

George Oscar French (1844-1865)
Civil War Letters – 1864, part 1

Transcribed by Dawn Hance; typed by Joann Nichols; edited by Paul Zeller

Fort Stevens, Jan. 1st/64

Happy New Year to all!

[Corp. Byrns] has just arrived & says that he called at [Jo's] for my clothes & they were not done. Now I write to tell you not to send them at-all by Ex. Or any other way till I write you again. I am well. The weather is splendid & every thing goes well. I cannot think of much to write today. Our Bat is full Aggregate 145. [Ta] Millers wifes brother is here. Wears his hair behind his ears & seems to labor under the impression that he is a nice young man. I will write no more till after the mail & then perhaps I can think of something.

Fort Stevens Jan 20th [1864]

Folks at Home –

I have just arrived all right. [French returned from furlough home] 48 hours on the road. Found the boys all on the square & very glad to see me – Sherman & Lewis are 2nd Lieuts. No Orderly appointed. Yet. I am all right for it I suppose—Know I am—I did not take Alfreds receipt for the \$12.00—but opened the letter & gave him the money in presence of ten or 12 good men—there is no come back to it. Was too tired to write a recpt. You must excuse this short letter . for I am very tired.

Good Night

Oscar

E.W. French

Fort Stevens D.C. Jan 31st 1864

Oh Dear – why don't you write. Two weeks ago tomorrow night since I left home & not a word from any of you since. I wrote you a little note in pencil, the same night that I arrived here & you should have got it a week ago yesterday. My visit home most used me up – for I haven't felt like myself, since I got back – such a change of food &c & that cold I got on the Susquehanna – all went to use a fellow up. I got here the 20th, was promoted the 24th to Orderly Sergt [First Sergeant] & took charge of the Co. the 25th. We are getting our little 2 hours Battalion drill every forenoon & our little 2 hours Company & Artillery Drill in the P.M. 1 hour each – Beside Dress parade. I don't find a moments leisure time between daylight (reveille) & 7 oclock P.M. I am busy all the time. Since I got back I have bought a set of Infantry Tactics Caseys Standard 3. vols \$2.50 for the three. I don't hear anything definite about our leaving this line in the Spring. One thing is certain the 1st Vt Artillery is the largest Regt. in U.S. Service & as well drilled & appointed as any & it don't seem as though they would keep us loafing around here doing garrison duty for another year when men are needed so much in other quarters. We will probably not be paid before the 15th March Uncle Chase [Salmon Chase, Secretary of U.S. Treasury] has got through printing greenbacks to pay the boys with. I wish you would send me that box of H. pills I left in the cupboard – a 3 ct stamp will bring them through. I Don't appear to think of much to say to day. I will not seal this till after the mail – hoping to find a letter from some one in it. After the mail & nary a letter.

Well I don't believe I will send any more of my Penmanship through the country till I hear from some one if it is not in ten years & If anyone thinks enough of me to enquire – just give them half a dollar & tell them that I remember them in my dreams.

Now Don't Write
G.O. French
Ord. Sergt – Bat C.

Fort Stevens D.C. Feb. 8th/64

Folks at Home

Yours of the 4th was received yesterday. I had begun to think that you never was going to write me. You say you did not want to give me credit for the pencil marks & yet, I had much rather write a letter in ordinary times than to write another, under the same circumstances as that was written.

Geo. Ross got here last night about 7 – staid all night & left for B’y – Station this morning. Pvt. George W. Ross of Castleton, Co, B, 2nd Vermont Infantry. He had been home on reenlistment furlough.] I got the pills all right. As to going to see Grandma – I would like to see her firstrate. But I don’t exactly like the way the rest of them have used me. That is one reason. Reason No. 2. T would have used up two precious days out of the 11. Cost at least \$3.00. Reason No. 4. If I had went I would have felt rather small if I did not give Grandma something which I did not feel able to do. Coming from Jersey City to Washington I got in with 107 recruits for this Regiment. Had my ticket at Gov’t rates \$5.65. But saved it Bill Johnson from Brandon went home & took it. He got back last night & gave me \$5.00 for it so my fare from N.Y. to W. cost me 65 cts. Lucky for once in my life Yes I am going to save all I can from this out My pay from Gov’t is \$20. I will have \$8.00 here pr. Month. & I mean to make this do me, if possible.

About Orderly conduct if I had not went pretty straight I never would have had the berth. Franks folks must be foolish to think Tim [Lemuel T. Barber] could hold the position of a non-com’d Officer. Let them whistle. I care nothing for them. If they knew how much I had done for Tims good in the past eighteen months they would have reason to thank me as Tim has done. I don’t think Bill [Barber] will come home – he don’t seem to care much about it. Little Gal I don’t think you are N I C E to talk to me about going to Balls. I don’t think of much to say to night. So Good Bye

Please Direct
G.O. French Ord Sergt
Bat C. 1st Vt Arty. &c

Later 8 P.M.

I have not heard from Bill since yesterday, he was doing well at last accounts. I apprehend no trouble about his ultimate recovery. I am going to see him tomorrow. I shall do all I can for him, it will not be much though for he has as good care as he would at home – nearly. The weather from the 20th Jan to the 4th of Feb. has been uncomfortably warm – like August in Vermont but it is somewhat cooler now. I am going to send Smid my picture as soon as I get around to it. This ink is so thick I can hardly mark with it. I will now close with love to all Write Soon

Ock

Fort Stevens D.C. Feb. 21st [1864]

And how are you all to night? I got your last two days ago & should have answered it before, but for the very reasons that I had no time & nothing to write. In fact I have nothing now, but—as you say—suppose I must write so as in order to get once [in] a while—a letter from home. I am glad to hear that Em got out of her scrape all right. It would seem as though she would always run into such a place, if possible—I am sorry to hear of your fuss with Frank. I did not know that he owed you anything. Yes, I wrote that letter for Tim--& do write for him every few days. Bill is getting better, & expect him back with the Company in a day or two, though of course he will go off duty for a few days. The pin I sent was for Skire A worthless thing at best—one I got in New York coming back. We had an inspection today at Ft Slocum—over 1200 men in line. A splendid Regiment I tell you. I came out for the first time to day in my best rig. Don't I put on airs? I don't see anything of Sam yet. We have had some very cold weather since I wrote you last. Thermometer stood at 8° above zero. Coldest I ever saw it in Dixie. But is quite warm now. I got an awful cold out of it somehow. Talk about backing letters. What do you think of this one? I can think of nothing & so will close with love to all

Oscar

[
Fort Stevens D.C.

