

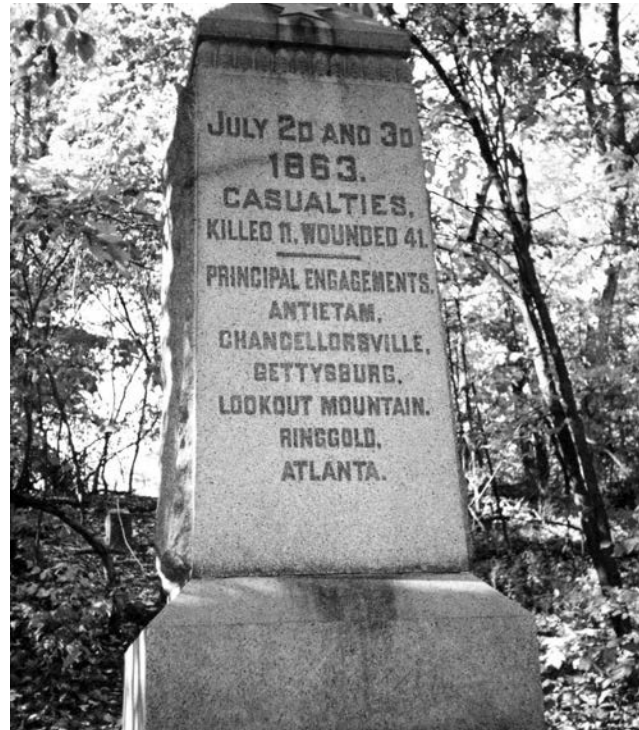
The St. Lawrence County Historical Association

QUARTERLY

Volume LII

Number 3

2007



The Civil War Letters of Edgar Crane, of Stockholm

... and Lyman Lincoln's contrary view of the war

The St. Lawrence County Historical Association at the Silas Wright Museum

The St. Lawrence County Historical Association is a private, not-for-profit, membership organization based at the Silas Wright House in Canton, New York. Founded in 1947, the Association is governed by a constitution, by-laws, and Board of Trustees. The Historical Association's membership meets annually to elect its trustees.

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The St. Lawrence County Historical Association is a not-for-profit membership organization and museum which serves as an educational resource for the use and benefit of the citizens of St. Lawrence County and others interested in the County's history and traditions. The Association collects and preserves archival material and artifacts pertinent to the County's history. In cooperation and collaboration with other local organizations, the Association promotes an understanding of and appreciation for the County's rich history through publications, exhibits, and programs. The St. Lawrence County Historical Association operates within museum standards established by the American Association of Museums.

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Membership in the St. Lawrence County Historical Association is open to all interested parties. Annual membership dues are: Individual \$30; Senior/Student \$25; Family \$40; Contributor \$55; Supporter, \$100; Patron \$250. Members receive the SLCHA Quarterly, the Historical Association's bi-monthly newsletter, and various discounts on publications, programs and events.

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The Quarterly is endowed in memory of Albert Priest Newell and Ella Waterman Newell.

Publication of *The Quarterly* is also made possible with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a State agency.



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The SLCHA Quarterly is published Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall each year by the St. Lawrence County Historical Association for its members and friends.

Additional copies may be obtained from the St. Lawrence County Historical Association, P.O. Box 8, Canton, NY 13617 at \$4.00 each (\$2.00 for members), plus \$2.00 for postage.

Contributions:

The SLCHA Quarterly welcomes contributions. To submit a manuscript, or for further information, please contact the editor through the St. Lawrence County Historical Association. Please address communications to: Managing Editor, *The SLCHA Quarterly*, P.O. Box 8, Canton, NY 13617.



Volume LII Number 3 2007
ISSN: 0558-1931

Contents

From the County Historian <i>Trent Trulock</i>	2
Letters to the Editor	3
The Civil War Letters of Sergeant Edgar Crane <i>Transcribed with Commentary by Stanley L. Maine</i>	4
An Anti-Civil War Ditty <i>Lyman Lincoln</i>	28

Issue Editors

John and Susan Omohundro

On the Cover

Two views of a monument dedicated on July 2, 1888 to the 60th Regiment of New York Volunteer Infantry on Culp's Hill, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The regiment defended the hill near the left flank of General George Greene's Brigade on July 2 and 3, 1863. Edgar Crane of Stockholm was one of the defenders. Nearby are Greene's statue and an observation tower. Photos by Stanley Maine.

From the County Historian

by Trent Trulock

With all the interest in the Civil War, it sometimes seems like it just ended (except in some parts of the southern United States where folks still speak as if this is only a temporary pause in the “War of Northern Aggression”). In 2011 we will be commemorating the 150th anniversary of the beginning of this bloody conflict. And while there were no Civil War battles fought in St. Lawrence County, the war had a tremendous impact on county residents of the time. New York State sent more soldiers to the Union Army than any other state, and these state regiments, and those of other states, were filled with St. Lawrence County men. Women in the county were also involved in the war effort, both at home and by traveling to become nurses to both loved ones and strangers.

The St. Lawrence County Historical Association has an extensive collection of Civil War materials in terms of artifacts, such as a saddle that was used by Chauncey Clark of Colton, NY who enlisted in Company L, 9th New York Cavalry and served as a major. The SLCHA also has an archival collection that researchers consult all of the time. This collection contains materials such as diaries, letters, books, enrollment lists, muster rolls, discharges, pension papers, personal records, and material on The Grand Army of the Republic, which was the Union Army’s veteran’s organization. Some researchers use these archival items to find out about specific engagements that regiments fought in, while others are interested in specific soldiers and tracing family connections. Currently two researchers are compiling a list of Civil War soldiers who were residents of St. Lawrence County during the war, including those who enlisted in regiments from other states. This type of research is a tremendous undertaking and underscores the present fascination with the Civil War.

Some of the county’s Civil War veterans are famous, such as General Newton Martin Curtis, a tall man from Depeyster who led the Union troops in the assault on Fort Fisher, NC. President Abraham Lincoln, who was also



The Silas Wright House, home of the St. Lawrence County Historical Association.

exceptionally tall for the era, once remarked to Curtis, “Colonel, how do you know when your feet are cold?” (*Quarterly*, April 1984, page 19). But most of the county’s Civil War veterans are men who remain mostly unheard of today. They answered the call of their nation and the names of most are available to us today if we only take the time to look for them.

The SLCHA also keeps the history of the Civil War current with the Civil War Roundtable. This is a group that meets one Sunday most months of the year at 2 pm. The roundtable programs often consist of speakers on certain topics related to the county’s connection to the war, though sometimes the meetings are show-and-tell sessions that enable participants to share their personal collections.

The Roundtable also sponsors a Civil War reenactment every summer at Robert Moses State Park in Massena. This year’s Civil War Weekend will be July 26-27, 2008 and will include Union and Confederate reenactors showing what camp life was like and engaging in skirmishes. For some of the reenactors these events are a family affair, with wives, children, and even pets participating. Another group active in the area is the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. This group has been supporting the Civil War Roundtable’s project to clean Civil War gravestones.

Stan Maine’s article in this issue of the *Quarterly* on Civil War letters highlights again how much work and energy is still being devoted to the study of this bloody and important chapter in our nation’s history. It is certainly true that the Civil War happened almost 150 years ago, but the continued interest in it makes it very present today.

Letters to the Editor

Beginning with this issue, the Quarterly will publish commentary from its readers. Corrections and additions to articles appearing in the Quarterly are warmly invited. Letters may be edited for length and content. The following letters were received in response to the LII(1) 2007 issue that featured James Carl's "Mines, Immigrants and Railroads: Stellaville in the Early Twentieth Century."

June 27, 2007

Jim Carl,

Thank you again for the work you have done on the history of Stella Mines. You have written a very readable account of the geology, the mining and the people. . .

As we discussed on the phone, my grandfather was Superintendent at the Stella mine. In about 1915 he became the Mine Captain at the Edwards zinc mine. I am not sure of his title when he was at the silver mine near Tezuitlan, Mexico. He was the "boss," possibly manager or superintendent. One story relates that he was cussing out the foreman for a poor timbering job, so the foreman of the mine would have been under his supervision.

While in Tezuitlan my grandparents became friends with Narouche deTaube and his wife Nell. I believe deTaube was associated with the Hanna Copper Company at the mine. He is the one that asked my grandfather to go to Stella mines. DeTaube later became an investment banker and had a seat on the New York Stock Exchange. In the 1930s I remember deTaube visited my grandparents in Syracuse, New York. The one thing that stuck in my mind was that he did not have very good eyesight and at dinner proceeded to smother his food with salt and pepper.

In 1992 I went to Mexico and visited the site of the silver mine, Minerale Aurora, about six miles from Tezuitlan. Many of the landmarks in the photos taken by my grandfather were still recognizable even though the mine closed in 1925.

I am a retired electronic engineer, so my foray into mining is quite amateurish and would never have happened if not for my grandfather's involvement.

Sincerely,
Stu[art] Casanova,
Hammond, NY

* * * * *

Dec. 3, '07

Dear Mr. Carl,

I read with great interest your article about North Country mining in the *Quarterly*. I was really impressed by the background and the depth of your study.

. . . a funny bit of the human comedy I recall about mining interests is from the 1930s. That might be of passing interest:

My father, Stanley Cornell, owned about 52 acres of land in Clare (woodlot and hunting) and one summer he was approached by a young aide of Mayor Curley of Boston (he of the tarnished record) to sell the mining rights. My father said absolutely not. He told me later that some in government circles heard there were iron deposits in the area and Mr. Curley was anxious to secure mining rights for little or nothing in case there was a bonanza in the future.

There wasn't.

Will our politicians ever change?

Truly,
Dorine Cornell Lord,
Ogdensburg, NY

* * * * *

Dec. 23, 2007

Dear Mr. Carl,

I was delighted to read the article you wrote in the last issue of the *Quarterly*.

I was particularly interested in the geology and mineral information in the early part of the article. Although [I am] an electronic engineer, some of my father's profession rubbed off on me. He was professor of geology at the University of Chicago for 40+ years.

We have been members of the Historical Association for many years, since I inherited a summer camp on Carry Falls Reservoir some years back, after my uncle died in 1982. The camp was built in 1902 by my grandfather, Lewis B. Fisher, who was on the divinity school faculty at St. Lawrence University around 1900. The camp was moved back in 1952 or so when the Racquette River was dammed at Carry Falls.

