

Quarter Master Department 154 Regt N.Y.V.
Lookout Valley Tennessee Nov. 10th 1863

Dear Ann,

Very much to my joy I Received a letter from you last night. Dated the 26th of October.= It made me glad indeed to learn that you were all pretty well Thanks Oh; thanks to Our Heavenly Father for his great mercy to us unworthy creatures as we are. I am also very glad that the Wheat turned out so well. I think that you will not suffer for the want of food for an other year= O how much we are indebted to a Kind Providence that it is as well with us as it is

I would like very much indeed to have some Dack_s Oats for my poor horse, in as much that he and the rest of Our Horses & Mules are suffering very much for the want of something to eat, for the reason that it cannot be brought here fast enough. food must be brought to the Soldiers if all the horses starve. I have before now paid 5 cts. for a Buiscut and gave the horse half of it. When we came over the mountains he would follow me like a dog. it was really amusing to see how the horses would climb up the Rocks and down the steep gulleys Every time we would stop he would take hold of my coat Buttons or try to get his nose into my Pocket, as much as to say= Please give me a Hardtack Poor Horse he is now hungry night and day and it makes me feel bad because I have nothing to give him. But we may have enough in a few days Yesterday the Rebels from the lookout mountain were very lively all day, and threw many shells at our wagon trains as they went up the Valley but no harm was done although some had very narrow escapes. But to day we do not hear much from them. they only blazed away for a few hours this morning. yesterday was a cold blustering day, but last night the wind went down and to day is much more pleasant=

I will bid you good by now and will try to finish this tomorrow= My health continues very good

Nov. 12th 1863.

Dear Ann

Yesterday passed away without my finishing this letter not because I had no time to do so but from the fact that we were to get some pay to day I thought I would wait and Send the check in it but this morning I am told that we shall not be paid to day So this will go without the check but you will get it in the next It will be only \$20. but it will do some good I shall get 2 months pay which will be \$34. you can have the \$20. & I will Keep the \$14 for no one knows when we shall be paid again.= The Butter & cheese you sent me was very good indeed The Butter was very much praised by all that tasted it.

You know when at home I was very fond of Butter but here I do not care any thing for it unless it is some of the very best, then I can not eat but little of it, for it makes me have the sick headache= As for cheese I can eat that all day if I only had it.= I return my sincere thanks to David Davis & Mary for sending me that piece= We were just starting from Alexandria when the box came I opened it took out the Tea, Tobbacco shirts & some of the dried fruit and put them in the Carpet Bag and that was the last I saw of it. I think the

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(November 12, 1863 continued)

Apples & Pears would be very good if kept untill ripe It made me glad to see those Pears for it was something more than I ever expected to see when I set out the little trees

It makes me feel very happy to think that Tommy & Frances Ann are so well and nothing would give me more pleasure than to gratify Tommy's wish to see Data back= Let us trust and hope for the best and may be the time will come sooner than we expect when we can meet again

The Rebels are very noisy this morning They have been firing for the past two hours from point Lookout. they have done but little harm yet, and I hope they will not. I have no news to send to you you get more war news than I do

It is Reported that we shall move from here in a few days but I do not believe it. We cannot move very well now for we are to short of Supplys We got a little corn for the horses last night The weather is cold, but pleasant. My love to All

Very Truly Yours

Wm Charles

Quarter Master Department 154th Regt N.Y.V.
Lookout Valley Tennessee Nov. 14th 1863

Dear Ann

Last night I was made glad by the Receipt of a letter from you dated the 30th of October Stating that you were all well it always does me good to hear that, for as long as you are all well at home I can be quite contented here I am very much Surprised that Mr. Williams Refused to accept the present to \$2. which you offered to him The next time you offer him money whether it be \$2. or more or less I am quite sure that he will be very glad to take it.

I do not remember of promising to pay him \$5.= "and most likely he means five dollars a year" If I did it was before I had any thoughts of going into the army If I was at home I would have given him not only \$5. but much more you know and so does he that I have never been backward about paying the ministers I did not neither do I now think it was my duty to pay him anything as long as I am in the service and a way from home But I thought if you wanted to make him a present of \$2. or \$3. why you might do so thats all not dreaming that he would be offended at the smallness of the gift. Well he may see the day when he will be glad to take that even If he was earning his money the same way as I am he would know how to value it. I think it is a little unreasonable in him to demand or expect any thing from me under the circumstances= But I hope that you will not harbour any ill feelings toward him. if his conduct has hurt your feelings you must forgive him as to going to hear him preach of course you must act your own pleasure about that. What Brother John means about the Deed that I gave to father not being good for anything I can not comprehend The Deed is as good as the Laws of the State of New York can make it, and cannot be made any better unless the laws are made better. That is as far as I know any thing about it.

