

Evangelist J. Gillmore Collection

Guide to Captain Evangelist J. Gilmore Archive Collection, Company B., 96th Illinois Infantry Volunteers

DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

Repository

Civil War Museum, Resource Center Kenosha, Wisconsin

Language of Material

Material in English

Abstract

This collection consists of 45 documents, mostly letters written by Evangelist Gillmore which he often signed as “Vange”) to his wife Elizabeth (often addressing her as “Lib”/”Libby”). Thirty four introductory/background chapters that give a summary of the role the 96th Illinois Infantry's participation in the Civil War. The Gillmore family documents that relate to the specific activities and time periods of the war follow each chapter. The “forward”, background chapters, and entire collection process were the gathering activity of Mr. Russell D. Gillmore, a great-great grandson of Evangelist J. Gillmore. There are several other men and women mentioned in “the Forward” that are given credit for the research and writing of this project. Mr. Gillmore also attests that some of the letters listed in this collection are in fact “either missing or faded”, and he has brought this to the attention of the reader/researcher. The end of this collection comprises personal letters written by in laws of Captain Gillmore, several articles on the casualties of the 96th Illinois Infantry including the death notice of Captain Gillmore. Mr. Russell D. Gillmore points out that “this is sort of a biography of Evangelist, but will be of interest to anyone who had an ancestor in the 96th.”

AMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Use Restrictions

None.

Preferred Citation

(Identification of item). The Evangelist J. Gillmore Collection, The Civil War Museum, Kenosha, Wisconsin

Provenance:

Special recognition of thanks should be given to Ms. Carol Memler Bennett, who spent many difficult hours transcribing the original, handwritten, and faded letters.

Processing Information

Processed by Frederick J. (Rick) Holtz, 2014

Biographical note: (Taken from Chapter 1 by Mr. Russell D. Gillmore).

Evangelist J. Gillmore (“Vange”) was born on May 8, 1835 in the town of Darien, Genessee County, New York. He was the oldest child of Benjamin Parker Gillmore and Mariam Saviah (Harper) Gillmore. In the early 1840s the family moved west to Illinois with promise of acquiring larger and more fertile farming land, settling in Avon Township, Lake County, Illinois on 160 acres of land.

Vange Gillmore married Elizabeth Rowling on April 4th, 1858 in Lake County, Illinois. They started their life together on a 120 acre farm that his father had purchased from the government in 1846. In addition to becoming a farmer, Vange also became a teacher. Besides his wife Elizabeth (“Libbie”), he left behind two children, Fred and Nellie.

Evangelist J. Gillmore was 29 years old when he enlisted in the 96th Regiment of Illinois Infantry Volunteers, Company B. At the time of his enlistment, he was made a First Sargent, then a 1st Lieutenant and quickly made a Captain. He listed his height as 5' 8 and 1/2 inches tall, brown hair, gray eyes, fair complexion, married, and his occupation as a farmer. He enlisted on August 9th, 1862 in Avon, Illinois for a period of 3 years. He was mustered in on September 5, 1862 in the city of Rockford, Illinois.

On the evening of June 20th, 1864 Captain Gilmore was wounded in the attack on Kennesaw Mountain, Georgia. He died three days later on 23rd of June. His brother Myron, who served under him and survived the Civil War living to the ripe age of 71, played a major part in returning Captain Gillmore's body back to Lake County, Illinois (Waukegan).

His funeral was July 3rd, attended by Rev. F.B. Cleveland as announced by “The Waukegan Weekly Gazette” issue of Saturday, July 23, 1864

COLLECTION OVERVIEW: This collection consists of letters Captain Gillmore wrote his wife and family. What makes this collection particularly interesting are his subjects or topics presented, giving today's reader a true glimpse of what concerns and issues had to have been on the minds of so many soldiers during The Civil War.

COLLECTION LIST:

Doc. #1 of 45: To his dear wife, dated, September 6, 1862, from "Camp Fuller", Rockford, Illinois

Noteworthy: Very anxious to hear from her.
Talks of his trip arrival to Chicago and train transfer to Rockford.
Given rations ("soft bread and syrup") and "shown our barracks".
Very hungry and hardly anything to eat.
"Ordered out with Jo Davies County Boys to muster into the 96th.
Supper "consisted of hard bread (crackers) only."
"Officers left to elect the regimental officers" and he "was already put in charge of his company."
His first order was "to detail some men to guard our doors."
"Slept with a shawl" the first night and his bunk "was damp".
"Morning rations" (breakfast) included.."fresh beef, crackers, coffee, and sugar."
"A lot of rain" recently and very muddy"
"Write often".

Yours, as Ever
Vange

Doc. #2 of 45: A letter to his wife Libby and son Fred, dated, September 12, 1862, from Camp Fuller

Noteworthy: Trying to recall when he wrote her last and if it was a "full letter."
He "finds" that "I have bought the elephant in taking this office."
Lists his first pay as \$15.10 with the decision to "not draw any more than the other privates."
Was immediately appointed orderly of the 22nd unit.
States that he sent her \$10 "by Lieutenant Whitney", and that "commissioned officers have not drawn any pay" as yet.
Described a dream seeing her and Fred and recently all there received "camp kettles, mess pans, knives, forks, and cups."
He looks at her pictures often.
His food staples consist of "fresh beef & pork, soft bread, and cracks

every day just in proportions we wish” including sugar, syrup, beans, rice, coffee, and tea,”etc....

“We draw no pepper, so we pass the hat to get money for it.”

They “hired C. Whitney and J. Barnes for cooks and detail 2 men every week to assist them.”

Concludes by saying that as he draws more pay, he would like to pay up his small debts.

Yours affectionately, Vange

Doc. #3 of 45:

To his dear wife, from Camp Fuller, dated, September 23, 1862

Noteworthy:

Complains somewhat that he has received and read only 2 of her letters.

“Feels somewhat discouraged about writing” when he writes more than she does.

He informs her that “we have got our guns and equipment and nearly all our clothes” now”.. and that we all “expect our bounty soon.”

He implores his wife to visit him soon because he thinks “we will be ordered to Minnesota before a great while.”

He mentions “that he has had to throw the labor on two other Sargent during the past week”, and “has caught a bad cold.”

Reports that the clothing received is “pretty good”, and “we have hats instead of caps.”

He gives a detailed description of his hat as well as being given “brass plates for our shoulders to carry our guns”, but complaints among the men remain about the heaviness of the guns.

He also describes the colors of each part of his uniform and also included “that I had a letter from mother last night”.

He reminds her to “talk to Fred about me, and telling him “that he not forget he has a pa.”

His closing includes remarks that “It seems as though I have been away a long time”, and that “three of the boys wives from Waucounda are here now.”

“It is raining some now”, and “I shall write to Andrew and father soon.”

Yours affectionately,

E. J. Gillmore

Doc. #4 of 45: (Readers note: There are no letters from Vange to “Lib” between October 11th and November 5th, 1862) This letter to wife “Lib” written in the “Fall, 1862”, are the bottom third of a page of a letter.

Noteworthy: “I have-----erable confidence in you, and Edwin, will study up some say to turn things without sacrificing much.”
“I did not give you the names of the sick ones in quarters. They are O. Whitcom, A. Castle, M. Cleveland, Wm. Bottom & H. Weatherly.”
“We learn that the soldiers at Rockford were so disgusted with the barracks, they have burned them all up.” Adieu! Your Vange

Doc. #5 of 45: (Reader's note: This is an enclosure in a letter from Vange to Lib, probably late, 1862, from Danville, Kentucky).
It is clear that were many concerns and worries for soldiers far from loved ones, away from wives and families for many months, as well as the constant frequency of receiving partial or no communication from wives and other family members and close friends. It was probably often greatly assumed that most of the worry came from relatives left behind. But here is a poignant example of a common theme that had to be on the minds of many soldiers in all time periods. Here we see clear examples Vange's intense concerns over the question of marital faithfulness on both sides of matrimony. In all of my processed collections, this is the first example that I have read where a soldier addresses such an intimate and personal topic. It may well have been experiences and situations like this that prompted Captain Gillmore to take the moral and evangelical stands that he did, well recognizing that his military experience put him in a great Christian mission field to improve the lives of his fellow soldiers, etc. (I have taken the liberty to process this correspondence in its full entirety, so that the modern day reader can sense the urgency and frustrations of those separated by loved ones for long periods of time, illustrating the fact that sexual desires and temptations were as strong in the middle of the 19th Century America as they are in present day).

Noteworthy: “Lib! I wish you would write on a little slip of paper all about the private affairs in regard to yourself, etc.” “How soon do you expect to be confined”. (Vange has learned that his wife is seriously ill but does not know the reasons or details).

“Some of this Regiment have caught diseases that prove they have had intercourse with women of bad character.”

“Lib! When I see so much vice practiced by men who pretend to be virtuous, it makes me feel almost proud of myself.” “All kinds of men are here and of course all kinds of vice are practiced, but we have some good and virtuous men..”

“Whitney says his wife tells him to “get all he wants of other women and he always has, and she seems to like him better for doing so.”

“He is an unprincipled fellow but it don't make any difference here..”

