

Gilbert J. Backlund
Chief of Operations
Stones River National Battlefield
3501 Old Nashville Highway
Murfreesboro, TN 37129



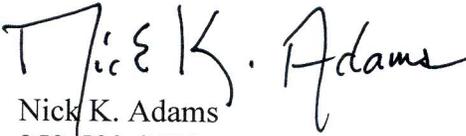
Sir:

It was a pleasure talking with you at the end of my Civil War journey a couple of weeks ago.

As requested, I am sending you copies of the relevant letters written by my great-great-grandfather, David Brainard Griffin, of the 2nd Minnesota Regiment of Volunteers, during his encampment at nearby Triune, TN. These will be included in my annotated publication of his entire two-year reporting to his young family on the Minnesota prairie, *My Dear Wife and Children*, expected to be ready late May.

I have not yet copied the originals. Before I go to that time and expense, would you please confirm that you want them as well?

Your Obedient Servant, &ct,


Nick K. Adams
253-589-8426

_____	Supt.
_____	OPS
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_____	Int. Ranger
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Stones River National Battlefield

3501 Old Nashville Highway

Murfreesboro, TN 37129

Phone: (615) 893-9501, Fax: (615) 893-9508

Regimental File Donation Form

Donor Name: Nick K. Adams

Address: 11407 Madera Gardens Dr SW

City: Lakewood State: WA Zipcode: 98499-1492

Phone: 253-589-8426 Fax: _____

Significant Person's Name: David Brainard Griffin

Unit: Co F, 2nd Minn. Reg. Vols.

List Contents of Donation Below:

Letter Number 69

Camp near Concord Church Tenn. March 2/63

My Dear Wife and Children, As we are expecting to move in a day or two from here, I thought that I would write a few lines to you this evening. I am well and hearty this evening, and I hope that you are the same. I received a letter from you to night dated Feb. 20th, in which you had enclosed Samuel's letter. I was glad to hear that you were all well, and that, the folks in Vt. was well when he wrote. I should think that he could tell where Henry is, so that I could write a letter to him. I guess that I shall have to write to him another letter, and ask him a few questions, but it does not do much good, for I cannot get any answer from the last one that I wrort to him. I see that they had a surprise party, I hope that it will be so that you can have a surprise party, before long, if ~~it~~ there should not be any one else there but your humble servant. I received a letter from Em. two days ago, stating that he was well, and enjoying himself first rate. I suppose that you hear from him often. I guess that I have received nearly all of your letters, or the most of them, I do not know as I had ought to say any thing about your letters untill I get them. If you get Samuel's likeness so that you can send it in a letter, send it to me, and I will send it back again to you. I am glad that the folks are kind to you, and I hope that they will receive their reward in doing so. I am glad in my heart that you have good meetings, and a good minister of the Gospel. I hope that you had a good visit, I have said something about it in my other letters. I do not think that Father is a getting very rich in selling town lots, where abouts has Chipman put up his house, does he think of marrying the "schoolmarm" yet. I think that Hill rather beat him, but still he can take the "Old Maid for his "daddy in law," by takeing "Careline[" You do not say anything about Allen, whether he is agoing to get a woman, or not, tell him if he will come down here, I will get him as many as he can carry home, but perhaps they are not of the eøller

complexion that he would wish, we have about a dozen wenches outside the camp, and about 25 “buck niggers” they can all find enough to do, as teamsters, cooks, waiters &c, they have come in under the proclamation, evry regiment has as many or more than we do, I hope that they will all be taken away from the secesh, for it will go a good ways towards crippling the rebellion[.] I see that the Richmond (Jef. Davis’es papers,) begin to look on the dark side of the rebellion. I hope that they will feel the dark part of it, they think that they are in the last stage of the war, that they have got to fight, or die, or give up in shame. I hope that they will soon give up, so that we can all go home, in a short time.

We went out a foraging yestergay, we went some seven miles and some of the roughest country I have seen for a long time, stony and hilly, the boys got some potatoes, hams, chickens, turkeys, eggs, tobacco &c, besides filling the waggons with corn and fodder. I got a few cotton seed, that I will send to you. I think that it will grow in Mary’s garden, you must plant it about the same time that they do corn, so that the frost will not kill it all that you will have to do to it is to plant it in the ground. I have been to work on the bridge to day, we finished it all up to night.

In Camp near Tryune Tenn. March 9th 1863

You will see by the date of this letter that we have moved since I commenced to write. I had to drill in the forenoon of the 3d, and in the afternoon we got orders to be ready to march at four o’clock, with two days rations, so I did not get any chance to write that day.

