

**Van R. Strong**  
**Company F, 46th Illinois Volunteer Infantry**  
**Civil War Letters**

Submitted by Elizabeth C. Manvell to RootsWeb.com

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Transcribed by Sandra Proeschel

New house of Reffuge July 1/62

Dear Brother

I now seat my self to write a few lines to you for the first time I hope you will forgive me for not writing you before and I don't feel mutch like writing you a very long letter on the acount of my health is so poor. I have not seen a well day for over 4 months I was taken sick soon after the donelson fight I had a hard time thare after they surrendered the fort the 10 of february our regament was taken to gard the prisoners we marched three miles that morning before we was poot on gard it was nine oclock in the morning and kept thare till 3 the next day without being releaved then marched till sundown and camped with not mitch to eat this was on the eve of the 17 of Feb the 16 we started with one small peace of meat and hard crackers on the 16 our officer could not get any for us so we looked out for our selves we went to whare the comissaries stuff was and found tea rice and sugar it dident take long to open them and got what we wanted we boiled our tea and rice then picked in shugar went free it was nice white sugar

The 18<sup>th</sup> morning came the Col sent som tumes to the landing before he would leave for s

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St. Louis Sept 18/60

Dear Mother

One more I will try to let you no that I am well

I have wrote you two letters since I left you and now as soon as you get this want some of you to write without delay so that I may here from you and if you should not write for three or four day after you get this it may be to late for me to get it as they is no certenty of stay her any certin length of time. I hope not long for I had rather be south with the army than here in the paroll campt. We don't get a nuf to eat of rations we onelay draw rations and don't get near all of that the comsaries is in to mutch of a speculation but we can buy all that we want cheap for money that I have not got and don't now how soon we will be paid off and I want you to give Lydia Ann this letter so that if she has not sent the money west I should like to send it to me if she can soon as she gets this and if it cant send it soon I don't wont it sent here. I would not of wrote for it had I any or had a plenty to eat if she can send the money I want it poot in a letter

Mother has Lest come home or did he say away if he has come tell him to come out here to see me that I was thar to see him and spent all of the money that I had it just a pleasant journey to come here and see the country.

How is marary a getting along is she well and Mr Mead give them my best respects and tell them to write to me have you heard from Aclah if so how does she gets along did she get to work in the factory how does Mr and Mrs Selleck Folks get along tell them that I think of them every day and wish I could see them a little while tell them they have my best wishes tellnOat to be a good boy and and keep his tabaco clean

I must close my poor letter write soon as you get this and direct your letter the same as I do

God buy for this time

To. Van R. Strong  
Co. 13 1th Batalion  
Paroll Prsnors  
Benton Barracks  
St. Louis Mo

Natchez Oct 12/63

Dear Mother once more I take my pen to write a few to you once more my health is as good now as it has been since I have been in the army and not got quite 11 months to stay we are camped near to the city the pleasintes and healthest of any in the south and would like to stay here till my time is out

I had a very pleasant trip this time down the river soon as I get out of the army I think you will see me home again thare

I have just come in of from pichet we had a first rate time it seemed like home to go on duty once mor I hope that I never shall be a prisnor of ware again but let me fight till the ware is over

I shall not writ mutch till I here from you I want you to write soon as you get this and let me no how you get a long tell the Girls to write to as this letter is to them the same as so I wrote to them My best respects to you all direct you letter as before when I was in the regt

Van R. Strong  
Co F. 46th Ills Vol  
Via Cairo Ill  
Natchez Miss

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Camp Near Vicksburg 11/25/63

Tuesday Dear Sister

Miss Tenn I now take my pen in hand to write you a few lines to let you no that I am still in the land of the living with poor health I have had poor health for the last two weeks I am a little better than I than I was I think that I shall get a long some I have just been to town to day to express som money north I sent one hundred this time so you see that I am a getting some laid up a head if nothing happens when my time is out I think I shall have 400 hundred dollars a head to start on a gain in this letter Sister I will send you and Oatis the the 2 dollars you sent me when I was in St Louis The money done me a good deal of good I am ten times Oblige for the favor I have oneley ten monts more to serve then I shall be a free man once more

