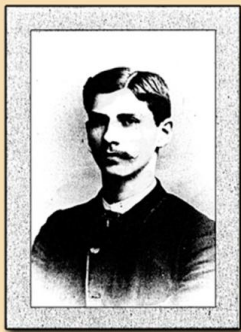


**CIVIL WAR  
LETTERS  
OF**



**FRANCIS J. PHELPS**

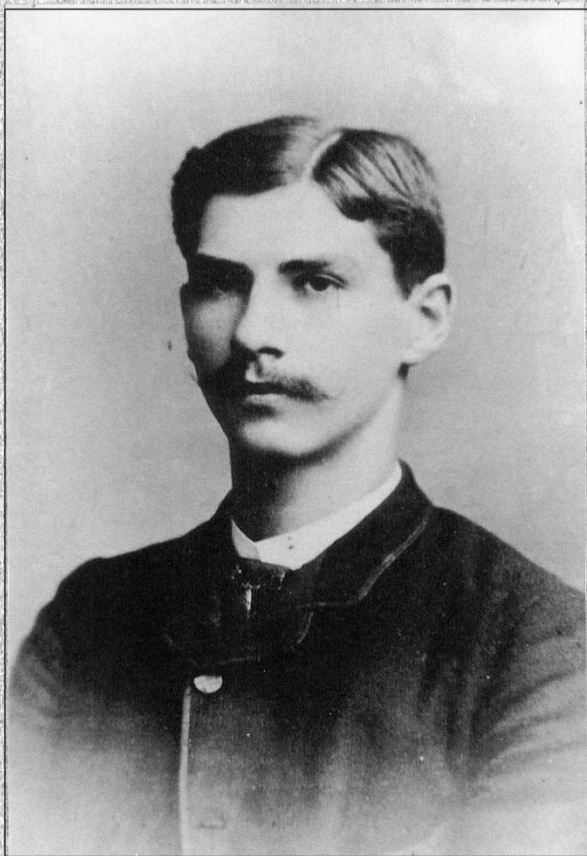
CIVIL WAR LETTERS  
Of  
FRANCIS J.  
PHELPS

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**FRANCIS JASON PHELPS**  
June 9, 1833 - May 6, 1864



LYDIA ANNE LARGE  
Wife of Francis J. Phelps

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The letters contained in this work were all written by Francis J. Phelps,  
except for the three listed here:

No. 3, by B.C. Flagg, a family friend.

No. 27, by 1st Sergeant Joseph W. Wallace,  
reporting the death of Francis to his father.

No. 28, by Jason Phelps to a Mr. Lyman.

## **Letter Number, Date, Where Written & To Whom Addressed**

- #1 December 20, 1861, Camp Griffin, near Washington, D.C.  
to Sisters and Brother
- #2 January 6, 1863, camp near Whiteoak Church, Va. to Father
- #3 January 20, 1863, Hatteras Island N.C. to "My Dear Friends"  
from H. C. Flagg
- #4 March 19, 1863, Penningtonville [home], Chester County, Pa.  
to Father
- #5 April 1, 1863, Harrisburg Pa. to Father
- #6 April 13, 1863, Camp Curtin, Harrisburg Pa. to Father
- #7 April 16, 1863, Harrisburg Pa. to Sister
- #8 July 18, 1863, Moscow, Luzerne Co., Pa. to Father
- #9 August 13, 1863, Moscow, Luzerne Co. Pa. to Sister
- #10 August 22, 1863, Moscow, Luzerne Co. Pa. to Father
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- #16 November 30, 1863, Camp Curtin, Harrisburg Pa. to Father
- #17 December 3, 1863, Camp Curtin, Harrisburg Pa. to Sister
- #18 [date unknown], Camp near Brandy Station, Va. to Father
- #19 December 22, 1863, Camp near Brandy Station, Va, to Sister
- #20 January 4, 1864, Camp near Brandy Station, Va, to Father
- #21 January 21, 1864, Camp near Brandy Station, Va. to Father
- #22 January 28, 1864, Camp near Brandy Station, Va to Sister
- #23 February 4, 1864, Camp near Brandy Station, Va. to Father
- #24 February 24, 1864, Camp near Brandy Station, Va. to Father
- #25 March 24, 1864, Sadsbury Pa. to Sister
- #26 April 15, 1864, Camp near Brandy Station, Va.  
to Father\*
- #27 May 19, 1864, Camp below Fredericksburg, Va.  
to Jason Phelps, Esq  
  
from Joseph W. Wallace  
1st Serg Co. E 49 Reg. P.V.
- #28 May 31, 1864, Pottersville N.H. to Mr. Lyman  
from Jason Phelps

\* Francis J. Phelps's last known letter.

## INTRODUCTION

I believe the Civil War letters published in this book to have been in the custody of my great aunt, Sarah Matilda Phelps, the eldest of four children by the third wife, Mary Webster Knowlton, of Jason Phelps, of that part of Dublin, now Chesham Village, in Harrisville, New Hampshire.

Auntie was close to her father and, like him, a chorister. She was a practical nurse and for many years asserted that her "home away from home" was that of her youngest brother; my and my siblings' grandfather, Alfred Clayton Phelps, of 80 North Lincoln Street, Keene, New Hampshire

Among other things, Sarah left Grandpa a medium sized, buckskin covered trunk containing family memorabilia, and a small, to be carried, buckskin trunk or chest, beautifully decorated with fancifully cut strips of thin leather. This chest contained old deeds, family letters, and a treasure trove of Civil War letters written from the front by her half-brother, Francis J. Phelps, to his siblings and father, Jason Phelps.

Grandpa left these memorabilia to his only son, our father, Austin Clayton Phelps, from whom I inherited them, as keeper, after his death in 1957. He had previously authorized me to dispose of the memorabilia and letters in what I should consider the best manner for posterity.

I conceived it proper to commission my nephew, Edward Clayton Phelps, of Bernardston, Massachusetts, to care for and publish the Civil War letters of Francis J, Phelps and later deposit them in an historical archive, preferably in the New Hampshire Archives at Concord, since the family resided for many years in that state. Edward accepted the offer of my younger brother, George Alfred Phelps, of Sparks, Nevada, to compile the letters in book form.

Francis Jason Phelps was born on the 16th of January, 1833, the only child of Jason Phelps and his first wife, Mary Ann Monroe, of Lowell, Massachusetts. He served in the Union Army from 1861 until his death, during the "Battle of the Wilderness,"<sup>1</sup> in Virginia on May 6, 1864.

Although Francis was married, to Lydia Large of Pennsylvania, and had a daughter, Ida Angeline, and two sons, William Preston and Francis Jason, none of his descendents are known to us.

John Edward Phelps, 1999



## Editor's Note

In order to provide the reader with the essence of the actual letters, I have copied them "verbatim" to the best of my ability, using the same format as nearly as possible, and the original spelling and punctuation, or lack of it, that Francis used some 136-years ago. I have limited the use of added [bracketed] words and characters to those which seem essential for clarification.

