

These letters were written or received by Delphine Barnard Root and her sister Emily Barnard Knight of Dixfield, ME. The original handwritten letters were transcribed by Ellen Francis Leach Root, wife of Albert Barnard Root, Sr. in the late 1800's. Her transcription was digitized in 2006 by Karen Root Grimm, Ellen's great-granddaughter.

Delphine married Daniel Root. They had two children, Albert Barnard Root and Charles Justin Root. Baby Justin died of typhoid in 1863. Daniel Root moved to Chicago leaving his family behind in Dixfield. Delphine divorced him.

Emily married Edwin Knight and had Charles Edwin Knight. Emily's husband died of typhoid in 1864. Their young son Charlie died in 1867. Delphine and Emily moved in together and raised Albert Barnard Root in their childhood home on Weld St in Dixfield.

From Delphine, Daniel and Emily

Taunton, Mass. Oct 14, 1855 to Mary J Root Greenfield
(*Not all, just the main points of the letter – EFR*)

Dear Sister,

Sabath day – spending the day at hospital with dear husband. Have been writing my friends here in town for two weeks. Next Wednesday I shall start for home. Daniel will go with me. Mr. Root says it is not for our interest to work in the laundry at the hospital. I take cold easily and ironing all day long is too hard for anyone. Suppose Mary Moore is having good time at home. Mr Lawton says if she does not come soon he will shut up shop he is so lonesome. I have not seen much of Daniel today – he has to work all day.

DL Root

From Daniel Root to Father and Mother

I have been setting glass from ten until four today. 24 Panes I had to set. A crazy woman broke them out this forenoon. I will write when I get way down east the great part of the country that little children talk about so much.

Dixfield Dec 2, 1855 from Delphine Barnard Root to Mary Root; her mother-in-law, Greenfield Mass.

Sister Emily took part in a school exhibition as she had attended school all the fall. (High School) (*Emily was b Sept 12, 1838 and married Edwin Knight May 17, 1863 - EFR*) Here we have summer winter school and sometimes a high sch in the fall. Got a letter from Daniel. I have made him six shirts besides sheets, pillowcases and clothes for myself. I have a very kind moth to help me. We were so happy to meet Father Root in Boston. We are expecting Father (Barnard) home from the far west soon. I hope he will never go back again. His business out there is surveying and he is in the woods a good part of the time. He is 58 years old.

DB Root

July 28 1861 from Emily in Dixfield to Mary Root in Greenfield

If you knew how tired I am since I arrived home. No pleasure in traveling unless one feels well. I enjoyed it for two hours – then novelty gone and I took little pleasure in anything. People and everything

has changed after being gone two years, except my home. Business is very well. Mrs. Doctor Abbott called last night. She is starting for Kenosha to join her husband who went 3 weeks ago. She looks old – lost a child a short time ago. People think she took something to get rid of it but she pretends to feel badly.

I have made me a dress and a white skirt since I came home. My dress is a purple and green delaine trimmed with drab and green, made a morning dress. Melissa Randall gave me the dress and it is very pretty indeed. I wear it open if front with my shirt waist which is tucked (the front breadth) It is stitched on a sewing machine and looks nice I can tell you. That was a present from Mother. I also got a hat and a net and they say they are very becoming to me and of course what “they say” must be true. I think of your mother very often and will never forget her kindness to me during my sickness. She was a mother to me and long shall I remember it. I am not much better than when I left but I am no worse. Daniel has written me but have not had a letter from Delphine. Do not let Charlie and Albert forget me.
Em

Sept 11, 1861 from Emily Barnard Knight to Mary Root

I feel so tired I can't work. Wednesday and yesterday the County Cattle Show was held here and we had a house full of company and that with the noise and confusion usually attending such an affair has tired me out. A great many people in town and the show was quite interesting. The Fair at the Hall was very good indeed, exceeding anything that I ever saw here before. Wed eve there was a very enthusiastic union meeting which I attended. Many speakers were from out of the place and some were smart. I met many of my old schoolmates and associates during the two days – some of them I had not seen for years. (*Emily was 23 yrs old at this time – EFR*)

A company of Volunteers in being formed here and there is much excitement about it. 60 now from this and nearby towns. All to come here to drill next week. Elisha Winter is Captain of the company. Henry Walton (one of the returned three months soldiers) – Colonel Mr. Randall's office is now the Recruiting Office and that is just opposite our house so you see we have a fair chance to see all their movements. Dixfield seems now a little more lively than it has. Next week there is a meeting here to sell horses for government use. My health I think is improving quite fast although I do not think I will ever be as tough as I used to be. My throat and lungs are still weak and always will be I think. It is more healthy about here than when I last wrote. The Diphtheria has abated somewhat now and I do hope that its reign is over.

The High School is prospering finally. Mr. Richardson, the teacher, is a smart man. I assure you, just such a one as you would like Mary. They have lycenns weekly and they are good. I seem to have lost all taste for society. Sara Edmonds is at home now, but she has a brother just gone in consumption and her time is wholly devoted to him. Glad to hear you had been to Northhampton. Sorry Delphine could not have gone with you, she goes so little. Sr Lizze Jack (that was) in the family way. She was not been married but a short time but that in these days makes no difference. Indeed it is very popular.

I had a letter from Lucy Ann last week saying that Mason Eustis was married to a Miss Glynn of Boston. She has been his housekeeper ever since the Nicolet was opened. Lucy writes that she is a very fine girl and will make him a good and profitable wife. Humphrey Eustis is also married to Julia Wilson – they were mar two weeks ago. Humphrey is here now but his wife is at Great Falls. It seems rather queer about his marriage but the family keep their own counsel never say a word about it. The firm of Calender

Rogers, Eustis Co have failed up entirely and "Billy" has not down here since he came home from the war.

Emily

Dixfield Sept 24, 1861 from Emily Barnard Knight to Mary Root

(Much moralizing about the rewards of a teacher – EFR)

We are having a very pleasant High School this fall, taught by Bartlett Richardson an old schoolmate of mine and he is an excellent teacher I suppose.

It is very sickly indeed about here. The Diphtheria still rages and more fatal than ever. In the town of Megalloway about 30 miles from here there were 25 people sick with it and 21 of them died, all in one week. That seems almost incredible but it is the truth. The disease is becoming more malignant and the people are very much afraid of it. There are a number of severe cases of it here in this village.

Father is working for Mr Randall. Mother is down to Lucy Marbles making a rug, Melissa is at school. Grandmother and I wish you would take your work and spend the day with us. How are Aunt Catherine and Regina (*Regina was married to Edwin Wheelock 1857 – EFR*)

Emily

From Wm P. Alderman in Civil War

Sept 27, 1861

Headquarters 18th Regt Co I Camp Corcoran

Dear cousin Mary

Your kind letter was rec'd the 19th inst and you cannot realize the interest with which it was read. If ever you are away from your home, hundreds of miles and situated so that you are deprived of many of the conveniences of life and the society of friends and I might say all society, you will then know how to appreciate a message from those you love. I sincerely hope that you may never be placed in such a situation. You may think that I am getting sick of military but I am not. I did not expect when I joined the army, to live as I have been used to, on the contrary, I made up my mind to a life of hardships, and I have found it so far endurable as I expected. I am satisfied with all except one thing, and that is in regard to Officers. Although the officers in my own company are good ones, I cannot but see the inefficiency of some of the Officers in the Regt. They are a disgrace to the Regt., to Gov Andrews who appointed them and the country and cause.

Hall Hill, VA Oct 3, 1861

Dear Cousin,

I was suddenly called away from my writing to do something else and have not had an opportunity to resume it till now, for last Saturday we rec'd marching orders, and moved forward a distance of five miles in the direction of Harpers Ferry that night and we reached Hall Hill our present encampment about 11 o'clock at night. The night was cold and windy and we built campfires. By the way I would like to have

you see an encampment of 6 or 6,000 men at night with their fires all going, it is a good scene for a painter.

Well, we were ordered to spread our blankets and lay on our arms, for we did not know how near the enemy might be to us, as it was known that they left the morning before the very ground we then occupied. All our pieces were loaded so if we were attacked in the night we could give the foe a warm reception. There were four regiments encamped besides us. So we all lay down and made ourselves as comfortable as we could and I for one being tired, soon went to sleep. I have got so I cannot sleep at all unless I lay on something hard.

