

they will not forget my little family in my absence. I will have to stop for to night for the wind flares the candle, and it is long past bed time, in the evenings when it is pleasant, the boys have good times in dancing I do not dance much myself but I enjoy the fun of the thing first rate. I think that we shall have some more rain before morning, but I must bid you all good night, and go to bed and dream about you which I do often. "Good night."

Tuesday morning, April 5<sup>th</sup> I am well this morning. It rained quite hard in the night but it has ceased now, and the air is clear and nice, the boys are all busy now, some are getting their breakfast, others washing, &c, &c. I expect that you would laugh to see us cooking our meals, we all have the same things to cook, but we all cook in our own way, and in our own dishes. I have baked bread a number of times, and have good luck. I make water "risings" and they come up as nice as you please. We are getting bread from the Commissary now, which is very good, we have a plenty of hard tack[.]

How many bushels of Wheat have you got left after saving what you wanted? is there enough to last you untill next harvest? do you keep a cow at the Valley? or any hen's or pigs, how does Father take the place? or let it out? I do not think that you need to look for Dan, for I do not think that he will go there, but still he may. I hope that he will, and get him a home on the prairie, did you buy any of the white willow? how do they set it out, if it does well this year perhaps I will set some out for you next spring. I see by the papers that the K. G. C.'s are a little stiller than what they were, it is best for them to do so, for the Government, is taking hold of them in some places, and they are not received with any encouragement in the South, but as you are getting the Nashville paper, now I know that you will get nearly all of the news how is the paper liked there? does Mary take any papers? Why don't she write some to me. I sha'nt kiss her when I come home if she don't. I want that she should have "lots" of good things to eat,

when I come to see her, but I cannot tell her when that will be, but I must stop for this time, you can see by my letters that when I get a letter from you, that I can find something to write about, but when I have to write two or three letters between your letter's I do not find much to write about. I had put of writing this time longer than I should if I had got one from you, perhaps you wrote one between the two last ones I got, the 12<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>. Write often. I will close now and go and get my breakfast[.] I must bid you all Good bye with a kiss and my love for yours from your Husband, and friend,

D. B. Griffin

Letter Number 78

Triune, Tennessee May 11<sup>th</sup> 1863

My Dear Wife, Children, and Sister Mary, one and all, I will try to write a few lines to you this afternoon, although I have not much to write, for evry thing remains quiet here[.] No advancement being made from either side, and as the country is prety thouroughly cleaned of its forage, we do not have to go out a foraging. But the Gen. finds enough for us to do in the way of drilling. We had a Co. drill this forenoon and the boys are out on a Division drill, both Brigades drilling together. I ~~staid~~ stopped in camp so as to draw rations for the Co. I am well to day as usual. I received a letter from Samuel to day which I will send to you with this. We have been a watching the reports of the Telegraph from Hookers army<sup>1</sup>, but as yet we get nothing reliable, but there was a good deal of rejoicing in camp to day when the news came in the mail, that the "stars and stripes" were a floating over the rebel capital, Richmond. I hope from the ends of my fingers, that the reports will prove true, but we will have to wait a few days longer to get the real truth of the matter, but they have had a hard fought battle, there is no doubt, but if our army is victorious, and the enemy is hemmed in between two armies, they will have to give in between this and next \_\_\_\_\_. I wont say when, would you? but God grant that it may be ended before long, and let the men go home to their families and "sweethearts," parents and friends, but we, or the most of us have no desire to go home before the country is at peace, "honorable peace" too," do you want that I should Nerva? I know you don't, but as you get the papers, (as I hope that you do) you will get all the news in them that I do, here. I have not got any letters from any one (except Samuel) since I last wrote, and I do not like to write two letters to you evry time I get one from you, for I cannot find any thing to talk about in the second one, but I cannot wait so long, so I write a little in order to let you know how I am, and where I am, and when we stay in a place a

long time, and there is not anything a going on, it is the same thing right over and over. I like to write, and talk to you on paper even, and I know I should like to talk to you by "mouth," but as we cannot, we must talk to each other all we can on paper, so you must write all the news, and ask all the questions you can think of. I have to burn up all of your letters, because I have no way to keep them but I expect that you have got a few of mine laid up for future perusal. My prayer is that I may be spared to rejoin my little family, in health. We enjoy ourselves as best we can, there is a floor laid right in front of my tent, and four of the boys have dressed themselves up in female apparel and are having a hapy time a dancing, one of them has got on my flag for an apron, we have had it a flying in the camp ever since we have been here, as it is now long after "taps" I must close, we have got orders to fall in with our guns and accoutourments to morrow morning, but as we get that order so often we do not think anything about it, but we may have a skirmish with the enemy before many days. I will not write any more this time, so I will bid you all good night and go to my bed. Good night "Nerva," with a { kiss } for you and the babies[.]