We were all ready and we started with the first Tenn. Cavelry towards the rebels, we marched about fifteen miles that night and came up to the rebel pickets, when we lay down for the rest of the night, our men took a rebel Major, prisoner that night, the next morning we were up at light, and our Cavelry commenced a skirmishing with the enemy, all the while driving them back, they captured about seventy rebel cavelryman, wounding five or six, and taking a large number of

horses and mules, about noon we were reinforced with the rest of our brigade, when we started on, we crossed little Harpeth river on trees that we fell across the stream, as the bridge had been burned, we went about six miles more, but did not get into any brush with the rebels, for they skedaddled to fast for us. I had to go on picket that night, it was quite cold, so that it froze hard, but nothing hapened through the night, the next morning, the 5th we started about ten o'clock, the advance soon coming up to the enemy's pickets but we did not meet with any opposition untill we got to Chapel Hill, about five miles, here our advance came up to their rear guard when sharp skirmishing commenced, as we were the rear regiment we were ordered up on a double quick, which we took for about three miles, when we formed in a battle line, and marched on, but the rebels did not make but one stand, and then they charged upon two companies of our Cavelry, but they came back in order to draw the rebels back to where we were formed, but they did not come a great ways before they wheeled, and we went after them, some three miles further, but they had crossed Duck river, we had to wade a stream which was about half knee deep. As we had obeyed orders and done with one brigade, what Gen. Rosecrans ordered two to do we started back, for we were some fifteen miles in the advance of the army, we marched about two miles back of where we camped the night before, our regiment did not fire a gun nor received a shot, the next day we started about four o'clock and marched some six or eight miles to this place, (Tryune) where we stayed that night, it rained hard all night, but we had some rubber blankets to stretch over us, we did not get very wet, and as I was very tired and sleepy, I fell asleep and slept so sound that I did not hear it rain, the next day we sent back for our tents and knapsacks, and moved about one mile, to where we are now, our tent came about ten o'clock, and they were very welcome, for we had barely got into them when we had as heavy a thunder shower as I ever saw, but we spread down our blankets and got a good rest, yesterday we had to poliece up, (that

is clean up) the streets and fix up our tents and beds, we had not got that done when we heard heavy artillery in front, and we were soon ordered to “fall in,” we marched out and got a position, but the firing soon ceased, they were a shelling a house in which were a lot of rebel cavelry, which made them scatter double quick, we stood in line untill four o’clock when we came back to camp, and we got our supper, and then we had a heavy shower and it was quite cold, so we were glad to go to bed, so I did not write any, this morning it has came off fair and it is some warmer, and we have got polieced up, and I have wrote so much, and now I must stop and get my dinner for it is after dinner time I am agoing to have some beans for my dinner.

I received a letter yesterday from you and Alice and Ida, and was glad to hear from you again and hear that was all well, it was dated Feb 25th and had the sermon, and a story in it, I like the sermon very much. I would like to hear him preach, and to go to meeting with you but I cannot tell whether I shall ever be permitted to or not, but if not, I know that we shall meet together in Heaven. I have not answered Em.’s letter yet, but intend to as soon as I can. I have got three rings partly finished two for you and one for the children and I will send them along, you can polish them up by rubbing them with cloth, if they are not large enough for you, you can get someone to file them out a little larger, if you do not want them both, give the colered one to Mary, and keep the white one, if I can get any shells, and we are in camp for any length of time I can make some nice ones, let me know if they are of the right sise, the cotton seed some of them I picked out, and a few I left them in the cotton just as they are picked of. I hope that they will grow so that you can see how it looks[.]

I do not think that the Indian’s will ever get down as far as you are, for I think that the Conscription will place enough men there to protect you. We got a great deal from the rebels on this last trip, in the way of forage, pork, turkeys and chickens – so we had enough to eat all of the

time, this is a rough, hilly country, but there is a good many good farms, but they do not look quite as well after we have camped upon them awhile, for we burn evry rail that we can get hold of, and evry negro man goes away from them and goes with the army, they make good teamsters, megro families are sent to Nashville.

We have not received any pay yet, nor I do not know when we will get any, but I hope before long[.] I do not get any more than a private, except a little extra clothing but not enough to make any difference. Wesley Baldwin has got his discharge, and if he gets home well, he will go and see you, if he does you must let him see my letters, and tell him to write to me, there is no foundation to the report that the Potomac army is demoralized, it was started by some of the northern Copperheads. I hope that they will all be punished as they deserve to be. We have not received any news that is reliable, since we have been out, it is all together likely that we will remain here untill the whole army advances, which I think by the movements will be before long, we are now in the front, on the Nashville and Huntsville road, between Franklin and Murfresboro, and about twenty five miles from Nashville, and about the same from the other two places, M. and Franklin[.]