Why Does not John ask me something about it. What is the use of bothering Lewis about it. About those papers that you have. I do not know of one that will do him any good= Therefore I hope he will not worry himself to much about them.= He knows very well that a good Share of that Property really belongs to me But most likely he will do all in his power to prevent my obtaining a dollar of it. Maybe we can live without it, and that too just as comfortable and as happy as anybody All I ask is life & health. All the other comforts of life will follow, By the blessings of Our Heavenly Father.= since I have began to write these few lines the shells from lookout point have whistled most fearfully= but none of them came this way=towards us yesterday was very quiet only once or twice during the day was a canon fired. I think that we are likely to remain here for some time= But we cannot tell anything about it, for maybe that in less than 24 hours we shall be obliged to dig out. You have no doubt seen some account of the fight here when the 11th & 12th Corps first came in. I have seen the account that the New York Herald gives of it and it is very incorrect also the map of the place in that paper is all wrong We have not taken lookout mountain as reported in the papers and I do

(continued)

(November 14, 1863 continued)

not know as we want it for the Rebels can do but little harm to us from it. But as far as I am concerned I would be very glad if it was clear of Rebels

Sabbath morning Nov. 15th 1863

Dear Ann,= It is a very lovely morning= although there was a white frost last & it was quite cold Our ever preasent enemies upon point lookout have not fired but once as yet. yesterday we we were entertained most of the day with the music of their shells.=

The people here & I think the whole South are the most degraded lot of beings that can be met with any where The institution of Slavery has proved the utter ruin of the whites of the south.=

I did not used to believe all the stories told about the slave holders but now I know them to be true and the truth not half told= It is impossible to believe unless you can see with your own eyes You know I allways told you that slavery did the white man more harm than the black but I never could believe that the white people of the South had become half so much degraded as they have most of them are as ignorant as the Bruits that graze the fields not one in a hundred of them even know their A.B.C.s

Well good by Dear Friends= Please kiss the Babes for me and tell them that Dat thinks of them very offten and implore the blessing of Our Heavenly father upon them my love & good wishes to all.

I am Dear Wife Yours

Wm. Charles

That check you will not get for a week or two the pay master will send it from Louisville when he gets back there that will be safer than to send it from here It is said that we shall be paid tomorrow

(Undated fragment)

I would like to say some thing to those little Babes that I left more than a year ago, sleeping so sweetly and so innocent. When I kissed them that morning, it almost broke a fathers heart, and it was a harder struggle to turn his back upon them then any one can know untill he tries it. I would say to them in the language of an other

B. patient B. prayerful B. humble B. mild
B. wise as Solon B. meek as a child
B. studious B. thoughtful B. loveing B. kind
B. sure you make nature subservient to mind
B. cautious B. prudent B. trustful B. true
B. courteous to all men B. friendly with few
B. temperate in argument in pleasure in wine
B. careful of conduct, of money, of time
B. cheerful B. grateful B. hopeful B. firm
B. peaceful, benevolent B. willing to learn
B. courteous B. gentle B. liberal B. just
B. aspiring B. humble because thou are dust
B. penitent, circumspect, sound in the faith
B. active devoted B. faithful till death
B. honest B. holy transparent and pure
B. dependent B. Christ like and you'll be secure

Don't you think the above lot of Bees worth haveing== they are worth more, then all the honey bees in the world. will you try to make those little ones know there Value

I do not know what more to write to you, But night before last I did not sleep much, because long before bed time I found that some thief had stolen my tool chest!! And what on earth was I to. to be sure the Government would furnish me more But I had so many little things of my own in it that money could not buy in this part of the country and of course the could not be replaced no how! But next morning we saw a a way off going with the Box under his arm, and an other man carrying part of the tools in his hands. they were soon halted, and the traps taken from them. they said that they found it back a little ways, and went with me to the spot I found most of the tools. The hatchet was gone and three of the best files and some other things but I was very glad to get what I did I know it made me feel quite comfortable again. My Tool Chest is a source of great pleasure to me== Please give my love to Dack__ & Ma_g_ and best Respects and good wishes to all enquiring friends

The Rebels threw many shells at our camp yesterday & today no harm done

Yours most Truly

Wm Charles

Head Quarters 154th Regt. N.Y. Vols.
Lookout Valley Tennessee
Nov. 20th 1863

Dear Ann

Night before last I received a letter from you with the good news that you were all well, that is the best news that you can send to me about these days=

I am very glad that David Williams is home again Wm Davis was rather unlucky for if he had remained in the Hospital a few weeks longer he would also have a chance to go home. You think that it is not fair for some to have a furlough twice and others not once. I do not know any thing about that. you know that I must take things as they come and I try never to grumble or find fault= So you seem to think that Brother Joel is Drafted I would be very glad if he could come into this Regiment= Maybe that his age will exempt him

