

Letters to my Sisters

A CIVIL WAR ACCOUNT



George T. Copeland

LETTERS TO MY SISTERS:
A CIVIL WAR ACCOUNT

by George T. Copeland

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Second Printing

ISBN 1-58241-090-9

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Thomas W. Pfeiffelmann
587 N. State St.
St. Ignace, MI 49781
(906)-643-7635

Additional copies \$20.00 each, shipping and handling included.

Published by
Harbor House Publishers
221 Water Street
Boyne City, Michigan 49712

Foreword

Lying in drawers, boxes or closets are many historic documents which remain virtually unknown. These manuscripts provide windows into the past that only a fortunate few ever get to see.

Sometimes the treasures are recognized and shared with friends or family. Occasionally the documents are transcribed and published making it possible for others to use their contents. When the past is shared we are all enriched and our thanks go out to those who have made possible these publications.

Thomas W. Pfeiffelmann, a native of the Straits of Mackinac, has become, through his family, the steward of a large legacy of historical materials; documents, photographs, and objects. As a former school teacher he recognizes the importance of sharing historical resources.

Over the years he has collected the memories of many Mackinac Islanders in oral histories, and he has permitted historical archives to copy his photographs and documents. In this book Tom has gone a step further and personally published a portion of his collection.

Despite the passing of time, the Civil War continues to fascinate and our understanding of the conflict grows as more information comes to light.

These letters are written by George Theodore Copeland from Zanesville, Ohio who at age 18 joined Company C, 74th Regiment, Ohio Volunteer Infantry, part of the Army of Cumberland. From his enlistment in 1862 George wrote regularly to his family. Fortunately the letters to his sisters Lois and Virginia have survived. As an infantryman in the Army of the Cumberland he spent time in Tennessee where he participated in a number of battles and skirmishes. Later George took part in the siege of Atlanta, Georgia and after its capture marched with Sherman to Savannah. Attached to the headquarters he moved through South Carolina and was at Goldsboro, North Carolina in April 1865 when the war ended. After participating in the Grand Review in Washington, D.C. he took a train to Louisville, Kentucky, stopping on the way to visit his grandma in Clarksburg, West Virginia. Mustered out of the army, George returned to Zanesville, Ohio.

Plunge right in and experience the Civil War through George's eyes as he shares it with his sisters.

Dr. David A. Armour

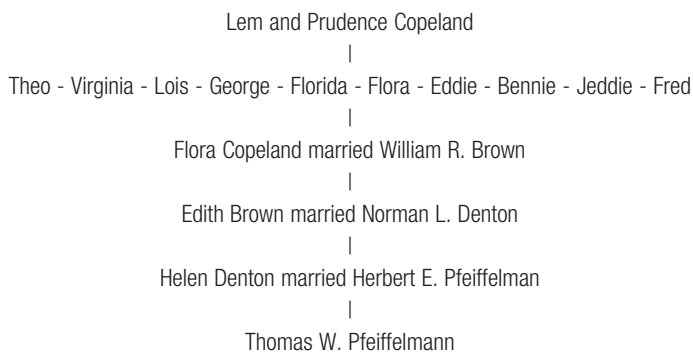


George "Thedie" Theodore Copeland, *Staff Sergeant*
Co. C, 74th Regiment. O.V.V.I., 3rd Brig., 1st Div.
14th A.C., Army of the Cumberland

Introduction

George Theodore Copeland's Civil War letters to his two sisters, Virginia and Lois were given to me by my uncle, William Denton of Pentwater, MI. George served in Co. C., 74th Regt., O.V.I. (Ohio Volunteer Infantry) Army of the Cumberland. The letters were handed down on my Mother's side of the family. George T. Copeland was my Great Great Uncle.

The following is our family tree from Lem Copeland, George's dad to the present:



Flora's husband, William R. Brown also served during the war with Co. B, 154th O.V.R. He later became a famous architect specializing in cathedrals all across America. Their daughter Edith raised a family with her husband, Norman in Elmwood Park, IL. Their daughter, Helen, met her husband, Herbert, on Mackinac Island where they were married in 1927. They spent over 50 years together on Mackinac raising three children; Edward, Thomas and Nancy.

A Child's Thoughts

The idea which runs through these lines, and which is so beautifully and naturally carried out, it is said, was expressed by a little boy five years old. The whole piece is true to a child's fancy.

*O, I long to lie, dear mother,
On the cool and fragrant grass,
With nothing but the sky above,
And the shadowing clouds that pass.*

*And with the bright, bright sunshine,
All round bout my bed;
I'll close my eyes and God will think,
Your little boy is dead!*

*Then Christ will send an angel,
To take me up to Him;
He will bear me, slow and steady,
Far through the ether dim.*

*He will gently, gently lay me,
Close to the Savior's side,
And when I'm sure that we're in heaven,
My eyes will open wide.*

*And I'll look among the angels,
That stand about the throne,
"Till I find my sister Mary,
For I know she must be one.*

*And when I find her, mother,
We will go away alone,
And I will tell her how we've mourned,
All the while she has been gone!*

*O! I shall be delighted,
To hear her speak again –
Though I know she'll ne'er return to us –
To ask her would be vain!*

*So I'll put my arms around her,
And look into her eyes,
And remember all I have said to her,
And all her sweet replies.*

*And then I'll ask the angel,
To take me back to you,
He'll bear me slow and steady,
Down through the sky so blue.*

*And you'll only think, dear mother,
That I have been out to play,
And have gone to sleep beneath a tree,
This sultry summer day.*

Hagar in the Wilderness

*She kneeled in prayer within a desert wild –
Hunger and thirst were praying on her child;
And her own form so weak and trembling grew,
She felt that death was creeping o'er her too.*

*Oh! It were sad to die away alone,
With none to hear the heart's sad moan,
Or close the eyes, or lay the hands to rest,
Their last work done, upon the sleeping breast.*

*Yet, for herself she pray'd not – He was there –
Her boy – her love – the object of her care;
For him her beautiful prayer went forth - for him,
Her eyes with bitter, scalding tears were dim.*

*"Oh God! – the God of him who sent away,
Thy servant – hear, Oh, hear I pray!
And send the angel of the promised word,
Whose voice of comfort I before have heard.*

*For, oh, he dies! And I, I cannot brook,
Into this dying, gasping face to look –
My mother's heart recoils – such bitter strife,
Oh call I pray thee – call him back to life!"*

*The prayer was scarcely breathed, ere from on high,
The angel of the promised word drew nigh,
And bade her weep not, for a fountain's voice,
Must surely make her drooping soul rejoice.*

*One moment bow'd in adoration deep,
To him who heard, and will each promise keep,
She with the water laved her dying child,
Until he, in reviving, joyously smiled.*

The Hundred Days Men

*Of all the soldiers that are out,
And gallant deeds you read about,
The Northern papers all will praise,
Are now the men of a Hundred Days.*

*For scarcely a paper you will find,
That has not something of this kind -
The best men now that Lincoln pays,
Are those that went for a Hundred Days.*

*The Veteran Soldiers years ago,
Who battled with the Rebel foe,
Suffered then in many ways,
But not like those of a Hundred Days.*

*Some went to Demmison one day,
And saw the Elephant they say,
They may not think that soldiering pays,
Those that went for a Hundred Days.*

*They marched some hundred miles or more,
until their feet were very sore -
They had neither carts or drays,
Those men who went for a Hundred Days.*

*Men who have been on bloody ground,
And have seen the dead strewn all around,
Who have met the Rebels face to face,
Are out for more than a Hundred Days.*

*Say not then of those who went,
They were the best the country sent;
Do not give them all the praise,
Those who went for a Hundred Days.*

*We'll give them credit every one,
For all the good that they have done;
But Uncle Sam will have to raise,
More men for another Hundred Days.*

*Now if our Cause is just and right,
Let us have the men to fight;*

*It matters not about the praise,
If we'll end the war in a Hundred Days.*

Battle Hymn of the Republic

*Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword;
His truth is marching on.*

*I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps,
They have builded Him an alter in the evening dews and damps;
I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps;
His day is marching on.*

*I have read a fiery gospel writ in burnished rows of steel.
"As ye deal with my contemners, so with you my grace shall deal;
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his heel,
Since God is marching on."*

*He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreats,
He is sifting out the hearts of men before his judgement seat,
Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him! Be jubilant, my feet!
Our God is marching on.*

*In the beauty of the skies Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me;
As he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,
While God is marching on.*

Xenia, Ohio

APRIL 11, 1860

Dear Sister,
Dear Sister,

Received your long and affectionate letter and was very glad to have you write me a letter. Now it is impossible for me to set down and pen my thoughts to paper so you must not think hard if I do not write you anything of importance. Theo and Fred are well at present. Theo at the time which I am writing this letter is icing a cake for a donation party at the preacher's house late tomorrow. I have not much time to write so I will close and when I can I will write you a long letter.

Theodore Copeland

Xenia, Ohio

MAY 14, 1860

Dear Sister,
Dear Sister,

In your last letter you mentioned the fact that you would like to have me write you some of the time. But you do not think that it is a hard task for me to write a letter to you and therefore you must not look for something grand. Xenia is dull and inactive and everything appears to be afraid to stir around. The farmers are planting their corn and I am making my garden. So see if we do not make a great fuss we are doing some good in the world. The preacher, Mr. Smith has gone to conference at Dayton. Preacher Mr. Crumb preached yesterday. He is a very good preacher. How do you all do at Home? Are you all well and over your fright about the water? How does my little Jeddie get along? Tell him to write me another letter. Tell Flora to write me a letter and Eddie and Bennie.

Give my love to Aunts Hannah, Lenada and all the rest of them. My love to Pa, Ma, Virginia, Lois, Florida, Eddie, Bennie and Jeddie.

Write soon. Good Bye.

From your Brother,

George Theodore Copeland

Xenia

APRIL 29, 1861

Dear Sister,

I received your kind letter and was glad to see you have not forgotten one in the excitement of the times. You tell me not to join the company. Well I have not as yet, but I do not know how soon I will, not because I am a coward for if I had had permission in my first letter from Pa today I would have been on the march.

You tell me to read my Bible. Well I do try to. I have read as far as the 21st Chapter of Proverbs. What do you say to that? Today the Second Company started away. They go to Milford 14 miles from Cincinnati. All the Columbus troops go there.

I wish you would find out if Mrs. Hewitt ever answered my letter if so I never received it. I also wrote to Bell Crabtree and received no answer. I will have to come to Zanesville and jog your memories a little.

All are well and send love. Write soon.

Your affectionate Brother

George T. Copeland

Xenia

MAY 31, 1861

Dear Sister,

I received your letter this morning and hasten to reply not for any great reason that I know of only I expect you are like me, you like to hear from somebody once in awhile.

But I do not know any news to write. Fred went down to Cincinnati yesterday and came in the 10 o'clock train last night. John Brown has enlisted for 3 years and belongs to Company D, Regiment 12th O.V.M. He came up yesterday and expects to stay till Saturday or Monday.

A hatter by the name of John Crumbaugh took sick Saturday and on Monday morning he was a corpse. Reason of it was intemperance.

All the family are well and send love. Write and let us know if you have anything new about the war. V. wrote to Jeddie, ask him if he received it.

Your affectionate Brother

G. T. Copeland

Putnam

FEB. 16, 1861

Dear Sister,

It is the Sabbath and I thought I would pen a line or two to you. The family! All are well except Pa who has had a bad cold but is almost well of it again. Mrs. McCabe is able to come down stairs. The meetings are still in progress and we are having a good time. One evening 14 were up to the alter and 7 have been converted since they (the meetings) have commenced. Thirteen were up Friday night. Lois is still at Xenia.

I wish I had something to write about but as I have not I bid you a good night.

Your Brother

G. T. Copeland

MONDAY MORNING

Received your kind letter also the paper.