About 2 o'clock in the morning I was awakened by a heavy volley of musketry about 100 rods from me as near as I could judge. I was not long I tell you in jumping up and seizing my gun, nor were the rest of us, and in two minutes we were drawn up in line of battle, when our ears were saluted by another volley and then another. I have neglected to say that a general advance was made that night, probably one hundred thousand men were advanced that night at the least calculation, and some of them were in advance of us. So I concluded at once that our front had been attacked and I made up my mind that the time had come and we had got to fight and I must confess that I felt a little shaky about the knees.

Barnes Oct 4, 1861

Although I was a cool as I am this moment But all were not affected alike. Some of the boys I think must have et something for supper which did not set well on their stomachs for they were suddenly sick at the stomach and fell to vomiting right smart when the second and third volley were heard. But I was not affect in that way. Well we did not hear any more firing and after standing in line about two hours, we rec'd news that the firing was between two Regts of our own men who had mistaken each other for an enemy and fired killing in all 16 men and wounding more but you have probably seen before this an account of it. It is a disgraceful affair and goes to prove what I said in the beginning of the letter. We have just rec'd news that Gen. Fremont has been superseded by Gen John E Wood. I say good for Gen'l Wood has been kept back from active service too long already for a man of his talents and known ability and Fremont if it is true (and it looks like it) suffered Col Mulligan to remain in Lexington without sending him aid. He should not only be superseded at once but court martialed and cashiered – and that is escaping with little punishment enough. But I do not feel disposed to condemn him until I know more about. But if he has been superceded by Wood it shows what the government thinks of his actions and they do not act in such matters without some cause. I see that Wm. Walker's Co. has gone into Col. Lee's Regt. On Hampden Park with 30 men and if that is all he has got you can make up your mind that the Co will be disbanded and poor Walker set adrift again. I know a little how such things work.

I would like to be in ----- today and see you all once more. I should enjoy it hugely. Tell Uncle not to worry about the war too much but hope for an early settlement of affairs and to look for good news before long from the Army of the Potomac as I think a concerted action of McClellan and Banks on the Rebels is about to be made. Tell Daniel that it is not his duty to leave his family to fight for his country and that camp life although it is a wild and novel life is accompanied with privations and hardships which no on can know but those that have tried it. I must now close, although I could write till night and not get short of words. You must excuse all mistakes in my letters for I never look them over and take no pains with them. If you can read it, it is all I care for. Write soon for a letter is a prize here. My love to all of you hoping we shall meet sometime to talk over what it takes us, so long to write now.

From your cousin
Wm P. Alderman

Sept 11, 1859 Achsa Slade, Pittsfield

Dear Cousin

I was taken sick 7 weeks ago in bed three weeks (typhoid fever probably – EFR) I was boarding here in the village – had to stay there 5 weeks. Have been with my sister since am to Lee to stay 2 or 3 weeks. I want a class to learn jewelry \$10 a piece but as I need the money if you can get me a class of 6 or more I will take them for \$6 each. Dr. thinks I should not be sewing. I have a pain in my side. Direct to East Lee care of FM Couch.

Your friend Achsa

Apr 29, 1860 Timothy T. Root Cambridge to Mary
Pa. Rockdale Crawford Co.

Dear Cousin

Morton was married Wednesday evening April 18 by Rev McBerber (Pres.) at the house of Mrs. Birchard the bride's father. The next day some of us took a ride. I came back to our house for the infuse. Had a very pleasant time – wish you had been here. My love to Father, Mother, Daniel and wife and yourself. Mort's wife was Mary Adeline Birchard. Is William Alderman there yet?

Timothy

March 31 1861 from Ann Root

Dear Cousin Mary

Your letter had lain over in some post office for 3 months. My health is very poor. Has been since I came home from Mass. I cannot do any work except sewing. Brother Eliakim was at home since two weeks is able to be about now.

Brother Daniel has moved from here to Cambridge Village so that we are alone now. Sister Meribah's health is good now – she does all of her work but washing and ironing – has not done for 10 yrs. I cannot go out doors for over two months and think I never shall again. We have cheese to make. I have a good girl but she can't do everything and she's young too. This keeping dairy is killing on women folks. Uncle Sylvester's buying cows and going to making cheese this summer. It will make steady business for them - that I know from experience, they have been in the habit of going when and where they pleased but they will find it different now for milk has to be attended to whether visiting is or not. I suppose you have heard cousin Justin Root's marriage before this time. He has also gone into the oil business and calculates to make a speck and I hope he will for he has a family to support and if he fails there he will have to try something else. The oil fever rages here more than politics. I hate politics and do not think of the state of affairs more than I can help. If they had succeeded in assassinating Lincoln I should have wakened up a little. I think our government is in an awful situation. Father says he thinks your Father cast a wrong vote. I am afraid he will forget going into business again for I am afraid he will forget going west and we shall miss that visit.

Love from Ann

Feb 22, 1861 Cambridge PA Timothy to Mary

Dear Cousin – Cousin Eliakim came home sick – he has gone back to Rockville. Quite a thaw the snow going, creek rising, doing damage, three bridges going off with the ice. Two were new ones. I am glad you and your father are planning to make us a visit. He would enjoy a visit to the oil works. I think I shall visit then this spring. Justin is talking of going into a company of five to bore for oil. Mort and wife, Justin and wife and five Miss Birchards and some young men are coming this afternoon they will stay in the evening. It snows and is good sleighing.
Timothy T. Root

Letter from Wm. P. Alderman from the army Sept 27, 1861

Sept 18, 1861 from Susie Collins to Mary

Dear Mary – Mother has returned after a visit Aunt Electa came with her to Albany – she will make a good long visit – *The rest is about her prospect of getting a boarding place if she came to teach school*
Susie Collins

Electa b Mar 26, 1801 mar Daniel Alderman

Laura B feb 4, 1807

April 1861 Scotia NY from Aunt Laura Collins

Dear Neice -----about finding a school for you. Our district school is ½ m from here. Katie and Jamie attend it – teacher here for four years. Susie and Annie go to Schenectady to the Union School – from the primary to the classical room. Young men fitted for colleghe young ladies graduate. 1400 – 1500 in this school – many teachers. In Registrars Office they employ men. Do come and visit us. I should be as glad to see your father and mother (*father Justin Larura's brother*) Charley is just as busy in farming as when on public work – laying out money instead of taking it in
Aunt Laura Collins

April 21, 1861 Cambridge PA from Timothy T. Root

Cousin Mary -----Cousin Ann is not very well, not able to work, they have a hired man this summer. Ann goes to school at Cambridge (*Ann dau of Daniel and Susan b July 7, 1834 – EFR*) Stacy's folks are all well. I have been getting out staves this spring but now work at home farming. We shall milk 11 cows this summer. Mother has a lame wrist. (*Mercy Thomas mar Sylvester Root 1824 – EFR*) We had a regular family visit at Sister Sally's Thursday Father and Mother and all the brothers and sisters with their wives except mine. I have none yet. (*Martha mar Albert Rockwell, Sally mar Jer Stanford, Sylvester B mar Fidelia Rockwell, Justin mar Nancy Birchard, Lucy A b 1841 – EFR*) Morton and Adaline and I
Timothy

I have been to the oil works, was gone four days. The excitement was intense. I was at a number of works that were pumping but they don't get such large quantities of oil as reported from 6 to 25 bbls a day, average 10 a day. They have had a great fire there. Last Wednesday there was a company struck a vein of oil and gas which caught fire, spreading from one well to another, burning 10 or 12 men to death and 10 to 15 more very bad. It burnt one rich old bachelor so he died in about 2 hours. He made his will, had no relations he knew of and willed \$100.00 a piece to two young men who took him out of the fire

Timothy T. Root

Aug 11, 1861 Cambridge Pa from Timothy

Cousin Mary

I have been very busy haying, We have had considerable rain last 2 weeks or should have been there sooner. Mort helped us rainy days. I visit schools some. Lucy and I visited Miss Johnson's Thursday and Miss Hamilton's Friday afternoon. Schools are all out now. Some war excitement here now. There was a recruiting officer at Cambridge Friday. 5 or 6 of our young men go tomorrow for Erie. If I was not so big a coward I should go. To tell the truth I am ashamed to send this bad writing.