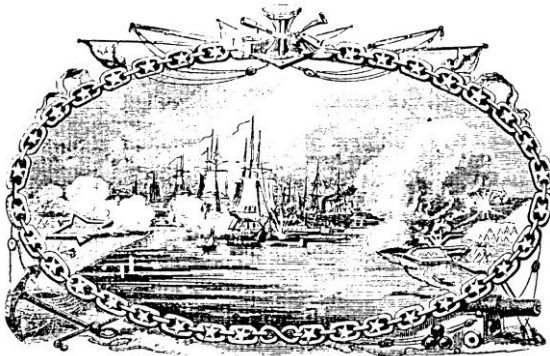
George A. Phelps

Ladies Editor  
Maple Hill N.Y.  
49 Post Road  
Miss Martha Phelps  
Ferrisville  
Cheshire County  
care of Jason Phelps N.H.

Copy of a letter envelope written by Francis J. Phelps

December 20, 1861

letter #1



Bombardment of Forts Walker and Beauregard at Port Royal, S. C., by U. S. Fleet, Com. Dupont.

Camp Griffin

Dec 20/61

Dear Sisters and Brother

I take my pen in hand for the first time to write you a few lines thinking perhaps it would be a pleasure to you to get a letter from a long absent brother; I should like to come to see you but have not had the time nor the opportunity or any thing else that I could leave home perhaps you may be surprised to receive a letter from me being so far from home and in the circumstances in which

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engages being at war with our Southern people but I do not wish you to feel any apprehension in regard to my safety for I expect the whole grand army will return home in the spring where we shall live in enjoyment and happiness in the future; I have not much to write except that I am in good circumstances at this time we have a log house which we built to live in and we have a stove to warm it there has not been any very serious cold weather here we have built quite a large city so that we have every thing pretty nice with one exception and that is the presence of the fair sect as we cannot enjoy their smiles; for it is out of the question to keep them in a soldiers camp I would advise brother William not to try soldiering for it is not a pleasant piece of business there is a great deal of hard work about

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it that he does not think of and more it is rather hard living I have not a great story to relate but will say that I have often thought of writing to you should you recive this letter you will remember your long absent Brother and write to him without restrant as I like to here from long unseen friends and you must all learn to write as it is great to here from you as I cannot be present to talk to you so no more at present but remane yours most Afectionate

Brother

Francis J. Phelps

Direct

Camp Griffins near

Washington D C

Colonel Irwins reg 49 P.V.\*

Care of Cap G F Smith

\* [Pennsylvania Volunteers]

January 6, 1863

Letter #2

Camp near Whiteoak Church Va

January 6th 1863

Dear Father

I am well and in good health at this time; and hope to remain so; providence permitting; We are now in Winter quarters now but do not know how long we may stay in time as we have three days rations on hand all the time with orders to be in readiness to move at a moments notice, I am quite comfortably fixt; have a whole tent by myself and a fireplace in it that makes the tent so warm that I cannot stay in it sometimes, the weather is quite warm here and very pleasant more like spring at home; but it may not continue so long; We wer in the battle of Fredrickburg and lay in line of battle three days; the shot and shell flew round us like hail but there was not one hurt in the regiment, but the

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gun stacks had to suffer as several of them were hit; and it was fortunate that we were not ordered to charge on the rebel batteries for if we had there would not be many left for we would have been mowed down, and it was thought practicable to fall back across the river on our old line of battle; there is not much confidence placed in the General in command of the army now but there is a great liking for McClalland and I think the troops would fight better under him than any one else; but however we must obey any one that is put in command of us, and there are but few in the army that do not want the war over for us poor soldiers want to get home to see our friends Wives and Children and if the Government would let us privates settle it we would go and shake hands with the enemy then go home; and this I will say is the sentiment in both armies, as we

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have talked with them on picket so you see that it is men in office of the government that is keeping it up and it proved to be a niger war I suppose you will peraceave that I have turned from a republican to a demeacrat and so are every man I hope you will not think that I am doing rong but things have altered from what they wer two years ago and I think there will be some more alteration in events to come; I have no more to write at present but let me hear from you soon direct your letters as usual so good buy from your

Affectionate Son

Francis J. Phelps

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P.S. we have not been payed off foe six months but expect it soon; there is no letter stamps to be had in the army I would like some sent me.

January 20, 1863

letter #3

[letterhead engraving]

“THE CONSTITUTION AND THE LAWS”

Hatteras Island [N.C.] Jan 20 [1863]

[illegible] Emma[?]

My Dear friend Sarah

Before I came away I promised to write to you, we are now on an Island which belongs to North Carolina

The place where we are is a union place They were forced into the rebel army, when Gen. Butler took this place the rebels ran and they that were forced into the army remained. The Island is about forty miles long and two wide it is mostly sand, but where it is not it [is] mud and water with nothing but rushes on it. There is quite a number of kinds of trees on it I never saw any like them before there is a number



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of families on the island but they can neither read or write but they can count money quick enough. We had quite a hard journey across the water from Annapolis to Hateras Inlet when they came round the cape the captain of the boat said that if we had been two hours later we should have sunk but we got through safe, but ran into a sand and there the boat lays They tried quite a number of times to draw it of[f] when we were on it but could not, then they got us off it and tried again with three steam boats to draw it off but cant start it so it lays there and is all breaking to pieces. There was one schooner

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that sank while we were on the boat and  
right in sight of the boat where [I] was  
There has two more sunk since we left the  
bay

There was a number of boats Loaded with  
horses belonging to the fleet, one boat was  
wrecked and out of the one hundred and  
forty horses that was on board nineteen were  
saved They were all flung overboard  
some would swim for the shore others the  
waves would dash against the boat which  
killed them instantly they were all the time  
within a few rods of the shore the men  
were all saved but had a hard time of it, I  
wish you would send me a bushel of  
doughnuts and a good cheese, we move so  
often that I want something

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besides hard bread to eat and that is all we can get when we are moving, write soon and let me know all about the matters at school and Pottersville but I must close with Love to all enquireing friends remember and keep a good share for yourself.