Feb. 28 [1864]

Dear Father

Yours of the 25th is just recd—One reason why I had not written was my time is fully occupied—have 10 or 15 minutes before parade—have been to Slocum on Battalion drill to day. Have to go to Ft. Bunker Hill every day—a dist of 6 mi—start just as soon as I can get my guard & details out in the morning viz 8. A.M. & get back at 2 or 2½ P.M. Then a Co report & a company morning Report to make out—Then the mail & passes to the boys &c--&-- 9 P.M. After Roll call and my details are made out for tomorrow, which is Muster day. We start for Ft. Bunker Hill tomorrow at 7 A.M. To be mustered by Brigade. And of course a Drill of 4 hours with no dinner till 2 P.M. I have been in the Capt's Office since parade helping make out the muster rolls for tomorrow—I don't find a moments spare time between day light & 10. P.M.—But I can keep a light in my room all morning if I chose. Don't have to put out my light at “taps” Bill has come back from H hospital—some poor—but nothing to compare with me when I came out at Ft Saratoga 14 mos ago. Yes, Carl sent me 5 stamps but I had written some 4 or 5 to him before I got them, & two since. Say Nothing

I notice that I have turned over a leaf or two in the old Co since I took charge of it. Some things “isn't as they is” & more “wasnt as they is”] The old watch continues to move on harmoniously—unmindful of the rumors about marching orders &c

Capt sent for me & I had to leave just got back—I forgot to tell you that the main spring of my watch broke—had one put in at cost of .75 cts—cheap—I also bought or sent for 3 vols of Caseys Infantry Tactics—complete only standard U.S. Tactics comprising Vol. 1st School of the Soldiers of the Co. Bugle Calls Drum calls—Skirmish drill—Vol II School of Battalion—Vol III Evolutions of a Brigade & Corps & Armies -Cost \$2.50 They contain all that a Gen'l wants to know—every move illustrated by cuts or diagrams “Every Family should have them” (using the language of the Poet) When you hatch up the news to write to me please note it down & then you can remember it. Did I tell you that we had Battalion Drill at Slocum to day—I must close for I am very tired

My love to all the little ones
Write soon
Order [?] Yours Oscar

P.S. [Written over first page] I notice that the 11th Vt has marched & countermarched for over 5000 miles over the Dist of C. & not a word of credit do they get for it from Vermont. I am chest foundered & sprained & foot sore & worn out with such incessant drilling & marching

O.G. French

Fort Stevens D.C. March 6th/64

Yours of the 3d is just received and I answer right away for I like to have prompt answers. And then Elisha has departed? Sorry to hear of it for his was the only friend I had in No. 6—But such is the way of the world. We must all be resigned to our fate. Seems as if Em did get into all sorts of scrapes she is so headstrong and rushes things so. Oh yes Uncle Charles' copper mines are like the ignus fatius always in sight but never attainable—I think he will “copper mine” around till he is an old man—and will then find himself without a copper—let alone the mine. I hope you will have Grandmother come down and live with you during the summer at least she could sleep down stairs when Father was away from home.

We were mustered the 29th Feb and will be paid before the 20th for 4 mos. If Grandma Don't come down to live at our house, I shall send her a little money. About the cars running off they did run off twice coming back, once right in Newark, N.J. took an hour to get on. This at sundown And again about 9 P.M. this side of Bordentown. Took till Midnight to get on again. Nobody hurt. A squad of four leave here for Vt tomorrow.

Pete & John [Privates Patrick and John Donnelly of Castleton, Co. C, 11th Vermont]]—in the number. I shall send the satchel by Pete. You will see I have had it marked—I could not get it marked at all unless it was done in this way. Marking cost me nothing. Stamps are no account between Bill & I. we got it on such things as though we were brothers. Bill Alford played out the 12 before Noon the next day. I don't think he will get a furlough—if he does—it will be at the tail end of the Co—and the chances are that he will get cut off. I have no very suitable paper & so I will write on one of my blank reports. I have one of these to fill out every morning before 12. M. they go to Reg H'dq'r's—Since we got off those Rolls I don't have quite so much to do—but am busy. An Ord Sgt does more work for less pay than any man in the Army. I shall send home a woolen shirt—all torn to pieces. I wrote to Uncle John about a pair of bootees. for Pete to bring to me when he comes. I will send the am't immediately after payday—Directly to him—If Smid will go after them, I will be his Uncle for 90 days. I am thankful for Mothers & Ellas letters & hope they will continue to write.

I will now bid you
Good Night
From—Oscar

Fort Stevens, D.C. March 18th 1864

Yours of the 14th is at hand—I had begun to think that you had forgotten me—or—at least was never going to write me again. I have little or no news to write. We were paid off on the 14th inst. for four months. But I don't suppose that you will get the \$48.00 till after six weeks—or two months. I want to ask you what you think about my breaking my Gov't allotment? The Pay Master gave the boys checks for their money and in that way the folks will get it a month earlier than they would otherwise. I shall not have the money to spare Uncle John for the shoes—You must try and pay him some how. I found quite a number of little debts to pay and beside if I should send it to him, I might have to send for money—soon—I suppose you have seen the old satchel, ere this. I sent home one of my woollen shirts—all torn up--& two magazines to the girls. Some that Miss Jewett from Foxboro--sent me.

Am glad to hear so good a report about the woodpile—so much better to get it up in the winter than to wait till Summer & sled it up. Farwell fashion Yes. Pete & John [Donnelly] are good soldiers you think they are good looking, but the 1st Vt Artillery is composed of such men principally Best Regiment ever left Vermont by all odds. I had a pass to the city yesterday, got another book, Patten's Light Artillery Drill I went in & all over the Senate Chamber—spent a couple of hours hearing the Hon. Senators discuss their various bills. Of course Sis Al [sister Alice] must go to the Sem [Seminary at Castleton] during the coming Summer. For “Nell must be a Lady” – Perhaps Lutheria could be prevailed upon to go & then the two girls would be company for each other—we will see that she is ragged up so that she need not be afraid to go—on that score at all. Go to School, Sister and be nice about it. When you see Maje Wood [Myron Wood] you will see a Soldier in every sense of the word. Maje & I are chums. Tell me how you like the way the old valise is marked with my name

Tim carries sail about O.K. Don't think Bill will be at home by the 10th—But will do all I can for him, to help him to a furlough. You say, you expect we will move. Cant see the move. all the hopes I have is that as old U.S.G. [U.S. Grant] is in command, that he will rush things in every direction. I don't think of much to write. You see I am very prompt to answer your letter. Please be equally so in answering mine. Regards to all enquiring friends. Oh No Mother I did not mean to come back on Em or find any fault with her. Not a bit—Nor did I wish to hold up to view any of her “peculiarities” as you term it. I am very sorry she should hurt her foot.

