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140 South Broad Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19102  
[www.ullegacy.org](http://www.ullegacy.org)  
[legacyfoundation@unionleague.org](mailto:legacyfoundation@unionleague.org)  
(215) 587-5568

1805.025.05

Camp near Potomac Creek, VA  
February 4th, 1863.

Dear Uncle

That Box arrived at last, 21 days on the way; Everything it contained was sound Excepting the Pipe, which was broken at the joint but I have rejoined it and works as well as ever, and I guess I make quite a figure with the pouch Slung about my neck (Size wont [won't] admit of pocketing it) playing Euchere [Euchre]. Especially when I have that cap on that Pop sent, it will take just about 5 minutes of my time to clean this fellow out and then I will continue with this letter. How do you like my Boots? There is one thing I dont [don't] like, and that is, that the only thief in the whole Regiment (and who is displayed evry [every] day in front of Camp) has a pair just like them. By the Bye, that is one way to get up in the Army Stand on a Barrel, with Recomondation [recommendation] for Character on your back; this fellow is a member of Co "E" our Regt [Regiment], he robbed his tent mate while in bed asleep, and he now kills the time by taunting the dutch, french man, that guards him. We would Shave [page break] and drum him out of Camp, only that he would be so much pleased with getting out of the Army that the Punishment would Suffer, So we have Court Marshaled [Marshaled] him, to stand thus [sketch of a stick figure standing on a barrel] for a week, (be the weather fair or [sketch of a fowl] (I must beg your pardon for the last, as I have not seen a fowl ["So" crossed out] for Some time, therefore I have almost forgotten their Shape) and he is also to forfeit to the U.S. Three Months Pay, Viz for Jany [January], Feby [February], + Mch [March]. It serves him right.

The Subject must change as I do not like to dwell on Sad Subjects, and I suppose he feels sad enough. But a Certain Lt. Col. [Lieutenant Colonel] of a certain Regt. [Regiment] that came from a City somewhere near you feels pretty good about now, from all accounts, but I am afraid that it might injure his good name at home, if I was to illustrate the Scandal around Camp of him, The facts are that there is a large dwelling house opposite our Camp, Three young Ladies live there, an old woman and two wenches (blacks) also, A Certain Lt. Col. [Lieutenant Colonel] Seized the Stable for the accommodation of his + other horses, but lately he has much business at the house, arm around young lady +c +c [etc. etc.]; but within the past few days he has placed Guards over Said Stable, who are Stationed (instead of around the Stable) at certain points around the house; he spends half his time there; when last seen he had an arm around each of two of said young ladies – large lot of Commissary s stores [page break] go to Said house on orders from Lt. Col. [Lieutenant Colonel], +c +c [etc. etc.] – I am quite sorry that Pop is acquainted with him but men will be men, and women cant [can't] resist a good looking fellow no how, Especially when he's got Bars on his Shoulders. If Pop thinks it would do, and that the aforesaid bad ["charahter" crossed out] character will not know who the author is (if he hears of it) I could illustrate on the Subject to Considerable length, in fact it would make quite a Story in pictures.

I am very much indebted for your presents, the gloves and writstbelts are just the thing for Picket duty and the Stockings also, and all are serviceable, please accept my thanks. Ask Pop about the

above mentioned Colonel, and let me know if I shall make it or not, I guess Mart – Croll would like to get it.

Give My best wishes to your wife and family, My furlough has gone up I think, so I may not be able to see your little daughter, but her being Union is all right but as to you being a Union "Gal" I intend investigating, guess your Wife wont [won't] Say So.

Give my love to Pop and all the family and also to my wife if you See her, and write Soon.

Your Affectionate Nephew,

Carle

P.S. I am Well, Excuse Ink.

1805.025.06

Camp Near Falmouth Va.  
Wednesday April 22<sup>nd</sup> 1863.

Dear Uncle

Your hasty letter of the 17<sup>th</sup> inst came to hand yesterday, I would have received it Sooner if this Brigade had not been out of Camp, we were about Seven Miles from here where we releived [relieved] the Cavalry of Out-side Picket duty, as they were ordered off, and have all left here, our orders for an immediate march were countermanded the next morning, and it is rumored that Joe Hooker broke his leg by suddenly getting off of his horse, but I dont [don't] believe it – although Old Abe is here again and on what business we cant [can't] tell but I hope it is not him that keeps us here, An order has been issued that we are to keep 8 days Rations on hand and ready to carry with us when we march, but if they expect us to fight hard with such a load on our backs they will find out their mistake [“and” crossed out] look at this picture how do you think a fellow can load and fire, charge, lie down, double quick and fire and load kneeling +c [etc.], with that hump on him, and if we have much Solubrious [Salubrious] weather wont [won't] it grease our Socks; but I Suppose it must be, and we must keep our Minds Eye on Richmond and Suffer all for that Flag, and Some hot work we will have of it, before we [page break] get through. I am in great hopes that I will be one of the few to return and Enjoy the fruits of Success under our flag. but we all know that many thousands of brave men will strew this first battle field of our Spring Campaign in death, but we all hope that individually we will not be one of the number, The Paymaster has just arrived at Brigade head Quarters, and will pay us we Expect day after tomorrow, which will releive [relieve] Some of the Mens Minds, as they can then Send their families some money.

Here is the portrait of a young lady I Encountered when we were at the outposts, She was of an Enquireing [inquiring] Mind, but when I politely informed her that she had better get a little closer off from my men she donted, She wanted to find out if She was Safe or not, but I couldnt [couldn't] inform her, I thought her appearance looked suspicious but sound on the goose, She did not find out who de General was dat commanded us – guess not.

Some white women and Girls also were here, wanting to give the Men trade for Sugar, Coffee, +c [etc.] they were all in the Same interesting Situation, Seven whites and the aforesaid – (young U.S. Cavalrymen in prospect).

[Continues sideways in left margin] I must close now as I have been called to the Captains Tent. Give my love to all the folks at home, Your Wife and family, and enquiring [inquiring] friends.

In haste Your loving Nephew

Carle

1805.025.08

Camp at Beverley Ford Va Sept 13<sup>th</sup> 1863

Dear Uncle George

Your 2<sup>nd</sup> letter I anticipate receiving this Evening by the regular Mail, but time and opportunity [opportunity] (you know) must not be neglected, So to commence, A Genl. [General] Order has been issued in our Brigade, forbiding [forbidding] a game at cards called poker, ("but tell me what is the difference between betting money on a game of 7 up, and ditto on Poker.") 7 up, a Dollar a game is all the rage here among the Commish [Commissioned] Officers; however neither game ever troubled my mind, As I don't gamble.

Although there is another kind Spelt [spelled] Gambol meaning running, jumping, +c [etc.] Similar to what you See these Chaps at, that I admire most heartily and I can be found indulging [indulging] in the healthy and beneficial exercise at Some time in the course of each day when we are in Camp these fellows kept me waiting about half an hour with their sawney attempts they are Subs [Substitutes] or conscripts of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Massachusetts Regt. [Regiment], And dont [don't] know enough to stay on their own ground yet, but it was quite amuseing [amusing] to Myself and four others of the Non Com [Non-Commissioned] Staff whose portraits I will give you if I am not interrupted [interrupted] too often with this letter, in which case as with the last I will drop illustrations, and find Some [page break] other pleasant employment; below I will give you the portraits of four of my Chum Non Coms [Non-Commissioned officers], but you must excuse me if I make a bad picture of them, I will try to give their expression of countenance as much as possible if I can persuade them to ["keep" crossed out] keep a straight face for five minutes, No1 is a Color Corporal, No2 Sergeant of Company "C." No3. Sergeant of Company "E.", No4 is a Corporal of Co. "C." they are a dem foine Set, that-crowd, but they look innocent enough don't they?, The Rascalls! And I have just told them that they never had such a Compliment paid them before in their lives, Nos3 + 4 laughed but my Camera took the laugh before I could prevent it but it dont [don't] alter the resemblance much, they are sadly in want of a Shave just now but Sometimes they do have clean faces outside of the ornamental hair work, Shaped after the latest fashion Plate of Mr. Merrymans Monthly, No1 was wounded in the forehead by a Splinter of tree at Chancellorville [Chancellorsville] which has put a Mark (Similar to the mark on Condemned goods) on his head that affects his Vanity muchly, we tell him he's Condemned, Sometimes which he dont [don't] relish much; they are all lively ducks and dull care has a small chance when they are around, they all Sing, Gymnize, dance and play, and I am tutor for the lot in Drawing + Writing [page break] We have writeing [writing] School in my tent Sometimes and lately they are trying to draw Sketches but of course I am bothered almost to death with their ill shaped and miserable attempts at a thing they have no taste for, but I get all of my paper now from them, although I did buy a package of note and Envelopes a few days ago but I must make them Supply me in the future, Here You have quite a heavy sketch of our Spring; Splendid Water, and the quantity Supplys [Supplies] the whole Brigade, a Guard is posted here to prevent any abuse of the water Such as washing in it; diping [dipping] dirty Cups in; or throwing dirt into it, wasteing [wasting] it, and positively forbiding [forbidding] the Conscripts from bathing in it, which they might do.

Yesterday the Officers of this Division indulged in a horse race, Each Brigade to furnish a running and also a trotting horse, Of course I was there, and in good time, I took considerable notes but a horse race always reads the same excepting the incidents or accidents and with our race only one accident happened An old Plug of a horse fell and almost killed himself, The Black Horse "Punch" owned by the Col [Colonel] of 9<sup>th</sup> Mass, won the running Race 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade, and Sorrel Mare Beauty 5<sup>th</sup> US Battery [page break] 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade won the trot, and afterwards outran the Black Horse "Punch", beating him 3 lengths, easily for a purse of \$150., a Side, So our Brigade were Victors, and us boys thought we would also have some fun and with the Assistance of our Sutler we got up a Sack race, but, our fun was soon stoped [stopped] by an order to prepare to March, and two Corps, a Battery, and Some Cavalry have started already, but we are only holding ourselves in readiness to (not at Arms length) Support them on a reconnoissance [reconnaissance], And all day (to day) we hear heavy Canonadeing [cannonading], So we look for a start before Sundown to night, I will be much pleased if we can only bag Genl. [General] Lee and his Army-but I should hate another Chancellorville [Chancellorsville] affair, and Sincerely hope that we move for some Purpose that can be accomplished this time, I received the Gospel according to Dr. Benjamin And would have understood the language if you had not marked it, as I noticed a portion of it in the Comic Monthly , it is very good and true,

Company "F." sends their pious regards to you, Myself included, give my love to Your family, My Wife, Mother, Pop, and to My numerous Sisters + Brothers also remember me to Aunt Eliza + cousins, And to Wrigley when you write (I hope we will benefit him this Move) Also to Mr Struthers, Mr Germon, and all enquiring [inquiring] friends I wrote to you day before yesterday which I hope you received, I will write to Pop and Rosey to day. This is letter No3 Since I got your last, Write to me soon and often as we may be on the March for some time.