Enclosed you will find a letter from Mary Smith which Pa received this morning.

Ma says you must not worry about her work as she gets along very well.

As for me I will try and do all I can and If I can get anything to do I will do it.

As for my visit to Virginia next summer, you must not say anything as I have made up my mind not to go.

Love to all.

Your affectionate Brother

Geo. T. Copeland

Camp Chase

MARCH 3, 1862

Dear Sister,

Having a spare moment I thought I would write you a line or two to let you know that I am still in the land of the living. I sent down a few lines to Theo by Mr. Drake Saturday which I suppose you received. The drum is beating for the guards and I have to go and take my place in a rain.

Did Mary send up my "housewife" if so I have not received it. I will some of these days write you a letter and give you a description of the Camp and Prison.

Write soon.

Good Bye

Your affectionate Brother

Geo. T. Copeland

Care of Capt. Owens

Co. C, 74th Regt Ohio Volunteers, USA

Camp Chase, Ohio

P.S. Enclosed you will find a Rebel Postage Stamp.

G. T. Copeland



Shown at 150% of original size.

Camp Chase

APRIL 15, 1862

Dear Sister Lois,

I received Pa's, Cousin Sam's and yours and was glad to hear from you once more. Tell Jeddie that I stood guard one night it rained on Monday but have not stood any since as I have had the headache and a day or two ago I went to the doctors and took a dose of Ma's favorite medicine "Castor Oil".

I shall stand guard tonight and tell Jeddie it is not going to rain this time.

I had the "pleasure" of seeing "two Parsons" this afternoon and they also made a speech apiece.

Viz. Parson Brownlou of Tennessee and Parson Jeth Trimble of Columbus.

Parson Brownlou is down on the rebels. He says he left a wife and small children at home and he says he has two brothers, one is at home taking care of his mother. The other is in the Union Army at Cumberland.

I could not tell you all he says but he said some bitter words for a preacher to use.

Parson Trimble was just the opposite in his talk. Mild and pleasant just like he use to be in Zanesville. I could almost imagine how you would look if you was here. You would want to go up and kiss the old man wouldnt you?

As regards to the 74th and 69th Regiments leaving Camp Chase I cannot tell as there are so many rumors afloat that we cannot tell. But if the Regiment does go I will let you know as soon as possible, which I do not think will be soon.

Will you tell Cousin Sam that "NO ONE" can join the regiment. Thats what I was told by the Commanding Officer of the Company, Capt. Owens for that was what instructions he received from his superior officers.

Give my respects to all the people that want to know where I am.

I suppose you heard that 200 prisoners left for Sandusky. Their places were filled up with about 300 more. So you see that they do not decrease very fast.

Give my love to all the family and yourself.

From your affectionate Brother

Geo. T. Copeland

P.S. Tell Pa not to feel bad because I do not answer his letter and Cousin Sam the same.

Yours

Geo. T. Copeland

Camp Tod

MAY 9, 1862

Dear Sister, *Sister Lois*

I thought I would write you a few lines and let you know I am well and enjoying myself down here in Dixie. We moved from our first camp and are now encamped in a nice grove just outside the city. The water is as good as ever was drank by anybody.

We are assured by Governor Johnson that we are to stay at Nashville as long as we are in Tenn.

We are assured by some of our highest officers that they think we will be disbanded in 2 or 3 months. If so I may have a chance to spend the 4th of July in Xenia or Zanesville.

I want you to write me a good long letter when you get this.

Write soon

Your affectionate Brother

Geo. T. Copeland

74th Regt. O.V.M.

Camp Tod

Nashville, Tenn.

Camp Tod

JUNE 2, 1862

Dear Sister,

I received your kind letter and was truly glad to hear from you once more. You know what good it does a person to get word from them they hold most dear on earth. I wish you to write me as often as you take a writing spell which is about once a week, is it not? I would that the war were over and means would admit of your coming to see one of the pretty Gardens of Eden spots of the world. About 1 and 1/2 miles from camp is a place where all kinds of flowers known and unknown are kept. For acres the place is covered with hot houses. There is a tower on the place 110 feet high and by the time you get to the top by the winding stairs you are as tired as a 1/2 mile walk would make you. Then they have a house that you look through some fancy glass and you see all kinds of colored flowers and at the same time it is a looking glass and shows all the trees behind you. 15 miles from camp is the Hermitage where Gen. Andrew Jackson is buried.

6 miles from camp is Gen. Hardens 4400 acre farm. A great part of his farm is put in a park. He has buffalo, deer, elk, bears and all kinds of wild animals. The weather is warm but a breeze is blowing all the time up from the river which does a good deal of good.

I would so like to see you once more but it is as the fortunes of war are decided and we may be able to come home in a few months.

My health is a little better as I get better used to the climate.

Write soon.

But I forget to tell you that I received Pa's letter Saturday and was glad to hear that you are all well at home. If I had time I would write but I must stop with bidding you all good bye.

Your affectionate Brother

Geo. T. Copeland

Mill Creek Bridge – 4½ miles from Nashville

DEC. 1, 1862

My Dear Sister Virginia,

A day or two ago I received your kind and affectionate letter and I can truly say that it always gives me joy to get a letter from my sister Virginia.

If it will not worry patience too much I will tell of a few incidents that transpired during our blockade by the rebels. It was in the later part of August that the line of communication was broken up and the few troops in Nashville were put on half rations and after Buell and his Army were about to leave the place. Buell wanted to leave the city but Gen. Negley (our general) and Andy Johnson said no. He said his Little Chosen Band could keep the city and you know whether we did or not.

After Buell left we had issued to us bread and fresh beef and 1/4 ration of salt and that was all.

No soap, candles, vinegar, sugar, coffee, rice or beans.

We captured a bushel of rye and made rye coffee for awhile.

But had you of come to our table some day and you would think that we were almost starved out but we had the sacred trust of keeping Nashville and we did it.

Our Regiment was on picket every few days and when on two different times the rebels made demonstrations on the picket posts and went away worst by considerable.

We went out skirmishing 3 times. The first time there were killed as far as could be ascertained twenty of the rebels and none on our side. In the second skirmish 36 of the rebels were killed and one on our side. The third time we captured 2 of their pickets.

But that day is all past and now reinforcements have come and we are now at Mill Creek Bridge.

It is expected that the paymaster will pay us Wednesday and if he does I will send 40 dollars home by the express which I want Pa to spend for the home uses and rent.

Now Virginia if you can keep from it I do not want you to teach school no more or any other of our family.

I know I am able to take that the rent all right as long as I am in the army and if I get home I know your big brother can make a small pittance towards the family good.

I do not want any of my sisters as long as I am hale and hearty to help keep me or any of our family.

Pa wanted to know how our officers were. Our 1st Lieut. is acting Adjutant and Capt. Owens is a cheat and a humbug to the government. He is not worth his weight in mess pork. He is going to resign as soon as pay day I hear. He is not liked by a man in the Regt. Our Second Lieut. is as good a man as you could scare up.

But as it is getting late I must close by bidding you. Good night.

Your affectionate Brother

Geo. T. Copeland

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

JAN. 11, 1863 (4)

Dear Sister Theo
Dear Sister Theo,

Oh! How glad I was to get a letter from you and Mollie Brown.

I had had no letters for so long and a spell of the Blues and downheartedness had come over me that I could not shake off. But them letters set them to flight and God bless you for it for if I had not had a letter for a day or two more I believe I would have been sick.

I got a letter from Dr. McChing before the one you sent by mail. I was not disappointed but if you have a chance to send my gloves and socks by anybody send them and as for my New Years dinner I will chew a few "hard tack" and think it is biscuit and that will do.

Dear Theo, I went through scenes and saw and heard things that God grant I may never see again.

Men with arms off, legs off, brains scattered on the ground, bowels hanging out. Here a body without any head on it. Here a body cut in two pieces with a shell. Here a hole dug in the ground ten feet deep and as many wide half full of bodies, a few cornstalks thrown on them and then filled up with dirt.

Oh! God grant that this war may close that man may come to a real sense of his wrong and make peace.

But for all this do not for a moment think that I want the North to give one inch. NO. NO. NO.

Theo the ground that we first fought on and last when they sent out to bury the dead our men had been stripped of their clothing so the rebels could fool us with our clothes as they did in Wednesday's fight. As a body of them came up we had orders to cease firing as we were firing on our own men. They had our clothes and our flag and when they came close enough they fired on us and then run.

If Mollie Brown gets my letter go over and read it as it contains a journal of the taking of Murfreesboro, and it will do for you.

I would give my bounty and back pay to get to see my friends in Xenia and Zanesville for one day but I must not complain. When you write to Zanesville tell them I am safe as I am afraid they will not get my letter.

Good Bye.

I am dear sister
Your affectionate Brother

Geo. T. Copeland

Headquarters, 2nd Division

14th Army Corps, Army of the Cumberland

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

APRIL 20, 1863

Dear Sister Lois,

Dear Sister Lois,

Before I begin this note I want to ask one question. Who in the family do I owe a letter to? There are so many letters and orders going through the office that if I do not as soon as I get a letter answer it I almost sure to forget it.

Well through the entire day I will think that in the evening I will write a letter home and somebody brings in an order that has to be sent out as soon as can be copied, well then I forget that I was to pen a word or two to the loved ones at home and so it goes day after day and week after week. If I did not like the present time when all is hushed in the silence of sleep take up a pen and scribble a few words that nobody can read or that anybody cares about.

But I am transgressing from the regular line of letter writing (did you ever know me to do otherwise) and therefore I must change my subject to the pleasing thing of war. What is war? A large body of men that are governed by one man as their leader go out and meet another lot of the same flesh and blood and the side that can kill the most and wound the most are the best men. Is it not a pleasant subject to dwell on? You go out and see a field after a battle is over and have the men that are almost on the verge of Eternity curse their God and ask you to take a pistol and relieve them of suffering.

Last night a spy that belongs to our Army was coming in to our lines and one of the pickets seeing him and supposing him to be rebel shot at him and hit him and it is supposed he is about dead, if he is not already.

In the 19th Ill. Volunteers this morning a wagon run over a man and killed him instantly, but such are the realities of life and doings in an enemy country.

Why does not Virginia write me a letter some of these days. I drew my money day before yesterday and I would send Pa some but I believe I will wait a few days and see if the law is passed granting furloughs to the men. If so I might take it in my head to ask for one but I would not come if I had to give up my present position. God grant the day may soon dawn when I can come to see with the cares of a soldier's life taken off my shoulders. For you know that your brother is doing all he can and has as much to his K (his life) as the proudest General that trods Columbias proud soil.

God Bless you all at home is my prayer.

Please write soon.

I am Dear Sister your affectionate Brother,
Geo. T. Copeland

Camp near Murfreesboro

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

MAY 3, 1863

Dear Sister Virginia,

And I owe you a letter do I? Well I suppose I will have to still owe it or send you a poor scribble for payment.

A few days ago our 1st Lieutenant and 50 men of which I was one were sent to the depot to move a few goods there and when we went back to camp the men had all gone out to the front as an attack was expected on our lines. But in a couple of hours came back and we all drew shelter tents or dog tents as the boys call them and put them up and after 9 o'clock roll call went to bed. At 11 they come and routed us out of bed and told us to pack our knapsacks and dog tents and be ready to move in "15" minutes with two one day rations (could you get ready to move in a new part of town in 15 minutes). The men told the Officers and the Officers told the Colonel that they would not carry the dog tents and the Colonel put two of the Captains under arrest for "Mutiny" but after all the men did not carry them and do solemnly declare that they will burn them before they carry them. We marched out in the country about 5 miles and staid (in company with 21st Ohio and 78th Pennsylvania and Battery G, 1st Ohio) for three nights and two days but no enemy appeared and in the evening we came back to camp and put ourselves in readiness for a forward movement. Which means all the men that are not able to march are sent to the convalescent camp and all repairing made that is needed, rations and ammunition drawn, and everything of that kind that is needed.

