

W A R of the R E B E L L I O N

1861 - 1865

LETTERS written while in service

by

WATERS WHIPPLE BRAMAN

Enlisted at Troy, N. Y., December 7th, 1861, for
a period of Three Years - Age 21 yrs.

Mustered in January 30th, 1862, as First Lieutenant
with rank from January 15th, 1862,
Co. C, 93rd N. Y. Vols.

Transferred to Co. H, April 3rd, 1864 for promotion to
Captaincy, with rank from March 23rd, 1864,
vice Captain Hiram S. Wilson, deceased.

Mustered out January 14th, 1865 (Expiration of term
of enlistment), as Captain, with rank of
Brevet Major N. Y. Vols.
3rd Div. 2nd Army Corps, Army of the Potomac.

Service: 3 yrs., 1 mo., and 1 wk.

93rd Regiment N. Y. S. V.

"MORGON RIFLES"

Camp Rathbone, Jan. 31, 1862

Mrs. Waters W. Whipple,
Dear Aunt:

It is not likely at present that the regiment will go before Tuesday or Wednesday, but I would like to have my trunk all packed so that I can fetch it down on Monday morning if I come up on Sunday. If I do not come up, I wish uncle would send it down on Monday, but I will try and come up on Sunday afternoon. If I don't, I hope you will all come down so as to bid me good bye.

The other night after I got here I was sick all night with the sick headache, but had to act as the Officer of the Guard next day, but although I could not sleep any last night either, still I feel all right again.

Enclosed I send a photograph of Capt. Colvin of Co. A. Tell Lib to keep it on the parlor table for me. I guess I shall have some of my own taken tomorrow. If I do you can get them when any of you come down, or I will send them up.

With love to all I remain

Yours in haste and written in the dark.

Lieut. Waters W. Braman

Co. C 93rd Regiment
New York State Volunteers
&c &c &c

Head Quarters 93rd Regt. N. Y. S. V.
Camp Rathbone, Albany, Feby. 7,
1862.

Dear Uncle:

The regiment has not gone yet, and from present appearances will not go in two or three weeks. At any rate we are to have muskets to drill with while we are here, and the boys are calculating on having a good time here on the Fourth of July at least. They say that is what the muskets are for.

It is certain that the Regt. will not leave until they are paid off, and there is no funds to do that with until Congress makes an appropriation, and that will take them sometime yet.

And the sutler at this post is beginning to trust the men for anything they want. And he would not do that if we were not going to be paid here, because he belongs to Gov. Morgan, and the Govenor knows all about it.

Enclosed I send a couple of my photographs, and a couple of certificates which I wish you would give to Ephriam, which he will dispose of as agreed between us.

I do not know as I shall come up on Saturday or Sunday next but I shall certainly come up again, and perhaps two or three times before we go. When we do go it will probably be in a hurry.

We all got our Commissions today, and as they read I am the oldest officer in the Regt. as it was dated a year back, I suppose by mistake, and so I had to send it back to be altered.

If I don't come up Sunday I will send some of my big photographs up Monday night.

Yours truly,

Lieut. Waters W. Braman.

Park Barracks, N. Y.

February 16, 1862.

Dear Aunt;

We arrived safe after twenty hours travel on the cars, all safe and sound, and are in tip top quarters at the Park.

We are going to Rikers Island tomorrow afternoon, and I do not think we shall stay very long there. Our rifles are all here and waiting for us, and we are to have them as soon as we get on the island.

It is only about twenty minutes sail from the city, and if any of you come down write and direct to me at that place and I will come over and see you.

The men all feel well, but we are having such good news from the South, they are afraid they will not get down in time to see the fun.

When you or any one writes direct to Lieut. Waters W. Braman, Co., C. 93rd Regt., N. Y. S. V., Rikers Island Barracks, and it will come all straight. When we get settled there I will write again, so that if we should go to Staten Island instead you could know where to write me.

Give my love to Em. and all the folks, and don't forget to send that photograph that I marked to Lydia the first chance you get.

Yours truly, but in haste,
Waters.

Headquarters 93rd Regt. N. Y. S. V.
Camp Bliss, Feby. 19th, 1862

Dear Em;

We are all settled in our new quarters on Rikers Island about 11 miles from the city up the East River.

We have pretty good Barracks and shall probably stay here five or six weeks, at any rate three weeks as we have full supplies of coal and stores for that time. But it will all depend on the movements of troops at the south, and I hope they will make some move pretty soon if it does have anything to do with us.

I opened the box last night for the first time and came near finishing the cider fried potatoes and nut cake.

Our rifles came yesterday and are to be distributed to the men tomorrow, but not any amunition until the men get a little familiar with handling the guns for fear of accidents. The guns are Enfield Rifles and very good ones too.

I might have come up to Albany again to see the sick men and stragglers left there but inasmuch as we did not have but two men left I thought it was no use, not but what I would have liked to come and see you all.

If any of you come down to N.Y. you can come up here by coming on the city cars from the Astor House up to Harlem and then cross over in a skiff. It is possible that I may come up again before we leave but not very probable.

Give my love to all and tell them I am very much obliged for fixing my things for me. They are the best in the Regt. and I could sell my trunk for more than it cost they all like it so much.

Yours truly but in haste

WATERS

PS

Tell the folks to direct to Lieut, Waters W. Braman, 93rd Regt. N.Y.S.V., New York City and I will get it as we have a postmaster who goes down every day.

WATERS

Camp Bliss, Rikers Island
February 23rd, 1862

Dear Friend;

I received Uncle's and Libbie's letters by mail and also one by Bob Getty. This afternoon he was up to the Island a little while but would not stay all night. He did not bring the box up so I shall have to go down to the City tomorrow, but I think that if you are kind enough to send it I can well afford to go after it. The other box is just about gone and here let me thank you all for it. The things were all very nice as all the officers will testify, and also for this one for I am sure it will prove equal to the other if it came from home. Speaking of home, I never felt that I had a home so much as when I read Uncle Waters' letter, especially the way in which it closed.

I was very glad to receive Libbie's letter, not only for the news which it contained but for the expressions of kind regards from all.

I guess it was full as well you women folks did not come down to Albany as I should not have been likely to have seen you; and if you had gone down to Greenbush it would have been the same, as we did not get there until about dark, We had to wait there about an hour in the cold for the cars to be got ready. We came through without accident and altho' some of the Companies had men left behind at the different stations, we did not have a single one left, and with the exception of Jack, have not a desertion in the Company, and I can hardly believe yet but that he will come yet. I think the Cox folks in Albany got him on a spree, but do not think he intended to desert when he went down town, and, if they who did persuade him knew that the penalty was death if caught or such other penalty as a Court Martial shall decide, I don't think they would have done it, and, if he is caught (and there is two or three looking for him) without he returns of his own accord, and that pretty quick, I pledge my word that he shall be dealt with to the full extent of the law. But when I heard he was gone I did not believe it for I would have about as soon suspected myself as Jack. He must want to live the life of a dog and a coward if he has done so. He must want to come back to Troy I should think. I know I should want to get as far from anyone that ever knew me as possible and I hope that every relation I have got in the world will forsake me, if I ever forsake the Flag at the last moment, as he did us, but I may meet him again. I hope it will be soon and I hope it will be coming back to duty like a man; but if it ain't that way God help him.

(*Now, Rensselaer, opposite Albany)

Libbie, I saw that young lady who was waiting anxiously for the 93rd to make its appearance in N. Y., and spent a very pleasant evening indeed, but I had not seen her until after you wrote, although I had her address from someone in Troy, but I thought they were fooling me about the number of her house, but I found everything all right.

Tell Em she can have that Photograph that I marked, if she wants it, or any other but the one Aunt Hannah picked out.

We have pretty good Barracks for men but not very good for the officers. My bunk is in the third story opposite the store and as near to it as possible to get. The Regt. is getting along pretty fast as far as drill is concerned. I am trying the rifles every day to see how they will shoot. We practice sometimes at the distance of about $3/4$ of a mile, at a Rock out in the river, and sometimes hit it, and can see every shot when it strikes in the water.

The prospect now is that the Regt. will be payed off within a week or two and leave immediately for the South. I did not see EMMET or the young lady from W. V. as I have no time to go on a wild goose chase of that kind.

Give my love to all the folks, to Cally and Lydia, and believe that I remember you all and still remain as ever

Your Nephew and Cousin

Waters W. Braman.

Headquarters 93rd Regt. N.Y.S.V.
Camp Crocker March 9th, 1862

Dear Uncle;

Here we are down in Dixie, one and a half miles from Washington on the Bladensburgh Road near what is called the Bladensburgh toll gate. We are encamped on the side of a hill where it is very pleasant. There are 8 or 10 Regts. right in sight. The encampments look splendid all laid out in streets and the tents all regular and white as snow.

There are two Regts. of regulars and it is worth while to see them. I wish to mercy I was in the regulars instead of the volunteers. Most of the Regts. are expecting to leave every day and I think likely we shall cross the Potomac in a few days.

I have got a big tent about 10 feet square and the Capt. and Milo have one too. The right way is for the Capt. to have one and the Lieuts. between them, but the Capt. has got a big bed big enough for two and so Milo is going to sleep with him. I have got two or three of the corporals in with me for a few days until we get two more tents and the Capt. and Milo has to do the same.

I am well as can be and getting fat as a pig since we left that Blissfull Island which I hope never to see again. I like being camped out here, in fact I feel better than any place since I have been in this business. Perhaps it is because we are nearer the scene of action. At any rate the men are just beginning to be soldiers. They were too near home to learn much before.

We had a lovely time coming down on the cars, which we took at South Amboy and came via Phila., where the ladies gave us a splendid supper as it was about midnight when we got there. There was 5 Regts. of us on the Road one after the other and they fed them all there. They have splendid accomodations there and I think it was rightly named when it was called the City of brotherly love. They fed us also in Baltimore but it was rather poor after eating in Phila. The men will always remember what they got there and the good looking ladies who served. Co. C gave them three rousing cheers or rather six, three for the city and three for the ladies, with a will.

The men were rather tired, not so much with the travel or marching but standing still at all the places when we had to change cars with their knapsacks on, which is worse than if they had been marching.

We see all kinds of Regts. passing every day going over the river and it is fine to see them with baggage trains and all.

We are right at that Spring where the folks or rather where the soldiers were poisoned. One of the Regts. had a sentry shot there four or five nights ago by the enemy's scouts, who are even on this side of the river and even in the City of Washington some dark nights, for you see we are only four or five miles from them anyway and we hope soon to be nearer.

The Black Horse Cavalry, Col. Morrison, are only two miles from us and they say here that they are likely to be discharged and sent home. I do not think I shall have time to go over and see Mr. Knight.

I am as contented as can be here but I often think of home and all the friends I left there.

We left the Island rather unexpectedly. I was abed the day about noon when the orders came. I had been up all the night before trying to get one of our men down to Blackwells Island that had the smallpox. I had to tend to it myself as none of the men that could do it would have anything to do with him as they were afraid of catching it, and the Capt. and Milo had never had it and so I had to do it myself. We had to take him down in a small boat and go through Hurlgate in the night at that; but the Col. ordered him to be taken off that night, so it was done. If he had let us wait until next day, I should have got some one to go in my place; but still a fellow cant have it but once and if I have got to have it I may as well if I caught it.

