In spite of the optimism in Henry Albert Potter's letter of the 21st, 6 days later we find him still sick in the Hospital in New Market. The regiment moved on leaving him and several comrades to tough it out.

New Market KY
Monday Oct 27, 1862

Dear Father
I had a good chance to get a letter in the office today. So I thought I would write a line. I am in the Hospital. I have had the jaundice pretty bad and then caught some cold. My throat has been very sore. I have put Oil of Hemlock on it so it is much better. I am going to get some Wild Cherry Bark & liquor, make some bitters. I guess that will straighten me. I have taken Calomel Rhubarb for the jaundice. Dr Bacon of Dewitt is the assistant Surgeon. A very nice man. We are in a Presbyterian Church. There is sixty sick here. Two or three are dangerous. The regiment is about 30 miles ahead at Munfordville.
We have had about 3 inches of snow here. I suppose up home you have had a foot, perhaps. It is a very pleasant day. The dust which has been very unpleasant has simmered down. They have had no rain here for three months of any account. It is a hard place to get postage stamps here. I wish you would send me a dozen or so when you write. I hope to be with the regiment when we get our Pay for I have not a cent. John Gilbert has been some sick. Bilious as well as myself, but he is with the regiment. I will have to stop. My love to you all and to my friends, Mrs Gilbert especially.
Write to your ------? love
Albert
Write direct
Co B
4th Michigan Cavalry
Via Louisville, KY

Henry Albert Potter returns from New Market, KY hospital. He is recuperated from Yellow Jaundice and rejoining his comrades in Nashville, having missed the regiment's hunt for CSA Gen John Morgan's Cavalry. He details his method of laundry to his sister for approval and gets a chance to hob-nob with the upper crust at Nashville.

Saturday November 15th 1862
In Camp near Nashville, Tenn

My dear Sister

Having time this afternoon, I thought I would write a line home and tell you of my whereabouts. I am felling nearly as well as ever only I tire out very easy. I have a good appetite. Have just been eating dinner. Had some fried shoulder, sweet potatoes, cold beans, bread and coffee. So you can see we don't live so bad here. It is only when we are on a scout or march that we have hard feed. Then we take it as we can catch it. John G.[John N. Gilbert] is in the hospital at Mitchellsville. He is pretty sick, or was when I was obliged to leave him. He is not in with the rest of the sick but has a good bed in a house near the Station. As he was rather weak, the surgeon did not move him from the place I got for him and I was very glad of it. I have not heard from him since I left and am some uneasy, but hope for the best. Levi Fishbeck is with him he will see to him perhaps as well as I would. I wanted to stay but the surgeon would not consent so I had to come on here. We are camped just across the river from Nashville, the capital of Tenn. I have been through the city, it is a pretty place, about half as large as Detroit. The State House is a splendid building built upon a hill. You can see it 3 or 4 miles from the city in any direction. The country around here is very fine. Nice farm houses with their little cabins in the rear for the darkies. They have no barns in this country of any account. A great many houses have been burnt along the road. The chimnies stand as a bleak monument of the desolation of war. I said we were camped, I only meant a detachment of the regiment under Lt Col Dickinson[Julian G Dickinson]. The regiment is not here nor has it been. They are scouting around after Morgan. We expect them in now every day. There was fighting night before last about 17 miles from here. We think the 4th was engaged, but have heard no particulars. Lieut J.M. Carter[Julius M. Carter] is sick. He is at home near here. He thinks of coming home to get well. Our captain, Frank Mix is now with the company. The boys all like him first rate. I have not seen him yet.

We have not drawn our pay yet and I doubt if we get any until the 1st of January. I am clean gone done, no done gone, that's it. I am dead broke. I guess I can stand it though if I don't have it I won't spend it. There is due me now about $40. Mother, I intend to pay you all up as soon as Uncle Sam pays me. Please send down your acct and I will fork over. There must be a right smart of it by this time, I reckon. When you write again tell me about the farming how much wheat was sown and where? Did they sow Meditteranean on Rhodes farm? How many potatoes was there? And how much corn? Are the horses fat? And all these little things. They are all very interesting to me.

You ought to see me do my washing. I washed out a couple pairs of socks yesterday and 4 pocket handkerchiefs today. I rubbed them out in soap suds until I thought they were clean. I then rubbed soap on them after wringing them out and boiled them up in the cooking kettle and then rinsed them out in cold water, was that right? And to iron them rubbed them out with my hands. I am very precise about this for I thought perhaps I might make a mistake. I guess it was all right but the cooking kettle.

I send you a Confederate note. It is not the genuine but said to be a facsimile. I sent John a paper printed by the rebel Morgan. It is quite a curiosity.