"Fare thee well and if forever be forever fare thee well"

Good Bye. Write soon.

Your affectionate Brother

Geo. T. Copeland

P.S. Did you get my likeness? Is it all right?

Camp of 74th Regt. Ohio Volunteer Infantry


Murfreesboro, Tenn.

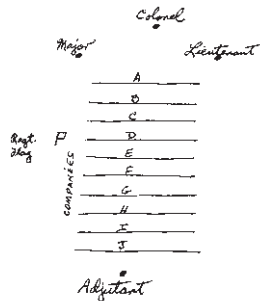
JUNE 6, 1863

Dear Sister Virginia,

"Better late than never" will be a good motto for me to use in regard to my letter that I owe you, but which my humble endeavors are now going to be put in force to try and collect a few items if interest to write about and if when they are put together they can be called a letter well and good and your answering it will be an evidence that you accept it as such.

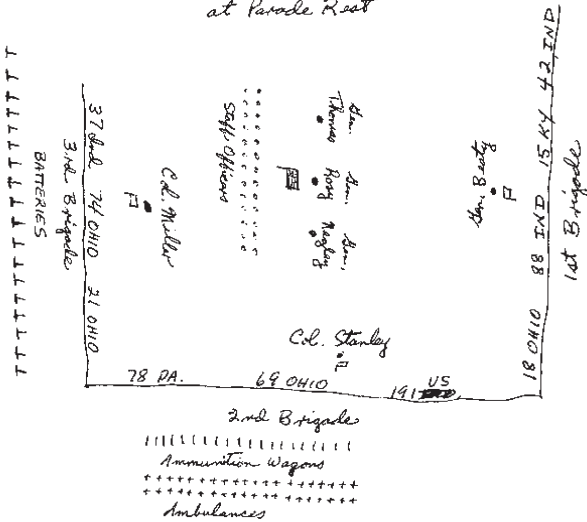
In the first place I will try and give you a short sketch of a review our Division had last Wednesday, June 3rd. For several days the men had been brushed up which means our accouterments had all been blacked then all the brass plates and brass buttons brightened up. Our knapsacks blackened and haversacks washed and canteen straps blacked or washed (if they were cloth ones), and clothes washed and brushed up and neatly packed in our knapsacks and boots and shoes blacked up and last but not least of all our faces and hands washed. Now you may laugh at that for you may think that soldiers may not wash their faces and hands. But as a general thing soldiers keep themselves cleaner than some of the boys at home for necessity compels them to, to have good health.




Well I do declare I am going off my path of telling you about the review, but I will take a good start again. At about 1 o'clock in the afternoon the drums beat the roll and in ten minutes the Regiment was out in line and in five more we were marching in column of companys (which is this only the distance between the companys is such that they can wheel in line again so fashion ) to join the rest of the Division on the parade ground which is about 2 miles from camp and is a nice field, level as a lawn, and about 40 acres in extent and there formed in the following order.



George Copeland's original illustrations redrawn by Thomas Pfeiffelmann.

1st Division, 14th Army Corp.
 Army of the Cumberland
 at Parade Rest



We were formed in the rear, open order (which is this ) which represents a company at close order and open order is ) and Lt. Colonel Tucat rode along and inspected us to see if ) we were all brushed up and everything ready for the review (as he is the Department Inspector General) as he was going past our Regiment he said to General Negley who was with him. "I am looking for a man without a haversack but I cannot find one" which showed that we were well equipped. We then went back to close order and stacked arms and watched the 19th Illinois drill in the skirmish and bayonet exercise, and I must say it was the nicest drill and the best too that I ever saw.

At 3 o'clock the Division wheeled in column of Companies and marched around the field so that every man passed in front of the General, the Artillery following in after the Ambulance Corps in behind the Ammunition Train. The dotted lines show how we passed and shows that all stopped in the same position as we were at first.

After that we marched back to camp and so ended the best review (so some of the visitors said) that ever took place in the Army of the Cumberland.

The next day we had orders to prepare 8 days rations. Three to be put in our haversacks and five in our knapsacks. But as yet we have not gone anywhere but there are some reports that the rebels are fighting at

Franklin and we may have to go there some of these days.

Several months ago General Rosecrans sent a man out to spy, and after he got inside the lines an officer put him in the ranks and after he was there awhile he escaped and got back to Murfreesboro day before yesterday and the first man he met was this officer with a Captain's uniform on spying in our lines. You may be sure he was arrested in a hurry, so now he may have to stretch hemp and our man will be paid for the few months he acted rebel soldier.

Yesterday a man was hung about a mile from camp for killing a Union man. Some of the boys in camp went over to see him hung but I did not. Up to the last moment he said he was innocent and said they would find out so at the Judgement seat.

A man is to be shot Monday in the 59th Ohio for desertion.

Several of the 74th Ohio boys came back to the Regiment today that were captured at Stone River.

I now hear that our men had captured 200 men and 400 horses at Triune, Tenn. and had also repulsed and driven back the rebels from Franklin.

A new Colonel was appointed to the Regiment and came back today. It is Col. Given former Lt. Col. Of the 18th Ohio. The men all join in saying that he is in the wrong place, and if they do not like him he had better be in a hornets nest, for soldiers sting worse than hornets sometimes. Probably you have never heard why Col. Moory resigned.

If you remember alright I once told you that he ordered the men to pack up their shelter tents and they would not do it because they could not carry them. He said they should carry them if it was a cart load and that a controversy arose between him and Capts. Fisher and McElvay and that he put them under arrest. Well the trial came off and during that time the Colonel made so many different statements and interrupted the court so often that they ordered him out of the room. As soon as the trial would be over the Capts. were going to put in some charges against him. As soon as he heard they were he found out he was not well enough to stand soldiering and handed in his resignation. It was accepted for the good of the service I suppose. So that the reason that he resigned was not on account of bad health but for fear of being dismissed from the service.

Well Virginia I never made any endeavors to get my discharge papers, but I might have tried for them if I had not got encouragement from home to stay. For you know that when I left home it was in very dutiful circumstances but I hope that you all have forgiven your soldier boy for what you then called a rash act but I do not. I now have over a year of

my time out, or how would I stand if your Brother was a drafted man or a conscript. God grant I may never be so much behind my duty that I owe my country to stay behind and have to be forced to join in the ranks. I was then in a kind of humor they called the blues, and now that has wore off (you know all our family have them). I am as contented as a hog on ice.

For the last week or ten days it has rained nearly every day and night but I think it is about over now and if it is we may expect some hot weather. I hope ere this letter reaches you General Grant may have captured Vicksburg and all its garrison, and General Banks take Fort Hudson and that will be a blow that the rebels will never get over. Then if the Army of the Potomac will for once win a battle and take Richmond then I will begin to think the war will end sometime or other.

It is my opinion that the Army of the Cumberland is laying quiet waiting for what General Grant does and if he succeeds there then Good Bye Murfreesboro and all hail Chattanooga.

Now Virginia I have put down a good many words and if you will accept them as a letter I would be thankful.

Give my best respects to all my friends and Aunt Hannah and keep a good share for yourself.

Good Bye
Your affectionate Brother
Geo. T. Copeland

Camp of 74th Regt. O.V.I.

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

JUNE 6, 1863

Dear Sister Virginia,

I had the extreme pleasure of receiving your kind letter yesterday and was glad to know that you had gotten my letter.

There is nothing in the life of a soldier that is so much calculated to make him down hearted and discouraged as to know day after day as the mail comes in that there is none for him.

He begins to think well, here I am laying out of nights in rain or blow with blanket that you at home would think insufficient to keep you warm in your feather beds. With nothing but some hard bread and bacon (indeed for the last few months we have been getting poor "Grub" from the Quartermaster) Pa must not blame me if I can not send him as much money as I use to when we were down in Nashville. For here everything is so high and I like to get a few things to eat once in a while that in a short time amounts to a right smart sum. But you know that every cent of money that I can spare is thankfully given to you at home. For the present I have to get all my things in trust of the Butler or Mr. Allen for they have quit paying down here for the present. You at home staying in warm houses living off the fat of the land and yet can not take a few minutes spare time to write to a soldier because it is too much trouble. Now do not take that to home because I get a letter every week and you may be assured they are fully appreciated.

I was only talking of how they are with some of the boys in the Regiment. There is one boy in our Company whom I have known to be made sick by disappointing him in not writing.

I was up to the 5th Kentucky a few days ago to see Sam Ratcliff. He is hospital steward and was well at the time I saw him. Charlie Lillebridge is in the same Regiment. Dr. Dixon or Dickson and myself went over to the 97th Ohio a few days ago to see our friends over there.

Capt. Berkshire, Lieuts. Innes and Ewing were well as well as Capt. Hull and Lt. Cox and all the boys I knew. I wish that Mr. Potwin knew I was in the army and would try and get me a position. I believe he would if Pa would tell him. Now I want you all to remember me in your prayers at home for yesterday I took the most dangerous place in the Regiment. You might say that of flag bearer but I do think that one place is as dangerous as another and with Gods blessing I will be as safe there as any place.

Col. Josiah Given is from Cosochton and use to practice law in Zanesville. I like him first rate. Good bye.

Your affectionate Brother

G.T. Copeland

Dechard Station, Tenn.

AUGUST 8, 1863

Dear Sister Virginia,

Day before yesterday I received a letter from Father and yesterday I received a cap and newspaper for which I am thankful. "A soldier knows how to appreciate a kindness" and you know that when in an enemy's country that anything that comes to our remembrance from "them we hold dear" we strive to return a favor if ever it becomes my lot to be placed in a situation to repay my friends at home for their promptness in doing me a favor then cheerfully I will do it.

Sometimes when I lay me down to sleep on my bed of rails I dream of home:

*"Oh! Sweet are the fancies that come with our dreaming
When low on our knapsacks we sink to repose,
Of the home and the household where soft eyes are beaming
And tender cheeks blushing with tints of the rose,
Of the gentlest of whispers - the fondest of greetings
From lives that we Love as we love our own life,
But alas! While our pulses with joy hush their beatings
The war bugle sounds - and we spring up to strife."*

Often yes often have I sat down in the old rocking chair and held long converse with my sister Virginia when the drums sound the roll call I wake up and see myself not under the old household roof but under a Southern sky.

Maybe you ask do we complain. Well Virginia I have heard more complaining at home when people come home from a short walk of a few miles, "what a hard time they had. They thought they would never get back," and such like. No you will hear the soldiers say "well if I get home safe at the end of my time I will be satisfied."

I am contented here as long as our government strives to do all in its power to put down this wicked rebellion.

*"We are under a gallant leader
Hurrah for Rosecrans!
The man of iron nerve,
Whose soldiers never reverse
When he their ranks commands,
The man who always leads
His soldiers to brave deeds,
Hurrah for Rosecrans!"*

“The man who never lost a battle” is the one who has the confidence of the “Army of the Cumberland”. The soldiers are proud of him and he is proud of his soldiers and it does not make matters worse because he is a native of Ohio.

*“He may boast of the south, the east and the west,
But Ohio is my country, I love it best.”*

They are at work now organizing Colored regiments and probably my sister would like to hear her brother’s thoughts on the subject. Well being we are engaged in a war for the restoration of the Union which has been sullied by a set of fanatics who live in the South and who are in possession of Chattles called slaves who are human beings, only their color is black. In the course of the war it becomes necessary to free those Chattles then who can oppose the arming of them and help to work out their countries good.

*“De darkeys feel so berry lonesome
Libing in the log house on de lawn,
Dey move dar tings to Massa’s parlor
For to keep it while he’s gone,
Dar’s wine and cider in the kitchen
And de darkeys dey’ll hab some,
I s’pose se’ll all be confiscated
When the Linkum sojers come.”*

In a few days we are expecting to move again, where to we do not know but we are under marching orders. There is some chat of our Division going to Bridgeport on the Tennessee River. It may be but I cannot tell.