If the doctors were worth anything the man should have been taken down two or three days before he was, but they don't seem to know what is the matter with a man until he is either well or dead, expecially the latter, then they are particularly active in getting him under the sod. If they are no better surgeons than they are doctors, I pity the boys if there is ever a battle in which the 93rd has a hand.

If you write direct to Washington and I will get it while we are here, and if we leave, the letters will follow us, and I will write when we are going to leave. Don't forget to put the letter of the Company and No. of the Regt. and N.Y.S.V. on the directions.

We have our regular rations and cook ourselves or rather we don't cook ourselves but cook the rations ourselves.

Give my love to Em and all the folks. I will write
to Lib and Em both in a day or so, and one to Aunt Hannah too.

Write soon

Your Affectionate Nephew

Waters W. Braman

PS Excuse the writing but I am awful tired and in a great hurry
and would not write at all tonight but I thought it was my
duty to let you know all about it as I wrote you I would.

Yours,

Waters

Meridian Hill, Washington, D.C.
March 18th, 1862

Dear Uncle:

Your welcome letter came to hand in due time - also one from Libbie - tonight. As you see by the above we have changed camp grounds. We struck our tents this morning and moved here- we are about the same distance from Washington as before, but on the other side, we came here as our Brigade is here.

Tomorrow at 10 O.C. A.M. we again leave, this time we do leave, for we are not allowed to take any of our tents for men and only one wall tent (which is about ten feet square) for the officers of each company- and I guess I shall have to leave my trunk behind and only take such things as I need immediately - probably the capt. & myself will take a trunk between us in which case we will pack the other and leave it stored here - government provides for their safe keeping - and we will be allowed to leave about two men from each company to take care of the camp equipage.

You will plainly see the reason of all this as the troops are required to move forward so rapidly and in such large bodies that it would be impossible for government to provide transportation for all the baggage for it took 32- six horse teams to move us this afternoon, besides the men carrying their guns Knapsacks & Blankets. The Regt. is in the third Brigade of Gen. Casey's Division, our Brig. Gen. is Gen. Palmer a graduate of West Point in the same class with Gen. McClellan -- Our Brigade is composed of the 81st 85th 93rd 98th & 101st N.Y.S.V. and is said to be a splendid Brigade. We are to march tomorrow to Alexandria and from there on towards Richmond and hope to smell Powder in a few days.

Whether or no we do see any fighting will depend on circumstances as it looks now we probably shall. The Regt. has not as yet been paid off although we have been promised from week to week and they tell us tonight that we shall be paid in a few days and that it will follow us. It is a great wonder to me that the Regt. does not refuse to go if they were not good true men they would refuse. But there is not a single murmer although I have seen letters to men saying that their whole families had gone to the Poor House - and lots of them that were suffering for their pay which they expected from their Husbands at least two months ago. But so it is and it is part of a soldiers duty to do as he is told and say nothing - but you may judge whether you could fight any good if you thought your family was suffering.

I did not suffer any severe consequences from my exposure to the small pox, nor could the man have been provided for without a commissioned officer so you see the thing had to be done by some one.

I shall answer Libbie's letter as soon as we get any-where that I can get a chance to do so - but perhaps it will be rather short. But it will depend on the time I have, not on the wish to do it in a hurry - for I look with longing eyes for a letter from home even when I know there is no possibility of getting one, and I know it would not look well in me to sleight you. I have not been able to see Brother William as yet but shall probably do so in the next few days - and still I may be within a mile of him and not see him - but if our Regts. are encamped over night any where near you may be sure I shall see him.

Give my love to Lydia and Carrie when you write and to all the folks in Troy and West Troy*- When you write direct to Washington and the letter will be forwarded, at any rate direct there unless you get different directions from me.

Your affec. nephew

Waters W. Braman

P.S. Wednesday morning

The Regt. is not going until tomorrow or next day

Waters

(* Now Watervliet, N. Y.).

Head Quarters Co. C 93 Regt.
N.Y.S.V. Mch. 23, 1862

Dear Libbie:

Yours of the 17th inst came to hand and was read with pleasure. It was rather longer than the one you will get from me. The pictures were very acceptable as the feminine sex are rather scarce down here -- You wished me to send you something from Dixie in a letter but there has been no chance as yet to send anything that would go in one, nor is there much that would seem like contraband on this side of the river but we are going over in a day or two and then I will send you something.

We are still on Meridian Hill in the same place as when I wrote to Uncle Waters. We are going on this expedition from Alexandria, and as soon as the troops already there have embarked, there will be about 60 M troops on the expedition and as the boats do not arrive as fast as expected you see it takes some time to ship all the soldiers.

The 93rd Regt. is to be paid off at last the eventful day is tomorrow I shall probably send home \$100.00 or so when I see how much I get. I shall send it by express probably, Tuesday or Wednesday either from Washington or from Alexandria.

I had a letter last night from Kill and shall answer it in a day or so from here if I find the Regt. is going.

Bob Getty was here yesterday I met him in the city day before and he came up and staid all night in camp with me. My tent is not fixed so nice here as it was over to the other camp, so I could not entertain him in great style. Our camp is only a little ways from Georgetown but we have to send to the city when we want to buy anything to eat as they are all Secessionists in the city of Georgetown and would poison us all if they could get the chance. In fact, one of Capt. McCornishes men was poisoned drinking liquor and in the 92 N.Y. they have poisoned 5 or 6 men in the past two weeks and I do believe that two-thirds of the population of this district are secessionists.

Bob Getty is going on the same expedition but not on the Boat that he left N.Y. with, as he has left her and is trying to get on some other vessel.

If we ever go to Alexandria I will try and look up your friend. You wanted to know who Milo was the individual who bears that name is the respected 2d Lieut. of Co. C. so you will understand.

We are to have a grand Review tomorrow afternoon if we get Paid off early enough there is to be three Brigades of our division and two other divisions present and there will probably be about 10 thousand soldiers on the field. I wish you were all here to see it as it will ge a grand sight.

If I can get time enough I will go down to the city and send by express a big thorn that I found here to put in the Parlor perhaps I will send it with the money, I guess I will get a little box to send it in but you must be careful and not break it in taking it out. I will write to Uncle Waters when I do send it. I have not yet written to Carrie or Lydia but intend to do so soon but I don't have hardly time to answer all the letters I receive from persons in Troy.

We have not the slightest idea of where we are going on the expedition nor do, I suppose there are many that do, besides, Geo. B -----, some think it is to Richmond, some to Reinforce Burnside but I think that either way will take us to the same place, Richmond.

I wish my trunk and about two thirds of my things was up in Troy and I do not know but I shall send it up one of these days and you need not be surprised to see it soon.

Give my love to all the folks and tell Aunt Hannah that the next letter to Kills and the one to Uncle Waters about the money I will write to her. -- And to the rest of you when I hear from you--

Your affect. Coz

Waters

Head Quarters Co. C
93d N.Y.V. Camp Cassidy
April 6th, 1862

Dear Uncle:

Your kind letter has just this moment arrived- I had been expecting it for about a week and I delayed writing on that account. I wrote a letter this afternoon to Em & Kill and another to Lydia. The mail which brought your letter is the first we have had in over a week. Our Regt. has seen a good deal of hard service in the way of Picket & Guard duty and everything but fighting- and that to with nothing to eat for whole days at a time and sleeping on the Ground when it came night- but that is nothing as that is what we came for.

The first night after we came here we were on the very outposts of the army towards York-Town and I had to post a picket Guard through a swamp after 10 O.C. P.M. for about two miles with nothing for a guide but the north Star. Not a very pleasant duty but somebody had to do it and although I had been officer of the Guard the day before coming down on the boat from Alexandria- yet they send me in preference to sending some others. It would have been comparatively easy if there had been a guard there to have relieved but you see we had marched with our whole Brigade beyond the Chain of Pickets and of course had to post new ones.

We have moved our camp since we came here and are now about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Newport News and in full sight of the James River and the Rebel Batteries on the other side.

I was down to the camp of the second N. Y. Vol. and saw Willie Whipple - Elijah Wm. had gone to Baltimore Julia Frank was down here but went back to Baltimore where the Family is stopping the day before yesterday.

I have not yet seen Wm. His Regt. left Washington more than a week before we arrived there- and left Alexandria a day or two ahead of us and the night I was on Picket I was within half a mile of their camp- but they were ordered off during the night, and although I found out they were there during the same night from a man of the Regt. who had been off visiting another Regt. and our Pickets arrested him yet I could not leave my post to see him. And I think the Regt. is in Battle at the present moment- at any rate we have news that they are having a pretty hard time taking YorkTown- we can hear the Guns all the while if we can not join in the fun.

We are under marching orders and it is certain we shall leave En Route for Richmond in a day or two and perhaps before morning, as last night they called up two of our brigades and did not give them any time to pack up what they left behind. When a soldier hears the long Roll he has got to start at the first tap.

As to that note, the money will be sent tomorrow or next day by Express and you may expect it certain. I will send it to you.

Give my love to all and believe me your

Affect Newpew

Waters W. Braman

P.S.

Perhaps I had better save twenty five Dollars of this money although I do not think I shall need it unless I am sick. If I do you can charge it to me and I will write whether I do keep it or not -- When you write direct to Old Point Comfort.

Yours & C

Waters

Head Quarters Co. C
93rd Regt. N.Y.S. Vol.
Camp Cassidy New Port News, Va.

Dear Em & Kill

Your letters came to hand as we were leaving Alexandria - since which time the 93rd has gone through rather varied scenes.

We left that place on Sunday with the mud about six inches deep, from there we had a pleasant trip down the Potomac to Fortress Monroe where we landed and marched to Hampton and there slept on the ground in a grave yard it seemed rather sacriligious to make a fire against a tomb stone or in a church, or rather in the walls of a church as you remember the place had all been burned by the Rebels and was certainly the most desolate looking place I ever saw.

The next morning we again marched about ten miles in the direction of New-Port News but a little to the right and right on the outposts of the army - towards York Town - and again yesterday we moved to our present position about a mile from New Port News.

We are in sight of the Rebel batteries on the other side of the James River - called the Pig Point Battery on which there are guns that could throw shells right into our camp. The Rebels have also Gun-Boats with which they have shelled quite a number of the camps but do not do much damage. We are also in sight of the sunken Frigate Cumberland - which you remember was sunk by the Rebel steamer, Merrimac.

Our forces were engaged in a battle yesterday but it is of no use for me to write you the particulars as you can get it better from the papers and there are a thousand different stories afloat in camp.

At any rate I was down to the camp of the 2nd N. Y. and saw them start on a forced march for Warwick at which place I think there is to be a General Hospital for the wounded.

John Quackenbush sent his respects to you both. I saw all the Troy folks and they all felt well. The Regt. were very nicely fixed in their old winter quarters and it will come rather hard for them to sleep on the ground as they are not furnished with rubber blankets. Neither Officers or men were allowed to take anything but what they carried on their backs - not do I think we will be when we leave and you need not be surprised any day to see my trunk coming home. I have got more traps in my trunk than a Regt. ought to have for service.