Again Good Night

Oscar

Hdqrs 1st Battalion
1st Artillery Fort Stevens

April 7 [1864]

Dear father and all

Yours is at hand. I am well at present and hope to be so for more than ever there is a prospect of our going to the front. We are going into the old 6th Corps under Sedgwick. [Maj. Gen. John Sedgwick] We commenced to drill to day with knapsacks to accustom to it. Let us hope that we may go. Cant think of no more to write a present that [you] would care to hear – Bill and [piece of page torn out] boys are well. Maj'r will be home [piece of page torn out] his furlough has gone in. have been to Fort Bunker Hill today on a court martial. Write me soon & write all you can. Hurrah for the 6th Corps.

G. O. French

[undated and written on back of letter in pencil]

The boots did not fit and I sold them and sent \$ for another pair. Please get them ready for Maj'r to bring. The Col. Has bet 5 gals. Of rum with – or offered to bet with any one that we will go. Our Sert., 1st Lieut. Has got his things all packed for a start. We are to go into the Sixth Corps Artillery Reserve. We are not to have any siege train. Gen. Sedgwick applied for us and said that Vt. troops were at a premium in the Army of the Potomac.

More troops have passed through Wash. During the past month than any like period of time since the war. Now don't be sceart. We may not go. If we do I will write often and send home some things. Bill, Tim and I have a barrel all ready. I will bid you good night, Oc.

Fort Stevens Ap 16th 1864

Dear Father

You will see by the above that we are still at Stevens. The boys are all well and prospering finely. I'll tell you what I want, need, and must have i.e. \$50. just as soon as you can send it. I am not at liberty to night to give the reason why I want it. Any more than this. A little learning is a dangerous thing, just so with promotion, a little very dangerous. Don't fail to send it immediately by mail, a check Payable to my order. Tim's furlough came to night—approved—Bill [Barber] and Nates [Bliss] don't seem to come for some reason—as yet unexplained, I shall also send a note by Tim, so in that case this should not arrive as soon as he. You would know what I wanted. I may not want to spend it. If I don't, will send it back all right. I have nothing to write worth the trouble, got a letter to day from Aunt Ell, all well I suppose you have seen Maje Wood. I paid Uncle John for the gaiters (second pair) Our drills with knapsacks still continue. I had to stop writing till this morning. Have concluded not to send any word by Tim. I am expecting a letter from you every day. I suppose Em's school is out. Bill got a letter from her the other day. Bill says the reason why he don't write to his folks is because they don't write to him. Don't think of any more and must stop.

Write soon
G.O. French

Fort Stevens D.C. Ap 28th 1864

Dear Father

Yours of the 24th is before me with contents &c all right: Yes, I did think some of going into a colored Regt. and I am confident could pass the board and get a Capt's commission—\$1500. You say it is a will-o-the-wisp scheme. I don't think so exactly. But everything goes against me. The Lt. Col. Found out I was going and sent for me to come to his office. He talked to me like a father, as much as an hour—Told me my chances for promotion in this Regt were too good to throw away. Well he talked to me so much, and promised me that the Regt would move that I finally told him that I would wait and see what turned up. I don't think that I shall use the money this time, but am very thankful for the prompt manner in which you sent it. I can keep it till next payday, and then send it home. Don't you suppose that Willard would give me credit for it if I should send it back just as it is? Let me know next time. Tim got transportation from W. and back to be taken from his pay, on the next muster roll. Well I was 20 the day that you sent the money, and weighed 180 with my blouse on. I think we will move in time to participate in the Summer Campaign. They are bringing in the Vt R. Corps to take our place in garrison. Berry's Old Corps—the 9th passed by Ft Lincoln the other day. This Corps is composed of 50,000 Veteran troops in the best condition, they were from 7 a.m. till 4 P.M. in one continual stream, passing by. Major Wood brought me the shoes. I sold the others for \$5.50 and sent \$4.00 to Uncle John. So you see I was a case and a half ahead on the two trades. But you need not tell Uncle J. We had Brigade drill to day at Fort Bunker Hill. We left here at 8½ A.M. and got back at 3 P.M. without dinners, having been on the march all the time since leaving. They may talk of this Regts idleness but I tell you we have marched and countermarched for more than a thousand miles, over the Dist and Md. Let them talk. I'll bet we will make a show when we do take the field. Vermont may blow about this Regt, but they would like to see us in the thickest of the fight—So as we earn our money. Oh these unselfish Vermonters. But we are as reckless of our lives as they can possibly be for we know if we fall it will be in the sacred cause of Liberty. And we are bound to fight it out as long as a man is left, or a piece of a man. Vermonters may croak, but let them come, and fall in with us. And give us a practical Illustration of their great self sacrificing spirit. I am glad you did not send Em's money. I want none of it. She has all the work for her money. Or enough to use it up. I send you some pictures. They cost me nothing—Seems to me you do not write very often. Tell Alice to be a good girl, and if she can dress with any show with the rest [vest?] to let me know.

Ever Yrs Oscar

Fort Stevens D.C. May 8th [1864]
Hdqrs 1st Battalion 1st VT Arty

Yours of the 5th is before me & read with pleasure – Was glad to hear so good an account of all the people of No 6. Don't know how I can find words to express my love for all the people around about Castleton. Glad to know that Sis &c is going to school. Hope she will continue to do so. I've arrived here all right after a few days. I wrote home for Tim. All he said was that he had a "good time" But I guess that he did not have so good time as he anticipated. O – How hot! For three days past the sun has been enough to kill a fellow Thermometer 100° in the shade. And yesterday we had a Brigade drill at Ft Bunker Hill. I had the honor of commanding the color company. 1st Battalion 2nd Division. Beside the march back (5 miles) We had 4 hours drill. Left here at 8 in the A.M. Got back at 2½ P.M. Three of our boys (from our co) fell out with sun stroke. And this without knapsacks Oh it was awful – But the Ord Sergt & I did not fall out. No, nary time. I got a line from Will yesterday shall send that check home without writing my name on the back. It is expected that we will leave here this week – Or in two weeks at all events. They are having awful times for the advance over the Rapidan So not Everything as Dickens says "Is staring hot. I shall send home 4 woolen blankets, my new coat & pants, a pair of army pants – that red shirt, & copies Infty tactics 1 or 2 Arty tactics and other articles too numerous to mention Shall send them per Express C.O.D. style . shall get a receipt & send it to you – may send my overcoat . would if the Colonel would let me – for I never can carry it on a march. Was very much delighted to get Em's letter would answer it if I had time, but as it is you must excuse me and take the will for the [illegible] guess this is some scratching. Well must close Good night

