DELEVAN ARNOLD, KALAMAZOO VOLUNTEER
IN THE
CIVIL WAR

by

Thomas O. McConnell
Delevan Arnold, a capable and energetic businessman of Kalamazoo, was born in this county on January 25, 1839. He was the son of Hiram and Betsey (Massey) Arnold, natives of Jefferson County, New York. He was reared in this county and received his education here and at the Jefferson County (N.Y.) Institute. He remained on the home farm with his parents until August 21, 1861, when he enlisted in the Union Army for the Civil War as a member of Company I First Michigan Cavalry.

Hiram Arnold was born in Brownsville, Jefferson Co., N.Y., July 14, 1808. When fifteen years of age he engaged, as clerk in a store, to learn the mercantile business; this he continued until 1836. At this time he had saved from his earnings one thousand dollars. Thinking he could establish himself better in a new country, he joined the tide of emigration then setting West, and chanced to locate at Kalamazoo, in July, 1836, where he engaged in the mercantile business, which he continued some twenty years under various names and firms.

In 1855, Mr. Arnold withdrew from the mercantile business and engaged in banking. In 1859 he retired to his farm, some two miles north of the village, and built a fine residence, with pleasant surroundings, where he has since resided.

Mr. Arnold was married Oct. 16, 1831, at Brownsville, N.Y., to Betsey Woodbury Massey, daughter of Edward Massey, who died when she was a child. She was adopted and grew up in the family of Solon Massey, of Watertown, N.Y. She died Aug. 17, 1879 leaving six children, two having died in infancy. Mrs. Arnold was an active member of St. Luke's Episcopal Church of Kalamazoo from its organization.

Politically, Mr. Arnold has ever been a Democrat, but not a politician, although he has held several offices of trust and honor, among them that of president of the village.

History of Kalamazoo County, Michigan; Philadelphia; Everts and Abbott, 1880, p. 283.

Ibid, p. 285; Brookside.

Compendium of History and Biography of Kalamazoo County, Michigan, David and Frank Little, editors; Chicago, A.W. Bowes and Co.
The 1st regiment of cavalry was organized during the summer of 1861, by Colonel T. F. Brodhead, and left its rendezvous in Detroit on the 29th of September for Washington, in command of that officer. It lay in camp at Frederick, Maryland, a considerable portion of the winter, and its principal service was on the upper Potomac and near the eastern slopes of the Blue Ridge.

The First comprised a part of General Banks' force and in February, 1862, moved to Harper's Ferry and later entered the Shenandoah Valley, advancing as far as Winchester, pushing the confederates before it.

The First distinguished itself in many skirmishes while advancing up to the Valley and companies and detachments of it made a number of brilliant charges which attracted the attention of General Banks and received from him complimentary mention in orders.

General Banks had too small a force to hold his advanced position and the confederates planned to get in his rear and overwhelm him in front and flank and capture his command. Banks fell back to Martinsburg and continued to Williamsport, fighting most of the way, as the confederates had succeeded in getting between him and Williamsport and at the same time pressed his rear guard with forces that outnumbered the Union troops. In this trying moment the First Cavalry did splendid work and only retired from the difficult position held when greatly outnumbered by the enemy.

[lanman, charles, the red book of michigan, e.b. smith and co., detroit, 1879.]
The First remained at Williamsport until June 12, when it took part in General Pope's Virginia Campaign, joining that portion of Pope's army under Banks. 5 It was engaged with the enemy at Orange Court House, July 16th, and again at Cedar Mountain on the 9th of August following, where an engagement took place between Banks' forces and those under the rebel generals Jackson, Ewell, and A. P. Hill. The enemy having a superior force of over two to one, Banks was defeated with heavy loss. 6

The First was engaged at Manassas, August 30, and suffered severely in that battle, the brave and chivalrous Colonel Brodhead being among the mortally wounded.

The regiment during the early months of 1863 was assigned to duty in front of the defenses at Washington and held a long line, making the work arduous and exacting and requiring the regiment to be alert night and day. During that period it had several skirmishes with the enemy, losing a number in killed and wounded.

Later, in command of Colonel Town, the First was assigned to the famous Michigan Cavalry Brigade, consisting of it and the 5th, 6th, and 7th Cavalry, and served with the brigade until the close of the war.

6 Robertson, Michigan in the War, Lansing, W.S. George and Co., 1882, P. 565.
The brigade was in command of General Custer in June, 1863, during the Pennsylvania Campaign; in July, the First was with the brigade at Gettysburg and made a sabre charge upon Hampton's Brigade of the confederate cavalry, one of the most desperate as well as brilliant charges of the war. The First drove a whole brigade in confusion from the field and turned what appeared to be a defeat of the Union forces into a complete victory. The regiment lost at Gettysburg 11 officers, and 80 men killed, wounded, or missing. On the fourth of July the First, under Colonel Stagg, charged the enemy at Fairfield Gap, driving the confederate out and holding it until the entire column passed.

The regiment returned to Virginia and was constantly on duty with the brigade, meeting the enemy at many places; it was at James City in October. Here Kilpatrick's division, of which the Michigan Brigade formed a part, was attacked by the enemy under Fitzhugh Lee and a desperate battle ensued. Custer's

It is singular that the gallantry of a portion of the troops of Michigan in connection with his own, first brought Custer into notice and that the great military reputation he afterwards reached was acquired principally in command of the Michigan Cavalry Brigade, which attained a most enviable national reputation and was noted, both in the Union and rebel armies, as among the best cavalry in the service.

His career as a military leader was of the most successful character; his fearless dash and daring achievements made him the terror of his foes and the idol of his officers and men.

These characteristics were natural in him, and when the war ended his gallant service on the plains in Indian warfare made them continuous, ending only with the last gallant defense on the "Little Big Horn River," June 25th, 1876, when in command of the 7th U.S. Cavalry he was attacked by an overwhelming force of Sioux Indians, and after making one of the most desperate fights on record, he, with his entire command was annihilated.

Ibid, p. 577.
brigade was surrounded and he was determined to cut his way out with the sabre, which was done.

November 19th the First met the enemy at Buckland's Mills in a severe engagement, as at Morton's Ford on the 26th.

In December 370 of the 1st Cavalry re-enlisted and went home to Michigan on a thirty day furlough.

Arnold was wounded in front of Washington in 1863, and at Cedar Mountain had a horse shot under him, which fell on him, injuring him seriously. In 1864 he was promoted to second lieutenant of the 9th Cavalry, but was unable to accept the position because of the state of his health, which disabled him for further active service. He was honorably discharged August 29, 1864. After leaving the army, he worked two years as a bookkeeper in Detroit, then returned to Kalamazoo, where he remained. In 1869 he married Miss Ida W. White, a native of New York, and thereafter he was engaged in the implement trade as a bookkeeper. In 1900 he was elected secretary and treasurer of the Farmer's Mutual Insurance Company of Kalamazoo County, a post in which he rendered good and faithful service. He died November 3, 1907.