“I have but little desire for sexual intercourse & don't know but I shall lose all desire....” “Wouldn't you wished to be divorced if I should?”

“Major Smith expects his wife and two little boys here soon...” “He found a letter by a sweetheart to her lover in the rebel army that was ridiculous in the extreme...” “She spoke of good times they had had on the lounge in plain terms.” “She said she allowed no one to touch her but was keeping herself all nice and tight for him when he returned.”

By writing on separate slips we can let any one read our letters...”

“Be sure and direct just as follows.”

Danville, Kentucky

Co B., 96th Reg. Illinois Volunteers

To follow the Reg.

“You need not say care of Captain Salisbury. V.”

Doc.# 6 of 45: (Part of a letter written by Vange to Lib., apparently, November 5, 1862,

Noteworthy: Mentions suffering from the “considerable cold” and the hope of “being moved into some good barracks”.
Complains on the lack of not having stoves to warm the tents.
Has heard that some are complaining about the conditions and trying to get back home to have a good time.
Fears “there maybe some trouble with father's estate” with all the relatives and what each will want and grab for themselves.
There has been much talk between the enlisted men having to endure their hardships and letting their officers know of their great

dissatisfaction.

He wishes “nothing than to be higher than the rank of a lieutenant, as “being a captain” comes with to much responsibility.

Doc. #7 of 45: To his wife, dated, March 17, 1863, from Franklin, (Tennessee?)

Noteworthy: Opens wishing his wife and son Fred “could see this beautiful morning” and scenery.
He writes that “between 20 and 30 regiments are encamped here” while “12 men are sent out” daily to work on fortification.
He reports that the “rebs. Followed us back from Duck River across which we drove them last week.”
“There are all sorts of opinions as to what the Rebs. Tend to do.”
He states, “I see the Copperheads are playing out some and I hope the Conscription Act will be rigorously enforced, although it would take Ed and a great many others that would be much needed at home.”
He adds, “Many of us here are needed at home.”
He's “wearing old boots” that have now been “twice taped”, and will have to last at least 3 or 4 more weeks.
He's borrowed \$7 from Carlisle Druse who just got out of the Danville Hospital and will by new boots as soon as he is able.
It does no good to speculate on when he will get paid next.
He reports that “deserters” have certain period of time to report back to their units before they will be punished.
“One of our deserters has returned, a George Turner of Wauconda, but I think he will not be punished as the Colonel allowed him to take a gun to fight the other day.”
“Do you furnish wood for Chet?”
The rain has been continuous and Vange doesn't know if he will ever get the chance to dry his clothes.
His regiment is “on picket today and we are close by some houses which contain a good many women who have doubtless got husbands in the Rebel Army.”
“We have set some rails up against the fence and spread our rubber blankets on them and they make a very good shelter.”
“The tents are all in the rear of the division now” and “several wagons have broke down.”
Vange gives his wife directions on how many bushels of manure

she will need to spread out and requests her to set out 50 trees
Finishes his letter reporting to her the price of food staples like ham,
concluding that he found 8 of her old letters to him and postage stamps.

Yours Forever, "Vange"

Doc.#8 of 45: To his wife, dated April 5, 1863, from Fanklin, Tennessee

Noteworthy: Reports receiving her letter of the 14th and mentions that he
he currently is made "lieutenant of a picket guard".
Attacks by the rebels are becoming regular occurrences at "day break".
It is said that our strength of forces can withstand attacks "of a force of
twenty thousand".
Hears of other soldiers like "the Whitneys" have received a box from
home, but states, "I have not got ours yet!"
Reminds her that he has "sent \$10 in a letter and \$40" and that he has
signed up on "the Allotment Roll" that "contains the names of relatives,
etc. whom we send money to." The soldiers keep a copy of each record
sent and if for some reason the allotment money is robbed in shipment,
it is protected and cannot be spent.
He talks about the evils of a man named "Salisbury" stating that he
is not connected in any way to this bad man's behavior.
He concludes mentioning that "we were mustered out of the service
yesterday", and..."mustered in again as officers".

Vange to his Libby

Doc. #9 of 45: (Reader's note: This letter from Vange to his wife was begun on
April 5th after his being mustered out and not finished until April 7,
1863).

Noteworthy: In his most recent action he talks about the Rebs getting away before
they could be captured.
Expresses his encouragement about the prospects "of the war closing
now", stating that "If the Copperheads at home do not try to resist
the draft, we are all right"...
He he brings up to his wife, "You seem to think the newcomer
will be a boy but I dreamed it was a girl", mentioning "that it is a

superstitious belief” that more baby girls being born is a sure sign of peace to come.

He reminds her “to have a few trees set out but if you can't get it done conveniently, let it go.”

Getting potatoes now are cheap and we get them often but not tea.

They can also buy flour and “our cook makes pretty good flour.”

He reports that his eating is getting him “quite fleshy”, and hoping that he will get paid soon.

He concludes by reporting that “All is well” and that “William Bottom got his discharge papers today” because “he is very fleshy” and “can't stand to carry a knapsack”.

Yours forever,

Vange

Doc. #10 of 45: To his wife, dated, April 17, 1863, from Franklin, Tennessee

Noteworthy: He read letter from yesterday mentioning his disappointment in not getting any news.

Though today was payday, he reports that his recent promotion did not show up on his new Lieutenant's paycheck, and he “shall loose the use of the money until next pay day”.

He is glad Captain Whitney has returned praising him as an officer “tried and true”.

He reviews the fact that “Whitney was wrongfully put under arrest a short time ago” and that a man from Crystal Lake (Ill.) “was showing just what kind of a man Salisbury is.”

He states, if the outcome means that “Whitney goes home” then, “I shall be in command.”

Vange to Lib.

Doc. #11 of 45: (Reader's note: Vange gets the good news of the birth of his daughter, “Nellie” who arrived on April 20, 1863. Also, you will note Vang's newest fear that in his dreams, his new little daughter had died. Again we are reminded of the psychological impacts, stresses and worries that soldiers experience in wartime as they express their feelings for the love ones they dearly miss)

To his wife, Sunday, May 10th, 1863, from Franklin, Tennessee

Noteworthy:

Just received the latest letter “with some of the darling's hair and how very fine it is!”

“Myron said he was going to write to Edwin so I proposed we should send both in one envelope.”

He warns Lib “not to let anyone know” what he's written her about “Captain and Burnett's gambling”.

He illustrates to Libby an example of some “very foolish orders” by mentioning that all commanders “should not wake their men at ten minutes to 4 o'clock A.M.” and “permit none to go to the sinks until after daylight.” He goes on to say..”Well of course some of the me had to commit nuisances in the ranks while standing in line of battle and their company commanders were arrested for allowing it. What do you think of that?”

“Captain Hicks of Company A drew up a letter to colonel Clark protesting some of his orders and every one of us lined officers signed it.”

“You say mother is worrying about me getting my pay. Of course she will but I don't worry much”. “The man who mustered us in as officers said we would get our pay from the state.”

“I borrowed from Myron \$46.”

“ I dreamed last night that our little daughter was dead. It was a mixed up dream. I thought the folks told me that she had died and they buried her, but they heard her crying so they dug her up again.”

“Let no one see this letter nor tell any one of these things about colonel Clark” ...as “Clark and I are on good terms.” “I will write you.”

Vange

Doc. #12 of 45:

To his wife, dated, June 4, 1863, from Triune, Tennessee

Noteworthy:

Reminds her of the copy “Harper's Weekly” (second installment) he recently sent her and that he was “to march the next morning” without knowledge of the destination.

He mentions that after 2 PM the previous day some 8000 rebels marched into Franklin but the men left behind “kept them at bay” until a larger force came up from Brenton, “and we whipped them soundly.”

Tells of his encampment on “the right wing of Rosecrans army”, that experienced the “Battle of Stone River.” He notes a “large burying ground close by that doubtless contains many a hero” while “the trees

show the battle as no small affair.”

He points that the army has to continually be careful for the security of any mail because if it should fall into enemy hands, the information could be disastrous to the outcome of our efforts.

“The 1st Tennessee Cavalry, Colonel Brownlow (Parson Brownlow's son) is here....with 5 other cavalry regiments that have gone to Franklin.”

“One colonel of a cavalry regiment has his wife with him and she wears 1st Lieutenant shoulder straps” but cannot tell if she is an officer. “The “The men say she rides into a fight and does as much execution as any of them.”

“Those cavalry men have a fight to average once a week.” “Each ...is armed with a revolving rifle, two revolvers, and a sword.”

“I have sent home 2 blankets, 1 set of towels, and two books with some things with others in a box directed to Mrs. Whitney.”

“I got some washing done today for 10 cents apiece.”

page 2, June 5th

“We are still at Triune” and “a currier from Franklin states that the cavalry drove the rebs out this morning at 3 o'clock but I guess have come back again with reinforcements for they commenced cannonading again!”

Vange dreamed about his daughter again last night and “the Captain says I called on my daughter to bring me a cup of water last night but I don't remember....”.