Yours truly H.C. Flagg

March 19, 1863

letter #4

Penningtonville, Chester County, Pa,

March 19, 1863

Dear Father,

You will be surprised to receive a letter from me, written from the above named place and in order for you to understand why it is that you receive one from me at this place, taking into consideration the time that I would have to serve in the army, and that I had to go through the present Campaign, which may be one of the severest that has been had since the commencement of the war, and it being altogether likely that I might receive a wound that would cripple me for life, or be killed in one of the many battles that may be fought this summer, I came to the conclusion to do the best thing for my family that could be done under the present circumstances, and in order to do so I have reenlisted in the service of my Country for the term of three years more unless sooner discharged, and receive the bounties given to them who reenlist from the Government and from the County which is three hundred and fifty dollars, and

[page 1 cont'd]

furthermore by doing so at this time, it has given me the opportunity of placing my family in good circumstances this spring, and being at home I can do so better than when I am in the army, perhaps you will think I have done a fullish thing

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but under those considerations I do not know how I could well avoid that my chances were small during the presant Champaign, there are but few men who have reenlisted that have done as I have although I do not claim to be an exception by bringing home all of their bounty money and placeing it in their Wife's hands. I brought home with me five hundred and fifty dallors I supposed that my wife would be tereably disappointed in my doing so, but it seems that she is in better hart than I anticipated, which I was very happy to find.

I do not think the war can last more than twelve months longer, and it must be desided one way or the other this year as I think neather party can hold out longer, and with the means I have at hands I belive I can get along better than I have I have done during the past two years, and there is a prospect of the pay of the soldiers being raised there will be more inducements for men to enlist, I would liked to come down to see you this spring, and intended to do

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so, but circumstances prevented my doing so, as it takes all that I can earn to keep my family, when I wrote that letter [to]

Martha about the Irish man, it was intended for me as I thought of surprising you by visiting you un expectedly

I was out on that reconaissance of the 21 of February and had a very fine time while we were out. I have no more to write of interest so will bid you good buy

While I remain as ever your

Son

Francis J. Phelps

P.S. I shall remain at home intill the eleventh of April, you can write to me here if you like

April 1, 1863

letter #5

Harrisburg April 1st/63

Dear Father,

I am well and in good spirits and hoping that these few lines may find you enjoying the same blessing. I am located at Harrisburg the Capitol of the state on provost duty for the present time I cannot complain of my treatment so far every thing has gone on well I think that I may not go to the army for some time, our boys write home that our regiment has but 70 men fit for duty now, should they decrease in the same degree that they have for the last two months there will not be a man fit for duty then the regiment will be disbanded as it would take a long time to fill up the ranks at the rate we are recruiting for we get



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but few men now, unless they [fill] the old regiment up with next draft which I think they will but that will take some time for there will be so many to be filled that our regiment will not stand a very good chance of getting full My wife and Children wer well when I left them, I got paid yesterday and sent the money home I have no more to write so good bye from your affectionate  
Son

Francis J. Phelps

April 13, 1863

letter #6

Camp Curtin Harrisburg April 13/63

Dear Father

I received your very welcome letter last Wednesday and was very glad to hear from you, that you are well and in good spirits. I am well as usual, You say that Sarah is going to teaching school this summer I did not suppose that they had advanced in there as to become, school teachers, but I am happy to find that they have improved there time, which to my own sorrow I have neglected so much that I have been under the necessity of studying ever since more or less.

You wished to know whether those daguerreotypes came, they did, I thought I wrote about them in my last, but perhaps I forgot it, however I will try to remember things better the next time

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they look very natural but they have grown so large that I do not suppose that I should know them if I wer to see them, there has been an Order issued to muster out of service all of the supernumery Officers of the consolidated regiments in the field and I come under the head of the list with them so I shall be mustered out in a week or two then I should like to get a commission as a second Lieut - if possable - as I cannot earn more for the support of my family than to be in the army, I suppose my wife would rather have me stay at home and go to work and it may be for my benefit but I am liable to the draft which I do not desire to have presed on me for I would rather be a voluntier than a drafted man My family are all well when I heard from them last, and I hope soon to be with them the rest of my days which I hope end in peace and happiness I have not much more to write I may think of coming up to N.H. to see you sometime before long so good buy

From your son

Francis J. Phelps

April 16,

letter #7

Harrisburg April 16th, 1863

Dear Sister

It is pleasure that I take my pen in hand to write you a few lines. That may be of interest to you, and I am happy to hear from, Father that you are well. I am well and in good spirits at the presant time, and hope these few lines reach you, in safety, I am on guard in camp to day, it is raining, and the weather is very bad, besides it is so very dull here, that I did not know what to do with myself, there are but few men in camp, and nothing of interest going on here, that I set myself down writing; There is a prospect of my being mustered out of the service in a week or two, as there was an order issued to that efect from the war department for supernumery Officers to be mustered out of the service, and since the consoladation of my

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regiment. I come under the head of the list of the supernumeres, should I be so happy as to get a discharge from the service, it may be possable that I may come home this spring should nothing prevint, and I think it may be the only opertunity I may have of seeing my friends.

It has been a very long time since I saw your smiling faces, and the joyous laugh, that rang out on the still evening air of a soft summer day, when I left you, little thinking that when I went that I should be so long away. But time flies swiftly, we know not the ways of God, his works are many and past comprehension, it with plasure that I think of those times when we used to scramble over the grean pasture of our Fathers farm in search of chickerberys and other fruit, those times are past and gone, and we have grown older in years, but perhaps our hearts are as joyous as ever, still there

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is not that childishness connected with it as in our young days, and as we are getting older we see that there is something better to live for, we have a bright future before us, which if every moment is employed in something that will advance our knowledge, and improve our minds with a better understanding. Then as we look through the long prospective, and see fulfilment of prophecy and promise, though it may be accompanied by discouragements annoyances, and perplexities yet in all our studies we should not be discouraged, but advance with a steady step up the ladder of fame. The Bible is a book all should study, with diligence and understanding, for through it we shun a very many evil ways of sin and wickedness, It gives us but one view of our case, and apart from the free, unmerited grace of God, authorizes no hope for a single soul, it is a mournfull truth, but as the word of God teaches thus

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should we live by his precepts and example, and upon his truths we must plant ourselves a fundamental principle. So I will say no more for this time, but I find by Father's letter that you are going to teach school this summer I am glad to hear that you are qualified to instruct the young, and may you commence with mildness and affection, not to be stern or overbearing but pleasant to all your scholars seek to gain their hearts and affection, then they will obey you in every thing, otherwise you may have trouble. Now no more for the present while I remain your Affectionate

Brother

Francis J. Phelps

Write soon for I do like to hear from home direct your letters to Penningtonville,  
Chester County

July 18, 1863

letter #8

Moscow Leugerns Co July 18th 63

Dear Father

It is with plasure that I take my pen in hand to inform you that we are still on recruiting service, we have not recruited but one man since we have been here, there is a prospect of our going back to the army after the Draft, which is in progress at the presant time, the first of the Draft commences on the 21st of this month there has been quite a riot in New York on account of the Draft, but it has to be enforced, there can be no oporsition to the laws of the Government, and it ought to be known that the presant rebellion must be put down and the Union must and shall be preserved, I do not know the reason the people have so much oporsition to the demands of the presant administration, they are doing all they can to suppress the rebellion. And when we are just beginning to see the light of peace breaking through



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the clouds of desolation that has obscured the horizon of our once happy country, by the many victories that have lately dawned upon our victorious army of the Potomac, and also of the west.

