

Ringgold June 2 1864

Dear Ann

Yesterday I saw four Boys from the Regiment three of them were wounded but not very bad one had 3 of his fingers shot off. the other two were struck by the same ball, George Phillips of Yorkshire, & James Johnson of Franklinville both of Co. D. The Ball first struck James in the arm then cut a flesh wound in the thigh of George they were not in the fight but were back a mile or more from where the fighting was going on But it seems they were not far enough. There has been very hard fighting during the past week & most likely our forces are within 20 miles of Atlanta by this time. We expect every day to hear that they are in it. I have no news at all. My health is pretty good The weather is extremely hot but the nights are quite cool (These pleggy flies almost eat me up)= Well how are you all. how does the grass grow. But then what is the use for me to ask for I shall not get a letter this summer as I know of. But then maybe I shall get some in a day or two

If I could only learn that you were all well I should be more contented than I am. How is Tommy and Sissy are they well I suppose Tommy goes after the cows at night & Dackey in the morning How many cows does Sissy milk or most likely she does not milk any more for a while-----

Well it is getting to warm must give up. the flies will, will, will yes they will of course they will drive me out of the tent

Please give my love to Dacky & Mang_ & Father & Mother Respects & good wishes to all enquiring friends

Yours, fighting flies

W. Charles

P.S. You must excuse this letter because the flies bother me so Well my time will be up in about 15teen months then these flies will not bother me Dont you think that is very consoling Only fifteen months just think of it.

Ringgold June 3d 1864

Dear Ann

A man has just come from the "front"--There has not been much fighting for the past 3 days The Enemy is very strongly fortified on Altoona Mountains about 10 or 15 miles this side of Atlanta

The other morning Gen. Hooker had a very narrow escape His breakfast was ready & he was told to come and set down he said that he would come in a few moments But during those few moments a shell came and struck the chair he was to sit in and tore the table and the dishes into fragments But I believe doing no other damage. There was heavy thunder showers yesterday & it has rained considerable today it is still very warm & more rain will likely fall

Have no news what ever to send to you. it looks now as if we would stay here for some time yet maybe untill the campaign is over & when that will be no man can tell.

I would write to you every day but my Postage stamps are most all gone and I have no money to get any more and it maybe some time before we are paid. So if my life is spaird I will try to send you two letters a week, as long as I am here-----

Since I came from home time has never seemed so long to me as now can not content myself no how. I suppose the reason is because I get no letters and every one here are strangers to me-----

But I do not wish to complain. I only tell you how I feel thats all. I shall get along first rate as long as long as I am well, if the Bushwhackers do not come in upon us some night & take us all off--

Tell Tommy & sissy that Dat wants to see them very much Indeed I want to see you all but that is all the good it does Well we must hope for the best, & pray earnestly to Our Heavenly Father to remove this accursed War from us

With the hope that Heavens blessings will be with you all

I am as ever yours

W. Charles

Ringgold Ga. June 16 1864

Anwyl Ann

(The first page is written in Welsh.)

Dear Wife I am afraid that you cannot read a word of my cymrany so will not trouble you with any more of it this time but still I like it so well that it would give me a very great amount of pleasure to know how to write it, and I know that you will excuse me if I try once in a while.

I cannot tell you how long I am to remain here maybe for a long while yet. I am not so lonesome as I have been time passes away quite fast. I have plenty to eat and plenty of time to cook it. in fact I have nothing to do only to stay here and take care of the things

The only thing that makes me feel uneasy is because I do not get many letters but I think that in a day or two I shall get them If any body there wonders why I do not write to them you will please tell them that I have but very few postage stamps and have no money to buy any--I must keep enough to send letters to you, untill I get your letters Because it would not do to let you be in darkness as to my whereabouts

I have not heard any thing from the front for several days, therefore am not able to inform you what is going on there, But I believe that a terrible Battle will be fought in a few days, if it has not all ready occurred Oh Ann what bloody days these are indeed it is frightful to think of Let us Hope and earnestly pray that this Curse may be removed from us and that Our Heavenly Father will once more Bless Our country with Peace

Please give my very best respects to all enquiring friends.

My warmest love to Dak__ and mänge & to Father & Mother and all the family. How is Tommy Bachgen Dat it would not be at all strange if he is Bachgen rhm un ar all erbyn hyn.