When we came into Nashville the other day I had no horse. I had been riding in the ambulance but when we got in the City I got out and walked and by that means did not keep up with the rest. A gentleman came along in a carriage and I asked him if I might ride a piece with him. He said yes! With the greatest of pleasure! I got in and finding that he lived near where the regt was going thought I would ride all the way. He was a strong Union man. Was a member of the legislature when Tennessee seceded. His name is Trimball. He invited me to stay to dinner. I thanked him very much and excused myself, but he urged me so that I went in. And oh! You ought to have seen the style. I hardly dared to step on the carpets with my dirty boots. He introduced me to his wife, son and daughter and Mr. Richards an aid of Gen Negley's was also there to dinner. For dinner we had three courses Soup first, made of mixed vegetables such as we have in the Army. It is a mixture of cabbage, carrot, tomatoes, peppers, beets and other things all cut up fine. And pressed into cakes about an inch thick and preserved in some way. The 2nd course was a pigs-head, souse, snout and all and sweet potatoes. The 3rd was fried beef, wheat and corn bread all the way through. Cold water to drink in silver cups. After dinner I thanked them very much and took my leave. A friend of mine was to the city to see his cousin as it happened his cousin lived in the next house a large two story brick (Trimball's house stands upon a hill, a splendid house and so richly furnished. So much silver plate etc) and Mrs Trimball happened in. Had an introduction and in the course of the conversation found out that I was in the same company and sent over a very polite invitation to take tea. Isn't that beautiful! For lo! And behold come to find out Mr Trimball is Attorney General of the State. I think I shall go over and marry in the family wouldn't you?

Amelia, I have written this little adventure just because I had not much else to write and to show you how the richest families are obliged to live here. On acct of the war sugar is 75 cnts a pound, brown. Coffee $1.00 and hard to get at that. Milk and eggs are out of the question. Apples are 10 cnts a piece, but we bought some a 2 for 5 cnts in camp today. Gen Rosecrans' headquarters is in Nashville. I have not seen him yet. The mail from the North is uncertain. I don't know when you will get this. I am sorry you have to stay at home when you might be at school but

perhaps it is all for the best. By reading and thinking you may educate yourself to a certain degree but I think you might perhaps get a school next summer! You might set your mark there and try! Give my love to Emma and Anna and to Mrs Binck and all my friends. I am going to write to Mr Lancers the next I think. You may send a stamp or two in your next letter as they come very handy. It is about nine o'clock. I am sergeant of the guard to night and will have to report myself. My love to you all. Direct to Nashville Tenn,
From your brother, Albert

[written around the edge of the letter:]
You must excuse scarcity of news this letter is all stuff.
Mr Gilbert's folks must not worry about John as he has good care I think he
will soon be with us again hope so at least. The weather here is very fine. We have had a fine shower lately, just
enough to lay the dust. They days are about such as we have home in Sept.
The nights are cool. How is the weather up in Mich.____

[for the curious: John Gilbert got well, then was discharged August 6, 1863 "(leg broken while in line of duty)"]

We find Henry Albert Potter back in the thick of things after his return to the regiment. He tells his mother not to worry about him getting shot and muses perhaps he will never see a real engagement.

In Camp in Nashville
Dec 2nd 1862

Dear Mother
I received your paper today and Amelia's letter last night and have received all of the letters, stamps and papers you have sent me, I think. I am feeling first rate again. We just got in from a three day's scout yesterday. We went out on the turnpike to Lebanon after the rebels but they skedaddled before we got there. Sunday afternoon we came up to their pickets and had a light skirmish, no one hurt. Companies B and A were detailed as picket guard that night and it rained. Oh dear! We were not allowed any fires but had to stand it. I was wet as a drowned rat but did not catch a cold. So you see I am tough. You are foolish to think I am going to get shot or any such thing. Its time enough to think about such things when you have to. Mustn't look on that side. Well we captured some fine chickens on our scout and consequences was we had an excellent pot pie today for dinner and Lew Wilcox[Lewis H Wilcox] is baking some wheat pan cakes for supper. I must stop until I eat about a dozen or so.

Well those cakes were not quite as good as yours for they were a little heavy being about inch thick. But they tasted very good with sugar. Better than hard cracks.

I heard from John yesterday he is getting quite smart. Able to walk some. By being careful he will soon be with us again. Alf Shepard[Alpheus F Shepard] wanted me to say for him that he was around. Billy Egleston[William H Egleston] has had a bad earache a day or two. He is well other ways. I don't want you to send me any more money. I was only telling how hard up I was. If rumors are true we will get our pay this week and then I can send you some. Give my love to George Rhodes. Tell him to improve his time at study, he will never regret it. Tell him to make my respects also to Mr Rhodes family. If Josiah lets old Charley go you must get a mate to Skip, don't go with out a team. There's no use of it. Better get another mare to raise a span of colts for me. We take all the good horses we find on our scouts. It seems rather hard but it is right nearly every family in the country about here to Lebanon are rebels. Company B has not been in any battles yet and is not likely to be very soon. You must recollect there are hundreds of regiments and thousands of companies in this great army. We may possibly serve our three years out and not see a large engagement.

I have sent the likeness. You may send it to Aunt Nep when you get thro'. I will send another one home when I get a chance. I have no news to tell you this time. Tell GJB I would like to hear from him. I wrote Neiman Lancer a week ago. Write often as you can. I do not always have time to write. I always write every chance.

