

#1 ACM

August 14 1862

Dear Parents

I am well as usual we got to camp about 10. O. clock that night safe and sound I have been examined and sworn in so you see I am checked to go to Dixie there is talk that we are going to get our uniforms to night if we do I shall be at home ~~tomorrow~~ tomorrow and if we do not get them I shall come home as soon as we do get them the first night in bunk I liked to froze to Death we did not have any blankets but last night our Company Drawed 50 blanket so that we slept more comfortable we have had good victuals and all we want of it and cooked good to I dont ask for any better living we are camped in a pine grove and a pretty place to I dont know as I have any more to write this time give my love to all

Yours from

Your son

Alva C Merrill

2 ACM

August 26 1862

Dear Parents

I again take my pen in hand to pen you a few lines yesterday I felt pretty sick but today I feel a little better I went in for my ration today noon I think by tom or so I shall be well my arm is doing first rate we have drawed our canteens and the boys went up to the spring this morning to fill them some got water and some got milk I sent my canteen up by Mr. Goodrich and had it filled with milk it holds 3 pints and I had to pay 3 cts so you see I had some bread and milk for Dinner if you are a coming out here I wish you would come the day before Camp meeting and may be I can go home with you and bring some more patches with you I have used this I took when I was to home for something else and bring some good Apples to I want you to write to me as soon as you get this and tell me all about who is enlisting and where the war meetings are we dont have to drill much yet the next morning after I got back here when (?) I was going out of the barracks a man met me in the door says he How do you feel this morning I said first rate and he put my name down to ~~stand~~ stand guard the next 24 hours on guard at 5 o clock and off at 11 on at 3 and off at 5 and just so through the night

I cant think of much to write today write as soon as you get this and tell me when the Camp meeting begins I should like very much to be to it and I think if you come of out just before the meeting begins I can get a furlough to go back with you give my love to Nancy and Irvin and all inquiring friends

Yours from your son

Alva C Merrill

direct as follows
Mr. Alva C Merrill
Jamestown Chataqua Co. N Y
(Care of Captan D B Allen)

Oct 22 1862

Dear brother and sister

I now sit down to write you a few lines I am enjoying the greatest of earthly blessings called health and Pa is well to it is very windy here to day the wind is in the northwest but I am turned around here so that it seems to me as if it was in the south east yesterday we marched up to Fairfax to let General Seigel see us Drill a little after that we were marched about 3 miles north of the village and were drawn up in line of battle there were seven regiments of us and a batallion of artillery we were reserves and had to lay back in the woods about $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile from the main line. well Irvin I & Horace have been fixing over our house to day we went about $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile from camp and paid 10 cts for two bundles of cornstalks to weave into the gable end of our dwelling we wove them in so that we have quite a comfortable house now you wrote that you talked of having a husking bee I wish the next time you write you would tell me whether you had one or not and if you did tell me what kind of a time you had and the next one you have dont forget to write Horace and Me. well Nancy how do you do to day & what are you doing ma wrote that you sprained your ankle hasit got better yet I hope it has I want to know how many bushels of aples and how many bushels of potatoes you have got in the Sellar and I want to know whether there has been any snow there yet I expected when I got down in dixie to find hot weather but there has not been any hotter weather here than I have seen up in old Cattaraugus the first week after we crossed the Potomac it was just about as warm as it generally is up there in haying time since that we have had some of as cold nights as I want to see whil I have to stay in these little nasty tents some nights when I go to bed I put on my overcoat and button it up and put on my night cap and then my cap and then turn my overcoat cape overmy head then put a blanket over me an then when I wake up I am shaking as if I had the ague. now Mother I guess I will write a little to you are you well to day I am afraid you work so hard that you will be sick I want you to be careful you had better hire some than to get sick when Sunday comes I think I can see the people gathering to the meeting house to hear the word of god preached and it seems just as though I should like to be there to but there is the same god to worship here that there is at home you mus pray for me and tell the people of god they must well mother (give my respects to all enquiring friends tell Mike he must write and tell him where to direct you said Caroline wasto our house did she say anything about getting a letter from me) I want you should get that money that Mr Dawley owes me and send it to me in the next letter I want it to get me a ruber blanket Horace bought him one to day and give \$ 3 for it and I want you to send me some three cent stamps say 50 ~~cent~~ cents worth or such mater they are a prety scarce thing here I suppose pa has described our journey so that there will be no need of my describing it one thing certain it was a good long ride oh one thing I would have liked to forgotten yesterday I attended the funeral of one of our fellow Soldiers his name was Myers a member of Co D he died of conjection on the brain I guess that I wont write any more this time write as soon as you get this and dont forget the money and the stamps