The letters which follow were written from his entering the service in September, 1861, to the end of 1862, when the cavalry returned to Washington. The original spelling has been retained, since it is easy to understand and in fact differs little from today's standards. A considerable number of omissions

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8 Brown, Brig. Gen. Geo. H., op. cit., Arnold was one of these men.
9 Little, David and Frank; op. cit.
have been made, largely of material relating to rather routine personal and family items.

I would like to express my appreciation to Mr. Alexis Praus of the Kalamazoo Public Museum for his cooperation in making these letters available for my editing. Also, I am indebted to Dr. Ivor D. Spencer, Professor of History, Kalamazoo College, for his many suggestions.
My Dear Mother,

Well here we are at the seat of war encamped within about four miles of Washington. We had a very pleasant ride down, with the exception of the ride from Baltimore to Washington. We all came in first class cars to Baltimore, and were as comfortable as you can imagine. But from Balt. we had to wait for all the regular trains and ride in the poorest kind of cattle cars, so that we were twelve hours going forty miles. We started from Camp Lyon, as I suppose you know, on Sunday morning and marched to the boat. Jefferson Av Woodward Av and all the streets through which we passed, were crowded with people who cheered us to the echo, and wished us god speed, and a safe return. At 11 Oclock the boat left the dock, and we were fairly off for the war. We had a very pleasant trip down the lake, with the exception of having a man drowned from one of the Cos, and got into Cleveland at 8 Oclock... We left Cleveland for Pittsburgh at half past Eleven, and from that time till day break I slept as sound as a dollar. The ride on Monday was very pleasant, along the banks of the Ohio River, within sight a great deal of the time, of the shores of western Virginia. We passed through the

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1 He had written to his parents on Sept. 29, telling that he had arrived in Detroit, and he is leaving by boat for Cleveland.
famous Coal and Coal oil country. At about 11½ Oclock we arrived at Pittsburg, where we found a very good dinner prepared for us by the Citizens, which consisted of bread and butter, Bologna sausage, raw tomatoes, Coffee and apple for each man. A pretty good dinner for a soldier. At one Oclock we started for Harrisburgh. And at three we got among the Alleghenies. I never expected to see such magnificent sights and scenery as I saw that Afternoon. It was a beautiful afternoon, and as we passed up the ravine, the sun shining upon one side and the other almost as dark as night, and both clothed in dense forests, was truly splended. At just midnight we stopped upon what is called the summit. The highest point on the road. The officers and those of the men that had money got out and got something to eat. We stopped in Harrisburgh two hours, and had coffee served out to us. Harrisburgh is about as large a place as Kalamazoo. On our way to Baltimore, we were detained in a town about sixty miles from the Maryland line, called Little York. It is one of the prettyest towns I ever saw. As nice I think as Kalamazoo. We stayed there about six hours and had a good chance to see the place. It was the first time we were permitted to leave the cars on the route. We had a dress parade upon the Main Street. Started from there in the night and got into Baltimore earley in the morning...

We left Baltimore at 12 Oclock and as I said, were twelve

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² This located east of Pittsburgh which has been discovered recently.
hours in reaching Washington. There had been two large build-
ings erected near the Depot, one for the soldiers eating room,
called the soldiers retreat, and the other for a sleeping
room (where we wrapped ourselves in our blankets and laid on
the floor). Each buildings are each capable of accomodating
2000 soldiers. In the morning I went up to the Capitol and
looked through. I wish I could describe to you what I saw there,
but I should only make a burlesque of it. I had often heard
of the enormous amount of money, and the time it has taken
to erect it, and all I wonder at now is, that it has not cost
a vast deal more, and that it had not taken a thousand years
to do what has been done. And it is no where near completed
yet I wish Amelia could see it. The marble statues and
sculptureings, the Paintings the staircaseings of marble of
every color of the rainbow, the floors, laid in marble flowers,
designs, and figures, as natural as life. But as I said be-
fore, I cannot do the subject justice. We marched for our
camping at 10 A. M. and passed through the City, but I could
not form much of an opinion of the place, from the fact that
soldiers on the march cannot take much notice of outside
matters. We arrived at our camping ground at 12 Oclock
Thursday. And our tents came a short time after, and in two
or three hours we had as nice a Canvass city as one would wish
to see. We have the 7th Conn. Regiment on one side of us,
Col McReynolds Cavalry on the second, the 3rd New Jersey

4Amelia is Delevan's sister; Census of 1850.
Cavalry on the 3rd, and the 46th Pennsylvania on the 4th. And several more regiments within hearing but out of sight. Berdan's sharpshooters are encamped within a mile and a half of us. Speaking of the Conn 7th, puts me in mind of an exciting incident which happened night before last. The spring from which we get water is guarded by a squad of the 7th. On that night the sentinel heard a noise in a stone culvert through which the overflow of the spring runs. He cocked his piece, which was a Sharps Rifle with a Sabre bayonet, and soon saw a man's head in the opening. He took aim, fired and rushed down to the Culvert just in time to run another man through the body who was coming out. The second man supposed that his partner had shot the sentry, and as he came out said "You've killed him have you," and as the sentinel shoved his bayonet through him, he said "Yes, I've just done that." The man that was shot, was killed dead. And the one stabbed is now in the hospital at Washington, waiting until he is well enough to be hung.

I think I have strung this out long enough. I shall write as often as I can, and hope to hear from you very often...

I forgot to say that we were to march from our present camp today. We are going onto Capitol hill. It is said that we are to be the City-Guard or Patrol. Goodby

From Your Aff son

Delevan.

Direct to
Delevan Arnold
Washington
D. C.
My Dear Mother

"Who wouldn't sell his farm and go for a soldier."

We have been having for the last few days the most dreadful weather that I ever saw. It has been very cold and rainy, and now the wind is blowing a perfect hurricane. The men are all busy fixing their tents for fear that they will wake up in the night with no other covering than the black canopy of clouds which overhangs Washington. The weather here is very changeable. One day as warm as it is in Michigan in the middle of July, and the next as cold and raw as one of our November days. We have not drawn our overcoats yet, and the sudden changes are not very comfortable, or beneficial to our healths. Last night I slept very sound. But when I awoke this morning, my blankets and clothing were soaked with water. I have had a bad cold ever since we first went into quarters at Camp Lyon; but since we have been here, it has been very bad indeed. I don't know what will come of it, if it is not stopped pretty soon. If I could sleep in a bed two or three nights I think it would help it....

I hope Byron\(^5\) will get the Sutlership he is trying for, for it is a paying office. But still hope that he would not impose upon the soldiers with the prices that our Sutler

\(^5\)Delevan's brother.
and most others do. The best way for a soldier to do, is to
steer clear of the Sutler. Some of our men have drawn as
high as $15 to $18 from the Sutler, which will come out of
their pay on pay day, and leave rather a small amount from
them to draw for their two months service.

