



A typical young recruit posed for this picture at the beginning of the war.

The Civil War through the Eyes of Private Hugh Perkins

Background to Assignment:

Hugh C. Perkins was 17 years old when he enlisted voluntarily in 1861 to fight for the Union. Throughout the next 3+ years, this youth, not much older than many of you, kept up a steady correspondence with his best friend back home in Wisconsin (Herbert E. Frisbie). You will be reading a selection of his letters.

Remember, historians must regularly make judgments and write history based on primary source documentation. Edited textbooks don't just "magically appear". Sure, it isn't as "easy" to learn about soldiering in the Civil War from a primary source as it is to go directly to a secondary source, but it should be much more interesting to FORM YOUR OWN CONCLUSIONS based on what a living, breathing, person who experienced soldiering in the Civil War wrote to his best friend on the subject!!! Many items mentioned by your textbook in Chapter 12 are alluded to in Hugh Perkins' letters if you read "between the lines" closely enough.

Hugh Perkins enlisted in the Army of the Potomac in the summer of 1861, just two weeks after the first major battle of the war, Manassas. He also saw the end of the war firsthand, when Lee surrendered to Grant at Appomattox Courthouse. The letters that Hugh Perkins wrote to his best friend back home in Wisconsin, between these two events, are a true historical "gem". Few men served for the full duration of the war. Having done so, Perkins gives a panoramic view of the war from the perspective of a simple private. While his experiences are not historically ALL inclusive (he served and saw combat only in the East, primarily in Virginia), they nevertheless are a great opportunity to learn about the war first-hand from a young man (17 when he enlisted) who fought in almost its entirety. He does, throughout his letters, make many references to the wider events of the war which take place beyond the battlefields of Virginia and Maryland.

As you read his letters (while consulting the timeline and your textbook as you read) your broad understanding of the general course and chronology of the war will become much stronger. This, while very important, is not the only learning outcome that should result from your having studied Hugh Perkins' letters.

You should also develop a strong understanding of what it was like to be a soldier in the Civil War in a way that a textbook just cannot relate as effectively. As with all wars, it was the infantryman, aka the "common foot soldier", who bore the brunt, suffered the most, and ultimately determined the success of generals and the eventual outcome of the conflict. This is what Hugh Perkins was and why his "common soldiers story" is anything but.

AMDG

American History 8

Chapter 16 Portfolio Assignment: "Letters of a Civil War Soldier" (50 points)

Written Assignment:

1. (5 points) Compile a list of all the well known Civil War personalities (generals, political leaders, etc.) that Perkins either sees firsthand or mentions in his letters.

2. (5 points) Compile a list of the major battles and military developments the Perkins both fought in or simply refers to in his letters.

3. (10 points) Compile a "Top 15 List" entitled:

Top 15 Facts / Surprises the Hugh Perkins Taught Me About What Life Was Like As A Soldier in
The Union Army

Your list should begin with #15 first and each "factoid" should be 1 to 3 sentences in length

4. (25 Points) Observe that there is a gap in Private Perkins' letters between November 1862 and March 1864, a span of about 16 months. You will be filling in this gap by fictionally but also authentically writing "The Lost Letters" of Hugh Perkins. There are five of them. Each is approximately ½ to ¾ page in length (double spaced, size 10-12 font... est. 2 to 3 total pages of writing). The dates of your letters will be...
 - a. January 1863
 - b. April of 1863
 - c. late July 1863
 - d. late November 1863
 - e. January of 1864

In these letters, you will continue to write home to Herbert Frisbie in Wisconsin and will strive make them authentic by referring to the events of the war both on and off the battlefield in their proper chronological context. Continue to weave in facts about soldier life, the personalities who emerge in the war, and the ebb and flow of battles, etc.

5. (5 Points) You must include, as part of your assignment AT LEAST 5 visuals that are Civil War related (photos, maps, cartoons, etc.) and one of them MUST BE A PHOTO WHO REPRESENTS HUGH PERKINS, UNION PRIVATE, 7TH WISCONSIN REGIMENT

Dear Friend,

Letters of a Civil War Soldier

First of two articles

Washington, D.C.
September 29, 1861

Writing of what he called "Mr. Lincoln's Army," the Civil War historian Bruce Catton observed: "The point that is so easy to overlook nowadays, when all of the illusions about war have been abraded to dust, is that those young men went off to war eagerly and with light hearts, coveting the great adventure which they blithely believed lay just ahead. They went to war because they wanted to go, . . . and the obvious fact that in their innocence they did not have the remotest idea what the reality was going to be like does not change the fact. This was the army of the nation's youth."

