

George G Sinclair Letters

A transcript of letters written during the Civil War by:

1st Sergeant George G. Sinclair to:

Francis E. Anderson Sinclair his wife.

September 1862 to July 17, 1863

INTRODUCTION

Sergeant George G. Sinclair was a member of Company C of the 89th Regiment of Illinois Volunteers from Chicago, Illinois. He was wounded on June 25, 1863 in the Affair of Liberty Gap, near Nashville, Tennessee by a rifle ball through the right lung. He was given an Honorable Discharge on October 3, 1863 and despite [sic] a hole in his lung, lived for another 22 years. He died August 16, 1863 in rural Pulaski County in the State Of [sic] Arkansas.

In the letters, he refers affectionately to his wife as Frank or Frankie.

These transcripts were made by Miss Nancy Kersey, a Great Granddaughter of George and Francis. The original letters are currently in her possession. [sic]

September 6, 1862

Camp Manchester, Louisville

Dear Frank,

You are no doubt wishing to hear from me as I am from you, then we have not the best chance in the world to write but you shall have a few lines at every chance that I can get to let you know of my whereabouts and health.

To commence with, how are you prospering fine I hope with that little homely faced little one, the newcomer, I mean. Do you sit up any yet? Don't hurry Frank and rely too much on your strength but keep still until it is perfectly safe to stir about. In short I want to know all of the folks that are at home. As for me, I am perfectly well with the exception of the cold which is improving a little.

Well, to commence with my journey, we struck tents on Thursday afternoon and started for Cincinnati about six o' clock, but when we arrived at Michigan City we received orders to go to Louisville as the secesh were threatening the city and were within six miles of it. Well we started for the south and arrived at Jeffersonville opposite Louisville on the evening of the second day meeting with the warmest of receptions from the inhabitants of all the places along the line being waited upon with water and fruits in great plenty with plenty of kisses and waving of handkerchiefs which of course were appreciated by us. On arriving at Jeffersonville we were caused to stop there until midnight so as to blind the secession sympathizers as to our strength and our effectiveness. But as it was many people were up. Some waved banners to us while

others said nothing and some devils threw a lot of rubbish and a bottle from a five story building intending no doubt to quiet some good Union soldier. But the Lord did not will it so, for it did no harm, only just reminded us of what we might expect at any time from some disinterested [sic] Kentuckian.

The weather is beautiful just to suit me, neither too warm nor yet is it too cold to sleep out in the open air with one blanket around me.

Today is the sabbath and as I sit in camp and hear the hum of two thousand people in this encampment, I am reminded for what purpose they are collected here. Otherwise, I should consider it a grand picnic. They all seem to enjoy themselves so well, the marching is the only objection I have to camp on a soldier's life, for it is almighty hard to strap a weight of sixty pounds on a man's back and trudge through dust and sand for three or four hours. When I see large stout men camped on it, then I think it is time for me to think that we are overloaded and some of them have given out on our march from the ferry to our present position.

Now Frank, I have about done. Give my love to all and tell mother that I will write to her this week.

Adieu dear Frank from your ever affectionate,

George

September 13, 1862

Camp Manchester, Louisville, Kentucky

Dear Wife,

I received your very welcome letter this morn when I was writing to mother and you may be sure that I got hold of it as soon as possible, for I have been looking for a letter from you these two days for I could not keep it out of my mind the condition in which I left you and thought that you would be sure and write on the receipt of the first word from me and I had calculated that if the mails run regular I had ought to have had an answer by that time. But, I am glad to get it now and short as it is, I did not expect you to wear your strength out in writing to me. I hope that when you receive this you may be able to write a dozen pages. Tell me all of what is going on, everything even your little business affairs. Tell me all about them.

Has the railroad company paid you anything yet and how does the little one prosper? I need not caution you to take good care of the little one, but I am afraid you will take too good care of it and spoil her. Recollect what I told you on going away and she will come out all right in the end.

As to naming her, Franky, if you promised anyone that they should name it why keep your word, but otherwise I would wish you to name it and it will please me perfectly, in fact I would rather you would name her for I shall think more of the name on your account.

I have had quite a jaunt since I wrote you last, we were ordered to Cincinnati to protect Porcololis but after trudging three or four hours with a knapsack on my back, we laid down on the river bank for the night with the starry heavens for a canopy and a lot of broken bricks for a bed. They were those soft red brick or we should have fared hard. Well the transport that was to take us did not come during the night, so we crossed the ferry to Jeffersonville to take the cars for Cincinnati. But we had as good luck there as on the Kentucky side for we were packed on to open flat cars and old stinking cattle cars all day through a thunder storm getting completely soaked through. Then we were marched down to South Holt on the Indiana side to lay out another night in a stubble field, It rained all night. The next night we went back to our old quarters In Kentucky about a mile from Louisville city limits where we are now. But we are going to move tomorrow morning for where I can't tell as we are not let into the secrets of their movements which are so deep. Well, thank the Lord I have not much curiosity on that score. Only I want them to end this war as soon as possible so as I can get Home.

The 2nd Board of Trade regiment Is on the other side of the river, but, I have not had time to go across except on business. I have been down town on the strength of my sergeancy going all over the town. It is a very fine city laid out just like Chicago at right angles, only it is a much older place and more fine or substantial buildings. There are no shanties or poor looking houses. Rents must be cheap for the working people to afford such houses. I like the place much and would like it better were it not given quite so strongly toward secessionism for there are many avowed ones here as we had a taste coming through the first time at midnight. Some devil threw a shovel full of rubbish and a bottle at us from a house top on Main street. It was lucky for the parties that the place was not known at the time for it certainly would have come down, for we have got a second 19th Illinois in this regiment. We beat Billy Wilson all to pieces for hard cases, but they are the right stuff for fighting.

Now dear Franky, I must close this as I am in an awful hurry and had to use a pencil and sit down with a piece of board to write on, not a very comfortable place to write on.

Our boys are all well. Billy Lacey returns his respects and says that he wishes that he could get a hold of a piece of that home made bread just now, it would go first rate. It makes them all swear at the living that we get for we don't begin to get what Uncle Sam allows us. Charlie Foster is well.

By the way I got the second sergeants both by the captain's appointment and the approval of the men. I am proud of it for it is certainly great an honor to hold such in this regiment as a lieutenancy would be in some regiments, for I think that I could pick out hundreds of them that are as capable as if not more so, for the generality of them are all fine smart young men.

Well Frank, I must bid you goodbye for the present. I sent you a box with some boots that were given to me and as they fit me I thought that it would pay to express them

home. Please see to it they are directed to you at 55 Prairie Street. From your affectionate husband,

George G. Sinclair

September 23, 1862

In camp near Louisville, Kentucky

Dear Frank,

We are drawn up in line of battle behind the entrenchments in Louisville this morning. We are on the eve of an eventful battle of the north and south and we expect some hard fighting for by our information this morning, Bragg is marching on Louisville with our army commanded by Buell following him up hot-blocks his intentions is no doubt to take Louisville and occupy [illegible] intrenchments not expecting any force of ours at this place. I do not pretend to know what our numbers are, but they are considerably greater in number than they expect.

Frank, I thought that if anything should happen to me in this fight, I should make sure and write a note which will be found on me and sent to you.

We have had quite a tramp since I wrote you from Camp Manchester on Monday a week ago. We were ordered into line for the purpose of forming into a brigade. Well we started about 10 o'clock in the hot sun down through the streets of Louisville. It being so sultry that many fell out of the ranks from sun stroke and sheer exhaustion for we have to carry the load of a mule on our back and body. I just think of upward of 80 pounds on a man's person strapped and loaded on such a hot sultry day. Charlie Foster was one that could not stand it and nearly died, as many others did die. Well we marched 5 miles with our loads without water to the sorrow of many a poor fellow. I felt rather [illegible] think that I stood the heat pretty well when large strong men gave out. Ambition will do a great deal to keep a man up. Well, we were put into a brigade under Colonel Woodruff of Kentucky.

There are several Illinois regiments in the division, among which are the Board of Trade battery and Board of Trade regiment, the 88th Illinois, I believe. You have more means of knowing at home of such matters than I have here so you will know of the truth of that yourself.

Well, from that camp we were set off toward Bardstown, hearing that the enemy were marching in that direction. We marched 10 miles on that road and encamped for the night and Sunday which was spent in drill. When we received orders to march back to Louisville as that place was expected to be attacked. We received quite a compliment on our march back to camp by saying that our regiment marched like weterans on a forced march through the dust ankle deep. Our orders have come of some, hence I had to break off on this sudden for we were just marched into the works.

Mrs. F. E. Sinclair, Chicago

and the 79th Illinois have taken our places and we are held as reserves. I shall now have to bid you goodbye hoping that I may see you again soon. Give my love to Mother Anderson and Sinclair with all the rest. No more at present from your affectionate and loving husband

George G. Sinclair

Kiss the little one for me and teach it rightly.

To Mrs. Frances E. Sinclair, Chicago, Illinois

In the way It should walk through the path of life, this is the second time that I have been at this letter and called to arms. We expect to be attacked every minute. The regiment is in good spirits, some dancing, playing cards to amuse themselves just aching for a fight. I am in as good turn as the rest, but I cannot help think of you at Home and what will become of you if I am taken away. I have no serious [end of text]

Sunday September 28, 1862

Headquarters 89th Regiment Illinois Volunteers

In camp at Louisville, Kentucky

Dear Franky,

I am now at camp in another quarter of Louisville. Since I wrote to you I have changed around considerable. We laid in the trenches all day last Tuesday or near them expecting an attack from Braggs [sic] army. At night at about 11 o'clock, we were roused out at a moment's warning to go on a reconoitering [sic] expedition. Well, we marched out about three miles and laid out in the corn fields and woods taking turn about a watching for the enemy. No enemy appeared for some reason or other not known to us. The next day we marched back to Louisville near where we were laid the day before and pitched our tents.

I liked the situation much for it gave us a chance to see something of the people of Louisville. When we were encamped at the different places before it was too great a distance from the city, but, we were encamped the last time on the outskirts and after the big scare was over, the citizens came flocking back again filling our camp to overflowing.

They would not let us stay in good comfortable quarters, but posted us off on picket duty in another direction. Yesterday morning General Buell's whole army came in, so that brought us orders to shift again. Now we are packed down near where you can see nothing as far as the eye can reach but soldiers and mostly new recruits for Buell's army is up town somewhere.

I expect that Charlie Toops is here but it is impossible to find a regiment unless it lays right next to you. They are all unsettled and moving all of the time.

I saw George Bently last night. He is a captain in the 21st Wisconsin Regiment. There is also a number of boys from the road with him. In fact it seems as if everybody in the railroad business had left it and gone to war.

We had a slight taste of the inconvenience of camp life yesterday a marching all day in a heavy rain and pitching our tents in the night, laying on the ground, which was as wet as it could be after such heavy rain, our blankets wet. We found a little straw which was also wet but took the curse off from the ground. It will do very well as long as it is warm weather, but we expect to have to take it cold and wet shortly.

By the way you may send me a rubber blanket for I forgot it when I was in Chicago. Come to think of it, you may send me the money if you have it to spare. \$3.00, that is the sum that the boys paid for it here. It is a half dollar more than Charlie Foster paid for his in Louisville, this is a great better article. Don't send the money unless you have plenty to use for I can possibly borrow what I want until we get paid off. Send bankable Kentucky money for me for no other is good here.

This is Sunday of the week but there is no difference between that and any other day here. Not much like the Sundays spent while at home to me I assure you. Then times are brought to mind very often and I only repeat the sentiments of the whole army when I say that I had the prosecutors of this war on both sides before us, then would be but a short shrift for all of them, so we could go home. In fact the whole army itself will revolt before twelve months are passed. We have 24 men on the sick list today, so you can imagine what hardships the men are put to. I should have been down before this had I not been naturally of a strong constitution and inured to hardship and then being a little ambitious in not wanting to give out.

Frank, I am tough and hearty as any man in our company, so you need not worry for or on my account anymore than you can help. Pay attention to yourself and the baby and see that you don't suffer for any necessities of life.

Frank, you said in your letter that you had not named the baby. I think it high time and if you can't find a name that suits all parties and you don't want to call it after yourself, why let me call it Lucy, but by all means settle this all important question by the next letter. I don't want you to defer writing as soon as you receive this on that account but I hope that you may have chosen a prettier name before this reaches home.

I am acting orderly sergeant in place of the 1st sergeant, who is sick as is also both of our lieutenants which duties of all I have to attend to just now, and it makes me jump around I can tell you. But it is not only for a day or so, thank goodness, for I don't fancy the work without I get the pay for it. My regular position is 2nd sergeant and Mike Rlney is 3rd sergeant while Mr. Fonda is commissary sergeant.

I have just been over to the river to bathe and had a good wash. There was about fifteen hundred soldiers all washing themselves and clothing for we don't get the chances of washing at every encampment for water is very scarce in this region on

account of the dry summer. Farmers that have much stock are troubled to find water to keep them alive without driving quite a distance.

I can walk across the Ohio at the falls at Louisville for they are nothing but rapids about half a mile long. This is a beautiful country just rolling enough and plentifully wooded with regularity and fine laid out roads for pikes as the [sic] call them and I would like the looks of the fine large and rich country residences, if I owned one with about one hundred niggers to support me for I must say I like the style very much, such rich furniture and well laid out grounds. Oh why weren't I rich so that I would not be expected to go to war and be separated from all that I hold dear on earth?

We have got to pull up stakes and leave again today. I don' t know for what purpose that they are agoing t[sic] o move, but our officers of the division don' t consult the will, pleasure or comfort even of the soldiers, they are nothing but machines to go when told to without asking any questions.

You may send my letters as usual to this place to be forwarded on. As I have got considerable to do today before morning and expect some of the boys will need instructions, I will close this by bidding you all goodbye for the present hoping that the war will soon be ended and I may get a chance to go home that I may see you all once more.

I would say to Ed Hayward that I am perfectly well satisfied with my choice for he has not seen only one side and that the bright one as yet where he is. Wait until they commence moving about and then he can tell a different story.

Give my respects to all who may inquire and my love to all that please to accept of it. Tell Mother Mary and Ally that they must write me a good long letter giving me all of the news. Tell Wallace to be a good boy and go to school. Once again, love to all reserving the lion's share for yourself your own. Goodbye Franky, kiss the baby for me.

From your own loving,

George

To Mrs. Frances E. Sinclair, Chicago, Illinois

October 4, 1862

Headquarters 89th Regiment Illinois Volunteers In camp out of doors, rather near Shelbyville on Louisville and Lexington Pike, a rainy day under a wagon between showers.

Dear Frank,

Since I wrote you last we were expected to have had a fight. Our will is good but no rebels are to be caught that is by us. We drove them over 20 miles, our advance a skirmishing with them nearly all the time, we started last Wednesday about 10 o'clock, the sun hot enough to scorch the hair off a man's head. On the Louisville and Lexington Pike for Louisville we had about 20,000 men with artillery, cavalry and all. Another

detachment started on another road running south and still another of the same number started on the Bardstown Pike to drive the rebels from Kentucky in all directions. We took the right direction for we started them about 12 miles from Louisville. It proved to be a part of Kirby Smith's horde, who started on the first sight of our advance and we saw nothing more of them. Now and then we picked up a stray gun cartridge box that some poor devil that was hard pushed had to throw away to save himself. We shoved on after them fast as possible, in fact so fast that it used up over two thirds of our regiment of our company. Only 12 men with a captain and lieutenant marched into our present camp and Frank, I was one of that twelve. Talk to me but ain't [sic] I tough. I begin to think I am. The rest fell out with fatigue and exhaustion a number used up for some time. This marching with laying out nights is making me tough as a pine knot. Cold, I haven 't heard of such a thing since I left Louisville, it's rain come wet me, sun come dry me, with me. I tell you though that Uncle Sam must be looking out for another recruit for my time is very near to a close only 2 years and ten months more. Think of that but don't weep for we may get out a little sooner, we ain't [sic] up yet by the rebels nor mutinied as the report was in Chicago and shot for it, but we are getting along first rate and doing finely .

We are changed into another brigade, it now is the 6th Brigade 2nd Division of the Army of the Ohio.