This from your husband in Tenn.

D. B. Griffin.

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<sup>1</sup> Union Gen. Joseph Hooker, facing CSA Gen. Robert E. Lee, in The Wilderness at the May 1-3, 1863 Battle of Chancellorsville, a follow-up Union loss to Fredericksburg, though the Confederates suffered the loss of Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson.

Letter Number 79

In Camp Triune Tenn. May 18<sup>th</sup> 1863

My dear Wife and Children, As I received a letter from you to day dated the 11<sup>th</sup> I will write a few lines to you this evening. I am as well as usual this evening, but am some tired as I have been to work upon the breastworks all day. The Gen has made some alterations, in the old ones, and made some new ones, and when they are all finished they will have some very strong works. We are expecting to have a fight at this point, if the rebels make the attack, if not I do not know whether we will have any fight or not, but I hope that we will not meet with the same success that the Eastern army has at Fredericksburgh, it is an awful loss to both armies, and nothing gained on either side. We think that Hooker is a good Gen. but there is something wrong, probably there is too much interference in other places, but as you get the papers now you can see what they are doing both there and here, and elsewhere. I have not received any letters since my last, and I was glad to get one from you to day, but was very sorry to hear that my boy was not well, but was glad to hear that he was some better when you wrote. I hope that he will get well, and that we may be permitted to live and meet together an unbroken family at the close of the war, or of my term[.] I will forgive you this time for not writing oftener, but somehow I do not like to wait two weeks or more, for a letter from you when we are in camp, and the mails come regular every day, please write as often as you can, you know that I will write as often as I can find anything to write about. I have told you in my last letters to tell me all about your visit down on the prairie, and if you are all well I guess that you will. Alice says that she and Ida gets their pictorials and she thinks that they are very pretty. I hope that they will be worth the money to them. I know that they will like them, and I am satisfied with the investment. As you have received all of the money that I have sent to you, I will send you some more (\$11.00) in this

letter, and I hope that you will use it, if you need it for, sickness or anything else to make you comfortable, because I shall send all that I can spare to you, and if we both live to join each others in our little family circle again may we both be "ten fold" paid for all the sacrifices and deprivations that we undergo while far from each others presence, and I want that you, and the children should enjoy yourselves while you can. I have a plenty of company such as it is, but then it is not like being in the ~~the~~ presense of one's family and friends, shut out from the presense of the female portion of the earth, from the loving smiles and kind words, that helps to lighten our way through life, as well as the prattle of the dear little ones. God bless and protect them. I felt like dropping a silent tear when I read that my little darling boy was sick, but I hope that he is well ere this. You wrote that you was down to Preston at the Union meeting. I heard about the meeting by one of Co. A's boys who was there, he says that it was quite a gathering, and that the copperheads were pretty quiet there now, he says that he saw Leonora and Eph. Wheeler there, and a good many others. Who did you go down there with, do you hear from Emery often, I wish that you would write about him. I see in some of the papers that the Indians had been down near where he was this spring, but that they had not done much damage yet, and I hope that they will not do a great deal.

Alice wanted to know if I ever saw so many negroes as there is in the Pictorials. I see more evry day, and they look just as bad as any that there is in the papers, regular darkeys from the plantation, of all colors from the sable black down to the white slaves of the south, "big bucks," wenches and nigger babies, with their thick curly wool and "long heels," thick lips and wide noses, of evry feature natural to the race, but they are to be pittied, for they are agoing to have a hard time of it for a few years at the least, but I hope that African Slavery will be ended and the blacks taken out of the country, this country was made for white men to till, and evry man to be

his own master but enough of this. I was glad to hear that Mr. Westfall had given the folks down on the prairie a sermon but I suppose that it is to hard for them to believe that “the wages of sin is death,” for all men, oh! no! nor that “Eternal life is the gift of God,” for all men, “but only for a few,” and “great I” is to be one of those few. I thank God that I can think for myself. I hope that he will continue to preach the gospel to them. I hope that you will have a chance to go to meeting often. I hear that Wesley Hazleton is in Chatfield have you ever heard from or seen him, he has taken a farm there, do you hear anything from Dan.

Now I must stop for to night for it is near 12 o'clock, and we have to get up at daylight, perhaps I will write a few lines in the morning but I will bid you all a good night, and go to bed, you must excuse my bad writing.

{ Good night “Nerva” }

{ Good night Alice } May God keep and

A { kiss } for all

{ Good night Ida } protect you through life

{ Good night Edgar } and at last may we all

meet in heaven. Good bye to night. D. B. Griffin.

