

Head Qtrs of 97 Reg N Y S V
Kalarama Heights D.C.

Washington March 22 1862

Dear Kate, I wrote you on Tuesday, we left Albany on that day at 4 O'Clock P.M. Arriving Safely at New York on the Next Morning day light. We went into the park Barracks in the centre of the city & remained there till 5 O'Clock just time enough to be armed & furnished with tents & camp equipage. We then took the Steam boat from Perth Amboy where we again took the Cars for Philadelphia We arrived there late at night but found the people up & waiting for us with abundance of refreshments, coffee & plenty of food for the entire regiment. We left Philadelphia for Baltimore about day light for Baltimore here we again changed cars marched over some of the ground where the Massachusetts 6th were assaulted 19th April last we left Baltimore for Washington at 7 O'clock reaching Washington about 9 O'clock and were ordered the next morning to Kalarama hights about a mile from the city. We are all well, the 81st are encamped right in sight of us several of their boys have been over here but I have seen yet none of them but I am going over as soon as I close this We are in a splendid place. And everywhere we look the eye is met with tents & troops marching & countermarching. but I tell you this country will remember this war desolation reigns, the bare buildings remain, these many of them are grand, the present prospects are we shall remain near here some time but the boys are anxious to go forward, McLellan with an army 160 thousand strong is moving down the Potomac & you may expect to hear within a month that Richmond is taken all are full of hope & expectation there are probably 100 thousand men within a mile of us. I have been in first rate health since leaving home. I can write no more at present but I want you to write often tell Elbert to write a few lines to me in your letter I want him to be a good boy mind his mother & study hard & learn fast to try to become a man. I have not yet got my valise. Much of the baggage was lost & my valise among the rest & I don't know but it is left in Albany. if so I may get it again Kiss the children for me write often Yours J. V. Ferguson

Enclosed is a Stamped Envelope Directed to our Camp.

(The following is typed from Mom's copies of her First Cousin Jack Ferguson's originals. The copies were made in the 1960s - During the Little Falls Sesqui-Centennial. At that time, there was a family reunion where Mom's generation got together with her siblings and her first cousins (Jack, Mitchell, Anna) and their kids. I imagine Jack's son Jack Jr. has the other half of the originals. This was not included in Nancy's originals. Read on, there is a cool surprise)

(Camp Scene from photograph)
Head Quarter 97 Reg N.Y.V
Fort Corcoran Apr 6, 1862

Dear Kate. Yours was received in due time & gave me great pleasure in its perusal. It relieved my anxiety much for when last home I feared for the health of Little Raymond & Elbert & borrowed some trouble on their account. I also was glad to hear that the rest of our friends were either getting better or well, my health is very good indeed although last week for a day or two I had Diarrea consequently upon change of climate & water, but now I am all sound. & were it not for the absence of loved ones at home could feel perfectly contented to remain on the Sacred Soil of Old Virginia. Today we have had religious service in the open air, reading the Scripture, prayer, & short discourse all occupying about 25 to 30 minutes Both officers and men show great respect and they seemed interested and the occasion was Quite an impressive one. Many citizens from Georgetown & Washington were on the ground & have been walking about all day. More are here than usual from the fact that they can come now without papers which for a long time has not been the case

Many of our men have been sick & some are now mostly with hard colds, diarrea &c and one Albert Fuller from Salisbury after embalming we sent his body by express to Little Falls. I sat up with him Wednesday night & though from home he had good care as circumstances would allow.

I saw Edgar in the City last week & he said he had just heard their regiment have orders to move at two O'clock that afternoon & he must hurry back to Camp since then I have heard he did not go & though only two miles I have had no time to go & see. But I think they have gone as many of the troops have recently moved into Virginia either to join some expedition or guard some forts or ferries, & there is no use whatever for them on the Maryland side of the Potomac. and there is need of many men this side for many miles to man forts &c.

A general onward move is being made a large army of over Sixty thousand men are moving toward Richmond by the way of Manasses & are now South of that place, & as they leave, their places must be filled by new troops. You say you are fearing we shall be moved, I have no doubt we shall. but when? Uh! thats the question, perhaps tomorrow perhaps not in six months, but I have strong doubt of our being called into the field soon if ever. But we are very contented where we are & who wouldnt be in such fine quarters as we have. Albert Paull has had a bad cold which made him quite sick for a day or two but he is better now tell Mary and Sarah they must write so that we can hear often from home. I have been into the city every day with the mail but must have a pass to get there. & none of the men can go without a pass. & if found there after their pass expires they are locked up in the guard house some of our old Groggies have a dry time but it relieves us of much trouble & anxiety

You cannot imagine how different the appearance of vegetation here from Ohio, flowers in bloom Grass green. & dust flying thrashing to so that from here it looks like a cloud & there at times you cant see across the Street. Society, Language, Habits Everything different. Six mules or Six horses with one line. A Shilling is called a Levy Sixpense a Fiss. I think I shall not be able to come home to Conference. it would be too expensive as I want to Come when Raymond Comes down. I have not found my valise.

It had considerable in my shirts most of them, Shawl, old over & under coat & a good many other articles

(The following, from Nancy's collection of originals, is one sheet or rather, one half sheet of stationery, torn along one side to separate it from the other half, written front and back No salutation, heading or date. I originally placed it here because it seemed to fit chronologically, i.e., still discussing his lost valise, before he bought a horse. Then, upon typing from the copies Mom had made from her First Cousin Jack Ferguson's originals, I came upon the preceding which had no closing. So- I think they go together.)

I think it was stolen from the baggage everyones going from Washington to Kalarama as many others lost things sachels, boxes & etc. If I was coming again I should leave many things I brought along as I have no use for them We live well. Enoch More, a Negro from Little Falls is our Cook. I buy in market & we can have just what we want I wish you could drop in & see us & our Mansion. Washington is alive with soldiers & negros & Congress is about passing a law freeing all the negros in the District of Columbia. And now a word to Elbert Elly do you think of pa often. Are you trying very hard to be a good boy? Do you mind ma every time without complaining & try to help her all you can? I hope you do. Elbert you know I love you & nothing would make me feel better than to know you are a good & obedient boy. Dont go off from the house without first asking ma-If you get lonely or tired take one of the books I got for you & read I have sent a couple of papers to you & I hope you will send me the Northern or Adv. & Journal occasionally Elly I saw a little mule not much higher than your head the other day & a little boy was riding him like fun. Be good & kind to Raymond & don't get angry. Kate if anything is wanted at any time you must let me know. You must write if you want money before you get out. I enclose five dollars in this. I dont want to send large amounts as it's unsafe by mail.

I have no horse yet, but shall get one soon as I am bound to see something of this country - You may expect soon to hear from our army soon. I am glad to hear that Sarah is comfortable & that they have a fine boy. Now Kate dont fail to write often if it is but a line write once or twice a week Kiss the children for me, Remember us in prayer Yours J.V. Ferguson.

Ohio Apr 10/62

Dear John

I hasten to answer your letter which I received last evening Mr Wood brought the Mail Tuesday Night so we did not expect any yesterday, but Anthony waited for the Evening Train which brought a letter for me I began to be very anxious to hear from you as you will know by my sending you a letter yesterday and my not hearing from you last week I feared that you too had been obliged to pack up at a moments warning and go to the Burnside or some other distant place and had not time to write but you had better believe I was pleased last Night to get your letter and hear that you was well I was some disappointed to hear that you was not coming Home Conference time but perhaps it will be for the best but I am fearful the climate and Water will not agree with you again you speak of getting a Horse that you can ride and see the Country would it be safe to ride

any distance alone, you know I am quite a hand to borrow trouble, Emily received a letter from Edgar last Evening he says he is well they keep him very busy he says he is very careful about drinking the Water for he thinks he would like to come back to Ohio again says he is not Homesick but I think he does not like Virginia quite as well as you and Brother Wood they write their Camp is near a large Orchard of Peach Plumb and Apple Trees Peach trees all in bloom they received their Pay before leaving Washington Edgar sent his Father one Hundred dollars besides this there was some six Hundred Dollars sent to distribute among the Soldiers Families it was sent by express to Albert & Mr Nealenbeck Mr Johnson has moved down on Anthony's old Place under the Hill Sarah & Family have moved back on their Farm the California Women received Checks last week, Anthony's Children _____ & Ella have had the Scarlet Fever they are getting better I feel very thankful that Providence has favoured our Children thus far that they have escaped the diseases that are about us I was very much frightened when Raymond had the Rash I was afraid it would be Scarlet Fever Mrs Capperwell is quite sick Anthony's folks had a letter from Nancy Amer their Boy had been quite sick with inflammation of the Lungs but was better they talk of coming down in June Amy Roger wrote that Brother Peirces folks talk of going to Wisconsin this Spring she said she did not know who they would have to Preach for them Brother Erwin seemed very anxious to have you Preachers of the Black river Conference come Home he was fearful the Climate would not agree with you and for my part I know not where they will get a supply of Preachers Brother E spoke something about Brother Hall's coming here, Martha Cruickshank called to see me a week ago last Sabbath & how glad she was to see me she was with Mr Allen, folks enquired about you she wanted me to come down and see them, Now John I want you to write often, as often as once a week at any rate it is a great satisfaction to hear from you what did you do for Shirts could you buy them there ready made, We are having a daily Mail this week and last Night got the news of a terrible Battle and that General Johnson was killed and Beauregard had an Arm shot off of course we are glad to hear of our Troops gaining the Victory but it seems hard to hear of so many being killed on the field of Battle Raymond looks for you often and calls Papa I fear he will not know you if you stay away so long we will send you the Northern this week good Night
Remember us in your Prayers Your aff Companion C Ferguson

(in margin)

Mrs Paull is anxious about Albert and wants to hear often they are well Sarah is at Hannah Margarets John works for the Harveys again.

(The following was written on two separate half sheets of stationery, again, torn. I place it here because he mentions his move to Ft Corcoran as a healthier place, farther from the dampness of the Rappahannock. Also, he mentions that his April 13 letter is the fourth that he has written.)

I want to introduce you into our sanctum sanctorum, pass up from the Rappahannock river quite a hill, say fifty feet more or less there you will find the camp of the 104, back of which & still higher is the 105 NY. & 107 Penn Regt. Crossing the camp of the 104. & entering another field you come to the front of our camp 30 feet higher than theirs, passing up the middle streets you come directly to the Col.s tent to the left of which is mine or the Majors & mine as we tent together Our tent is 12 feet square, before the tent we have trees planted to give us shade in which we can sit outside the tent. As you enter you will see a hard ground floor, neatly swept & on one side if you should come in now, you would see a bed. made not of feathers but quite comfortable on the ground is four bundles of wheat straw unthrashed on that a husk mattress wide enough for two. then an army blanket then Majors shawl for the under sheet, then two blankets for upper sheet & covering & between these sheets lies now the Major I think asleep Overhead is a pole swung (to)for hang our clothes on much as those in kitchens at home in the right corner is a hat rack or clothes bars made of a small tree with limbs cut of irregularly long enough to hang hats & other things on, on the other side the table on which I am writing & good I made it today. John Landmire got me a ()prime board & I drove four stakes in the ground for legs then put cletes from one to the other on which I fastened two pieces of the board & had enough left for a shelf underneath where we keep our tin plates & cooking utensils & I might add pipes & tobacco. Our other furniture consists of two camp stools. So much for our Reception room, then in the rear of this & connected with it we have a fly of the size of the tent which forms a veranda where in the afternoon we can sit & read & have a cool shady time. If you should go out there now you would find on the left hand our saddles hanging on a pole laid in (crothier) & on the right a stone wash stand with tin wash dish somewhere there Jim our good looking fat lazy contraband who has followed the Regt since we left Georgetown. We keep him to do chores get our horses bring water, get our meals & wash dishes, he too is asleep on the ground or with only a rubber blanket under him. He says De Niggas neber sleeps in de bed da allays sleeps on de ground & he insists on doing so he sometimes takes a blanket and goes right outside & lies down in the open air & sleeps till morning today he has been washing my clothes & done it very well This you may think a curious house but I can tell you it is quite comfortable & only for the absent ones I could really enjoy a camp life if I could get enough to eat. but here we are limited in variety though we have tea, coffee, sugar, ham or pork & potatoes and cracker with such fresh meat as pronounces secessions & comes over to us but we can get no fresh bread or butter at present, though I expect butter tomorrow Yet I feel quite satisfied & contented hoping that when called to fight for our rights a kind Providence will favor the Regt with brave hearts and great success. I wish Elly was here tonight to sleep with me but as he is not you may kiss him twice Raymond too Good night for J.V. Ferguson

Head Qtrs 97th Reg N.Y.S.V.
Ft Corcoran D.C.

Apr 13th, 1862

Dear Kate: I yesterday received a Second letter from home & it was a very welcome one indeed although it informed me you had received no letter from me except one from Meridien Hill or Kalarama Hights. I cannot tell the reason for I have twice since & this is the fourth letter. I received your other & replied at once I sent by my other \$5.00 & will send more soon as I expect soon to get money I have no heard from Edgar Since we left camp near them. We are still at Fort Corcoran but expect to go soon Some 8 miles from here to McClouds Mills. We are put in Gen Duryee's Brigade with one Pennsylvania & two New York Regts Pennsylvania 107, NY 102, 104 & ours the 97th Your fears that I am Sick and unable to write are all unfounded as I am quite well & we have good Quarters & plenty of everything to Eat & make us comfortable Several of our boys have been sick & one (Albert Fuller of Salisbury) has died since here. Stephen Kegg has been very sick but is better & we think now he will get well We have had four or five cold stormy days. 3 inches of Snow but it is gone now & the ground is dry. Nights here are very cold, but days warm & pleasant Albert Paull is well. he has had the mumps & was pretty sick on day & night but is all right now.

We are not troubled much here about being moved for we see troops moving this way & that constantly changing camps & we don't expect to remain long in one place but we are a good ways from any of the rebels yet. I have bought a horse & I have been out about five miles & as far as we could see Camps of Regiments & forts to met our Eye This country is a barren waste, fences, Orchards meadows. Everything gone trodde down or used up A century wont bring it to its former condition We have a fine lodging room I have a good mattress & the Major sleeps with me We have a marble Ilale washing stand & desk A fine place & everything nice. One room is used as a Telegraph office & we can hear from all over the country any moment. Our lines extend more than three days march south of the Potomac & the Rebels can get no nearer without our knowing it and Thousands of troops are encamped all along up & down the river

We are expecting to hear something great soon from Yorktown .McLellan is before that place & has sent for reinforcements, about 50 or 60 thousand have gone down & something will be done. I have been to Washington most every day since we came here. I get the mail the letters are not for me, if every body knew how much the boys love to get news from home they would write oftener

We have Service every Sabbath in the open air & it is quite interesting If I send anything home I shall send it by Express to Prospect & I shall send some more money soon Enclosed is a facsimile of the Confederate Notes. Elbert it is for you maybe you can pass it at Mrs Snyders Store. Delong must wait a little. If you get any news from Raymond you must send it. I hear often from Brockets Bridge, all the boys are well If Alberts folks hear from Edgar they must write me where he is. Please write often I cannot come home to conference. Love to all. Kiss our dear boys for their Pa. Yours
J.V.Ferguson

Side of letter: Direct Chaplain J.V. Ferguson. 97th Reg N.Y.S.V. Washington DC

(figures plain)

Head Quarters 97th Regt N.Y.V.
Camp Reliance Va.
Apr 19 1862

Dear Kate

I embrace this time to write a few lines. We left Fort Corcoran Thursday 17th & moved to this place. Our camp is very pleasantly situated about the Alexandria and Marrussco rail road. We are only about three miles from Alexandria nearly opposite Washington. I think in a healthier locality than before less exposed to river breezes & fogs. I am quite well & am on the point of going to the city with the mail which I carry yet every. I go on horseback. I got a good government horse for \$120. You seem to be afraid I will be caught by *Secess* sometime when riding. In the first place I have a smart horse. In the Second the rebels are not within fifty miles of us & our sentry are on a line between us some fifty or sixty miles south of us so you may rest quite easy on that *score*

Col Spofford, Mayor Northrup and Myself have put our tents together and live by ourselves. Enoch Moore cooks for us & we live as we please. I wish you could just step in and see how cozy & inviting our palace is. We have Spoffords tent for a reception room it has a board floor. Majors for a sleeping dressing & sitting room & mine for a dining room then we have another for a kitchen & cook room. Our sitting & dining room is carpeted with sea grass matting which we got over at Fort Corcoran. I presume we shall be kept moving from place to place for some time till things get settled some. We had 35 four horse teams to move us here some six miles We are in Gen Duryea's Brigade which contains five regiments one from Pennsylvania & four from New York. We are told we shall remain here some four weeks it may be more or less. I have received yours & Elberts letter I was glad to get them & think Elly writes quite plain & very good I wish Elly you would eat a piece of sugar for me. I am glad to hear you are quite well for I have had much anxiety about the children because of the sickness about there. But the Lord is good & we praise him.

I have had a letter from Raymond they are well. the baby has been sick but is well. We have fine summer weather I send a sprig of Peach blows to prove it. My valise is clean gone But I have a supply now I got shirts in Washington but I only wear a woolen shirt & collar except Sundays so they dont amount to much. But I find many have lost more than I so I dont complain

I have written every week & I want you to write at least as often as that. Elly you must write again. I have not heard from Edgar. Tell Albert to write me where he is. I can write no more now We are very anxious about Yorktown, we hope McLellan will succeed & there is much confidence that if he gets Yorktown Richmond will soon follow & Secession will have its death blow for this we devoutly pray.

I have learned that War is a terrible calamity & hope this is the last we shall ever have. I would like to attend conference but I cannot. Col Wheelock is home on business. Love to all (Elly be good) Kiss our boys Yours J.V. Ferguson.

Office of the

Adams Express Company,
Pennsylvania Avenue,
Washington, D.C. Apr 24th 1862

Dear Kate

Enclosed you will find some notes & cash the notes I send you for safe keeping as you can keep them more safely than I can in Camp. The money you are to use at your discretion. The \$100 note is drawing interest at the rate of 7 3/10 per cent. We are all well, pleasantly situated & expect to remain here some time. I have not heard from you in nearly two weeks. Do write often. I mean to come home when Raymond comes down. G.W. Skinner has resigned & is soon to come home. Says he is Sick, we have cool nights & til yesterday it has rained four days making much mess but today it is mostly dried up. In tents we keep warm and dry & I never slept better. This morning I had an invitation to the Quarters of Capt Simpson of the 104th NY to marry a man who has found a lady here. The wedding is this evening 7 o'clock.

Several of our Officers have their wives with them. Tell Elbert to write again. I got his paper. thank you Elly. I think you write quite well I have written Anthony. tell him to write me. Albert is quite well. Give yourself no uneasiness on my account as my health is first rate & we are where forts are more plenty than farm houses.

I can write no more Elly I want you to get a cake of Maple Sugar & keep it for me be a good Boy, pray for Pa & try to please your mother & kiss Raymond three times for your affection Pa. Kate be careful of Raymonds health

Yours J.V. Ferguson

Dear John

May 2nd 1862

I received your letter on Thursday of this week I was glad to hear you was well as we hear of so many sick & dying among the Regiments. Edgar writes they have to leave a great many in the hospital, the 81st have been moved again. Edgar writes they are now within three Miles of Yorktown they are still held as Reserves he seems very anxious to have the War got along with, he says they fare hard. Brother Wood writes Home often sometimes twice a week he thinks they will be able to come Home by the first of June but I am afraid he will be disappointed, We are usually well with the exception of little Raymond and he is getting better though it has seemed rather slow his throat has been very bad swelled a great deal I tried my best to weather it by putting on _____ and Hops and Vinegar one side is better but the other the Doctor had to Lance yesterday it Discharged considerable it relieved him very much as he had been very troublesome I am in hopes that he will get along now it is almost three weeks since he was taken we have had quite a time with him although he has not been quite as bad as Berta her ears keep running and she is quite Deaf. The Doctor Lanced her throat on one side which troubled her some time Elbert is well goes to school likes Sarah for a Teacher very much, It has been very sickly here we have just heard that one of Sammy & Tommy Conklins Children are dead. Mrs Williams moved up last week one of her Boys is very sick she has Telegraphed for Mr Williams last Week there was a letter came from California bearing the news of the Death of Mrs Dunnn and one of their boys this is a World of

Sickness and Death I have sent you a number of Papers will send you the Northern this week with the proceedings of the Conference the Appointments I suppose will come next week. I received the Package of Money & clothes you sent yesterday Morning as it was rather late when Anthony came Home Friday Eve Rob brought the Mail in on Thursday when I received your letter Rob said he was Mr Arthur the Man that keeps the Railroad Horse he told him there was a Package there for me but could not let it go without an order from me so I sent one by Anthony I have also received the five dollar Bill you sent in a letter and thought I had acknowledged the receipt of it to you before this I have received a very pressing invitation from cousin Jane & Aunt Marise to come with my Children & spend some time with them they thought you could as well direct your letters there but think I shall not go have you written to Jane yet she seems very anxious to hear from you I have just been reading a short account of the Pittsburg Battle which is said to be one of the most bloody Battles ever fought on this continent and it seems enough almost to make the blood one run cold to read the account I hope and Pray that we shall hear of no more such Battles although our Troops won the Victory still it seems awful to hear of so many Lives being lost you say Mr Skinner is expecting to come Home I could almost wish to hear you was coming but will not dictate but it is quite lonely to have you away so long and in time of sickness too I have not had any word from Raymond & Nancy lately but she wrote to Anthony,s folks they were coming down in June and then you say you will come home too I hope it will be so Now write and let us know all particulars Respects to all good Night

from your aff Companion

Anne C Ferguson

Please send me envelopes ready directed

Head Quarters 97th Regt N.Y.V.

Camp Reliance Clouds Mills

May 4th 1862

Dear Kate,

It is Sunday evening and we have had a most delightful day. Just such a day as is well calculated to make us feel well. And now that the day is closed & the cool & pleasant evening is set in my Mind involuntariouly wanters to the home & friends I have left behind me. I received an Advocate from home a few days since & was happy to obbtain it as by it I learned some of the proceedings of Conferences and I wish you would send me the numbers containing the proceedings of the Black River Conference. I also wish you to write me if you have received a letter containing five dollars also \$140 by express. The first I sent from Fort Corcoran & the last from here directed by express you you, to Prospect.

We are in a very beautiful & healthy camp, on the Rail Road & Turnpike running from Alexandria to Manasses.

Our Brigade are guarding the rail-road to considerably beyond Manasses. Our regiment goes out & Stays a week & then another goes & relieves them. Our regiment has not been on yet but their turn will come soon. they leave here their tents &c here

under a guard sufficient to protect it from thieves, and taking a week rations they go & stationed along the track at bridges & other exposed points they shift for shelter as well as they can, and you may be sure Soldiers wont stand out in the rain if there is anything about to shelter them for they will very soon appropriate it. Beside there are nnold that I again forgot it but as you heard ot it it is just as well. I assure you it is a nice one Sword belt & sasj. I dont know the cost. On it is engraved. "Presented to Chaplain J. V. Ferguson By members of the 97 Regiment N.Y.S.V I have work it only once & that was when the Officers in a body went to call on the General at his Quarters & were introduced. I have not love of Style, fuss & feathers enough to wear it much.