My love to all

Albert

[written around the margin] I recd Mr Gilbert's letter. My love to them all. Less than a month ago Henry Albert Potter was telling his mother he might not fight in any engagement. Now comes a letter after the battle of Murfreesboro or Stones River. Potter, like Morris, discusses the burning of the wagon trains which occurred and losing his books and 'likenesses'.

Camp Stanley[General David S Stanley, commander of Cavalry under Rosecrans]
Near Murfreesboro
January 8th 1863

Dear Father, Mother, and Amelia

I am not dead, wounded, or sick, but, on the contrary, never felt better in my life. Have since I left Nashville. I can say that I have had an active part in as hard a battle as has been fought during the war.

A general move of the army was made on the 26th Ult. The fighting commenced about 10 miles from Nashville the same day and lasted nine days. When the rebels were driven from Murfreesboro. The 4th Michigan has won at

least a name and place. On Saturday 27th four companies under Captain Mix were sent out and came upon a strong body of rebel cavalry. There was about 150 of us we charged upon 200 of them, drove them about 2 miles shot 5 of their men, a no. of horses and took 8 prisoners. One of our corporals was wounded in the side. January 9th
We have been busy today arranging our tent. We have got a sesesh stove, Table and Bunk, taken from one of their camps.

Our Company was engaged in Wednesday's fight. We made two charges upon rebel cavalry. Capt Mix[Frank W Mix] had a splendid horse shot from under him, our quartermaster Sgt was wounded. I have had 3 or 4 narrow escapes, have been where the cannon ball and shells were flying close around me and I must be lucky. I did not think of getting killed at all but I expected to be wounded. We entered Murfreesboro on Monday. The rebs left Saturday night. Out right was driven back on Wednesday with great slaughter on both sides. I passed over the field Monday. The rebels had carried nearly all of their dead, ours were lying in rows as they had been carried to bury. Horses dead and guns and artillery filled the ground. I can't tell you anything of the sight.

The rebels captured and burnt a part of our train and among the rest our company wagon were stolen excepting what I had on. The likenesses and the books are gone. The captains and lieutenants clothes were all gone. Such are the fortunes of war. John Gilbert was not with us thru the fighting was not very tough and had a pactious? horse he staid with the train. Charley Smith[Charles H Smith] is without doubt dead, he died with the black jaundice as we were informed. Herman Lounsbury[Herman H Lounsbury] is very sick. I am afraid he will have a hard time of it if he ever gets well. Charley Starkweather[Charles A Starkweather] is isolated with a lame back. Alf Shepard and Norman Smith are well. We shall be very busy for a week now making out our payrolls have a good deal of writing. L J Southworth[Lorenzo T Southworth] is writing home he is well. I am liking soldiering as well as ever, if only I keep well and I never felt better--
Albert
[written in the margins:]
Give my love to all, and write soon, the news I have not heard from you since I left Nashville.
I sent a sesesh envelope and some cottin seed, plant them they will grow.
I would have written before but have had no chance to send
Direct to Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

[The men mentioned, except officers like Mix, are all from Ovid, Clinton County, Michigan]

In this letter Henry Albert Potter recounts the charge of the 7th PA and a Union debacle south of Franklin. I am reading MINTY AND THE CAVALRY(1886),
by Joseph Vale, Captain 7th PA Cavalry. I condense the story:
On March 4, 1863 Minty ordered the charge of the 7th Pennsylvania, using sabres as the principle weapon, which resulted in capture of Unionville, TN. Afterwards General Rosecrans "directed that it [7th PA Cav] be known henceforth, in the department, as the sabre regiment of the Army of the Cumberland."
On March 5, 1863 the Union attacked General Nathan Bedford Forrest at Spring Hill with "the 85th Indiana Inf, the 19th Michigan Inf, the 22nd Wisconsin inf, the 124th Ohio Inf, the 9th Pennsylvania Cav, and 4 pieces of artillery." The rebel force at Spring Hill included "Van Dorn and Price's Cavalry to a total of twelve thousand" men. [when you read regimental histories you must be careful of estimates of enemy strength-mr] The information of the disaster and increase in Rebel Cavalry resulted in General Sheridan directing Minty to be sent as reenforcement toward Franklin on March 6th, 1863.

The Letter:

Near Franklin
Sunday Mar 8th 1863
Dear Father
I have been thinking of home today. Of the pleasure we could all have if I were there with you all a short time. It is a warm balmy spring day. The birds are singing. The trees are budding and Nature is working quiet and harmonius amid the bustle of the camp. We had a heavy thunder shower last night. But I slept soundly in my little storm tent as dry as a pig. I still keep tough and hearty. I stand camp life and its hardships much better than I thought I would when I enlisted. I believe I feel better than if at home teaching. If I live to come home again you will see me a tough man. This the fifth day out. We started from Murfreesboro last Wednesday morning with a brigade of infantry. We are in the 1st Cavalry Brigade under Col Minty[Robert H G Minty] of this regiment but acting brigadier. He will get a star before long, I believe, every body likes him also and he is a rising man. Lt Col Dickinson[William H Dickinson] has resigned[disability]. Major Park[Josiah B Park] is now Lt Col. He has not been with us much, is acting inspector of cavalry, I think don't know when he will be with us, if ever. Major Gray[Horace Gray] and Huston[Joseph P Huston] are home recruiting. Have not seen any of their recruits yet. They are not worth anything to us, nor never would be and among the many promotions who else do you suppose has been hit myself, as true as preaching. I was promoted to 2nd Lieut. The 27th Feb'y and transferred to