Last Sunday I went over and saw Captain George Beatty and some more boys In the 17th Wisconsin and also a lot of my old school mates in the 24th Wisconsin. They are all captains and Lieutenants. Bill Mack is in the same regiment. The 88th Illinois was near and I was over to see Tom Brown, but he was at dinner or supper, I don't know which and did not have much to say. I was rather disappointed for I wanted to have a talk with him. The 19th Illinois is at Louisville if it has not moved since Sunday and a host of Illinois regiments from all parts of the state. The city and country all around was completely filled with soldiers, the whole of Buell's army was there.

Sunday October 5th. I don't know hardly what to write this morning is a is beautiful day out with our blankets as it rained yesterday.

I hear this morn that we are to have an eight day armistice for a peace conference between north and south. God speed them. We are all on a jump for joy.

I will send you a paper of our own printing in a day or two containing an account of my coon hunt, for I the hero of about a thousand men because I climbed a tree and knocked a coon off the limb when fifteen or twenty had tried to get up to but dare not. But I had a good feed of coon meat and last night I stumbled on a fine pig and confiscated him for our mess and it did not go bad I can tell you. I'm a going to have a nigger to work for us and then I shall be satisfied as far as camp life is concerned.

There was quite heavy continued firing heard yesterday and day before. The upshot of it was that a part of our division captured four thousand prisoners, rebel cavalry. I shall have to go on inspection shortly but will write more soon. George

I have since heard that there is no truth about the armistice, but there is no telling anything about that down here. You can tell more about the papers at home of such things, but I really hope that it is so for this is no place for me, I have found that out. If they keep us marching about the country on a wild goose chase and no enemy to be found, it will not do much toward closing the war or satisfying those who came to fight, not kill themselves by long forced marches and exposure to the weather. The men are making a great many bets on the close of the war by the first of January and some as soon as two months. I think them rather premature in their calculations. If I get back in one years [sic] time, I shall consider that I am doing well, won't you Frank? Keep your courage dear girl and we will soon be together again. The Lord willing we shall enjoy many more happy days together as those we have passed. As you say what is to be will be and can't be otherwise. It is hard to keep my mind from home and its associations.

Then there are times when I love to spend a pleasant hour thinking of times passed but those thoughts crowd themselves on my mind often when I am in no mood to think of anything good. I curse myself for a fool for ever joining in a strife which I have no interest in whatever and am only acting as a cat's paw for a damned set of politicians who are now abusing the very men who are fighting for their cause by speculating in contracts and cheating the poor soldiers. Not even giving them a living such as the government promises to us. These are the reasons that I have for cursing the hour that got me into such a scrape, but it is my own fault for I might have known that there was never a government or body of men yet that cared for anybody or anything farther than their own ends, which is to fill their pockets at no matter whose expense.

Frank, when I come home I am going to learn the coopers trade and set up shop so I can be at HOME all of the time, now ain't [sic] that a fine castle to build in the air to be knocked over by the first breath of air and that breath from the mouth of any of our generals in command to say nothing of Our Great General Above, who sees to all things. You did not think that I was so religious as to think of such things, did you Franky, but I am just the same as ever, always giving the devil his due and no more living to enjoy myself as I was put into the world for. Though I forgot myself when I came here. I always hope to be guided in the right path of duty by my Conceiver which you know teaches me about right in things pertaining to this world and I hope for the next.

Well Frank, as dinner is nearly ready, I will close this uninteresting episode by hoping that this may find you in as good health as it leaves me. Give my love to mother and the folks and tell them that I received [illegible]'s letter with yours and will answer it in a day or two. My love to all, don't forget anyone and write me a good long letter no matter what you put to make it a long letter, fill it up and lots of it now don't forget to tell me of every little thing that seems of no importance to you but it interests me greatly.

So goodbye Franky for a short time from your ever loving and devoted husband,

George G. Sinclair

Kiss the baby for me. Love to all. Tell John that I am a cooper already

George

October 13, 1862

In camp in the woods near Danville, Kentucky

Dear Frank,

Since I wrote you last we have been in a few queer places. We were in two skirmishes and are now in full blast after the rebels. When I wrote you last we were in camp at Shelbyville. It was on Sunday, well on Monday we started for Frankfort, hearing that Bragg was a going to stand there but the bird had flown. We arrived there in time to interrupt their meeting to inaugurate his military governor a Mr. Howse, which thought that the state was not worth governing.

We encamped in a beautiful maple grove a mile and a half from the town. It turned out to be the very grove which they had selected for and had built a platform to speak on for the governor's inauguration. Our boys took possession and some of them had a fine bed out of it with some straw from a nearby stack.

The next night we started at midnight, all of the different brigades on the different roads so as to act in concert and surprise Mr. Bragg.

We marched down through Frankfort which lays in a little valley of the Kentucky River between very large steep river hills mountains, you might call than. As we left Frankfort, we bid farewell to Kentucky's beautiful part of the country and entered on a poor sterile hilly, rocky ridge, which I would stand a lawsuit before I would accept all that I passed over in a four day march, as a gift. It was a continued succession of hills and ravines covered with heavy timber and undergrowth with not enough water even in the usual water courses to water a canary bird. We suffered awfully, we being glad to drink the water laying in the hog holes which smelt worse than any gutter in the back streets of Chicago.

I fell down once from complete exhaustion, my mouth being swelled almost full, but it's go on with our march. As we approached a little place called Lawrenceburgh, some people, men and women, came out to meet and inform us that the rebels had gone on about three miles so we were marched on, but as our advance passed through the place we being the second right, a few cavalry as skirmishers and an artillery camping before us to chart the way in case there should be any danger. We had just cleared the village, that is our advance, when a party who greeted us with the Union Flag jumped up and fired on our cavalry, upon which ensued [sic] a nice little skirmish.

As we passed through the main street some of the women were crying and wringing their hands and begging some of our men not to kill their men for Bragg had raised a whole company there for his army.

There was one feature on this program which looked well to me and one with a person with my temperament admired very much. It was a pretty young woman on horseback

who rode out five miles to meet us and she looked gay with a light body and dark skirt and a spirited horse. She carried a little flag in her hand which she waved as we passed her. The cannons a booming and the musketry a rattling. Well, she sat there and cheered us on and as our company cheered her in return, she only wished she was so she could fight with us says she "I would be with you." I say it was heroic in her, for it was a queer sight to most any of the men for we did not know but what the whole of Bragg's force was there and we had only a brigade, about six thousand. Beside that they were moving the wounded to the rear and it was a nasty sight to see human beings cut up in the way they were. It only made the men more eager to get at them. Not a man flinched. We did not get a shot at them, there not being but two or three hundred of them and the cavalry and artillery and first sight some Indiana [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] on our side was five men wounded, some rather badly and this one man killed that I saw. Some said that there were four but I did not see any more myself. There were seven wounded.

We then cut off from the regular road and crossed over that awful country where the water was so scarce. That day at noon I marched into camp for dinner, I being one of them of our company who marched in the ranks, all of the rest having to fall out not being able to keep up [illegible] [illegible] a very quick march.

That night we went into camp about nine o'clock with fifteen men making a march of 3 miles which with the heat and want of water was awful. The old soldiers in our brigade saying that they never had but very few as hard ones and we stood it very well. Recollect that we are the only new regiment in this brigade, a new regiment being put into each old brigade so as to make it efficient as soon as possible for service. After we got encamped for the night, there was not a man in my squad who could go for water to use for camp purposes. So off I started a mile and a half down a mountain for I have not seen anything in the shape of hills since I left California to compare with them. Well, I went and filled my canteen and mess pan with water and then took a good wash all over, which refreshed me very much. In fact Frank, it is my habits of cleanliness that I can thank for my good health and sound feet for I am the only one in our company that is not foot sore. I knew the reason of which is that they are too lazy to wash their clothes and will wear a pair of stockings all gummy and sticky with sweat, which of course makes their feet blister.

Well, that night I had a chill and fever which weakened me much and when morning reveille sounded at three o'clock, we turned out, or got up, for we were out and had been for the last month and got a little coffee which was all I could take. At about four or five, we had an attack in the rear by a part of Kirby Smith's detachment, who had come onto us by mistake on some other road and did not discover our force so we deployed around as skirmishes running over hill and valley trying to bag them but they smelt a mouse and left after killing eight men and wounding some others.

Our regiment lost none. We fooled around until ten o'clock and then started off full tilt for the devil knows where, for I do not nor have I found out yet, but we happened to strike

on to the Danville road and pushed on hearing of the cave spring battle. As fast as we could we arrived there the next night encamping right on the battlefield among the secesh, I mean dead ones, for they were scattered all over the country.

General Beatty was killed and buried within forty rods of me. I'll tell you it was hard to walk over the field and see the fresh graves and dead secesh laying on the ground decaying. They were a perfect specimen of those that were in Camp Douglas and as I have heard General Rousseau say that as they did not care to bury their dead that we would not, and they were so mean that the hogs would not eat them. We or I have gotten used to such sights now.

I do not know what we are to do nor do I care. I know that none of them can make sure calculations on anything nor know when there is to be a fight until you are face to face with the foe.

The 88th was in the fight of last week and had five killed and twenty wounded. I could not learn any of the names. I saw Jo Rogers' father or I suppose it was her father yesterday. He was wounded by a piece of shell and taken prisoner and paroled at Harodsburg [sic]. We had several of their men who were paroled. Today three men came in and gave themselves up saying that they were tired of fighting and retreating on nothing to eat but black walnuts and what they could steal and that is not much here for there are no crops except corn and the armies of both sides have been over the ground twice so the country is completely eat out. The inhabitants have left, in fact, I have not seen a man or boy at work in the fields since I left Louisville. I tell you the country looks desolate indeed. The fences are torn down everywhere. The orchards stripped of their fruit and fields of the corn and barnyards of cattle and everything else that can be eat. The wells, springs and creeks dried up by the all devouring armies, they are much worse than the locust of Egypt which destroyed everything, but we drink everything as well.

Well Frank, I am well and in good spirits for the last week more or less. I'm getting used to it now and can lay down and sleep at anytime [sic] wet blanket and all. By your kind thoughtfulness I shall soon have a rubber blanket as soon as I can send to Louisville and back, which is ninety miles from here.

Your letter makes me think of Home and it comforts me every time I look at it. The more so at your descriptions of your Sunday dinners, the room and baby without a name. I should like to see t but I should much rather see you and I hope the time is not far distant when I can have that pleasure.

I think that Charlie Toops was in the fight the other day. His colonel was there as a brigadier general and I guess that the 1st Wisconsin was there too.

John was a good boy for buying his mother a carpet, it is much better than fooling it away.

My love to all with much more to yourself. Many kisses to you and baby and don't worry for me. Always wait for positive news before believing.

From your ever loving husband,

George

I can't get a stamp in all the camp just now.

Sometime between Oct. 13, 1862 and November 15, 1862

Headquarters 89th Regiment Illinois Volunteers Camped In field near New Market, Kentucky, Supposed to be en route [sic] to Nashville, Tenn.

Dear Franky,

Since I wrote you last I have been tumbling about considerably not knowing at any time our next days [sic] destination. At last writing we were on full blast after General Bragg. But that all buggered out for we stopped at Crabb Orchard about 50 miles from Cumberland Gap. It was [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] him for we were using up his army faster by keeping his men a running than by a battle for they were hard up for the necessaries of life and were pretty well tired of this war and were coming over to us every day in numbers saying that they had enough. They looked as much poorer than the Camp Douglas prisoners as they were inferior to ours there. But Old Buell did not see fit to let us use his, Bragg's army, up in that manner for that would help end the war and Buell is having too good a thing out of it to stop the war just now.

We have had some rather cold weather the last two weeks a laying out when it froze hard enough to cover the ponds with ice. Last night our tents came from Louisville and it was mighty lucky too for we just barely got them pitched when it came on a heavy snowstorm and on turning out in the morning, found six inches of snow on the level, bully for Kentucky, the sunny south. We are now in just the place that I should like to live at this season of the year. It seems almost like the Almighty's orchard of nature. There is plenty of everything, those persimmons sized walnut tree and are ripened by the frost. The fruit resembles a small tomato in size and looks but the fruit itself tastes like a green grape and would make a splendid preserve for winter use. There are thousands of blackberries and other kinds in the season, I should judge by the looks of the bushes through the country.

We are now at the foot of the Cumberland Mountains or a branch of them and the country looks rather wild. We are supposed to be enroute to Nashville to go into winter quarters there but nothing definite is known of our destination or what we are to do. Some pretend that we are to have sixty days armistice to treat for peace, but I guess that would be too good luck for us.

By the way, speaking of going home, Billy Del has gone home insane or they let him go to make his way best he could. The cause of it was home sickness and disgust of camp

life and a little Gall at Elgin. With all, George Dyer has been taken to the general headquarters as clerk, and Charlie Foster is well but has been sent to Lebanon with a lot of sick men. Mr. Fonda is sick and in hospital at Bardstown. Our first lieutenant is also there with 30 men in all sick. This marching about the country laying out in all weather exposed in every manner kills more men than all the battles fought. Thank the Lord I have my health and am permitted to attend to my regular daily duties. I have been acting orderly sergeant and 2nd lieutenant for some time past.

Frank, that one dollar bill came just to my hand, for it is just as good as the wheat here, in fact anything in the shape of a bank bill is snatched rather than scrip of either north or south in this section for anything with a number of dollars on the face of it looks better to them, sitting on the fence as they do, ready to jump toward the winning side, than good greenbacks. So if you have any old bills of any sort send them along and they will buy me many good things from the farmers here and the sutlers. I have not seen any papers of any sort from the north nor can we get them for we have such a large mall that they won't bother with papers. Did you get any from me? I directed them to the Westside Post Office.

If you will let me know what division and brigade Charlie Toops is in, I will try to find him but without I know just where to look, I might inquire for six months and not find anything of the 1st Wisconsin regiment. We passed the 88th the other day but I did not have any chance to see any of the boys, the 24th Wisconsin was with them.

Our regiment has in it now about 500 men in the ranks for duty, the balance have given out and are in the hospital and yet ours is about the largest that I have come across yet and the old troops all say that's a bully regiment as we pass them by the march.

But that's nothing to do with my being here instead of at home with you as I ought to be. Keep your courage up Franky, this cannot last forever and the Lord King willing I shall have the more pleasure by experiencing the hardships of life for we have had uncommon hard times since coming into the service for we were put right into an old brigade and they say that we stand it much better than any new troops that they ever saw.

We marched all last week without any meat at all and only four small crackers a day about the size of soda crackers. I eat mine every morn before starting and then marched all day from four or five o'clock in the morn until seven and sometimes nine o'clock at night on an empty stomach. Talk about serving one's country and suffering all that to put money into these quartermasters' pockets for we have to pay taxes for the full amount at home no matter whether the poor soldier gets anything of it or not. I say Damn the Country. I would just as soon see the south win as the north for skin the poor they all will. Just you wait until I get home again and would someone ask me to enlist again, to starve myself and wear my legs off marching for their gain.

No more on that subject but kiss that nameless baby for me for I wish that I were where I could do the same for the mother. My love to everybody. Tell Mr. Willie that Rigney is

well and sends his respects with mine to him. Mine also to Mrs. Willie and Sarah. Also to Mrs. Barker who I should like to see. Give my love to all who may inquire. Kiss everyone for me for were I there, I should do it reserving a good share for yourself. So goodbye for now Franky,

George

P.S. You can do as you please with those shirts and that brush did belong to Wallace. I don't want the shirts so you may sell them. By the way, I want you to see Mr. [illegible], the man who pays the Cook County relief fund and find out when they are going to pay anything. You can find him at the County Clerk's Office at the Court House. Attend to it, will you Franky? You can also draw something for baby. Goodbye from your ever loving and devoted husband,

George G. Sinclair

To Mrs. Frances E. Sinclair

Chicago, Illinois

Written near Mechanicsville, Taylor County, Kentucky

November 15, 1862

Tirel Springs, Tennessee Headquarters 89th Regiment, Illinois Volunteers

Dear Frank,

I received your welcome letters for I received two at once this time last evening. The reason that I did not get them before last evening was that we are detached from our brigade and put on duty at this post to guard the springs from the rebels as this is a regular watering place for trains running to and fro [sic] between Nashville and Mitchelville [sic] on the Louisville and Nashville turnpike.