Therefore are there not people enough in these united states, that have patriotic feeling in remembrance of the deeds of the noble fathers of the revolution. Who have built up one of the best Governments on the face of the earth. It is my desire to see our Union restored to its once peaceful security and prosperity, that has given us these long years of happy progress and independence, now although our country has been struggling, with the elements of civil war, and as darkness is disappearing from the heavens when our armies are gaining laurels for themselves, on the battlefield, is it wrong for people to create fables among themselves in opposition to the demands of the Government,

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there is a law made by which men can buy themselves from the draft by paying 300 dollars in to the hands of any Officer instructed to receive the money, there can be clubs formed for the purpos of raising money for those that are too poor, and cannot get the money, the men of this place have formed a club for that purpos, and should men be drafted they will recive \$300 whether they go or not, which will benefit there familys if they have any. And this one instance of the many that in like manor might the people help there countryman. Yet the Government may already have the means by [which] they can suppress this willfull disinterestedness for the restoration of our Union. There are those who are doing all they can to prolong the war. And with incredible and amusing stupidity some of them honestly think it strange that a great sovereign, imperial Government would not suffer itself to be snuffed out like a tallow dip.

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These gentry who have not had the courage to fight and maintain with arms the cause which they affect to consider so just and holy, are the most contemptible phenomena of the rebellion, they congregate with our one indigmous copperheads and hiss at the Government to which they to which they ask the security of their lives and rights, and the protection of all the property which has not been exhumed by the relentles despotism for the success of which they so ardently pray. Those men ought not to have a pace on God's footstool upon which they could stand for they have no heart for the many poor men that are suffering for the country and the many breaking hearts that are left at home, widdoes and orphans. I will close by saying that I am well and trust this may find you the same while I remain your affectionate Son

Francis J. Phelps

August 13, 1863

letter #9

Moscow Luzerne Co. August 13th 1863

Dear Sister

It is with pleasure that I take my pen in hand to write you a few lines for the second time. I recived your letter some time ago, and was very glad to here from you, your busy at home all the time you might employ tour time oftener in writing to me, it is plesant to here from friends all far distant and to peruse the long letters of the ones we love. But sister you say that your writing is bad, elegable but there is time fore improvement, and you ought to open a corespondanse with some of your acquaintances for that purpus. What is more beautifull than a well writen letter, where one can read it without stoping to spell every word, it is a branch of study which will be a companion to you in your lone and weary hours of solitude. Then when you can pass your time plesantly away in speaking to your friends at a distants. I suppose you have been out at making hay for Father this summer. That is more than the girls do in this part of the united states, because they

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use the horse-powers to do there work here and it saves labour. I expect to go back to my regiment on the first of September as it is to be fild up with the conscripts. I am very pleasantly situated here, and do not care much about going back to the army. I suppose Sarah has got my letter I wrote to her some time ago write to me and let me know for she has not answered it yet. I have no more to write of interest so I will close, while I remain your

Affectionate Brother  
Francis J. Phelps

August 22, 1863

letter #10

Moscow Luzerne Co. August 22d /63

Dear Father

There is not much new that is of interest here, no more than you have heard, they are still pegging away at Charlestown, I think the nest of treason will soon be ours, or in ashes, and with the taking of that City we hope to see the rebellion go down. This union never was so great as now. The storm which has torn its sails, and racked its sides, and strained its cables, has only embeded its anchors more securely in the earth. The question of its permanance is already settled, the close of the rebellion is only a matter of time, it will come and the arch-traitor will exclaim as did Lord North when he heard of the surrender of Cornwallis; O God its all over, it is all over, be patient, be hopefull; Let God work it out,

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for His hand is in this war as surely as His hand was in the deliverance of the Hebrews from Egypt, it is said this was the slave holders war on Law and Government, but it might be cald the Lords war on the national wickedness, on a slaveholding barbarism, and when the war is over the wickedness will be expialed in blood, and barbarism will have disappeared forever. As sure as the Slaveholder's hand is seen tearing the constitution to peaces, God's hand is seen breaking off the fetters of the slave, peace will not come untill freedom is secured. When the nation is right we shall be victorious. God will keep us in the crucible untill the dread of this plague is burned off. Who would want this war closed untill we get ready for a firm lasting peace, untill the viper that has been stinging and poisoning

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us is dead. O what a country ours will be when the states shall be united when the dear old flag shall wave from Maine to Georgia, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, when slavery shall have become extinct, when the barbarism of the Southern society shall have given way to a better civilization, when those immense cottonfields shall be worked by free labor or cut up into farms for our brave soldiers, when by those bloodyed rivers huge manufactories shall rise, when there shall be no cause of desolation and strife, but when all will be animated by one common interest, inspired by a common faith in Liberty and Religion. That day will come, it may be away over some dark trials beyond some fearfull calamities but it will come; it will be such a day as Washington and Hancock and Adams pictured and dreamed about



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and prayed for it will come with its blessings, and be greeted with Hallelujahs, it will be the Millennium of political glory, the Sabbath of Liberty and the Jubilee of Humanity.

I have no more to write but  
will say that I am well and  
so are my family and I trust  
you will receive this in the  
enjoyment of good health

So good buy while I remain  
your affectionate Son

Francis J. Phelps

September 13, 1863

letter #11

Camp Curtin Harrisburg Sept 13/63

Dear Sister,

Not having heard from you since I have moved my post, thought you would like to hear from me, I have been in Camp Curtin two weeks, and was in Washington since with a squad of men. It is very tiresome rideing on the cars, so far, with men in charge, for it keeps a person on the lookout all of the time, they are apt to get off the train when it stops at a station. I had rather be on duty in camp than to go any place with a party of recruits.

It is not likely that we shall go to the regiment for some time, so we shall be kept here on duty during the draft. It is just two years to day since I enlisted in the service, and I have thirteen months to serve yet, unless sooner discharged. Which I hope will be the case, as there

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is some talk of peace among the rebels, they are getting tired of the war more than we are, and their sources of communication and supplies are being cut off, so that their territory is diminishing in circumference, with the advance of our Victorious armies.

Who is there that cannot be proud of glorious sons of liberty who are marching on to conquer a rebellious foe. That would destroy our peace, and our liberty. We find that the nest of treason is being swept from the face of the earth. Fort Sumter is a mass of ruins, and it will not be long till Charleston City will fall, and with it, the hidred head of rebellion.

Then may we cry the song Hoist up the flag long may she wave.

