adopted her to bring her North and take care of her. She will be treated as this lady's own child, and it is designed to educate her as a teacher for her race.

"Look upon this child—tell me if you ever saw a fairer, sweeter face? This is a sample of the slavery which clutches for itself everything fair and attractive. The loveliness of this face, the beauty of this figure, would only make her so much more valuable for lust. While your children are brought up to fear and serve the Lord, this little one, just as beautiful, would be made, through slavery, a child of damnation. The whole force of my manhood revolts and rises up in enmity against an institution that cruelly exposes such children to be sold like cattle. Look upon this child, every one of you!—look upon her, every young man and maiden in this house!—and, by the memory of this scene, and for the sake of such little ones as these, and for the sake of Christ, let your souls burn with fiery indignation against the horrible system which turns into chattels such fair children of God! May God strike for our armies and the right, that this accursed thing may be utterly destroyed!"

The child was then baptized Fanny Virginia Cassiopeia Lawrence, the last being the name of her Northern benefactress, who is to be her foster-mother.

One may live a life-time and never witness such a scene. It never will be forgotten by any eye that saw it. May God's mercy cleanse the nation of its great sin, that such a scene shall never again be witnessed in the land!

ENCLOSURE

I had almost forgotten to tell you
about our festival. We had it last
Thursday night, the evening of
Thanksgiving day. We had 13
essays. Three of which were
poetry. Quite an interesting
speech was made at the opening
by one of the gentlemen-teachers
belonging to our Normal class.
After this followed the essay
interspersed with music, both
instrumental and vocal.
The subject of my
composition was
Thanksgiving day.
The house was well
filled and the people
seemed to enjoy it.
I suppose you do not
escape the drought at
Glynn. Have any of
your friends been affected?
Quite a number were
drafted from our town.
Do you hear from your
brothers now?
My respects to your parent and
brothers. Sarah C. Van Wagon

Maupaca. Nov. 30th 1863.

Dear Christie. [Sarah]

I feel just like talking
with you to night; but as that is quite impossible I will imagine
that you are hearing what I put upon paper. I received your
kind letter sometime ago and at the time intended to answer
it soon. But being subjected to two very severe examinations
and having to take a part in a festival has occupied my time
completely. The examination of the Normal class under Mr.
McC. Munn took place on the 20th and 21st of this month. And I
can assure you it was an examination. He is very different
from Mr. Pratt. Perhaps you have seen him; but least you
have not I will give you a description of him.

He is about as tall as Mr. Goldthwait, light hair and
whiskers and mustache. light eyes, and such a look in them, it
was enough to frighten me to ~~have~~ them rest upon you.
He wears a scowl continually in the school room. Speak very
sharply part of the time. At first sight I felt that he was
not a Mr. Pratt. During the examination he would give no
information concerning the questions. He would say that they were

perfectly plain. That we must understand them just as they read. One young lady asked the meaning of a question and he replied that he was too old to be coaxed. That she would get nothing out of him in that way, if she were to talk a week, &c. I suppose that it was all right for him to do so but it made the examination very unpleasant. You know, Christie, that an examination is never a very desirable task and especially when the teacher is not a pleasant person.

But notwithstanding all his unpleasant manners in the school room, those who have seen him out of it call him very pleasant and agreeable. But perhaps you have seen him and have quite a different opinion of him. I was examined again hoping to get higher standing in some of the branches.

But I doubt if I get anything this time. My other certificate came after I had commenced going to school here. It was quite a surprise to me. For I had given up the very small hope I once had of getting one. It was accompanied by a letter from Mr. G. inviting me to attend his school this winter, but I was already engaged here, which I considered a very good excuse.

Last Friday and Saturday were devoted to Mr. Wernli's examination. I succeeded this time in obtaining a second grade, and feel rather better than I did last spring. Fourty^{six} teachers were examined and forty five passed. I think this proves the benefit of Normal Schools. Mr. Wernli and Mr. Mc Gregor have both proved to be very good teachers. Mr. Wernli has gone to his examinations and those who have not made out their sixty five

days are now attending the High School, taught by Mr. Mc Gregor. I intend to stay the remainder of this week. I believe that I learned more about teaching yesterday, by watching him than I ever did before. I came to the conclusion that I had never ~~taught school~~ but merely kept school.

