

## Eugene A. Lyford Letters

### 88th Illinois Regiment

[margin note: Killed battle of Stones River December 31, 1862 Buried in Illinois]

[image-soldier]

Camp of the 88th

Nashville, Tenn.

Sat. Nov. 8th, 1862

My dear folks at home,

Night before last after a nice little march of twenty three miles as we lay around our camp fire before the Captains [sic] tent the post master a bright boy they call Charlie handed a little bunch of letters for Company 2 to the Captain. I merely glanced up from the pancakes I was frying and buttering! As fast as fried for I could not believe one for me was among the six or eight he had. But when Sergant [sic] Lyfords [sic] name was called you better believe my knife dropped and my fingers extended in a twinkling to catch the letter as he thrus [sic] it at me! Mary you discussed very safely on the topics of the day. I believe that was about the most sensible of your letters to me Your opinion of old Buell is the same as all of us hold. As we have seen him and his long train of cavalry men pass us, we always thought him an old foggy foggy as well as an old granny and thought it not strange if he was a traitor at least! The story goes among the boys that at the hospital when the wounded Rebels run left at Perryville one of our men asked a Rebel what kind of a General Buell was he wanted to know "What Buell" for Gen Buell commanded their Army! Some of the men say it is their belief that the Battle of Perryville was a agreement between the two Gent Buell and Bragg at least a sham fight but many brave men and some brave commanders fought with terrible earnestness and found a patriots [sic] grave How eagerly the 88th have followed the Rebels up that very night for twenty miles and how easily comes We have done our part in entrapping the whole army of Bragg! There [sic] shame in the trudeness [sic] of Buell in ording [sic] the firing to cease and for holding us back, eager to follow up the track of the retreating foe! Shame for ever and infammy [sic] in his name! We are all disgusted with the man. We hail Rosencrans [sic] as our leader and the weary hours seemed shorter where we heard of the happy charge. We are also pleased to have a fighting General to command our Corps. Gen McCook is well spoken of I believe generally Our division commander Gen Sheridan we see almost every day. I know little of him and hear but little All I can say against him is that he is an inferrior [sic] looking man and will drink. So in the latter respect our Brigadier and Col Brig Gen. Grensil is much liked by all tho [sic] when orxed

[sic] he will swear and bellow dreadfully. He is the old Col. of 36th Ill. who are with us one of the ,[illegible] regiments of our brigade and have Pea Ridge to ,[illegible] an their fattend [sic] banner. They are old sojers [sic] up to any sport into any mischief ,[illegible] You speak of the PT. Byron boys being tired of the service. Ha! You would laugh (or cry) to hear some of our men cry out again Generals and everything else army towards night after walking on and on for many miles on the land Ky. Pike. O! How they will grovel and swear sometimes especially if there is no sign of a halt. Tis really pleasing to see the 88th now and compare it with the 2nd Board of Trade Rejement [sic] of Sept. the 1st There all was morn and jumping and dancing and singing and hurraing Now we are sober as deatnis [sic] tho [sic] our language is not so repried [sic] as a general thing. All our little tramps from depot to camp and from camp to depot two months ago we yelled or cheered at every flag or demenstration [sic]. Now we pass anything and everything without a word from our lips A silent, dumb dusty train. Every man fixing his eyes on the heels of the man before him to keep from running up against him when he stops. I have known the rejement [sic] to march almost for [sic] hours so silent along the dusty pike that nothing could be heard but the rumbling of wagon wheels as the clattering hoofs the rattling of tin cups yoter [sic] cans pails or the hundreds utensils shipped to the soldiers on cooking purposes.

On last Friday ,[illegible] last days I march we passed two houses all in fire set by order. The woman who ,[illegible] there had endeavored [sic] to piriere [sic] a well out of which some of our officers draud [sic] and came near loosing [sic] their lives. As we passed by a house near by these we saw a Union flag in the window as much as to say "Dont [sic] hurt us" It is difficult to distquish [sic] between a lover of the Union and a Southerner here. All must suffer together with out much distinction O what destruction goes along with an army. Fences curub [sic] up houses plundered, fields stripped and everything layed [sic] waste where a few thousand men happen to loeb [sic] ever night. Men are not allowed, however to leave the ranks during the march, tho [sic] many do it and almost every house is entend [sic] alay [sic] the ,[illegible] Generally the boys are willing to pay a good price for the things they get, but some take a bee hive as anything in the very sight of the inner. One of our boys I understand went into a house and got the fire to smoke the bees out besides taking the honey. As we approached the subbubs [sic] of the city on this side of the river the houses became nim [sic] frequent and beautiful. We saw several laye [sic], handsome residency in the groves of toll [sic] elms which seem to abound on this side. But no flags waved from the window as at Cinnicinati [sic] None but colored faces seemed to occupy the fimmes [sic] happy houses of now ruined men. The regement [sic] broke into platom [sic] and the band played its best for a short time Only when we whiled back into column of ,[illegible] ranks and music ceased as if it would not pay to put us air before empty buildings. We are encamped now in a beautiful grove not in sight of the city, but half a mile or more from the river. I have not tryed [sic]

to cross the river yet, for so far it has been impossible for me to get away I understand that I can get a pass tomorrow and if I can I shall ,[illegible] Capt. Whitrus Company probably and all the PT. B. boys in it now. It will be pleasant truly I hope I can. The troops that are here have been on half rations [sic] for months shut out from all the world. They say we look thin and worn out. Should you not think we would look so? I hope we shall be permitted to stay here and recruit up and that they who have been lying still so long here will be ordered away, if any are to be. We officers if I may ,[illegible] myself away that number have fared very well since we have been here, the boys brought us in a quarter of nice mutton, some turnips etc. A fellow from our company who is brigade Forage Master brings in something good almost every night. I generally do the cooking or part of it. Lient. [sic] M. has a negro boy he picked up after the Battle of Perryville who sees to cleaning up the dishes. So we are getting along nicely now. If we stay here a few weeks I shall have time to write to all my friends. I have not written to Charlottes yet to Annie and Frey but once since I enlisted. I want to write my Sunday School as soon as I can get time to collect my thoughts and forget details and drawing valions [sic], roll calls etc. etc. As to my things I want you to send me I cannot tell at present where to have them sent. They cannot be sent here now for the railroad is not completed through yet. It is expected that the cars will not be running through to Nashville for several days perhaps weeks. You may wait ,[illegible]evail,[illegible] or send them here as you please You know when and where we shall go as well as ourselves. I shall write soon again. You must write as often as possible telling all the news while I remain

Truly and affectionately [sic]

Eugene

Sidenotes: Sunday AM 9th

The cummaissary [sic] train ,[illegible] back to Michelville this morning So I will send you the half written letter It will assure you of my good health and safe arrival in Nashville often passing ,[illegible] a hard march. I know not how ,[illegible] I can write you ,[illegible] you need not send my things until I ,[illegible] when we shall winter I will write ,[illegible] E

Monday morning Nov. 11 1862

This letter is but a continuation of the one I sent off in a hurry yesterday. E  
Yes, many of our boys are tired of the war, wish themselves home, wish they had never come etc. etc. I do not wish as they and expected many of the privations that I have

found, but I really never thought it what it is and has been with us we left Louisville [sic] Oct. 1st and have travelled 38 miles since then averaging 1 miles a day. Some days we have run our 2 miles. Some days we have lain idle. We had no tents on the campaign until four days ago. I assure you they seemed like home. The three officers and I occupy one tent I room with them and live as well as they. I manage to carry but little more than our Captain in the march. The lieutenants carry some things for me in their sachel [sic] and other minor traps I truck into our tent. So I virtually carry no knapsack. Lieut. [sic] Ball is about used up and talks of resigning. Lieut. Miller is going to try to get a position from his cousin, who is Brig. Gen. Sick at Nashville. So there will probably be a change soon in our company officers. You need not think that I fare worse in my position than do Lieutenants and Captains. It is hard as those who carry their bed and board on their backs. The most blessed in the army ar [sic] the mounted men who only keep along with foot soldiers. I have ridden only a few times. two half days on the baggage wagon going to Bowling Green and the part of two days coming to Nashville, when the chaplain kindly let me ride his horse and that too, without asking.

I suppose I must tell you something of our long march here of near four hundred miles from Louisville, KY. We were a little more than thirty days performing it. The weather has favored us wonderfully, we being but a few times compelled to sleep out wet nights or march in the rain. The road however has been very dry, and dusty - ar [sic] sometimes scarcely able to distuiquish [sic] one from another. You would not have known me had you stood by the road side as we passed. Mrs. Joe Dow, however, picked me out as we passed through Chicago, almost as dusty as we have ever been since. We thought that five miles march was dreadful - true it was hard on us green as we were then, but it is little to compared with what we have endured since. Now we care not for dirt, heat, rain, or cold. When tired we lie down anywhere even in the center of the road. How would I look lying down in the road front of the Dry Store. Yet I have done so in the streets of some of the Kentucky cities! A soldier cares for nothing when brown with dust from head to foot.

Your letter shows that you know about as much if not more of the Kentucky or rather "Cumberland" Army than we who compose it. When we left our Camp near Crab Orchard we supposed we would go to Lebanon and take the cars either for Louisville or Nashville. We did not see Lebanon, but went around it [~~crossed out: and went~~] to Bowling Green. Contrary to our expectations we only stayed at that city (of six thousand inhabitants) but two days. We got some clothing. I got me a pair of sky blue pants of much better material than the dark blue ones we got at Chicago. We all had a good opportunity to clean up, with the water in Great Barren river. But we brushed off the dust only to be covered again in the tramp of 60 miles in four days to this city. On Wednesday we passed the state line into Tennessee. As we passed the stone heat marked the boundary a faint cheer was given and all seemed to walk and breath more freely "glad to get out of the Wilderness", fully satisfied with our experience in Kentucky,

assured that we had seen enough of her. There seemed to be no difference in the general aspect of the two states, save that the wind had shifted during the day and blew cold at night. I also hunted up the 51st Ill. But they were out on review, so that I saw only two of the boys. I first met 'Pud Bell' the same little round faced roque he was when he left his home James Sheppard was on guard somewhere but I could not find him, but I was told that he "stood it" well I had a long talk with Marcellas Metzgar in the Adjutants' office where he was staying while the reg. was out. He is looking very healthy and seem to be enjoying himself very much. He says his extra pay as clerk of [illegible] cents a day is played out so that he now receives only Soldiers' wages. But he has an easy time of it. He came part of the way over with me to camp. Would have come clear over but thought it too far. However, he rode over next day and saw the Rock Island boys. I assure you he was glad to see them. I suppose his reg. has left Nashville already as many troops are leaving today. I know not how soon we may go to. [sic] As to David W. he is in the 24th Wisconsin Reg. of our brigade. I see him frequently. He has kept well all the time and takes good care of himself I judge. His friends need not be alarmed about him. I have not seen McCasky since the divisions separated at Crab Orchard away up in Kentucky. I suppose they have either gone on to Cumberland Gap or marched back to Louisville.