These are the letters of one of those youths, Hugh C. Perkins—about 17 years of age when he enlisted in the 7th Wisconsin Regiment in the summer of 1861—written to his friend Herbert E. Frisbie, back home in Pine River, Wis. They are the particular letters of a particular soldier in a particular war. But almost a century and a quarter after the final battles of the Civil War, Hugh Perkins's words also speak to us.

The Monitor prints excerpts from these unpublished letters on this assumption—that all letters home from war are finally addressed to all of us.

(less than 2 months
after Bull Run) Camp Randall, Wis.
September 8, 1861

Dear Friend,

We have got our guns and two suits of clothes. We got our new uniform last night. It is a nice one. It consists of a gray jacket, a gray pair of pants, and a gray cap, all fixed off with broad cloak. Our guns are a newly revised musket and very handsome.

All I have got to write on is my cartridge box, and that's good enough. . . .

★ ★ ★

Dear Friend,

We left Camp Randall a week ago last Thursday and was just one week on the road. We had an awful old time coming here. At every depot and station on the way the ladies would come out and shake hands with all the soldiers and sometimes kiss them. We was treated first-rate on the way. At every window in every house until we got to Baltimore the women and children were swinging their handkerchiefs and hurraing.

At Chicago the streets were covered with folks, and we had six men out of every company go ahead to clear the way. We marched through all the principal streets in the city. I never thought that Chicago was such a big place. Every little while there would such sounds go up that it would fairly make us all jump just from spattin hands and stomping of feet. I will never forget that night.

We walked through every city and was cheered by all, but when we got to Baltimore there was quite an opposition. Some of the women would holler "Hurrah for Abe Lincoln," and others at the same time were hollering "Hurrah for Jeff Davis," and they appeared to be very much excited. I seen some prisoners that was just taken and sent to Chicago. You could tell very easy the Secessionists when you met them on the street. They would look awful sour, but they dastent [dare not] say anything. The Secession streets in Baltimore were all dark, while the Union Streets was well lit up.

★ ★ ★

Arlington Heights, Va.
October 14, 1861

Dear Friend,

We have moved across the Potomac, and are now encamped on Arlington Heights, about fourteen miles from Bull

4. THE CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION

Run, where we expect to have another large battle.

My Uncle Hiram visited here yesterday. He said he had been in three or four skirmishes, but expected to have the hardest battle there he ever was in. Hiram thinks we will not have more than one hard battle, and that it will be the largest on record in modern times. He thinks that all who survive that battle will see their houses before spring.

We expect to move further on towards Dixie in a few days. Our men are all anxious for the big fight to come off.

★ ★ ★

Phony War Period!

Camp Arlington, Va.
December 7, 1861

Dear Friend,

I hear your school has commenced. I hope you will enjoy yourselves as well as we generally do winters. I wish you all the pleasure imaginable and wish I could help you enjoy it. I don't think this war is going to last many years. It is the opinion of most of the folks that we will be home next Fourth of July. I haven't been homesick yet.

Our camp is situated in a beautiful place. The boys have been ornamenting the streets with cedar trees, and it looks beautiful. They have made an arch of cedars at one end of the street, next to the parade ground, and in the middle hangs the letter "I," designating our company. The Colonel's tent they have ornamented with shells and moss so that everything looks splendid. We are going to be inspected by General [Irvin] McDowell in a few days.

★ ★ ★

Arlington Heights, Va.
January 9, 1862

Dear friend Herbert,

I have just returned from picketing again. We had a first-rate time, only it was pretty cold. It snowed a little that night for the first time here. It made the night awful noisy; and as one sat listening for Rebels, he could imagine he heard them approaching him every few moments, especially if he was a little scairt. One of the boys ordered a bush to halt, and at the same time fired on it. He shot three times at it.

Oh, Herb, I would like to see you first-rate, and all the rest of the folks in Pine River. I expect to before many months. McClellan says that this war is a-going to be short and sweet.