Yours from your Son

Alva C Merrill

Camp halfway between
 Warrington & Haymarket
 Nov 8 1862

My Dear Mother

I now take my pen in hand to let you know that I am well and so is Pa I suppose Pa has wrote to you since we left Fairfax. we left there Sunday Nov 2 about noon and marched till about sundown then we camped for the night in the morning we hitched up and started again that afternoon our line of march was over the bull run battle ground I saw some awful sights that afternoon shells and cannon balls were scattered all along the road human hands & arms and skulls and men buried with their face out or their knees out and some that were not buired at all but a man is not of much consequence here we stopped 1 hour for dinner in the woods about 2 miles from the bull run creek a good many of the tree tops were cut off and some of them nearly a foot through then we passed along through a camp where a regiment of rebel cavalry camped the night before we passed through Gainesville and Haymarket this village was prety much deserted it has since been burned by Gen Seigels order then we camped three miles from thoroughfare gap the rebs were trying to get through the gap we could hear the cannons evry minute General Burnside came with his troops on the other side of the ridge and attacked them and drove them down past the gap he has taken Warrington Nov 7 marched 7 miles towards Warrington and camped where we now are tomorrow is sunday probably we shall have to march we have had plenty of Honey and apples here Horace and I have apple sauce three time a day we have sugar to sweeten it with & it tastes first rate about them logs at the mill Pa says that they are not divided & he cannot tell anything about them I dont see but what pa is as cheerful as any of them & I dont think he grows poor any lately he is not lame & does not cough any more than he did at home about that one that deserted from our Company his name was John ~~Whitney~~ Whitney he lived Geo Y beebes Horace likes it prety well here I think he and I tents together now Jate(?) Hull and Theadore got so shffless that we left them Pa says that he wants Leonard to fix that fence that he spoke to him about before it freezes much Nov 7 it snowed half the day I am tough as a bear and growing fat evry day Write soon from your Son

A C Merrill

4 ACM

Camp near Thoroughfare gap
Monday Nov 10

Dear Mother

I have just got time to finish my letter when I left off before it was to go out to Roll call and after that the lights had to be put out then in the morning we got marching orders to be ready at 8 oclock so you see I had no more time until we stopped we marched back to within $\frac{1}{2}$ mile of the Gap we marched over creeks and mountains when we got to camp I was tired enough so that I did not want to write and Monday morning I was called to go on picket we went out through the gap about 2 miles and tramped through the lots and then they had more than they wanted so that about $\frac{1}{2}$ of our co was sent back to camp got back about sun down tired out and now I can write. Pa's well and on guard I am well and should like soldiering first rate if we had a little more to eat If you have not got a map of the seat of war I want you to get one & I will write all of our marches so that you can see where we go our Brigade is stationed here at Gap to guard it Probably we shall stay here quite a spell I received the money you sent and was very glad to get it Pa has saved up his made up his mind that he can't get along without paying out some money I will give you the bill of what he bought this morning

3 apples	10 cts
2 lbs of crackers	40 cts
5 " " potatoes	<u>25 cts</u>
	75 cts

so you see if you get anything here you have to pay for it if you are a mind to you may send 2 or three dollars more in your next letter you may think it is a good deal of money but I got just what you sent me and no boots and no rubber blanket what you send can come out of what I have sent home I have got to pay 6 dollars for a pair of boots and 3 for a blanket we have not got that box yet I don't think of anything more this time write soon write about the folks down north & ~~the~~ tell me who is drafted and who is Governor

Yours From your
Son A. C. Merrill

it is getting to be almost roll call time the snow is gone off and it is pleasant weather kiss Nancy & Irvin for me