Tuesday morning,

I am well, with the exception of the teeth ache, and the piles trouble me some, once in a while, but I keep about my duty. We have cool mornings and warm days, but it is not any warmer here than it is in Minn. It is a beautiful morning. I have no news to write, we were not attacted this morning, but we look for it evry day. I will stop for I have got to go to work before long so I will bid you all good bye write as often as you can for I am uneasy when I don't hear from you evry week.

D. B. Griffin

Letter Number 80

Triune Tenn. May 25<sup>th</sup> 1863

My Dear "Nerva." As I feel rather lonesome this evening I will commence a letter to you. I have not been very well for a few days past. I had a touch of the diareah, and that set left me with the piles, so bad that I could hardly walk, set down nor lay down for three days, but I am a good deal better yesterday and to day, so I recon that I shall be all right again in a day or two. We have not had any fight here yet and it is the impresion of the boys that the rebels are a falling back from our front to go down and fight "Grant," but if all the reports are true, they will have to commence before long, or else they will have a hard bone to pick, but I will not surmise any of the results that are to take place on the Miss. but we know that our forces have done well, down there of late, and I hope that they will meet with great success and end with the taking of Vicksburgh, and the whole of the Miss. river, and it is almost as good now. We have been a building new forts and breastworks and strengthening the old ones for the last week, and it seems as though it would be almost impossible for us to be driven out of them, if we should ever be attacted here, but I have my doubts about the rebels visiting us here. We have an other change of Generals in our Division, Gen Schofield<sup>1</sup> has gone to Missouri, he superceeds Gen Curtiss<sup>2</sup>, Gen Brennan<sup>3</sup> has taken the command of this Div. The Div. had placed a good deal of confidince in Schofield as a Gen. and were loth to part with him, but I hope the change will not be for the worse. Gen. Brennen appears to be very strict and carefull, and he does not intend to be taken unawares by the enemy. We do not see into the movements of the army of the Potomac, so we let them work, nor do we know what keeps us still so long a time here.

I have not got any letters from you nor any one else since I last wrote, so I have not got any thing to write to you about, as I hope that you get all the news in the papers that I do. We have a

good deal of reading matter in camp of all kinds. We have had our Co record printed and I sent one of them to you, they cost \$1.50 apiece, if you get it safe you would not sell it for that I know, you can get it framed or keep it as it is now. I sent you \$11.00 in the last letter I will not send you any in this one. I am very anxious to hear from you so as to know how Edgar gets along[.] I hope that he is a getting well, I do not know how I should feel, to hear that any of you were dead, and I hope that you will not have to tell me of any such news. I hope that you will all get along well, and live, and that I shall live to meet you all alive and well. I have not received any letter from Em. perhaps he never received mine, you must write about him in your letters and about our folks to I like to hear from all of the folks as often as I can. Mr. Cutting is not very well, the rest of the boys are well, there has not been a death in the regiment since we came to this camp, to my knowledge, and that is a saying a good deal, while the Tenn. reg. looses some ten a week, they have buried over 75 men since we came here, and a great many of them are sick now. I have not any more to write untill I get a letter from you, and I must get one before long, or else I shall be more lonesome still, my bedfellow is out on picket to night, so I have got to sleep all "alone," don't you care, how does your garden look? did you plant the cotton seed? how much of a garden have you got? Is the children agoing to school this summer? do you hear from the third reg? &c. I will close for this time, and bid you all a good bye again, write often, please do "Nerva," accept these few lines with my best wishes, and a { kiss } for all. Good bye, from  
D. B. Griffin

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<sup>1</sup> Union Gen. John McAlister Schofield, commanding the Army of the Frontier in Missouri, later the XXIII Corps in the Atlanta Campaign, and in 1888 rose to Commanding General of the US Army.

<sup>2</sup> Union Gen. Samuel Ryan Curtiss, who resigned his U.S. congressional seat from Iowa to lead a state regiment, rising to Commander of the Army of the Southwest and eventually placed in charge of the Departments of Missouri, Kansas, and the Northwest.

<sup>3</sup> Union Gen. John Milton Brannan, Brigade Commander, and later Chief of Artillery for the Army of the Cumberland.