Yours in best of health + spirits,

Carle [sketch of stick figure holding American flag]

1805.025.09

Camp near Kellys Ford, Va.  
Sunday Afternoon November 15/63

Dear Uncle - Here I am again with a big Sheet of Paper and a thimble full of Ink, going to eddify [edify] you on things in general in and around my neighborhood - My Sketch of the Rebel log huts or winter quarters got almost rubbed out before I got any chance to copy it but I have copied it and a fine big picture I made of it, but the Colonel heard Somehow that I had drawn it, and he sent for it, and afterwards asked me for it - So thinking I could draw another, I let him have it but I dont [don't] feel like doing it over again, and we now have Marching orders - although we may not March, So I here give you a copy of two (the Most prominent) Huts of the Rebel Camp which shows you how cozy they had made themselves for the winter, the houses were all constructed in the same manner of Slats of Wood and were covered with rough oak Shingles or staves and the seams or Spaces between the Slabs were filled with clay, to keep out the wind and weather, fireplaces with chimneys were attached to each Hut, about four Rebs [Rebels] would occupy each house - The Huts were built in rows, and the whole Camp was regularly laid out - other Similar camps were in the neighborhood and accommodations for a large number of Horses were also built in the Same Manner (of logs) - They were all burnt before we left the ground - Our Division (the first) of this Corps are the only troops left in this neighborhood, we came back here after the [page break] Skirmish at Brandy Station, which I told you in my last we received orders to do, there has been continual Boom, Bing, ing all day to day, and Some Bliming (musketry) close at hand, which is the cause of marching orders - but our division holds the Fords, and I have just learned that all is sociable so far and that a Scouting party of Rebs [Rebels] caught fits - although we are divided into four commands, some Picket, Some waggon [wagon] guards - and the ballance [balance] at two fords, with Artillery.

We live on the same poor fare yet, but we have made our tents Comfortable, and if we only had our Sutlers we would not grumble a bit - The ballance [balance] of the Army is Somewhere at Culpeper, or near the Rapidan, I beleive [believe], with Old Meade - So you See we are favored this time, unless major Moseby [Mosby] gets troublesome; I think we could capture Moseby [Mosby] but you see we dare not, without orders to do so, as there might be other work for us - that we dont [don't] know of yet, however we are takeing [taking] it quiet while we can,

Our Division was reviewed yesterday and will be Inspected tomorrow, We have a new Division General "Bartalet," [Bartlett] but the boys dont [don't] like his style much; the other day he rode out along the front, to receive hearty cheers (he thought) but instead of cheering for their new General, the boys sent up a deafening Cry of "Hard-Tacks," for which reception he ordered us all to drill for the space of an hour, which only increased their dislike for him - In the distance I now hear our Chaplain loudly discourseing [discoursing] for the Spiritual benefit of poor Soldiers, (and \$125. Per Month) which is not always the Case on Sundays - as we only average One [page break] sermon per Month - and you see I am loseing [losing] my ration, just on account of this letter, which I must put in the Mail bag before 5, O'clock. P.M. although I will try and get a hear of the latter part of the Sermon, and also get some tracts, I gennnerally [generally] ["Although" crossed out] attend - We are all well, and now look for a Speedy

termination of this Rebellion, I also expect to visit you next Christmass [Christmas]. I like your manner of saying right out just what you think – although I was aware of it, and had foolishly thought it a benefit that party did not know more, but I have found out my mistake Although as a general thing the women know too much for me – damd [damned] if I wonder at Adam Eating an Apple, now!! And I think I’ve eat about a bushel!! I’m sorry I ever saw any of the Sex – but let us change the Subject – I am getting up a Series of “Plesant [Pleasant] Moments” of the Soldiers Camp life, for you, which I will send in My next letter, Say tomorrow, if nothing happens but in the Meantime dont [don’t] fail to Continue a profusion of Correspondence, My Amount of Mail Matter has been verry [very] small lately - with the Exception of one (from Ned) I have received no letters for over a week, Although I must now Acknowledge the “Notions” and “Harpers Weekly” received from you, with the Press from Ned – for which accept my thanks and acknowledgments of Co. “F” Our Regt [Regiment] received great praise for Cleanliness and drill at the review, and also the Name of Little Regiment, from Old Bartalett [Bartlett], but Our Brigadier Genl. [General] informed him that although Small in numbers we were big in a fight – which is I think the first time we were ever spoken well of [page break] The Captain has just missed me, so Sent for me to appear at Meeting good bye for the present

My love to all – write soon –

Yours Carle



1805.025.10

Camp at Beverly Ford Va, December 29<sup>th</sup> 1863

Dear Uncle

I must with this letter acknowledge the receipt of two bundles of Newspapers among which I find the "Comic Monthly", Frank Leslie's & Harpers Weeklys, and a Circular & invitation Card to opening of the Cooper Shop Soldiers Home, and I also notice in the Phila [Philadelphia] ["EN" crossed out] Inquirer 26<sup>th</sup>, the Grand Entertainment given to the 29<sup>th</sup> Penna Infy [Infantry] by the Cooper Shop Soldiers Home Managers, I see it is noticed as the first square meal the Regt [Regiment] has had for some time, and knowing (by Experience) the kind of meals a Regiment gets here, and judging [judging] from what I hear from our members who have been guests of your Cooper Shop Institute, I am sure it was a dinner as described; but it dont [don't] do me any good to allow such thoughts to linger on my mind or per chance my grub wont [won't] go down, So to change the Subject How did you like my pencil photograph (Side face) I think it is a good picture? How do you like my pallatial [palatial] residence below? You will See that I and bedfellows have tried to keep out the water by makeing [making] drains all around the shanty, It is a good picture of the outside; this End of the house we use for kitchen + parlor and the other End is bedroom. our double bunk is made across the end of the tent, So it gives us plenty of room at this End, to write, read, cook, Eat, Smoke, Wash, or lounge lazily about the fireplace, (when off of duty) which is very seldom. -

This Side or front faces the Street (or Company line) which is the Space left between the Companies in which we assemble at the call of the Drums + fife or Bugles - at Roll Call, or to form for drill, dress parade, fatigue parties or picket duty before going out - [page break] The Cabin or Shanty is about 10 feet long by 8 ft wide, the door is 4 1/2 ft high & 2 ft wide, opening inside, the peak of the roof or tent, is about 8 1/2 feet in the clear, and our Rifles hang as usual from the ridgepole, over our bunk, below I will draw our position (when off duty) at night, which gives you some ideah [idea] of our bunk (our blankets are pious (holey [holy]) and my bunkey snores dreadfully; but you need not notice that) you see I indulge in Comic reading before snoozeing [snoozing] it wont [won't] do to think myself to Sleep, I'd get the blues; evry [every] part of the cabin is put to Some use; under the bunk is where we keep our Wood, after it is Split and of the proper length for our Fireplace, and over the foot of the bunk is a wide shelf, on which we keep our Grub, we have two pet Spiders in the tent who crawl all over our Eatables, and the bed; one is a daddy long legs and the other a black one, this place is full of them, and other insects in proportion; We have Some modern improvements, for instance our wash basin (or boat) is hewed out of a chunk of red Oak dug out, then ready for use, our stool is Rustic Style - the seat is half of a barrel head and our table, Same Style but the top, which is the lid of a cheese box, Our candlestick is a square chunk of brown Soap, other articles of furniture Similar (not to the soap) now I guess you know enough of our family affairs, So I must Strike on Something Else, That Note (Confed[Confederate],) did you get it I wonder, it has been in the pocket of one of the Members of Co "F." Ever Since we were at Portsmouth Navy Yard, at which time it was Sesesh legal tender, and good in any part of this State, now they wont touch it, So I captured it thinking you might not have seen them, (no matter if you have) I will send all Sesesh things I get hold of to you from Saw Mills down to Gun boats, by the way I do want an article from [page break] Philadelphia, it is a half round file about 5 or 6 inches long 1/2 inch wide, could

it not be sent in a newspaper? please let me know in your next, I am not in Irons wishing to free myself, but I want to make Some rings of Reb bones, Wood pipes + (Curious Fact) there is several graves here, on our drill ground, Several Cavalry Skirmishes have taken place in this Vicinity. Tomorrow I am Expected to go on Fatigue duty – but I have signified it as my intention not to go, Our duty is fatiguing Enough, and I wont go to building Corduroy roads this winter, let Old Abe Send the [racial slur] down here if he wants roads built; it is out-side of Military duty, and I cant handle an Axe, and wont Shoulder logs through this Mud, when there is no nescessity [necessity] for it, Excepting to Ornament Head Quarters; Our reenlisted men are waiting to get their advance bounty and furloughs, and are not Expected to do duty until they return, I don't know what will be done with my case, tomorrow, and dont [don't] care, I am half Mad with the Service Anyhow, We have had a Regimental Court Martial lately And I Am afraid that one of the men of Co D, was Sentenced to be shot to death with Musketry, as his Sentence has been forwarded to Washington for approval of Old Abe, he deserted the Regiment after the Battle of Gettysburg, and was caught in Citizens dress, and without his rifle or accoutrements, and sent to us, under guard – he has been in evry [every] battle Excepting Since Gettysburg the Rappahannock, and the Skirmishing to Culpepper [Culpeper] and to the Mine Run Affair, he was in the 7 days fight, South Mountain, Antietam, Fredricksburg [Fredericksburg], Chancellorsville, (Both Bull Runs) + Gettysburg two others are to forfeit all their pay, and at the Expiration of their term of Enlistment to be dishonorably discharged the Service of the UStates – which is pretty rough – none of the belong to Company “F”-Our Camp is near where the Five Desserters [Deserters] were shot some few months ago, and their graves are still to be seen, nobody seems inclined to disturb their bodies – [page break] Well I suppose you had a glorious time on Christmas day, and I wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year. My health is pretty good now only that little cough, which I have not got rid of yet, but my Eyes are quite good now, So I don't care much about the cough, the balance of Company “F” are well, and send kind wishes for your further Welfare, long life +c [etc.], the fact is they have robbed me of all the papers Excepting the Comic Monthly (but will return them) I forgot to Mention that I also received the Writing paper and Stamped Envelopes, this Sheet is one of the number, Envelope also, if I had not received them I could not be now writing. As our Sutler (he is here now) pays more attention to smuggling [smuggling] Liquor to our officers, than he does to the wants of the boys; and I have no doubt it pays him well,

I have been for the past 3 days anxiously Expecting letters but none come, although the papers are all the more in hand, It is quite late now, so I must close, and turn into bed to get my ration of Sleep before Reveille, probably I will be shoved on Guard – probably placed under arrest-

