

Head Quarters 154 Reg. N.Y.V.  
Bridgeport Alabama  
Oct. 27 1863

My Dear Ann

It seems a great while since I have heard a word from you and it may be some time yet before a letter from you will reach me-- The mail does not come here very often

I have but a very poor oppinion of this State & the state of Tennessee the country we came through is very poor indeed and the people look as if they never had half enough to eat

You know what kind of a House John \_att used to live in Well most of the houses on the road that we came on between here and Nashville are no better Some of them much worse There is hardly a barn in fact not one that we would call Barn to be met with the whole Distance I am very much disappointed in regard to this state & Tennessee

We were 14 days on the march from Nashville to this place and 8 of those days were rainy. I felt well all the way untill untill last Friday My old trouble took me

We made out to get to Stevenson in this state before dark; but Oh how muddy it was-- I could not help put up the tent or get supper that night But after vomiting for a while I got a little better The Q. Master went and got some cedar bushes to keep our blankets from getting in to the mud & I laid down it was wet but a very soft Bed next day I was all right again-----

The mail has just come in but it brought nothing for me. Well there is no use to fret for that will do no good

Yesterday was a very pleasant day warm & calm To day is cloudy & chilly and threatens an other Rain Storm

I have no news what ever to send to you The Villages in this State and Tennessee are like the Villages in Virginia=very small & old & dirty The Village of Bridgeport consists of a part of a Rail Road Bridge & an old saw mill

Most of the Troops have crossed the River yesterday and to day it is said that the attempt is about to be made to Drive the Rebels from Look out Mountain which is not far from Chattanooga but rather between that place and this so that we can not use the River from this place to that. But the River and the Rail Road must be oppened between this place & Chattanooga in order that supplys may be taken the Army thats there

It will be very difficult to do it with Wagons Because the Roads are so bad and have to go so far around

The Regiment left camp this morning in a few days we shall follow with the Baggage if we are successfull in Driving the Rebels from the said Lookout Mountain=

I am a little Home sick to day But I shall feel better when I shall hear from you I hope Mary stated in her letter that Father was there Well I am glad that he went down for it will do him good. Please give him my love and tell him that I will write to him as soon as I have time Well how are Tommy and Frances and how is your self=& Ma\_g\_ & Dack\_

(continued)

(October 27, 1863 continued)

I Hope & pray that you are all well Have you had any snow yet.=

I have seen several patches of cotton growing.= It was not very good for the frost came to early for it.=

Well, please give my love to all enquiring friends

Yesterday I sent a letter to you but I will every day or two while we are here but very likely we shall have to go on tomorrow or next day

Did you get that \$60. check that I sent to you from Alexandria

Yours Truly

Wm Charles

Head Quarters 154th Regt. N.Y.V.  
Bridgeport Al. Oct. 29th 1863

Dear Ann

Hear I am once more trying to write a few words to you=& I am very thankful to the Giver of all things to be able to inform you that I am well & enjoying all the comforts that a soldier need expect under the circumstances that we are at present placed in you see we are in the Heart of the Enemys country, and of course We are not so well supplied as if we were nearer Home The Army at Chattanooga is Suffering some for the want of food, because the roads are so bad that it can not be taken to there fast enough= But the Cars from Nashville come as far as here so we get enough=of Hard bread & Pork coffee & sugar & some Tea== So you see we are not at all likely to starve. The weather yesterday & to day has been very pleasant and about as warm as it is there about the first of June but the nights are quite cold but no frost

I am well supplied with clothing Although I lost those shirts you sent me & 2 pair of Woolen socks & Carpet Bag full of one thing & an other.==

Still Uncle Sam you know is a good master and does not let his boys suffer for the want of clothes. I have 3 Wollen Blankets 1 Rubber Blanket, 3 shirts, 2 pair sock 3 coats 1 over coat 2 pair new pants 1 pair Boots 1 pair new shoes, 2 towels, 1 Pocket Handkerchief had 2 but lost one the other day= 1 vest &c So you see I have clothes enough to last me all winter I saw John Williams William Williams son he is quite well now but has been sick I gave him a good Rubber blanket for I had 2 and he had none and gave Lewis Jones one Woollen Shirt because he only had one John Williams looks very much like his Brother Ike only a little fleshier

Lewis Jones is a very good boy He is as happy as a boy can be and very thankful that he did not leave his Regiment as Dick Lewis & Ben Morgan did= It will be much better for those boys if they will return before they are reported as deserters I am ashamed of them any how and I never could believe that they would do such a thing= It was no harder for them than it was for others, in fact they had no excuse at all==

We have not heard much from the Regiment since they left here but Report has it this morning that the 11th & 12th Corps are fighting some 15 or 20 miles up the River, between here and Chattanooga= We shall know the truth in a day or two=

