

1861
Camp Smith Oct 11th

Dear Hattie

It is with pleasure that
I seat myself pen in hand for the
purpose of writing you a few lines.

I am enjoying good
health at the present time the rest of the
Glover boys ditto This is truly a great blessing
& I hope these few imperfect lines will find
you enjoying the same blessing. I dont
feel just right about leaving you in the manner
that I did but it hardly seemed possible
for us to do differently under the existing
circumstances Friday we were full of business
all day we had to be inspected by the
Surgeon Dr Skinner of Barton to ascertain
if we were sound and healthy quite a number

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were declared unfit for service some appeared
very much disappointed so much so as to shed
tears We then elected our Officers which
was quite a delicate piece of business to do
& suit all We at last succeeded in electing
the following list of Officers viz Capt
O A Hale 1st Lieut Geo H Phelps
2d Carlos W Dwinell I will not name
all the non commissioned officers Fred M
Kimball is 1 of the Sergeants E H Nye
Alex Davis & myself Corporals from
Glover We did not get away from Barton
untill quite late Friday evening so you see
it was almost impossible for me to visit
you But I trust that the noble disposition
which I know you to be possessed of will
cause you to forgive me There is scarcely
an hour passes but what I think of you
& long to be with you but this we
Know to be impossible at present
But we can converse with each other

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by aid of the pen which is a source

Of great enjoyment to me
Perhaps a short sketch
of our journey from Barton to this
place will be interesting to you We left
Barton Saturday morning at 8 o'clock
We arrived at White River Junction
at noon marched to the Hotel &
took dinner at 2 O'clock we took the
cars for Montpelier we arrived here
at 6 O'clock took supper at
Burnhams Hotel we then marched
to the Fair Ground a distance of half
mile up two or three clay hills made
muddy by recent rains We arrived
at the encampment about 9 O'clock
we there received two blankets each
1 oil cloth & 1 wool blanket we found
87 tents pitched to protect us from
the storm these tents are large enough
to accomodate from 12 to 20 men

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the bottom of each tent is covered with
straw this with our blankets makes a
good place of rest I rest well nights
feel well in good spirits during the
day Our rations though not of the
finest quality consists of good substantial
food such as Beans Bread & Beef
Pork Tea or Coffee with trimmings
my appetite never was better
We have received our uniforms
mostly we have received 2 coats
each 1 over & 1 dress coat 1 hat
our hats are ornamented with a
small piece of brass in front in
the form of a bugle on the
left side with an eagle we
expect the rest of our uniforms
tomorrow It is quite doubtful
about my going to Glover before
leaving for Washington the
Capt has no power to give us
permission to go home some
of the boys are mad about it

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but we must submit to the rules & orders
of military discipline We have some fine boys
in our Co & some that are not so fine
Nearly all the boys that enlisted from the
towns of Glover Albany Barton & Brownington
have signed a pledge thereby pledging
themselves to abstain from
the use of all intoxicating liquors as
a beverage also not to indulge in
the use of profane language this I
think is a fine thing I tent with Glover
boys except two & they are good likely
fellows Before leaving Glover Mr Perkins
gave each of us a Testament & we make
a practice of using them every evening
before retiring to rest We expect to
leave for Washington some time next
week cant tell the day In regard to
me being Corporal it is no great
honor but I shall not have to
stand out on guard this I should

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not like to do I get 22 dolls per month
a private gets but 20 dolls per month
The Regimental Band is full so I shall
have to go to fight for my country

I will now draw this scroll to a close
by wishing you peace and happiness
Hattie please excuses all mistakes for
I have written this on a rudely constructed
table in my tent surrounded by 8 or 10
jolly boys & all the noise & confusion
of the tented field

Yours in haste from
Your affectionate lover Dan Mason

PS. Please write all the news
you can get on receiving this

Direct to Dan Mason
Camp Smith Montpelier
Vermont

Care of Capt O A Hale 6th Regt
of V..V..M then if
I should leave before receiving it it would
be forwarded to Washington

Topics include: organization of the company, journey to camp in Montpelier, issuance of
uniform, camp life, temperance

Transcribed by Gemma Philcox

Washington Oct 25th 1861

Dear Harriet

It is with pleasure that
I seize the pen of correspondence to converse
with the object of my affections for a few
moments though hundreds of miles stretch
between us we can communicate by aid
of the pen this I deem a great privilege
But it would be a much greater one
to converse face to face but this is
impossible.

I am now in the city of
Washington enjoying good health happy as a
fish in high water I have not seen
a sick hour since I enlisted The rest of
the Glover boys ditto Our reg't left
Montpelier Saturday morn Oct 19th 9 oclock
we arrived at Springfield Mass at 10 in

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the evening we were there furnished with a good
supper by citizens of that place free of charge
thanks to them we arrived at New Haven
Conn Sunday morn at 4 oclock we were detained
there two hours at 6 we took the steamboat
Elm City bound for Jersey City I enjoyed
riding on the salt water very much we
sailed up through Long Island Sound
the day was pleasant the water was dotted here
and there with vessels of all shapes and sizes the sea
fowls were flying in every direction the Steam Boats
blew their shrill whistles men and boys were
cheering as we sailed near the shore the ladies
waved their handkerchiefs everyone seemed filled
with excessive joy We sailed through what
is called Hells Gate this is a narrow channel
between New York City & Brooklin we sailed
within a stones throw of each city the shore was lined
with masts & sails I saw some of the most
beautiful farms & houses surrounded by the most
beautiful grooves on Long Island that I ever saw