I did not expect to write so much when I commenced, but I do not know when to stop. If I could talk with you for a few days, I could get catched up, the boys are all well, and are anxious if there is a fight, to be in. I do not think that you will find any of the "2nd" back out when the moment comes, there was one man buried on the seventh, in Co. B, our Co. has not got a man in the hospital[.] We muster 43 men, now, which is about the average of the other Co's, the rest of them have died, deserted , or been discharged from service. I am as well as can be expected. I weigh 167 lbs. I will direct as you wish me to, but I think that "Nerva" is a good name for me, kiss all of the babies for me, and tell them that pa likes to have them all write, and I hope that I

shall soon see them all, and you to, give my respects to all, these few lines from a “soldier” to his wife and children, may God protect you in his mercy, good bye all,

D. B. Griffin

[kiss]

Letter Number 70

Camp near Tryune Tenn. March 17th 1863

Dear Wife and children, As We have not got much to do this Afternoon, and I do not know what to do, but to write a few lines to you, although I have not any news to tell you. I am well and hearty all of the time, as well as the rest of the boys. I do not think there is a dozen men on the sick list in camp. We are a getting very hot weather for the last few days, and the trees and grass begins to put forth their green leaves and blades. I saw some peach trees yesterday, that had commenced blossoming, so you see that we shall soon have summer, again, but I hope that we shall not have to stay down here during another summer, but things look now as though we were agoing to remain here for some time, to come, for we are fortifying very strong, through the whole line, and if the rebels undertake to drive us away, I hope that they will be met with a warm reception. It is reported here that the rebels are evacuating Vicksburgh and concentrating at Chattanooga, but if we have nothing of any reliability just yet, if it is so they may undertake to drive us back from here. We do not get only now and then a paper, and when we do there is not anything in them worth reading. I have not received any letters since I last wrote to you. I have written to Emery, the reason why I have not written to you before, is because we were expecting our pay evry day, but we have not got it yet, and when we do get any we do not get but two month pay, but they tell us that it will not be but a few days before we get the rest of our pay for six months[.]

I hardly know what to write for I have not got any thing to write about, it is very warm and the boys are playing ball, pitching quaits, &c, and when we are not drilling or on guard, we pass away the time as best we can. I have partly learnd how to play chess, so I study at that some. We had a sermon last Sunday from the Chaplain of the 1st East Tenn. Cav, he preached very

well, that reg. is composed of men who have been driven from their homes in Tenn. by the rebels, for their Union sentiments, and they swear vengeance on those that have driven them away from their families and friends, they cannot even hear from their loved ones, at home as we do.

Wednesday morning 18th I have nothing new to write this morning, but I am well and I hope that I shall hear from you soon and hear that you are all well, and getting along well. I expect that there will be quite a time amongst the old ~~bachel~~ bachelors, for they will all try to get married, in order to avoid the conscription, on the first call. I should like to see some of the young men of Minnesota rally to the call of their country, let them come forward at once, and try to end this wicked war, it will be done if every man in the North has to come into the field, and the sooner they do it the better. As well as I love my family, (and God knows that I love them dearly) I could not stay there, while my country needs me. I should like to see you all, and perhaps I may before long, but I do not build any "castles in the air" but time flies fast, and it will not be long before my term of enlistment will end, may we all live to join one another, again on this earth. I cannot think of any more to write this time so "good bye all,"

D. B. Griffin

Letter Number 71

In Camp near Tryune Tenn. March 22nd 1863

My Dear "Nerva" and babies, friends and neighbors, one and all, I will try to write a few lines to you to day. I am well to and in good spirits. We have not had a great deal to do for the last week, but still it has been a pretty busy time in camp, for the pay-master has been here and payed us off for two months, so we have had a little money to pay up our debts, and get a few things that we need, and a good many things that we do not actually need, such as Whiskey at \$2.00 a quart, and quick sales at that, cheese 50 cts a lb....&c, but as your humble servant thinks more of his little family, than he does of gratifying his own desires, I have not indulged in such "costly" luxury. I will send \$20.00 to you in this letter, and I hope that it will not be long before I shall be able to send you more. I have got all the money that I want to keep, for I do not need any thing but paper, ink, envelops and stamps. I have got 25cts. worth (24 sheets) paper, and I have sent \$1.00 for stamped envelops, I owed \$2.00 which I have payed, and have got \$2.50 left, so you see that my "spree" did not cost me much[.] But the Capt. told us this morning, that we had had a two days spree now, and discipline was laid aside, and no notice has been taken of what we had done for the last two or three days, but that he wished it all stopped now, for the enemy were right in our front and that we were expecting an attack from them at any ~~th~~ time and he wished that we would all be ready to fall in at a moments notice, and be ready to "fight" if called upon to do so, and we are all ready, and willing too, and if needs be to benefit our country and friends, to die in the service of our country, and if ~~there~~ was a few of the Traitors of Fillmore Co. or Minn. in the lines of the enemy to stand up and fight in the ranks of the rebels against us, they would stand higher in our estimation to day, than what they now do. I have heard a good deal of talk amongst the boys of the Reg. in denouncing their friends even, or them