We have but fore frost here this winter so you see that it havent been very cold here yet

I shall write soon again you will get a letter from me once in to week

So no more this tim write soon as you get this I have not had any letter from any of you since I came south give my love to all and keep som for your self

To L.A. Strong  
Van R Strong

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Camp 15th Ill Vol Infy

Cowans Plantation Dec 7 1863

Dear Aunt Lyda,

In compliance with your request in your letter to Van R. I will try and write you a few lines.

My health is good we are camped about 8 miles from Vicksburg in a very nice camp We have got good comfortable log houses built and are having very good times. I presume Van has kept you posted from time to time of our ware about and of what we have been doing so it will not be necessary for me to say much except Van and me have both been in the same Birgade ever since immediately after the battle of fort donelson about two years ago and since that time we have had good many good times and as good well hard times

Yet Dear Aunt there is a charm about a Soldiers life there is not in civil life I think of reenlisting this afternoon or to morrow.

Since I have not been on a furlough in the service I shall have me this spring. I got a letter from home as late as the 20th of Nov. our folks were all well Mariah is living at home Orlando that is Mariahs husband is in the 10th Minnesota at St. Louis.

Yesterday we had a young tornado it blew down a good many trees in and around camp it killed one little boy that was in camp Dear Aunt I am trying to serve God and make my way from earth to heaven my trust is firm in God.

Give my love to Uncle Cousins Otis, Lyda Ann and Ada, and tell them all I should be glad to hear from them

Write soon and accept these few lines from your affectionate nephew

Char W Mitchell  
To Lyda Strong

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Camp Cracker Dec 8/63

Dear Sister

I now seat myself to write you a few lines to let you know that I am still among the living and in better health than it was three weeks ago

I see Charles Mitchel yesterday he is well Dan M is in Vicks burg som 8 miles from here the last time I herd from him he had the ague Charles is well he says he will write some in my next letter home Uncles Pash Folks was well John is in California a doing he wrote that he had rather live thare than another place he had been in

Dear Sister would you like to see me this winter if so I will come if you will get me a good woman I will come thare and marry before next march So if you want to see me before nex march get me a woman soon and I will come prethapy? You think that I am fooling but if you think so all you have to do is to try me get the woman you will see me before next march

I now must close give my love to Francis write soon

Van R Strong  
To M. Mead shall I come for the woman

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Camp of the 46th Ills Vol  
Morganza bend Louisiana

Dear Mother

I now seat myself to pen you a few lines to let you know that I am well my health is very good this summer have been sick but little this season we left Vicksburg the 29th last month go here on the 30th we are camped in a very pleasant place they is from 12 to 15 thousand of our men here to keep the rebs from closing the river to reinforce hardeo in front sherman they are trying to get a crost the river the best they know how they is fifteen thousand of rebs campt out some 18 miles from here with 10 peaces of cannon they will need more that if they get a crost here for we have five bateries making from 25 to 30 cannon besides we can use the liaoy for brest works

Mother we have had the easiest time this summer since in the army we had one hard time while out to jackson not long since we had 2 small force for the rebs but would of eat up the rebs as it was if it hadent of been for so larg a waggon trane we could of used up the rebs as it was it took two many of the men to gard the train we had all we could to to save the train but saved the whole all but one waggon that had one bale of cotton on would of saved that if it hadent broke down the rebs made 3 charges on the trane the last time they was satisfied by loosing one hundred men in the charge then they lost all hapy of capturing us our Co lost 2 kiled and 2 taken prisonor since exchanged

Mother I want you to write often and tell me all of the news you can here of I want to here of I want to here how Oats is the last I herd of him he was in the Hospital sick when you write to him tell him that I am all wright

Tell the Girls to write often this is to them as mutch news as so it had of been wrote to them.