You must not look for much war news from me, for I
expect that you get the news sooner, and more of it than we
do in Camp right in the centre of it. Or as the old negro
said "Right in de middle of de exitement."

Our Regt. did its first service night before last. The
Major took a squad of ten men and went down into the City,
and succeeded in capturing two sessionists with three
boxes of revolvers. One of the men was accidentally shot by
one of our men, but I believe not dangerously hurt.

...I hope you will write often, and if we move to Balt-
more, as the Col talks of doing now, I will advise you so that
you will direct your letters to that place.

My love to all.

From your affectionate son

Delevan.

I forgot to say that I wish you would send me a village paper
once in a while. They would be very acceptable.
My Dear Sister,

The weather in camp has been very bad, with wind and rain. Arnold tells of the many rumors about camp as to the destination of their regiment and these are standing jokes. He is homesick but realizes that he must stay. We are here mere tools, and, as Joe Doty says, "have to step to the fifeing."

Our Regiment is very sickly, and our company more so than any other, we have lost two men since we have been here, and there has been eighteen deaths in the Regiment. A larger number than have died out of any other about here. We have been busy since we got our horses. Up in the morning long before daylight, have all we can do until after dark. You want me to tell you about my horse. I have got a regular beauty. A dark chestnut with two white hind feet and a star in his forehead. He is as kind as a kitten, but has all the life one could wish. He puts me in mind of Jim. I wish I had Jim here he would make a capital cavalry horse.

...Secretary Seward was in camp today and gave the Col. a good dressing out, for not making a requisition for us our overcoats. He said that we were a deplorable sight, such a day as this, without coats, slapping ourselves to keep from freezing. But I have reliable information this afternoon that we shall leave this place within five days....

Delevan.

6 Secretary of State, Seward.
Dear Mother.

...It is just three months to day since we were mustered into the United States service, and Oh! what long months they have been to me. To day we are to be paid off for the first time, and we only get two months pay. Tomorrow we move Camp about three miles from here, upon Seventh St. Delevan tells of his need for clothing and wishes his mother to send some. He has great difficulty during his service in receiving the clothes, as he mentions from time to time in letters to follow.

You say that you suppose I am glad that I was not at home to work in the dirt, doing the falls work. I can say that I had rather do the dirtyest work about a farm than to be a soldier. Oh! this soldiering; I am sick of it...

Delevan.

My Dear Mother.

...You see by the heading of this that we have moved from our old Camp near the Capitol, and are now encamped upon Seventh St. about a mile from Pennsylvania Av. Our Camp is in a grove on the side of a steep hill; which is rather in-
convenient to those that happen to get to rolling in the night; from the fact that they most always roll out of their tents. But our stay here is to be of short duration.

...I was across the river two days this week, visiting the 2nd Mich. I took the boat from the Washington monument, and went to Alexandria. I was much surprised in that city. It is much larger than I had any idea of. But it is under martial law and don't amount to much....

P. S. I shall write as soon as we get to our place of destination.

Camp near Fredrick City
Maryland.
Dec 15th 1861

My Dear Sister

Here we are, camped about one and a half miles from the city of Fredrick, a quite large place and the Capitol of Maryland. We left Washington last Tuesday morning and were four days on the March. The weather was very fine all of the time, but the nights were rather cold for sleeping out of doors, or that is, without tents. The weather here now, is, and has been for the last two weeks, just like our Indian Summer. Rather different I expect from the weather in Michigan.

We have laid out on the ground for the last four nights, with only one blanket each, and slept very comfortable, con-
sidering. We arrived here on Friday night about 7:30 O'clock, and we were all so tired from our march that we just tied our horses to the trees and gave them their oats, wrapped our blankets about us and slept until morning as sound as bricks. Yesterday we worked hard all day pitching our tents, setting pickets for our horses, and cleaning up the streets. We have a beautiful place for a camp. A splendid grove of about twenty acres gently slopeing to the west, with all but the large trees cut down, and not a bit of underbrush. All that we lack is water. We have to go about a mile to water our horses, and it is not very plenty at that. I understand that we are to be quartered in the city this winter, and that workmen are now building us quarters.

Just before we reached this camp on Friday we passed a Brigade on Review, and come to find out, they were being Reviewed by Gen. Banks. Our Division Gen. rode, with his staff, up to the side of the road and, inspected us with evident looks of satisfaction. We looked rather dirty, with the dust and mud of four days march upon us, but the four days had done much for the men. They had learned a great deal about marching, and the horses had got the hang of it, so I think that we looked passable...

It is now two weeks since I have heard from any of you. I wish that you would write oftener, even if I do not; for there is nothing that cheers up the hard life of a soldier,
as much as letters from home. To know this you should see the rush for the mail every afternoon when it is brought into Camp. Everyone expects or hopes that there is something for him.

Give my love to all,
Delevan.

Camp Brodhead
Fredrick Md. Jan 6th 1862

My dear Mother.

I have some time to spare this morning and will write a few words to you. Maybe the last that I ever shall. We are waiting with horses saddled and everything ready for the word to march on to Hagerstown where there is, or is to be, a battle.

Orders came last night at 6 O'clock to pack two days rations, sharpen Sabres, with all possible dispatch, and be ready to march at a moment's notice. We were all ready in a very short time and have been waiting patiently ever since for the word "to horse." It seems that ten thousand rebels have crossed the river, and have attacked our troops at Hagerstown, and we are ordered on to cut off retreat in case the victory should be on our side. We may not have to go at all.

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8 Named after the Colonel of their regiment and, hereafter, every camp has the same name.
If we do not, the whole Regiment will be greatly disappointed, for we have made calculations on seeing a skirmish if not a battle, and having a hand in. We have snug winter weather here now. The ground has been whitened with snow, and last night it snowed all night so that there is four or five inches of snow on the ground now. The orders have come to roll blankets, and buckle on Sabres.

Good bye my Mother. My love to all, I shall come out of it all right.

Delevan

[In a letter of Jan. 23, from the same place, he states that the regiment has been paid again; the weather is bad, with the camp six inches deep in mud.]

Frederick M. Feb 7th
Camp Brodhead

My dear Mother.

I own that I have been very negligent in not writing any of you for the last two weeks, having received two letters from you during that time. I got the one written from Niles, yesterday. We had a General inspection yesterday of everything we have drawn from Government since we have been in service. Before this reaches you, you will most likely have heard of the death of Sergeant Luck of our Company. His death is lamented by all his friends, and he had
a great many in the Regiment. He was a good soldier, and is a great loss to the Command. From the time of leaving Kalamazoo, he and myself were fast friends, always sharing with each other like two brothers, and I feel his loss keenly. I should rather he had died upon the field of battle. He died of Tiphoid fever after an illness of only one week. I had charge of the escort that took his body to the cars. The body was sent home by the Free Masons of which he was a prominent member.

