

THE CIVIL WAR LETTERS OF
JOHN AND HUGH CROSGROVE
of Westfield, Chautauqua County, New York

Letters supplied by Virginia Peterson, Rochester, New York,
and in possession of her husband's parents

Taken from the Website of Duke and Ramona (Barkley) Robbins

<http://barkley.robbins.net/cosgrove/index.htm>

Commentary by Jack Stockman October 1999

- 1 John Crosgrove to Sister Sarah, 29 January 1862, Camp Fenton, Washington.
- 2 John Crosgrove, 20 March 1862(?), Alexandria, Virginia (beginning of letter missing).
- 3 John Crosgrove to Brother Edward, 9 April 1862, Fortress Monroe, Virginia.
- 4 John Crosgrove to Sister, 25 November 1862, Chantilly, Virginia.
- 5 John Crosgrove to Brother, 3 July 1863, Westminster, Maryland.
- 6 John Crosgrove to Sister, 7 August 1863, Kelleys Ford, Virginia.
- 7 Hugh Crosgrove to Sister, 27 March 1864, Lookout Valley, Tennessee.
- 8 Hugh Crosgrove to Sister Sarah, 11 August 1864, Near Atlanta, Georgia.

1 Letter of John Crosgrove to his sister Sarah, 29th January 1862.

John enlisted at Westfield, Chautauqua County, New York, on 10 September 1861 and was mustered in on 1 October 1861 as a Private in Company I, 3d Battalion, 9th New York Volunteer Cavalry Regiment. On 26 November 1861, the Regiment boarded the "Knickerbocker" and steamed down the Hudson River to New Jersey whence they sailed on another vessel to South Amboy. From there the Regiment went by train in box cars and cattle cars to Washington, D.C., stopping en route in Philadelphia, where the citizenry fed them excellent free food at any hour of the day or night. Upon their arrival in Washington, however, they were fed a breakfast of a chunk of bread, a chunk of boiled beef, and a tin cup of coffee, which they had to eat without utensils. Dinner consisted of soup and bread. The Regiment marched up Pennsylvania Avenue and pitched their tents on Meridian Hill overlooking Washington from the north. [Dr Gray Nelson Taylor, Saddle and Saber: The Letters of Civil War Cavalryman Corporal Nelson Taylor (Bowie, Md.: Heritage Books, Inc., 1993, p. 2.)

Camp Fenton Washington Jan 29 1862

Dear Sister Sarah

I have been looking anxiously for several days for a letter from you but to night I came to the conclusion that I owed you a letter and thought perhaps I had better write to you and ask you for one before I get one If I do not get a letter from home about once in so often I begin to feel lonesome and watch the mail pretty close. you can scarcely imagine how much good a letter from home does us soldier boys the mail comes into our camp every day while we are out on drill in the afternoon and when we come in it is a little amusing to see the boys rush to the co post-masters tent to see if there is any letters for them and you can tell by their countenances whether they were disapointed or not and

those that are fortunate enough to get a letter tare the envelop and devour the contense with great avidity I am well and enjoying the best of health as I have ever since I have been in camp and as I tent with **Martin Harmon** and him and I agree pretty well we enjoy some pretty good old fashioned visits I find it to a nice plan to have a confidential friend away here in camp with whom I can converse freely on any and all subjects I find him to be a very agreeable and interesting young man. We have on some of those beautiful evenings walked out on our parade ground and had some good visits when all of our Friends were convulsed so we are carried back in our own minds to our own home. But the Bugle would blow at 8 Oclock to summons us to roll call when every soldier is expected to be at his quarters. If you were to come into our camp you think we were as happy a family could be thought of the boys all try to make the best of it. [change in ink] We are getting to be pretty good cooks and can get up a first rate meal of victuals we have exchanged our small tents for the large sibley tents that give us much more room and enables us to stand up strait But they have also their disadvantages there being so many of us to geather and as a mater of course we have to have some that are not so agreeable as we would wish they were I rode down to the city with **Dr Spencer** last monday it was the first time have been out of camp since we came here although the city is not a very nice one it presents a grate many attraction to us soldier boys that never was in the the city before the Dr look a good deal of pains to show me all the public Buildings and notable objects we rode past the White House the residence of the president it is a verry large white building as white as snow and is so large that it ____ a person to go over it then there are the Post Office Department Treasury Department War Department clothing Department Commissary department Pattent Offie all built of White marble and verry large buildings that would make a city of them selves I think it was the Government Buildings that made the city what it is because I could not my attraction of nature to make a city the streets were filled with commissioned officers and private soldiers and the large army wagons and at this time it presents the appearance of a thriving city. I like the personal appearance of the people of the city verry much they are more tasty in their dress than the people of Albany **Samuel Taylor** was over here to see me about 2 weeks ago and took dinner with me he looks well and feels well he likes soldiering pretty well Ps write soon and give me all the news and let me know how you get along and how you enjoy yourselves at home this winter