I also enjoyed the article on Hermon.

Sincerely yours,
David L. Fisher,
Greenport, NY

The Civil War Letters of Sergeant Edgar Crane of Stockholm, N.Y.

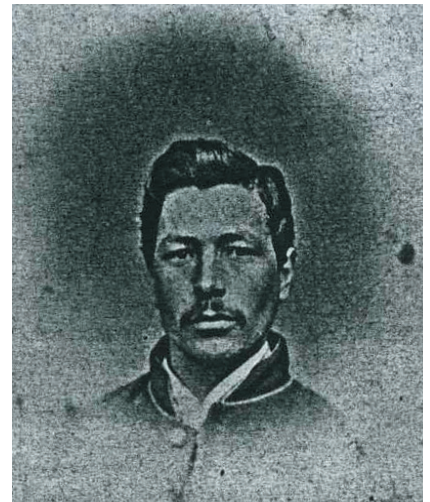
Transcribed with Commentary by Stanley L. Maine

Edgar Lyman Crane (1841-1913) was 20 years old on October 5, 1861, when he enlisted in the 60th Regiment of the New York Volunteer Infantry. He and his parents, Lyman and Sarah Skinner Crane, were farming in Stockholm at the outbreak of the Civil War. Edgar left his parents and his sister, Eliza, to train in Ogdensburg's Camp Wheeler before being assigned to active duty in the Washington D. C. area.

These letters, now in the archives of the Stockholm Town Historical Association and graciously made available by historian Carl Stickney, were written by Crane during active duty in the field. Stanley Maine of Pierrepont transcribed most letters from the originals, but others, presumably lost, were available only as earlier transcriptions. The Quarterly editors and Mr. Maine have selected excerpts that reveal Sergeant Crane's actions, observations, and thoughts about battles that include Antietam, Gettysburg, and the prolonged fighting near Atlanta. We have retained his spelling but added remarks in brackets that clarify his meaning. Mr. Maine has compiled a chronology of the 60th Regiment, which is interspersed throughout the text to offer context for the letters.

Note in these letters Edgar's keen business sense, as he spots opportunities to sell homemade butter at a profit or to lend money at interest. His accounting is as careful as any businessman's. As a farmer, he has a professional eye for land quality and crops in the countryside he passes through. On a few occasions he muses about buying cheap land and staying south, where farming is better than in Stockholm.

Sergeant Crane is a man of strong opinions. He hates draft-dodging civilian "Copperheads" and sympathizers of the Confederacy back home more than the rebels he faces in the field. At the same time, he is disgusted by the institution



Young Edgar Lyman Crane, enlisted man in the 60th Infantry and the author of these letters. Photo courtesy of Shirley Dubois.

of slavery (“I want slavery to Die Die Die!”). General McClellan, who “wants to be president,” comes under heavy criticism for wasting soldiers’ lives.

Sergeant Crane strives to remain upright and civil in what was surely a dehumanizing experience. He and his regiment suffer more from disease, such as dysentery and cholera, than from battle wounds. He often visits with hometown friends in other military units, and engages them as couriers of packages and money sent home.

Edgar Crane was able to return to Stockholm twice during active duty. During his prolonged sick leave in the Bronx, he hatched a plan (later abandoned) to slip away and visit home. His letters show that he often wishes he were at home, but other times he is eager to reenlist and continue the fight. His thirst for family news is prodigious, while he supplies them with news about friends and relatives with him in the army (most deletions in the letters that follow are in this category).

Crane’s letters provided author Bonnie Barry Sanders with a feel for the life of the soldier on active duty as she wrote her period novel, *Kiss Me Goodbye* (Burd Street Press, 2007). -eds.

* * * *

The 60th Infantry was organized, mustered, and trained at Ogdensburg. The core of the regiment was the 33rd New York militia, made up of soldiers from St. Lawrence, Franklin, Jefferson and Clinton counties. Its first colonel was William Hayward.

The regiment left for Washington D. C. in November 1861. Its first duty was to guard the railroad at the relay house near Baltimore, Maryland. There the men were assigned a new colonel from Rhode Island, George Sears Greene. They continued on railroad duty until June 1862. By then, Colonel Greene had been promoted to brigadier general and William Goodrich promoted to the regiment’s colonel.

* * * *

Head Quarters 60th Reg.
Camp Preston King
Near Balt[imore],
Jan 31st, 1862

Dear Parents and Sister,

I recd. your kind letter yesterday but have delayed ans. it till today on account of being on duty yesterday guarding camp.

I thank you for the stamps that you sent me although I have some now. I recd your letters in the box and also two *Independances* [periodicals].

You wanted to know what books I had to pass my leisure time with. I have Titcombs letters to young people and we have a debating & reading school or rather society. The question last night and night before was Resolved that the signs of the times indicate a speedy suppression of the present rebellion in the southern states. It was contested with spirit on both sides but the negative carried their point, doubtless because I spoke on the negative side of the question. We meet tonight to organize and adopt a constitution. We have about \$30 subscribed for a library but it will reach 40 or 45 when all have subscribed. I gave 25cts. So you see our evenings are occupied not as it is in some camps. ...

I don’t know how we will like our new Col. [George Sears Greene] yet. The first time that he took command at dress parade the adjutant brought us to a present arms when the Col. told us to shoulder arms or something else, I don’t know what and there was not one of the reg. that knew what he

meant. He spoke so different that we could not understand him. I guess we shall like him first rait.

Our boys exchange visits with the 16th often. I believe one of our Co. is over there today. It is only about four or five hours travel.

Tell Mr. Drake if he will send me \$100. I will let it out for 20 percent per month and make it sure.

No more this time Goodbye
E Crane

* * * *

Headquarters 60th Regt.
N.Y.S. Vol.
Camp Preston King
Feb 6th, 1862

Dear Parents and Sisters

... I am sorry you feel so about me. I know there are temptations that you know nothing of yet. I hope I have not straid away from the principles which have been taught me. As far as licentious women are concerned I am innocent. I will not traid with them or speak to [or] of them. If there were no other motives than my Mother & Sister that compelled me. I hope I should keep myself clear from all such nuisances as now fall on the Soldier.

There is no probability of our leaving the R.R. [railroad] while we are in the service so it is not likely that we will see any fighting. You spoke of the importance of this R.R. should be guarded. It is of immense importance. If the road could be stopped for two or three days the work would be done. The Army across the Potomac would have to scatter. There are 8 or 10 trains that pass us every night. It would take 4 trains on the road at our house [town of Stockholm] to make one here. None run less than 50 or 60 cars. All loaded to the utmost. The engines are two stories high here and 6 drive wheels. They run the longest trains here that I ever saw.

I know it is a very important post but a Regt. armed as ours is and accustomed to the rifle from boyhood could do much more

effective service in the front than here. Only think of the management. The Zouaves [volunteer units such as the 7th New York who wore baggy red uniforms] on Federal Hill are armed with old smoothbore muskets and they have been in the front ever since they enlisted. Yesterday morn I came off guard and when we shot off our rifles We shot at a bush about as large as that old two quart measure of ours which was about 50 rods off. There were about 40 shots fired. The best shot is between one of our sergeants and myself. It is so near a tie that it can't tell which is the best. Both hit with[in] a few inches. We used to think that we must lay our gun on something or we could not shoot, but here every man has to shoot at arms end.

I should have gone today but I could not. I will go tomorrow if I can and get some photographs for you. I can get them for 2\$ per Doz. or 1.50\$ for 6. I think I shall take one doz.

There was a man died in Co. K last night by the name of Mason [Edmond Mason] He was sick with the asthma. He went to bed as well as usual but died before morn.

There is about 3 inches of snow here although it is warm and nice weather now. I want you to ans[wer] this as soon as you get it and write often. ...

Now don't feel concerned about my health, I am doing well, I am heavier than I ever was at home. ...

* * * *

Camp Greene, Maryland
March 17, 1862

Dear Parents and Sisters,

I Recd. your kind letter a day or two ago and were very glad to hear from you as I had not heard from you for sometime. In your last [letter] you felt bad about our going south. We have moved south as far as we shall I think or at least as far as there is any prospect of at the present. We are 14 miles from Baltimore and 24 from Washington so you see we are not very far south yet and

no prospect of going further. We have good barracks to live in and do only 4 hours guard in 36 and have drill 2 hours a day in fair weather. So you see that our duty is not hard at all here. We have our liberty and go where we please provided we are here at roll call and in time for duty. At headquarters we had to stay inside of the guard all the time.

We are in a nice place to[o] the watter is fine and the farmers all have large peach orchards and strawberry patches so you see that if the government let us stay here all summer we will have a good time. The country looks like old St. Law. land and the watter is as good. There is a great many buzzards here and the boys go out hunting and sometimes find a hen and shoot it and it makes a buzzard of it right off.

You said Capt. Eddy [a chaplain] said that intemperance was the cause of all the trouble in the regt. So it is, all the boys that have been punished have been drunk when they committed the deed. ...

The weather is quite cold today it commenced raining 3 days ago and rained all the time till yesterday morning and cleared off cold, but we shall have warm weather before long, warm enough to make us loll. The winter wheat is looking nice here at present it is about three inches high. There is a great deal of it here.

I don't think as much of the sacred soil as I did when I came. The weather is fine but the land is poor and wants a great deal of manure to make it bear a good crop. The land on the bottoms or on the river is good enough but the ague [a feverish illness] is the pest of the bottomlands. A man that lives on the rivers have to pay the doctors what they earn.

I recd. a paper yesterday from you and I wish you would send me one every week. I want you to write 4 letters to my one for there is 4 of you and I am only one - but my paper is out and I must close.

From your son E. Crane

* * * *

Camp Michigan
Annapolis Junction, Maryland
April 24, 1862

Dear Parents,

...We came here about a week ago and as it has rained most of the time we have not had an opportunity to see much of the county yet

MD is the same all over or at least all of the state that I have seen, the curse of slavery spots the face of the state. In passing through on the [railroad] cars you can tell when you strike into the state of MD from Penn. by the looks of farms along the road. ...