★ ★ ★

Monitor vs Memmack time! 3/9/62

Camp Arlington, Va.
March 1, 1862

Dear Friend and Schoolmate,

The 22nd of February we went down to the Arlington House. The whole of McDowell's Division was there, and we had quite a celebration, after which McDowell made us a good speech, and ordered us to give three cheers for the

Western boys who had been so successful in the late battles in the South and the taking of Ft. Donaldson, Ft. Henry, and other places; which we did. Twelve thousand men can make quite a noise if they are a mind to.

We all met there again yesterday and had some good orders. They were this: that the Division should be held in readiness to march at a minute's warning with knapsacks packed, and three days' rations cooked ready all the time; and the commandants of companies shall see that every rifle is in good shooting order; and that we must have our regular 40 rounds of sharp cartridges.

After the General had read the orders, the Colonel stepped out and said, "Boys, if them orders exactly suit you, you may cheer," and you had better believe we roused him up three times good. The order states that we must pack our knapsacks as light as possible, and that the officers' clothing must be reduced to a common carpet-sackful. The boys seem to be in the best of spirits, and anxious to smell powder.

I am very much obliged for the program of your school. I suppose you have a good time there this winter. I would like to be with you first-rate, but I can't yet. But I think we will be together by the 4th of July if nothing happens. If I had time I would send you a program of my school (called the Military School), and I will sometime before long.

- Pea Ridge 3/62 ★ ★ ★

- Shiloh time 4/62 ... Here comes
Varragut!

Camp near Fredricksburg, Va.
May 16, 1862

Dear Friend,

I have seen two brisk skirmishes, where we made the Rebels run for their lives.

We still remain on the banks of the Rappahannock. We have got a splendid campground on the river bank facing Fredricksburg in a clover field. The clover is up to our knees. Am now right in a little pine grove filled with flowers of all kinds and beautiful singing birds, . . . which makes the woods a delightful resort for the soldiers.

We live first-rate, especially I and two tentmates of mine. We had the good luck to buy two or three dozen \$5.00 Confederate notes at 5 cents apiece when we left our other camp, and when we came to Fredricksburg they went at par with Secesh merchants. I and Joseph Hurd have passed notes to the amount of \$41.00 and taken their checks in return, which are current here at par. You may bet we live top-shelf now. We have been here 8 weeks and I haven't eat a ration yet. We buy everything we eat. We have ham and eggs, fries, cakes, tea, milk, soft bread, maple molasses, preserves, fresh strawberries, ice cream, lemonade, and everything that we want. We want to spend all our checks here as we can't get rid of them out of town.

The enemy attacked our pickets again today, but were driven back after losing about 20 horses and men. The bridges are all done as far as here; we will cross today or tomorrow. We expect a great fight.

★ ★ ★

28. Dear Friend

Camp on the battlefield near Slaughter Mt., Va.
August 17, 1862

Camp on the battlefield of Antietam
September 26, 1862

Dear Friend,

We have had long and tiresome marches all over Virginia since I last wrote to you. [Lt. Gen. Thomas J. (Stonewall) Jackson has been reinforced and is advancing again. He has a strong line of pickets this side of the Rapidan [River].

We are now under [Gen. John] Pope. He is commanding the Army of Virginia. We will soon be engaged with Jackson's army. Now that McClellan has left the James River and they have nothing to fear from that direction, we will have to contend with the entire Secesh Army. The Secesh are down on Gen. Pope. They would hang him in two minutes if they could get him. They have ordered every officer that is taken under him to be treated as a guerrilla and hung.

Oh Herbert, I have been all over the battlefield, and it looks hard to see men buried like a lot of hogs, 12 or 15 together. But I suppose they feel just as well as though they had ever so nice a grave and coffin.

We had nothing to brag of in this fight. If anything I think we got the worst of it, but the boys are willing to try the thing once again. There is the large armies to meet soon. You will probably hear of a fight before long. That will be a fight. We haven't laid round here in Virginia all this time for nothing.

post What Battle? } A ***
Bleedy one! } Camp on the battlefield, Md.
September 21, 1862

Dear Friend,

You said you did not know but I had forgot to write. It is not so. I may think of it every day, but it is easier to think of than do when on the march and expecting to meet the enemy every moment.