G.O. French Ord. Sergt Bat C

Camp of the 1st Vt Arty On the Rappahannock near Fredericksburg, Va.
May 14th [should be 15th] 1864

Dear Friends at Home

The morning of the 13th we left Ft Stevens at daylight. Formed the Regt on the old familiar drill ground near Fort Bunker Hill for the last time and marched to the wharf at Washington. Took the steamer and at 6 o'clock P.M. we landed at Belles Plains on the lower Potomac, & 70 miles from Wash. Marched out onto a hill and camped this morning took 5 days rations and camped. have marched all day without dinner & having just got my tent pitched about a mile from Fredericksburg. It has rained all the time since we left and the roads are in an awful condition, I saw Gid Hawkins at Bell Plains. He was slightly wounded. [Pvt. Gideon Hawkins of Castleton in Co. B, 2nd Vermont Infantry was wounded May 5, 1864] Noah Peak was killed in the first days fight [Pvt. Noah Peck of Castleton in Co. C, 2nd Vermont Infantry was killed in action May 5, 1864]

Grant has been fighting 7 days. We are 8 or ten miles from the army. Shall go out there in the words in fold illegible] I can get a chance to send this home. Will try and find a Sanitary wagon in the morning. I sent home a barrel by express one of the two blankets—is for Frank and the other with things [words in fold illegible] for Chan. The rubber blanket and all in it is mine. All the boots are mine. Also the four wool blanket at the top [words in fold are illegible] ten thousand prisoners going to the rear under guard - the filthiest and meanest set of fellows you can imagine. We expect to see a fight before tomorrow night. I will do my best if we do. We are 1700 bayonets strong today. But I notice that one year from today and will not count so much. I must close. All the boys are well.

Love to all
Yours, Oscar

Camp of the 1st Vt Arty Co C Near Spotsylvania, Va. May 17th 1864

Again I am down to write a few lines home—I wrote you last from F-g. [Fredericksburg] Va Date 14th should have been 15th. Next morning the Regt. crossed the Rappahannock on a pontoon bridge and marched through F— out on Chancellorsville plank road filed off thru through the Wilderness. This is indeed a wilderness and the scene of the late desperate fight the most desperate since the war. The old Brigade is awfully cut up. It went in with 2700 and came out with 700 having lost two thousand men in killed, wounded & missing the greater proportion of them are slightly wounded Gid [Pvt. Gideon Hawkins], Geo Ross [Pvt. George W. Ross of Castleton in Co. B, 2nd Vermont Infantry wounded May 5, 1864] & Jasper [Sgt. Jasper A. Benedict of Castleton in Co. B, 2nd Vermont Infantry wounded May 6, 1864]. Chub Durham was killed. [Pvt. Thomas P. Durham of Castleton in Co. B, 2nd Vermont Infantry killed in action May 12, 1864] John Freelove is missing. Sgt. John A. Freelove of Castleton in Co. B, 2nd Vermont Infantry was captured May 10, 1864. He escaped September 14, 1864, and was discharged October 27, 1864] They fought nine days & were up as many nights without rest. I don't suppose I can get any mail through either way till the 15th of June. We are Brigaded with the old Vt Brigade. They were glad to see us come—1700 bayonets. They said “Well boys, we need you” We have been lying in line of battle for two days—we can see the Johnnys over the river in a clearing. Our skirmishers are at work, firing slowly, sullenly. The boys made a charge on an old secesh today, & brought off everything they could carry. Grant has been pushing them steady along ever since the opening of the campaign The army is confident of success I think we will be in Richmond before the 4th of July.

May 19th

I left this on account of marching orders. We left camp – marched all night fought all the next formed line and marched here where we arrived at 9 last night. This morning we were routed up at three to come out here – about a mile from where we camped last night. We can see the Johnnys from where we are. Only five [wounded] of our company – W. Alford in the left leg. [Pvt. William H. Alford of Castleton wounded May 18, 1864] Jake Hall in side. [Wagoner Jacob P. Hall of Hubbardton wounded May 18, 1864]. Lewis Pelkey, E. N. Streeter, John Tate. Tate loses his left arm. The others are not seriously wounded. [Pvt. Lewis Pelkey of Fairhaven, Pvt. Elbridge N. Streeter of Dorset and Pvt. John Tate of Glover were all wounded May 18, 1864] [words lost in fold] Not a man flinched. Col. Warner was wounded in the back of the neck. Lieut. Glazier Battalion Adj. Left arm cut clean off. Both [words lost in fold] killed one of the 2nd – 6 killed. My face and left ear full of mud. All the boys are well. We expect a great battle to night or tomorrow. We drove them every where. I shall write often. [words lost in fold]

Yours,
Oscar

Camp Near Cold Harbor, Va. June 7th

Dear Brother Will

Yours was received yesterday and read with pleasure. You said you could not read my last, and I don't know as I can write so that you will be able to read it this time. You wanted me to give an account of my adventures. Well here goes—on the 12th of May at daylight we left Fort Stevens and at dark the same night landed at Bell Plains on the Potomac Cr'k 5 miles below Aquia Cr'k camping for the night