I am determined to adopt an entirely new course this winter and try, not to merely keep school but to teach. Mr. Mc Gregor requires his scholars to write a great deal. Connected with every lesson he has a written exercise, and this he recommends to us.

I believe I told you that I was going to teach at home this winter. I shall probably have about 30 scholars. I shall board at home and walk about a mile.

I have commenced taking music lessons, and intend to continue them during the winter. Miss Katie Ashman is my teacher at present. I expect to take lessons of her mother when I go home. They live quite near us and as I shall board at home I think I can get along finely.

I enjoy it very much. But sometimes I am almost discouraged. It is very slow work. I am very sorry now that I did not commence long ago. But still I think that I am not too old to learn.

Do you sing now. I suppose you have sung those songs a great many times the past summer. Do you ever sing "E B" now? I have taken that as a lesson, and hope soon to be able to play and sing it. I had a fine time yesterday singing it. My teacher played ^{and sang alto} it. Her brother sang tenor, a Mr. Farley the base, and myself the air.

It carried my mind back to the old College. Do you remember the last singing lesson I took we sang all those pieces together? I wish we could be together again. How much we would find to talk about.

You said in your last that you were going to school again after your school was out. Where do you think of going. O Dear! I wish we could both go to Madison. I have a great desire to go there. I care nothing about going any where else. I think now, that if I ever go from home to school again I will go there. But when that will be I don't know.

And so you have had the pleasure of seeing our old Professor. I would really like to see him myself. I wonder how many scholars he has. You will probably make them a visit this winter as you will be so near them. If so please write me a full account of it.

I think you must have made a mistake in directing your letter to Ellen Corbett if you have received no answer yet.

She mentioned you in her letter to me, and wondered why you did not answer her letter. I have received no answer to my last yet. Perry was well and seemed to be enjoying herself finely, when she wrote me last.

I suppose you have commenced your school. When you write please tell me all about it, and I will do the same in my next. I wonder what a stranger would think, Christie, if they should see our letters. more than half our written conversation is about teaching and schools.

Please write me very soon a good long letter Direct to Bureau.
With much love I remain your friend Per.

Vicksburg Miss. Dec 6th 1863

Dear Sandy:

Your alphabetical letter was read, last night, - along with 3 others to William from you, Father, and the Lowell girls. All your arguments to W. against re-enlisting are of no avail now - he and I are into it - so far that we could not back out now, if we wished to, without disgracing ourselves, and, you know, death should be preferred to dishonor. But we do not wish to retreat, and I know you would not wish us to, if you could see the glorious enthusiasm pervading all branches of the Service now, caused by the recent Orders of the War Dept. relating to the Veteran Volunteers. There is a perfect furor for re-enlistment, and the troops who have seen the most Service, hardship and ill usage, and lost the most men in battle are the most unanimous in going again, and seeing the thing out, - "In at the Death," you know. You must not think that W. and I go into it because of the influence of example, for we were "veterans" when not more than 10 men in the company thought of enlisting, and, 2 days ago, we were the first of 21 to step to the front as volunteers. Now, we have 43 names on the list of men pledged to re-enlist, and before this

time tomorrow over 60 will be pledged.

This great increase from the original number is due to the publication of a recent Order, allowing Veterans the privilege, where three fourths of a company or Regiment recd list, of going home en masse to recruit.

There is also a flag promised by Mr. Pearson to the Battery which shall exist again the most man in proportion to its numbers, and we have strong hopes of getting it.

But no matter whether we can go home in a body or not, the Veterans still have the privilege of a 30 days furlough inside their state, equivalent here to a 30 days furlough, and all transportation furnished to and from their homes. So you may soon expect to see

William at least, and perhaps myself, but I think considerably of going east to Boston and Cambridge - if I get a furlough, but I don't believe in cutting in the air, or Chateaux in Espagne, so we will drop this subject, and take up something more to the purpose, and that is, the Union Literary Society of Vicksburg. I tell you it is a fine institution, and it is wonderful how much talent it has brought to light among the Soldiers of this Corps. I have formed some most pleasant ~~and~~ acquaintanceships through my connection with the Association, and expect to make more tomorrow evening when we hold a general Social Gathering in the Presbyterian Church here.