It had been a regular sporting place in times gone by for the bloods of the south to rusticate, drink good water and bad liquor in plenty, but the hotel is used now for our officers [sic] headquarters and a hospital for the sick of our regiment.

Since I wrote you last we have marched about considerable. That Sunday night our company went out on picket duty and it was cold enough to freeze ice in a house. We made ourselves partially comfortable by keeping a large fire and exercising ourselves by running about confiscating anything that we could lay our hands on. Our mess raised a nice box of honey which we laid into, you bet.

The next place that we came into of any importance was Bowling Green, Kentucky. The land of caves. We struck the first cave or the vicinity of caves at Bells Tavern, twenty miles north of Bowling Green and the whole country for thirty miles is more or less caves and rocks

The railroad bridge at Munfordville was just finished so the cars run through as far as Mitchellville, Tennessee and we got supplies and winter clothing there. We encamped four miles south of the town.

Bowling Green is a place of about eight thousand inhabitants before the war commenced. It is quite a pretty place, but between the rebel and our troops being quartered there more or less since there has been anything doing in the war business. A number of buildings were burnt by one party, others sacked and pillaged by the next. All the public buildings being used for hospitals, so take it all around the place cannot retain much of its [sic] former appearance.

I must describe Mill Cave where we encamped. It is one of the places where the much spoken of and noted lost river of Kentucky, which has no visible raising or mouth but shows itself in a few places for a quarter of a mile and then becomes lost again into the bowels of the earth through solid rock. Where we were the face of the country is one of the best in the state, with this exception; you may be walking along one level field and stumble into an abrupt opening hardly large enough to get through that perhaps would be the entrance to a large cave of more than a mile in length. This Mill Cave is just a deep chasm about a quarter of a mile in length, twenty rods across and from fifty to seventy-five feet deep with a river coming right out of the rocks and entering at the lower end into the cave. Some enterprising Yankee, I would be willing to bet largely, had put a mill and made use of the water, but like all other Institutions of this sunny south had been let go to rack and ruin. In fact, the people of the south are the laziest most shiftless set of people that God ever put on the face of the earth. I have not seen a decent farm or farm house in the south nor have I seen a neat tidy woman or girl since I left Shelbyville. They are a lank bony set half dressed, hair uncombed, dirty lousy layabouts that haven't enough about them to keep themselves clean .

Frank, who do you think came into camp to see me the other day but the right honorable Martin Quin, the lieutenant, that would be who had dwindled down to a fifth or commissary sergeant of Stokes 1st Tennessee Cavalry which he says that he joined in Nashville. They were guarding a wagon train to Mitchellville and return with army supplies. He could talk as big as ever and had the impudence to tell me that he left immediately after I was married. I also saw Captain Frank Wescott of the 51st Illinois with a number of others from Chicago that I knew.

Frank, those certificates to insure the War Fund Cook County were sent to Mr. Downs, the treasurer of the Milwaukee Road. You can get yours by going to Mr. Huntly. I don't want you to beg of the county, but this is your right. Mrs. Loomis went to Colonel Cristopher and got her certificate and draws \$2.00 per week. You can draw \$1.50 for yourself and 25 cents for Gertie, making \$1.75 a week which would be quite a help and to be had for going after it for it is rightfully yours. All the married women of the country receive it or a number that I know of certain and they had not to say that they were not able to earn a living. As for the \$10.00 from the railroad folks, I guess is all right if it is not I shall not stop here for I don't believe in letting them bamboozle me into this cursed

business and then laugh to theirselves [sic] at my foolishness in taking their promises. It nearly created a mutiny in Colorado and there will be certainly some to leave to go home and take care of their families before country and that's my awful fix. I have risked my head for country and it's a pity if I couldn't, for goodbye this time, write soon, my love to all and kisses for yourself and Gertie,

George

My own Frank, not to say anything about my mother and the younger ones at home, who I should not like to see suffer as long as I can earn a cent. I want you to go right to Mr. Huntley at the Shops and have a talk with him. He will see you righted, if it is a possible thing to do.

You must tell him that you need it, that what little money that I left has been spent and you need more to live on. He will also see about the war fund for you. Now don't fail to attend to all of this for I find out that some of the old troops in our brigade has not been paid off for six and eight months. They are paid according as the paymaster happens to come across them on certain rounds that he takes once in a while and then falls back to some town to spend what he might have left of the spoils. That is about the way that we are treated all through the army. Never mind, it can't last forever and then I am free. Yes, free once again for allowing that a man has his health. Here he does not get half enough from the damned quartermaster for if government allows us plenty, he cheats us out of a good share to fill his own pockets with. You would laugh to see us manage sometimes to get along from our drawing of rations to another by killing hogs, geese or even a young beef. Confiscating some sweet potatoes, apples and [illegible] from the surrounding country, which is entirely secesh and right in the middle of Morgan's gang, who by the way, captured a few of our men. Once in a while they get a few alive.

I have just been to dinner and we had fresh hog and some hulled corn that boiled yesterday. It went veil. I can assure, Franky, you need not worry about my health, if it keeps as good as it has since entering the service. I am as hearty as a brick and can digest the capital letters of a grave stone and sleep sound out in the cold rain, not troubled at all with a cold. Rheumatism is the only thing that I am troubled at all about but that has not bothered me as yet.

Your dreams had ought to go to the contrary and all others of such nature. Although I have often had some very queer dreams at times myself, but don't let that worry you at all. I can't say though that I would rather see you here best of all places in the world but then should like to see you here very well were I sick. I tell you I was blue last week for one of the men received a letter from his wife saying that Baldwin had denied ever promising to pay \$10.00 per month to their families but by last night's mail I found out that some of them had gotten it. I am in hopes that you may be one of the lucky ones.

I like the name that has been selected for our little one and think it very pretty and there is some sense to such a name to none of your milk and water names such as people are all the rage often taken from every new novelette that comes out. I am also very

glad of Henry's promotion for I think that he deserves something of the company after laying idle so long.

I can see you at home just as I Imagine things are there, you up in your room with little one of an afternoon. You a sewing, reading or writing just as the case may be. Everything all tidied up in place, a nice fire a burning, everything cozy and Mother good naturely [sic] grunting, perhaps talking baby to Edie. Mary busy with something and in comes John and his father all covered with snow, stamping and blowing. I can almost imagine that I can see such a pleasant scene and would to God I could, but I must say goodbye to all until I come home sooner the better

From yours ever,

George

November 24, 1862

Headquarters 89th Regiment Illinois Volunteers

In field near Nashville, Tennessee.

Dear Franky,

As I have few leisure moments just now to spare I know of nothing that will give me so much pleasure as to write you a few lines to let you know of the changes that we have made since I wrote last from Tirel Springs. We had to leave there last Monday a week ago today as the old General Rousseau with his division came to take up his quarters at the springs, keeping a whole brigade to do the same duty that our regiment had been doing alone. We were not much pleased as we had just got fixed up comfortable for cold weather and there was plenty to confiscate around that point which we as a true and loyal citizen and soldier of this great and glorious Republic, made it our duty to use as much as possible of their, the rebels, provisions, so as to use up what subsistence [sic] they have on hand and thereby cause them to sue for peace thus end the war. Don't you think my plan a good one? If we can't whip the rebels out, we can eat than out in short order, especially if everyone eats as much as I do.

I have found what brigade Charlie Toops is in, he is at Mitchellville the southern end of Louisville and Nashville Railroad as it runs now, guarding that place against Morgan's gang. He is in the 28th brigade of Rousseau's division. They were in the thickest of the Perryville Battle and did well. I guess he is all right. Take it for granted until you hear otherwise.

I have seen some of the 19th boys. There are a number of than that I am acquainted with. They tell me that C. Lamberson has been acting adjutant of the regiment. It is an office the rank the same as first lieutenant but with the difference of its being a staff office, bully for Cornell.

We started on our last march, it having rained two days before hand and anyone can imagine what fine footing it was, but we weathered the two days march finally passing

through the best looking part of the south that we have been in as yet. We cannot give a very correct idea of the country as everything is torn and ransacked to pieces. Nearly every farm that we pass has nothing but ruins to mark the place where once stood some fine mansions. Their owners leaving everything behind and scooting for the land of Dixie. You might look in almost any direction and see the tall old fashioned chimneys standing, a sad monument of this cursed rebellion which it will take this country a hundred years to come to build up again and regain its [sic] former prosperity. As we entered Nashville, we could see more of the effects of war, bridges and everything that could be destroyed has been touched by the destroying fiend. We crossed the Cumberland River on the pontoon bridge into Nashville, which is a very pretty place and rises from the river bank toward the south, is very well laid out with fine buildings generally the principle [sic] ones of which are the State House and a fine college, markets and with an insane assylum [sic] in sight of where we are encamped on the Murfreesboro Pike. There is not enough water in the Cumberland to run the steamers at present, and the railroad's not in running order so it makes Nashville rather dull outside of military business. The Louisville road was to be opened yesterday which will help to enliven things to have direct communication with the north.

We are now in a country where it is nothing new to hear them skirmishing every day. They have been at it today since three o'clock this morning, We can now hear by a field piece or two. It must have been rather brisk all the forenoon.

It's now noon and dinner is ready or nearly so and we have to go on drill at two o'clock. I will finish this afternoon if nothing prevents.

George

I have just come in from batallion [sic] drill, which is a whole regiment' s drill. It is now five o'clock and I will try to finish out this sheet before supper or crackers and coffee, I should say. With what I jayhawk [sic] and I am pretty good at that, I am getting fat and rugged, sleeping on the ground in our little tents when it freezes water in a bucket an inch or more, sleeping sound as a buck. The boys in our mess concluded that they would rather sleep on feathers this cold weather, so we went and husked a lot of corn to lay on, not the corn but the husks to lay on. Won't we have it fine tonight, eh?

I hope that you receive that money from the company and myself impartial [sic], for if I do not receive what they promised, I shall do everything by compulsion and I would even desert rather than see you suffer or be dependent on anyone. I would leave and go to some other part of the states and let them whistle for me and be damned with their country to save, for when there is not public opinion and patriotism enough in the wealthy at home to take care of the families of volunteers which they solemnly swear to do on getting us to go and fight their battles and after we are gone, repudiate all they have said and leave the dependent ones to suffer or become outcasts of society to procure the necessities of life, as is the case of many a poor victim.

You just let me know immediately know should anything go wrong, should your Father be sick or you seem to be a burden to them . In fact, should you need my help at all, let me know at once for my duty is toward my family, before country or anything else except God and it's a tight match between the two. I'll let you decide on that part.

Dear Franky you are always in my mind and were I sure that you were well provided for, I should be content to stay my time out, but you would never complain anyway unless you were hard pinched. I am very glad that Mother Is so well satisfied where she is.

It is getting so dark that I cannot follow the lines so I will bid you adieu for the present. My Love to all at home and respects to those who may inquire for me from your affectionate husband,

George G. Sinclair

Write all the news to George

December 3, 1862

On picket duty seven miles from Nashville on the Nashville and Chattanooga railroad.

Dear Frank,

I received your ever welcome letter a day or two since, but have not had time to write since and I take time to pencil this while I am on duty.

We have moved our camping gound [sic] since I wrote you. I do not know of their reasons for changing only to get us in another part of the army. We expect to be in the advance of Rosecrans' Grand Army, which is only waiting for supplies and a chance of plenty of subsistance [sic] for his men. Then we go on, the devil knows where, for we don't pretend to ask. All we have to do is to march onward when ordered and ask no questions.

Franky, I don't want you to keep sending me money and stamps for I do not need them and it's only a mistaken kindness in your sending it for I do not need anything here that I have not. We are in a country that if you pretend to pay for what you get, it would take a young fortune to live decently and pay the prices of anything that we consume. So I am content to take what Uncle Sam furnishes us and jayhawk [sic] all that we can from the country. I had to laugh at your Idea of buying ne a Thanksgiving dinner with that dollar that you sent me, which by the way was a good one and arose of itself from your own kind heart. But when cheese is a dollar and butter is a dollar and a half a pound, potatoes and apples a dollar a pick, how much of a dinner do you suppose a dollar would buy, and everything else selling at the same proportions. So my dear, I would rather you would save or use the same money for your own benefit which is the same to me. You need not worry on my account for I will not go without as long as there is anything to eat in the country around. I would further say on behalf of myself that I am getting fat and saucy and am regaining my usual weight.

You asked if I could not get home to spend Christmas and New Years, I don't think that I really can for the fighting will commence soon and every man will be needed in his place. It is now nearly four months since I enlisted and at the expiration of the first six, I shall, if living and well, apply for a furlough of twenty days which the government promises, and if they don't give it to me, I shall take one on my own hook, just as Frank Wescott did. So you need not look for me before that time, and if they are fighting very brisk at that time, I may put it off a little while. Not but I should like to see you and visit home once again, but I never should like to have it thrown in my face that I left when there was any fighting on hand.

We had our maiden battle three days ago. We were sent out on a foraging expedition and were assailed by some of Breckenridge's cavalry but we laid six or seven of them, they not doing us any damage in return. We are gaining quite a reputation as a crack regiment and I tell you, we earn it too, for finer never turned into the field. Well on that day we were thrown out as skirmishers and we skirmished right on a bed of sweet potatoes and cabbage which were buried [sic] for winter use. We appropriated all that the whole company could carry. Our mess secured nearly a bushel and four good heads of cabbage. You may bet that we lived high while those lasted, they are out today. As we are out on picket, we shall try to replenish our stock of vegetables before tomorrow [sic] night.

Thursday 4th Dec., You see by this that I have passed another night in succession on picket, the most dangerous of all military duty, and come off with a whole head and a half bushel of potatoes besides which I went outside of the lines this morn early and confiscated, and the owner extended his hospitality by presenting me with a warm breakfast of sweet potatoes, corn bread and buttermilk, which I appreciated a great deal but not enough to refund the potatoes that I had got. I was kind enough to stop a lot of other soldiers from robbing him, wasn't I kind. It is our maxim here to let everyone take care of himself and the devil take the hindmost.

We are having splended [sic] weather here at present, very cold nights and warm days but little rain. If we had a fall of snow on the ground, it would seem like our northern winters. We are kept on the move for two hours at a time and four off, so you see that we can manage to keep warm for that length of time.

I am very glad that you got that money from the company for I had worried considerable on your account, but now as long as you receive that amount monthly, there is no danger of your suffering. I do not like the idea of your being dependent on your father or anyone else. We shall probably be paid off in a month or two and I can then send you what I get. So keep up good spirits for there is a good time coming. I think that the reason why they don't pay off sooner is that they are waiting for something to be done by congress this month toward settling our difficulties without fighting and if that can't be done why then they want all the men here to fight, and if they paid them off now they would not have half of the present force for the men would take French Furloughs and be off toward their loved ones at home. Oh how I should like to pick up and start for

home. I could foot it all the way barefoot at that and thank God for the chance to do it honorably too.

I had a letter from Ally and Julie last week, I was much pleased to hear from them. Ally says that Julie is jealous of your baby wanting as good a one to herself, and she wrote that Gertie was a regular Sinclair, easily known to anyone as such. I answered her that to be sure it was a Sinclair and I should be sorry to hear of it's [sic] favoring anyone else as Steve's wife's child does by all accounts.

I am very glad that Gertie is so little trouble to you. I can just picture you and Sarah and John making so much fuss over a little youngster. But I guess that there will be a house full if Sarah should happen to marry and do as well as you and Mary have done. By the way I congratulate Mary on the birth of her son, may she have many more. Tell Hank that he must hold up and take a fair start with his neighbors, not to be in a hurry. He is young yet.

I have not anymore nonsense to write this time, so goodbye for the present with much love for your own. Love to all,

George

December 6, 1862

Headquarters 89th Regiment Illinois Volunteers In camp near Nashville

Dear Frank,

I am going to write you a nice little letter this time, as I wrote only day before yesterday, but I received your very kind letter of Nov. 30th and thinking that it might give you as much pleasure to hear from me often, as it does me to hear from you, news or no news, that I would write again today.