Over the Union so noble, and so brave. It is a dreary day in camp, the clouds are o'erspread the heavens, there was quite a heavy shower last night, which was very dry. We are about to move our camp to some other part of Harrisburg this week, as this was the old fairground. I think it will be used for that purpose this season. I think that

[page 2 cont'd]

is what we are to move for. I was at home week before last, my family are well and they sen there love to you and the rest of the folks. There is not much of intrest to write, excep[t] I got quite a soking last night in the rain going out to the picnic

So I will bid you good bye and  
write soon. While I remain  
Your affectionate

Brother  
Francis J. Phelps

September 27, 1863

letter #12

Camp Curtin Harrisburg Sept 27th 1863

Dear Sister

I suppose you are looking for an answer to your letter that you wrote to me some time ago. But having been busy most all the time since I have not had the opportunity to confine myself to writing. And to day I am acting Officer of the guard. Which is the same as Captain and recognized by the red sash they were over there shoulder as I have one over mine I am entitled to that respect that a Captain in the field has.

The time I take to pen this noat, is while on duty in the Guards room in the guardhouse. There is confined here 18 prisoners, nearly all deserters and it requires thirty Guards to watch them We have very plesant weather here today, the sun beams down upon us quite warm, there is not a cloud to be seen in the heavens, truly this is a lovely day for the sabath. But soldiers have no time to attend to divine worship, except it is performed in camp, then it is not very well attended by them,

[page 2]

for there is not much that is Godly seen in a soldiers life. If a civallions were to go around among the quarters of the men they would find them playing cards or at most any other game, that can be thought of. In fact this war has degraded more men of sound moral principles than any thing that can be brought to bare on the wellfair of man. Men of religious minds going into the army, will soon forget his heavenly ways, and become degraded in mind, if not in principle.

War is a destroying agent to every thing lovely, virtuous and honorable. And thousands of young men who have entered the service of there country, have become degraded in principle and virtue, and nothing can stay the progress of a downward course when they are thrown into society of those who compose a large army, for they are made up of different classes of men throughout this Country

[No ending suggests missing page or pages. Editor]

October 15, 1863

letter #13

Camp Curtin Oct 15th 1863

Dear Father,

It is with pleasure that I have time to pen you these few lines. I suppose you have heard of the Union Victory we have ganed hear in Pennsylvania for Andrew G. Curtin, Although the majority is not so large as I expected yet it is enough to elict him. I went home to vote, as I was a married man I had no vote in Harrisburg. Ohio has elected there Union candidate by nearly 100 000 majority and we are have Union Victories every where except in the field, we hope by this election that there will be a vigorous support given to the Administration for the purpus of putting down this rebellion, and I think it will be the means of giving confidance to the Southern ----- people in the Government of the North and they will take hold and help themselves.

There are a great many of the old soldiers enlisting for three years more, my regiment has enlisted, all but those that are at home on recruiting service

[page 2]

I do not think I will enlist again as I have my family to support and it cannot be done on 13 dollars a month, not but what I would like to serve for the war but circumstances at home will not permit me to remain away from home my family for any longer time than I have all ready enlisted for

My family are all well and in good spirits My youngest is growing very fast his name is Francis J. Phelps Jnr Named by my wife while I was in the army;

I have not much more to Write but give my love to Brothers and Sisters and except a shair for you and Mother While I remain your

Affectionate

Son

Francis J, Phelps

Write soon And tell  
Sis Sarah to answer my  
letter



October 24, 1863

letter #14

Camp Curtin

Harrisburg, Oct 24th/63

Dear Father

It has been some time since I received s letter from you, and not knowing whether you were sick or well, I thought I would pen these few lines to you for the purpos of geting information in regard to your health. I suppose you have heard of the desision our State has given in regard to the constitusionality of the war. We have elected A G Curtin by 15,600. Odd majority, over Woodward the copperhead candidate and all of the states are Loyal to the Union. I have not much of interest to write

I expect to change my station in a few days, and go out recruiting

[page 2]

again, as they are calling in all of those that have been out the longest, in for duty at Camp Curtin, and sending out those that are here So I will close by bidding you good buy, and tell sisters Sarah & Martha to write as soon as they can conveyantly (that is if they have a mind to.) there is no compulsion on my part but I would like to hear from home some times

And I remain Your

Affectionate Son

Francis J. Phelps

To Jason Phelps

October 30, 1863

letter #15

Camp Curtin

Harrisburg Oct 30th/63

Dear Sister

I just now received your letter, and was very much pleased to hear from you, although it has been some time since, I last heard from you. Happy to hear that you are well and in good spirits, You say that your school terminated sooner than was intended to close. I am sorry for your sake, but you must improve your leisure moments at home.

There is some prospect of my going out on recruiting service again soon as they are going to keep but ten men at Camp Curtin. The most of my regiment have reenlisted for three years except those who are on recruiting service. But I do not think I shall enlist again until my three years are out I have a little more than eleven months to serve. They are giving 500 dollars bounty for old soldiers but I can earn 650 a year a

[page 2]

great deal easier than carrying a musket and a load on my back.

I was at home on election day in this state to vote, and we Elected Andrew G Curtin Governor again. My family are all well and in good health, they live in among a nest of Copperheads, and they do not like it much but it can not be helpt till next spring when they will move to another place. I think the war will draw to a close soon, if we have further success as we have had, the confederacy is getting narrower e very week

[page 3]

I have not much of interest to write and you must excuse the writing as I have no table to write on So good buy write soon while I remain your

Affectionate Brother

Francis J. Phelps

November 30, 1863

letter #16  
Camp Curtin Harrisburg  
Nov 30th 1863

Dear Father

You will  
perseave that I am back in the old camp  
again, but have not long to stay, having  
been Ordered here for the purpus of  
reporting to our regiment. Which we shall  
do this week. It is no more than I expected  
as the recruiting has been thrown into the  
hands of the Provost Marshalls -----

[page 2]

It is chearing news. I think the war is very  
near drawing to a close, for my part I wish  
it was over.

My family has been very un-well. I have not  
had any opertunity to go home before I shall  
go to my regiment So good buy I have  
nothing of interest to write. I will let you  
know how and where I am when I get to my  
reg't while I remain your affc't

Son

Francis J Phelps

December 3 1863

letter #17  
Camp Curtin Harrisburg  
Dec 3rd 1863,

Dear Sister,

I am now in Camp Curtin, and will remain here till next Monday, we shall start for the army of the Potomac. It had been expected that Orders would come for us sooner or later. I would rather stay here through the winter, where we have it comfortable but I suppose we shall have to some of the bitter with the sweet, but it will not make much difference should the weather continue as pleasant as it is now, so that we do not have to tramp to much Virginia mud. It would been plesant for us to stayed out on recruiting service during the rest of our tirm

[page 2]

of service, which expires the twenty fourth of next Oct. coming, the most of the regiment has reenlisted for three years, and I suppose that they will have us to do the

[page 2 Cont'd]

same, but we cant see it, the most of us have Wifes and familys, although the bounty is quite large but it is not sufficante for me, if they would give me six hundred and fifty, a year for three years then I would talk to them, which is as much as I can earn at this presant time. But however I think the war is nearly over it cannot last more than nine months longer, if our Generals do right and follow up every advantage they gain, in fact I think I see the dawning of peace, the dark clowd of rebellion seems to be lifting slowly from the face of this once -- peacefull and prosperus nation, thousands of lives have been sacrificed for this noble contry and it may be that I may lay my body in the dust for the same, yet I trust in God's protecting hand to bring me safe through to the end. I have nothing of interest to write so give my love to all enquiring friends while I remain  
your Affectionate  
Brother

Francis J. Phelps

[Date unknown] letter # 18  
[ Per J.E. Phelps, "this letter is apparently  
later than the one of Nov. 30 1863."]