Give my love to all the family. A Happy New Year all around – which includes evrybody [everybody] and the cat, there is no use mentioning names; Especially when I have written two letters besides this within a week past – I hope Rosey is well, but her letter must be on the way for me by this time, So I will let it Say – Dont [Don't] forget that I include Capt [Captain] Harry Wrigley and Mr Struthers, with that Happy New Year,

Write to Me soon, dont [don't] forget the file – Send a good long letter if you can spare the time – I have not heard from Detroit yet! I have great Expectations from that quarter & Washington! Your Affectionate Nef,

Carle

1805.025.12

February [February] 23<sup>d</sup> 1846 Island of Lobas

My Dear Wife

Since I Last wrote to you from the encampment at N [New] Orleans I have seen much that was strange and new to me and before you Receive an other Letter I shall be before the the walls of Vera Cruz and through [word crossed out] I hope an engagement 24<sup>th</sup> I was obliged to Leave off Writing to attend to Corporal Waram who was seized with convulsions and while supporting him I thought every moment would be his Last the provision here made by the Department for the sick are horrible and upon his partial Recovery he objected so much to going to the hospital that we made every [word crossed out] arrangement in the power of his Mess to which [words crossed out] I belong and his comrades to make him comfortable a Bedstead was made for him and the construction of it may amuse it is made by Driving four stakes into the ground with crotches on the end on which is Laid poles and the staves of a flour Barrel answer for Slats ["this" crossed out] the above is wrote particularly for Mr Longmir who is acquainted with all the friends of Mr Waram to whom he begs to be Remembered he calculatis [calculates] to get his Discharge but the Difficulty now exists of how we shall Dispose of him it is impossible to take him with us as the the Removing [word crossed out] him to the Vessel is almost impossible and if we could I Believe the orders of General Scott is that no man shall go on Board the Transport who is not fit for Duty and I see no alternative but Leaving him here on the Island under the care of Strangers (without the power of helping himself for the present) who have about as much Regard for a mane [man] as the [they] have for a Dog it is a dreadful position to be placed in and I would Receive a death warrant with about as much composure Waram should never have Left Philad [Philadelphia] in the situation he was in which was but the partial Recovery of severe internal Bruises and the knowledge of this fact by the physicians of the Regiment make it extremely hard for him to get his Discharge whic [which] will be Delayed for some time he got two severe falls on Board the Vessel in our voyag [voyage] frrom [from] [word crossed out] N [New] Orleans to the Brazas and from his Leaving the city to the present he has never been able to perform Duty [#?] tell Mr Longmire not to communicate any thing of this so that his wife may hear it and I hope for the Best and that he may Return home by the earliest opportunity so much for the Corporal Now for the illustrious individual who Indites [Indicts] this who has lost so much of his former self that you even my Little Wife would not know me I have ["left" crossed out] lost 33 pounds when I Left you and Now to tell the full particulars of my voyage and how I Lost flesh [page break] we left N Orleans on the 16 Jany [January] for the Brazos and arrived there after a [word crossed out] Rough passage on the 26<sup>th</sup> we Remained at the Brazos four days and then sailed for the Island of Lobas at which place we arrived on the 15<sup>th</sup> the [word crossed out] Transport vessells [vessels] which was to accompany us arrived 14 Days before us which gave Rise to most fearful Rumors upon our account a Transport vessel containing the the Louisanna [Louisiana] Volunteers was Wrecked on the Beach but about 20 miles from the Island and the 1<sup>s</sup> and 2<sup>d</sup> division of our Regiment thought that it was us but the same wind that Wrecked [word crossed out] them Drove us to within 20 miles of Vera Cruz and our gallant Captain said he had a notion to take the Castle of St Juan but the wind changing made it impossible for us to do it

after Leaving the Bar a [at] the Mouth of the Mississippi the vessel began to Roll very much and a Rich scene was presented out of 300 men Nearly one half were hanging over the Bulwarks of the Vessel Discharging the Bean soup from of their stomachs which they had been so eager to get there for my part the smell of Salt water only improved my appetite and I eat pork and Biscuit with great gusto for which I Received sundry hard curses from those whom the very sight of Pork or any thing eatable made sick the following Day we had a spanking Breeze and we went along under close Reef top sails at the Rate of 10 Knots an hour the Vessel on account of a chopping sea Rolled tremendously the sailors themselves could not Keep their feet without holding on to something and what was us poor Devils to do who was not used to it numbers of us were pitched out of our Bunks and the Mess Kettles a Devil of A Rumpus I got on Deck at day light and I did see about the Tallest specimen of Waves and tell Father for me that I can now fully appreciate his paintings I Left my hold of the Belaying [trin? fin?] During a temporary Lull crop the Deck when the vessel careened so much that I was pitched on Deck in my fall (and I was not the only one that fell by Dozens) I struck on a Ring Bolt my Left Hip struck the Back of my head and sliding Down scraped my shin under a spare spare which was Lashed on the starboard side and smacked my nose against some thing I Know not for I Laid senseless for some time two sailors picked me up and carried me below so ended my [word crossed out] pleasure at the sight of the Rolling Sea my hip swelled greatly and in Less than an hour was as Large as my fist and give me great pain but in two days i was quite well we caught a shark previous to our arrival at the Brazos and he was cut up and eat in Less than no time and the flish [flesh] pronounced excellent I tasted a bit of it and Liked it very much [page break] the Dysentary [Dysentery] prevailed to a great extent among the men and our vessel left N O [New Orleans] without a physician or Medical stores and the sufferings of the men was great Lieutenant Bryant of our Comy [Company] took the part of Doctor but his his Knowledge was Limited as Likewise his medicine chest which was borrowed from the captain of the vessel and at the Brazos Lieutenant went on Shore to get Medicine and Fresh Beef the Beef arrived but no Dr or Medicine the Beef heaven save it any man Bringing such an article in Your Markets would be prosecuted we immediately formed a jury and appointed a coroner to find out how the animals came by their Death the verdict was Death by Starvation and very few of them eat of it our Lietenant [Lieutenant] or Doctor for whom we were Delayed could not get off and we at Length made sail after being delayed 4 Days and the Remainder of the voyage was passed without Medicine or advice and nothing whatever necessary for the Relief of the Sick whose numbers increased Daily Salt Pork Hard Biscuit and Bean Soup with Coffee Rough enough to to wear a mans [man's] throat out are not the things to cure dysentery [dysentery] or give a man any Relief who wants ["R" crossed out] nourishment in a few days after Leaving the Brazos I was seized with it and for Six Days I Knew no Rest Night or day and every one said that I was jerked more severely than any one on Board the Vessel my clothes that fitted tightly in Philad [Philadelphia] hung upon me in folds and any Coat overlaps 8 inches I continued extremely weak until the Arrival at the Island which is a [word crossed out] Low Sandy place covered with Low Brushwood and vines Lizerds [lizards] Crabs Roaches ants and a Variety of Strange animals but the Bathing is Delicious the Heat intolerable the fish exquisite if we could only catch them and the [word crossed out] water would make you vomit I dare say that you could not Keep your toes warm under heavy clothing when I was sweltering under 102 Degrees of Heat

25 the Order is Now given to Strike tents and Major General Scott intends trying what his game Chickens are Made of as he calls our Regiment ["W"; paper missing] is decididly [decidedly] the Best Drilled the Best Dressed and the Best behaved [paper missing] whole and is decidedly the Crack Regiment of the whole [Requisition?] a [paper missing] I must conclude although I have not told you the 20<sup>th</sup> part I intend we Sail at 12 oClock for Larardo which is about 7 miles from Vera Cruz and upon the arrival of all the troops we will march immediately to the attack of that place so Remember to Give my Love to Father Mother Sister and Brothers to call my Friends and to you My Dear Wife

I Leave My Love and

Affection

Your Husband

James Birch

[page break]

Mrs. James Birch  
Care of T. Birch Jr.  
Philadelphia  
Pa.

1805.025.13

United States Hotel Pittsburgh Novr [November] 15<sup>th</sup> 1846

My Dear Wife

I have arrived here and am in good Health and Spirits excepting that the thoughts of your anxiety on my account has somewhat Marred the pleasure that I should have Received from the Beautiful Scenery and the many amusing incidents on on the passage We parted as you are aware on Wednesday and arrived on the same Day at the towns of [word crossed out] Lancaster and Harrisburg at the Latter place We were Kindly treated by an entertainment at the expense of the citizens Patriotic Speeches were Made by all the great people of the place which was Responded to by our officers until at Last we came to the conclusion that we were Rather great men ourselves and also the most self sacrificing individuals - we traveled all night by canal Boat and arrived at Clarks ferry at about 4 oClock in the morning where we partook of a most excellent Breakfast at about 4 in the afternoon a most splendid entertainment was provided for us by the Ladies of Petersburg and so on until the arrival at pittsburg [Pittsburgh] we Received the greatest Kindness and Hospitality at Johnstown and Blairsville the two Last towns we stopt [stopped] at the people done every thing in their Power to Make us comfortable and appeared as if they could not do enough for us although those in authority acted Quite to the contrary the canal Boat which conveyed us from Harrisburg to Hollydaysburg [Hollidaysburg] was not large enoug [enough] to accommodate us and we had to Lay ["at night" crossed out] Huddled at night Like a parcel of Pigs amidst [amidst] the greatest Riot and Discord created by the Noisy Rascals we had Brought with us who have fortunately for ourselves become better Diciplined [Disciplined] [word crossed out] arriving at Hollydaysburg [Hollidaysburg] we had to ascend the Mountains by Rail Road car but I prefered [preferred] walking up and such was the Steepness of the Ascent and the great Height that I almost gave out but I was amply Repaid standing upon the Highest Part of the Alleganey [Allegheny] Mountains the surrounding view was grand and magnificent in the extreme I also forgot to Mention that a party of us walked over the alleganies [Alleghenies] on Sunday Evening on the great National Road which afforded me great pleasure the many Beautiful Little towns we passed and the Rivers along With the Magnificent Mountain scenery makes it the journey of great interest to me the [word indecipherable] which had preceeded [preceded] us on Monday had acted in such a Disgraceful manner that the people in many villages and stopping places Refused to sell us any thing to eat or Drink but our conduct which was orderly [word crossed out] soon established confidence and at Harrisburg to pittsburgh [Pittsburgh] we Received as I have before mentioned nothing but Kindness Captain Morehead is without any exception one of the most gentlemanly men I have ever Met and I am proud to think that I enjoy his confidence the officers from the Highest to the Lowest are a fine set of men and perfect gentleman the men with but a few exceptions are a fine sett [set] and our Company has commanded Universal Respect and is justly considered the crack company of of the Regiment [page break]