I also bought a pen for Eliza [Edgar's sister] and sent it in a box I hope she will get it for it was a good pen and a nice one too. It was a genuine gold holder and the pen was 3 dollars. I gave one for it.

You said the snow was two or three feet deep in the lots. I hardly know how it looks, here the grain is up and grass is looking fine and the weather is warm when it doesn't rain. The peach trees are in blossom and look very nice.

I have just come in from inspection of arms which we have at 11 ½ A.M every day. We are to be mustered in next week for our pay again next week but I don't expect our pay before the 15th of June or later.

Eliza spoke of our being the 10th Co. ... According to regulations the Capt that gets his commission first gets the right flank and the next one gets the left flank and so on from both ways to the center. Goodrich got the first commission and consequently the right flank or rather 1st Co. When he was promoted the next oldest commission takes his place and the new Capt has to take his place according to his commission and there was 9 before Montgomery so that makes us the 10th Co. Our Col. Has been promoted to Brigd. Gen and I expect Bill Goodrich will be our Col. now. I hope not, there is the least principal in him than any other man in the Regt. Our Co. are perfectly disgusted with him. You can't place any dependancy on his word nor anything he says and is very

profane to the men when we drill and any other time he is nothing but an overbearing rascal and cut throat. It don't make any difference what he uses to get his aims or own agrandizement – but dinner is ready and I must close. We have bean soup for dinner today I wish I could eat with you today.

The Major says that he will bet 50\$ to 10 that we will go home by the fourth of July I hope we shall but I hardly think it. ...

There is quite a number that have the mumps at present in our Co. I don't know as I shall have them or not I am healthy now and hope to be in the future.

I hope to go to Baltimore this week to get some photographs. I have the promise of a pass and shall go the first opportunity.

I have let Albert have 12\$ till next payday and I owed 8 more and I have bought 33 stamps and a few other articles and I have the rest to stand me till next pay day. I shall have money enough to stand me I think. ...

I believe there is no prospect of our getting off the RR duty as I know of.

I saw a couple of 10 inch mortars going to Yorktown night before last. The weight of each was 17,192 lbs. ...

“Sixteen days rations fall short sometimes and then we have to go without or borrow our living.”

* * * *

The following is a copy of a previous transcription. I do not have a copy of the original. - S. M.

Camp Michigan
Annapolis Junction, Maryland
May 9, 1862

Dear Parents and Sister,

...We are guarding the RR at present from Annapolis Junction to Jessups Cir a distance of 5 miles. You wrote that Philo Munson wrote that our Co stole so that they had to move us from there to here. When we moved from Camp Preston King our co

went to Dorseys Cut and Co K were moved to Annapolis J - and our co guarded their old ground and our own. After they went there the major was very strict and they wanted to get back so they would come down to their old camp and steal chickens and it would be layed to [blamed on] Our Co. I know our Co have had [stolen] some fowl and some such things but they are not any worse than the other companies. Sixteen days rations fall short sometimes and then we have to go without or borrow our living. I have not took [stolen] 5 cents worth since I enlisted. Yet, I have eaten that what was took but I had to live. ...

I hope I shall be at home to help you build the old shop again and I will stay there when I get there too. You won't catch me enlisting again unless there is a prospect of the Government going down, if there is, I am in again. When we get this straightened up again England won't dare point her finger at us. If she does she may prepare for a good flogging plague take her. She would like to

have got at war with us last winter but our statesmen were too much for her and now she must look out. I would help to lick her. ...

it is time to go on guard and I must close good by

E Crane

I have doubled this according to regulations.

* * * *

Railroad guard duty ended when the 60th Regiment was transferred to Harper's Ferry on the Potomac River at Virginia's northern border. They were in General Greene's brigade, Sigal's division, Banks' Corps. After a few marches and small skirmishes, their first battle was Cedar Mountain, in which they had only a supporting role.

Camp Defiance
June 25 [1862]
Up in the mountains on Cedar Crick

Dear Parents

When I commenced this to you we were down the river from here we came here yesterday from our old camp and like it a great deal better than our old camp. We are located on the side of the mountains in a very pleasant pine grove. Our whole brigade is here guarding a pass that ["Stonewall"] Jackson passed through to attack [General Nathaniel P.] Banks before. I hardly think he will get through again this time. ...

I am sorry to hear that the prospect of crops is no better there. The wheat here is ripening off fine. I don't think that it would be stretching the truth to say that there is 12 or 15,000,000 of bush[els]. In this valley, in fact there is nothing but wheat here.

Today I am 21 years old what a difference in my employment a year ago and today. Then at home and in peace, now scouting the mountains of Virginia a hunting men as I used to squirrels in the woods. ...

The night before we came here I was on picket and about midnight it rained very hard as I ever saw it rain in St. Law Co. our tent blew down and we got as wet as could be consequently, but a soldiers life is the life for me.

We don't get as many luxuries as we used to in MD. Every thing here is very fresh, salt is \$16 per bbl. And 25cts per pint think of that N Yorkers.

Philo Munson is in Harpers Ferry yet. He sent my money home for me. Am glad you recd. It. I would like to come home and help you use it but that is out of the question at present at least. I would like you to come and see me the fourth of July. We are going to have some great time the forth and I will take you round and show you all the military in the valley. I want you to write often and long letters to me. I can't write much now. ...

* * * *

During the summer of 1862 the 60th Regiment was devastated by typhoid fever and diseases that accompany it. They were sent to recover at White Sulphur Springs, Virginia.

* * * *

August 11, 1862
White Sulphur Springs, VA

Dear Parents and Sister,

It has been a long time since I last wrote you and a longer time since I recd. a letter from home. Perhaps you will be surprised at seeing a letter dated from here but probably you have heard of the sickness in our Regt.

It's hard when we first came in to the field we were the pride of the brigade and could fetch 800 men into line at any time but scarcely 200 well men can be found and many, very many, of our boys will never get into line again. It's hard even for a soldier to see his ranks and comrades thinned by disease. If twas in the heat of an engagement twould be different. We could have the consoling thought that they done some good but disease strikes the best of our boys and no remedy - gone almost as sure as though the battle ball was through them. Poor Harrington and Hogan and I could name a score of other ones, yes, probably more. We have lost on an even [average] nearly 2 a day for a month most and can you blame me for feeling sour to see our brigade march off for [blank] was hard but to see all the 60th on their backs was harder still. I don't know why we suffer so much harder than the other regiments at our sides.

There has been a fight going on for 2 or 3 days up at Sperryville or near there. Before we came here to the springs, which was yesterday we could hear the heavy artillery yet I have not heard how the battle is going. There was 20,000 infantry and 13 batterys of light artillery or 80 guns went to re-enforce us last night. One of our co. saw 500 prisoners taken there the other day. A great number of them wounded in the arms and hands and

face. One Col. had his nose shot entirely off. Our brigade was in the fight I suppose and probably we should had been if our boys had been well enough to go on.

I don't know our loss or how much we have gained in the fight. My health is good and has been all summer but I had the fever last winter. I suppose that is one reason why I have not had it this summer. I am in the hospital taking care of the sick. The hospital is in the hotel at the springs. It is large enough to accommodate 1300 sick. The building and surroundings and cottages cost [\$]250,000. I saw today a letter written in /38 [1838]. It was found in the garret [attic] stating that there was 2500 shares at [\$]100 per share so you can judge something of the place. We are not allowed to use the spring watter as the doctor says twill hurt us. ...

The weather has been verry hot for the past 2 weeks and it almost cooks us and the nights are so cold that a man must have 2 blankets over him.

Now I want you to write often and all the news. Are they drafting in NY? If so who is going, rather coming? But my paper is full and paper is precious here and so are stamps

Good by E L. Crane

* * * *

The regiment's first major battle, at Antietam, involved Colonel William Goodrich's brigade of Greene's division of Mansfield's 12th Corps. Goodrich was killed. He and his brigade had been sent to the right of General Hooker's line to charge up the Hagerstown Pike into the West Woods. After Antietam the regiment returned to Harper's Ferry. They faced little action except for skirmishes at Hillsboro, Virginia, on November 9 and December 1.

* * * *



Aftermath of the Battle of Antietam, 1862. Photo by the famous Civil War photographer, Matthew Brady.

Harpers Ferry
Nov. 26 [1862]

Dearest Parents

...You still see by this that we are still here guarding commissary stuff or at least the Regt. is. I have been unwell for almost a week and have done no duty and am excused at present, yet I have not been so sick that I could not be around.

I recd. also a package containing an Independent NY Evening Post & a pamphlet called the National Preacher. I am very glad you sent the sermons as I have not heard but one service since I came from home. We don't have services down here now at all. ...All the services we ever had was being called into line and a psalm read and a poor thoughtless prayer offered then dismissed and I have not had a chance to attend Church but twice since I left home. Once in MD and once in VA but in VA we had 300 rebels penned up in one [church] and I was guard over them.

The health of the Regt. is about as it has been for some time past. And that is not very good. I would like very much to be with you tomorrow—Thanksgiving. You don't know how I would like to jump off[f] the [railroad] cars there as I did the last time I came home but I must wait I suppose till we see whether [General Ambrose] Burnside does any thing this fall. I hope I can get off the cars the first of Jan. and be a free man. Time will tell. The first of Jan will be here soon. ...

It's same as Col. Redding of the 3rd Del. [Delaware] says: that it don't make any difference if the Gov. don't furnish anything for the 60th Regt. or not, they will have something and be comfortable if it is within 10 miles of them.

He saw a mess of us come in to camp with a back load of tents that we found off up the valley and they have done us good service. For we have only just got our new ones now.

...

* * * *

Dec 3, 1862
Harpers Ferry

Dear Parents,

It is now almost three weeks since I have heard from you and I don't know what to think unless Uncle Sam has not done his duty. I have not yet heard from you since you sent the box which I received in due time for which I thank you very much,

The weather here is nice and warm yet, and not much mud have we had yet. There has been but one little snow here this fall and that lasted only a day or two. I like the climate of VA much better than NY on acct of the short winter and long summers.