The next morning we took up the line of march for Fredericksburg where we arrived at night & pitched our little tents on the banks of the Rappahannock, next morning passing through F & out on the famous plank road toward Chancellorsville. We passed the old Battle fields--so famous in the history of the war—Night at 9 oclock we camped in a little clearing in the Wilderness & the next morning joined the old Vt. Brigade To which we are attached. We lay in line of Battle doing picket duty &c – till the night of the 17th when at 9 oclock The whole 6th Corps was under way at daylight – in the morning. We arrived on the old Battle ground of the week before the ground was strewn with dead men who were turned so black in the burning sun – that our boys thought – at first they were darkies – They had lain there 6 days – Tired – Exhausted – after marching all night with out breakfast – or rest, we “went in.” The Ball opened by a terrible artillery fire. The boys in the old Brigade – said, the most murderous they ever saw. We advanced from one rifle pit to another, till at ten we were in the fourth line & only about 800 yds from the Rebel Battery in the woods. I ran some very close chances – men falling on either side – in front & rear – but I came out all right – at noon we were withdrawn – Bill Alfred was wounded in this battle – I saw him taken off. Have not heard from him since. I could not begin to tell you truthfully what we have been through on this campaign. We have marched day & night = Turned Lee's right flank twice – Once on the North Anna River, skirmished with him all the way – whipped him at all points – Driven him into the Defences of Richmond, & Now. The siege of R's is begun. Our Regiment has been on the extreme from since May 31st. yesterday we were within 400 yds of the Rebel Works, Exposed to shell & sharp shooters all the time. Every night we work Sapping & throwing up approaches – nearer & nearer each time. We were relieved this morning & came to the rear – where we can take off our cartridge boxes & pitch tents, & wash our faces & cloth. We have been under fire 7 days – On the 1st of June we marched from near Mechanicsville & fought all the afternoon.

Our Regt has lost about 250, killed, wounded & missing, since we left Washington. Co. C killed – 1, wounded – 10 missing – 3 – after we crossed the Pamunkey our rations gave out & we were hungry for two days. I am worn down & poor & thin so are all the boys But I am well & I hope we won't have such long marches – anymore – You must write to me more often & big letters. I don't know as you can read this if you cant let Smid read it for you. I don't believe I can write unless you read them. It strikes me it would not be a very paying business. My Love to all the Folks – Our Folks & write soon Bro Oc

On the Chickamoniny 7 miles from Richmond

Affectionately Oscar
Will E. French

[on last page]
Vermont Brigade
Second Division
Sixth Army Corps

Camp on the Chickahominy
Near Cold Harbor June
10th

Dear friends

Although I have not heard from home in a long time yet I will write for I have a few moments to spare & I know you will be anxious to hear from me. You see I have been fortunate enough to secure a little ink to write with. It is a very pleasant day. But all around is a scene of desolation. In fact desolation the most perfect follows our path. I got a line from Em & one from Will. I have answered both.. You don't know how much good a letter does a fellow down here. A good long letter full of every little incident that transpires in the much thought of "Home Circle" that appear trivial to you, Have a great importance to me so far away from home & all its little comforts. I tell you we have done more than I thought it possible for men to do We have marched day & night on short rations and after we crossed the Pamunkey, we were without for three days, our boys [ravaged] the Country for forage We eat corn-- wheat, & got but very little of that. On the 1st inst. we marched 15 miles before noon --- went on the field fought till dark, & then built breast work all night. The boys were so faint they could not stand, (pen don't work very well), But we have lived it through & now are down before Richmond with an immense army, & the Rebel Capital must fall. You must send me a few stamps the next [time] you write. This can be had here by paying 5cts for them. Also send me a dollar green back to get paper & c with. we shall be mustered the 30th & if possible, I am going to put \$100 to my credit for these 4 months. I believe I have earned it twice over, Gid will start for home this 28th & I shall send my watch by him. It is sadly out of repair, but would run if the face were only tightened. Capt Goodrich has gone back sick Also John D [Corp. John Donnelly of Castleton] All the rest of the No C boys are well, except perhaps some of them have this Chickahominy Diarrhoea. I advise you to get Harpers Weekly of the 11th June. All the pictures about the Army of the Potomac are very good— We fought in that terrible "Salient" on the 18th June-- Dead men were there who had been there 7 days-- Some of our boys thought they were darkies. Near that solitary tree on the right of the picture Lt Glazier lost his arm [First Lt. N. Newton Glazier of Stratton in Co. A, 11th Vermont Infantry] & Col Warner was wounded Not 20 feet from me— , The Johnnys are shelling us out on the right, & our Batteries are giving them three for one Don't fail to write often

My love to all
Oscar

P.S.

Cant you send me something to read once in a while? There is a great dearth of reading matter, & when in camp, a fellow wants to do something to drive away dull care – Any old paper will be new to us – I mean to get hold of Reb paper to send you – Have seen plenty of them but could get possession of none – I hear there is going to be another draft in Vt. Well they cant draft me – as I am "in

out of the Draft”.

Cha's. City C. H.
Va June 15th [1864]

Dear Friends

Gid [Hawkins] says he will start for home tomorrow & I embrace the opportunity to send my watch & a picture. The watch I give to Frank [Smid] on the condition that he repairs it & is a good boy. It is all to pieces—from laying on the ground But it came so from having the face get loose & things all came off.

The picture was taken from a house By one of our boys & gives a fair specimen of secesh beauty. Keep it till I come home—I am well--& stand the siege firstrate. You will hear from Gid. Now we left the trenches in front of Richmond & came down here marching 24 hours. Gen. Grant is a brick. I want you should have Gid stay with you a week & tell you all about this campaign—I would give. All the boys from No. 6 are well Except Tim who is down at the mouth, but I hope nothing serious. I shall do all in my power to help him. But it is a bad place for a fellow to be sick. Why don't some of you to write. I have only had two letters since we left W. & got both of them on the 30th of May. I wrote from Spotsylvania, Mechanicsville & two or three times beside. Don't fail to write—as often as you can. I got letters from Em & Will & answered both of them. We are near Harrison's Landing. Have passed over some of McClellan's old Battle Fields. We expect to cross the Ja's [James] River to night or in the morning. I don't think of more to say Only Mother must not worry about me. For I am all right & feel thankful for such good health & keeping the balls away from us so far. I will bid you Good night

Camp on the James River 16 June [1864] 4 P.M.

We moved up here last night and are throwing up a strong line of rifle pits. I suppose City Point opposite us is to be the new base of supplies of the Army of the Potomac. I have just returned from a good swim in the James. The River is full of gun boats & transports. I have just learned that Ock. Babbitt [Pvt. Oscar Babbitt of Castleton, Co. I, 5th Vermont Infantry Regiment] was wounded through the right thigh in the Battle of Cold Harbor on the 3rd of June. But I learned that his wound was not considered dangerous. Capt. Goodrich left us on the 1st June for Washington—Chronic Diarrhea which has hung around him ever since we came out. He could not stand the “soldiers milk” i.e. mud and water of the peninsula. I learned that the old second [Second Vermont Infantry Regiment] will not start for home till Monday. I send you a very convenient corkscrew—which was picked up on the Field of Cold Harbor.