Our division was reviewed the other day by Gen Rosencrans [sic]. Noticing that I had no knapsack on, he pleasantly remarked as he rode by. "Sergeant get all the law allows you, and keep it. Remember that Sergeant. Orderly Sergeant" We were standing at "present arms" I remained in the steady position of a soldier neither looking to the right or the left. I did not look up at him, tho [sic] I knew he was speaking to me, but as he said the last two words I bowed my head and he rode by. He joked pleasantly with the boys as he passed slowly up and down the ranks followed by his long train of mounted officer and men away [illegible] I noticed our division Gen. Sheridan, Gen. McCook and others connected with this army corps. We prepared for review at three o'clock, but Gen. R. did not come until sundown and it was so dark that I actually could not distinguish his features so that I should hardly know him to see him again.

We are all pleased that the Union Army is out of the hands of McClellan and Buell, both very suspicious characters. Much as I once thought of the former, I now hardly know whether to call him a traitor or an incapable General. I hope the war may soon end but the future is dark and to content myself and to avoid disappointment I place the end far off.

I am very sorry to hear of Mr. Taylors' [sic] death. "But many brave boys must fall." I also hear to day throu [sic] Lieut. [sic] Miller of the death of my classmate at Galesburg - Shield Many will probably remember him. He was a homely but good hearted fellow. [illegible] is a little unwell. Neetcolf has a lame foot. The other R.I. boys are well, who are with us. I have not heard from Hazeltin. We left him at Bowling Green. I hope to see him with [sic] his company soon again.

I leave it with [sic] you to send my things or not to me at Nashville, Tenn. I am credibly informed that the R.R. will be opened to Louisville in a few days. It can come to Nashville, but whether we shall remain or not is a question do as you please.

Truly

Eugene

Camp of the 88th Ill. Vols.

Near Nashville, Tenn. November 16th 1862

My dear folks at home -

before dinner I received a letter from you, and now that the dinner is through and your good letter read, I shall endeavor to talk to you about matters and things "away down South in Dixie".

Yours was written just one week ago today (Sunday). I wonder if you were sitting by that stove in the sitting room and I wonder if you had anything like winter up in that wonderful town of Port Byron. We if I recollect rightly, enjoyed a beautiful Indian Summers' day, had preaching (the first for a great while) and a brigade review in the afternoon. In the latter all our guns, ammunition knapsacks etc. were inspected by Gen. Grensel or some of his staff. You listened to sermons, sitting in the pews of a church. We sat on the ground and assembled in a grove as our temple. I know not what you all are doing today or in what a situation you are, but this Sunday finds me as hearty and well as ever I was. The camp is very quiet and really Sabbath like. The air is warm and a slight rain is gently falling. It would not be strange if our rainy weather set in here soon and it be our luck to make our next campaign in mud and wet. But to your letters - Mother need not talk of furloughs for no more furloughs are granted - not even sick furloughs. I certainly should love to be at home to eat some of your nice bread and especially butter. Besides if you would give me a drink of buttermilk to go with them, it would be all I would ask. Never mind your chickens and fruits, bread butter and milk would be high living for a soldier. Certainly I would love to sit down and eat a meal with [sic] you all, but there is no use talking I am in for the war and there is little use trying to get out of it as a live man or sound man. Mother need not look out for me to come on the cars, for I don't expect to come very soon. I tell the boys that two years is the least [illegible] I put to my absence from home and that I shall not be astonished if I stay many months longer.

I obtained a pass to Nashville last week and enjoyed myself very much. I accompanied the Captain [illegible]. We walked the narrow streets of a Southern city with eager eyes, viewing the deserted business houses, the vacant mansins [sic], the fortifications all with interest. Some pretty residences seemed to show no change on account of the

war, but all else told the great tale of war. The great and splendid State capitol is the line of [crossed out] of the city however. Situated on an eminence in the city, it is used as a fortification. The great blocks of stone that formed the fence around it, are used in the works around the building. On these works four huge cannon - besides two brass pieces are mounted. The building is filled with [sic] troops quartered there and everything seems to be going to sack - except the library and archives, which rooms I noticed were shut up. The two houses - that of Representatives and Senate now resumed with the noise and [illegible] not of prattling secessionists as it did a year ago, but of Soldiers, careless of carpets and chandelair [sic] and the splendid building once polluted with [illegible]. From the [illegible] we studied the map of the city, but I will not elaborate here, for my Journal contains all I could write you anyway. Remember me to Mrs [sic] Harper. I do not know how soon I can answer the S.S. letters

Eugene

On picket eight miles  
South of Nashville  
Sun. Nov. 23rd 1862

My dear folks at home

Good morning to you all this bright balmy beautiful Sabbath morning! I would love to be at home today and not away off here in Tennessee on the look out for the Secesh. The Rebels are said to be in force at Murfessboro [sic] only twenty two miles away. Their pickets are but a mile from where we are stationed. This is the nearest the 88th ever stood picket. But we anticipate no skirmish or anything of the kind. I who have no duty to perform enjoy picketing much more than being in camp, where the [illegible] is employed in drills and answering to the thousand calls for the "orderly" All I have to do here is to eat what the boys bring in to "us officers" after we have cooked it in the most exquisite manner. To day I am endeavoring to answer some letters. I have too long neglected. And yours first, for letters from home are the dearest ones that I get. It came to me just as we started from our camp on the other side of the river opposite Nashville. As we halted now and then I read it by piece meal until I had finished it. Mary writes of Mr. Temples' dissatisfaction. She would not think it strange had she heard the grumbings and swearing among the soldiers that I have heard, especially such as I heard the first two weeks on our campaign after Bragg. Tell Edward Gates that he would get tired of soldiering a great deal sooner than of any work he can do about Pt. Byron. Let him and Al Best try it two weeks on the march or sick in the ambulance or hospital a few days even, and they would wish themselves home again. Were I home again, I would be very slow to perform the duty - if it were a duty of

enlisting in the Army. Let Albert not think that he will better his condition by joining the army. Just tell him that I have seen the hardest days of my life since I left home last August. But I believe I am doing my duty - but it is a dreadful duty. Tell him of the 125th ILL regiment. I was perfectly astonished the other day to hear the facts in regard to it. They only turned out one hundred and twenty five men at dress parade! Our company which left Dixie with one hundred and ten men had only twelve out at company drill that day! Our regiment left Chicago with 85 men. Now we can muster only 5. We drew rations for 83 men for our company at Camp Fuller. Now I draw only 51 rations. But few of our men have died. The sickness in camp is what thins the ranks. You would be much interested in seeing the sick winding their way every morning when the "sick call" is sounded. Drooping over, hands in their pockets with long faces. The "sick, lame and lazy" march to the Surgeons' tent at the time of "Jim Along, A Josy". Many of our boys at first were inclined to make sport of them as they slowly passed by every day. One in particular always would laugh and cry out "There go the sick men!" I told him he might some day dance to the same tune. He little feared it strong and rugged as he was. But yesterday on our little march from camp here he fell out of the ranks and had not come up this morning at roll call. Being sick on the march especially is to be dreaded by Soldiers. Up to a few days ago our reg. had the usual number of ambulances - two - now we have four. But that many is none too many. There are always more applicants than can be accomodated [sic] and on such a hard lot falls. Many a poor soldier's heart has sunk within him as he lay by the road side - refused a ride - and unable to keep along with [sic] his regiment and often with [sic] his division, to say nothing of his brigade. I have seen a stout hearted man [illegible] as after every exertion had failed - he left the ranks, leaned his musket against the fence and lay down only to see his company, the Surgeons, and regiment after regiment pass on careless of "stragglers". Let Edward Gates or Albert be "piled up" in a fence corner down among the hills of Tennessee and if he does not wish himself as a [illegible] at home, with plenty to eat and plenty of friends then I will give you my hat and come home on a furlough! There is no fun in war!

Mother hopes I "will find better quarters in Nashville" compared with our life during our forty days campaign. We live at home in our tents with little to do and enough to eat and variety enough (to those who have money.) We have here an opportunity to buy little articles which the govt does not furnish but as a general thing the prices are enormous. Coffee sells at 8 sugar 5 bakers bread 111 a loaf - a piece about six inches square! Every thing else in the same proportions - butter 75! I suppose when the cars get throu [sic] things will change and prices come down. I understand that today the train direct from Louisville will be in. It certainly will be soon for they have a large force at work on the road. The principle damage to be repaired is a tunnel this side of Mitchelville which was exploded full of rocks by the rebels. I believe I was told that the tunnel is two miles

long! This has been the delay in completing connections between it and the rest of the world.

Sidenote: I do not want any more of Mr. Hughs boots Those I left home with I gave to Coz Isiah before I left Chicago The Army shoes with sewed buttons are the thing.

The weather now is delightful. The days are clear and just cool enough - perfect Spring weather. I cannot think however our rest and good weather can exist together. But our hardest marching must be over [illegible] any way for I have learned "the old soldier" and carry no knap-sack. Only an extra overcoat, which - if too warm - I sling over my shoulder on my sword. I have no doubt but we shall stay in our present camp several days - for we must have some clothing before winter comes any farther - And besides the enemy seems to be not a great way off.

We had a grand foraging expedition this week, Wednesday, Thursday and half of Friday. It consisted of four hundred teams of six mules each. With a guard of fifteen hundred men, under command of Col. Sherman. We started out in a rain storm but were so fortunate as to get a ride to the place where the teams were loaded Our ride tho [sic] it saved our feet from injury was hard an our bodies. Those army wagons are the most dreadful things to ride in I ever saw. Many times I had to stand up going over the strong pikes. But we were kept free from the mud and rain so that we were much pleased with our ride withal. The only accident that happened on the way was to the 85th Ill. An old dead tree fell across the road as the wagon carrying them were passing, killing two soldiers instantly and mortally wounding two others. We saw one of the guns all bent up as we returned the day after.

The teams were loaded from the property of an old secesh who is said to own eight square miles of land there on the Cumberland. We drove ahead of us many hogs, and sheep, and cattle which we picked up around the "digging".

The day we came back to camp was most pleasant indeed and we all enjoyed the march very much. I picked a sprig of Juniper with the little blue berries set beautifully among the leaves. I meant to send it home but have lost it since.

Sidenotes: This page I have added since we returned from picket cannot write more now

The Captain had a letter from Geo. Hazelton today He is quite sick at Bowling Green Hospital Four he says he is gaining slowly.

Serg. Meacham is along with us tolerably well He eats too much! Tell Fred to save some of these apples until the war is over but I dont [sic] think they will keep two years!