...The city is under Marshal law the same as Washington and any one who has the least vistage of Uncle Sams dry goods about him, has got to stop and show his pass. If he is unlucky enough to be without one, he is marched off to the Guard house...

...We have just been getting new uniforms. That is, all of those that had not drawn two suits since they have been in the service. We have also been furnished with India rubber Falmas, or cloaks, and are now as well provided with clothing as ever soldiers were. Two company's have gone on special service; one at Hancock, and one at Hagerstown, and I expect that our company will leave for the latter place in less than a week. The duty is guarding a railroad and telegraph line. We shall have first rate quarters for ourselves and horses; and something to do; which will be better than all...

From Your Affectionate son

Delevan.
My dear Sister.

...Was not that a great victory at Fort Donelson. The soldiers around here were mad with joy at the news. Our whole Reg. came out by companys on their respective parade grounds, with their revolvers loaded, and fired six rounds in honor of the event. A few more such victories and the South will be subdued.

The weather is disagreeable and dry feet are a luxury. The health of the men is good except when guard duty comes.

We came into Camp day before yesterday from about six miles back into the country where our company have been doing picket duty. We went out Saturday morning.

It is very hard work, but there is lots of fun in it. We do it just for drill, as there are none of the enemy about. One compy goes out every other morning and stays forty eight hours. Our Videttes were posted through a large wood, and we had outposts about a quarter of a mile from them, beside patrols on all of the roads leading to our main post, so that nobody could get anywhere near us without being discovered. Everyone that came along were taken and brought in. It was rare sport I can tell you to see what terror some of them were in when brought in an taken before The Captain, who would look

9A sentinel on horseback.
fierce enough to eat them up, and question them as to where they belonged, and whether they were Union men or not, and whether they had seen any of the Rebel troops lately in that vacinity. After he had had sport enough with them, his face would relax into a broad grin, and he would tell them to go about their business.

The talk here now is that we are to go to Washington in a few days to deliver up our horses, and if that is the case it means that the Regiment is to be disbanded and sent home. I hope so for I have got enough of this kind of soldiering....

From Your Brother
Delevan.

Warrinton Junction Va.
April 3rd. 1862

Dear Mother.

Since you heard from me last our company has been continually on the move, that is the reason of my not writing before. I do not know when I shall be able to send this as we are away from all mail communication, but will trust to chance to get it off.

The day after I wrote to father we left Winchester with Gen Ambicrombes Brigade, for Manassass. There was only our Squadron, Co's H & I with him, acting as his body guard. We marched two days, getting as far as a little place called Aldie, thirty five miles from Winchester, when an express
came, bringing the news of the battle of W - 10 and ordering us back as a reinforcement. We made a forced march back twenty five miles, and then came orders to turn around again and continue on our original march. All of this marching and counter-marching was discouraging, as you can well imagine. It did not effect us mounted men much but on the Infantry it was very hard. The road for miles behind the main body was full of straggling foot soldiers, foot sore & tired out. At "Goose Creek," fifteen miles from Centerville, we halted and had a days rest. On Friday night our company occupied the mansion of Gen. Stuart, the Col. of the celebrated Black horse cavalry. It was a splendid place before the war. He was one of the F. F. Vs 11 and very wealthy. In rumaging the house which was full of old books & manuscripts, we found a lot of old continental script, a sample of which I send. On Saturday the 29th we passed through Centerville, and arrived at Manassas. The former place is well fortified, and a very strong point. It was but a small town, but during the winter, the soldiers built huts which cover the plains for miles, and on first coming in sight of them, they have the appearance of a large city. But words cannot express the look of desolation that surrounds the whole country, from Centerville to Manassas Junction is nothing but a barren plain; not a fence or house to be seen for miles, But there is plenty of dead horses, which may vary

10 Winchester, Virginia.
11 First Families of Virginia.
the scenery, but do not send forth a very pleasant odor.
On the road from C - to M -12 a distance of 7 miles, I counted 108 that laid within sight of the road.

Manassas Junction was a very strongly fortified place. If the Rebels had held the place against us, we never could have taken it without great slaughter on our side. From Bull run to Manassas is a plain of four miles, and from their batteries which occupy commanding places before the town, they could have mowed our men down like grass. We laid at M - over sunday, and occupied the huts that the 27th Georgia Regt. lived in last winter.

Monday we came on to this place, where we expect to stay some time. There are forty thousand men, comprising Gen. Blenkers Division laying here. They are mostly Germans, and a noisy set I can tell you. Gen Banks Division is coming here, and Blenkers is going back, to go on an expedition down the coast.

I suppose you have seen full accounts of the battle of Winchester, and supposed that I was there and participated in it. We were all very sorry that we were not there, for it was a hard fight, and that is something we have been wanting to see ever since we came across the river. Most likely it was all for the best though, for I might have been the first one hit. The Rebels fought better than in any other battle during the war. We had a Company of Sharpshooters in the engagement, who paid particular attention

12Centerville to Manassas.
to a regiment of rebels who were behind a stone wall, and showed nothing but their heads. After the battle there was eighty two men found dead behind that wall, and eighty one of them shot through the head, and one through the neck. Pretty sharp shooting that, was'nt it?

For the last three months Lieutenant Sherman\textsuperscript{13} has been doing duty out of our Co. He does not like our other officers and they do not like him. He has been trying to get a commission in the Navy, but whether he does or not he will not come back into this company again, he will be transferred into Co. C. This leaves a vacancy of Second Lieut. which I have the offer of. The Capt\textsuperscript{14} has asked permission of the Col. to make me a Lieut. And all that is wanting is two or three letters of recomendation from some responsible men to secure me the commission. I am to be acting Lieut. until Lieut Sherman is regularly transfered and then my appointment will be confirmed.

Arnold asks his father for two letters of recommendation to be sent to him\textsuperscript{7}....

Delevan.

Front Royal Va.
April 5th 1862

My dear Sister.

...I write as often as I can get a chance to

\textsuperscript{13}Charles L. Sherman of Kalamazoo; Robertson
\textsuperscript{14}Captain Acker also of Kalamazoo; Robertson
send a letter. As soon as the R. R. Bridge across the Shenandoah, that we are waiting for is finished, I expect that we shall join the Regiment and communication will then be open all of the time.

This guarding Railroads, with only one company in a place, is very hard work for both men and horses. Our company is overworked, short of Rations, and in fact "hard up." Plenty of money in our pockets, but cannot buy anything because it, (the money) is all so large...