who they supposed were their friends, but they have denounced the doing of the administration, and are a trying to discourage, those who have left all, home friends, and evry thing, in order to save the country from ruin and infamy, and in so doing they (the Copperheads) have got the ill will of all good Union loving men, and Officers in the army, and if they persist in uttering their traitors sentiments, in the North I, nor any one else will not be responsible, if their folly falls upon their own heads. The K. G. Cs.¹ are nothing else, but a den of lothing, hissing reptiles and if the soldiers ever go home “victorious,” (and I believe they will,) they will spurn them as they would so many serpents, wreaking vengense on them where they can find them, amongst which are the editors of the Chatfield Democrat, and others in Fillmore Co, but I hope that they will repent and help save the union. I am anxious to see the conscript act enforced, but I hardly think that they will ever be brought into action, but we cannot tell, what may turn up before three months rolls around. We hear a good many rumors about Vicksburgh, we heard the same rumor that you did, but no one believed it, it is the general belief that they are evacuating Vicksburgh, they had a fight at Yazo Pass, our men taking a good many men and boats. I think from the present appearences that it will not be long before the Miss. river will be open for the navigation of the North, but we can not believe hardly anything that we hear in the army. I do not intend to write any thing to you that is not true. I received a letter from you on the 20th, dated the 10th, so you see that it takes about ten days for a letter to go through by mail, and I will try to write one to you evry week, if I can get time. I should like to have been there and had a visit with you, when the Mrs. Wheelers and others were there. I hope you had a good visit. I hope that Leonora is not that bad put to for a beau, that she would concent to have an old gray headed “married” man go home with her, I do not think that “little Dan” steps up to her very prompt[.] It seems that the “Old Maid,” (Hill) got his “Ebenezer” raised a little when he was a milking “Rosa,” and he could

not contain himself. You wrote that evry thing was very high there, and that you did not know how people were a going to get along, but if you could see some of the folks down here, and they not able to get anything at any price, you would not worry at all, about it, if we all live through it, and are able to gain ~~our~~ the day, times will be better again. I hope that the weather is warmer up there, by this time. It is quite warm and pleasent here, some of the trees look quite green, peach trees are blossoming and garden flowers are in bloom, so you see that it is a good deal earlyer here, than there, but still this is called a late spring, some years they plant their corn in March, but there is not much farming going on where the army stops, in fact they cannot do anything, no negroes, no horses, no fences, no cattle, nor anything left but houses and land and unless they are union men, that will not be of any use to them. It is amusing to see some of the old rich secesh, beg of when we are out after forage, but it is of no use, for where we can find any we take it, such is the way they are a getting their Southern rights.

I can see that Alice gains in her writing some. I receive her little letters with a good deal of pleasure. I hope that she will continue to write to me, can she read my letters? tell her that she must get her new dresses done, so that when I come home, (some off of these days,) she can show them to me, but I hope that she is a good girl, and helps her Mother and Sister and little brother. I thought that Edgar would weigh more than 33 lbs. by the looks of his picture, but he has got to grow some before he gets as "big" as his "daddy," and Ida, "my black eyed girl" she tries to write to me once in a while, if she keeps on a trying, she will soon get so that she will write as well as I can, you must write about all of them. I hardly think that they will escape both the meazels and hooping cough, but if they get either, be carefull and keep them warm, and they will get along, and Mary and her babies too. I think of you all, and often. Mary you must write a few lines to your brother, if you can, you and "Nerva" can simpathise with each other, in your

husbands absence, do you ever hear anything from Em's brother in the army, if so where is he now if living. I have not heard from nor seen him since we left Corinth. Now "Nerva" I cannot think of much more to write this time. I want that you should answer this as soon as can, for I shall want to know whether you receive the money or not, we will probably get payed off again in the course of a month or so, but if we do not, and you get this, it will last you some time yet, but I must stop for this time and I hope that this will find you all in good health, the health of the Reg. is good as yet. Now I will bid you all a good bye once, more, hoping that it will not be but a short time before we shall be permitted to meet one and another, on this earth. I remain yours forever,

D. B. Griffin.

Here is a couple of rings, which I have made, one for you and one for myself. I do not know but it is to large for you, but I guess not, they are made from muscle shells got out of the Cumberland river. I have got another on my little finger, if I can get time and anything to make them with I will make the children some may our love be like these rings, having no end.