On the 10th of May our Surgeon reported 1733 men – Present for duty. Today he only reports 1325. We have lost heavily since this campaign commenced. But the 11th Vt holds its head as high as any Regt from the State. We have earned a good name – On the 20th of May – when the Army was on the its first flank movement. The Johnnys smelling a rat charged our first line of breastwork with four Brigades – in three lines of Battle – our pickets repulsed them three times & some of the prisoners we took said they thought the Vt. boys fit some. But the 2nd Brigade as they call us fought as they never saw men fight before – our pickets fired 60 rounds – before they fell back. Well I must cook supper & eat it.

Before Petersburg June 18th

I cooked supper Bolted my tack [hardtack] and swallowed my coffee “Fell in” & marched for 20 hours – We arrived just here last night. After another forced march – The outer defences of P. are ours & the city. [Sentence too faded to read] Our forces have not lost very heavily in this battle. We were about 24 hours ahead of the Johnnies. A month ago today we were in the Wilderness. [Sentence too faded to read] Gid expected to start for home Monday. I write Thursday be [Rest of sentence too faded to read] I don't see what [illegible] of all the letters I have written home. I am in good health & spirits. But poor as a crow from such long marches. All the boys are well. [illegible]. Write often. Oscar

June 24th 1864

I am well – and alive – thank Providence. We have had an awful time. Lieut Sherman & Sergt Peter Donnelly are killed. Co. C. has 6 wounded – three missing among them Bill [Barber] send me \$50 - \$10. when you get this & \$10 once in five days & - till it all comes – I am going to get a commission, Expect it in a week – it is dark, & I must close Mark. Russell – Tim & all the 6 boys are well

Direct yours to 2nd Brig 2nd Div 6th A.C.

Love to all
Oscar

Camp in the field Near Petersburg, Va
June 26th 1864

Folks at Home,

Yours of the 22nd has just arrived and a good long letter it was. Done me good to read it. Also got one from Em which I shall answer as soon as I can get time. I dropped you a word two days ago just at night after we came in out of the woods where we got so terribly cut up. I think I told you our Regt lost over 5 hundred. But I have learned that 400. would cover our losses on that bloody night. Co. C. lost as follows, Killed Lt. Sherman [Second. Lt. Merritt H. Sherman of Castleton killed June 23]. P Donnelly [Sgt. Peter Donnelly of Castleton killed June 23]. Wounded Wm Lamb [Corp. William Lamb of Poultney wounded June 23], C.O. Foster [Pvt. Calvin O. Foster of Whiting wounded June 23 and died July 29, 1864], Jas. Carlisle (since died) [Pvt. James Carlisle of Orwell wounded June 23 and died June 25, 1864], Geo. Kilborn [Pvt. George Kilborn of Middletown wounded June 23 and died July 9, 1864], W.C. Hawkins [Pvt. William C. Hawkins of Fairhaven wounded June 23 died July 14, 1864] & F. Farwell [Pvt. Francis M. Farwell of Wallingford wounded June 23 and died August 24, 1864] missing. W. H. Barber [Pvt. William H. barber of Castleton taken prisoner June 23 and died at Andersonville, Ga., November 16, 1864], A. J. Benson [Pvt. Allen J. Benson of Peru taken prisoner June 23 and died at Andersonville, Ga., August 21, 1864], M. A. Monroe Pvt. Martin A, Monroe of Poultney taken prisoner June 23 and paroled April 28, 1865], Geo. A Dawson [Pvt. George A. Dawson form Wallingford taken prisoner June 23 and died in millen, Ga., October 19, 1864]. These last are supposed to be prisoners. It was so many Vermonters ever taken was this. The 69th Penn. Vols. On the right gave way and the Johnnies came in on our right flank & poured in a terrible fire while their lines in front ceased firing. And said "Come in you Yankee sons of bitches." Our boys said "Cant see it" & dropped on the ground. A volley from front came tearing in. our boys rising up fired with the muzzles of their guns not two feet from the breasts of the advancing foe & fled over powered, But rallied on the support, charged through the woods for half a mile took the ground & held it. Next morning we found the body of poor Peter [Donnelly] of Castleton killed at Weldon Railroad 23 June 1864], in the woods and buried him by the side of a gigantic pine tree. The 4th Vt is most all taken prisoners. There is not as many men in the old Brigade to day as there were in the 11th Vt when we left the defences of W. I wrote you something about my commission. I have since been told it is on the way. I expect it as soon as the 4th. I expect to be assigned to Bat E But shall try to stay with the old boys if possible. My pay will be \$105 per month & twill cost me something to live for you see an officer does not draw rations &c from Gov't but has to subsist entirely from the Commissary Dept. I am very anxious about Bill. [Oscar's dear friend, William H. Barber, who was captured at Weldon Railroad 23 June 23] But we have searched the pines through and through & can find nothing of him. Think that in the confusion & darkness that he was taken prisoner. Indeed I am confident such is the case for he was last seen near the gap in our lines where the cowardly Dutchmen broke & ran. Those confounded Dutchmen broke at Cold Harbor & our Brigade was awfully cut up in consequence. there has been no fighting of consequence in our front for two days. But there has been fighting on our right, and there is no time,

day or night, but we hear the roar of cannon or crash of musketry. I am very sorry to hear of Mother's sickness. I wish you could hire a good girl & give a rest if possible. I am also glad to hear Smid is a good boy. He must do everything that he can to help around the house, & make it easy for Mother & Alice. The has not made its appearance. We have laid in camp for 48 hours. What is going to happen. We have actually washed our faces & hands. We have plenty to eat & my health is good, first rate, so is Tim. Tim is cook & does not have to go in can stay three miles in rear lucky dog. This is the last sheet of paper – dirty enough too.