I have not much news to send to you. My health continues very good although I had quite a time with my head last night. I was over to Chattanooga the other day, it is only about 4 miles yet the river is so crooked we have to cross it twice= one of the pontoon Bridges is a poor one it is the one that was captured from the Rebels a while ago. Chattanooga is quite a place for a Slave State I was at Gen. Thomas Head Quarters, and also at the Ordnance Office. there I found a couple of Cambrians by the names of Jones & Evans. They gave me a very warm invitation to come and spend Christmas with them. But who can tell where we shall be by that time. The Rebels on Lookout Point have been very quiet yesterday and to day. Some think that they have left. A few days will tell the story. It looks to me as if a great Battle would be fought within a very short time. But I do not think we are quite ready for it yet.= But we are preparing for it as fast as possible The Rebels thought that they could drive us out from this Valley with their Canon from the Mountain= But after a trial of three weeks they have not been able to do it.= But it did seem a little dangerous, but we soon got used to and after a little did not pay much attention to the Shot & Shell that came from the mountain=

Last Sunday, I was sitting with Bill James, Lewis Jones and some of the other Boys when a villinous Shell came over us only about two rods from us, it passed much nearer to others & struck in the ground a little ways below our Camp.= It did not explode & very likely it was a Solid Shot.=

I have made some Cressents.= One for Mr. H. H. Roberts & one for Anne Edwards. I can not make them very good for somebody stole my files But I will send them as soon as I can get them marked maybe I will send them without marking them But I have not much faith that they will ever get there for I do not believe that half of my letters get to you of late.== Well, Well, here comes Marching Orders.= Tomorrow at 8. o clock But where to====No use writing any more for it may be many days before I can send this off my love to all. Good night==

Very Truly Yours

Wm Charles

P.S. Do not send me anything

Lookout Valley Tennessee
Quarter Masters Department
154th Regt. N.Y. Vol.
Nov. 27, 1863

Dear Ann,

Your letter of the 17th of this month is just received. It me very glad to know that you had received a letter from me from this place=

Lookout point does not trouble us no more it is now crowned with loyal men the mountain itself was all ways loyal and hense forth all ways will be

For it has been Babtized, or rather sprinkled with the lifes Blood of to many noble Freeman to become again the resting place of Rebels. The Rebels are in full retreat, and our Victorious army in full chase Heaven has blessed us with with a great Victory. I hope it will result to the good of all.= And hasten the time when this cruel War will be no more

Our Regiment have been Very lucky this time not a man was lost of course many had very narrow escapes Our Colnel had a Ball put through his Boot & an other took a piece of main from his horses neck

Lookout Valley Tennessee
Nov. 28 1863

I have no news to send to you this for we have learned nothing in particular from the front since yesterday noon

The Enemy is retreating as fast as he can, Burning up what he can not take with him.= Last night about midnight a violent rain storm set in & still continues= Military opperation goes on with diffi- culty.-----

We have many reasons to be thankful to the Ruler of all things for His wonderful mercy to us=

I am afraid that we are not half thankful enough=

Please give my Best Respects to all enquiring friends-----

Then you think that Tommy would know me= I am sure I would be very glad to come and give him a trial

I hope and pray that the time will soon come when we can be to- gether again

Give my love to Dack & Marge and Kiss the Babies for me

Yours Truly

W Charles

Quarter Masters Department
154th Regt. N.Y.V. Lookout Valley Tenn.
Nov. 30th 1863

Dear Ann,

I have no news to send to you to night, and will only write a few words I must say to you that it is well with me Thanks be to God for it. I hope it is the same with you all. We consider But do not know for certain that the Great Battle of Chattanooga is over. It was began one week ago today and ended I believe night before last.

Heaven has crowned our efforts with a great Victory & our loss is not near as heavy as any one would suppose= The son of Gen Breckinridge was captured he was an officer on Gen Braggs staff he and about 200 other Rebel Officers pass by here on their way to Nashville a little while ago He was pointed to me he is a small size young man and rather a pleasant looking boy= I have seen some thousand of Rebel Prisoners and most all of them seem very glad that they were taken by us. Most of them are poorly clad Many of them have no shoes I had a chance to talk with some of them that were taken on Lookout Mountain the other day they said that they had been greatly and shamefully Deceived in regard to this war, and many of them said that they would never fight with the Rebels any more and I am quite certain that they never will=

It has been very cold with us yesterday and to day the ground frose some three inches last night We have seen no snow But I believe they have a little snow even here some times=

I was up on the top of Lookout Mountain again yesterday Somehow or another it makes me feel happy to go up so high I feel when up there that I am so much nearer Home, and the air is so pure=and health giving= Our Regiment will be back here tomorrow or next day= wither we remain here or go elsewhere is of course to us unknown. It is reported that we go to Memphis=