¹ Knights of the Golden Circle. The secret society's original objective was to create a "circle" of at least 25 new slaveholding states out of territories annexed from Mexico, Cuba, and other parts of Central and South America and the Caribbean, in order to guarantee constitutional control by the South. It later favored secession. During the Civil War, Southern sympathizers, mainly in the Northern states of Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and Iowa, were branded with that earlier name.

Letter Number 72

Triune Tenn. April 2nd 1863

My Dear Beloved Wife and Children, I will try to write a few lines to you to day so as to let you know how I am, and what we are about. I am as well to day as usual, and I hope that I shall remain so during my term of enlistment or during the war, which I hope will be ended before another Winter, and for one I cannot see, for the life of me, what will hender the North from putting down evry armed traitor in the South, before that time, and I have faith to believe that it will be done. We are getting a strong army here again, and we are strongly fortified all along the line, both with siege pieces and field, and line after line of intrenchments, so if the rebel army sees fit to attact us, they will meet with a "warm" reception, but it is not generally thought, that they will make an attact, but if they do not old "Rosy" will go out to see them before a great many weeks rolls around, and I do not think you will find many of the boys but what will march boldly up to the scratch, at the first sound of the bugle, for we are anxious to end this contest and return to our families and friends, but we do not wish to go home, before we can do so honorably, and have our country at peace, not untill evry traitor shall be silenced and put down never again to show themselves, as such, as long as we have as good a government as we live under now, although they may do acts under the present circumstances, that would, in times of peace, be deemed unconstitutional. I hope that no one in Minn. ~~bi~~ will go against the administration, nor any of its acts, untill the rebellion in the Southern states is put down, for ever.

You must not think, because a man is a Democrat, that he is opposed to the doings of the North, and in favor of the South, for there is just as strong supporters of the present administration in the democratic party as there is in any other party, in fact a man cannot be a democrat unless he is ~~in~~ a supporter of the union.

Afternoon, Well we have been called out to meet the rebels, we went about two miles, and took a position behind a hill, and laid in readiness for them, but the 1st Tenn Cavalry drove them back across the river without any loss on either side, so after laying there about two hours we came back to camp and got our dinners. It is very warm to day, but the wind blows hard, the last week in March was a cold blustering week, there was a frost nearly every night, and the two last days we had "snow squalls," and rain, if it was as cold up there accordingly, you have had pretty cold weather[.]

I received a letter from you last night, dated March 23d, and was glad to hear from you all again, for it was almost two weeks since I had heard from you. I am glad that you all keep well, for I should not like to hear that any of you were sick, and I not able to get home. I am glad that your neighbors see a little to your wellfare, if nothing more than to shovel the snow off from your wood pile. I wish that you ~~will~~ would give Mr. DeGrooat my best wishes. I hope that he is not a "Copperhead" as they call the "K. G. Cs," and I do not think that he is, for I do not believe that any man, who wants to save the Union, can be one. I hope that all in Spring Valley will try to encourage those who have enlisted in the cause of their country, by urging them on, by kind words, and kind acts to their families, and friends in their absence, and if we ever ~~we~~ are permitted to join our friends and families, that they will be amply rewarded, in having a peaceful and prosperous land to live in the remainder of their days, and if we cannot reward them with our hands, may God reward them in his mercy.

I wrote a letter to you a few days ago, in which I put \$20.00, which was all that I could spare, and I hope that you will get it all safe if not write to me as soon as you get this we only got two months pay. We are expecting the other four months pay this week or next, and then I will send you forty or fifty dollars more, and you had better keep the most of it for your own use, for it

may be a long time before we are payed off again. I have sent for the Weekly Nashville Union for six months, and it will be sent direct to you, you will find nearly all of the news from the army in that and a good deal better than I can write it to you, and also a good deal of other news, there has a good many of the boys signed for it in the same way, I think that it will do you more good than the dollar. I think that you have got the children some very good dresses, if they were dear, if you lived in the South you could not get them any, at any price, nor hardly any thing else, if all accounts are true, I do not see how they are agoing to live another year in the way they do now, almost entirely cut off from all communication from any other part of the globe, and their slaves leaving them, and where ever we go they do not raise anything, if they do, it will not do them any good, so unless they give up soon, they will be almost in a starving condition by another winter, but we look for some great change to be made within the next three months, and I think that it will be for the better for us. I sent three papers to you a few days ago, and I will send you a few more, if I can get hold of any good ones. I will stop untill after supper.