Yours as Ever
Vange

Doc.# 13 of 45: To his wife in camp near Shelbyville, Tennessee, dated, July 2, 1863

Noteworthy: He opens asking the “presumption” that his wife wonders why she is not getting more letters from him.
Reports that the cavalry has made many a reb “skedaddle” here while a good many have drowned in the Duck River, “as they didn't have time to cross on the bridge.”
“Our boys have found several dead bodies in the river and from their pockets of they got \$109 in Confederate money.
We marched quickly some 16 miles from Murfreesborough, bivouacked in the woods, and in the afternoon we were happy to see our “ knapsacks, mess chests, and tents, etc.”

“Colonel Champion is appointed Provost Marshall here and we may be used as Provost Guard.”

“This is considered to be the strongest union town in the state, probably a hundred of the citizens have come in from hiding places where some have been for 6 months.

“Now quite a number have enlisted in some regiments here.”

“Thirty three Indiana boys were taken prisoners when their brigade was gobbled” as they were taken while on their way to Richmond.”

“Citizens have been very kind to them but the rebel officers won't allow them to.”

“We are pretty well now...and I am not as fat as I was two weeks ago.”

“I am very tired tonight so please excuse me.”

Vange Gillmore

Lib Gillmore

Doc. # 14 of 45: To his wife, dated, July 4, 1863, from Wartrace, Tennessee.

Noteworthy:

“We had to make wide streams yesterday that were waist deep as it rained pitchforks times downwards.”

“The rebs left this campground one week ago today” while our cavalry artillery have done pretty much all the fighting so far.”

“Our cavalry don't use their carbines much nowadays, but dash right in and cut and slash with their swords.”

“Several of those we have guarded..have bore the marks of sabers.”

Vange mentions his “visiting the guards” who turned out and saluted him and he informed them “that they needn't do that thing any more.”

He reminds Libby that, “I have had no letter from you since the 23rd.”

“Guess you don't write me very often of late.”

“Have you “soured” on me? “Well, one of the boys has brought me a dish

Vange reports that the Sargent Major informed him that he was made “Officer of the Day” as he came back to his tent. So he “slicked up some”, put on his sash and sword and “reported at Head Quarters for instructions since which the program has been of follows.”

“There is another rumor in regard to Rosey's taking Chattanooga, stating how

he took it. Maybe its true as “Wilders cavalry came in here last night all tired and fagged out..”

“The mail boy has come and I will close.”

Lieutenant E. J. Gillmore
Company B, 96th Regiment, Illinois Volunteers
1st Brigade, General Bairds Division

Doc.#15 of 45: To his wife, dated, July 14th, 1863, Wartrace, Tennessee
(Reader's note: Here we clearly see Vange's disappointment and struggle on dealing with 2 issues of immorality with the army. The first is his visual recording of the record amount of gambling (probably due to extreme boredom), and the second issue (and just as serious to him) is the falsifying of information in document form to the government for additional pay.)

Noteworthy: Thinks “we will move camp today if it don't rain to much”, and “Gambling is being carried on again to a fearful extent.”
“Pay rolls have been called” and “I am in hopes we will be paid again this month.”
“I send Lieutenant William Vincent's picture—please preserve it well.”
His boots are in very bad shape from all the marching and he spent \$1.50 “to get them tapped.”
“One thing we do which I have some feeling of compunction about.”
“That is drawing pay for servants when we do not have any.” “We have to certify on our honor that we have actually employed them.”
“I am in reality just as entitled to a servants pay if I do my own work as if I employed one but I don't like to certify us above, although the Colonel has to sign it too and he knows that but a few of the officers have servants, and he has not ever said anything about it.”
“We have to name the servant in the Pay Rolls” and “we have to list 13 for his wages and 19 for his rations, and 3 and 1/2 for his clothing.”
He asks his wife Libby, “What do you think about my certifying as above?”
“When you are with Romans, you must do as Romans do.”
Vange to Lib.

Doc.#16 of 45: To his wife Libby, dated, July 25th, 1863, from Wartrace, Tennessee

Noteworthy:

Mentions receiving her letter of the 19th and reports having a severe case of diarrhea “pretty badly” remembering his first occurrence of it when he first left home.

Also brings up “a letter from mother, Geo. and Frank”.

He points out officer's issues with “soldier's Musters being revoked.”

Expects to get his back pay “as far back as January 6th” and things it could be as much as \$250.

He brings up other expenses that he recently paid including “our mess for \$15 and his reminding her that that he recently sent home \$140, keeping only \$35 for emergencies.

He mentions other monies sent to relatives like his mother and father.

He requests her to “please see that the money is passed over to the proper persons”, and “that them all write to the boys immediately, acknowledging the receipt of their money.”

He closes by mentioning that she consider paying debts now as much as she is able, and that it is ok that she sell some of his “personal property only if you get a decent price for it.” He is referring to farm equipment that is not being used, and there is some doubt in this correspondence that he wonders if they will ever again return to farming. If so, “we ought to at least have a new harness and wagon.”

“General Rosecrans was expected here today” and “We still continue to hear good news.”

My respects to all the folks

Evangelist

Fred.

Elisabeth

Grace

Ahem!

“Tell Fred I couldn't hardly read his letter, he must take more pains.”

(Reader's Note) Vange continues on writing another page and one quarter though he has already closed/signed off.)

No one has any information as to when anyone will be able to get home, maybe in the Spring.

“Would like to see them all very much but would rather come home with more money when I do come.”

He talks about “Mr. Annis who was reduced to a private in February on account of being absent.”

He also mentions his dislike of “Whitney and Burnett”, that the men are “togging.”

He requests to Lib not to say anything to mother about “their gambling or anything.”

He thinks by spring the enemy will be whipped and the war will be at an end, and he would hope to be home in the land of the living spending his evenings “with wife and babies”, reading a good story, and “throttling the little ones on my knee.”

He praises her for “economizing” and reminds her, “Now is the time for us to secure our farm” so “that we can make us a pretty home.”

Then he expresses “if I should be taken away that your choice of a future supporter would be such a man as I would be willing to have the training of the little ones.”

“God grant that you may never be deceived if such a thing ever should happen, but these are unpleasant thoughts and I will not dwell on them any longer although they often come across my mind, and no doubt you often think of such things as thousands of such cases are constantly happening.”
“This war has made many widows and orphans and doubtless will many more.”

He mentions receiving an invitation to attend a “Soiree at General Whittier H.Q. in Shelbyville Friday night”, reporting too that “Whitaker was well pleased with our appearance before “Rosey” the other day.”

He finally reports that “E. Potter is very bad off and we have tried to get him furloughed but Dr. Will will not do anything about it.”

Yours Forever,
Vange to Lib

Doc.#17 of 45: To his wife, dated, August 9, 1863, from Wartrace, Tennessee
(Reader's Note: Here we get a glimpse of what the duties and pitfalls of being a lower ranked officer and commanding a group of men. Vange is obviously venting and explaining situations to his wife, in part to get reassurance and support for his actions from her.)

Noteworthy: He reports that he has just “came off Picket” and is feeling “quite sleepy.”
Is getting a lot of frequent headaches and briefly recalls his history of military service to her.
“One year ago we had a hurricane in northern Illinois and eleven months ago we were mustered into the 96th.”
“I expect we shall soon be enlisting again as “Veteran Volunteers.”

"E Potter see some better." "Well! Your letter has cured my headache so perhaps I can write a letter after all."

"The boys all say I will get whipped when I get home". (Note: Vange is talking about the subordinate soldiers under him).

"The boys are certainly good to my face."

"We have orders now to drill two hours each day", "but I tell the boys if they will take the pains and execute each movement briskly and correctly as possible, I will let them rest more than enough to make it up."

"By taking such a course the company will improve in drill." "A few lazy ones that fall behind the rest and don't take pains at all and spoil the appearance of the whole Company." "Why of course I just make them come to time." "Anything wrong about that?"

A few bad ones spoil it for "the willing ones who are the sufferers."

"Of course when I reprimand the men they are mad at the time and tell the boys what they will do when we get home, but the next day its..

Lieutenant, won't you have an apple or a peach or something of that sort to make up?"

"Captain Taylor who came in as a 1st Lieutenant was not liked by his company at all, and the company even went so far as to sign a petition to have him resign."

Doc. # 18 of 45: Part of a letter from Vange to Lib., dated, August 30, 1863. Location not given but probably still somewhere in Tennessee. This is the last page.

Noteworthy: He reports that "one of our boys died at Murphreesboro, Tennessee on 13th. His name was James Eleazer Graves, and Vange states that "He was one of the best fellows I ever became acquainted with."
He also reports that a "fellow named Huntington of Company C. died here in the hospital night before last of chronic diarrhea" and that "he will be sent home tomorrow in a metallic coffin." (Reader's Note: This is unusual and points to the fact the Huntington's family was very affluent).
Vange mentions "Salisbury" and tells Lib..."You would think I was about spoiled if I was to do as Salisbury did at Rockford, Chicago, and Cincinnati, as he confessed to me for I had to use instruments on him to rid him of a certain disease some of the women gave him." "I expect a good many men demoralize themselves at Nashville, but here in the field there is not much chance unless they stoop to wenchies, but I guess there

isn't any danger of that.”