Tell Flora that I will write her some of these days. She must not think that I am unmindful of any of the family. No indeed. I hope the day may again come when I can set down and tell Ma, Pa, Virginia, Theo, Fred, Lois, Flora, Ed, Ben and dear little Jed of my long weary marches and fight my battles over again. God Bless you is my prayers.

Good Bye. Write often.

From your affectionate Brother,

Geo. T. Copeland

Dechard Station, Tenn.

AUGUST 10, 1863

Dear Sister Lois,

Do I owe you a letter? Or do you owe me one? Or are you and I square on the correspondence? If so I am going to see if I cannot break the profound silence that reins supreme divine around the family of T. J. Halls. I have written two or three times to my sister Theo and for almost three months have not had as much as a scratch of a pen from her. It may be that she does not think a soldier, a private soldier, is not worthy to correspond with the wife of a Northern Merchant. I know that a man in the ranks, however his station life may be, is not looked on as anybody but gospel is not true that this if it was not for the private soldier now in the field, Washington would have been sacked, the North would have been whipped, and the South would have gained the independence they have so long fought for and which they will never win.

*"Our fathers God to thee
Authors of liberty,
To thee we sing
Long may our land be bright
With freedoms holy light,
Protect us by thy might
Great God our King"*

*"We live in hard and stirring times
Too sad for mirth, too rough for rhymes,
For songs of peace have lost their chimes
And that's what's the matter!
The men we held as brothers true
Have turned into a rebel crew,
So now we have to put them through
And that's what's the matter!"*

Well Lois, I have been in the army going on two years and yet every few days we find something new to talk about. Yesterday for the first time I ever saw a Brigade Dress Parade and that was one held by our 7th Brigade. At four o'clock the assembly was sounded and we took our Flags and reported to the Headquarters of the Brigade with them. Then the Brigade formed the line of battle in the following order: 78th Pennsylvania, 21st Ohio, 74th Ohio and 37th Indiana. All the drummers in the Brigade reported to the head of the 78th Pennsylvania. After the line was formed a company came around and escorted the Colors to the

center of the line and the Brigade Commander, Col. John F. Miller, was there to receive them. As we came up in front of him he ordered the Brigade to present arms and then said Colors Post and each Colors reported to their regiments. Then he brought the Brigade to shoulder arms and the parade went off as all the others do of the same denomination, only in dress parade only one battalion is represented and here 4 battalions were in line.

While I am writing the regiment is preparing to go on picket as the regiment that whos turn it is to go on is going down in Alabama. We are under orders to go and expect our Brigade will go tomorrow and then farewell to Tennessee. We have had a long stay in your State but now duty calls us in another clime and go we must.

They say John Morgan scarred the people so in Xenia that they could not eat their meals for over a week and as for sleep some of them never shut their eyes until he was over 200 miles away. Good for the loyal little town of Xenia!

*"Yes sound the march our northern freemen,
Turn not back from man or demon"*

But I must close as I want to write another letter.

Good Bye. Write soon.

Give my respects to the Browns and to all inquiring friends.

From your affectionate Brother,

Geo. T. Copeland

3 miles from **Stevenson**, Alabama – Cave Springs

AUGUST 21, 1863

Dear Sister Lois,
Dear Sister Lois,

This morning I had the pleasure of receiving your kind letter and hasten to reply.

Now Lois do not for one moment think that I would try and evade writing you. No indeed a letter for me from Lois is as welcome as from any of my correspondents. Now Lois do you think that I would write a falsehood to Father in regards to my health. I can tell you truly that my health is better here than it ever was in Ohio. I do not have the headache here one day where I had it a month in Ohio and you know that I use to suffer with it there.

Now I will endeavor to answer you one and all of the questions you ask me to the best of my ability.

I am still color bearer and know all its dangers but will try to do my duty. As for the south it is a place that I would not live in was the war over. After we left Nashville I have not seen as good looking town as Putnam in the whole lot. Mixahala is a sample of some of the southern towns down here. Sometimes we will travel all day and not see but one house and sometimes not any. Some days we have not warm but hot days down here such as you never saw in Ohio. I have not had a letter from anybody but my regular correspondents and you know them all. Sabbath day is the same in the army as any other day with the exception that we do not drill on that day. Sometimes we are on the march and as other times we are in camp and then we do not have regular preaching as we have no Chaplin in our regiment.

We have a sermon about once a month from the men of the Christ-Association and then they distribute books and papers. I have a hymn book that one gave me. We have not had a prayer meeting since we were in Camp Tod, Nashville.

Now I have answered one and all and hope you will not think that now as you found out all you wanted that you would quit writing.

Give my love to Fred, Theo and Eddie and tell them to write me and I will try and answer it.

Good Bye from your affectionate Brother,

Geo. T. Copeland

Co. C, 74th Regt. O.V.I.
3rd Brig., 2nd Div., 14th A.C.
Stevenson, Alabama

Chattanooga, Harrison County, Tenn.

NOVEMBER 10, 1863

Dear Sister Virginia,

It has been some time since I last wrote you but I hope I am not forgotten so that a letter would be unacceptable.

I believe the last letter I wrote you was from Dechard, Tenn. Since then I have been through a portion of Alabama and Georgia, saw a skirmish and a hard fought battle, and am now back in old Tennessee and have seen a skirmish here and taken two trips back in Alabama again. It is a life full of changes, today we are safely in camp and tomorrow we may be in some other state (for we are so close to them that it is only a few hours walk) and engaged in deadly conflict with our enemies. What a life for a man to commence life on. But experience is a good teacher and I can say with a good grace that I would not for any amount of money sell what I have learned since I volunteered. It has shown me the frailty of man in many forms. Its shown me that friendship is strongest with those in authority. Now Virginia you may think I am getting on a queer subject but you know or at least I do my views of that. I would think no more of my Father in his humble trade of Hatter than were he president of the United States.

You may think different and things are different in the army from that, but I have seen so much of it that I disprize it. It is a saying that wars render a nation better and purer. God grant that our country may become purer from this dreadful revolution. That its leaders may be disfused of the earth and their influence be a unit in society.

I was sorry that you had taken the place where you did if it was at all against your feelings knowing that you did not like to teach. But I hope soon to be able to grant you the privilege of never teaching again.

That I can be a help to Pa in his old age so that he can rest in quiet. That will be the study of my life, not to live for myself but for our family.

I use to be a wild bad boy and have often looked back with sorrow at the times when I offended my kind parents with my actions. But I trust I have become more of a man, that my boyishness has passed away and that I have something now to do.

Now sister you must write me a good long letter for I always love to get one from Virginia and when you write to our folks in Virginia tell them that I send love to all and also give my respects to all enquiring friends and also give my address to them and tell them to write to me and I will try to answer them.

Good Bye. Write soon.

From your affectionate Brother,

Geo. T. Copeland

Co. C, 74th Regt. O.V.I.

3rd Brig., 1st Div., 14th A.C.

Chattanooga, Tenn.

Chattanooga, Tenn.

JANUARY 12, 1864

Dear Sister Virginia,

Your kind favor of the 1st came to hand day before yesterday and after being fully considered I thought I would answer it before I left Tennessee for home.

I suppose you have heard ere this that the 74th has reenlisted in the Veteran Volunteers. When I see you I will fully explain to you why I did so. You must not think that I am going to desert the family altogether.

I suppose when I get home which if all things work good will be the last of this month or the first of the next. I will have to go to Martins Ferry or could you, if I will send you money, come down to Zanesville for a few days for you know they are all strangers to me there. Write to Pa and tell him if you could and when I get to Zanesville I will send the money to pay your way there and back.

There is no news to write.

Good Bye from your affectionate Brother,

Geo. T. Copeland

P.S. "Barcus is willing"

Putnam

FEBRUARY 15, 1864

Dear Sister Virginia,

This evening the bus brought Theadie and Donie and want you to come home this Thursday coming, for you see Donie says she can't stay longer than a week from day after tomorrow. So you must come right away, "don't delay till another day". You needn't think I am going to write a letter for I aint.

Good Bye

Flora

Dear Sister Virginia,

Do not be in a hurry to come to see me for I won't evaporate.

But if convenient come this week as I am going back to Xenia about the 25th of the month.

All well. Good Bye.

From your affectionate Brother,

George

Putnam

MARCH 15, 1864

Dear Sister Virginia,

What a queer thing this world is. When I arrived at Bridgeport I heard there that the train would not get to Bellaire in time for me to get on the train so I started and walked to Bellaire and after a short time found me at home all safe and sound as a dollar.

Enclosed find a picture which you will give to Mary B. with my compliments.

Write me some time. Good Bye. Family all well.

From your affectionate Brother,

George

Shelbyville, Tenn.

APRIL 2, 1864

Dear Sister,
Dear Sister

Once more in Shelbyville and a long walk before us.

We left Louisville, Kentucky Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning we arrived in Nashville and there we learned that there was not transportation for us so we have to walk to Graysville, Georgia about 200 miles from Nashville. We have been 5 days on the road now and are 55 miles on the way.

Tomorrow we start for Tullahoma and from there to Stevenson, Bridgeport, Chattanooga and there join our division 35 miles south of Chattanooga.

Now Lois I want you to write me a long letter because I want something to read when I get to the front which will be about the middle of this month.

There is no news to write here.

I will try and see James Sherman when I get to Tullahoma if he is there. That is where the Regt. is.

Give my love to all. Write soon.

Good Bye from your affectionate Brother,

Geo. T. Copeland

Co. C, 74th Regt. O.V.I.

3rd Brig., 1st Div., 14th A.C.

Chattanooga, Tenn.

Graysville, Georgia

APRIL 15, 1864

Dear Sister Lois,
Dear Sister Lois,

Your kind letter of the 6th was in camp for me when I arrived and can truly say was welcome for as we were so long on the way word from home was badly needed by us poor mortals of the blue cloth profession.

I do not know from what letter you answered. I wrote you from Shelbyville and Flora from Stevenson and so many more that I can hardly keep the run of them.

Would like a history of the time since I left home. Well that is asking a good deal and I will give you some notion of it.

Left Zanesville on Wednesday the 16th of March and went to Columbus and there found out the Regiment had not reported. Put up at the American house and stayed until the 17th when Dr. Duncan and myself put up at the National Hotel and stayed until Saturday when I reported to Camp Chase (had previously reported to Major Fisher in town) where we stayed until Wednesday when we took the cars for Cincinnati where we arrived at 10 o'clock that night (only 12 hours going 120 miles) and marched to the 6th Street barracks. Staid there until Thursday afternoon when we took the boat and next morning marched to the soldier's home in Louisville, Ky where we staid until Saturday afternoon and then took the cars for Nashville. I never want to travel the way we did that night. For a few miles that night we made a mile a minute over as rough a road as ever you saw. Sometimes the car would bunch like a ball and then come down on the track so hard that it would jar you like everything. But we found ourselves safe and sound in Nashville Sunday morning and put up our tents and staid until Tuesday noon when we started and marched out on our road to Chattanooga. Three days we spent in going to Murfreesboro and 2 to Shelbyville. Two to Tullahoma. One to Dechard. One to Cowen. Two to Stevenson. At Stevenson we took the top of a train and came to Chattanooga and staid

there until Tuesday morning when we marched to this place in one day, 17 miles. Now we are in camp once more going on as if we had not been home. But there are a good many pleasant memories of the brief 30 days in my mind which are talked about over our camp fires.

May the day not be far distant when I can come home to stay until I want to go myself.

Give my respects to all enquiring friends and love to all the family and sometimes give a thought to your affectionate Brother,

Geo. T. Copeland

Co. C, 74th O.V.I.
3rd Brig., 1st Div., 14th A.C.
Graysville, Georgia

Write soon and often.