Tim

Aug 30 (1861 I think) Cambridge PA from Ann Root

Dear Cousin Mary – as Brother Sumner says we will give you the best the house affords. Our men folks have had a great deal of trouble getting in the hay. Help has been scarce and wages awful. Father bought a mowing machine this year or would not have been able to do it. Hay is a high crop this year. It has been so dry that we have had no feed for our cows – we are not making as much cheese as usual. The draft has gone off here and the first class. Cousins Justin and Timothy are among the drawn but I do not think either will go. I never see Justin and Timothy seldom he is away so much. I do not go out much – it takes me all the time to see to my household affairs. I am looking for another draft in a few weeks. So many are taking advantage of the \$300 act. There is one township and borough from which 30 were drawn and scarce one is going. The government wants men and not money. Did Cousin Daniel get exempt. I rec'd a letter from Cousin Charlie last week – he wrote that Henry was drawn – would not go. Charlie has resigned his commission on acct of sickness and came home. Cousin Daniel is married. How I wish I could come east on another visit.

Ann

Ann's mother Susannah died Sept 25, 1858

Sept 25 1861 (1864? - EFR) Cambridge PA from Ann Root

Cousin Mary

I left home to make a short visit with my sister Meribah (*Meribah b Apr 14, 1823 mar Rev Norman O Thomas Sep 3, 1846 – EFR*) She and her little boy are left all alone. Her husband has gone into the army. He entered the Navy but had not been shipped when I came away from there so we do not know where he will be sent, probably somewhere on the coast. He is in NY and very anxious to get away from there, says he don't much care where, so he can leave that sink of perdition. He says if a man escapes with his life he does well. Sister feels that her last prop is gone, she buried her oldest child (a girl of 12 years) in July and she has poor health – everything to see to, in door and out, which makes it pretty hard for her as she has never been in the habit of seeing to herself hardly. It is but little she has to do if she had any health. I expect now to go back and spend the winter with her as soon as I can leave home. It will be sometime yet as I have my house to clean from top to bottom and the cows to take care of until they are dry which will be very late. I also have a great deal of sewing to do. I sometimes feel like running away

when I am so hurried but I dare say work would follow me if I did. Do you have such things to trouble you Mary? I should think you would be very lonely and your mother too staying alone all day, always having had such a family around her. Do you expect Daniel's family back to live with you again? Uncle Sylvester has been to Mass but did not come to see you. Brother Stacy had his barn burned eight weeks ago. Everything in it – hay, grain, two wagons, two hamefaes, two saddles, buffalo robes and almost all of his farming utensils – about \$1,000 loss. He is now building another. I do not see them very often. Cousin Timothy has gone to butchering and peddling beef – the other cousins pursuing their usual routine. Brother Sumner is well, sends his love and photograph.
Ann

Nov 17 1861 Cambridge PA from Timothy T Root

Cousin Mary

I have letters due me from Dan Alderman, Uncle Eliakin, George and Zilpha Smith, Charlie Fay. Father recd a letter from Clarkson Smith enclosed 3 nice wedding cards one for Uncle Daniel one for Mort and one for himself so I suppose he is married. News here is mostly war – a regt of volunteers in Erie and Crawford Counties and 18 or 20 that I know – 2 cousins George and John Burt and Joseph Webster our nearest neighbors and the most of the schoolmates and warm friends – I miss them someone must go and those that can leave home best ought to go. They were all young men 7 of them school teachers and their places have to be filled. They pay here only \$10 for ladies \$15 for gentlemen per month. I suppose you get more there. Nelson Alderman was here and made us a short visit. I have written to Cousin George Burt in the army, they are in the 81st regt. Col McLanes regt. They were in Va near Falls Church. Father is getting quite smart again. His hand first began to well about Sept 1 – looked awful, pained him terribly – sick other ways – under Doctor's care 6 or 7 weeks. He has no use of his hand at present so it ties me to the chores. Uncle Daniel's and Stacy's folks are well. Ann is doing her work with the help of little Clara Root. They have sold their cheese at 4 ½ c a lb. Which is very low. We have not sold all of ours yet butter is worth 15c. Cattle are cheap. Daniel has got home. They sold out their drove at wholesale – done well, I guess.

Cousin TT Root

Dec 22, '61 Cambridge PA from Ann

Cousin Mary

My health has been very poor all summer and my girls poorer still until I got tired of having them around finally dismissed last one some 3 months ago and have done my own work with the help of little Clara, sister Electa's girl until the last 3 weeks. I have an excellent girl now but she goes to school and that leaves a great deal of work for me to do – so --- hover over the fire and do not feel like writing. Thought of letter writing makes me as nervous as an old woman. But 6 months from now or a year will tell a different story. Father's health is pretty good also rest of the family. Uncle Sylvester's hand is nearly useless and we fear will always be. We have had only 2 days that sleighs could run at all this winter. These old windy days I think of our poor soldiers, their exposure, hardships and loneliness. There were 23 young men of our acquaintance who went. Penn Regt some of them our most intimate friends – I miss them but will not complain as long as they leave my folks alone – selfish? Of course I am and will own it. Cousin Nelson made us a flying visit on his homeward way. Love to all especially Uncle Justin and Aunt Susan.

Ann

From Mary Root March 11, 1862 Chester Factories to Mother

My Dear Mother –

Daniel came with me as far as Springfield where he stopped over until today. I expect he will come on afternoon train today. Arrived at Chester Factories at half past one, found Uncle William and boys had gone to town meeting no one at home but Mrs. Fay. Charley arrived about 4. Myra also from school and we passed pleasant evening Henry is away on a visit at Blandford – expect him home tonight. All prophesy a poor season for maple sugar. I am in hopes they prove false.

Uncle Eliakim has not been down this week yet. I do not know how I shall get there unless some of Uncle William's family carry me. Myra has grown to be a great girl, larger than I am. Not quite so tall. She has changed little in her appearance – somewhat in actions. A very pretty girl indeed, very quick and ladylike. Resembles her mother very much. Uncle William has no increase of family as yet, nor does she look very bad, as she wears hooks considerable large. I should not have thought of her being sick at present. I hope that Albert continues better and that none of you will be afflicted with mumps. I have no idea of having them. Is there any prospect of my getting either a public or private school? If any letters come for me from Pa you can open the, but no others. Redirect them to me here at Chester Factories.

Uncle Eliakim came last night but they would not let me go back with him. Shall probably go today. We plan to visit Cousin Myra's school this morning.

Daughter Mary

Wm Fay mar Independence Root 1838

Charley July 15, 1841

Wm. Henry

Myra mar. Dexter

Laura baby

From Emily to Mary Nov 10, 1861 Dixfield ME

Friend Mary

There has been so much to take up my attention for the last three weeks that really I could not think of writing letters: but today being very quiet I will devote that purpose and therefore silence the "little monitor within". The soldiers left here last Monday and I for one, was glad when they left although they were as civil as soldiers in general. The ladies (including myself) were very busy all the time they were here on drill, making clothing for them and a needle book (or soldier's bag) was given to each one filled with everything needful in that line. With the while, we had to be pretty busy I assure you to get them all completed before they left.

Billy Davis was married two days before he went away to Margret Foster, but it was kept a secret until he had been gone three days. He was afraid his fellow soldiers would serenade him and they would if they had known it. This company belongs to Col. Sheply's Regt. The 13th. They are now at Cambridge Mass

awaiting orders. It is very sickly about here indeed. Last week there were two deaths at the same hour, Montcello Edmonds and Lucy Marble's baby. Mother was called to go to both houses at the same time. Montcello came home from Boston three months ago the day he died. It was a quick consumption and he was a very great sufferer. He was willing to die and made every preparation for his funeral. His family takes his death very hard, especially Sarah. He was a bright, smart boy and they had made great plans for him for the future and there expectations were large, but so it is. Man may propose, but God alone can dispose.

Lucy Marble's baby had the whooping cough and at last had fits till it died. Poor little cherub, it suffered dreadfully and nothing seemed to relieve it, but its sufferings are over and it is at rest. Who could wish it back to this sinful world? Clarendon Marble also lost a child two weeks ago and he has two more that are very sick and not expected to live. Diphtheria is the disease and it is making such ravages all around here. There is not a day but we hear of deaths from it.

The High School classes here this week with an exhibition and I think they will have a good one. The teacher has spared neither pains nor expense to make it interesting and I hope it will pass off well. He has been to the expense of sending away for scenery and the pieces are all new that are to be spoken. Melissa takes an active part in it and is busy learning the piece.