“As for myself I don't have much desire for sexual intercourse and I don't know as you will own me any more, as I am not a man now unless I have such desires.” “ Will you own or reject me?”

“Let me know before I come home.”

“Last night it was very cold but today quite warm”.

“The men are generally pretty healthy now since we have got water from the spring we are now using from.”

“Chicken broth has kept me from the hospital.”

“Officers have to pay \$1.05 a day at hospitals now.” “Therefore I am doubly anxious to keep out of them.” “As long as I can stay in camp the the doctors here will prescribe for me gratis.” “I have taken Blue Pills to regulate my liver and Opium Camphor and Quinine for the diarrhea.”

“Have eaten very little for 2 weeks.” “Have no diarrhea today but am weak.” “We are handy to a creek so we can bathe every day if we wish.”

Thursday, August 30th, 1863

“It is raining quite hard so I presume we will have to march again.”

“Rosey” was here yesterday and said it was our turn to go to the front now.”

“Kiss the babies for me and tell them about their pa!”

“He is coming home one of these days, etc.”.

“I ain't as mad as I was a little while ago.”

E. J. Gillmore

Mrs. E. J. Gillmore

From Vange to his wife, Lib., dated, August 30th, 1863 (No location given and what follows is “page 2” only as page 1 is missing). What we learn from this part is that Vange has been very ill with diarrhea, giving the reader some idea of what medical treatments were prescribed for such a common soldier ailment.)

Noteworthy:

“Therefore I am doubly anxious to keep out of there”. As long as I can stay in camp the doctors here will prescribe for me gratis.” “I have been taking Blue Pills to regulate my liver and Opium Camphor and Quinine for the diarrhea.” “Have eaten very little for two weeks.” “I have no

diarrhea today but am weak.” “We are handy to a creek so we can bathe every day if we wish.”

“It is raining quite hard so I presume we have to march again.” “Rosey was here yesterday and said it was our turn to go to the front now, so I presume I will be down in Alabama ere long.” “I have not heard anything from E. Bothernick in a long time but expect he is out to front further.”

“Kiss the babies for me and tell them about their pa!” “He is coming home one of these days, etc.” “I ain't as mad as I was a little while ago, Ha!Ha!”

E. J. Gillmore

Mrs. E.J. Gillmore

Doc. #19 of 45: To his wife, dated, October 5, 1863 (Reader's note: This is part of a longer letter or two shorter letters). No location given.

Noteworthy: He mentions a larger contingent of the Potomac Army “is coming to our assistance” or “some place further north”.
He has no desire to “soldier another winter” as they have been on half rations and “getting a few potatoes and parching corn”.
His boots are no longer good for wear and he has had them “tapped twice” and “now the uppers are giving out.”
He asks her to “Tell King to make another pair the same size” putting on thicker soles and “thinks they may cost \$8 or \$9.
He reports that he “will be short of money before we get paid again.”
“The Captain sent home \$20
“Get the boots made so you can send them as soon as I get where it will be safe to do so.”
He tells Libby that he “is thankful to get out of battle without being hurt—it is a wonder to me so many did escape but it was in the woods so not as good aim was taken as we would have been on open ground.”
“But a perfect lot of lead of lead was flying continually and it was awful to see the boys falling about us.”
“I would have been in the second charge had not Captain asked me to wait for him, but it saved my life and I don't feel so bad about it.”
He explains that he is afraid that “some will try to make out that we tried to get out of it.”
“If we get in another battle, I shall not go back to rally the men again but shall stick to my place even if but one man stays with me.” “Though

in fact I could do more good gathering the men as I did and bring them to the Captain to form again”.

“The boys know I did what I could to stop them, and in one ravine where I thought they would try to form again, I drew my sword and stopped quite a squad.”

page 2, Vange to Lib, dated, October 6, 1863

“but just then a shell burst near us and he mounted his horse and off he went and the squad I had succeeded in stopping broke by me.”

“I could not keep them alone.” “Whitney thought the regiment would not make a second charge or he probably would have gone up when I caught up with my squad.”

“The weather is very dry and we suffer a good deal from cold at night.”

“Many of us have no blankets.” “I left mine on the battlefield.”

“If you could color the overcoat I sent home I presume you could sell it pretty well.” “I expect the do not allow citizens to wear soldiers clothes there, do they?”

“This is a very cold day and I wish I had an undershirt and a pair of drawers.”

Page 3, Vange to Lib., dated, October 6, 1863

“I am informed that the letters we have written since the fight have all been detained at Nashville.” “So you may get this as soon as you get those.”

“The rebs sent in to have us remove our sick and wounded from C-- as they would shell the town today and they are true to their word as they have already commenced.” “And we are ordered to be ready at a moments notice.” “I expect some shells will be dropping in here pretty quick.”

“Well wife I have written over considerable paper, but I have not said much at all.” “Our wounded boys have all been sent home.”

“Oh! How I would like to see the little darlings.” “Mother seems to thinks Nellie is handsome and smart.”

“That was indeed cunning in her pretending to cry.”

Yours truly,

Vange

Lib.

Doc. #20 of 45: To his wife Libby, dated, October 16th, 1863, from Camp Clark

Noteworthy: He tells his wife that he failed to mention to her that he would like his boots “a little larger than the others as it is coming wet weather or winter.”
He also would like them “high topped to long legged” in Officer fashion”, and reminds her that he doesn't care “whether King puts on steel plates on the bottoms or uses steel headed nails”. Whatever “he thinks best”.
“I shall need them as soon as I can get them” and states that “A good many of the boys are sending to him for boots” as well.
He also mentions that “he likes these army shirts pretty well, but they are not long enough”. “If you can send me a pair of red and blue woolen ones (army style) with pockets on each side, I would like those.”
He also has an additional list of requested items including, 1 pair of long suspenders, 1 pair of buckskin Gloves with long wristlets, 1 cotton Handkerchief, 1 pair of mittens, cheese, currants and wine.”
He requests her not to send a large box.
He indicates that “Captain Whitney is trying to resign” but doesn't know if he will be promoted.”
“We will not be allowed by 2 commissioned officers now that our company, being too small to allow any more.” “It is thought by many that we will have another fight ere long.”
“I am now commanding Company D (Bloodgetts Company) as all their officers are absent.”
“We are enjoying pretty good health but I have been troubled by rheumatism some.”
“The last letter I got of you was dated the 24th of September.”
Vange

Doc. #21 of 45: To his wife Libby, dated, November 4th, 1863, from Shell Mound

Noteworthy: He informs her that he received her last letter of the 14th but “presumes” she has written since then maybe several times.
A recent battle from Lookout Mountain on the 29th killed one man from the 101st Illinois Regiment who happened to be with us and injured two from Company D of our regiment.

He explains he was not commanding that particular day but “were ordered back to camp.”

They had been living on “quarter rations” and “mustered for pay” on the 31st. He remembered that day significantly as it was son Fred's birthday and tried to recall in his mind where we was the year before on that day.

Reports on November 1st packing up and marching as far as a pontoon bridge that had been damaged by the rebs, so they had to wait for the bridge to be repaired. Getting reports that they might be in danger of being attacked, they fixed their bayonets that night and “rested on their arms.”

On November 2nd they marched rapidly at daylight and by sunset reached within 6 or 7 miles of Bridgeport.

On November 3rd “we moved up in a valley between 2 mountains and camped on both sides, immediately throwing up breastworks.”

This day he reports that “he is on picket” 3/4ths miles from camp on the mountain side.

He reports of seeing a “pretty large cave” of “which 4 men went into it a few days ago and have not yet returned.” The cave contents were used in the extensive manufacture of saltpeter.

“There are nine regiments now in our brigade and all here together camped on the sides of these 2 mountains.” “The river is about 3 miles from us and the railroad is between us”.

“As soon as the bridge is built across the Tennessee River, we will see the old locomotive coming through here.”

“Yesterday we drew full rations of Hard bread and bacon, and half of Sugar, salt, and coffee.” “When we were in Chattanooga, it was not uncommon to see two shillings offered for an ear of corn.”

He told the boys that morning to “take some good knives and on up the road and get some fresh meat.” “They did and brought back a pretty good mutton.”

“I noticed that I got all the liver I could eat and got the best part of one of the hind quarters to cook for my supper and breakfast.”

“I don't think there has been a night for the last two months that I have not dreamed of seeing father alive and well.” “I have dreamed a good many times of late going home and visiting at mothers.”

Love to you and the children,

Vange

Doc. #22 of 45: To Lieutenant E. J. Gillmore, from Office of Charles R. Steele,
Banker, Waukegan, Illinois, dated, November 30th, 1863

Noteworthy: Dear Sir,

“Your favor of the 19th instructions is received and the allotment Rolls came to hand today.” “I have sent the drafts to New York and directed the Green backs to be returned by Express as the U.S. Notes bear from 1/2 to one and one half premium over common currency now exchange on New York very plenty.” “I have commenced paying the consignees and will pay all the smaller amounts as fast as called for, my charges to be retained will be only what I pay for the Express charges which is about \$2 per Thousand on the retained from the larger amounts, my best regards for all the boys.” Yours respy,
Chas. R. Steele

Doc. #23 of 45: “I have advised Lieutenant R. Lonny of receipt of his remittance.
A part of a letter written to his wife Lib., dated, 1863, location unknown

Noteworthy: He speaking to her about lying in 3 inches of water in the morning and that he was “thoughtful to have placed some flat rails down and lay on them but as my rubber blanket was not long enough to cover my legs, I got a thorough wetting.”
Doesn't look like the rain will hold up for the drying of his clothes, and is “thankful” his wife and babies “are in a comfortable place.”
“Our regiment is on picket today” and “we are close by some houses which contain a good many women who doubtless got husbands in the Rebel army.”
“The teams are all in the rear of the Division” and “several wagons have broke down.”