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The Steamer Elm City is a first class steamer

of the largest size I should judge it to be more than 20 rods in length finished & furnished nice as any parlor Our regt of a thousand men looked rather scattering on her I rode on the upper deck most of the time where I had a fair view of the surrounding country the scenery was beautiful words fail to describe my feelings at that time It did not seem much like Sunday I assure you We arrived at Jersey City at 1 o'clock P M We then took the cars for Philadelphia We arrived there at 10 in the evening We were there marched to an eating saloon & furnished with a good supper free of charge every reg't that passes through that city is fed in like manner this saloon is supported by donations We were detained here some time We arrived at Havre de Grace about 8 o'clock Monday morn the cars that we were on were run on to a ferry boat 12 at a time 3 tracks 4 on each track this seemed rather odd to me

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We arrived at Baltimore about noon We marched through the city to change cars we met with no opposition we took dinner there we then left for Washington We arrived here at 9 o'clock Monday evening Tuesday we were removed 3/4ths of a mile from the city on Wednesday rather Tuesday we remained in the city I visited the Capitol buildings I went up on to the marble steps in front the doors were locked but there was a great deal to be seen on the veranda and outside It is made of marble carved & worked in the most beautiful manner there are quite a number of beautiful marble statues standing in front which look as natural as life Since I commenced writing our regt has been marched into Virginia a distance of 11 miles from W I have to write by odd jobs a few lines at a time I commenced this letter in Wash I am now finishing it in Virginia seated on a rock using my portfolio for a table Yesterday which was Thursday we were marched to this place after 2 o'clock P M we arrived here about 8 in the evening We were much fatigued we came by this way of Chain bridge this is a bridge across the Potomac river we are located about 4 miles

west of this bridge near by the rest of the Vt
reg'ts we meet with a good many old acquaintances
This morning as I was preparing to finish this letter
our Capt handed me a letter which proved to be
from you I was much pleased to hear from you
V.V. M stands for Vermont Volunteer Militia
Virginia is a rougher colder place than I expected to
find it we had a very heavy frost last night
though I have seen but a small portion of it
Our friends tell us there is no rebel encampment
within ten miles of us

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There are a good many Federal troops encamped
in sight of us as I write there is a Brass
Band playing the nicest music but a few
rods from me Soldiers are practicing target
shooting others are pitching tents some are
killing oxen for food that have been taken
from the rebels Yesterday a Company of
Cavelry brought in 8 rebels 7 hogs & 1 horse
I must now close by asking you to excuse
all mistakes and accept my best wishes
from Dan

Direct to Dan Mason
Washington
D C
Company D 6th Reg Vermont Volunteers

When I was at Mont I sent you
A daily paper please let me know if you received

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it Direct as I tell you &
your letters will be forwarded to our Camp
Write seen & oblige Dan

Topics include: traveling to Virginia, sightseeing, camp life

Transcribed by Gemma Philcox

Camp Griffin Nov. 17th 1861

Dear Harriet

It is with pleasure that I seize my pen to acknowledge the reception of your worthy letter. I had been anxiously looking for one for a number of days. I feared that my letter had been lost or miscarried, but I was happily disappointed on receiving an answer. I was sorry to learn of your ill health you must be careful of yourself & get well as soon as possible. obey your Mother and be a good girl. If she says take medicine you must take it. remember Mother knows best.

I am well & enjoying myself first rate at the present time I have enjoyed very good health most of the time since I enlisted I have gained 11 lbs in flesh since I enlisted I think the climate is going to agree with me I like Virginia much better than when

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I wrote you last. Since that I have been out in to the surrounding country & I like it much I think it a fine country for farming. the surface is smooth & the soil appears productive. There is considerable sickness in our regt at the present time. The prevailing disease is measles. quite a number of the Glover boys are sick with them. viz. Edward Ufford Hobart Bliss Zebina Y Bickford & Alec Davis. Davis & Bickford are just coming down. Ed & Hobart have been in the Hospital about a week they have been quite sick they are now able to walk out if they dont take cold they will soon be able to perform duty. I am glad that I had them when I did in fathers house. it is bad enough to be sick under the best of care surrounded by kind friends The boys complain some of their treatment in the H but I think they were treated as well as could be expected in camp life. We are having some cold bleak weather now. we have had veery beautiful weather most of the time since I came here the ground froze slightly night before last for the first time. I was out on Picket Guard duty the air though not very freezing was very

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chilly. I was stationed on what is called a reserve. A reserve is a body of men stationed back in some well selected position for the outside Pickets to flee to if they should be attacked Alec Davis & I were Corporals of the reserve. there has to be a guard around the reserve Corporals have to change this guard once in so often each Corporal has his relief to tend to when one relief is on the other rests. A Corporal does not have to stand on a post or beat picket guards are placed on posts 3 on each post Guards around encampments or around reserves are placed on beats 1 on a beat with orders to keep moving the pickets do not move 1 of them is allowed to sleep in the day time while 2 keep watch. in the night no one is allowed to sleep. We were stationed about 3 miles from our encampment. our reserve was within 30 rods of the outside pickets. There are reserves once in so often between the outside Pickets & the encampment so that if one reserve is outnumbered it retreats to the next & so on until they reach the main army. I have not seen a rebel since I came here our Pickets have not been troubled