E Company under Capt Tolton[Joseph B Tolton]. He is a good military man, well drilled, but is not very healthy. I hav been in command of the Comp. ever since have been in it. And expect to be half of the time. J W Mann[Joshua W Mann] is 1st Lt but is detached and in command of the brigade provost guard. He will never be back in the Company, probably, I hope not at least. I do not have near as much to do now as I did when Orderly. My pay is $129 per month, out of that pay $16 per month for forage for horse. Have to hire a darkey and find myself in everything. Still I think I can save considerable. I have bought a coat sack for $15 and vest $6. My straps I got from my predecessor. They are nice ones. We have been paid up to the 31st of October. I rec'd $36.25 cnts. Uncle Sam owes me about $75 yet as an enlisted man. I have to get may discharge papers made out and then be mustered as a com's'd officer. I have no need to complain but 2 or 3 enlisted men in the reg't have done as well as I. There are 5 Orderlies that have been such since the reg't was formed and are likely to stay so. I am the 2nd Orderly promoted over Co.E's orderly and been assigned over him. He is a clever fellow but not very competent. I must hse him well. I shall still try to do my duty. As long as I do so, I still have friends to help me to anything. I have not got me a very good horse yet.(never had the Bigdon? horse, major Mix owns him.) But shall get one as soon as possible. I can take and receipt for any horse we come across thro the country and will improve the chance. I want to get a good rig throughout to bring home with me. I am glad you have got another mare. You will have a good way to get around and go visiting. I don't want you to kill yourself fretting or working, but live as easy as you can. Hiram K[Hiram J Knowles] wants me to buy his farm and I don't know but what it would be a good plan, wouldn't it? Hiram is not tough. I am sorry poor John[John Gilbert]. I feel lonesome without him. He stood a good chance to be Orderly in Co B if he had not broken his leg. Maybe he can get his discharge. I advised him to, if he could. I think he can. Let Mr. Gilbert read this. I read his letter to John. I have written so much about myself you will think I am getting vain. But I wanted to let you know what my prospects are and have been. Lorenzo[Lorenzo T Southworth] is now QM Serg't. He heas done as well as anybody could and he deserves it. Charley S[Charley A Starkweather] is back with the Co. He is well again. Lewis Coon is dead. He is from [Duplain], I believe. Alf Shepard has been sick as long time. He will be discharged, he tells me. Norm Smith is very sick. If he lives he will do well. His is a good boy. I like Norman and hope he will get well Oh! how I would like some Maple Sugar. I you think there is any chance to
get it to me you may send a little box and anything else you think I would like. Send to Murfreesboro and write before you send. You will have to send by express, if at all.

Now I must tell you about our scout. The first day out we surprised about 600 graybacks, made a charge on them and captured about 50 of them. A capt

and 2 lieuts. The 7th Penn was ahead with their sabres They won't stand the sabres. They all know the 7th. They call them the fighting 7th and hate them accordingly. We go out in such numbers that unless there is a large force of them they won't stand. I hve not had a chance to fire my pistol since the big battle. Our Brigade has captured about 400 since then. I should judge. Now I must tell you some bad news. We had 1500 men captured last Friday. Infantry, Col Gilbert of the 19th Mich was com'd'g the brigade. He is a new officer and too fast. He was out Thursday and attacked and drove the rebs. The next day flushed with victory, attacked them. They run as usual. He followed them on and on until from each side and behind a swarm of the enemy came out and they were cut off. Fighting was useless and they were captured, the most of them. The Col got away, I believe. A smart man is needed to lead men successfully. Van Dorn is encamped 5 miles from here and Wheeler's Cavalry. They are reported 15,000 strong and are saucy. There will be another big battle before long, I think. 30,000 men are here, so said. But I doubt it we will probably move in the morning and maybe will have a battle, can't tell. I don't know
how this letter will get thru! Write. Give my love to all my friends. To Mr Gilbert especially and Mrs Longham.
Direct to Co "E" instead of "B". Good bye. I never forget Home sweet Home

Henry Albert Potter writes his sister Amelia in this rather light-hearted letter, describing the grand review held in Murfreesboro by Rosecrans. Potter states his belief Rosecrans will never be defeated.

Murfreesboro, Tenn.
Wednesday Mar 17th
Dear Sis

Having time, I will scratch you a line to tell you of my continued good health and prospects. Am getting along finely in my new company.

Oh! Such splendid weather as we are having at presetn. At home I can imagine how muddy and disagreeable it is yet. While here the tree are some of them looking quite green. I saw one today fully leaved. They call it box elder. Peach trees are in bloom. I send some buds and blossoms. They grew on rebel soil and I suppose are budding traitors. Their color though is not butternut.