For the first two Days of my journey I had no appetite but since then I can get scarcely enough to eat the Mountain Air agrees with me I have a Little pet who has taken a great fancy to me it is a Bright Little Youngster of 15 Years old he is our Drummer Boy and we have a fifer Boy who Matches him he took a fancy to me from the first and we Bunk together in Soldiers phrase every Night and it affords me a

pleasure at Night when he nestles by my side in the straw [word crossed out] to wrap him up  
Comfortable in his Blanket it Reminds me of you my Dear Wife the weather has been intensely cold and  
but few could Bear it the men themselves and good stout ones to complained and no wonder the Boy  
Required care and he shall have it While I can administer it but he is a fearless Little Rascal and Bears  
privations in a manner that shames many an Older and Bigger personage he says he his [is] determined  
to be a soldier I cannot but think it a shame that one of his tender years should be allowed to Leave his  
home for such a life we had fracas on Saturday Last which Liked to have become serious it was between  
a a part of our company and the cadwallader greys [Cadwalader Grays] fortunately arrived on the spot  
in time to suppress it and our worthy Captain thanked me for it expressed his pleasure at my being there  
we are Living at present at the [word indecipherable] Hotel in a style a great Deal to good for soldiers I  
actually slept Last night in a feather Bed under clean sheets the Luxury cost me 25 cts [cents] heretofore  
the floor with some straw under me has been my Bed and very glad to have 4 hours out of the 24 of  
good sound sleep on that the fellows keep a vile Discord every Night by singing Laughing and any thing  
that will create noise the city is full of soldiers and a Dirty Smoky place it is for gentleman of that stamp  
we expect to leave here very soon write to me immediately get Thomas to Direct it to the Care of Kuhn  
& Greaves Pittsburg [Pittsburgh]  
Remember me to all every Friend and Relation I will give you another Letter in a few Days and I shall find  
means to send you my Degueretype [Daguerreotype] Likeness in full Uniform and you must have yours  
taken and Thomas will find means to send it to me at New Orleans Remember me and give My Love all  
Father Mother and all

And Most Especially take care  
of Yourself

James Birch

[page break]

Mrs James Birch  
Care of  
N. Longmire  
Bank Street  
Philada [Philadelphia]

1805.025.14

Pittsburg U.S Hotel Decr [December] 21<sup>st</sup> 1846

My Dear Wife

To Morrow at 12 oClock we Leave here for New Orleans a small journey of 2300 miles Down the Ohio I will write to you from New Orleans I have wrote to Thomas about some things you must assist in getting them Ready your Likeness you must not Fail to have sent for you can scarcely Imagine how I shall value it mine I shall have taken at N [New] Orleans in full Regimentals and their [there] will be something about it to Surprise you Tell Mother and Hannah that I feel Like a Soldier and it will be but a short time before I understand the duties of one we [~~are~~] have been quartered in the US Hotel and fared well ever since we have been here and Like it well enough if it was not for the everlasting Noise of made by Drunken and Rowdy Soldiers but so much the better for my self I feel called on to act correct and show an example every Respect is paid to me and confidence by both officers and Men from N. [New] Orleans I shall send you 20\$ I Loaned to Day 15\$ to our Worthy Captain as the approbation for us was not Large enough and a number of the Men was not paid. I shall Receive at N. [New] Orleans near forty Dollars in all on that account at present we are Receiving 20cts [cents] per Day for Rations but spending one Dollar as I have for the sake of comfort and quietness got a private Room in the Hotel our men have two Large Rooms the floors of which is covered with straw in which they Lay Like so many Hoys their quarters would be no ways objectionable if they would Keep Sober and Not fight we have four men on the Sick List whom it has been my pleasure to attend my Little comrade the Drummer Boy Rooms it with me St John is his name and he sends his Respects to you he Received his pay on Saturday and sent all of it to his mother of whom he frequently talks in his sleep my Health has been first rate but I cannot Sleep more than four hours out of 24 but feel no fatigue on that account but [I am?] always fresh and wide awake which I attribute altogether to my temperance [page break] you must not forget to wright [write] to me [~~from~~] at New Orleans Thomas will Direct the Letter for you tell me all [~~y~~] my two Mothers Say and give them a Kiss a piece for me also to Hannah & Eliza and be sure to send in to me collectively in the pacage [package] to N [New] Orleans Mrs Wotton & Susan also owe me one which I empower you to Collect for Me be sure to see Mother and [~~have~~] tell her to hasten the shipping of those thing I ordered as if haste is made use of they will be in New orleans As soon as i am the young Scrub of a Drummer is Beating the Devils Tattoo on his instrument and I must away to Roll call

So God Bless You

My Dear Little Wife

James Birch

P.S our Lieutenant took our names the other Day and the Number of Children tc [etc] I told him I had but one Wife and as to Children I should have one when I get another tell Thomas to Attend to that Matter of the Committee.

[page break]



Mrs. James Birch  
Care of N Longmire  
Bank Street  
Philadelphia  
Pa

1805.025.15

St Charles Hotel N [New] Orleans  
Jany [January] 12<sup>th</sup> 1847

My Dearest Little Wife

I Received your two Letters and the [they] were as Refreshing to me as water upon the Desert Rejoice with me for I have been promoted [word crossed out] to the Most honerable [honorable] position that of Standard Bearer of the Regiment and first Seargeant [Sergeant] of the Regiment I carry the Sword instead of the Musquet [Musket] and it is my Duty to defend the flag of my Country we Start tomorrow with Sealed Orders and along with the pleasure I feel at your being Happy and comfortable I Rejoice in the Idea that we Shall have a fight tell Thomas who I have wrote to that I do not wish any advice my thoughts were Never more about me than at Present the Drummer Boy says that if he gets home again and you are no Bigger than I Represent you to he he will give you a Kiss  
[page break]

My Best Respects to all my Friends and tell Mother that the more she comes to see you the better I shall Like her tell tell Father that I have a whole Lot of Sketches of the Many Beautiful places I have seen and that I have improved wonderfully in the art of Drawing how much he will be able to judge any Love to Eliza and tell her that space obliterates all that she has ever said against me you will Receive by Sea my likeness and about 20 pages of Writing which I intend for you and my friends

So God Bless You

My Dear Wife

While I Remain

Your

Affectionate Husband

James Birch

[page break]

Mrs. James Birch  
Care of N Longmire  
Bank Street  
Philada [Philadelphia]  
Pa

1805.025.16

Jany [January] 15<sup>th</sup> 1847 Battle Ground

My Dearest Wife

We start at Last although we thought that [~~Last~~] Monday was to be the day but the Stores were Delayed [~~word crossed out~~] to Morrow (Saturday) we start as the Order has been given to strike tents our musquets [muskets] all packed 8 in half an hour time we will be Ready for the Sail much pleased am I to think that I shall have a taste of sea Life our Destination is Brazos Santiago there to wait for Orders there Little Doubt but the impression that I had when I left your City was correct and that Vera Cruz is our destination and that we shall have what we all Desire that is a fight my Station is one of Danger and therefore of Honor and god Grant that I may hold it with Honor to You My Country and Myself I have 4 Corporals as guards no greater Disgrace could attend them Myself than to Desert the flag in the Hour of Danger I shall Receive 22\$ per Month & 4 Rations instead of 7\$ which will be quite acceptable You may tell Thomas that I Left Philada [Philadelphia] with about 8\$ in cash this was absolutely used up in Necessaries in our passage to Pittsburgh for on two thirds of the journey I was obliged to pay my own expenses on our arrival at Pittsburg Nothing had been done for our Accommodation therefore I put up at the U.S Hotel which I would have Done under any circumstances Rather than have put up with the Accommodations that the Companies which preceeded [~~preceded~~] us had I can stand any Hardship except that of Breathing and Atmospheres made Pestilent by Breaths of a hundred men in a Close Room Laying Like so many Hogs Cursing swearing and Drunk such was it on Board the Canal Boat and such would have been the Case in Pittsburgh which I had made [~~word crossed out~~] my mind up not to submit to if money could procure comfort I have just Returned from Morning parade and the Orders are given to be Ready in one hour instead of to Morrow therefore I have but Brief time to say much more but you will Receive a full account as I promised from our next Stopping place Although this may be the Last you may hear of Me for Some time I had permission from the Capt [Captain] to Spend [~~page break~~] a couple of Days in N [New] Orleans which I made the most of I met Mr Murdock at the St Charles Hotel he was Kind Enough to Present with an order for Lieutenant [~~word crossed out~~] Bryant & Lewis & Myself to the St Charles Theatre Murdock played the Stranger most Admireably [Admirably] the Hotel St Charles is the most splendid in the U.States the [~~word crossed out~~] Architecture is pure Corinthian and surmounted with a Large and High Dome which is quite a Prominent Landmark the Calaboose or Prison is a vast pile and the Architecture purely French that is it Looks Like nothing but itself I Believe upon a fair calculation that their [there] is Nearly 2 taverns in every House in N. [New] Orleans I went to the Globe Masked Ball and the Quateroon do and they are without any exception the Vilest places I ever was in although they are quite fashionable and the Citizens and Strangers of N. [New] Orleans may feel proud of having fashionable Assemblies composed of the Refuse of a certain clap from all the great northern Cities I seen Mr Hill and he had just Received the News of his Brothers [Brother's] Death which he told me he had every Reason to expect from the manner in which he Lived Mr Hill Receives me very Kindly and I paid him several visits I [~~word crossed out~~] walked over the Battle ground and the embankments Still Remain and I feel satisfied that Myself with others have never given Gen [General] Jackson the Credit for that great Victory that was his due when we take into consideration that he fought the Veterans of the

Peninsular war and the Flower of Wellingtons army with a Vastly inferior force Defeat would have been no Disgrace and victory the Evidence of the Superiority of the Citizens Soldier of this Free Republic Tempes Fuget [Tempus Fugit] Time Flies we may probably stop at Pensacola if so I shall make it my business to find Mrs Russel my Worthy 4 [?] Cousin Tell [word crossed out] Father that I have a good many invaluable and Correct Drawing by Myself for him the Perspective in them is grand tell mother to take good care of you in my absence and I shall Love her much for it and not to worry the Least for me as the more Labor is put on me and the more privations I have to bear the stronger I get I have not had No sickness yet and never felt better in my Life although numbers in the Camp are very unwell Soldiering agrees with me and I Look to the future Cheerily hoping there may be in it my [word crossed out] Redemption of the past [page break]

To the Whole family [word crossed out] Collectively and individually give My Love tell George that a Campaign would do him good and as he Bears the name so he Likewise ought to imitate the good & Brave Deeds of our worthy uncle

To Mrs Wootter Susan and Friend Charles give my best Respects

To Longmire and Ned do Likewise tell Ned to give them to Clements and the whole crowd of My Friends tell Ned that we have lots of Corn Pork & Beef Hard Biscuit & Beans but can have no Cabbage dont [don't] fail to give any Respects to Mrs Caiender Grandmother Charity and all the Rest Tell Dick it is time for him to sing if it is only to please you