Evening Well we have been to supper, and had dress praderade[.] I had some beef stake, and coffee and crackers for supper. We have got orders to be ready to march in the morning at seven o'clock with two days rations in our haversacks, with shelter tents and blankets, picks and spades, so I think that we are about to advance our lines some. We have just had shelter tents issued to us. I cannot tell how I shall like them, they are pieces of canvass about six feet long and five foot wide, they are so fixed that two of them go together and make a good shelter, they are to be all the tents we have. We have also changed our muskets for the Enfield rifles, which are better guns and they are not as heavy as the muskets were, so you see that we are fully armed and equiped for the summer campaign, we have also got clothes enough to last us untill July, so you see too that "Uncle Sam" feeds and clothes his boys better than any other army in the world.

I hope that Dan will come out there this spring and get him a home as soon as he can. There was two or three regiments taken prisoners at Franklin, as you said that you had heard, but that is about twenty miles from here. We were out some ten miles yesterday after forage, we did not see any rebels, we got all of the waggons loaded up with corn and fodder, and got back to camp just at dark, the peach trees are all in full bloom, and I saw a few apple trees in blossom, the forrest trees are getting quite green, so I think that we will not have any more cold weather this spring. I have not got any shells to make rings with now, but if the streams get low again, perhaps I can get some. As it is a getting late and this sheet is nearly full I shall have to close, so you must excuse me for this time. I should like to talk to you all night if I could, but I must stop and bid you all a good bye, so good bye "Nerva" Alice, Ida and Edgar, with a kiss [here]

D. B. Griffin.

Letter Number 73

In Camp near Triune April 11th 1863

My Dear Wife, Children and friends, I once more have got down upon my knapsack, with my pen in my hand, to write a few lines to you all, it has been a number of days since I last wrote, and I have been a putting it of, in hopes that I should get a letter from you, but I will not wait any longer. I am as well to day as usual. It is quite warm and dry, we have not had any rain for some time, and the springs are a getting rather low around here. The trees are a putting on their new dress of green, and it begins to look like summer. There is not a great deal of farming done in this vicinity. I have seen them a planting corn in one place. We have been kept pretty busy since I last wrote, we have been out in front, a reconoitering and feeling of the enemy, but we did not see any here. There has been a number of skirmishes near Franklin¹, we could hear the fireing here, and we were called up in line, ready to reenforce them if called upon, but we were not called upon. We are called out evry morning, with arms and accoutrements, and then we are either on drill, inspection, muster, review, or on working details, foraigning or upon guard or picket, so we find a plenty to do all of the time. I have not got any war news to tell you, if I had, you will get the news in the Nashville papers, which I have had directed to you. We hear that they have commenced bombarding Charleston, and we all are anxiously awaiting the result, and also we look for something from Vixburgh.

I have sent you \$20.00, and this makes the second letter since, I will let you know of it in evry one I write untill I hear from it, or from you. I was asking Capt. Barnes to day if he knew Mr. Gaskill in Spring Valley, he sayed that he did, and that Sargeant Gaskill of Co. B. was a son of his, so I went to him and told him what you said about his brother being sick, he had not heard of it, he is anxious to hear from them, you must write about them, when you write, we are all

anxious to hear from our friends, no matter from what source, so when you write you must write about all of the friends of the 2nd. Sargeant Gaskill is well. I have just heard that Luther Peasley and Willard Scott of Napierville were both Captain in the 105th Ill. regiment, now at Murfresboro, and that Thad. Scott, had got a divorce from his wife, she was Elonor Butler, there is a good many of the Ill boys that I knew there. I shall be glad to see them, and shall go and see them if I get a chance. We have just received orders to have three days rations ready for our haversacks, so there is something for us to do I expect. We were mustered yesterday, in order to know how many men it will take to fill up our regiment, there has not many of the Deserters returned as yet. I do not know how many men there is in the Reg. but there is between 5 and 6 hundred.

I sent three papers to Alice the other day, so she must excuse me from writing this time, we have not got payed yet but expect it in a few days. I do not think of much to write this time so you must wait untill I get something to write about, the boys are all well that we knew, write as often as you can and oblige your husband, and friend, so Good bye all, this from "Corp." Griffin, Co F. 2nd reg. Minn. Vol.

¹ On April 10, 1863, CSA Gens. Earl Van Dorn and Bedford Forrest, attacked Union Gen. David Stanley at Franklin, Tennessee, then withdrew back to Spring Hill.