We had a grand review and inspection of all the Cavalry Force in the Department or nearly all by Maj Gen Rosecrans yesterday at 12 M It was a grand sight. The Review was on a large common 2 miles from town. There was one large flag with the Gen'l and then the "star" flags of each Brigadier or Commander of Brigade numbered to show which each commanded and

then most of the different Companies had their Guidions. All together made a handsome show with the officers with their full uniforms and white gauntlets and red sashes. Gen Stanley[David S Stanley] wore a Yellow Sash. The maj gen wore none at all. Rosecrans is a large well proportioned man, looks about forty five. Is quite bald as I could see when he saluted the Brigadiers. He looks good-natured and benevolent. Has a large Roman nose slightly hooked as he passed us on a gallop with his staff. He said "good morning, gentlemen! I am glad to see you all out this morning." And a little further on "you are the hope of the army. Do you mind that?" and on he went talking along the line and encouraging the men. Mrs Rosecrans was at the Review also. I was not close to her. She was dressed in black and rode a splendid horse. I believe Gen Rosecrans is the most popular Gen'l in the army of the Union. He has never been whipped and permit me to say he never will be. The army in this department has the prestige of success and victory and we intend to keep our name good. The rumor prevails here at the present that Vicksburg is evacuated and the army moving up to crush us out. How much truth there is in the report I can't tell. We will be ready for them at any rate. Prospect is that we will get pay up to Dec 31 tomorrow. Will get it this week, I think without fail. The boys in B Co are all well, I believe, I have not heard from John[John N Gilbert, Ovid] since I wrote you last. Direct to Hospital No 8 Nashville. There at present, have written to Stephan V. , Elder Bassers and quite a no. lately. My love to you all.
I got out in command of a picket guard 7am tomorrow. Good Bye. Write soon. My love to all
Albert

Henry Albert Potter writes his father, obviously the weather and his health are good; but, he muses on death, and seems to say it is human nature which allows us to put thoughts of death away but reason, which we should use, to keep us thinking of our mortality.

Sunday March 22nd [1863]
Dear Father
We are having beautiful weather here at present. Nice, warm, growing spring days. Much trees are all in blossom. I am fat and healthy yet like my new company and place firstrate. I rec'd
a letter from John today saying you were all well. I am glad. I often think that before I start home some of you may be taken away from this scene and stage of action. And I feel sad , and how much more you will say. Ought I to think of myself having so much more risk to run but you know how natural it is for man to put all such thoughts far away with the future, and especially the Soldiers, but this is no excuse for any man.

Human Nature is not reason which should be used.
I expect to be mustered tomorrow as Lieut. The Col read a telegram from the governor saying that my appointment was approved and my commission would be sent by mail with a no. of others. The Col thinks my commission will date from Feb 16. I will rank from that day but do not expect to draw pay, only from date of Commission approved is rec'd ie. from yesterday.
I intend to be as saving as possible. I am making, now, more than I ever did before and intend to improve it if my life is spared, to benefit all of us. I am earning it easy too. How easily I cannot tell but it does not seem to me I should be killed. I may be wounded perhaps, you have my feelings. I do not feel fearful at all. -----
I wish you would send me a lot of stamps they are hard to get here at all times.
No use to send me papers. John writes that Mrs Baker is dead and Egleston very low. How is Lafayette getting along? I have written quite a no. of letters lately I do not think we will make a forward movement right away. I am not sure but that we will have to fight here again but hardly think so. The rebels are getting saucy. Our whole line of pickets was attacked simultaneously yesterday morn but were ready for them.
Give my love to all, and write all that you are doing and going to do.
From your affectionate son.
Albert

Henry Albert Potter writes to his sister, recounts a lot of people who have died at home as well as in camp. Remonstrates with her for worrying about him now he is a Lieutenant and would like to have cotton underclothes instead of woolen. (Who wouldn't?)

Monday, Mar 30, /63
Dear Sis
I rec'd your long and good letter yesterday. I was glad to hear you were all well. Sorry so many are sick or dead. I know Mrs French is dead. Lt Col Park[Josiah B Park, Ovid] arrived here on Friday reported you all are well. Said things were about as usual, you could see Ovid yet for the houses. I have not heard from Norm S.[Norman Smith: he died the next day, Mar 31, "of disease"] in some time. He is not well yet. Charley Wrisler of the Colony[Conrad Wrisler or Wresler of Duplain: died Mar 24] is dead. He died suddenly of Fever. He was as faithful a man as I ever knew. He was just promoted to Sergeant in his Company. I send my likeness to day by Levi Bigelow. He has got his discharge at last. I am glad. The picture is not a good one. Too light but I thought perhaps I would have no better chance. So I send it along.
I have not been well the past week. Had some cold and chills and fever. But am better now. Got a very sore mouth so that I could not enjoy those