I have been in six battles. There is only four files in our company now. We have had the lead of this army clear from Fredrick. The Rebs have skedaddled before us. They made a grand stand here on this field for three days. In this battle our four files was not broke. We was in the hottest of the fight and lost not a man.

I was detained to help bury the dead. It was an awful sight. Some were killed so instantly that they never changed their position. Some was sitting up in the very act of loading, with their cartridges in their mouth and gun still in their hands. The Rebs fight like mad men. They will not leave the field until they are badly whipped, and sometimes they don't get a chance to leave then alive.

Herbert, I have seen some hard times and a good deal more than I expected to. My comrades and tentmates have fell on each side of me, and I am still alive and without a scratch. I have had the balls come so close that they made my face smart, but it didn't break the hide. It has got so that it does not excite me any more to be in action than to be in a corn field hoeing, or digging potatoes.

Only think of it, Herbert, of our 98 brave Waushara [County] boys, there is only eight here now fit for duty. There is not many sick at present. We have no stragglers like some companies, but still the men are gone. They have died the soldier's death or have been wounded on the field of battle. We haven't a coward in our company.

What did Lee even issue the next day, 9/22/62? ***

Dear friend Herbert,

I have been in six very hard and hand-to-hand fights. The first we had was at Gainesville. Our brigade marched up there just at dark and engaged a whole division of Rebs. We fought an hour and 15 minutes, and our brigade lost 750 men.

The next fight we had at Bull Run, where Billy Mitchell got wounded. The next at South Mountain and two between there and here. We had the post of honor given to us at Bull Run by Gen. McClellan and have kept it ever since. We were the last to leave the field at Bull Run and have commenced every battle since then. Gen. McClellan calls us the Iron Brigade. By gaining this name, we have lost from the brigade seventeen hundred and fifty men. We have never turned our backs to the enemy in any engagement, although they have outnumbered us every fight we have had.

At the battle of South Mt. we was ordered to support a battery. We done so, and repulsed the Rebs 4 times. As they was approaching the fourth time, we got pretty near out of cartridges. At that Gen. [Abner] Doubleday came up to our Brigadier Gen. and told him in a great excitement that his brigade was out of cartridges and the battle would be taken men and all. Our little general heard his story clear through and then turned to him and said, "Don't you be alarmed about my brigade. They have got a few cartridges, I guess, and when them are gone they will hold it if they have to do it by the point of the bayonet." And we did hold it.

Herbert, you spoke about me forgetting an old friend. That can never be so long as I live, but we have been under fire for 28 days at a time and had to keep our cartridge boxes on all the time. So we didn't get much chance to write. I think I will have a chance to do better.

Camp Arlington, Va.
November 22, 1862

Dear Friend,

You said you had some thoughts of enlisting. Now I will tell you one thing. I would not advise you to enlist, for I don't know how you might like a soldier's life. But Herb, if I had not enlisted I would the first chance I could get. Others may say what they please. I like the life first-rate. If a man wants to see the world, here is the place for him. I have seen more since I enlisted than I ever expected to see in my life.

We had a grand review day before yesterday. There were one hundred and eighteen regiments there. All the head officers, McClellan and McDowell and lots of others, besides the President of the United States, Abe Lincoln, and Governor Randall of Wisconsin. Of all the cheering you ever heard, there was the best of it. They took one Secesh that day, watching our movements.

We have just received news that 1,500 [Rebels] have arrived at Alexandria and delivered their arms and offered to turn and fight for the Union. But it may not be, so we will know by tomorrow whether it is or not.

From your friend,
Hugh C. Perkins

Huge Turning Points Blw Now and the Next letter in Pa/Miss. ***

This is where your "lost letters" portion fits

4. THE CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION

Second of two articles

April 9 marks the 118th anniversary of the Battle of Appomattox, and Lee's surrender to Grant. These unpublished letters of a young soldier, Hugh C. Perkins, written to his friend Herbert Frisbie back home in Pine River, Wis., describe that historic moment, and offer a very personal account of the years leading up to it. Only two other Union regiments had more casualties than the 7th Wisconsin, in which Hugh Perkins served.

Now you add your own context notes!

Near Culpeper, Va.
March 26, 1864

My dear friend,

I saw General Grant in Alexandria. He is a pretty tough-looking man for Lieutenant General, but I guess he is all right on the fight questions. He came up to the headquarters of the Potomac Army the same day I did; that was day before yesterday. He is a-going to make us get right up and climb in a few days.