Sidenotes: Do as you think best about sending my things There are 250 turis [sic] of express matter in Louisville for the Army but do as you think best They will make ? me some time [end of letter]

In camp seven miles from  
Nashville, Nov. 25th 1862

Dear Father -

I have just learned the painful fact that Geo. Bodwell Hazelton is dead. The Sergeant Major of our regiment has returned from a visit to the various hospitals where our sick soldiers have been left. He informs me he died the day before he - the Sergeant - arrived at Bowling Green, which was some time last week. I have learned no particulars and can say no more, than that he was greatly respected by all the boys and that they learn with great sorrow the departure of so highly an esteemed friend. When others murmured and complained in the dusty hard days march he kept on perseveringly, without one word of complaint. He was ever kind and gentlemanly and always ready to do his duty. When I told Lieut [sic] Miller that Geo. Hazelton was dead, he remarked to me that "he was the very best boy in our company" and all esteemed him such. Our company will miss a noble soldier from the ranks and his men the best from their number. Any additional particulars that I may learn I will write immediately.

It is probable that his friends have heard of his decease before this, but I promised to write them of anything happening to him. You will inform them of the contents of this, if they have not heard. I suppose his remains could be found at Bowling Green without much difficulty as I believe the graves are marked. I understand that the graves of those who fell at Perryville were all marked.

I cannot write more now for the mail goes out soon. I am very well and really enjoying my self. We have a mess chest now in the Captains [sic] tent and have the gratification of eating and drinking from nice white dishes!

The prospects are that we shall lie here a week or two.

Eugene

Camp of the 88th Reg. Ill Vols.  
Dec. 4th 1862

My Dear Father

The arrival of a large amount of things from Chicago for the 88th last evening induces me to send after whatever you have ready for me. You - I think - had better express the box to Jisiah (or Dearborn) and let him send it along with some one going to the 88th as some one is going there very frequently. The express ruin through to Nashville now, but hundreds of trns [sic] of matter cannot get through. I am in great need of stockings, Boots you need not send unless you can fit me.

My health is good tho [sic] suffering with a bad cold. Settled in my head causing considerable headache, the first since entering the army. I have plenty of turkey, chicken, pig etc. etc. to live upon now since the Brigade forage master - (a man from our company) messes with us - I am not in want of money and you need not send any,

tho [sic] I have none. The Chaplain owes me ten dollars and the boys eight for things I have sold them. There is not much chance of air being paid off at present, tho [sic] the 36th Ill of our Brigade got their Green Backs today.

I send a letter for Geo. B. Hazelton and one from him to Capt [sic] which you will hand his folks.

The R.I. boys are well - excepting Hall who is getting over a cold and Sheppard who has been under the weather but getting "fit for duty" as the Surgeon writes in my Sick Report Book.

I send a sprig of Juniper to Mother to remember my Thanksgiving Day by. Tell her I can't come home Christmas, but intend to spend the winter "here" at the "South".

I am affectionately your son

Eugene

Camp of the 88th on Mill Creek

five miles from Nashville

Sunday Dec. 14th 1862

My Dear Parents

I have not received the usual weekly letter this last week that you probably wrote last Sunday nor have I written you for over a week. And I have not written either because I have not found time or have not taken it from the broken hours of an "orderlys" [sic] life. Could I collect all my spare moments into one bunch I could write columns of matter to "my five hundred friends" but when you have to run a half a dozen times to detail a man for this and others for that, while writing a page of note paper you may well excuse me for putting it off, and putting it off until a more convenient season. Sundays are generally occupied in recimmissances [sic] or foraging expeditions or reviews and when they are not so used they afford the only spare time I have for writing letters. I did not go to hear the Chaplain preach this forenoon because I determined to finish a letter to Coz. Charlie I commenced last Sunday. I wrote her nine solid pages like this telling her of my wanderings and experiences in the sunny South. I do not remember when I wrote her before since I joined this Army.

Since I wrote you last, we have been ordered to march and had those orders countermanded several times. First came the order one night about midnight to have three days cooked rations in our haversacks immediately and be ready to march at a moments' notice so we were up all that night "fussing around" and in obedience to "red tape" the companies were got all ready to start at five o'clock and waited and waited until ten when we were ordered out in battallines [sic] drill! So ended the forenoon.

About two the long roll was sounded and the whole regiment as well as the rest of the brigade was drawn out in line of battle just as if the rebels were upon us. There we rested on our arms until sundown when we were ordered back to camp. The occasion [sic] of all this movement was picket firing along our lines during the day. The next day we were on picket and were nearer the butternuts than we were ever before for we could hear their drums and at night see the light of their fires about a mile or two off. We expected an attack in the morning and of course kept a vigilant watch during the night. The day we went on picket was a beautiful day and our company was gested [sic] down in a little hollow in a charming grove of beech hickory oak walnut and maple trees. And as we walked along through the thickly fallen leaves I could not but think of Mrs. Kennans "September days" and specially of "Heaped in the hollows of the grass, The withering leaves lie dead, Which nestle to the eddying gust, Or to the rabbits tread." In such a concealed place, we were allowed fires during day and night and a neighboring fence supplied us with rails. So there we spent the day reading, writing, eating or cooking. The great abundance of nuts here is a fine thing for us soldier and, the dry wrathes [sic] holding on so long they do not spoil by the exposure. When I feel like taking a "crack" I do not "of course" go to the garret and help myself from the barrel or to the woodhouse, but only step a little outside of the camp lines and pick them from the ground, all day and nice. So on picket the principal thing we do is to eat. In fact this may be called the principal employment of the soldier!

I wish you could have heard our hearty laughter, when a little dutchman, strait [sic] as a saw rod, and full of self confidence, went to drilling two men in the manner of arms. To hear him say "shoulder arms"! In his short German accent. The performance was most comical I assure you, and we lay on the leaves and laughed almost loud enough to be heard in the rebel camp.

The 27th Ill relieved us and from them I learned that they were in the same brigade as the 51st and that their camp was just across the road from our encampment. So when we returned to our new camp (for everything had been changed while we were away) I started off and visited the 51st. Who should I first see but Henry Mut? He looks not the same square [illegible] he was at Pr. Byron, but much thinner Still he looks healthy excepting his eyes are quite sore. Mrs [sic] Day also is troubled with sore eyes. Lieut. Whitman took me into his tent where Mr. Cole now acting Lieut. was. I had a very pleasant time while I stayed. Lewis Genning has been sick and does not look strong yet. Millard Bowkes has grown to be a handsome young man. James Sheppard looks well. Marcellus M. was off to town, but called over today and I had a long talk with him. Allen Gray a classmate of mine at Evanston is Commissary Sergeant in the 51st - he called to see me day before yesterday. He is the same jolly [illegible] but has lost all the earnest religion he had at college. I remember how he used to be ever ready to start tunes such as "There'll be no more sorrow there etc." in Professor Neyes' class meeting. He says he got along very well during the three months service but since then he has had such

an inclination to swear and steal (as all soldiers have) that he has got over it all. He says of James Milner that he will get ever so jolly now and then and that Omen Foster is very noisy now and then. I am sorry for Jim Milner. He was a very smart young man and while I boarded with him I learned to love him. His parents must feel very bad, for they were so glad that he had performed as he did at one of the Chicago Prayer [crossed out] Camp meetings. It is strange to think how careless men will get in the army. The Chaplain only had two or three dozen men to listen to his sermon today. He is not very interesting in his sermons and, then, the Colonel takes every opportunity to snubb [sic] him. Mr. Thomas had a hard time of it among the set of officers at the head of the regiment. Our Col. drinks a great deal, but not withstanding this and many other objectionable characteristics about him, he understands his business pretty well. He is a good deal like Capt. Dodge in many respects. No one speaks to praise him but to use his own language of himself (which I overheard) he "has been cursed to h-l a dozen times by every man in the regiment". Still we all place a great deal of confidence in him. For instance, he had been gone a short time ago on a court martial about a week and left the Lieut. Col. in command, but he being unaccustomed to command made a great many balks. And the men really cheered and sprung to their arms with a bound when the old familiar voice of the Col. called us to "attention", on his return when we were in line one day.

You doubtless have heard or read in the papers of Rosecrans' army being provided with shelter tents. You know we now have these large, commodious Sibley tents shaped like figure (1) [note: a cone shaped tent is hand drawn here] about twelve feet high and twenty feet in diameter across the base. capable of holding twenty men. They are warm and shed the water well. The shelter tent represented by Figure (2) [note: a triangular shaped tent is hand drawn here] are made by buttoning two pieces of common factory cloth together at the top and pinned to the ground at the sides, with a pole upright at each end held by gray ropes fastened by pins. These tents are very small, opened at each end, but made so that more than one tent can be buttoned together at the ends. It is calculated for a man to carry one half of a tent – a piece of cloth about four feet by six - and that two men shall sleep in a tent made of the two pieces. How almost useless such shelters will be in a rain or in cold weather you can judge. The whole army so far as we can hear have decided they will not have such things - in short refuse to take them and say they will not give up the Sibleys. Our brigade has so decided - so has the one in which is the 51st Ill. You would have been pleased to hear our state brigade shout and scream out "fall in for your 'dog houses'" one evening when they were brought to us and one was pitched in front of the Col. headquarters. The little miserable things go by the name of "dog houses" everywhere here among the soldiers. I know not how the tent question will turn out - whether we shall be forced to take them and give up these or not. Gen. Halleck, I believe ordered them for the army. They would certainly save baggage trains, but the soldiers have enough load now to carry on their

backs. They carry their bed and board - Must they also carry their houses to live in? In any event I shall be all right for the officers can have a wall tents all of the square ones you see often pictures like the diagram in this corner. [note: a tent with walls and closed front is hand drawn here]

- Monday evening - I wish you could look in upon us now just as we are. The rain is pattering on the tent - and goes "drip, drip out doors It began at two o'clock when we were falling in the company for brigade drill, but the Col. came around and told us to dismiss the company", when, with a shout, the boys ran into their tents. I wonder if I can give you an idea of our circumstances! Now look at the drawing. [note: a circle with numbers is drawn here] No. 1 is the door of the tent where the water drips in a little. No. 2 is the mess chest with cover opening toward No 10 the centerpole. on the chest are our dishes being washed by the cook (a man from our company) who sits at No. 6. No. 4 is where Lieut. Miller sits reading "The Independent". No. 5 is where Johnston brigade foragemasters (or thief as we call him) sits talking with Lieut. Ball (No. 8). That square spot is our fire place, made by digging a hole in the ground and covering the ditch, which runs out side, with flat stones, and a hollow log for a chimney. At No. 9 Capt. Spalding sits looking over his valise. No. 7 is where the nigger ("Scott" about 14 years old) was "fussing" about when I drew the diagram - he now is pounding coffee on the hearth [sic] stone in a bag, for breakfast. Under the edge of the tent behind (4) is our straw (Lieut. [illegible] and mine) and where we sleep after spreading it out. We are just of a hight [sic] and bothe [sic] 21 years of age - and withal are very congenial companions all around. I was very much pleased to receive your letter of last Sunday - Enclosed I found \$2.00 and postage stamps - both will come very handy. It seems very strange for you to be talking of cold weather and everything frozen up - skating etc for here we have had no real cold spells yet. I have not really needed mittens or anything you can send unless it be stockings. They are very scarce indeed. If we do not get a supply soon from Uncle Sam we shall have to go without excepting the few who are lucky enough to get some expressed from home. The Capt. gave me two pairs of cotton socks tonight which will be sufficient for me for many weeks. Could you send my things by some one coming to the 88th from Chicago. I would get them. Now that we have been here so long, if they were expressed to Nashville we might be gone so as never to get them.