So Good By My Dear Little Wife

James Birch

I want to get my new uniform and sword before I get my Likeness there will be an Artist I guess with the Army you should see my Mustacheos [Mustachios] but I think I shall have them cut off they are very troublesome although they improve my looks I only wear them at the Particular Request of My Capt [Captain]

Do Not fail to wright [write] often Directed to the Care of Mr A Hill

1<sup>st</sup> Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers Letter G

care of Capt. [Captain] Morehead

they will then be shipped to me

1805.025.17

May 2<sup>d</sup> 1847 Camp Near Jalapa [Xalapa]

My Dear Wife

Here we are in Camp about 3 Miles beyond the Beautiful City of Jalapa [Xalapa] and its [it's] still More Beautiful Senoras [Señoras] whom I cannot help occasionally taking a Sly Look at You have Received before this News of the Glorious Victory of Serra Gorda [Cerro Gordo] and I Regret to say that I could not be there the day before the Battle I was sick from the effects of a Sun Stroke and which I had got on the third days March from Vera Cruz I was burning up with fever and suffering from severe dysentary [dysentery] but towards Evening I felt a Little better I put my Arms and accoutrements in order and Reported myself for duty for I was determined to be there if I had to crawl there but an order came from the colonel to Repair to his quarters which I did and I Received from him orders to Remain behind and take command of the guard Detailed to protect the Baggage train which as quarter Master Sergeant [Sergeant] of the Regiment was my duty he expressed great Regret that I could not be allowed the privelage [privilege] of being shot and gaining glory but he said that the mexicans might make a detour around the Hills and attack the guard and try to get our Baggage and that I might have a chance of making a good fight with this consolation I was obliged to stay behind I can give you No description of this Battle sufficient for me to say is that it was one of the Most Brilliant Battles of the whole campaign Gen [General] Scott Rode out as cool as a summers morning and Returned about 3 oClock with Vega and other Mexican generals of distinction amidst the Cheers of the whole line smiling Like a Basket of Chips at every Body and I can tell you that the old man Setts [Sits] on his Splendid Horse He Looks [word crossed out] Like a whole team he does the old Critter [page break] and we will Make him president the old Rat in spite of all the Locofocus in creation our Regiment behaved gallantly the [they] charged up to within 70 yards of one the fortifications when they had orders to Halt the firing I was told by several whom I conversed with on the subject and who gave me a description of the Battle was tremendous [tremendous] Bullets of every description flew amongst them Like hail and Strange to say not one man of the Regiment was Killed and only 2 or 3 slightly wounded our men Stood the fire firmly and their situation for a short time was such as to make the sloutest [stoutest] quail but no such disposition was shown by any one and firmly they stood their ground and waited anxiously for the order to charge which order they never Received Twiggs attacked the fort from the opposite side with his Regulars and soon the white flag hung over the fortifacation [fortification] and the enemy surrendered Notwithstanding all [word crossed out] the gallantry and firmness of the Pennsylvanians we were the subjects on the next day of the grossest misrepresentations but since justice has been done us at one time our Colonel had orders from the general to Retreat which orders was disobeyed you could not conceive the Rapidity of forcing unless you Heard it no interception for a moment for near an hour of cannonading and musquetry [musketry] on the part of the Mexicans and the steady up Hill work. with the Bayonet on the part of our troops Near 4000 Mexicans were taken prisoners [word crossed out] and about 6000 Stand of arms and over 40 pieces of cannon some of which were the most Beautiful in Point of Workmanship and ornament I ever seen and one Brass 64 Pounder was Splendid poor fellows this place was the scene of their former glory and great appeals had evidently been made to them for at this place they had defeated the spaniards and declared themselves free from spain. Every preparation had

been made to annihilate us if we come straight up the Road but Scott made them open their eyes when in the morning the [they] found that we had dragged Heavy mortars [mortars] and cannon up a Steep mountain and then carried them around on the top and planted a Battery within Half a mile of them which Knocked one of their fortifications in to a cocked Hat in Less than half an hour and they Knew nothing of it until it opened fire no wonder St Anna [Santa Anna] made every preparation to Retreat and Said we were [page break] the devil and had it not been for the haste of Twiggs who wanted to do something extra Sant [Santa] Anna would have been completely Surrounded and taken prisoner as worths [Worth's] division was working their way around the Hills to Cut him off and a Remarkably tight Chance of escape he had Harvey with His dragoons pursued him to Jalapa [Xalapa] took his carriage and a good deal of Money but enough of the Battle the scene after was Horrible as I witnessed the next day I Rode over the Battle field and never wish to witness another I Bought a Beautiful sword (which I now wear) for a canteen of water from a mexican I would not have taken it if it had not a been that he was obliged to give it up my orders to move the teams on immediately after the Battle was countermanded and we Remaineded [Remained] for 2 days after the Battle to bury the dead and take care of the wounded my office Entitles me to this Privelage [Privilege] of Riding and drawing Rations for a Horse and I had a Beautiful Mustang Pony given to me when I Left Very [Vera] Cruz which I Rode all along was here Stolen from me an [and] I had to foot it from Serra gorda [Cerro Gordo] to our present encampment and a great Loss he will be if I cant [can't] manage to get another as we start for mexico in a few days I have had Myself Reduced twice to one Shirt by thievery on the 2d day of our Landing My Knapsack and all my clothes with my Blank was Stolen from the place of deposit an [and] a complete new Rigg which I had Bought at a very High price I was Robbed of Here 1.75 for A striped shirt such as would cost at home 75 cts [cents] my great Boots the soles dropped off and I was obliged to give 3.00 for a pair of Brogans such as cost 1.25 in Phiada [Philadelphia] but such is a soldiers Luck and I am not alone in my next Letter I will give you a full description of the City of Jalapa [Xalapa] and the Surrounding Scenery which is the most Beautiful I ever beheld also the Black eyed Spanish girls who are certainly Beautiful I hope Corporal Warham has arrived Safe with the Painting and that Longmire has Read you the Long Letter I sent him in all my Letters from you and Thomas no mention is made of Father why it is so I Know not and to hear of him at all times gives me pleasure and I Like not such forgetfulness of him [page break] give My Love to all Father Mother Sister and Brothers with my Good Wishes to all my Friends who come to see you Tell Thomas to place but Little faith in Warham who Kept out of harms [harm's] way and never smelt [smelled] gunpowder or Heard a Bullet Whistle I have a good many curiosities which I will try and get sent Home some I have with me and some are packed up at Vera Cruz I must close as the mail will So good by for the Present and I will try to write to you soon although it is first hard to get time 2d to get ink 3 to get paper 4th to get pens and after it is wrote to get it Carried

So Farewell with the Love of

Your Husband

James Birch

Quarter Master Seargeant [Sergeant]1s Regiment

Pennsylvania Volunteers

[page break]

Mrs James Birch  
Care of T. Birch Jr  
6<sup>th</sup> & Chestnut  
Philadelphia  
Pa

1805.025.18

Castle of Perote Monday May 24<sup>th</sup> 1847

My Most Amiable

I enclose this with the Letter to My Wife to inform You and her and all the Rest of the most interesting family of individuals that Genl [General] Scott who although a Whole team himself has just arrived Bringing Near 300 Teams with him and Numerous Pack mules the News that I can gather by his arrival is that he Does not expect any more fighting and [word crossed out] that at no Definite time can be fixed for our homeward journey but I have made my Mind up unless there is a great change comes over me and that I fully Recover my Health I shall apply for my discharge and be home before November to go to the Hospital Here is the next thing to going to Your Grave men here gradually waste away and even if they do Not Die they are Left with Broken constitutions for the Balance of their Days [word crossed out] Some few indeed the climate [climate] appears to agree with but even they must [must] bide their time and possibly may find themselves mistaken the Interpreter says that the Mexicans themselves cannot Keep their Health in this place you can Now from the eastern Wall of the castle count 27 graves which have been filled [word crossed out] since our arrival (and up to the day) this is 10 More than was actually Lost in the taking of Vera Cruz and the Castle surrendered and if you Visit the Hospital and saunter around the Castle you will count our one hundred who if they Do not [word crossed out] help fill up more graves May at the Best or Worst as you chose take it Linger out a Miserable existence a great Part of this is Attributed to the Water which Runs from the Mountains and is strongly impregnated with copper Much to the Bread which has hitherto been [been] sour and Mouldy [Moldy] and I see but Little hopes of a change for the Better and seriously is the Beef Charged with being the Cause but Let the Cause be what it May we are Likely to Remain in a state of Profound ignorance if we Depend on the Doctors and Scientific Men we have here at Present the former if you go to them for advice invariably administer Either Blue Bills Quinine or Opium for the Administering of Which I Believe they have Regular days Let the Complaint be what it May on the same Principle that Mrs Squeers Administered Brimstone and Molasses about 9 oClock the Drum Beats [word crossed out] the Doctors [Doctors] call the sick are called and the Potion given in about as Regular a manner as you would give a horse his oats and the Patients are Looked upon by both Doctors and assistants [word crossed out] as you would Look upon any thing you considered a Nuisance therefore I wish you to see that the few thing I speak of in my Letter to my Wife are shipped to the Care of Mr Hill I calculate that I shall have at the Least when I arrive in Philada [Philadelphia] full 200\$ but I intend to make every effort to get a Situation in some of the Towns between [word crossed out] N [New] Orleans and there Letters addressed to me in future Must be Directed to the Care of Coln [Colonel] Wynkook 1s Regiment PA Volunteers and Marked for the Army in Mexico the men who I Expected would carry my wifes [wife's] Letter could not proceed on account of a Body of Mexicans Lancers some 2 or 300 hundred in number occupying the Road between here and Jalapa [Xalapa] they have been Routed and a train Returns to Morrow or Next Day with a Strong guard and this with my Wifes [Wife's] Letter will go Direct to Vera Cruz [page break]

I had indulged in the hope that I would [word crossed out] see the City of Mexico but that hope has fled and Although I have seen much that interested me and afforded me great Pleasure still Much Remains



of interest which I should like to see but I feel not that same energy that I did on our First Landing the Diarrhea Weakens both Mind and Body