From your Brother **John**

2 Portion of a letter from John Crosgrove to [—?—], apparently written on 20th March 1862 at Alexandria, Virginia.

About 15th March 1862, one of the batteries of Major-General George McClellan's Army of the Potomac, including John's Regiment, the 9th Cavalry Regiment of New York Volunteers, moved to Alexandria, Virginia. There, "the river was full of boats of every description loading with troops and army suplies. With the movement of the immense army trains and as a result of a severe storm, the roads and fields, and the camps of the batteries became very muddy and the men in the batteries were for days without dry feet. Their shelter consisted of two ponchos tied together over a pole supported by stakes about thirty inches high and a third poncho fastened over one end. This sheltered three men, each man furnishing a poncho. Its resemblance to a dog kennel gave it the name 'dog tent'. Hay, blankets, and overcoats served for bedding. A tallow candle wired to a stake made a light by which to read and write letters." [Dr Gray Nelson Taylor, Saddle and Saber: The Letters of Civil

LETTERS OF JOHN AND HUGH CROSGROVE

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War Cavalryman Corporal Nelson Taylor (*Bowie, Maryland: Heritage Books, Inc., 1993*) p. 23.] Corporal Nelson Taylor, a soldier in John's same outfit, Company I, 3rd Battalion, of the 9th Cavalry Regiment, wrote on 1st March 1862 to his father that "We arrived here yesterday about 4 o'clock and we expect to leave here in a day or too We are Guarding on Amunition train They are fitting out an expedition of 20 thousand troops to reinforce Burnside We expect to go along with them to guard the trains . . ." [Taylor, Saddle and Saber, p. 23.]

[First page of letter missing--no salutation or date, except March 20 is mentioned later in letter]

almost all of the boys with whom I am acquainted are now either at this place or on the move for here there are 50000 troops to leave here within a few days for Richmond. one Battation of our Regt are detached to go in the Artillery and 2 Battalions of us go as infantry to guard the amunition train we now have charge 100 6 mule teams loaded with amunition and are now waiting for orders they are busy shipping troops now and we shall not go untill all the soldiers are gone then we will ship for Acqua Creek and from there we will have to go by land. though our orders may be countermanded and we sent back to camp things are so uncertain in the army that soldiers hardly know one minit what they will do the next on sunday I went about 4 miles up towards Fairfax where I saw **Capt Drake** and a good many of my old acquaintances and among the rest I saw **Jim Henner** he looks tough and rugged but I think he is about tired of soldiering but there was one in the 44 Regt that I expected to see who I shall never see in this world and that is **Samuel Taylor** his Regt is now lying about 1 1/2 miles from us and I went up to see him and inquired for him and they told me that he died a week ago last sunday morning in the Hospital at Georgetown of Typhoid fever his comrades told me that he lay sick in his tent a week and when they made an advance he was taken to the Hospital and they did not consider him dangerous but when they returned he was dead the hospital where he died was only a bout 2 1/2 miles from our old camp and if I had only known that he was there I should have went to see him his Co. all feel verry sad at his loss as he had won the respect of them all. I will now give you a description of Alexandra this is place of considerable notoriety being the city where Elsworth was shot and is full of secessionist if they only dare to express their sentiments and the city is now under marshal law there is to forts that command the city and the river and they could shell the whole city with perfect ease Fort Elsworth that lies nearest the city is considered to be a verry nice fort they have some rifled cannon that are 14 feet long that will carry a ball 5 miles this is the most beautifull spot that I ever saw one of the most splendid views that could be imagined but the soldiers are fast destroying the country which money cannot replace fences groves and shade trees all fare alike all have to fall under the soldiers ax our boys are cutting a beautifull grove of Oak chestnut and ceader willow etc right in the yard of a Reble Captain but are have respect for the property of all union men. March 20th this is rather a moist morning and we are still here do not know whether we shall go any farther south now or not **Hugh Montgomery** is here in this place he likes the artillery pretty well we are now feastin on Oisters our men captured 2 Oisters Sloops loaded with oisters from the Rebles and brot them up to Alexandria and all soldiers are free to use them