Our Company with detachments of Gearys regiment have brought up the railroad to the Shenandoah River, stopping at every station, and keeping guard, while the work-men repaired the wood and rebuilt the bridges, of which, the Rebels did not leave one. The road is built along a chain of mountains (the Blue Ridge), and there are a great many bridges, so that a great deal of work had to be laid out. A train of cars, called the construction train, fitted up for boarding and lodging the workmen is kept on the road and makes it very convenient. About four miles back from this place is a gap in the mountains called "dismal hollow," and it is a dismal place sure enough. There is just room for the Railroad and a wagon road; and the mountains rise up on either side almost perpendicular. The rebels had rolled down large rocks from the mountain side, and made a serious obstruction. We had to wait there most of one day, but the "Yankees" (or the "d - d" Yankees as the chivalry call us)
are not scared at trifels. We were told back of dismal hollow, that there was quite a force of rebels there and that they intended to attack us as we passed through. So we expected them, and kept in readiness, but did not get a glimpse of them.

How dearly I should love to be at home this spring, to help fit up "Brookside" for the summer campaign. It will look beautiful this season, and I shall see it too, if my life is spared two months longer. This part of Virginia is called the Valley of the Shenandoah and it is as beautiful as its name. I wish you could see it one of these fine evenings about sunset. The Valley of the Shenandoah is the only part of Virginia worth fighting for. If I had lived here, and an enemy had invaded it, I would have fought to the death.

Night before last the Major in command at this point received information that a party of white men would go through Chester Gap, about five miles from here, at 12 Oclock with a lot of negroes, running them off south to work on the rebel fortifications, and wanted a sergeant and twelve men to go out and take them. I picked twelve men and went. We got to the gap just in time to see them coming out. I sung out "halt" to them, when one of them fired a pistol, the bullet of which whistled uncomfortably close to my head, but he dropped from his horse with a ball through his shoulder, and the rest gave up. There were six white men with eleven negroes, and take it all in all we made a pretty good thing
of it. It is a game that has been carried on for some time, and we mean to put a stop to it if there is any such thing. The man I shot will get well but I don't think he will have much liberty allowed him until the war is over. He is one of the wealthiest men in the valley.

I am going to send this over to Strasburgh by a dispatch carrier and he is about ready to go, so I must close. Give my love to all, and write soon to

Your brother

Delevan.

In Co I's Quarters Presb-Church
March 3rd, 1862

My dear Sister Emilie.

Here we are domiciled in a first class Presbetaryan Church in the Secession town of Charleston. We sleep, and eat our hard bread and pork in the pews that were in times gone by, occupied on each Sunday by the Southern Chivalry and F. F. V's, of this much persecuted land (!)

We left our camp at Frederick on the 24th of last month and had a cold muddy march to Harpers Ferry. We had to wait two days a few miles back from the latter place, for the Engineers to build a bridge across the Potomac. The bridge is a pontoon or boat bridge, and one of the nicest pieces of work that I ever saw. It is just above the railroad bridge that was destroyed last summer. We crossed it
at noon on Thursday, with eight or ten more Regiment, and
were fairly in the land of Secesh. The town is entirely
deserted by its former inhabitants, and we took up our quarters
for the night in a fine brick house, and picketed our horses
in the door yard and garden.

The next morning we were roused up before light to get
into the saddle and march on this place, which was then held
by the Rebels. There were two Battalions of our Regiment,
supported by two Regts of Infantry and two Batterys of rifled
cannon. Our cavalry was in advance, and when we came to the
outskirts of this place, which is about 8 miles from the
Ferry, the bugles sounded a charge and down we came, the
horses at a dead run, right through the centre of the town;
But the birds (that is the secesh cavalry) had flown, so we
took possession of the town, and waited for the Infantry and
Artillery to come up and hold the place, while we followed
the retreating rebels. We divided up and took different
roads, but the second Battallion in which our Co is, took
the right one, and we came in sight of them two or three
times but the running qualities of the Southern chivalry is
proverbial, and they made out to get away from us. But, we
succeeded in taking two wagon loads of flour which they were
running off to Winchester, and two muskets that they dropped
in their flight. That night our pickets were driven in by
a party of about 200 Cavalry, who took two of our men and

15 Secession land.
three horses.

The next morning our company went out on a scout, about two miles towards Winchester, but did not get sight of any of the creturs.

I dont think that there are any of them now this side of W. with the exception of a few of the independant cavalry who scout nights and pretend to be farmers in the day time.

Yesterday (sunday) instead of attending church like good folks, Co's H & I went out about five miles and captured two hundred and fifty barrels of flour, part of it was in the celler of a house that a brother of George Washington built, shortly after the Revolution. The place is now owned by descendents of that family, but vastly degenerated.

The negroes here are mightily tickled at the success of our troops, and give us some valuable information. A little nigger about twelve years old told us where to find the flour in the celler. Says he, "Massa's got right smart of flour in de celler, hidin it 'way from you northern fellers."

We expect to march upon Winchester in a few days where most likely there will be a big fight. I am in first rate health, with lots of hard work to do, and very little to eat. The people here are about starved out. Tea is worth 5.00 a pound and coffee 1.00. Salt is worth 1.00 per qt. and other things in proportion. Give my love to all, and kiss the children for me. Write soon.

Goodbye, from Brother Delavan.

16 Guerillas.
Piedmont Station Va.
April 21st 1862

My dear Mother.

...We have been at this place five days now, and will most likely stay several days longer. We are guarding a railroad while the workmen are rebuilding the bridges, of which there are a great many, that the Rebels have destroyed. There is a band of Gurrillas about here amounting to some two or three hundred mounted men, and called Whites Cavalry, that give us a great deal of trouble. They go about in small parties, and pick up a good many of our soldiers, most every night our pickets are fired upon, and driven in, and every night when we lay down to sleep, we expect to be attacked before morning, and have our arms ready to seize at a moments warning. There is only our two companys here, with two small companys of Gearys Reg. But we think we could give them a warm reception if they come down to visit us. Day before yesterday our two companys went out scouting, to see where the Rebels were. I was ahead of the column with five men as advance guard passing through the mountains, we saw three of them on the road and gave chase. They turned a bend in the road at the foot of a hill and were out of sight. But as we came around the hill, there they were within five rods of us with their rifles leveled, and as we came in sight, fired. One missed his aim, but that of the others was deadly, two of the men, from Co H, reeled in their saddles
and fell dead. The scoundrels wheeled their horses and fled amid a shower of pistol bullets, unharmed. They had very good horses, and before we could hardly think they had made their escape. These Rebels know the mountains and country so well about here, that it is pure folly to try to catch them. The two men, two of the best of Co H, were shot right through the middle of the breast, and there was not half an inches difference in the wounds. Poor Fellows! They died nobly in the defense of the country which we all love, and those that are left of us are determined to visit a terrible vengeance upon their murderers. We are to take no prisoners after this....

Your Affectionate Son
Delevan.

Front Royal Va. May 9th 1862

My dear Mother.

...The service this detachment is in at present is one of no danger or interest to a soldier. We are kept here to hold the town and neighborhood in check, and have nothing to relieve the monotony of camp life but the occasional decent upon some rich farmer and levying such provisions and forage as we may need. Within three days we have visited seven distillerys and destroyed over one hundred and twenty barrels of poor whiskey. We wont let the rebels have the fun of
drinking it and it will not do to let our soldiers have much if any of it....