What a glorious place this would to have a Lot of Furniture in fact every thing that is useful or even Ornamental at the Present time all sorts of goods Command any Price. for Such is the scarcity of every thing desireable [desirable] this is easily accounted for the country has Received Little or Nothing from foreign Nations for upwards of two Years but I will Guarentee [Guarantee] that the Yankees will take advantage of the Present Low Rate of Duties and the Scarcity of goods to Run in any quantity of them [word crossed out] A man who could have Landed a half Million of Dollars Worth the of the Proper Kind of goods the Day after we had possession of Vera Cruz after paying all expenses would have Doubled his money easily in two Months for No one thinks that 3 times as much as you pay in Philada [Philadelphia] [word crossed out] Dear for an Article here it is when they come to 5 & 6 times the Price that they growl the Suger [Sugar] which has been Dealt to the Men is of Mexican manufacture it is called Bolousey it is outrageous worse than Molasses to Sweeten tea or Coffee I had procured a Little tea and I went into Perota [Perote] to purchase a pound of decent Suger [Sugar] and I had to give a quarter of a Dollar for a Pound which would have cost about 8 cts [cents] in Philad [Philadelphia] to their own country men the price would be about one half what they charge us I consider the Mexicans about the Meanest Race of People on the face of the earth they will Bow in the most cringing Manner to the one he would Stab the Next Minute Stupidly ignorent [ignorant] for abundant [abundant] is the opportunities they have to imitate at Least if not invent the necessaries which they Require but their Wheels are Solid Blocks and the Articles of [word crossed out] Husbandry Require four times the Power to Draw than that any thing Decent would [word crossed out] a quaint sight is it indeed to See one of them Ploughing quite Primitive is their appearance two or three oxen pull the Plough and the Mexican with his Characteristic Costume the Hat of Which has a Rim over twelve inches in Breadth Segar [Cigar] in his Mouth and pole in his hand some 15 foot in Length with a sharp nail in the end to goad the oxen thus he goes taking More Days to perform his Work than a Yankee would Require hours

on My Journey here I met a carriage the Property of a Wealthy man the sight of which would have created great astonishment in Philada [Philadelphia] the Body of it once has been Genteel and evidently seen better Day if you could procure the Body of the old Hack Jimmy Hackerty Drove some eight Years Ago in philada [Philadelphia] and hold it now to the Sight it would scarcely Present More Venerable appearance and this piece of antiquity was Dumped on A carriage that would have disgraced a jersey coal wagon and this to hauled by 8 fine Mustangs four abreast a man could could have made a comfortable fortune exhibiting it in the States

1805.025.19

25 this Morning I was awakened by my Messmate calling me and telling me that my Boss as he calls the Quarter Master Capt [Captain] O Hara wanted but Little time Does it Require to Dress Here for all you have to do is was [wash] your face and comb your Beard and Hair (I have Not put a Raroz [Razor] to my face for near three Months) this done I was hastening out when who should enter accompanied by the Quarter Master but the Redoubtable Capt [Captain] Walker I was told that I must find quarters for his Men some 300 in Number and thiry [thirty] Horses and a Splendid Body of Men and Horses they are they take their Abode permantly [permanently] with us and it makes me feel confident that the Mexicans will not prowle about here much in future by Walkers own account he has a heavy Debt of Veangeance [Vengeance] to pay for in this Castle he was prisoner with others of the Mier expedition here it was that he with his comrades Drew Beans for Life or Death for the Prisoners were Decimated and every 10<sup>th</sup> man Shot when Sant [Santa] Anna attacked Parades who was fortified in this castle the flag staff was Shot away and the Mexicans Made Walker Replace it this he Did and in Replacing it he Dropped a 10 cent piece in the [word crossed out] hole that it came out of and swore that if he Lived Long enough he would be Back and Recover it Back he certainly is but as to Recovering the Piece of Money that is Doubtful I have he heard no account of his Doing so to Day but I have been so busy attending to My Duties that I have no time I can only say of his appearance that he is a small Light Made figure Light complexion Sandy Hair with good Regular features and nothing ["Re"; paper missing] he makes but few Remarks but I Notice that when he speaks to his men [paper missing] prompt quiet obedience follows the order although [although] a jollier sett [set] of fellows would be hard to find when off duty

We have Now a fine turn out at the Castle 7 companies of the first Regt [Regiment] Pa Volunteers one company Regular Infantry one company Artillery and Walkers mounted Rifleman these alltogether [altogether] Will make a force of something less than goo good effective Men quite sufficient to Man the Batteries and Keep off 20,000 Mexicans [word crossed out] or on the plain flog 5000 of them and when all the [word crossed out] Wagons are unloaded and the Provisions Stowed in the castle we shall have enough to Last over 6 Months

I forgot to Mention that the old General Left us this Morning on his way to Puebla and from then is to Mexico Accompanied by part of the New Requisition some 14 companies and a Heavy Train of Artillery and Ordinance Stores Worth and Quitman [Equipment?] are Ahead of him Twiggs with Mexico their Destination where probably Taylor will Join him and in the Halls of the Montzumas [Montezuma] Negotiations will be entered into for Piece [Peace] and when they [word crossed out] Will Settled the Lord only Knows

But I must [word crossed out] Close the Return train Starts early to morrow or I would not Sit up after Revelli [Reveille] to write this which will be my Last home if I do not Receive some from there I can see no excuse for you and the Rest of the family not Writing oftener Letters you must Know for you have ["abu"; paper missing] opportunity some to me Free of Postage if Marked for the Army in ["Mex"; paper missing] the paymaster has Arrived And I am Fearful that it will be of No benefit to Me for the Present as capt [captain] Morehead has the Descriptive Roll at Jalapa [Xalapa] where he is quartered with his company and we will Receive but 2 months pay therefore I will Not be paid on the Non Commissioned

Staff for I did Not Receive My promotion until Last Month (April) Thomas Received a Letter Dated April 7<sup>th</sup> in which I mentioned that I had Received the Appointment of Assistant quarter Master in the place of Hairland [Haviland] (Son of the Architect) on the 22d I was fully confirmed and my Advance of pay commenced I receive now 17 instead of 7\$ per Month and after the 17<sup>th</sup> of Next Month (June) we shall Receive 3 1/2 extra for clothing 42\$ being Allowed per Year for Clothing 21 of Which we Receive at when mustered into service My only hope is that if I do Not Receive my pay now that the Colonel will Advance it to me for I am satisfied that proper Provision will benefit me more than all the [word crossed out] Doctors in creation So Farewell Give my Love to the Whole family and I will endeavour [endeavor] to procure you the Tip end of old Taylors Nose and Numbers of Mexican Curiosities that Identical 10ct [cent] piece of Capt [Captain] Walkers to Help pay for this Letter Numbers of Lead and Copper Balls which the Mexicans threw at us at Sara gorda [Cerro Gordo] which you can sell to Messrs Forsyth and apply to the same praise worthy purpose and also a commission for Yourself of Lieutenant [Lieutenant] General in in The place of T.H.Benton whom it did not suit and if you prefer it and I Know you are fond of a Sedentary Life we will cover your Posteriors with [word crossed out] Feathers and appoint you Mother of eggs for Sant [Santa] Annas Fighting chickens

Yours J Birch

2.M.S.1st Pa Vol [Volunteers]

[page break]

George R. Birch  
Of Messrs Forsyth & Brothers  
Plumbers 7<sup>th</sup> & Carpenter  
Philada Pa

1805.025.20

Castle of Perote, Mexico  
September 24, 1847

My Dear Madam,

It is with the liveliest feel-ings [feelings] of regret, that I announce to you the Melancholy tidings of the death of your hus-band [husband], Mr. James Birch. He died at this Castle last night, of, as I am informed by Surgeon Reynolds, Chronic Disease of his brain and digestive organs. To alleviate the pangs of this mournful an-nouncement [announcement], I take great pleasure in informing you, that throughout his whole sickness, he re-ceived [received] every comfort that it was in the power of his brother soldiers to bestow upon him, and not only by them, but every attention was bestowed upon him, by our inestimable Surgeon John G. Reynolds of Penn a. He was buried this afternoon by a detach-ment [detachment] of 1<sup>st</sup> Reg. Pa. Vols, and his funeral was an evidence of the respect in which he was held by all, being attended by almost every officer in the Garrison. [page break]

On account of his health, he resigned his Situation as Quarter Master's Sergeant on the 19<sup>th</sup> of July last – Since which time there has been no train between this place and Vera Cruz, or no means of reaching that place with safe-ty [safety].

He placed in my possession, a few days Since, your miniature and letters, which I will transmit by first safe opportunity.

His papers in relation to his pay &c [etc.], have been placed in the hands of Dr. Reynolds, who will advise you as well as the Government, of the State of his public affairs.

Trusting that he who tempers the mind to the shorn lamb, may smile mercifully upon you in this your hour of affliction,

I have the honor,

To be, Madam,

Very Sincerely Your friend

Isaac R. Diller

Capt. Ass't Commissary of subs. [subsistence]

1<sup>st</sup> Reg. Pa. Vols.

U.S.A

Mrs. James Birch

Phila

[page break]

Castle of Perote, Mexico.

Sept 24, 1847

Mrs. James Birch,  
Care of Gen. Adam Diller  
Philadelphia Penn a

28

1805.025.21

Castle of Perote  
Sept [September] 28, 1847

Mrs. James Birch.

Dear Madam

I grieve to be the bearer of evil news to you. I have lost an excellent soldier and a warm friend and you have been bereaved of a husband. He died in the castle in the evening of Sept 23 after a long and troublesome but not very suffering illness. The last mark of respect which his officers could render him was paid at his grave towards which we all followed him with sorrowful hearts - He was a hair good man and had performed his duty so faithfully and well that I promoted him to the highest non commissioned officer vacant (Quarter Master Sergeant).

Permit me Madam to give my sorrow to the deeper and stronger grief of a bereaved wife, and command my services at all times as your dead husband's truest and best friend

Francis M Wynkoop  
Col 1<sup>st</sup> Penna Regt [Regiment]

1805.025.22

#684

Department of the Interior

Widow's Claim.

I certify that Amanda Birch widow of James Birch, who was a quarter master's Sergeant, 1st. regt, Pa Vols; in the service of the United States, is entitled under the provisions of the act of Congress approved June 3, 1858 to receive pay at the rate of eight dollars and fifty cents per month, to commence on the twenty-fourth day of September, 1857, and to continue, during life, unless she shall again marry, in which case the pension is not payable after the date of such marriage.

Given at the Department of the Interior,  
this first day of  
December, one thousand eight  
hundred and fifty-eight.

[Signature of J. Thompson]  
Secretary of the Interior  
Undersigned  
[Signature of ?]  
Commissioner of Pensions

[diagonal writing]  
Amount due on this Certificate from 24. Sept., 1857, to 30 Sept., 1858, inclusive, per Pension Office  
Calculation \$96.33 1/3

[page break]

Amanda Birch

Payment to be made  
at Philadelphia  
By J.E Devill  
Agent for paying pensioner  
In the Agency of  
Pennsylvania.

Recorded in the Pension  
Office,  
In Book A Vol.1,  
Page 98, by  
Gen. D. C. Heibbs, Clerk.

1805.025.23

Caption: "how are you louse"

1805.025.24

Caption: "played out – after a long march"

1805.025.25

Caption: Union Soldier [~~s~~] Carries out Confede [Confederate] personal Propy [property] tax law

Confederate citizen, to the left: "well, that was the only meat I had for the winter, and its [it's] a damd [damned] shame to take it"

Union soldier, to the right: "I cant [can't] see it – Ive [I've] only taken Confede [Confederate] tax – (half what you raised)

1805.025.26

Caption: "our troops often converse with the Rebs,"

Soldier, to the left: "you're tired of the war, are you I'd think you were!"