From Your Brother **John**

3 Letter from John Crosgrove to his brother Edward, 9th April 1862.

On about 28th March 1862, John's Battalion left Alexandria via schooners, canal boats, and barges, and landed at Fortress Monroe, Virginia, in sight of the enemy's iron-clad steamer, "Monitor", at anchor in the harbor, which contrary to expectations did not attack the Union boats. John's Regiment camped outside the ruins of Hampton, the once-beautiful city having been reduced to a pile of burnt bricks and lonely chimney stacks by the Confederate troops. Corporal Nelson Taylor of John's Company I wrote on 5th April that "We are 3 miles from Fort monro on the road leading to Yorktown and about 14 miles from Yorktown and they are Fighting there to day they comenced this morning 7 ocl and they are at it yet. It is sundown now we can hear the Cannon quite plain. Our troops number over a 100 thousand . . ." [Taylor, Saddle and Saber, p. 26.] On 8th April, Corporal Taylor wrote, ". . . the Battle [at Yorktown] comenced We could hear the constant roar of cannon all of the afternoon and night The most of the Army here Advanced Sunday and yesterday Monday they wer fighting all day it rained very hard the report is that there is a good many kild and wounded on both sids. . . Before [the rebels] left Yorktown they had all maners of Infernal machiens fixed to blow up our troops Thousands of shells and Torpedoes just covered up with sand and the moment you step on them they explode The entrance gate to their Forts are all closed and wires attached to the gates and leading to some of their machiens of destruction There was several of our troops kiled and wounded by them . . ." [Taylor, Saddle and Saber, p. 29.]

Fortress Monroe Va. April 9th 1862

Brother Edward

I received your last letter in due season with pleasure to hear from you and to know that you were all well and I now take this opportunity to answer it I am well and have not yet known a sick day since I have been here. the weather here is quite as changeable as at home last saturday near Fort Ellsworth the snow fell to make the ground white. I see by your letter that you have verry much improved your handwriting I think that **Talmadge** has had you under his instruction again and I would advise you attend his lessons as long as he stays in Westfield a[s] I did know your hand writing. I guess you will enjoy making sugar on the hill this year but you ought to have me up there to cook for you as I am pretty well used to a rough life and consider myself a pretty good cook. But I think before you get your sugar made I shall be to far away for you to send me any as we are now on the advance and expect to be at Richmond in a short time there one hundred thousand men left this place this week and to day they expect to attact Yorktown You asked how it was about the farms here in Va. and the fences etc etc. I will now tell you a little about it although my travles have not been verry grate in Va., the farms are verry large some of the planters own from 1200 to 2000 acres with one large and sometimes a pretty nice house on them and 2 or 3 small negro houses out around the houses have mostly been evacuated and now are occupied by our soldiers for Hospitals and Barracks etc Some of the Planters have protection papers given them by the Government and the property of these have to be spared in the vicinity of the house any how, the soil is verry shallow and some of it is not worth tilling and there is scarcely a rail or a fense to be seen the land all lays open to a common and the most of it is used by the soldiers the surface of the country is verry uneaven and there is a good deal or has been of small scrubby timber but the soldiers have cut a good deal of it for to burn and a good to clear the way so that they can see farther that there may be nothing in the way. I will not give you a journal of our trip here from Alexandria as perhaps that will be as interesting to you as any thing that I