Letter Number 81

In Camp near Triune Tenn. Sunday morning May 31<sup>st</sup> 1863

Dear Wife and Children, I will write a few lines to you this morning. I am not as well as I wish that I was this morning, but I am a good better than I have been during the week. I have lost over ten lbs in the last week, but I feel about well this morning, but I am weak. I got a letter from you last Monday just after I sent one off to you, so I thought that I would wait a few days before I wrote again, but I did not intend to wait quite so long. I wrote a long letter to sister Mariah since and one of my eyes was quite sore two or three days, and it rained for the last two days, but the sun shines bright this morning, and the air is pure and cool. We have not much stir in camp for a week, but the news from Vicksburgh, is watched with a good deal of interest from day to day, the most of us think that Grant will succeed in taking the place, he has done well so far as heard from, but the news comes slow[.] You can see all the news from here in the Weekly Union better than I can write it. The Cavalry went out in front yesterday, and saw a few of the rebels, having a little brush with them, killing two or three, our reg. was ordered out to support them, but had not gone far before they were ordered back. We are ordered out under arms evry morning at day light. Our new Gen. is not liked very well so far, he is not the man for the Volenteers, he puts on to much style, and goes to much upon formalities to suit us, but perhaps he will make a good fighting man, but he will never get the confidence of the boys that Thomas, McCook, or Schofield did while they were with us[.] I hardly think that we are agoing to have any fight of importance here now, but I think that we will move somewhere before long, and probably ahead.

Our reg. is gone out for a regimental review this forenoon, and then they will not have anything more to do to day unless something turns up. The mail has got in but not much news

from Vicksburgh. Grant appears to hold his own, and a little more, but we are a having a hard fight there but I hope and pray that he will succeed in taking the place. But "Nerva" I got a letter from you dated the 23d and a good long one too, which done me more good than all the rest of the news we got. I felt a little ashamed of myself for not writing to you before, but you will see the reason. I cannot blame you, nor did I mean to scold you for not writing oftener. I think that you have your hands full to take care of your own sick and all the other sick in Spring Valley, but I was glad to learn that Edgar was well again, but you must take care of yourself and not wear yourself out, before you rest yourself. I have a plenty of time to write when we are laying still in camp, but when we are on duty or the march, we do not get much time, and it is hard work to write about nothing. We draw bakers bread now, it is very good bread[.] I had some potatoes and fresh beef and bread for dinner. I have not eaten anything but a little bread and coffee for a week before. We have a plenty to eat drink and wear. It was a getting very dry here, but the rain yesterday and the day before has raised the streams and springs some, we dug a well for our company and got good water. Can you get your cow pastured all summer, I hope that you can, for it will be a great help to you to have her where you can find her at night. I hope that the children will have a good school this summer and that they will learn fast, who keeps the school? I am glad that you have a plenty of reading these times. I shall like to set down with you, if I live to get home, and look over my old letters. I could connect them with all the places that I have passed through, and hundreds of incidents not worth while to write about. I hope that my expectations will be realized. I wish that I was there this spring so as to help you make your garden, do you have more than one lot for a garden? there has been some green peas and strawberries in camp, but they are all gone before this time the peach crop bids fair to be heavy in this quarter, and I expect that we will have to stay down here untill our time is up, so there is no

use of our setting any time to be at home, but they will not keep us long after peace is declared. You seem to be willing not to have me come home untill I come home for good. I am glad that you are, for it would cost a good deal, and not do us much good, for Father seems to see to you, and keep things straight for you, just as well as though I came home to do it myself, so I will not worry myself about the affairs at all. I know what you meant when you spoke about Henry and Mariah's "children" you must not think that the Griffin's are all right because some of them are "lucky," perhaps Sarah has not stayed over with Mariah without some reason. I wrote a long letter to her, and I have asked her a good many questions, about her "children" and evrything else that I could think off[.] I told her to write one to you or to me, if I get one I will send it to you. I am a looking for a letter from Samuel evry day, and he said that he would send me some papers but I have not got any yet. I have not heard any thing from Em. yet. You wanted to know where the boys got their dresses to put on when they dance, they make them out of some old tent or blanket, and borrow some of the "wenches," they fit them as well as a "shirt does a bean pole," the flag is the same that I got at Louisville. We did not have any skirmish then, nor since, and the papers report that the rebel army is a falling back in our front all the time, we shall know before long. I hope that I can come home by another fall and then I will see about getting a dress for you and the children, the boys will soon begin to count the months, that they have got to stay in the service. I expect that they will go off very slow the last year, but we will try to be patient and do out duty to our country, while we do stay in the service, and let the future take care of itself. Mr. Cutting has been quite unwell, but is better now, Pete and the Case boys, Elicut, James Thornton, Wallace Clark, Sergeant Gaskill and the other boys from around there are well. What Warner do you refer to when you speak of Mr. Warners reading the paper, &c. Sergeant

Wallace of our Co. used to be well acquainted with the Kingsley boys of Spring Valley. It is a very warm afternoon and it feels like having showers before long.

I cannot think of much more to write this time, I did not intend to write as much as I have when I commenced, but when I got your's I found something to write about. The regiment is just agoing out on dress prarade. We have got a Brass Band organized again, so we have a plenty of good music now. The 9<sup>th</sup> Ohio and the 35<sup>th</sup> Ohio both have a band. Our band is a playing now so I must go out and hear them, they do not play as well as a good many, for some of them never played upon an instrament untill about four weeks ago, but they are improving very fast.