Soldier, second from right: "well tom what do you think of re-Enlisting"

Soldier, to the right: "I'l [I'll] re,enlist if Uncle Sam will furnish the Smoking"

1805.025.27

No caption.

1805.025.28

Caption: "Illustration of My last nights dream after returning from Genl [General] Meades Headquarters  
Slightually Mixed"

One figure: "Next President"

1805.025.29

No caption.

Carlton Birch Collection  
Catalog Number: 1805.025

1805.025.30

No caption.



1805.025.31

Camp Barnes January 17<sup>th</sup> 1864

Dear Uncle George

Yours of the 12<sup>th</sup> inst came to hand last night, and the fact is I have not had a chance to write sooner We have been again on Picket and then I was detailed as Recorder for Field Court Martial and have been kept busy Even at night, I received two Batches of Newspapers Each one Containing a file ("Dont [Don't] Send any More") they are just the ones and I want to know what is the damage? \$-I have now but a few moments to spare (Sunday) as we have Inspection Shortly and another tomorrow, (Brigade) I have just recd [received] another package with "Punch" Almanac 1864 & Yankee Notion and Declaration of Independence – Many thanks,

We had an unfortunate affair happen lately one of our Members (C<sup>o</sup>. D) Deserted, and being detected was returned to the Regt [Regiment] under guard – He had on a suite [suit] of Citizens Clothing, which was solid Evidence of his intention, he was Sentenced to be Shot on the 29<sup>th</sup> inst, and was as I last saw him in his little prison tent a perfect fac simile [facsimile] of the plate above, He did not like to be Shot to death So he Escaped during the foggy [foggy] night of the 15<sup>th</sup> inst and although Many Shots were fired after him got Clean off, I was sent to alarm the 118<sup>th</sup> Pen Vols [Pennsylvania Volunteers] Guard but I found them already Allarmed [Alarmed], having left their Guns and skedadled [skedaddled] from their Guard House – it was some time before I [page break] Could find the Sergt [Sergeant] of the Guard, I am glad I was not on Guard that night – In regard to the Scolding – My Chatham St. Jew, did forward the Watch but he was a long time about it – I have it all OK, So no more Scolding – My ["nam" crossed out] name is in for a furlough next Christmass [Christmas] when I Expect to have a glorious time, tell Rosey to look for a letter next Summer from me, as I cant [can't] get a chance to write sooner – judgeing [judging] from present prospects – I hope Sickness is a Stranger in your family by this time, the Contents of the Box are hardly touched yet, as I have been living at Brigade Hd Qrs [Head Quarters] Most of the time,

Give my love to Evry [Every] body + Rosey Pop, Mother, +c [etc.] the reason I sent Roseys letter to your Care was that she mentioned visiting you in a day or two, which would have been about the day that letter arrived in Phila [Philadelphia] My regards to Mr Struthers + Capt [Captain] Wriggley More anon

I forgot to Say I am well – the Rebs [Rebels] attacked us twice lately but got such a warm reception that they were scared off – (they were Gorilla [Guerrilla])

Write Soon,

Yours Carle

1805.025.32

Head Qrs [Quarters] 1<sup>st</sup> Michigan Detache [Detachment]  
Camp Barnes Va March 3<sup>rd</sup> 1864

Uncle George

Having Several Moments of leasure [leisure] I have made a hasty Sketch of my present quarters, which you can shade to Suit yourself as I have not the time now to spare; the mail leaves here in fifteen or twenty minutes So you must not Expect a long letter; besides, I have already written you two previously So I am short of Subjects to write on, Our Orders to March were only Cautionary, and we remain Still in the Old Camp, which I wish to inhabit as long as possible, I wrote to Pop last night which I presume he will have received by the time this reaches you; it Contained a Copy of the letter My Captain gave me before he left me here, how do you like it? I am very glad to hear that Rosey Enjoys herself So much, and am indebted to you all for the kindness shown [page break] to her during my long absence, but I am afraid you have all been greatly disapointed [disappointed] at my non arrival in Philadelphia before this time, but the fact is, that one Evening, about three days before the Regiment left here, I was alone in my tent Codgitating [Cogitating] over the prospects for the future, and I imagined if I was to Stay here, and prosecute a Vigorous attack with testimonials of Soldierly conduct, upon Genl [General] Meade during the absence of the Regiment and its Officers, that with the flank movement of promises to his Sister, and my Battery of letters opening upon his front, that the Old General might possibly come to Some terms, for my own personal advantage, thereby giveing [giving] me the power to fulfill my promise made some time ago, of coming home with the straps on, What do you think of my Logic? My health is Scrumptious and I have not been attacked by anything in the Shape of Malady lately Excepting a fearfull [fearful] appetite (Caused probably by the large amount of Mental Exercise) which will require a Commish [Commission] to Satisfy if it keeps on,

However I was for a long time without Eating much of anything So lately I have made up for it hugely – Do you think I have any Show for my White-ally? Be candid and let me know by return of Mail what the General said, when he was in Philadelphia,

A little Snow fell last night, but this morning the Sun is out clear and beautifull [beautiful], Our camp wears quite a lively appearance with the Snow distributed in blotches throughout the Streets Officers Orderlies (Svts) [Servants] are galloping about [page break] probably with some fresh orders to march (hope not) but the weather has been so bad lately that it may be they are glad to get out this fine day.

I have no more Rellicts [Relics] to send you at present but Expect to have Some photographs before long. Our Colonel and Major have a negative here in charge of the Photographer and probably I can get him to sell me a couple of Pictures of them I will call on him this afternoon I can also buy some of the Group pictures at the Same time (My fat picture) which you were so much pleased with. although I did not have an Egg in my mouth at the time it was taken, That man (Photographer) is coining money here, he charges \$4. for a Photograph single one, \$5. for four pictures and after that 50 cts [cents] Each, although he took 12 pictures of the Group for \$10. with the priviledge [privilege] of selling any quantity after our 12 were struck off, as all the Regts. [Regiments] in the Brigade wanted groups for their albums, of which there are quantities in Evry [Every] Regt, he now charges 50 cts [cents] each for the Groups,

and they are Selling as fast as he prints them, I was pleased to hear that all the folks were well and hope they may always continue So; how is Mrs. Struthers Mr Struthers, Harry Wriggley, Aunt Eliza and Some others you forgot in your last letter, please hand my best respects around, and dont [don't] be stingey [stingy] with them, I shall anxiously look for your letter also one from Pop, Dont [Don't] hurry yourself but if you have time I would like to hear by return of Mail.

The Mail is now about ready to go out So I must conclude by sending my [page break] love and best respects to My Wife & yours + family Also to Pop Mother Sisters + Brothers, Grandma, and all Relatives + friends, Martin is in Washington yet I received a letter from him a few days ago – he's all right Side up, and trying to Save money-

Excuse hast of

Your Aff Neffyou [Affectionate Nephew]

Carle

1805.025.33

Hd Qrs [Head Quarters] 1<sup>st</sup>, Michigan, Detach [Detachment]

Camp Barnes Va.

March 20<sup>th</sup>/64

Sketch Caption: Nothing Charged Extra for Chickens

A good living and cheap

Uncle George

Here I be, again Sketching a bust that my Bunky [Bunkie] and I have just been on – (Chicken,) Eggs, Herring and Bread + Butter with Dried Apple Sauce and Condensed Milk, it was just Old Peaches, dont [don't] you wish you was a Soldier? The above gives you a faint idea of our present quarters, China Ware, Writeing [Writing] table, and Bed in back tent.

I received your letter of the 16<sup>th</sup> after having made up my mind that the last 3 letters of mine had misscarried [miscarried], but to find out that your Neglect was the cause of no mail for the past 15 days – it was too bad in you, very well Sir (Excuse haste as I cant [can't] afford to write much after such treatment,) but I cant [can't] afford to waste paper or I would stop right here, So I will inform you that all our Officers of the Division have had such a gay old drunk for the past few days that Some of them had the tremens or Something Else and kept us up all last night and yesterday under arms, by imagining the Rebs [Rebels] were crossing the River below us, but after a Reconnoissance [Reconnaissance] on my own Account – I am fully prepared to Say that not a Reb [Rebel] is [page break] in the neighborhood, (that, I am positive of)

I Suppose my furlough will be overlooked as none at Headquarters appear to be on duty. John Whisky had better look out, he is causeing [causing] a deal of trouble in this Brigade,

Lieut [Lieutenant] Harry McMannus of 118<sup>th</sup> P. Vs. [Pennsylvania Volunteers] has just received his furlough and will leave for Philadelphia to day (10 days leave) he is a very particular friend of (Dick) Richd [Richard] M Batturs; he has also promised to call at the Store, his furlough was sent in two days before Mine, So there is yet a chance of mine being returned all right although I am afraid it is doubtfull [doubtful] as the marching fever has taken quite a hold on our General (Brigadier) I dont [don't] See that we are of much good here, as from all I read and hear, the Republican + Democratic Union Men are doing their best to create a fight at home,

My Commish [Commission] Business I will leave until I get a furlough or disappointment [disappointment]. Your plan was good but I think Col [Colonel] Givins the Surest, I feel greatly pleased at your good opinion of Rosey, She has a good Example in Aunt Elizabeth and I am pleased that She is So industrious,

Give my love to Rose, Your Wife and family, Pop, Mother and in fact all the folks in General, I am Sorry to hear of the sickness of Capt [Captain] Veacock hope its [it's] nothing Serious – My regards to all his folks – You can allow this letter to lay over as if I dont [don't] get my furlough tomorrow I will give it up

Your old Neff Carle

1805.025.34

Near Petersburg Va July 16<sup>th</sup> 1864.