When you write to Virginia tell her that Emma Large (now Mrs.) told me in Columbus if she would write her a letter to Piqua she would answer it. They have moved there now.

G.T. Copeland

Camp of 74th Regt. O.V.I.

Graysville, Georgia

APRIL 29, 1864

Dear Sister Lois
My Dear Sister Lois,

A few moments ago I was handed a letter and when I opened it there was Pa looking at me.

Now do not suppose that I fainted away and looked as if I was going crazy. No indeed. But I tell you it was a pleasant surprise and one that he has my thanks for.

It is indeed a good picture. May the day come when I can thank the original for his many kindnesses.

My 6 came duly to hand and will be sent to their different places some of these days.

Will look for the Regiments this afternoon. There was some skirmishing out in front this morning which is a true sign that the Rebels are going to make a backward movement or else are sending some of their forces to Lee's Army.

Whenever you want any questions answered (unless it is of a certain nature) write to me and I will answer then if in my power.

The day that Theo and I went to Columbus we were detained there and we went to her house by enquiring at the depot. When I went up there I left my things there for a few days while I staid at the hotel as they were safer there.

I did not get my blanket colored for I was too lazy or else was too negligent.

Poor boy he needs a wife to take care of him. Cannot you interest some pretty girl in his favor so that when he comes home he can set up housekeeping. I can cook, eat, wash and iron. Now if that aint enough for any husband tell me so.

I sent 4 pictures to Virginia. 4 of the "old man" in his young days. You do not take me to be over 40 do you? (By those pictures)

Give my love to the family and kindest regards to all of my enquiring friends.

Give Pa my thanks for the cap and cover and sometimes give a stray thought to your Soldier Brother,

George

In line of Battle in front of Lost Hill, Georgia

JUNE 16, 1864

Dear Sister Virginia,

Not long since I had the pleasure of receiving a letter from you and can say that I was very glad indeed.

Was very sorry to hear that you had been sick and hope ere this reaches you you will be again in the enjoyment of good health. I wrote Pa a letter day before yesterday and after I had written we left where we were and advanced about a mile or two and built a breast work almost in sight of the Rebel skirmishers. One man in Company H was killed and one in Co. G was mortally wounded. Yesterday we advanced about 3/4 of a mile just inside of the first line of Rebel works.

When we again move I do not know. The Rebel Gen. Bishop Polk was killed by one of our shells day before yesterday. He was standing beside Gens. Johnson and Hardee when he was struck.

The 78th Ohio is close here but I have not seen it. Young Mathews sent me his compliments yesterday and says he is safe so far.

Saw Dave Jones yesterday. He was well.

While at Resara I saw the 15th Ohio boys. Had a talk with Mary's brother. Have not seen him since.

This is one of the longest campaigns our army was ever in but I am confident of our ultimate success for we have a heavy force:

Army of the Cumberland,	4th Corps,	commanded by Gen. Howard
	14th Corps,	“ “ Gen. Palmer
	20th Corps,	“ “ Gen. Hooker
Army of the Mississippi,	15th Corps,	“ “ Gen. Logan
	16th Corps,	“ “ Gen. Dodge
	17th Corps,	“ “ Gen. Blair
Army of the Ohio,	23rd Corps,	“ “ Gen. Scofield

Bridge Guards or the Reserve those relieved by the O.V.I. are under Gen. Rousseau. So anybody that ever saw an Army Corps can form some small notion of what our army is. Our Corps when we left Ringgold had 73 regiments in it.

Well Virginia I hope you will write often and long letters for I love to hear from you. Well I must bring my scrawl to a close.

Good Bye.

I am Dear Sister your affectionate Brother,

George T. Copeland

Near Marietta, Ga

JUNE 19, 1864

Dear Sister Virginia,

A few days ago I sent a few words to Pa and then in a day or two I wrote you and hope that ere this you have received them. Today I was the recipient of one from you and one from Lois and one from Pa and one from Eddie and a paper and a handkerchief. So for one day that was a good mail but as we have been on the front line all the time we got several days today at once. Many thanks are due you for them and that is all I can offer for I cannot make much of a letter while we are so situated. We have to write between moves (and sometimes we move a dozen times a day) and often we are up half the night building breastworks to shield us for the next day. When morning comes some other division will change their position so we have to change ours and throw up works (we have built so far 19 breastworks on this march).

Day before yesterday we moved and built our works so close that our line of skirmishers could fire into their works. Yesterday morning we were laying behind our works when fall in was given and only had three men wounded. Last night they withdrew from their works and are now trying to get away. All day long our men are working to cut off their retreat and now the word is that we have one Corps cut off so that they cannot get away. I hope it is so and that we can get them.

Now Virginia I have not time to write long as it is so dark that I cannot see the line on the paper hardly.

Enclosed you will find a few picture to put in the album. Will get some more if I can. One is Gen. Negley as he was at Battle of Stone River, Gen. Thomas as he is now and Walter Collins, one of my mess mates.

Good Bye. Write soon

Dr. Dickson is well and with the Regiments all right.

From your affectionate Brother,

George

P.S. Will write Lois in a short time if nothing happens. So she must not feel bad for my not writing to her first.

G. T. C.

Near Marietta, Ga

JUNE 20, 1864

Dear Sister Lois
Dear Sister Lois,

I was very glad indeed that my sister wrote me a letter and if she only saw with what eagerness I watch the mails when they come in you would not have any doubts on the subject.

We are in a dreary wilderness and many such little evidences of home thoughts are as shining spots in the desert of life. My sister knows that I love my dear Sisters. All of them (if I do bother them sometimes when I am at home) and would do anything in my power on earth for them.

But I must not brag too much of what I would do for fear you would ask me to do something that I would fail to do and then you would set me down as an imposter, which I may be for ought I know.

In writing to Virginia yesterday I said that I had a letter from Pa. I only meant that there was a Postscript to yours from him. You state that the papers are giving news of Battles all the time. With us we are in Battles nearly all the time. Some of the prisoners we take say that Sherman makes a good rear guard for their army. He keeps so well closed up to him. "Flora says that when her school is out she will write a long letter". What if I should say that when this Campaign is over I will write you. You would think strange. Try and do better than that Flora or I will have to give you a lecture.

The only way I can decide the question of work will be like the boy dividing the walnut. Give you the shell and say that neither of you have much to do. As for myself one days work and exposure we do is more than a match for a months work.

Day before yesterday while we were being shelled we were ordered once to lay down and it was raining as hard as you generally know it to rain. Yet we would lay there and (boom) would go the cannon and the shell would go over us like a streak of lightning and burst in our rear.

Battery 1, 1st Ohio is as brave a battery as ever went into action. When we were ordered down their three batteries were ordered down. Two from our Division and one from Gen. Baird's Division (2nd Division, 14th A.C.) and our Battery was just in front of us when we moved and Buckskin (an English officer who commands it and as he wears a pair of buckskin pants the boys call him buckskin) come and told the boys to load the guns there and "when you go out shoot fast and don't shoot wild" and then they went out to an open field only 900 yards from the Rebel fort and kept the Rebels back until we and they built

our works. They lost 13 men doing so (and the other batteries did not get into position until night).

When we move from here I do not know but as I write they are fighting pretty heavy in front but our Brigade is back in reserve and do not know when we will move.

Well I must bring my letter to a close. Hoping to hear from you again soon. I will close by bidding you to give my love to all my friends and relatives and those who take any interest in a poor Soldier boy.

Good Bye.

From your affectionate Brother,

George

On the banks of the Chattahoochie River

7 miles from Atlanta

JULY 12, 1864

My Dear Sister Lois,

Dear Sister Lois
I wrote a letter to Flora yesterday and in it told her that I had not received her letter but in the afternoon a mail came in and with it I looked for letter and thinking that I had just written her I would write you and that would do as well.

I hope that Flora will not take offence for it and I will be voucher for her that she will not. So here goes for an answer to it.

To begin with as in the case of Brother Sowers, I know of the same kind of a one in our Regiment. You will probably remember that Black whiskered man who use to come to Fred's store by name of Lucas. His brother and himself belonged to Co. D, and since we came back John died at hospital at Chattanooga with small pox and Basil was wounded at Buzzard Roost and died a few days ago at hospital in Jeffersonville, Ind. So both of the boys are gone in less than six months. They leave a father and one or two sisters to mourn their loss.

The next item of news on record is about a fire. On Sunday morning last a heavy column of smoke and blaze was to be seen in the direction of the river and for fear it might be the railroad bridge our Regiment was deployed as skirmishers and went out to see and found the Rebels gone and the bridge burned. Yet nobody rung the fire bell.

Next Angie Sherman came up to spend the afternoon. Why should I care if she did? She does not care enough for me to answer a letter I wrote her by bringing up some false notions of me being a criticizer. So she can await on somebody else in the corresponding line. I am as proud as she is.

Before I heard of John Hardens death I went over to see him and found he was no more but such scenes are not uncommon down here. It may be that you would think that I was as particular as I might have been in giving the particulars but it was my way of doing. Then comes some questions trying to find out how I behave myself down here. I will tell you this that since I was home I have tried more than ever I did in my life to live right. One year ago at Murfreesboro (June 15th) I commenced to read the Bible through. Today I am at the 13th Chapter of Second Corrinthians. So you see that I have nearly read the Good Book through while I am out. I read 4 chapters every day and have read them while laying behind breastworks with shells and minnie ball flying

fast, in camp, and on the weary march and today. I do not have a single cause for regret that I have done so. On the 7th of May, 1857 Ma gave me that Bible and at every place I have been on every march, in every camp, in every battle, that Bible has been with me. It is getting worn some now but if I ever live to get home there is only one person I would want to give it to and that person is my own Dear Mother.

There is one thing that should not worry you at home and that is fear that you will hear of the death of some one of your friends and relatives. That will not save their lives nor hasten their end and there is plenty of time for mourning after their death. So let us be. We are in God's kind care and keeping and his will is my own pleasure. I only wish you had some of the rain up where you are that we get sown here. Some days it rains all the time in torrents and the lightning and thunder are terrific. During one engagement we were in a thunder storm came up and the fight had to stop for a time. Man quit his work of slaughter with man and then the lightning stuck a tree and killed one or two men and wounded some more in the 1st Ohio. In the midst of life we are in death. So you see that it is not only down here that our life is exposed, it is the same everywhere.

Now Lois I have written and answered all the questions I could that Flora's letter contained. As I had written all the general news I will bring my poor scribble to a close. Give my love to Pa, Ma, Virginia, Lois, Flora, Bennie, and little Jeddie and all my friends and relatives. Good Bye.

Please write soon and remember
your loving Brother,

George

Camp, 74th Regt., Ohio Veteran Volunteer Infantry

Near Chattahoochie River, Ga

JULY 15, 1864

Dear Sister Virginia,

Once more I take up my pen to write a letter to go to the land of civilization for it is not to be found down here in this wooden country.

I suppose you will say what has come over George now that he writes so many letters. Well to answer the story we are now laying still doing nothing waiting on this side of the river for "Johnny" to go away from our front. Or in other words waiting for their army to be flanked from their present position.

Last night I witnessed one of the grandest sights in the heavens that I ever saw. A heavy storm was coming up and while yet a mile away it commenced to lightning. A good part of it was heat lightning and intermixed with sharp flashes and peals of thunder. The lightning flashes so fast that the light of one was hardly gone before it was followed by another. For an hour it was that way. I never saw the likes before.

To day Col. Given leaves us to go home on a thirty days furlough on account of sickness in his family. Col. Taylor, the Col. Of the 15th Ky in the 1st Brigade, is to take command of the Brigade for the reason that there is not a colonel left in our Brigade.

The 1st Wisconsin and 37th Indiana are commanded by Lieut. Cols. and the 74th Ohio, 21st Ohio and 79th Pennsylvania are commanded by Majors and the 38th Indiana is commanded by a Lieut. Col. So you see we are now rather short of Brig. Officers in our Brigade.