Times here are hard and money an unheard of thing. Father cannot collect a cent that is due him and says he is discouraged and I believe he is by his actions. This war will ruin the people and the Nation too. Everything looks dark now and the future looks still more so. There is no prospect of this war coming to an end as I can see. I am tired of reading the papers for I can get no information that I want. The Republicans here are silent now. If you try to converse with them, they turn the conversation quickly. I assume the North has thus far been defeated in every battle and they begin to see the strength of the South and some of them are frank enough to admit that they have been disappointed in the strength of South.

How are you prospering in your school? Do you find it as easy as the summer time? I should like to step in and see a little while right well. Do you see Mr. Briggs and wife often? I was sorry to hear that your mother had been sick and Delphine had to work so hard. I hope she will like her girl and be able to keep her all winter for there is enough to do at your house to keep a half a dozen busy all of the time.

My health is quite good so that I am able to work all of the time and I feel smart. I can not bear the east weather and I once could but if I am careful and stay indoors the most of the time, I get along nicely. I am generally at home all hours in the day, so you need not defer your calls but run in any time for I am always prepared for street folks. Does Daniel still continue to peddle? I hope he has better luck in collecting than he used to. But of course, I don't expect he does these times.

I think much and often of Greenfield and the happy hours that I have spent there and many times since I came home here I wished myself there but I know that it was for my good to come home for I think the change of scene, climate, and every thing did more for me than all the medicine or doctors that I ever saw. It is very dull here and some times it seems as if I could not content myself then again I think it is much better for me to stay here till I am perfectly well, for I have come to the conclusion that "good health is great wealth". The weather here has been cold but now quite warm and I think we shall have an Indian summer. I hope you will excuse my small sheet of paper and when you write do as by me.

I believe I have written all the news and will draw to a close. Give my love to all of your family and save a share for yourself. Father and Mother wish to be remembered to you and all. I wrote to Daniel and Delphine some time ago and am waiting patiently to hear from them. Where is SB Dewey Esq. and who

is he honoring with his very desirable addresses now? Of course he has left Miss Butler ere this or else he has changed much of late. Do you hear from William and if so where is he and what does he think of war life? My questions are many but if answered will much oblige.

Your friend

Emily

Feb 18, 1862 From Emily Barnard Knight, Dixfield to Mary Root in Greenfield

Friend Mary,

Although I have nothing of importance to write you, yet will try and fill my sheet with such materials as the little quiet town of Dixfield affords. I have just finished reading the daily paper and its contents were truly interesting. The taking of Fort Donelson is a great victory. That, and other late achievements (Ft Henry and Roanoke Island) seems more favorable – but who can tell what may follow? The news last night was that our people had taken Savannah but whether true or not remains to be seen. It has been snowing all day but I believe it has cleared off now and the sun almost shines. I am glad for we have so much snow it seems dreary. The weather is not very cold, quite comfortable. I have not been out of doors for a fortnight for I have had such a bad cold and cough that I have been about sick abed but have made out to keep about. My health is much better than last winter but still a little cold brings on a cough and my side troubles me considerable. I suppose your school is nearly done by this time and I think that you must be glad and want your freedom once more. Do you hear from your Aunt Laura and do you think of visiting her in spring? I wish you could come down east and see me. I would introduce you to some of the beaux here. I tell you. We have some promising young men here. What they excel in most is drinking rum and running after every bad character that can be heard of, two of the sterling virtues. You spoke of selling your place – I know that you will hate to give it up finally but under existing circumstances, I presume you hope that they may be able to see. Delphine wrote me that they were not butchering now – but were trying to collect but with poor success as usual. Do you know what they think of doing if they sell out? It is quite sickly here. Diphtheria still rages. Jane Edmonds is very sick with it now also Edward Stanley and Mary Mitchell. Sarah Edmonds is at Augusta and expects to stay there some time. I have no particular friend now, so I keep my own counsel. I should like to run in and see you much and have a chat about matters and things but I do not see as I can just now. Where is Mr. Headly now? And who supplies his place in the brick church? I believe I have written all the news and shall be obliged to close for the want of ideas this time. If you knew how dull it was here you would not wonder that I did not write better letters. Father says “Give my love to Mary” and that says Ern.. Where is Aunt Catherine now?

Em

The following letter was omitted in right place. It should follow March 30, 1862

April 20, 1862

From Em in Dixfield to Mary Root Greenfield

Dear Friend Mary,

I acknowledge the receipt of your good letter and will now try to answer it. We are all in usual health with the exception Grandmother Trask who is quite feeble. We are having beautiful weather now, warm and pleasant and the snow is rapidly melting away. I have just been up to see the river which is exceedingly high and has done much damage carrying off bridges, logs, timber and many other things. The

ice went out of the river last week and a magnificent sight it was, I assure you. The ice from above all lodged at the ferry in one solid mass of immense size looking as I should think as icebergs might, and truly it was a grand sight. There is no meeting today and people seem to be strolling the streets some watching the river and others doing most anything to kill time, my self among the latter number. The Orthodox Society have meetings half of the time and I most always attend when the weather permits. I like the preacher very much indeed. I think you must enjoyed your visit at Westfield finely by your description, and I am glad that you had the opportunity of visiting your friends there. How was you pleased with your cousin Nelson's wife? I used to hear you speak so often of him that I feel almost acquainted with him and feel quite interested in his affairs. I suppose you have not as yet decided what you may do this summer, or where you will locate. When you do please inform your friend Em. Have you worked any in your flower garden yet? I mean to have some flowers this season if possible. I am going to begin to clean the chambers tomorrow and I believe that you are fond of house cleaning, so just run down here and help me a little will you? We shall all be very busy now for two or three weeks as we have lots of fixing to do about the house and yard. My health is very good now and long may it be so is my prayer. Grandma Trask is very troublesome and the most of Mother's time is devoted to her and for the present I shall be obliged to stay at home, for Mother thinks she could not get along without me. Melissa attends school and her time is wholly taken up with her studies. I think she will teach this summer. She is called an excellent scholar and I think she will do better at teaching than any other kind of employment. It seems to be a general time of health now about her. Diphtheria has at last entirely disappeared, but how long such may be the case I can not say. Now there is not a case of it in town that I know of.

The Factory now is doing quite a little business and it seems more lively than it has for a long time. I should like some of the maple sugar than Daniel has made very much. There has been any amount of it made about here this spring, it being an excellent season for it. Do your folks still think of selling the old place? I wish that your folks and mine could live near each other. I think it would be pleasant on all sides. Where is the Hon. James Long now and what is he doing? I wish I could run in and see you all today and when shall I have that pleasure? Father is waiting to take this letter to the office and I must close. Write when you can and very much please your friend.

Em

From Wm. P. Alderman Dec 17, 1861

Dec 17, 1861 Halls Hill, Va. Headqts 18 Reft Mass Inf. Camp Barnes

Dear Cousin Mary –

Resolved that if I can possibly avoid it, that you shall not again have a chance to remind me of my tardiness in ans your letters. I take the first opportunity to write in answer to your last which was received last evening, very gratefully and perused with much pleasure. But I hardly think that I can make this as interesting to you as yours was to me for there is nothing transpiring in and about the 18th that could interest anyone very much. We still remain in camp on Halls Hill and are patiently waiting like Mr. Cawber “for something to turn up”. I had forgotten to mention one thing when I said that there was nothing new for we have just rec'd a new uniform and new tents and equipments from France. They are Zouare in style and are very nice indeed. Without doubt the outfit is as good if not the best in the service, taking it all in all. It is complete in everything, not a tent pin lacking or the smallest article that is considered necessary for a soldier to have is wanting. The tents are really splendid and are made to contain twenty men, but we it seems have more than what is really necessary for the Ret and are not