I sent you a letter Saturday with a Cressent in it. you can give it to whom ever you like, or keep it yourself. I will send you one for Ann Edwards I can not put any names or anything on them for the boy that did it for me is gone I have got some that I will send to you to give away to whom please. I have sent to you some verses Entitle a Hive of Bs worth owning in two different letters you can give one of them to Miss Lydia Owens if you like or to any one else you like David Williams has not come back to the Regiment as yet. Do you know what has become of Dick Lewis & Ben Morgan. It is about time that they should be to their Regiment if they ever intend to come Does my Boy Tommy continue to use his Pipe if he does please let him not use anything but the very weakest kind of Tobbacco Tell him that Dat would like it very much if he would only smoke but just a little for Dat is afraid that it will make him sick some day==

Does Frances Ann talk any yet. I hope she does for I think it is time that she should begin to say some thing-----

Good night I will try to send this off tomorrow I have \$10. I want to send to you but I am afraid it would be lost has that \$20. check or army allotment come yet. What kind of a time did you have Thanksgiving Day How I would like to have heard some of the Good Prayers that was offered up that day=----

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(November 30, 1863 continued)

My health continues very good although the sick headache is a little troublesome, and you may send me a little medicine if you please. If you have any Boneset or Thoroughwort take a Bunch of it and Boil it untill the strength is all out, strain it, then Boil it down the same as you would in making sugar untill it cakes and make it into very thin cakes so that you can send a piece now and then in a letter. A little tin basin will do to boil the syrup in you may boil camomile with it if you like=

You know I have no faith in Doctors Stuff But I know that the above medicine would do me good or at least it would do no harm. Well good night to you all once more and I will finish as I began by saying that it is well with

Your unworthy Husband

Wm. Charles

Quarter Masters Department
154th Regt N.Y.V.
Lookout Valley Tennessee
Dec 6 1863

Dear Ann,

It is a most beautiful day, a day that I would like to be at Home and go to church with you. It is a long time now since I have heard a sermon or a prayer.= It seems that I would give most any thing if I could only go to a prayer meeting where men pray in earnest and with faith= I have been reading for a while this morning (My Welsh Testament was in my Sachel when it was stolen, very sorry for that) and will let you know some verses that have been of great service to me "Pervirse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth Supposing that Gain is Godliness, from such withdraw thyself."

"Put not thy trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy." "And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good."

There-for take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye maybe able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand"= I think very much of that verse

"Let your conversation be with out covetousness and be content with such things as ye have, for He hath said I will never leave thee nor forsake thee

So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper and will not fear what man shall do unto me"

"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life where unto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses"

Finally, Brethern farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort be of one mind (do good for evil) live in peace and the God of love and peace shall be with you"=

Is it not a great comfort to us poor mortals to have such a Bible as ours. It is a comfort to all men in all places and under all circumstances if they love to read it. Those soldiers that love to read their Bibles are the men that can be depended upon every where They are true on the Battlefield and always faithful on Guard. Goodby now I will try to finish this tomorrow and send it to you

Lookout Valley Tennessee
Dec 7/63
Quarter Master Department 154th Regt N.Y.V.

It is a little cooler this morning-froze quite hard last night

I have no news whatever to send to you part of our Regiment is away towards Knoxville some hundred miles or more from here It was reported here yesterday that the 11th Corps was going back to Virginia but it does not look like it to me=

We have not heard much from the out side world for some time that is we have not seen any newspapers since the Battle It is very likely that we shall move from here before a great while because it is so difficult to get any thing for the horses and mules to keep them from starving

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(December 7, 1863 continued)

If my life is spared through this war I shall know how to enjoy the comforts of home But it is not certain where that home will be whether in the town of Freedom or some other place _____. If Dac_____ wishes to finish up stairs or even make one room on the south end I will pay \$25 towards it, and will send it any day he wishes

Or if he & all of you think it best to build a wing to the house I am willing to pay \$50 fifty dollars= or he can let it be until I come and if we make our minds to stay there we shall try to make every thing as comfortable as possible

I am not very well today had the sick headache most all night It is time that a letter from you should be here

Trusting that you are all well I remain Very Truly Yours

Wm Charles

I send a couple of Crecents for Tommy He may give them to any body he likes may be he better let the Roberts girls have them (I have had no letter from them this great while) in the next letter I will send a half moon for D. Williams Boy= Maybe I will send one for William Davis Boy too Seeing that Jane Ann is so good a friend send me all the ten cents pieces you can find They are worth from 50 cts to 75 cts to me

I have a half moon with a Heart in it for Sister Susan But will not send it until she writes to me.