Probably before this reaches you, you will hear of some brilliant scout made by Gen [John White] Geary from Bolivar as he is out now. He drew seven days rations for his division night before last and started about 4 A.M the same morning. I am glad we do not have to go out on such hunts with him for the nights are very cold and to have to carry 3 days rations in ones haversack and 60 rounds of ball cartridge and ones blanket is not boys play. The fighting is not much account but the load one has to carry and sleeping on the ground with only one blanket over you when you are not marching for they march as much in the night as in the day time is not very comfortable. One has got to be a soldier to enjoy it and an old one, for the new ones cry a good deal if they can't have a bed and all the blankets they want.

You will see by my other letters that I have been sick a little. I am better now although I am not returned to duty yet. I have not been any time so that I could not get around my tent but I have had a bad disease - the bloody disentary - but I am a great deal better now so that I am entirely over that and I hope soon to regain my strength. ...

You wrote you was going to fill another tub of butter, if you have not sold it and have it full now I will give you 20 cents a pound for it delivered to the express agt [agent]. If you don't have it full, in a few weeks will do just as well. I will pay you for it when I get my pay

...I will sell it here for 30 or 35 ...

Good by - write often

E Crane

Don't show this letter to the neighbors - E
Crane

* * * *

Dec 6th 1862
Harpers Ferry

Dear Parents,

I recd. a letter from home last night and although unexpected I was verry glad to hear from home. As you see we are still here and I don't know as I am sorry although I would like to have been with [General] Banks some where. But I don't know where he has gone and by the way I see by yesterdays paper that the 106th are with him. They embarked at NY Citty but our Regt. is to[o] badly used up to stand such an expedition as that. So I suppose we shall have to winter in this cold climate. I would like to have seen the 106th right well but probably shall not now.

The snow fell about 3 or 4 inches deep here last night and today. The wind is very strong it feels some like old St. Law weather. I hope it wont last long. Soldiers can't stand cold as well as they can heat.

That box that was sent last summer from the south neighborhood came here a few days ago. I recd. a shirt, pr [of] drawers pr socks and a bottle of jellie. Can't hardly make up my mind whether the drawers were made for a man or a woman. If they were made for a man I would like to know where you got the pattern or prehaps they have grown some since you sent them as they have been some time coming. They are now about 2 feet 2 inches across the hips but never the less they are pretty good drawers.

I am glad we did not have to go out with Gen. Geary as he has not returned yet and the troops that are marching must suffer terribly. A broken leg is not to be compared to it[, to] lay down on the [ground] with only one blanket and the snow 3 inches deep or prehaps on picket where there is no fire

allowed. Not even to cook a cup of coffy. It is a wonder that soldiers are dieing off by the hundreds. The new troops are suffering more than the old ones calloused to it. It affects soldiers just as chopping does a nuns hands that is not accostomed to it.

My health has not been very good for a couple of weeks now but I am improving now. ...

Highly important from the South. We have just heard of the terms proposed by the south, what do you think of them. I don't know what to think about it. I want slavery to Die Die Die! I don't want any more fighting. You don't know much about a book by the reading of the account of it. I don't mean that I won't fight. I will go where I am ordered, but I don't want to see any more battles. I hope the thing will be settled before long. I don't know as I will live in old Stockholm or not I like MD pretty well it is a good fruit co. [country] and a little warmer winters than you have up there. Although I have not seen any of the daughters of the land that were to be compaired to the daughters of my kinsmen or neighbors. I guess that I had better stop. Don't show this letter to any one ...

* * * *

After participating in a miserable march in the mud, the regiment went into winter quarters at Aquia Creek in tidewater Virginia, north of the Rappahannock River.

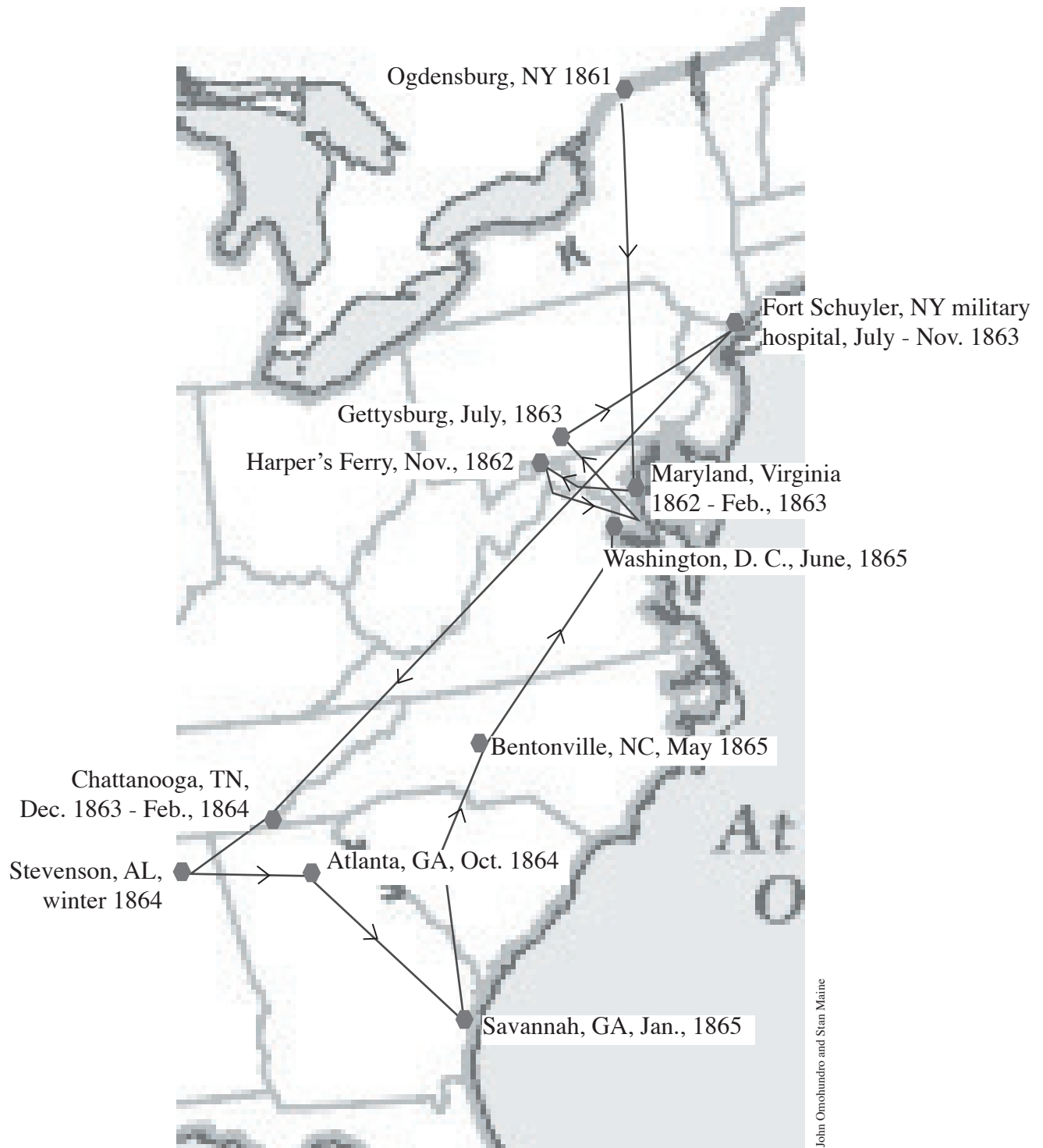
* * * *

Stafford Court House, VA
Jan 25th 1863

Dear Sister [Eliza],

I recd. a letter from you this morning which was mailed the 12th of Jan. which was the first I have heard home from in six weeks but I suppose it was because we were on the move most of the time.

We arrived here last night after a march of 5 days, distance made 30 miles. It was



Sergeant Crane's travels during the Civil War

froze when we started and the first day and we made 18 miles, it rained the first night and since then we have had mud a plenty. The second day we made 1 1/2 miles and we worried our way through to here and I believe we are going to stay here a week or 2, perhaps longer.

We are 7 miles from Falmouth and 10 from Fredricksburgh. We are on the reserve yet and shall not be called into action until needed. Gen Sigal [Franz Sigel] has command of the reserve and most of his troops have gone on from here and our Corps [the 12th] came on to here. I don't know how long we shall stay here, I hope till the mud either freezes or dries up. We had to throw away provisions and ammunitions to get here with the teams. If the town of Stockholm could save what one Corps wastes twould make them as rich as the Rothschilds.

You spoke about going west in the spring. You must do as you think best. I would like to be at home to see you married and start [west] but I don't see any prospect of coming before 18 months at least by fair means. I had as much tell you how I feel about this army 18 months more if it was not for the folks at home. You do not see things as we see them here. This war is not ment to put down the rebellion by any means or it could have been done one year ago if it was. It is nothing but a political sceme and has been carried on as such ever since it broke out. 25,000 men were lost in McClellan's noted strategic movement to the rear. 15,000 more in the 2nd bull Run fight 12,000 more at Harper's Ferry 10,000 at Antietam making a grand total of 62,000 men lost. More than 2/3 of those might have been saved if our Gens had worked together. These things are hushed up to you, but a fool can learn a little by experience and why should we not when we see it. ...

I shant attempt to justify my feelings to you, you don't see what I see, know what I know nor endure what I endure and for what. The aggrandizement of some one [General McClellan] that wants to be president. ...

When we came into VA the 60th Regt. had

930 men, now we have 500 all told 250 here and the rest in the hospitals. Where are the rest, there has been no disertions of any consequence. Too many of them have drawn their bounty land in VA. 3/7 [the width and length of a grave] ...

It must be I have not got all the letters you have written. But Uncle Sam carries the mail as well as he runs the rest of the mashine I guess.

I don't know as there is any prospect of our getting any pay, they tell about pay being a 1,000,000 a day but I have not seen a soldier that has seen any of it. The bounty men and the substitutes are the only men that have money here. I have got a five cent piece which is the only silver piece in the United States I expect. I don't know how much I shall get for it when I offer it for sale. ...

You wanted I should tell you how I felt and I guess I have at least as much as you want to hear. ...

* * * *

Head Quarters 2nd Brigade
2nd Division 12th Corps De Armee
Aquia Creek, [Virginia]
Feb 26th 1863

Dear Parents,

...Yesterday [cousin] Chauncey came down and made Bert and I a call. I knew him the minute I saw him although I did not know he was coming down. He said he would have known me anywhere. His Regt are only 7 miles from here. And I am going to get a pass next week and go and see him. We can go within 40 yards of his tent on the cars.