Camp near Brandy Station Virginia  
Dear Father

I am now in  
the army of the Potomac again. The  
recruiting parties left Harrisburg on the  
seventh of this month, and arrived at the  
regiment on the ninth at six O'clock, we  
came all the way by rail, except two miles  
which we walked from Brandy Station.  
Well I suppose we have got to tramp some  
more of Virginia soil for a while longer but  
thank God it is only for nine months at  
least. There are many of our regiment  
reenlisting for three years in the Veteran  
Corp, none are allowed to enlist that have  
more than one year to serve, so there are  
none enlisting but the old soldiers. They  
are to receive four hundred and two dollars  
bounty, which is to be paid in installments,  
divided



[page 2]

into six months each, and as soon as they are mustered out of the old three year term they receive their back pay and their bounty of one hundred dollars, then as soon as they are sworn in again they receive seventy five dollars of the new bounty. But it is a big thing I can't see it, as my time is so near out. I do not think I shall tie myself down to hard tack for three years more. I think I have a better prospect at home, having been offered two dollars and fifty cents a day at running an engine, which will be much pleasanter than soldiering, whether I get that amount per day or not.

I think the war is nearly over, at any rate it cannot last more than a year at the most. It comes a little [hard] to do duty in camp on the field, since I have been away on recruiting service, for a short stay at home takes the military all out of a man. I have not much of

[page 2 Cont'd]

interest to write, it has been very cold here since I came here and it has rained for the last three days. the weather is very cold and cloudy to day. I am well except a very bad coald, give my love to all of my Brothers and Sisters and some for your self so good buy while I remain your Affectionate  
Son

Francis J. Phelps

Direct

Washington, D.C.

49th regiment P.V.

6th army Corps

December 22, 1863

letter #19

Camp near Brandy Station, Va

Dec. 22nd 1863

Dear Sister

I suppose you will see by this letter that I am back in the army again, there to remain the ballance of the unexpired tirm Of my enlistment, having nine months to serve.

I left Harrisburg on the seventh of this month, and arrived at my regiment in the evening of the ninth. In coming through Washington we lay over night to run about there, and had about eight hours and had a grand oppertunity to look about the city. I visited the Capitol and the Patent Office, it would be worth a persons time to spend about two weeks in Washington, there are thousands of beautifull objects to be seen that would gratify ones mind, especially in the Patent Office. We came out on the Orange and Alexander railroad to Brandy Station which is south

[page 2]

of the Raperhannock river, and our camp is about two miles from it situated on a hill in the edge of a large growth of Oak timber, which is being destroyed by the army for building material to make there houses, and for fire wood.

My mess mates and I have just got our house finished, it is quite snug and warm having a large fireplace extending all the way across one end, and the Chimney built a little higher than the roof, so that we get all of the heat. We have two bunks in the house in the place of beds, two sleep on a bunk there is a mantle piece over the fire place upon which there are sundry articles of eatables and table furniture, such as meat coffee sugar bread plates cups spoons knives and forks, and a cloths line tied to the rigpole upon which are a few articles of wearing apparel while we have a rack for our guns. I have been on picket ever since I have been here, it was a very cold night out and there was quite a heavy frost on the ground in the morning, of the sixteenth we were relieved at nine O'clock.

[page 2 cont'd]

There are many of our old regimental men reenlisting for three years more but I think I will serve out my old time first before I enlist again, as I have a family to support and a better prospect in view when my term of service is out, and I think the war will wind up next summer as there is every indication of it now.

I am well at present and hope this may find you in good health I have nothing of interest to write,

Direct your letters to Washington D.C.

49th regiment P.V

6th army Corps

While I remain ever

Your brother Francis J. Phelps

January 4, 1864

letter #20  
Camp near Brandy Station  
January 4th 1864

Dear Father

It was with pleasure that I received a letter from you last evening. But I am sorry to hear of Sarah's illness and hope when this may reach you you may be in good health.

As this is the first letter that I have attempted to write this year, and as its commencement is fraught with a terrible Rebellion, in which Brother is in arms against Brother, in which fratricidal Strife, they are spilling one another's blood, for

terrible  
the purpose of upholding that ^ bond of humanity that institution which has been a curse to our once prosperous and happy country.

And as it is the darkest just before dawn, so do we look at the present Rebellion. It is hoped that this ungodly war will close before the return of this time another year.

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So far, everything looks favorable for a speedy return of the states in rebellion to the Union, and there is a healthy union sentiment all throughout the west and South west, and thousands are taking the Oath of allegiance to the Government and there are many deserting the rebell ranks.

And should it continue thus for a few months longer, the South will be deplet of all there best fighting Population, which is fast eding away. And that once bosted Confederacy, whose corner stone was King cotton, and its foundation is slavery will soon melt away to be a subject of History to be read in future Generations by people of other nations, and Republican Government could live and Conquer a Civil Strife that is unparalleled in the history of the world. We have a glorious future before us that will out shine all other nations, and give the hand of friendship to all the lowly of all the nations to except a home in our land of liberty. So far as reenlisting is concerned, I think I have a better prospect at home, as the State of Pennsylvania is not doing any

[page 2 cont'd]

thing for her soldiers, and what is got by her men is given by the Government although she has furnished more men than any other State, yet she has not treated them exactly right. but as I did not come to fight for money but for my country, and furthermore as my old lady thinks three years is long enough to be away from home, and She thinks I had better not try it again as it does not sute her to be man and woman bouth. I do not know where the Sixteenth Mass. Is or in what Corps it is in, it might be very clost to me and I not know it and it would not be of much consequence to ether of ud should we get acquainted.



[page 3]

I saw Luke Knowlton at Washington last summer, but did not see Asa as he was at the regiment Luke was guarding the rebell prisoners at the old Capitol building, we have comfortable quarters and a dry floor with a large fire place and a roaring fire in it, it is snowing to day here but it will not be of much consequence to us as we can not go out a sleighing I suppose you have Sleighing up there by this time, the wether has been very cold here for two or three days back.

I am well and hope this may find you well and in good health while I remain your affectionate Son

Francis J. Phelps

Washington D.C.

3rd brigade 1st division 49 reg P.V.