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for a long while I felt perfectly safe. Lieut Dwinell was a commander of our reserve & during the day we on the reserver were where we pleased part at a time Orange Williams Lewis Clark & myself went to a house to carry an axe that some of the boys had borrowed we found some soldiers there eating bread & milk 2 or three negro women were milking in the year [sqatting] around in the mud. I counted 24 cows in the yard I went in to buy some milk they charged 10 cts a quart I thought that rather high so I tried to buy some eggs they axed 28 cts per doz this I thought rather high so I did not trade We went from there to the woods to hunt chestnuts we found any quantity of trees & burs & some nice chestnuts it was rather late in the season the chestnut groves had been visited by boys & hogs to many times to have them very plenty. We went to some

rebel wheat stacks to get some straw to put in our cabins to sleep on. Pickets build cabins of rails & bushes & then line them with straw if they can get it. We found 4 large stacks of good nice wheat 1 of them was nearly half gone we helped ourselves to what we wanted Pickets start from camp at 3 in the morn & return about 7 the next morn we carry our provision with us in our haversacks something similar to a leather satchel made of oil cloth. In regard to the sufferings of the 3d reg I think they have been greatly enlarged upon I have been to their encampment & I cant see why they are not as well provided for as we are except their uniform was somewhat

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soiled Since we came here they have been furnished with new uniforms throughout they have each 2 wool blankets & we have but one I cant see how they suffered ery much for clothing. They came here in the heat of summer & the change of climate caused considerable sickness in the Regt & judging from the amount of labor done in chopping trees & building forts &c which they claim to have done the greater part of them must have been worked quite hard. their ranks have been reduced by disease to quite an extent & I doubt not but what they have seen hard times but I think you in Vt have had the dark side of the picture presented to you Here in camp life we hear a great many false rumors such as that the rebels are marching on to attack us in great numbers or that we are going to fortress Monroe to stop through the winter or going on some sailing expedition down the coast. when we first heard these rumors

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we were inclined to believe them but we soon learned to let such rumors go into one ear & out of the other. You must not believe all that you hear from this way until it has been thoroughly confirmed. One of our Co received a letter stating that

we had been attacked by an overwhelming number of rebels and forced to retreat to the banks of the Potomac & its waters were so swollen by recent rains that we could not cross & we were nearly all killed or taken prisoners This letter was from his parents in Vt Another received a letter asking him what they should send him to eat they had received the heart rending news that we were starving to death. In answer to the first I would say it is so absurd that it needs no explanation. In regard to the second report we had to eat some hard pilot crackers & tough beef the first week that we stopped here. Since that we have bought us a large sheet iron baker & we now have a plenty of nice bread & good beef & pork as a general think to go with it we have boiled rizer & mollasses twice a week we have beans & pork 2 a week or rather 2 meals in a week we have had a number of

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messes of doughnuts since we came here we miss the butter & cheese pies & cakes & such dainties but we manage to grow fleshy on what Uncle Sam furnishes. I should like to call at your house some of these frosty mornings & get a piece of your warm punkin pie or warm potatos & meat would not go bad with fried eggs for trimmings In regard to our bedding we have ticks filled with husks from rebels cornfields we use our blankets & coats for covering & our knapsacks for pillows we have under ground trenches or arches covered with flat stones to warm our tents with. In this manner we sleep very well I commenced this Sunday & today is Tuesday Sun night one of Co F died in the Hospital of the measles this is the first death in the Regt he has not been burried yet There has been 16 deaths in the Vt 5th Regt they came here in the month of Sept when the days were very warm & the nights cold & foggy this caused a good deal of fever I am now seated on my knapsack in a pine grove about 3 miles from camp with a reserve our whole

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Regt is on Picket guard today I will now
draw this dirty scroll to a close by asking
you to excuse all mistakes & remember me
to all the friends
& receive this from your true lover
Dan

P S I am now going out scouting
to see what I can find some
of the boys bring in milk
their canteens that they milk from
rebels cows I don't think they always
ascertain whether she is owned by a
rebel or not. of course I would not
do any such thing Of course I would
not. though a little warm milk would
go well with our cold bread. of course
it would.

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Write soon &
oblige Dan
Direct as before

Topics include: measles, reserve duty, foraging, rumors, food served in camp, bedding

Transcribed by Gemma Philcox

Camp Griffin VA Dec. 10th 1861

Dear Harriet

This morning as I came into camp from picket duty I received your worthy letter which was a very welcome visitor. I had not heard from Glover for sometime except a few lines that I received from Emily inside of the box of clothing & eatables concerning the contents. all of the Glover boys received a bundle of clothing & eatables I received 1 pr of boots 1 pr of gloves & a quarter of an excellent cheese some of the boys received cakes & cheese some butter pie & sugar cakes. as it arrived the night before thanksgiving we were able to have quite a thanksgiving There was great rejoicing over the contents I assure you It would have made you laugh to looked in upon us & seen how silly we looked as each one examined his bundle of Vt goodies We were very grateful to our thoughtful friends for them. I think we shall send for another

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box in a few weeks if we stop here. & I think we shall not more at present. I am well & enjoying myself first rate I would tell you how much flesh I have gained since I enlisted if you had not laughed at me about it so much in your letter but I will venture to tell you that I have gained 17½ lbs. since I enlisted or the scales lie I weigh 165½ lbs in my dress coat minus a vest 7 lbs more than I ever weighed before I have not been sick any length of time since I came here. The Glover boys are now all able to perform duty except Alec Davis he had the measles & got quite smart then took cold & was threatened with the fever but he is now able to walk out & take some food I think he will soon be able to perform duty. Hobart had the measles quite hard & got nearly well when he was taken sick with the mumps he was quite sick for a number of days he is now nearly well again. Tell Ellen that Edward is quite smart though he has been quite slim for a number of weeks. I dont believe that he writes to her very often I dont think he writes many letters to any one. Perhaps you know more

about his correspondence with Ellen than I do
please write as much about it as you can without