can write now. Since we came to A. we were ordered to keep 3 days rations cooked and on hand as we were liable to be ordered to move at any moment but it takes time to move 10000 with their equippage teams provisions etc and as we go as a guard to the reserve Ordinance train we were about the last to ship but after being here 2 weeks we were ordered to the march last Sunday at noon but after getting ready and waiting a long time the Order was countermanded and we had to stay an other night in camp but on monday morning early we were ready to march to the dock and went a board of the boats about 10 Oclock 1 steamer 2 scooners and a barge but it took all day to get our baggage wagons and horses etc aboard but just at sundown we pushed out into the rive an achored untill morning. the river is is verry hard of navigation I had supposed that it was verry easy of navigation but there are very few pilots that ca run it in the night on account of the shoals. Tuesday Aprill 1st we weighed anchor early this morning and started down to river the morning was beautifull one and we enjoyed the ride verry much about 10 Oclock this morning we passed Mount Vernon the home of Washington

[page missing? no signature]

4 Letter from John Crosgrove to his sister, 25th November 1862.

The 9th Cavalry Regiment remained in front of Washington to defend the city while the Battle of Antietam, Maryland, raged on 16th and 17th September 1862, ending in General Robert E. Lee's defeat there. Then the 9th Cavalry were gradually advanced from Falls Church toward Leesburg, to Fairfax Station, Massas Junction, Chantilly, and Bull Run. Corporal Taylor of John's Company I wrote on 23rd November 1862: "We are camped on the Shantila farm 3 miles north of Centerville. We are having rather cold windy wet wether here at present to cold to day to write much of a letter." [Taylor, Saddle and Saber, p. 76.] On 19th November 1862, John's brother Hugh's 154th New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment encamped near Fairfax Station where, on 25th November, the 154th's Regimental Commander, Colonel Patrick Henry Jones, issued an order establishing "a strict regimen of daily details, Sunday inspections and recitations in tactics by the company officers. Colonel Jones was determined to raise the standard of discipline and military efficiency of his officers and men. ." [Mark H. Dunkelman and Michael J. Winey, The Hardtack Regiment (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1981) p. 36.] With the brothers temporarily stationed only two miles apart in the Leesburg Turnpike road, they were able to visit with each other.

Chantilly Va. Nov. 25th 1862

Dear Sister

You will doubtless be expecting a letter from me long before you receive this and I can offer no excuse for being so tardy except procrastination which you know is the thief of time but now I am just seated to write this leaves me well as I hope it will find you the same. I saw **Hugh** last sunday and had a good long visit with him he was well and learning soldiering verry well found the boys all in good spirits and all of our amediate acquaintance were well and enjoying themselves as well as soldiers well could under the circumstances. last week was rainy and unpleasant as **Sigles** whole division moved back to Centerville and Fairfax. We were verry much surprised when the order came for us to turn back but like true soldiers we obeyed. our regt. had only just moved to the front. our regt. was ordered for rear guard as usual. when ever **Gen's. Sigle** or **Sthall** want

cavalry that they can depend upon they call on the 9th The army is a great place for petty stealing I will just give you an instance of it. Last Tuesday night where we had encamped for the night - **M. Harmon** and I had layed down for the [night] using a rubber blanket a our saddle-blanketts for a bed and we had two woolen blanket & a rubber blanket to cover us bet we had not lay there more than half an hour when some scamp slipped one of our wool blankets from under the rubber and got away with it an also a haversack full of hard bread our rations for the next day we thought the trick a cool one our present camp is on the Leesburg turnpike about 6 miles from Fairfax Court House and **Hugh** is on the same road and only 2 miles from here towards the C.H. and yet it requires a pass from a Major Gen to to pass the pickets that lye between us. **Sigles** Army Corps is held as a reserve to the whole and I thin perhaps it will be kept near Washington to defend the capital and watch **Stonewall Jackson** who is reported to be watching an appportunity to get into the city but I think he will fail if he attempts it. The weather is rather cold for field duty but we cavalry men have the advantage of the Infantry for we can carry more blanketts than they can. We had a great inspection today We have not had much duty to do of late consequently ourselves and horses are getting pretty fat the grain for our horses is brought from Fairfax but we have to go from 3 to 5 miles into the country after hay and carry it in on the horses backs. we have not had any pay since the 1st of July and money is getting rather scarce. but we expect pay this week. I have no news to write all the boys of our acquaintance are well We expect a good many recruits to join this regt from old Chautauqua. By the way how does **Knapps** get along recruiting; will they evade the draft; I think by all accounts there must be a good many invilades there just now; write soon and give me all the news you can think of Give my best respects to all enquiring friends. May God protect and permit us again to meet on earth that we may soon again meet to enjoy the comforts of home is the prayer of your Brother **John**