Comp. E. 6th army Corps

January 21, 1864

letter #21

Camp near Brandy Station Va

January, 21st 1864

Dear Father

Not being very well

This morning I came to the conclusion to write you a letter. I am troubled with the Piles, and have had them for two weeks. They are very bad things to have, they are brought on by carrying heavy loads on the back; We have all of our wood to carry some distance to keep up our fires, and we get upon our shoulders a log of wood that we can hardly stagger along. Wood is getting to be very far to carry as it has been cut all around the Camp, although wood is plenty in our immediate vicinity, yet it is hard to carry it the distance of four or five hundred yards.

The weather has been very wet and stormy for several days back and not so cold as it was the first of the month.

Tuesday was my birthday. I suppose you

[page 2]

know that I was 31 years of age that day. Well time slips away very fast and each day brings us nearer to our grave. It has been ten years since I left home, and it seems but a short time to me, although a long time to look ahead.

But should I live till next September you may possibly see me in your vicinity walking on a pair of crutches, and I only trust in Providence for my safe return, with peace restored to our Country, and prosperity to the People, provided all things turn out favorably in regard to Political matters next fall. There is some twisting and squirming at present time as to who shall be the next President. But there is little fear on my part as to who will be Elected. There is but one way of doing, either destroy or to save the Country by voting for the man that now holds the reins of Government, or placing a man of the same Principals in his place, and should A Lincoln not run for the

[page 3]

next Administration there would be no man of conservative principals more fitted for the place and to rule the Government than Gen'l B. Butler, although the Democratic peace men (or Copperheads) have denounced him as a turn Coat, yet he is a man that loves his Country more than party principals. We have heard of his stern dealings with Traitors where ever he has been in this war.

But there is a difference of opinion in the army as to who should be President, and it exists to a great extent, some wanting George B. Mc'ln, others, Grant, and they are made to believe that there must be a change of Administrations to save the Country. But we know that it will be the means of bringing back Slavery and divideing the Country. And when the test comes those men who are peace Democrats will not dare to vote ether one way or the other, for they know that if they distroy the Country they will injour there own interest, thousands of them will be afraid to vote any other Ticket but that which will save their interest from being distroyed, and through

[page 4]

that the war party will get two votes, where they would have but one, which will secure a Majority for the Republican party which will go beyond any other that has preseeded it. And it is hoped that Abraham Lincoln will continue in the Presidential Chair during the next four years as he is the only man (with one exception) fit to end the war. He has always stuck to the one thing, and that is what is desired by a truly Loyal people. But if there are many who are so infatuated as to distroy their Country and gain a few dollars and [ ]rill their interest in the most benign Government on the face of the earth, let them go, and be out casts forever from all social intercourse with honorable men, it is somewhat astonishing to me that some of our soldiers talk of the Democratic peace Doctorin while they are fighting for there Country, such men cannot tell the difference of the party Principal and the reason to continue the war.

[No further information or signature suggests missing page or pages.]

January 28, 1864

letter #22

Camp, near, Brandy Station, Va

January, 28th, 1864

Dear Sister

I have just come off Guard this morning, and feel somewhat sleepy after being up all night. The day being very pleasant and quite warm for this season of the year, we have pretty pleasant weather here for the last few days, and hope it will continue so for some time yet as our wood is getting scarce, having to carry it some distance, and while it is warm we need no fire except to cook our meals.

We lost two men out of my Company day before yesterday, they were on picket and went for wood out side of the lines, the rebels got them and I suppose they are at Richmond by this time. I think I would rather run the risk of being killed in battle than to be taken prisoner and have to lay in prison in Richmond.

[page 2]

But if it should keep good weather for some time I expect I will move some where ether to fight the rebels or so that we can have wood handy. There is some prospect of our getting our pay raised some four or five dollars, I should like to have them do it for I can not keep my family on the pay we get now, there is nothing of interest going on in the army now,

I hope this may find you all well give my love to Brothers and Sisters and the rest, with my respects to all enquireing friends While I remain Your affectionate

Brother

Francis J. Phelps

Washington D.C. 49th reg

P.V. 3rd B. 1st D. 6th Corps

Comp E

February 4, 1864

letter #23

Camp near Brandy Station Va.

Febr. 4th 1864

Dear Father

I received your letter yesterday, was very happy to hear from you. As for myself I am rather under the weather after being on a long march. We left Camp last Friday the twenty Sixth, and started for rebelldom, moveing in a south westerly direction in side of our picket line till we reached Culpepper Cort House which we past through, it being eight miles from our Camp, three miles further we past the picket line, and struck out in a westward course for eight miles more, it then being nearly sundown we halted for the night



[page 2]

bivouac for the [blank] wood, in Colum  
[blank] our beds of leaves a [blank] our  
blankets over us, we slept soundly until  
morning at seven we were roused by drum  
and fife for breakfast which we procured in  
short order, at we were ready to proceed on  
our march and we had not long to wait, as  
soon a Bugle sounded forward, there is no  
sound so pleasant to the soldier, as that  
which carries him forward to meet the  
enemy.

But we met no enemy, marching two miles  
further we past through James City a small  
town in Madson County. It consisted of four  
houses one tavern they being in a very  
dilapidated condition. Marching on for  
seven miles further

[page 3]

we past a spur of the blue ridge mountains,  
and came to Robinsons River where we met  
a few of the rebell Cavalry Pickets, which  
we drove across the river, when we formed  
in line of battle, the first Brigade cross the  
river and drove them through Madson, when

[page 3 cont'd]

they went into Camp we being rear Guard two miles and one half from the place, we were out four days with three corps of the army, twenty seven miles from Camp, we tuck two days to march out, and we came back in one. I can tell you it was a pretty sirvear march for the first time after so long a rest, my feet were blistered very bad, and to day I have a reumatism in my knee otherwise I am well, the object of the march was to attract attention of the rebels from our real object

[page 4]

Which you will hear of in the papers I am going to a Military School for the purpuss of educating my self for a commission I will close and bid you all good buy while I remain

Your Son

Francis J Phelps

excuse the writing for I am in a hurry

February 24, 1864

letter #24

Camp near Brandy station Va.

February 24th 1864

Dear Father

It being  
some time since I have heard from you,  
But supposeing you were busy at home  
about this time of the year, geting ready for  
sugaring as it is geting near that time, I  
came to the conclusion to write you a short  
note, and would like to have some of the  
sugar you may make this year. But I do not  
know as I would eat as much as I did when I  
was about ten years old, when there was a  
large amount of it disappeared in some  
manner.

There is very plesant weather hear at the  
presant time, and quite warm. We had a  
review

[page 2]

of the six corps yesterday, it was a very imposing affair. I think there will be a review of the Army of the Potomac this week if the weather permits.