I have looked very anxiously for a letter from home but have received none Since Monday last telling me Raymond was some better. I tell you it relieved me much but am very anxious to hear again. You must have had a very serious time with the dear little fellow & I feared it was worse than you wrote for I could see you were very much alarmed, but I hope our dear boy will fully recover. It seems his fate to suffer much from disease & was there not great vitality about him he never could have stood what he has. I am glad Elly is well & I hope he is a good boy. I should feel very bad to hear that he was naughty & you have not written me anything about it. Now I want you to tell me what kind of a boy he is, whether he is kind & not cross and minds ma well I think he improves in writing. Ellie you must write again. You asked about my new horse. he dont look like Col. but is a but is a barge Brown, & looks a good deal like one of Br Farrille,s, he is a noble looking fellow But when I got him he was not good to ride. I tried t lead him from the barn where I got him to our Quarter 1/4 of a mile but he reared up through his foot over the halter took it out of my hand & back he went but I got him again & then when I got him home & saddled him he would not go from the barn I got our teamster to get on him & he threw him.....don't frighten him at all & Elly he rides as easy as rocking in a chair, My saddle bridle &c cost thirty dollars. The Col. has got back & he said today he means to have my horse for he is the best in the Regiment. he is a real tiger of a horse, but is very kind & will follow me all over yet I would rather have one not quite so large for Elly you would be afraid to ride this one he is so large. A few rods from us just across a small creek is a Cavalry regiment they have about a thousand horses. They are pretty hard fellows both men & horses. last night one of them almost killed one of our best men a Zeaman, Our man had been to Alexandria & was coming home to Camp with two others. the Cavalry man was some drunk & got mad at the two when Zeaman (the man hurt) and who never drinks liquor)tried to pacify them. The Cavalry man drew his pistol & shot but missed then the two ran but Zeaman had no idea of his hurting him but the Demon drew his Sabre, a sharp heavy one & struck him cuttin a gash from below the left eye, up above his ear about an inch, as much as eight inches long & of course deep, cutting right through his eye & skull. So that the brains were visible & the doctor took out several pieces of bone before he could sow it up. the gash was at least an inch deep, & yet the man is still alive. it is now about 24 hours since it was done. I have just been out to the hospital tent to see him he suffers much pain but strange to say is perfectly rational & talks with ease. Yet we all think he must die & all regret it as he was one of our best men. We don't have much trouble here about men getting drunk for them cant get liquor if they would I have not seen one of them drunk since we have been here & I tell you it makes it much pleasanter for all concerned. The Cavalry man.....myself & hope God will cause the Word to do much good I

seemed some like a camp meeting. The General & their officers were in attendance. Col Fuller of the 104 N.Y. Regiment was a presiding Elder in the Genessic Conference. & several other officers in the Brigade are preachers. We are where Slave holders live, a few nights ago from the house about 20 rods from our camp 3 fine head of human cattle, took leave & they have not found them since. Ain't it really too bad! & all the time most you can see cattle of the same sort passing along with a bundle in hand for Washington or further North. Slavery Must die where our armies go & let all the people who love our country say amen

We are cheered daily with the successes attending our armies. to-night rumor says Yorktown is ours but that we can hardly credit & yet it may be you will know if it is true, before it reaches you. I now think McLellan means to take it with as little Sacrifice of life as possible. I pray God to favor him. In the District of Columbia as of the first of May all Merchants had to take license & also a Strong oath of allegiance, but Many in Alexandria refused to do it & the stores are shut up. This shows their disloyalty & if our army was not here to-day in Washington Georgetown & Alexandria as in Baltimore Secession would be openly allowed by a large Minority if not Majority of the people, but every foot of ground & every building is within reach of hard arguments Solid reasons for loyalty planted on the fortifications all over these hills. Hundreds of acres of forests have fallen under the axe of Soldiers. Ornamental & fruit trees too has shared the same fate. for Camp use.

I have been today to Fairfax Theological Seminary a lovely spot & noble buildings large libraries all left by the rebels.....

(in margin)

I must fill the margin David Ransom of B Bridge is Married to Jane Beverly. & James Bracket to Jose Brown....Lambersons wife. Col Spofford hears from home most every night. & I want you to write often if it is but a little Albert Paull is quite well Mos of our boys are well My health never better Sleep like a pig Kiss our little boys for me Yours J.V. Ferguson

Dear John

Ohio May 8/62

As the Mail came in twice yesterday I received yours with the Evening Mail and hasten to reply to it fearing you may not get the one I sent you on Monday as I sent it with a chance to Prospect and in that I wrote to you that I had received the five dollar Bill you sent me from Fort Corcoran and like wise the Package with the 140\$ and Notes all safe I am greatly obliged and it came in good time as I had used considerable with Raymond,s being sick he is gaining now he is quite thin the swelling is ging down since it was Lanced he is pretty well covered with the Rash yet and to day he wants to sit on the floor some but is quite troublesome yet I received a letter from Nancy yesterday, she writes they think now they cannot come as soon as June as the season has been so late that Raymond will not be able to get his Shipping done by that time I was some disappointed as I expected you then, but still I want you to write when you think you can come for she said they wanted to come at that time - Well John we have heard that the Rebels have evacuated Yorktown we hardly know what to think of this move we are

aware that many lives are saved as yet but we fear it will ...the War and perhaps be the means of Calling our Regiments farther and farther away and that then they may be exposed to greater hardships and dangers, Edgar does not like travelling very well and I fear you will find it harder if you have to go on you say you are well now but it seems to be more sickly further on Edgar says he is more afraid of disease than aBullets although he has stood it well yet they have to leave so many in the Hospital Brother Wood wrote they had left Jasper Hallenbeck there sick this is the second time Brother Wood went back some three Miles to see him found him a little better Mr Hallenbecks Daughter and her Husband have moved Home from the South I believe he went to Fearfield after them yesterday. Well John you question pretty close about Elbert I suppose you are well aware that he is very fond of company and likes to Play and as there is a good many Boys here about his size I find it rather difficult to keep him within bounds I have managed so far to keep him in Evenings but to sum up the whole as Sister Wood wrote to Brother Wood about Gary he needs a Father to help to guide in the right way, he is quite anxious to see your Horse thinks it would not be to large for him to ride I wrote you in my last that Sammy & Tommy Conklin had lost one of their Children I attended the Funeral on Monday when I went in Church I was surprised to see two coffins on enquiry I was told one was John Conklins Child who I have heard was in your Regiment the Molther and one Boy seemed to be the chief Mourners it looked hard I felt to sympathize with her it brought things fresh to my mind as I had pictured out a smilar Pat for myself when Raymond was so sick our friends are all on the gain now, John I will now ask your advice about my trying to get a Cow Butter has been quite high I have had to pay eighteen pence a pound for some and Raymond has to have his quart of Milk a day but as I expected you in June I thought I would wait till you came Butter is 14 and 15 cts per lb I send you last weeks paper and this with the proceedings of the Conference our Preacher has not come yet S Salisbury you will see by the Paper perhaps you know him Sarah Paull is teaching at the City Sister Mary at Greyville Emily at Paretuville Frank goes to Willmurt Mary at Hood in the Turner District Saran Maria across West Creek Mary Paull feels anxious about Albert

Head Quarters 97th Regiment N.Y.V.
Camp Reliance Clouds Mills Va.

May 9th 1862

Cousin Jane.

Sometime since I received a letter from Kate in which she told me you had requested a line from me & following my own inclinations also, I most cheerfully comply with your request. Only begging pardon for not doing so before. I presume you have thought somewhat strange of my leaving a quiet home and the enjoyments of a family assiciation, for the turbulent & unusual condition of a life in camp and among comparative Strangers. I admit I sometimes think strange of it myself & yet cannot in good conscience condemn the course I have pursued. Patriotism Humanity & Religion had been outraged by this treasonable & wicked rebellion and stood appealing to their respective votaries in such terms that no friend of either could fail heartily to respond. Many of our best men rallied to the rescue & in the name of God took up arms and offered themselves upon their altar

and by so doing made great sacrifice, sacrifice absolutely necessary, but they wanted the Gospel and this need not be denied & when this regiment made choice of me as the instrument for dispensing it to them, I too felt I ought to be willing to make some sacrifice that their desire might be granted. I did so and here I am & if I can do anything toward redeeming our bleeding country either by staying the hands and encouraging the hearts of these dear soldiers I have no heart to refuse

Head Quarters 97th Regiment
Coattells Station Virginia
May 12 62

Dear Kate I have a little time this morning to write You see as I wrote before we are moved right down the rail road to just below Manasses . we are guarding rail road our whole brigade is here. We are quite well indeed. Weather very pleasant. are cheered with the news from Yorktown, Norfolk & so we left Clouds Mills Sunday. I came with the Wagon train, on horseback. Saw a fine country but very desolate & . It is some thirty miles from C Mills. McDowell is on some 30 miles in our advance. You must if you please write regularly & often. Direct as befor. I can't write more no time mail is of shall write again soon. Kiss the Boys

Yours J. V. Ferguson

Head Quarters 97th Regt N.Y.S.V.
Camp Reliance, Cotletts Station Va.
May 18. 1862

Dear Kate, It is Sunday evening again, I suppose my last has been received & you have borrowed some trouble about our moving & consequently are quite anxious to hear from us.

Our present camp is some ten miles from Manasses, on the R Road leading toward Fredricksburg. We have in the Brigade four regiments of Infantry & a battery of artillery. The battery of artillery consists of six ccannons drawn by four to six or eight horses. Some guns for throwing balls others for bombshells. I received a letter from you Friday & was glad to hear you were well & that dear little Raymond is getting better. I feel very grateful to God for sparing you the painful experience of Mrs. Conkling & my daily prayer is that we may all be spared to enjoy each others society & the blessings of fever many years. I also received the paper containing the appointments. Think them generally first rate, not much acquainted with your new preacher, but hope he will be well received

& prove useful. I was in Washington Friday & yesterday. Saw Br & Sister Lyford. they are looking well, heard him preach Friday in the open air near the rail r depot, to a large number of union prisoners mostly taken at Bulls Run now discharged & going home . Albert Paull & John Lautmire were just in here. they had a letter from the 81st telling of the death of Jasper Hollenbeck & others. Jaspers death must be a very sad blow to his friends at home & such blows are falling all over our country. the cruel result of this wicked war I think Edgar has more cause to fear disease more than bullets. I saw some

six steamboats at Washington loaded with over fourteen hundred sick and wounded from McLellans army and many were taken further North to Philadelphia, Baltimore & N. York. I suppose they had a hard time & in a very unhealthy locality because of swamps & poor water. Our regiment is now very healthy many were sick at Fort Corcoran & we lost some but they are very healthy now. We have a fine camp h you & Elly could come & walk through it with me tonight, it extends over half a mile is on a long rise of ground in a splendid farming country but not many farmers, most have left for secession in some fine houses all is taken but a few slaves who rejoiced to see us. Every day we have coming into Camp from 20 to 50 contrabands, we send them on to Washington or employ them here. On our way here I wrote you I came on horseback with the wagon train, we came through Fairfax Courthouse Centreville, Manasses & passing over part of the ground where the battle was fought last July. The quarters of the rebels were comfortable log houses, many standing now & numerous enough to supply 150 or 200,000 men. Showing they had a large army. At noon we stopped & took dinner in the house occupied last winter as Gen Beauregards Head Quarters. A splendid house & farm of only 2400 acres of land. The house is stripped & farm too all that remains is some half dozen slaves who make shift for themselves, Manasses is a hoax, there are no strong forts or works there & not a building was left the rebels burned everything when they left of some 4 or 5 hundred barrels of flour that they cut the hoop & destroyed So also with everything Thursday night I staid in Alexandria & slept in the house where Ellsworth was murdered. Saw the spot where he fell, the door Jackson came out of & fell as if I would like to avenge his blood, but the day of retribution awaits the prepetrators of such cruelty we are in the enemy country but the enemy is gone south of the Rappahannock There are a few professed loyal men living about but we dare not trust loyalty that has been safe among traitors. Today our pickets arrested a man supposed to be a spy he came within our lines & can give no good account of himself so we have him in irons underguard.

We had quite an excitement at Cloud Mills one night just before we left there. Along about one O clock at night we were awaked from sleep by the drums beating a call to arms & the call

Head Qtrs 97th N.Y.V.
Centerville Va
May 27, 1862

Dear Kate

From the above you see we have moved again, this we expected but to be moved back toward Washington was not expected Last Friday night at two o clock an order came from the war department, directing the cooks to be waked & two days rations prepared & the Brigade hold themselves ready for a march. the order came by telegraph we thought it was to Fredericksburg - but finallay the order came for us to retire to Manasses, we came on Sunday to about four miles of Manasses & staid till Monday, yesterday when we came on to Manasses & were ordered to hasten on to Centreville, leaving everything tents trunks & all but what little could be carried I sent my trunk to Washington & took my valise on my horse & on we go making a rapid march to this place where we find good quarters built last winter by the rebels. Well, why this sudden move & in such haste. We

dont know but, we hear it reported that the 97th and all the brigade were awfully cut to pieces, but we have not seen or heard of a rebel anywhere about,

We dont know whether its a matter of necessity or a stroke of policy to snare Jackson & Unle by drawing them from the mountains, is a question, but one thing is sure our armiew are falling back. Gen Banks Cox Shields Geary & @ & are being concentrated in this place. We shall have a hundred thousand men here in two more days & by then no force can drive thro to Washington which some fear is to be done by Jackson & Johnson, but my impression is that they are bagged in less than one week if they are this side of the Blue ridge mountain we are near the old Bull Run battleground; Now I suppose you will see why I have not written before but delayed a few days, but I hope you have not concluded I am sick for I cant afford to be sick every time my letter is delayed. My health remains good & our boys generally enjoy good health . Some diarrhea but less now than at Ft Corcoran, I conclude you had a streak of blue when you last wrote. I mean to come home on a visit before long but have no idea of resigning this part of Va is as healthy as York state. My head aches a little tonight & shall write no more. I want Elly to be diligent at school & obedient at home. I have heard nothing from Edgar or John Johnson, but hope to soon. Excuse any omissions or errors Yours J.V. Ferguson

(In margin:) Kiss the boys for me I think of them every day & night & hope you may be supported in caring for them. Direct as before

Washington May 29th 1862

Dear Kate & family,

I wrote a letter a few days since telling you of our moving about. I came into the city with Col. Wheelock & Lieut Rowan from Centerville. We march today again to Manasses or thoroughfare gap. I came in to see about sending home my trunk by express. We have no pay yet so I shall leave the charges for you to pay I find the papers spreading excitement & terror by false alarms & Bug bears. The papers here had an account of the 97th 104th and others about being cut to pieces when the fact is none of them had been within a score of miles of any body of rebels whatever. The fact is Washington City got terribly alarmed because of Banks retiring but three quarters of it is Moon Shine. It makes me almost disgusted with publick men to be moved so easily by an excited populace

I shall not write much more as I have no time this morning Our march is toward New Market, Va. Northwest of where we now are but not being on the Rail Road I may not expect so regular letters until we get settled again. We are in the healthiest part of Virginia.....I pray you dont fret yourself about me I feel I am in the way of duty & in the hand of a powerful & Good parent who doeth all things well, & I am not in the least alarmed about my personal safety or of our success. We now have an immense force thrown in to Manasses & they are bound to destroy Jackson & Uhle & Johnson who is threatening Banks in that district I think they have him now where he must soon squeal. My love to all

The Boys are all well write to Raymond & learn when they are coming & inform me Elly you must be a good and obedient boy while I am away so that when I come home I shall find you a better as well as larger boy Kiss the Boys for me We go ro join the

Brigade in about an hour I hope to find a letter this morning from home when I get the mail.

Good Bye for the present

Yours J. V. Ferguson

Direct letters as before.

Head Qtrs 97th N.Y.V.

Front Royal Va

June 3d 1862

Dear Kate & family,

I last wrote you from Washington City in which I told you of our being on the march &c Well now we have marched & I am not in Washington, But in or near Front Royal on the Shenandoah river West of the Blue Ridge mountains I left Washington the next day after writing & went to Manasses with my horse on the cars from there I in company with Dr Cornish & two other officers & a private Started on horseback on the turnpike leading to Thoroughfare Gap over the Mountains through Manasses Gap. The road was beaten hard by the Army that were passing over it in advance of uS. We came up with our regiment about five OClock AM. They Seemed glad to see us & some of them appeared quite surprised for we being one-day behind time they concluded & it was currently reported that we had been captured. & Col Wheelock had sent a number of Cavalry to look for uS., also Sergeant Way from Little Falls. & he has not got back yet but all this fears were entirely groundles & arose from the General panic caused by Banks retreat. for the last two months there have been no rebels whatever East of this place except one day when 26 Cavalry men went down about 25 miles to the Gap. & right back as a Scouting party at the gap was the 104 N.Y. Regiment whose pickets frightened by these ran to camp. Spread the alarm & the whole regiment took fright. burned up their tents & all their baggage trunk, valises, Knapsacks of Some guns and started off for Manasses as if old Jeff was at their heels. leaving part of two companies a little way off on guard without giving them any notice & they came in a few days & after

We are now where there have been two battles within ten days first a week last Friday the Rebels attacked a Maryland Regiment Stationed here doing guard duty over the Rail Road & Pike bridges. These were the advance of Banks division. The Rebel Cavalry infantry and artillery came in upon them in large numbers & killed or captured nearly all of them chasing them along the road near where I am writing & on toward Winchester, a part of the cavalry crossed the river just below & got in ahead of them & on toward Winchester, a part of the cavalry crossed the river just below & got in ahead of them & but few escaped they then rushed on to Winchester & on clear to the Potomac chasing Banks who conducted his retreat in a masterly manner clear out of Virginia

The rebel then occupied this place & last Friday Gen Shields, the crack General of Virginia came in upon them & then it was their turn to run his cavalry dashed upon them & killed & wounded many & took some 150 or more prisoners & retook Some 40. they took the week before also Several guns rifles & baggage wagons. We left

Centreville Wednesday & got here Sunday about ten O clock on the march we slept out doors as best we could & two nights it rained very hard but having a rubber blanket it sheltered the upper side & the water under me was not very cold if I laid still I slept first rate & never felt better.

We had just got into the village & stacked arms, when the boys went at their coffee & crackers, but in a few minutes we heard the roar of cannon, boom after boom showing that hot work was going on only a few miles off. Soon all over from every hill & valley troops were moving, our drum beat the long roll & all fell in full of hope that the hour for doing something was near. Though tired & foot sore with their long march all started off with new life miles of Soldiers might be seen all marching in the direction of the firing. Gen McDowell had command

From the position of our Brigade we were near the rear and had to wait till many others passed by. I was expected that Fremont had attacked Jackson in the front & that he must retreat over these bridges to escape her cannon - were planted & a large force crossed over but soon they came back & away they went pell mell in the direction from which we came & taking the sight up the valley to reach a gap & get ahead of Jackson Yesterday we heard firing again in the direction of Strasburg showing that Jackson is running. Gen Shields has put on up the valey hoping to head him off but I dont believe he can do it Jackson is a great runner & an arch fellow & hard to catch. I think however Old Shields will chase him for a while if not clear out of Va. they are at least thirty miles off by this time & we are left here with a force four or five thousand strong to guard the Rail Road & river Bridge with no rebel army any where near & very dull business I have been today to see the prisoners confined here taken last Friday they are not uniformed but look tough & hard like good fighting men they are intelligent & talk freely, are sick of the war & want a parole to go home most of them are from Georgia

Our Regiment was paid yesterday & Albert sends home some money by express Also John Landmire sends some to Ant.

Through mistake in pay roll I got none now & must go to Washington to get pay. I mean to come home as soon as I can and meet Raymond I hope they will not put off coming a great while. I expect to get a mail tomorrow when I hope to hear from you. I hope you are all as well as I am. I sent my trunk by express you had better open it. Please write a long letter soon Elly wont you write me another letter I dont expect to write as regular as heretofore but shall when I can Kiss Raymond & Elbert 5 times Each for me J V Ferguson

Head Qtrs 97th Reg N.Y.S.D.
Fort Royal June 6, 1862

Dear Kate I wrote a line to you from this place a few days since informing you of our removal to this place. We are here yet and like the position quite well although it has been raining for five or six days in succession & the men have no tents & only rude shanties made up of fence boards & other trash affording very good shelter, we are expecting some small poncho tents in a few days. Our duties are guarding bridges across

the Shenandoah, a rail road & pike bridge but we were relieved yesterday by the high water, which carried off both bridges, leaving one or two regiments on the west side of ours with some others on this. The only way they can get their supplies is by boating them over from here, we get them from Washington by rail road. Three Massachusetts men were drowned today by the upsetting of a boat when attempting to cross. We board now with a very fine Union family have good board but no butter which is scarce about here as the soldiers milk the cows for their own use. I have read that Casey's division were considerably cut up at Richmond, but have no particulars as we have had no mail for a week but expect it regular hereafter. Fields & Fremot were after Gen Jacksons army the last I heard & had chased them some thirty miles from here & were still pursuing but with what success we don't know only that they had taken several hundred prisoners & baggage wagons. I have not yet seen a live rebel only the prisoners in our charge 149 of them I was in to see them today Some of them are sure they cannot be conquered, while others seem less hopeful & wish to get out of it & are very ready to take the oath of allegiance.

We have no enemy in force anywhere about here, & the boys begin to fear they will never have a chance to show their metal on the battlefield, but we contend to serve our country in whatever capacity or position to which she may assign us.

I have written to Raymond to come down as soon as he can & I shall then be home to see you if nothing happens to prevent. It seems a long time since I left home & I am getting quite anxious to see my family - We are in a beautiful country amid the mountains, have first rate water, good pure air, & consequently quite healthy. I am black & hardy you would hardly know any of us we are so colored

I sent my trunk by express leaving the charges to be paid for I thought you had more money than I have as I have not got pay yet through mistake in the pay roll

Col Wheelock is going to Washington & I must close this to send by him to Washington All our boys are well.

Elly I have got no letter from you lately & I hope you will write one soon are you a good boy trying to obey your ma in all things, I hope she has no cause of complaint, on your account.

Capt Egelston had been quite afflicted with boils on his neck but is better now. I feel sad over the demoralizing influence of the war. this is seen most in the increasing profanity in the army

We have no intemperance as there is no whiskey getable. Some old soakers grumble awfully,

Now you must write often as it is a great satisfaction to receive a letter from home.

I can write no more at present.

Kiss the boys for me

Yours

J.V. Ferguson

Dear Father

We received your letter and was glad to hear you was well it seemed a long time when we did not hear from you in two weeks you say you have wrote every week but one mys have been lost by the way. Now Pa when you write again I want you to tell me if your horse looks any like the Colonel used to. I expect to go to school next week to

Sarah Paul perhaps I will learn to write better then, I should like to step over and see you if I could come on the telegraph and back again in a little while I guess I would so good bye.

Head Qtrs 97 N.Y.V.
Cattello Station Fauquier Co Va
June 12th 1862

Dear Kate, From the above you will see we have got back again to this place. We left Fort Royal yesterday morning & came on the cars via Manasses Junction getting here this morning about 8. o clock Just as we left F. Royal we received a mail the first for a week & found two letters from home, which gave me great pleasure. I also received a copy of the Conf Minutes from some source. think from Br Erwin. I was glad also to get Ellys letter enclosed in yours & hope he will have better luck s4etting another hen. I am glad Raymond is still improving.

We have read with indignation the false reports of this regiments encounter with the rebels & their hasty flight burning tents baggage etc etc, it is simply false in every part. We have made no retreats, had no alarms & been near no force of the enemy only on entering Fort Royal when Fremont & Shields were after Jacksons running army. & then we were not within 6 or 8 miles, but were drawn up in line of battle not knowing but Jackson was approaching instead of running, but Fremont is after him yet & has chased him out of the valley of the Shenandoah as you will hear before this reaches you. I have read with a great deal of Solicitude of the terrible **fight** before Richmond. & the cutting up of Casey's division. The 81st we learn suffered much but I have seem no familiar name in the list of Casualties, & I hope the noble boys from Ohio are safe. I presume Albert's folks have heard ere this from Edgar & I hope you will write me soon

I think the present design of the War department is to throw around Richmond Strong reinforcements so as to gain an easy action, all the troops from this section have been moved toward Richmond, & if all the available force is concentrated at Richmond the loss of life must be much less. As Jackson is driven of I presume we shall be moved south also. Every thing looks favorable now, & Richmond taken breaks the barbe of rebellion. - the country about here is much more healthy than the Eastern part of Va. less swamp & low land & more running water & mountains. I am glad you like your new preacher, & on looking over the minutes think the appointments are all admirable, I find much in the army I could wish different, great profanity & but little religion but my efforts are to prevent as much as possible & nothing more You ask of Albert Paull he is well & tough except a temporary cold. I also have today a slight attack of Diarsca but my health so far has been first rate. We have had to rough it some lately but I stand it first rate. I begin to want to come home & visit my family as the time draws nigh when I expected to come, & I have written Raymond he must come as soon as he can. Our living when moving about is very irregular, Sometimes plenty, Sometimes less, Sometimes a good bed & sometimes none at all & my appetite is such that I can eat whenever I get a chance whether very nice or not. last night at White Plains we stopped an hour or so. I had no dinner or supper til 10 or 11 o clock & then couldnt find supper I went from house to house til I came to one where I found some fresh bread, butter & milk, then I had a supper then took part of a loaf of bread & canteen of milk for a

breakfast this morning. I meant to have fodder if nothing more. I think I shall have mail a little more regular now than for a time & I hope you will write often, direct as before, & I will write as opportunity offers.