Does Sissy talk any yet. Did mänge get any strawberries from her strawberry bed this season Are you going to have any fruit Are those little Pear trees alive yet How does the grass grow=and how does the new house get along. I suppose cousin Tommy is to work at it before this time How does that Babe of his grow What is her name. Well I will ask no more questions, although I would like to ask you a thousand more With the hope that you are all well and comfortable I bid you all good night. Hope for the best and remember that I am

Yours Very Truly

W. Charles

(Short passage in Welsh.)

Ringgold Ga. June 20 1864

Dear Ann,

Ten letters came to me yesterday. Need not tell you that I was glad, for that does not at all express the joy. Five of them were from you and dated April 29th May 5th May 10th May 13th & May 24th one from Mother, one from Mary, one from Hattie Owens and two from Mr Allen Our old Quarter Master

There was some terrible fighting last week and we have lost a great many men. Joseph Crowell of Captain H. Cheneys company was mortally wounded. Our Regiment numbers now less than one hundred men.

In a former letter I told you that there was a man in this place, a minister by the name of Evans, he was in my tent for a long while yesterday and we had a first rate visit, of course I had to read from the Welsh Bible to him. He said that he would like very much to have your likeness and if you would send it to him he would send the likeness of himself to you or said he what would be just as well we could exchange the likenesses of our children. you can send the likenesses of Tommy or Sissy and he will let me or send it to you the likeness of his little girl.

The pictures I have of yourself & children are all worn out. as soon as you have time you will please have them taken again and send them to me. Mr. Evans thinks that there maybe some relations between your family and his!----

Do you know any thing of the where abouts of Lewis L. Jones, since he left the hospital at Chattanooga I have heard nothing from him. you said something about his coming home. has he come. I hope he has. I would like to see him very much. He is such a good boy.

I think that I shall be wanted at the front in a few days but do not know for certain.

We lost one Rail Road train loaded with forage &c night before last. the guerillas tore the track and as soon as the train ran off they burned it and took what men was on it prisoners. the fire man was killed & others badly wounded.

Please give my warmest love to Dack___ & M___ & to father & mother &c----

In the early part of last winter I sent a crescent to Mrs. Roberts but without doubt it was lost for I never heard any thing from it. I am out of Silver now or else I would make her one.

For the life of me I cannot understand what Deed John is making such a fuss about. All the Deeds consarning that farm are on record in the office at Ellicottville, what more does he want.

Very Truly Yours

W Charles

Ringgold Ga. June 25 1864

Dear Ann

I have nothing new to write to you to day but never the less will send you a few words. one of our boy came from the Regiment this morning after some account Books & paper &c for the Q.M. I am to remain here for some time yet, no one knows how long. I think during this Campaign. The infernal Bush whackers are very bussy doing all the damage to this rail road that they can you see the account of some of their doings in the papers, no doubt Day before yesterday a party of them came within three miles of this place and came very near capturing a couple of very large trains going to the front. a little girl did all she could by standing on the track and waving her hankerchief to stop the train= But the Enginer paid no attention to her & in a few minnits the train was off the track and part of it a heap of ruins. Some were killed & many wounded because as soon as the train was off the tracks the Guerillas were there to kill all they could

Hardly a day passes but some such a thing happens on this Rail Road. But I should like to have seen that little girl, that was so good as to try with all her might, to let those on the train know that there was danger ahead. God bless her little heart. I hope that comfort in this world and joy in the world Eternal will be her portion you will say amen to that I know. The weather is hot. of course we do not know what hour the guerillas will come in here last night & the night before it was said that they were but a little ways from here, but I hope they will stay away

I have made some pretty play things for the children and will send them home as soon as matters are settled a little. The other day I was the house of the Rev. Mr Evans had to talk & read Welsh to him and his wife. his little girl gave me 3 little shells to send home to Tommy & Sissy that are from the Sea Shore I have one shell the most beautiful I have ever seen I intend to make it into a shell Ring for you

Please let me know the names of those that were recently Baptized there.

I am very sorry that I am not paid so that I could send it home for I know you need some there by this time----There will be 6 month due us the first of July

My love to all will write again in a day or two

I am most truly Yours

W. Charles

Ringgold Ga. June 27 1864

My Dear Ann,

It has been an exceedingly warm to day, but now it is somewhat cooler for there was quite a shower about sundown.