Dear Uncle

We have just completed a Bomb proof and being Safely Seated out of danger I can write a letter or two, in peace, I dont [don't] know what to write about but as we dont [don't] get our mail very regular now on account of the Rebs [Rebels] being near Washington, I must keep up our line of Communication; (I hope you wont [won't] let it get cut off,) I am well and so is C<sup>o</sup> D generally [a second "n" crossed out in generally] we have been hard at work, and yesterday blew up a Caisson of Amunition [Ammunition] in the fort opposite us killing 13 Rebs [Rebels], all with one Shot from one of our "Mortars", We have a great number of Mortars along our line, (and Rebs [Rebels] also) we were in danger of being killed both night and day before we built our Bomb Proof an illustration of which you will find attached, although I have not the Patience to draw anything to day, We had Brigade Inspection this Morning under Cover of our Works and it passed off without any one being wounded by the numerous Shells that fell near us; We can get out of their way now, but we will not be able to sleep in our Bomb Proof, Each Company [page break] dug its own hole and built its own Proof; the back of the Proof is 12 feet from the inside of our breastwork and Seven feet from our foot platform, We have two very large forts nearly Completed, one on the right and one on our left, and our underground operations are progressing (to blow up the Rebel Forts) We have our forts so masked with Brush + timber that the Johnnies dont [don't] Suspect what a dish we will soon have prepared to Cook their goose on, Several Reb [Rebel] Pickets Came over last night, and some come Evry [Every] night lately, they say a whole Brigade will come over to night at our Signal (of 3 Rockets) and we will be under arms probably until 12 O'clock (midnight) to receive them, I reckon you Citizens are releived [relieved] from your Scare by the time you receive this letter, as the 6<sup>th</sup> Corps from our Army has about got Even with the Rebs [Rebels] that undertook to visit Gettysburg, at least we hear they are driving the Rebs [Rebels] out of Maryland into Virginia again, and we hope they will get here in time to be blown up, with these in our front, wont they look fine going up [illustration of three stick figures] – I hardly think I should like to be there then, I have no ambition to leave terra firma in that way – [page break] although we all Expect to rise in the World, and the Johnnies will rise sooner than they dream of-1-2-3- gone,

I have just had dinner, Consisting of the following articles Hard tacks, Beef boiled, Beef Soup thickened with hard tack, and Hard tack soaked; there are four of us messing together at present, 3 Sergts [Sergeants] & 1 Corpl [Corporal] and we ate our four rations of Potatoes for two days "in one meal" along with one days ration of Pork for four Men, besides Hard tack and Each having a pint of Coffee; "but the fact is, we dont [don't] get our rations" we only get half rations of Everything Excepting Hard tack and Fresh Beef,; [sketch of a hand pointing] "And onions + Pickles, also molasses, Rice & Potatoes are all sold to Officers until culled down to rotten or damaged lots, and they are given out as far as they will go! Sometimes we get a Potatoe [Potato] Each man, Sometimes two, but never more than three, in three days rations, Pickles were rarely ever get, once or twice a year, unless the Sanitary Com [Commission] furnishes some as it did about 3 days ago, the Commissaries of the Regiments cant [can't] help us, as they do not receive Such things among the rations the Brigade Commissary deals out to them, and they (it seems) dare not complain, So we are half the time with nothing but Hard tack, I

would like to know who is really the head man in this Swindle, why Even the hard tack [page break] they rob us of: the Boxes are supposed to weigh 60 lbs when they have Bread in them but they dont [don't]and each Box is supposed to have 50 lbs of Bread inside, but it dont [don't] – the Boxes weigh about 18 lbs and the Bread about 40 lbs – who is to blame? And has Uncle Sam got so poor that he has to send us Such Miserable Pork as we now get, “there aint [ain't] fat Enough on it to fry it in, and we will have to make special requisitions for Cod fish to fry it with there is more grease in codfish than in the last Pork we had, Just look at at the likeness of our Orderly Sergeant, who has depended Entirely on Uncle Sam for his food, I am afraid he will blow away some day – You might speak to Mr Sanitary Commn [Commission] if you see him, and say also that we have not been paid yet, and Tobacco is most outrageously scarce [scarce] here, Write Soon, Give My love to My Rib, tell her I will come home the first Strong wind that blows, provided we are not better fed – My love also to Aunt Lizzie & Laura and the boys, Aunt Eliza + Annie, Captain and all Relatives + friends My Love to Mother and Father + family if you See them Soon, I will write to Pop tomorrow unless Something turns up –

Your hungry Neff Carle.

1805.025.35

Camp near Petersburg Va July 20<sup>th</sup> 1864

(Sketch of a handshake, with the caption: "How are you?")

Dear Uncle,

Your welcome letter with Illustration of "double quick to Supper" and Encloseing [Enclosing] Power of Attorney; dated July 15<sup>th</sup> was received at about dark last night; The reason out Mail comes after dark is, that it would be dangerous to the Mail Carrier, to approach our advanced position in daylight, we are So close to the Rebel Works, I have also received one Package of Newspapers Containing two Copies of the Public Ledger and one Press, 3 Stampd [Stamped] Envelopes and two pieces of Tobacco, all, most thankfully received, Your Letter is particularly noted on Some particular Subjects; in regard to Edwards I have notified his Orderly Sergt [Sergeant] (Charles Worthington) Several times to send [crossed out letter] his Descriptive List to him, but he has not the power, If Tom Edwards asks his "Surgeon in Charge to Send for it" he will have it forwarded, but not in any other way = A recent order from the War Dept [Department] forbids all Commanding officers from Sending Desc [Descriptive] Lists to other than Surgeon in Charge at Hospl [Hospital] where the Sick Man is Enrolled, and then it is Sent through the Supt [Superintendent] or Milly Comdr [Military Commander] of Reserve Corps, for the District; - You must tell Rosey that I came very near loseing [losing] my precious head by trying to get that photograph from Sergt [Sergeant] Paschall of 118 P.V's [Pennsylvania Volunteers] – I went over to see him yesterday at noon (they lay in the rear of us) and fearing no danger at that distance from the front, we were chatting around a Small fire, at which he had been Cooking Some Pork, when a Shell came Wizz zis zing a-long in a direct line for the trio of us (one being a private of my Co.) (No 2 is Paschall + No 3 the undersigned in Illustration) and within a few feet of us it Struck a very Small burnt Stump of a tree [page break] which turned (Most Miraculously or Providentially) the Shell upwards in almost an Angle of 45 degrees missing my head by About Six inches (from accounts of about half a dozen Eye Witnesses) and Explodeing [Exploding] about 9 feet above us, without injureing [Injuring] any of us, Merely Stunning Me for a Moment; it was a small shell, and came from a long range Parrot I think or it could not have reached that distance, it made a great fuss with the stump, Screaming very loud, I thought the Stump had it tight, at first as it seemed to me to halt there,

I am astonished to hear that Evrything [Everything] is so high in Philadelphia, and Some of the prices are Enormous, a tentmate of mine has a list of Provisions from a friend of his in Your City, And as Rosey will get allowance for her Support she must Contribute it towards keeping house, I had no idea of the Cost of living in Philada [Philadelphia] until to day and I do not get my information from your letters, or I would be blind yet, but I have referred to the Daily Papers and the Correspondence above Mentioned, I will get the Power of Atty [Attorney] Executed to day and Mail a Business letter with this one, I presume Rosey makes the Power of Atty [Attorney] over to justice Eugene Fecht at Detroit Michn [Michigan] as he will have to Collect it for her, and she might have it Sent to Your Care, a letter to which Effect I will write, I was quite angry last night at the Mail Carrier, as he only brought me four letters and one Package of Newspapers, One was from Rosey, One from Edwards, ditto Ned, ditto Yours, wasent [wasn't] I lucky I turned them over and over and knew who they were from immediately but I had quite a consul-tation mentally as to which letter I should open first finally I opened the biggest [biggest] (Pig-ish

like) but you see, I thought that the letter from Rosey could afford to wait, (women should be considered last) and as that Rib of mine dont [don't] weigh much, I passed it, Edwards' was thin and felt as if it was a short letter, So I read yours first and [page break] then Neds, then Edwards', and last Roseys, and I'll give her fits for that letter, see if I don't, [sketch of a hand holding a rod] a licking would not be severe Enough, but thats [that's] my affair, although you may box her Ears, five or Six times just to remind her of what I will give her when I come home next month, (She talked about a visit to Detroit) The weather here is very hot yet, but we had quite a shower of Rain Yesterday and last night, which Old Sol, has dried up already, The Second Corps has been on fatigue duty diging [digging] ["an" crossed out] a covered road for Amunition [Ammunition] Trains along the rear of our line, which looks to me as if we would have that hot work in this Neighborhood before many days, Our Forts are progressing Completion rapidly and I understand our Underground Communications with the Rebel Forts are Completed but I do not know for a Certainty, General Warren and Genl [General] Griffin Visited our front line to day and they Say our line must be advanced Even if we only gain Six Feet Each night on the Johnnies, but I cannot see the use of Such labor on the line we now hold if we are to Evacuate the works So Soon; perhaps the Generals think we live too high on half rations, (which is all we get) and if we work, we will need three times as much to Eat as we now, get, Somebody is makeing [making] Money on our Rations, the Men had nothing to Eat to day, until 3.P.M, when Rations were issued for 3 days My Rations are 3 Spoons full of Sugar, ditto coffee (ground), four white Potatoes size of a hens Egg each, a chunk of Cabbage the size of my fist, and 30 Hard tacks, about 1 1/2 lbs Pork 1/2 bone, and a Spoonfull [Spoonful] of Black Pepper, all told; which will Exactly last me 1 1/2 days or Four Meals, however I borrowed \$1.00 from one of our Boys who has just been paid Commutation Money, (on a Veteran furlough) and have purchased four lbs of Flour, some Dried Apples And Ham, which will Carry us through for Some time, with the Rations we receive here, And moreover we will be [page break] paid off this week, [Sketch of a soldier flat on the ground with the caption, "Safest position when Shells are about."] We have good times down here at meals the flies taste evrything [everything] for us to see if its [it's] good for our health and if they dont [don't] die, we Eat, provided they will let us, Dont [Don't] you think you could Enjoy a dinner with a Chum under the Circumstances here illustrated, but the flies miss it sometimes, like this Morning they hop'ed [hopped] into a hot fry pan just as I was pouring Some Scalding flour gravy into it,

The Revd [Reverend] Dr. Seems quite Elated at your promise to obtain him the desired Catalogue, dont [don't] forget the name of the College and the Street it is located on, provided you can get the Catalogue; he is well, So is Old Company "F" and sends respects,

The Colonel and I, have had another talk concerning that Enlistment of Mine, and he seem at a loss to know how to rectify the neglect of my Captain, unless he holds me for a 3 years term, and I dont [don't] want to stay; I am looseing [losing] precious time here, I have done as much as any man, for my Country and now that Negroes are in the Field let them Fight it out, I have been roughing it for over two years and a half, and been in twelve good Battles besides Considerable Skirmishing, have two good Sized Scars and two Small ones, have never lost one day in the Service, Never received a days furlough (more or less) Never received punishment of any kind, or been con-fined in any Guard house, but I feel that I am not in my proper Ellement [Element] here among Private Soldiers, and in the Regiment, Hello! I have grumbled the whole page full of passing thoughts, however I wish you to know how I feel about it, I must now close by sending my love to Rosey – Your Wife, + family Laura in Particular, and to Pop,



Mother, Sisters + brothers Aunts + Uncles +c, +c, [etc., etc.] Give My respects to Mr Struthers, and to Edwards, tell him to ask the Surgeon to send for his Descriptive List. I send by this Mail the Power of Atty [Attorney] + Certe [Certificate]

Yours Carle

Write Soon – dont [don't] buy any more papers – can get them here