... I am detailed as guard for General Jackson and like the plan first rait, as I don't like to dig very well. All the rest of the regt. are building fortifications. As all the rest of the Armee is here. This [w]hole armee is fortifying. I don't know what [General Joseph] Hooker is going to do here, I don't believe the rebels will even venture this side of the Rappahanock again in many force. I

saw a squad of about 200 the other morning that ventured this side and our boys showed them a trick with a hole in it [gun?] and they came to the conclusion that they would go back immediately. ...

The snow fell about 8 inches and today it is raining hard but what care we have for the storm. We have a good pen. 9 of us have a shanty 20 by 8. I would presume you would think it was rather full but there is plenty of room and some to spare.

We expect to stay here as long as Gen Jackson has command of this Brigade. ... I would like right well to come home to see Elisa off but probably cannot. I want you should send me some of the wedding cake. Write me all of the particulars of the transaction too. ...

* * * *

Head Quarters 2nd Brigade
(Near Aquia Creek)
March [1863]

Dear Parents.

I recd a letter from you last eve. and I must confess that it was with a throbing heart that I opened it. I expected one 2 or 3 days before as I had requested a letter every other day while Elisa was sick. I am right glad indeed she is no worse and I hope she will get along. My health is as good as usual as you will see by the enclosed that I am not very poor in body I mean I am poor enough in pocket. ...

[Confederate]
Gen. Stuart's Cavl. have been raising particular fits with our Cavl. in our rear but if he is not mighty carefull he will get caught at some of his tricks. All of the 7 Mass. Cavl. were out after him the day I was there. The 16th are up at Falmouth they are counting the days of their servitude. They are afraid

“Although I am away from home and surrounded by bad men there is not a day goes over my head that I do not think of Mother”

[General] Hooker will get them in a scrape a few days before their time is out. They have served so long that it is too bad to kill off a lot of them now. ...

I went up to the 102nd NYI [New York Infantry] and got my photograph for you. It cost \$1.00, Pretty good price. I have got to go on guard so I won't write more. ...

* * * *

Under the temporary command of Lt. Col. Redington, the regiment moved out on April 26 with the 12th Corps, crossed the Rappahanock River and became heavily engaged at Chancellorsville. They lost 14 killed and mortally wounded, 40 wounded and recovered, and 12 missing. From June 1863 to September 1864, the regiment was commanded by Col. Abel Godard.

* * * *

Sunday April 25, 1863
Head Quarters 60th Regt
Near Aquia Creek [Virginia]

Dear Parents,

...Although I am away from home and surrounded by bad men (in many cases) there is not a day goes over my head that I do not think of Mother Father & Sister and their influence has a baring on my conduct. I don't mean to do any thing that my mother would be ashamed of me for. Probaly before this reached you, you will receive a package of money. There is only \$110 in the package it was marked \$115 by mistake. 35 is Mrs' Munson's and 75 yours. I have Lieut. Kelseys note for 25\$ - and use [interest] - which I would like to have him pay you if it is convenient for him. I think 27.50 \$ is about right. You will see by this that money is worth more here than there.

6 for 5 is the usual rate - some pay 3 for 2 and some 5 for 3.50. It is unsafe to let [lend] money here on account of the uncertainty of payday and one does not know where he will be on payday. As likely as not he will be prisoner in Richmond or sick in Washington or off some where else.

We shall probaly move from here tomorrow as we have orders to that effect. Now I believe we have 8 days rations packed in our knapsacks and haversacks, 5 in the first named and 3 in the latter. We are not allowed to carry only blanket, a shirt, pr. drawers and pr. Socks and rubber B [blanket]. In all our marching before we have never carried more than three days rations. I don't know where old Jo [General Joseph Hooker] is going to put us, but I hope he will put us somewhere where we can whip the Rebs. And after we got them whipped I hope we will gain some advantage by it - McC [General McClellan] never did.

Do I understand that the Legislature has passed a bill allowing us (me I mean ha ha I am 21 now) to vote. I hope it has, you need not to be afraid of any Copper Heads here and if we do not diminish them twill be mighty curious. There probaly will be some here electioneering and I say let them come. They will find that the Rebils in arms are treated as prisoners while rebils at home to a hempen cord [hangman's noose] if they fall in to our hands. We have a little respect for a prisoner of war but for one of those mean cowardly sneaks we have but little respect. They talk about resisting the draft. I wish they would try it and the Gov would send us home to take care of them, but they won't and it is no use of talking about it. They are too big cowards to volunteer and are afraid of the draft - that's all that ails them. I have no time to write more.

Good by for this time
Edgar L. Crane

* * * *

May 21st [1863]
Headquarters 60th Regt.
Near Aquia Creek, Va.

Dear Parents

...As you said, it was a great mercy that I was not hit but I was spared and I hope I am thankful for it in some degree.

I know it is a wonder and a blessing that I am safe but one gets so accustomed to hard sights here in the army that they can't feel as you do. I know it's a mercy and I thank God for his goodness. I know that I am thoughtless and do [w]rong many times. Yet I try to ask forgiveness and protection not only from harm but from doing rong. ...

I don't think the army will move again right away not till we get some conscripts. I wish that the old regts might be filled up They would learn a great deal quicker and be better officered. Old officers and old men know what to do and how to do it. And new troops are not as good as old ones That was demonstrated the other day as [a] good many of the new troops broke while not an old regt. faltered (11 C excepted) [11th Corps were attacked by Stonewall Jackson and many regiments "skedaddled" to the rear]

I am sorry to hear that John Finch has broke his arm but better to be broke than have it shot off. There was an officer walking along behind me, and not a few paces from me when all at once his head was nocked in to a _____by a piece of R.R. irons. The rebs fired stone and old iron, glass and anything they could get a hold of. I guess they are short of shell and such ammuniton. I wish that they had not another ounce of powder in all Confederate States, then this war might close. Our division lost 1205 men up there. [Geary's Division, 12th Corps, Army of the Potomac] I don't know what the Corps lost. My paper is full

Goodby from your son
Edgar

* * * *



The Battle of Culp's Hill at Gettysburg. Lithograph of "The Attack of Johnson's Division," by Edwin Forbes, original painting oil on canvas, Library of Congress.

The regiment was next marched to Gettysburg, arriving there at 4 p.m. on July 1, 1863, to camp near Little Round Top. At daybreak it was ordered to join the rest of the 12th Corps to fortify Culp's Hill. During that day all but Greene's brigade was withdrawn to help out on the Union's left. The 60th and four other regiments comprised only 1300 men. At 6:30 p.m., Confederate General Allegheny Johnson's division of Ewell's Corps attacked the hill with about 4000 men. From then until 10:30 p.m., fighting mostly in the dark, Greene's brigade repulsed three separate Confederate charges. The next day the brigade, reinforced with the rest of the 12th Corps, drove Johnson's division back down the hill and across Rock Creek. Thus ended the 60th Regiment's part in the famous

battle. It lost 17 killed and mortally wounded and 34 wounded but recovered. Sergeant Crane was among those wounded.

* * * *

July 11th 1863
12th Corps Hospital
near Gettysburg Pa.

Dear Parents,

I should have written before this date but I expected that we should have been sent to a general hospital before this time but the R.R. has had to be put in running order and since then there has been no transportation for the wounded. My wound is doing first rait. It is nothing but a flesh wound and not bad at that. I got off so much better [than] some of my comrads did that I feel thankfull. It was a terrible battle. I should not be surprised if the trees wood [would] die

"It was a terrible battle. I should not be surprised if the trees die in the woods where we fought. The trees are litterally peeled from 10 ft high to the very roots."

in the woods where we fought. The trees are litterally pealed from 10 ft high to the very roots. We picked up 3000 muskets forward of our Brigd. Some one left them there. There was five separate charges made to break our Brigd. And 5 times were they repulsed. Twas terrible.

I don't know what took place on any other part of the field nor where the line ran. We had all we could tend to. I don't know where our corps is now nor do we know what's going on. We get no papers of any kind. You'd

had not better write to me till I am sent to a Hos. somewhere and then if it is a possible thing I am coming [home] a little while.

I have written to Elisa since I was hurt. You had better write when you get this as I can't get paper from here. I lost every thing I had when I was wounded. I was skirmishing when I was hit and after that they were driven back I crawled into our lines I was afraid that they would take me off the field but they did not. I had the pleasure of lying under the fire of both sides but I got down behind a large rock and kept pretty quiet I tell you.

I can't write much more when I get home I can talk — enough I guess.

Good by Ed

I am not hurt so bad but I can walk 3 or 4 miles if I want to.