The Association did me the honor, 2 weeks ago

of electing me to the office of Secretary, and my duties in that position are, to keep minutes of each meeting, and read them and any other reading matter to be read, to the Association, and to take charge of the books of the Association.

William was on a committee appointed by us to visit Gen. McArthur with an invitation to attend our Social Gathering, and they were received by old Mac with great courtesy, and we have the promise of his attendance.

In order to get a good address and letter of invitation to present to the General, the committee agreed that each member of it should write one, and that they should then be presented to the Association for their choice. I wrote one for William, and when they were submitted to the Association last Tuesday evening, mine was selected almost unanimously.

I have not written anything for our magazine yet, as we have been so busy the past week putting up a stable for our horses, and, in the double capacity of Corporal and Boot & Carpenter I have been kept pretty busy with hammer, saw, and square.

In any work of this kind, the Corporals are expected to take the lead, and direct the men of their respective squads. Of course they will work in rotation to see which Squad will do the most work and the best. We have good reason to be proud of the 5th Platoon, for at the first call for veteran volunteers, before we knew anything about the furloughing

on the flag, 13 of our men stepped to the front, while
the other 3 platoons furnished 8 altogether, and the
most of them belonged to the Winona Regt.
Common is in, Southwick, Rogers, O'Hara and Witter all
in, besides many other good fellows whom you do not
know. Sam Wholley won't join us, for fear of consumption
and we tell him the only specimen of that disease he
need be afraid of is the consumption of bread and
butter and apples. We will have the three fourths
of the Company in tomorrow, and then those who
do not recruit will be mustered into some other
organization to serve out the remainder of their term
of service, and we will get \$175 in our hands
and a chance to ruralize in Minnesota.

I need not justify my conduct to you or Father
for you will at once see and appreciate
the motives which prompted my course, and you
must approve of it - if you have any Patriotism
in you. This thing is so much finished now
that I must see the end of it - before settling down
in life.

That was a confounded story
your Chymum copperhead got up about Father.
I am much interested in your account of
the horses. You need not write to us until
you hear from us again, as we may walk
in on you sometime very within a month.
Your Loving Veterans, Thos. Depue
Century

on the flag, 13 of our men stepped to the front, while the other 3 platoons furnished 8 altogether, and the most of them belonged to the Winona Regt. Cannon is in, Southwick, Rogers, O'Hara and Witter all in, besides many other good fellows whom you do not know. Sam Woolley won't join us, for fear of consumption and we tell him the only specimen of that disease we need be afraid of is the consumption of bread and beef and apples. We will leave the three fourths of the Company in tomorrow, and then those who do not recant will be mustered into some other organization to serve out the remainder of their term of service, and we will get \$175 in our hands and a chance to ruralize in Minnesota.

I need not justify my conduct to you or Father for you will at once see and appreciate the motives which prompted my course, and you must approve of it - if you have any Patriotism in you. This thing is so soon finished now that I must see the end of it - before settling down in life.

That was a confounded story your Chymum copartners got up about Father. I am much interested in your account of the horses. You need not write to us until you hear from us again, as we may walk in on you sometime day within a month.

Your Loving Veterans, Thos. Depatie
Secretary

Dec 9th 1863

My Dear Father,

I send you this circular, thinking that you can perhaps ~~you can~~ get up a box of books in our neighborhood and send it to us. We are in earnest in

and send it to us, We are in earnest in our endeavors to form a Library, and already it has been started by the bringing in of books from the Camps by members of our Literary Association. So you may be assured

association. So you may be assured
that any books you may send will not
be lost. The Christian Commission of this
City will have charge of the books, as it
already has a room filled with books there sent
down under the auspices of the Commission
in the North. In this room are seats for
the soldiers, and any one is welcome to
come in at any time and read as long
as he likes. It is a great blessing to

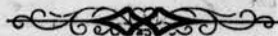
as he likes. It is a great blessing to us, but there are not enough books, nor a large enough variety of them, to supply the wants of all the soldiers at this Post. The men

of all the soldiers at this Post! The ones
whose names are signed to the Circular are
worthy members of our Association, I will
write to Sarah this evening No more
Your loving Son Thos. Christie

Your loving Son Thos. Christie

My term of office as Secretary ended last night - and I was disappointed -
 ever thought I mean as my successor, as I do not wish to do anything but the
 "taking notes"

C I R C U L A R .