Nov 23 1862
Camp near Fairfax Va

Dear Mother I now sit down to write you a few lines. I am alive and well yet but dont know when my turn will come to be sick. Monday Nov. 19 we got orders to pack up & start and in less than one hour we were on the road we started about 6 o'clock at night from the gap and marched to Haymarket that night camped there till morning then we started again pretty soon after we started it began to rain and rained all day long when we left Fairfax they made us leave our knapsacks so you see our blankets got wet so that they were not very light to carry and not very nice to sleep on we marched the second day within 2 miles of Centerville camped for the night on the same ground that we camped on when we went down it rained all night that night in the morning we started again and marched to within 2 miles of Fairfax we got there about 10 o'clock it still continued to rain rained all that day and all that night and the next day and night so that we got pretty well soaked up I stood it well enough but it made Pa pretty near sick he is getting well now I guess if we stay here a day or two longer he will be well again. I dont know how long we shall stay here nor I dont know what we came here ~~for~~ for it is talked that we are a going to winter quarters but nobody knows any thing here I will tell(?) you so that maybe you can tell something about what we are a going to do in General Seigels Corps in the division under brigadier General Van Stanweir I wish you would write where the 44 and 64 is if you can find out I heard they passed us when we were at New Baltimore and I hear that theres talk of settling this war does the papers talk of any such thing I suppose today is Sunday but it dont seem much as Sundays used to in Cattaraugus we have had a general inspection today had our knapsacks and guns inspected stood about an hour in the cold it is a pretty cold day when they give me enough to eat I like soldiering first rate like it full as well as I thought I should I am growing fleshy evry day... Horace and I tent ~~alone~~ alone now Jalt(?) and Theadore got so nasty that we could not stand it with them and not only nasty but lousy to you need not tell anybody so but it is a fact you better believe that I and Horace takes a lot of comfort together if one gets any good thing the other has half I dont know what I should do with out him I know I should be homesick if he was not here we had some bread and butter the other day for the first time since we left Jamestown and it tasted good it tasted a little like money the butter only cost 20 cts a pound and not first rate at that I have not got any books yet our quarter master has mad a requisition for us to draw rubber blankets and I guess we shall get them there is a great deal of sickness in this regiment no more this time write as soon as you get this write all the war news yours from your son

Alva C Merrill

December 23 1862
Camp near Falmouth V.A.

Dear mother I now sit down to pen you a few lines I cant say that I am well nor I am not exactly sick either I have had a very bad cough now for about two weeks and my lungs are very sore but I think I shall get over it without calling on the Doctor I guess that I will give you a little description of our last march we left camp near Fairfax Dec 10 marched all day passed by Fairfax station then we marched a little each day for 8 days Dec 12 we reached Dumfry the rebel Cavalry left there about 3 hours before we got there Dec 14 we reached Stafford C.H. the next day we marched to within 8 miles of Fredricksburg ~~the~~ the next day we was called out about 8 o. clock in the evening and marched till 1 o. clock that night mud knee deep then we was ordered to stack arms and be ready to fall in at a minutes warning we laid there till 3 o. clock the next day then we marched about a mile and camped where we now are. we arr ~~are~~ not in the reserve now we are in the front line and as near the rebs as any of them I persume that you have got news that our men have taken Fredricksburg another great Union victory but the truth is our men got whiped there pretty bad to Burnside shelled the town in the first place and drove them out onto the hills into their breastworks then Hallack ordered him to crossed the river which he did and tried to storm their batteries which they could not do and had to fall back with great loss on our side our men are all on this side of the river our pickets are on this side of the river and theirs on the other we are camped within about a mile of the river we can see the rebel fortifications from our camp how long we shall lay here I do not know hope not long I had rather march than to lay still last Sunday I went down about 4 miles to the 44 and had a good visit with Wilbur I tell you I was glad to see him he has got to be a sergeant he looks as natural as ever he looks as toug as a bear the rest of the boys that went from Dayton in that regiment that is left are all well I got a letter monday from Mrs. Howlett with the stuff for ink in it as soon as I can get a little time I shall answer it I have written one or two letters before this that I have not received any answer I wish that you would write to me a little oftener than you do Pa has got 3 now within a few days and no letter for me tell Nancy and Irvin to write some to ~~me~~ I should like very much to hold Christmas and Neyeas at home but that is impossible it seems hard to have Pa deprived of the comforts of life as he is if he was only at home I could stay and feel a great deal better about things than I do now not but what I like to have him with me but I fell as though his place at home and if he wa there to see to things i think it would be much better if you see any of Mr Dawleys folks tell them that I saw Ed Ellis and that he is well and that he had heard from Wat a day or two before and he is well I dont know as I have any thing more to write this time also good day a mery Christmas to you all this is from your son ~~A.C.~~ A.C. Merrill about that stuff we got in that box we got the bag of ~~bread~~ Dried fruit and 6 lbs of butter and a flanel rag and pa got about a ~~one~~ pound of cheese by teasing hard for it P W Hubbard used as much of the butter as any body I dont want you should ever put any thing in the box for me that is a going to be delivered to him