5 Letter from John Crosgrove to his brother, 3rd July 1863.

John and Hugh both fought in the Battle of Gettysburg. The Battle began on 1st July 1863. "In the early afternoon the 9th NY Cavalry was supporting a battery on Cemetery Hill near the Emmetsburgh road. The skirmish line of the Confederate forces began firing at the line of cavalry. Companies G and I[John's Company] . . . dismounted and using their carbines and revolvers charged the enemy and drove them back." [Taylor, Saddle and Saber, pp. 93-94.] Corporal Nelson Taylor wrote on 4th July 1863 that "We have had a number of Skirmishes and lost quite a number in our regt. Our Division had a hard fight July 1st at Gettysburgh Pa. We comenced the fight in the morning with only our Division and a part of the first Corps of infantry and they wer to much for us and drove us back 2 miles before we got reinforcements and then we held our own the rest of the day and reinforcements kept coming in all night and the fight began early in the morning again." [Taylor, Saddle and Saber, pp. 95-96.]

Westminster Md. July 3d 1863

Dear Brother

I now take this opportunity to write you a few lines to let you know that I am well and I heard from **Hugh** yesterday at 2 P.M. he was well and safe thanks to God for his mercies to us

I wrote to Sarah from Gettysburg and dated it July 1st but I made a mistake of one day I wrote on the evening of June 30 just had time to finish it when we were ordered out on pickett we remained out that night and the next morning about 9. A.M. we were relieved by the 2nd squadron of our regt, and we reported back to the regt they were in line of battle and we formed in our place the fight now raged high there was nothing on our side but our division of Dav, and one Battery of artillery and the rebs. had two Division of Infantry and artilyery we were obliged to fall back before noon but not till after we had took a Brigade of the Rebs. Prisoners then the 1st Corps. came up and we regained our old position but there was constantly reinforcements coming on both sides and the Rebs drove us back through the town and parolled a lot of our wounded

I cannot speak too highly of the people of Gettysburg they threw aside all fear and turned out to take care of our wounded carrying every thing that a soldier could with for killed and two wounded one of them slightly the two that was killed were in our squadron and one that was seriously wounded belonged to our Co. a 9 months man named Cane the rest of the boys are all safe and well. We left the Battlefield yesterday morning and are now 25 miles away but hear govt news from the front I suppose you hear the news by the papers and I have not time to write you a long letter now I do not know what we are here for but this is the terminus of the Western Railroad and we have had no rations or forage in two days and our horses are verry much jaded and poorly shod and may be we we will get our horses shod and rest and go back to the field of action again we have not had mail in a long time should like to receive some mail there are squads of rebs going past under guard 700 just passed and we may be able to compell the reble army here to surrender here in pa this is a good grain country and the fields are waving with ripe grain I will write more particular when I have more time Excuse this scrible from your Brother John

6 Letter from John Crosgrove to his sister, 7th August 1863.

"On August 1 the 9th encountered and engaged the enemy near Brandy Station and Culpeper, Virginia. On August 3 the brigade moved to Kelly's Ford, then on to Catletts Station on the 15th to observe Lee's cavalry activities." [Taylor, Saddle and Saber, p. 99.] *Corporal Nelson Taylor wrote on 6th August 1863 about the " . . . Cavalry fight witch took place on the 1st August thiss month between Gen Burford and Stuart Cavalry Our Division crossed the River at Rappahanock Station about 8 oclck in the morning and it was 10 before we w wer all over and then we advanced along the Rail Road towards Culpepper nearly 3 miles to Brandy Station and there we found a plenty of Stuarts Cavalry and a light Battery and the fight opened It was as hot a day as I ever saw They stood and fought there awhile and then they comenced falling back towards Culpepper slowly and we folowing Our regt was in the front and under fire all the time Skirmishing Chargeing and meeting charges with them. We followed them nearly to Culpepper and then there Infantry relieved there Cavalry and then it was our turn to fall back and there Cavalry and some Infantry folowing hurrying us up for 1 hour untill it was dark and on to the same ground where we found them in the morning." [Taylor, Saddle and Saber, pp. 101-102.]*