To the Friends of Learning and the Soldier :

By desire of a Literary Society constructed under the auspices of the Christian Commission of this City, we, a Committee of the Society, address you to enlist your co-operation in a scheme which we have under way, which is no less than the establishment of a CIRCULATING LIBRARY here for the benefit of soldiers and others who may desire to profit by it. We need not allude to the general advantages of such an institution, but will merely cite the facts of the situation here, and the special necessity which exists for such an enterprise. It is highly probable that for some years to come, quite a number of soldiers will be stationed in and around Vicksburg. There exists here no such thing as a public library, nor, indeed, any private ones of any magnitude or value. Now it is our aim to relieve, so far as in us lies, the tedious monotony of camp life for the soldiers stationed here, and to furnish them a pleasant mode of passing their time, and one which will be far more beneficial than many others which they now employ. We deem this to be a worthy object, and one which calls loudly to the loyal, Christian men and women of the North.

We are, of course, not averse to pecuniary assistance, but chiefly we want books, readable books, books whose innate worth shall allure the soldier from other pastimes and resorts of a less healthy character.

We appeal, therefore, to the Christian Church, through Her ministers, to aid us. We appeal to Literary Associations of towns and colleges to assist us. Frequently their libraries contain duplicate and triplicate copies of interesting works; can they not spare one of these for the benefit of soldiers in the Southwest? We appeal to Soldiers' Aid Societies. Will they not turn a portion of their energy in this direction? We appeal to Editors and Publishers; their capabilities of assisting us are many and various. We appeal to every loyal person in the North to aid us in our scheme for improving the condition of our comrades in arms who shall succeed us in the occupancy of this Post. And need we say that we believe the great throbbing heart of the North,—which has already done so much for her soldiers,—will once more worthily respond, and aid us in our need?

Very Respectfully,

(Died in Texas after War.)
(Killed at Guntown.)

WILL. M. McLAIN, 32d Ohio, *nephew of General Morby.*
STEPHEN A. ROLLINS, 95th Ills,
JONATHAN MORTON, 29th Ills,
WM. W. MAULL, Ag't C. C.

VICKSBURG, Miss., November 20th, 1863.

Committee.

NOTE.—Packages sent to the Christian Commission of Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Chicago, or St. Louis, directed to "Union Literary Association, or Vicksburg, Miss., in care of Wm. W. Maull, Agent of Christian Commission," will be forwarded properly, and gratefully received. Letters on the subject may be addressed to any member of the Committee.

Vicksburg, Dec 9th 1863

My Dear Sister, [SARAH J. CHASE, CLYMAN, WIS.]

Your long and interesting letter of the 25th Nov came to hand yesterday, when it should have been answered, but I had so much writing to do which I could not put off, - such as the minutes of the Social Gathering that our Association held on Monday evening, - that I could not find time to write up my Journal even, so you will have to accept this excuse with the schoolboy's promise, "I'll never do it again Sir."

Speaking of that Social Gathering reminds me that I must tell you of all the good things we enjoyed at it, - but first for preliminary explanations. Our Literary Association, which meets every Tuesday evening in the rooms of the Christian Commission consists of about 20 members, the most of whom were strangers to each other. For the purpose of getting acquainted with each other we determined to have a Sociable. Now I need not tell you who have moved in the first circles of Fox Lake Society, what a Sociable is, for doubtless you have attended many a one, - but this was a Soldiers Sociable

Off is well. Sarethwick and Brown do. Sam is gone to the theatre tonight. I prefer to stay at home and have a talk with Sam. I have a great mind to go to the theatre on Friday to see what the thing amounts to. Write me, when you have time. I am as usual. I am yours, 786.