I feel so utterly lonely to night, that I hardly know what to do with my self. Can not tell why. my health is good, there is nothing in particular to trouble me. But seeing so many pass by on the train to day, so badly wounded and suffering so terribly from the heat, no doubt has something to do with my present feelings. indeed I cannot help but feel sad, when--but it will do no good to dwell upon the subject= Indeed a Soldier must not think upon the horrors of war. if he does he soon becomes unfit for the duties of one. He must always look on the bright side, and hope for the best. But in regard to this war Hope has almost deserted me. I cannot see a single ray of daylight yet!! And the War cloud seems as dark and as big as ever, and Peace seems as far off as it did three years ago. you see in the papers no doubt, a great deal about the speedy downfall of the rebellion, that the southern people are almost starving, that the rebel army is discouraged &c, &c. Last winter I did think that this summer would end the War, but from what I have seen with my own eyes and heard with my own ears, I am fearful that it will be a long time yet Most of the Rebel Army will suffer death rather than give up, and when I say the Rebel Army I the people of the South! because Every able bodied man is in the army

But says you who will raise food for the army if all the men are fighting the women & children & the old men will do it in fact are doing it. Thousands & thousands of women that never did any work in their lives before this war, are now working from daylight untill dark, either spinning weaving or hoeing corn in the field! There is a woman not far from this place that has fifteen acres of corn under cultivation all the help she has is a very small yoke of steers & two small boys. She also has a cow. (I know not how she made out to keep her.) from that cow she makes a little Butter and every week she takes that Butter & the Butter milk a distance of seven miles and trades it off for flour, hardtack coffee or any thing that will keep herself & little ones from being hungry. All the clothes of the Rebel soldiers are made at Home, the cotton is growed at Home it is carded at Home and spun at Home and woven at Home and made up at Home and it is no wonder that the rebel soldiers fight so well for their Homes & are willing to die rather than to give up their Homes to those that they believe to be their Enemies

In that part of the south where the Union Army has not been of course the negroes do all the out door work. But my candle is almost out, so good night you must read this letter all to yourself, & maybe it will be best to let any one but yourself see it. Maybe to morrow I shall feel more cheerful.

Bridgeport Ala. July 16th 1864

My Dear Ann

It does seem so strange that no letters come from you. I did expect to get some this week, but Saturday night has come but no news from Home Still I do not wish to grumble because it cannot be helped. My health has not been very good for the past few days. Suffering some what from the Bowel complaint, which is so prevalent in the army= but trust it will prove nothing very serious.

This is a very lonesome place, but not very lonesome for the past two days. Because the Rebels are not far away from here and it is thought that they will attempt to capture this place & destroy the Rail Road Bridge Last night about this time it did seem that there would be a chance for fight early this morning but morning came & the day has passed & the Rebels have not come. How long they will keep away is more than I can tell, most likely they will stay away untill they are ready to come & of course I hope they will not get ready this year or next or next

If you read in the Weekly Tribune or any other news paper that the Rail Road Bridge at this place has been destroyed make up your mind that there must have been a severe & Bloody Battle before the Bridge could be destroyed.

I think that it would take from three to five thousand Rebels to take this place It cannot be taken without some very hard fighting, and the fortifications are being made stronger every day. Still you must not be surprised if you do read someday that this place has been captured the Rebels will do it if they can.

The fact is you must not be surprised at any thing now days, for these are the days that you and everybody may expect any thing to happen But I must give up, my candle is out. So good night to you all

Sunday morning July 17 1864

All very quiet this morning Where the Rebels are that were going to take this place by storm yesterday morning no one seems to know

The Rail Road Trains are running regularly So the Rail Road is all right between here and Nashville and also between here and Chattanooga.

I do not get much news from the front, only that our forces are still advancing and by this time must be within a few miles of Atlanta.

What did you think of the Rebel Raid into Maryland did you think some of them would come up that way--

How do you suppose the people of Freedom would feel if three or four thousand Rebels would come up that way and steel every Horse & cow & sheep in the town & compel the young men to go & help drive them off!!