In coming here from Nashville we came a cross the Battlefield of Stone River=or the Battle of Murfreesboro. Mounds of earth were many in number denoting the spot where a soldier had fallen and was sleeping his last sleep That was a big Battle & lasted 7 days= Our loss in Killed & Wounded was 8,778 Eight thousand Seven hundred & seventy eight. It was fought the last of December 1862 and the first day or two in this year I was shown one place where a long ditch had been made and over 300 bodies put in it. John Williams was in that Battle

To show you how poor the people of this country are let me tell one instance that we met with in the valley this side of Cumberland Mountain

It was raining very hard & we stopped for the night some time before dark We had the fire started and were trying to prepare

(continued)

(October 29, 1863 continued)

something to eat when an old man came out from a very old log hut, covered with Rags and no shoes or any thing on his feet Well that man was 90 years old and was and had been justice of the peace for 40 years still was not able to get a pair of shoes All through where we have come coffee had been as high as \$5.00 (five dollars) a pound All they have to eat is corn bread & pork and some of them not half enough of that most every woman I saw had pipe in her mouth. One woman begged Tobacco of us she said that she chewed & smoked both & was entirely out. One of the boys was so tickled that a woman was begging Tobacco for her own use that he gave her all the smoking tobacco he had, & the southern Lady was very much pleased

Tell Tommy to be a very good boy and to be very kind to his little Sister I send you and them many kisses & invoke the blessings of Heaven upon you all Please give my love to Dack\_\_ & Ma\_g\_ & Father & Mother & Sue & John and Wife and all friends that enquire after

Yours Most Truly

W Charles

Bridgeport Oc. 31 1863

Dear Ann,

Yesterday I sent you a letter soon after it was mailed we had orders to be ready to march at 4 o'clock. The stuff was partly loaded and the order came not to start untill this morning It rained very hard most all day yesterday & nearly all night it is between 4 & 5 o'clock it does not rain but cloudy & rather cold

There has been a Battle up the River between here and Chattanooga but how severe we have not & cannot find out Because there is so many different stories One Report has it that over 400 of the 11th Corps was killed &c Our Regiment have been in the fight or very near it, but I can not learn that any of them have been killed or wounded

We can not go far to day because the roads will be so bad. do not worry if you do not get a letter from me again in a week or so, because it maybe so that I can not send one=

Did you get that picture= "All quiet on the Potomac" that was sent to you from Alexandria=

Have you seen Dick Lewis & Ben Morgan yet I hope that they will come back soon.

You must not harbor any ill feelings towards Jane Ann. If she or anyone have done you any Wrong= Why forgive them= There must have been some mistake or misunderstanding somewhere or else Jane Ann would not have any ill feelings towards me or you.=

Well it is getting day light We have just been eating our breakfast and are all most ready to go=

Give my love to all=

Yours very Truly

W. Charles

Head Quarters 154 Regt  
Camp at the foot of Lookout Mountain  
six miles from Chattanooga Tennessee

Dear Ann,

Last saturday I sent a letter to you from Bridgeport Alabama stating that we were about starting with a Wagon train for Chattanooga. Well we did not get a way untill saturday night for the Pontoon Bridge gave a way twice. So we did not get here untill yesterday about noon Having been told that the Rebs have been driven from Lookout Mountain, We were some what disapointed When we found that they were still there and throwing shot & shell at What ever went a long the road It was not very pleasant to say the least to go a long a road and have shot & shell pass over our heads some times in front of us then again back of us But we had nothing else to do but to keep a going& so we did slow and easy as if there were no canon within a hundred miles of us. and no harm befell us. It made me feel a little nervous, & I thought of you and the little ones thats there But I could only rely upon Him who is able to save me in all danger and say O Lord Thy Will be done and not mine

Our Regiment have been in a fight here but not one of them was hurt= The Rebs keep a shelling all day to day but they can not do much harm for the mountain is so high.= My health is very good considering all things. It is said that we have got a strong position here and that we cannot be driven out &c, &c. I hope it is all true. The steam Boat from Bridgeport comes to within 6 miles from here

The weather is very warm for the season I have no news to send to you= I send you a little cotton it grew in the state of Georgia it is not ripe The cotton Balls when ripe are as large as a mans fist break open and look as white as snow= I would like to send you a whole Ball, but cannot very well Please give my love to Dack\_ & Mang\_ & best Respects to all enquiring friends I am afraid that Tommy will forget that he ever had a father. Do you suppose that he would know me now if I was to come home. May God bless you all is the Prayer of

Yours,

W Charles

Head Quarters 154th Regt. N.Y.V.  
Camp at the foot of Lookout Mountain  
Six miles from Chattanooga Tennessee

Dear Ann

Yesterday I wrote a short letter to you, stating that we had come up to the troops with the Wagon Train safe & sound====The Rebs are still on lookout mountain, but we have heard nothing from them yet to day Yesterday they shelled all day but I cannot learn that anybody was hurt= although some had pretty narrow escapes The roads from here to Bridgeport are frightfully bad= but we shall not be oblige to use the roads much if we can keep the Boat running on the River She comes within 6 miles of us now, and the road is not very bad from here there so that we shall not suffer for the want of Supplies= That is we shall not go very hungry=

