

April 24th 1864

An other sabbath day is all most gone This morning wrote you a few lines it was raining then but about noon it cleared up most beautifully

Was at sabbath school but I am sorry to say that there were but few there so we had prayer meeting you know two or three can have that any time. in the afternoon there was preaching

D. Williams is in the Hospital but is not much sick He does not know what they will do with him. But I do very well. He will not be sent to the Invalid Corps but will drive an ambulance team. that will be a very good place for him, and I believe will like it. that is if he can like any thing in the army

Bill Davis is in the Government Work Shop repairing & painting Wagons he gets no more pay but he likes it much better than to be in the Regiment.

It seems most impossible for me to make up my mind what is best for me to do in regard to leaving this Regiment & go to Philadelphia to see if they will give me a commission in a negro Regiment. Sometime I feel as if it was God's will that I should go and if I was shure of that of course I would go. I must do what I think my duty is or else I can not live happy you must not worry about the matter at all. Because if I go most likely I shall see no fighting this Summer & let us hope and pray that the fighting will be over before an other summer And an other thing you must remember that a commissioned officer can get out of the service much easier than a private or an uncommissioned officer-----

It is very strange that I do not get a letter from father Please give my love to him & mother. Give also my love to Dack_ & Mang_ and tell them that I am very sorry that I am not able to be with them this spring to help them I can let you have about \$100.00 next pay day

The number of our corps is 20 and our Badge instead of half moon is a star---- Just like the one in that Badge that E. M. Day brought for Tommy If I only had silver now I could sell a great many stars I made one for the Coln. yesterday from a 25 cts. piece & most every one in the Regiment would buy one of me if I only had them-----

I did expect a letter from you to day but was disapointed

Well please kiss the children for me and accept my prayers and good wishes for them and you and rest assured that I am

Yours most truly

W. Charles

Will send a Ring for B. Williams in the next letter

Lookout Valley Tennessee
Head Quarters 154 Regt N.Y.V.
May 1st 1864

Dear Ann

Day before yesterday I received a couple of letters from you dated the 15 & 17 of April. was very glad indeed to get them & learn that you were all pretty well, for I was getting some what uneasy because it had been more than a week since I had heard from you. Thomas B Rees did not make much by sending to the D_____ about Deacon Lewis did he Wonder where will his Deviltry will break out next I understand that John Davis has been disgracing himself lately by conducting himself towards a Soldiers Wife in such a manner that would make any thing but a drunkard hate himself to death It is well for him that some of the Soldiers that are here did not kech him at it they would shoot him as quick and with about the same feeling as they would a skunk

I am very sorry indeed that Mary conducts herself in a way to give father & mother so much trouble it is so strange that the child should act so foolish & wicked. May God in his infinite mercy change her heart and make a good girl of her The day will certainly come when she will see the error of her ways & I hope it will come before it will be to late

There is no news here worth sending. it has been very warm here for a few days the trees and Bushes are growing very fast there is a small oak tree near my Tent that has grown 14 inches all ready! The attention of some of the boys were called to it last night and they could hardly believe their own eyes. I was told this morning that there is a corn field not far from here nearly knee high!!

Please give my best respects & good wishes to Mrs. Jane Lewis. I know it must be sad and sorrowful enough for her. But I know that our Heavenly Father will take care of the widow & be a father to the fatherless

Give my warmest love to Dack___ & m_____ tell Dacky to hire some one to help him this summer if he can

Am very glad that Tommy & Sissy are good children Tell Tommy that Dat will come home some day to play with him & Sissy, & will bring lots of play things with him too-----

Have you bought him a little Drum yet if he wants one get it for him

It is nearly time to go to sabbath school We shall have preaching at half past 1 o'clock

It rained quite hard yesterday & to day it is a little cooler. How does Ben like that _____ ring that I sent him.