Elly help ma make the garden & weck it & take good care of the chickens & I shall have a great many things to tell you when I come home. No time for more love to all
Kiss the boys. Yours J. V. Ferguson

Head Qtrs 97th Reg N.Y.S.V.
Catletts Station Va
June 15th 1862

Dear Kate is Monday Morning & I guess June 15th but of this am not so sure & cant take the trouble to enquire. The morning is very pleasant & fine & the camp is very quiet.

Yesterday, the sabbath, we had no religious service in the morning on the account of moving our camp a little ways for a better ground. We are encamped in an Orchard & most of the tents are shaded, making it rather pleasant. We got our tents which we left at Manasses, on our return from Fort Royal and we are abundantly supplied now, but while at Fort Royal our supply was poor the men had only such shelter as they could get for themselves some slept in barns & sheds others built shanties of fence boards, rails bushes, straw or anything that would (throw) off the Rain that continued for several days, quite a number were made temporarily sick by the exposure & march but the health of the men generally is now very good. Some diarrhea & @, but nothing general, Col. Spofford is going home on a furlough. Carlton has got his discharge & is going home to stay which I suppose will please his mother greatly. Mr. Winchell was expecting to come home but could not obtain a pass. We get a daily mail now but have received nothing from home since I last wrote

We are ignorant of our future & cant tell anything about our destination, we guessed we should go toward Richmond because we thought that the point where forces were needed most but we hear nothing more about it now though things about Richmond remain about the same since that terrible fight. Most of our men are anxious to go for they ;think there is a chance to do something or soon will be.

Gen Fremont is a rising star in the army. Jackson is still running before him from place to place & we hope his army will be entirely overthrown. McDowell has apparently few friends, & why he has so large a command is a wonder to all. There are many contrabands running loose all about here & I sometimes think if I can find a right smart & good looking, little girl or boy I should fetch it along home when I come. I can get them of any age, & think a good smart girl of 12 or 14 or younger would be a great help to you & if you think you would like one. I wish you to tell me what age would suit you best & she shall be found or a boy either, or both as the number here is of no account whatever

We have a good boy now about fourteen a slave from Georgetown as handy as a girl & as neat & good a cook as most any woman you can find we think much of him he cooks for us, & I can bring him he is pretty & smart & good. I told Carlton he must come out & visit you, & I will say to you if you can get down to B Bridge Uhler Prem is home I suppose you would have a good time. They start for home today & I would like to go with them but must wait till Raymond comes. I have written to hurry him down as soon

as possible & the sooner the better as it seems a long time since I was home & I want to see you all.

I hear today that it is likely we shall remain here some time as this is a key to Fredricksburg & Richmond & Front Royal. We are faring well now, we have stewed ripe cherries, & green apples, milk, fresh meat@@ & we relish them well. I think you will do as well not to buy a cow to increase your care & labor if you can get milk & butter. Albert Paul is well he has sent home some more money by express. Also J Lantimire sent some to Anthony. I have not drawn mine yet but can any time I go to Washington. If my trunk has got home please inform me. I have just been out & got some buttermilk & butter brought in Camp for Sale. Butter 25 cts Sweetmilk 10 cts Buttermilk 7 cts.

(In the margin:) Tell Sarah Paull & the rest of the girls to write me often.

Head Qtrs 97 Reg N.Y.S.V.
Catletts Station June 27, 62

Dear Kate,

I received a letter from home Monday & was glad to hear you were all well. I have written one or two since that started from home, not paying any attention to order or dues. Yours also contained one from N.A. which I read with pleasure & shall watch with some anxiety the mail for another getting the time for them to come. It will not answer now to change the arrangements set a time for myself & they come if they can. For I want to come when they can & not when they cant if they come in any kind of season. I have written them to know when they can & will be down. I shall probably come next month sometime any-way But it is utterly impossible for me to say precisely the time as I dont know where we shall be. It is now very hard getting a furlough unless very sick or very persevering but I Being a Citizen may be able to come when Raymond is there.

I am sorry to hear Br Woods health is so poor, but hope he may recover soon. You speak of our going to the Peninsula. I have no fear of our being ordered that way at all, & yet we may go toward Richmond from this place if so we shall go through a very healthy country to Fredricksburg & not through the low lands of the peninsula we have been expecting some time to go there. it is only 2 days march from here, & no farther from Washington than we are now. You say you fear my diarrhea may become chronic. It may have become so already, as I have known nothing of it since I wrote, I cannot say.

I was very sorry to hear that McLellan & his whole army were prisoners it was really too bad, how his wife must feel. I hope if possible when you write again you will use Black ink as it is much pleasanter to read than blues. The season is very backward here & cool also, not warmer so far than usual at Herkimer, but cooler nights & yet no frost. We have some very sudden & hard showers. Last Monday my horse & two others were gone & we 10 or 12 started out in all directions, but we found they had gone down the R.R. toward Manasses we followed them to Centerville 22 miles from here toward Washington, where we found them. We started for Camp, there came up a shower, it rained terribly & the little streams raised so we could hardly ford them, there are no bridges, & we partly swam them across, & got in camp before dark having rode over fifty miles. Next day I went to Alexandria with the mail & back yesterday so you see I am able to be about. I ride on horseback considerable & think it is doing me good. I hope

you will have good luck with your cabbage plants. The heavy frosts seem to do much harm in your County

We are expecting some changes among the Army Commanders of this vicinity & what the future programs will be we cannot tell. Jackson has got back again to Front Royal. Our forces had been all withdrawn & the R. Road to that place abandoned. A very large army under McHowell is lying about here & Manasses but I think they will be moved soon. McLellan is moving slowly but sure. I have entire confidence in his success at Richmond. Elly have you got some chickens yet. I sent home my sword nbecause it was of no use & only a bother.

Please write often Yours J. V. Ferguson

Head Qtr 97 Reg N.Y.V.
Catletts Station Va
July 2nd 1862

Dear Kate,

Although I have not received any from you since I wrote last yet I take the present chance to write again. It is a cold rainy day which makes it quite unpleasant in camp but as we have had a break pleasant weather we cannot complain.

We are here yet, enduring, the uninteresting monotony of a camp with little activity or anything to excite or please. Last week about the time I wrote we expected to go to Fredricksburg at once. I went on started for Washington but on my way I heard from the Brigade Quartermaster that we were to move the next day. I stopped at Alexandria till next morning & took the cars again for Camp but found all as when I left & it remains about the same still & when or where we next shall go no one knows. One of our boys, Purdy of Co. E. died last Sunday & was buried here he was sick only four days. Typhoid fever others had it but all are better. This morning one Pooler from Black Creek cut off two of his fingers with an axe. it is said purposely as it took three blows. He was homesick & wanted a discharge. We hope that Under Gen Popes our New Maj General that the army of Virginia will be made more efficient. Many regret that Fremont resigned & more that McDowell does not for Fremont has done much McDowell nothing. I hear from J. Lantmire that his and Alberts money has been received I am quite anxious to hear from Raymond when he is coming for I want to come soon. Col Spofford has not got back yet. Gary Spencer is home sick he has ague & fever. Another fight before Richmond with very doubtful results but serious loss of over a thousand each side all the troops in this quarter want to go to the aid of McLellan. thinking the more men the less loss but we go where ordered

You speak of your paper having been stopped get Brother Wood to send for it for you. I think if I dont hear from Raymond I shall be home by the twentyeth of this month perhaps sooner perhaps later. It takes some time to get a pass signed by the Col. first, next the Brigadier Gen. Next McDowell, next Adj Gen Thomas or the Secretary of war. But if I get cramped I can come in the dress of a citizen & run the risk of being Cashiered or of losing my place. I want to see you all & I hope Elly & Raymond will both know me & neither be afraid of me if I should be a little colored

Elly we have got a Grey Squirrel in our tent in a box & he is getting quite tame. I wish you had him there dont you. We have great plenty of nice cherries and Blackberries, all we can eat I wish you had some of these there too, they grow all over here. What do you want me to bring for you & Raymond when I com you must write & tell me. Albert Paull is well he has written home John Lantemire also. The men are faring pretty well now good bread beans pork beef salt & fresh, rice tea & coffee & they are improving on such fare

You must write oftener if you can as it does me much good to hear from home If Raymond has written inform me. Does Edgar take Br Woods place or not We have baked beans for dinner Yours J.V.Ferguson

Head Qtrs 97 Regt N.Y.V.
Warrenton July 10. 1862

Dear Kate From the above you will perceive that our Regiment have been moved again. We left Catletts Station last Saturday Warrenton is about 10 or 12 miles west of Catlets, a branch Rail Road runs from here to Catletts on which all our supplies are brought from Washington. This is the finest place we have yet been in. A beautiful country fine air, and the best water we have had in Va. The village is about a mile from our camp situated on an eminence looking off on beautiful farming sections in every direction. There are Several large hotels & though the stones are now doing but little yet show that considerable business has been done here. Four or five churches, Stone or Brick & Many Residences of modern style the homes of Some of the F.F.V.s with parks & Huckelberry all combine to make this the finest place we have yet seen. We are encamped on the land of Bill Paine a member of the Confederate Congress. I saw the home last night of Extra Billy Smith of political notoriety & who with his son are now a Gen & Col in the rebel army. In fact this is a hot bed of Secession. There are but few men able to fight remaining here & the women are scornful & saucy. I noticed however a downcast & sad look characterized most of them also that many were draped in mourning. Why we are here none can tell. Whether preparatory to a move toward the valley of the Shenandoah or to Richmond. But as there seems to be a large force concentrating here we think that Gen Pope our new Commander means to do something. It is rumored that by tomorrow night there will be 80,000 men concentrated here Gen Banks was expected with his yesterday but did not arrive. Gen McDowells are mostly here I am disgusted with our military leadership. Gen McLellan was no doubt sadly whipped & yet thousands of men were within three days of him but allowed to remain idle while our noble men were falling under the force of numbers sent from a greater distance to strengthen the enemy. There is no force any where about this part of Va. for us to fight Since Jackson has gone to Richmond, I am glad a call for more men is made but thinkif what we have were allowed to fight the war would soon be ended, but now they are so very fraid of hurting somebody. Every hour even of Rebels has a guard for its protection & no chicken pig or lamb must be appropriated to the use of our men while crackers last. But Kate I am complaining not for myself as for several day we have been Luxuriating on fine chickens

garden faire & fruits of the finest quality. I wish you could see the cherries which abound here. We have all we can possibly eat also of fine Black Berries & By the side of this sheet on my table lies a mess of Green Beans for our dinner. I received a letter from Raymond Sunday saying he cant come now so I shall come home as soon as I get a furlough unsnarled from the red tape of military officials. I have looked for a letter with much anxiety hear how J Johnson gets along from your writing I feared he might not recover I saw by the yesterdays Herald that H Hinfett was on his way home. Also that J Beverly was wounded in the leg on his way home Albert Paull is well & hearty as a Buck So Lantmire Kiss Elly & Raymond for me. I hope to see you all by the time stated in my last Do not look for me till I come.

Ohio July 15th 1862

Dear John

I received a letter from you last Evening and as it seemed rather uncertain about what time you would come Home I thought I would write again. I was glad to hear from you again it being some over a week since we last heard from you we are usually well the weather has been very dry with us though we have Just had a fine Shower this afternoon, Henry Johnsons folks returned Home from Albany last Thursday John was gaining some when they came away the Doct thought if nothing new set iin he would get well the Ball remains in his body they have not heard from hime since they came Home they still feel quite anxious about him but as he has not got a furlough they think he will not be able to come Home if he gets better, Mr Shufelts folks feel troubled a good deal about Henry Shufelt as they hear nothing farther from him only by way of the Newspaper that he had arrived in New York his name was with list of Sick and Wounded also John Gibson & Son was reported to be in New York sent one letter Home after his arrival with the name of the Street Number and so forth John Gibson went to the Falls yesterday and Telegraphed to find out whether he was able to come Home or not also enquired for Henry Shufelt but received no definite answer, John Wiggins is sick with Fever was sent to Philadelphia he wrote for his Father to come and see him he started Yesterday, Michael Hiney was sent there soon after the Battle at Fair Oaks but they do not hear from him lately and do not know whether he is living or not, Albert,s folks have not had word from Edgar since the last Battle they received a letter from him wrote the twenty sixth of June which was before the Battle and they only received it Monday Night Brother Wood received one last Night wrote the twenty seventh so you see it takes the Mail a good while to come from where they are they are anxiously expeccting to hear from him every Night, we saw by the Papers Edgar had been promoted and received the Office since Brother Wood resigned When Edgar wrote last he said they had changed their which they did not like very well he spoke of Casey and said the old Man cried like a Child

when he left, I believe they are now in Peak,s Division and Neagle is their General I saw in last Weeks Herkimer Journal that Capt Beverly was not Wounded as reported but Sick with Scurvy I have since heard that he had come Home and his Wife was sick with Consumption and not expected to live long E Northrup was reported Wounded and on his way Home, Walton from Fairfield who wrote a great many good letters for the Papers was Wounded at the Battle at Fair Oaks got better went again was Wounded again in the last Battle and at last taken Prisoner by the Rebels Poor fellow they think he will not see his friends again very soon, there are others among the list of killed and Wounded Brother Wood is getting better some you write of having so many Cherries I should like some very much we have but few Strawberries here as the Frost Injured them very much you write of having Green Beans some of ours are in Blossom I was almost sick of Home after the hard Frost but I must close for the Night as it is late so good Night I received a line from Nancy A telling me they could not come till Fall I was disappointed I will send it with this, from Ann C Ferguson

Head Qtrs 97 N.Y.V.
Warrenton, Va
July 12, 1862

Dear Kate

I have today received yours of the 8th & am glad to hear that you are all well. You say it seems a long time since I left home of this I have no doubt. To me also the time when I saw you all seems long & yet I never past so short a four months, in fact the constant change, excitement, and novelty of soldiering makes the time seem very short. I was glad to hear John Johnson is still living & with prospect of recovering. His nurses must be very faithful, from what I have seen of city hospitals they are exceedingly comfortable for patients & I should prefer them to any other place, except home in case of sickness.

I see by the newspaper Edgar has been promoted to the Lieutenanctcy of his company this is as it should be & as it ought to have been long ago.

Am glad to hear Br Woods health is improving, think he took a wise course in leaving while he had strength to leave for the camp is a poor place for a sick man.

I hope old Herkimer will continue to honor herself by rallying under the new call for troops, for the crisis is at hand. If Richmond falls soon our country is safe. If she repulses us & the struggle is prolonged we may expect that England & France will not fail to offer intervention in obedience to the call of her Commercialists, Manufacturers & Aristocrats & if she does a terrible struggle (continues)

I think the Government is awaking to this fact & the next move on Richmond will not be to aggrandize a General but for success. We still remain in Warrenton, & in first rate health. We have now but few here on the sick list when we left Catletts the sick were taken by R Road to Alexandria.

We are expecting to leave here soon moving on west probably to Gordonsville to the Va. Central R. Road, where all of Popes army of from 80 to 100,000 men will concentrate & take possession of that means of communication between Richmond & the Shenandoah Valley & from which place also he can move on & threaten Richmond from the North

while McLellan does the same from the South. Orders were received a day or two ago for this Brigade to be in readiness for marching upon an hours notice, & yet it may not move for sometime. Well (I suppose you thinking) why dont he write when he is coming home? Well I will tell you I dont know. I wrote in my last I should have to wait for pay. Well after we had received marching orders as above I tried to borrow money thinking I should then try to get a furlough but as yet have not been able. You know I have received no pay since we left York State & have six months pay now due & have not enough to come home & return with So you must patiently bide the favorable time, for I shall certainly come just as soon as possible.

I feel that I make great sacrifice if obliged to prolong my stay from my dear family but I thank our kind heavenly Father for the exceedingly good health with which I am favored & that though separated we are all spared alive & in health. You speak of Qtrly Meeting, Nothing would please me more than to be there but it is altogether uncertain & I must say rather doubtful. Elly how would you like to be here to Eat some Cherries & Blackberries. I think every day I wish you had some. Are you learning to write, and if so why don't you write some in ma's letter for me you don't know how much I want to see you & little Raymond & all the rest.

I wish you could see our mule teams six mules with long ears, all before one wagon, and drove by one man & he rides on the back of one of the hired mules & drives them all with one line.

Have you got any chickens? I should like to ask you some questions from your new Arithmetic. I guess I could puzzle you. I hope you are a very good boy & try to do for ma all you can & make her as little trouble as possible.

I hope you dont often let that naughty spirit make you angry and saucy. I dont think you do, at least I hope not for I love my dear little boy & want him to be good & happy. I pray for you every day & ask the Lord to help you be a good boy. Elly dont you love still to kneel by your little bed every night to say your little prayer in the ear of our heavenly Father & do you ask him to take care of Pa. Dear Elly I shall hope to find when I come home that you have been growing better while I am away & that you are trying to grow up to be a useful, good & happy man & to be so you must be a good boy, every day. Be kind to Raymond, dont bother him. Run & kiss him just now, for me tell him I will kiss him again when I come. Now Elly I think you will by to write some to me next time. I must close by saying give my love to all Remember me to Br Erwin when he comes. I remain yours, J. V. Ferguson

Head Qtrs 97 Regt N.Y.S.V.
Warrenton July 15, 1862

Dear Kate

Although I have not received any from you since my last writing yet as I have leisure this evening I thought I would write again. We remain still in camp near Warrenton, not withstanding we have been under marching orders for over a week.

At present there seems to be no more prospedt of our soon moving than a week ago except perhaps in the immense amount of Supplies being sent here by R.R. daily such as flour & bread Beef, Pork, Beans, Rice, Coffee, &c, &c, with Army wagons horses, mules, &c, &c, which indicates that a loarge move is on foot but what it is. Yes, that is the question. None but the authorities can tell, but my opinion still is we are destined for

Gordonsville, on the Va. Central R. R. which runs directly to Richmond, At all events I think we shall be moved in that direction. Gen Pope seems resolved on using their large army for some purpose, and his course is endorsed by the men. At present while he is organizing his army no man can get a furlough & all that are absent will be called in.

I today had Col Wheelonk sign a furlough for me, & then he took it to the Gen to get his approval but he could not at present, for he had no authority. Col Wheelock himself wanted to go to Washington Monday but could get no pass even for that at present. Mr. Mr. Addy our Quarter Masters Seurjeant is tomorrow to come to Herkimer with the embalmed corpse of his son who died here yesterday of Typhoid fever. He was about 18 years old & sickened & died much as Purdy did of whom I wrote. It is sad t see a boy this stricken down far from home but many such cases are daily occurring in the land.

Disease seems to be more fatal to young boys than to grown mature men. Alikum Looker is discharged & on his way h;ome, he couldn't stand it. Last night Col. Zriegel of the 109 Penn Regiment died very suddenly, rumor says of Delirium Tremens he was a fine officer & man only that he was addicted to drink.

This habit the Officers many of them have, but the privates can get no liquor if they wanted to, our officers are very free indeed from drunkenness. This fact is gratifying indeed.

Now I hope you will try to be reconciled to the necessity in the case & not worry yourself about my coming home. At present I shall not run the risk of the results of leaving without leave. My health is first rate, I eat very hearty & have enough. Our Sunday's Service was quite interesting to me our Church the Shade of two large elms The band for a choir & a large proportion of the Regiment for a Congregation. Our Service has been necessarily irregular because of our frequent moving. Weather is quite warm & pleasant. Albert Paull & Landmire & all the Onio boys are well & contented. Albert makes a first rate soldier, tell Sarah Paull to write often to him & once in a while to me. I shall continue to try for a pass but doubt getting one now.

Yours J. V. Ferguson

Head Qtrs 97. N.Y.V.
Camp at Waterloo Faquier Co Va

July 25, 1862

Dear Kate. I received a letter from you about a week since & wrote one about the same time. Was glad to hear you still continue well and should have answerd it before but for the fact of our moving again. We left our old camp at Warrenton last Tuesday morning and moved west about 10 miles & are now encamped on the North bank of the North Branch of the Rappahannock there are some eitght or ten thousand of McDowell's troops encamped here where they can advance

Head Qtrs 97 Reg N.Y.S.V.
Camp near Waterloo
Wednesday, July 30th 1862

Dear Kate I write you again from this place where we are yet quite pleasantly situated. I received yours last on Sunday & was very glad to hear that your health remains good as also that of the family. You speak of not having much garden & of hoeing in it yourself. I am sorry you have not a good garden & that you tried to hoe it, better let it go than do it yourself. But if you think best to save it then have the work done, although you may be obliged to pay more for the work than in other places. This is my advice. My health remains first rate yet & I think I shall be bettered by the change & suspension of excessive preaching. We moved about a mile Monday to get a better camping ground & now are in a fine location pleasant & healthy. We have fixed it as though we were to remain here a month & yet may move tomorrow. I sent you some money by express to Prospect \$870 which I hope will reach you safely & which you are to keep (save current expenses) til otherwise directed.

Gen Pope & McDowell are expected here tomorrow. Pope's order requiring citizens to take the oath of allegiance makes them squirm, "right smart" and Warrenton where is now is to take a sifting soon. This is an important order & will vacate many delightful residences whose occupants if allowed to remain within our lines would inform the enemy as have done heretofore of every movement of our army. I don't expect much activity in the army till more men are sent on & we hope they will come soon. Every day's delay jeopardizes our cause for in the Virginia department none can doubt but the rebels have the advantage at present & their Generals know how to improve it. I have been riding out with the Field Officer of the day, & visited the pickets of this Brigade. they are placed at every exposed point about the camp from one to two miles out, had a very pleasant ride. Saw considerable of the country right about us. The residences here are mostly old fashioned substantial houses with stone chimneys build up on the outside of the house. They are built generally out in the lot in a grove or surrounded with shrubbery so that you can hardly notice a house as far as the eye can reach they being so from view by trees. I have been in no place except village where you can see as many dwellings as from your door. All these peculiarities with others such as large estate & land monopoly the rustic roads through forests of second growth, winding along over hills, through ravines & very irregular in their course renders this country quite romantic & interesting. One thing in regard to the present inhabitants, I have hardly seen a young able bodied man here all are in the army & if we had sent the half as many in proportion to our numbers, all today might have been on our way home. I see Lucious Wood & Albert are of the recruiting committee & I hope they both will exert themselves to the utmost to secure enlistments I can assure them we must have more men or the sacrifice of life will be alarming if we succeed at all

Near our camp are the ruins of a factory & o, burnt by Gen Banks which up to a week or so since was turning out large quantities of cloth for use in the rebel army. My sheet is full so I must close or take another I guess. I will take another piece as the writing fit is on.