I now must close by sending my love to you all write soon as you get this and except this From you Son with respects

Van R Strong  
To my Mother Lydia Strong  
Morganza La. Aug 1th/64

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Camp of the 46th Ill Voll  
Memphis Tenn Dec 4-1864

Dear Mother

I now seat myself to write you a few lines to let you no that my health is first rate and hope these few lines will find you the same and all of the rest We have been on the move long back last week we left Dirualls bluff Ark. and came here to Memphis Tenn while on our way down the white river we was fired into from the shore by the Gurilia bend that was secreted behind som logs wounding four of our men and 2 mules 1 horse non seris they fired 4 or 5 volies at us whare we was sting close togeather all over the boat it was a wonder that it hadent of kiled a number the chance they had but we was soon loade and ready for them and then they had to keep their heads down or get hurt

How long we shall stay here is more than we can tell but I don't think long as the rebs are ninety miles east of here at Corinth commanded by horagard it is the same General that we fought and the same place 2 years a go but I don't think he will stay thare long without some yanke visiter

I have not herd any thing from Cousin Dan Mitchel for some time The last time I herd he was well Charles was in the 5th regt and that was all taken prisnors so Charley is either a prisnor of war or kiled I hope he will come out all right yet they was taken in Ga and held thare as prisnor

The most of the Boys are well and in the best of spirits and ready for a fight at any time

It is very pleasant here now they was some frost last night so it was quite cool last Night but the ground hasent frozen any yet

Mother I havent mutch newes to wright I onely write this to let you know that I am well and want you to write soon as you get this and write all the newes you can here of we havent been paid for over seven months and besides that I have over ninety dollars owing to me for rings that I made since last paid it will be \_\_\_\_ can send \$2 hundred north this time

I want you all to write soon as you get this please except the Love of your Son

Van R Strong  
To his Mother Lydia Strong

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Mobile City April 27/65

Dear Mother

Your kind letter has just come to hand stating you was well which is good newes to me my health is first rate and has been for som time although we have had some hard times since we started on this experdition for this place you spoke about our not capturin mobile but you cant say so now for we are in the city now but had some hard fighting in getting here but I don't think we will have to fight any more our troops has all left here but part of our Division and gone up the Alabama river but I don't think they will have to fight any is they is not of the rebs left to make any show the rebs are a coming in in small squads every day and are satisfied to quit well they mint since they have kiled our leader now if they don't quit our men never will take many more prisnors in a fight they sware venganc to the rebs now if they don't quit and lay down their arms. Then again on the other hand all of the boys are in deap mourning for the President To think of killing our leader one of the best men living that done all he could to save the country after doing all he could then he was sold like our Savor for thirty peaces of silver but he is not dead he has gone home to heaven to live with Christ in peace whar thare is no more ware

Mother you wanted to know if we have a nuff to eat I can say yess plenty and more than we can make use of we get all of the johnny bread we want it makes me think of home when I eat it we have all of the hard tack shugar coffe meat and other army rations plenty

Mother you wanted to know if I wanted you to send me the N.Y. Tribune I though that was the understanding if I sent Father the Chicago paper he would send the NY paper to me but if Father don't want to send the paper tell him for me to keep it I was aware in the first place the newes would be old by the time it gets here but not to me for we cant get any northern papers once a month and when we do get one we have to pay 25 cts for one paper at that

I now will remind you of the forth of July is the 2 hens up a fatenning. I think I shall be thare by that time

You wanted to know if I had herd from Uncles I had a letter from them one month ago they was all well then he has sold him farm Dan was here in the fight and so was Maries and Mary Ann Husband I saw them just before the battle how they are now cant say I havent herd but will write to them and see

I now must close by send my best respects to Wm Sellects Family and all inquirin Friends and keep some for yourself