obliged to have but 15 which makes it quite roomy. But as I am in the Seargts tent, I have not been so crowded as the men generally are. By the way speaking of our new outfit reminds me to answer some of the questions you propounded in your letter. In regards to the inquiry if I or the Co were in want of anything to make us comfortable, I have only to say don't for Heavens Sake send us anything from Greenfield, for if we should be called on to march I do not know what means we could adopt to transport more than one half the stuff we have got especially if we should march a great distance. I would be glad to give you a minute acc of our uniforms but they are too extensive to admit of the space in this, beside I hate to describe anything of that kind, and am not good at it by any means. They all came from France and I suppose they are a present to us. You spoke of our glee Club and thought that it would prove a benefit to us as well as a source of pleasure in taking us away from the vices of camp. Mary, you are not the only one who has an erroneous idea of camp life, in fact very few who stay at home have no correct idea of camp life. Instead of its being a school of vice as is generally supposed it is one of virtue and good morals to more than one half of the army. Intemperate men are obliged to be temperate, as they cannot procure the means of intoxication. The profligate is compelled to substitute another word for an oath. The slovenly is required to keep himself as clean and neat as any man in the Regt and as cleanliness is next to Godliness, I think it must be a Christian virtue. And, above all, a man is compelled to attend Divine services every Sabbath whether he is religiously inclined or not. Religious books and tracts are distributed freely among the men, and the Co of which I am a member have recently been the recipients of a large box of books, most of them being of a religious character, and some of them are valuable from their antiquity dating back nearly to the commencement of the Christian Era as being the time of their publication. Among other familiar works I noticed "Pilgrims Progress" which presented every appearance of having been raked up recently from somebodys garret where it had laid for the last half century in inglorious disuse among the accumulating rubbish of that elevated region. Most of the books presented the same appearance and at once conveyed the idea to my mind that the generous donators in the town of Wrentham, had been having a general house cleaning and over hauling of old traps and must have given expression to their feelings by a sigh of relief when they placed them in the box which was to convey them to us. But I suppose they have eased their minds of the idea that they ought to do something for the soldiers and feel better. Do not think that I think all the contributions which come from benevolent associations for the benefit of soldiers are of no more use than this one, for I do not. By the way I almost forgot to mention that our camp was visited last Saturday by W. T. Davis and Dr. Charles Fisk of G. I saw them and spoke to them. They appeared pleased to see me and surprised I merely spoke to them as they were in a great hurry. But as it is getting to be the time for Tattoo, I will close this hastily written communication, hoping you will forgive its errors and lack of punctuation. Give my love to your Father and Mother, Daniel and Della and everybody in the street that you think proper to, reserving a large share of friendly feelings to yourself and accept this from your cousin,
WP Alderman

March 31, 1864 Carver US Gen'l Hospital Wash D.C.

Dear Cousin Mary,

I confess that I am ashamed after two years silence to take up my pen to write you or to answer those "two" lonely unanswered letters. I cannot but feel that you will despise me now, but nevertheless I will make a "Clean Breast" of it and do what I ought to have done a very long time ago. I will not try to make any excuses for my unpardonable negligence. You have just cause for being offended with me. But I will say one thing in justification of myself and that is that I prized your letters as much as any I ever received from any friend. And the sole and only reason why I did not answer them was because I conceived my first duty was to my parents and brothers and sister and aside from them and cousin Susan Collins, I do not recollect that I have written a single letter to any living being since the last time I wrote you. It is

impossible while in active duty in the field to keep up a numerous correspondence at least I think it is, but however that may be, I will say no more in regard to it. Mary, I cannot tell you how much I have thought of you since I heard of the death of your Father. You have sustained a great and irreparable loss. I am poorly qualified to offer consolation, but I assure you that you have my sympathy. I had heard of the illness of your "Father" but I was not expecting he was so near his end. I learned no particulars of his sickness and death while "home" on a furlough. The many kindnesses I have rec'd at his hands will ever live fresh in my memory. Many men have made more professions of goodness, but I have not yet seen the man who lived a more "honest" and "unselfish" life than your lamented "Father". Let us trust that "our loss is his gain"

In regard to myself, you may be surprised to see that I am in a "Hospital". I was taken sick the first days of December, immediately after the famous "Mine Run" Campaign. A sore came on my "back" which finally terminated in an "abscess" which discharged as much as a "Gill" of matter per day. This lasted about three months, at the expiration of which time, the Dr. succeeded in healing it up. It reduced me very much and has left me with a weakness in my back, which I fear I shall not soon get rid of. However, I am feeling pretty well now and hope I have no permanent disease about me. I have been "Home" this Spring" on a thirty day "furlough" which did me as you may suppose, more good than "medicine". I returned here the 24th inst.

Mother went to Albany, while I was at home, with me and from there she went to Aunt Laura's with me. While there she was taken sick with the "Pleurisy" or something of that nature and was obliged to stay there some two weeks. Aunt Laura was also taken sick with nearly the same thing but not so violently. When I returned here I left them both convalescent. I enjoyed my visit very much notwithstanding Mother's sickness, and it seemed rather hard to come away again. But I have less than "four" months to serve. So you see if my good fortune does not forsake me, I will soon be at "home" again and for good. Ah! I think I will know how to prize "Home" and its comforts hereafter. I look forward eagerly for the day that I will be a free man again. No more "roll calls" – no more "night alarms" – no more long and tiresome "marches"! No more "fighting"! – I have been very fortunate thus far. I have been in "eight" battles and never rec'd a "scratch". It seems wonderful to me when I look back upon those fearful scenes that I am a living man. – But I am sick heartily sick of war.

It may interest you to know that I have been promoted to "First Lieutenant". However I did not accept my promotion. I did not enlist for the sake of promotion when I went into the ranks as a Private Soldier. I know not what the motives of others were but mine were purely "patriotic". But I long ago came to the conclusion that this war was being waged for other reasons than that of Restoring the Union. Therefore I concluded to get out of this service just as soon as I could and so declined taking my commission for fear that I might be held longer if I accepted it. Besides I want no office under this administration. I calculate I have thrown away three of the best years of my life in an unworthy cause. You may think I speak too strongly but this is a subject upon which I feel strongly. The present state of our "Beloved Country" is enough to draw tears from all who sincerely long for remaining in her Service and therefore, I shall quit it as soon as I can. But I have said enough, perhaps too much, already. And will change the subject.

I have just rec'd a letter from "Home" which brings the interesting intelligence that Brother Daniel's wife has presented him with a son. I shall soon at this rate be "Uncle" to a crowd of urchins too numerous to count, but never mind. They can't disturb any "old Bachelors" ears with their infant squalls while I am here. Do you know I am twenty seven years old, almost an old bachelor. Where have the years fled to? And how little I have noted their flight. Well, well, if I am destined to be an old "batch" so be it. I will not seek to alter the decrees of fate. But I am writing a good deal of "stuff" and have my doubts about it being interesting. So for fear of being tedious, I will close. I sincerely hope you will forgive my past

negligence and write me soon. For I am very desirous of hearing from you all. Answer in two weeks time and as much sooner as you like, directing to Carver US Hospital, not putting of Co. or Regt. Remember me with much love to Aunt Daniel, Della and children. And believe me ever your cousin and sincere friend,
Wm P Alderman.

May 25, 1864

Knight US Hospital New Haven Conn.

Dear Cousin Mary

Your kind letter did not find me at "Carver Hospital" as you no doubt expected it would. For I was transferred to "New Haven" about two weeks since. Together with all the sick in and about Washington that were able to be moved. However it found me notwithstanding. I had fled to the land of "Wooden Nutmegs". And I assure you I was very very glad to hear from you. I hardly know what I am going to write you in answer to your very interesting letter. Indeed I do not feel competent to write a fit answer. But you know my rough style and I know you will excuse it in the absence of anything smoother. You and I evidently do not look upon the present events transpiring in Va. in the same light. You look hopefully upon the present campaign, as the one which is bound to establish the supremacy of the government and restore peace to our distracted land. While I would fain hope that such might be the final issue. My experience has taught me to examine carefully every point, before placing my faith in anything connected with the present war. I have been too many times fooled and misled to believe anything with the public opinions sets down as a fact.

To be brief, I have but little faith. I have but little faith in the present campaign in Va. If it does not result in disaster I shall feel very thankful. I am losing faith in almost everything. I have heard so often of the Glorious Victories of our armies when in reality defeat was the result of the contest. The fact that Gen'l Grant has found it necessary to suspend operations for a few days convinces me that he has been met with a force much superior to anything he expected in point of numbers and courage. Grant has been successful in the south-west but he has not been dealing with the Heart of the Rebellion as he now is. Nor has he been opposed until the present time to any man equal or anything like equal to Gen. RE Lee who is without doubt one of the greatest military men of modern times.