ACM # 9

Dec 26 1862
Camp near Falmouth

Dear Mother again I take my pen in hand to let you know that I am still living and I feel better than I did when I wrote before I received a letter from you dated Dec 17 with \$1 in money and one stamp I was glad to get it it came to me Christmas I done know but you ment it for a Christmas present at any rate I called it so Wilbur is over here to day and he and pa has gone down to Co. B they are about $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile from here supporting a Battery O! I guess I will tell you what I had for dinner yesterday Horace and I had sow pork and some dessicated potatoes and apple sauce and plenty of sugar and some molasses candy after dinner I went over on to the river bank and sat and looked at the rebel pickets and at our pickets I was just a good rifle shot from them it looked just like little boys play. I sat and thought of home and those I left behind me but I suppose they are enjoying themselves at any rate I hope so I tell you I thought of a good many things in the course of two hours but I can tell it to you better when I get home then I can write it I might write you a little about P W Hubbard but it is to mean to write with a pen in fact it is to mean to believe I persume he will be at home in a short time and be as good a Christian as ever. I guess you have not had much experience in soldiering if you had you would not wonder at my going in with the rest I tell yo it is astonishing to see folks steal here folks that would not do it at home no more than nothing in the world Pa got about 2 lbs of sugar of Mr Hubbard and in the night one of his tent mates stole part of it I will not call any names but it was one from our own town. I persume you remember the man that stayed to Mr. Garfields the night we stayed there just before w e left Jamestown he died a few minutes ago he has been well and tough till a few days ago I have not learned what was the matter with him we have heard here that W.H. seeker was dead and we have heard that he was getting better and I dont know which to believe our regiment has dwindled away considerable since we left Jamestown we left there with 900 and 70 odd men and now we cannot muster quite 600 you have not written any thing about my rifle yet I wrote to you that I wanted it got home and cleaned and kept at home for when I get home I shall want to use it pleas tell me about it in your next I dont think of any more to write this time Pa is well and the rest of the folks to.as far as I know yours from your Son

Alva C Merrill
R C Merrill

please send me a few stamps in your next and tell me what the brave boys that have got home have to say about the war the most of us think they were home sick