Monday Morning June 1<sup>st</sup> I feel quite well this morning, it rained hard last night, but it is clear this morning, and the birds are singing briskly, and the Sun is just a coming up. I was over in Co. A. last Eve. and I took up the Chatfield Democrat, and the first piece I read was a lie, and the whole paper was made up of lies, it was the editorial in regard to Valandigham's<sup>1</sup> arrest, he says that he had been arrested, tried and sentenced, "for no one knew what," strange he did not know for what, when evry paper in the Southern Confederacy knew. I wish that I could wield the pen. I would direct a few lines to him the boys say that he ought to be "hung," but as my sheet is about full I will close by bidding you all a good bye this morning.

Good bye one and all from your friend D. B. Griffin.

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<sup>1</sup> Democratic Congressman from Ohio, Clement Laird Vallandigham, a prominent antiwar "Copperhead," convicted of treason and exiled to the Confederacy. He vigorously opposed Lincoln's 1864 reelection and, later, Reconstruction policies.

Letter Number 82

In Camp near Triune Tenn. June 3d 1863

My Dear Wife and Companion, As I received a letter from you to day, I will try to write a few lines in answer although I do not know what to write. I feel quite well to day. I left off going to the doctor Sunday morning. Monday morning we all had to go out on a Division review the first one we ever had, in our Division, we all had to have our knapsacks, haversacks and canteens on, besides having our gun and accoutrements on. We were out some four hours and I got very tired, the review went off very well, at night we had orders to be ready to march in the morning at six o'clock with one day's ration, we were up and ready, but it rained hard in the morning, so we did not start quite so early. Our reg. went out about twelve miles for the purpose of moving in a union family, we had a hard road to go on, through a cedar swamp, and over hills and rocks, but we got there all safe, and we got a few loads of corn and the familie's goods, and came back on a better road, but I did not walk but about four miles. I got so tired and the "piles" bothered me so that I got into a wagon and rode the rest of the way, and I was very tired last night, but, I rested well through the night, but this morning I had the tooth ache some and I had it drawn out, so I guess that I will come out straight by and by. When we got back to camp last night we had orders to be ready to march by tomorrow morning, so we have been drawing rations and one thing or ~~ne~~ other all day. Where we are going nor which way we cannot tell yet, we may not go at all, there has two more Brigades come here yesterday from Franklin, they had quite a fight at Franklin yesterday but the rebels were repulsed with quite a loss in killed and wounded and prisoners. We do not think there is much of a force of rebels very near us, now. The rest of our Division is a coming in now, so it ~~like~~ looks a little like old times to see soldiers a marching along. We will be very apt to advance in a day or two at least, and no knowing when I

shall get another chance to write to you, but I will write as often as I can, if I am well, so you must not worry if you should not have a letter from me again very soon, your letter was dated May 26[.] I see that you thought that I was a scholding you in my letters, but it was not intended for any such a thing. I see that the trouble is in my not getting your letters so I will not say anything again[.] I asked you a few questions and you merely say that you have written to me before about it for instance I asked you about W. Hasleton and you say that he was as Fathers last winter and you wrote about it at the time. I never got any such letter, you say that you wrote all about your visit down upon the prairie, you wrote a letter when you were at fathers, stating that you had been to Beamans and Jerry's and was agoing to go to Boynyton's and over that way, and in the next you said that you had been there, but did not say one word about how they were, what they were about &c, if you have I never have received your letters. I knew by your letter that you were down to Preston, but I merely asked you who you got a chance to go with, not that I was "jealous," but just to know who your friends were, and as it seemed a long time to me not to get any letters from you I thought that I would talk a little about it in my letters, but I did not think that you would take it that I was a scholding you, Nerva[.]

Now I will leave it to Mary if I was a "scholding" or not, I will not say any more, but I do like to hear all that I can from you, you must not think it hard in me if I should ask you a few questions, will you. Now you must not take this as all scholding to, for I do not know what other way I should let you know what I want to, if I could talk to you I could tell you in different language. It rained hard last night, but it is quite warm to day. I saw a few pieces of good wheat yesterday, but it is generally very thin, it begins to turn some now, but the corn is not very forward here this spring[.] I picked a few rasberies yesterday, the Blackberies are beginning to turn there is any amount of them this year, as well as peaches apples &c. We continue to get

good news from Vicksburg, but they are a fighting hard, there. I hope that we will not get into any such a fight, if it can be helped, but if it is necessary let it come we are trained for it. If you want any more money before we are payed off again, I will send you some, but I have spent some more than I expected to, and I want to keep some by me so I will not send any more just yet unless you want it bad. If I cannot stand it to march all day I shall go to some hospital or convalescent camp for I find that a person gets along just as well, if he don't try to do the best he can, but still I shall not shirk, there has a number of the boys told me not to try to march along with the reg. when I am in my condition, but I tell them I shall go as far as I can before I stop, or leave the reg. I cannot think of much to write to night for I wrote you a long letter Sunday four of the boys went to the hospital yesterday because they could not stand it to march, and I guess if I had been here I should gone[.]