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breaking any secret promises & I will keep dark about it. About 3 weeks ago our Reg went out on a foraging expedition accompanied by the Vt 2ds. 3d. 4th & 5th Regts 5 Co of cavalry & 2 batteries of artillery our Reg went as far as flints hill this is situated about 2 miles this side of Vienna & about 5 miles from our camp our Reg was stationed there to protect 4 pieces of Capt Motts battery some of the Regts went on further We had orders not to leave the grounds but as the Officers say it is impossible to keep we yankees in one place long at a ime we are apt to break over the bounds & hunt up something good to eat or find some rebel trophy that day we slyed off to a deserted habitation & found 3 Percimmon trees well laden with fruit. this fruit is sweet & good to eat it resembles frozen apples in outward appearances some of them are nearly as large as hens eggs there are a number of large seeds in each one (I will enclose a number please plant them next spring) We ate all we wanted & brought some into camp in our haversacks. We started for camp about sun down we arrived at camp about 7½ in the eve with about 70 wagon loads of hay corn &c the result of our expedition

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We are having some Vt Sept weather here now for it has been uncomfortable warm for several days past the soldiers were out minus coat & vest & plenty warm yesterday when on drill I should have been glad to got into the shade. today it is quite cool I cant realize that you have good sleighing in Vt but according to all accounts you have upwards of a foot of snow I dont care about walking on your snow paths but I should like to take a sleigh ride some of these moonshiny evenings with Miss. H.B.C by my side firstrate well. We have not had any snow except a few scattering flakes 2 or 3 times just enough to say snow not enough to make any show on the ground. A week ago last Saturday E.H. Nye & I obtained passes to go to Washington city our Capt

went with us & as he was acquainted there he took us to see the fine sights we went on foot to Georgetown we there took an omnibus for W. City a distance of 4 miles I can ride through to the Capitol for 6 cts or if he rides but 10 rods it is the same we went into the treasury building where uncle Sam keeps his money it is a very large marble building finished in splendid style We also went to the Presidents house this is a beautiful marble house surrounded by a beautiful yard full of fine shade trees we went into the great celebrated east room this room is furnished in the most splendid manner imaginable. the carpet curtains & furniture was much nicer than any that I ever saw. there were mirrors set in the sides of the room larger than 1 side of your kitchen. I should judge there were quite a number of chandeliers as much nicer than the one in the meeting house at Glover

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village meetinghouse as you can imagine. In fact I cannot describe the splendor of it in a letter. of the green room as it is called ditto. We did not see Old Abe We then went to the Patent Office this is a splendid marble building of large dimensions where all models of Patents granted by Government are kept also many other curiosities. We saw the coat pants & vest of Gen Washington also his chest sword & camp furniture. also Gen Jacksons coat & eppauletts that he wore at the battle of New Orleans. also the original Declaration of Independence & Washingtons commission both were set in a frame or case that shut like a book case. some of the names of the signers were nearly obliterated. I saw many other curious things but I will not stop to describe them. I could spend a weeks time there pleasantly We then went to the Post Office where all the army letters & papers are distributed this is also a large marble building nicely finished We then visited the Smithsonian Institute this is a beautiful building surrounded by a large yard dotted here &

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there with beautiful shade trees. This is a building full of

natural curiosities We saw all kinds of stuffed birds little & great with glass eyes every feather was in its proper place. they looked as natural as life. some of them were very curious specimen. Also all kinds of fish & snakes of every kind in glass jars in some kind of liquid also 1 live snake. though not large he was a fine looking gentleman covered with bright spots also a live alligator about 4 feet in length also the first printing press also a chinese plow this was an awkward looking concern enough. also all kinds of beasts such as tigers leopards bears monkeys ourang outangs Deers &c standing up in glass cages as natural as life their glass eyes looked as bright as you please We also saw Dr. Kanes dress that he wore on his Arctic expedition it is made of long shaggy fur covering his person from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head except a little around the eyes mouth & nose it was stuffed & stook up life like. also a meteor stone that fell from the heavens it resembled a large piece of iron weighing perhaps 150 lbs. also some mummies or dried human bodies with the hair hanging from their heads & the dried flesh cleaving

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from their bones. also any quantity of other curiosities that I will not stop to describe. & in comparison with what there was to be seen we saw but very little I could find enough to feast his eyes on a week in this place We then went to the Capitol buildings. first we went into the basement on the back side into the great bakery We saw quite a number of mammoth ovens & cords of nice loves of bread We then went around to the front & walked up the splendid steps on to the veranda directly under the great dome which is supported by large marble pillars. on each side of the steps there are quite a number of marble statues standing out in bold relief looking very natural We then went into a large room called the rotunda this is a circular shaped room reaching from the basement to the top of the dome. The ceiling is covered with paintings on a very large scale such as the landing of Columbus the embarkation & landing of the pilgrims &c We went into several other large rooms that I have not time to describe We then went up onto the dome which is 264 feet in height above the basement

floor this we found to be a wearisome job. after ascending
a good many flights of stairs we at last reached

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the giddy heights .& as the Capitol is situated on an
eminence we had a splendid view of the surrounding
country we could see the whole city & a good many little
white villages the habitations of soldiers. after gazing
around as long as we wished we made our decent.
men in the street looked like small boys. At 6 ½
in the eve we took an omnibus bound for Georgetown
from there we walked a distance of 8 miles. we crossed
chain bridge about 8 ½ we reached camp about 9 ½ in
the eve safe & sound though somewhat fatigued.
but well satisfied with our days labor. I received
a letter from Emily last night she did not write any
news of importance also 1 from Albert Blake.
I will now draw this scrap to a close by asking
you to excuse all mistakes and asking you to accept the
best wishes of your absent lover.