delicious biscuits and molasses! Oh!
Well you had a very pleasant and interesting acquaintance in your dream. Would not smile or notice you. Dr Neitch is a villian.
I don't know the use of being lonesome or sad and I don't want you to be. I don't want to come home and see you moping around all you, telling everybody you see, Oh! I wish Albert was home. I wouldn't be at home now if I had staid at home. Some others would have been here and to shape up these men would have been a drafting in Ovid and I might have been the first one that would have been pleasant. It is right just as it is and it is my duty to be here. Suppose I am killed. I have no wife or children left for others to care for. And you will have the same good care you have always had. But I don't intend to be killed. The rebel was never born that was smart enough to hit me. I may die with disease and so I might at home. I am in no more dangerous place than I was as Sergeant.
You may send that box as soon as convenient. I had a bite of Maple Sugar that Col Park [Josiah B Park]brought from his folks. Just as aggravating send me a couple of cotton shirts for under shirts. I can't wear woolen next to me, and some cotton stockings and anything else good to eat.
I have not heard from John[probably John Gilbert] in sometime. That is by letter, I don't know why he don't write. I write him and sent some money but he has not answered. Lieut Carter[Julius M Carter] saw him and said he was getting along as well as possible but could not leave his bed yet.
I am going to write him today.
There is no need of Mr Lounsbury's people nursing any hope that Herman is alive [Herman H Lounsbury died Dec 31, 1862 in Murfreesboro]. I saw him myself the day before he died just as we all went out on a scout. And I did not think he would live then. He was moved to the hospital the next day which was too much for him and he died at night. Hiram Knowles[Hiram J Knowles: also died at Mufreesboro May 12, 1863] went down and was satisfied.
There is no signs of a forward movement at present. If you send a box direct Lieut. In care of Lt Col Park and it will receive more attention, so also with letters.
I must close. Give my love to all my friends and all write
Good bye, Albert

Henry Albert Potter got a quick promotion from 2nd LT to 1st LT and writes home to tell about it. The Confederates he is fighting daily never seem to get him angry, however, "Coppeheads", the Northern Democrats, which in our day are called "Doves", do set him off every time he hears of their opposition to the draft or the war.

Headquarters Co H
Apr 3rd 1863
Father
I suppose I should inform you of all my good luck, well then. I am now a 1st Lieutenant and in command of "H" company. The Capt (Abeel) [Alfred Abeel, Deerborn, taken prisoner supposedly under a flag of truce' before Stones River on Dec 21, 1862-MR] is a prisoner in Atlanta, Ga. and will probably stay there some time. I am in full command and will be responsible for (--?) the same as Capt. I take Lt Leach's[Wesley H Leach] place, he is now Capt of Company "A" -- There are few who are doin as well as I am and I have friends on every hand. Pay is the same as 2nd Lt. With the addition of $10 extra as Com'd'r of Company. I was not expecting another honor so soon and it took me entirely by surprise. I do not like to take so much responsibility but can do it, if I must. I have a good lot of boys. I will get along without any trouble.

I have not been well the past week, was taken with chills and fever and fearing it would end in a regular course of fever, I took a heavy dose of Calomel and now I have a sore mouth. It is much better than it was and I feel better myself, shall soon be as well as ever again.

The Brigade and Regt are out on a five day scout. I was not well and therefore did not go. It is the first one I have missed in a long time.

What are your sentiments as regards conscripts law and the prosecution of the war. I cannot believe are opposed to either altho claiming to be a Democrat.

I tell you the men in the army are death on the Copperheads. By these I mean men who are opposed to every move of the government and are crying for peace and compromise. What Peace can we have? What Compromise can we make? We can have peace by recognizing them as a government. We can have compromise with them in no other way and then they will claim Ky and Tenn are the people searching for such a peace as this would be? Are they satisfied with such terms?
Then why not rise in union and crush them out.
Is this the time to argue about politics? Verily; no! The business of the North should be to stop their traitorous mouths and let not another word go in the hungry ears of the South and to send us more men. They can hold

out not much longer, I believe things are approaching a crisis already and ere long the affair will be solved. Right will triumph.

My love to all. If you could send me a small trunk instead of a box it would be better as I need one very much. From Your Affectionate son Albert

Direct Lieut H. A. Potter Com'd'g Co "H"

[In the margin of the letter is the following]
Mother , I would like to see you. Oh! How well & hope is ere long. I am getting real gray hairs are honorable, you know, especially for [---lost at the edge]

[written vertically on the 3rd page is the following]
It's generally supposed that I wear about as many bars as that great man you saw in Detroit Lt Carter[Julius M Carter] He is yet a 1st Lt, he was promoted to fill Shepard's place and it affected him so that another promotion it is thought would prove too much for him. He is troubled with "promotion on the Brain" a very serious disease say nothing about this he always uses me well enough.

Henry Albert Potter, always a Repulican, carries a metaphoric cliche on the "ship of state" to ridiculous lengths in another tirade against the Democrats of Ovid, Michigan. Proud of his new promotion he signs his letter as 'commanding Co H'.

Headquarters Co. "H" 4th M. Cav
Apr 14th 1863

Dear ones all
I re'c'd a letter from home to night. We just came in from a scout. Have been out since last Thursday morning. Our Brigade has not done much. We were over near Franklin. Van Dorn is hovering around to see what he may devour. He made a dash into Franklin on Friday. But got rather severely handled. We killed about one hundred, officers and all, while our loss was but a trifle compared to theirs. The Fourth Regulars captured a Battery of six pieces but they were not supported and consequently were obliged to give it up again. Although they succeeded in disabling a part of it by cutting the spokes in the wheels.