dont let anybody see this letter

Jan 27 1863
Camp near Falmouth

Dear mother

I am seated in my tent with my blouse wrapped around my foot trying to write to you but I have got almost discouraged about your writing to you anymore I have ~~written~~ written two letters before this and have not yet any answer to any of them I dont know as you have got them but if you have I dont think you have done exactly right in not answering them but I write this time in hopes that I shall get an answer Pa is well and I am well and tough as a nut but I have got a boil on my left foot on the heel cord which is not very ~~pleasent~~ pleasant but I think it will get well in a day or ~~two~~ two. Pa got two letters from you ~~this~~ this morning no 23 & 24 no 19 & 20 & 22 he has not got probably they are lost you sais you heard we had crossed the river and had had a fight it was another of these UNION VICTORIES I will try and give you a little history of the fight Jan 14 pretty early in the day about 3 oclock we started from camp and marched till daylight and made up some brush tents and then we went to work our regt and the 73 P. V. was there fixing roads we stayed there a ~~couple~~ couple of days and then went back to our old camp stayed there two nights and then we went back to the same place and went work again we were fixing road for the army to cross the river is was about 9 miles from Falmouth up the river got evrything all ready and the whole Potomac army was in motion calculating to cross the river bu Jan 20 just at dark it began to rain rained all night and all the next day and all that night and the next day you would have thought about Virginia mud if you had been here it was just half way to my knees evry step that day the whole army was ordered back to their old camps our Company was detailed to help the wagons through they stoped about 3 o clock in the afternoon to get something to eat when they got ready to start Horace and I was not quite ready so we got a little behind and we had to go just as fast as we could to overtake them we catched up a little after dark and I could have kept up well enough but Horace tuckered out he thought he could not go another step but we got to the woods and made us a fire and went to bed rested ~~good~~ good and the next day we was enquiring for the 154 N. Y but we found it without ~~any~~ much difficulty you cant begin to imagine anything about the mud here was a Canon stuck and there was a pontoon stuck and there a baggag wagon and there a dead mule and here a tired out Soldier and so it went we got to camp the 23 we did not go to our old camp but stoped ~~about~~ about 1 mile from it thus ends the great battle mother I wish you would send me pamphlet of some kind to read you can do it up just as you would a paper I dont care much what it is but something interesting Uncle Norman was here but he did not stay here long I did not see him but a few minutes I gots the boots and was very glad of them they ~~fit~~ fit first rate and I think they are a good pair only there is not nails enough in the botom it is a hard place for boots here the gloves you sent by the Captain I have not got yet the Captain had his sachel checked and when he got to Washington it had not come and when he got ready to come away it had not come so he come without it may be you will want to know how far I have read in my testament I begin at the 16 Chapter of Acts Horace has read his through ~~the~~ the paymaster is here he has

ACM # 110

paid the 29 N. Y & the 73 P. V. we expect evry day that he will call on us. well it is six months yesterday since I enlisted it dont seem as though it was so I think my 3 years will be up pretty soon I can stand ~~any~~ any thing I have seen yet but I suppose a bullitt would kill me as quick as it would any body Mother you cant begin to think what a hard place for morals it is here when I first got here I was perfectly astonished at it but I ~~cant~~ tell you when you have lived without bread for 2 or three days you would get something if you could I hope I shall not get to be a very big thief I suppose P. W. Hubard is at home enjoying himself BRAVE BOY you spoke about his coming into the ranks I hope he wont any way for I was glad to get rid of him and so was the whole Company I suppose he will enjoy just as much religion as he ever did but I shall not have to Ans for what he does I shall have enough to answer for without I was very ~~glad~~ glad to hear that Mary had experienced Religion & I hope she will live it I will write to her as soon as I can get a stamp please tell me in your next if any more of the girls to the Sumit have been Converted ~~and~~ and what their names be and I want to know if you have got that money from Mr dawlee⁶⁵ yet I think you would have a good (?) to go there and stay all day I think I should like to make two or three calls down that way give my love to Nancy and Irvin and to all the rest of the folks I dont think of any thing more to write this time please write as soon as you get this this from your Son

Alva C. Merrill

Irvin here is a ring that I made of Laurel root ye can take some sand paper and make it smooth and here is an old bosom stud that I found at Camp Seward

please send a few stamps

ACM # 11

Camp near Falmouth
Feb 2 1863

Dear Mother

we received two months pay last Saturday enclosed please find a check of \$ 18 you can set it down with the other that I sent home I shall send a little more before great while I dont suppose you can read this at all I have got a felon on my fore finger of my right hand that helps some about writing I think I have killed it so it will get well in a few days our Surgeon is going home and I am going to send it by him I wish you would write to me once in a while when Pa gets a letter from you he has to read it 3 or 4 times over before he will let me read it so I have concluded not to ask him to let me read any more of his letters

no more at present write often

Remain as ever your ungrateful

Son A.C. Merrill

Camp near Stafford C.H.