As usual when I fet writing one sheet is not enough. So I take another. Maj Northrup & Dr. Cornish & myself tent together & we have a very pleasant party. Soldiering has its various shades & for a few days we are enjoying the sunshine, a march is tiresome & if rainy & muddy & then obliged to sleep without shelter it is exceedingly exhausting and I think more men die from such exposures than in battle, this is gradual but continual destruction while the battle is sudden & its results are generally known & at once many

hearts are made to bleed. I have had no letter from Anthony or any one else from Ohio except a short one from Albert which I mean to answer when a good time offers. I see the 34 N.Y. have suffered much & that Clinton Sanders is among the wounded, Wm Lamb has got his discharge & gone home. So also a number of others from Boonville &c. Our Surgeon Dr. Marvin has resigned & gone home & no body cares for that as he was a poor stick. Poor Mr. Skinner. Rev Lieut I wonder if he has recovered his voice. I think we have a few more who will not stand power but most of our men are No 1. I don't know but we are doing just as much for Gov as if in the battle but most of our men feel as though they would like to get a sight of a rebel flag without waiting to go in the Museum to se it. Las night a party of a dozen of our boys came in from a scouting tour, they brought in several horses & two rebel prisoners one mail carrier, with his mail containing some very important matter it is said they went some 20 miles from here across the Rappahannock river. A word to Elly Are you a good boy I want you to be I should feel bad to know you were not so I hope for my sake you will be a good boy & obey ma & do all for her you can, You will wont you my boy You must remember to pray God to help you & also pray for pa. Kiss the Boys for me Yours J.V.Ferguson

Jead Qtrs 97 Reg N.Y.V.
Camp Waterloo Gaqrier Co. Va.
Monday, Aug 4, 1862

Dear Kate Although I have received no letter from you since my last yet I write again. I expect to get one from you when the mail comes in today. We yet remain in Camp from where I last wrote you Gen Pope has been here & has gone on toward Gordonsville & when he gets ready I suppose we shall be moved forward

Although we are in the best camp we have yet occupied yet I shall not regret a forward movement, as nothing disheartens men more than inactivity My health is first rate & we have but few sick men now in the Regiment. Albert Paull tells me he has heard from home. That John as enlisted & that many more Ohio boys are doing so, that Br Wood is trying to raise a company, now I am glad to see such patriotism But I am sure the best interest of the men now going into the field as well as the best interest of the Country dictates that they join the old regiments or those now in the field let these be filled up first, then if there are more let them form new regiments It is better for the men Because

1. The Bounty is fifty dollars more than for those joining new
2. They have the advantage of better officers or officers of more experience.
3. If they enlist in an old regiment when the regiment is mustered out their enlistment term ends while in a new one they would be held the full three years.
4. The Sanitary Commission report the health in old far better than new, a consideration of importance where two thirds die from disease instead of being killed by bullets. Better for the Government for it saves the cost of officering a lot of new men for whom there is ample room under officers in the old.

The government gives men their choice and they only need express that choice to the recruiting officer of their neighborhood he will take them to the nearest military depot & they will be sent on free of expense wherever they want to go. There has been some recruiting for this regiment & we would like to have any who wish join us as no doubt our march will be as it has been through the interior or highlands instead of the Peninsula & swamps of the Coast.

Col Wheelocks health is somewhat improved. Frank Reed is also much better Mrs Wheelock is with the Col at Warrenton Since I commenced this I have been to Warrenton saw the Col he looks quite badly. I dont receive any letter from home yet though I expected one tonight

While I was away this afternoon our Regiment received orders to be ready to march on an hours notice & will probably march tomorrow farther on towards Gordonsville. This side of there some 20 miles from here our advance had a skirmish yesterday & took some fifty prisoners. I saw at Warrenton two who were wounded in the fight it is rumored they are fighting there today. We shall learn soon if it is true. If you receive the money I sent you please acknowledge it at once. I want you to write oftener & you speak of waiting for next mail for letter from me. Now don't wait for I am anzious to hear from home, although for the present I cant come.

Elbert I have traded my large horse for a pretty small roan horse one I guess you could ride he is gentle & kind & gallops finely & I think I shall keep him to bring home with me when I come & then if ma says you have been a good, first rate boy you shall have a long ride. Tell ma if she gets the money I sent I want her to get a present for you. Did you get the yellow boy I sent you? I guess Raymond wont be jealous if he is ma must make it right by getting him something too, Ive not got your letter yet. I wish you could all go to Brockets to see the folks. Sister Beverly is very low. Write all about the children Yours J.V. Ferguson

Heat Qtrs 97 Reg N.Y.V.
Camp near Cedar Mountain
Aug 14, 1862

Dear Kate & family

I have today received two letters from you one Saturday evening the other Monday morning & was glad to hear you were all well It made me feel sad to hear that Elly cried when you read that I was not coming home at present. In my last I wrote you we were about to move to Culpepper Court House & probably on to Gordonsville Well sure enough we were moved forward to two miles south of Culpepper which is quite a town & near which we learned that Gen Siegel, Banks & McDowell's army Corpse, were there also & that about four miles ahead the rebels were in strong force having driven in our Cavalry & were resolved to prep through Culpepper & so on north. We went into a field by the road side where we bivouacked fo the night. There was something grand about the march through Culpeper & on to our camp The heavy (tramp) of long columns of infantry. The rattling of the dangling sabres & the clattering hoofs of Troupes of Cavalry. The music of innumerable brass bands the stirring martial music all rendered delightful by the beautiful moonlight that shone upon the scene. Here Gen Pope rode passed by us accompanied by McDowell, Siegel & Benton. We slept on the ground after taking a supper of crackers & coffee expecting next morning to be led on the the Battle for God & our Country.

Next morning Gen Banks Corps advanced, about 9 o'clock. I spent Saturday & Sunday niights assisting to care for the wounded & here I learned some of the horrors of They were taken to Culpepper & temporarily cared for & have since been sent to Washington.

I think our loss was greater than the enemy though many think otherwise yet though they had the field at night they had fought only our advance & when they reached the main body they fell back. We have 20,000 cavalry men here. Siegel, Banks, McDowell, Shields & King are on hand & it is said Burnside is on his way from Fredricksburgh to cut off Jacksons retreat

I think you will not hear of much inactivity in this department. I never saw so much activity every night troops ar moving not much by day

Now I want you to write often I think Elly must be a busy boy as every letter almost says he has got no time to write this time but I hope & wait.

I can write no more at present

Yours J.V.Ferguson

Ohio Aug 14th 1862

Dear John I wrote to you twice laast week but I do not know whether you have received either one of my letters or not and so will write again I have my doubts about your getting the last one which I sent on Friday I was not very well and got Louisa to direct it for me. I had lent my Envelopes which we usually Copy after and so in a Hurry we forgot about putting the Number of the Regiment on, Mary Paull thought perhaps they did not direct their letters right as she said Albert did not write Home very often and thought he could not get theirs so she borrowed it to direct after, I received the Package of Money you sent last Wednesday Night and wrote you on Friday about it but as you perhaps have not received my letter I write again Anthony said the Charges on it at the Express Office was 1 Dollar 25 cts which I paid, Charges on Alberts was Sixty two cents, I was into get a letter from you last Evening but was disappointed we hear they have had a Battle at Gordonsville have not heard the particulars yet, feel anxious to hear whether your Regiment was engaged in it, Last Evening we received the sad news of the Death of Capt Hannah in the Newspaper his Death must have been Sudden as Edgar wrote nothing about his being Sick in his last letter Home Edgar wrote he had sent in Papers to be raised another Peg in Office as Lieutenant Fitch has resigned Edgar wanted to know what had become of John Ferguson so I concluded you do not share much correspondence with each other Michael Kiney came Home this week he could not get a Furlough and so took his discharge he looks rather miserable he was shot through one of his Lungs he says had it not been Edgar he would not have been here now as he begged him to lay him down any were but Edgar carried him as far as he could and dragged him part of the distance untill he got a Mule Boy to help carry him the rest of the way he says never can forget Edgar Michael went to see the Doct to day his Wound is healed but he is troubled with an inward pain he has been very bad his Wound would heal and then break open again Well now about the Money I would like to have you dispose of it some way as I do not like to keep so much in the House at one time I presume you have received my letter in which Albert sent a line asking for the use of a part of it now I shall not dictate do as you think best but I thought perhaps if you should conclude to let him have it perhaps you would rather take a Mortgage on the place the same as Mr Hurd did it but do as you think best, and now a word about your coming Home should your Health begin to fail would it not be better to do as Brother Wood did come Home than to do as

Capt Hannah; and others stay there and die I cannot help but feel somewhat troubled about you when I hear of so many dying away from their Homes John Johnson has not been Home yet but has been sent back to New York could not get a Furlough to come Home this does not seem right they think he will have to take a discharge the same as Michael if he comes he was much better the last time he wrote but they think he will not be well enough to do duty in some time if ever that was quite a mistake about Brother Wood,s getting up a company to go again to War he has been to Brother Westerns nearly three weeks trying to work in ...the first week could not do much at it but last Week it went better she thinks he will not undertake to go to War again John Paul & JOHN Mcintosh came Home on Furlough,s yesterday to stay untill Monday they have their Uniforms Anthony said you was mistaken about the Bounty they get larger Bounty here as the County raises an additional one here for the new Regiment that is forming here We are all usually well Raymond calls Papa and Elbert Behaves good for your not coming Home good Night Yours as ever Kate Ferguson

In margin: Sarah Ants wife told me yesterday there was a Marriage their daily Kelore Mitchell is with Brooks they thought it must be Brother Mitchell

Aug 21st 1862

Dear John

I received a letter from you Monday Night was glad to hear that you was well but still I cannot say that my mind is at ease from your writing I should think you had been in rather a dangerous position and many tell me that you were not obliged to go out on the Battle Field and I believe you told me the same before you left Home then why expose yourself to dangers unnecessary and that to unarmed which makes it seem worse I shall not attempt to describe my feelings to you but one thing is certain these are sad and lonely days such as few of us ever expected to witness and I think now that I never could have got along with it as well as I have had it not been for the care I have over my/our Children which takes up my mind and Time We are usually well with the exceptions of Elbert is having a couple of Bibes the Weather is very warm here day times at present the Funeral of old Mrs Hume was held in the Church to day she had an attack of Diarrea John Hume is also very sick his recovery is doubtful there are several cases of Diarrea quite sickly at Greysville a number of Children have died Capt Hannahs funeral was held at Marcy I think on Monday it must have been a great trial for his Wife to have him die so sudden and away from Home, Edgar wrote he died in Camp was out on dress Parade the Night before he died his disease was Congestion of the Brain Edgar thought very much of him says he was a good Man was prepared to die and had gone Home, Harvey Snyder and his Daughter Julia are at Alberts on a visit Sarah Woods Babe is not very well is troubled with its Bowels same like our little Sisses was Ma is staying with her, Souisa stays with me Nights Now John you said nothing about the Money what must be done with it I should feel a little Better not to have quite as much in the House Report says there are a number of stray Soldiers at and about Greyville who are Night Walkers in Uniforms with guns and Bayonets some of them went over and destroyed Brother Walker,s Father,s Garden while another Report is that Teams have been stopped on the Salisbury Road and their Money demanded by these Military Gentlemen we have not heard of their being sum up this way but they may come, Fleury golks had a letter, from

John Johnson he is in the Hospital in New York Mrs Church that took care of him from the first is with him but he is tired of the Hospital and wants to come Home but cant get a Furlough or discharge either does not gain much some of the Doct there advise to have the Ball taken out yet but he does not like to try it, Mrs William Ash called to get your address to send to Nathan,s Boy, Arthur Ash said he had wrote to you but had received no answer he wrote his Name had been enrolled on the Draft Roll but Mr Ash's people think perhaps he will not have to go as he is Clerk in the Post Office have you received a letter from Anna Elvira Abiel if so she would like an answer I have heard that Warren Yonker and John Ingraham had enlisted in the new Regiment, Burt was around to day trying to get more Men to fill up his Company the Regiment is full and they are going to have another started so they will not leave Herkimer right away they went there on Monday Brother Wood is improving is still at work in Hay has Preached two or three Funeral Sermons Brother Salisbury Preaches good Sermons Raymond begins to talk some says Ill cry if anything does not please him he is pretty well is quite a play thing for all even Mr Snyder stands in the door and slaps his hands at him he likes to go in the store and reach up his hands for Candy which the old Gentleman takes the box down and lets him help himself he will go very near him and try to speak loud as if he knew he was deaf which pleases Mr Snyder Well John we are having green Beans, Peas and new Potatoes if you were here you might share with us we had a little Frost last week hurt the Buckwheat a little but nothing farther I believe from Kate Ferguson

In margin: Mary Paull says tell Albert to write they think he does not write half as often as they would like to have him I will say that Edgar writes on an average three and four letters every week and always seems to have a great deal to do

Camp near Rappahannock River

Aug 25 1862

Dear Kate I have but little time to write this morning as already a battle is begun They are engaged about four miles from here, part of our force is on the West side of the river & part on the East. We have been very active since the battle at Cedar Mountain we moved forward nearly to the Rapidoe & remained a few days & on Sunday the whole army fell back to this River & the enemy have followed I hope yet fear since McLellan left they have rushed forward troops via Gordonsville in very large numbers.

We have a large army & pretty strong position & I hope can hold them any where with this force it is here but but if obliged to fall back to Arlington hights we have forts there which their thousands can overcome We hoped McLellen would join Pope before the battle but he has not had time The march & jaunt of the laast tour gave us all a pretty hard one. I stood it well except a cold which for a day or two gave me considerable pain in my bones but I have come out of it all right after two good nights rest

I have received no news from home for some time gbut expect some when the mail comes We have had no mail for four days. Tell Mary Albert is all right

About that money I am not yet prepared to give a reply as I have been negotiating in another direction.

We have warm days but very cold nights, very dry at present.

While I write I hear the cannons roaring terribly I am with the ambulances & in case our brigade is brought in action shall remain at hospital to assist in caring for the wounded.

I can write no more at present. I remain

Yours, J.V. Ferguson

Kiss my dear little boys for me how I wish I could do it myself

(on the back of the letter, in pencil)

Tomorrow is my birthday

Aug 28th 1862

Dear John

Although disappointed in not getting a letter from you last Evening still at your request I write again not knowing whether you got my letters or not as this is the second time since I have received any from you if I can get a letter from you once a week it does very well although I would like to hear oftener and when a week passes by without my hearing from you I begin to borrow trouble more than usual and to day is Thursday and I have not had a letter from you since a week ago Monday Night, we have a regular Mail three times a week now Monday Wednesday and Friday Now if you are well and could write a little oftener, as you cannot come Home, I want to hear from you as often as possible if you are sick cannot you get some one to write for you I may as well know the worst as I am uneasy if I do not hear from you why don't Albert write oftener to his Mother she is very anxious about him and now since John is gone to makes it seem worse for her he is at Herkimer yet and what is to become of us and our Country some of us Women get almost discouraged sometimes and are afraid we shall never see the time when Peace will be restored to us again, Mrs Winchel called at Anthony on Tuesday she said it was over a week since she had a letter Mr Flemsburg asked me this Morning when I had received a letter from you he said they had not got any from their Son in some time the Daily Papers of yesterday says there is a rumour afloat that Gen Sigel shot McDowell through the Heart and killed him the particulars are not given the papers also say there is fighting going on Alberts folks had a letter from Edgar last evening McLellans Army was then at Yorktown when he wrote he says they had a warm dusty March but he writes every chance if they only stop a little while, one time after the Death of the Captain he wrote with Sash and Belt on as he had command of the day he dare not take them off, Anthony,s folks have had a letter from Nancy Ann she wanted to hear from you had seen by the papers that McDowell's Division were engaged in Battle but said they had not heard from ;you in some time felt very anxious to hear from you Harvey Snyder and his Daughter Julia left Alberts this Morning hes been up on a visit he wished to be remembered to you Albert Mr Wood and Soucius have been through our place with a Draft Roll O what lonesome times all this excitement makes and when will it ever end nest Monday there is to be training here they are to meet here from four different towns and train Mr Copperside as their Commander a week from next Monday Camp Meeting commences near Remsen I do not expect to attend, my Children require my presance at Home Ma is at Sister Sarahs yet her Children are both unwell John Johnson is still in New York hospital wants to get his discharge and come Home Henry

Shifelt has gone back there as they would not lengthen out his Furloough the Friends are usually well our Children seem to be pretty well but it has been very sickly at Gregsville among Children Elbert goes to school he is very busy he has one Hen that has thirteen Chickens another with two he has to fix the fence to keep the Callpres out of Garden little Raymond still calls papee but whether he will ever see him to know him or not I cannot tell we think him rather cunning Now John if you have got my other letter that I have sent I hope you will send some word about the Money what I must do swith it as I do not like to keep so much in the House if you receive this I hope you will write a little more frequent if you cannot write more than a half a dozen lines do be careful dont expose yourself when it is unnecessary the Weather here is rather changeable this Summer one day very warm the next cool and rainy we have had some Frost you write you would like to have me visit Brocked Bridge I would like to see them all but do not feel like going a great ways with Children I have heard that Sister Beverly is some better I wrote to Sister Brown this week yours Ann C Ferguson

Halls Hill. Near Washington
Sept 4, 1862

Dear Kate. I presume you are very anxious to hear from us by this time, but you are no more anxious to hear from me than I am to hear from you. The reason of your not hearing from me regularly is an order from Gen Halleck or Pope forbidding sending any correspondence from the army till further orders. But I mean if possible to get this to you by private means.

We have been on the tramp for the past four weeks. & in several battles have lost quite a number of men. had a number wounded & some thirty five of our regiment taken prisoners. Among the killed is Lt. Dwight Faville he was shot through the breast & head & died instantly, the poor fellow was left on the field from Satrday till Monday before being buried. A Wheeler boy from Co. E was also killed & several others you do not know. Jas McIntosh was wounded in the leg. I helped him off the field on Monday. he with weveral more had lain there cared for by the rebels from Saturday.

The men who were taken prisoners were released all except commissioned officers. They took three of these from our regiment & they were sent on to Richmond. Albert Paull and all the brockets bridge boys camout safe & sound.

I saw Rose of Salisbury was a prisoner but is released. We are all pretty well used up by constant marching and short fodder but the prospect now is we shall have a little rest I think Gen Pope's object is accomplished & the design of the enemy defeated By Gen Popes advance toward Gordonsville McLellan was released from a tight place & no doubt the enemy meant to crush Popes Army before Mclellan could join him and this they tried but were defeated although we were obliged to fall back yet I have no doubt the enemy's loss is much greater than our own McLellans army is now here mainly & we have no fear of an attack on Washington but presume they will try to enter Maryland by Harpers Ferry or some where else, but we have an army now that we think will soon be able to drive them to the wall Our forces are rapidly increasing the new troops coming in rapidly You must write regular & often but must not be alarmed if you dont hear from

me regularly for I dont know how long it will be before I shall be allowed to write I want to see you all very much & never so much appreciated the value of home & home comforts as for the past four weeks

I have seen the privations and Horrors of real war & have been often constrained to cry O Lord give thy people peace. I have seen the 34th Maj Coverly looks well He says his wifes health seemed better when he left. Col Spofford won golden opinions by his coolness, bravery and discretion although Col Wheelock has not yet hoined his Regiment but we think that in action we gain by having Col Spofford to head the regiment in action I dont know that I can get this to you but shall try Kiss my dear little boys from me. Love to all J.V. Ferguson

Dear Kate Since writing the within with a pencil the mail for the first time for nearly three weeks came to us As I expected it brought two or three letters from home which I was glad to receive We are also informed that hereafter the mail may be sent as usual whether true or not I dont know I have written you all the news I could think of but should try to give you all the incidents of the past four weeks I should fail suffice it to say we have been on the tramp nearly every day & many nights. Giving us a taste of soldiering in earnest. We were first accidentally under fire at Cedar Mountain Then after our return from the Rapideau to the Rappahannock river where the R Road crosses the river our Regiment laid in support of a battery of artillery for nearly a week when there was more or less fighting every day. There we had two or three wounded Sargeant Smith of Co. E was hurt in his side one or two of his ribs supposed to be broken a man in Co H a German had his hand & arm shattered by a cannon ball. Not a man flinched. Next the Regiment was led into the fight near Bull Run last Saturday and were engaged nearly all day where they lost the men named in my penciled letter Yours stating that Mr. Flansburgh had asked about John reminded me that he was among the missing, but as he was seen some 1/2 mile from the front line of battle & was wounded in the arm it is supposed that he with the many others slightly wounded made his way to Alexandria of that I have but little doubt. Those taken prisoners have been released except Commissioned officers of these Lt Roof, Lt C. Fenton & Lt Downing were all taken & sent to Richmond.

The Regiment was nearly surrounded it was between three fires before it broke & then upon order & how so many escaped is a miracle to all. Capt Jones of Co. E had his army badly wounded Lt Carnes injured slightly by a rail hit by a shell striking him in the back. The missing keep constantly coming in so that our loss is not so great as at first supposed. The next & last time they were under fire was last Monday night near Fairfax but none were injured. The loss of Lt D Faville is deeply deplored as he was deservedly popular & a first rate officer For some time he seemed to have a presentiment that if he went into battle he should fall & so expressed himself to several Also when at the Rappahannock he gave me fifty dollars to keep for him & send to his mother if he fell also requested me to instruct Daniel Faville what he should do with money in his hands, that too, he wanted given to his mnother. I have a lock of his hair cut from his head after being shot. You seem to be very fearful of my safety & also of the money sent you. As to the first I try to keep clear of danger as much as possible & my duty I think demands that I should be at the hospital in the rear & out of range of shot here is where I have kept myself this far except on the night we were unexpectedly shelled at Cedar Mountain.

As to the money I have no opportunity myself as yet to dispose of it in a business like manner taking proper securities & if it gives you so much trouble as your four last letters would indicate, give it away or send it to a bank for safe keeping or anything you please, bury it in an iron chest, if Ohio has become so unsafe a place to trust or do as Mrs Larmay used to do divide it among the women of the neighborhood, anything will suit me.

Alexandria Sept 7th 1862

Dear Kate

Although I have but two days ago sent one I now attempt to pen another letter home. You see from the above that I am in Alexandria I have been in the hospital here. But, dont be alarmed I was not sick, nor wounded but visiting some of our sick & wounded men and searching for others who have been missing since the last battle near Centerville. Many got scattered, some wounded, others known to be & seen after the fight & there are others of whom we have heard nothing yet though we are hearing from some new ones every day. Among those not heard from since the fight are J. Flansburg and one of Mr. Potter's boys, the other having been sent to hospital sick. Isaac Rose of Salisbury. I think of no more now with whom you are acquainted. I think these were not killed in the battle for I was over the ground under a truce on Monday & our dead were not yet buried & should have seen them if there but that they were perhaps slightly wounded & made their way to Alexandria & have been sent off to some hospital if so their friends may hear from them before we do. All the prisoners but Com. officers were released. Although under fire all day the 97th stood firm till ordered to retire & then were obliged to escape under a galling fire from three directions, fire of both musketry & artillery. Five, yes one minute more & all would have been prisoners as before they as before they left position the enemy were so close as that some were fighting with clubbed muskets.

Several came to me afterwards & said with tearful eyes they knew that only the hand of God delivered them. My position during the fight was at the hospital a mile in the rear upon an elevation from which I had a view of the line of battle for two miles & such a terrific scene I never before witnessed & pray God may never again at this point the enemy had two batteries to our one & a greater proportion of men

Toward night in the heat of the fight we discovered the shells thrown nearer the hospital when the wounded loaded into ambulances & at once sent back toward & to Centerville I went with them, before reaching Centerville we met heavy forces of McLellans army going forward but they were too late the day was lost. Passing these I moved on with the multitude of wounded & sick & straggling to within a mile of Centerville when being very much exhausted & hungry I turned from the road to a house a little way off where when we were encamped here last spring I had learned Joel Mann lived. (the Joel Mann that once taught school in Ohio) here I found several wounded officers but was kindly welcomed by Mrs. Mann. Mr. Mann being away to York State on a visit There I got a supper, after that unsaddled my horse, cut some green corn stalks for him & tied him to the rails of the front piazza requesting the guard at the door to keep an eye on him went in & went to bed. And for the first time in over a month I undressed & slept in a bed. During the night Gen. Tower was brought in with one leg badly shattered

by a bursting shell & many other applications were made but they were full. Yard, barn, sheds, every where were soldiers some wounded, some sick & some scattered in the fight

Next morning a little after daylight in a drenching rain I left & passed on to Centreville & this way about a mile here I found the Lt Col of our Regiment.

I tell you Kate when I saw Mrs Mann a weakly woman & her four or five small children and heard her tell of how the soldiers had taken away her last cow & horse, her pigs & chickens, forcibly entered the house & taken all their meat meal flour in fact every thing & frightened one of her children into spasms I felt to thank God my family lived so far from the seat of active war. She seemed very glad to have me stay & I promised her if a battle occurred there that day I would do all in my power to have her family removed to some safe place. Soon after joining the regiment I found the army had all fallen back to Centerville during the night during the night & morning. We laid here one day & night & the next day I went back with the flag of truce to fetch off the wounded & bury the dead & oh what a scene of Horror. O cannot describe it I found Lt Murphy Sargeant Lewell Correspondent of the Utica Herald. Jas McIntosh & several others & never was I a more welcome visitor with tears they shook my hand I gave them water from my canteen & passed on in search of others soon the ambulances were there & took them from the ground where they had lain for 48 hours. wounds undressed yet they had been cared for & fed a little by the Rebels. These were all around us I talked with many of them & had a sharp argument with one of Gen Stuarts aids who rode up to us & began the conversation. I scoured the fields & woods as much as time would allow & left after seeing them all off getting outside the rebel & within our own just before dark reaching camp found the regiment had fallen back to Fairfax. I joined them next morning when we fell back to Halls Hill where they now lie opposite Georgetown.