I look upon it as folly to say we are victorious when we are really defeated. I am aware that such has always been the case with us, but I have yet to see its wisdom. Like one of our Revolutionary Fathers, I had rather know the whole truth and provide for it. Newspaper victories we have had in abundance but I have not yet learned that they have discouraged the rebels to the extent of suppressing the rebellion. And I fear they never will have that much desired effect. I think all sane people must agree to one thing. Viz – that if Gen. Grant cannot now conquer the rebellion, it must remain unconquered, and if such is the case let us look and see how the matter stands. We have fought Lee for eight or ten successive days and what has been the result – a loss of men not less than fifty thousand on our part and what have we accomplished – really nothing! Have we driven him inside the defenses of Richmond? No! Has he shown any weakness or want of strength? No! What then have we accomplished? All that I can see is that we have succeeded in finding out the fact that Lee is strong and cannot be whipped by any reasonable amount of fighting and so the matter stands - Grant at a Stand Still and Lee ready to meet him as soon as he is ready to advance again.

You may think I am talking treason. I am aware of the fact that if a man has any doubts as to final results he is at once branded as a traitor. But I cannot see that I am anything of the kind. I have served faithfully

nearly three years the Government, and I am not willing to be called anything of the kind by anyone who never has smelt "Gunpowder". It looks very ridiculous to me that a set of Stay-at-Home folks should pretend to say that those who have been fighting their battles for the past three years are traitors. But I am aware that "Old things have passed away and all things become new". Still it is a little hard to accept all the new doctrines.

My health is not as good as I could wish. I hardly feel equal to carrying the "musket and knapsack", still I prefer it to remaining here and shall act accordingly. When you write me direct to Co. I 18th Mass. Vols. Via Washington for I expect to be with my regiment. I hope I may hear soon from you. Accept my sincere love and remember me to all the family.

Very truly your affectionate cousin,
Wm. P. Alderman.

Letter from Laura Collins July 13, 1862 comes here

Middlefield – Aug (?) 1862 from Electa Coombs to Cousin Mary

I am at home again. I left Albany 6 months ago today. I have enjoyed my visit very much and shall return next weeks. Susan Collins has been here four weeks. You would like her much. Father's health is good. Mother not as well as last winter. She has more to do than she is able to do. Daniel is well. I have visited Uncle Eli – they have got another little daughter 3 weeks old. Mira is well.

We hear from Wm. Regularly every week – last one yesterday. He was at Fredericksburg about 200 miles from James River. He wrote only a few words and that with a pencil. He said he was well and for us not to worry about him if we did not hear from him again very soon as he had no chance to write until he gets at his journeys end. But we do worry. Poor boy, he has had a hard time but he is not one that complains. His letters are generally cheerful and he says in one of his letters "as hard as our fare is sometimes, we put on a good front and many a song is sung that makes the woods ring". We feel as tho he was in great danger now. But he has been watched over by a kind hand so far and we can only sincerely ask for his safety in the future. It is a sickening thought to think of the suffering among our poor soldiers and the sorrow and mourning of so many broken hearts. O it is dreadful! But I must tell you what Middlefield is doing for the two last calls. Yesterday they had a war meeting and voted to give a bounty of \$115 and they got all their men. Among them is Clarkson Smith and I believe George Smith.

Mother feels very anxious about your Father. She says you wrote to her and she can get no one to answer – so you must call this an answer for us both. Is his health any better, write and let us know. Mother says if he is able she wishes he and your mother would come out and make them a visit. We are expecting Franklin and his family cattle show. I have been quite sick today threatened with a fever. Love from us all to your father, mother, Daniel and yourself.

Electa Coombs

This was probably 1862 for Justin died April, 1863 and the battle of Fredericksburg was fought the last of 1862

Jan 12, 1862 Dixfield from Em to Mary

Dear Friend Mary,

I have been away for the last week. Mrs. George Hopkins of Franklin came for me. They live on a good farm and have every thing that is good to eat and I stuffed myself well I can tell you. We have had very cold weather indeed – quite mild now. Diphtheria still rages and many are its victims. Both of our school teachers are sick with it. The schools were closed and the teachers being strangers were cared for by village folks.

The factory begins work tomorrow and it will make quite a difference in business. Sarah Mitchell is going in to work and she and her adorable husband board with his mother. I should think he would be ashamed to have his wife work in a factory, but he does not seem to care a bit about it.

A number of families – those connected with the factory – have moved into the village and one of the owners of the mill lives just back of our house on the hill where Lucy Ann used to live. Sam Knight of Peru has lately got home from Minneapolis and was here the other day. He is going back early in the spring and Lucy Ann has sent expressly him to have me come back with him and go in the shop. It will be a good chance for me to go but I do not think I shall. I do not think I could stand it long to be confined to sewing or any other sedentary employment. I can not now sew all day without making me sick. My lungs and side still trouble me and especially if I sew. I am not a bit tough as I used to be. I should like much to go to Minn. For the journey and the friends, but to feel that I was obliged to stay when there, as of course I should if Lucy paid my fare there, I should not like it. Lucy sent Mother a dress by Mr. Knight and I am making it for her. We do not hear anything direct from Geo. Barnard although we heard by the way of John Stanley a short time ago that he saw him often. He was well and in the mines. Father wrote to him this week and told him if he cared anything at all about his parents to write. He also wrote to have him come home as soon as he could settle up there and take care of him in his old age. I do hope and pray that he will answer and come home soon.

I spent Thanksgiving, Christmas a few years at home did not go out of the house and was quite happy. There was a ball at Barnard Marbles New Years Eve and I had an invitation to go – but balls have no attraction for me now. Mr. Sidney Smith is making himself quite popular I hear. He and his wife like popularity. William Waits wife is going to have a baby very soon. They are much pleased about it. Do you think Daniel will take Uncle Eliakim's farm this spring. Do you still past his books for him. Delphine wrote that your mother is making coats for soldiers.

Em

Insert Feb 18, 1862

March 30, 1862 to Mary Root in Greenfield

Dear Friend Mary -

Enjoying yourself in Middlefield. I wish I were there to go to the sugar house with you. I went down to Joel Marbles last week and had all the sugar and molasses I wanted. Sugar is so high that all that can will make their own. We have had a dreary winter. Dr. Abbott and wife have got back. His health is poor indeed and the physician there told him to come east if he wanted to live. He was doing a good business there and would have made money. His wife expects to be confined and looks like fury. I'm glad I'm not married aren't you? I am so discontented – Uncle Carpenter leaves for Minnesota as soon as the Mississippi is open – soon I could go with him if I had the money. George Dillingham thinks some of coming to Boston to by goods and may be here soon. I do not expect he will give me my fare out there. Lucy Ann is doing well in her millinery business and says she would not come back to Maine for anything. Letter from Dellie that she is lonesome and they miss Daniel and Mary. Grandmother Trask is

very feeble and cannot live long. She is a great care for Mother. Melissa has just got over Diphtheria. She was very sick a few days.
Em

Letter April 20, 1862 INSERT

May 25, 1862 Dixfield from Em to Mary Root

Mother has such a hard time taking care of Grandmother that I could not go away any where. Mrs. Doct. Abbott has got a baby girl. Looks just like her. Doct Abbott's health is very poor indeed and he is going to Mount Zercon (?) to stop until he feels better. He was here and spent afternoon – seems very sober and much changed. Business is very poor. Father cannot collect a cent that is owing him. Hope your father will soon be better under Doct. Seymour's treatment. Does Aunt Elsie go to sleep many times a day as she did?

Emily

July 12, 1862 Dixfield Em to Mary

Grandmother Trask died quite suddenly last Monday at about 11 a.m. She has been gradually failing this long time and at last died very easily. She has been a great sufferer and had lost all her faculties. Mr. Bates attended the funeral - many people present.

Are they drafting soldiers in Greenfield now? They are going to begin here this week and there is great excitement about it. Many are leaving for Canada and I am glad of it. What does Daniel say about it? Of course he will sand draft and I hope he will go to Canada or some other place and stay awhile. I do hope all the Republicans will have to go now and we shall see a little of their boasted patriotism. If I was a man I should like to see anyone oblige me to go. I am real mad about it, are you? I see Mass. Offers much better inducements than Maine and perhaps they will not have to draft men there at present. But in Maine they're obliged to draft if they have any. Poor success to them say I.

How is your father's health? Are you still butchering? I wish Delphine could come home and make that long talked of visit. But as times are now of course, they could not afford it. I wish I was rich. If I thought I could get serving to do in Greenfield and Daniel and Delphine wanted me and if I could get the money to come, I would.