Vange

Doc. #24 of 45: A short note from Vange to Lib. There is no date or location given.

Noteworthy: “I can buy a good team here now for \$100, but they can't be worth much more than \$80.

“Anyhow I repeat it, do as you like and I will find no fault.”
“I have received your letter of the 9th and expect another soon.”
“Mr. Fred your letters come, just as regular as your mother's, and they do make me laugh.”
“Well, I have just finished eating dinner, and as you would be glad to know, no doubt, what we had to eat I will tell you.
“We had beans, soft bread, pork, peach sauce and coffee.”
“We have to eat hard bread part of the time.”
“The assembly is beating for battalion drill or I would write more.”

Yours as Ever,

E. J. Gillmore

Mrs. E. Gillmore

Doc. #25 of 45: To his wife, dated, December 7th, 1863, from Nick O Jack Cove, Georgia

Noteworthy: Received her letter of the 26th and “glad to learn” that he has Christmas dinner coming.”
“I think the butter, cheese, wine, and fruit-cake, etc. will get here about the 25th, so I think I will call it my Christmas dinner.”
“Lib., you need not send any more at present.”
He tells her “that some kinds of clothing I can get cheaper here than you can there.” “All government clothing comes cheap, at cost.”
“Fancy shirts and boots is what we need most.”
Vange asks his wife, “Did you hear anything this time about my “running” during the last battle?”
“I hear Whitmore has it now that Captain and I didn't even go near the fight and that all but him run.” “T Whitmore says the shoulder straps are waiting for him”. (Vange is implying here that the Captain would be demoted to the lower rank of an enlisted man).
Vange mentions that the Captain told him that “the folks back home had him dishonored.”
Also mentioned were “the Captain's papers have come back disapproved! “He has to get a statement of his accounts there” while “Many have resigned without getting a statement from Washington but they can't get their pay due them until they do.”
“Hooker it seems gets the credit for taking Lookout Mountain but I guess

Whittaker will have the matter righted.”

On the home front Vange comments that he hopes “Nellie is well” , and that she is sick from the cutting of her teeth.

Vange writes that he found a little drum on “Lookout” and would so like

to send it home to Fred, but that he couldn't afford the purchase of it.

He asks if Fred ever got the “Buckeyes” he sent by mail.

Vange is working on getting his back pay and has brought it to the attention of Haynes.

A small confederate sword was found on the battlefield and it is thought that it belonged to an adjutant general.

Vange concludes with his predicting that fighting will not resume “here until spring.” “Kiss the babies for me.”

Your Old Man

Vange

Lib.

Doc.#26 of 45: To his wife (addresses her as “Frow”/Frau), from, Nick O Jack Cove, Georgia, dated, December 25th, 1863

Noteworthy: “It is rather late in the day to wish you a “Merry Christmas” as you will get this about New Years Day”, so I will wish you and the little ones a Happy New Year Libby!
He mentions his being very healthy and having “the easiest of times since I can remember.”
He describes his Christmas dinner as “first rate”, “wheat, bread, fried cakes, bakes beef, and mashed potatoes.” Also had some “first rate baked beans.
He praised the chief noting how fortunate his company was to have “old Ike” or “Mr. Butterfield” , who “knows how to cook pretty well.”
Mentions he read her letter “of the 17th” instructing her to sell “our place for \$1200.”

completed” Cites that the railroad bridge across the Tennessee River “is now so the trains are running through.

He compares the weather now to October weather in Illinois.
“Colonel Smith (formerly a major) has built a pretty nice shanty and expects his wife and children here soon.”
Reports seeing a “Harper’s Weekly” with a picture of a soldier while on furlough expressing his sad and lonely thoughts.
Concludes his letter on the subject of personal photographs. “Have I ever sent Captain Pollack's photograph?”
“Quite a number of officers have asked me for my photograph but I never had a chance since I was promoted to have any taken.”
“My weight is only 171 lbs., ha! Ha!”

Good Night
Vange

“Captain begins to talk of leaving his swearing and playing cards entirely.” “If he could be kept away from his gang, he would soon become a pretty good man.”

Doc. #27 of 45:

To his wife, dated, January 13, 1864, from Nick O Jack Cove, Georgia

Noteworthy:

Mentions receiving her letter “of the 3rd and was surprised to hear “that Mrs. Salisbury was going to apply for a divorce.
“Thinking seriously of late of getting a furlough or leave of absence.”
He is noting the absence of a lot of officers on furlough and probably thinks he is entitled as well.
Mentions hearing reports of many soldiers freezing to death between Bridgeport and Nashville and that some soldiers have even frozen to death where he is.
Regularly reporting now is weight which is 183lbs., mentions that his breast “is filling first rate” (not really sure here what this refers to).
Reminds her of his mention to “sell their place for \$1200” and then “try to buy the lake farm”.
“Lib., I want your photograph!”
He mentions that “last week Sunday Captain James, Fife Major H. Weatherby, Sargent Wait M. Douglass, and I went and explored the cave some.”

They didn't go far in it as cave branches were continually falling down from all sides around us.
Still the effort of exploring it, "satisfied my curiosity."
"Maybe I will employ a guide if I visit it again." "Perhaps after Peace is restored I will bring you down here to see some of the sights."
"Does Fred drum any how?"
He concludes by reporting that the colonel's wife "is good about seeing to our boys in the hospital at Nashville." ("She has a pretty form but her features are not handsome.")
He goes on picket again soon and will dream of her tonight.
"I feel as though I should enjoy a leave of absence though."
"Good Night".

Vange to Lib.

Doc.#28 of 45: To his wife, dated, January 19, 1864, from Nick O Jack Cove, Georgia

Noteworthy: Talks about his son, Fred, as "a big fat baby, complaining that he "would have liked Fred's picture better."
He notes his son's changes remarking that he now "looks slim" and "not that healthy."
He again requests his wife Libby to send her photograph "as soon as you can." "And make sure it is a good one."
He's "got a bottle of painkiller and some Trask's Ointment.
Snowed recently but has not stayed very cold.
Some other small talk made of how other officers are feeling healthwise.
Signs off by noting and complaining that "he has not had any letters from her since the 3rd". "Good Bye."

Vange

Lib.

"Have just been looking at the pictures again and Fred looks all right to me this morning---he looks fat instead of poor. Ha! Ha!"

Doc. #29 of 45: To his wife, dated, February 6th, 1864, from Camp Nowhere (said to be about four miles from Cleveland, Tennessee).

Noteworthy:

Opens by explaining to Libby that they have marched a lot recently from one railroad station to another, and “on the 5th moved in a direction along the railroad 7 or 8 miles where we camped last night, and then marched again today the same distance.”

He notes “ a good many Pennsylvania and New York laborers here repairing the railroad.”

A good many who live here have been surprisingly supportive of the Yankees (leaving families and possessions behind to enlist). Many have now returned to their homes and have brought us with them.

Vange remarks, “There is no shame about eastern Tennessee being Union”.

“While the 4th and 5th Regiments have a good many from here, ..the rebs burned a house of a union family only two miles from here.”

“A citizen who was returning to his home said to me yesterday, “Oh! You-was don't know how much we-uns suffer!” “Longstreet's men would dress in Union clothes and come in our houses and tell how the rebels abused them” when they had been Confederate prisoners” He went on to remark, “ As soon as the rebs learned we were Union, they would rob us of our horses, cattle, and nearly everything!” “Oh we-uns have a heap of trouble!”

Vange closes this portion of the letter to describe their current menu.

“We have occasionally eggs and potatoes too, and tonight we have a chicken cooking.” “The weather has been good until today when we had a slow drizzling rain which was very disagreeable.”

Vange's entry to his wife Libby, dated, Sunday, February 7th at 9 o'clock A.M. (Second entry within this same letter).

Noteworthy:

“No orders yet for today..maybe move a few miles” and “fortify” then.

“The chicken for breakfast did me good.”

“Lib, I guess we had better not fret much about buying the lake farm”.

“If matters can remain as they are, let them until I get home.”

Vange's third entry to his wife, dated, Monday, February 8th

Noteworthy:

“Have not moved yet”. “Our Wall Tent and mess chest came up

to Cleveland (Tenn.) on the cars and the teams were sent up and got them together with a good deal of other stuff for the regiment.

“Four or five boys got together with a good deal other stuff for the regiment”.

“Expected to get a letter from you yesterday, sure, and if I did, I wanted room to write a little and that's why I didn't finish.”

