



CAMP "JOHN MANLEY," 154TH REG'T N. Y. VOL.,
1st Brigade, 2d Division, 11th Corps, Army Potomac.

Near Stafford C. H., Va.,

1863.

April 8, 1997
7 Arnold Street
Providence, RI 02906

Mr. Michael Irvin
19 Jaekle Avenue
Silver Creek, NY 14136

Dear Mr. Irvin,

It was good to talk with you last night, although obviously I would have preferred to have heard differently from you regarding your great-grandfather's diary. Still, I'm glad to be in touch with you and to have you on my rolls of descendants of members of the 154th New York Volunteers to represent John M. Irvin.

I just wanted to drop you a line to plead my case a final time. The goal of my work is to resurrect and commemorate the memory of the 154th New York. There are several ways in which I believe I'm accomplishing that goal. One is the annual reunions of descendants of members of the regiment, where we gather to remember the service of our ancestors and learn about what they endured during the war. Another is special projects like the mural I created next to the regiment's monument at Gettysburg, and the monument we descendants funded, erected and dedicated at Chancellorsville. A third is my publications on various aspects of the regiment's history, based on the vast amount of letters, diaries and accounts by members of the 154th which have been shared with me over the years by descendants of the soldiers. In those publications, the story of the 154th New York is being preserved for generations to come.

I am, of course, going to continue this work as time goes by. I'd very much like to add John Irvin's voice to the voices of his comrades as I chronicle their service. Whether I can do so is up to you, as the current caretaker of his diary. Which do you think your great-grandfather would prefer? To add his voice to those of his comrades of the 154th in telling their story? Or to remain mute? I sincerely hope you'll reconsider your decision.

I'll be sending you an invitation to our reunion sometime in July, and will look forward to meeting you at the gathering.

Yours truly,

Mark H. Dunkelman