It is winter here now in earnest [sic] for we have had quite a little fall of snow and last night was the coldest that we have had as yet. I shall really like to know what we are waiting here for, and in fact, all our country they doing nothing in the way of fighting and the roads will soon be so that an army cannot move one way or another. I suppose that they are waiting for the rebs [sic] to get a good ready to receive them in style.

We had a rumor here on Thursday that some of the rebel states had petitioned to be taken back into the Union and the authorities [sic] in Nashville fired a thirteen gun salute in honor of it and also that General Lee had been sent from Richmond and power from the confederacy to treat for an armistice for thirty days. I rather guess it's all moonshine with no foundation at all. In fact it is too good to be true.

I saw Billy McAvry day before yesterday. He came over and took pot luck with me. He is fat and hearty, has had no sickness at all. He complemented [sic] me by saying that I

was looking better than ever he had seen me before. He sends respects to you and all of the folks when I should write again.

You was very kind and it is just like you to think of my little wants down here. I appreciate your thoughtfulness but Uncle Sam will furnish us with socks and mittens and I believe they are here and are to be given out today, it has been rather cold on the fingers handling a gun these cold mornings but I use one of them as little as possible you may rest assured.

My socks have worn first rate but they are nearly gone now. You ask if I have had to mend them, why yes, I call it mending. I wore my foot through the toe part and then I sewed it up again so it answered as well as ever. Ain't [sic] I clever.

So now Franky, don't you ask me when I want money again, for if I do or need anything, I will send for it. You need not be afraid of that. In fact, I need nothing here but what I can get at the settlers. [sic] If I have money it is only a temptation to foolishly spend money which will do you more good to keep at home for me if you do not need it at the present time for your own use.

You say that I was missed at home on Thanksgiving day not anymore, I dare say though. I regreted [sic] not being with you. There must have been quite a family gathering. Oh how I should have enjoyed it to have been with you.

You did perfectly right in not going until starvation compelled you to go for the Cook County fund, for I have since found out that it was no fit place for any lady to go and I should go rather hungry myself before I could condescend [sic] to beg of any society, such as that, much more allow you to expose yourself to the jibs and jurs [sic] of many that would feel disposed to offer such to you. I expect that we shall be paid off the last of this month or the first of the next and than we will have a little something to store.

How is my little Gertie getting along? Does she grow fast? I love to hear of everything that is going on at home, even family matters are of a great deal of interest to me. Write everything and anything.

Remember me to all. How is Mother Sinclair making at boarding? I was sorry to hear of your mother's illness. I hope she may be better when you get this.

My love to all and kiss to yourself and Gertie from your
ever loving,

George

December 16, 1862

Headquarters 89th Regiment Illinois Volunteers

In camp near Nashville, Tennessee

Dear Frank,

I received your ever welcome letter last night after we came in from a foraging expedition which although the day was very stormy, provide a good one to us, that is our mess, for I secured a fine pig of a hundred pounds, a lot of potatoes, turnips, chickens, geese and I guess that we can live for a few days as well as any of the officers can afford to.

The boys are busy cleaning up their guns, some cooking, some cleaning what they stole or jayhawked [sic], I would say for I consider anything that we can lay hands on confiscated to a good cause that is to keep us in good condition. By the way, what do you think of my weighing one hundred and fifty five pounds, strong and hearty not that superfluous flesh but a good hard healthy weight. What do you think of my constitution, eh? I guess that the Sinclairs are as tough as any that they have here or anywhere else.

Just as I am writing this, Billy McAvry came in to see me. I was over to see the 24th boys Sunday but did not see him there, so he came over here today and agoing [sic] to cake dinner with us.

I also saw Thos. Brown, who is in the same brigade as Bill and had a long talk with him. He told me that Charlie Toops laid about two miles from us toward Nashville, having come down from Mitchellville a day or two ago. I shall go over as soon as I can get away. I am kept rather busy in my position as orderly. Sunday was the first that I had been away from camp on my own business since I have been in the service and as I was ploding [sic] along towards our camp after my visit, I felt the most like a free man, than I had since I left home and as you say I almost watch the minutes until I think a reasonable time has elapsed [sic] for me to ask for a furlough. I heartly [sic] agree with Pratt in saying, "were I go home the country and everyone else might go to the devil or anywhere they liked, before I would shoulder a musket again."

Today is fine and comfortable out of doors but last night it was awful. We had just moved here on Saturday and consequently had no time to get fixed up comfortable with bedding and so last night we had to lay down in the wet and cold and ourselves wet to the skin. We slept but not very sound. I hope that we may have things rigged up a little better before another storm. Such weather affects me more than all the marching we have done could do by setting the rheumatism in my bones. I shall thank God when I am out of such cursed business once more.

Frank I would like to hear of and from any of my friends, that express regard enough to wish to write and hear from me and I will gladly answer any that may so kind as to do so, and you did perfectly right in telling them so.

I will answer Mrs [sic] Walker's letter in yours for I should hardly think it proper to do so otherwise. I would hardly answer her or any other lady, even older woman acquaintance without my wife's knowledge. Not that I think any less of Mrs. W. but I consider it your right and would be unjust to say the least toward you should I have any secret correspondance [sic] with any person. I think a great deal of Mrs. Walter as a friend and I also think that she is an honest well meaning woman although a little fond of attention from others but her husband knows her perfectly and treats her accordingly. I should like very well to hear from Mr. Walter and the boys on the road and will answer and keep them posted should they write.

You are no prouder of that child of ours than am I and all that I regret is that I am in a situation where I am as a stranger to it and should the war continue, even were I spared my life and limbs, it would take the little one a long time to realize that she had a father alive.

I hope that the friends of those that are in the marine artillery will effect something towards the relief of the boys. It is a perfect shame that this government should be allowed to carry on as they do, sacrificing the lives of thousands upon thousands for no purpose at all but to fill the pockets of some special pets of office holders at Washington. Oh that there could be a stop put to such work before we sacrifice the best blood of the land.

I wish Ed was at home and safe again. Give my love to all and kisses for the little one. I expect that you spoil Gertie, although Mary says that she is a perfect baby and Mary knows all the babies in the vicinity, so she ought to be a judge, well I must bid you goodbye for the present giving much love to all reserving the largest share for yourself, your ever affectionate and

Loving George

January 6, 1863

Headquarters 89th Regiment Illinois Volunteers

In camp four miles south of Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Dear Frank,

I received your kind and welcome letter on the 24th of last month. I also received one from Ally and Augusta the day before. But we were ordered to march the next morning, so I had to defer writing them and we have been on the steady go ever since. You wished me to tell you how I spent Christmas and New Years [sic] day, as I could not answer then, I kept a little memorandum of events that have transpired from that up to the present time. To commence with I will copy a letter that I had written a week ago last Sunday while on march. December 28th was the day that I received your letter while we were marching along. Things passed along as usual in camp up to the 24th of December. Now and then I would steal off to visit some of the boys in other regiments

that I was acquainted with. I saw Dick Fitzgibbon in camp of the 51st Ill. while at Nashville and I have seen him since the battle. He is well, has grown considerable and likes soldiering first rate, though, says it is not home. I have seen Thos. Brown before and since the battle. He is also all right and well as usual. The day before Christmas we pulled up stakes and took a start forward on our grand forward movement that has been talked of so much, but only marched out two or three miles than [sic] back again to pitch tents until further orders holding ourselves In readiness to move at a minute's notice. The next morning we were sent out a foraging with a whole brigade as a guard, we drove in their pickets about ten o'clock and skirmished with them, the rebs [sic], constantly until four in the afternoon. The loss being trifling on both sides, perhaps a half a dozen killed or wounded on either. The loss seems light to speak of and constant skirmish kept up half a day, but light as it was it will make many a once cheerful family desolate. Well to go on with my story, on the morn of the 26th Dec., bright and early we started out again. We being on the right, that means in military parlance that our division was ahead, we taking the Nolensville pike, also one on the Franklin and Murfreesboro Pikes towards the latter place where we expected the enemy to make a stand. On the first day's march we made nine miles, it taking us until quite dark to accomplish that on account of the bridges being either burnt or blown up so as to delay us as much as possible, It taking some time to repair, so as to get the artillery across. We had not much of a train otherwise for all of our tents and camp equipage being left behind carrying tents for only the big officers and what amunition [sic] we needed. This day's march was a very disagreeable one. It raining all day, a cold winter rain completely saturating us and you can imagine how comfortable we were to lay down without any shelter at all on the cold wet ground, though we laid more comfortable than could be expected, for we did not go to bed any too early. Recollect that everyone down here are secesh, out and out. So we did not hesitate to help ourselves to anything that we wanted. So the boys Just pitched In and opened the stores in the town and dwellings In the vicinity, completely sacking everything. I confess as badly as I hate the secesh, I had not the heart to destroy what I did not want as some did, but took only what I wanted to eat. You would think it a hard sight to see, the fine large mirrors broken, carpets torn up, pianos turned by the soldiers, you can guess what a turning they got. Well, in fact they played the devil in general with Nolensville. I will say in our defense that the people deserved all that was put upon them.

Rained hard during the night but we was up and off in the morning of the 27th. Raining all day we moved very cautious, this day our advance driving the rebels before them. And at Triune we heard chat the rebels intended making a death stand, and I should say that the place is admirably situated for a strong defense, being situated on the top of a high range of hills, almost mountains you might say, and a stream running at the base of the hill. And the bridge was blown up to there was no crossing for artillery for miles. But with all these natural defenses in their favor, they were easily shelled out. We encamped within a quarter of a mile of the village. The boys serving this place as we did Nolensville. A little accident happened to our company from the effects of sacking, as they found some whiskey and abused it and one of our men fell into the opening for the

bridge at Triune. He died that night, we burried [sic] him at midnight. It seemed mighty hard to lay him here away from home or friends. When we laid this night in our wet blankets it put me in mind of the old woman's cure for a cold, not very pleasant though.

In the morning of the 28th, Sunday, we were marched out to give battle to the enemy, as we now understood that the rebs [sic] were drawn up to dispute the passage of a small stream with a big name called the Big Harper, it was four miles from Triune. But we found no enemy. Expecting a few bushwackers [sic] so we countermarched back to camp. This day the sun came out quite warm and comfortable and as I sat in the woods in camp which I named Camp of the Palace, for as I sat there within my sight was one of the finest buildings in the shape of a dwelling that ever laid out of doors and a very pretty natural location. General Johnson made it his headquarters last night. Today we shall probably stay one more night and then we shall go on again, the Lord only knows where.

Monday Dec. 29th. This morning we countermarched back about three miles and took a short cut across to Murfreesboro Pike over a high rolling country and rather bad roads for four or five miles. But on raising one of the most lofty of the range we opened on one of the most beautiful sights that I ever beheld and some beautiful hills and valleys, streams, little villages, etc., all within sight in the distance looking so peacefull [sic] and happy. Murfreesboro could be seen in the distance. Little did I think then as I gazed almost enraptured on that scene, that it was to be the theatre of such transactions that have been enacted since. As we come down the slope the roads became very bad especially through the swamps for there are any quantity of cedar glades and swamps. We marched until seven o'clock and then camped on an old cornfield and as it had rained two days heavily, the soft plowed ground was not very agreeable to lie on. There had been a cavalry charge made on the same ground during the day between the 15th Pennsylvania cavalry and some of Morgan's and Forrest's of the rebs [sic]. The Philadelphia boys doing them considerable damage and completely routed them. Our loss was twenty-seven killed and wounded. To make things pleasant we were allowed no fire and it rained very heavy during the night. In the morning I found myself laying right in a pool of water as each hollow between the corn ridges was full. As soon as we began to stir about in the morning, the ground was a perfect mush. The reason that we were not allowed fire was the fear of being surprised by the enemy for we were within four miles of them.

December 30th we started early for Murfreesboro, the weather thick and foggy, it raining lightly, rather cool, marched about a mile and a half and heard the ball opened by Davis division on the front. We had struck the Murfreesboro Pike so he was in front and skirmished with the rebs [sic] nearly all day, slowly driving them ahead within three miles of Murfreesboro, where they were seen in force in a heavy piece of timber where it was reported they had a large encampment. They had thrown up rifle pits and observations to our forward movement. We could not draw them out so we shilled [sic] them until night. They answering for some time but were finally silenced. We laid in a

piece of woods within a quarter of a mile of their batteries but received no damage at night. Just after dark we were moved, that is our division, our brigade having the advance up in the same piece of woods that the enemy were in all day. We encamped in a piece of under brush of cedars and briars. We cut cedar boughs, grass, etc., to lay on. The night turned rather cool, the night passed all right after setting the pickets. The 32nd Indiana, an old tried regiment, being sent out. Now it will be seen by subsequent events that hauling off their battery the night before was altogether a ruse to deceive us as their force was not stirred at all during the day, but lay quiet not being disturbed at all by our shells. So they lay there and heard every movement of ours during the night for we lay near enough for them to hear us cutting cedar brush and the officer's cooks cutting wood. We were not allowed any fire for poor devils of enlisted men and they even let our men go through their lines to get water and to water the battery horses, being sure of us. In the morning, well we laid till we had slept ourselves out, it being early light, our officers not calling into line of battle and starting three hours before daylight as was the custom at Louisville and Nashville, when we were perfectly safe and secure from all harm. But here right under the nose of the enemy we were allowed to get up at our leisure. We not supposing that there was anyone to disturb us within a mile and a half at least. Some of the men had just put on their coffee to boil, others starting a fire and getting ready for breakfast when we heard light skirmishing on our flank and immediately the firing grew heavier and we were ordered into line. The men were just forming when a little fellow from a company on our left in our regiment came running toward me and away from the firing. Thinking that he was getting scared rather early, I tried to stop him but says he "I shot in the bowels, I can't". Just at that moment another sings out "I've got one" to putting his hand to his head and even then I would not believe that they were anything more than spent balls that were over shot from where they were at it on the left of us. But in a jiffy of time the balls were zipping past us from nearly all sides and the men were tumbling pretty fast. Then we began to realize that there was an enemy firing at us for just then our battery men, what there was left of them, gave four shots of grass and canister and left as there was no horses hitched up to the pieces. We then had the order to lay down and down we went, the balls whistling over our heads like mad. When we lay we could not see as far as the rest of the regiment of the brigade. And they discovering the enemy advancing and the fourth brigade had just been surprised who laid just as near the rebs [sic] as we did, came running into us pall-mall. So they on the front of our brigade getting first sight of danger were the first to get out of the way. Well we laid there for a few moments like good fellows. Our colonel looking for some command from our brigadier general, (Willich) who by the way was taken prisoner at the onset, but not getting any command, let us lay there, he sitting on his horse, our adjutant being wounded and unhorsed, the major unhorsed and the bullets whistling like hail by him. He was a brick. I tell you and by his actions gave a great deal of confidence to his men. I thought as I saw him sitting there that my life was worth no more to me than his was to him. Just then the adjutant general rode up and said to the colonel who sat on his horse quite near our company. Said he "order a retreat, colonel for God's sake, give your men a chance for their lives". So the

order was given and as we rose up the enemy was within twenty yards of us and as they caught sight they fired a murderous- fire into our ranks completely riddling the regiment. We had an open field to cross of about forty rods and it was impossible to keep a retreat in good order as all of the old regiments had left the field before us and was running in all directions. So we did the best we could to get to the first fence where there was a second growth of timber and underbrush. Here a part of us rallied about fifty with our colonel and we were nearly the last ones that crossed. It was clear and the rebels are in a steady column, three brigades deep, their banners a flying. Here I took a good deliberate aim at the banner carrier. The banner was a triangle supported by a round frame. I believe it is the state seal of Arkansas. But that was the second time that I had coverd him with my musket and failed to bring him down and at a good near shot at that, but I am satisfied that I could not shoot in that direction without hurting somebody. So we fought from fence to fence and tree to tree. Our men falling all around, some in front now one beside me then one would cry out from behind. Oh, it was awful to think of, but some how or other I did not anticipate or even fear a shot. And I can ascribe It to no other than an all seeing and kind Providence that guided my footsteps that eventful day. Well so we fought rallying a few men here and there. We waiting until they would come near enough for a good shot and they had to shoot at random to clear the thickets ahead so by this means our loss was slight after we got shelter and theirs was heavy at one field imparicular [sic], they laid in great number completely covering the ground. At about three quarters of a mile from our first starting point we rallied as a regiment numbering about three hundred and twenty and kept our numbers good during the day. At this wood we made a stand with fifty or sixty of the 32nd Indiana with the 93rd Ohio to support us, but as the rebs [sic] came in sight through the cornfield, these bold Ohioans or Buckeyes run before they fired a shot at us leaving the railroad boys to stand the charge and we did it, too, driving the rebs [sic] in turn across the woods and holding them in check for half an hour, until they got a battery to bear on us then as they advanced we were ordered to retreat not wishing to expose the strength of our force to them in that quarter. So we continued fighting and retreating in good order until we drew the enemy under the cover of General Rousseau's [sic] guns, who had the left of the right wing. Then the battle raged the opposite way, we driving the balance of the day. You had ought to hear that colonel of the 93rd Ohio abuse his men for running when new recruits would stand. In fact we were the only regiment in our brigade that held together as a regiment and kept In good order and under command. About two o'clock, we were taken back on the reserve but it was not much reserve for the firing was incessant from all directions, the booming of the cannons was tremendous and the clattering of musketry was awful to listen to, to say nothing about the damage that it must do. I tell you that there has been nothing on this continent that can compare with this as a battle, all of our old soldiers agree in saying this. We soon had enough to do again as the rebel cavalry had got in our rear and attacked our amunition [sic] train, but were soon repulsed. Although they waved a large white flag, but we paid no attention to that as it was an old story that white flag, for we could see them rush right in and capture the teams and hurry them off. But our cavalry

soon overtook them and recaptured everything, punishing Mr. Rebs for their audacity. There was soon work found again for as we expected an attack in considerable force on our extreme right. But when we got there It was so near night that there was nothing more done excepting some pretty hard cavalry fighting out on an open field in our sight, the night turned in cold and frosty, we relying on our arms all night. Our rations ran out the day before so you may imagine that we were rather hungry, fighting and running from here to there all day long. About midnight the provision train came in with a supply and about three thousand troops, a part of Thomas' division. I thought that night the longest Old Year out and New Year in that I ever watched for.