* * * *

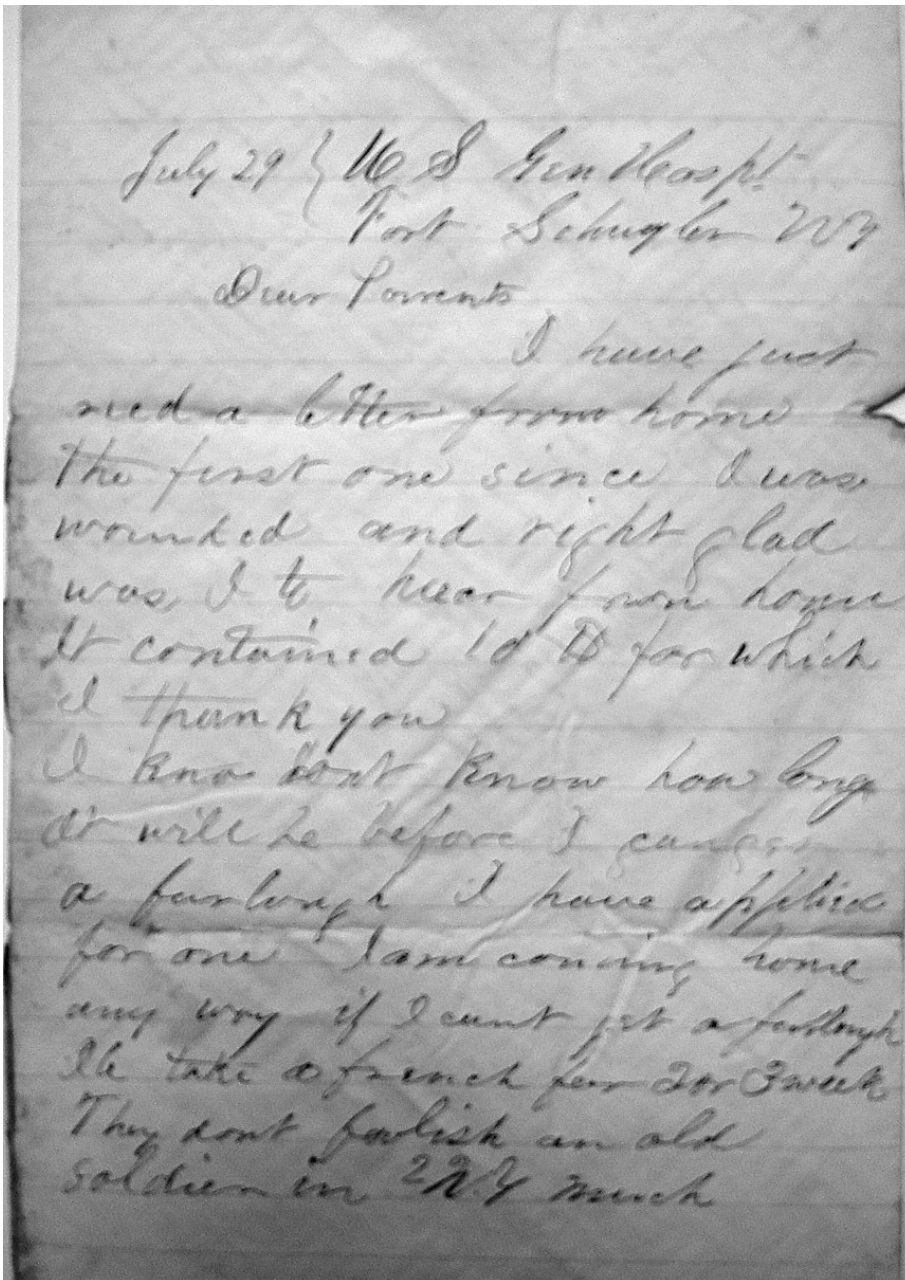
July 29 [1863]
US Gen Hospt
Fort Schuyler
[Bronx] NY

Dear Parents

I have just recd a letter from home the first since I was wounded and right glad was I to hear from home. It contained 10\$ for which I thank you.

I don't know how long it will be before I can get a furlough I have applied for one. I am coming home anyway if I can't get a furlough. I'll take a french

One of Sergeant Crane's letters home, written on July 11, 1863, after he was wounded in the Battle at Gettysburg.



[go absent without leave] for 2 or 3 week. They don't foolish [harass] an old soldier in 2N.Y. [Northern New York] much. I am glad they have been drafting there we want more men to fill up old Regts. We can learn them more about soldiering in 3 months [than] they would learn in a year by themselves. If my time was out today I would enlist again. It's just as necessary to maintain our Gov. [government] now as ever. They had all of them better come in to the 60th [Regiment] for a year.

Dinner is most ready, goodbye
Edgar

* * * *

Fort Schuyler was erected in 1856 and named in honor of revolutionary war leader Major General Philip Schuyler. It guarded the eastern approach to New York City from Long Island Sound. During the Civil War, Fort Schuyler housed the MacDougall Hospital with a capacity of 2,000 beds. It also imprisoned as many as 500 Confederate Army POWs and Union Army criminals. In 1934, the fort was decommissioned by the U.S. Army and converted into the New York Public Nautical School. Today it houses the museum and administrative offices of that school's successor, the SUNY Maritime College.

Sunday Morn Aug. 9th [1863]
US Gen. Hospital
Fort Schuyler, NY

Dear Parents I recd. Yours of the 5th two or three days ago and was glad to hear from home again. I suppose that you are going to meeting today at the old meeting House. How I wish I could go with you but I can't and it is no use to wish so I must content myself here. I expected to be at home long before this time but there I have been disapointed. I don't know what to do about coming home with out a furlough. I should have to lie in the Guard house as many days [as] I was at home besides loosing my pay while I was gone. But as far as pay is concerned I don't

care anything about that but I have never been under arrest and I hate to do anything that will bring me under arrest. But yet I want to see my friends. ...

Twas desperate fighting thus gained it at Gettysburg. ... The dead laid as thick as the pebble stones do on our hill. They charged our works 5 times and were repulsed every time. They came out each time within a rod of us but were driven back each time. There was but few wounded among them our boys fired low. But I can't write more Good by from Edd

* * * *

Aug 15th [1863]
US General Hospt.
Fort Schuyler, NY

Dear Parents

...I suppose the draft will take place in the city in a day or two. I don't think that there will be any riot this time. There may be a little slaughter as 2 or 3 pieces of light Artillery is placed on every corner and if they resist the draft they will get blown in to eternaty mighty quick. There is a good many old soldiers here and they had rather fight copperheads than Rebs in [that] a Rebs got principle enough to come out openly and fight the Gov. but those contemptable reptiles had ought to be taken & hanged ...

* * * *

August 26th, 1863
US General Hospital
Fort Schuyler, New York

Dear Parents,

As Jack Eldridge is going to start for home this morn I will send this by him. He will tell you all about me so I will not have to write that. I don't expect a furlough now although I am not going to give up trying for one till I leave. You wrote some time ago that if I wanted anything to write for it. I would like a pair of shirts such as you have sent

me before and a bag of needles & thread. You need not send so many buttons but a peace of wax, thimble & thread will be enough. Make the bag smaller than the other. I lost everything that I had except what was on my back. You wrote that the Co thought I was a prisoner. I suppose I was for 2 or 3 hours but I made good my retreat with out a paroll either. ...

Good by from your son
E L Crane

* * * *

Sept 1st, 1863
U.S. Gen. Hospital
Fort Schuyler, N.Y.

Dear Parents,

...The weather is very cool at present - (good for wounds) making it very pleasant for all the inmates of the hospital.

I am glad Mr. Drake wrote to the surgeon in charge although I don't expect a furlough nor do I intend to come home unless I can get one. I would like very much to come home though but so far my efforts are to no avail.

...

I know there is a good deal of hardship in a soldiers life but yet there are many worse lives to live than a soldier. I have found that one wants to take all things as they come and not let tomorrows hardships trouble you till tomorrow and make yourself just as comfortable as you can and be cheerful all of the time if you can. I tell you a little exersize and cheerfulness is better medicine than all of the pills you could get into a big basket. It does more to making a man healthy. Just so as a man gets down hearted he is sure to die, of course it is a soldier's privilidge to grumble but let it be good naturdly. If he does this: do his duty cheerfully, take advantage of everything as it comes along and not keep thinking of the hardships. He will most always get along all right (unless a rebil gets his eye on him, then he is no better than any other man) with both officers and men. ...

* * * *

In September Edgar Crane's unit was transferred west to General Ulysses S. Grant's command near Chattanooga, Tennessee.

* * * *

Sept 4th, 1863
U. S. Gen. Hospital
Fort Schuyler, NY

Dear Parents,

...You spoke of going back to my regt. I don't know when I shall go back any more than you do. I shall go when the doctors get ready to send me but I don't think I shall go for 2 or 3 weeks as we are mustered for pay and we shall probably stay till we get our pay which will be about the 15th or 17th and I don't know as I shall go then. ...

I believe I shall try VA after the war is over I am in earnest. I tell you it is a splendid climate up among the Bleu Ridge Mountains and splendid land too. Fruit grows wild and of a great variety and crops are good when there is no blight and such splendid streams too, clear as cristol and cool enough for trout. Nature has done her part well but man poorly. ...

There is splended land along the Rhapponnoc to[o] but it does not equal the northern part of the state but the curse of slavey it is enough to make ones heart revolt to see it. I have see 50 young nigs under 5 at one plantation raised for stock. There was one woman asked me if I ever thought she would see the time she would be free. She said she had rather see her daughters die than marry. She used this expression "we are treated like sluts and mares" and the same woman had a daughter as white as any girl in St. Lawrence County. She had been a house servent I guess as she was far above the common black but enough of this

Good by
Edgar Crane

I wrote I wanted you to tell me how much [money] I sent home please do.

* * * *

Sept 16th 1863
U. S. Gen Hospital
Fort Schuyler, NY

My verry dear Parents,

...Things go on as usual here first there is getting up the men and making the beds next. Extra diet 3rd dressing wounds 4th clean up and wait on the worse 5th Extra diet dinner 6th wait on the ward 7th dressing 8th Extra diet supper. We commence dressing at 8 in the morning, takes till 11. Dinner at 1 P.M. dressing in the afternoon commences at 4 till 6 so you can see that the time is pretty well filled. There is 40 men in the ward that are wounded but there is only 30 that have to be dressed 2 [times] a day. The light wounds require but one dressing a day but you may ask what I have to do about all of this, I help. I had rather do it than lie still it is so tiresome to have nothing to do. ...

I am glad you wrote how much I had sent home. I can tell now nearly how much I have saved in the 2 years or nearly. I shall recv. 4 months pay this week probaly taking up to the first of Sept. I shall send home at least \$40. That will make 240 in 23 months as I enlisted the 5th of Oct. I have drawn \$314. 299 regular pay and 15.25 extra pay for what I done last winter at Harpers Ferry Hospital making the 314. Then I had to pay 14.81 on my clothing acct. leaving the sum of \$299.44 for my 2 years. There is some \$20 due me on my clothing acct. now though. So you see I can see what I have done. I have tried to be as saving as I could though. You wrote that Shaw & Sims had \$150 where is the other 50? If you have used it, it is all right, if not all right, its all right anyway, only I would like to know. I am willing you should use the whole of it, only I would like to know the position of things to come to a debt and credit stand. ...

* * * *

Oct 13, 1863
Thursday Evening
U.S. Gen, Hospital
Fort Schuyler, NY

Dear Parents.

I recd. your last letter yesterday and was very glad to hear from home again and to hear where the regiment was. Although I saw an account of them at Bleu Spring, Tenn. You spoke of being glad I was not among them. If I had known of their going, I should tried to have met them at Washington to be sure. I do not like a VA winter campaign. But when I enlisted I enlisted because we wanted more men not Hospital beats. There will probably not be a chance of leaving here this winter now the regt. is so far off. But if there is I must improve it. It is no place for me here when my comrades are in the front. ...