I am feeling firstrate again. I got a letter from John Gilbert also today. He gets along slowly. I'm afraid he does not have as good treatment as he should , would like to go him but cannot at present. He has a good appetite, but can't get enough to allay it.

We have had several nice showers & the woods are beginning to look quite green. Apple and Plums trees are in blossom. The fields of wheat and grass are starting up. And all nature is looking pretty. You well see the negro women out in the field planting corn and holding plow. I've got used to it all here but it would seem odd at home.

I am sorry to hear that Ovid is so far gone. Although I think the Democrats of Ovid are generally loyal and vote accordingly. They still cling to the old ship "Democracy" not knowing seemingly how rotten a hulk she now is. They seem to think that the NAME is sufficient to carry them safely through but after having been afflicted with a dry rot ever since 1850. And running into the old ship Constitution at Charleston, thereby losing the most of their important machinery and causing such a leak, That ever since they have been going down. I should think the passengers would be getting uneasy and want to take passage in a safer boat. Such a one for instance as the "Liberty Union" a double decker capable of carrying more than any other boat in the world. And sailing the fastest with or against the current. Passengers on board this boat have confidence in their pilot as his compass never fails and they are certain of reaching their destination sooner than any other boat for they have taken the nearest route. Consequently they have no reason to argue among themselves or to find fault with others who are doing better than they can do.

I would like to have seen H C Smith elected as Supervisor and John Gilbert a justice, they deserve it. They are unconditional Union Men. Wm Shepard is not safe he is running fast but he is in a wheelbarrow running on the planks of the treacherous ship "Democracy."

I am sorry you can't send a box. I had got my mouth fixed for Maple Sugar. Hiram Knowles[Hiram J Knowles, Ovid] is getting better. Alf Shepard[Alpheus F Shepard, Ovid] also Billy Egleston[William R Egleston, Ovid]is tough as ever. Lorenzo[Lorenzo T Southworth, Ovid]] is now first Sergeant of Co "B." I commenced on nothing and am now spun out. Write often. My love to all my friends. Tell Frank Shepard to write me a letter.
I remain as ever
Your Soldier boy
Henri Albert Potter
Lt Com'd'g Co. "H"

Henry Albert Potter gives us some candid insight as to his feelings about the negro and gets pretty defensive about an apparent picture of "my boy Ed" he sent north.

Headquarters Co "H" Near
Columbia Tenn Apr 20 [1863]

Dear Sis
I rec'd your letter today acknowledging the receipt of the likenesses. Glad to hear from you. Ben Shepard is not worth a decent man's notice and he makes such remarks. I don't care what he or any of that stripe say about me they can't hurt me. Their ravings cannot be helped. The expressions they get off about me is but the scum and foam from the large amount of Copper and Malicious Jealousy, mixed together of which they are mostly made up.

Mrs Longcor need not be alarmed about my boy Ed's coming up north. I sent his likeness up to you more for the novelty of the thing than anything else. Thought it would amuse you. but if I should bring him Yes! Suppose I should commit such an awful act, whose business would it be but my own! -- I don't believe I think more for the negro, than Mrs Longcor but I do believe and say they ought to have their freedom and they shall have it not only because they are human and have souls, but because their masters have forfeited all right to them and their loss is our gain And again they make good soldiers, good Fighting soldiers, and I say let them fight. They are no better to stop a ball than I am --- If working men are so opposed to arming the negro let them take the musket out of their hands and come along.

Show one a man, who is down on our negro soldiers and who keeps hanging back and shirking and I will show you a coward. Yes a moral coward and I believe God hates a coward.

I am expecting some photographs, soon, I will send you one when they come. We have a very pretty camp here. Know nothing of the prospects of moving at all.

How many people have died since we left Starkey and how many since I left Ovid. of those that left and those who staid we all hang? away and know not our own time may arrive.
My constant love to you and mother and father
Albert

Henry Albert Potter writes some letters to the hometown newspaper in Ovid and launches another tirade at the "Copperheads" of his home town. He also feels somewhat down that he has heard no words from home about his promotion to First Lieutenant in Company "H".

Headquarters Co "H" 4.M.C
Camp Minty near Murfreesboro
Sunday Apr 20th 1863

Dear Folks
I must write and tell you that I am well although nothing else of interest presents itself. I Have rec'd no letters from home in some time. None I believe recognizing my promotion and change to another company. The regiment has been out since last Monday. I was about half-sick then and did not go, but I feel all right now and am having a long rest with nothing else to do but write or read.

I enjoy myself firstrate have a wall tent all to myself. Good bunk etc. and I am living well too. Good bread and butter ham potatoes onions tea and coffee. And we get mackerel for supper sometimes which is very nice.