Dan Mason

Write often & all the news that you can get.
You must be careful of your health
& be a good girl.

O EXCUSE

ME I should have said
Lady

Direct as before

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I commenced this letter the 10th today is the
12th & I am well

Topics include: boxes from Glover, foraging expedition, weather, sightseeing in
Washington, including the White House, Patent Office, Smithsonian Institute, and
Capitol Building

Transcribed by Gemma Philcox

Camp Griffin Dec 27th 1861

Dear Harriet

I received your worthy letter last evening I learned from it that you were enjoying good health which was the best news that you could have written I hope that you will be careful of yourself & enjoy this blessing for a long period. I am well except I have some cold about ten days ago I had an ill turn that lasted two days. one night I was very chilly I could not get clothes enough over me for sometime to feel comfortably warm I soaked my feet & Mr S D Gray made me a cup of hot sling & placed a hot brick at my feet & the next morning I felt quite smart & in 2 or 3 days I was able to perform duty. The Glover boys are all well & we have some jolly times We have raised our tent about 3 feet by setting posts 5 feet in length 2 feet below & 3 feet above the ground in a circular

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shape, then placed the canvass on top for a roof We then corked in between with splinters & mud we have a sheet iron stove that cost us 36 cts each. it has one place on it for cooking. we have a Coffee can & a frying pan we make crust coffee fry potatoes & flapjacks & beef steak I got up this morning before daylight & helped Chas Ufford fry flapjacks for breakfast We fried a big stack of them for we have quite a family only 14 the boys pronounced them good. I will bet 2 cts that I can beat half the girls frying flapjacks now. I dare say you have heard of the battle at Drainsville a few days since We heard the firing from our camp. Gen McCalls division of Penn soldiers went out in the morning on a foraging & scouting expedition (this Div is encamped about a mile north of our camp) Our division started about 2 oclock P M. to assist them if nessessary We marched 12 miles we came to a branch of the Potomac the rebels had burned the bridge so that we were compelled to face about & march homeward the boys were in the best of spirits until the

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order to about face came. that made them look disappointed quite a number fell out by the way & were picked up the ambulances which follow an army to pick up those that are wounded or sick & are not able to march (an Ambulance is a 2 wheeled covered carriage drawn by one horse) The rebels commenced the attack but according to all accounts they were badly beaten our men drove them back with great slaughter killing 170 & wounding a great number. our men lost 10 killed & 15 wounded they brought in as many blankets & over coats as they could bring in to camp. I learn by letters written to the Glover boys that Glover friends think that I am sick. After I had my poor turn I wrote to Emily about it stating that I was nearly well. a few days after Z Y Bickford was taken with a chilly turn same as I was Samuel D Gray made him some hot-sling & set up with him & kept fire. Mr G wrote that night to his wife stating that he was sitting up with a sick man not mentioning the name one of Mr. Gs girls told Emily about it

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this with what I wrote was enough to make them think that I was having a run of fever or some kind of a fit of sickness. There has been a great deal of sickness in our Reg & a number of deaths but I am happy to say that the sick list is greatly diminished. other Regts from Vt that have been here long enough to get acclimated are tough & rugged & I think that we shall be equaly so after we get naturalized The Col says that we shall stop here through the winter he thinks. I have but little news to write you but I am your affectionate lover here the same as when in the Green Mountain state. there is scarcely an hour passes but what I think of you. I will now close this confused mass of ideas by wishing you health & happiness

yours in haste from your
true love Dan

If it was a few days later
I would wish you a happy new
year perhaps you will get it by
that time so I will wish you the same

Topics include: camp life, food, battle of Dranesville, sickness in camp

Transcribed by Gemma Philcox

Camp Griffin Va Jan. 12th 1862

Dear Harriet

As I came in off Picket this morning I received your worthy letter bearing date Jan 7th with the pleasing news that you were enjoying good health which was the best news you could have written. I am blest with the same enjoyment. the rest of the Glover boys ditto. I fear that you are getting to be a disobedient girl. who would have thought that you so pure & guileless would ever stray from the path of virtue so far as to go to the sugar tub in the absence of your parents & steal sugar & melt to cool on snow & eat. & even go so far as to say that if your love would come & visit you when the folks were gone you would treat him on the stolen sweet. only think of it. if that is not old Eve right over again I am no judge. I suppose that you are surrounded with a beautiful carpet of white snow

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& the cold bleak winds which Vt is noted for in Jan. we do not have to plod around in the snow here in Va but we have plenty of Va mud which is very friendly so much so that it is hard parting with it. it is very adhesive. We have had but little snow yet. the most we had was about 2 inches or a little less Jan 5th. since that we have had a thaw which carried off the snow & took the frost out of the ground. Today is Mon I commenced this yesterday which was Sun it was a warm pleasant day so much so that we had no fire in our tent after 10. A M in the day time nor in the evening. the boys were standing out in the streets minus coat & vest it was summer weather. today it is quite cool. yesterday we had a meeting out on the Parade Ground the Reg formed a hollow square the Chaplain & singers standing in the centre. We have services every Sabboth when the weather permits. Our Chaplains name is Edwin Stone nephew of Levi H Stone, We have seen no rebels yet some of the boys are quite impatient & find considerable fault

with the Genls because they dont order an

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advance but I think they know their
business best. at least they ought to know
better about Government affairs both civil
& military than we youngsters do. I have a good
deal of confidence in Gen McClellan yet
I think his policy is to crush out this
rebellion by sending great naval forces
down the coast & taking important places
There are two great expeditions about reddy
to start if they have not already sailed.
one down the coast the other down the
Mississippi river. if these fleets are successful
I think the rebellion will receive a blow
that it will never recover from. I think
when we make an advance it will be
a successful one. I dont think we shall
advance on the rebels strong hold at
Manassas untill we can attack it on
all sides. thus gaining a victory with but
a small loss of life. I wrote a letter to
Arabella Cutler about a week ago I have
received no answer yet Yesterday morn
after I came in from Picket & finished