Letter Number 74

Camp Steadman, Triune Tenn. Apr. 16th 1863

Dear Wife and Children, I will write a few lines to you this afternoon, in order that you may know how I am. I am as well as usual to day, but as I was on picket duty last night, I am some sleepy and tired. There has not anything turned up of any interest since I last wrote to you. We have been out a foraging once, and as the fortifications are nearly all completed, we do not have as much to do, as we did have for a while. The rebs. attackted our men at Franklin, but they "mistook their man," and come off "second best," but you will see an account of it in the Nashville paper, which I hope you have received all right. I have only sent it for six months, so you will know how to pay the postage on it. I see the daily evry day, and there is nearly all in the weekly that there is in the daily, so if you get them, all correct, you will get more news from the army than I possibly could write. I think that it advocates the views of the soldiers about as well as any paper that I have seen, you must try and let Father's folks read them, as well as others. I received a letter from you two days ago, which was dated the 4th in which you sent Samuel's likeness and his letter. I cannot see the first look of Samuel in the likeness, some say that he resembles me, but I failed to see it. I have not received any letter from him[.] I received a letter to day from Em dated the 4th, he was well, and was expecting to move from there, in a short time, to where he did not know, he says that his his folks, and Dan's folks, were expected to be there, (with you) this spring, and that if we were there, we could have a nice visit, but thinks that if we ever get home we can make up for lost times and "back rations." I hope that we will be permitted to join our littl family circle before another fall, and I think that I shall be at home by a year from this fall, if living, so keep up good, cheer, for the time flies fast around. I was glad to learn that you were all well, and that you had received the money all right. "Nerva" I enjoy

myself better, when I know that you are not a suffering for the want of any thing, to make you comfortable, than I should to keep more money by me to spend for that, that I do not need, and if, you do not blame yourself, no one will blame you for getting what you need, and what the children need. I think that you sacrificed comfort enough when you let me go into the army, but I hope that we shall both live long enough to be amply rewarded for all of our trials, and that we shall again see our country at peace with all nations, and all traitors blotted out from the face of the earth.

I think that Mrs. Nichols is rather getting the start of you and some others. I should think that she was old enough to do better, but then I expect that the world will keep a rolling around until the end of time, and that the people will multiply and replenish it. I would like to see Alf's boy, and them to, till them to write to me, perhaps I shall see some of the Minnesota boys down here before long, to fill up the regiment, as conscripts, and I hope that they will all come willingly. I see that you are having an early spring. I hope that you can raise enough on your place to eat, and some to spare. If you have any way of paying off our little debts, do it and in any way that you are a mind to, but I want that you should keep enough money by you for your own use. I guess that I can send you some more in the next letter, the boys are all well and hearty. I do not think of any more to write this time, so I will bid you all a good bye again and close, this from your husband and father,

D. B. Griffin

Letter Number 75

Friday morning Apr. 17th 1863

Good morning "Nerva," It is a very pleasant morning here, how is it there. The first Tenn. Cav. had a skirmish yesterday with the rebels, in front of us, they captured six or seven, including a Lieutenant, and wounded and killed a number, our loss was three wounded, one mortally. We were expecting an attack from them this morning, and we were up and ready for them, but they did not come on. We have had a considerable of rain for the last few days, but it has come off pleasant this morning, the trees are nearly as green as they are in the summer, but it is a late spring for this country. I will send you five (\$5.00) dollars in this letter and will try to send you some in my next, we are to be payed in a day or two, for four months. I have sold enough of my rations to come to about four dollars, and when I am payed I am going to send Harpers Weekly to Alice & Ida, it will not make them feel bad will it? and perhaps some other papers. I had thought some of getting a furlough this spring if I could but I have given up the idea, for it would be only a few days that I could be with you, and when I had to come back you would feel worse than you ~~to~~ would, not to see me at all, so I will stick to it, until the end of my term, or to the close of the war, if I am well and lucky. I should like to see you all well enough but it will hardly pay. If Dan comes out there, (but I hardly think he will) tell him to write to me, and I should like to have others write to me to. You have never told me how much your taxes were last winter, I wish that you would, how much is a good cow worth up there? or the two year old? steer, what is wheat worth?

The Paymaster is here to day so we shall have some ~~me~~ green backs, again. We have a good deal of reading matter in the camp just now. We take the Daily Nashville Union, and we get the Louisville and the Cincinnati papers, and a plenty of other reading matter, so we manage to enjoy

ourselves first rate. My bedfellow has been unwell for some time past, but he is on the gain again. I will close this letter again and bid you all a good bye, again.

Good bye "Nerva," }

Good bye Alice, } From your husband

Good bye Ida, } and Father D. B. Griffin

Good bye Edgar, }

Letter Number 76

Camp Steadman, Triune Apr. 27th 1863

Dear Wife and children – I will write a few lines to you this morning. I am well, as usual, and hope that you are all as well. I have not any news to write to you, we have not had any fight here yet, the reg. was out after forage the other day, and there was a squad of rebel cavelry near there, but a man gave them some signs, that the Federals were a coming, and they skedaddled, but we took the man prisonor and told the woman if she had any thing in the house, that she wanted to save, to take them out, quick, she took out some of her bedding, and the match was lit, and soon the house was in ashes. I like to see the General's come down close upon the rebels, and their simpathisers. We are looking for something to be done before long, somewhere in the army, the news in the papers, go to show, that the move has commenced in the right way, the people are coming out for the Union every day.