Having had little else to eat for four weeks than hard crackers & coffee & marching day & night I was like most of the men much exhausted. but getting a pass to visit the hospitals & see our wounded in this City of Washington I have had three good meals a supper last night, breakfast & dinner today. I now feel as though I could take another tour Col. Spofford & 3 other officers are boarding here a few days to recruit. Spoffords difficulty is biles & eruption of the skin So you see you have no course for uneasiness about me. I would have written but the mail from this army was stopped. I have not seen the 81st though I heard last night Ledgwick's division was here some where. Albert Paul stands it like a tiger. Healthy & tough & a first rate soldier. I want you to write to Raymond to set the time for his coming down & I will try to be the(re) pass or no pass. I want to see you all very much indeed. I have no fear of a fight here though there may be on the upper Our loss is 10 known to be killed, 35 prisoners since paroled over 30 known to be wounded and some 60 missing of whom nothing is known.

Monday Morning. feel first rate. have seen Mr. & Mrs Carner. he is but slightly injured, learn that Capt Jones is dead died yesterday from the effects of his wound & amputated arm. I shall remain about the city of Washington a few days & then go to camp. I want to visit the hospitals first. Yours J.V.F.

Washington

Sunday Oct 12, 1862

Dear Kate You see by the above that I am in the Metropolis, I arrived here Friday evening about six O'clock all safe & sound

I spent the day yesterday in visiting different hospitals here to see our boys I found several & learned of the death of others one was F Dempster from Qafsellville another Z Burlingame of Boonville both died of disease in Hospital, I went to the hospital where Jas McIntosh died & learned the date of his death, Sept 11th But did not find that he had left any effects. I called on the Ward master who should take care of them if there were any & he said he had no overcoat, knapsack or blanket & that he had left neither purse nor account Book he was buried in the Soldiers home, a burying ground for deceased Soldiers if you see any of his folks you can inform them, &c,

I have heard nothing new from the Regiment but expect to visit it tomorrow, I did not stop at Herkimer s I heard the Regt was not going till the 20th At Little Falls, I learned that Sister Beverly was dead and was buried Tuesday

Col Spofford & wife are gone home he was better but not well he had a furlough

On my way down I saw Gen McLellan, who came on the same train from Philadelphia to Baltimore where he had been to meet his wife who came on with him. He was cheered at every station on the line, he responded only by appearing on the platform & bowing thanks. At Prospect I met Capt Roof & Lt Fenton late from Richmond who seemed very glad to see me & I'm sure I was to see them. I saw Dr Myer he said Sarah's eye was better & he could easily cure it. He...of my bottle of Raspberry shrub. I did not care anything about it as such things are only a bother unless you have a way to carry them. I shall leave my valise here at present only taking a change with me

At Prospect the cars were off so quick I hardly had time to say good by to Elly & them he kept out of sight a little I guess as we started, but Elly you must not feel bad because I am away, but try to be a good boy & then when I get home I shall love you more than ever. I feel first rate in health, think I shall stand it finely

As soon as I learn anything about Albert & the Rest I shall write again. Soldiers are coming on by thousands every day. But few are in the city. There is great confidence in McLellan, although all are desirous for an advance and it must come soon if at all this winter or fall. quite cool today Please write at once & often kiss the little boys for me
Yours J.V. Ferguson

Head Qtrs 97th Regt

Camp Mercerville Oct 16th 1862

Dear Kate, I have reached the regiment & suppose you are anxious to hear from us. And as I suppose the anxiety concerning Albert is greatest I will afsure he is all right well & hearty. He was slightly injured by a piece of a shell which struck his blanket and cap-box, exploding his caps & set his blanket on fire & slightly burning his fingers in putting it out, but he was not obliged to leave the ranks at all. So you see my opinion expressed to Mary is correct John Santmire is well. I saw him this morning. D Beverly is in hospital near here is getting along finely. I left Washington Tuesday morning. went to Baltimore (then) to Harpers Ferry by the cars & came on foot from there 15 miles to camp On the way I staid at Sharpsburg over night & went over the Great Battle Field evidence of terrible work was visible the trees, fences & everything was pierced with balls & bullets & every house in Sharpsburg is pierced with cannon balls & shells. On

the field are caps & clothes of all kinds pierced torn & bloody & near a cornfield in a lane this ground is still covered with blood pools dried on the hard path where they fell & laid in heaps most of them-shot through the head & body as the lower parts were shielded by the bank by the sides of the road-this was the rebels stronghold but they were driven from it finally withbut our forces bought it dearly as the lof was heavy & they were so exhausted that they could not follow up the advantage they had gained but had they known how badly the Rebels were whipped they would have tried no doubt to follow up their advantage. The number of the regiment now is 289 privates and 14 Commifioned officers present. 28 of these reported sick. Besides these a large number are away in hospitals sick or ailing & &. Capt Egelston & all the boys with whom you are acquainted are well. Wm H Snyder is dead he was wounded through the lungs & died in the hospital a week ago last Sabbath. Joseph Harrison of whom Mr. Bachus enquired is wounded & in hospital here he is on the gain. Geo Grinnell is dead, wounded through the lungs & died of his wounds in hospital one man of Co E lost a finger on each hand had a ball shot & lodged in his forehead another through his body like Michael Phineigh & five other shots in other parts of his body & is now alive & is recovering fast. I am well & feel not a bit the worse for my walk. We hear heavy firing this forenoon down the river or towards Winchester we cant tell exactly where you will have probably hear by the time this reaches you. Most of our officers think there is a prospect of the Corps remaining here for some time yet. It is quite cool here today overcoats comfortable I have paret of a shell that killed two Rebels at Sharpsburg I suppose Elly has work enough to do. Elly how about the potatoes are they dug yet. Is Raymond well kif them both for me.....I could hardly bear to wait the time to come when I should be permitted to be with my family again but still I feel that much as I want to see you & my dear little boys I can make the sacrifice of personal pleasure for the benefit of our bleeding country & I am fully satisfied that the order of Gen Pope which requires this Sacrifice on my part is precisely what this army needed & is for the common good as is every other order yet ifued by him

The new and increased vigor imparted by them attest their wisdom. I was glad to hear that J Johnson was getting better & hope he may soon be well. I presume Alberts people have heard from Edgar before this & that he is well. I have no doubt but the sickly climate of the Peninsula kills more than the bullets of the enemy. We get the papers here daily from Utica, New York & Washington with full accounts of the Wounded sick &tc arriving at th cities & so we had heard of these before you wrote.

When you write tell me all about Elly & Raymond & the rest of the folks, how you get along &c&c. I hope you will cheerfully submit to wait my coming home till such time as I can get away which I think will be after the army gets fully organized & in working order. I have received pay received it yesterday & shall send it to you by EXpref to Prospect, keeping only enough to defray my expenses. I hope there will be no troublew in your getting it I received \$930.00 & send home \$850 all I can spare as I have borrowed some to keep me along the past six months.

I am exprefing for the boys a large amount today which I shall take to Warrenton this afternoon. Frank Reed is sick & in the hospital at Warrenton with fever also Channery Brown our Servant & a first rate Soldier. I shall go & see them today

I hope you had a good Qtrly meeting. Would like to have been with you. Albert Paull & Landmire are well & hearty Albert is a first rate quiet Soldier John is the old

sixpence. One of Mr Potters Boys is sick, but this morning is much better. We are expecting to remain here some time & yet may move today. Several of the men have deserted since pay day & among the number is Fred Service a small loss to be sure. This is indeed a terrible war but signs portend that that Govt begins to see the necessity of earnestness and promptness, & now I have hope of a speedy ending.

With the present policy I can hope the God of battles will be with our army & give it success. I see daily much wickedness more than you would suppose would exist with men exposed to so great danger as men in the army yet I do what I can to save them but sometimes feel my labors are of little account yet I would sow beside all waters hoping yet to gather fruit. The boys & all treat me with great respect & generally attend our religious worship & last Sabbath evening we had a very interesting prayer meeting under a large elm tree our frequent moving interferes much with our prayer meetings
Pray for us Love to all Yours J.V. Ferguson

In the margin: Keep the money except what you need till otherwise directed except for a present to Elly.

Head Qtrs 97 Reg N.Y.V.
Mercerville Oct 22n 1862

Dear Kate

I have just received a letter from you which I perused with much satisfaction It gives me great pleasure to hear from home & I hope I shall hear often. I have written once since I arrived in camp, which was one week today.

Our camp is pleasantly situated on a ridge of hills about 2 1/2 miles from Sharpsburg and only a little way's say 1/4 mile from the battle ground. The men have got new tents & new blankets & clothes and are quite comfortable now. The officers, too, have got new tents since the big battle near here. So that notwithstanding the cold nights we are all comfortable. I tent with Maj Northrup & Capt Egelstone, We have an officers mess in which one goes into the country about and buys butter, eggs, potatoes &c for us all who pay in as he wants the money, we have a contraband to cook for us. So that our stomachs are well cared for, and mine behaves itself nobly, I eat very hearty, digest well & have not had the slightest difficulty with it since I left home. Capt Egelston & Maj Northrup some expect to come home to attend the draft in their respective counties. Col Spofford is home on a furlough. The present general health of our regiment is good The wounded in the hospital near us are generally doing well I wrote you that Albert Paul was unharmed though a shot struck his cap box and exploded them. Daily the boys while away some of the dull hours recounting incident of hair breadth escapes or daring adventure of themselves or others of which their recent experience in the severest battles of the war furnish an abundant supply. James Adsit of Co. F. from Lascelville is dead. he is, the man who lost his leg while going off the battle field with Lieut Spencer. he leaves at home a wife & two children D. Beverly continues to improve finely. Avery from Wilmot is with the regiment all right & well of John & Hiram Potter I hear nothing only one of them is at Annapolis a paroled prisoner. I have been over to the camp of the 121st about 1 1/2 miles from here I saw the Brockets Ridge boys Charly Bradt, Camp Moon and others. they seemed glad to see us Yonker looks well John Ingraham is hearty

& tough. Mr J B Langdons son from Russia is here after his Brother who has fits occasioned by some stroke on his march from Washington. I guess the boys dont think soldiering is much fun. I yesterday saw Nathan Hemstreet, he was here is camp is about 2 miles from us. he looks like a soldier. the worse for wear but is tough & well he send respects to you & all. Albert P. has written a letter to Mary. I am sorry to hear that Laruk has so severe a time with her eyes I had hoped they would soon be well when I was home & still think it cannot last much longer with her Elbert done well getting his potatoes dug & in the cellar I am glad he is not a lazy boy. I hope he will also be a good & obedient boy I think your garden done well. Today it is quite cold with a very high wind. last night it blew some of the tents down & the boys were obliged to put them up again in the dark There are apples but not very plenty. Chestnuts, Walnuts & Black walnuts in considerable large quantities about here. Many of the boys are fixing up their tents & making them warm, for some think we shall winter here but of this matter no one knows anything, yet it is my opinion we shall not remain here much longer as we are every few days ordered to have rations ready & be ready for a march at a moments warning. The army was all exhausted, Without clothing tents blankets or Camp Equipage & in an unfit condition to do good active service till recruited & these things supplied This has taken some time but this is now pretty generally done & the army apparently ready for service and I hardly think it will be allowed to winter in Maryland although if anything is done at all before winter it must be done soon.

I rece... a letter yesterday from Raymone he was then at Cleaveland he said that all of our Ohio friends are well. Tell Henry to take good care of Col for if I get home safely I want him for my horse. How do you get on with getting wood, does Delong furnish it If not you had better get some one to furnish 25 or 30 cords & pile it up Perhaps some one will come with a machine & saw it & fit for the stove.

I found on my return most of my things but my blankets were gone. I bought a large shawl in Utica & a rubber blanket in Washington so I am provided for. We held service last Sunday in the shade of a beautiful large oak just behind my tent, but many were absent who used to attend they are in the hospitals or in the spirit land.

I hope God will spare my life & my family that when my duties here are done I may be permitted to return to them again Elly and Raymond must again be kissed for me

Yours J. V. Ferguson

Dear John

October 24th 1862

I received yours last Evening & hasten to reply to it & also to tell you something more about little Raymond,s sickness we think he is a getting little better now but gains rather slow the Doct calls his disease Scarletina the second Stage of Scarlet Fever his throat has been very sore swelled very much outside, I can tell you John I have been very much troubled about him it has caused me a great many anxious moments and o how I wished for you to be Home sometimes I feared he would never be any better he was a very sick Child & it seemed so bad we could not get a Doct for two days and a Night and then we had to have Myers as Wiggins was away from Home so much we could not get him Myers cam twice his Bill was only six dollars which made quite a draw on my Purse but I must not complain if he only gets better I have succeeded

at last in getting Wiggins to tend him as Myers could not see him often enough Doct W was here today thinks he will recover now but I tell you I have had my Heart & Hands full & although we have had Watcher every Night for a week still I am pretty well worn out as he has been troublesome and would cry and call Mama and then I would get up and take him, I fear he will forget his Father if you stay away so long O dear how much trouble and excitement this War has cost already last Saturday Night Alberts folks received a Package of letters from Edgar informing them of the Death of William Bachel a German that went with Edgar from this Place when the news was broke to his Wife it almost made her Crazy she has three small Children not asolute in the Country I tell you it excited our sympathies for her here is Sister Wood and mself with our little Families it would be a trying time to as should hear we such sad news I realise we are not the only ones but very Many there are who are liable to be called upon to bear such trials but then we can not really feel for others untill we compare our own situation with theirs, Edgar seemed to feel quite bad about Bachel he said they left him at Washington in the Hospital they thought he would get better untill they heard he was dead wrote to his Father to the best for his wife he could and when their Pay Day came they would make up a Purse for her Adam Hoss has been very sick at Staten Island has received his discharge and returned Home Mary received a letter from Edgar he writes home often he said they were within six Miles of Yorktown which frightened us some and the Ellsworth Regiment are within three Miles of that we tremble expecting to hear the news of an awful Battle and perhaps some of our friends will be numbered with those who are cut down I read a letter in the Utica Observer Teusday paper-signed by one who belonged to your Regiment or the 97th that they expected to move on to Yorktown you say nothing of this in yours, and also says that Chaplain Ferguson had be Presented with a Sword Sash & Belt is this a mistake or did you forget to mention it, please let us know Friday morning

Raymond is imp0roving some we think he is quite troublesome the Rash is going away I have to wash him with Salerative water as it makes him itch so, and while writing I have to keep rocking the cradle so you see by my writing there is a constant Jarring I have been very careful and taken him out any except one afternoon to Sister Woods her Children were all well, Anthony,s children Emma Ellie and the Baby have all had the Scarletina Simplex in a mild form their throats were not sore, Ma and Mary were with me or I do not know what I should have done when Raymond was sosick John if you have plenty of Envelopes it would be quite convenient for me to have you send some all ready directed I have shortened myself with Money by paying Doctor Myers six dollars

Yours in Haste Ann C Ferguson

Head Qtrs 97, Reg NYV
Berlin, M Oct 29, 1862

Dear Kate

Our Corps is on the move for Virginia we have marched back to this place eight miles below Harpers Ferry & are this morning crofing a pontoon Bridge into

Va. The whole army is on the move The weather is fine & boys in fine spirits. and all pretty well.

Albert & Q Lautmire are well. I have no time to write much but suppose you will want to hear from me. I have had one letter from you since I left home & written two. We have not much news to write. Spenceer Spofford & Carner are not here yet.

Lieut Jenkins of Prospect has been dismifed from the service. He stopped at Washington when the Reg went through the day Capt Jones died & staid a few days by so doing he violated an army order & was dismifed

No Officer or private in the Regiment blamed him but think the action of the Court martial unjust & mean to try to have him reinstated he goes home this week

I can write no more at present You must write often & not wait for one from me for I dont know how I shall be situated

Give love to all
Kif the boys for me
Yours J.V.Ferguson

Head Qtrs 97.Reg NYV
Camp Near Warrenton

Nov 8, 1862

Dear Kate,

From the above you will see that we have got back in Dixie some distance

I last wrote you from near Waterford where we stopped one day. Since then we have been on the move every day and reached this place yesterday. The rebels left it only 12 hours before we entered. Our march has not been a tedious one as we had good roads & beautiful weather Our advance every day had more or lef fighting with the enemy but they fell back constantly & kept some 6 or 8 miles ahead of our division though we were daily within hearing of the guns Our march was from Berlin which you will find by the map just below Harpers Ferry, up the valley between the Bull Run and Blue ridge mountains pafing by the way of Waterford near Snickersville on Bloomfield & Union to new Salem then to this place The weather had been beautiful except cool at night until yesterday when we had a severe snow storm for two or three hours reminding us of our Northern New York. I received yours on Wednesday & was glad to hear you were all well but sorry to hear that Sarah Paull's eyes are so bbad & hope she will soon be better. I think Anthony is quite unfortunate it seems really too bad to loose so good a colt & spoil such a nice span

The health of our men is very good indeed we have but very few sick Frank Reed is qyite unwell & was yesterday sent left in a private house at Warrenton. Albert Paul said last night he had a letter from home & they had not got his yet but they perhaps have by this time. Pay day has not yet come but is looked for anxiously as the boys have four months pay due them.

My health still continues good & we have kept quite comfortable. The boys consider sheep, pigs and chickens contraband of war & supply themselves freely & as no

army had before passed through this valley before they find quite an abundance. We have a fire at the door of our tent & by my side sits Frank Faville both seated on the ground & writing on the knee.

Whether we shall move today or might or not we dont know but we hear this morning the roar of cannon telling that our advance is gone forward toward Culpepper & we shall probably move in the same direction soon I dont think the Rebs will make a stand this side of Gordonsville if there & if they do you may expect to hear they are terrible whipped

Our army is moving cautiously & with great force This morning the report comes to camp that N York has elected Horatio Seymour for Governor. We hope however it is not so but fear. I should like to have seen Aunt Marcia & Jane. Hope you had a good visit. You must write & often & I will when I get a chance Kif the boys. Elly write
Yours for God & Our Country J.V.Ferguson

Head Qtrs 97 Reg N.Y.V.
Camp Near Bealeton Va
Nov 12th 1862

Dear Kate Again I am at the inconvenient busines of writing with a book on my knee for a table. I last write you from Warrenton where we remained till yesterday when we were marched to this place. Bealeton is the name of the Rail Road Station near our camp on the Rail Road running from Alexandria to Gordonsville. it is about 4 miles west of Catletts Station & about five east of the Rappahannock So you see we are again moving into Seceffion. The Rebels are only about six miles west of us on the other side of the Rappahannock We marched to this place yesterday

Head Quarters of 97th Regt
Near Stafford Court House Va
Nov 21st 1862

Dear Kate, I have no ink convenient so use a pencil When I last wrote we were at the Rappahannock Bart Road Bridge which we held till the army had mostly moved down the river toward Fredricksburg & Acquia Creek on the North side of the river. We than destroyed the bridge & acted as river guard to the moving army now moving back of us bu Pleasantons Flying Artillery our march was a tedious one as we left the River at dark & marched til nearly midnight when we bivouacked officers sleeping on the ground & without tents the men had their ponchos. It rained during the night and all day yesterday and all last night & the march is half knee deep and all had to wade through it in the rain

& dark last night we got in camp about 11 o'clock & I with Capt Palmer & with two others put up a tent & slept soundly till late this morning. My rubber coat, cap & leggins kept me almost perfectly dry & I suffered but very little. The move of the army in this direction is unsuspected to us & its destination a mystery. But one thing is certain, he cannot move much further by land & if we are headed for Richmond it must be by way of rail road from Fredricksburg or down the Potomac from Acquia creek,

before Our men are quite healthy indeed of the diseases of summer will not prevail during winter wherever we may go. Capt Eggleston & Northrup Paull near Chain Penelge he had a bad cold but was otherwise well to say whatever you to have the gold (save my wedding piece), I should not wait long for I long to supply wood if anybody else would get it all at once. I have recd the from Elly Elly, if you knew how glad I am to get a note from you, you would write oftener. We are transferred last Sunday from Durycas to Laylo's Bridge transferred last Sunday. In directing your (letters) you need not mention the Brigade but simply the regiment. I must for I send this to Washington by chance our is going, I shall write you again soon, write regularly but I cannot on the march. Love to all Does Raymond talk? Kiss the boys for Pa Yours J.V.Ferguson

Head Qtrs 97 Regt
Brooks Station Stafford Co Va Nov 23 62

Dear Kate

It is thanksgiving evening & having an opportunity I embrace it in writing a few lines to the "dear ones at home". I last wrote you from near Stafford Court House the camp which we left last Sabbath & came to this place.

Brooks Station is on the rail road running from Acquia Creek to Fredericksburg about 5 miles from Acquia Creed and 8 from Fredericksburg. It is only about five miles from the camp last occupied by us. In my last I told you of our wet cold & muddy march from Rappahannock Bridge. A very unpleasant one indeed but we soon became satisfied for the weather became clear & pleasant & the roads quite passable and our short move to this place was made on Sabbath with ease - The main body of Gen Burnside's army now lie along the line of this rail road, which though not yet in running order tthe whole length is fast being repaired so that it soon will be. The bridge across the Rappahannock at Fredricksburg, all the bridges along the line, and all the cars & engines on the road were destroyed in August by Burnside who retreated from this vicinity & joined Rope in his grand skedaddle. The cars & engines were run upon the wharf at Acquia Creek landing and then fired & with the wharf entirely consumed, so they might no fall into the hands of the enemy, and now the cars & engines to be used here have to be brought in vessels from Washington

The cars are now running nearly to Falmouth a little place on the north side of the river & just opposite Fredricksburg. Sumners corps is at Falmouth & the enemy are still in possession of Fredricksburg. Each army having pickets along their respective banks of

the river which is so narrow in places as to bring the pickets within fifty yards of each other. A pontoon bridge is ready there to be thrown across I suppose as soon as Burnside is ready to force his way over. Batteries commanding the city are planted on the heights of Falmouth. The Rebels also have batteries planted on their side the river to dispute any efforts to bridge or cross the river which if they persist in doing & Burnside means to go that way toward Richmond will no doubt soon occasion a battle. Much speculation & all unsatisfactory, is indulged in as to our future course. Some believe we shall go on board of transports down the river & others that we shall go by Fredricksburg over land, yet none can tell anything about it but most prefer to go on transports as the easier & more comfortable route. We wait to see what is to be done with us. The letter you last sent had a note from Albert in which he asks what I think of the removal of McClellan. I hardly know what I do think. Although I do not believe as Albert does that McClellan is a coward or incompetent, yet I am satisfied he is too slow to cope with the enemy's leaders or to satisfy the wishes of the fast people at home. And I further believe that had he advanced on the broken Army of Rebels at Sharpsburg the next day after the Antietam battle there would have nothing been left of their entire Army. He had them hemmed in, beaten, broken & defeated & yet allowed them to cross the Potomac without taking a prisoner excepting wounded men & stragglers or capturing a single piece of artillery or even a baggage wagon and all this too when he had thirty thousand troops as reserves which had not been in the wednesdays fight at all. Their entire army lay in a bend of the river & within three miles at the farthest point from the bank & from the right of our line it was not more than a mile to the river. I will on a small scale sketch about the position.

It is true they had heights on which
they had batteries & could retreat
across without being discovered
without making a forced

reconnaissance or by spies yet I see no excuse for ignorance of their moves by Gen MC or failure to follow if he knew of their retreat and this illustrates what in my opinion is his great defect. I think he has no superior in America in skillfully massing his troops, handling a large army or conducting a battle but I do think that he is too slow to follow up his successes to make them of the greatest advantage and furthermore that he lacks that decision & rapid action necessary to a successful General. His plans are well matured & studied but after maturing he seems to hesitate. We want a man to think decide & strike all at once like our old Jackson & Taylor or strike without thinking like the Rebel Jackson

Though McClellan had the unbounded confidence of the army yet his removal is pretty generally quietly acquiesced in except by the Party pimps who are in the army only because they could not resist the popular pressure at home, but care more for party than country. His refusal or neglect to advance as ordered Oct 6 is enough to remove any officer from command & I am willing to try Burnside.