Sergeant Cutting went to the Hospital, he is pretty slim, I was weighed yesterday and I weighed 155 so you see that I am not quite so fleshy as I have been, but I feel quite well to day and if we do not have to march I shall get along first rate. I am not homesick nor do I intend to be, for that is a bad thing to have in the army[.] Was Alice very sick and have the other children had the same disease. I would like to see you all evry day, but I expect to have to wait untill the term of enlistment is out, you seem to think that perhaps they can keep us longer, but as I have told you before they cannot unless they pass a law to that effect, it will be a little over a year more now, we have been here  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a year, and it is a short time to us, time does not seem so long to us as it did when we first came south, soldiering has become a second nature. But I will stop now by bidding you all a good bye again, and I hope and pray that we may all live to enjoy the comforts of home once more. May God bless and protect us all in his mercy.

Good bye My Dear "Nerva" with a kiss for all

Good bye “ “ Alice

Good bye “ “ Ida { Kiss }

Good bye “ “ Edgar from your Dear Husband

and father in the army of the Cumberland

Corp. D. B. Griffin

P. S. Thursday morning. I feel quite well this morning. I have got to go on picket this morning. We have not got any orders to move as yet, and some think that we will not go from here as they have got to leave two reg here, to guard the place, but I do not want to stay. I will let you know, soon good bye,

D. B. Griffin

Letter Number 83

Camp near Triune Tenn. June 8th 1863

Dear Wife and Children, As I have an opportunity to write a few lines to you this morning, I will do so. I am about the same as I was when I last wrote, not exactly well sick nor either am I entirely well. The morning that I wrote, I expected to go out on picket, but the order was changed and I did not go. We had a grand review in the afternoon, there was twenty three regiments out besides the Batteries about 15,000 men, it was an imposing grand sight I tell you now. I wish that you could have seen us as we marched around in front of the Gen. (Granger)<sup>1</sup> each regimental band striking up some lively tune as they passed him. We all had our knapsacks on, and I got quite tired. While we were there we heard heavy Canonading in the direction of Franklin, and when we came back to camp we received orders to get our supper just as soon as we could and take one days ration and 40 extra rounds of cartridges and a blanket, and march to Franklin that night (15 miles) and a hard night's march we had of it to. It was just dark when we started, and for a while we were in the woods where you could not see anything, but we managed to get through after a good deal of falling and stumbling over stumps and roots. I fell over one stump but did not hurt me any, after we had got a few miles it commenced raining, with a good deal of lightning, which had the effect of making making it look darker, and the road was very rough and slippery, and we had to go very slow. I hardly think there was a man in our Brigade (four regiments) but what were down in the mud or stumbled over the rocks and stumps before morning. We got to Franklin just at the break of day, wet, muddy, and tired. I stood it through with the rest of them, but I could not held out ~~ma~~ much longer. We were taken in to a beautiful door yard where all was green, with grass and shade trees and were told to rest ourselves as fast as we could, we all lay down and were soon asleep. We found that the rebel

cavelry under Forrest<sup>2</sup> made a raid on the place in the afternoon, capturing a few of the pickets, robing the stores, and several other depredations, as well as cutting of the railroad and telegraph between there and Nashville and were about to take the fortifications as our Cavelry got there they had quite a skirmish with them, killing some and taking 16 prisoners which we brought back with us. We lay there all day a waiting for an attack from the rebels but they dare not come in again our Cavelry had a little skirmish with them in the fore part of the day but it did not amount to much. We lay there all day, and at night it rained and I got into a barn, and slept good all night. Franklin does not look much as it did when we went through there one year ago, there is not a fence left, not any thing a growing, and a good many of the houses empty. We started back to Triune about one o'clock, arriving in camp about sundown but I rode back in an ambulance. Yesterday the Tennessee Cavelry had quite a little skirmish here with the rebs. we got a few wounded and a few taken prisoners, and there was some of the rebs. killed and wounded, there appeared to be a reconoiter on the part of the rebs. along the whole line, to see whether we were here or not, and they found us a waiting for them at evry point[.] We are under marching orders now, that is to be ready to march at any moment, but when we go I cannot tell, the reg. is out a drilling this forenoon, but I did not go out, it is quite cool this morning, we had a little rain last night, but not much. I think that we are agoing to have good weather for a while now[.] I do not get any news any more than what you will see in the "Union." I will wait untill after the mail comes in, and perhaps I shall get some news to write about.