I received a short letter from Samuel, which I will send to you. I wrote to him yesterday and I have asked him a good many questions, I tell you. I will ~~teH~~ send you ten dollars (\$10.00) in this letter, which makes \$25.00 this payment, you must keep count, so as to know whether you get it all or not. I am a looking for a letter from you, which will tell me all about the folks upon the Prairie, as I suppose that you are there now. I should like to be there with you but there is no use of wishing, do you get any of the papers yet, and how do you like them, does anyone read the Nashville Union.

We are having very nice weather now, but it looks a little like rain, this morning. I cannot think of any thing to write this morning, so I will not try, the boys are all well, in the Co. and in the reg. I hope that we will remain so, the Tenn Cavelry lose a man about evry day, and there is a good many sick, you will see a good many letters from them in the Nashville Union, they are

true union men, if some of the Copperheads had to go through what they have been through, they would curse the South, slaves and all, as bad as they do, may they soon be permitted to see or hear from their friends and families in east Tenn, but I must stop for the want of something to say so good bye one and all, this from your beloved husband,

To "Nerva," and the babies

kiss them all for me and

take one for yourself.

Corp. D. B. Griffin.

Letter Number 77

Camp Steadman, Triune Tenn. May 4th 1863

My Dear Wife and Children: Again I will try to write a few lines to you all. I am as well as usual this evening. We have kept ourselves pretty busy since my last. In the first place we had to turn over our Sibley tents, and fix up our shelter (or "dog") tents as the boys call them, we button two or four together, and then fix them up from the ground, about four feet at the sides and 7 or 8 feet at the top, and then fix up our beds under them, and then we fixed up a shade over us and in front of us, so you see we can sit in the shade, or lay down and enjoy a good nap. I have just finished fixing mine this forenoon.

We had muster the last of Apr, so U. S. owes two months more pay, and I guess that we will not have to wait so long for our pay as we did before. I have sent you \$25.00, \$5.00 in the first and \$10.00 each in the two last letters that I wrote to you, and I will not send you any more until I hear from some of that. I hope that it will all get through safe, for you need it, or will sometime, but I have been quite lucky with what I have sent, some of the boys have lost some money through the mails. We have been a drilling a Brigade drill, that is the regiments in the Brigade all drill together (four reg.)[.]

We went out this afternoon to drill, but after drilling about one hour, in battallion drill, there came up a heavy shower, and the Gen. thought that it was a going to be most to heavy for us, so dismissed us, and we came back to camp on a double quick, we had quite a shower, and it is quite cool and comfortable this evening. We have had some pretty warm days here already, but we were in camp.

It has been all quiet about here for sometime, our reg. has not been out for anything for a good while. We were some expecting an attack yesterday morning, but, as usual, the rebels did not

come. It is not impossible for them to try us some of these days, but we are ready for them, as I hope we always will be. We are strongly entrenched and fortified, and I think we can stand a strong pull, with them. The papers give good accounts of the army both at the Rapahanack and on the Mississippi. I hope that evry thing will be sure and to the purpose if they do have to move slow. I hope that the war will be ended before harvest, and I be able to go home safe and sound, don't you "Nerva?" I received a letter to day dated the 27th Apr. from you, and was glad to hear that you were enjoying yourself down upon the Prairie, amongst your folks and friends, and where we have passed many a hapy day together, and I hope that we will be spared to pass many more. I do not see but what you get along with the farming first rate. I hope that you will enjoy yourself better this summer, than you did last, and I think you will[.]

I have sent you three papers, which will keep your spare moments occupied some, if you get them all. I want that you should keep the pictorials, for us to look over together, if Providence permits me to return home, to my family. I was sorry to hear of the trouble that Thomas Douglass had got into but I think that he will come out all right, for I think he was a good soldier, and done as well as he could do, probably, it is not as bad as represnted, I hope not. I got the same news by James Thornton's letters from Dan. Paul. I wish that you had told me where the third reg. was, and where J. Nichols is and how he is, if you can find out by his folks. I shall look for a good long letter from you when you get back to the Valley again you must tell me how they all are, and how they all get along. You must send me a piece of Mary's "new dress," if you want one like it, or else tell me what kind of a dress you want, and if it should hapen right, I might send one to you, if I could not bring you one. I hope that I can, sure "Nerva." You say that all of the folks send there best respects to me, why dont they write a few lines to me, which