“Dr. Pierce's wife is with him now.” “Tell the Captain that the doctor has a very pretty woman and the boys all like her, though they didn't think much of the Colonel's wife.”

“She had too much fire and made herself too conspicuous.”

“I rather think the boys would like my woman, so Lib. You better come down ha! Ha!”

Good Morning, Vange

Doc.# 30 of 45:

A letter to his wife Lib., dated , February 17th, 1864, from Blue Springs, Tennessee

Noteworthy:

Vange mentions receiving her letter of the 8th, and reading it”did him most good.”

Much of his activity is doing “heavy guard duty and considerable scouting.”

“Deserters from the rebel army are coming in very fast” and when he was on picket last Saturday, 125 came in. “Scarcely a day passes that some don't come in.”

He remarks that 100 rebel prisoners are coming in a day, average between Chattanooga and Knoxville, “It doesn't seem the Confederate Army could last long at that rate” as “I don't believe they can conscript fast enough”.

Describing recent action Vange mentions, “One division of rebs has come a few miles of us three times we know of, but for some reason they turned back again.” “I believe we shall have an early campaign this season; in fact it seem to have commenced already.”

“We are expecting to move every day again.” “John E. Smith's division, the one Billy Tuttle is in, arrived at Cleveland today I learned, so I presume I shall see Billy again in a few days.”

“We got paid yesterday up to January first.” “My wages were \$221 and war tax out left me \$214.95.” “I made out Allotment Rolls again and sent to Steele.” “I sent you only \$100 as I might get sick or wounded and need a little money so thought it best to save enough this time.” “I sold Myron my old watch for \$5.00 and bought me another for \$20.00, so now I have a good time piece.” “Our potatoes and soft bread played out again but we have some beans, pickles, sour-cROUT & hominy so we make out to live yet.” “We are not so hard up as we were at Chattanooga for there we didn't have “hard tack” enough.” “We have another little fireplace again and it comes very good for it is pretty cold just now.” “I have been drawing clothing for the men today and helping Captain Blodgett make out his ordnance returns, etc.” “Three of our officers are under arrest for drunkenness.” Captain Rose got to fooling with his sword and broke it.” Ed Malone has just got back from Waukegan tonight, but I have not had a chance to converse with him.” “Orville Barron is pretty well now.” “Its getting so cold I can't write so will go to bed and finish this in the morning.” “Well its Thursday morn and pretty cold. “I dreamed last night of dancing with you-thought you on hand like a _____”. “You reprimanded me slightly for letting Captain read your letters and I don't blame you if he made you think he had seen all, but he never saw any that contained privacy. “ “Vange ain't so big a fool as to do that.” “ I told Captain what I wrote you about Kelsey giving you two dollars, and showed him what you wrote me, but that was nothing against you- nothing you need feel ashamed of.” “No I believe I know my “biz” better than to expose my wife to ridicule.” “I am getting along first rate with my men. Most of the officers and men call me Captain, but my commission has not come yet.” “My respects to all the good folks.”

Vange

“P.S. You need not tell any one about the officers being drunk or they'll think I am a “tattler.”

“I sent .20 cents , new currency to Fred, twenty to Nellie, and

fifty to you.” “Please be sure and mention the receipt of the money I sent to Steele as soon as you get it.” “If you wish you can send an order for it.” “Mention the receipt of what is in this also to Captain Blodgett's photograph.”

Doc. # 31 of 45: A letter to Lib. (Please note: The top section of this letter is gone... which so a large section of page 2 is also gone).
Date is missing, only the location ..”near Ringold” is mentioned.
You will note in this entry that Vange is describing to his wife several combat situations and I will high spot the key ideas of those.

Noteworthy: Vange discusses a retreat prior to February 25th near “Triune” followed up by marching into “another valley seven miles south towards Dalton” where they met up with “Baird's Division and attacked a heavy force of rebels there. Vange was ordered to “throw out” his company “on the left flank as skirmishers” “but the rebs fell back some”. Then he was ordered to take his company back to the regiment “when the division advanced in three lines of battle.” He mentions at this point, “we were second in line.” “We advanced rapidly until we were nearly exhausted when a halt was given in we lay down.” “Only 3 of our regiment were wounded and one killed.”
“On February 27th the rebel cavalry came up close to our picket line and 2 regiments went out to the front about a mile and lay in ambush.” Brigid ere General Croft (3rd Brigade) “sent a few teams on a road “ being exposed to heavy enemy while their cavalry destroyed the supply train and our men laying in ambush at the same time.

About March 1, 1864, page 2, Vange to Lib. (This is the final two pages of his letter. He ended by writing in all the margins of his letter, so some completed thoughts are missing here.).

“Our batteries opened fire on the rebel reserve to keep them back and we gobbled 70 of their cavalry.” “We retreated toward Blue Springs, about 10 miles and camped for the night.”

“We learned that Baird's Division suffered considerable on the 25th.” “We heard considerable firing our right on the 25th, but supposed they were only keeping up a heavy skirmish the same as we did in front, but it seems there

was some pretty hard fighting.” “I guess General Thomas concluded they were pretty strong”.

“We have a pretty heavy force at Ringgold yet and I suppose they move out every day as if to attack Dalton in order to keep the rebs from reinforcing Mobile as we expect a battle there soon.”

“Longstreet has retreated from Knoxville, Tennessee, and I guess has reinforced Dalton and sent more troops to Mobile.”

“We got back to camp on the 28th, but our tents were missing, citizens and soldiers from Cleveland had taken them.” “I have gotten track of my tent and I guess I'll get it back again..”

Doc.# 32 of 45: From Libby to her husband Vange, dated, March 17th, 1864, from Avon.

Noteworthy: She tells him she received a letter from “Underwoods” (a letter she has been waiting for) on the subject of selling their farm. The letter discusses who has control of certain notes.

She was advised to “sign the agreement” but stated “there are two notes against the farm”

“Little Nellie has just walked in” and Lib states, “that little Nellie walks all around and is well again.”

She hopes her husband will get home in the spring to see her while “Ma is quite miserable yet and not able to do much.”

“John has concluded to have me live down in the log house and he live with me.” (Note: This is an interesting sentence and I wonder what Vange thought after reading it).

“I would rather be my own boss a while so we can have a garden and I can live _____ as I have a mind to.”

“Vange, I like your plan first rate.” “I am so lonesome....I dread nights the most.”

“If only I got your letter a few weeks sooner, I could have made some different arrangements.” “Our colt is not fit to sell now as she is so poor she seems to feel well but still keeps poor.” “She has enough to eat.”

“If there is no prospect of your getting home before fall, I will sell her.”

“I would like to have two cows and my sheep I guess I could get \$5 a head for my sheep quick if I could sell them.” “I have let mother have \$250.” She says she will raise it between this and fall.” “She was so

anxious to get it that I let her have it before I got your letter.” “I lent Drury \$115 and he will pay it soon, I expect.”
“Fred and Nellie have just been having real play_____”. “Nellie laughs just as hearty, I wish you could hear her.” “Fred is now spinning his top.”
“Charlie came home but then reenlisted again.”

Doc.#33 of 45: Letter from Vange to his wife Lib., dated, March 23, 1864, near Cleveland, Tennessee

Noteworthy: He finally received her letter she wrote “at Frees”.
“The mail is not coming regularly now.” “Baron is getting quite tough.”
Been snowing hard for the last day and a half (since he was on night picket duty.)
“Messengers Townsend and Napper and_____ have been here to see the 96th Regiment and were sent by Jo Davies County to present Grant with a \$2000 sword.”
“We met the General in Nashville a few days ago”. “One of these gentlemen has been all over the world a good deal and has seen many regiments drill both in this and the old countries, but he says the 96th can beat any other regiment he ever saw; he complemented us very highly.”

(Note: The rest of this letter is missing).

Doc. #34 of 45: To his wife, (“Dear Girl”), dated, April 1st, 1864, from Cleveland, Tennessee

Noteworthy: Vange reports that he and his company are in unusual good health, and he acknowledges the receipt of her most recent letters of the 17th and 21st.
With a good deal of rain the last few days, it has continually come through our tents “streaming under all about us”. We are all completely soaked through.
“After the storm it was quite chilly at first...and it seemed hard to get into a wet bed.”
“But soldiering you know is nothing to what it is “to have children”.

“I sent by Geo. Ferguson when he went home and got me a leather valise which cost me \$11.24/100 so now I have something to keep my things in as well as the rest of the officers.”

“The veterans are coming back now and are bringing a good many recruits so our army is increasing pretty fast.” “I have made out O Baron's papers for a furlough and sent them forward.”

“Captain Rose of Company K got discharged, now we have three of the original Captains who are Captains now.”

“There's a Military ball down town next Monday night but guess I will be putting dancing awhile yet, although I would like first rate to attend a good civil party.” “The trouble here is the girls would be asking me for tobacco and as I don't carry the article, I expect I wouldn't be very popular among them.”

“Nearly all the women here chew tobacco, and if a man should take a chew in the presence of a lady and not offer her some, she would fee insulted.” The “girl I left behind me” doesn't use tobacco.” “I'll wait and go home and dance with her, -she and I are old “chums” and talk some of going in business together when the war is over...”