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my breakfast & got a little rest I helped
Chas Ufford fry some flapjacks for dinner
they were real good I tell you. I will bet
you with all of your boasted skill you could
not beat them. with water flour & saluratus
stodged up together without any shortening.
I will now close this great epistle
by wishing you health & happiness
Give my respects to your Mother
& all the friends

Receive this from
your lover Dan

Topics include: maple sugar, snow, religious services, military strategy, pancakes

Transcribed by Gemma Philcox

Camp Griffin Va Feb 5th 1862

Dear Harriet

I received your worthy letter (bearing date Jan 19th) last eve. it is a very good letter I enjoyed the perusal of it very much. but I dont understand why so much time elapsed between the writing & mailing of it. the latter being done Jan 31st I have a good mind to give you a good scolding for being so slack about it but as it is the first offence of the kind I will refrain from doing so. but remember what out pourings of wrath awaits you if you are not more prompt in future. I am well & contented. I like camp life very well & why shouldnt I it is so muddy that I dont have to drill but very little I have not been on guard duty for a number of weeks. a great many days we have nothing to do but eat read write play chequers practice on my Bugle. & have a good time generally. Perhaps you will think to your self I'll bet he plays cards if so you will not think right for I

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have not played a game of cards since I enlisted no not for 2 or 3 years previous I see a great deal of card playing & gambling on a small scale in the Regt. many foolish boys lose their entire wages in this way or if not all in this manner the Suttler gets the remainder for little dainties which are very injurious to their health. & these articles at an outrageous price. I have seen enough to convince me that if one plays for the sport of it in camp lilfe he will soon be tempted to play for small sums of money. I shall not play a game of cards while I am in the army. the Glover boys are all well except Elbert Nye he is having a run of the jaunders he has been sick about a fortnight he is now gaining. Perhaps you would like to hear a short explanation in regard to the Bugle refered to on the first page. A little more than 2 weeks since our Col sent to Washington for a new Bugle. the next question was who should play it. one of our tent boys from Brownington happened to be Cols orderly (as he is

called) & heard the conversation he told the Col

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that he knew a fellow in Co D that had played on the Alt Horn considerable in a Band. the Col said he thought the one mentioned was the one he wanted. I happened to be the chap. I got Lieut Dwinell to intercede for me & I got the Bugle with orders to go to my tent & practice the calls for skirmishing. I practice on it every day. it has been so muddy for several weeks that we have had no drill to amount to much. some afternoons the Regt is taken out on the Parade ground to fire 10 or 15 rounds of blank cartridges or perhaps to fire ball cartridges at target aside from this we have but little drill I expect to be Regimental Bugler. I don't know how much pay I will get. some say I shall get more than I now do & some say I get the same. Lieut Dwinell thinks I shall get \$27.00 per month if so well & good. if I get no more I shall get clear of all guard duty both Picket & Home which is the most tedious duty that we have to perform. I shall also be exempt from all drill. When the mud dries up which is very deep we

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shall drill in skirmishing & then I shall find out how much pay a bugler gets. at all events it is considered quite an honor to be Bugler for a regt. When an army is advancing through an enemies country it is frequently necessary to send out a portion or a whole Reg to search the woods a little in advance of the main army so as not to meet with a sudden surprise from the enemy. in skirmishing the Capts & Lieut stand several paces behind their Cos the Col stands or rather sits on his horse on an eminence where he has a fair view of the men perhaps 50 or 100 rods behind them. the Bugler stands near him. he gives orders to the Bugler & the Bugler sounds the call used to represent the command. the Capts have to be familiar enough with the calls so

they can tell one from an other. they give the
command to their Cos. some of the calls are
short & some are quite tunes I have learned
to play nearly all of them. I wrote to Arabel
Cutler a long time since. I have received no answer
when you see her just put her in mind of me
I guess that Geo Ballou & Anna are courting
rather strong. Emily wrote me that he was
coming up again in about 4 weeks.

For my part I think this courting is poor
paying business I have not been courting for
as much as 4 mos I calculate to go about next
fall in Vt. Remember me to all the friends
& Receive this from your sincere lover Dan

Topics include: camp life, card playing, role of Regimental bugler

Transcribed by Gemma Philcox

Camp Griffin Va Feb 22 1862

Dear Harriet. I take this opportunity to answer your worthy letter bearing date Feb 12th. as usual it was a welcome visitor. I experienced much pleasure in perusing its contents. Judging from your letter you thought I was in earnest about the date & mailing of your previous letter. I supposed that you knew my way of joking & blackguarding better than to think that I meant half what I said. I was only gassing. To tell the truth I have no action against you I consider you about perfect or as near to it as any one. I know you to be the possessor of true Patriotism. this you have proved by your

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actions. I honor & admire you more yes love you more if possible than I did previous to your being brought to the test. I am afraid that you are staying at home this winter from parties & social gatherings on my account. if so you are not doing right I want you should go every chance that you can get to go with likely fellows & I know you to be to pure to accompany any that were not. I am not afraid to trust you. I have perfect confidence in you. I believe your love to be as pure & lasting as ever kindled in womans heart. I long for the time to arrive when peace shall be declared throughout the land & the frant army of the Potomac & all the union forces shall be disbanded & return to their respective homes. I long to grasp your loving hand & steal a kiss from your loving lips. I want you to make preparations to go some where with me to celebrate next 4th of July. I honestly expect to go to

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Vermont before 4 months shall pass away.