I was out on picket that other night after we got here and had to start in the night and post picket guards for about two miles right through a swamp which took till most daylight. We did not have any very strange adventures but found it rather a new business.

I saw the new Steamer MONITOR at Fortress Monroe. It is rather a curious thing for a vessel - but they think it is King of the Sea down here.

We are as far advanced in the war as the Regts. that came here six or eight months ago. We are under marching orders and likely to leave here at any moment and shall I think tomorrow. When you write direct to Old Point Comfort, Va.

The weather for the past few days has been splendid and the trees are all in blossom.

I had a letter from Lydia a day or two ago and shall answer it today. I have not yet had any answer from Uncle Waters as to whether or no the money came all straight in fact we have had our letters but once since we left Alexandria.

I shall probably write Uncle Waters tomorrow.

Give my love to all.

From

Waters

Youngs Mills, Virginia
April 18th, 1862

Dear Uncle:

I recd your letter and also one from Abbie and another from Libbie at the other camp. I have also recd papers twice from home and once from Kill and they were very welcome indeed.

I do not know what to think about the Col. not sending that money for that note but he told me and so did the Adj. that the note should be met and three days before it was due they said they would send it that day, And the next day I was sick so that I could not get out of the tent and did not hardly leave the tent until the morning of the day we left to come here, and supposed all that time that the money had been sent. But it seems they had been trying to make Capt. Johnson pay it or part of it and so delayed sending it but the Adj. says it shall be paid and I don't know as I can do any more than keep at them until they do send it. I am very sorry it was not paid at the time of it but believe it will be paid.

I was sick for four or five days with a sore throat and a kind of Distemper that almost the whole Regt. has had and pretty sick too. But am all right now as you may judge for I was able to march 17 miles day before yesterday and carry all I have got here on my back and I feel as tough as ever now.

I found it impossible to get my trunk taken any farther as the Captains are only allowed one box to carry all the company Books in and only one waggon to carry the whole Regimental Baggage (all which looks like business) so you see it was impossible to take it any further and as we are likely to be in action service every day I think the least a man has the better they are off unless we were to be like the 2d Regt. in Barracks for six or eight months.

We are encamped about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Youngs Mills or rather beyond, and only about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the Rebel lines- We are expecting a Rousing big battle every day for the Rebels evidently mean to make a strong stand at Yorktown or they would not leave their fortifications back here unless they intended to concentrate their force at that place, for at Youngs Mills they had splendid fortifications and winter qtrs. full as good as any of our own and evidently laid out by a skillful engineer

and in a place surrounded by a swamp where it would have taken ten times their own force to drive them out, but they left in such a hurry that our boys found a warm dinner all cooked and the fires burning when they first occupied the place.

There are all sorts of stories afloat here today about the Rebel Steamer Merrimac being sunk, and I wish it was so as it will make a great difference with our army about transporting provisions. I suppose you hear all sorts of stories up there about our army here but you need not be alarmed as we are closing in on them from every side and don't mean to fight until we are sure of thrashing them clean out and off the Peninsula. The enemy are firing more or less shells at our army every day but are not doing any damage, except the shooting of the pickets on both sides. Still, any moment we may be engaged in a general engagement and I am sure we will as soon as we can get 5 days rations for the whole army.

Enclosed I send the key of my trunk and I wish you would have the things taken out and as we expected to leave every moment I had not had much washing done for the last two or three weeks. I supposed even until $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour before we left that I could bring it and had it all packed for that purpose and not for sending home, but the order came that we were not to take anything and I thought it best to take about two changes of underclothes and let the rest go home in preference to leaving it to be stolen as every deserted camp is ransacked within an hour after it is left by the Negros who are left here.

I just happened to get a chance to send it down to Fortress Monroe by our old Qtr. Master who has resigned. He offered to take it to Troy but as he was sick I thought it best to have him express it which he did and returned me the Recpt. which I enclose.

I wish you would tie up those letters and papers and keep them where everybody can not ransack them as I did not have time to see whether I wanted to send them or not. If I had known in time I might have sent the Girls a bouquet of Sesech flowers and some other things.

Direct your letters as before and they will come all straight. I will answer the girls letters in a day or two.

With love to all I remain as ever,

(in haste) Your affec. Nephew
Waters W. Braman
20

Camp Bolton near Warwick
Court House, Va. Apr. 20th, 1862

Dear Cousins Libbie & Abbie:

Your letters both arrived on the day previous to our marching and since that time we have moved nearly every day. I direct this to you both knowing it will be well received and if I were to write two separate ones they would both amount to the same.

We are stationed as you see above, near Warwick Court House and village of the same name. It is a miserable tumble down affair and the best building would disgrace any northern farmer if he had it for a barn. From the appearance of the country there seems to have been a total lack of energy on the part of the inhabitants, and I think the whole country is at least one hundred and fifty years behind the state of N.Y. in civilization, and the Negroes that are left say that they did not raise anything but Niggers that they sent south for sales and I think it is without exception the most poverty stricken land I ever happened to visit. Nor do I wonder at their wanting to secede.

As I am writing I can hear the guns of our Pickets and the Rebels having a little skirmish. The Rebel Batteries are about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the court house. We do not expect a general engagement for some days to come and yet we ordered to be ready (night and day) for a forward movement and prepared for fighting.

There appears today to have been quite a skirmish towards Yorktown to judge by the heavy firing in that direction. We are still about nine miles from Yorktown but we shall have Batteries enough to take as the Rebels have fortified almost across the Peninsula from the York to the James Rivers we are the extreme. Left of the whole army and are opposed to the Right of the Enemy. There is continual skirmishing all along the line and we think nothing of going to sleep hearing them popping away at each other with Rifle and Field pieces. Our men are busy every night building Batteries to oppose the same on the other side of a big creek (called Warwick Creek) which separates the two armies.

There is no doubt but when the Dance once fairly opens it will throw Bull Run or anything else in the shade. For the Enemy are fortified in a country that they are well acquainted with but it is full of the most

horrible swamps, which they have taken advantage of, but by the help of God! we will overcome all difficulties and teach the villains one lesson, so that they will not do as they do now that is call to our Pickets from the other side of the Creek to know if we remember Bull Run, and call them Dd Yankees. They do not seem to know anything about Fort Donaldson or any of the Union victories.

For some reason or other they put none but Georgia & Louisiana soldiers on picket. Perhaps they fear some of the Virginians or North Carolinians might take french leave. Certain it is that their leaders are smart men and cunning as foxes -- and they will not give up without a fair trial.

It is now 10 O.C. P.M. and as I am officer of the Guard tonight I have just had orders to keep every fire out and to allow no noise as they are expecting that the enemy will try and throw a bridge across the creek, which is pretty wide as there is a regular marsh each side of it and they want all quiet so if there are any signals they can be readily seen and if our Brigade was wanted we could advance without a moments delay. And it is dark as tar and raining into the bargain, just the kind of a night for s surprise to be successful.

That Thorn which I wrote to Libbie I had got was indeed a curiosity but although I had it all laid up to send, orders came to march and if I had a wife and the order came to start she might look out for herself for all me. Nor do I have much time to collect curiosities as I do not believe there are many regiments but our own that have gone into active service as soon as we have, or seen more of it in the way of marching and Picket duty. In getting ahead we have been very lucky.

I wish you would have the things in my trunk taken out but kept so that if at any time during the war and I am alive and we are likely to stay 5 or six months in a place (which I hope won't be until this inhuman Rebellion is stopped) that I can write for it at all events as things have turned and look for the present I am glad I sent it home there may be some letters or papers that I do not want every body to read and I wish these to be taken care of as I had no time when I packed it to see whether they were good for any thing or not.

Give my love to Carrie and Lydia when you write and to Em & Kill and Aunt Hannah and all, and all the young ladies that inquire.

Yours as ever

Waters

Write often and accept much love from

Waters

Excuse the Blotting on account of the poor accomodations.

Army of the Potomac
before Yorktown
Head Qrs. Co. C., 93rd Regt.
N.Y.V. April 24, 1862

Dear Aunt;

As I have not as yet written directly to you (Although when I write to one I consider it is to all) I thought I would direct this to you as perhaps it will be the last. But I guess not although we are within easy gun shot of the Rebels and likely to have a general engagement at any moment, in fact it cannot be delayed long unless the Rebels run before it comes. We are so near at any rate that last night about 6 o.c. our Colonel and Major went out to the line of Pickets, which is about as far from camp as from your house to the Steam Boat Landing, and they must needs pass the line a little and the consequences were they are probably at the present moment on their way to Richmond Prisoners. Some are uncharitable enough to say that they wanted to be taken, but I do not think it was the case. As you know the Col.'s Father is a prisoner with them and there is a great feeling here against their whole family. I do not know what changes it will make in our Regt. as yet. There is some talk that we are to have Col. Morrison of the No Horse Cavalry for Col., in that case we will probably have Capt. McNett for Major.

We are at present encamped about 4 miles from Warwick and about 5 miles nearer Yorktown than when I wrote last and instead of being on the left of the Army we are now in the centre of the line and opposite one of the Rebels largest Forts.

As we were marching in here I came across my Brother Wm. His Regiment lays just on our right so I see him pretty often. He is well and has been, and enquired after you all and wished to be remembered to all. I guess his Regt. will be put into our Division so we will be near one another. I might get him transferred to this Regt. if I could get any one to change places with him, but there is not any one in our company that is willing to.

About a week ago the Col. appointed his brother Wm. C. Crocker, Quartermaster of our Regt. and he is now acting as such. We are just now short of every kind of Provision except meat. We have plenty of that, both salt and fresh but no bread. I would give anything for a couple of loaves of your fresh bread. Perhaps we will find some in Yorktown which is only 5 miles from here.

Give my love to all the folks at home and abroad.

Yours truly,

Waters.

Head Quarters Co. C
93rd Regt. N.Y. Vol. before
Yorktown, Va., April 27th, 1862

Dear Uncle;

Your letter of the 22nd inst. arrived last night, also one from Kill and another from Em. We are still in the same place as when I wrote to Aunt Hannah being the longest stay we have made in one place for some time back. Our place in the line has been changed (I mean the place of our Brigade) from the left of the Army to about the left center and opposite two of the heaviest Rebel Batteries in reconoiterring one of which our Col. & Major were taken by the enemy not over 60 Rods from our camp.

The Lieut. Col. & Genl. Palmer each had a letter sent by a flag of truce to them by Col. Crocker but the flag came to the Pickets of another Brigade and the consequence was it went to another Genl. & then to Genl. McClellan instead of to them. All there was in the letters was to send him some clothes and to send the rest of his things home and saying that he was a prisoner, and was to be sent to Richmond. Yesterday Genl. McClellan sent an aide of his down to search the Col. & Majors things to see if he could discover anything treasonable but not the least thing could be found that could give grounds for even a suspicion.

There is nothing new except that daily we are getting more & more prepared for the coming struggle. We have the same round of Picket duty on which we see plenty of Rebels on their Batteries, but are not allowed to fire except in case of necessity because they wish the Pickets more to give notice of any movement on the part of the enemy than for the few men they might happen to kill and because they wish the firing for Signals on the Picket line. There is an exception to that however, for in one place about $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile on the right of us the Sharp Shooters are continually firing if a rebel dares to show his head above the Batteries, so that our men can build a Battery to oppose theirs, and during the night there is a continual strife those on our side trying to complete the work and the Rebels firing shells and grape shot to stop them if possible so you see we have music all the time. It is very pleasant to be on picket in the night and hear the Guns and once in a while hear the Rebel picket call you a damned Yankee and everything else. Our men would blaze away at them and bring on forty general engagements every day if it was not contrary to orders from Genl. McClellan.