Gen. Johnson has come back and taken command of our Division again. If we had had our way of it he might have staid at home until the war is over.

What are you going to do this coming fall and winter? Are you going back to Martinsville? The way things are now at home I think the best thing you could do would be to go there and if you are sharp enough catch somebody who is fighting the Devil as a partner for life.

I wish I had the making up of some of your love matches. I think I could "Pop the Question" for you. Well well you are getting on a subject that you know nothing about or else your brain is turned. You will say maybe so it is. But I have nothing else to write about and I want to fill up the sheet. Therefore I have to put in a good deal of nonsense that might be left out as well as not.

It is astonishing to hear the rumors that are generally afloat in our camps. To believe them all would soon make an infidel of most anybody. One day we are in possession of Petersburg, the next that Grant has taken 14,000 prisoners. Then comes news that Burnside's Corps has been captured and today we hear that 3 Corps of Lee's Army are now threatening Washington.

It may be Lee's policy to try his old game, that he come over McClennan, with Grant. But so far I have confidence in the Hero of Vicksburg, and Missionary Ridge and think that Lee's plans will turn out to be a failure and will help Grant to work out his first plans.

Enclosed you will find one more picture for the album. It is a picture of the Captain of our Company just come back from Libby Prison.

Give my love to all the family and respects to all enquiring friends. I received the paper last evening and note contents.

Whenever you have a spare hour that you do not know what to do please write to me for a letter from home is always welcome.

Good Bye.

I am Dear Sister your affectionate Brother

George

In front of **Atlanta**, Ga

AUGUST 7, 1864

Dear Sister Lois,
Dear Sister Lois

Yesterday I had the pleasure of getting a letter from you.

It always does me good to get those tokens of regards from the loved ones at home.

I wrote to Pa this morning and in it told him that I would tell you of a trip we took on the 4th of the month.

On the evening of the 2nd, "get ready to march at 6 o'clock" was the order and we fell in line and moved from where we lay in reserve and relieved the 1st Brigade of our Division from the front line the morning of the 3rd. The 14th A.C. moved from the center to the right flank, all going but our Brigade. Butterfield's Division of the 20th Corps relieved our Division and we relieved a brigade of Baird's Division of the 14th Corps. The afternoon (about 1 o'clock) Butterfield came up and relieved us again and we moved as fast as we could to the extreme right and as it was very warm we suffered with the heat quite much. The distance was about 5 or 6 miles. We were there only about 5 minutes when orders came to go back as fast as we could to where we came from as we were needed. We started back and never rested a minute until we were back to our old quarters. I can tell you it was a hard march. The hardest I ever experienced since I came out. But when we came back we found every thing quiet. The Rebels had tried to take our skirmish line but were repulsed. Up to the present time we are at the same place and are temporarily attached to the 20th Corps. I wrote to Angie a few days ago again and will try and see if I will be more successful next time in getting her letter.

I have lost a good many letters lately as the citizens are very bad along the line of communications and get into bands and rob the mails.

On the 4th I finished the New Testament so I am once through the Bible that I can say was read carefully. On the same day I read 2 chapters in Genesis and will read 4 a day again. Dr. Dickson has promised me one of his pictures when we get into camp again, when he can send to Cincinnati for some. Also I have the promise of Col. Given as I gave him one of mine.

Give my love to all the folks who take the trouble to enquire for me. Robt. Miner is a Veteran Soldier but not in the sense you mean. Every soldier that has seen service of 2 years is called Veteran but he has not re-enlisted. The last time I saw him he was well.

But I will close.

Good Bye and ever remember me as
Your loving Brother,

George

In camp near **Atlanta**, Ga

SEPTEMBER 14, 1864

Dear Sister Virginia,

Your very kind favor of Sept. 2nd found me this morning all well. Tonight (for Tattoo has blown for lights out but I am running the chances to try and write this before anyone bothers me) finds me once more in an established camp after four months of as hard campaigning as the generality of men see or feel. On the evening of August 25th we broke camp with the 20th A.C. and moved to rear of the 14th A.C. The 26th we crossed Utoy Creek and took up a position to the right of the 23rd A.C. and that night our Corps moved over there. We staid until the morning of the 28th when we moved out and that night we camped side of Montgomery Railroad. The 29th we spent tearing up the road for 16 miles. Burning the ties and twisting the rails in all manner of shapes and leveling down the grade and embankments. It was the worst piece of road I ever saw in my life after we were through. The 30th marched southeast all day and tonight fines us about 2 1/2 miles from the road. The 31st enemy attack the Army of Tennessee at Jonesboro and our Division move down to the rear with their train and then go back after dark. Some of the Division got into camp at 2 o'clock A.M. Sept. 1st moved to the front and take up position and can see the Rebels about 1/2 mile away busy carrying rails to make works. Word comes "move to the next ravine" and at it we go. Jonnie opens up with one gun (12 pounds) which wounds one of Co. A. After getting here Col. Given says to us, "there is a fence a little ways in your front. If you can get there the day is ours." At it we go with yell and gain it without loss. Forward again and we cross and take their rail pile and then to the next woods we charge. "We are at the railroad," comes in the word from the skirmish line. We cross the woods and see the Macon Road. We thought that all was well but alas in one short hour our Regiment was to see sorrow.

Once more the word "Advance" and through a narrow strip of woods we go and no Rebels but when crossing an open field the Rebel "open and charge" was heard and then our Regiment suffered. 11 were killed outright and 31 wounded. Mellirue Davis was mortally wounded and died on the 3rd. William U. Wollenberry and James W. Moore were killed in Co. C. Lieut. Scott of Co. B was killed and this afternoon I attended the funeral of Lieut. Bricker of Co. G. That charge gave us Jonesboro. That charge gave us Atlanta. The Rebels said when they

heard the shooting it was either the 16th Shooters (Weinie Rifles) or the 14th A.C. for all agree that there is not a Corps in the army can handle an enfield any better than our Corps (they learned a lesson at Chickamauga).

Give my respects to all enquiring friends and Miss Barcus particular. I am sorry you are not going to board there but you know best. Write as soon as convenient and Pray for and ever remember your affectionate Brother,

George

direct to Atlanta, Ga.

Poetry by Ivo S. Owens, Co. C, 74th O.V.I.

Rome, Ga

OCTOBER 14, 1864

Dear Sister Virginia,

Your kind favor came duly to hand yesterday. Well I am always glad to hear from home but this time it was doubly so as we were out of letters so long and as we had to leave Atlanta and come up here to establish our communications the letters were a treat for us. I had the pleasure of getting ten (10) by that mail. So you see I had quite a little reading matter. All of Sherman's Army came away from Atlanta except the 20th Corps which holds the place. We have been marched hard I tell you after the Rebels' Army. I think that Hood will regret to the day of his death the day he bought his army north of the Chattahoochie River on the run. He did not bring rations to last him long and expected to capture ours at Big Shanty. When he came to that place he found "NIX" and so he is now between two armies, the Army under Gen. Thomas and the Army under Gen. Sherman. As the orders came to move I must quit.

Write soon.

Fired as before
from your affectionate Brother,

George T. Copeland

Co. C, 74th Regt. O.V.V.I.
3rd Brig., 1st Div., 14th A.C.
Atlanta, Ga.

Head-Quarters, 3rd Brigade, 1st Division
14th Army Corps, Dept. of the Cumberland

Near Galesville, Alabama

OCTOBER 25, 1864

Dear Sister Virginia,

Your kind letter came to hand while I was at Kingston, Ga. and as I did not have any chance to write ere this you must excuse my tardiness and hope for the better next time. As you see by the caption of this sheet I am now at Brig. Head-Quarters clerking in the Adjutant General Dept. I only came here yesterday but as I am trying to get a good understanding of the different branches of the Army I think I will like the place very well. You heard I was in the Inspectors office before and I know the run of that kind. Then I have had a good experience of Regimental duties. So you see I am on the road to a good military education and that is of some account. As yet I have not heard from Mary B. but hope that the next mail will give me a letter from her. I was very sorry to leave Atlanta so soon after occupation as we had made us some nice houses to live in. We were allowed to tear down the houses that were in the way of our new line of works for the defense of the place. We had made us some very nice places to stay. But duty calls and we do not complain as we are a little better humored than some of our friends in the North. For while we were destroying the last line of communication the last of August. They were in solemn assembly in Chicago trying to destroy us. We were successful in our effort there and I have no doubt but the Baltimore Nominees will have the city in their possession ere many weeks pass by. So note it be Lincoln and Johnson are the men for me and I am thankful that I have a vote to give them this fall. We left Atlanta Oct. 3rd and went to Marietta via Kingston, Rome, Resaca, Snake Gap, Summerville to this place and always too late to find the Rebels. They know what Sherman and they dare not meet him on any terms. I do not know how long we may stay here but we do not care. We are always ready. Give a soldier 15 minutes and he

can be ready to move to another state. Shorter time than some men in the North would want. I am glad you like your school where you now are. I would like to spend a few days at Martinsville again this winter but the fortunes of war will it otherwise and I have to submit with as good grace as possible.

But as it is late at night and I am tired writing I will have to close my uninteresting letter. Give my kindest regards to Mrs. Barcus and Mary if she be at home.

Remember ever as
your affectionate Brother,

Direct *George T. Copeland*

Hd-Qrs, 3rd Brig., 1st Div.
14th Army Corps
Atlanta, Ga.

Head-Quarters, 3rd Brig., 1st Div., 14th A.C.

Kingston, Ga

NOVEMBER 6, 1864

Dear Sister Virginia,

Yours received today and many thanks for your favor. Before I begin this I will tell you that I cannot pen you but a few lines as it is late and I am tired writing. Also I will say that I cannot tell when you will get anymore letters from me as rumor says we are going to leave the railroad and go south while the Rebels are north. And that in a few days communications will be broken and not resumed until we get to Savannah or Mobile. I will write to Eddie some of these days and give him a word of advice.

Tomorrow I am 21 years of age. So you have now a big brother that don't chew tobacco.

Give my love to all the friends at home and respects to Mary B. and Mother. Write soon.

Good Bye from your affectionate Brother,

George T. Copeland

Head-Quarters 3rd Brig.

1st Div., 14th A.C.

Atlanta, Ga.

NOV. 7, 1864

Dear Sister, another day has gone and yet your letter is still in my care. We are now in a way of doing things by jerks and jumps down in Georgia and it is always best to be ready so when the Post Master says "get your mail ready" you are prepared. Tomorrow is to decide who is to be president and if I can get the chance Lincoln and Johnson will get at least one vote and the wish of one that he may get them all.

Today I am 21 and if I was at home I would give you all a nice dinner to celebrate my birth as it is. I have cause to be very thankful to God that he has spared my life through so many dangers as he has. I sent some money to Pa yesterday but do not know whether he will get it or not as things are so very uncertain now a days. I gave it to my Lieutenant so allow by the State agent.

Good Bye,

George

Head-Quarters, 3rd Brig., 1st Div., 14th A.C.

Savannah, Ga

DECEMBER 18, 1864

Dear Sister Virginia,

Did you expect when I last wrote you from Kingston that next letter would be wrote from this part of the Globe? If so you thought more than I did.

Many are the changes in the life of a soldier. 12 days more will end the present year and what a year it has been for me. At the commencement on the 1st day of January I was engaged in making out a set of papers that made Co. C. a Veteran Company and during February and March I spent some happy days among my friends in Ohio. More such days I hope are in store for me when this curst war is over.

April saw us marching back to the field and May, June July, August and part of September we were on a campaign to Atlanta. October, November and December we were traveling the weary miles from Rome to Savannah. Here we are in the rice swamps of Georgia patiently awaiting the day Gen. Sherman shall say "Boys take the city" and say you not, it shall be done. For we can take the place, but at what cost.