Afternoon Well, the mail has come in but there is nothing exciting in the papers. We are looking with a good deal of anxiety for the fall of Vixburgh just now. We think that if that falls it will weaken the rebellion a good deal, but wheather it will end it this fall or not, is rather doubtfull. I do not expect to go home before my time is out, so look ahead with hope. But I got

a letter from my dear "Nerva," dated June 2<sup>nd</sup> and was much pleased with it to. I was glad to know that you had a chance to go to meeting if the Methodist and Baptist are jealous of your Company. I guess that they would ride with almost anyone if they had no one to look out for them to ride any more than you and Mary has, it shows how large their souls are. I hope that some of them will be obliged to let their husbands and friends go into the army, and leave them to take care of themselves, it is the very ones that will talk the most, that would take the advantage of a woman in the absence of her husband, but Nerva do not mind their talk, go to meeting when you can and with Mr. Westfall if you can, if he is a good Universalist, he will protect you, and if I should live to come home I hope that I shall be able to repay him for all his trouble. As to Mary's being kissed and hugged, I should do the same thing, if I could see her or you either and I should not care what the folks sayed about it either. As to my placing sentinels up there to watch him, I had rather place them out here in front of the enemy where there is some danger of an attack from them ~~enemy~~ for I do not believe that any one would try to injure me or my family in my absence, if so they are worse than the southern traitor.

Yes I wish that I could have been there and heard him preach the sermon, but as I am not I will be content where I am, untill I am free again, and then if nothing hapens we will enjoy ourselves in going to metings and other places together. I have not got any clothes to send home this spring for I have not drawn any more than I actualy needed, the company stoored some clothes in Nashville, and I put in one of my blankets with them. It would look rather queer to see Edgar in pants and boots and hat. I cannot see him only as the little babe I left in Eliza's arms, the night I came away, if I am gone three years you will not know me, nor I you. I am sorry that your eyes are sore. I know how to pity you for one of my eyes have troubled me for a couple weeks or more, and now they are both quite weak, one of them is very red to day, and I cannot

look upon my paper but a little while at a time, but I think that ~~that~~ they will get over it. I hope that yours will not get any worse off than they are[.] I cannot think of much more to write this time, how does the children get along with their school this summer, have they got a good one. I would like to see you all to day, but here I am away down in Tenn. and a fair prospect of going still further south “away down in dixie,” but perhaps not. I wish that I could stop writing to you, and go to talking with you, and then I could find enough to talk about for awhile I guess, but I have been all day in writing this, and there is not anything to write about either, but I will close now by saying good bye to you all, and hope for the best to come this from your husband and father in the army of the Cumberland,  
to Nerva and the babe’s.

Corp. D. B. Griffin Co F 2<sup>nd</sup> Minn.

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<sup>1</sup> Union Gen. Gordon Granger, a Division Commander under Gen. Rosecrans in the Army of the Cumberland.

<sup>2</sup> CSA Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest, often in independent command as a cavalry raider, capturing or destroying significant amounts of Union men and supplies.

Letter Number 84

In camp near Triune Tenn. June 14<sup>th</sup> 1863

Dear "Nerva" and "babies," I will try to write a few lines to you this morning. I feel quite well this morning to what I have been this ~~mor~~ week past. I went on picket once but came in quite well sick, but I took some medicen, and lay still, and I feel a good deal better this morning, but I shall not go upon duty again untill I am strong enough to go it. We have not had any news here of any account since my last. The rebel cavelry made a dash or two upon our pickets, within the last week, and there was quite a smart skirmish last Thursday with them, they fired a few shell into our lines, but without any damage, we took a few prisoners and Wounded some, and we lost a few. I cannot hear a strait story about the fight so I will not attempt to describe it, you will see some sketches of it in the Union. We have got a very heavy body of troops at this point. I do not know how many, but I think there is about thirty thousand men. We received orders last night about eleven o'clock to have two days rations in our haversacks and be ready to march at a moments notice, but it is now eight o'clock, and we have not got any marching orders yet, there is to be a general inspections to day, but I do not have to go out, with them. We have had some rain, and the nights are quite cool, but it is very warm during the day. We do not hear any different news from Vicksburgh yet but all eyes and hearts look there for something decisive. I hope that Gen Grant will conquer them at last, but he has got a "hard hand to beat." If he does not take the place this time, there is no hopes of our getting out of the war before our time of enlistment is out, about 13 months more as I will be mustered out the same time the regiment is, (so count fast.) if we do not have to do any more for the next six months, than what we have done in the last six, we will not be hurt much. We have been in this camp nearly three months and a half, or nearly one third of a year, and it hardly seems more than so many weeks to

us, the time goes off so fast. I hope that the time will soon come when we will be permitted to meet each other at our homes in Minnesota, and if we live it will soon roll around.