* * * *

On November 24, the 60th Regiment, in Ireland's brigade, of General John Geary's second division, General Hooker's 12th Corps, took part in a charge up Lookout Mountain, Chattanooga, driving the rebels from the mountain and capturing a battle flag. They then helped capture Missionary Ridge, chasing the rebel army as far as Ringgold Gap. The 60th lost 10 men killed and mortally wounded, and 40 wounded but recovered.

* * * *

Sunday Morn Dec. 14, 1863
Camp 60th NYV
Lookout Valley, Tenn

Dear Parents, I recd. a letter from you last night and was very glad to hear from home. As you may judge being away down here out of civilization. The date of the letter was Nov 29. I am very sorry that it was necessary to cause you so much grief on acct of my not visiting home before I left and of not spending Thanksgiving with you but I could not do it.

There was an examination of all detailed nurses in the hospital and I told them that my wound was healed and they put me down for duty and so I came to my regt. I did not voluntarily leave the hospital as you seem to think nor do I know as I was compelled to leave. I should have liked very much to have visited home before I left but I had scarcely 3 hours notice and I had my things to get and see to. Dr Soule gave me a pass and forgot to date it and if I had notice a day or two before I left the hospital I think I should have ran my chances on it and came home. ...

You spoke of their [the army's] recruiting at home. What do you think of my enlisting again. If I do I get 502\$ and a furlough of at least 30 days. With your consent I should do it. I know what a soldiers life is. The Regt. is going to enlist as a Regt again that is [to] preserve the old organization and enlist as the 60th NY. I would like to go with them with your consent but I shall not until I hear from you.

I wish you would send me 25cts worth of stamps in your next

Good by
Ed L. Crane

* * * *

After Missionary Ridge, the 60th went into winter camp at Stevenson, Alabama. Most soldiers in the regiment re-enlisted for three more years or the duration of the war (those who didn't re-enlist were temporarily assigned to the 137th NY regiment and mustered out in the autumn of 1864). The re-enlisted were transported by train back to Ogdensburg NY for thirty days leave. Upon returning south, they were reformed as the 60th Veteran Regiment. Meanwhile, the 12th corps was consolidated with the 11th into the 20th Corps, commanded by Major General Joseph Hooker.

* * * *

Nashville, Tenn.
Co A 60 N.Y.S.V.
Feb 18th, 1864

Dear Parents,

...We started from Camp Wheeler [Ogdensburg, NY] Saturday morning [and] arrived at Rome just [at] dark distance 142 [miles]. Changed cars for Buffalo, arrived at B just about 5 in the morning, dist 280 miles. Changed cars for Cleveland, arrived Cleve. About 9 P.M. D 380 Miles changed cars for Indianapolis and arrived at I at noon the next day D. 280 Miles, changed cars for Jeffersonville arrived J about 8 P.M. dis. 120 miles. There was a man of Co E fell from the car and had both of his legs crushed. One just above, the other just below the knee by the car passing over them about 30 miles from Jeffersonville and when we arrived a[t] J. he was dead. I think his name was Ladu [Henry LaDue] He leaves a wife and 5 children. We laid in Louisville 24 hours (Had a good sleep) and then took the cars for Nashville where we now are. Distance from L to N 185 miles. ...

The weather here is nice and warm, no snow of course and the ground not frozen at all and the dust a flieing when the wind blows. ...

* * * *

Spring 1864
Stevenson, Alabama

I am sorry that we will lose [General Henry W.] Slocum for a better man is not in Govt. employ and I know there is none braver for I have seen him ride unattended the length of our or rather his part of the line, where it was almost sure death for a man to raise his head above the breastworks. Yet he rode through in full uniform two stars on his shoulders and his buttons in 3s on his coat. I don't know whether the rebels spared him on purpose or not yet he walked his horse the whole length of the line and once his bridle got tangled on a bush and he leaned forward

and loosened it as cool as though he was on parade. But there was a ball came so close to his head that it made him bow his head, but I suppose the Govt. and Gen Grant will put such men over us as they think best and all we have to do is obey and go forward.

I was on guard at the Depot today and saw a deserter from Jackson's old Corps, Ewells Corps, the Corps we fought at Chancellorsville and Gettysburg, had a pretty good visit with him. I don't blame him for leaving them. He had served his three years out and they refused to discharged him or let him have a furlough and so he took a long furlough. He thinks this thing is nearly played out. He says their army are deserting by hundreds and as quick as we move will come faster.

I like to meet such men, they are brave men [even] if they wor [were] enemies, I respect them as much again as I do those low lived _____ [blank in text] copperheads at [in] the North. They are such dastardly cowards that don't dare stand by a principle right or wrong.

There was about a dozen deserters there, three from Ewell's, 4 from Longst [General James Longstreet] and the rest from Johnson or deserters from conscription. There were also about 30 Women and Children, Refugees. I won't attempt to tell the condition, it's beggars description. Heaven be praised it is not my mother and relatives yet they are someone's relatives. I pity them from the bottom of my heart. But there is a pleasant feature of the war here too. There has been a school started for the Blacks or rather contrabands, as black does hardly apply to some of them. I saw them as they came out of their school room this morning in their Sunday attire and smiling faces and could think of the text Thy ways oh Lord are not our ways.

But a little over a year ago Mr. Jeff Davis stood on the Balcony of the Hotel and made a speech and now, in a building but a few rods from it, the slaves is learning to read and write. What a contrast! I should think there was about 150 or more scholars little

and big and a happy set they are. They think Masa Linkum [President Lincoln] is a mighty fine man.

You wrote you could not bear the thought of my being taken off by Cholery [cholera]. Why should I fear Cholery more than anything else. I have tried to do my duty and as far as country has claims I have no upbradings of conscience and am I not in the hands of the same god I was in the VA army? He has preserved me through 2 ½ years and preserved me to see my friends once more and hope to return again. Yet some must fall, my lot is among the rest, I don't wish to escape the responsibility. I will stand by my comrades, they have stood by me. But I must close. ...

* * * *

The new 20th Corps, including Crane's Veteran Regiment, marched in spring 1864 with William Tecumsah Sherman and participated in the battles of Mill Creek Gap, Resaca, Dallas, and Kennesaw Mountain. They were one of the first regiments to march into Atlanta.

* * * *

Camp behind the [illegible]
Near Marietta, GA
June 22nd 1864

Dear parents,

...Since I last wrote we have been engaged again. Our loss was not so heavy in men but I think it was one of the hardest days engagements I ever participated in. It rained hard all day and we had to ford a stream twice that was 3 feet deep and as we were in dense woods the trees were dripping heavily. Our loss was only 10 men that day, the day before we lost 3 supporting a batt [artillery battery] ...

Our situation is good here we are within three miles of Marietta and 7 or 8 of the river (Chattahoochie) and 20 miles from Atlanta. We occupy a line of pits that the enemy used

yesterday against us. Although our advance is slow I think it is sure. ...

The weather has been very wet of late just as it always is in time of active campaigning. I suppose it is caused by heavy firing of artillery. We never fight a heavy engagement but it rains hard after it directly. It is better for the wounded but it is rather tough on those that are not hit. ...

* * * *

During the Atlanta campaign the 60th lost 14 killed and mortally wounded, 46 wounded but recovered, and 1 missing. Just before Atlanta was captured, General Hooker resigned and General Slocum took command of the 20th Corps.

* * * *

Atlanta, GA
Oct 23 1864
Camp 60th NYSV

Dear Parents

... I recd the things you sent and thank you for them

as I needed them much. We recd our pay a little while ago. I shall send \$150 home. I should have sent more but I have had to spend some. I paid \$35 for a watch and must buy some other things before long.

You spoke of getting a gold pen if you have not the money yet ready you will take \$5 of mine when it gets there and get yourself a good one.

You wrote about the Horses of fire and chariots of fire round about Elijah protecting him. I don't think there is any round us though. Although I have seen a kind of fire in front of us several times but I don't think there is much protection in it and as for invisible spirits - when you see this fire you will almost always hear something whissing through the air Prehaps it's there but I don't like to have them come too close to me for I have seen folks hurt by them. Neither do

I know how much fear they see in the rebel ranks I always try to put as much led [lead] [in] them as I can and I think that does a good deal of good as I think it is a little more substantial than fear. But to be serious, I am very thankful my life has been preserved through the carnage of the campaign and yet how little we realize the danger we are in. Truly the hand of God covers us and to him we should give thee thanks. You spoke of peace. I would like peace as well as any other man in the country. But is it time to talk of peace now when we have driven them to the wall - no. Let us with one grand rush crush them. Twould be cheaper to exterminate them than fight this war over. Cowards at home may talk about peace but give me men that know their rights and dare maintain them. The only way we can get a peace that is lasting

is to crush the life out of them. We have been playing long enough. They wanted war now let us give them all that they want of it and pay them good interest too.

...

* * * *

The 60th then marched with Sherman to Savannah and north through the Carolinas until the end of the war. The regiment had very few casualties during this last phase of the war, but some men went missing.

* * * *

Savannah [Georgia]
Jan 15th 1865

Dear Parents,

...I recd the vest you sent me on the 18th also. And before I had worn it 12 hours I had a ball hole through it. The ball passed between my right arm and side. I was standing up at the time talking with one of my comrades,

my right arm hanging loosely by my side. My comrade was standing a little in front of me on a little lower ground. The ball struck his hat cutting the rim pretty badly and passed through my coat and vest. I thought I was hit till I examined a little and found it did not go through my shirt, then I knew I was allright. (I am afraid if it had gone through my shirts it would have caused more deaths than it would to have gone through me) You knew not [to] let the neighbor read that. But it is reminded now. When we are in camp we can keep clean but on the campaign it is impossible. But it don't trouble us much so don't let it bother you. ...

There is a tip top chance for young men here now. In fact I believe if I was out I would try it here. There is a recruiting office run for the navy and they are accepting soldiers from the vols. They pay 1600 bounty for 5 years. What do you think of my enlisting as a marine. I have soldiered it for so long that I don't think that I shall be able to work for a living after my time is out. (I think I had rather steal.) Don't you think I had better go into the Navy where I will have steady employment and not very hard work. ...