Your Son Van R  
To his Mother Lydia Strong

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Camp Saluberty Spring La.  
Sept 1, 1865

Dear Mother

I have just got your kind letter dated Augst the 18 togeather with one from Lydia Ann it brings me mutch jouy to here again after hearing that she was lost by beaing shiprect it brought many a sad hour at first to here of sutch newes but now them days have past and she is saived and in her own home in california and I hope she is happy for she has had a \_\_\_\_\_ of trouble in getting thare to live happy the remainder of her days and I trust she will at any way we will trust in the Lord that Geo will care for her through life Mother I herd of her luck befor I got your letter I have a Friend that writes me the newes I hope it wont be mutch longer that I shall have to write I want to see her togeather with all of the rest but cant now for a while at least till the Gov sees fit to discharge me from the army some tines the prospects looks fair to get home then again they is not mutch hopes of getting home very soon

Mother you must have a good deal of patience as well as myself you can realise my being gone while I have the expearance it it is not my good will to \_\_\_\_\_ but have to Now let me say as you have spoke of having a plenty of corn to make the weding cake I wish you to bake and keep one a head so that they wont be any time lost when I do come please poot in some sweet apples and pankins in it so we can have a change I like it for a change

Mother I have oney got but one letter from any of you for three months I have wrote often but thare comes no answer the time is nearly come that I will have to stop writing if we don't get pay soon so I can buy materials to write and if you don't get any more letters from me you can ask some one els if I am well she will tell you for I write as often as one a week I hope a few more will do so I get home

Mother we are a having a very good time I was out in the country some twelve miles from here and staid four days. I had all of the johney cake honey butter and other stuff that was good as I wanted to eat I was welcomb and asked to go back and stay a week and I am a going to excpt the chance for a change

Mother my health is first rate this summer and wish you the same I wish I could see you and tell you all of the newes I now must close by sending my Love please write often and long letters Give my love to and except of your Son

Lov Van R. Strong  
To My Mother

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Camp Saluberty Spring La  
Sept 8th 1865

Dear Mother

I now seat my self to write you a few lines to let you know that my health is first rate and am a having a very good time but it is very loneson here as they is no excitement to pass of the time the men are very antious to get home to see their friends they Love so dear but cant come for some time. The Gen in comand of us here has been at new Oleans to see the comanding Officer to get us home he return here last evening with the asurance and made a speech to the same affect that we should be musterd out within sixty days so you can see it is hard to get out of the army I think we woul be glad to be home before that time but cant so we have to wate I think we will get out in the coarse of sixty days from now and then I an a coming thare soon as I can get the money due me in the north that wont take very long probly not more than a week after I get to whare it is the main thing is to get out of the army that is the hardest part I now have been in the army now four years the twenty six of this very month and beleave me or not I have seen some hard times sence I first enlisted and when I get home you can make up your mind it will bee one of the happiest

meeting that we ever had or ever will have in this world there is another world better than this I hope to meet you where we shall be happier in than we ever can in \_\_\_\_\_

Mother I have just got a letter from neer there stating that Lydia Ann had gone to california to be married and had go most there all wright although you have never wrote any thing to me at least I have never got any I have not got any letter from any of you for nearly three months it seems as so you have forgotten me almost entirely and Mary to I have wrote a number of letters and it seemes hard to get no answers from them please write if it is but a few lines if nothing mor tell me how you are a doing I now must clos the mail goes out early I now send my love to you all write soon and except of this from your Son

Van R. Strong  
To my Mother

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B. F. HERINGTON & CO.  
PROPRIETORS OF THE  
City Drug Store  
Prescriptions Carefully compounded

Waubay, S.D. March 3, 1892

Father please take your Soldier discharge papers and have them copied and sworn to and send to me we want organize A S. of V. camp here please do it right away as our applacation is here now we are all well the town is growing every day will write more soon.

Good bye Mina

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