One month has wrought a great change. our army has been successful at every point. many Forts & important places with thousands of rebel prisoners have been taken by our gallant troops. As you will get the news in the papers long before this reaches you I will not give the particulars here. The daily newspapers (which are brought from Washington every day by little news boys) are filled with cheering news. Our arms are crowned with success at every point. Camp Griffin is often made wild with joy on receiving the glorious news loud hurahs rend the air. it is deafening to hear the shouts of the excited soldiers. the wildest enthusiasm prevails. I dont see much prospect of our advancing at present it is so very muddy now (& has been for the last 6 or 8 weeks) that it is impossible to move heavy artillery & the baggage waggons which must nessessarily

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attend the advance of an army. Some think that we shall never see any fighting It is reported in the news papers that Manassas Junction is being evacuated by the rebels according to all accounts the rebels feel very much disheartened they think their case a doubtful one. This Afternoon I went over to Gen Smiths head quarters to see 7 rebel prisoners that the Penn Cavelry captured & brought in this morning. I saw 3 of them they were dark complexioned long hair dirty inferior looking chaps. they had no uniformity of dress one had on an over coat that was taken from the Maine 7th Reg at the Bull run fight last July. In regard to Bugling I am not prepared to say much about it. Our Col has been to Boston to visit his friends he returned night before last he was gone 15 days. it has been so muddy

for several weeks that we have not
drilled any to speak of except in firing
blanks or target shooting. I expect
the mud will dry up before long
& then we shall drill in skirmishing
& then I shall be able to tell you something
about it I have got the calls all learned
I will now close by wishing you health &
happiness receive this from Dan

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I am well the
rest of the Glover
boys ditto. except
Hobart Bliss he is sick in
the Hospital with the fever. I learn that
J. Bean is courting E Clark please write about it

Topics include: prospect of peace, rebel prisoners, mud

Transcribed by Gemma Philcox

Camp Griffin March 7th 1862

Dear Harriet

your ever welcome letter bearing date Feb 28 came to hand last evening & was perused with the usual degree of satisfaction. How miserable I should be if I could not hear from you. though we can not converse face to face at the present time we can by aid of pen correspondence to each other (though hundreds of miles stretch out between us) & convey ideas that are interesting & pleasing especially to one in my situation in an enemies country far from the object of my affection. I experience a great deal of real enjoyment in perusing your letters. I have often heard said that lovers lost or were apt to lose their love to some extent when absent from each other any great length of time. this saying does not fit my case, for the longer I am absent from you the more perfect you seem to me. I thought when at home that I loved you as much as possible for one to

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love, but I am aware of the fact that the longer I am absent from you the dearer you seem to me, there is scarce an hour passes but what I think of you. In your letter you seem to think that I estimate your perfection to highly, but I think not. I dont suppose that you are exactly perfect in the strict sense of the term but I think you come as near to it as any one I know. I wish that I was as perfect as you are. I am surrounded by all kinds of vice but I intend to return to my home with as good morals as when I left. I know that if my morality becomes impaired that I shall not merit your loving hand which I hope to possess it at some future day. at all events I am willing to acknowledge you my better half. Oh excuse me I am a little to fast I mean that I hope to be able at some future day to call you so. I know your generous disposition will compel you to overlook my little imperfections & wrong sayings for I know that I have said that to you that I ought not to have said. for example one eve when we were going down to singing school 2 years ago this winter, my mind was somewhat troubled & I said more than I ought

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to, though I did not intend to hurt your feelings in the least. You know this loving business is a little delicate in its first stages especially to one of my temperament, but enough of this. I am enjoying very good health at the present time I never enjoyed such perfect health six months or nearly that in succession in my life, at least I have no recollection of it I was weighed today & would tell you how much I weighed if I thought you would not laugh at me as you did once before you naughty girl. but I will venture to tell you., I weigh 172 lbs & a fraction more in my dress coat minus a vest 25 lbs more than when I enlisted. the Glover boys are all well except Hobart he is sick in the Hospital with the fever he has been quite sick but is getting along well. Edward is working in the cook tent he was very still & steady for the first 2 or 3 months but he is now more jolly & appears to enjoy himself now quite well. Yesterday Elbert Nye & I obtained passes & went to Alexandria the city where Col Ellsworth was shot by a man named Jackson last summer

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we went into the house. there is a flag staff on one corner of the building the very one that Col Ellsworth hauled down the secesh flag from & raised the stars & stripes in place of. Col Ellsworth was Col of the fire Zouaves Alexandria is quite a large city on the Potomac on the Va side about 16 miles from our encampment we went on foot over near Falls Church a distance of 5 or 6 miles which brought us to the Railroad we there took the cars for Alex a distance of ten miles. our ride was free soldiers all go free on that road. we saw a good many steam boats & schooners also towboats & skiffs. We had a good time. we intended to ride back on the 5 oclock train but the 5 oclock train proved to be a 4 oclock one & we got left, so we had to foot it. after walking on the track 7 miles we concluded to go out of our way a half mile

on to munsons hill where the 1st N. Hampshire Battery is stationed. Alfred Crosbry who used to live in Glover was there he is saddler for that Battery. We stopped over night & returned this morn which is Sunday you will notice by the date of this that I commenced this Friday. We had services on the Parade ground this forenoon a minister from St Johnsbury preached to us the Reg formed in a hollow square. the minister singers & field officers

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standing inside
the square.