Oh it makes my heart ache within me to think of the terrible cost this war has been. I have been in many a bloody engagement and seen friends shot down by my side. Do you think that such scenes would harden our hearts to pity? No we are as much sorry to see the hurt as anybody and I often think of what sorrow their friends must feel for their loss. Now sister do not think I am down hearted. No indeed. But when a solemn feeling comes over me I write the same way and when I am in a jolly way I write a fool letter.

But where is my letter. Here I am writing to you and no letter from you. Yet you are not sick are you? Or you are not so busy at school that you cannot spare ten minutes to write to a soldier. Well I may say both are the reasons and will take it as such and proceed with my letter as if I had just received one from you.

The weather is so warm here that to go in the shirt sleeves is a very common occurrence. You know we are only 20 miles from the ocean and every once in a while a breeze comes up from there so we can get along very well.

What a blessing it is that the weather is as mild as it is for if it were cold as it is in the North what would we do out in the field here and no camp ground near where we could form an encampment.

But if it is so warm now what will it be in August.

But I have been writing all day in the office so I will bring my letter to a close by asking you to write me soon.

Good Bye from your affectionate Brother,

Direct *Geo. T. Copeland*

Hd-Qrs, 3rd Brig., 1st Div., 14th A.C.
Before Savannah, Ga.

Head-Quarters, 3rd Brig., 1st Div., 14th A.C.

Before Savannah, Ga

DEC. 23, 1864

Dear Sister Virginia,

Your kind favor of Nov. 29th and 30th came to hand today. As I write my letter here the day is drawing near its close. I suppose you are on your way to Zanesville or else you are getting your things ready to go.

Sherman's Army have once more fulfilled the task given them to do and Savannah is now ours.

But more of this later. You say you would like to know how we spent the 30th day of November. Well we were camped at Louisville, Ga. and that day marched to Sebastapol, a distance of eighteen miles and that night we slept on the Macon and Savannah Railroad. The day was warm enough to go without our coats and today if we were not favored with a good sea breeze we would nearly suffer with the heat.

The people of Martinsville are surely better natured in an appeal for funds than the congregation of Putnam area.

Now I will go back to Savannah. I was down in the city today and I must say that it is the finest city I have yet seen in the South. The streets are better laid out and the buildings are fine.

We captured a great deal of ordinance here. All the cannon the Rebels had fell in our hands but a few pieces that they have to cover their retreat. There were nine pieces in the front of our Division. Some of them were 32 lb. guns and some of them in the forts in town were 100 lbs. From what I saw I suppose there must be nearly 200 pieces of cannon captured. They also left useful things of many thinking people would have destroyed, such as cars and locomotives, boats and small craft in the river and so on.

I would like to be with you home during the Holidays but am not able and so I will say I hope you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Years.

Give my love to Pa, Ma, Virginia, Lois, Flora, Benny and little Jeddie.

Good Bye. Write soon.

Direct *Geo. T. Copeland*

Hd-Qrs, 3rd Brig., 1st Div., 14th A.C.
Savannah, Ga.

Head-Quarters, 3rd Brig., 1st Div., 14th A.C.

In the field Ga

JANUARY 24, 1865

Dear Sister Lois,

Dear Sister Lois
I received a letter from Flora and in it she states that you have written to me several times but I have not had your letters. I will now try and write you a short letter if I can and then I may get another letter from you which will form a foundation to a long letter from me when I get to Charleston.

You will see from the heading to my letter that we have left the City of Savannah but we are only six (6) miles from there in a big swamp cut off from the world and not knowing when we will get away from here. Today the sun is out and things begin to look a little bright again but yet we cannot move on account of the mud.

Dr. Dickson is well and in good health and sends you his best respects.

Now Lois as I am not well fixed for writing and you are at home. I will ask you to excuse this short note and return good for evil and write me a long letter and I will try and do better sometime in fly time.

Good Bye

I am dear Sister

your affectionate Brother,

George

Head-Quarters, 3rd Brig., 1st Div., 14th A.C.

Sisters Ferry, Ga

FEBRUARY 2, 1865

Dear Sister Virginia,

Your very kind letter of the 15th came to hand in the mail today and was a great treat for me.

But there is one thing that makes me at times almost angry at some of my friends and that is that they are always saying that they do not write to me because they are afraid their letters will never reach me. But there is one thing I can tell you and you can depend on it for the truth that if you do not write and mail your letters to me that I will not get them and therefore will not have any opportunity to answer them. When I see a large mail come into camp and none for me. I do not always feel in the best of humor. Why? Because you are afraid to write fearing I will never get the letters.

Now to commence an awkward attempt at a letter. I am forgetful of many of the laws of letter writing and you will have to forget a great many of the rules laid down and allow me to have my own way of telling things or relate circumstances that never happened or never will happen.

For a sailor to write or tell any strange that happened or that even he saw with his own eyes it is set down as one of his yarns. But a soldier can write anything he pleases and it is set down for the truth and no mistake.

How is there anything different in the moral condition of the soldiers in the army and the sailors in the navy. Or is it because salt water does not help a person tell the truth.....

Where is Mary B.? I have not had a letter from her for some time but would enjoy one very well. When you call on the family see if she received my last written in front of Savannah.

We are on the eve of a grand march through South Carolina, the Garden of almost all the soldiers hopes.

Ask a soldier what state he would like to go to and he will tell you South Carolina for there is where the trouble began and they want the State to suffer for it. I can tell you that they will suffer for they will feel all a soldier's fierce hate.

Kill, Burn and Destroy is a hard motto for civilized people to use but that is not too bad for her.

I do not know how soon we may get off from here but when we go you will hear from us in the papers. I hope this campaign may be our last and the next move may be a speedy return of the Grand Army of General Sherman to the North.

Write soon. Good Bye.

I am dear Sister your loving Brother,

George

Direct to
Savannah, Ga.

Head-Quarters, 3rd Brig., 1st Div., 14th A.C.

Goldsboro, N.C.

MARCH 27, 1865

Dear Sister Virginia,

Once more a mail came from home and in it came a letter from you which I am now going to try and answer.

But you will find that Raiding does not much improve my letters for we are nearly all the time cut off from the North and I get careless and do not take the pains that I would were we in direct communication.

You ask me my opinion of the mass of the people.

Never since I have been in the Army have I had as good a chance to study the characters of the people as I have had on this campaign.

When we left Savannah Jan. 20th we did not carry but a few rations and we were forced to keep ourselves from the country.

For myself I do not approve of this way of doing business as it leads the men from discipline, "But what can't be cured must be endured" and so I went a good many time out foraging and when out I could study Southern character. Commencing with South Carolina they were mostly rank Rebels and would not tell us so to our faces. Some would dare us to do the State any harm as we would be dispensed.

But here you would see some families who would be true Union while we were there and then "Bushwhack" us when we were away from there.

In North Carolina we were looked on as doing the best we could under the circumstances but for all that she is not all loyal.

I am sorry we are forced to use the country as bad as we do but it is as hard for them to go hungry as anybody else I know but yet we cannot go hungry and have things in our reach. But I will not trouble you with anymore of this kind of a letter. I wrote to Mary B. last and therefore she is debtor to one. I am sorry she has quit writing. I wrote a long letter to Eddy about what you spoke of and hope good may come of it.

From all appearances Sherman's Army will be clothed, paid and rationed at this place ere we go again.

Please write soon.

I am dear sister your affectionate Brother,

Direct *George T. Copeland*

Hd-Qrs, 3rd Brig., 1st Div., 14th A.C.
Goldsboro, North Carolina

Head-Quarters, 3rd Brig., 1st Div., 14th A.C.

Goldsboro, N.C.

MARCH 28, 1865

Dear Sister Lois,

Your kind letter came duly to hand and here I am sitting down on a bench near the pretty city of Goldsboro, County of Wayne, State of North Carolina. That answers where I am. Well I have just come from dinner. Viz. beans, pork and crackers. That answers how I am. The pen and knife as yet have not come to hand but I received the hats and cap. I am still in hopes that they will come all right yet.

I received several letters and papers from Pa and as I wrote him from Fayetteville and also from this place I will call his letters paid if does not raise any objection.

I wrote Flora a long letter last night and therefore my fund of knowledge is very small and you will have to excuse my letters if there is not much good sense in it. But anything I can palm off for a letter I will do so.

On the 31st day of December, 1863 the 74th Ohio V.I. did, with the full understanding that they would hold their organization if 3/4th of the Regiment re-enlisted, go into the Veteran Service. A little more than one year has passed and today we get the unwelcome news that the name of the 74th Ohio is to be extinct and we are to be consolidated with the Sixty-ninth Ohio V.V.I. Now this is in direct contraryness to the word of our government and is as unwelcome news to us as could be given us.

Who is there in the 74th that have been with it for so long a time as what we have been in the service but what feels the vile wrong that has been done us. Lieut. Col. Brigham of the 69th came over to our Regiment as Savannah, Ga. and wanted to know how a consolidation would be liked by the Regiment. They told him that they did not want it done. And yet right in the face of this he goes to the Division and Corps commanders, and it may be to the Governor of Ohio and War Department and told them that it was agreeable to all parties. He would tell this vile Lie for the sake of getting an eagle on the strap of his dignity.

We will regret the day he told that story and will regret the day ever he saw the Seventy-fourth Ohio for it only can be judged by an old soldier of what it is to make an enemy of a Regiment.

For once since I came in the Army I can say I feel hurt. I can stand almost everything. I can march as far as any set of soldiers dare, fare as bad and stand as much fatigue without complaining, but this touches me in a tender spot of my heart.

But I have said enough on this subject only that a petition has gone to Washington asking them to repeal this order. If they do so well and good, if not we must bare our heads and suffer all the injustice they please to heap upon us. Did you ever see people leaving their homes and going West or a body of Gipseys moving through the town. I doubt not if you have. Well such is the picture that is going before our eyes everyday as we lay here in camp. All the people that came within the reach of Yankeedom are left without anything to eat and they are now coming into our camp awaiting transportation North.

What they will do there I know not but yet they cannot stay down here for we cannot fed them and they cannot live without our help.

It would amuse you to be on our line of march and be in the van and see the Black folks welcome "We'uns all". They will tell you that they have been praying for this day for many a year. One morning an old Darky preacher came into our camp and while there he prayed for our cause and such a prayer I have not heard for years. How these folks learn to preach and repeat the Scriptures and can argue with you and yet cannot read is a mystery to me. They can learn to give advice and can show others the true way to Christ and yet cannot let others mislead them. At the same time they cannot read what they are telling you of ought to be listened to and their saying lived up to for if them is not inspiration I do not know what is.

North Carolina is a very thinly settled State. There are fewer houses here than in any State I have been in yet.

But the amount of tar and rosin there is here. Some days while we are marching away in the distance you will see a dark cloud coming up and which will rise nearly all day. If you would go there you would see one of the ground fires we have nearly all day which is made from the proceeds of many a days work. Here is a thousand or maybe five thousand barrels of rosin on fire and what a hot fire it makes. Do you know how they tap a tree to get the sap? They take an axe and cut down the bark one third round the tree and then cut the wood and make the centre sharp or rather they make two blazes of it and then at the bottom they cut the tree like they were going to cut it down and hollow out this place to receive the sap. When it is full they take the sap out in a vessel. There are forests here of many acres and all the trees this way. One cutting will last 5 or 6 years and then they renew the same place.

Well now I have written you a long letter and I will wait with as much patience possible for an answer.

Love to all. Good Bye.

I am dear Sister your affectionate Brother,

Direct

George T. Copeland

Hd-Qrs, 3rd Brig., 1st Div., 14th A.C.
Goldsboro, N.C.

Head-Quarters, 3rd Brig., 1st Div., 14th A.C.

Goldsboro, N.C.