I have tried to learn about Jas McIntoshe's money but can only find that he had told several (among them G Rockard) that he had lent Winchell fifty dollars & some to D Norton when he hurt his foot & thought of going home but I can find nobody that knows themselves or have heard Winchell say anything about it. I have no doubt the facts stated in his letters are true & think Winchell will not deny them So will tell Albert of this.

My health is first rate never better Albert Paull & J Landmire are well. Col Spofford returned Monday. looks well, Capt Egelston is home. I rec'd your stamps. you needn't send any more for a week or two, We have a fire in our tent, it is a trench dug in the ground covered with flat stones except a place for wood & a sod chimney outside. it keeps us warm enough. Some thirty recruits from Utica arrived yesterday for our regiment. Elly you must write a line or two in all of ma's letters. I am sorry Sarah Paulls eyes are so bad I hope they will soon be better. Pay day has not come yet & money is getting scarce here. How is Sarah Lutes babe. Does Raymond talk? Tell me all the particulars

Remember us at the throne of grace

Kiss the little boys for me

J.V. Ferguson

Yours

Head Qtrs 97 Regt N.Y.V.
Brooks Station Va
Monday Dec 1st 1862

Dear Kate

Yours duly came to hand & found us still at Brooks Station It was a week yesterday since we came to this camp since which I have written you once.

The weather since we came here has been quite pleasant & the roads are quite good again, and we are expecting that soon we shall be started out of this. There seems, to be but little doing beside furnishing supplies for the army, and this is no small matter. Forage for horses, Rations and Clothing for the men - providing horses Mules, Wagons & harness for those worn out & broken down & preparing the army for an onward move is a work that requires much time & energy & this so fast being done. The Rail Road from Acquio Creek to Fredricksburg is now finished except of course the bridge across the river at Fredricksburg. & the track is almost kept hot by the constantly running trains. Our boys have fixed up their tents with fire places primitive indeed but quite comfortable You would be amused to see the style of these sod conveniences. They have some quite ingenious contrivances. There are some screws loose somewhere for many of the boys are short of sufficient clothing & especially shoes although frequent requisitions have been made. Some of the men are quite dissatisfied because of it and also because they do no receive their pay now due

The army seems now to be quite reconciled to the change of military leaders although at first some few seemed quite inclined to grumble.

In your last you speak of your expenditures & of your economizing &c, &c, now I have simply to say I hope you will not in the least scrimp yourself either in the line of provision or dress but supply yourself with whatever you think necessary. It of course is quite cheering to learn that your neighbors have been able to supply themselves so liberally & am sorry I can see no samples so as to judge of their taste. you may perhaps next time enclose a few. You say N Curtis spoke of sawing wood for you and Anthony discouraged him. I am sorry for that for I know that no one item is more essential to your comfort than a good supply of wood & I would advise you again to get on hand all you need for the winter so that you will not be bothered any more. Nicholas owes me &

ought to be willing to pay it in that way but if he will not, get the wood, & pay the money Delong, when I was home expected to have a machine next week but has not got it yet seems & wood sawed split & piled even now would be better than green from the tree. Make a bargain with some body to provide within a certain time (not too long) 30 cords of good Maple or Birch wood fitted to the stove & piled up conveniently & when it is furnished pay for it. I hope to be able to furnish the necessary funds at some time or another if Uncle Sam does not break down. I now have three months pay yet back & when I receive my pay I shall send what I can spare. I dont expect to be able to send a U.S. interest note, for Uncle Sam's credit is so good as that they are worth considerable Premium & are hard to get hold of My pony is getting along finely & I think will soon be entirely well. I ride him daily & he is but very slightly lame. I see by the papers that New York had indefinitely postponed the draft & I hope the invalids of Onio will recover their health. I presume if some of them had been here at some of the battles they would have been able to overcome their afflictions show their ability to run as fast as any of us.

I dont remember of mentioning that when at the Rappahannock Bridge the Rebels were in plain view just across the river. They came down to the river bank & talked with our boys. They were anxious to exchange papers with them which was done by wrapping them around a stone & throwing them across. We expected fun when our men fired the bridge & our regiment were brought up in line of battle on this side & on the high banks stood our cannon & in the rear a long line of Cavalry all of these were ready & expected the rebels to fire on us But they did not & the victory was a bloodless one. I today have learned the 121st are four miles from here & mean to go tomorrow & see them. Capt Moon is not dead but Lieut Cameron is, You may tell Albert that John Landmire says he means to send Anthony some money when he gets his pay & then he will send Dr Wiggins money with it that it must by no means be charged to the town. John is doing well & is able & willing to pay when he gets the money & I will see to his sending it Albert again asks my view of McL removal. I have stated it in my other & further than that cannot say till I see what Burnside does. I do like McL caution, Skill &c when in action but do not like the want of dash & rapid action so necessary to whip Americans his mode of warfare would be exactly right to whip any other nation if they attack us but is too slow for the hot blooded yankees of our own country. I have 3 ct. p. stamps enough for the present will send them. Elly send me a paper wont you? put your name on it. A letter too. We have no snow nor very freezing weather though we have frost every night. Did you have a thanksgiving dinner. I did. Crackers & coffee taken with very grateful hearts, But no religious services that day here, we had a review. I hope the prayers of the thousands that day before the Lord will be abundantly answered Kiss the boys for me
Yours J.V.Ferguson

Head Qtrs 97th Regt N.Y.V.
Brookes Station Va Dec 6th 1862

Dear Kate, Although it but a few days since I wrote you as I have leisure this afternoon I use the time. You see we yet remain at Brooke's Station although since I last wrote we have changed camp. We moved only about 1/2 a mile to better ground From the appearance of things we judged we should remain here some time & perhaps all winter & set about fixing up our camp to be comfortable, but before night, the same day (Wednesday) we received an order to be ready to march Thursday morning at daylight.

On Thursday we were ordered to be ready on Friday & last night which was Friday night, we were ordered to hold ourselves ready to march at any moment and so we stand now. In the meantime the roads are all lined with our moving army. They seem to be headed for King Georges Court House. They have been moving for several days. Yesterday was rainy until night when it began snowing very much like our Northern Snow Storms & continued till late in the evening when it became clear & very cold & this morning when we arose it looked quite like winter. The ground was covered to the depth of about 2 inches & the trees were bowed with their heavy load, and although it is 4 o'clock P.M. the hills are white still.

From the constant moving of trains of baggage wagons & artillery the roads are again quite bad and this has prevented the army moving as fast as they otherwise would & for this reason our division don't move yet, and in fact it is almost impossible to move at present much as we may desire it.

The elections month & the state of popular opinion abroad & the growing desire of the army to see the end of the war soon by compromise or any way leads me to fear at times that some inglorious plan will be adopted to bring this about & no good result to our nation for the vast suffering, sacrifice & loss of money, blood & life. If this is the case there is but one class of persons upon whom the blame should rest & that is the prating, Traitorous Politicians who remaining far away from the field of danger & strife contents himself with watching the efforts of the Government for the purpose of discouraging & embarrassing in all that is not conducive to the interests of his particular party.

These bid by misrepresentation for the favor of the miserly fellow whose money is his God by crying against taxation & for the low & base Debauchee by encouraging to hope for easier means of gratifying his bestial desires & all is encouraged & supported by the blinded, respectable but prejudiced party man who will vote now for a measure & man in favor of secession, because he is a Democrat & yet perhaps they sing praises to Gen Jackson whose determined opposition to these very same principles which now curse us saved our country in its former time of danger & some of them glory in the fact that they voted for him also. Voted as Democrats once against secession & now as Democrats virtually for it. But I thank God there are some true men who will not go with the multitude to do evil. But enough of this which perhaps is not of interest to you. Capt Palmer of Co. K. tents with me since the Maj & Capt Egelston went home & we have our tent fixed up very cozily indeed. We put up logs two high like a log house & then our tent on these & banked with earth all around. Then we built a fireplace of brick & chimney six feet high. For mortar we used mud. In the corner we have a bed this is made first by laying a log far enough from the wall for two, then pine or Cedar twigs & boughs to fill up & make it soft on these we spread our blanket & make our bed. Sleeping very comfortably. In one end of the tent we have a small tree set with limbs cut off long enough to hang hats coats &c on. Over head we have a rope stretched from our pole to the other for a line to hang clothes & things on. Our floor of course is the ground but this is dry & hard. Most of the boys have their tents fixed up warm & nice. I am glad to hear that Sarah Paulls eyes are some better. Albert is well & hearty. Payday can't come yet & when it will I don't know, but money here is very scarce. I have divided mine till I but a little left. You may send me a few more 3 ct stamps. I have not been discharged yet as you heard. Think the drummer thought of Capt Ferguson who has resigned & gone home. Am glad your attack of pain was no more serious. I could not be content here with

family sick at home. Be assured my little family are daily remembered at the throne of grace & I trust we shall yet be permitted to enjoy each others society I visited the 121st Saw Dr Walker & DeHolt of Newport who is Asst Surgeon he sent respects to you All the boys are well except Wade Faville he was in hospital at Washington I am not expecting any immediate fight but the Army will be put in position along the Rappahannock to move move whenever admissable. Give my love to all. Elly you must write again dont wait so long next time. Be a good boy A kiss to all Time hastens & N Year will soon be along. Pray for us Yours J.V. Ferguson

Head Qtrs 97th Regt N.Y.S.V. near Fredricksburg Dec. 18, 62

Dear Kate I have no letter writing materials but write at all event. We have had another great battle. Our troops crossed the river, and attacked the enemy in their strong hold and fought all day Saturday but did not succeed in driving them only slightly at a few points. Our loss is very heavy. The 97th fought bravely & lost Killed in battle three, & wounded 33, one has since died. Among the wounded are Capt Palmer from Rome through both legs & Lt Rockwell of Col E. None of your acquaintances are hurt. Br Anson Robinson from Newport was the first man killed in the regiment. The 121st were in the fight but lost only a few & none of my acquaintance, I have not heard from the 34th yet. But they were on the right & there was terrible fighting there. I call it a defeat, for no doubt Gen Burnside meant to go forward, make the attack, but was repulsed. He was not driven back, but remained across the river in front of the foe & in battle array til Monday night when he came back with his whole force to this side of the river. Our wounded were all brought off the field & everything done for them that could & the weather was very favorable being warm & dry & yet there was much suffering. I have been busy as possible in caring for our wounded men. We sent off some of them yesterday for Washington & the rest will be sent soon.

My health is first rate. The weather is still pleasant except very cold nights. I feel cast down in view of our defeat but trust all in the hands of a wise providence

We have not yet heard from Gen Banks. We are in suspense as to our future movements,_____ I have lost my horse saddle & Bridle. Stolen from before the hospital Saturday night. All search has been fruitless, I may yet find him but it is doubtful. I had yesterday a letter from you in which you say you have no recd mine I have written regularly till last week Our regt took some 40 prisoners in a charge upon them. The pickets are very near together & are quite friendly Tell Mary Albt is sound, many narrowly escaped, but thank god for saving them. Elly must write again I can write no more Yours in haste J.V. Ferguson

Hospital of Gibbons Division

Near Falmouth Dec 24 1862

Dear Kate. For the second time since the Battle of Fredricksburg I write you. Before I wrote with pencil I yet remain here caring for some of our wounded. Most of them have been taken away to Washington, somewhere about 150 remain here but of these only four are from our regiment. These are doing well. Our regiment are in camp at King George's Court House about 8 miles from here and every body is asking since our late sad repulse "What next?,, If course, nobody knows but we do not expect to remain idle. Although I have labored hard for our wounded boys yet my health was never better. I see many sad

sights & hear many sad sounds. Moanings & groanings on every hand. Men praying & men cursing and I find enough on every hand to call out the deepest sympathy & the most laborious efforts. These sufferers show much fortitude & patriotism & are mostly of a different condition. From the position the Rebs had it would require 10 to 1 to drive them & I think it was folly to attack them in their strong hold. But perhaps nobody was to blame. I have not seen a paper since the battle & consequently dont know what they say or think but I dont want to see such another slaughter for no purpose. I have not heard from the 24th but the 121st lost none with whom I am acquainted.

Col Wheelock & Col Spofford were both in this fight & showed themselves very brave & cool and both came off unharmed About 20 of our paroled prisoners reached the Regiment the day after the fight You spoke in your last of reports of my discharge & of talk of consolidation with the 121st & their desire to retain their Chaplain &c&c. Of this none of us have over heard any intimation down here & if roomens talk give you trouble & anxiety why tell them not to talk for I cant help it so far away from where these consolidations discharges &c &c are manufactured.

The weather here is delightful very much like May in Northern New York our tents are all open this morning & it is plenty warm enough without any fire. Our Hospital is near the River bank & the Rebs pickets are along the River on the other side in plain sight & speaking distance and now all is quiet & friendly between them & ours.

I have not yet found any trace of my horse & dont expect to but think I shall find another I hope you are comfortable & provided with whatever is necessary for self & family Money is scarce with us Pay day has not come yet & when it will is uncertain

Tell Mary Paull the two Mr Garretts of South Trenton, old men are here one a fifer & the other a drummer I am sorry Sarah eyes are so bad & hope they will be better than the Doctors fear

I expected to go to Washington with some of our wounded but shall not now. I hope Elly will go to school regular & do his best to learn get for him whatever books the teacher thinks he needs. Elly you must try to learn to write well so that you can write letters every week to pa and Elly spend the evening at home & in the house. Read some story aloud for ma every evening & try your best to be a smart & good boy I would like to be at home to spend these winter evenings but cannot

Elly do you cry any more? Two babies at one time are rather too many for one family so you must let Raymond do all the crying

On the day before the Battle I was in the City of Fredricksburg & it seemed horrible many houses burnt & the rest pillaged furniture crockery clothing & provisions of all sorts were appropriated by the soldiers, here is one playing the piano, another filling a sack with flour & here in the street sits some soldiers on a nice sofa cooking cakes of stolen flour & stolen dishes while for tea & coffee & plates they use the finest china ware & property of all kinds scattered every where & here & there a dead rebel killed by cannonading the day previous. Such the effect of war, homes desolate, property & life destroyed & all for what? The families had been previously removed. I send for Elly some mottoes taken from a stone by the boys. I had some books but they went with my horse. write often & let not your heart be troubled on my account, trust in God & pray for me Yours in love J.V. Ferguson

Heads Qtrs 97 Reg N.Y.V.

Near Bell Plains Dec 26th 1862

Dear Kate

Yours of the twenty first I received tonight & from date of posting I see it reached me in four days. I also received last night yours of the 14th. The reason of my not receiving this one before was because of my absence from the regiment caring for our wounded in hospital near Falmouth, But as they are now all sent off to General Hospitals at Washington my services were no longer required & I returned yesterday (Christmas) to the regiment. Our wounded were all doing well when they left, except Jerome Wheeler of Co E. from Wheelerstown in Russia. He was wounded in the knee & the surgeons took out his knee Ran & I fear he will die yet good nursing may save him. I found the regiment encamped in a pine grove on a sand hill on the road leading to King George's Court House, and about 4 miles from Bell plains a landing on the Potomac. The entire army is lying along in this vicinity between the Rappahannock & Potomac rivers we are only at a distance varying from 5 to 8 miles apart. The camps seem only to be temporary which indicates an early movement in some direction. Nobody knows when or where. King Georges County is very hilly, sandy & barren, so is Stafford Co. The army is in a good condition & high spirits although they feel the disheartening effects of the repulse in the late battle yet they are confident of success if the Rebels can be got out of their ditches & woods & from behind the stone walls into an open fair fight. There can be no braver hearts than those of our army. None can conceive properly of their daring & courage. But no army could resist or rather rout a foe hidden & shielded by embankments & walls & felled forest trees. Among the wounded in our Division Hospital was a Rebel Lieutenant taken prisoner. He told me he would have been ashamed of their army if they had not held their position against double their numbers & that they had no cause of boasting over the late battle. He seemed to be a fine intelligent fellow He is heartily sick of the war & desires to return to his family in Georgia. He enlisted my sympathy & done for his comfort all I could. His name is Pettigrew

I am sorry to hear that Lucius is so sick but hope as he is now some better he will continue to improve were I with him I should feed him Milk Punch and Beef tea to strengthen & build him up. I am not quite out of money I have five dollars yet I hope we shall get our pay by the time that is gone. I have recd the stamps, both kinds which you sent me. Also Elberts letter I hope he will write again soon. I am glad Elly is so well provided as he says with good clothes, and that he is so good as to do so much work & go to school regular. I have written you twice before this since the battle & given all particulars I thought of I have today heard from the 34th that Mr Moyer of Brockets B was killed a cannon ball or shell struck off both legs above the knees & he died on the field. Alex Cumming was also wounded severely. Ame Woolever slightly, those are all I heard of my acquaintance. I have recd 3 letters from Raymond & N.A. they are well. Raymond says that some 12 men are to be drafted from about 80 & that he is among those who are to run their chances & that as they are not allowed to hire substitutes if drafted he shall go into the army and consequently he has not used the money I let him have but kept it to return if obliged to go. I hope he will not be drafted for I think his health too poor for soldiering yet he nor N.A. did not complain. but seem quite submissive to their lot. The draft comes off Dec. 30th. I am glad you are so well provided with wood &c & hope you will be quite comfortable during this winter, I never witnessed so warm a Christmas as yesterday. It seemed more like may than Dec. we

have splendid weather, & if we could have N York Society, Laws & Soil I should like to live in this delightful climate. I should like to drop in & see you all this Evening & stay till after New Year I think I should try to have a Good New Years dinner & by the way, I had a good chicken dinner yesterday. I got into camp just as our mess had dinner prepared my walk of 8 or 10 miles gave me a keep appetite I did dinner full justice I can assure you.

Since Capt Palmer was wounded, we have now in our mess Lt Col Spofford Dr Little a noble fellow Lt Cady another fine fellow from Rome & Lt Carpenter & myself & we have very good living indeed & my health being first rate I enjoy a hearty meal much.

Capt Egelston & Maj Northrup are home yet and I dont know when they will return. There are many citizens from different states now visiting the army looking after their wounded friends. Some are sad to find they are dead & buried others rejoiced to find them slightly injured or unharmed. There were a vast number only slightly wounded & yet too many fataly wounded & killed. Elbert you must not wait for me to write you a separate letter but consider whit I write in mas letter an answer to yours. You wrote a good letter I had to read it tonight to several officers in my tent and they called it a first rate letter for a little boy like you. I would like to have you hear the music here. but guess you will have to wait till you are a little older and besides I think you would soon get tired of it. My Pony has not yet been found but the boys say they will find another for me if he is not soon found & as there are plenty of horses in this country I expect to have another soon. I wish you too a happy New Year. I can not write any more to-night, but want ma to kiss both Elly & Raymond on both cheeks for me.

Remember when you kneel around the family altar your absent J.V. Ferguson

Head Qtrs 97, Reg N.Y.V.
Bell Plain Va
Jan 15. 1862

Dear Kate

I am still in the enjoyment of first rate health & comfortably situated for which I feel greatly indebted to Kind Providence We here are having fine weather still today it is very windy & a tree was just blown on the Col's tent & smashed things generaly but nobody was hurt. We are in the same old camp still waiting for orders, In fact that is most of the Soldiers businef to wait for orders, then obey. Our regiment is in fine health & spirits. We have not a sick man among us. Our number of fighting men Besides teamsters hospital attendants &c is about 200. and they are not spoiling for a fight, although they have shown that when iin one they are true blue No men can fight better than ours have I am glad the 81st & 152 have so good luck & hope the may long be kept where they only have guard duty to do. far away from the field of blood & death I wish we had so good a Post. If not so honorable it is useful & quite as safe

When I tghink of home which I afsure you is quite often I almost get homesidk & want to be there but duty seems to forbid. I think with present health I could enjoy a visit better than when home. I think New York must be proud of Horatio Seymour her governor & his mefsage. The State Rights doctrine is precisely what Jeff Davis pleads as the proof of the right to Secede & is fatal to any republican Government He seems

determined to array New York against the administration which he denounces in Bar Room slang phrases. while he has not a word to say against the rebels who also denounce & seek to destroy the object of his hatred but he is a democrat and so democrats I suppose will endorse him Hundreds of negroes are hasting toward Washington, free, yes, thank God free & no power on earth can again enslave them. Men, women, children on foot, in cards & wagons. Mafses of course are going daily and once across the Rappahannock more will come & every one that leave Mafsa now weakens his power to harm us

Elly, Lonny Ingraham was here today with Dr Walkers horse Dr is sick in Washington, getting better, dont you wish you coulcl have been here to see him. You would have to sleep in a cloth house. Are you a good boy. Every letter says Elly cant write any this time, well Pa gets no letters from him then but I love you for all that & would be glad to kifs you tonight but cannot. Ma must do it for me

Yours J.V.Ferguson

In margin: No pay yet

Camp of 97 Reg N.Y.S.V.

Near Bell Plains, Va

Jan 27, 1863

Dear Kate

Yours of the 18th was received last night and found us as it left you in the enjoyment of good health which we are mutually indebted to Kind Providence. As you see we are in our old camp again. I wrote my last just as we were about to move acrofl the Rappahannock and attack the enemy, all confident of succefs & full of hope. But as we are here again on the precise spot we wrote from then you may be interested somewhat in the details of our expedition. For several days we were under marching orders & finaly on Monday night Jan 19th the order to march next morning came. On Tuesday morning early all was in a bustle of preparation Breaking camp & packing up We got in line & under march before twelve Oclock. Our camp looked some like a deserted village & we left it with some regrets though many were glad the decisive battle was soon to come off We supposed of course as many days had been spent cutting & grading roads from our point to the river that we should be led directly to the river & acrofl. But as we moved off to the right & back from the river we soon learned this was not the design and on we go toward White Oak Church, 3 miles beyond it past Franklins & Burnsidess Head Quarters & still on acrofl field & over hills out of sight of the river to a point about 1 1/2 miles from the River and four or five miles above Falmouth. A march of 10 miles that day and then about 9 Oclock Bivouacked for the night closed up Tuesday. Early in the evening it Began to rain, raining all night, making it exceedingly uncomfortable for the men. Many of them slept but little but spent the night sitting or standing around fires built of such poor stuff as they could coax to burn in the rain. The next morning they went on some three miles further on a road Leading direct to the river at a ford. There we encamped On Tuesday morning the roads had become so soft & muddy by the nights rain that it was almost imnpssible for a team with a load to move and by noon as it continued raining cannons & wagon trains also the Pontoontrain with the Boats to make the bridges for us to crofl over the river on were stuck in the muc sure enough Everywhere the ground was so soft that a loaded wagon would sink to the hub &

in some cases twenty horses or mules were attached to one wagon & then could not budge it. In places 5, 10 or 20 wagons might be counted in sign all fast. Horses & mules, dead, wagons broken or abandoned were numerous & soldiers wading through the mud ankle deep to be seen everywhere. As it continued raining hourly Wednesday night & Thursday to all it became evident the project was a failure & must be abandoned. The forage for horses & rations for men could not be transported nor could the Artillery be moved. As the men had on their persons three days rations they would not suffer till these were gone. These were out Thursday morning. Our Brigade succeeded in getting a supply for two days but many others the teams could not reach. So on Friday night the order came for all to return to their old camps & early Saturday morning we were on the move. To evade the mud as much as possible we marched (not in good order) over hills & fields all the way & got into camp just before Sundown. As the distance was some 13 or 15 miles, a very heavy march for the going many fell out & set up tents in the bushes & by the way & didn't get in till next day. Our tents which (by the way) had not moved got back on Sunday. On Saturday night Col Spoford, Dr Little & myself found lodgings in a house near camp & slept on the floor.