so the description of it will probably be interesting. It would weary you to tell of all the steps we took to ensure success in our entertainment (for we had determined to admit everybody, and ladies especially,) of all the committees we appointed the Ushers we elected (Santherick was one of them,) of how we appointed this one to read an Essay, and that one to lecture, so and so to be Master of

Ceremonies, and Surgt. Thayer our bob Leader of the choir. The long expected evening came, and although it looked like rain, the large Presbyterian Church was filled to overflowing with a splendid audience, officers, men, and citizens not to forget all the front seats full of ladies, some of them from the North, and many from this city. The Brass Band of the 1st Brigade, 3rd Div. was in attendance, and a full choir sat in the gallery, besides the "Quartette Club," who were on the floor.

Gen. McArthur arrived about 7 O'clock and the exercises commenced with singing and prayer. As I was Secretary of the meeting I had a good position to hear and see from, - immediately in rear of the Chairman.

After the prayer, we had a stirring tune from the Band, and then the essays and recitation of our magazine came next, interrupted by frequent applause from the audience.

I could not tell you half of the good things in

the magazine; it is enough to say, that I have never seen a Harper so interesting, and then it was all original matter. Poetry, Editorials, Stories, &c, all good enough to be printed. Then we had the Song, "Dreaming the happy hours away," by the Quartette Club, and I think, in fact I know, that I never heard such beautiful singing, and never expect to hear better.

After this came the intermission for sociable purposes, when introductions were made, conversation carried on, and "a good time generally" enjoyed by the members and the audience.

By the remarks I heard from the audience, it seemed that nobody expected to find such a high order of literary talent among the common soldiers of this army, it being generally thought that we are a rough set, with but little principle, and still less intellectual tastes or capacities. They who think so make a great mistake, if they could see the eagerness with which anything good to read is sought after by us, how many dear daily papers are bought in the camp, and if they could hear the animated and profound discussions of abstract subjects in our debates, they would alter their opinion. Indeed, what is our army composed of, if not of the youth of the land, trained in the common schools and colleges of the free North, whose wits are sharpened, and ideas expanded, by the rough

Grand and others included, many thanks for the
congratulations and very kind wishes
Given to all the family

experiences of arduous campaigns.

But I digress. After the intermission we had
more singing and more music, and then the
second part of the magazine was read, and an
essay delivered by Srgt. Rawlins of the 93rd Ills.

A Thanksgiving Anthem from the soldier choir
succeeded, and the audience dispersed at about
half past eight after singing the Doxology. A collection

amounting to \$40 Dollars was taken up for the
benefit of the Soldier's Library during the evening,
making the total amount subscribed for that
purpose during the fortnight something over
\$85 dollars.

You and Father must circulate
the circular, ^{I sent you before} in the neighborhood, and try and
send us some books. Put those volumes of Doug-
lass Journal into the box. I sent a copy of the

circular to the St. Paul Press with a few words of
comment, and you may see it printed, if so,
send it down to us. I saw Bill Derrough in
town today looking well. He came down in
9 days.

I had an offer of a clerkship at Quar-
ters of the Post last night, but declined with
many thanks. I don't want to leave the boys.

We are not recruited yet, but before this reaches
you we will be in for another 3 years, and perhaps
on the way home to recruit. So don't write till you hear
from us definitely about it. I send a letter from T.R.
by this post. He seems to be well. I am more tired.
Your loving Brother J. H. Minnie

all how much better off in every respect I have been through God's
Mercy I might say with the Psalmist. Truly my life here
has been cast in Pleasant Places. It is as little as I can do, to stand firmly
by the Reglorified Flag of my Country, trusting ever in the mercy of
him who hath so blessed me in the Past. Now God forbid I should speak
these things in a canting manner, or being void of the sense of their
full meaning. What hath my Past been how have I used its many
Privileges, what have I ever done to make me worthy of a Place in
the Great Human Family. Nothing I have nearly vegetated, or done
but little good, generally been found wanting in any contest with my
Lower Passions. I never being strongly tempted, I may not have
done as much evil as I should. But I have failed to do good. When I
might and thereby I have transgressed. So let me do what I can in
this way. To cover the many sins of omission in the Past. For