I have not been mustered yet as an officer and have only rec'd pay up to Dec 31. As I was mustered in the payrolls before I had really rec'd my commission. They refuse to pay me. But as soon as I am mustered as an officer I will get my Discharge papers as an enlisted man and draw pay on thru up to the date of discharge. Which will be up to the 6th of April as I rec'd my commission as 2nd Lt as that day. I also got my 1st Lieut's on Apr 15th after I mustered and have no need for them I will send them home and you may have them framed if you like. [I believe he is talking of his Commission Papers-MR]

Our fine weather still continues. The trees are newly leaved and grass has quite a start.

I sent you a Nashville Union some time ago. There is a letter in ti that will perhaps prove interesting. I have also written to the Clinton Paper and sent them some exchanges. The copperheads get a slight touch, but not as much as they deserve. You may be assured they have no sympathy here. The Traitors! And if they forcibly try to miss the conscript in any other legal law they will bitterly see the day. If they have a spark of Patriotism left they had better at once enlist to save their now doubted loyalty and honor. There is no use of their trying to oppose the great fact that this Union will be preserved and that the Sacred Constitution will suffer if it is not actually destroyed and the more they oppose this

fact the more will they be left out in the COLD. I can see it plainly.

I just rec'd your letter Amelia, and was glad to hear of your health, but was pained to hear of the loss in George's family. I sympathize with them sincerely. They think so much of their children and I am also very sorry to hear of Aaron's death. He was always apparently hearty He was a good hearted boy and I am glad of the protracted meeting. I hope it will do much good. I would like to be at her school house and hear a good sermon and see all of my friends, It would be a Pleasure.

Aunt Nep is very foolish. I hate to hear a woman talk so. I supposed she had more faith in the People. She seems to think the whole country is utterly depraved. Entirely sinful. She is mistaken and is getting to be a real croaker. Don't tell her so, for pity's sake.

I will look for the Box now soon. Hiram [Hiram J Knowles, Ovid] is getting better. Billy is well as ever. As soon as the Col gets back I am going to try and see John. From what I hear and he writes he is not getting along very well.

Give my love to all. Sam, you must write, tell Hiram and Mary Longcor, I don't like them at all because they don't write
-----? and never wait for
Albert

Henry Albert Potter in a light hearted mood writes home again. The camp is neatly laid out amoungst the cedar trees and all are enjoying the relative peace General Rosecrans ponderously rebuilds his army for the advance which appears off in the distance: not only to the troops but also to A Lincoln, who keeps prodding 'Old Rosy' trying to get him to move. Have you ever seen a 3 cent piece? It is smaller than a dime and has "III" on one side for 3 cents.
Mike

Headquarters 4th Mich Cavly
Camp Minty Murfreesboro, Tenn
Wednesday May 6th 1863
Dear Sister

I received your letter some days ago, but have not written as I thought I would wait until I rec'd the box you sent. It has not arrived yet so I will write a line today.

I am hearty and well, never felt better. It is [--?] today and cloudy with some rain. I am "officer of the day" we had a Brigade Inspection and Review yesterday. Everything went off well. Gen'l Turchin [J B Turchin] is com'd'g the cavalry in lieu of D.S. Stanley Brig Gen Now Maj Gn.

I was glad to hear of our good luck in Virginia and at New Orleans in Bank's command. I think we will have a battle here ere long whether we advance or the rebels attack us is not certain. Probably we will advance, the confederates are receiving reinforcements, we understand, but there is no such thing as getting whipped in this Army we are bound to push our way through until Tennessee is reclaimed from the hand of her enemies.

Doct. C.T. Armstrong [Charles T Armstrong, asst Surgeon, Ovid] maybe you will see him. He will tell you how I am getting along. Stephan Nyman was here last night. He is in the 22nd Mich Inftry, is well and tough.

I have not heard from John Gilbert since I wrote last, Hiram Knowles cannot live long[died May 12 in Murfreesboro] he has got the consumption or very near like it. His is at Gen'l Hosp. in town, has a comfortable place but he cannot stand it long. I did not know he was so bad, he is a skeleton. He may possibly get well, but, in my opinion, cannot. I am sorry Hiram enlisted he was better off at home. George McClintock is dead of "B" comp. he lived in Ovid near Fitcher, I believe.

I wonder sometimes that I am well and hearty, while those much tougher are dead, I believe I shall come home safe and sound. I have not been mustered yet and therefore have not rec'd any pay as Lieut. I am paid up to Dec 31. US owes me about $175. now but I have had to borrow some. There are so many paper to get out for a muster, it takes some time. I am waiting now for any, in the company muster roll it shows that I have been mustered as an enlisted man, it is in Detroit. It has been sent for. I just got a ~~letter~~ from Ben the folks are all well. I will write to him this day.

Our camp looks very nice. We have rows of cedar trees set out between the tents and around my tent I have got quite a bower of trees and bushes. The tent poles are twined with a wreath of cedars, you know I like to be fixing such things. My quarters are as nice as any of the officers and as clean. I had no news to write today, just wrote to let you know I was well. Mother, I want to see you, I'm coming home in the fall
Albert
[the following written in the margin]
I send you a card that I had made for you with the Lord's Prayer written in the size of 3 cents. I paid 25 cts for it.