LETTERS OF JOHN AND HUGH CROSGROVE

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Kelleys Ford Va. Aug. 7th/63

Dear Sister

I just returned from Alexandra found the regt. just 'going out' on pickett and concluded we had done a good days work and did not go out but we had not been more than two hours when we were sent for as they had not men enough so out we go but were permitted to sleep all night and were not disturbed either by our own men or the enemy. I suppose you have heard of the two late cav. fights we had last Saturday and Monday I was not here at either of them but think our men had a pretty hot time of it though there were only four killed and about 30 wounded which considering the circumstances was lucky there were some officers wounded but none killed one officer **Lieut. Burrows** of Co. K. from Fredonia was wounded badly in the right wrist and slightly in the neck he was a brave and galliant officer he is one of the few who earned his position in the field the only man wounded in our co was **Henry Masse** he was burned with a shell on the arm it tore his blouse and shirt and just started the blood a little his arm was pretty sore next Morn. and the Capt. thought he had better go to the Hospital **Henry** is a good soldier and was promoted to Corp. last fall as regards the fight I can tell you but little but we drove the rebs the first day nearly to Culpeper but they got reinforcements and we had to fall back we are on the south side of the Rhaprahanoc from Rielleys Ford all the way up and have just completed the Railroad Bridge one the river. though it is my opinion that we will not make any offensive movements (more than strong Cav. reconaissance to find out the position of the enemy) untill we get the conscripts down here nearly every regt. has sent their details of officers home after them we will send ours in a day or two I am glad they are going to fill up the old regt. for there are not more than 3 or 400 men in the largest regt. fit for duty but they all have their full share of officers. then putting these new men into old regt. they will sooner be fit for the field than they would if formed in new regt. and will not be near as expensive the weather is verry hot now when I was in Washington it was so hot that we could not go around any I was with in 2 miles of the paroled camp and the convalesunt camp should liked to have went there would have found a good many old acquaintance there. but I had no horse and it was so hot to go on foot. It seemed like civilization to get to the city again. the Guerilias are thick between Alexandra and Centerville they captured a large waggon train on Saturday we expected to meet **Mosely Bond** but did not but I was verry unfortunate on the way I lost my menoramdom book that I had just put 33 postage stamps in and I had your Photograph and **Edd &** caps pictures a lot of letters and some papers that were of considerable importance to me so I will have to mail this letter without a stamp

Well how do you all get along at home; much the same as usual I suppose I often think of you all and would like to see you and have a good long visit with you but I am not willing to give up the ship yet and let the rebs have their own way I shall stand to my post and trust in God who will not suffer a sparrow to fall to the ground without his notice. I read **Cap** letter last night glad to hear from you please write soon give me all the news my love to all and write all the news to your Brother **John Crosgrave**

I forgot to say the rest of the boys are all well. I saw **Hugh** yesterday he was well he had a chance to go home after conscripts and refused

This is the last surviving letter written by John Crosgrove. "On the 10th [June 1864] the enemy and Gregg's division met on the Louisa Court House road where the enemy was posted behind barricades in dense timber about three miles from Trevillian. . . When Sackett gave the 'Forward' command, the men sprang into the woods with a yell. Col. Sackett and about forty men fell before the fire of the enemy, but the balance of the regiment forced on to the enemy's lines and pressed on taking over 80 prisoners, many of whom testified to the heroic daring of the 9th in breaking their line. . . The losses in the 9th N.Y. were the largest of any engagement during the war: about 300 killed and captured in addition to the wounded. Due to the scarcity of ambulance wagons, the wounded had to be transported in old buggies, carts, and any other available vehicle. The suffering of the wounded was intense, the heat of the summer and dusty roads adding to their discomfort." [Taylor, Saddle and Saber, pp. 155-156.] One of those wounded at Trevillian Station on 11th June 1864 and captured by the enemy was our John. He died in enemy hands on 25th June 1864 at Gordonsville, Orange County, Virginia.