“Then Fred talks of me a good deal and was pleased with the idea that I might be home to see him soon..” “ Good Night”.

Your “Feller”,
Vange

Doc. #35 of 45: Vange to Lib., dated, April 15, 1864. (Note: This is page 2. Page 1 is missing).

Noteworthy”: “So my dear Gal, I should have enjoyed a visit hugely with you but I submit and make the best of it.” “I know I have done the best I could in trying to get home.”
“Sometimes I think I don't care much to go home and let my woman-- with her head on my breast and trot my little darlings on my knee for a-----should hate to leave them again so bad---.” “I could do it if I set about it---is easier to go into battle than to part from our loved ones.” “I hope I can soon come and stay with you.”
“Hoping the Kind Providence will preserve your health, and give you strength to meet the trials which beset your path.”
“I am Yours AS ever”,

Vange

Libbie

Doc. #36 of 45: To his wife, dated, April 27th, 1864, in Camp at Blue Springs, Tennessee
(Note: We don't know why Vange has been charged of misconduct in his letter to Libbie).

Noteworthy: He informs her that "they have moved back here on the 23rd" and will be here "a week or two"
Complains of a headache with little sleep due to picket duty.
Reports that there "a dozen officers are under arrest for incompetence and negligence, some for refusing to obey orders, some for drunkenness, cowardice exhibited in battle, and some for absence without leave, etc."
He comments that "I have never been under arrest" but "I expect it will be my turn soon" and that "I shall be able to defeat them" (the charges against him).
Remarks having received her letter "of the 18th and "has fears that you are sick" and "may never see Nellie again."
"I know you are careful with the children....and trust we will all meet again and enjoy many years of happiness."
Mentions the warm weather over the last few days.
"I hope you will enjoy yourself this summer." "I think you are rather hard to mitten me when it is 20 months since I have slept with a woman; when I have been so true to you all that time too." "Why, I have not even had anything to say to a woman except in the way of duty when on guard of when purchasing eggs or vegetables or something of that sort."
"You wish to know what kind of women there are down here but I can't tell you only by what I have heard others say." "I have not attended any parties yet but have thought I would like to go once at least."
"Today I went over to the picture gallery and had my negatives taken for photographs which I will be able to get by Friday."
"If Fred has no slate, it would be a good plan to get him a small one and let him make pictures all he will." "Set him copies of figures and printed letters."
"When children learn that way it don't tax their minds at all."
"The impressions on their little minds at his age have a great effect on their future life." "I will remember of things that happened when I was his age."
"Orders have just come to be ready for a reconaissance tomorrow night and to take three days rations and have it last for five days." "No tents or valises will be taken". "The probability is we will try to make Dalton."

“The rebels are in heavy force now and we may have some hard fighting to do.”

Good Bye,
Vange

“Our crops will not be the attacking body, I think we will move up near so as to reinforce the Corps on our right if necessary..”. “I shall write you again immediate after our return.” “O! How I would like to see you and the children again but Libbie, the parting would be so hard!”
“Kiss the little darlings for me.”

Yours forever,
Vange

Elisabeth

Doc. # 37 of 45: From Vange to his wife, Libbie, dated, June 8th, 1864, in Camp, 3 miles west of Allatoona.

Noteworthy: Vange opens by mentioning heavy marching and finally pitching tents in “the scorching sun”.
His current position (with the 5th Illinois) is more to the rear of the line, and he can “hear the car whistle at Allatoona very plain”.
He wishes she “were here” “to view the 20,000 men within two miles of me, and I can hear preaching, praying, singing, swearing officers giving various commands, mules braying, cattle mooing, horses neighing and men chopping trees falling, bugles, fifes, and drums without end”....
“We can see men engaging themselves so differently, some are reading, some writing, some playing cards while others are building arbors and spotting their grounds about their tents.”
“I am sitting cross-legged on a log writing on my knee.”
“I got the Chattanooga Gazette of the 4th which states that Grant had got to Pominky River, so I presume the siege of Richmond is begun by this time.”
“Grant seems to be the man for us.”
“Wouldn't it be funny if Richmond and Atlanta should fall into our hands on the 4th of next July?”
“Well George, how do you and Frank make farming go now?” “I am very glad of it for we need faithful boys at home as faithful men in the army.”

“I can imagine pretty well how Frank and Fred look playing along the road to and from school, and how little Nellie looks trudging around after her Ma.”
“How I would like to dangle the little darlings on my knees but I shall have to wait until this cruel War is over I suppose.” “My love to all.”
Truly Your Vange

To Elisabeth

Doc. #38 of 45: To his wife Libbie, dated about June 17, 1864, Georgia. (Note: The exact location of where specifically Vange is in Georgia is hard to read as well as well as much of the letter due to the ink fading). This is Vange's LAST LETTER to his wife Libbie.

Noteworthy: Vange describes enemy battery shells “directly over us and our line wounding four of our own men.”
Vange describes “waiting together with reserves when a piece of shell tore George Phillip's side pocket” and “that it did not hurt him that much.”
“Our chief of Artillery was killed by a sharp-shooter yesterday.”
“News has come that the Johnie's are retreating again.”
He received her letter of the 6th, thanking her for writing twice a week. He goes on to describe Carlisle Druce's death on the 13th, being felled by a decayed water logged tree “that crushed him on his left side, breaking his legs and killing him instantly. This happened while Carlisle was laying partially asleep at the reserves picket post.
Vange describes the sounding of “General Attention” meaning they will be moving soon. He describes a mountain about three miles ahead of them where the enemy is probably entrenched. Orders are to out flank the enemy after arriving there.
Vange thinks the larger engagement will occur “when we get to the Chattahoochee River”.
He notes, “I see men shot almost every day.” “Yesterday I saw a man's leg all torn to pieces and he will probably die.”
“The weather now is quite cool and good for the wounded.”
“Oh Libbie! This war is an awful thing!”

“Tell Mrs. Ditwiler the best way she can get Jame's body is to apply to W. R. Cosmelin's Government Undertaker in Nashville, Tennessee, who will furnish a metallic coffin, get his body, and send it home.” “By doing so he can be got for \$100, less than to send a civilian for him.” “Besides it is very doubtful about a civilian getting here at all.” “The probable cost of getting his body home will be about \$150 or \$160.” “None but metallic coffins are allowed.”

We'll be moving soon, and “you'd better see her as I may not have time to write now.”

“You wish to know if you can have a new bonnet, etc.” “I answer yes.”

“If I take you the 4th I not only want you to behave pretty as you say you will but I want you to look pretty too.”

“We used to dress according to our means, let us continue to do so now.”

“We are falling in now to march so Good Bye.” “Kiss the little darlings for me.”

Vange

Doc. #39 of 45: A letter from Maria Gilmore McKinney (Vange's sister) to Elizabeth Rowling Gillmore (Vange's widow). The letter is dated from Odell, May 14, 1865

Noteworthy: Maria opens by remarking to her sister-in-law Elisabeth, “the pleasant day here” and that “Frank, a big boy, is sitting on the floor.” She has got “her house cleaned and ready for the flies to dirty it up again.” With over a hundred and fifty plants “the strawberries are in blossom” and “there are a dozen currents of gooseberries” already appearing. She remarks that she is glad that Elisabeth “is now well fixed.” She “assumes that John and Marcilla are living on the Woley place” and wonders if they caught Jeff Davis yet. She talks about how many animals they have, the chickens and roosters mentioning that “we take only the Chicago Tribune” and cannot do without getting the daily news. She asks Libbie, “Have the neighbors ever gave you anything towards helping to pay for Vange's tombstone?” She “expects that Fred can read pretty well”.

“Andrew has got about ready to plant but a few have planted yet as it has been so wet.” “He finds it very slow with oxen.”
“Give my love to Jo and Mary”. “I should like to see them.” “I don't expect to come home this year.” “We shan't have any money to spend visiting.” “I am sorry you are not coming down here.” “Let Fred write when you write again.”
Maria

Doc. #40 of 45: A Letter from Surgeon Evans of the 96th Illinois Regiment, dated, June 22, 1864, a Field Hospital near Marietta, Georgia (Note: This letter was printed in “The Waukegan Weekly Gazette”). It is addressed Dr. Evans to “Friend Cory”.

Noteworthy: “Enclosed I send you a list of casualties of our Lake County boys in the late fight, which was pretty severe on for our regiment, wounding our Colonel and Lt. Colonel severely. Captain James is severely wounded in the shoulder, recovery doubtful. Captain Gillmore will not live till morning; his brother is going home with his body. Our wounded men do not recover from their wounds as well as they did after the Chickamauga fight. The long marches they have made during the campaign tell upon them, and most all of our severely wounded cases, prove fatal-They don't rally-no recuperative power-”But they fight like devils.” We are driving the enemy slowly before us every day, and I think we will spend the 4th of July in Atlanta. We have to fight hard for every inch of ground we take now days, and sometimes we pay pretty dearly for it. The way our regiment go so badly used, the enemy made four charges within five hours to retake some breastworks we had driven them from, and were repulsed every time. Our wounded are all sent back today to Chattanooga.”