...They [the southern girls] will hardly look out of the window to see the (d - d) yankees pass, as much as they like to see our pretty uniforms. We catch them sometimes peeping at us through the blinds or a hole in the curtain, but they want us to think that they would not pollute their eyes by looking at us. My love to all, write soon

Your affectionate Son

Delevan.

Markham Va.
May 23rd. 1862.

My dear Mother.

...We came here from Front Royal yesterday afternoon. This is a little place of only a few houses, but is situated in a beautiful spot. Nestled in among the mountains with its white houses; it look like pictures I have seen, but never expected to see the reality.

The mountains are one mass of green foliage, now, and are beautiful beyond description. In some places they are cleared and cultivated to the very summit. The green fields are surrounded by stone walls, & from a distance lots of sixty & eighty acres look no larger than a kitchen garden.

Day before yesterday morning we were called out at two O'clock to go out to a little place called Brownstown,
eight miles from Front Royal, and take some rebels. A contraband had brought in word that there was twenty five Infantry there. We got to B-town just at sunrise; but no rebels were there. They had left during the night. We went on a little further, about two miles, and came across a man in citizens clothes with a musket across his back, and mounted on a fine black horse. He was coming toward us and got within forty rods of us before he became aware that he had business on the back track. Then began a race that no one who has never participated in a chase after rebels can form an idea of. The road was very bad; crooked and rocky. But we never mind that. All we do is to spur on. We followed this one three miles when we got near enough to use our revolvers, eight or ten shots were fired at him when he threw up his arms, stopped his horse, and gave himself up. The first words he said were "Good morning boys, You've got too good horse flesh for me. You're Michigan boys aint you? I've heard of you, and am glad to fall into such good hands. I did the best I could, but you were too much for me." He said he belonged to a Louisana Regiment; but he had on no uniform and will most likely be treated as a spy. I have got his horse, and it is a very fine animal. One of our shots took effect in his shoulder but did not wound him very bad. I spoiled my old horse a while ago, foundered him; since then I have been riding a horse that I pressed from

17Negro slave.
a farmer, not a very good one but now I have got a horse that I can depend upon. We would never have caught him if he had not been hit....

From your Aff son
Delevan

Washington D. C.
June 3rd 1862.

Dear Mother

You may be much surprised to hear that we are again in this city. But it is true nevertheless. We are in the city of magnificent distances. We were all very much surprised last Thursday, while at Manassas, at being ordered back to this place and the next day we marched here. What it is for I do not know. We expected to stay in Virginia until the campaign was ended; and in fact had much rather stay there than be in this disagreeable place. We all hate Washington....

You have heard I suppose that our troops are again in possession of Front Royal. How our Co. would have liked to have been the first to go into that place again. We owed a grudge to the people about there and would have made them pay dearly for their actions. After we were driven out, six or eight of the citizens took a Union man and a New Yorker (who lived two miles this side of the town, and who had been in the habit of giving our men provisions) and hung
him on a tree within ten feet of his own door. We know who
the villains are, and we spared them before, but woe to them
if we ever get our hands on them again....

Good Bye

Delevan

Fredricksburg, Va.
June 20th 1862

My dear Sister.

...You see that we are again in the land of

Dixie. How changeful is the life of a soldier, and how little
he can tell one day where he will be the next. We left
Washington last Thursday, with only ten hours notice, crossed
at the long bridge, through Alexandria, and down along
the Potomac bottom, in sight of that river a part of the
time, and over the worst roads I have experienced since I
have been soldiering. We were four days on the march, and
unused to marching as we were after lying still two weeks,
it was a very hard jaunt for us. On the last day it did
seem as though I could not set in the saddle. But we are
having a resting spell here and are all right again.
Fredricksburg is a beautiful place as seen from the heights
across the river where we are encamped, (none of us have been
into the city yet) and is about the size of Kalamazoo. The
trees and houses resemble that place very much. There are
a great many Union people living in it. I am going across
to day and take a look at the place....
There was a Review yesterday of all the Infantry about here, about eight thousand, and it was very fine. A well drilled and disciplined lot of men as I ever saw together. The U. S. Gunboat "Freeborn" is lying in the river just below our camp. She has two very large rifled cannon on board, and they are trained on the town for it is thought that the Rebels will make a dash at the place, as McDowell's force has mostly been sent to Richmond. One is got up in regular man of war style. Well, I must quit writing and tend to my horse...

Your loving brother

Delevan.

Washington D. C.
June 29th Sunday.

Dear Mother,

Again you see that by the fortunes of war, we are back in Washington. We were gone just two weeks. Were in Fredricksburg one week, and were on the march the other. What we went there for I don't know, and as far as I can learn, nobody else does. But I do know one thing, and that is that we were marched until we could hardly sit in our saddles. Making thirty miles a day, when we should have made only fifteen. I have not been able to do duty since we got here, night before last. For the last five day's I have had a wretched headache, and fever most of the time. He continues to tell of the many sick men in the company and General Banks' retreat where many were killed and wounded. The next day Arnold describes
his visit to the Statue of Freedom, which is incomplete. Delevan.

In these last few letters Jackson and Ewell were pressing Banks' forces in the valley, thus causing a delay in the Union plans. A concentration of troops at Fredricksburg for a march on Richmond under McDowell broke up to help Banks hold and regain his position. Arnold's regiment was moving from Front Royal to Washington to Fredricksburg in the confusion. On June 26th General Banks was replaced by General Pope commanding the army of Virginia. Finally, Jackson's infantry had been overworked and Lee ordered them back to Richmond, leaving only a small regiment of cavalry in Virginia.

Culpeper July 25th, 1862

Dear Mother,

I send you a letter that I wrote ten days ago, and which I have not had a chance to send. It is not a very nice looking sheet, but respect it for what it has passed through. It has seen fatigue, hunger, and wretchedness, in the last ten days, that to pass through will make either soldiers or dead men of any Army.

We left Culpeper on the 16th in a terrible thunder shower, and marched for Orange courthouse twenty miles from here, with the 5th N. Y. Cav. (I will tell the story as

brief as possible, for I don't like to dwell upon it.)