Yours most truly

W Charles

Ringgold Georgia May 16 1864

Dear Ann,

I am here in charge of the Baggage of the Regiment since last Tuesday Have not heard nothing from the Regiment since, But understand that there was very severe fighting yesterday & last night. But can't tell you any thing about how matters stand at present But I think every thing goes on well. It is reported that we have captured three or four thousand of the Rebels but they have not passed by here as yet. In an other letter I have informed you how our Regiment was cut up in a fight that occurred week ago yesterday

Last Tues morning I was with the Regiment, but in the afternoon was ordered to this place with the Baggage & here I am the only one from our Regiment & of corrs am some what lone some

Lewis Jones was at Chattanooga doing well, the last I heard from him & that was last friday.

There is no doubt in my mind but that Ambrose Arnold is dead & Sydney Moore The Cars run down as far Dalton since saturday= maybe they go further by this time the army has advanced some 12 or 15 miles beyond that place The place we are trying to get is Atlanta a place as important to the Rebels as Richmond is if not more so. I saw to day Gen. Kilpatrick go by on a bed in a Rail road car wounded in the thigh. for one I am very sorry because we need his service so much just now. The weather is not very hot except in the middle of the day----

Shall got no letters from you or any body else untill I get to the Regiment again & when that will be nobody knows

Some how or an other I do not feel like writing but thought that I must try to send you a few lines to let you know that I am alive and well

Please give my love to all the friends & be sure to do all in your power to console & comfort the Wife & family of my friend & comrade Ambrose Arnold

I shall be very lonesome affter him & Sydney, for they spent a good share of their time with me when we were in camp----

If I am alive tomorrow morning will write a few lines more so now good by

Yours most Truly

W. Charles

May 17 1864

Nothing new this morning We are gaining some ground every day It is now 10 days since the fighting began & it looks as if it would continue ten more. We shall not stop fighting untill we get Atlanta or else get driven back to Chattanooga

Ringgold Ga. May 19 1864

Dear Ann

I have nothing new to write to you to day. Have heard nothing from the Regiment, only that Hooker is some fifty miles from here Have written several letters to you from this place but am not sure that you get them

This was before the War broke out a splendid little place. With good houses, flower gardens & plenty of shade trees Some of the houses & Rose bushes are left, but most every thing has been burnt or destroyed

It is quite warm to day and the flies are so troublesome that it is most impossible to read or write I never saw them so thick in the north as they are here just now

There is no knowing when I can get a letetr from you it maybe some time & yet maybe some one will come from the Regiment in a day or two

We get but very imperfect news of what is going on in Virginia But looks as if Richmond would be taken this time----

Ringgold May 20th 1864

very many of our wounded were taken by here yesterday & last night on the Rail Road Trains. Our forces are still advancing & must be near to Atlanta by this time This is the 12th day since the fighting began. since the 8th fighting night & day more or less has been kept up. Our loss has been heavy, because the Rebels would not fight unless they had a good place The only wonder is that we are able to drive them at all Rocky face mountain & Buzzards Roost were more difficult to take then Lookout Mountain-----

Please give my love to Dacky & Mang_ & to Father & Mother and all the rest of the folks

My health is very good=

With many kisses & good wishes for yourself & little ones

I remain

Yours Very Truly

Wm Charles

Ringgold Ga. May 23d 1864

Dear Ann,

Almost every day I send a letter from here to you and it seems very odd that I get none from you. But it is no bodys fault. the mail goes to the Regiment most every day and no doubt there is a pile of letters for me but they have had no chance of sending them to me as yet. I saw four Boys from our Regiment to day on their way to Chattanooga. They were sick one of them belongs to Co. D. and lives I believe in Yorkshire. He is discharged and is going home. He said that he would be sure to go and see you when he would get Home. I told him that I would be very glad if he would do so for I knew that you would be very glad to see him. His name is D. Phillips. I hope he will come and make you a visit.