I received a letter from you yesterday dated June 6<sup>th</sup> and was well pleased with it as I always am with a letter from "Nerva," and to hear that my little family is well, and enjoying themselves as well as they can[.] I hope that there will no cloud pass over your hopes, and that they will be fully realized in a short time, and that I shall return to you, to spend the remainder of my days in the presence of my family, but I see by your letters that there is a man coming up to fill my place one of these days, whose name is Edgar Lincoln. I think that he would look like someone's else boy, more than he would a boy of mine if I should see him going around the streets with a hat and "boots" on. I am glad that he is well, and I hope that he will grow up a good boy and be a blessing to his mother and sisters. I do not know why you cannot hear from Em. if he does go on an expedition for they will keep open the communication with the State most likely. I hope that he will come through all right, as well as myself, and I guess that we will. I am glad that "grisy" makes a good cow for you, what do you do with rosy this summer, and what does fathers folks do with the Oxen, are they doing well. I wish that they could earn a little Brakeing for you, if they could, is Allen a breaking any this summer. I wish I was there to work with him. I am sorry that you had your cotton plants picked off. I do not think of much more to write this time, the band is aplaying a fine tune now, and the companies are out on inspection, and I am a getting dinner. I am getting some soup. I will close, good bye

D. B. G.

Letter Number 85

In camp near Triune Tenn. June 20<sup>th</sup> 1863

My Dear Wife and children, I feel as though I must write a few lines to you this afternoon, but I have not got any news to tell you for it is a very quiet time with us here, there has not been any movement of the troops here since I last wrote to you, and things remain about the same at Vicksburg but it seems as though the rebels had made a stir among the men on the Potomac<sup>1</sup>, and I am glad of it, for it will wake them up a little, and give them something to do, but I have confidence to believe that Gen. Hooker will give them all that they ask for in his way. I hope that they will not get back very safe again but the papers are very still upon the movements of the army, but as near as we can judge evry thing is a working well, and I hope that it will end well, and hasten the close of the war. I received a letter yesterday from Samuel and two to day, one from you and Alice, and one from Sister Mariah, and I was glad to hear from you all, but none so well as from my own "Nerva," and the babies[.] I was glad to hear that you are all well, and are a getting along so finely this summer. I hope that you will have good luck, and that I shall be permitted to go home and find you all hapy, before winter, but I expect to have to stay another year, if we do not it will be a "hapy disapointment" won't it "Nerva?"

I have rather been on the gain since I wrote to you but I am not very stout yet, my appetite is note very good yet, but I guess that I shall get along without going to the Hospital if we stay in camp, but I shall not try to march any yet, you must not worry about me to much for if I should get any worse, I will let you know as soon as I can write or get any one to write, but I hope that I will not have to do so. Where does Mary Vandervaust live, you wrote that Mary got a letter from her. I hope that you and Mary will not get all the Women jealous of you as well as the

Methodist down on the prairie, you had better look out, or you will have some of them in your hair before you know it.

I expect that if I was at home that I should laugh some to see the boys out a drilling under Jerry, but as to my being put into office with them if I was there would not be so well for I think if I serve my time out in the army, that they can let me alone the remainder of my life[.] I would be willing to help them all that I could and that is all. I am glad that the children have a good school this summer, and I hope that they will learn fast and well while they have a good chance. We have not had any very hot weather as yet, we have some very heavy showers, and the air keeps pure and cool. I hope that you will not suffer any up there for the want of rain, for we shall want all that you can raise to spare. I will send both of the letters and you must try to write Mariah a few lines if you can, I guess that she is a getting along very well, she seems to have almost evry thing but the "baby." I shall write to her before long. I will see if I can find any one in the Tenn. Reg. from that part of the state, if I can find out anything I will let you know, and you can tell the woman so, but it is hard to find any one in a reg. unless I know the name of the town they live in. Capt Barnes has gone to Wisconsin on a furlough perhaps he will come there, he is not very well, there is not a great deal of sickness in the reg now, we are in hopes that we will move before long for we are tired of being in one camp so long. I cannot think of any thing to write to day so I will close for this time, and bid you all good bye, from your Husband and  
Father

D. B. Griffin.

To Nerva

Alice

Ida and

Edgar

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<sup>1</sup> This would mark the beginning of Lee's northward push into Pennsylvania, paralleled initially by Union Gen. Hooker, then by Gen. Meade, culminating in the July 1–3, 1863 Battle of Gettysburg.