Reached the Rapid Ann River in the middle of the night, laid out in the rain till morning, forded the stream which was much swollen reached Orange charged through the town, chased the enemy out four miles, within five of Gordonsville, took three prisoners, and lost forty men. We picketed the place that night. The enemy sent up troops by R. R. from Gordonsville, and about daylight the next morning we skedaddled. I came near being taken that morning. My horse was wounded in the skirmish the day before, and I could hardly get him along. I stopped at a farmer's took a good horse, and just got away when the rebel Cavalry came up, and by hard riding I caught up with our main force. We found the river much higher than when we crossed it before; but across we must go, and across we did, without the loss of a man or horse. It had been raining torrents and all of this time and we were without a dry thread on us, and had been so since we left Culpeper. To add to the comfort of the thing we were to camp that night without tents or food. The man that had a stray hard biscuit about him was lucky. We passed that night as best we could most of the men sitting by the fire thinking of home, while others so fatigued that even the dashing rain could not keep them awake, lay scattered around on the muddy ground. In the morning we made tracks for Madison where Gen Hatch was with his brigade we reached there by noon, and got something to eat having been gone from the supply train 72 hours, with only one day's ration of hard bread. From
Madison we fell back to within 7 miles of this place, were reinforced, and last Monday night we marched, with 5 Regiments of Cavalry, for Gordonsville. See 3d page19

Gulpeper Court House, Va.
July 29th 1862

Dear Father,

...We have been having some pretty hard soldiering for the past two or three weeks. Not much fighting but what is worse, hard marches, night and day. We have been down within two miles of Gordonsville, and found a force there of from sixty to seventy five thousand men. There was five regiments of Cavalry with us, and we were sent down to burn some bridges and destroy a large amount of army supplies, not knowing that there had such a force come up from Richmond. We did not succeed in doing anything, but the whole Brigade came within a hairs breadth of being captured; for it was almost a miracle that the command escaped.

It is expected that we will be attacked here, and we are looking for it hourly. There are only six or eight thousand men here, but there is a large force within supporting distance, at Warrenton and Little Washington....

We think, down here, that the war is farther from an end than it was at the beginning, and that we shall all of

19This page is missing in his letters.
us be used up a great many more with us before it is settled.

Give my love to all, and write as often as convenient to
Your affectionate Son Delevan.

Bivouaced near Rapidan. R.
August 13th 1862

My dear Mother.

It is some two weeks or more since I wrote home last. I should have written before but we have been continually on the move, and have had our hands full. We were sent down to Madison together with four other Regiments of Cavalry to meet Jackson's Army that was advancing. We were skirmishing continually with his advance guards, and at last came very near being cut off. One night our Col had orders from Gen. Buford, to move towards Orange courthouse, or toward the place until he found the enemy, and drive them if he could. A detail of seven men from each Co. was made for an advance guard, and I was of the number. We went on, an hour or two in advance, and moved cautiously to the Rapidan River, twelve miles from Madison, where we saw large camps of the enemy, and drove in their pickets some distance, but we learned from Videttes placed upon high ground that Rebel cavalry was moving to our rear to cut us off, so we fell back four miles and met the Regt. that had
come up to support us. We again advanced, and met about a company of rebel Infantry deployed as skirmishers, and drove them back, and fell into a trap. These skirmishers were only sent out to draw us into an ambush, and after we had driven them about half a mile, we were opened upon by a Regiment of Infantry on the left, and one a head and to the right. Our men stood well for a while, but getting no support, (there was only our advance, and one company engaged) were compelled to retire. At almost the first fire my horse was shot, and fell heavily upon me, stunning me so I could not get up for some time, but I made my way off the field the best I could, as soon as I could walk. I have been so sore and lame ever since that I can hardly ride. This was last friday night the 8th I lost my revolver in the fall, but it was empty. I was glad to escape as it was, for the fire was heavy, and we had a considerable many wounded. I picked up an old horse in the road, and rode bare backed to Madison.

The next day we all fell back to Woodville 15 miles west of Culpeper, and Jackson advanced upon that place and there was a hard battle, which you have heard of here this. Our loss was three hundred killed and two thousand wounded. Jackson lost three thousand. Culpeper is nothing but a hospital and it is enough to make the stoutest heartsick, to see the poor fellows that were wounded. The weather is very hot and some of the wounded went two days before their wounds were dressed. Our Brigade came on to Culpeper
Sunday night, and went to the front. I stayed back to the town with the wagon train, as I was not fit for duty. The fight was on Saturday and Sunday night, Jackson retreated leaving most of his dead on the field. It was a most disgraceful retreat. He sent a flag of truce calling for time to bury the dead, and then again for still a longer time, and instead of burying the dead he retreated. He had some of the dead buried to be sure, but not near all. When I came up to the Regiment, yesterday, there was still some unburied. But our men were burying them as fast as possible. The stench along the battle field was terrible. Scores of horses lay about in advanced state of decomposition. Jackson must have had sixty or seventy thousand men, to judge from the camps he left. His force is laying about five miles from us now, and his pickets are only two miles off. It is expected that he will give battle again here, and maybe it will be today....

Give my love to all, and pray write often. Good bye.

from your aff. son
Delevan.

Point of Rocks, Md.
Sept 3rd 1862

Dear Father.

I have just arrived here from the rebel lines.
I did not know but you had heard that I camp up among the
missing in the battle of Saturday, at Bull Run. And I hasten to relieve your anxiety. I was taken prisoner in that terrible Cavalry charge of Saturday, and carried to the rear of the Confederate army, where I found Capt. H. E. Hascall & N. Gilbert of our Co. Maj. Atwood was also a prisoner with us, Col. Brodhead was shot through the lungs. The rebels took him to one of their Hospitals where I hear he died the next morning. There were seven officers taken from our regiment, and two left dead on the field. I have just been drawing off a list of the prisoners taken from our Regt. to hand to the Maj. who has charge of us, and find that there are about seventy of us.

There were twelve hundred of us that came through from Gainsville where the prisoners were all taken, and we had to walk all of the way Forty five miles. I presume we shall all be allowed to go home until we are regularly exchanged.

We shall go to Washington tomorrow, or as soon as cars can be provided to take us down. The rebels used me like a gentleman but could give me nothing to eat. I lived three days on nothing but green apples. I shall write again soon.

I am very well.

From Your Aff. Son
Delevan,

P. S. Capt. Hascall with the rest of the Officers was sent to Richmond.

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20 Herman E. Hascall of Kalamazoo, Robertson, op. cit.
Dear Mother.

We arrived here last Friday evening, and came out to this Camp which is about four miles from the City. We have very good barracks, and plenty of rations. But from what I can learn we will have no chance to go to our homes. Some of the paroled prisoners that have been brought here before this have taken leave and gone home. But that is dangerous, and they have to have money. We will get no pay until we are exchanged and I want father to send me some money to buy me some clothes, as the rebels took all I had but my poorest suit. And if I get a chance I shall take a French pass and go home so I want money by me in case of emergency. I think it is too bad the way we are treated. After being over a year in the service and now have a good chance to go home, to be kept in camp here like a lot of Hogs. The rebels use their men a great deal better than that. It was understood by the Rebel officers that we were to be sent to our respective homes, and Gen Longstreet told me that it should be so. I am in good health, but very dirty and ragged. Have father send me twenty five dollars. Direct to Sergt. Delevan Arnold, 1st Mich Cavalry paroled Prisoners., Camp Chase Columbus Ohio. Give my love to all and write soon.

To your Aff son

Delevan.
My Dear Mother.