Write soon
Oscar

Enclosed is a letter for Bill. I am ordered to open all uncalled for mail & if of value – to return them. I have not read this, there are 6 stamps in it. I send a piece of [illegible], picked up in the entrenchments in front of Petersburg. We are now 4 miles S. west of P—came here on the night of the 21st crossing the P & Norfolk R.R. through New Market & around to the left of the army. We are two miles East of the P & Weldon R.R. which our Division took & burnt for some miles. Report is that a large body of Rebs are moving South, on our left flank. Our troops too, are swinging around toward the left. The 3d Division 6th C is on our left, as also the Second Corps I don't know what all this is to amount to. We can not take their lines by charging. The only way to do it is to siege them out or bring them to a fair field fight which they never will do. I am very lonesome thinking of Bill. As we were constant friends & companions. But I think for certain that He is a prisoner, and not wounded—I have enquired of every man that was near his end of the Company. And all agree in that the last seen of him, he was all right, and just after a squad of Johnnies came in on his right—and I am confident he was taken. But the uncertainty as to his fate is painful. I wrote to Uncle C. [Chauncey L. Barber – Bill's father] about it but it was dark and I was awful tired & some excited. It has been hot enough to roast a fellow for ten days – But a light shower has just passed over, cooling the air a little. There has been very little firing to day. I will close for to night.

Camp Near Petersburg, Va

July 6th / 64

Having a few moments this morning, I thought I would improve them by writing home. Yours containing \$10 was recd yesterday. Am very much obliged for the prompt way in which it was sent. Though I have not yet had occasion to use it. And don't know as I shall. I am well at present. We moved from the Church where I wrote you before, back to a pine forest two miles from here on the 2nd. And this morning we just moved up here relieving the 3d Division. Our movement in the P. & W.R.R. [Petersburg & Weldon Railroad] on the 23d was another thing altogether, from our move on Reams (I wrote you River) Station which is 6 or more miles further South. Our move to Reams Station was to support Wilsons Div of Cavalry, which had gone on beyond. But as we came to the town, & advanced in three lines of Battle. The Rebs skedaddled to the no one knows where—and left us in peacable possession of the town Depot &c Papers say the R.R. was “strap iron on wooden rails” No such thing. It was a fancy road in first best repair, and composed of “Extension” rails, something I never saw in Vermont. But we destroyed it pretty effectually. A package came for Bill. There was in it 12 sheets of paper, 12 envelopes, 1 lead pencil, 1 paper pin, 1 do needles, 1 bunch black linen thread. I wanted all these, so I wrote to Uncle that I would have you settle for them, as it would cost 27 cts more, to send them back, and perhaps double postage if I sent them without stamps, which of course I must do. So I kept them You say we have not got P very well, we don't want it & could not hold it, should we get it. For the Johnnys hold the heights on the West side. But we have the Heights on the East side, and our 30 Pd Parrotts & Mortars Burn away at them continually, slowly. Have set it on fire a no. of times. The place is good for nothing to them. Except to stay in. Same as the impenetrable Wilderness or the fortresses of Spotsylvania. As to being “out generalled” or coming near “losing his army”. You must talk that to some one beside me. All we want is a fair show & we would go through them like smoke. Ask Gid what he thinks about being annihilated. When we crossed the James &c. I wrote to Ed Burns [Peter Donnelly's stepfather] and Uncle C. [Chauncey Barber, Bill's father] on the 24th June. As soon as I could after we Came out. I was pretty well used up and did not feel like writing. Besides it was dark, when I wrote. But I told them all I could about the boys. Tim & I are well. I cannot think of more this time. Expect the mail will go out every minute and must close.

Don't fail to write often & soon – Ock

Love to all Oscar

Camp Near Petersburg Va

8th July 1864

My Dear Father

Your very kind letter of the 3d is just at hand and contents all safe. Don't send any more till I write for it. Your letter found me well, and enjoying myself, as well as a tired soldier could, resting in camp. We are now on the same ground where were the 24th June & two miles from the Pines where I wrote to Em. I wrote you at Oak Grove Church, where we lay for 24 hours after our raid down to the Station. I have seen several accounts of it in the papers, but none right. I wrote you concerning the stamps & C Bundle & all. I am very sorry that Will felt bad about the watch. I thought of him, and then thought that Will is much older than Frank [Smid] and would not think so much of a trinket as the boy would. Beside he earns some money & could buy a watch. And again thought twould encourage Smid to take hold & help the others—You ask what I intend to do with the money—Use it economical—Buy a sword &c if my document comes But they may withhold the papers – (as our Regt is so small now) for some time. I am pretty well contented here—The most fault I find is the unpleasant sound of various dense bodies, moving through the air with great velocity. But I trust I shall come through all right. Thought I had answered it. Well, we are serving as Infantry, in every respect. But I think that our Artillery Drill will be the means of getting us into Fortifications the coming Winter. Our Col. Has not returned. You know he [Col J James M. Warner] was wounded at Spottsylvania on the 18th [May] We all want him back, our Lt. Col resigned and Major Flemming was gobbled up on the 23d June. They are firing all the time. Night and Day—up in front of P. But to day the cannonading broke out into thunder for a couple of hours or so and now only the dull, regular, firing is heard—Everything is quiet in front of the 6th Corps to day. I am very glad to hear Mother is getting better, slowly, though it is. You must get a girl if possible, and let Mother keep entirely still, and I am confident she would soon recover entirely. It is awful dusty. Not a particle of rain for a long time. Hope it will rain just a little to cool the air and not make it muddy. Yes I shall try and write often when we are in camp, as at present. But I have an awful sight to do Capt. is in Vermont, Lewis [Second Lt. Judson A. Lewis of Poultney] on Detached Service Sherman Dead--& only Tucker [First Lt. Silas B. Tucker of Northfield]—Meeker & I to run the institution. I have been at work all day on the Muster Rolls and am some tired. We have no conveniences to run an Office in the field. It is most dark, and, my time is limited. Thanks to Little Sister for writing & she can rest assured that her little letter was read with much interest and pleasure. Why Don't Smid Write? I will bid you

Good Night Oscar

City Point Va July 10th 1864

Folks at home –

The agent of the U.S.C.C. [United States Christian Commission] has just given me this sheet of paper with envelope—so I will write. Our Div. broke camp 6 miles south of Petersburg at 12 o'clock P. M. and marched without once stopping to rest till this morning just as the Sun appeared – we came in sight of the broad James [River] once more—We will take the boat this P.M. for some say the Defences of W. [Washington] and some with a better show of probability—Another campaign in Penn. & Md. Only the 6th troops has started on this trip. The 2nd Corps took our places and we have men enough left to take care of Petersburg. We came 18 miles last night. But we expect that we will see some awful marches in the coming campaign. The rebels massed 15,000 troops and charged on a new Fort that our fellows (Don't know the Corps) were building. And we concentrated on them . the fire from 60 pieces of artillery. Some of them of heavy caliber. And literally as my informant said, "Piled them in haystacks." Such a complete & bloody a repulse was never heard of – We came by P. in the night and the continual, regular firing, was going on—some of the shell came unpleasantly near with a painfully familiar sound. As they seemed to enquire "which one" which one I saw the first train of cars to day have seen in a long time (Insertion) [?] Were on the City Point & P.K.R. [or P.R.R.] which we run up within two miles of the city [?]. Some big siege mortars went out to day. Guess the Johnnies, will get some "Dutch ovens"—The James looks like New York Harbor—So full of shipping of every kind almost. My health continues to be good. For which I try to be thankful. Weather is awful dry and warm. And the dust is 10 inches deep. I will now close—I shall write frequently, give my regards to Enquiring Friends