I believe Dear Brother that if a man fall on the Battlefield
or dies on a sick couch, in consequence of this Struggle, he
wins God's Right. And that's wrong, and falling with his
thoughts and works on the side of Liberty and Justice. That
many of his sins shall be forgiven him, and if it is God's will I should
pass through Suffering, and why should I doubt his Grace, or Mercy
being extended through the coming years, of my Soldiering. Allowing he
has not forsaken me in the Past. ^{And there is another thing} ^{which you are bound much that you are unable to be a Father}
Bear in mind. Whether we live or whether we die. We are under the
Cross surrounded by his Love. You will all be aware of the fact before
this letter reaches you that J. L. and I are pledged to enlist, and
if we can do the Mustering ^{Office} and there is but little doubt we will
we will be soldiers for two years more than the one of the term
we are now serving provided the Government needs us so long

As it is likely I will be among you some time this winter or
next Spring. Our Literary Society is a complete success in every
respect and attracts much thought among the soldiers. which finds expres-
sion in the pages of the Weekly Magazine and the debates. Everything
is conducted in a most excellent manner, and there is as much
decorum in our meetings as if we had the presence of the most moral
Woman among us. and there is never the face of one of them of any
kind in our conclaves. There are numerous schools in town
for colored children, and adults, and the reports concerning them
say much to the honor of both Pupils and Teachers. We have had
change of weather since I wrote to Father and I am hot and
cold, now cold and cloudy. Cousin Josiah informs me of Uncle
Dave being drafted, and at the same time assures me he will not
serve. Now I really wish he had the sense of getting rid of shouldering a
muzzle unless it was by being a Light Artillery man. It would do much
a day in the margin, as he is good. He be a soldier for a year or
two. For surely believe he is one of the kind that would send
his Father to the Poor house, or to the devil, if the first was not
obtainable, if the old man was likely to be troublesome. Oh his
Patriotism must have been greatly taxed when he dedicated a copy of the
Bible case to the first Minnesota Battery. Well he will have to pay
three hundred Dollars, to get rid of the draft. But Lord have mercy
on his Customers ^{afterward} for he won't, until he gets back the Dollars
Cent Per Cent interest don't do any more trading there for at
least two years thereby making great gains.

Well you see I began to breakfast with this letter and
end like a flandering roguer. But I really think Truth
is sometimes very like flander. That is when you suppose
some folks just as they should be. I may be somewhere else.

Least you should all die of disappointment and curiosity. This time
why I wrote to Maria Fane Chowhanait. Enclosed a printed
Circular to each. (Noting why I do so, I will send one or
two more off next week, and you will get one in the family
perhaps I do have one already. Give my love to all
to Father and Mother especially, and say to them that if I was
at home on the eighteenth day of this month I would make
them a Birthday Present. Grandmother Bertie, also love to
all and believe as ever you most affectionate Brother
William F. Christie

Least you should all die of disappointment and curiosity. Their tree
why I wrote to Messrs. Fane & Co. of New York. I enclosed a printed
Circular to each. (Noting why I do so, I will send one or
two more off next week, and you will get one in the family
Perhaps I do have some one already, give my love to all
to Father and Mother especially, and say to them that if I am
at home on the eighteenth day of this month I would make
them a Birthday Present. Grandmother Bertie, also love to
all and believe as ever your most affectionate Brother
William F. Christie

Vicksburg Mississippi Dec: 20th /63

[~~dear~~ Dear Brother] I am sorry to let you know that the style of your letter of the second ult: is not to my taste or taste. It is very true there are many things in connection with this war that looks like fooling away many precious opportunities for thoroughly crushing it out. But do not let us despair. It is not chance nor accident that causes these things to be so, No Sir, I believe that it is the necessity of the time, and in accordance with the importance of the great struggle of the age, between Right and Wrong. The spasmodic action of the Army of the Potomac is one of the evils of the war, and although you and I may not be able to ^{stop} the ~~beauties~~ or the use of its past and present mode of action yet we have no reason to doubt their efficiency. As for the forwarding of the cause of Freedom. As for that 300,000 I think myself that it is a bad thing for the army, and I really hope that ~~Congress~~ will either repeal it or ^{the Executive} draft so often that it will be impossible for those drafted to pay the commutation, and there is every reason to think that Congress will annex that part of the law, so that our armies may be filled up to the maximum, and let the Rebs. and their friends over the water see our determination, and ability to use up any and all opposition whatever.