I also got the N. Y. Herald last night which was very acceptable but I could make a better map of the Rebel Batteries myself.

Waters

Camp Winfield Scott
Va. May 3rd, 1862

Dear Kill & Em:

Both your letters were recd. and read by me with pleasure, also one from Uncle Waters which I have already answered and I have also received one from Libbie containing a silk handkerchief. As to the direction of letters to the Army of the Potomac, I think the proper way is to direct to Washington because then our letters come to each division in a separate bag by the way of Ship Point, and those that are directed to Fortress Monroe go there, unless the No. of the Regt. and Brigade is on and then they come by Washington no matter how they are directed.

The first notice in the papers about our Col. Maj. and Adj. being very near taken prisoners was only a hoax and was started by Gurdeon G. More who wrote it home to Troy. We all had a good laugh about it when we saw it in a Troy paper but since this last trip we laugh the other way. There is nothing farther new in relation to the matter only that Gen. McClellan has investigated the affair and come to the conclusion that there was no Treason about it but for the time there was a probability that the whole Regiment would be suspected and put under arrest.

A few of our Regt. have seen a little brush with the Rebels and myself and about 10 men from Co. H saw some real fighting and some blood shed. The way it happened was this last Monday I was Officer of the Guard and of course could not sleep any at night & the next day the first 5 Cos of our Regt. went on picket duty Co. C. with the rest but of course I did not go on account of being up the night before. This was Tuesday and as I was taking a sleep about 3 O.C. in the afternoon the 5 Cos. of our Regt. was called on to go out skirmishing for the purpose of making an armed Reconnaissance to ascertain if the Rebel Pickets were this side of the creek. And when I heard it I volunteered to go with Co. H. and after we had deployed as Skirmishers and were marching we came upon the Skirmishers of the 56th & 77th N. Y, Rgts. & the 11th Maine who had encountered the enemy and were falling back and as I had command of the Right of Co. H which was the Right of our Regt. and the center of our Regt. not coming forward the consequence was about 10 men and myself went forward with the other Regts. when they charged on the Rebels and did not know but the rest of the company was up even with us and it was impossible to tell on account of the woods being so thick so the skirmishers of the four Regts. got all in together and then charged on them and drove the Rebels out of the woods into the open fields and there they broke and ran for their forts which opened on us with shell & Cannister shot

but did no damage all the shell bursting in the tops of the trees, but before their pickets ran they made the bullets whistle pretty livley. The 77th had two men shot and the 11th Maine had one man shot. One of the 77th has since died. He was shot within six feet of myself by a musket ball which shattered his hip. The poor fellow groaned horribly but we soon passed him and had other things to think of. We remained in the edge of the woods untill dark (the bullets once in a while cutting the trees and ground pretty close to Uncle Sams devoted followers and it is strange to me so many balls can be fired without doing more damage) and then withdrew and joined our different regiments and then returned to camp. You should have heard the ten men that was with me after we got back to camp crowing over the other boys because they had seen smoke. The Rest of the Regt. broke of to the left and did not see any sport at all but it did us all good, as the probability is we shall have a pretty sharp fight in those same woods in a few days.

There are all sorts of stories afloat in camp about the other corps of the army and about the enemy all in our favor however. One day we hear that Beauregarde is taken another that Richmond is taken and today we hear that they are now leaving Yorktown but certain it is Gen. McClellen has gone to Washington and the story here is that the English and French Ministers are trying make peace between the North and South. If the Rebels are evacuating any of their Fortifications it is only to make another Bull Run affair of it.

The shells are bursting pretty fast, at the present moment not a quarter of a mile from here but it is only the opposing batteries making targets of each other. They are at it night and day.

It has not been officially announced to the Regt. that the offices of Col. and Major are vacant and so there has not been any provision made to fill them as yet. There are three or four candidates for both places of Lieut. Col. and Major as probably now the Lieut. Col. will take the place of Col.

I will write to Lib in a day or two if nothing happens.

Give my love to all the folks over home and my Respects to the young ladies next door --- and believe me still your affect. cousin

Waters

Camp Winfield Scott
before Yorktown, Va.
May 4th, 1862

Dear Libbie:

Your letter containing the handkerchief came in good time for as you said I had but one and so it came very acceptable. I should not have written today but that we are to leave here and do not know when I shall get a chance to write again and as our Chaplain has resigned and is going to Ship Point today on his way home I am writing in something of a hurry in order to take advantage of the chance to send this.

The Rebels last night evacuated Yorktown and their whole line of entrenchments and today the Union troops have got 7 or 8 miles in pursuit of them.

We were ordered to march this morning but as 5 companies of the Regt. have gone on Picket today we shall probably wait untill they can be called in & then go altogether.

The 93rd is in awful bad shape for yesterday Co. B. laid down their arms and refused to do duty because they had not been furnished with Sharps Rifles as was promised by the 1st of May. The consequence is the whole Co. has gone away under arrest except 16 men also the Lieut. Col. & Capt. Hobart & two or three Lieuts. are also under arrest and the Regt. is under general suspicion on account of circumstances which seem to have combined against us for the past two weeks. But I guess all will come right soon, there is a good deal of dispute as to who shall fill the vacant places in the Regiment and I do not know where it will all end. At all events Capt. McNett being the senior capt is in command today.

About that box, I wish you had sent it to Ship Point as it is there we have chance of sending instead of Fortress Monroe but I guess I may get it I will if possible.

Enclosed I send you a couple of cotton seeds which I got at a house that had just been deserted by a rebel family. I got them from an old negro or I would not have known they were cotton seeds. I rec'd a letter from Abbie and also three papers last night and will answer the letter soon.

Yesterday afternoon I was out to the Rifle Pits and saw lots of Rebels behind the fortifications and had them fire at me as I went across the open field to and from our batteries, but now our troops have possession of all the fortifications and we think they have retreated to the third line of entrenchments or else gone entirely to meet McDowell.

I will write tomorrow or next day. Love to all.

Waters

Camp Winfield Scott, Va.
May 8th, 1862

Dear Uncle & Cousin Abbie:

I recd your letters of the 30th last night if we had staid where we last were should have got it on Sunday, but just after I had closed the letter to Libbie we were ordered to march and since that time we have been on the march after the rascals, who manage to give us the slip every night and then our cavalry and light artillery comes up with them about noon and then part of them make a stand to allow the rest to continue their Retreat, but every night when it got to dark to fight we have had the best of them because the Gen. kept sending fresh troops forward and they could not stand the press and before daylight the Rebels are gone again on Sunday we marched at about 4 O.C. P.M. and marched untill 10 O.C. at night when we camped for the night, before morning it commenced raining and we commenced marching again and marched all day in the Rain but very slow as the way was all blocked up by Baggage Waggons loaded with provisions and heavy artillery that were all sot in the mud which in some places was over half way up to our knees, untill we got almost up to where the Rebels were making a stand at their strongest Line of fortifications near Williamsburgh, then we had to go on the double quick for about two miles, and when we got there notwithstanding there were thousands of older troops there, we were ordered to throw of our Knapsacks for a fight and although raining at the time the men threw of overcoats and all and we were marched in line of battle into the woods within 40 Rods of the Rebel batteries and troops. The ground was in such a state that not much artillery could be brought to bear on them, there was one line of battle in front of us so that although shot & shell canister & Grape were flying over our heads within two feet of them, we did not get one single shot at them because our friends were in front of us. If they had been broken up it would have been us to take their place the Shell & Shot which passed over us in the woods killed a great many just behind us who were just in the edge of the clearing and behind them again there were three or four lines more of battle so it was almost impossible to have been defeated as the instant one line should waver another would take their place but luckily there was not much of that done.

I know of but one instance & that was the 55 N. Y. Guard Layfaette a large body of the Rebels approached with the Stars & Stripes and said they were friends and when quite near they fired and killed nearly

the whole of one company the 55th then charge on them & drove them back but were completely broken up themselves & the 93rd P. Vol. took their place and gave the Rebels fits. They had all kind of contrivances for killing us such as pits 40 or 50 feet deep and bomb shells called torpedoes which explode on being rubbed by a man stepping on them, they are buried in the ground. We found the same all along the road and some few men were horribly mangled by them. These things were all fixed by order of Gen. Magruder who it is said is a regular Blood Hound.

It was about 5 O.C. when we marched into the woods in front of the batteries where we remained about one hour & a half when we were ordered to relieve the regts ahead of us and marched in for the purpose but the Rebels left for the next line of entrenchments when they found fresh troops coming up so all we had to do was to follow up and that without getting a shot as the trees has been cut down making what is called a slash and so they retreated before we could get a chance at them to fort Magruder, the largest of all their forts on the Peninsula, which they also left before morning and our Regt. had to stand to their arms all night in the darkest I ever saw & it raining continually as hard as it could pour. The next morning after we had discovered that they had again given us the slip we marched back to where we left our Knapsacks, and built fires and eat the first meal we had for 24 hours. After a rest of about 3 hours we again marched to our present place beyond Williamsburgh where we have staid all night but expect to leave every moment. It is expected the Rebels will make a stand at a place called Chickahominy.

It was an awful sight the morning after the fight to see the dying and dead Rebel and Yankees but most of all is to visit the houses and barns used as hospitals and see the wounded and the piles of legs and arms that have been cut off. It is a good deal worse than to see the heaps of dead all tumbled into a grave. Some of the rifle pits & entrenchments that the Rebels used had been used in the Revolution.

I have not as yet got the box but all the express is to come to Yorktown and I have arranged with the Waggon Master to get it for me. I could write fifty sheets of the barbarity of the Rebels and of the expressions of the wounded but the mail man is waiting.

With love to all I remain as ever,

Your affec. Nephew & Cousin

Waters W. Braman

Co. C 93rd N. Y. Vol.
New Kent Crt House
En Route for Richm. Va.

Dear Em:

Your letter dated the 10th Inst. as just this moment arrived. I had been expecting two or three letters from home as I am sure I have answered all and have written four or five times since the last date you say had been recd.

We arrived here this morning just before daylight having marched all night. It is very tedious marching there are so many Artillery & Baggage Waggon in the way, and it is no small job to move three or four whole divisions at once, for those in front would be at least a days march from the rear. No person who has not seen it can form the least idea of this monster army and all the necessary appendages. We think nothing of seeing 10 or 12 thousand Cavalry all mounted and in motion right in one field. It is worth risking something to see what is to be seen.

We have some very saucy Sesech prisoners, and some of the fair sex are rather spitfull as we pass. This afternoon our pickets (Mounted) caught a rebel Col. Lieut. Col. Major & Capt. just over the lines - as soon as they found they were caught they tried to fool our men with a flag of truce but our boys were to sharp for them knowing they would not be likely to come with one with their arms & equipment all on. I have just seen them they are very saucy. Their arms had to be taken from them.