Em

Aug 31, 1862 the same

Dear Mary,

I have been in the milliners shop this last week tending shop while Miss Fairbanks is away on a visit. She will be away four weeks. Mason Eustis and wife have been here on a visit and are now in Boston. They have for Washington where he wants to see his brother Humphrey who is there as Lieut. In the 16th Regiment now stationed there. They wanted me to go back with them but were going in such a roundabout way it would have been too expensive and Mother did not want me to go. Lucy Ann has been very sick indeed with congestion of the lungs, had two attacks and did but just live. She was as cold as a dead person for three hours, no circulation. At last perspiration appeared and she gradually go relief. Her

sufferings were intense but God spared her for some good reason. Jone (Ione?) is going to be married to a shoe dealer there a Mr. Weaver (?) – worth some property and a fine man. Lucy Ann will miss her and probably wanted me to come on that account. She will have to give up her shop – overdoing – exposure. We all are much pleased with Mason's wife, a fine woman – will help him along in his business. She is good looking and very dressy indeed. Mason seems very fond of her. Mason says George Dillingham is coming here this fall. I do not think they will have to draft here as the town will raise money enough they will get volunteers. There are some that have skedadled – three of the Marble boys and I don't blame them so far. So glad that Daniel has such a good situation these hard times.

How I want to see the children. Mother is going to pick hops this week for Uncle John Eustis. Melissa is up to Rumford picking hops – coming home to attend school soon. Ellen, Henry Park's wife is dead. She died in the Insane Hospital at Augusta last weeks. She has been insane ever since her last child was born six months ago. She leaves three children. Henry's mother will take care of them I suppose. I have been sick, with bronchial sore throat. Many have typhoid fever and bad colds. Very cold weather here. I should like to see the soldier's camp in Greenfield. I think there is little patriotism. What do you think of McClellan's removal? Do you have any change there? I have just 2 cents and I am going to send this letter in a paper as I have not money enough to pay the postage. It is impossible to get any change, even postage stamps are very scarce – nothing but bills. I do not know what we shall do. School closed last week. Mr. Howard is to teach again in the spring, a fine teacher much beloved.

They begin to draft here this week. The town furnished its quota but many were rejected by the doctor. It seems as though I should freeze to death and I do not know what I shall do when winter comes. There is no meeting here now. If Daniel stays in Springfield long perhaps he can get you and I something to do in a store. Where are Charlie and Henry Fay now?

Em

INSERT

Date not stated from Em to Mary

I shall not each this winter – the pay is too low. The schools in the village are taught by a Mrs. Benjamin Burns of Woodstock and the small school by Sarah Wheeler. She boards herself and has \$5.00 a week would that be an inducement for you?

Feb 15th year not stated – from Em to Mary

Mother does not do much about the house but always busy about something on rugs a good deal. I have been making me two sofa pillows – very handsome. One is silk of all colors and the other of thibet and all wool delaine. So you see I am fixing as fast as possible. A very mild and comfortable winter so far, snow deep – sleighing good. The last I heard of your Father he was not able to leave the house. I hope it is better. Daniel wrote me of the marriage of Martha Burnham to H.G. Woodward. If your fathers health continues poor, I think Daniel should stay home from Springfield and look after the business. Cotton cloth is from 37 to 50 cents a yard and prints 25 and 30 cts a yard. I do not know what will become of poor families with many children. Tell Dellie that Rosella Harlow is going to have another baby and her health is very poor. She will not live but a short time if she continues to have children so fast as she has. I would get a divorce as soon as possible.

Em

March 16, 1862 Middlefield Mary Root to Justin Greenfield

Dear Father,

I came to Uncle Eliakim's Thursday night and it has been stormy ever since. No sugar has been made, the snow is so deep it is hard getting around. They wish for rain but it has been hail and snow. This morning the flakes were so large like snowballs. Daniel has gone up to Uncle Daniel Alderman's with Henry Fay who came yesterday. Uncle Daniel has begun making sugar – he caught about 40 buckets of sap last week during the warm spell and thinks he will have between twenty and thirty pounds of sugar. Uncle Daniel rec'd a letter from William a week ago. He was then expecting to march on the Manassas but that is taken without any fighting as many other places. What do you think of the Merrimac and Monitor. I hear they are panic stricken in New York for fear that the Merrimac will appear in their harbor but I rather think the little Monitor will prove a match for her.

Tell the children that Major is in the enjoyment of good health and eats his allowance regularly. Uncle Eliakim has a lame back that is troubling him considerably. He wants to know if you are going to buy the Stanton place. Another man is talking of buying it and he is afraid he will get the start of you. I should think it was about time that Mr. Church made up his mind in regard to the farm. Uncle E and Daniel have been busy getting things ready and will begin tapping the trees this afternoon. Tell Mother and Dellie they need not come over to get any sugar before tomorrow. Daniel says tell Charlie and Albert he will bring them home a sugar man.

Mary

From Dr. J Church to Justin Root May 20, 1862 Springfield

Dear Cousin

Telling what pills and medicine to take to increase urine and relieve breathing - diet – you better take the cous (?) and come and see me

J. Church

Ann Root to Mary Mar 22, 1862 Cambridge, Penn.

Dear Mary –

We are very lonely and sad since brother Eliakin's death and to know that our friends remember us is very gratifying. He had been sick with sore throat two or three weeks and had barely got able to go into the store again. The first day he went into the cellar and packed three hogs, took cold and had not felt well since. When he was taken sick his disease was inflammatory rheumatism.

He went to his breakfast in the morning and started back to the store but felt so badly that he crossed the street to the tavern, got as far as the barroom and laid down upon the floor. He lost the use of his limbs so fast that after dinner he had to be carried upstairs and never left his room until he was carried out a corpse. Father was at the village the day that he was taken sick, but he could not be moved so that we had to consent to his being away from us and visit him when we could. I did not see him but three times during his sickness. I might have staid with him some but he was in such a public place and not thinking him dangerous was waiting for a more convenient season and waiting for my own conscience was the most bitter drop in the whole cup. To think that he should die so near home without one of his family with him is almost too hard to bear. It seems to me that I cannot have it so. If I could only have been with him it would have been a great consolation to me at the time as well as now and forever.

I had no regrets as far as care was concerned for he had the best of care. An experienced hand as well as a particular friend. No one thought him in danger until it was too late for us to see him except the Land Lady. She said that she was worried and wanted to send for us but the doctor said no, there was no particular danger. And I suppose there was not until the disease struck his vitals and then he went almost instantly. The doctor was in hopes of keeping it from seating at the heart and said in all probability it would not but for the previous disease of the heart which he has been troubled with ever since his return from Mass.

If I could only see you I could talk to you but I cannot write. I have lost all my ambition and interest in every thing, only to pass the time with as little thought and care as possible. I think sometimes if it was not for father, I should not care what became of me. He is so kind and attentive to us all that I would not put another drop in his cup but rather drink what was in it. My good old Father! I almost worship him and I can see that his troubles wear upon him. His health has not been very good this winter and for some time he has had a very bad cold with a cough, but is getting the better of it now. My health is about the same, grunting all the time, but never sick. We all want you to come and visit us.

Yours with much love,
Ann

Scotia July 13, 1862 Aunt Laura Collins to Mary Root

My dear Niece

I feel very anxious about your father and what Dr. Church thinks. I hope it will not prove to be heart disease. I was never so busy in my life as I have been this spring and summer. My girl, who lived with me several years, was married in the spring. We milk 9 cows and make a quantity of butter. I think the best medicine for your father would be for him and your mother to drive out here with your own team. It would cost you but little and would give us great pleasure. I want you to come with them. It is vacation with the girls. Susan graduated this summer and will be at home now. Annie and Katie will go again in the fall. I want you and the girls to know each other. Susan is going to Mass. this summer. Do you hear often from William? We have had no news for a good while.

Aunt Laura

Ann Root, Pa July 20, 1862 Cambridge

Dear Mary ---

We have had carpenters 4 or 5 weeks and now comes haying so we shall get no rest. So dry early the men have just finished hoeing the corn. Father makes the cheese and the girl and I do the rest of the work. I work hard too. You are not teaching – had you rather do housework than teach school? I never did like teaching. If I were a man I rather be a soldier, as little courage as I have. We here feel very sad about the subject of the war. The fighting before Richmond has made a great many mourning hearts in our vicinity. Three of our acquaintances were killed. Two lived in the village and I went to school with the other. He had a brother die of disease a week afterwards and his friends hearing of his untimely end about the same time that the other died. There were others killed whom we know not so well. Three others are missing, we do not know whether dead or prisoners. Two of these grew up with us. Also several intimate friends wounded, not expect to live. They belonged to the 83rd Regt Penn. Vol. Probably you have heard of it. It was one of the Crack Regts that won the prize suit. The Coln was killed and nearly all of the officers

were disabled. And the last that we knew the regiment was in the care of Corporal Langley (a friend of ours). He was slightly wounded in the left hand. Out of 700 men of that regiment that went into action upon the 26th of June, at the calling of the roll after the battle they could must only 112 men fit for duty. A few stragglers have come into camp since but not enough to bring them up to 150 I think. It makes me feel very sad indeed when I read of the slaughter that was made there. It was said that the 83rd regt fought 2 days and marched one night without anything to eat, and not one murmur was heard. I should think that their strength would have failed if their courage did not.