Feb 14 1863

Dear Mother ^a

your most welcome letter of the 4 came to hand in due time the first I had received from home since last Christmas I had made up my mind you did not calculate to write to me again at all I came in by my fireplace and lit a candle and you had better believe it done me good to read it I almost forgot I was a Soldier ~~o~~ for a few minutes let that be one of the times that I forget it and I will tell you one of the times when I think of it we broke camp feb the 5th about 9 o clock in the morning it commenced snowing about the time we started and snowed all the way we camped about 3 o clock soon after we got our tents pitched it began to rain and rained all night camped right in the open field the snow about 5 inches deep you can calculate it was anything but fun the next morning they took us up in to the woods and we ~~we~~ pitched our tents again we had not been there more than an hour when it was strike tents and fall in marched to within 1 mile of Stafford CH. and now we have got good winter quarters for the time I expect evry day when we shall have to dig out I am glad Irvin can take comfort in going to spelling schools I notice I would like to hitch the colts and go to a spelling school myself I reckon that I could raise ned(?) equal to the best of them but I reckon I shall ~~be~~ have to wait a while you said you wanted me to write what I wanted sent I should like a good wool hat and a pair of checkerd shirts and a coffee pot that will hold about 3 pints you can pack it full with butter or dried fruit so that it will not Jam very easy and you may put in a paper of shoe nails and some waxed ends and a severing (?) awal(?) and a peging awl both with handles to them and two pair of socks please send me by mail as soon as you get this about 50 cts worth of nice paper and envelops I want something nice and I cant get it here do them up nice so that they will not get mussed up it is mail time now and I must hurry up or it will not go ~~until~~ till monday what you send you had better send right away for as soon as the weather will ~~improve~~ do we shall be pulling out of this the receipt for making ink 1 lb of extract of logwood 1 ounce of bycronate of potash to 10 galls of water I have not got any papers you sent yet please write soon give my love to Nancy and Irvin please write as soon as you get this and dont forget to send the paper and envelops

this from your Son

A.C. Merrill

Feb 22 1868

Camp near Stafford G.D. Va

Dear

Mother

I take this opportunity to let you know that I still enjoy good health and all the comforts of a Soldiers life last Monday we were reviewed by Generals Sigel & Hooker there was 4 regiments in line of battle our regt. was on the right then there was three regts held as reserves then the Generals rode all around us accompanied by their Staff and orderlies I tell you it would have been a sight for you folks that never see any soldiers it was a very pleasant day Tues it commenced snowing about 4 o'clock am and snowed all day and I was in Picket about a mile and a half from camp wedns it commenced raining and rained all day Thurs it was rather a cold day but did not storm Friday it was warm and Sat was as nice a day as ever I saw but some time in the night it commenced snowing in the morning the snow was nearly a foot deep I dont know what time it is but should it was 4 o'clock and it has not stopped snowing yet so you see we have sudden changes here as well as in Ballaranges

the prospect is now that George Real will go home on 10 days furlough and Horace wants to send for some things and so do I and so we thought we would have a small boy sent - start - at - as soon as you possibly can after you get this so that it will get there to Washington before he does and I think he can put ^{it} aboard the cars for Brooks Station so that we can get it in a short time I will give you a list - of what I want - sent - you know I wrote for some cotton shirts I think if you have not got them made you had better buy some flannel shirts ready made as you will not have time to make any you need not send the coffee pot as Horace is going to send for that - I want 1 or two pair of socks and some awls with handles and some waxed ends and some shoe nails and some dried fruit - and put up $\frac{1}{4}$ of a pound of extract of logwood and some of the potash to make ink with and I want a good wool hat - be sure and get one large enough and I presume you will think of a good many things that I won't think of. I want some maple sugar now - mother I don't want you to use the money that I send home to pay Pa's debts with I want you should keep enough of it - so that you can have some money by you all the time I want you

should use what you want of it - and what
you dont use let some good man have it on
interest - you knud not ~~pay~~^{use} another cent of
it to pay Pos debts with men that he ows can
wait till he gets home If I should live to
get home I shall want my money where I
can get it - I dont know as I ever shall get
home but I kind to think I shall there was
very heavy fire ing all round to day I dont
know what it was for but I suppose they were
celebrating Washingtons birth day there has
been talk here that Sigels army was a going to
be shipped off south in the spring please
tell me in your next if there is any thing
in the tribune to that effect - I dont think
of any thing more to write about this time
please write often I will answer all the letters
you write to me it does me a good deal of good
to read your letters I wish I am going to send
you a piece of a hard tack I want you should eat
it - and see if you think you could live on them
without much of any thing else and not half
enough of them

so good by this from your
Son Chas H Merrill

as they have all got a direction to put on to
the box. I thought - I would write one
to and then you can take which one you
are a mind to

Mr. Horace N. Darbee

Co K 154 Regt N. T. S. I

Washington D. C.