APRIL 8, 1865

Dear Sister Lois,

Dear Sister Lois
A paper came to me today but no letter and as we expect to move Monday (10th) I thought I would let you know at home that I am well and waiting patiently for the dove of peace to come. Grant has taken Richmond and we will now have to destroy Lee and his Army and there will you find a set of men who can march as fast or scare as much as Sherman's men. What a job it is to write a letter when you have nothing to write about. Now what would make a soldier open his eyes and run and gather his all in his little trunk (carried on his back) would not have any effect on you. As I write I hear the notes of a bugle sounding the calls of a march (our Division is on review) and so it is in regard to a letter. Things that would interest one would not be of any consequence to you. More than one year has passed since I last saw you at home and what a year of change it has been. Many of my companions that were at home in all the glory of a veteran furlough are now reposing in a Southern grave. How we mourn them can only be told by a soldier. True we can see our best friend put in the ground and not one tear be shed or one trace of sorrow on his brow. But if you could look in his heart, there the anguish is. I am not unused to sorrow and have seen many a sad occurrence but yet tears are strangers on those occasions. I have almost cried sometimes when reading of our sufferings when all is over. Lois until this last raid we made I never knew what the cruelty of war was. Here it was so visually impressed on my mind that time, place or circumstances can never erase them. I have seen men on this last march have not one thing to eat all day but a little parched corn and then they only trusted in getting a supply from the men who went out foraging in the morning. These men were Sherman's who can do so much and you will hear them say, "well I will go hungry for a few days if it will put this war over so that we can go home to our friends." Sherman is a good man to put down this Rebellion. He has the best army on the face of the globe. Yet some of these newspaper men of the North would destroy our hard earned laurels.

Good Bye.

I am dear Sister very affectionately
your brother,

George

Zanesville, Ohio

APRIL 10, 1865

Dear Lois,

We received three letters from "Thedie" (George T. Copeland) today. One for me and a short one for Jeddie containing a picture of Lt. Col. Miles of 71st Pa. V.V.I., Commanding Brigade. Tell Ed that Henry Dozer died at Cleveland and was buried here a week or two ago. We had a pleasant time Friday afternoon when E.W.K. and brother and sister Thomas were here.

The news came this morning early that Lee had surrendered. There upon the bells have kept a going all day. People left their work; militia turned out; a silver band discoursed most excellent music; school commenced but was dismissed, and the children run at large; processions throng the street; and now Zanesville is illuminated and rockets are studding the sky.

The preacher asked when you would be home, as well as some others. I do not expect to go to school this week, as I want to attend the associations. The S.S. Convention is the 5th of June.

Has Donie given me up? Perhaps she thinks I have given her up but indeed I never shall. I will still hope to receive another letter from her as long. Aunt Hannah and Mrs. Fahquhar have gone to visit Mrs. Lamb. Lou Knight is sick, has a fever. O! don't you miss the Home Journal now! If you only knew where the story was at! But you don't, do you? How many more are you going to miss! Give my love to the Browns, the Hetons, Keali and Hal. Ruth Imlay is going to teach the infant school under Mrs. Wilbur. Lou Spencer is teaching a school in the country.

Write "Thedie" a good long letter, cheerful as you can. He needs it. Tell Fred to have that picture ready against the time you come home. Write me a good long letter. I need it. Carrie Worthington is on a visit here.

Good Bye one and all good bye.

Write soon.

Flora

Head-Quarters, 2nd Brig., 1st Div., 14th A.C.

Louisville, Ky

JUNE 15, 1865

Dear Lois,

Received your letter just before we left Washington and therefore did not have time to answer it.

Left Washington on Friday and on Sunday morning we arrived at Clarksburg where I stopped a few hours at Grandmas and took dinner with her and then came on the next train.

Found all well there. Miss Maggie Smith is living with Grandma. Tell Flora to write to her for my sake as I ask it as a favor and renew their old acquaintance that the war has stopped. Surely she can forgive her wrongs if I can mine. I wrote her today and also to Grandma.

I know the Smith family were on the other side of the house but we are the ones to forgive now as we conquered. Nothing has been heard of Willie Smith yet.

We arrived here yesterday and went into camp, being two (2) days and three (3) nights on the cars and two (2) days and two (2) nights on the boat.

Rumors are current of our going to St. Louis, Mo. and also to New Orleans, La. both of which I hope are false.

Good Bye. Write soon.

I am your affectionate Brother,

George

Zanesville, Ohio

SEPT. 12, 1865

Dear Sister,
Dear Sister

I am sorry that I have to write you this letter for the reason of the bad news it contains.

This morning I received a letter from Maggie Smith telling me that Maggie went down to the cars on Tuesday and then went home and Martha took sick that day with dysentery and died on Tuesday, Sept. 5, 1865.

Uncle Isaac is also sick with the same disease and they fear for the termination of his case.

The funeral took place on the 7th. She was buried at Ten Mile.

She was dressed in white with a black silk sash which she made when in town; black slippers and white riding gloves and everything in the best order they could have.

Cousin Maggie and Julious were the only ones from town.

Received a letter from Cousin Annie. She has had another bad spell but was better. Grandma was well and Betsy does not say anything more of leaving.

Received a letter from Dr. Kent. He was well and sent his best respects to you.

I must ask you to excuse my poor writing as I am writing it in the store and have to hurry up.

Good Bye. Write soon.

From your affectionate Brother,

Geo. T. Copeland

P.S. Kind regards to Mary.

Zanesville, Ohio

OCT. 3, 1865

Dear Sister Virginia,

This morning I was made glad by receiving two letters from M., one from you and one from Mary.

Hers contained her picture. Such a good one I think and you cannot tell how highly I prize it.

I am so glad you understand each other for you know what I told you one time not long gone by that you were to consider my home yours and to know that she agrees with me is joy indeed.

Oh! Virginia you cannot tell the joy her letter brought to my heart when she said my love was returned. All I ask is now may God make me worthy of her.

I wrote you Sabbath and also you had a letter mailed on Friday from Lois and Saturday Pa sent you a box of furs in which I put a note to you. Hope you may receive them all.

Brother Thomas and wife are no better. I saw Bro. McCabe this morning on his way to Portsmouth. E.N. Kirkham and H.G. Foster are superannated. Rev. Gardner goes to Middleport. Rev. Bing goes to Hanging Rock circuit. This is as far as I know about appointments.

Give my love to Mary when you see her. I wrote her this evening and beings it is late and I am tired I trust you will excuse so short a letter.

Good Bye.

Affectionatly your Brother,

George

Zanesville, Ohio

OCTOBER 15, 1865

Dear Sister Virginia,

Your letter came on Saturday and as Lois wishes me to be the one to answer it I accept the task with the understanding that if I fail in not writing as much as you would want that you overlook all such things and take the mission for what is worth.

To commence with, I arrived home safe and sound (only being detained an hour a short distance this side of Bellaire on account of a broken spring) the same day I left you and found all well.

I sat down and wrote Mary immediately and hope she received my letter.

Have any of the Teachers wanted to know why I came to Martinsville?

If they do you can see Mary and if she tells you to tell them you have my permission.

You can tell any of your friends of our engagement if Mary gives your permission but do not in the first thing go against her wishes for I think that she ought to be the one that should be consulted and pleased.

I would not for anything do any act that should make her feel bad about. Therefore I write this to place you entirely on her wishes.

I felt so bad when I came home. I was almost homesick when I thought how long it will be before I can again go to Martinsville.

But I hope the day is not very far distant when you can call each other "sister" and love each other as such.

Bro. I.E.S. goes to Harmer. Bro. "K" is still at his brother's and has had a very bad spell of sickness. Bro. Bennett is a widower and a very good preacher for all I know. I hear his sermons well spoke of.

Bro. Moore is a married man and ditto as to preaching.

Bro. Thomas is able to walk around and wife is getting well.

Bro. Acton preached this A.M. He is a single man and may be a good preacher but I cannot tell how I will like him from his sermon this morning.

The cost of the muffs are \$15 and capes \$21 but we have no more at present that I know of.

We have a muff at \$19 and capes at \$25 and \$35. I expect we will get on some furs in a few days and then I can sent you word.

Kiss Mary for me when you see her and give her my love and also her Mother.

When you have a leisure moment to spare write to Lois. You owe her a letter and yet you never say anything about it. Now please do not forget.

Good Bye.

Affectionately your Brother,

George T. Copeland

Zanesville, Ohio

NOVEMBER 4, 1865

Dear Sister,

Dear Sister

I am at a loss what to write you but I have concluded to make the attempt and let the consequence be as they may. Failure or no failure. So here it goes.

I wrote to Mary a few evenings since and in her letter I asked her to see you and get you to explain to her how our house and smeltyers are fixed and how the proposed change will be so that she will see that at anytime that we are able to commence housekeeping for ourselves we will be able to do so. But for fear you do not know allow me to explain. A passageway is to be built opposite the door to my room and into the front room of the other house and we are to have the front room also the two rooms upstairs. Mr. Knight is to occupy the other part of the house. So you see I will furnish the house little by little as fast as I am able and in that way we can commence housekeeping.

See Mary and explain to her how the matter stands as it has bothered me a good deal since she wrote me that she would rather commence keeping house than board.

I wrote Theo not long since and in her letter told her nothing but said I expected she had had a letter from you on the subject. When she wrote Flora she said she had not heard from your letter so far.

All the family are well and send you their love and all want to hear from you.

Give Mary my love and do not you be an entire stranger to their house as I want you to love each other as sisters ought to love.

Good Bye. Write soon.

Affectionately your Brother,

Geo. T. Copeland

Zanesville, Ohio

NOVEMBER 14, 1865

Dear Sister,

Dear Sister

A few moments ere the train is to go out and I think I can write a dozen lines or more ere it is time to mail this. Therefore you must excuse brevity and take it for what it is worth.

The family are all well at present. Your letter came in due time and I expected Lois to answer it but finding that she does not I will pen you this note.

There is no news here worth recording.

I had a letter a few days ago from Maggie Smith and in it she said all in Virginia was well and sends her love to all of her friends and I think you are on that list.

Quarterly meetings was Saturday and Sunday. Rev. Mr. Moore preached Sunday morning. Rev. Mr. Mather preached in the evening. Lovefeast last evening. Ed handed in his Certificate.

Give Mary my love and kiss her for me. Tell her I am well and waiting patiently to hear from her as her letters are always welcome.

No more at present.

Affectionately your Brother,

Geo. T. Copeland

Zanesville, Ohio

DECEMBER 5, 1865

Dear Sister Virginia,

Your letter to Ma came to hand this morning and as I am the letter writer I suppose it falls to my lot to answer you.

You must be in Bellaire so as to leave there at 5 o'clock in the evening. You will get to Zanesville 1/4 past nine (9 1/4) P.M. The train for Lancaster leaves here at Eight fifteen (8 1/4) A.M. Too early to connect with the morning train from Bellaire. She will have to lay over one night in Zanesville. If there are any more changes I will tell you ere the time comes.

I wrote Mary to make us a visit during the Holidays so that she could be here longer than I can be there. If she consents she will come with you on Saturday I suppose.

News in Zanesville is meager.

The Misses Durosse's send you their love. One of them told me today she had written to you and had not heard from you. I gave them your address today.

I had a very narrow escape last night. As Pa and I was coming over from supper and as we were going to cross Main Street a horse and buggy came dashing down the street. The horse knocked me down and I laid hold of one of the shafts. He drew me about 20 feet before I could get away. He tore the coat off my back but that was all. I escaped getting hurt but it was a narrow escape.

As it is late and I am tired I will stop.

Give Mary my love and a good kiss and tell her not to forget to write me. All are well. Adieu.

Your affectionate Brother,

Geo. T. Copeland

COMPILED BY THOMAS W. PFEIFFELMANN
587 N. State Street • St. Ignace, Michigan 49781