And how do you suppose you would feel to see 50 or a 100 rough looking men with guns & swords & large knives coming into the house, & helping themselves to whatever they liked & after going into the cellar & drinking what milk they wanted & spilling the rest, & destroying what Butter they did not want to take with them and after that going to the Barn & shooting all the chickens & hens &c, and maybe set fire to the Barn! and after that compel Dackee to help them drive all the

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cows, the horses & sheep & hogs into the road! And that would be the last you would see of them!! That would be pretty hard would it not, but such scenes as that takes place very offten only a great deal worse. I hope by this time that the Rebels are all driven out of Maryland again, and may it be the last time that they ever will get there. I understand that they have done a great deal of damage & stolen a very large amount of Horses and Cattle & sheep & Hogs &c. to bad to bad

Well the sun is coming up very hot, & not feeling very stout I will not trouble you with much now this time for there is nothing new to write about. I have sent David L. Williams Boy a Ring with his name on it. did he get it. Have also sent a crescent to David Bach Edwards with his name on it did he get it.

I have not heard a word form the Regiment since I came here How are you making out for money. am not able to give any kind of a guess when I shall be paid but if you need some maybe that you can borrow some of some one untill untill I am paid I do not think that we shall get any money untill September! Tell Sister Jane that I have a crescent for her but do not want to send it just yet Have also a pretty shell to make a Breast Pin for Susan & one to make Shawl Pin for you. Please give my love to all, but keep the largest share for yourself & Tommy & Sissy & remember that

I am yours as ever

Wm Charles

Sabbath evening.

It has been very hot all day, but since sun set it has been cool, and most delightfully pleasant

This head of mine has troubled me some all day, but it is better now, so will try to write a few more words. it is to bad to send send so much emty paper so far.

Before I left Ringgold I went to bid Mr. Robert Evans and family good by, but they were not at Home they had gone down to the farm to see about cutting the the Wheat So I did not see him. Was very sorry because he is a cleaver man. I think that I shall write to him some day, and when this "cruel war is over shall go and make him a visit. but how foolish I am I promise myself a thousand things when this war ends, that never will come to pass. But then would you not like to see the places that you have received so many letters from. maybe you will some day who knows

Anwyl Tommy

Dat is very lonesome that he does not hear any thing from you & Sissy. How happy it would make me to have you & sissy here with me Don't you think that we would have lots of fun. How we would go & pick Blackberries & Huckleberries and how we would go down to the River and hunt for Shells and then work them up into Rings and which chains, Breast Pins & shirt Buttons, and into all kinds of trinkets, wouldn't we Tommy yes we would Then we would go up into the fort to see the Big Guns and to watch the Rail Road Trains pass over the long Bridge wouldn't we, To be shure we would, and after that we would go

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and see the Gun Boat thats down by the Boat Yard and the other Boats thats there--yes we would. Dat has lots of trinkets for you & sissy. Did you get those little shells that I sent in a letter from Ringgold. Do you think that you can learn to read a little this year. Dat would be very much pleased if you could I do not wish to have you go to school this year or next, but every day I wish you would try to learn something. Learn to to read as quick as you can my boy, it will be a great help to you to get throu this troublesome world= Remember that Dat has but a little more than one year to serve in the Army and maybe that Our Heavenly Father will spair his life to come home to you. Of course you will be very nice to M__g__ & Dack__, for you know that they have and are doing a great deal for you & sissy. You & sissy must Play all you wish but do not make any more trouble than you can help. How does the grass look with you and how soon are you going to commence Haying. Maybe you have begun already. Well good by, and may the Lord God of our fathers be with you to guide and protect you now and ever more, is the earnest prayer of

Your Father

W. Charles

Bridgeport Ala. August 8th 1864

Dear Ann

The other day I received your letter dated the 22 of July, Stating the house occupied by Thomas Dornen was burned &c, with the prommis of letting me know the particulars in your next. Today your letter dated the 29th of July was received, but not a word about the burning of that house So I think that you must have written about the 25th and the letter most likely lost. Maybe it will come yet. Your letter which came to hand today contains sad news indeed. Sister May. So sick maybe in her grave tonight and my dear Brother Lewis Jones dead, and the daughter of Brother Wm Davis gone to the world of Spirits=

Indeed this letter contains more sad news than any I have ever received from you. I had not heard a word for certain that Lewis was dead although from the fact of not receiving any letters from him I began to fear that to be the case