There is no doubt of the death of Ambrose Arnold and most likely S. Moore is also dead but I have not given up all hopes of him yet. He might have been taken prisoner. I do hope he is and that he may come back to us again. I have no news at all to send to you only that our front is by this within 30 miles of Atlanta. It makes me shudder almost to think of the comming week!! Before we get Atlanta a great Battle must be fought. when I say that you know why I tremble if we are successful in that Battle most likely it will be the last for two or three months but if we are not successful "What then" I dare not picture to my self "What then" But if it be God's will for us to triumph, it will be so. To Him let us direct our prayers because it is He alone that can give us the Victory

Bridgeport May 24 1864

Dear Ann

It is a lovely morning the sun is coming up over the hills & all nature with the exception of man is rejoicing-- How strange, man the noblest work of the Creator should by his wickedness bring so much trouble wretchedness and woe upon himself.-----

There is no news worth sending to you from here. Have not heard a word from the front for a couple of days--that is I do not know what has been going on the two last days. But I believe that our forces are still advancing & most likely that they will have to go very near to Atlanta before the Rebels will fight.

This side of Atlanta there is quite a River called the Chatahoochee. On the banks of that River there will be a desperate Battle fought. Unless we can outflank the enemy some way and pass by & compell him to fall back to some other place

The last I heard from the Regiment (and the 20th Corps) they were on the banks of the Coosa River about 30 or perhaps 35 miles beyond Kingston

We captured some cotton & other plunder at Reseca (or Resacca) I saw it go by here yesterday on the Cars

In looking at the map of this state you will see that there are mountains between Dalton and Atlanta the country is levell but I am thinking that a level country will give us more trouble than a hilly one because the enemy will Dam the small streams so as to overflow their Banks and make it very difficult ofr us to pass. They did Dam one stream between Dalton & Reseca so that it was impossible for us to do any thing with the canons for a long while-----

(continued)

(May 24, 1864 continued)

Tell sister Jane that I will make that crescent for her when we get settled again

Well how is Tommy & sissy & yourself and all How does the house get on Has Dacky any body to work for him. How does the grass grow, & how does the People of Freedom love one an other as well as ever

Does Mang__ make Buttons enough to suit her Did those little Pear trees blossom this season What is the prospects for fruit My love & good wishes to you all tell father & mother that I will write to them in a few days

Very Truly Yours

W Charles

Ringgold May 23d 1864

Bring My Father Back To Me

A Song for Tommy & Sissy

Bring my father back to me
When this war is done
Give us all the joys we shared
Ere it had begun
Oh bring my father back to me
Never more to stray
This is all my earnest prayer
Through the weary day
Bring him back bring him back
With his smiling healthful glee
Bring him back bring him back
Bring my father back to me

All the house is lonely now
And my voice no more
In the pleasant summer eves
Greets him at the door
Never more I hear his step
By the little Gate
While I sit in anxious tears
Knowing not his fate &c

Bring my father back to me
From the Battle strife
Thou who watches o'er the good
Should his precious life
When this war has passed away
Safe from all alarms
Bring my father back again
To my longing arms
Bring him back bring him back
With his smiling, healthful glee
Bring him back bring him back
Oh, bring my father back to me

The above verses I found in a little Book very near as I have written them.

Ringgold May 26 1864

Dear Ann,

You see by the above date that I am in this lonesome place yet. Not a word of news do I get and of course not any letters from any one. Week ago to morrow there was two men went up or rather down from here to the same Brigade that Our Regiment is in with the intention of coming back but they have not come yet. And it is said that General Hooker & General Howard have gone way off south of Atlanta, and maybe they will go to Mobile before they stop! I have not a word of news not one word, have not heard a word from the front for two days. I was told yesterday that night before last The Rebel Cavalry got into Dalton had a skirmish & took 30 of Our wagons away with them. the story may not be true. I think that if we do not move from here in a day or two I shall get a pass and go to Chattanooga to see Lewis Jones and the other sick & wounded Boys. I dreamt of seeing S. Moore last night. He looked very thin and pale & I could not get him to say any thing= Poor fellow I hope he will come back.