Nearly the whole of the men of the old regiment have reenlisted for three years more there will be but few left, and it is thought the war will close this season, there are many of the rebels coming into our lines and giving themselves up they think the war will close by the first of July, they say they are tired of the war, and that there are many of them that would leave the rebels lines if they could get away. I have nothing of interest to write, yet I never have had any influential friends that would try to help me along, or I might been a lieutenant by this time, but I will rest contented as I am

I have no more to write so I will close by remaining your

Affectionate Son

Francis J. Phelps

Washington, D.C.

49th Reg't P.V. 6 Corps

March 24, 1864

letter #25

Sadsbury [PA] March 24th 1864

Dear Sister

Perhaps you will think it strange that I write you from this place. I am at home now on a Thirtyfive day furlough. Having reenlisted for three years more in the service of my Country, it was not for the furlough or the money that I reenlisted, so much as to come home to place my family in better circumstances than they have been since the war commenced. It being Spring time, and my family to move into another house, I thought I could attend to it better than any one else. I brought home with me nearly six hundred dollars, four hundred of it I have put out at interest, the rest I have, with the exception of what I took to pay for a cow and pigs and two cord of wood. I have been very busy since I came home, and have worked hard every day, so that I have not had time to visit any of my friends, and I do not know as I shall get time, while I am at home. I shall go to Lancaster tomorrow or next day on bussness which I have neglected for seven years.

[page 2]

I own two-hundred dollars in property there, which I have not payed taxes on yet. I suppose you think I might come home to New Hampshire with some of the money, had I done so I could not stayed but one week with you, and it would taken four days to come and go so that would have been ten days consumed. Which were very precious to me, as I could not accomplished the work I have already done.

You may think I was foolish to enlisted and leave my family so long again, but it is hoped it is hoped the war will close this year, and it is confadently expressed here that it will, and as soon as the war is virtuely over I will be discharged as soon as any of them yet, as the Company I belong to is a conscript Company, and they will be the first to be discharged, it makes me one thousand dollars better of than I ever was yet. You will say I am fighting for money, I consider I have as good right to it as any one else.

[page 2 cont'd]

I have not much to write of interest to you more My Wife and her sister have gone to Church this evening, and left me here all alone with the Children they are all well. I am pretty well at this time but very tired, and have the back ache

So no more at present While  
I remain Your affectionate

Brother

Francis J. Phelps

PS. I leave for the army on the 11th  
of next Month

April 15, 1864

letter #26

Camp near Brandy Station

April 15th 1864

Dear Father

I am back again in the army, I arrived back the 13th in good health and spirits. Also leaving my family in good circumstances better than they have been since I have belonged to the army, There is indications of a move taking place soon, as the Sutlers have all left the army by Orders from U.S. Grant and they are making extensive preparations in front and around Culpepper, having commenced a cordon of forts their for the purpuss of making it a depot of supplys for the army while we are on our march to Richmond. We think ir will be our last Campaign during the war.



[page 2]

I have now considerable money at interest and also my property at Lancaster which yet holds good and by the time the war is over it will be of considerable value, and should I get out of the service by next Spring or even if it Should last for two years, I will be 1200 dollars better than when I entered the service.

And trusting in Providence to spair my life and health, in the future, I will have a tiny little home for myself and family there are many of my acquaintances that I know at Lancaster who are worthless not having a penny saved for a rainy day but I have been in the army for three years and at 13 dollars a month at that I have some left.

[page 3]

But thus the world does

A man of steady habits and upright

Ways secure to himself some

Friends when he does not think

of them I have not much to

write of interest so I will close

by remaining Your

Affectionate

Son

Francis J. Phelps

Direct your letters as before

[To our knowledge, this was the last  
letter written by Francis to his  
family in New Hampshire. Editor]

May 19, 1864

letter #27

Camp below Fredericksburg Va

May 19th, 1864

Jason Phelps, Esq

Dear Sir,

Last evening  
a letter came to my company for Corpl.  
Francis J. Phelps and by looking at the  
signature I found it to be from his father  
and I hast[en] to answer it

I regret to inform you that your son  
was shot dead on the 6th of this month on  
the battlefield known as the Wilderness.

His loss is lamented by all.  
He was a brave soldier and fell at his post  
of duty nobly.

His conduct on the battlefield was  
characterized by his cool but steadfast  
bravery, and while we mourn him as a loss  
of one of the

[page 2]

bravest of the brave who have fallen for his country, we cannot but admire him for his noble character and self sacrafizing conduct in defense of our country's cause.

We sympathize with you in your affliction for your brave but departed son, but would ask you to resign yourself to the will of Divine Providence Who doeth all things well,

I saw him personally after he had fallen. His death was an immediate one, being shot through the head the ball entering the left eye. He did nor speak after his mortal wound, but died a hero, and with ten others we lament him as the bravest of our fallen.

I would have written before but could not as our mail

[page 3]

leave before of late.

His body received as religious a burrial as the circumstances would permit, his affects were all collected and will be sent to his wife at the earliest convenience,

Should you wish any other information in regards to him write and you shall be thoroughly enlightened as far as our knowledge extends.

In taking leave of you  
I have the honor to be

Your obt Svt  
Joseph W. Wallace  
1st Serg Co E 49 Reg P V

May 31, 1864

letter # 28

[The following letter was written on page four of Sgt. Wallace's letter of May 18th, 1864. Editor]

Pottersville, May 31, 1864

Mr Lyman Sir, I have received a letter giving the particulars of the death of my son Francis J Phelps, of which I send you a copy thinking perhaps that you would like to read it as it speaks highly of his Moral character & Bravery. As he was I believe a member of your Society I should like to have it read as I hope he is not forgotten by the church.

Yours etc.

Jason Phelps

## THE FINAL DAYS

The chart below depicts the organization to which Francis J. Phelps belonged on the 5th and 6th of May, 1864, during the awful "Battle of the Wilderness."

ARMY OF THE POTOMAC: General U.S. Grant

6th Army Corps: Maj. Gen. John Sedgewick in command

1st Division: Brig. Gen. Horatio G. Wright

3rd Brigade: Brig. Gen. David A. Russell

49th Pennsylvania Regiment: [?]

Company E: 1st Serg. Joseph W. Wallace

Corporal: Francis J. Phelps

According to the historians, on the 5th of May the Army of the Potomac crossed the Rapidan River at Germanna Ford. Grant and Meade established Headquarters near the junction of the Germanna Plank Road and the Orange-Fredericksburg Turnpike—not far from the Wilderness Tavern—while Sedgewick's Corps guarded the rear from the ford to partway down the Culpepper Mine Road. (See map, Appendix III.) On the 6th of May, when the left flank of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia made its end-around the Federal's right, Russell's Brigade was third in line from that right, northwest of the Culpepper Mine Road. Presumably it was there, in that tangled wilderness some one-and-a-half miles west of the junction, that Francis met his fate.





**THE END**