We are in want of Soap very much to wash our clothes, & forage for the horses= They have had nothing to eat but a little corn for two weeks or more many of them gets sick & some of them have died Doctor Day has lost his= the rest of the Regimental horses have come through all right although they look poor & very different from what they did when we started from Alexandria

I do not feel like writing this morning so I will stop untill to morrow, & to morrow no one knows where we shall be

In the Evening Nov. 4th

It has been compairitivly quiet all day to day it is now about 8 o clock in the evening, a little while before sun set there was some canonading but no harm done as know of= This affternoon I went up to a high hill thats between us and the River from there I could plainly see the Rebel camps. Their pickets & ours are within speaking distance= But it is thought that the Rebs will not try to drive us out from here, & it will be a very difficult task to drive them from lookout maountain But the main object in sending the 11th & 12th Corps down here have been accomplished The road to supply Grants Army with food has been opened & will be kept oppened in fact it must be kept oppened or else the whole army must fall back to Nashville We can not run boats up to Chattanooga because the Rebs can shell the River for more than two miles from the mountain The River as you will see by the map makes a short bend just at the foot of the mountain and of course it is in sight for a good ways. But I think that the chief reason why boats do not go up to Chattanooga is because we are oblige to keep a pontoon Bridge across the River= We are and have been on half rations.= But the boys do not complain at all= So good night

November 5th 1863  
early in the morning=

It began to rain last about midnight and still continues to drizle a little= all seem to be very quiet this morning but there is no telling what an hour may bring forth.= I think that Mr. Williams had better waited a little before getting into debt in fixing up the Church= but he and the Brethern ought to know their bussness better than anybody else, & if they can afford it no one will find fault as I know of. Did those Pear & Apple Trees grow any this Summer= and how much did those maple trees grow thats there by the house How many sheep do you winter How many calves How many cows & yearlings How does the Horses feel Do you get the Tribune now if not I think that you better send for it.= Also for Harpers weekly. the Pictures will please the children so much.=

Head Quarters 154th Regt. N.Y.V.  
Lookout Valley Nov. 8th 1863

Dear Ann,

An other Sabbath day is almost gone. It has been a rather lonesome one for me I cannot tell why but yesterday and to day I have been a little home sick. you cannot blame me much for that can you. If you had been away from home as long as I have most likely that the same feeling would visit you once in a while. But you must not suppose that I am unhappy, or sad, because I am not for my lot is a very comfortable one for a soldier. I have plenty to eat and good clothes to keep me warm. The Quarter Master and I sleep together, he has 5 blankets & my three, makes a very comfortable bed= The friendship between him and myself grows stronger the longer that we live together. Hope it may continue to do so I Receive the kindest treatment from all.= I think that Bill James is a real friend to me now for he seems to be very anxious to do all in his power for me=& so Lewis Jones Bill Davis is a little jellous maybe but am not certain for he acts very friendly indeed- Do you know where David Williams is I should like to see him very much Please Remember me most respectfully to his family= You will please tell Sister Kate that I will make Ann a cressent as soon as we get settled We do not know what hour or minnit we shall be obliged to move from here & so I have not put up the work bench yet. the fact is I have not the disposition to do no more than I am obliged to do, becuase we are so near the Enemys Guns= It makes my heart go pittypatt every time they fire not that there is much danger where we are but still it is some what unpleasant They have thrown quite a number of shells to day but no one has been hurt as I can find. One bursted under a wagon to day but it did no harm

What they try to shell the most are the wagons as they come in from the boat landing But as yet they have not been able to do but little damage

Lookout Mountain is a very high one so high that a person can see parts of Seven States from it!!! And it is said that there is 10 miles of levell land on the top of it. There is also a Hotell & splendid Race course up on it. The Big Buggs of the South used to in the summer to come together there for the purpose of Drinking Whiskey Gambling & to Run Horses I trust a better use of the place will be made here after From a hill just behind our camp we can see Chattanooga and the camp of the Rebel Army beyond on Missionary Ridge We can also see General Braggs Head Quarters I think it will be a long time before they can be driven from there But I hope that something will happen that they will be obliged to leave without fighting them

I have Received no letters the past week.= I have written pretty often to you but have not felt inclined to write a word to anybody else

Give my best Respects to H.H. Roberts & family tell the girls that they are not forgotten, and will write to them soon if circumstances will permit. It frose quite hard last night and continues cold

(continued)



(November 8, 1863 continued)

How is Mr. Harris & family= And how does the church prosper. is there any new births in Zion.== Please give my best Respects to all my old friends=

Where is Jane Lewis going to stay this winter How has Uncle Sam Owens made it this year did he have good crops & did he get good prices for his cheese

Well how is Tommy & Frances Ann; they are well I hope. Give my love to Dack\_\_ & Ma\_g\_ and Father & Mother Sue &c &c=

Good night

Monday Nov. 9th 1863

Pleasant but cold All well this morning The Enemy are throwing a few shells but no harm is done

Hoping to hear from you soon I Remain

Yours

Wm Charles