Although I had not slept three hours in the past three nights, it was so cold and wet I could not sleep a wink. We laid in a cedar swamp or glade among [sic] big rocks and mud between them. And being allowed no fire, there was not much comfort to be taken in our position. Near morning they issued two crackers and a small piece of meat salt as could be to a man with quarter rations of coffee and there was no water within a mile of us. But this was better than nothing and it proved lucky for us to get that for we got nothing from the night of Dec. 30th until Jan. 2nd, but I am anticipating.

January 1st the ball opened just after daylight, it being delayed a few moments after , gave us the hope that the enemy had evacuated Murfreesboro, as the trains were to be heard running all night, the whistles blowing with as much consequence as if doing a heavy paying business. But our hopes turned out to be false for in approaching their lines slowly, they opened upon us quite lively for a spell then it slacked up a little while, but was soon opened briskly for all day. Though each side fought rather wary trying to draw each other out, our generals keeping us running about all day, going through his military maneuvers to accomplish some end of his own. But each side tried to out do [sic] each other on the flanks, but the most of the fighting was done on the front and centre [sic]. The prisoners that we took reported that heavy bodies of troops had been pouring into Murfreesboro for the last four days and that they had raised large numbers of seven days men of the citizens to serve for this battle, so our folks thought it best to fight sure, until the balance of our army could come up for their acknowledged force was from fifty or sixty thousand and we had just about thirty thousand on the field when they opened the fight. But there was enough on the way to out number [sic] them. But it takes some time for an army to move even thirty miles in the manner that they do. It will be seen that the rebels were perfectly cognizant of all our doings by raising those seven days men from the time that we made our start from Nashville. In fact they have known each and every movement that we have made since entering Tennessee, being posted as to the numbers that we had and have kept informed when and what movement we were to make our forward movement and they have improved their time by forty flying, so as to make all resistance possible. Our regiment had not much fighting to do only one attack of cavalry and the shells to dodge that happened to fall near us. I saw George Burroughs of the 21st Wisconsin and also Charley Toops of the 1st Wisconsin when they were passing us on the pike today. They were well not having been hurt as

yet. The night turned in cold and we were sent back two miles to stand picket. Nothing happened in our quarter during the night.

Now to speak of the past two days' events and their casualties, our loss was severe owing to being the surprised party, for there was three whole brigades served just as we were. Now I blame our General for his neglect of caution if not of duty in allowing us to be surprised in any case, but before hand [sic] I should say, he had no right to move his division right in amongst the enemy without knowing their whereabouts and did he know them. He was so much more to be blamed for not cautioning his brigadiers to be on the lookout for a surprise, as we was the attacking party and should have caught them a napping were it possible. He is held in very low esteem by all of the whole army for from his carelessness is owing our defeat on the right wing. Some of the men that have close friends or relatives, threatened him considerable and I don't blame them either. There again General Johnson was not seen by us but once during the day and then he rode slowly by not taking any more notice than if we were not concerned in any manner with him, not even inquiring after the balance of the brigade which was the flower of the whole army and we the only regiment that had come off in any sort of order. That cut us I can tell you, for when other Generals would ask what regiment it was and praise us for hanging together so well for new troops, and have our own General pass us by and not even recognize a salute from our colonel, it made many more hard feelings toward him. We heard that he told General McCook that the sixth brigade was not good for anything and wouldn't fight. McCook called him a liar and told him that he knew better for he had tried them before when he commanded a brigade. It was reported that Johnson's sword was taken away from him and disgraced on the field, but I don't know how true it is.

Our Hospitals are filled almost equally with the wounded of enemy and ours. And as far as I have had a chance to pass over the field that we hold, the dead number about the same, this I can vouch for. There was no doubt quite a number of wounded on both sides perished as the nights are quite cool, the days as warm and fine good weather for the work that is going on. Our regiment lost on the battle of Wednesday one hundred and ninety killed, wounded and missing. A part of those will probably return out of our company, of forty though, fifteen are gone, one has since returned and we heard from another. But the balance are taken prisoner, wounded or killed. Some of Morgan's cavalry captured a part of our provision train and burnt ninety train loaded. Today we have three ears of corn delivered to us as a days rations. Rather hard fare aint [sic] it for soldiers fighting to free the niggers, such a good cause (my convictions at that time). But I consider the feed as good as the cause and don't grumble. We were told that that was all we was to have until our trains could get here or we whip the rebels out. But I am afraid that is a larger job than Father Abraham anticipated and he has just been and gone and done it in issuing his emancipation proclamation, which only exasperates the rebs [sic] to fight the harder making an enemy for the Union where it had a friend before. In fact making very devils of them (very true). January 2nd, this morn the days [sic] work opened early and quite brisk, for our troops are pushing slowly ahead and the enemy fighting for every inch of ground, but our folks will try and end the thing today, If

possible, for we are getting desperately [sic] hungry and must win. Now and then a shot or shell reaches us and we dodge them. You may laugh at us dodging cannon balls or shell, but it is easy enough to get out of the way after a shell or two has been thrown for they take such a range and do not vary but a little until they try some other point, it being all guess work shelling troops out of a piece of wood. But let me add that there's no dodging those little fellows that sing tip-tip and when they strick [sic] a tree go pat-a-pat. The more I think of it the more I wonder how I ever got out of that field alive on Wednesday morning.

Today our captain is acting lieutenant colonel, our second lieutenant commanding the company and your humble servant a lieutenant or two of them for there was no other and I am still acting in that capacity (Jan. 8th). The enemy made several spirited attacks at several points today trying to find a weak one and to charge on our batteries, but were repulsed everytime [sic] going off losers. The Chicago Board of Trade battery distinguished themselves acting like old heros [sic], repelling a charge on their battery five times during the day. But just at sundown was the hardest and hottest charge that they had made during the battle. I have since found out that General Breckinridge led it himself and that if they did turn our left flank or best I can assure you, for they fairly acted like devils incarnate. But it was repulsed as spiritedly on our side and with more hours and loss damage tons, for we drove them nearly two miles, they fighting in their retreat gallantly, but we gained the day fairly, for we captured three long thirty-two pound guns (a part of the famous Washington Battery of New Orleans) and a stand of rebel colors, these cannons were much heavier than any that we had on the field, our largest being twelve pounders. Our brigade was one that made the last charge, we being brought from the right wing to support the left as they were hard pushed. I tell you it was exciting to see the boys bring off the batteries and take in the prisoners, the heavens and earth fairly shaking with the dins.

We laid on the battlefield that night, it commencing to rain at eight o'clock. Raining hard all night, nothing occurred [sic] of importance during the night until four o'clock in the morn, then we marched back to our position on the right wing through mud and water knee deep, which was no fun with these government shoes on. And I like a fool left a good new pair of boots in my knapsack at Nashville, not wanting to carry them and the shoes were so much easier to march in, in dry weather.

I satisfied myself about the rebels getting whiskey on going into the battle, for I went out on the field after last nights [sic] fight and took a canteen off from a dead rebel and it had whiskey and water mixed. And a prisoner told me that he knew that they had work before them on Wednesday morn when they issued whiskey rations to the men. It seems to be the motto of the rebs [sic] to get the men drunk and keep the officers sober and ours to keep the officers drunk and men sober.

Dec. 3rd, the rain lulled a little this morn at daylight and the cavalry scouts soon brushed up a fight but after a few minutes cannonading it was stopped. So it has been during the day skirmishing all day more or less, the weather not permitting very heavy work. Today

received one day's rations of bread, meat, sugar and coffee, which was the first we had for three days. I tell you it went like hot cakes. I forgot to tell you what General Rosecrans said to us when he wanted us to make a charge on Friday night. He rode up in haste and said he, put the cold steel to them, the impudent devils, but we did not get within pricking distance of them, as the sight of us advancing on a double quick in line yelling like mad men seemed almost enough to scare almost anyone.

I heard our General Morgan's amoving [sic] here with reinforcements and provisions. The trains are full sixteen miles long all loaded with provisions, God speed them. I say God speed the reinforcements too, I say for we are nearly all worried and worn out, laying out in this weather at this season of the year and no covering but the heavens and hardly anything to eat during our six days' siege, I really don't know what we shall do unless relieved or win the battle by oblidging [sic] the enemy to retreat beyond Murfreesboro, so as we can take time to rest and recreation. We are constantly under arms night and day and this is the eighth day of this work since we left Nashville. At about half past five o'clock we were started out on picket and I can assure you that it was no pleasant duty for it was raining steadily with a cold raw northeast wind blowing .I had often heard talk of wading through mud knee deep, but never had the misfortune to realize it until now for without exaggeration it was over ankle deep right in the field woods or any when that the rains could soak into the soil, that being a mixture of clay and sand which is awful stuff to adhere to a person's clothing. Just as we started, there was a general movement made by nearly all the troops in our Immediate vicinity and cannonading was opened from our whole lines interrupted only by the roar of musketry. It being dark and stormy, we supposed that it was an attack by the enemy, as they chose the evening before to commence at us. It was our side following their example of a night attack and it was carried on well for a comparatively small force attacked and drove the enemy from behind their rifle pits and breastworks, capturing a number of prisoners and occupping [sic] the works, though our men had run out of amunition [sic], they set their pickets and retired back to our lines for reinforcements to hold the works taken anticipating a rally on the rebel side to recover what they, the rebs [sic], had lost, but we held every inch and was not molested anymore for those works was the key to Murfreesboro, so they had to evacuate and did so on Sunday morning at four o'clock. Now to tell why we were so successful with a small number of men. In the first place it being dark, they supposed was larger than it really was, for here let me say that our whole forces did not exceed after all their waiting to get a good ready there, not having but about half of our available force was a good shame. For it laid us open to a defeat by pushing so far ahead with so small a number of men when we had every reason to expect the rebels to fight their hardest being told as prisoners has since told me, that unless they won this battle that they would have to retreat to the devil only knows where and if they gained the day that Nashville was theirs and nothing could ever get them out of Kentucky again. There again another reason why a small number of men was best to storm their works was that we would lose less men, the smaller number engaged for our artillery did good execution. It was an awful and still a grand sight. On our whole front the heavens was continually illuminated by the discharge of artillery. We could not see

the flash of musketry as they were out of our sight, and both heavens, earth and water fairly jarred with the vibration in the air. I have often heard during a severe thunder storm, the heavens roar as if there was some very heavy object arolling [sic] overhead. Well this sounded like that, only more so, and was kept up for over two hours, just think of that. But about our dragging through the mud and water nearly knee deep for a mile and a half and then laying out in the rain all night, I was so worn out this night that I laid my blankets down on the hardest spot I could find and slept soundly. On waking I could hardly speak aloud. At daylight we started back to our regular position, the weather commencing to clear up at about seven o'clock and at noon was very comfortable In the sun. No firing today it being Sunday was the supposed cause, we had not heard the report of evacuation. Charlie Toops come over to see how I had come out of the fights and he told me the news as he had been out a mile beyond our lines. In the morning early when we found that the rebs [sic] had gone, there was a detail of men from each company of each regiment to go out and look up their dead and wounded, if any could be found. I was one of those being anxious to go over the field of our retreat and see the damage done to us also theirs, if possible but theirs had been taken care of and they had three days possition [sic] of that part of the field to bury dead in which of course they did some but after all I could and did count three rebs [sic] for every Union soldier on that ground. There was same awful sights and every one of our men was stripped of their clothing and shoes more or less and those of their own that had anything of any worth taking. I must say and I am glad to do so, that they treated our wounded men and prisoners with every attention possible under the circumstances not taunting them with hard names or anything of the kind, but treating them as welcome guests. And in our case that I heard of, two rebels went out and built a fire and laid down by one of our wounded men that couldn't be moved until his wounds were dressed, stopping with him two nights in succession adjusting his head covering, covering him with blankets, fixing his drink and food. This I have from some of our men who was taken prisoners and sent to the hospitals to take care of the wounded. By the way every house was converted into a hospital for miles around. I could write a week in speaking of little incidents that happened and what I saw on our search, but suffice it for me to say, that we did not get half through that night and started back for camp. Coming across a field where we made one of our rallies and the ground was literly [sic] covered in rows with dead men. We never thought that we did such execution, but the work was inevitably ours as no other part of the army was near that spot and to make it look far worse, the hogs of which there are a great number running about, had eat some of the bodies half up. I found quite a prize on that field, beside the body of a young man that was mutilated horribly, you will be suprised [sic] when I tell you what my prize was, well it was no more or less than a corn dodger, a little dirty to be sure, but that did not matter to me as I had not had any bread for nearly days. In fact we had but six crackers in seven days and a trifle of a pound of bacon. We living on parched corn all this time. The next morning, January 5th, the search was continued and a squad sent out to bury the dead. I had seen enough the day before, so I did not go there, but went out and killed a hog as did some other boys, then we had plenty again, such as it was. We felt the want

of vegetables or bread victuals. The day was taken up burying and removing the wounded to some permanent hospitals. At night it rained giving us a good drenching but we are used to that now and make the best of it. January 9th, this afternoon, we started for a new camping ground in the direction of Murfreesboro. We crossed Stone's [sic] River on the railroad bridge which had been burned by the rebs [sic] and repaired by our folks so as to get the infantry over, the artillery and cavalry fording some distance above. On our way we seen where some good Union man had lit his pipe and accidently dropped a match, they made a good fire at any rate, so may the whole of them gather there would be no place to rendezvous [sic]. When we came into Murfreesboro, everything was shut closed except where the boys had opened on their own before. Nearly every inhabitant has left, in fact the whole country is deserted. We are now encamped about four miles from Murfreesboro toward Shelbyville, Tenn., where we are to stop a week or so to rest and recruit. On our way from Murfreesboro to this place, we saw some encampments of the rebs [sic], who left in more of a hurry than ever we did on the Wednesday before. They left camps and everything else standing and got off in a hurry. The most of them leaving their arms and equipment, that did me good, I tell you. This ends what little I can write of our doings since leaving Nashville up to the present time.