How many is Stockholm quota under the new call. I hope they will draft them and fetch them right along for if we can get them for the spring campaign we can scoop these rebs for they have not got another man. I tell you there is hardly enough left for seed. You come through their country as we have one can realize what the rebellion has done for the south. She has ruined herself. ...

Gen Grant never spoke more truth than when he said they have robbed the cradle & grave. We marched 325 miles and I don't think we saw 100 able bodied men on the road and that through the most populous part of GA. The empire state of the south. When the war drains NY's as hard, will be time to close the war.

You rightly suppose that the part of GA we passed through was the finest in the state. It was a splendid country till we struck the Savannah river at Millens. From there it was verry swampy, but our flanks were well

protected so that we took our time. ...

You spoke of those photos I sent home they are all verry natural especially Sherman. I saw him when he was looking over that old gun. They had just got the guns to bear on Atlanta, That Brigade Gen that he is facing and speaking to is the chief of Artillery of the Army of Mississipi. Through all the blood and carnage our gens have been spared to us except [Gen. James B.] McPherson. I have been over the battlefield where he fell. Poor fellow, not 40 years old and a perfect gentleman, yet the same hand that met out his fate to him has preserved me who was of great deal less importance to [the] Gov. But I can't say that I would have it different.

It seems strange sometimes that a man can go through so many dangers and not get hurt yet we know that the same hand meets out health & sickness wounds and instant death. We are in the same hand in an engagement that we are in camp. But I know it is natural to fear an engagement most but more die of disease than fighting.

There has been considerable talk about our division staying here to garrison the place but I think we shall not. There is another move up. Prehaps before you get this we may be on the road for Charleston, Wilmington & I don't know but VA.

But I must close ...

I send this in a captured envelope - Ed

* * * *

The 60th Regiment participated in the victory march in Washington and was mustered out on July 17, 1865.

* * * *

June 16th 1865
Camp near Bladensburg, MD

Dear Parents,

I recd. your letter yesterday and will answer it tonight as the heat is not so oppressive as it is in the daytime. You see we are still in the U.S. Service although I think it very unjust thing to keep us and I do not see

as there is any prospect of getting out soon.

We were paid off in full to the first of May yesterday. I recd. \$211. I think I shall send home about 150. I should more but I was in debt 30\$ and I must get me some clothing.

...

Real Estate is very cheap now in VA, Wash, North Ca, South Ca, & Ga. Splendid farms for sale in NC for 3 to 5\$ per acre, good lands, thousand of Fruits of all kinds.

I think there is a Bully chance for a young man. I would like to improve some of this good chances myself but I must go to school 2 or 3 terms yet. I am out just 4 years on schooling and I must make it up some way.

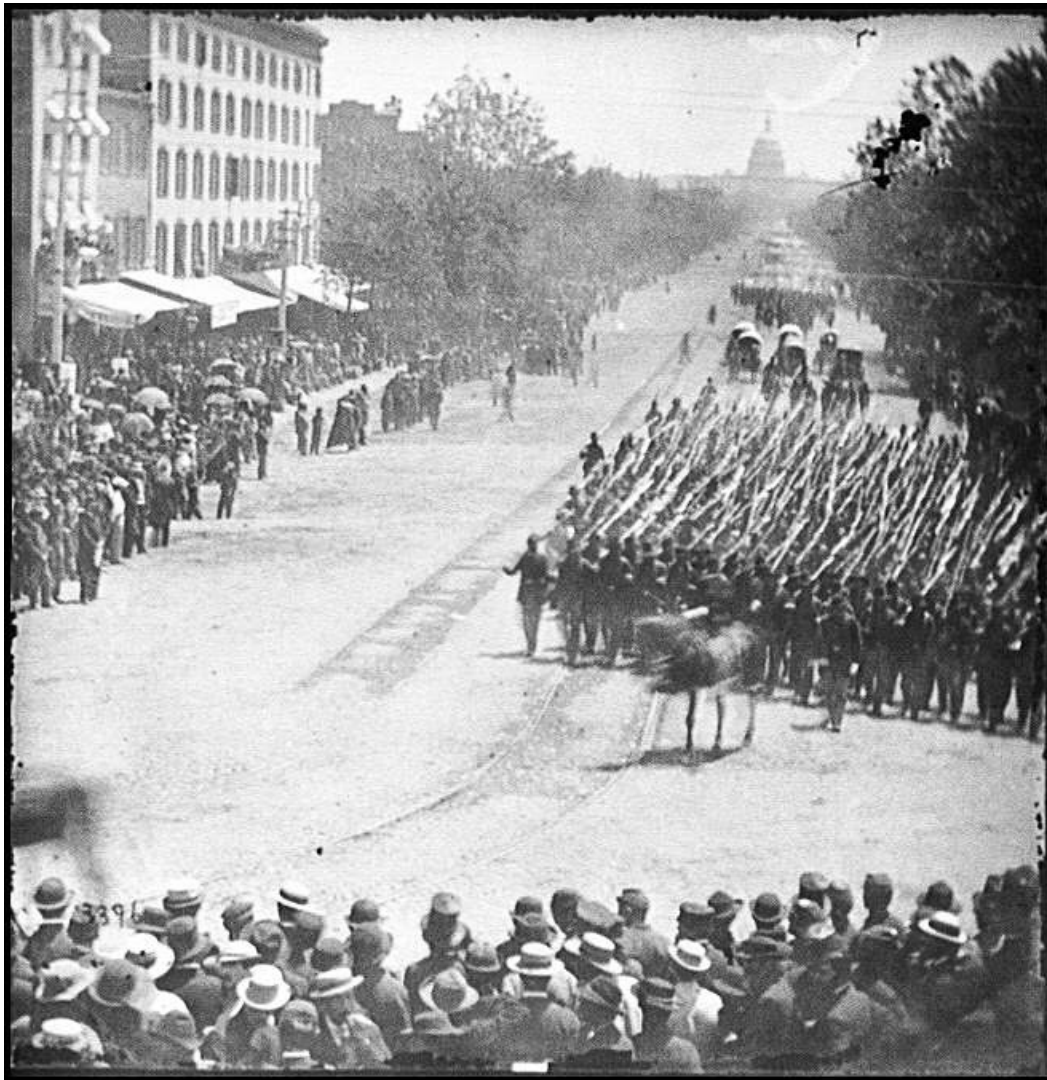
...

But I must close this, goodbye from your son E. L. Crane, 1st Sergt. Co A

Remember me to all of my friends.

I won't send so much waist [waste] paper next time, but I must close now.

* * * *



The 60th Infantry marches in the victory parade in Washington D. C. Photograph by Matthew Brady, in the Smithsonian collection.

Promoted by the end of war to first sergeant, Edgar Crane returned to Stockholm and resumed farming with his parents. Three years later he married 26-year-old Ruby Partridge of Upper Jay, New York. Their marriage produced eight children in the next

fifteen years, four boys and four girls: Anna (1869), Lyman (1870), Solon (1871), Mary (1873), Sarah (1875), Edna (1879), Ansel (1883) and Frederick (1884). Edgar died on August 4, 1913, age 72. Ruby died in 1924 at age 82.



Sergeant Edgar and Ruby Crane in northern New York after their marriage in 1868. Photo courtesy of Shirley Dubois, a descendant.

About the Author

Stan Maine is a lifelong resident of the North Country with an abiding interest in the Civil War and genealogy. He has served on the SLCHA Board of Trustees for 12 years and been an active organizer in the Civil War roundtable discussion series.

An Anti-War Ditty

These lyrics, discovered in the SLCHA archives, show that not all Stockholm men felt as strongly in favor of the Union cause as did Edgar Crane. Sergeant Crane's letters contain scathing comments about civilian "copperheads," those who shirked their duty to fight. Lyman Lincoln and Edgar Crane lived only about three miles apart and must have known each other. One hopes that their relationship was amicable.

Lyman Lincoln bought property on the west branch of the St. Regis River at Munson Road in the 1850s. He ran a woodworking shop and was known for making wooden pumps for water wells. He also built "Lincoln Log Bridge," the first bridge across the river at Munson Road. His bridge was destroyed by ice in 1886 and his home by fire in 1978.

Stephen Foster, the enormously popular 19th century songwriter, published "Oh! Susanna" in 1848. In the version below, Louisiana is substituted for Canada as a destination. –eds.

The Skedaddler's Farewell to his Country

Composed by Lyman Lincoln, of Stockholm
[sung] to the tune of "Oh! Susannah"

I'm going off to Canada
As you may understand,
On purpose to escape the draft
In my own native land,
Although I love my country well,
I love myself much more;
And I'm resolved I'll not be shot
Upon my native shore.

Chorus – Farewell old Abraham,
Don't send after me,
I'm going off to Canada,
On purpose to be free.

I love my wife and children all;
And all I hold most dear,
On purpose for to run away
From those dreadful guns I fear;
And if I ever do return,
'Twill be when war is o'er,
And when there is no danger
Of hearing canons roar.

Chorus

When first the war broke out,
I thought I was a healthy man,
But found I was mistaken quite,
As you may understand;
For I have pains in plenty Sir,
My bones are out of place,
So you would not suppose I was
One of the human race.

Chorus

But when I get to Canada,
I shall be free from pain,

My bones will all return to place,
I shall be well again.
If Queen Victoria sends me back,
I'll hate her whilst I've breath,
And when that I am dead and gone,
I'll haunt her after death.

Chorus

I'll swear allegiance to the Crown,
Or anything they please,
If I can get to Canada,
Where I can be at ease;
Before I will go south and fight,
And risk my being shot,
I will forsake my native land
And everything I've got.

Chorus

My character I leave behind,
It's worse than nothing here,
It's just exactly like my pluck,
And courage too, I fear;
But old Abe Lincoln's conscript act,
It is the truth I tell,
Has frightened me almost to death,
I wish it was in hell.

Chorus

But when the war is over
Then I'll return again,
My country's laws I will support,
Her rights I will maintain;
No fear of being drafted then
Will frighten me away,
And if that time should ever come,
I'll hail the happy day.

Chorus – Then old Abraham
You may send for me,
And I'll return from Canada,
To the country of the free.

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