Yes, I "can buy things" here but at enomours [sic] prices; for instance, a good pair of boots costs from \$8. to \$14, down here, tho [sic] I got me a very good pair, by chance, for \$7. this afternoon.

Albert must try and study [illegible] thoroughly - I should love to now, for it tells so much how wars were carried on in Caesars' day and he can compare them with modern modes. How much we all have learned since the "dogs of war" were let slip at Sumpter! [sic] I rejoice with Albert that "he has plowed his last furrow" and I believe you will

rejoice with me, when I have fought my last battle and no sound shall awake me to glory again.”

I think it is very doubtful about Lieut. Whiton and “Sell” Metzgar going home at Christmas. It is no easy thing to get away without talking [illegible] leave. Nor have they said anything to me about it I am not coming then nor shall I try for it is no use. I do not know but I saw Mr. Alexander in Nashville when we passed thro [sic] there, for I saw a countenance on the street which looked like his tho [sic] thinner. I did not speak for I was not certain about him.

Tell Fred that the “battle of Cornstalks” of which Mary speaks in her letters two weeks ago, brings to mind the battle of Perryville where we fired at a corn field full of rebels, tho [sic] we could not see them. After the battle was over that evening I went into the field a few steps and on looking at a couple of stalks by my side. I found that each had been riddled by our musket balls. Tell him I guess I was in the greatest battle! I hope I shall never see another such a one. Still sometimes I almost long for [crossed out] for a fight. If it does come, I shall try hard to do my duty.

The R.I. boys are all well. Sgt. Meachaem is very fleshy now He eats too much and begins [sic] to [illegible] He will get sick with a fever. I am fattening up fast but am very careful of my diet and shall to hard to keep in good health. I purpose to write to my Sunday School soon if possible. I do not forget those dear [illegible]

Truly Eugene

His last letter.

Camp of 88th Ill Vol 8 miles  
North of Murfresboro [sic] Dec. 28th  
Sunday 3 PM

Dear Folks

We moved day before yesterday from Camp on Mill Creek and arrived here yesterday in an awful rain. We traveled the day before while the water came down in torrents and the boys were yelling like mad dogs - some in fact barking. Some giving the usual order in battle “lie down” - all exceedingly merry. But it cleared off last night and the weather is beautiful today. We reached here with only a few skirmishes with the enemys [sic] out posts. Friday, lost 13 killed and wounded. 3 killed – our men of course “they say” the rebs [sic] lost more.

I dont [sic] know whether we shall have a fight or not - you can judge as well as I. The enemy is here and may make a stand. I believe all will be well with me.

We are in a land of plenty - you would judge so could you see the loads of nice [illegible], mutton, poultry, flour meal and tobacco [sic] that has been coming in, in a perfect stream. Talk of the rebels starving! When the planters' cellars are stuffed full of provisions for the army. We cannot starve them out and I begin to think we can't whip them. They can hold out as long as we. They need only half our force to hold the hill, and strong positions all along their borders. This is the opinion of the soldiers and will be mine ere long I believe! Lieut. Muston is Capt. now. I called on him last night. Write often I love to read your letters.

I am truly

Eugene

Sidenote: Lieut. Bace has handed in his resignation He cannot stand the service. If anything occurs of importance I will write immediately if not when I get a chance.

He died at the Battle of Stone [sic] River Dec. 31, 1862.

Camp Douglas

Aug. 17th Sunday

My dear folks

I have been [illegible] around the camp among the tents to find a planed board to write on. I am now sitting near the door of the tent within which the men are lying on the ground, some writing, some discussing the tendency of drinking so much coffee as we all do, and some reading etc.

When we arrived in town last Wednesday eve. we found that Capt. Bolls [sic] men had gone to Camp Douglas- is to speak [illegible] strictly - below Camp Douglas proper in Cottage [illegible]. I went to Mrs. Haines - the other two men of mine to a hotel. Mrs. Haines folks are all well. They are moving the buildings now. A (CATS or LOTS) letter from Honorable says he is wearing away rapidly. Thursday I waited all day at Capt. Christophers office to be mustered in and at night when that operation was performed he repeated the oath so rapidly that we hardly knew what we were swearing. Friday I waited at the Court House for my bounity [sic] check all day - There was such a rush every where in the military line. We do not expect our money to come around for some time.

As you will notice in todays [sic] Tribune Capt. Bolls [sic] company and Capt. Spaldings [sic] effected a consolidation yesterday - We gave him the Captains [illegible] and are [illegible]and one corporal for 35 men. At the election Spalding was put in Capt. Miller first - and Boll Second Lieutenant Meachaus and I are to have the first two searjeucys [sic]- Wheter [sic] he or I will be "orderly" I cannot tell. I stand a pretty good chance for it. Will know tomorrow but whatever I get I shall not complain. I am so glad that we have a good man for our Captain. Capt. S. is a member of the YMC association and well recommended to us by Eids Boring and Harvey. He is quite young and very kind and pleasant. We have many good men in our company but two or three who drink

Last night we got our blankets 84 of us what a gay 84 we were. I slept very [illegible] but I lay awake till two o'clock there was such a noise in the tents around us - singing, whistling, talking, laughing fiddling etc. etc. How strange it sounded! And today what a strange Sunday! We were marched to the lake before breakfast for a wash, and have been drilling all on Sunday! Men cutting wood, boxing laughing, running and everything else make a curious Sunday! In fact there is no Sunday in Camp. There are bible classes and preching [sic]

I tried to get out of camp this morning to stay with Mrs. Haines but the Colonel would give no pass. He gave only two to [illegible] guard tomorrow.

Mr. Neatheror is our cook. Mr. Sheppard is an odd [illegible] talks sometimes of hitching up his tram to go to oak home to hear Mrs. Flehasty! Says he is going home sh[illegible] hands with the guys and says "good" [illegible] complains some this morning but I [illegible] he is not much unwell. I think you would laugh to see us in our tents at the table with our tin cups of coffee and tin plates or any [illegible] But I like this lazy life, will gain fat on it -

Eugene

Side notes: You will save these letters as I shall keep no other Journal.

Do not write to me until I can give you my address. I shall write again soon. E

Chicago Ill.

Aug. 21st 1862

Dear Folks

You probably have been looking for a letter from me every mail, and you should have received one, had I not been so busy. I was fortunately put in a "Orderly" by our officers, they gave me the office because they had promised it to me as certain, and because (as they say) they thought me a person very fit to have it. The duties of the office keep me going a greater part of the time. I have to call the roll four times - or more - a day, take them to the lake before breakfast drill them at tree, make repents every morning to the adjutant (who by the way, complimented me this morning as having made the first [illegible] rep [illegible] draw the rations daily, detail men for guard and police duty, and answer the hundred and one calls for the "orderly"

I suppose I shall never be so busy again as I have been for a few days past. I have so many [illegible] rolls to make out etc etc that I can hardly think of home or anything else.

Today I am in the Court House square as a tent recruiting [sic], we have 86 men in camp, but we wish to get all that we can, recruiting [sic] is a very easy business (herr) [sic] All that I have to do is to sit in my tent and wait for recruits to come in. I wish you could see me now as I write amid the noise of the streets and the banting of drums, I can count 13 recruiting [sic] tents from my - there are several men in the other side of the court house.

I shall stop at Mrs. Haines night until I go back into camp. She is very kind to me and wishes me to act as I would at home. They have been moving the house across the street and everything is upside down. But if I cannot find lodging in the house - as I am a soldier, I can lie out in the ground. The boys do it frequently down in camp in [illegible]ference to sleeping in the tent. For instance, are [illegible] on comming [sic] out of my tent, whom should I see wrapped up in his blanket with a stick of c d-wood for a pillow, but Samuel Odell?

I was greatly [illegible] to do something similar last night, it was so warm, but the officers calling me to there [sic] tent I stayed inside with them. But we did not succeed in getting to sleep until after a long time of laughing and story telling. We do have jolly times now, but it will be different when we get down in the Land of Cotton probably. But here we stand to live or die, live

Our men had a prayer meeting last evening in one of our tents. The tent was so crowded and so many were crowded around the [illegible] that I could not get in, [illegible] than holy of our men were present to say nothing of men from other companies.

When you write - direct your letters to me in care of Capt. J. J. Spalding Box 4343  
Chicago, Ill.

I shall probably [illegible] again tomorrow. It is sundown now and I must shut up shop

Very truly

Eugene A. Lyford

Chicago

August 31, 1862

Dear Father,

I succeeded in getting out of camp once more yesterday, but only on the plea of ill health. You must not conclude that camp life does not agree with me for in fact the cause of my complaints lies in the kindness of the friends of Capt. Spalding and his men. During the first part this last week our tables groined [sic] under heaps of cakes, pies, chickens, fruits, etc. etc. My appetite [sic] has been excellent from the day I went into camp two weeks ago. And when these things came it "got the better of me" A dose of pills and dieting I think will bring me out all right.

I do not fear, if I can only take proper care of myself which I shall try to do. I hope Mother will not be anxious about me for I am with the best of friends. The Ccptain keeps me in his tent and let me lie on his cot when I felt most unwell. He took me out of camp last Sunday to church. I heard him bid "good bye" to his Sunday School Last Friday evening he went to his class in Black Street Church, of which he has been the leader for five years. He is praised by all who know him.

Although we probably shall have a drunken Colonel and have already a drunken [illegible] most skillful and experienced Surjeon [sic]. I am thankful and contented that was Captain is a man every inch of him. My mind is made up to [illegible] the war through if I can have life; at any rate I shall try to be prepared for the onset. Let not my Mother be troubled for me for all I know is well in any [illegible]

I suppose we shall [illegible] in a few days I am truly Eugene

Side note: I sp[illegible] last evening pleasantly with Miss Luci Bragdon She and Miss Sesuken came to see me

Camp Fuller  
Sept. 3rd 1862

My dear parents,

We have orders to leave tonight either to Kentucky by way of Louisville or by Cairo. All is haste and hurry. I am ready to go wherever [sic] I am sent. I know not whether I go to return again or not, but I trust all is well. If I can do any good in the cause of my country I ask no more.

I received a letter from Annie and Aunt M. today. They think I am doing my duty. Aunt M. quotes a passage from the Bible which she says was her concolation [sic] while F. was in camp!