George Sinclair

And now my dear Franky, I will devote a line or two to yourself. In the first place I am well or comparatively so of course you could not expect a man made even of iron [illegible] up and feel as well as usual after what we have gone through with in the way of hardship, exposure to the weather of mid winter [sic] and but just enough to eat to keep [illegible] our bodies. I am better than I expected or had [illegible] to hope coming out of this siege and I am very thankful to my Maker for His protection toward me, so great a sinner. I take it all for the best and think that I am reserved for some other purpose. I am very anxious that this awful war shall be closed so that I can devote some of my future life to my family and self, not to use the best days of my life in making the families of others and my own miserable.

I begin to hope that daylight may dawn toward the day of peace, for it is sincerely wished for by everyone except these nigger [illegible] as do they I suppose would that the world should be put to the sword rather than one of their black pits, should go without a white shirt or know how to read latin [sic]. Oh there's a hot place in Hell for the originators of this inhumane war, I know.

Now I want to know how you are and little Gertie, too and all the rest of the folks for that matter. It is you that I am writing to and you that I am thinking of in writing this. Oh how I should like to be at home once more, if only for an hour, but were I there for an hour I think that anyone would have their hands full to take me away again.

I never wish to spend another winter's holidays as these last had been spent. And what is more, I never intend to, either, for I think I will come home and let some abolitionist

take my place, in the good work. Everybody that I have heard expresses an opinion of the subject are of the same as myself, that is that we will let them fight their own battles. As soon as government commenced to free niggers or carry on the war for that purpose or use the army for their protection, it has not done so yet and I hope will not.

Frank, enclosed in this letter you will find a piece of secesh poetry, at least I suppose it to be as I found it in some books that were taken out of a house in Murfreesville when we went through there. Wether [sic] it is original or not I cannot tell. The handwriting and spelling does not indicate that the fair on that wrote it had many accomplishments or even a possible education but she might have been a poetess notwithstanding her lack of spelling or writing. It is a momento [sic] of the war at any rate. I also will enclose a ring of my own manufacture intending to send it as a New Years [sic] present to you, as it was everything that I could get in the shape of a gift and it will no doubt be prized equally as high by you as if it had been made of more precious stuff. It is made of a mussel shell found on the banks of the Tennessee River. The piece of shell was given to me by Robert Purcell, one of my messmates, who has not been heard from since the battle and is probably a prisoner of war. I made the ring while laying around camp. They are quite durable and pretty and came from the land of secesh. I tried to fit your third finger. How near did I come to it? I guess that it is a little to [sic] small.

Now Dear Frank, I have written all that I can think of now but would like to sit down beside you and talk a great deal more, but I suppose that I shall have to defer that until some future time and as I have a letter to answer for Ally, I will close this by wishing everyone well, giving my love to all telling them that I am as full of fun as ever.

Many kisses for yourself and Gertie, tell Gusta if she is at Chicago that I will answer her letter shortly and chat she is not forgotten by me by any means. Love to everyone from your ever affectionate husband.

Please give Ally this letter, I will enclose it in this.

George G. Sinclair

P.S. Tell Ally, mother or any who may write to direct as the enclosed envelope.

George

Sympathetic [sic] Song Goodbye

1. Farewell, farewell is a lovely sound and always brings a sigh

But give to me when loved ones part. That sweet old word goodbye

That sweet old word goodbye, that sweet old word goodbye

But give to me when loved ones part. That good old word goodbye

2. Farewell, farewell may do for the gay when pleasures throng is nigh

But give to me that better word that comes from the hear [sic] Goodbye

That comes from the heart, that comes from the heart, Goodbye

But give to me that better word that comes from the heart Goodbye

3. Adieu, Adieu, we hear it oft with a tear perhaps perhaps [sic] with a sigh

But the heart feels most when the life moves not

and the eye speaks a gentle Goodbye and the eye speaks the gentle Goodbye

But the heart feels most when the lips move not and the eye speaks the gentle Goodbye

4. Farewell farewell is never heard when the tears in the mother's eye

Adieu adieu she speaks it not but my love goodbye goodbye

But my love goodbye goodbye. But my love goodbye, boodbye [sic]

Adieu, Adieu she speaks it not but my love goodbye, goodbye

Written by John M. Hardy Hay

Steward Winged Arrow

April 12th 1861 12 days out Lat. 51.34 Long. 13.14

George G. Sinclair

(This was a copy in someone else's hand writing and spelling was correct.)

January 27, 1863

Headquarters 89th Regiment Illinois Volunteers

In camp near Murfreesboro, Tennessee

My Dear Franky,

It is raining sleeting and trying to freeze all at the same time, making the weather very disagreeable both overhead and underneath our feet as the ground is completely soaked with water and water mixed with Tennessee soil makes a very fair mud as there is no soaking the rain off into the ground as in Illinois. Here it is all rock bottom and there is no draining the land until the sun's heat dries the water out.

This morn the country around has much the appearance of winter at the north, the limbs of the trees and ground cover with snow and we all think, though nothing known for certain, that the weather and bad state of the roads is detaining us here, but I am tempted to think a little differently for all or most of our generals have gone to Washington and to us, we have it here, find out what we are fighting for whether it is altogether for the nigger or the Union and Constitution as it was. If the nigger is the object and Abe Lincoln's Proclamation still to be the main feature and guide for the prosecution of this unholy war against our own countrymen, then I am out of it forever

and shall act conscientiously in leaving the army. There are other news too that have started some excitement and hopes that it may be so, that was of the states of Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana and Ohio repudiating the President's Proclamation of September 22nd 1862, thier [sic] legislation refusing to raise another dollar or another man to carry on the war with and farther to recall all the troops that each of the states have in the field unless the President recalled his proclamation. I hope that this may be so for them, it will give the nigger loving quality a chance to fight for the freedom of their homes having been decieved [sic] in the object of this war and swindled into enlisting for to preserve the Union when in fact it was only a cloak to raise men to fight their abolition battles.

I want you to send me the column headed news, if any papers that may come handy for we can not get any papers until the news as it is rumored becomes stale and those cuttings from a paper will contain the most important of the news and can be enclosed in a letter as well as not.

The Cumberland River has been so low until lately and the continued raids by Morgan on the Louisville and Nashville railroad has cut our communications with the balance of the world almost entirely. But the river is up now and the road again is in running order so we may expect a mail from the north soon. I have not heard from you since I wrote that big letter of the 6th, January and I am becoming very impatient and want to hear from you.

I am writing this having no special news but thought that you might like to hear from me a little oftener than a letter could be sent to Chicago and back so I thought I would start this and let you know of my health which has not been very good since the exposure and hardship we had to undergo on our march from Nashville and during the battle before Murfreesboro. I was troubled with the rheumatism and a bad cold which has quite laid me up for the past two weeks or more and I shall continue to lay off until I feel completely well, and this laying around in these little tents, through this winter weather is a help to my complaint, but had I influential [sic] friends at Government Gate's elbow, I might get a furlough honorably and to get to my home when I could be out of the cold and wet for a sufficient length of time to cure myself and again if our railroad company has lived up to thier [sic] promises of help and seeing that the boys were sent home in case of sickness, but after getting us off to the war they cared nothing farther about us. When I am paid off, unless something turns up extraordinary, I shall take a short trip up Chicago way for to recruit my health and should the authorities hunt me around, I will leave them altogether for a furlough I am bound to have by hook or crook.

We have only two sergeants left out of five and those are myself and Rigney, the others that have stayed behind at different points have fared better than those that have done duty right along, and are thought more of than us at that. Dave Griggs, our orderly sergeant never did six days duty at all put together since his enlistment and he after bellyaching around for some time was sent to the hospital and now I hear altogether as well as usual, has gone home by the help of Mr. Huntly, who was interested in him by

his laying around so long and had him and his boy, a drummer, brought home. Well, I have done his work all through, which from the first he was incompetent to do and he has received the pay for my work all this time. I can't see any reason in it at all and am going to write Mr. Huntley so too, for if the man is really disabled, it is easy enough for him to get discharged and when he does that then I or someone else that will do the work can be appointed to the vacancy, but not until he is either discharged or dead can the captain fill his place.

Dear Frank, I don't know what to write hardly, for when I am as I am at present, about half sick and lame besides, it makes me think that when I am paid off by a little of your and Ally's help, I can accomplish my object. I will write to you of what I want when the Paymaster comes out I will tell you what I do want now and they will probably cost five or ten cents apiece and that is a few bills of that confederate script, small ones, I would rather have and not any larger ones than a ten dollar bill of our greenbacks, and I can speculate a little on currency [sic]. You can enclose them in your letter to me. Send those rather than the news list for I can do pretty well on them, I am in for speculation just now. Don't forget this now Frank.

Write and tell me whether you got my ring In the letter that I sent in care of Mr. Huntly and how you liked it. To be where you could see and hear the whole thing. It is not a very pleasant place surely but as we are here we must do the best we can in such a case for our own reputation. I hope to soon feel better than I do at present both in body and mind. I also hope that this will find you enjoying perfect good health with little Gertie. You are always in my mind and In my prayers. My thoughts are centered on Home which by the way, I pray often to be there with you. No more this time, so I will close by sending love to the folks and respects to any who may inquire of me.

Kiss Gertie for me sending many to yourself from your affectionate and loving husband.

George

January 28, 1863

Headquarters 89th Regiment Illinois Volunteers

In camp near Murfreesboro, Tennessee

My Dear Frank,

I wrote a letter to you only yesterday but I received yours of 21st January last eve and now hasten to answer it for in it I complained of not hearing from home thinking it high time for an answer and my letter might have not reached it's [sic] destination. I was very impatient and glad to hear from you when it did come for I had almost given up of ever again getting a letter from the north district as Morgan's gang were continually pitching on the Louisville and Nashville Road making it unsafe to send mail by that route. And being then dependent on the height of the river for a chance of sending our mail that way. So we here come to the conclusion that a regular correspondence with our familys [sic] and friends had about given out and that we would be lucky to get any word to and

from our friends at all. I like just such a letter as yours of last night only I wish that there was more of it, especially of what concerns us alone for as you say until I am your confident who should be.

I guess that you as well as others are a little proud of Gertie, our own first born. No wonder that you are fond of her, as fond of children as you are naturally and your own so good and so little trouble to all, with no particular work on hand but to take care of the baby and yourself, it is no wonder to me as I said before that you are altogether bound up in your child and think that there are none like her. But again I want to warn [sic] you not to spoil the child for her own good as well as yours hereafter, for even now when it's [sic] attention is taken up by every object that it notices, can be learnt to let things that it should not have alone, now do recollect this while it is quite young and attend to it, for my sake, yours and the sake of her own in after years. You may think this quite misery lecture from me but recollect that I am far away and only surmise that you might possibly in your extreme love for your child overlook these little faults that become great ones as she becomes older in years .

I am not pleased at all, nor flattered in the least by Mrs. Smith's compliment of my letter, but I very much object to it's being put into print not but that it is a fair description and a truthful one of the part or nearly all of the battle that I was a witness of. But I being fixed to one body and that but a small portion of the whole in action, it would be impossible for me to narrate all of the particulars as to the disposition of our forces. Also being unacquainted with any of the generals except with Rosecrans, McCook and Rousseau by sight and our own division and brigade General, it would be impossible for me to call names of such individuals that did signal service during the battle and again one person is not competent from his own personal observations to relate all that happened on such a field interspersed with timber, creeks and dense thickets of cedar and pines. I had to steal my chances and run from this portion to another that had been the scene of anything extraordinary on the field during the day after we were given our quarters for the night. I did this all out of curiosity and a wish to find out the damage done on both sides and judge for myself so as I could write as good a description of the battle as possible for the benefit of my friends at home, but not a corrected description for publication. In the first place it was a family letter and as such should not be read outside of it only to some of by acquaintances or neighbors. Sincerely [sic] my letter related too much of what our regiment did and would savor a little too much of the boasting to others than those interested in the welfare of this regiment, there again I censured not any more than they deserved or half as much as they [illegible] our general for allowing us to be surprised thus throwing the blame on the heretofore good name of tired troops and the new lives proved themselves equal if not better than the old ones, for as anyone can testify, our regiment was the only one out of Johnson's Division that consisting of three brigades and five regiments in a brigade and ours was the only one that was brought around to the reserve on it's [sic] retreat in order and line and completely under command, making a stand by itself three times when old regiments were shamed by thier [sic] officers and told to look at us new troops for an

example and our regiment numbered on our first rally within thirty odd men, as many as it has since. And once more, why I did not wish my letter published is this, that I could write sufficiently well and there was no pretensions made to grammar or punctuation and I could not make use of the English language well enough to describe what I saw and make sense of it and if that Mr. Smith or anyone else wishes a correct description of the battle as any one man can write and just as I should have described the thing, could I have found words to do it with, let them send and get the Cincinnati [sic] Weekly Gazette of January 14th and that will be worth reading for it is true and good picture of the ground and operations that were transacted on that memorable Field of Battle, in fact it is History. You may read this portion of my letter to Mr. Smith or Mother rather and let her tell him I am much obliged to him for his good opinion of my letter but would rather he had not attempted to satisfy Mother's or anyone else's ambition for me but I do not wish to be brought into public notice in quite such a manner. I should like to see my name in full though filled out on a discharge of disability for if I keep on at the rate that I have since the exposure of the battle, I shall be forced to apply for one as it is I think that I shall have to be put into a good comfortable house before I shall ever get rid of the rheumatism for as long as I lay out in this cold wet weather just so long will I be affected.

I am sorry for Mrs. Willie and can sympathize with her in her loss and I should also like to see Ed Hayward at home and well, poor fellow. I pity [sic] him for I know just how they are taken care of in any department of the service.

Unless something turns up within two weeks, I shall try for Chicago on a furlough, a French one, I mean, to visit the folks and recruit my health.

I am sorry that Julie has so poor health and her disability to support her child but I suppose that such things can't be helped. Tell Ally to write all the news relating to the war and what prospect there is of its end.

I sent a letter to Augusta at Chicago supposing her to be there. Mother owes me a letter too. I wish her to write me a good long letter. I have not any more to say in this uninteresting episode. Writing yesterday leaves me but little to say today only to write often and long letters for they are interesting to me no matter what it is.

So goodbye for the present. Give my love and respects to all, kiss the little one for me, I not forgetting you on that score from your ever affectionate husband,

George G. Sinclair

February 11, 1863

Headquarters 87th Regiment, Illinois Volunteers

In camp near Murfreesboro, Tennessee

My Dear Frank,

I received your kind and welcome letter two days since on my return from Nashville where we had been sent as a guard to the provision trains and we had quite a time of it for the march was nearly ankle deep all the way. The weather raining so you may imagine what sort of a time we had laying out on the cold wet ground two nights. It took us four days to go there and back stopping one day and two nights at Nashville and as luck would have it our day there was fine and put me in mind of one of our May days at home. Where we were encamped was two miles from the center of the city in the old fair ground buildings and it was the first time that I had slept under shingles or roof since I left home. It seemed mighty good to lay on the hard floor and hear the rain patter down on the roof. They have splended [sic] fair grounds and buildings throughout all of this state and Kentucky sparing no expense to make them show well. Our boys occupied the amphi—theatre [sic] building and had a jolly good time the second night as some had procured liquor from the city.

I had charge of our company as commander our captain acting lieutenant colonel and our lieutenant being sick did not go with us. So I had the free run of the city and it did me a great deal of good I assure you for I felt like a free man once more and as I passed by the dwellings along the street, the windows and doors open, the children playing about, now and then a strain of music would reach my ear from someone practicing on the piano. I tell you it put me in mind of former days.

We are kept rather busy now and have been for the last month although the weather has been awful with some rather cold weather to live in cotton house, but the most of it was worse than freezing for it rained making everything uncomfortable. I went on duty just after my last letter to you and ever since it is picket one day and night and shoveling in the trenches the next at Murfreesboro, for our folks are building forts at this place. The cars are running through to Murfreesboro or Stones River for the bridge is burnt there. Then we have foraging to do about once a week. We went out week before last and was attacked by Wheeler's Cavalry, rebel and lost quite a number of men. Not any out of our regiment but all out of our brigade. The rebs [sic] had what we call jackass artillery. It is a small cannon hauled by one mule and could be taken almost anywhere. While our artillery is confined to the pikes on account of the mud and soft ground. Well, our men were standing around the fires that they had built for comfort as the enemy had stopped the train in front, when this jackass artillery let fly a solid shot right into a crowd and took the leg off one man and foot of another. This was done within twenty rods of where our men were and we skirmished with them all day. I saw but one man that was hurt and his hand was shot away and I heard of several that were killed.