I enclose this
ring for you not because
I think it anything very nice or
beautiful. but it is one of my own
manufacture wholly so. I whittled it
out of cocoa nut shell & by the aid of a
file I cut a piece from a 8 cent piece &
fitted it in the4 top as you see. I have
made 3 rings one that I intend to send
to Emily one that I wear & this one that
I send to you. our boys have made a
good many & sent home. In regard to
slavery I think it will receive a death
blow before peace is declared Mr Lincoln
advocates the gradual emancipation of
the slaves. In regard to H Pages writing
a friendly letter to you. it is perfectly,
right for you to answer it. receive this
from your lover Dan

Topics include: courtship, morals, sightseeing in Alexandria, health, slavery

Transcribed by Gemma Philcox

Head-Quarters 6th Vermont Regiment
Company D
Camp Near Newport News
March 31st 1862

Dear Harriet, I have not received an answer to the letter that I wrote you 3 weeks yesterday. Perhaps you have not received it, or if you have received & answered it it has not reached me yet. It is rumored that there is no mail matter allowed to leave Washington for a certain number of days, this if so is to prevent the rebels from knowing the movements of our army. The next day after I wrote you the Great army of the Potomas advanced about 10 miles in the direction of Mannassas. we encamped about 3 miles from Fairfax Court House. it was quite rainy in the A.M.

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which made it muddy & hard walking. & as we were each well loaded with a knapsack filled with 1 heavy wool blanket 1 rubber blanket 1 over & 1 fatigue coat, 1 shirt 1 pr drawers portfolio & some other little trinkets, 2 days rations in haversack, canteen, cartridge box & belts with 40 rounds of ball cartridges & a gun & bayonet we were somewhat fatigued when we got to our journeys end. We are provided with small linnen tents 1 for every 4 men they are in 2 pieces which button together at the top. when stuck up they resemble the roof of a house. they make quite a comfortable shelter to crawl under in a climate like this. We stopped there untill the next Saturday when we started toward Alexandria by way of Fairfax Court House. it commenced raining when we were at F. C. H. waiting for other regts to pass. it rained most of the time during the day & night. after marching about 15 miles we turned into a piece of pine woods for the night

were thoroughly drenched with rain

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I was wet through long before we halted about the time we stopped it rained harder than ever my boots were full of water+ & I felt cold & chilly. others were in as bad or even worse condition than I was. some were inclined to curl up by a tree they did not seem to care whether they lived or died (it was a cold rain) I knew that I must do something to stir my blood so I went with several other to get some rails when I got back with my rails I felt better. it was hard starting a fire but we succeeded in doing so after a while. We mixed our rails with green logs as large as 3 or 4 of us could carry in a little while we had a regular log heap fire our shanties were open in front so that the fire could shine in & dry our clothes. as the ground was level the soil is such that the water was 2 or 3 inches deep all over the grounds. we cut pine poles 3 or 4 inches in diameter for a floor to our hovel

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& covered them with brush we then spread our blankets & sought nature's kind restorer sleep I slept soundly several hours. when I awoke the steam was rising from my wet clothing in large quantities. I felt much refreshed & strange to say I didnt take cold but few of Comp did. Sunday the 23d we marched to Alexandria & went on board the steamboat Catskill. thousands of soldiers embarked that day. thousands went the week before. I have not time to give the particulars of our voyage but Tuesday morn when we awoke we found ourselves ankored near Fortress Monroe

We ran up to the wharf by the fort & stopped some time but did not get off. the old Fortress is a strong costly looking Institution with many heavy guns mounted on the top & judging from the large number of port holes in her massive walls she has a large number of guns inside. the Union & Floyd guns are on the outside elevated on heaps of sand they are monsters to behold We landed at Hampton about 2 miles from F. Monroe. the next Thursday we marched up James river about 15 miles & drove in the rebel pickets a part of the army went by Big Bethel and drove the rebels without fighting. the next morn we marched

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back about 6 miles to our present encampment. This is a beautiful country very level & free from stone I think the soil is very fertile & productive though many beautiful fields have been poorly cultivated & has become somewhat exhausted. I think if it could be cultivated like our New England soil it would yield a bountiful reward Peach trees are in blossom here & have been for several days. I am well some of the boys are some unwell H Bliss & Z Bickford are in the Hospital. We are now about 180 miles fom Camp Griffin. As there is not much regularity about the mail & we are moving about you need not expect to hear from me very often. Direct letters as usual & they will find

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me after a while. Since I commenced this letter I received your ever welcome

letter which gave me great pleasure
When you write write all the news
Day before yesterday I went over to
Newport News I saw the wrecks of
the Congress & Cumberland which
were sunk by the rebel Steamer
Merrimac. they are but few rods
from shore. the Cumberlands
masts stick out of the water
20 or 30 feet. the Congress was
nearly all burnt but enough to
left to mark the spot. I must
draw this piece of pencil marks to
a close. I fear you cant read all
of this, but as I have no ink I
have to use a pencil. Receive
from your lover Dan

Topics include: advance of the Army of the Potomac to Fairfax Court House, camping conditions, voyage to and description of Fort Monroe, skirmishes with rebels, viewing the wrecks of the Congress and the Cumberland at Newport News

Transcribed by Gemma Philcox