I thought I wrote all about that skirmish which you say you read in the times. It was in a letter to you and Kill. I do not see why you have not recd. it. The way it was half of our Regt. was on Picket among the rest Co. C. I was not with them, so when the remainder of our Regt. was ordered out of course I volunteered to go and went partly as a guide on account of my knowing the way through the woods and also to assist Capt. Wilson of Co. H who has no Lieut. We were deployed as skirmishers (also Co. B. the other three companies acting as reserve) and then marched forward towards the enemy. Our Regt. was on the extreme left. I was on the right of our skirmishers who I kept pushing forward and by some mismanagement the center of Co. H. did not move up and the consequence was myself and ten men got separated and went

still forward until we met the skirmishers of the 11th Maine & 56 & 57 N. Y. who had just met the rebels falling back and after we reinforced them we charged on the rascals and drove them from the woods across an open field in front of their fortifications which immediately started the shell & Canister shot at us. In this position we stayed until near dark when we returned, having accomplished all that was intended. I think the only man killed was killed within five or six feet of myself just as we charged on them. Send me the paper if you can get it. At this last fight, although we did not get a shot at the rebels still we would if they had not run, and they had the pleasure of firing at us for about 4 hours, and then we had to stand in front of their batteries until morning in a drenching rain, and then to march over thousands of dead and dying to their largest fort called Fort Magruder.

The Box has not come as yet, but it is not strange the way we are shifting about. Still am expecting a chance to get it every day.

We are not even allowed a tent for commissioned officers, nothing but tent blankets that each one carries to make himself a shelter as they are called.

We are going on tonight or in the morning and are expecting to whip them sure since we have heard that the Merrimac is sunk and our Gun Boats are all up the James & York Rivers.

With love to all I remain as ever,

Your affec. Coz

Waters

Head Qtrs. Co. C 93rd N.Y.V.
New Kent Court House
En Route for Rich - Va.

Dear Uncle:

Your kind letter of the 11th came to hand last night - also the map of the burnt district. I had heard the day before of the fire and was quite worried about it although I was almost certain that you had escaped this time. As it is it must be an awful blow for Troy.

I do not see how it is that you do not receive any more letters for I am certain that I have written two or three times to you & once to Libbie and once to Emma since the one you say Kill received. It must be that they are detained at head Quarters for some good reason-----

We are still at New Kent the same place from which I wrote to Em. We have been expecting to leave and are now under marching orders & liable to go at any moment. We are about two miles from Cumberland which is on the Pamunky river which is a branch of the York River at which place all the army stores are now being landed. I was down there yesterday and found the Adams Express but no box for me. There were three or four for our Regt. but they must have left Fortress Monro a day or so before mine arrived at that place.

We are about 27 miles from Richmond and are expecting a fight at Bottoms Bridge which is on the Chickahominy about 12 miles this side of the Rebel City.

We have plenty to eat. All the fresh Beef & Sugar & Tea we want we can buy at government prices even cheaper than you can in Troy. These are got of the Brigade Commissary who has orders to sell to officers.

About that note I think the Regt. will be paid off again soon and if I cannot get it thru I think you had better let Job try his hand at it and I am certain it can be collected.

Our Qtr. Master who is a brother of Col. Crocker had a letter from him last night dated at depot for Union prisoners at Richmond saying that they were closely confined and had their Mess with Col. Corcorane and also saying that he had no change of clothing and wished him to send what could be sent and to take care of the rest until his return.

I hope the 10⁴ will be down in time to see the fun at Richmond and perhaps they may be needed, yet we are confident of giving them a good whipping.

Give my love to Kill & Em & Lydia when you write and to the folks at home. I have not seen my brother since the morning after the fight when he and some other Pioneers were burying the dead.

With love to Aunt Hannah and yourself
I remain as ever,

Yours aff. nephew

Waters

(Note: This undated letter may not be in proper place)

Head Qrs. Co. C. 93rd Regt.
N. Y. Vol. Encamped near Ropers Meeting
House, Va.

Dear Uncle;

We are on the direct road to Richmond but have been encamped at our present place which is in sight of Genl. McClellans Head Quarters for the past 24 hours. We are however expecting to start very soon, they say we are to go by what is called the south road on which the rebels destroyed all the bridges and it is no use for us to go without our teams can get through.

The whole army is confident of whipping the rebels in this next great battle but the probability is they will not even wait at Richmond to give us a chance to fight them.

None of the papers we have seen have half an idea of the battle of Williamsburg nor of the number killed or wounded. The battlefield has since been all burned over to get rid of the dead horses of which there were a great number killed, mostly artillery horses and officer horses.

The appointments of Field Officers have not yet been made nor do I know who they will be. All the officers think they are entitled to the places and although I should like well enough to be Major still there are to many older - Captains - although two or three of the most sensible ones offered to try and have me recommended for Lieut. Col., for there is not an officer in the regiment pretends to contradict anything I say about military and as to the Spunk - twice under fire with any white feather and at the last fight or rather after it openly commended at Head Qrs. for coolness and what little spunk there was a chance to show, but still I do not think it would exactly answer to jump over so many yet if the thing was left to a vote of the men, I am sure that I could be elected Col - over Butler - who they still detest and with good reason - for he is an intolerable Tyrant and don't know as much about military as even some of the Sergeants.

It is no use to be in a hurry about these things. Wait patiently untill we have two or three good battles and then this Regt. will have some as good officers as any in the service for there is the material to make them of in the Regt.

The Box I have not yet seen but the Waggon Master says that all express for us will follow us so I am not likely to get it short of Richmond & it is lucky Em did not put the cider in for it would be in a nice fix.

I was very sorry to hear as I did by you and also from Libbie that Mr. Kerr had hurt himself by accident and I hope it will not prove serious as I should be sorry to hear that any of the friends had hurt themselves or were sick.

(Ropers Meeting House Letter Continued)

I have had your complaint for about five weeks but have got entirely over it now, but I had a good appetite & was able to duty all the while although I did not feel exactly well but I did not like to write that I was any way sick. I am now as well as ever in my life & hope to be untill this rebellion is entirely put down.

You have not half the chance to see how unreasonable a rebellion it is that we have here. I think it next to impossible to whip the Army of the Potomac just now for they have such confidence in themselves & leaders that they are ready to face anything they are told to.

I have received but one letter from you or any of you in two or three weeks but we have had but few mails for the past week.

If you do not happen to hear from me in the next week or two you need not be scared for if I could get a chance to write I do not know as I could send it. All the letters go to Gen. McC's Head Qtrs. and he sends them or not as he thinks there is to be any movement that requires secrecy.

I have not heard from Lydia but once and answered that once immediately Nor have I seen William since the morning after the fight when I saw him at Williamsburg. The 77th was not in the fight where we were. They were way to the right of us.

Give my love to all the folks Em & Kill & Carrie & Job & Lyd & Joe and to all the folks at home.

In haste

Waters W. Braman

P. S. The Regt. will probably leave in the night for Richmond which is about thirty five miles.

W.

Tuesday May 20th, 1862
White House Landing
Pamunkey River, Va.

Dear Uncle:

As you see by the above direction we are at the place where the government Stores and everything for the army are landed. The way we came here is this. On Saturday night we marched all night going from New Kent Court House to Baltimore Cross Roads, and there we lay over Sunday, and expected to stay over Monday, but about midnight came the order from Gen'l. McC. for the advance of the whole army, and also an order to Gen. Casey to send a Regt. from one of his Brigades of five Regts. and we were selected and before daylight were on our way for this place and the duty assigned us is guarding the different wharfs and the immense piles of Pork, Beef, Forage and every kind of Government property. There is also a Rail Road which although it did run down to West Point, the Rebels burnt the bridge at this place and so it will when in operation start from this place. There are lots of cars, princely baggage & freight cars, on board of vessels now laying in the River.

There are about one hundred vessels at this place, the wharfs are made of old canal boats all floored of with timber except one, which is a pier built by our troops. There is also at this place about 200 Hospital tents and in the event of a big fight it is intended to make a general Hospital at this place. Our Brigade lays today about 10 miles above us on the line of the Rail Road and although for my part I had sooner go on with the Brigade still some one had to be left here and it is a pretty important point too, and if the Stories told here that the Rebels are evacuating Richmond are true we shall probably join our Brigade as soon as that point can be made the Depot for military stores.

The worst inconvenience we shall suffer is having our letters go to the Brigade instead of getting them here untill some arrangement can be made and when you next write direct to 93d Regt at this place without putting on the Brigade and I think it would be well to put it 93d Regt N. Y. Vol. doing guard duty at White House Landing, Va. until you hear different from me

I wish you would have the girls get and send me about 3 yards of either very dark blue or green cord about 1/11 of an inch in diameter. I want it to put down the side of a pair of Pants which are light blue and so it must be very dark blue or green.

(Send the cord by letter.)

There is an Express office post office and News Depot where we can get New York papers published the day before. As to the box I have not as yet got it but expect to do so tomorrow as there is to be a lot of express up from Fortress Monroe.

If you can I wish you would get a small leather valise and put in it a pair of Boots with large tops about No. 9s, pretty good and middling strong, also about two white shirts $\frac{1}{2}$ doz. collars and two more Red Shirts and two pair wollen socks, and the two narrow neck ties that were in my trunk, also the suspenders and a pair of Gauntlets gloves and my sash. That is all I think of unless it is some white handkerchiefs. The prospect is that from this place we can have waggons enough for Baggage. The officers who left their trunks at Newport News have not heard from them and do not expect to see them again & some of them were valuable. Send the Valise immediately and don't get too much in it as it is a very bad plan to have too much in the army, the least possible amount is the best.

If it is possible to get the appointment of major as things are I would like it. The only reason we were sent here was because the General had no confidence in our commanding officer & we have preferred charges against him which were signed by every officer but one and headed by myself, charging him with being totally incompetent to command a regt. and we were not wanting in instances of his disability. Another charge was one of insanity which I honestly believe and we have since ascertained that he was knowing to the intention of Co. B * to lay down their arms in front of the fortifications and the men have not the least respect for him and mock him to his face which would soon demoralize the best Regiment in the service.

* Co. B. is all right now.

Last night down to the dock I came across my old friend Hyde who used to drill us in the Bayonet & Exercise. He is Lieut. Col. of the 9th N. Y. Cavalry. They like the No Horse Cavalry have never had horses but have unlike them been serving as Infantry, but are to be mustered out of the service in a day or two. He is going to try and get the appointment of col. to our Regt, and I hope he may. The first thing he wanted to know was if I would not go to Mexico and fight the French & Spanish in case this was settled here in a short time. He thinks that is the place for him and me. He staid with me last night and says he has wished a thousand times he had me with him. Give my love to all. I will write to Carrie in a day or two and also to Lydia. Give my love to Em & Kill and Aunt Hannah and the Girls and to everybody.

Your affec. Nephew

Waters W. Braman

P.S. I have not started for Mexico yet. W--

Head Quarters of Guard
at Whithouse Landing, Va.
Whithouse May 23d, 1862

Dear Cousin Libbie:

Your letter of the 19th inst. was received by me this morning, containing also one from Carrie. There are six of our Co. on duty at this place, the rest being up to Gen. McClellan's Head Quarters about 12 miles from here. The duty we have to do is to guard the wharfs and also the commissary stores of which there are immense quantities, also have to furnish a guard for the hospital Tents of which there are at least 200 and are pretty well filled with sick.