Yours,
M. Evans

“List of casualties to staff officers, and members of the Lake County
From the 96th Regiments

In the Field Four Miles southwest of Ackworth, Georgia
June 13, 1864

“Editor Gazette: Dear Sir;- I herewith send you the list of casualties in my Company since leaving Blue Spring, Tennessee on the 3rd ult., and desire you will give it a place in the columns of your every welcome paper.”

“In a skirmish at Rocky Face Ridge, Georgia, May 9th, Private Fred. Brainard was killed; Corporal Warren E. Towers received a flesh wound in the right arm, and Private Erastus T. Cleveland was slightly wounded in the the right ankle. At the Battle of Resaca on May 14th, Private James Letwiller and Herman Hoogstract were killed. Today, June 13th, a sad accident befell one of our number. While in the discharge of his duty as picket, Private Carlisle T. Druce, youngest son of Alexander Druce, sen., of Warren, was killed by the sudden falling of a decayed tree, which crushed his left side and broke his legs, thus causing almost instant death.”

“The above named were all true and faithful soldiers, who were ready and willing to do their duty, and the Company deeply mourns their loss.”

E. J. Gillmore, Captain,
Co., G., 96th Illinois Volunteers

“P.S. The enemy had again made a stand but, of course, will soon have to retreat, as General Sherman is able to flank them out of any position they can take here. The recent rains which have been quite heavy, will retard operations somewhat.”

E. J. G.

Doc. # 41 of 45: Article from “The Waukegan Weekly Gazette, dated, Saturday, June 25th, 1864 (Further “Casualties of the 96th Regiment”)

Noteworthy: “Again are we called upon to chronicle a long list of casualties in Lake County Companies of the gallant 96th Illinois Regiment which occurred on the 20th of June, when General Sherman carried the enemy's works in front of Kennesaw Mountain, Georgia. From Myron Gillmore of

Company B, who arrived here on Thursday of this week conveying home the body of his brother, Captain E. J. Gillmore, we learn the following particulars of the affair and casualties to Lake County Companies so far as he was acquainted with them.

On the evening of the 20th a charge was made on the enemy's works in front. The 96th gained a position, and held it, though three times desperately charged upon during the night, but at large sacrifice. Mr. Gillmore reports the following casualties.:

.....
Captain E. J. Gillmore, Company B., mortally wounded and died on the evening of the 23rd wounds received in the head and thigh.

.....
Mr. Myron Gillmore states that the losses in other companies are not so large as in the Lake County Companies. He believes that he gives the full extent of casualties to our noble boys, and we sincerely trust that he has. We learn from him that Sargent Evans has written us the full details of all those in the regiments, which should have us ere this, but has failed to do so.”

P.S.

Doc. #42 of 45: Article from “The Waukegan Weekly Gazette”, dated, Saturday, July 2nd, 1864. “From Sherman's Army. Operations from the 21st to the 23rd of June-List of Casualties, Etc. Correspondence of the “Cincinnati Gazette”, Base of Kennesaw Mountain, Georgia, dated, June 2nd and 3rd, 1864. (Note: Author of this narrative battle account is not mentioned).

Noteworthy: “In the brief communication which I attempted to forward you yesterday, I spoke of General Schofield's projected crossing of Noe’s Creek, and intimated that it was doubtful whether he had really crossed that stream or not. I hear again this morning that he certainly has; but as branch of the creek runs parallel to the main stream, about a half a mile west of the latter, on the line of the Dallas and Marietta Road, I am somewhat inclined to suspect that it is the branch which General Sherman has crossed.

I also told you of the advance of Major General D.S. Stanley's division on the evening of the 20th, a movement really intended as a support to General Schofield. The cannonade preceding this movement was without question one of the most fearful I ever listened to.

Until our lines commenced to advance, the rebels maintained the silence of the grave; and such was the shower of deadly missiles hurled upon the tops and around the sides of the mountain, that it really seemed as if no living thing could remain upon it.

Suddenly, as Whitaker's and Cruft's brigades were moving gallantly to the attack and sturdy, Grace was awaiting to see where he might be needed. The rebels opened from four different points. The enormous guns were on the very summit of Kenesaw; two batteries, not far apart, were on a low hill on the right of the mountain, and still further to the right, a battery which we could not see. The scene was now truly grand. Thunder answered thunder. More than sixty pieces of cannon were exploding in quick succession. The air shrieked continually as if tortured by flying missiles as the trees of the forest actually shuddered as if instinct with fearful life. The very earth heaved beneath the reverberations.

At length, however, all the rebel guns, save one battery upon the right, were silenced; and the anger of the musketry told how fiercely Whitaker and Kirby were forcing their way, and how sternly they were resisted. I have already informed you _____ that Whitaker took the ground he was designed _____ to take, and held it against all opposition; while _____ being exposed in an open field to a heavy and unintermitted shower of musket balls; was compelled to relinquish the position he had taken, and fall back to the line whence he started.

After nightfall the enemy made most persistent and determined efforts to drive Whitaker from his advanced position; but the gallant Kentuckian held it against all their attempts, repelling no less than seven distinct charges upon his lines. In these charges the enemy must have suffered very severely.

Although the rebels finally despaired of being able to retake the ground they had lost, the opposing lines were so near each other that the firing continued without a moment's intermission during the entire night.

The next morning (21st of June) the cannonading was resumed on both sides; and fiery missile again met fiery missile as each whirled onward with ferocious energy to its work of death."

Doc. #43 of 45: Obituary notice of Captain Evangelist Joseph Gillmore from "The Waukegan Weekly Gazette", dated, Saturday, July 23rd, 1864.

Captain Evangelist J. Gillmore was 29 years of age on the 8th of May, last, the eldest son of the late B. P. Gillmore of Avon, this county. He moved here 22 years ago with his parents from the town of Girard, Erie County, Pennsylvania. He enlisted in Company B, the 96th Illinois Regiment. At the time it was raised, he was made First Sargent, and by merited promotion became Captain. He has two brothers in the Army of the Potomac, one, Myron, in the company he commanded, and the other in a Kansas regiment. He leaves behind a wife (the daughter of Joseph Rowling, Esq.,) and two children, one born since he entered the service. He was an honest upright man, prompt and faithful in discharge of his duties, made an excellent officer, and was beloved by all who had his acquaintance, both in and out of the service. He was wounded in the recent attack on Kennesaw Mountain, Georgia, on the evening of the 20th, and died on the 23rd.

Doc. #44 of 45: A family letter from Anna Gullidge Gillmore to Janice ("Janey") D. Kern living in Hainesville, dated, January 1, 1882, from Lake County, Illinois. (Biographical note: Anna Gullidge Gillmore was born and educated in England).

Noteworthy: Was glad to hear from her and was pleased to inform her that she (Anna) is now married in December at eleven o'clock at Milburo. They were accompanied to the wedding by two couples ("Fred's sister" and her "sister Sarah"). The small reception followed at their small home. Informs her that she cannot make the invited visit stating that there is just too much work to do on the farm. She describes the details of her wedding dress and states that "Fred mentions that you live in a nice big house", which she would very much like to see. She speaks of "a letter from Lizzie" and mentions that "Annie Gullidge had gone and Annie Gillmore was in her place". She reveals her liking to married life being "first rate"! Asks Janie to "write soon", "the girls send their love", and "Happy New Year"!

Anna postscripts that she will send her in a future letter of a dress made of “wine cashmere”.

Doc. #45 of 45: This is a letter from Captain Gillmore's brother, Uncle Myron, to his nephew Fred Gillmore and his family on letterhead company paper, “M. Gillmore & Co., Stock Dealers, Proprietors of Ideal Ranch”. The letter is dated, March 26th, 1912, from Lyndon, Kansas. (You will recall that Myron survived the Battle of Kennesaw Mountain and was responsible for bringing his brother Vange's body home to Illinois). (Fred's farm buildings burned in July, 1911 and at this writing only chicken and outhouses survived the fire).

Noteworthy: The letter is addressed to Fred, his family (“all the Boys & Gill's Daughter-in-laws and Grand Children”) Myron opens by apologizing for his “late reply” and that he has not been feeling well. He was sorry to hear about the Benny family fire and hoped they were well insured. The fire apparently was caused by poor storage of house paint. Myron advises Fred to do his own painting and not rely on others and to get insurance immediately on all the toys he has painted. (Fred must have had a toy collection or for his livelihood painted and sold toys). Mentions his thinking of selling his place “some man with 3 or 4 boys”. He boasts a “grand stock farm here” but currently having “heavy snow”; “How uncommon for March in Kansas”. Myron concludes by asking the whereabouts of “Eugene Hawkings Junior & How is Nellie (Fred's sister) and her family”, and “are they living on “Same Place””? Myron reports that “I am almost 71”, and he asks about “Ed Rowling's health in speculation that “he must be 85 by this time.” He closes his letter requesting his nephew “to write again Soon & Speak of Jo, Ed, & Johnny.”

“Now Give my Love to your wife and Daughter, Boys- & All-Come and See me Some Time, ok Fred” “Did that Explosion a year ago _____ Kensoha

Your Uncle My