I feel much better since Miss Louie B. and Annie Simpson took me out of camp last Saturday! I did not return from the city until Monday I spent a great part of Sunday at the house of the Western Editire [sic] of the rural New Yorker Chas. D. Brajeon Esq. I enjoyed myself very much.

I have not written often, because I have been too busy to do so. You need not write me until you hear from me again.

In great haste  
Eugene A. Lyford  
88th Reg. Ill. Col.

Camp Sherman  
Jeffersonville, Ind.  
Sept. 7th 1862

My very dear folks at home,

My last letter was written at Camp Fuller, Chicago, on the eve of departure to where we knew not, although we suspected we would go to Louisville. The next morning marching orders came, knapsacks were packed, tents struck, "Uncle Samuels" great baggage wagons loaded with tents, cooking utensils and officers baggage and the companies marched out one by one from the beautiful grove in which we had been eucoupied [sic] - first grassy then bare ground.

Our little march of five miles from camp to the depot by way of the Board of Trade building was a very severe one. In the middle of the day, through a thick cloud of dust we wound our way thru water [illegible] barbs of the city. When we arrived at Michigan Avenue near the middle of the city the column was halted and oh! how glad we all were, two of our company fainted and all of us cried in impatience for water. Kind friends brought out great tubs of it. Pailful after pailful disappeared until the eight hundred men were satisfied. We rested for about a half of an hour, when the regiment wheeled [illegible] platforms and marched up to the Board of Trade rooms. The [illegible] made a few farewell remarks. Among others he said we were their children, their sons and brothers. His talk does not [illegible] very well with our treatment so far, for we were placed into a lot of fright care with [illegible] rather bunches in their [sic]. Crackers and cheese and boiled ham were given us. Then we rode to Indianapolis [sic]. We arrived there Friday morning. We waited about the railroad depot until two in the afternoon when we were placed in these coal cars exposed to the burning sun and the burning cinders from the locomotive. We endured the fumes as well as we could until the sunset in the west and the latter we fought until midnight when we arrived at Jeffersonville. We were welcomed all along the way with cheers and waving handkerchiefs, fruits cold water and so forth. Friday morning the train stopped for half an hour. And we all got off washed up and helped ourselves to fruit which was very plenty [sic]. I got some buttermilk and was very thankful that I had learned to like it. We reached Jeffersonville late at night tired, covered with dust, eyes full of cinders and generally used up. We were glad enough to get off although there dust was deep and the air hot. In the clear moonlight, and the dead still of midnight we formed into columns and marched to a neighboring [illegible] and spread our weary bodies on the ground [sic] to sleep and dear me! how we did sleep. Before I knew it almost the drums beat for [illegible] and we all had to spring into rank for roll call. I got my breakfast at a neat little cottage in company with Luit. [sic] Boll and one of the Captains. I had some coffee, hot biscuits [sic] and syrup. O how good they were! That little simple meal made me feel that [illegible] For thru years is not like that of twenty years past at home and at college. At eleven o'clock we were marched two miles to another company Ground an ex. Senator Jesse Borright who was lately expelled from the Senate brick yard opposite the Kentucky shore. There has been a great many reynements [sic] in camp here before. Where they first came bright had a great brick kiln on the ground. The ground becomming [sic] very muddy last winter, the soldiers took them and made walks all over the camp. In short Jesse Brights brick yard and bricks were confiscated! The camp ground now is in a meserable [sic] condition rough and baked hard as a rock. Six or eight shade trees use ole we lane for shelter from the hot sun besides a tents. But we have good cool springs of water and a whole river to bathe in at [illegible], Louisville is opposite and a little below. It is quite a larger city between 60 and 70 thousand I believe. Jeffersonville has some eight thousand inhabitants. There are two [illegible] boats there building. There is

a very large camp over the river. Regiments go over daily. I hear that the Dixon reg is already there. If so I shall see my friends [illegible]. When we go across the Ohio I do not know probably not until we get our Army. Perhaps [sic] not for, [illegible] four weeks, I do hope we shall not be pushed into the field until we are ready, as some have been.

There is great excitement here now We [illegible] of recent movement of the rebels. Over one hundred leading merchants and banker of Louisville are shut up in the states prison here. The city of Louisville is under Marshall Law. Business is stopped and the people frightened generally tho [sic] there is less anxiety [sic] now than there has been for some days past. These new regiments comming [sic] in have compelled the rebels to fall back.

I went to church today with Captain Spalding. The Chaplain of the states prison invited us to dinner We had all we could eat of chicken potatoes, tomatoes, peaches pudding and [illegible] different kind of [illegible]

He was up tonight and talked to us. While we were at his house he had a great deal to say about the war. He has four sones [sic] in the army and must take great interest in the events of the day. He kindly asked us to call in any time.

Camp life suits me very well so far tho [sic] it is a hard one. The way we were [illegible] around coming from Chicago warns us that we must be prepared for the worst. I am feeling exceedingly well and looking much better than when I left home. You shall see my brown face in a few days if I can get out to the city and have some photographs taken. All the fault I have to find is that I am too busy cannot hardly find time do anything I want to do. I trust the day is not far distant where I shall have learned an "orderelys [sic]" business so well as to leave it for a less driving one. Three "Orderelys [sic]" were made Second Luetent [sic] day before we left Chicago on the promotion of their Captains.

I wish you could see how we live here. Up at sunrise for roll call. From six til [sic] seven squad drill At seven breakfast quarter before eight. Surgeons call eight quard mounting Nine to ten officers drill Tweleve [sic] dinner then battalrim [sic] drill and dress parade. Sundown roll call Nine o'clock roll call So you see they keep us going all day. These warm night I sleep out on the ground and I sleep so sweetly on the banks of the Ohio!

Please excuse me for not writing before and for writing so coredessly [sic] now I cannot do else under these circumstances Much love to all my friends Send my mail to me at Jeffersonville, Indiana care Capt. Spalding Co I 88th Ill Col. to follow the regiment

I am your truly

Eugene

Covington KY.

Sept. 12th 1862

Friday morning

My dear parents -

Night before last at dress parade down in camp at Jeffersonville, Indiana the order came that we would get ready to march immediately. It was rumored that we would go to Cincinnati [sic]. Our army came at the edge of evening and we were fitted out with everything complete by midnight. We had our uniformite = a blouse coat, a dress coat and overcoat one pair of pants two pairs of drawers two pair of stockings two shirts a knapsack one blanket one haversack one cartridge box one canteen a rifled musket etc. etc. All these things make a good load for us to carry. We marched to the depot about three o'clock but did not leave the Ohio until daybreak. With what gest everybody along the road cheered us! The nearer we approached Cincinnati the more was the interest in us. We ride for twenty five or thirty mile the other side of the city I enjoyed hugely. the road all the way was along a deep winding ravine with hills rising on either side covered with foliage of the most pleasing variety. The long train of cars full inside and covered on top with soldiers wound [illegible] is way along the crooked road like [illegible] huge snake. The track is a broad gauge and hence there is little danger in fact. The train flew like lightening all the way It seemed they went the fastis [sic] among the hills when the road was most winding. The hills as we approached Cincinnati [sic] were covered with vinyards [sic]. Such a sight I never saw But for most of the way between Jeffersonville and here the country is baren [sic] and broken, covered with rocks. I saw what I have heard described rocks in piles all over a wheat field. Samuel Odell [end of letter]

Side note: Here is a letter I cummenced [sic] the other day

E

Covington KY.

Sept. 14th 1862

Sunday 5 o'clock AM

Dear Father,

I wish I could find time to write you long letters frequently but it is impossible, moving as we are every day. From Jeffersonville, Ind. we went to Cincinnati last Thursday and were welcomed warmly by everybody. The citizens gave us a good supper. We went over the river and a [illegible] bridge after supper and encamped in this city we are open spot. It [illegible] pretty much all night. I was partially protected by a share of the Captains rubber blanket. [illegible] it seemed odd enough to have the rain pouring down [illegible] over feet [illegible] We have changed camp in this city twice [illegible] there, and are somewhere this morning probably not far.

The [illegible] to the city of Cincinnati is war. The rebels are retreating. I am well. Shall write when I can, so not be anxious, about me

Truely [sic] Eugene

Letter blurred from the rain

In camp near  
Covington KY. Sunday  
Sept. 14th 1862

My dear sister Mary

I wrote a hasty letter to father last night before we had left the city of Covington I have time this after noon as all the camp have either to sleep or write. I am sitting in our corner of my nice rubber blanket I brought yesterday in the city. The Captain is occupying the remainder of it, asleep. Lieutenant Miller is stretched out on the ground by my side. Sergant [sic] Meacham is lying just out side the tent asleep Lieutenant Boll has taken our canteens and gone out of the lines after some water. I packed my port folio in a box this morning before we left our other camp so I borrowed this sheet of paper from Private Sheppard. It is placed in my diary which is just as long as the paper is wide. And which I bought where at Chicago. It [illegible] helped me pick it out and to her I promised to send it when it was filled and she will send it to Port Byron. I have written in it only twice, but I have written ten pages. I will have a plenty to write in it no doubt. My letters home will certain about the same Mother however.

I am much pleased with camp life and there is only one objective I have to being a non commissined [sic] officer and that is the carrying heavy knapsacks. Just think a knapsack containing a shirt a pair of stockings a pair of drawers and overcoat a dress coat and a blanket a haversack full of saturis [sic] and trinkets a canteen holding two

quarts a cartridge box containing forty unused of cartridges a belt holding [illegible] [illegible] box and bayonet [sic] and a musket All these amount to forty pounds or more. One thing is certain I will not carry so much I cannot. We can [illegible] men. I have not so far. I have packed my extra shirt and drawers blanket and stocking in the officers [sic] baggage and if the time comes when I cannot do this my overcoat may go "to the dogs" and so may my shirt and drawers Very few of the old solders [sic] we meet every day have knapsacks. They say a man cannot carry them. All they have is a blanket and [illegible] one suit of clothes I shall stripe [sic] myself in the same way before I shall carry such loads and so will most of our company. We have had no severe marching yet. [illegible] loaded was that one from Camp Fuller to the RR depot in Chicago.

As a general thing we have a plenty to eat, although sometimes we are about starved and long for our Mothers [sic] pantry. Usually we can buy almost anything we appities [sic] crave. Our bread now is hard crackers I am found [sic] of them, perhaps it is because they are something new.

I keep my things in the Captains [sic] tent and stay there most of the day. But generally sleep outside of the tent. I lay my [illegible] rubber blanket on the ground put on my overcoat and cover up with my blanket if necessary. I lay out last night and a woke about one o'clock from a sound sleep [illegible] when the cooks were getting the rations ready. Roasted some sweet potatoes the boys had confiscated! Drank some coffee and went to bed. In the morning I dreamed a regular soldiers [sic] dream. I dreamed I was leaving for the wars and [illegible] many ladies and gentlemen sang some of my favorite sabbath school song Also another interesting dream which I will not disclose.