The weather continues rather wet & cloudy it is raining today. We expect some to remain here sometime as we cannot get away unless it is by water. Nobody thinks Burnside at fault because of His failure of the move as he does not make the weather & yet many to show his incompetency & quote this in proof & so try to destroy confidence in him. But I feel certain had we been permitted by the weather to move according to his plan before this time you would have heard of great battle & decided success. Today rumor is abroad that Burnside, Sumner & Franklin are relieved of their commands. I do not wonder at your being somewhat disheartened at the recent disasters & present position of affairs. I too am somewhat cast down & but for the fact that God reigneth I should despair. But believing in Him I am sure Rebellion based on oppression cannot succeed yet it may be our sin is so great that National disgrace & ruin are the only means of humbling us & bringing us to repentance. To my mind the most discouraging feature of present affairs is the condition of things at home. Democracy so called, sympathizing with rebellion, denouncing our government, refusing to send troops at its call, creating & sustaining Anarchy & violence in the public halls, Trying to destroy confidence in the Government & the Leading Generals all for partizan purposes while the temple of Liberty is crumbling over their heads. This sickens me, & evinces the sordid state of the minds the hypocritical party worshiping. But enough of this. May God save us from the ruin they seek to bring. You ask about Avery. He is with the regiment well & hearty says he has written home several times but got no answer. The Paymaster staid till we got back to camp when he paid us off to October 31st. I received 2 months pay & shall send home some money as soon as I can get to an express. Albert Paull is well & hearty indeed he feels bad because he is unable to send home any money this time. Soldiers are allowed 42 dollars a year for clothing & if they over run that the excess is deducted. He had drawn his amount & on just the day before his year expired he drew an entire new suit so that \$21.00 its cost was deducted from his last years pay leaving him only about \$21.00 then he had bought a pair of boots \$7.00 and spent some \$8.00 or \$10.00 for other things so that he has not a great deal left this time, not much more than he needs for expenses. It will be better for next year (but prefers a little now) for he has a new suit to begin on. Paymaster says we will no doubt get pay again the first of March. Tell Mary Albert has

not wasted his money, but paid \$21.00 in this year that belongs to next he is a faithful good soldier, always steady to his post. He is 2nd Sargeant in his Co. & now drawing \$17.00 per month.

I see that paper is high but I mean to write till I get through if it produces a paper famine. I spoke to Norton about Jas McIntosh's money. He says that when at Fort Corcoran last Spring James let him have \$15.00 to keep for him. but that at Clouds Mills he came & took it back & that is the only money of James he ever had. That when hurt at Catletts Station last July he did not have any of James money. And I know Norton was short of money at Alexandria & wanted to borrow of me & others. He was then just hurt and had left the regiment for Washington when I saw him at the Marshall house so I think it a mistake about Jas letting him have money with him in the hospital, but I could get no account of it from any one no doubt it was taken by some patient or attendant John Landmire is not with the regiment but with Qtermaster Rowan at Bell Plain detailed as orderlie. When I see him I will remind him of his promise to send home the money for Dr Wiggins

Now Elly I must answer your first rate letter I got it last night & I was glad to tell you. I see you are improving in writing. It would please me as much as you to be with you where I could see you every day but for the present I try to be satisfied I am glad Old Santa Claus remembered you. I would like to see your nice toys. Well now Elly I am glad to tell you I have found my pony again & dont want want Uncle Ant,s Col for Ive got a prettier one. Our Teamsters found him harnessed with a mate before an Ambulance. They unharnessed him without any ceremony and brought him to me seemingly as much pleased as I was. If he does well I mean to bring him home with me when I come to stay. How do you like your ring. Any kind of oil or grease is good to put on it. just a little once or twice thats all. Now Elly you must write again. I would like to eat some of your chicken

My Pony has been off 3 days hunting for Col Spofford's horse stolen the day mine was found. We found him just brought him in.

I can write no more for the present as it is mail time

Kate send for such papers as you would like

I am yours J V Ferguson

Camp of 97, Reg N.Y.V.

Camp near Bell plain Va

Jan 31st 1863

Dear Kate. Again I take my pen to write you, As you see by this we remain in the same old camp & all appearances indicate that we shall remain here for some time, in fact we could not move if we would on account of the mud. We this week have been having a taste of a Virginia winter. On Wednesday it rained all day & was pretty cold but during the night it turned to snowing & blowing & in the morning Thursday when we arose the ground was covered with snow to the depth of 4 to 6 inches & just in front of my tent was a snow bank nearly three feet deep. The snow continued to fall. the wind to blow & cold increase all day, and a windy day it was I afsure you. reminding us of Northern New York. We then wished for our snug houses and warm fires, but in vain, so we tried to make ourselves contented & comfortable. In this we could only partially succeed. as the

wind would blow the smoke down our short chimneys making it so smoky that many fires must be extinguished.

But the storm abated & yesterday & today have been quite comfortable & pleasant. The snow is fast disappearing. The changes in General officers of this army do not create much feeling or excitement, all feel satisfied to have (Fighting old Joe Hooker) as their leader. Our men fought under him at Antietam & South Mountain & are ready to swear by him. I am glad to hear of Collicotts election as speaker of the N.Y. Assembly & hope its effects may be beneficial. Col Spofford has offered his resignation, dont know whether it will be accepted or not

I have expressed to you \$170.00 which you are to take care of using so much of it as you need. Anthony spoke to me when I was home about having \$40.00 or \$50.00 for a time. & I told him if I had it to spare he could have it. provided I could have it whenever I called for it. And if you feel disposed to let him have it & take his note I have no objection. but, say to him when I call for it I want him without delay to pay it to me, else you keep it, for my design is to invest what I can gather at the first favorable opportunity.

Lt Rockwell of Prospect came to the regiment yesterday. he had been home wounded. Said he saw Anthony at Prospect. Capt Egelston is home yet. I have heard that Br Erwin is on here somewhere to see his son who is sick. All of our boys are well. My health first rate.

Elbert are your chickens all gone if you will write often I'll give you my part of them & then you'll grow fat. Does Raymond talk much. How I'd like to see the little bud. I hope God will spare all our lives that we may yet enjoy each others society

Elly my pony is just right for you to ride & he wont kick nor bite but is very gentle wouldnt you like to see him?

Kat take good care of our little ones Yours
JV Ferguson

Camp of 97th Regt NYV
Culpepper. Va
Feb 13 1863

Dear Kate It is Saturday evening and I am again in camp safe & sound. Anthony told you no doubt how he drove fearing we were too late for the cars. but yet we had time enough. On the cars I found several acquaintances from Boonville, and at Trenton Br Faville came on board so I had a fine chat with him. Andrew B met us at H. Patent & I had only time for a word with him, then left E Ann & Charley & away. At the Depot at Utica I met Brs Erwin & Daniel Austin, who appeared glad to see me & I was glad to see them I assure you, I also met Br Rice the preacher from Boonville & a Br Kingsbury who were on their way to Washington & expected to be joined by Br Tisdale from Little Falls, they were coming on to labor 4 weeks for the C. Coinruisson. But when we reached the Falls Br Tisdale could not come on till next day so they stopped off to come on together. Above Fonda we were detained an hour or so by a freight train of 14 cars being thrown from the track. This caused a failure to connect at Albany where I remained at Stanwix Hall for some 6 hours if I had known where to find John Johnson I should have called on him. Crossed the river on ice took cars & reached New York 6 o'clock next

morning. at 7. were off for Washington which I reached at 7PM, reach Mrs Bammermans at 8 had supper & By Mrs B urged me to go to the White House to attend the presidents Levee. In company with some other officers I went, shook the old man by the hand, m saw his lady and a vast crowd of Big & little folks Cabinet & military & other officers reaching Mrs Bs at 11 o clock in the parlor I found Mr William Higby & wife frm L Falls they had been visiting the army. she is Dr Yosts daughter perhaps you remember of meeting her there. Next day went to Provost Marshalls got pafs to Rgt. no questions asked. though two days behind time. spent the day in Washington & next morning took cars for Culpepper on board I met Br Rice Kingsbury & Tisdale who were going out to the Army had a pleasant visit on the way. left Brs Tisdale & kingsbury at Bristow & Br Rice at Brandy When I reached Culpepper I found Dr Little & Dirk Hardin who had come with my horse to meet me & give me a ride into camp which is about 2 miles from Culpepper

I found them all apparently glad to see me back. And I was glad the journey was over. The camp is a nice one. The Regt had on Cedar Mountain been called out several nights into line of battle, and were then moved back to Culpepper & soon after on Reconnaissance to the Rapidan, where they laid one night & then back to camp, Roday with a 1/2 dozen officers I have been to see a fine Cavalry review had a pleasant time. I took a little cold Thursday night & yesterday kept in with ear ache but better today. The weather is beautiful like Northern Aprils. I found the men all well. The veterans are expecting soon to come home but dont know when.

I hope you all are still well. what did Raymond say when he awoke, did not find me there. I hope Elly is still as good as when I was home. Kifs them both for me. I had my likenefs taken at Washington but have not reviewed them yet Ill send one when they come. Yours JV Ferguson

In margin: Kate you will pay Anthony my fare as I forgot it

Camp of 97th Reg N.Y.V.
Bell Plains Va
Febr 25th 1863

Dear Kate

Yours accompanied by a note from Elly came to hand on Sunday. Providence in his kinenefs seems to still give us all good health for which I am thankful.

I am glad Raymond's cold did not prove more serious. You seem to have plenty of donations this winter which indicates that the ministers events are being supplied.

I would enjoy being home to attend some of them but, We have been experiencing the worst storm of this winter Sunday & Monday were terrible days, much like a NYork snow storm. Snow fell about a foot deep & blew in all shapes But a few days & it will be gone to mud. Capt Emerson Northrup & his father were here all well in Salisbury also in the 34th. Capt Egelston & Maj Northrup returned last Saturday both looking well. Mr Merriman & Asahel I Carpenter from Russia were here Saturday. they are visiting the 121st.

The 152d Reg are doing duty in Washington city. They will perhaps remain there till active operations are commenced in the spring. Our men are in good health & first rate spirits. Weve not got a sick man among us. We had one case of small pos. the man had

been off in hospital but he is well & all right now. No danger at all of its spreading. Albert Paul, Avery & Landmire are all very healthy Frank Reed & Billy Dorsher have come back to the Reg looking well.

I should like to come home but no leave can be obtained for more than ten days & only two officers at a time at that. & as many have not been home at all they have the first chance & probably I cannot get any chance at all. Frank Favill is home yet, time y today I dont think any move whatever will be made by the army here till spring. The army are in good spirits & have great confidence in Gen Hooker. Elly your letter was a first rate one. you write better than you did. I am glad you go to school & try to learn. I think by this time you have plenty of snow. You must have worked enough to keep you busy all the time to get your chores all done I wish I could see little Raymond & you & hear him call you Lelly.

The soldiers have some high times here snow balling while there is snow.

My little horse is fat & funny, though he has only grain & once in a good while a little hay. I guefs you must eat your chickens alone as I cant come to help you

I hope the conscription will be rigidly enforced & an army raised to overwhelm the South, its the only way to raise an army & the only way to save the lives of thousands now in the field. All the way through it seems we have raised only just men enough to save being whipped , & hardly that My doctrine has always been a large army & a short war. I hope it will be adopted by Lincoln. I want you to write often & all the news Elly write again Kifs the boys for me Love to all JV Ferguson

Camp of 97. Reg NYV.

Bell Plains Va Apr 4./63

Dear Kate Although as yet I have heard nothing from you since I left yet I again write hoping to hear from you soon.

I having nothing new. strange nor funny. to write will be obliged to merely repeat the old story, "All is quiet along the lines,,"

My health still remains superb I can eat very hearty & they tell me, am getting fat. and the same is true of most of our regiment. we have buty very little sicknefs. The weather is still improving, rains lefs frequent. & not so cold we have considerable wind & this with the sun as the days lengthen improve the roads by drying up the mud Things at present look no more like a speedy move, than when I last write you. I told you of the probability of the consolidation of our Reg. with the 124th. The arrangements have not yet been sanctioned by the War Department. & whether it will be or not nobody knows. Furloughs are again being allowed & Col Wheelock left for home yesterday for ten days. On Wednesday night Dr Walker staid with us & I went with him to the Steam Boat Thursday morning he has resigned on account of health & is going home. The boys of the 121st are well generally. Johnny Ingraham is getting quite healthy again. Sonny has gone home. Our Division was reviewed by Gen Hooker this week & made a good appearance. Hooker is a smart, active, keen sighted man and made a good imprefsi on the troops. he has the Confidence of the army.

Albert Paull expects to go to Washington in a few days to visit the 152. The boots I bot for Maxfield were too small he sold them for seven dollars. Dr Hough our Surgeon has been dismifsed for Incompetency, but few tears were shed. Col Spofford is here again

he is sick today but not very seriously. I am quite anxious to hear from Sarah P. I hope she is better by this time. Our Pay-day has not come yet. but expect it daily.

We have daily arrivals of men from hospitals & deserters & exchanged prisoners. Mr Winchell got back on Thursday. Says he is not fully well but looks hearty.

We have no news but that received from the papers. but we are not much elated with the appearance of things at Vicksburg & cannot account for the slow progrefs of the S Carolina expedition as no mud interferes with their movements. The meadows begin to look quite green here & Spring is on hand, Have you paid Albert my horse bill & for those oysters? How does he get along? I suppose Elly wants to know how my Pony gets along. Well Elly he is fat & plump & can run like a deer & jump a ditch or wall finely. We have been trying our horses & learning them to jump ditches & walls & he does it finely & Mr Reb must have a smart horse to beat him. I think he is the best Pony on the Job & I mean to fetch him home with me when the war is over, if all is well. Is Raymond well & mischievous as ever, I wish I could be at home with you all the time but I will try to be contented & Elly if you are a good boy I shall feel much better about being away. You will be a good boy wont you? You say yes I know you do. Ma Kifs him for that. There now Kifs Raymond & keep for yourself their & my warm affection.

I must bring this to a close by asking your prayers & sincerest regards. Elly you must write often

Yours J V Ferguson

Head Qtrs 97th Reg N.Y.V.
Va. May 20th 1863

Dear Kate I am in receipt of your last and was glad to learn that Kind Providence still grants health to my little family at home and that you had received mine informing you of my safety also of our regiment.

We remain where we moved our camp to, just as I wrote last. & the prospects are we shall remain here some time as the army is reduced materially by the return of many troops whose term of service has expired

The enemy remains in our front acrofs the river in large force but we have no fear of their attempting to crofs over & attack us. in fact, nothing would please the army better than to have them attempt it as all the advantage of position would then be ours.

The same news that reached you-of the taking of Richmond we had also. but as it was only a camp story we were not so credulous as the people seem to have been for we hear from all quarters of the jubilations over what seemed to all so reasonable a succefs to expect. I find that often what is only a camp report is printed in the papers as a reliable rumor, well founded report, an undoubted fact. &c&c. We have learned to give but little confidence to the army correspondents who thus tamper with the credulity of a loyal & anxious public. Although we did not believe that Richmond was taken we do believe that Gen Grant has got Vicksburg or at least that it is at his mercy & this is a much severer blow to rebellion than the fall of Richmond or any other one point in the Southern Confederacy. You ask when this cruel war is to end.? I will answer when these wicked rebels have been conquered effectually & taught to respect law and though this is not being brought about as rapidly as we would wish yet it is surely being done. Progrefs is

surely being made & things to me never looked more hopeful than at present. Yet to do it speedily & with the least Sacrifice more men must be sent forward.

The weather here has been extremely warm but it suddenly changes & yesterday it was uncomfortable till we put a stove in our tent. The woods here abound in spring flowers & the grounds about some of these deserted plantations are beautiful indeed. Trees & flowers all in bloom causing us to wonder at the infatuation that should induce their owners to leave them to enter the Southern army. Two of our men from Prospect, James Stewart & Jerome Stauliff were sentenced to hard labor the remainder of their term, 6 months with ball & chain to their legs, forfeit all pay . Be branded with the letter T (for their) & then have their heads shaved on one side & be drummed out of the service, for leaving the lines when on picket & going outside & stealing two mules belonging to a citizen. Jim Stewart heard of the sentence of the Court martial when on picket so he left the line & deserted toward the enemy & has not been caught, but through the efforts of the officers Stauliff who is quite young, was released from part of his sentence, but was dismissed the service without pay & drummed out of camp he is soon going home. This is pretty severe but it was a grave military offence to leave the picket line. Stewart is the 2nd man under sentence, deserted. The other was a Stevens from Utica

I had a letter Sunday from Raymond they are all well. I had already written them since the fight though they had not yet received it. I see a great splurge is made over the 26th & 14th Regiments at Utica I suppose there will be over the 34th but the speakers credited them with a part in several battles where we know they were not engaged at all. So also with the 34th they claim in the same manner. Already the 97th has marched farther & fought more than either of these yet but little is said but I suppose it is because we have no blowers to puff us in the papers. We bide our time

I gratefully received the N.C.R. Thank you, I am glad the money reached you safely. If Anthony wants money I suppose he will ask for it as I had some talk with him about it before I left. I wish you to ask Albert if he had arranged for the payment of the tax on my lot due at Albany. I wrote Elly last week & hope he will answer soon Is he a good boy? Does he go around the Pond? These are questions about which I am very anxious. I hope you will have good luck with your garden. I think some one might sow some ground with B.wheat & let you have a share

I shall try to write to Jane M soon as she seems to wish it I approve of your plan to visit there this fall. I wish I could hear that little prattler call papa but I wait the providence of God. I send a kifs to each of the dear boys. This is the best I can do now. Pray for me Rest assured you are remembered by Yours JVFerguson

Hospital at Gettysburg, Pa\
July 11th 1863

Dear Kate

I am still well & remain at this place trying to do what I can for relieving the sufferings of the poor wounded soldiers. The wounded of our Division are mostly at

this Hospital about three miles from Gettysburg. Some however are at hospitals in the town.

Dr Chambers our regimental Surgeon is surgeon in Charge of the wounded here of this division he is a fine fellow & able Doctor. I have the pleasure of informing you that Col. Wheelock has escaped from the Rebs & has safely returned after being two days in the mountain with no food before he dare venture to a house as Rebs were on both sides of the Mountain He escaped while passing through a forest in the dark night by lying down just at the side of the road & the guards didnt miss him Col Spofford Capt Egelston Lt Murphy & Lt Chamberlin were prisoners & designed to effect their escape if possible. Frank Faville he said was a prisoner & about 50 of our regiment He did not distinctly remember seeing Albert Paull but since he was quite sure that he was a prisoner with the rest. I suppose Mary feels great anxiety but I have no doubt Albert is a prisoner & will be soon exchanged as we have many more prisoners than they. Alfred Avery was killed on the field & was buried near where he fell I suppose by pioneers whose business it is to bury the dead as soon as possible

Col Wheelock's sword & a part of the flag staff captured by our regiment were saved by a lady Miss Carrie Sheads the principal of the female academy who lived in a house in which Col Wheelock stopped as the Regt were falling back She hid them from the Rebs who followed the Col into the house by covering them in the folds of her dress. I yesterday went with the Col. over the battlefield & to the house & obtained the sword & highly prized flag staff. Rouse Maxfield's arm is broken & it was somewhat inflamed & swollen & not set, in consequence he is not doing as well as it ought. it may be that he will soon be better but now he is pretty badly off. We have all that is needed now for the comfort of the men though for some days they suffered

I expect to remain here some time & you will please send letters to

Chaplain J.V.Ferguson
Hospital 2nd Division 1st Corps
Gettysburg Pa

Some of the rebel dead are not buried yet but they are using the rebel prisoners for that purpose I sent by Col Wheelock to send my mail from the Regiment I have none since the fight

Elly you must write too when ma writing. & I hope you may be able to write often, Kifs Raymond for Pa be good to him, love him obey Ma, pray for me, be a good boy & when I come home, I'll kifs you.

I hope the war may end sometime things look brightly & hopeful now. Though I dont expect Lee's army will be all destroyed thats impossible I do think it will be greatly damaged our forces are after him

Give love to all

Yours J.V.Ferguson

Hospital near Gettysburg
July 28th 1863

Dear Kate

I am glad to be able to inform you that yours of the 21st was received on Saturday & was the first news from home since the fight. I was sorry to hear that Dear little Raymond & yourself were not in very good health, but hope that by this time you are both better. Your letter brought the first news I had of Capt Egelston's escape. Though Col Wheelock told me he designed to escape if possible I have heard nothing definite from the regiment since they left. I am expecting now to go to the regiment tomorrow or next day as the hospital is being broken up & all the wounded being sent to one general hospital in Gettysburg

All our wounded but three are sent away, among the number remaining is Lt Beecher Nephew of Henry Ward, B & son of Charles Beecher. He is severely wounded in the knee by a shell. His cousin Capt Stowe was also wounded but he has gone home, Lt B's mother is here taking care of her son.

Lt Cady of Rome died last Friday of his wounds, his mother was here caring for him. She felt very deeply. his death for he was a noble young man & fine officer

They had him embalmed & took him home to Rome. She was very grateful to me & others for our care & attention to him. Capt Palmer is his Uncle & went home with them. You said Mary was very anxious about Albert. I suppose she is & it is natural she would but I hardly see a chance for a doubt that he is all right. Col Wheelock said that many of our men were paroled & released at Carlisle & as Frank Faville wrote I suppose he was of the number & you ask why dont Albert write too? He may not have taken his parole as many did not for they must go right back into the army as no parole except at Richmond is respected by our Government & many went on to Richmond Again, Albert never was punctual about his writing. Rouse Maxfield is doing first rate & will soon be around

I am hoping for Peace within a year, but we must no doubt have some more hard fighting I am sorry to hear that Sarah P. is not fully cured of her sore eyes. I hope she may be soon You speak of Elly's having much to do & not able to write, well if it is work that prevents, I shant complain much as Id like a letter from him. Now you may hereafter write me at the Regiment as always here to fore for I shall probably be there before this reaches you. I some expect we will be obliged to go by the way of Washington, I have no tome to write you any more at present but shall write as opportunity offers

Elly I hope you will try to write as often as you can. The pony is doing well. I wish you were here to ride him. Ma Kifs the Boys for me & accept of afsurances that you are daily remembered

By Yours J. V Ferguson

Gettysburg Pa
Saturday Morning Aug 8th /63

Dear Kate, I have not yet gone to my regiment as I wrote you in my last but have waited a few days for Dr Chambers our surgeon who has been on duty here having our Division Hospital in charge.

I have just been to the office & obtained an order relieving me from duty here & to report to the regiment. Dr Chambers & myself start today. We are to go to Baltimore

thence to Washington & thence By Alexandria to the regiment all the way by Rail we send our horses to Washington by the boys who take care of the horses.

I have been helping care for Capt Downing who is doing finely and Lt Beecher Son of Rev Charles & Nephew of Henry Ward Beecher, severely wounded by a shell in the right knee.

His mother is here caring for him, he lies in the same room in which Lt Cay died. I think Mrs B a very fine woman & the Lt is a splendid young man. Capt Stowe son of Mrs H B Stowe was also slightly wounded but has since gone home. Rouse Maxfield is still doing finely he has been moved lately to Seminary Hospital it done him no harm & will be better than here in the church where he was.