7 Letter from Hugh Crosgrove to his sister, 27th March 1864.

On 27th January 1864, Hugh's Regiment, the 154th New York Infantry Volunteer Regiment, returned from the Knoxville Campaign to Lookout Valley near the Tennessee-Georgia border, and encamped near the headquarters of Major-General Joseph Hooker. "Leaves of absence were granted to some members of the regiment during the winter, and these helped to keep the morale of the 154th high, as did packages, letters, and newspapers sent from loved ones at home. . . On March 11, Colonel Buschbeck's brigade was reviewed by General Howard. A brass band played lively patriotic tunes as the men marched. In the morning of March 30, the regiment, along with the 134th New York and the 27th Pennsylvania, all under the command of Colonel Buschbeck, were sent on a reconnaissance up the Trenton Valley, west of Lookout Mountain. They advanced to a point several miles north of the Trenton (Georgia) Ironworks, and on April 1 returned to camp, having marched forty-eight miles and encountered no opposition. The leisure days of winter camp were drawing quickly to an end. . . Spring had come to Lookout Valley and with it would come a new campaign." [Mark H. Dunkelman and Michael J. Winey, The Hardtack Regiment (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1981) pp. 99-100.]

Lookout Valley Tenn. Mar 27th [1864]

Dear Sister

I recieved your kind and welcomb letter yesterday with pleashure to hear from home and to know that you are all well these few lines leave me enjoying good health as usual we are a going to have a funiral sermon preacher here this after noon for a member of our Co who died in the Hospital a few days ago he was taken sick the first of last may and was sent to the hospital and stayed there till about two weeks ago and then he was sent back to the Co for duty he had not been back to the Co but two or three days when he was sent to the hospital agane and died there with in two weeks you wanted to know if we have light bread now we have good soft bread all the time now for the last month fresh every other day I just this minite drew five loves for **John Wilson** and mysilf for two days ration **John Wilson** is a brother to **Wallas**. Wilson that was in **Bliss's** Co. **Lieut Beardsley** has resigned and gone home **Lieut C. L. Barnhart** is in command of our Co now **James Strain** is well but lame yet I thank that he will be put into the Invaled Corps he has been examened twice since he came back to the Co. he will never be able to march and cary his knapsack agane. for it takes a good sound man to do it it is the hardest work that I ever don I had rather cradel

all all day than to march and cary the knapsack and gun and sixty rounds of Catrages and from three to five day's rations which makes about as big a load as a man wants to cary. I had a letter from **John** a few days ago he is well the boys are all well in the co now we are have ing fine weather here now but we had quite a snow storme here last sunday night the snow was fourteen inches deep monday morning that fell that night it all went off in a day or two it was the first snow we have had here this winter. the peach trees ware all in blossome two weeks ago but I am afraid that the cold spell killed them all write soon give my respects to all enquiring friends from your Brother **Hugh**

8 Letter of Hugh Crosgrove to his sister Sarah, 11 August 1864.

From 20th July to 2nd September 1864, Hugh's regiment, the 154th New York Infantry Volunteer Regiment, was encamped just north of Atlanta, Georgia, during the Seige of Atlanta being waged by Major-General William T. Sherman. Hugh and his comrades in the 154th spent from mid-July to mid-August 1864 "on picket duty and constructing an elaborate series of entrenchments. Four-foot-high log walls were built and topped off with a raised log as a headguard. In front of these walls a five-foot ditch was dug, and beyond that sharpened stakes pointed towards the enemy. Finally, treetops were laid close together, with the heavier limbs sharpened and left to protrude towards the Rebels. The Union soldiers would build one such line of breastworks, then send out fatigue parties to build another, closer to the enemy. When the forward line was completed they would move up and send out parties, as before, to begin a third line still closer. This type of strategy was used by all the encircling bluecoats; the stranglehold on Atlanta grew tighter and tighter, and the city was subjected to heavy bombardment. . . The regiment suffered no casualties during the siege of Atlanta. But regular hard labor and the tremendous heat wore the men down, and Emory Sweetland noted they were plagued by lice, flies, ticks, lizards, snakes, and chiggers." [Mark H. Dunkelman and Michael J. Winey, The Hardtack Regiment (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1981) pp. 119-121.] It is sad to note that when he wrote the following letter Hugh, although having had a letter from his brother John that apparently described his being wounded in action, Hugh was unaware that John subsequently had died from his wounds in June, two months before.