We were so sorry to hear of your father's poor health. Father worries and wants to hear all about him as often as you can. Do Daniel and his family still live with you. I wish I could have been with you during your visit in Middlefield.

Love to all

Ann

Albert is so different but he is a better boy than he used to be. He goes to Sabbath school and day school every day. Em game me a new balmoreol skirt, it is black and white. I hear from Daniel every week. He wrote he should send you some money to help pay the rent when he got it. He has not sent me any yet but I think he will soon. I have just got Albert a pair of boots made – cost \$2.25 – he is a staver (staner, starer??). I have to make and mend all the time for him

D.L. Root

Em to Mary Oct 12 1862

My Dear Friend

I wish I could talk with you through some other medium than by the pen. For I can think of ten thousand things that I want to say to you but can not very well pen them down. But I will try and write something. I was quite surprised to hear by your letter that so many from your neighborhood had enlisted in the army. I should think it seem rather lonesome and I presume it does. If so it is the same there as everywhere. It seems sad does it not, Mary, when one thinks what our young men have gone for and what they are fighting for. What do you think of the Emancipation bill of the effects of it hereafter? It seems to me as if it was a wrong course to take to bring about a reconciliation so much desired, but time will prove all things. When his bloody war ends – and how many more precious lives must be sacrificed. I wish I could have that answered. I do think the North will have to give up yet for I firmly believe the South will never yield one particle and this Emancipation bill is not calculated to cool their wrath at all. But I am afraid I should be called a Rebel and I will not say more.

We are having fine weather now – warm as August although we have had several very heavy frosts of late killing many of the flowers. What are you up to these days and what do you intend doing this winter? I am at present in the Milliner's shop while she is away after fall goods. What I shall do this winter I am unable to say at present. I shall do something that is certain. I expect to sew three weeks for Lucy Marble as soon as Miss Fairbanks gets back unless I have a chance to do something else. Where does your Aunt Catherine and Regina live now that Edward is gone? Remember me to them when you see them. I suppose they felt very badly to have him go.

Do you hear anything from William now and where is he stationed? Has the regiment in camp at Greenfield left yet? I should think it would make business seem quite lively to have them there although not so pleasant for the people unless they are more quiet than soldiers in general. Do you go up to Barnardston often and how are the girls? We is Mrs. Denham now and ??? child? Do you have any poverty fits nowadays? If so what do you do for them? I should like your remedy much for I have strong symptoms of them and should like a preventative if I could get it. Did you shed a tear when Byron left you? Of course you did. Remember me to your father and mother and Elsie,
Your friend Em

And some on acct of disease. One, our nearest neighbor almost, was wounded in the left forearm. He has some hope of having the use of his arm in time but it is very weak yet, he has to carry it in a sling and probably will have to for months, but it is better to come home that way than not at all. I was very much surprised to hear of Clarson Smith's enlistment. What has he done with his wife and farm and in fact what are they all doing in Mass? I do not hear from there much. I had a letter from Aunt Mira the other day stating that Clarkson had a little daughter also she and Uncle William a son. I think that the country is getting fruitful.

Ann

Cousin Mary

After letting my letter be so long I will send it anyway. I couldn't find an envelope fit to use. If you would only come you would find it easy not staging it alt all – the cars run into Cambridge every day now so you can ride almost into our door. I rec'd an address from Henry Fay from South Wilbraham and that was all so I suppose he is located there in some business – teaching I concluded but do not know . Do you? I thought it might be one of his practical jokes and I should hate to send a letter to that address and get fooled. I rec'd his likeness some time ago and I must write soon any way.

Ann

From J. Church to Just Dec 4, 1862

Dear Cousin,

The powder had better be put into a vial and be covered. Tell Mary to write me again and tell me all about your symptoms. Then I will write again.

J Church

Mar 12, 1863 From J Church (Dr.) Springfield

I wrote your Uncle Eliakim on Sat and have been expecting to see or hear from him ever since. If he does not come by tomorrow noon, I shall take the P.M. train. I shall call on Dr ??? who will take me up or if not I can walk it with all ease.

Very truly yours

J. Church

From J.B. Pomeroy to Justin Jan 15, 1863

Justin Root Esq.

Dr Sir –

Your letter of enquiry I rec'd this evening and in reply would say that there is a Quinipiac Co whose Post Office address is this place. They are manufacturers of Fish Guano and other portable manures. They have been in business for 10 or 12 years in the same place and so far as I know are perfectly honorable and reliable for all their business engagements. They are considered by us as A. No. 1

Yours respectfully

J.B. Pomeroy P.M. Wallingford Conn.

March 1, 1863

Laura Collins to Mary, Scotia

My dear Niece

We heard your father had a relapse I feel very anxious about him. Your Uncle Daniel Alderman and Aunt Electa were here the last of Jan. They said if your father was able he would come to Middlefield. I shall meet you there. Harmony Smith made us a visit this winter when on her way to Cato. Jamie has had the Salt Rheum very bad this winter. He is able to go to school now. Annie and Katie go to school and Susan helps with the housework and I find her a great help.

Laura Collins

Laura to Susan May 31, 1863

Dear Sister –

I feel deeply for you in your affliction (*Justin Root died April 1, EFR*) I trust you recognize the hand of God in his dealings with you. It may seem hard for us to bear yet He doeth all things well and it is our duty to be submissive to his will. I feel very sorry for the loss of the slaughterhouse. It makes it very bad for you at this time. I should think it would injure the sale of the place. I am surprised that Mr. Newton should prove unfriendly to you or your interest. I thought he was one of Justin's best friends and I am astonished that he should do anything unfair with you at such a time as this. I sincerely hope that he will prove a friend. You wished to get \$800 and have some one bid the place off for you and I have talked with Charley about it and he wishes me to say to you that his money is invested in such a way that he could not do it. I hope that you will get the place sold to your satisfaction. It must be very unpleasant business for you. Let me know how you get along and what Daniels is doing. Annie and Katie are still in school. Annie finished in July. We have had a cold backward spring but warm now and things coming along fast. I have not heard from Eliakim since I came home. I heard by way of Charles Fay that Daniel Alderman was married. I am glad, on sister's acct. It will make things pleasant for them all. Enclosed find \$10 which you will please accept. Remember me to Della and the children.

Laura Collins

From Aunt -- Root Middlefield to Mary Jane 2, 1863

My dear Niece

We could not come over – Come as soon as you can. How are Dellie and the children? Where is your mother now? What is Daniel doing?

Root

From Mother Susan Root Greenfield Aug 20

Dear Daughter –

Glad you are having such a good visit. Much surprised that Eliakim had sold his farm and more surprised that W (?) had bought it. Presume that Mr. Collins is at the bottom of it. I know that they would buy it before they would see it go into other hands. I am glad of it. I will go and make Will a visit. I hope that Will feel better now he has got rid of the place. It will be very pleasant for the Alderman family to all be together.

Mr. Cushing has sold out and I shall not have the trouble of them unless the men back out. They have not come yet to take possession and we hope that they will not. They cannot get any place to keep house. Regina is going to South Deerfield to work in the wallet shop and the girl at work for Mr. Cushing is going with her. They want 20 or 30 girls there. Catherine has gone to Brattleborough to take care of a sick woman. Ed is going to Halifax to work he thinks. Enoch says that Harvey Newton says they will give me 50 cents a week for Elsa staying here – they would have given me that long ago if I had asked for it. I expect to be called for soon. Ely's folks have come home last Friday. He is some better and thinks he is going into business again but will go to the salt water to live before he goes into business again. Catherine has been to Esters ever since you went away. She has not been able to do her work since you went away. She wants me to come and help her tomorrow. I suppose you will come Saturday. Tell Eliakim I hope he will have a good visit in Penn. I shall come and see them when they get settled.

Your mother,

Susan Root