Our camp is placed in a wheat field The most beautiful place we have had. The tents are pitched in military style They [illegible] run are sound at the base and come to a finish at the top. The bottom I fastened by stanor [sic] to the ground and when all are fixed so at the sound of the drum the tents open whole camp rise at the same time being lifted up in the center on the tent pole. They are all struck likewise at the same time. It looks well I assure you to see a camp appear in a moments I do not know when we shall [illegible] again perhapas [sic] again in a few days. Write to me soon [illegible] to Cincinnati Ohio 88th Reg. to follow the Reg Co. I

Very truly Eugene A Lyford

Camp Coatsworth near  
Covington, KY.

Wednesday Sept. 17th 1862

Dear Father and Mother,

I have a few moments to write this morning and will improve the opportunity [sic]. I believe I wrote you last Sunday soon after our arrival at this camp. Nothing of importance has taken place since then. The scorching sun pours down regularly everyday. It seems strange too that it [illegible] accustomed all my life to expect a storm immediately after a hot spell of weather. Not so here. Each day is alike. Hot from eight AM until six PM. Evenings cool so that we need a blanket over us. Sometimes an overcoat on us besides. We do not drill a great deal. We cannot officers as well as men think so we have a morning drill at five o'clock just as the light is breaking. The officers of the old 36th Ill teach us. We have our muskets now and forty rounds of cartridges. Our baggage teams came in last night. Six four mule wagons. From this as well as from the fact the Gen Lew Wallace has been here twice we expect to move soon perhaps upon the enemy whose pickets are only twelve miles from us. Our pickets were driven in about two miles from here night before last. But we are ready for them if they do come. We have batteries in the hills around us. And five hundred Negroes are busy everyday digging rifle pits all around us. It really looks like war. The king roll may sound at any moment. How soon we could get ready I could not say. I knew the Rebels could carry off some of us. Soul and body. But they will have a tough time getting to our camp. They would have to climb hills covered with fallen trees in the face of [illegible] batteries and miles of rifle pits. I do not know that we realize our proximity to the rebels any more than we did at Chicago. But we shall at some not distant day. The most of us men now all employed in guard and picket duty. I thank fortune have no such duty to perform but as the Colonel told us yesterday we orderlies are the most important and responsible men in the company. We have enough to do that is certain.

I still stay with the officers and enjoy myself hugely. They are out almost every day in foraging expeditions. They do not often confiscate but generally pay for what they get. By this means we have plenty of grapes, peaches etc. I have had so many peaches I am sick of them always [illegible] them. At present we fare very well. Nice B[illegible] beef beans rice molasses [sic] sugar vinegar coffee crackers [illegible] all in abundance. I had an opportunity [sic] of bathing night before last in the Licking River. The water is hardly [illegible] than a foot deep. I had not washed before for over a week since I left Jeffersonville. Water here is quite scarce [sic]. Have some mornings to make our toilet with. I have not washed today yet. I believe I did comb my head this morning. We shall be barbarians when we get home. But [illegible] the life very much with all its faults. I shall be perfectly content if I do not get sick. I stand it exceedingly well.

Write often whether I get the letters or not I am eager to get letters I assure you when the mail boy comes around ever [sic] day Send papers We read very little I shall nothing when the war is over. Direct to Co. I 88th Reg Ill Vol. Cincinnati Ohio

E

Side notes: It is reported that Mr. Thomas one of our four bachelors at Ev is to be our Chaplain

On board steamer Arago  
at Louisville KY  
Sept. 20th 1862

Dear Father,

We left our camp near Covington last Thursday about nine o'clock and marched three miles to the levee [sic] opposite Cincinnati We lay there until three o'clock PM when we went on board this newly painted steamer and with five others sailed down the river in the Ohio. The 36th Ill. and 24th Wisconsin came down besides other regiments Friday night We stuck in a sand bar for two hours and found ourselves tied to the Indiana shore in the morning waiting the fog to clear off Our trip yesterday was perfectly delightful Our company happened to have the luck of being on the hurricane deck and a jolly gay time we had of it We sang and ate and laughed looking [illegible] scenery [sic] dreamed of home. I once found myself sitting in the sailing behind looking at the waves thinking of days gone by of my Mothers [sic] pantry of my Sunday School and college life. Again I sat with my legs thrown over the side railing facing the Indiana shore with my eyes scanning the high bluffs topped with solid rocks for miles and knew they looked the same to you long ago when in wild Western days you passed along the same lines. I confess for once I wished there was no war to call me away from those I love. But I got up and joined the boys in singing the Battle Cry of Freedom our regimental song. We came in sight of Louisville and Jeffersonville at dusk last night. Saw through the dim light of evening our old camping ground [illegible] again with tents. McCosky my chum is there now I understand a third sergeant [sic].

We have been on board the steamer all night and now this morning far advanced and we are not gone We know not when we shall go from here. We saved Cincinnati and now we will do all that we can for Louisville. The rebels are towards us they say. Have taken Munfordville and may give us a chance to try our muskets. But we are ready for them! Some say the 75th Ill is here If so I shall see my Pt Byron boys

Goodbye

Eugene

Direct Sergeant [sic] Eugene A Lyford CI 88th Ill Reg Louisville, KY

In camp at Louisville, KY.

Friday Sept. 26th, 1862

Dear Father,

I wrote my last to you before we had got off the steamer at the levee. We went to a clover field three miles south from the river and pitched our tents there. It was a beautiful place for a camp, but the air was rather confined by the trees which surrounded it. From there we [illegible] five miles to the west side of the city behind the rifle pits which we helped to dig the other night. The spot we now occupy is the most pleasant I think, that we have found. It is situated in a clear open field in the limits of the city with good water and nice parade grounds handy. We have been ordered to the rifle pits twice, once night before last at three o'clock in the morning. This morning [illegible] you think, we were called up to fall in at two o'clock! We stood then part of the time, and drilled the remainder of the time until after six! It was rather tough. We are drilling constantly now all day long. You would laugh to see us all covered with dust - the muskets glistening in the dew, and the steady tramp of the "Second Board of Trade" Everyday we march out looking tolerably decent for soldiers, but came back completely covered with dust. There has been no rain of consequence here since June and everything is dry and the road disapeably [sic] dusty. I now perceive that winter is approaching for the days are not so awfully warm now as they were a week or more ago. I suppose you have some very cool days with you now. Our nights are very cold, but our days are almost hot. As winter approaches we probably shall [illegible] I wish to tell my friends that I intend wintering in the Southern states. Gen. Buell is here now, and we shall in all probability [sic] go along with him in pursuit of the rebels. We may start by next Monday. It will not be strange however if we go on Sunday. Am fear of an attack in the city have all disappeared now We were expecting them. Hundreds of the inhabitants of Louisville left the city. Women and children [illegible] about the streets crying etc. So you see we have saved this city as well as Cincinnati! My usual health continues, my appetite is too good, I try not to but the other soldiers are eating almost all the time. Money fl[illegible] for cakes and fruit like water among the soldiers. The Captain and Lieutenants treat me very kindly and share the best with me. We have not been paid of yet, but expect our pay for the two months since enlisting in a few days. The months pay is advance from Chicago in two letters. I forgot the exact amount It

was something like forty \$40. dollars. If you have received the letters you of course got the money. The war bond committee of Cook Co. take charge of a certain part of the pay of soldiers and see that it is sent to wherever [sic] the soldier may wish it. Many of the solders [sic] of Cook Co. thus allot part of there [sic] pay and keep the rest for their own use. I allotted fifteen \$15. dollars to be sent to you, having five paid to me. If you are not notified of any amount due you [illegible] two (you will be, I suppose) You can get information about the money by writing to Auros G. Throop, Chairman of War Fund Committee. Chicago Co. Il You need not fear however but the money is all right and that you will be informed about it in time when we are paid off that is, every two months Please tell my Sunday School friends young and old that I often think of them and am glad that they are not among such influences as I am. It is a dreadful place to be in, but I enjoy camp like notwithstanding the bad language and disagreeable evils connected with it. I wrote to Feyuson yesterday and wish I could write often to you but you must take my hasty words. Write very often and send papers.

Very truly,

Eugene

Sidenotes: Will you not send me postage stamps in your letters as we have no chance to buy them here

Eugene

In camp west side Louisville,  
Monday Eve. Sept. 29th 1862

My dear folks at home,

Although I do not receive many letters from you and hear from Pt. Byron seldom, I suppose I must keep you informed of every move I make and of the passing events of camp life. And to begin, I will tell you that we have a Chaplain. He came last Friday. I knew that he was coming and I was so glad when I greeted him on returning from [illegible] did that lot now. He is none other than one of the four jolly bachelors who occupied the bachelor retreat in the classic town of Evanston He was our regulator there, and now has come to be the restrainer of the vices of eight hundred men! He came to his with full of glee may say although he [illegible] the grab week before him, and he is confident that he has come at duty call. He figured not for the position but it was inged [sic] upon him by the young men [illegible] One good thing he is a [illegible] never fear to speak with any. Perhaps his sermons are too logical for soldiers will be

unceasing. I knew it. He is absent in town today and has given me a sort of an oversight of his tent etc. So I am here all alone this evening. All is silent with in but without [illegible] strange all would seem to you. I might compare it to the buzzing of bees, but the comparison is not perfect for here the sound of fifers drums laughing talking the rattling of bones, the music of violins, of brass instruments, the clattering of horses [sic] feet and the tread of squads of men are combined in one strange confusion [sic], could you hear the sound but nice I would like it. It is an old story to me. We are now occupying the third camp at Louisville. I hardly know why they move us so much. We certainly lose [sic] time for drill which is very necessary. The object may be to get us accustomed [sic] to moving at a moments [sic] notice. And indeed we are getting in a [illegible] used to it. It takes but little time for us to pull stakes and be off. At the tap of the drum every tent falls and at the same signal they use again. I wish you could see us getting ready for a march as well as the five hundred other soldiers of camp life. We are expecting marching orders any moment. The movements of the brigade may be retarded some by the death of our Major General Nelson. There is little talk [sic] around here that he is shot. He was [illegible] to Capt. Spalding and myself by the Chaplain [illegible] states prison as being a reckless, drunken fellow and the insult he offered Jeff. C. Davis was to be expected and a fallow officer could not put up with it. Both General are doubtless to blame. But I am glad [illegible] is not our Major General now. Who will take his place I do not know. [illegible] Buell is removed and I know not who is our head officer. Buell is called a traitor for letting the enemy go and bringing his troops to Louisville and I am heartily [sic] glad he had to go to drilling raw troops at Indianapolis [sic]. I expect the great Union Army of seventy five is a hundred thousand men here will be marched [illegible] the enemy soon. We hope to scatter them easily. We can do it if we have a patriotic good leader. Oh that we had me! The regiment was out on picket duty day before yesterday. We started in the rain and mud, but I was safe under my rubber blanket. As it happened [illegible] the first [illegible] of Co 2 was not put on duty and all we had to do was to sleep on nice clean straw from a neighbors [sic] stacks and eat the coffee and milk and [illegible] and apples and sweet potatoes we got from the "Union" niggers of a plantation near by. Some of these things, the boys confiscated. I am afraid we shall all become a gang of thieves in a few months we would if the order of yesterday will not be carried out. You [illegible] to hear the board fences crack where we stop near me without any other wood laudy [sic] I have seen no fence standing, nor any posts in the morning when they were the evening begin. The Col. has issued an order stopping unnecessary thieving, whether it will be strictly carried out remains to be seen We had a most pear out time are picked Sunday morning a warm breakfast and a nice place to lie. I also went into the river and swam a race with Lie, [illegible] Nidler Beat him too! What [illegible] we have!