I had quite an adventure night before last on picket duty which gives me great reason to thank my God for his great goodness and protection to me so great a sinner. The case was this, we were out on picket and our lines are run in this manner; first as you will see on the paper I will send for explanation, at the crosses there were two or three companies stationed as reserves. The round marks are called outposts with five men and a sergeant in them which are relieved from there every two hours from the reserve

then the outpost men go out onto the sentinal [sic] beats and stay until they are relieved by the next outpost. Well, I had gone out onto the outpost with my five men about forty rods from the reserve and sent those that were there out to the sentinal [sic] beats giving them the counter sign, the sentinals [sic] were still out forty rods from the outposts and placed about eighty feet apart. When I started out it was 7 o'clock, dark as pitch and after I had been there about half an hour, I thought that I would go out and find the exact position of the sentinels and go the rounds which it is my duty as a sergeant to do once in the two hours to see that everything is all right on the lines. So I at about half past seven started from the outpost not knowing the position of the sentinels but trusted to their attention to business to stop me on the line then I could stride the line and go around. The dough headed fools didn't hear me and I walking in an old cornfield stepping on and breaking stalks making enough noise to awake the dead, but the sentinels or one nearest to whose post I passed did not halt me so I passed on out of the lines into sessesia [sic] until I knew that no picket lines were ever established so far out. So I then turned back keeping the same path that I went out and the first intimation that I had of anything was the flash and report of a gun within twenty feet of me right in my face, but thank the Lord that the damned fool was so badly scared or I should have been no more. I realized my situation at once and fearing that there might be another man with the first, sung out what the hell he was firing at me for that I was sergeant of the guard and told him that I would give him hell for it and he then sung out don't don't come here or I will shoot again. At that I knew his voice and that there was but one on a beat so I run right into him bayonet first. He was so frightened that he did not recognize me then and that he belonged to the next company to us and knew me quite well on any other occasion. He still continued to thrust his bayonet at me but I locked that with mine and run my hand in on the barrel of my gun and grabbed him by the neck with my right hand and used him none of the easiest I can tell you and jerked him along into the reserve and put him under guard.

The poor devil was so scared that by morning I had made up my mind to forgive and forget it thinking myself very fortunate in getting off without a scratch. But the poor fool reminded me that I must not call him such hard names another time like that in a threatening tone as if he had the perfect right to shoot me when he pleased and me to say nothing about it. I had ought to put a ball or my bayonet through him on the spot when he threatened to shoot the second time. His remarks rather riled me and right in the presence of his and my captain. I gave him a few belts in the face to teach him manners. He was very reasonable after that. Without joking it was no laughing affair to have a man shoot at you even in the dark at a length of two rods for that was the distance exactly. 'I fully acknowledge to whom I owe my preservation.

Charlie Toops was over here the night I went to Nashville but I didn't see him. I shall go over as soon as I can.

Frank, I meant for you to buy the facsimile of confederate script for that is just as good here as the original. I didn't suppose that you could buy any real or genuine script for

anything less than it's worth for they think as much of their script as we do of ours. The people here will take the imitation just as well as the genuine. In fact they will grab at any kind of money rather than greenbacks. Any old broken banks or money that never had a circulation is perfectly good here.

I was pleased with little Gertie's picture very much. It is the perfect picture of health, which is about all that anyone can judge of a child of her age. I am glad that she is so little trouble and is so good a baby, but you must recollect [sic] that she takes after her father in that respect. Mary's was perfect just as she looked when I left home. Just wish that I could be there to stay once more or even a short visit would help my home sickness but when we get the niggers all away from the south and established in our good comfortable situations, then I suppose that the north will acknowledge the independence of the south, as that is all of their apparent wish, but God forbid I say, but when that is accomplished and until it is, I do not expect to be allowed to see home or family for the term of three years.

After a few more such escapades as I have had through life, I shall begin to think that I am one of God's favored ones and invincible to all harm. But dear Frank keep up courage and all will be well, yet.

It is raining today but when the sun comes out and the birds are singing, the frogs a chiruping [sic] and flies are all about, it put me in mind of summer or last of spring at the north.

I received an abolition paper from Aunt Mary in reply to a cutting letter that I sent them on abolitionism but that don't affect me in the least for I get a glimpse of the Chicago Tribune once in a while and that is enough poison for anyone.

I have not heard from Ally yet in answer to my last to him but expect one everyday [sic].

Frank, I want you to tell me of how the railroad folks are doing and whether they have paid the ten dollars regular or not and how much they are behind on it for I want to keep track of those things. I have nothing more to write this time, my hand is swollen with the rheumatics, so you must not notice this poor attempt at a letter writing.

Love to all and kisses for yourself and little one from your ever affectionate husband.

Geo. G. Sinclair

March 7th 1863

Headquarters Eighty Ninth Regiment Ill. Fol's. [sic]

Campsite near Murfrusboro [sic], Tenn.

Dear Frank

I recieved [sic] your letter the 25th of last month and had been looking for one from you for three or four days. I came in from a foraging jaunt at three o'clock in the morning having tramped nearly all day and night with but a very little rest. In fact I never have

been so near used up as I was on coming into camp. We had orders to go out on a reconaissance [sic], but nearly every man was so lame that it was impossible to drag them out of their quarters this morning. It is inhumane to use men so, but, we are awful busy just now for our forces are expected to attack Vicksburg about this time and we want to keep the Reb's in motion here too, on our front so that they cannot run their forces and reinforce Vicksburg .

I want to do something before long and help end this accursed war for we have to suffer as much here as the ones that live right here and shoulder the expenses. For wherever an army is quartered everything for twenty miles is laid waste and disolate [sic], and as far as it is possible they live on the people of the surrounding country. You can barely imagine what inhabitants have to suffer for Union people or with as [illegible] are used all alike and robbed of all they have and then wading in the mud and fording streams at this season of the year, let alone the chances of having a dash rebel cavalry in upon us, for they know every foot of ground here and how to take advantage of it and very often it proves fatal for some poor fellow.

If I am to be shot, I want to go in and have it done and not linger in this hell upon earth and then be shot after all. But I will not anticipate any such fate for I think that I have stood so many chances and the Lord has seen fit to spare me. I really hope and prey [sic] that He will continue to do so and hasten me to my Wife and Home. I think that we shall have a general engagement here or down in this direction before a fortnight flies over our heads. Our men are [illegible] can fight now more so than any other time since the commencement of this war, for they see that something has to be done this summer or never and if our Government at home will only let our generals alone and encourage rather than discourage the troops, we will do our best. Then has a law passed congress that so many men from each company at a time could have a furlough. Now it is a strife among [sic] the-noncommissioned officers and privates to see who shall [illegible] the first one to be given. We don't know exactly when they are to commence, so if Captain Rouell should happen to come home before they conclude who shall go first, I want you and mother to put in a word for me. I rather think that I am all right but a word from a woman in asking for a favor is worth a days [sic] talking from a man. Then again I am too independent to ask any odd from anyone. I don't know that he is going home for a certainty but I guess it as the Boys got paid yesterday afternoon.

by [sic] the way I was paid four months and what then was over up to mustering in, and I will send you \$50.00 by the first opportunity. I have paid debts for boots and sulters [sic] stores to the amount of \$ 14.00. The balance I shall keep by me for anything that I may need and get a chance to come home on a visit so I shall need a small amount. I wish that I could go now but I don't expect to get away until after the coming fight and it will be all chance if I get away then. I want a couple of shirts made I told you what sort in my last letter. As I am writing now the sound of heavy cannonading is to be heard very plainly. It is the first time I was ever absent from the sight when they have a shot fired at them, and I should be with them now only lam [sic] not able to walk. I can hardly hobble

about. You may have some trouble to get this fifty dollar bill exchanged but may not again if you go to the Bankers.

I am glad that you are as well provided for and only wish that it could be better. But we must manage to get along the best that we can while I am here, and when I get home again for good, we will see what can be done in the way of getting a nice little home for ourselves. Frank this is the place to build castles in the air, we have so much time to ourselves while on duty, that is, time to think and my mind always full of plans for the future. But man proposes and God disposes, as the saying is and we like all others shall be governed by His will.

I am very happy to think and to know that our Baby Is so good and little trouble to you and I sincerely hope that she may continue so, and that you may teach her as she grows older to be good and lovely to all, liked and thought well of by everyone of use and an ornament to her sex. Now a great deal of this rests with her Mother and home teachings. I hope that your love for your child will not run away with your good sense and spoil what goodness that you say repeatedly in your letters that nature has endowed her with. Now Franky, perhaps these few words of admonition may not be needed in your case at all and I really hope not. So you will please excuse me of speaking of it for I am not much of a fault finder, nor ever was.

I must close my letter now as I have no more to say this time.

Love and respects to all with much more for you and Gerty, from your ever affectionate Husband

Geo. C. Sinclair

PS I will send the money as it is safe to do so, George .

March 11, 1863

Headquarters 89th Regiment Illiois [sic]

In camp near Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Dear Frank,

I received your letter day before yesterday on my return from the picket lines and was rather tired and our tents were struck and the wagons loading for a march as soon as I had my things on it. I opened your letter, it entirely overcame me and I sat down and had a good crying spell to myself. It was the first tear that I had shed for years, but a sense of what trouble may arise to all concerned that I could not help it. I hope that your next may bring me better news. I hope that I may get it before we start off from here for farther south, which we expect every day.

Our start the other day was a false one, we camping the same night where we have been for nearly two months and forage is so scarce that we are run to death between it

and scouting frequently making from twenty five to thirty five miles a day and part of the night and menaced and harassed by the enemy's cavalry, who are superior to ours and much more numerous.

Frank, I did not mean by asking how you were getting along in money affairs [sic] that you was to enumerate all the little articles that is necessary for a woman to have, but merely how you stood with the railroad company and that your board was paid up square so as not to be dependent on your parents for anything more than good treatment and a home which of course we shall always be indebted to them for their kindness. I sent \$50.00 to Mr. Huntly to be sent to you. Perhaps you will get it before this reaches home, for it started by express yesterday.

I received Augusta's letter from Danvers and Mother's a few days since and have answered both. Gusta wished me to write to you for her, she said that she would have written only it was so strange to write to a person that she never had seen, but I hope that she may come home soon and then I hope that you and she will explain reasons of not doing so before.

I have nothing to write more of interest and I have been in an awful hurry with this and if you can make it out you will do well. Tell Mrs. McAroy that I sav Billy about three weeks ago, but have not time lately. He was well and hearty then. Rigney got a letter from Mrs. Willie, he is well, also. My respects to them and Mrs. Chatterton and family.

Love to your and my folks with much more for yourself and little one from your affectionate husband.

George

Hope for good news the next letter, Frank, remember.

March 28, 1863

Headquarters 89th Regiment Illinois Volunteers

In camp near Murfreesboro, Tenn.

My dear Frank,

Recieved [sic] your ever kind and welcome letter this noon when we carne in from picket after laying out through one of the worst storms of the season, all day and night. But we came through all right with the exceptions of our ducking which was not very agreeable at even this season of the year, although it is much warmer now than when we had laid out last winter. I am very glad to hear of your cold getting better, also of mother and Gertie's improving. Oh, I wish that I could be there now, not that I expect I could be of any especial benefit to any one's health, but it would seem to do me so much good were I sick and to have my friends near me to comfort me when I was in low spirits. I think that all are somewhat like me in that respect.

Oh Frank, how I should like to be with you even more now, for I feel none of the best in mind if I am healthy in body. I don't like the looks of things either in future for mother for

according to Mrs. Chadbourn's account of her getting along, she has done very well so far, but I fear change for the worse if she has to move when Mrs. Chatterton goes to housekeeping in their new house, which I hear is building. I want you to see a little for yourself and that she does not suffer for want of help ff [sic] you have the power to avert it.

Those shirts that you made me do very well and I prize them highly for the sake of the maker.

I am kept in the regiment instead of getting my horse office in the light battalion, as I am told, for something better. Although I am on the roll of honor still and thought as much as ever by my officers to any and all, that I was more meritorious in regard to duty or good behavior, so I do not worry on that account, but hope for something still better when it may turn up.

I am glad that you received the money that I sent home. I will enclose \$5.00 more in this that I do not really need here. You may help mother with some in any way that she may need most, using your own good judgement in so doing.

I am very glad to hear that Ally is doing so, although he does not write me very regular of late. I am afraid that he is worried considerably, though he would be the last to acknowledge any trouble to me. Tell him for me that I do not need my watch, but keep it as long as he wants to. I thought that I might need it or some watch if I should to in the battalion, and write him accordingly. I do not need such a thing here. I am sorry that he has had so much trouble and sickness this past winter.

Franky dear, I don't know of anything new or of interest to write, but that little piece of news of a probable close of this war before another winter. that you sent me did much to cheer and encourage me on, but destiny is to be fulfilled. I claim at any rate, and the views of this one or that one on the subject no matter what they may say, will not materially alter the end to be attained.

I wrote you last Sunday and there has nothing transpired since of any note. We have had service and plenty of work of all sorts and the talk also of paying us soon again. I hope that they do, not that I need anything, but so you may have the use of it.

Sheridan's division is out on a scout for four or five days. Tom Brown is in his division. The whole army has been moved lately so that I do not know where Charlie Toops is now and cannot get time to go and find him. Billy McAroy was over here the next day after I answered your letter in which she, his mother, asked about him. He was looking first rate. Frank Bean is quite well and told me to send love to you when I wrote and kisses to Gertie.

I will close this by sending love to all, reserving your share for yourself alone with considerable for our little girl as you call her, and I remain as ever your affectionate husband,

Geo. G. Sinclair

April 12, 1863

Headquarters 89th Regiment Illinois Volunteers

Camp Drake, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

My Dear Frank,

I received your last letter night before last on coming in from picket or a scout, I should say, for we were out a week and I got one while out there, so I am indebted to you for two now but will answer them both in this.

I was glad to hear of our little one getting along so well and that Ed Hayward was on his way home, I sometimes wish that I had gone in the same service, then I should have been at home before this time. But again I think that everything has been done for the best for if I am to be spared well and good and if not, why it is all the same. Speaking of Ed, it puts me in mind of my brother Ed who married after so short an acquaintance and in England at that. Well, may they prosper in life and be blessed as man and wife. I rather guess that there is a prospect of having a chance to bring shells and Chinese dolls to some one else's children besides ours if he is gruff Uncle Ned at sea.

Frank when Frank Bean sends for her trunk which she has done or I believe, I want you to send my white felt hat and a towel, for she asked me if I wanted to have anything sent from home. I was over to see her yesterday and she and Mrs. Smith, a second mother to her, just loaded me with eatibles [sic] and fairly made me eat and carry off a load beside in by arms. Such work as that I don't like because it makes me think of home too much and makes me discontented where I am.

Frank, I will send you my picture in this letter, it's the best I can do just now but I have no doubt you would rather have the original.

We have been having some warm weather and you will see that I shaved my whiskers off but I needed it the next day for it turned round cold and has been fully as cold for the past ten days, as it has been during the winter, in fact I can tell no difference, but it has come warm again today and I hope will continue so for a person feels the cold raw winds and wet weather as much and even more than he would a northern winter at any rate we do living out doors all the time.

Franky, I think much as you do that the time spent here is just so much of our lives thrown away and when I get back once more won't I appreciate and stay by my home, wife and little one. Oh no I guess not. I wonder what is keeping our army from making a move. I can't make myself think that we ever will conquer the rebs [sic] by lying still and this is beautiful weather for army movements.

Billy McElroy was up to see me a few days ago, he is well and hearty. I was over to visit Charley Toops the first of last week but he was away, that is twice that I have been over and he was not there.