(in care of the quartermaster)

ACM # 14

Camp near Stafford Ch

Dear Mother

as Mr Badgero is going home I thought I would write a letter to you I have heard that he was going then I have heard that he was not and this morning I hear that he is going right away I will send Irvin my Neck tie it is one that I bought to James-town and wore it some while I staid ther but since I came to Virginia Ladies are not very plenty so I dont have any use for it

ACM

Mother you must write as often as you can afford to I expected Geo would bring me a good long letter from you I got the gloves you sent two or three days ago give my love to all yours in haste

from your Son

A.C. Merrill

Camp John Manly
Virginia March

Dear Mother

I have just come in off from picket went out Sat noon and came in Tues noon did not see any rebels Mr. Badgers brought me a letter from you I was very glad to hear from you and to hear that you was enjoying such good health it is a great blessing to enjoy good health at home or abroad I have enjoyed good health so far and I hope I shall till I get home I will tell you what I know about 9 months men we enlisted for 3 years unless sooner discharged and was mustered in to the United States service for 3 years but there was fraud used about it and they think that they cant hold up the Col of the 29 N.Y. was at Wash and he sad that our regt was down on the record as 9 months men we got the just two weeks after it started evry thing all safe and we was very glad to get it the coffee pot and spider is just what we kneed and I like my shirts first rate I hope pa will get his discharge for I know he cant stand the warm weather if he could get home I should feel a great deal better it makes me feel bad to think he is off here where he cant have no privalege at all if he was at home to see to things there I could stay my time out and feel a great deal better but when I think about home and no body ther to take care of you it makes me feel bad but then I hope for the best I have not been homesick yet but Pa wants to get home on furlow the worst kind and I hope he will have a chance before long and I hope that we shall all come home before long about our Capt's name I dont ~~know~~ exactly know who it will be there has been talk that Lieut. hotchil of Company C is a going to be our Capt. but I dont know whether he will or not you said you had been to Mr Dawleys and he had paid you the balance of my wage I wish you would tell me in your next wether he paid it willingly or not and what the said about me you did not write very particular about them I tell you I should like to go there and make a visit and there is one or two other places that I should like to call to very well but I think I will wait a little while I don think of much to write this time write as soon as you get this and tell me all the news I wish you would evry Sunday I like to hear from home this from your son

A C Merrill

ACM # 17

Camp John Manly Va Apr 12

Dear Mother

again I take my pen in hand to converse a short time with you I received your letter in due time for which I was very thankful I have not been very well for the past week I took an awful cold the last I was on picket and the doctor says I will have a run of the fever unless I am very ~~careful~~ careful Mr. Badgero is seckond Lieut in Co A our Capt name is Hotchkiss a Lieut from Co C our first Lieut is W F Chapman our seckond Lieut is Salmon ~~Beardsly~~ Beardsly so you see we have a full set again I like our Capt first rate as far as I have got acquainted with him I have kept a diyly memorandum since I came in to Va and at the end of this month I will send it home I dont suppose it will be worth much to you but ~~it~~ may be it will be a pleasure to me when I get home to look it over some are making calculations that they are going home in a short time but I dont make any such calculations you know I am one of the unbelieving kind I shall count myself lucky if I get home when my three years is up we have got orders to march tomorrow morning at 5 o clock it is not certain whether we shall go or not it is raining now that is one thing that makes me think we shall go for if there is any bad storm the 154 has to march or else go on picket we shall not (if we march) have any mail or have any chance to mail any letters so you kneed not think it strange if you do not hear from us in quite a spell you will have to excuse a short letter this time and I will try and write a longer one next time

So good bye for this time

I remain as ever your Son

Alva C Merrill