Every Yours, Oscar

Camp Near Poolersville Md

July 15th 1864

Our Folks—

Having a few moments this pleasant morning I will write just a few words to let you know how fares the 6th Corps. Our Regt embarked on board the Steamer S.R. Spaulding on the night of the 10th at 4 P.M. And at 8 in the morning of the 12th landed at Washington Just two mos. to an hour from the time we embarked for Belle Plains— Found the Rebs half a mile in front of Fort Stevens. The 100 day men in the fort could not hit the broad side of a ten acre lot. They used Canister & grape at 2000 yds. and at 500, used solid shot!! Confounded lunk heads. We went right past our old Fort. & went directly on the skirmish line. During the night of the 12th they backed off. And at four on the afternoon of the 13th our Division was off: marched for 24 hours with only one stop, for coffee. Last night arrived on this ground. Cavalry drove them off just an hour before, and are now 8 A.M. lying here—but expect to leave soon. Don't know where for. Don't know whether the Johnnys are down the river or not. If Hunter is on the other side as reported, we shall gobble some of them. Have taken a good many as it is & they had to leave a good many cattle, which are now running around in the lots. Expect the third Vt. will start for home to day. Did you ever see how they shove this Corps around? One day, we are 6 miles south of Petersburg, and, Presto! The whole Corps with 48 Pieces of Arty. is at Poolesville Md. in four days. Having marched 60 miles & rode 38 miles by steamer & been 24 hours engaged on the skirmish line—The Johnnys whom we took said they thought they were fighting militia till we came on the 12th and then they knew that some body were there beside green horns. They thought it very wonderful that they should meet the 6th Corps. For said they we left “you uns” at Petersburg in the trenches. The People of Washington were glad to see us come—brought us water &c took our letters to mail, they shouted bully for the 6th Corps – three cheers for the 11th Vermont etc. Boys are all well. Nate Bliss went to Hospital when we landed—hard up, worn out, as poor as a crow, but not dangerous. It is curious how I stand it so well. But I am tougher and browner than an Indian Rumor is we start for Washington to night. Got your last just as we left the District of Columbia. Shall write often.

1 P.M. Have just been out to see a man hung for a Deserter & spy—from the 67th NY Vols. A dismal sight. I thought of John Brown, guess we will go back to Petersburg, July 22. Near Difficult Creek—all well. Been up the Shenandoah Saw Sam at Snickers Gap

Camp on Georgetown Heights DC July 24th [1864]

Dear Father,

Yours of the 8th is just at hand. The first mail in 12 days – We arrived here last night at 2 P.M. I guess that thing is all right. My papers are at Hdqrs. But I have not got them yet. I can get \$40 of Mike O'Brien in 2nd Vt. [Pvt. Michael O'Brien of Poultney in Co. B, 2nd Vermont Infantry Regiment] & shall have you pay him thus saving the risk of sending to both parties. We had a terrible time in Md. & the Loudon & Shenandoah Valleys. We marched, skirmished & picketed almost incessantly for nearly two weeks. The old 6th Corps never was so sorefooted as at the present time. We forded the Potomac once, & the Shenandoah twice and after that marched 35 miles in 18 hours, only stopping once to eat. But we have had no men killed – some tired out & fell into the hands of Moseby's men. We expect to go into Fortifications – Don't know whether we shall or not. They must have some men that are experienced & the citizens of W. [Washington] say that if none but 100 days men are to be left in the forts, they will leave, & stop business. Tim has gone to the Hospital sick. I fear he is threatened with fever. I shall write to Frank [Tim's father, Frank Barber] as soon as possible So I am the only No 6 boy that is left for duty in the Co. And now about Peter – He was shot with a minie ball, which entered his abdomen about 1 inch to the left of his navel - & came out – just to the right side of the spinal column & just below the right hip. He evidently did not suffer much but bled to death quickly. His gun was loaded & capped all ready to meet his foe.

I recd commission last night J. 25th Dated 11 July. You can send my best pants & coat by express right away. We shall into back into Fortification The order came last night But don't know what Cos. will go to what places. However expect to go back to Fort Stevens. I got \$40 of OBrien & gave him an order to go to you for pay. I want you to send me \$40 more in weekly installments of \$10 or in one check to my order as you think best. I also got a letter from Em & Will yesterday. Also one from Uncle Chancey. My health is first rate & I am bound to come out of this alright. Had a good visit with Sam at Snicker's Gap. he was fighting on foot same us. rather worse than Heavy Infy. Well I must close

Love to all
G.O. French
Lt. Co. C Vt

Annapolis Hosp Aug 13, [1864]

Thinking you would be anxious to know how I am getting along, I take the first opportunity to drop you a line. –When I wrote you before, I was most dead, but I am a little better now. I gain strength a little every day. We are very pleasantly situated here, occupy the old Naval school grounds, on a hill overlooking the Chesapeake Bay on one side, and a broad river on the other. It is after dinner & I will try to finish my letter. I saw Capt. Goodrich, he rooms in the building opposite mine. I learn from him that Nate Bliss is dead [Pvt. Nathan G. Bliss, Jr., from Castleton, Co. C, 11th Vermont, died of disease in a U. S. General hospital in Washington, D. C.. His body was sent back to Vermont and he was buried in the Blissville Cemetery in Castleton July 24, 1864] and also Fon Smith of Hortonville [Pvt. Alphonzo F. Smith from Sudbury, Co. C 11th Vermont died August 6, 1864 of disease and was buried Arlington, Va.] Thus the boys go. Nothing ailed either, but fatigue completely worn out, which brought on a fever. Well poor fellows. I can think of nothing to write. The weather is awful hot, & we just keep as cool as possible. It costs me \$1.00 a day here, which will have to come out on the next muster rolls. My washing I hire independent of this—I will now close with love to all –

Oscar

Write soon.