Near Atlanta Geor Aug 11th 1864

Dear sister **Sarah**

I received your kind and welcomb letter yestarday and glad to hear from you and to know that you are all well I now write you these few lines to let you now that I am still enjoying good health as usual it has been quite rainey here for the last few days I was glad to hear a little more from **John** and hope that by the time you receive this that you will have a letter from him stating that he is doing well and hope that he will soon get a furlough and go home for I think that he would get along better there than he would in the hospital for I think that you would take better care of him I wish that you would send me another hat by mail send a good stout one and not quite as light one as the last for it did not stand the hard usuaged that a hat has to here I do not care what it cost send a black one. the last one that you sent was so bad that I had to throw it away sometime ago and have been waring a cap for the last month. we have got som large guns here now throwing shell into Atlanta som that throw shell that ways 72 lbs there is some deserters that comes in all most every day they say that we are cutting Atlanta all to peaces I should think that we would for there has been nothing but shelling every day since we came here. tell **Robert Alateis** (?) that I have been looking for a letter from him for some time back the boys are all well **Dolph Edgerton**

LETTERS OF JOHN AND HUGH CROSGROVE

11

and **Deloss Peck** are boat here yet and well I wish that you would send me a few postage stamps in your next letter as I have written all that I can think of I will close by sending my best respects to all enquiring friends write soon and give me all the news.

from your Affectionate Brother **Hugh**

Lookout Valley Tenn²⁷

Dear Sister

I received
your kind and welcome letter
yesterday with pleasure

to hear from home and to
know that you are all well
these of our loved ones
are enjoying good health
as usual we are going to
have a funeral sermon
preached here for a member
this afternoon for a member
of our church who died in
the Hospital a few days
ago he was taken sick
the first of last May and
was sent to the hospital
and stayed there till about
two weeks ago and then

From photocopy of original sent to J.E. Stockman by Virginia Peterson, Rochester, New York.

Civil War letter of Sergeant HUGH CROSGROVE, Co. E, 154th New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment,
Lookout Valley, Tennessee, 27th March 1864, p. 1.

he was sent back to the
Co for duty he had not
been back to the Co but
two or three days when he
was sent to the hospital
again and died there with
in two weeks you wanted
to know if we have light
bread now we have good
soft bread all the time
now for the last month
fresh every other day
I just this minute drew
five loaves for John Wilson
and myself for two days
ration John Wilson is a
brother to William Wilson
that was in Bliss's Co.
Lieut. Beardsley has resigned
and gone home Lieut. C. I.
Barnhart is in command of
our Co now

The boys are all well
in the Co. now we are
haveing fine weather here
now but we had quite a
snow storm here last sun
day night the snow was
fourteen inches deep Monday
morning that fell that night
it all went off Monday
is two it was the first
snow we have had here
this winter the peach
trees were all in blossom
two weeks ago but I am
afraid that the cold spell
killed them all - soon
give my respects to all
enquiring friends from
Yours Brother
Hugh

Near Atlanta Geor Aug 11th 1864

Dear sister Sarah

I received your kind and welcome letter yesterday and glad to hear from you and to know that you are all well I wish with you these few lines to best advise you that I am still enjoying good health as usual it has been quite warm here for the last few days I was glad to hear a little more from John and hope that by the summer you will have a little letter from him stating that he is doing well and hope that he will soon get a furlough and go home for I think you would get along better there than he would in the hospital for I think that you would take better care of him I wish that you would send me another hat by mail send a good stout one and not quite as light one as the last for it did not stand the hard usage that a hat has to here do not care what it cost send a black one the last one that you sent was so bad that I had to throw it away some time ago and have been wearing a cap for

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Civil War letter of Sergeant HUGH CROSGROVE of Co. E, 154th New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment, Near Atlanta, Georgia, 11th August 1864, p. 1.