We are kept busy at something nearly all the time on picket or a scout or drilling and the devil knows what not. Our chaplain is preaching now and I suppose I ought to attend but I am doing as well for all the good I would obtain there. It is the first sermon that we have had for four months on account of the weather. They are singing now and you know I love to hear that no matter of what sort.

Well Franky, I must close my rather dull letter for want of news, not that I should lack for words if I was with you but I have nothing special to write, so I will end by sending love to all, not forgetting an extra ration for you and Gertie.

From you ever affectionate husband,

George

May 22, 1863

Headquarters 89th Regiment Illinois Volunteers

Murfreesboro, Tennessee

My Dear Frank,

This noon I received your last letter and hasten to answer it as had it come a day later I probably should not have received it as we are ordered to march and the Lord only knows where. I was becoming as anxious as you seem to be by the tone of your letter for it has been nearly five weeks since I heard from you and have written two in the meantime. In your last before this you said that you was agoing [sic] to write again in a few days and hearing from Mother a short time afterwards, I did not think of delaying so long, but thought by your not writing that you had gone up in the country on a visit, as you spoke of doing in your letter of that time. I can guess now where my letters went to for about a week after I sent mine in reply, our regiment mail was found mutilated and thrown into a sink and letters then were found of a date similar to when I dated mine and some up to the night that it was found out. It was some devils who was looking for money letters that the army is sending off daily and to make sure and to allowing them to have gotten my letter to you at that time, in which they found no great prize. I wrote again soon after, but through some unseen fault it seems did not reach you. I am really sorry that you were given cause to be so much worried but with stealing of mail, guerrilla raids and there is no certainty of getting or sending through safely what little correspondence a person does have.

There are several rummors [sic] as to our movements and also that of the enemy. But we can place no confidence in anything that we may hear nor believe that we are going anyplace until ee find ourselves there.

The season has opened rather sickly but thank God, I am one of the lucky ones having been perfectly well and that was only for a week with a touch of the chills and fever. Then I was homesick, you may think, but that is all the good it does for furloughs are played out, they having promised but never fulfilling any of their promises, but never mind, Franky, I think that after this coming next battle, they will open their hearts and

grant me a few, but kissing goes by favors in this business as all others, I could get a furlough through as far as Rosecrans, but there it stops.

Only a little more than two more years and then Hurah [sic], I'll be my own master again. It will be a different country from this that will ever get me for a soldier to help carry on a civil war, particularly when it is made the object of so much speculation as this has been from the beginning. I am heartily ashamed of the name of being an American when there is so much good fighting material as our whole armies are composed of and such poor use made of it. Hooker's failure rather discouraged the most of the men here as to doing anything towards closing the war but think it prolonged a year. Our army have perfect faith in their commander of this department and are not afraid to meet a third of as many more as we number so you need not be worried for this part of it.

Our tents have been taken away for more than a month and little shelter given us but if we go on a tramp we shall discard them and lay out for they are not of much use at any rate and we stood the weather all last fall's campaign and twelve days of the worst of the winter and I think that we can make out for this summer.

Oh, I have a little news for you, though I suppose that Ally has told you before this time of it, well, it is no more or less than the marriage of Frank Bean, a notice of which I will enclose cut from a Nashville paper. Her husband is a fine looking good clever sort of a young man and a good family. He is from Indiana being a private in the 15th Indiana Volunteers. His name is Joseph H. Hamilton, the paper got both names wrong. I was not a guest, although there were some noted persons present with their ladies. Some that ranked very high, so I think that I ought to have been of the party, don't you. I think that the little gal was ashamed to tell me for I was over town to see her only two or three days before the thing happened. But it was all the same, for what would a poor devil of a sergeant in his living Uncle Sams be a doing among such big fry as generals, colonels, majors, etc., with their ladies and the ladies put on the most style by far of the two, so I feel lucky in not being there. Frank was asking me when I saw her last and I was complaining of not hearing from home in such a while, how I would like to see little Gertie. I answered, very well but would much rather see her mother, for I do so want to see your cheerful countenance again. But I suppose that I shall be permitted to see you all in good time.

I was a little surprised to hear of Ally and Julie going to brother's and boarding too. I am glad that Gusta has arrived at Chicago for I expect she will be considerable help to mother. I have not heard from Ally for nearly three months. Tell him to write Ed Hayward the same.

Love to all especially to yourself and little one, hoping for the best I remain your affectionate husband,

George G. Sinclair

How is your mother's health? How is John and father and Sarah and Ed? Love and respects to everyone not forgetting any. Tell me what you think of Augusta, what sort of a girl is she? How does Mother get along?

May 28, 1863

Salem outpost five miles from Murfreesboro, Tenn.

My Dear Frank,

It is only five days ago since I received and answered your last letter but as we are on outpost duty here and also under marching orders with five days rations that came out to us this morning it looked much like a forward movement so I thought that I would write you a few lines to keep you as well informed as possible of my whereabouts.

I am well and in good spirits hoping soon to help strike a blow that will tend to end this war. If successful, which I hope they all may be, so that we may be all returned to our homes and families once more. We are laying in a perfect paradise, the garden of Tennessee, our camp or place where we stack our guns and rendezvous for the time, while here is a splended [sic] forest with running spring water in abundance flowing from the rocks, the weather is just right and comfortable. Some of the boys think it rather warm but it suits me to a notch.

We are having perhaps some things that you are not at the north. Cherries are dead ripe in the orchards, plenty of mulberries through the woods and black berries in full and nearly ripe with every hedge and fence now covered with them.

Our brigade general came back to us day before yesterday. He had been for the past five months in the prison of Dixie being taken at Stone's [sic] River Battle. He was very glad to see us and we to have him back with us once more, for he is a fine gentleman and a splendid general. He is the illegitimate son of King Frederick of Prussia and consequently as he terms a Dutch Yankee General Willich. He tells some rather hard stories of the treatment that the secesh have him while prisoner.

June 3, 1863

Headquarters 89th Regiment Illinois Volunteer [sic] Infantry

Camp Drake, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

My Dear Franky,

I received your very welcome letter of May 27th yesterday and I was very glad to hear of the continued good health of all at home, excepting your mother, who I am sorry to hear has such poor health as she has had for the last year or two, but I am in hopes that she may fully recover and be the same as ever, a good kind hearted self full of love towards everyone. I suppose that your father has not moved from where they lived on Prairie Street when I left Chicago or you would have said something of it in your letters to me. I speak of this here because you wrote something about moving sometime [sic] ago.

Franky, you can do as you think best about going to Bloomington to visit Mary. There is no sign of a chance of getting a furlough that I can see. If I should get one at any future time before my time is out or the war ended, I shall be as much surprised as anyone, for no one here gets such a thing unless their nearest and dearest relatives die or something happens to them worse than death and even then a man must need be in considerable favor to get such a favor started.

But never mind dear Franky, if the Lord spares me, I shall be at home in a little over two years. Just think, one of the three have nearly passed away. It seems longer too of it than the time really is in passing away, so keep up courage and look for happier times when I do come.

I was very sorry to hear of your loss, Frank, of your pocket book because of the many little comforts that it might purchase for you and little Gertie, but never cry for spilled milk is my motto. But I should like to have a hold of the rascal who stole it for about ten minutes. I would advise you not to carry any more money about you than you need to purchase what you intend to when starting out. If I was only at home now, I could mighty soon earn that sum for you again but here there is not much to be earned, as far as the money is concerned, I should not care a straw, but if you really need it just at that time, and had no more to buy what you wanted, why I am mighty sorry. But don't fret.

I sav Tom Brown a few days ago down at the swimming hole on Stone's [sic] River. Charlie Toops was with him. They are both looking quite well and hearty and in good spirits. Brown has been promoted to orderly sergeant since I saw him last.

I was also over town yesterday and vent over to visit the 19th boys. They were out on brigade drill. I sav Lieutenant Colonel Raffin, but was not acquainted with him. He was looking finely, looks like a good officer.

I sav Mrs. Chadbourn where Frank and her husband stopped and had quite a visit with her. She speaks very highly of you and little Gertie, thinks I have a good sensible wife and one that is not too lazy to keep herself and baby clean and tidy. She says Gertie was just as sweet as a peach. I thanked her for the compliments to you and told her that I thought you would endeavor [sic] to merit them.

Mrs [sic] Hamilton, she that was lately a miss, Frank Bean, is not very well. She is down sick, in fact she is experiencing some of the ills consequent to the first month or two of married life. She cannot hold anything on her stomach, throws everything off, has pains in her back and head and declares that she will die. And at that I had to laugh and told her no I guessed not and that I had seen such cases before and that they had not only lived but grew family after it. She was laying the cause of her sickness on the amount of work she had to do, well I don't know but what that might be the cause, but it was not hospital work, such yarns as those she wants to tell to the marines (ie) unmarried men, not to sailors or married men, what you say, Mom Dear. I am not much of a prophet or a ladies [sic] man, but I do think that there will be a young Hamilton born in about eight months and a half, wherever the wife may be at that time.

I received a letter from Agusta last week and answered it the next day, I am sorry to see that she is not contented at home, but hope she may become reconciled to it. I think more than ever of Mary, she is a good girl.

I have not heard from Ally yet, cannot [sic] see why he doesn't write once in a while to let me know how things are going on at home, for he generally writes everything how is thier [sic] little one prospering.

Oh, I shall so much like to see Gertie and to see her mother much more. I sent your pictures and Mary's away as they were too heavy and clumsy to carry. I put them into the captain's trunk. They are sent to Nashville for storage. I wish that you would have your and Gertie's picture taken on steel plate the same as mine was and send to me for that I can carry. I wish you do this if you have the means to spare not otherwise.

We are held in readiness to march at a moments [sic] warning. We were reviewed by Old Rosa, a day or two since and General Willich took command of the brigade. There is some talk of making us mounted infantry. [sic] Will tell you more next time about it.

Give some love to all with much love and many kisses for yourself and Gertie, from your ever affect husband,

George

June 10, 1863

Camp Drake Headquarters 89th Regiment Volunteers

Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Dear Frank,

I received your kind and welcome letter day before yesterday. But not having anything special to write delayed answering it for a day or two to see if something different would be known as to our movements, but the siege of Vicksburg will let us soon whether we are to advance or to await and give the rebs [sic] battle here. Should they be so foothardy [sic] as to attack us at this place. If we do not have to leave here very soon, there is some hopes of our brigade being made mounted infantry. Some expect the horses as soon as July 1st, but I hardly think so. But it is in this way if General Rosecrans should have reason to feel secure enough to spare the men. They are to send one commissioned officer, one noncommissioned and one private home to see about fitting our regiment up with conscripts and select horses, etc., at any rate it will be government business.

Now Frank, I don't want to raise any false hopes with you as to my coming home but if everything turns out as it is rumored, why I stand as good a chance as anyone for these three each are to be sent from each company and I shall try my best to be one from this company, but still, dear Franky, I may not get the chance but should I come home, I most assuredly want you to be there and the only reason that I write this at all, is so that you may act your pleasure about going down to Bloomington before I find out something

more about this business. I will write you again just as soon as I find out anything more about whether I can be the lucky one to get home.

Now don't you worry about this and you may rest assured that I will do my best to get home if anyone goes. Perhaps we shall not be sent to Chicago at all but to some other rendezvous to get what we want.

You asked me in your last letter if I ever thought of the age of our Little Gertie and how she might be getting along, Frank, there is not a day that passes over my head but that my thoughts are with my wife and little one and hardly an hour in the day unless there is something of importance on hand. This is one reason that I long for more active service and probably shall have it when we get mounted, so that my thoughts may be more taken up with my occupation and time pass away quicker and I shall be with you the sooner once more.

I dreamed that I was at home or in Chicago a few nights ago and was passing down toward Randolph Street on Sangamon and saw a bright pretty little girl sitting at the window of your room. She had just been washed and her hair neatly combed and looked as sweet as a peach. Good enough to eat, almost. She seemed to be about two years and a half years old and something seemed to tell me that it was mine and she sung out when first seeing me, Here comes Papa George. Speaking quite plainly. I ran in the house without rapping and looked in the front room seeing Sarah and your mother then I hastily [sic] gave them a kiss and fairly jumped up stairs to your room before you should come out for I knew that you had heard the little one call my name and hearing the noise below was about coming down and oh dear Frank the joy of that meeting nothing can portray it and should I live a hundred years, I could never forget it and God grant that it may not be altogether a dream, but that I may be spared to make my dream good. I was fairly mad when I woke up and found it only a dream.

I have nothing more to write this time so will end by sending love to all, with a great deal for your own good self and little one hoping that I may soon be with you, I will bid you goodbye.

I remain as ever your affectionate husband

Geo. G. Sinclair

Write soon to yours

George

June 20, 1863

Headquarters 89th Regiment Illinois Vol. Infantry

Camp Drake, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

My Dear Frank,

I received your ever welcome and kind letter yesterday with your and little Gertie's picture. Hers was the perfect picture of health and innocence, so fat and chubby, and I flattered myself that she showed much intelligence, at any rate she seemed to be looking very steady and if she wanted to get at something that she saw, but I can't say much for yours, in fact it is not yourself at all, why your face looks bleared and blotched on the whole side. I wish you had another taken by yourself for I did not so much care to see a perfect picture of the baby as to spoil yours in the taking of hers, for a person can not change so much as you appear to have done in so short a time and the baby is bound to keep changing all the time, so that a person cannot form an idea as to what a child of her age will look like in three months from this time, that is the reason that I wished a perfect picture of yourself .

Now I just want what you are going to say, that you cannot look any better than the Lord made you, but I must say that you do not look as well by half as the picture that I had of you in the case, so when you get an opportunity and money to spare, I wish you would send me a picture of the same kind or on steal [sic] plate of yourself alone.

I suppose that this will find you in Bloomington as I shall direct there. I sent few lines in reply to one of your late letters, saying that you have better defer your visit for a few days on account of there being a small prospect of getting home, and it is a mighty small one too. I can assure you and I hope that you might not have received it and started as you intended for my hopes are dashed for the present at any rate. If I do get a chance to visit home, I will telegraph to you at Bloomington, so that you can meet me at Chicago. But make yourself comfortable where you are. I expect that you and Mary are having fine times with the little ones. Oh how I wish that I was with you, think I'd have as good a time as any of you.

Well Frank, how do you like Bloomington as well as Chicago? I rather guess not, for Chicago is quite a home for you.

There is nothing new here at present, no prospect of a march or fight. Our boys begin to pray for a fight rather than drill in this weather, as we have to do, then the most of them want to be led back commencing at the Canada line and exterminate "Copperheads" and abolitionists together. Then we think that we would stand a chance of finishing this accursed war but let them keep on. It's only two years longer and a little over then I can talk just how and do as I please. Think I'll stay with my wife and little one, what you say? I have nothing more to write this time. There is nothing to write about.

Frank Hamilton is getting well and all right. Tell Hank that Johnny Fangler is doing first rate. He is now bugler for the regiment.

Give my respects to all the folks that may inquire after me and my love to Mary and Hank from your ever loving husband

Geo. G. Sinclair

Much love and many kisses to yourself and Gertie

George

July 19, 1863

Murfreesboro

My Dear Frank,

Today is Sunday and I am sitting up in bed to write this to you to let you know that I am doing tip top, that is I am gaining rapidly. I was dressed and downstairs this forenoon and what is better than all, the doctor told me yesterday that if nothing sets me back, that I would be able to start for Home in a week from tomorrow [sic], Monday.

Oh how I long for the time to arrive and I wish that the journey was over with for I dread it. But I do so want to be with you. It seems as if I never should get there.

Mother is here with me most of the time. I am treated much differently since she came, being put into a room alone so that she can be with me. Then I am away from the stench of the ward, which was enough to almost suffocate one where I was. Then they are very kind in the kitchen and allow mother to make anything she wishes for me. Then there is a host of women that come in to see her and always have something good for me. So you see my Dear Franky that I am very much favored all around.

My arm begins to ache so I shall have to knock off writing for this time sending much love to all with much more and many kisses for yourself and little Gertie from your ever loving husband,

Geo. G. Sinclair

P.O. Do not write me here again after receiving this unless you should hear further of me, as I expect to be at home before it could get to me here. George