The Sanitary Commission are also taking lots of sick daily on board of vessels provided and brought with them the doctors and nurses (mostly ladies) are for the most part volunteers. The most of the sick are however but slightly unwell and will be able to join their respective Regiments in a few days but were unable to accompany them in their forced marches. And if a man happens to get left behind why the sanitary commission wishing to get a large name pick him up at once and just as likely as not let him be sick or well, he is on his way to the Boat of Hospital before he knows it. Still they are doing an immense sight of good, and all credit be to them for it. But as an instance of their over zeal our orderly who was a little unwell and had to be left behind at Williamsburgh and the Committee picked him up and took him down to the boat as he supposed to stay for a day or so and then rejoin us again and the first he knew off went the Boat and he found himself in Washington, at which place he immediately wrote to us and is now on his way back.

As you see by the heading of this letter I am not only at the Whithouse Landing but in the Whithouse itself which is celebrated as covering the same ground as the one in which Geo. Washington "courted" and spent the early part of his married life, with his fair fame unblemished as is not the fame of his descendants. The house has been occupied by Col. Lee of the Rebel Army, but is owned by the wife of Gen. Lee of the same "vagabond mob". Mrs. Lee is the Granddaughter of Mrs. Washington. Her maiden name was Custis which was the name of Mrs. Washington's first Husband. I am placed here with a guard to protect the property which is very fine for this part of the country. The House is of modern build the old one having been burned down about 35 years ago, this one is on the same foundation however. Mrs. Col. Lee who left only the morning of the same day our troops arrived attempted to remove everything to Richmond, but was unable for want of time to remove much but the pictures and some other furniture. She intended moving it all and would have done so had not the Rebel Gen's. in their usual "Bravado" style assured her that the Yankees would never pass the last ditch at Williamsburgh but be

entirely annihilated at that place.

I am writing in what appears to have been their own bedroom but will be mine for the present. The furniture on the ground floor is all of Black Walnut and of very heavy style. I should think the bedstead alone was worth 60 or 70 dollars, from the amount of carving on the Head board and all the rest is to match except the dining table which is a plain black walnut extension table and is better to write on than any of the two or three marble top tables which evidently belong to this room.

I have Lots of visitors to look at the house, either officers of the army or Navy or members of the Sanitary Com-- and such civilians as I think proper to admit within the grounds, consequently I have also lots of Lady visitors whose curiosity is great as is also their propensity to tease for articles to carry home as trophies, but I can't see it exactly in that light while there is a safeguard from Gen. McClellan lying on the sideboard in the dining room. The consequence is I have to look sharp after all visitors especially the fair ones and to escort them all myself for fear the temptation of a nice little book or some other article might be too great for them. Among the curiosities besides the furniture is a package which contains the records & other books of St. Peter's Church near this place on which is also another safeguard. The Church is undoubtedly the one in which Washington married his wife and the Record of the same is said to be in one of the books, consequently the package is much venerated by all. Also there is a note from Mrs. Col. Lee which reads as follows: "Northern Soldiers who profess to reverence Washington forbear to desecrate the home of his first married life, the property of his wife now owned by her descendants.

(signed) A granddaughter of Mrs. Washington.

The plantation is a splendid one and contains 3048 acres of Land. There are at present about 200 slaves on the plantation a few of which remember the immediate descendants of the old family. About the house is a very nice and tastfully laid out Garden consisting of about 10 acres and containing Grass Plots, flower beds, shrubbery also Strawberry beds of which I have all I can eat every day as well as green Peas for dinner, in fact the garden contains every kind of vegetable that can be thought of, plenty of lettuce, corn, potatoes, cabbage, beets, radishes, currants and everything that could make a person happy in this delightful place. I am sure it would suit Uncle Waters to a dot. He could trim Grape vines and do all the weeding he wanted to do. There is an old negro slave about 80 years old who is constantly at work at the melons and other things in the garden which he says he has always done since he got to old for family coachman and strange to say he never entered the house of his master during his life. They took all the family servants with them to Richmond.

Enclosed I send you a rose bud from the garden. It is the smallest I could find. I wish I could send some of the larger ones of which there are lots of different kinds and really splendid to some of them - perhaps I may send by express a little box of something to remember the place and the war. There are some grand old shade trees about the house and it is very pleasant these hot days to sit on the back piazza and catch the nice breeze from the River which is not over 30 Rods from the house, the lawn running down to the waters edge. But enough about the house and grounds. As to the lady, she must evidently have been a person of a very fine taste for the beautiful and as large perhaps as her husband had for the dismal satisfaction of being a traitor to his country and everything sacred in the eyes of an American.

Our Brigade and Division are only about fifteen miles from here but by tomorrow night will probably have crossed the Chickahominy River and be still nearer Richmond. There are lots of troops both in front & Rear of them and it is also reported here from head Qtrs. that McDowell's left has joined the right of our Army and the fate of Richmond is sealed. I think probably McClellan will not give them a chance to complete the evacuation which has certainly begun and rapidly progressing - I think likely if our Army does advance the six companies here will move up and join the other 4 companies at McClellan's Headquarters & then rejoin the Brigade and I hope it will be soon as guarding Homesteads that are probably to be confiscated to the Government is not what I left as good a home as I had for even though the duty be in a responsible and pleasant place.

The next letter any of you write I think had better be directed as before, putting on the Brigade & division but the valise send to this place as ere this I have no doubt it is on its way. The Box has not yet arrived but I am sure of getting it soon the delay is caused by the enormous amount of the kind at the Fortress which is coming forward daily.

With love to all I remain as ever,

Your affec Cousin

Waters

12 P.M.

White House, Virginia
May 29th, 1862

Dear Kill:

I recd. your letter also Harpers Weekly and a slip of the New York Times and on the same day came the box about which so much Ink has been spilled to a good purpose, for it is very acceptable and all but one or two exceptions in good order.

I am enjoying myself very much here having had plenty of vegetables, strawberries & such as you would not think of having in Troy and made lots of new and met some old friends. I have lots of standing invitations to visit the Boats occupied by the Sanitary Commission and also the U. S. Gun Boats. I am going to supper on the U. S. Gun Boat Marblehead and so you must excuse the shortness of this.

Enclosed with this find an engraving which I found in the White House and which I rescued from at least 50 old maids who are nurses with the Sanitary Com. who had made love to it and as soon as I was relieved from Guarding the House I froze to it expressly for you & Em, as a memento of the place and a Sesesh trophy.

With love to all, yours in haste,

Waters

I will write again in a day or so, I have written to Uncle Waters today and also to Carrie. Love to all,

W--

Head Quarters Co. C 93d N.Y.S.V.
White House Landing, Va.
May 29th, 1862

Dear Uncle:

Your letter dated May 24th came to hand last evening and am glad to know you are all well. The 93d is still on duty at the Landing except 4 companies. The duty is pretty hard in most places, the men being on duty every other day and night. Myself and 12 men have been Guarding the House of Mrs. Gen. Lee for the past week but have been relieved. I had nice times while there, having a good bed to sleep on and a good place to cook and we can get plenty of fish & eggs & such things very cheap for the gold & silver as it has been pretty scarce here for about a year and even now in camp we have about as good arrangements as when we were in Albany. As my mattress and all we left at Fortress Monroe & Newport News we have been allowed to send for and found most of them all right. That Box which has caused at least 50 inquiries by me has at last arrived the most of the things are in excellent condition in fact all but the bread, potatoes and crackers that were loose and everything without exception that was done up tight with paper is all right and all that was not so done up is spoiled. I am sorry about the Bread, still, we can get good warm Bread every day The Box is well worth the trouble of getting it and I am forever obliged to you all for your kindness in sending it.

I have been twice up the River in the Gun Boat Currituck but found all quiet. The last time we went out into the country on the other side of the River but found no signs of Rebels. It was about 9 or 10 O.C. at night and the overseer of a widow who professes strong union sentiments to whose house we went gave us a good supper. The widow herself lives at the River and we left a guard to look after her property. She has about 2500 acres and 75 or 80 Negroes and is said to be worth at least 250 or 300 thousand dollars, and is good looking besides. A nice chance for some good northern man.

The news of the Retreat of Gen. Banks does not affect the army as it seems to the people of the north. The Rail Road is in full operation from here and the Bridge is nearly completed when everything will probably be forwarded from West Point and we will go on to head Quarters and then to our Brigade again and if we are lucky enough be at the taking of Richmond.

That seems to be the height of everyones ambition here just now. The Rail Road is used for transporting grain & provision for the army up and generally brings down some provisions. The train which has just arrived brings only 500. We are daily sending them to Fortress Monroe and some of the biggest rascals to Washington that duty keeps three or four officers on the Route between here & those places all the while. I don't know but I may go to Washington in a day or two but it will be to go straight there and back again.

As to the Appointment of Major I am greatly obliged to you for trying to get it for me and I know that any advance gained honorably on my part would give you as much satisfaction as it would myself. As to the recommend of the officers I shall try and get, but there are at least 6 or 7 applicants for the office from our own Regt. and although some might for friendly reasons have a preference otherwise, none could object after the appointment was made for as to the ability none disputes that. As to that note, the adjutant I think has the means to pay it but has gone to Washington. When he returns if he does not see fit to pay it I think you had better give it to Job to collect. And tell him to push it through as fast as possible. I will write again as soon as he returns about it.

My own health has never been better than for the past month and I have never had to be excused from duty since I entered the service on account of sickness for which good health I have reason to be very thankful.

I found an old friend of mine, Mr. Hyde, at this place where the Regt. was to have been mustered out of service but have since been ordered to Washington to get their Horses. When he left he gave me a splendid Uniform Hat which could not be bought here short of \$8.00. He had two of them and gave me this to remember him. I have also found a young fellow by the name of Fisher who used to go to the Institute. The girls will know him. He is chief Engineer and ranks as Lieutenant on the U. S. Gunboat Marblehead, which lays at this place, and formed quite a friendship. I am going to visit him on board his vessel. He was with me on a little scouting party up the River the other night and has been to visit me since.

I shall write to Carrie today. Give my love to all the folks and friends of the family-

And believe me as ever,

Your affectionate Nephew

Waters W. Braman

P.S. It is reported here today that there has been a Col. by the name of Williams appointed to our Regt. and the rest of the officers are all trying to see who can get the start of one another about the Major, even the adjutant wants it. He is a nice man but totally unfit for the office and inasmuch as they are going in so strong there has quite a number spoken to me today and if you will get R. Sage or some one to see Gov. Morgan I think I might get it myself.