Saturday Meacham and I visited the camp of the 87th Ind. Saw McCasky who is a third Sergeant. We were very happy to meet. He likes camp life very much. Says he would not be [illegible] to leave the army. He has got to smoking Offered me a cigar and was astonished to learn that I always refuse the cigars offered me daily! I do not intend to come out of the army a worse boy than I was as entering it. I shall try very hard to return if I shall ever return a better man. I guess Mr. Thomas will keep me strait [sic]. My recruits are all well and getting along finely. You may tell their friends that the Rock Island boys are called the best squad in our company. Nutcalf and Hall have joined the Rimeer Company of the regt [sic] They are armed you know with spades picks and axes. Are excused from drill and guard duty. It will be hard service sometimes but they will have more freedom and [illegible] they will not be separate from the regiment Mathews [illegible] fears he will not stand carrying the knapsack but will have it [illegible] He is a good fellow We have many noble good hearted boys in the camp any and [illegible] we have got rid of two of the worst [illegible] are could not be taught anything The other way too lazy to live almost The former we have set to driving mules. The latter we detailed for an Ill battery wanting some of our men. [illegible] Col. is not at all liked. It is hoped we shall get another one some of these days. An Lieut. Col and Major are perfect gentlemen Our Quarter Master is an earnest Christian I have nothing more to write now. There is enough to write about in camp to keep me busy days I shall write as often as I can and hope to hear from you very often. Soldiers are awful glad to get letters I tell you! Direct as usual

Very truly

Eugene

On yesterdays [sic] battle field  
near Danville, KY. Oct 9

My dear folks at home,

I am informed of an opportunity to send word home this afternoon and am most happy to break the silence our long march [illegible] You probably were informed of the departure of our Aarmy from Louisville nine days ago. I endured it well. Marching from ten to fifteen miles a day. Yesterday our regiment was under heavy fire from the enemy I escaped unhurt Only two of our company were killed. I have time only to wish that you will not be at all anxious concerning me. I shall try to do my duty in any event. The enemy has not shown battle today. We had it heavy yesterday.

Truly Eugene

In great haste

Friday 1862

On the Rebel position of the  
Battlefield at Perryville, KY.

Oct. 10th

My dear Father and Mother,

I seized an opportunity yesterday of simply telling you of my safty [sic] and of the great event of my life. I have another chance this morning of sending word to you and shall improve it briefly. On Wednesday Oct 1st three divisions of the army of Kentucky left Louisville directly South. We travelled almost all day in the dust and sun. It went hard with us the first day I assure you. Our burdens made it so. I fortunately had packed some of my things as usual in the officers [sic] mess. chest at Louisville so that all I had was one suit of clothes besides a dress coat and overcoat and my rubber blanket. These are all I have and all that I can possibly carry on my back. It is very doubtful about my seeing the things I left behind but I do not care much for I intend that you will send me some few things in a month or so Most of the boys brought along [illegible] j [illegible] knapsacks half as large as themselves and as a natural consequence clothing was scattered all along the road for three or four days. Our marches were quite rapid during the seven days we were on the road to our present position. How we looked forward to our nights [sic] camping ground and O how gladly did we hail the camping gleaming through the dusk at evening as tired and dusty we arrived at the close of our days march! I would not have had you see me sweating and [illegible] through the daily march for considerable I would that you could have seen how thankful we were as we drank our coffee begin lying down on Mother Earth to sleep. We passed through most beautiful country indeed It charmed me and it seemed too bad that the [illegible]ind [illegible] force [illegible] of the Northern states had not made it a perfect paradise. But as it is it looks desolate enough. As we reached Bardstown a city the size of Rock Island we found the camps of the Rebel army just evacuated twenty four hours before so that we pressed forward in great haste after that The advance of our army skimushes [sic] daily with the rear guard of the enemy and dead horses marked the ground of contest. Days before yesterday the roaring of cannon at day break announced that we [illegible] had made a stand. And as now and then the war was [illegible], a short arise from the camps of our brigade. Towards noon we spied the mevement [sic] of the armies in the distance and at three Gen Greusel brigade was indeed to the field. We marched out manfully up a ravine halting on the crest of a hill From there we witnessed a most terrific battle away on our left wing. I grew tired looking

at the men scene and lay down and slept for some minutes when the trumpet sounded and [illegible line of text] The battery on the hill announced the approach of the enemy. We were ordered over the hill and ordered to fire into a cornfield below us from which bullets came thick and fast. Lying flat down we loaded and fired I strange to say saw not a rebel, but fired twice into the cornfield. Some of the boys fired more some less. At last our Lieutenant misunderstanding [sic] the orders commanded a "charge" so Co 21 started with fixed bayonets [sic] on the cornfield, but seeing the other companys [sic] behind we fell back when we were ordered to retreat We went back to the top of the hill reformed and marched back under fire of the enemy. We stood our ground until the butternuts left the corn in double quick for the woods beyond [sic]. The cheer upon cheer sounded all along the lines I thanked Heaven that I had been saved while four of our rej. ment [sic] were killed and thirty five wounded Night came as and the [illegible] husled [sic] from every quarters. I discaused [sic] of battle that night The eighty eighth won great honor by standing under heavy fire so well and by marching into it so undauntingly. Yesterday the rebels retreated and last night we advanced to their positions which an whole army now uses as a camp. We are near by a hospital in which the rebels left their wounded also surgens [sic] and men to care for them. They converse freely with us. Say we can never whip them, but confess that Northern soldiers have equal pluck with theres [sic]. Some of them are tired of the war and wish to go home. Some are very [illegible]. The battle field shows that the battle was severe. I saw one hickory tree with one side just torn off by a shot of shell. The Rebels left their dead in the field and heaps of sixteen or twenty lie around in some places. The yard around the rebel hospital here is filled with wounded soldiers lying around. It is dreadful indeed. I hope I shall not meet with such a fate as some of those poor fellows have met. I trust we shall see little more fighting and that I shall be permitted to return home again to enjoy its comforts once more. I shall know how to value them then What do you I had for breakfast this morning? Coffee, crackers and stewed apples! What a life we live! I enjoy it in many respects but long for the end. We have had no mail for over a week but expect one today. I hope I shall get a letter from somebody Those last two papers you sent me I have not had time to read but had to use the Independent to do up sugar coffee etc. to carry with me. Please send papers often I may get a chance to read them Direct my letters the same as before to Co II 88th Reg 3 Vol Louisville, KY. to follow the regiment Send stamps in your letters Give my kindest regards to all while I remain your affectionate son

Eugene Lyford

In camp near Crab Orchard, KY

October 19th 1862

My dear folks at home

I wrote to you but a day or two ago but as I have some spare time today (Sunday) and have some wants to tell you I write again so soon. Cold weather is now approaching and reminds me of a preparation for it. To be sure, I have as many things as I want to carry already but there are a few trinkets that I greatly need as soon as Winter sets in. The most important that I think of now are a pair soldiers [sic] mittens two good pairs of stocking a nice warm thick blue flannel shirt with a neat turn over collar on it, a pound of tea, a [illegible] quantity of caynine [sic] pepper and one of soda, a good strong small two bladed knife and such other little trinkets as you think would be acceptable to me. The other Rock Island Co boys will want something sent in the same package probably [illegible] will send them by express to Louisville, Kentucky. to the same address as my letters. Perhaps I may give you different directions in my next but they will be safe if sent as my mail is now sent. For there are frequent opportunities of sending to Louisville for anything we want by the teamsters. We have been lying in camp here several days for what reason I know not. Perhaps [sic] Bragg has escaped us or it may be Buell is collecting his whole army to move upon him in force. It was hard to endure at first the suspence [sic] of not knowing whether we were going but now we are in a sense accustomed to it. And call not [illegible] are content to be driven along like "dumb driven cattle" We are now encamped on a beautiful spot of grassy ground Have erected us booths by making a shed of sails and cornstalks which answer the place of our tents which we left behind us at Louisville Our parade grounds are magnificent down a level basan. [sic] Yesterday we went through a battallum [sic] drill of three hours an the double quick forming hollow squares charging beyonets [sic] with a shout and yell. And so forth. It was the first time our Colonel ever inspired any thing like energy into the men. He is generally [illegible] and profane at us which makes the men all the worse but yesterday he talked pleasantly to us even cheered us on in our charge with the pleasing exclamation give em [sic] hell boys! Oh! How we did yell and fancied ourselves often after the rebels "with a sharp stick:" I believe the 88th could make a splendid beyonet [sic] charge. We were going to make one the other day in the battle Co. 2 misunderstood the orders and started ahead the other companies strait [sic] down hill for the cornfield, when seeing our mistake we halted and kept on firing away at the rebels. Today has seemed exactly like Sunday to me. Most of the companies being absent and picket duty, so that we have had no drills. We have had services the afternoon. But our Chapelain [sic] being unwell we had miserable preaching. I uninteresting indeed that while lying on the ground listening to the serman [sic] I fell asleep! We do not have services often while we are moving about so much as we have been the past three weeks. We had an interesting times last Tuesday evening. The Chaplain had just returned from his cabin at the hospital among our wounded some forty. He read over their names, stated how they were wounded and how they felt. It