Poor Boy, how sorry I am that I could not have been with him little did I think when I last saw him, as I bathed his wounded hand that it would be the last act that I would ever be permitted to do for him. God only knows how I loved that boy, and He alone knoweth the grief that fills my breast at the thought that I shall never see him again on earth. I will pray & hope to meet him in that world where no Rebels can come to hurt him I would very willingly risk my life to save his and he would do the same for me. will you be so kind as to let me know the particulars of his death if you can, then I will let you know more of his life as a Soldier. He was a good soldier in every sense of the word and it will do my heart good to write talk about him. I wrote to Sister May, not long ago. I hope she got it. If she cannot perhaps someone will answer it I will write again. It would be just as safe I think for susan to go alone as to wait for company She would find pleanty of company on the way. I feel very sorry for Wm Davis, am really afraid that it will make him sick. He thought so much of the little girl. If I was with him I would do all in my power to cheer and comfort him what was the matter with the child. Am very glad that you and Jane Ann have become friends. Now you see what you have gained by treating her with Kindness when you thought her to be your enemy. It is always best to do as Christ tells us to love our enemies and do good to those that spitefully uses us.--

To day I received a letter from Cousin Jane Lewis dated the 8th of May. Just three months ago. Will answer it to day. it is a very good letter, hope she will write another.

You have not told me if any one has been to Hinsdale for that Box of clothing. it belongs to Lewis Jones W. R. Jame and myself. you will remember too that there is a little Gun there for me, at the house of Mr. T. A. Allen. The over coat I sent is a good one but you need not hurry to go after it. But if no one else goes why go your- self some time before cold weather.=

Am very sorry that the crops are so light with you in that country this year, but there is no help for it only to make the most of what we have. It pleases me very much to learn that little Tommy tries to make himself useful. Let him & sissy run out doors as much as they wish only if you can help it do not let them sleep out doors unless some one is with them because a snake or some worm might possible harm them. Please give my warmest love to Dacke & Marge and Father & Mother, and the family, and my good wishes to all enquiring friends. My health continues very good. And trusting through the Infinite Mercy of Our Heavenly Father that you are all in good health, I remain ever yours

W. Charles

Bridgeport Ala. Aug. 15/64

Dear Ann

Your letter of the 5th was received yesterday. was very glad indeed to learn that you were all pretty well. you seem to be somewhat discouraged that the war continued so long. I too am discouraged at times. But I shall never get so disheartened as even to wish to go to Canada. No let that be the Paradise of cowards Sneekes & traitors. Hope you will not let your heart be troubled about the Rebels coming there to take you all off. they will not do that at. at all events do not say any thing about Canada untill the war is ended then if you wish to go and become a subject to Johny Bull I shall have no objections you know that the wife of a Soldier should not be a coward

It is so warm this morning that it is most impossible to write and the flies too are troublesome

There is no particular news to send to you. Last saturday, it was reported that all the Baggage was to go to the front. some of it has gone, but I see no signs that our will go. I have had no orders as yet to take it from here= Therefore you will please send the letters to this place untill you learn for certain that I am gone from here. If any should come here after I am gone they will be sent to me. I am very sorry that "father is oblige to work as hard this Summer as ever." I left with them property enough without a cent of debt upon it to keep them quite comfortable as long as long as they lived and if they let John have the control of every thing they themselves are to blame. Wonder what has become of that money that the cows was sold for.

Please give father and mother my love. I hope they will live untill I come home-----

I am looking for those pictures every day now.-----

So Chester C. Newman has ran away has he O Blessed youth ran away from thy home and family rather than to defend those laws that defended thee so well all the days of thy life He is no doubt by this time very happy in the paradise of the sneekes cowards & Traitors in the land of Johny Bull

Not long ago I sent a Ring to Hettie Rees, and promised to send one to "Tom" I fullfill that promise in this letter---- Give him the ring with many kind wishes from me It is the mate of the one that I sent to Hettie I also send one to Dack_ let him take his choice of the two If he likes the yallow one the best let him keep it.----

I will send one that I wish you would give to Betty Jones I think I owe her one, and if I knew who was my greatest enemy in that town I would send him or Her the best ring I have and I have about 30 of them now, some very pretty.==== please give my warmest love to Dacky & Mang_ What has become of Aunty Ann. Please tell or rather inform a certain young Lady that lives on the hill by the name of Lydia to direct some of her missiles, I mean missives this way just as soon as she sees fit

Lots of kisses for you Tommy & Sissy

Most Truly

W Charles