If you do, he might mention my being on the Examining Board at Albany and that I am at any time ready to undergo an examination for Field Officer - At any rate if you do have him seen it will do no harm and perhaps may do me some good. I think I could get the Recommend of the officers if necessary,

Yours in haste

Waters W. Braman

Head Quarters of the Guard
White House Landing, Va.
June 1st, 1862

Dear Uncle:

Within the past 24 hours I recd. two letters from you. One principally about the Majorship and the other containing the key to the valise which I see you have been kind enough to fix quicker than I expected, and I have no doubt I shall receive it in a day or so, as I have sent to Fortress Monroe by one of our Sgts. and I think he will bring it up tomorrow night. About the promotion. It will be impossible for me to get more than two of the Captains to recommend me as there are but five captains with us, the other five are up to Head Quarters of Gen. McClellan where they have been on duty for the past week. And two of the Captains here are aspirants for the same place. If I could do as much here for myself as I believe you have done for me there I would be sure of the Position. As it would be of no use to send a recommend signed by two and as we are situated I can't get up to Head Quarters to get more, I think about half of the Captains would be willing. Each one of the other half think they are competent to fill the place themself. If the Governor sees fit to appoint a person totally unfit for the position, the Regt. will soon let them know their opinion. All I can say is I am much obliged to you (as I always shall be) (for a thousand reasons) for trying to get the appointment for me. And if I don't happen to get it, I shall not feel very bad, but try again some other time.

As you doubtless know ere this Our Division was all cut to pieces yesterday and our Brigade with the rest. If we had been with them I should probably be either dead or wounded at this present moment. There was one or two Regts. who had not one hundred men for the battle this morning after yesterday's fight.

With a soldiers feelings I think I would have liked to have been up there yesterday, and much more today, but when I feel a little human I think I should be thankfull that I am not dead just now, or with 400 or 500 of our wounded officers and men who are being put on board the Hospital Boats. I have myself helped get a great number of them out of the cars and put them on stretchers to be carried on board the boats.

The Boats are fixed very nice for the business and Rebel & Union have alike the same attendance and plenty of good nursing. According to our last news our forces are driving the Rebels at the point of the Bayonet and I wish I was with them when they enter the Rebel Capital instead of laying ingloriously here doing general duty that is worse than fighting, perhaps I would tell another story if I had an arm or leg shot off, but I hope I should be able to stand it as hundreds of our wounded are doing now. What would you think of men who had an arm off and a shot through his head getting out of a car and walking 200 yards to the boat without a word of grumbling, and some with three or four shot holes through their hide. As I

am writing there is a whole train of cars loaded with wounded and as soon as the Steamer Elm City can get up to the dock the whole guard are going to help get them on board.

There are lots of Washington visitors here today who came down on a boat chartered by themselves, and brought their ladies with them. There are also lots of lady nurses who are doing a vast amount of good.

Enclosed I send Libbie some Sesesh money which is at rather a low ebb just now. If I could send them in a letter I would send some other things which I have and perhaps will send in a little box. I am afraid I can't send her anything from the White House as the officer who Col. Butler sent to relieve me has since been placed under arrest, and although he tried at first to throw the blame onto me by saying I did not give him proper instructions when he relieved me, yet when I spoke to Col. Ingalls (who is the head man here) he said he knew from the way things were kept when I was there and the way everything I had charge of was done, and the instructions he had given me himself he was satisfied. I had transmitted proper orders, and common sense should have taught the officer what he was to do. The House is now in an awful state and no visitors are now admitted. Col. Ingalls also gave Col. Butler rats for putting somebody in my place there.

The last news we had which was since dark (it is now most 12 O.C. at night) is that the city is taken and the Rebels were taking the double quick in great disorder down the railroad towards Dansville. If it is true Bull Run is in the shade entirely and must give up the Champions belt.

With much love to all the folks and friends of the family, I remain,

Your affec & much indebted Nephew

Waters W. Braman

To Waters W. Whipple Esq.
Troy, New York

P.S. Direct all letters according to the original direction of Putting Regt. & Brigade on & Washington ----- Waters

The fight today has been a general engagement and the loss must be terrible. It is said the Rebels lay two & three deep in some places. Secession has received a death blow today.

Head Quarters 93rd Regt. N.Y.S.V.
White House Landing, Va.
June 5th, 1862

Dear Uncle:

This afternoon I had a chance to get my pay up to the 1st May, not from our own paymaster but from another who came on with his money and Pay Rolls to pay off a whole Brigade and as it was impossible for him to get up to his Brigade I scraped acquaintance with him and found a tent for him and placed a guard over it and so I managed to get my own pay in return. He says he knows our paymaster and can arrange it with him. In fact, I think the whole Regt. will be paid off as soon as this affair at Richmond is decided. There are three or four Paymasters here but it would be impossible for them to go up with Two or Three hundred thousand Dollars and try to pay off Troops that are stationed in Fifty different places and expecting to fight any minute.

I have sent this evening by Express One Hundred & Seventy (170.00) Dollars which I trust will arrive safe in due time I have saved \$52.00 which I think will be sufficient and if I don't have much I surely won't lend it and I can always write for some if I get entirely out of funds. The valise arrived the day after I wrote to you last. One of our Seargents brought it up for me if I had not sent by him I probably should not have got it in two or three weeks as there is an awful pile of the same kind at Fortress Monroe everything is all right, the boots are just the thing I wanted and in fact everything is just what I wanted and plenty of Room in the valise for my other traps. The cakes were so nice and fresh they went off like smoke. The Cake that came in the Box still keeps good and I am again obliged for them all.

There are a great many troop landed here and going forward every day. Today the 2d N. Y. Vol. passed through here on their way to join Heintzlemans Corps.

The Rail Roads still continue in full blast and are paying for themselves over & over. Yesterday and today they have sent a great number of boats up to make Pontoon Bridges so if the Rebels do flood the Chickahominy Swamp it will not affect our troops.

There has been considerable fighting above today first on the right & center & then on the left. The Rebels were Repulsed with heavy loss at all points we are confident of taking Richmond soon as McClellan will assume the offensive as soon as he is sure of success and nobody in the army doubts the success of his plans.

The censure which seems to be thrown on Caseys Division is pretty hard. The Blame if any should fall on Gen. Keys for putting them out of their place and not on the men who fought until compelled to Retreat on account of superior number on the part of the Rebels. The Prisoners say that they had seven divisions in

line of Battle one behind the other and all advancing on Caseys one Division. But in war if a man is lucky and succeeds he is called brave and is rewarded but no matter what courage he may have shown if he fights till death even, without being successful he is called a coward and made a scape goat for the sins of others.

I am entirely unable to say what moment we will rejoin our Brigade and we may stay here a month, but not very likely. Certain it is some one must stay here, and we find the duty very severe, the moment we are ordered to leave I will write you so you may know something near our whereabouts.

The Adjutant has promised certain that he will pay \$30.00 of that note this pay day and if possible I would like to get it without seeing him, and I shall try and crowd the other man. The bottle of Kino will be a good thing in this country when the water is not good, as what seems very slight at first soon runs into a fever in this hot climate.

I am on duty every other day and night but probably after today as we are not to guard the hospitals which took two companies the duty will come less often. Every day the last train brings down a lot of Prisoners which takes till 12 or 1 O.C. at night to dispose of - for Fortress Monroe - so the duty comes pretty tough, when it comes often.

I am making lots of friends here but still remember the ones at home. Give my love to them all and to Carrie & Lyd and Kill & Em & all the folks.

Hoping to be with you one of these days, I remain as ever,

Your affectionate Newpew

Waters W. Braman

P.S. All my last letters have been written in the guard tent and you must excuse all faults. Enclosed I send the Rebel money I forgot to send before for Libbie. Love to all, Waters

White House Landing
Virginia, June 8th, 1862

Dear Uncle:

Enclosed I send you Sixty Dollars to pay that Note.
I was on hand at the pay table and was glad to get the principal
without the Interest or the protest which you can charge to me.
I also send you Twenty Dollars for Peter McDonald - which you will
please give him credit for--

\$60 to pay note.

\$20 for P. McDonald

I am well and enjoying myself as usual. Thos. Holmes &
his brother in law Ackley are here tonight. With love to all,
I remain as ever,

In haste

Waters -----

White House Landing
Virginia, June 9th, 1862

Dear Em:

Your letter of the 2d was received and read with pleasure. The Northern News Writers seem to know all and more than happens to this army. Mrs. Gen. Lee instead of being here is about 16 miles up the main Road to Richmond at the House of a man by the name of Jean at which place she was overtaken by our troops and is still under guard at that place. She is a regular She Bear on the Sesesh question although she makes great pretensions to high breeding & c.

It is a shame after Gen. Casey's men being cut up and fairly driven back by five times their own numbers to accuse them of not standing fire, when nearly every officer was killed & wounded too. The 93d is in a flourishing state Gloriously serving their country doing guard duty. But we may soon have all the other kind of duty they want in a very few days.

I sent the other day an engraving to you & Kill it was one I borrowed from the White House. Almost everything has been carried off since I left, and now no one is permitted to go through the place without a pass from Col. Ingalls who is in command of the place. I have a pass at all times myself and should not be surprised if I was sent back to take charge of the House again. When I was there everyone could go through and I never lost anything. and gave satisfaction to all at any rate one man in writing to the evening post dated New York June 3d said I would not let a lady pick a flower. She must have been neither young nor good looking or I would certainly have given her that privelege.

Yesterday I had Thomas Helmes & Phil Ackley to take tea with me. They have gone up to the battle field tonight and I expect them back again in the morning. Tom was rather surprised to see me.

I was up to the battle field the other night but had to run away for the purpose I think it was Friday night. I did not see much of the old battle field but saw a little skirmish with the pickets. I saw a good many dead bodies not yet buried and in an awful state of decomposition, giving forth a very healthy smell, but dead men are not half so bad as wounded.

There was not a single man from the 93d Regt. in the Fight and if I had been there and in Casey's Div. I should not fear being twitted of running, as everything appears & shows that they fought well (but were not supported) against fearful odds. The only man in the 93d that was wounded cut two of his toes off with an ax - at the Head Qtrs. of the army.

I have recd. all letters & Papers I think.

Enclosed I send a South Carolina button given me by a

wounded rebel who was in the fight in which our division so roughly handled. I will send you a book from the White House so Lib can't brag over you any more. I have got some other buttons & a Sesesh Belt & Revolver for Kill - which I will send one of these days but am in hopes to have something more to send.

I guess I will have my picture taken here so you can see what kind of a looking chap I am now. I am sure I have grown some since I left Troy.

Give my love & respects to the young ladies next door who were so kind as to remember me. & especially to Miss Christie when she arrives I wish I could be there for a few nights we would beat you all to pieces the same way that we did the last night we played when she was there before. Tell her if the 93d had remained a few days longer at Rikers Island I should have called on her at Staten Island.

Give my love to all the Folks (especially to Em since she feels so bad because I perhaps happened to write in a hurry) over home and in the country when any of you write.

I wrote to Uncle Waters yesterday, enclosing \$80.00 and I wish he would send me that note. I forgot to ask him to do so but I suppose he would anyway.

With much love to yourself and Kill and the little Kills,
I remain as ever,

Your affec. cousin

Waters

White House Landing, Va.
June 16th, 1862

Dear Libbie:

Your long and welcome letter of the 12th came last evening. You say you have written three letters since you have received one from me. If you have, I have never received them and have answered every one and have also written to Uncle Waters two or three times since receiving any from home. I am sorry to hear Uncle has been sick and hope he is and will be better.