Col Wheelock, I learn has gone home after conscripts though I know nothing definite about the regiment

You must write often as possible I have only a little time this morning to write in. My health is first rate yet but I am glad to get off from Gettysburg for many are getting sick here. Dr Chambers is quite unwell & I dont know but he will stop with friends in Baltimore to Recuperate. I am not expecting but two or three more large battles to end this war & if enough conscripts are sent on soon these will be decisive & not very severe. Elly remember me & write as often as possible Be a good Boy Ma Kifs Both Elly & Raymond for Yours J.V.Ferguson

Camp of the 97th Reg N.Y.V.
Rappahannock Station Va

Aug 25th 1863

Dear Kate I received your last day before yesterday & was glad to hear you & our little family still continue in good health

I had just mailed a letter to Elly when I received yours with his enclosed. I would be very happy indeed to be at the Camp meeting but I now see no probability whatever of my being able to do so. My health still continues first rate and I dont think I ever weighed more than I do now which I think is pretty good evidence of being healthy especially in this hot weather. About all we have done, & that is hard work, has been to manage some way to keep cool. Yet from reports I conclude you in N York have had some days about as hot as any with us but here it hangs on longer but the nights are cool. I pity the poor fellows down about Charleston & further south & along the coast yet I suppose the sea breezes are cool & refreshing. I want you to write where Edgar is & what he is doing. Although I wrote you in my last there were indications of a speedy move but at present I think the probabilities are we shall remain here some time, if not attacked by Gen Lees army but of this we think there is no prospect at present Gen Rosecrans & Gen Burnside are both on the move it seems & I think Jeff cant spare men enough just now to risk a fight with the Army of the Potomac. We are near the river & several thousand of our Corps are across & our lines are back some miles from the river so we have a fine chance to keep clean & enjoy bathing & hundreds are in the river daily. We only have such provisions as are furnished by the Army Commissary & settlers as this country is as barren as a desert. We have tea, coffee sugar bread & crackers, desicated vegetables ham & fresh beef dried apples. condensed milk, butter, eggs, can fruits & potatoes eggs cost 50

cts pr dozen butter 50 cts per pond & other things in about the same proportion. For dinner today we had a treat, it was a can of tomatoes We try to eat what is good & wholesome & the best we can get. So you see we try to take care of our stomachs. We long for gresh vegetables right from the garden but they are not on our bill of fare I am sorry I did not meet Br Erwin as I must have been at Gettysburg when he was there. Br Pitcher told me he had been at the convalescent preaching to the soldiers was glad to hear it Remember me to him when you see him. Conscripts & more substitutes are daily arriving but we have received none as yet. The conscripts are generally good men but the substitutes are mostly Old Sogers. Our paroled prisoners are coming in daily. Albert has not come yet. today is cool & pleasant, a gentle shower last night I would like to be home I afsure and will be glad to have the time come when I can be with my dear family again & enjoy with them the Blefsings of a pleasant home. Till then I hope God will enable you to guide the footsteps of our little ones. I know its hard for the mother confined much to the house to always have an eye upon those able to be out doors. And sometimes feel that I must be at home to share in the oversight of Elly & Raymond. Yet I think Elly is a reasonable boy & will try to be good & obey you if only you imprefs his mind with a sense of obligation & insist calmly but firmly upon such a course as you see fit to prescribe for him. Ive felt deeply anxious for him for I know such depends on early habits and I want him to be a good & useful man

We hear nothing of Col Wheelock yet nor of his conscripts. We had quite an interesting meeting Sunday evening Br Johnny Zeft was here. I preached after sunset. The congregation sat on the ground around me & such seats as the camp affords. had good attention large attendance & after sermon a season of speaking the time, our circumstances, & condition as well as the exercises conspired to make it an imprefive season & the effect is visible. We have meeting again this evening & are hoping for a good season.

The news from Charleston seems to be encouraging & we are hoping daily to hear of the fall of Sumpter - & Charleston must then follow though it may be by siege. I have no time to write in a very exact style as I want to get this in the mail soon to leave. You must write often Kifs the boys for me. Send me a paper occasionally a church paper. I hope I shall hear a good report from the Camp meeting. there over goes my ink stand & my letter catches it but I cant write another now, Yours J.V.Ferguson

Head Qtrs 97th Reg N.Y.V.
Rappahannock Station Va
Sept 13th 1863

Dear Kate

I received your last on Friday night & was, as I am always when I get news of your good health &c very grateful to god for mis mercy to my family in my absence. I was also very glad to hear that you & Elly had been to Camp-meeting & see so many of our dear friends & had such a good time, I was a little surprised to hear that Mr H Brown & family should have been there the whole week. I imagine Elbert had a pretty good time with Johnny for Hiram Brown wrote Capt Egelston he had seen you there & that Elly & Johnny were together seeming to enjoy themselves finely.

You say they all enquired about me &c.&c which made me wish I had been there I always enjoyed such meetings & would gladly have met our host of friends on Rome Dist & worshipped with them in their beautiful leafy temple, but quite another sort of duties seem resting on me at present I feel that I am losing much by my absence from home & home privileged. My opportunities for religious & mental improvement are very limited indeed in the army Systematic study is simply impofsible & I mifs the helps of my Library & long for the time to come when I may again engage in my studies & enjoy the helps of good religious society. The instance you mention is indeed remarkable & I have no doubt affords a striking illustration of the different feelings that prevail in society under different circumstances. While in most places it is an occasion of sorrow & sadnefs, In Frankfort the increase of the number of Graves was the occasion of great rejoicing. But this grave subject should not be spoken of lightly so I leave it. You have ere this received my letter in which I advise you to arrange your home matters so as to leave them all behind & make a good long visit to Saugerties, I wish I could go with you but cannot at present. I have written to Edgar & hope for an answer soon Albert Paull is very hearty & fat think his visit done him much good. In regard to the disposal of the money sent you I approve your course so far Am not wiling to let it go in driblets, nor in any other way where there is any doubt of being able to collect at any time I want it. Money will buy wood or anything else when you want it. I want you to keep what you have for I have it in view to take Government bonds for it as soon as I can complete arrangements. Please write me about how much you have on hand. I expect pay again this week & will then be able to send some more I hope We are under orders to be ready to march at a moments notice with three days rations in haversack & last night we expected to move before morning It was a very rainy night the first hard rain we have had in a month but this morning nothing new appears & we remain intact but one corps (the 2nd) has crofsed the river preceded by a large cavalry force & marched on toward Culppeper and heavy firing (cannonading) is heard all day & whild I write I hear the constant Boom in the distance but it seems to gradually recede showing that the enemy is falling back farther & farther. I think it is a reconnoisance in force & not a general fight yet it may be one before it ends. It may be the first step toward an advance of the whole army. None can tell yet I hardly think such is the design at present. I dread the terrible fight & hope we shall not have much more of fighting to do.

The news from all quarters still continues to be quite encouraging & In God & our Army I hope this great rebellion will soon be crushed.

You must write me often & dont let your visit interfere with your writing, write the oftener.

I look at those pictures with much pleasure & it seems as though they ought to speak. I never saw a better than that of the dear little boys. The eyes & all so perfect. Everybody thinks they are very fine & that we ought to be proud of such a fine pair of little boys. Oh that as they grow up they may be as good as they are promising now. all the time you can give to their cultivation will be well spent. Well Elly I have not had a letter from you for some time, how is that? Can't you write often Take a little of your play time & write to Pa. it is a great pleasure to read a letter written by your hand

I hope Elly you are a good boy & that you are not s Lucy to ma and never go off without her knowing where you are & consenting to it. If you do it causes her much trouble & Elly no good boy makes trouble for either father or mother if he can help it. Play with

that dear little brother of yours. See how he likes to have you play with him & Elbert, as you love your Ma & Pa always do as we tell you & you will save yourself & us many unhappy hours. I kifs those picture faces often but I send kifses now through ma to the little Boys & through them to ma. My love to all Yours J.V.Ferguson

Health still first rate

Camp of 97th N.Y.V.
Thorough Fare Gap Va
Oct 21st 1863

Dear Kate, I embrace the first leisure I have had for some time to write to you. Yours of the 9th came to hand in due time & I was glad to again hear from home. As you have no doubt learned from Newspapers this Army was flanked & we had a harrowing time to get back to Centreville and get in position to meet the foe we marched hard night & day & readhed Centreville before the enemy for this we were racing, After we got in position the enemy did not attack us So we moved back to attack him but Old Lee had no taste for a fight & he in turn fell back, We are advancing by the Way of Thoroughfare Gap while most of the Army go in direct line for Warrenton and it is said our advance is at the Rappahannock. It has been stirring time with us I afsure you.

I have stood it first rate. Just now I have a gathering under my arm which is pretty sore but it is better for I had it lanced today The Rebs were here yesterday morning & we came in last evening have laid still today & may for a few days to come All hands speak highly of Gen Meades Retreat & call it masterly. did not lose a wagon or team there the wagon train would reach forty miles

I am very sorry to hear that your health isnot better for your visit. You say I dont speak of coming home. I did not simply because it is impofsible to get furlough now but unlefs your health gets better I shall come homne if I must resign to get there. I suppose our hardest marches are over for the season. I rec'd Ellys & Marys letter was goad to hear he was a good boy during your absence. hope he will continue to be such

Col is not with us yet tho we expect him daily. I must stop for I cant see a letter nor line its so dark.

You must write often Kifs the little pets
Yours as ever J.V.Ferguson

Camp of 97th Reg N YV
Bealton Va

Nov 12th 1863

Dear Kate

Yours of Nov 1st was duly received. It found us on the march & pretty active. I think my last was written at Bristow station just before we started on our late move. Just now we are only about 12 miles from Bristow & between it & the Rappahannock river, about four miles from the river where the Alexandria & Orance Rail Road Crofses.

I will give you a brief history of our late movements. I told you in my last that the Rebs occupied Bealton where we now are & from there to the river but that they must soon leave or get whipped. Well my prophesy is fulfilled

Nov 5th ie last Thursday we broke camp at Bristow & marched 7 miles to Catletts Station right up the Rail Road. We there encamped for the night & laid there the next day & night. Early on Saturday morning we were in line again & marching on toward the Rappahannock.

At Warrenton the 3rd Corps in advance of the 1st struck off south a few miles to strike the river lower down at Kelly's ford. While the 6th & 2nd Corps advanced along the Rail Road toward Rappahannock Station the 6th came upon the rebels just beyond Bealton. they drove in their pickets formed in line of battle & one division attacked them in front while another moved some distance around & attacked them in flank & rear. They were soon routed & fled but the flanking division pushed on & cut off the retreat & captured some 1800 of them with 6 cannons all their small arms & the pontoon bridge

while the 6th corps were doing this the 3rd reached them (the rebels) near Kelly's Ford attacked & drove them across the river & captured two or three hundred more prisoners. (I have just got Gen Meades statement that over 1600 were taken at Rappahannock Station and over 400 at Kelly's ford) Of course we lost some men as the rebs were strongly entrenched but how many I cannot say, probably 200 or 300. The next morning the whole army were crossed over the river and marched some five miles to Brandy Station in the Centre & extending off to the right & left. Our regt acted as wagon guard on the march & did not join the troops til Monday on our march from Kelly's ford to Brandy Station we passed the 2nd Corps. I found where the 132nd were, went to their camp, saw Johnny Paull & many others. They came down to the road & had quite a chat with our boys. after we got in camp went back again & had several hours visit with John & others John is not so fleshy as Albert but says he feels first rate.

Well the same night (Monday) about four o'clock we were in line again & marched back to the Rappahannock Station & recrossed the river & back here to Bealton. 9 miles here we went into camp Tuesday & all our corps is at work on the Rail Road or picketing & the way the railroad is being built is a caution

Monday night when we reached here we halted & slept in a bare open field though the wind blew a hurricane & we had the coldest night of this season A snow squall first of the season added to the discomfort. The distant hills yesterday morning were white with snow. Since then the weather has been comfortable & today very pleasant indeed We dont know how long we shall remain here but probably quite a little time it will only take a few days to finish the R Road to the River & then as it is not torn up beyond the army can advance again if they wish. It provided the weather remains pleasant if wet moving is impossible

The last movements have increased Gen Meade's popularity in the army, materially. My health is good, my boil is well, all sound. Our met pretty generally well. Had a letter from Raymond. he & family are well. Also Labens people, John P. said he had received a letter from home & they are all well. Things look rather encouraging in every direction. The recent elections. The advance in Texas. The Seizure of Rebel Runs by the French & English. The success of Meade. All seem to be rather encouraging. I hope you & the children are all comfortable & happy. I hope to see you before spring but if I dont get

sick & they keep at work all winter I dont know how it will be for none but sick officers are granted leaves of absence now.

Well how are those letters of Elberts, when are they coming. I must give him a little letter I suppose Well Elly take a ride with me on the march. On my saddle is buckled my blankets rolled up in a rubber blanket, in the Saddle bags are my crackers & meat sugar & coffee & a tin cup, Well we have rode in a straight direction 10 miles no fences nor bridges a few chimneys & one or two houses have been pafsed. We stop for dinner, first the horse tied to a tree, bush or stake, feed a few oats (if we have any) then a fire, gather some sticks & strike a match, fill the cup with water & set it on this is for coffee. There its ready. Hard tack boiled pork or beef tongue, hard tack & coffee. Its good. Eat hearty for we must be off again. There pack up & away till night, then stable the horse just as for dinner then, supper from what we had left at dinner, a good fire && then for bed. No house, barn or tent, but a clean place on ground geet to fire, spread rubber blanket then wollen next, then lie down with saddle for pillow & spread blanket over you, head & all & go to sleep. If it dont rain all well, but : ah yes it does sometimes if it does what then? Why we shall get wet. thats all. and a good fire in the morning & coffee hot & hard tack will soon make us feel getter & we are soon off again. I tell you we are not half so fraid of a little rain & cold air after a few such rides. Now Elly such rides, dinners & lodgings we often have, What do you think of it. Would you like it. We seldom take cold & are generally cheerful Kate kifs the boys for me write often Love to all Yours J.V.Ferguson

Head Qtrs 97th Regt N Y V.
Near Culpepper Va

March 21st 1864

Dear Kate As I have opportunity to write I cheerfully embrace it to inform you that my health still continues first rate and I am in good spirits.

It has been somewhat dull since the veterans left but we manage to pafs away the time rather pleasantly. The weather has been pretty fair, no rains but quite windy.

A week ago yesterday (Sunday) a gale of wind took down the roof of our chapel so we were obliged to dispense with service that day but yesterday we had it all right again and service very well attended though somewhat cool. The evening service was omitted as the Paymaster came on and paid off the Regiment last evening. No regard for day is allowed to interfere with operations military. I am this morning receiving money to exprefs and write this in the mean time. Yours came to hand in due time accompanied by Elly's. I didn't know Albert P. was going Monday or I should have seen him before going but I had no particular word to send. It is now 2 o clock PM and I have a chance to write again I have taken about 60 packages of money for the exprefs I shall send uou about \$200. Gov Notes which draw interest, but if the town wants them you can let them have it

I was over to the 2nd Corps the 17th (St Patrick's ay) Went over with a couple of our officers to see the sports of the Irish Brigade, called to see Johny Paull he is well & hearty. We had a splendid time. They had hurdle racing, mule racing, sack race,

climbing a greased pole, catching a greased pig, boxing &c &c and a splendid dinner of which we partook on invitation.

The dinner was followed by some fine toasts and excellent speeches. All went off in good order & was indeed a "feast of reason & flow of soul"

We had orders Friday to pack up & be ready to march at a moments notice. We packed up, but just night the order was revoked it was said. the rebs were trying to crofs the Rapidan at Raccon Ford. all is quiet since. We are expecting now that operations here will begin early.

Gen Grant is, to be with the Army of the Potomac, and no doubt he will do his best to take Richmond. We are on the alert for anything & no movement will disappoint us. We are well pleased with the vote allowing us a vote & we know who to credit for it. Also with the last call for 200,000 more men this looks like determination to make quick work of crushing the rebellion.

I would like to be home to get some maple sugar but yes but Well Elly you are very kind to wish me a share of your eggs & your chickens are very kind to give you two every day. I think they must have some of your spirit of liberality. My pony is doing finely just now & I dont mean to hurt him if I can help it but the army is a hard place for a horse. I hope you will continue to be a good & obedient boy giving joy to your parents by your kindnefs & good conduct. When will Ray's chickens be big enough to lay? Or do they all fly away? I cannot write more this time. Tell Albt Paull to be a good boy & not get into any scrape while away for everybody is watching the soldier. Please write soon

My love to all
Yours J.V Ferguson

Camp of 97th Reg N.Y.Vo.I.s
Culpepper Va
Sunday May 1st 1864

Dear Kate

As opportunity again offers I again write. Not because I have any thing particularly new nor in answer to my last: but partly because I think you are pleased to hear from me often and partly from my own wish to gratify my own feelings.

I always knew I loved the dear ones at home but never knew how much I loved you & the dear children till separated from you.

Not a day nor night pafses but what you are in my mind, and my prayers are offered for your welfare.

All things in camp remain about as they were, we are all ready and only awaiting orders to march. The rumor of Gen Burnsid's coming with large reinforcements is true On Friday the head of his column was at Catletts, some 25 miles from here. He had several thousand negro troops & some indians. Whether he is to join Meade in a front attack, or make a flank movement of course nobody knows. All feel that everything depends on

our next campaign. All of our veterans have returned (except a very few who have been reported sick & a few deserters).

I have been obliged to take away our chapel cover as the Christian Com. agents directed, and so our meetings are greatly interfered with. to-day the wind blows so hard that preaching out of doors is impracticable It has been quite cool several days. but this cannot last. I was very sorry to loose the use of our chapel just now as many were serious & some anxiously seeking the savior. But we shall pray God to take care of his own work, submitting quietly to the neccessities upon us. I was sorry to hear that Ma's health is so poor. I hope she may soon be better. I think Mr Ostrum is a very strange man and he & his new pal, not wife will see dark times in their selected way of life. I hope Br Salisbury had a pleasant field afsigned him and that Br Doty will do you all much good. Dr Chambers has returned he's not married but engaged says if his lady's father had been home he should have married, but he was away to Chigago.

I am still in first rate health & in good spirits, Id like to hear from Edgar again. I hope he is in a healthy climate. I have not heard from Raymond yet, dont know what it means. I wrote last. Mrfs Ash is your teacher again. I hope she will please. and have a good school. I sent home so much last pay-day that I have been obliged to borrow money myself to pay my neccessary expenses under the advaced prices of living I should sell all the pork I did not want for use and get another pig in the fall.-You have the purse in your own hand and I want you to use it for yourself and children, Be comfortable. Be happy.

Thank you Elly for your letter. Im glad the wood pile didnt fall on any of you & hurt you. I hope you will have good luck raising chickens. And General, you must divide with Corporal Ray-let him have some of them to feed and call his own. Take him with you to feed them, talk to him about them tell him about the mystery of their hatching from an egg-and what they will be when grown.

I hope you will be a diligent scholar love you books. learn fast. dont grieve and trouble ma by being naughty, going off without leave or saying naughty words.

I hope you will do what you can for the soldiers, picking berries &c &c, pleas write often Kifsefs for all
Yours J V Ferguson

Tuesday May 24, 1864

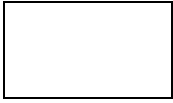
North Annas River Near Harmour Junction Va.

Dear Kate, Only time for a work Im well. Rebels have been retreating & we following, our corps crofsted the river last night had a sharp fight but drove the enemy, They are before us still & today we shall have a fight unlefts they leave, I think they will leave.

Albt Paull, tell Mary is mifsing, probably a prisoner, Last Thursday night our corps laid in front & close to the enemies lines it is thought as they had no fighting he had gone out of camp & been caught by rebel pickets This is my opinion & so I am not feeling very uneasy about him. We have taken many prisoners. Shirts recd. Potter boys, all right. All our boy about worn down but all in high spirits, ready & able & determined to fight desperately.

God grant us succefs

Kifs the boys for me J.V. Ferguson



The U.S. Christian Commission
sends this as the soldier's messenger to his home.
Let it hasten to those who wait for tidings.

"There is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

Charles City Court House

Near James River Va

June 15. 1864

Dear Kate

Again I write a few lines to let you know of our moves &c &c. As I Surmised, we are now on the James river having reached it after some sharp marching & hard work

I wrote sunday from our camp north of the Chickahoming. Well we started on Sunday evening at six o clock & marched rapidly Chickahoming at Long Bridge where we lay down about 1 Hours having marched all night. Early however the pontoons bridged the river & the 5th Corps pushed acrofs & moved up on the direct road toward Richmond to White Oak swamp bridge Our brigade was advanced to near the bridge & ordered to hold it. The enemy gave them a terrible shelling & some musketry the brigade lost some forty men killed & wonded, In th emean time the other corps were crofing below with great rapidity & by dark were on their way safely over & on their way to the James. We then withdrew quietly and commenced another all nights march We laid down about 2. o clock & slept about 2 hours & then up & on again, reaching this place about noon yesterday. men some tired but in good spirits. Here we rested up yesterday & last night. The whistle of the steamers in the James are very cheering & remind us of civil life. What next I dont know but Gen Meade & Grant are gaining every day in the Confidence of the Men & officers, and all expect something soon that will be rather decisive. I think Gen Lee is somewhat confused at Gen Grants ungentlemanly refusal to fight where Lee wants him too but insists on choosing his own grounds. Several things are remarkable in the Campaign. I dont think in all our moves the Enemy have captured a single wagon of our large train nor a single Cannon, nor driven any line of battle 1 foot from their breast works, So you see we are moving safely & with great caution & yet surely. We ar more miles from Richmond than before we moved, but miles are not the measure of distance in Army operations. Position is everything. My health is first rate. and spirits good, Ohio boys all well so far nothing heard from Albt nor Johny

Kifs the boys

Yours J.VFerguson

Hospital 3d Div 5th Corps

Near Petersburg Va

July 27 1864

Dear Kate

I again embrace a few moments to communicate with the dear ones at home.

I suppose you will be glad to know that my health still continues good, and I am having everything necessary for comfort. I have just returned from supper, we have all that can be desired. Potatoes, meat, rice, cakes, Puddings & can fruit. We have a splendid cook. The men are being fed finely with vegetables of various kinds, soft bread &c &c

We have had some fine rains since I last write & the weather is cooler, much pleasanter and more healthy. We think the hottest of the summer is past. For a week or so our Brigade have not been in the rifle pits but in camp doing much digging building forts and works to protect our left flank & rear. Yesterday the 2nd Corps moved off and are said to have crossed to the North side of James river. It is rumored they had a fight there this morning. I heard very heavy firing in that direction but can't say it was them. Saw Charley Johnson & Heiney, both look well & hearty. I went over to their camp & their Regiment had just fallen in for the march. I rode along for a mile. They send their love to all. Our Corps are on the left of the line & this afternoon they are all under arms for a fight as it is said the rebels are massing their troops in their front, preparatory to an attack. They may not make an attack but if they do they will have hard work to dislodge our men as they have very strong works. Still I think Gen Lee must fight soon.

The 6th Corps have not yet returned from Washington. Nothing new is heard from Albt Paull. I think he is not seriously sick nor badly wounded. Our Surgeon Dr Chambers has gone home for 20 days on sick leave. I took him to city Point Monday. I wish I could have been with you at the Quarterly meeting to see Br Erwin. Glad you had a good time. We are all getting anxious for pay day. I have lived on borrowed capital several weeks, but we have no signs of its coming very soon. You will have to do the best you can till then but I guess you will have no real trouble to get credit. The hospital here has some 200 men in it now, but few of them are very sick only we have died here of disease. Every few days we have some wounded on the picket line. As I sit writing about 2 miles in front the pickets are firing & I hear the bang bang constantly. There goes a cannon Boom. so it goes day and night. As it is toward evening brass bands are filling the air with very sweet music. At almost every head Quarters sometimes half a dozen are heard at once. A strange commingling of sounds, last night we could hear the singing praying & shouting of a negro meeting a mile away. Well Thank you for your few lines. Hope you will favor me again. Hope Ray won't be sick again. Be careful of yourselves I ride out nearly every day & feel better than to keep still I sometimes ride on a hill where I can see the lines of troops & the firing & watch it for hours. Night shows very plainly on distance lands enchantment for the view I must close, Yours J.V Ferguson

Camp of 97th Reg N Y V
Fort Wadsworth Va
Oct 6th 1864

Dear Kate

A few lines to you this morning as I have convenience. I am quite well and have no particular news. Wrote you on Sabbath we expected fighting, but things still remain quiet. Our lines were advanced toward the Crowell.....& strong fortifications are being built & now we expect to remain quiet a few days to complete these. So you see Gen Grant has no idea of being driven back. Our regt have not been engaged in the move & still remain at the fort. I expect to be detailed to the Division hospital & remain there till I come home. Time rolls very rapidly with us. The constant excitement appears to hurry it. I hear nothing from my valise but found where it had been rifled of its contents. All the boys from our way are well. We have had one day of rain lately but today it is very pleasant & warm. The army are in fine spirits & high hopes. Thousands are still coming in. I am daily expecting to hear of the evacuation of Petersburg & Richmond. I can't think Lee will attempt to winter his army there even should Grant not succeed in driving him out as he only has a single R Road over which to transport supplies for the citizens and army. (Except the Danville which they must soon lose.)

Of course I feel very anxious to get home & be again with my family but I would like to see the fatal, final blow struck first. I wish I could see Edgar before he goes but have given up all hopes of doing so. Tell Albt we feel perfectly easy concerning the coming election as Lincoln we think is sure of reelection. Yet we hope McLellan will be overwhelmingly beaten.

Elly you must not calculate on my bringing home my pony as I dont expect I shall be able to do so. I suppose Raymond in pants looks quite different from when in diapers but I guefs I should know him. Be god to him & ma & then yuo will make them both happy.

Ma you must kifs the little ones for me & when I get home I think some kifsing will be done without doing it by proxy. I must close. Have you the money sent last

Yours J V Ferguson