You will no doubt be much surprised to receive a letter from me from this place, but upon arriving at Columbus on Wednesday morning, we found that the Gainsville prisoners had been exchanged, and that they were going at 11 O'clock, A. M. Being all ready, I got on board the train, and went, with no serious accident until we had passed Harrisburgh, when the three cars from the middle of our train (the Train turned completely upside-down. The cars that were thrown off were heavily loaded with soldiers, but only twenty seven were wounded, and none were killed. After that we arrived safe in Baltimore, and from there to Washington we came without any trouble. I do not wish you to have any concern about me, but I must say that I never saw a lot of "Hogs" treated worse than we have been since we left Pittsburgh. We have been guarded more closely, bullied around, and pricked with the bayonet (Thank God that "I" was not served so) than ever was a lot of Rebel prisoners. I am too indignant to tell the whole of the story at present, but to clap the climax, when we were brought to Alexandria, we found that we had not been exchanged and we were the fools of the officers Comdg. We were marched from Alexandria to the Camp of paroled prisoners, and there I found where the lst was encamped, about a mile from there. That was last night; and I walked down here after dark, and
found the boys all well, Capt. Acker is not very well; he has the neuralgy in the head and has been laid up for several days.

I shall write again in a few days. Give my love to all.

Your own Aff. Son,

Delevan.

Headquarters 1st Mich Cav.
Nov 24th 1862.

My dear Mother.

Arnold writes of the painful carbuncle on his leg; he says that he has had it lanced and will be out of the hospital in a couple of days.

Before you receive this, most likely you have seen Col Acker, he left here a week ago today.

He said that as soon as he got home, he would see Father, get his co-operation, go to Gov Blair and get me a commission in his Regiment. I hope he will tend to it for I don't want to stay here, now that he is gone, and I think, that with the help of some of our good friends in Kal. he will have no trouble in getting the required Com.

All of the Bull Run prisoners have been exchanged, two weeks ago yesterday we were officially notified of it...

We have not been paid off yet, and there is no prospect of our getting anything for some time to come. The Regiment
has not been paid in five months. A shame, isn't it.

Maj. Atwood was in camp day before yesterday. He is going to raise the 10 Cavalry. Capt Howrigan came back to Wash. the other day, got on horseback, and on a drunk at the same time, got thrown, got his leg broke, and got laid up for the winter. (Gots' enough that, aint it?) Paper is rather scarce here and I shall have to put you off with one sheet but will be more generous in the future, if I don't see you before I write again. Please send three or four postage stamps in your next. Good Bye. Write Soon. Love to all,

from Delevan.

Camp near Fort Scott Va.
Dec 5th 1862

Dear Mother.

....Our Regiment is having plenty of work to do now. Everyman that is able to ride or do duty has been sent to the front, but are scattered all along the line from Fredericksburg to Leesburg. A detachment of our Reg. some fifty in number, led a brilliant charge the other day at Snickers ferry. There was about 500 Federal Cavalry & they saw the rebel pickets in force across the river, the 1st Mich charged into the river with a real Wolvereen yell, drove the enemy from the opposite bank, chased them five miles, into Berryville, to their camp, where there was a Brigade of cavalry, drove them out of that, killed & wounded fifty, took con-
siderable plunder, & then fell back before an overwhelming force that came up to attack them. Take it all in all, it was a bold and splended dash. We only lost one man killed and four or five wounded. The boys of the 1st are afraid of nothing, and will go where any mortal dare go...

I shall write as often as I can & I hope the letters will go through better than they have heretofore. I am in want of postage stamps, I have no money to buy them, & in fact, I dont know where I am going to get a stamp to put on this.

Remember me to all, & write soon to

Your Affectionate Son
Delevan.

Camp near Fort Scott
Dec 13th 1862

Dear Mother.

...This Regiment is a regular burlesque now.

We have only about one hundred and seventy-five men for duty and we are expected to do as much as though we were a full Regiment, and is what we get for making a big name.

I think we are going to move from here right away. There has been a order to bring no more wood or forage to this camp, so we must be going to leave. Where too we do not know. Maybe to the front and maybe to the rear. Gen. Bufort has been to Washington trying to get us to go down with Burnside, and I should not be surprised if that was our destination. There will be some hard fighting down there.
and it is hard telling which side will come off victorious. But we all hope -

The 5th Mich Cavalry are in the city of Washington...

Delevan

Christmas in Camp.

Dear folks at home.

A merry Christmas to you all. How do you all do. I hope it is as pleasant a day in Kalamazoo to day as it is here in the land of soldiers. It is clear, cold weather, and last night it snowed enough to whiten the ground. The first snow I have seen this winter. While you, perhaps, in Kalamazoo, have been slipping about on runners for a month. Although I am not at home I have had a very nice Christmas present. Yesterday I received the long expected package from home. And a capital present it is too. The things are all just what I wanted, and I could not have made a better selection myself. The India Rubber blanket and overcoat are very valuable articles in camp and every soldier knows the worth of them.

A few of us had quite a Christmas dinner to day. We got an old farmers wife to roast us a Turkey and make us a mince pie, which made me think of home. And then we had oysters, cider, etc. which made us a pretty good Christmas dinner...I am sitting flat on the ground, (or rather upon blankets spread on the ground) in my tent, by one of the
funniest fire places you ever thought of, built of stones and mud in one end of the tent. It is very comfortable too, these cold evening, I can assure you. Almost every tent has one, and there is a great strife among the boys to see who will have the best one.

There is talk of going to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania for the winter. The regiment is supplied with warm clothing now.

Delevan.

Camp near Alexandria
Dec 30th 1862

My dear Mother.

...Arnold tells of his eyes closed up with sties. He has been busy making out the payroll, which he is happy to do because the soldiers are in need of money.

We are having pretty brisk times around here just now. Stewart Cavalry are thrashing about the country and doing considerable damage. Yesterday they compelled the force we have at Drainsville to fall within ten miles of Washington, the day before he attacked our picket force down on the Ocquaquon river and took quite a number of the 17th Pennsylvania Cavalry, killed a Captain of this Regiment, and took about thirty wagons, several of them belonged to Sutlers, loaded with sutlers stores. Siegel we hear has got in Stuarts rear and he will have some trouble to get away. Quite a force has gone from about here to try and catch him. All the avail-
able men we had in camp were sent out Sunday evening. I should have gone, but the Capt. made me stay to make out the pay rolls. Stuart has four thousand cavalry with him, and fourteen pieces of Artillery.

The winter, thus far, has been very open and comfortable. We have had only one snow storm, and very little cold weather. Today it has been trying to rain a little, but didn't do much at it. I was down to Mount Vernon last week and took a good look at the home of Washington. It looks much like all the homes of the wealthy Virginia planters, and is going to decay fast. The Rose Geranium leaf I send you, I picked from the grave of "Father of his country." I got several pieces of the wood work of the house besides...

Your Aff. son

Delevan.
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