As you doubtless know from the papers, we came very near being attacked at this place by a Guerrilla Party of Rebel Cav. We certainly expected a brush with them but were disappointed this time but it is certain they are lurking about in small parties all ready to join each other at the first call and pounce upon any party they think they can master and murder on the other side of the river there are also farmers who to your face are strong for the union and whose property the government is protecting at an immense cost who are giving information and I believe the most of them were personally in that affair on Friday afternoon and night.

Yesterday I went up the River with three men who we had left as guard up to a widow's to get their things and if necessary leave them there again and also Lieut. Bradford of Company E took up six men to see if he could find anything of one of their men who as on guard up at the mill when the boats were burned but we hunted all around and even dug up a man that had been killed to see if it was him but no man could we find and so we proposed going over the River to see if he or some others were in the swamp as a lot of the teamsters swam the River when they were attacked. As the steam boat was not ready to go one man and myself took the small boat and started across and went through the swamp but found no one and came out into a big wheat field and while we were there the rest of the party came across and started up the Road but the Captain of the boat signalled them that they were in danger and they went back and got on board double quick and put out into the middle of the stream. I did not hear any signals and was quite surprised when I got down to shore to find the boat off and all watching for us. The Capt. of the Boat says he saw 25 or 30 Rebel Horsement skulking around the edge of the Wheat field but I did not see anything of them and think they were only negros.

Capt. Barnes and about sixty men went on an expedition over the River about midnight last night not with our company however, and as I had been on all of the expeditions I had to stay and let Milo go. And we may have work enough here and some one had to stay to take charge of the Company.

I am in perfect health and enjoying myself, as I am in the good Graces of all the military men here who have any authority. I wish Kill and Em & you could come down here it is only about 12 or 14 hours ride by boat from Washington and there are lots of visitors and you could see more on the way and here

than you will ever see in a lifetime in Troy and would be perfectly safe although in hearing of the cannons roar if there should happen to be a brush. I really do wish you would come and would like better to have Uncle Waters & Aunt Hannah come too. You could only stay over one night or so with any comfort but it would repay the journey of a month. Try and persuade Kill to come anyway, and I will get him a pass to go anywhere in the limits of the army. Cousin Julia, Julia, Frank & Ida were here a day or two ago and Mrs. Qtr. Master McArthur. I entertained them at my tent and spent the most of the day escorting them around and I just think I can do that here as I have a pass for myself & friends to go anywhere this side of Richmond.

Cousin Julia had not heard of Mary Dorlonson-Mary Bonticou's marriage and don't seem to have heard from Troy at all lately. She talked me almost to death and asked about a thousand questions about you all, but I don't think she got much the best of me. Julia Frank cut quite a dash with a Major of the 16th Mass.

I would like to be home about a week to tell you about all the expeditions we are on every day and of every kind which it would be impossible to write about as there is something new every day.

There is possibility but no probability of the Battle of Richmond coming off under a couple of weeks, and it may be in 24 hours. There are lots of troops here landing for McClellan every day and Siege guns without number. The 93d still continues in the same state except that they do not belong to any Brigade and when any of you write don't put on anything but the Regt. itself but direct to Washington as before and then if we leave here it will come all right.

I have only received two letters from Lydia instead of three and shall answer the last today. I have not seen anything of Wm. but I think he will look out for himself.

Give my love to Em & Kill and Call & Job & Uncle and Aunt, Abbie and all friends of the family and all who enquire after me but not to any one in particular. Hoping I won't have to wait over a week again to hear from some of you, I remain as ever your affec. cousin

Waters

White House, Va.
June 22d, 1862

Dear Uncle:

Your last letter came so long ago I am almost ashamed to answer it but you must excuse me this time and I am sure you would if you were here. For since a day or two since I received it I have been on duty every day - and almost every day have been over the river on some expedition and for the past week I do not believe I have averaged three hours sleep any night. We are very busy and our force here is so small that it keeps us continually on duty or on the watch for Guerrilla Parties, who no doubt are hovering around and knowing the entire country about here, and the vital importance of this place to our army they are continually on the watch for a chance to pounce upon us. Still we are not much alarmed about them and everything goes on as if there never was one living except that our cav. patrols are continually scouring the country in quest of them.

The Northern Papers have great ideas about what happens to the army and get all such affairs as the Guerrilla Dash very much exaggerated on one side or the other about the destruction of Property - the other night they got that altogether too high and the damage aside from the Scare was not even felt here amid the rush and immensity of the Operations connected with the army. June 23d.-- I began to write yesterday but I have done the same two or three times and had to stop writing to go on a little trip up the Rail Road.

About that bill of Messrs R. & L. I wish you would pay it as soon as possible for I had supposed it paid out of the money first sent home and am sorry it was not.

Our Regt. is not very likely to leave just now as the force here is now too small to afford much protection in case of being attacked by a large force, but we will try it if they try the experiment also. Our Regt. is now unattached to any Brigade or Division but constitute in themselves the Army of the Pamunkey.

This place is getting to be quite a city. I have charge of the sutlers and have them all on one street & make them pay \$5.00 for a license to sell their goods. At this place the money is appropriated to grading the streets & c. Col. Butler & myself have a big tent down on the Levee, where all business is transacted & the Col. furnishes me a horse to ride and in fact we could not get around fast enough without them, so you see that although busy from daylight till 12 or 1 O.C. I am having a good time and enjoying myself as well as possible.

I had a letter from Libbie & one from Kill night before last and will try and answer them & write one to Aunt Hannah as soon as possible. I wish Kill and some of the girls could come down for a few days, and see the country. They will never have a better chance, and I wish you would come too. I am sorry to hear the Mr. Kerr is having so serious a time but hope he will soon be around again. It must be awful tiresome for him staying in the house.

You need not flatter yourself about being no danger at White House but I think I can take care of myself as well as any of our men and if it comes our lot to meet the enemy here I think & trust we shall be ready & willing to meet them any day or night they see fit to give us a call.

I have seen nothing of William and hear that his regt. has not over 200 effective men in it.

I may go to N. Y. city in a few days but if I do it will only be to go there and back and no chance to come to Troy.

With love to all I remain as ever your affec.
Nephew,

In haste

Waters W. Braman

Head Quarters Gen. Casey
White House, Va., June 27/62
Office of Provost Guard

Dear Kill:

Your letter arrived in due time, but I have been so busy have delayed answering. I am at present acting as Q Master for Gen. Casey & officer in command of Provost Guard and am hurried every moment - have tried to write to you two or three times but have hardly got started before some business stoped me -- you must not think that I meant to write before, nor must Libbie. I shall write to her and to you a good long letter as the next few days will decide our fate at this place we are in a very uncertain fix just at this moment and even before this is finished we may be ordered to leave this place. as it is reported that Gen. S. Jackson of the Rebel Army is within a few miles of this place intending to destroy the Gov. property but he will find nothing in that line, and only a small force to oppose him, but we will try. We have been in this uncertain state for the past two weeks, but you need not show this to the folks, unless you see fit, as it might cause them uneasiness on my account, but you may be sure I shall take as good care of myself as possible.

Those things, I will send by Express if we don't leave here and if we do I may get more of them. I should have done so but if I had not time to write home I certainly would not to make a box to send them in. All the stores at this place are loaded on vessels except such as are being loaded on cars and are ready to be sent down the river at a moments warning.

Trusting to write to and hear soon from you with love to Em and all the folks, I remain as ever

In haste,

Waters W. Braman

Fortress Monroe, Va.
June 30th, 1862

Dear Aunt:

Hearing you were unwell and had gone to Union Village to Recruit I thought I would write to you there and I hope ere this reaches you you will be all well and stay so.

This letter is written on Rebel Paper, also the envelope. It was captured at the battle of Fair Oaks by one of Gen. Casey's clerks and you must keep it to remember me and the War, and it must also be a great curiosity up north. As you see we have left White House and are probably going up the James River but I have written all the particulars to Uncle and as he will send you the letter it will be unnecessary for me to state them again.

I have been so busy to work that it is almost impossible for me to do more than think of the folks at home but I don't forget you or any of my friends.

Enclosed I also send my picture. I intended to have some more taken but the day I got this one the man said it was a bad day and we left before I got another chance and I send it to you for if I should send it to either Em or Lib I should get a letter or two about it immediately. I never thought of sending anything to one more than another much less than to having any one brag over another and I suppose all letters are for the benefit of all whom it may concern.

As I am acting in three or four different capacities I must close this for want of more time and Hoping when I hear again from you again you will be well, and with love to Cal & Job & Lye & Joe and all the young ladies of U. V. and all the folks at home and friends of the family, I remain as ever,

Your aff. Nephew,

Waters

Fortress Monroe, June 30th/62

Dear Uncle:

As you can see we have left the White House for good. Your letter I recd. in time also one from Em last night. We left White House day before yesterday at 5 O.C. P.M. We had orders to be ready to do so for over a week before we left everything of consequence was brought away, and here we are expecting to leave this morning for up the James River but perhaps we may stay here a day or two if so I will write again tomorrow to Libbie. Every boat & every bit of government property was either brought away or destroyed. I set fire to the wharf from which the Knickerbocker started (the last boat) and was the last man on shore.

Why we left, the Head Gens. only know, and as it was orders I hope it is for the best. We shall probably land just below Fort Darling if we go up the James River.

It is reported in the Fort that Gen. McClellan by falling back on the right and concentrating his forces on the left & center has taken the city of Richmond. That was undoubtedly the program and I hope it is true. It was stated by our Cavalry patrols when we left the White House that the Rebel Gen. Jackson was within three miles of that place. If so he is caught in a trap that will bother him some if as we expect the Rebel Capitol is defunct.

For the last week I have been detached from the 93d and am still acting Asst. Q. M. for Gen. Casey & Commandant of Provost Guard and although the two weeks before I could hardly find time to write, yet for the last week I have been more busy than ever. I have for Provost Guard beside myself, 1 Lieut. & 53 Infantry & 14 Cavalry which are detached from their Regts. and under my own control & all picked men and we were having splendid times at White House. We were encamped in the grounds of the White House itself and it would do any one good to see the encampment as I got all nice new tents and the Gen. said they & the men looked like Regulars. Although the men are from different Regts. they all say they hope they can always stay with me. I had the privilege of picking them all out myself. Since I have got to be A.A.Q.M. I can afford a horse to ride especially as Uncle Sam furnishes it.

We had the provost guard deployed as skirmishers in the woods before the Boat got ready to start and expected to have a brush with Jackson although the orders were to let him come down as far as possible. But nary Reb. did we see although our cavalry Patrol reported their advance to be very near. I almost wish we had been lucky enough to have a little brush with them as I am proud of the Provost Gd. and would like to see them tried.

Everything on the right of our army went over the Chickahominy two or three days ago and although we kept sending provisions forward night & day perhaps our army before Richmond may get out of Hardees before we can send up the James River. All the Troops had also gone over the River except the Guards at White House & Tunstalls Station all of which and no others except the sick in hospital came away with us. Genl. McClellan took the other four companies of our Regt. with him.

Enclosed I send a Sesesh furlough taken from a man who I arrested as a spy it is the original thing and no humbug.

I am sorry to hear Aunt Hannah is sick and I hope her trip to U. V. will do her good.

With love to all, Em & c I remain as ever,
your affect. Nephew,

Waters W. Braman

P.S. Tell Kill he need not come to see me at White House but should be happy to see him up the James River or in Richmond.