Do you know any of his Relatives--He was a great hand to tramp round he would not lay idle in camp Last winter he would often come up to my tent early in the morning and ask me if I did not wish to go after shells After refusing for many times at last I went with him Lewis Jones= & went down the River for 8 miles out found no shells but then we had a good walk and good pure air to breath. he himself would often go but he would always give half of the shells he found One afternoon he came to me and said that he had a good fish net made & that I must go with him that night to Brook some three miles off for said he we may ketch some fish. Night came and four of us started with about a bushel of pitch pine to make a light. after a smart walk we get to the brook and strike a light and follow down stream & down we go through Brush & briers, Marshes and Mud; but not a fish could we see at last Sid said that he was satisfied that the fish had seceded and gone further south at any rate he knew that there was not a fish in that broke worth Ketching sometime before morning we got back to camp Please give my love to D_____ & M_____ & father & mother and others that cares any thing about it, & accept the same for thy self & little ones from

Ever Yours

W Charles

Ringgold May 29th 1864

My Dear Wife,

It would please me very much to know how you all were this lovely Sabbath evening. It has been quite warm through the day but since the sun went down it is cool & pleasant.= Yesterday morning quite early I took a walk up to the Rail Road Depot, & Who do you think I met. Well no other than Mr. William Griffiths the young man that work for a while for Mrs. David J. Williams We were both somewhat surprised he did not expect to see me and of course I had no thought of seeing any body from Freedom We talked pretty fast for a while. He gave me the History of matters and things in general & some things in particular. Told all about the affair of John Davis & Mrs. W. He says that it is not settled yet. I invited him down to my tent he came & we had a good visit I gave him a very pretty silver Badge. It was a half moon with a square and compass cut between the horns he seemed to be proud of it.= Some time in the affternoon he got on a train and went towards Dalton he is going to work for the Government if he can somewhere on this Rail Raod He will write to me in a few days The Boy looks pretty well but he says that his health is not very good He had the likeness of a young "Layde" or rather lady Bless me it was one of my Sabbath School children My stars the children will be men & women before I see them again. Do you think that I shall know my own Babies when I get home I feel perfectly satisfied that they will not know me Does Sissy talk much yet Bill says that Tommy talks all while

Well it did me much good to see him it was almost as good as a letter from Home. I have not heard a word from the Regiment this week Yesterday & today there has been rumors of an other Great Battle some where near Atlanta and that the 20th Corps suffered very much and some say that our forces are in Atlanta But I donot think that we have got that place yet. we shall know in a few days My health is pretty good and I do hope that you are all well

Will write a few words in the morning so now good night----

Ringgold May 30th 1864

The morning has come bright and glorious, the sun is just up it will be warm today.= Have nothing new this morning. Please give my warmest love to Dacky & Mag & Father & Mother----tell Sister Jane that I will send her a crescent as soon as I can make one The Regiment that her husband is in came down this but I was not lucky enough to see him Give my best respects to Thomas Davis & Wife also to David Davis & family & all the rest of the good people of freedom

I ought to write to H. H. Robers folks but my Postage stamps are nearly all gone & my money has left me some time ago, so you see I must not write to many letters. it is not at all likely that I shall see the Regiment for two weeks yet, maybe not for two months----

Give my love to Susan & Mary & Jane & Jane & to Mrs. Alfred Lewis. I was very glad to hear that little Kittie had got well Remember me most kindly to Uncle Samson Owens & family.

"You never go to John Charles house" so most likely you are not on speaking terms with them. Wonder if they remember that they have a Brother in the army. Yes they do no doubt, but I guess they don't care but little where he is or what becomes of him Well I know one thing that I have never given them any reasons to be unfriendly. But I suppose that they think that I have Hoping that you are all well and praying that the blessings of our Heavenly father will rest upon you all I remain Yours Most Truly

W. Charles