~~The Lyceum~~ Last Tuesday evening we attended the Lyceum as usual, and had a very interesting time of it. We introduced a new feature into our proceedings

by only having the Principal disputants on the regular question speak and then there were several ^{subjects} ~~questions~~ given out and those that got one had to speak on that subject right off, without any preparation what ever. I had "war" for our theme, and Stephen Rollins had, our Lyceum for his subject. Whether it was because we done so well at such short notice, or because we pleased our audience, we were chosen as the chief disputants next Tuesday evening. The question. Resolved that we should obey the dictates of conscience rather than the mandates of law. S Rollins affirmative Wm J Christie Negative. J D Christie was chosen to deliver an essay or lecture before the Lyceum. As you see the folks we are amongst are very good natured and are bound to have us shine, and sir I suppose we will shine with a refulgence equal at least to a dozen haddock on a fish bake.

Last Wednesday we had a sample of a rain storm in Dixie. I cannot describe it better than by telling you to just think of two of the heaviest rain storms you ever saw, fixed up into one and let down with the force of a waterspout. Some miles and waggons, belonging to an Ordnance Depot, stood in a small valley in rear of our camp, and where we were camped previous to our trip to Black River, at night when every one went to bed the valley was dry and very pleasant to ^{look} upon, or into. The rain storm came on about four o'clock in the morning, and at six o'clock there was a river, averaging four rods in width and five feet deep.

The mules were untied from the waggons, and swam out. By noon there was no river but before night there was a storm nearly equal to the first, and again the valley was flooded. Since that time we have had very cold weather for this latitude the ground being found frozen in the morning to the enormous depth of one eighth part of an inch, or thereabouts. On the 14th of this month we along with a large number of members of our association passed a very pleasant evening at the home of the Christian Delegate it was some of the nature of a service, and cost us nothing.

Mrs Plumber a very pleasant intellectual looking woman. She is station of the Soldiers home in this city, and Pres. Mrs Governor Harvey of Wis. was also there. Besides a number of other ladies in connection with the various institutions in and around Richmond, for the advancement of the human race. It was high midnight when we got back to camp. Matter in connection with our reenlistment progress very favorably, and we have every reason to believe at present that there will be a movement of at least three fourths of the Battery North. There are also a dozen men out of the aggregate that will be transferred to the invalid corps. I and I passed the Surgeon in a very pleasant manner, and there are now about fifty names that will go on the muster in rolls as Retirees. Today or tomorrow, and it is very likely by Thursday we will receive our Bounties for the past ^{two} years service, and be mustered in for another three years, our reenlistment dating since the first of Dec: 1863.

I hope Sarah has got the school east by the district
approving, Dampier's action in the matter, if not it
will surely be a lesson to her. Now Brother & mine
what do you think, if there are enough of the old Battery
to form a new organization, we will have a long journey
seeing that we will move north in a body, every one will
have at least thirty days in his own state, or wherever
he may desire to go. Then by reporting at the reunion
we will be likely to have an extension, and J.D.
proposes going east instead of home, if circumstances will
permit as far as I am concerned I will be home just
as soon as I can get, and I think it would be the best
thing for J.D. But it may do him good to go to the
East, coming home by the way of Boston, and as I do
not advise him one way or the other, there is a probability
of our being at home or at least my being among you some
time in February. I have not written what might
be called a "Buster" but nevertheless I hope you will be
content with this scrawl, seeing I am just at present
so that I have to keep my mouth open to get breath.

I hope you are all well. I am looking anxiously
every day for more mail, and write such times as you
do better in the way of giving us letters don't dare to complain
about us not giving you more. Love to all and believe

me as ever your affectionate Brother

William J. Christie,