happened that most of them were profusing [sic] Christians and all but a very few expressed a wish [sic] to be such in earnest. The stories he told had a great influence on the soldiers gathered around twice, and often some remarks he called to him all who were determined to lead a different life. Twelve came forward and kneeled before him. One from our company who was once a church member came away the number. When the Chaplain asked for his name he jumped up much excited exclaiming - "what have I done! I dont [sic] want to go!" and "When am I? who can tell" After this he sat down on the ground perfectly stupid and has been so ever since, refusing to eat anything and to say a word but wild and restless. Always out scouting around. He could get things to eat when no one else could. He could run any guard if he wanted to, but he was kind and generous. We miss him very much from our company and probably pity his sad condition. This affair cast a shadow upon the services that evening and has brought many a slur upon the Chaplain. You cannot realize how we miss the Sabbath priviliges [sic] we enjoyed at home. Without their Sunday is no Sunday and without them all [illegible] slack and loose in camp. Our want of newspapers causes great ignorance of military affairs away the army and every scrap of news is received with great interest. We know little how things are going on and cannot judge about the prospects of a termination of the War. The boys start all sorts of rumors which fly as the wings of the wind to every ear creating often times great excitement. For instance today a report was out that an officer was arround [sic] securritey [sic] for the regular army that they were to increase it to a hundred and fifty thousand men. Of course this meant that the War was ended and all the poor soldiers were to return home in a few days. But the soldiers all say that their friends at home all talk of a speedy termination of the struggle. They all wish it and who would not? The wounded rebels at Perryville were tired [illegible] of it and longed to be released. And it is said that the rebel army are with difficulty kept together that desertion are constant occurrence. It would seem natural that the army should feel lo [sic] led as they were up to the limits almost [illegible] Louisville and Cinninati [sic] and now forced to beat a hasty retreat before the hated Yankees How we men would feel to be obliged to return to Louisville [illegible] all the way by the blood thirsty army of Bragg. Indeed how we grumbled on the first days march when we were obliged to turn back and [illegible] to fake another. Some even swore and cursed that they were indeed back at all events I intend to be patiently [sic] trusting that all is well even should thru [sic] years elapse err [sic] we see our dear homes. Many such active marches as we have passed through would soon decimate our ranks. Full one tenth of our men are excused from duty since halting besides, full one fifth who were left behind and on the way here, almost everyone is complanning [sic]. I have but little reason to complain for I am almost as well as anyone in the company. Thank futune [sic]. And I hope I shall not get sick in the army An awful place to be sick. You need not talk of coming to take care of me for you could not get here. Write me very often and send pieces from newspapers in your letters Also some stamps now and then.

Yesterday with letter were very thankfully received.

E

Near Lancaster, Wednesday  
October 15th, 1862

My dear friends at home,

I do not know when I shall have an opportunity to send a letter home, but as the column has halted and a shock of cornstalks invite I improve this opportunity to write you. I have already written my journal for yesterday up to the present and now for a few words telling you how I feel since the battle, what we are doing etc.

The tone of the men has changed since the eventful hour during which they were held under deadly fire from a [illegible] foe. Before then almost all were wishing for a fight now they say that they never want to see another seach [sic]! They find fighting is no fun. But earnest stern work. Yet now I know that but few will shrink a particle from performing [sic] this duty of the soldier. I know I shall not. And trust I say so without boasting. I intend to face days and do my whole duty come what may. But battles seldom touch an individual regiment. Ours was in the regiment the other day. It may not see another or take part in another for many months. We meet many old regiments that were never under fire. Still we may become "The bloody 88th" as many of the boys already call it in sport Our Army since the battle has been watching the enemy very closely Every day we have been on the move. As we have been in fact ever since we left Louisville. Not a single whole day since then have we stood idle Sometimes we halt for hours [illegible] The greater part of a day in one place, at others times, we have no [illegible] got our coffee broken up and fire will everlasting [illegible] This morning I had got my tin cup on the fire with a few potatoes in it nicely covered with all the water I had when we were called into line. And away went the precious water to waste and my potatoes into my haversack, but the call was only to stack arms. When were allowed to "rest" again for a few moments during which I cooked a couple of my potatoes and just had time to cook them before we were off I ate one as I walked along and gave the other to Lieutenant Miller.

An advance guard is another [illegible] of Bragg all the time and commanding is heard ahead of us almost constantly We pressed [illegible] so closely yesterday that the bridges as two different creeks were smoking ruins as we passed over the beds of the almost dry bottom of each. There is some hopes that Buell and Lu. Wallace from

Covington will "[illegible]AJ" the wholepack [sic] of rebels, but I think he will make his way Cumberland Gap, that troublesome rat hole of Kentucky. He may make a stand before then, but I have no fears about the result, for I am ever confident of our success, and always feel that I am marching on to victory can not feel otherwise. The country through which we pass is most charming and of itself well [illegible] for our tramp through it and have become an ardent admirer of Mr. Hiltons "Old Kentucky." The land to be sure is not the rich soil of Ill. but it lies most beautifully covered with splendid groves of buck maple oak hickory and walnut. If you should wish to lay up a good supply of nuts, Albert and Fred had better come to Kentucky for them. There are no people hire to gather then and they can have none to disturb their O[illegible]! Shall I see the boys picking up nuts down here among the Rebels some of these nice fall days?! They may boil coffee in my tin old smoked up thing! And nibble away at my hard crackers. They would come handy too. For confiscation honey chicken mutton and such other things as they might find in rebel possession. We are not allowed to leave the ranks on the march, else we could supply ourselves with such delicious! What! Take things without permission from houses along the way!" Yes soldiers hungry soldiers have no consciences especially when tired with the days [sic] march and with haversack empty. Then I even I would not hesitate to take any eatable that comes handy. Last night we arrived in camp at dark, all tired and hungry bacon and meat all gone I determined to sally forth for a supper. We went to a house where an old Negro lady seemed to have the say. I first purchased some cornmeal for which I paid in the surplus coffee I hapened [sic] to have in my haversack. I also got some flour. I stepped into another room and found some 88 boys sitting at the table with hot coffee (some they furnished) and hot cakes smoking beyon [sic] them. They urged me to sit down and help them finish the meal. I did so without hesitation and O how good cornbread tasted to me with even no butter nor sauce upon it! We get tired of crackers and jump at the sight of cornmeal. Many a time have I scraped enough meal from an ear of corn to make a cup of hasty pudding. It seems too bad that tho [sic] we pass by hundreds of acre of standing corn daily, we can have none for a variety. The inhabitants along the road are all but starved, no flour, no meal, no anything. The rebel army have stripped them of everythin [sic]. Some say that their son have lost their meal on the way home from mile and even themselves have been pressed into the rebel service. What Kentucky will do next Winter I cannot tell poor as poverty now. She must starve there unless peace is hastily restuned [sic] and government away her citizens is miraculously from [illegible]. Only think [illegible] away I heading ground it has held before and over which thousands of rebels [sic] hoofs have clanked. Stripped of his inhabitants and of her wealth Kentucky has paid dearly for the new [illegible]. She has tried to maintain in a struggle. She must have known affected her as well as the whole nations.

It is Thursday now the 16th We have been idle all day encamped in our great field of camp near Crab Orchard, and Dicks River, about half way between Louisville and Cumberland Gap. I know not why we are idle to day unless we have lost track of Bragg. I almost know he will escape our clutches. But I earnestly hope we will bagg [sic] his whole force and stop treason in our state at least. We have [illegible] enough, it seems to me and cannot we do it? Time will tell. You and I look eagerly forward to some end of these troubles. You have a general interest in the War. I watch not a movement on the Potomac an seacrost. [sic] My whole interest is in our noble army. I could not is I should try keep movements at the East in my view for we hear nothing of the world around us. The American news is heard sooner and more accurately in England than in the army. A paper a month old is a cur[illegible] perhaps it will not be so when we get settled some when new communication is almost wholly cut off. And since this is so I want you to tell my everything accuring [sic] at home and abroad. You know not how I am interedted [sic] in reading your letters [illegible] write half enough send pieces cut from the daily paper of interest to me about late battles or anything of my regiments. I have not even seen the Presidents [sic] proclamation yet. Only heard of it. [illegible] must write very much to me if you would please me. Sergant [sic] Meacham! I am sorry to say fell out of the ranks yesterday and was carried in the ambulance when he has been today. I hope he will soon get stronger and become as rugged as myself. I see M[illegible] very often. The Rock Island boys are all well but Samuel Odell. He has been left behind sent back to Louisville I believe possibly will be discharged on acct [sic] infection of the lungs. Armor Sheppard I should also say is behind sick is unwell. I know not how seriously. I trust I shall continue in good health and safely return home to my friends soon.

Eugene

Sidenotes: I keep my journal which will be of some interest to you I shall send it about the first of January I send to Father a not [sic] Irsiah gave me at Chicago for money he borrowed.

E

Send me postage stamps!

In camp at Rolling Fork  
six miles from Lebanon  
Oct. 23rd 1862

My dear parents,

We are just sitting by our guns on our knapsacks this cool bright morning awaiting orders to fall in and be off as another hard days [sic] march. Last night ended an awful killing march of three days. Yesterday we traveled over twenty miles on the macadamized Kentucky pike. The great institution of the State. You must believe my feet were as we halted at night. I never suffered so before from traveling As we would halt yesterday afternoon for a few minutes in getting up I limped even and could walk only with pain. When I got to going however I got along very well. I know not within [sic] we are going. Some say to Louisville some say to Nashville. So you must not send me [illegible] things until further orders. You knew not how glad I was to receive a letter from home last night. I could scarcely keep the tears from my eyes as I read of your anxiety for me. I thank Heaven that I am safe. I trust you have received my letters before this telling about the battle. You inquire as to my superior [sic] officers. Col. Sherman commands our regiment Gen. Greusel our brigade (37th) Gen Sheridan our division (11th) Gen. Gelbert our Corps of the Army of the Ohio which Buell commands. Other divisions commanders are Crittenden, Duruant, McCook, Rissean, Smith Thomas etc. Some of these commands are pressing the rebels toward Cumberland Gap while we are going back somewhere. I send F.S. letter. I received last evening. Direct letters as before I am affectionatly [sic]

Eugene

Sidenotes: I have no more time now. Send me stamps and extracts from papers. Remember me to all inquiring friends. I would love dearly to be at home but willingly do my duty. I can appreciate home comforts when I return.

E

Bowling [illegible] KY.

Nov. 3rd 1862

My dear Father:

We arrived here last Saturday evening after hard marching from Danville for rather near there on the rolling fork when I received your letters rejoicing at my safety in the Battle of Perrysville. [sic] Bowling G. is not much of a place perhaps a larger as Pt. B. The R.R. from Louisville is complited [sic] to this point. Soon will be opened to Nashville. It is not known by us when we shall go from here or where. I fea [illegible] go to Nashville we probably will go afoot as usual I hope we may remain a few days anyway for I am so footsore that I can scarcely walk up in there. In fact I half of the way the last two days march. We are so fortunate as to have got our tents yesterday it haveing [sic] been a

month since we parted with them at Louisville. There will not be so much [illegible] hereafter I hope. I have a slight cold, and with this exception am in good health. I am also happy to inform you that I get some new shoes and pants today or tomorrow My old ones being used up. The latter being out in places! We get sky blue this time Our old were dark blue like the rest of our uniform. The R.I. boys are generally well Sam Odell being in Louisville. Gus. Hazelton is quite sick at a private house in Bowling Green. We shall do all that we can for him. Write soon Send papers if you think best. I get only a few.

I am truly,

Eugene

Sidenotes: The Sunday school were gladly received I send some perciummon [sic] seeds I picked on the weary march Plant them