Herbert, I hope the time will be when we will be together again. I have faith that we will.

★ ★ ★

Near Culpeper, Va.
April 14, 1864

Dearest Friend,

We have to drill almost all the time to teach these awkward recruits. There is some of them that take hold and try to learn, but the most of them are as awkward as mules.

The weather is very pleasant here now. We have orders to be ready to march. We have sent off all our extra clothing, and we will soon commence active service again. I expect we will see some hard fighting this summer. We are practicing twice a week, shooting at a mark. We shoot about 20 rounds, while the recruits are shooting from five to ten. I can hear some heavy firing this morning beyond the picket line. I think by the sound it is cavalry and artillery skirmishing. The boys are all in good spirits, and the raws are waiting very impatiently to be initiated in the science of battling for their country, as they call it, but as the vets term it, fighting for greenbacks.

I was on picket day before yesterday, and it was raining very hard, when General [Lysander] Cutler and several other high officials came to see how the pickets was making it. They had just got opposite our regiment when Thurstin, one of Company E boys, hollered out, "Oh, my greenbacks, how I do suffer for thee."

Old Cutler looked round and, says he, "Boys, that's pretty rough. You had ought to say 'country' instead of 'greenbacks.'"

"I know it," says Thurstin, "but, General, I can't lie. It was greenbacks that I enlisted for."

So the old fellow rode on and said no more, but I guess he thought we was a pretty hard set.

Herbert, there is no letter that I get that does me as much good to read as yours. You know just what I want to hear. Every little thing that you may think is of no account is just

the very thing that does the soldier's soul good to hear, and you know it. Be sure and write as soon as you receive this.

★ ★ ★

Camp near Culpeper, Va.
May 3, 1864

My dearest friend Herbert,

The Rebs have crossed the Rapidan [River] 85,000 strong. They have advanced their picket line within three-quarters of a mile of ours. They say if we don't soon pitch in, they will. I hope they will be as good as their word, for I would a great deal rather be the attacked party than the party to attack.

I came pretty near to getting taken prisoner again while I was on picket the other day. I went beyond our line after some milk and other eatables. We went about half a mile to a house, got our dinner and some milk, and come to find out we was in plain sight of the Rebel pickets. We had just got started for camp when we saw a squad of the graybacks' cavalry coming toward us at full gallop hollering, "Halt, you — Yankees." As we had no guns our only safety was the woods, and to the pine woods we went double quick, and the Rebs after us. They chased us to our picket line, where we made a bold stand, and they retreated in good order. The recruits thought this was pretty dangerous.

★ ★ ★

Chestnut Hill Hospital, Philadelphia
May 17, 1864

Dear Friend,

I take this opportunity of informing you that I am yet alive, although I have got a pretty bad knee. It don't work worth a cent, but I think it will be all right in a short time.

We had a very hard fight the fifth of May. Our company's loss was very severe. It was a hot place, I can tell you, but we all done our best and drove the Rebels about three miles through the thickest woods you ever saw. The recruits fought like tigers.

We have the best of care here in Philadelphia, and plenty to eat. I am in hopes soon to be able to walk round again. I would like to get uptown. Philadelphia is a very nice place.

I am in hopes that this summer's campaign will settle the war. The Army was never in better condition than when we left our quarters at Culpeper. We were all in the best of spirits. I little thought of getting wounded while we were making the charge and driving the Rebels like chaff. I think we killed and wounded a great many more than they did. But our loss was very heavy after all.

★ ★ ★

Chestnut Hill Hospital, Philadelphia
May 27, 1864

My dear Herbert,

I am getting along finely. This is one of the largest hospitals in the United States. There is a splendid grove of chestnuts

28. Dear Friend

close by it, with seats, swings, ball alley, and quoits, and they are all [used] every day by the more able patients. There is men among them that have been here for two years, and not a thing the matter with them. Oh! Herbert, I could almost shoot them, when they are needed as badly as they are now in the field to be playing in a hospital.

★ ★ ★

After being wounded, Hugh Perkins spent the summer in Wisconsin on furlough. In October he returned to his regiment.

City Point, Va.
October 2, 1864

Dear Friend,

The Rebel prisoners are a-coming in in droves, and they say our corps is within a mile and a half of Richmond and driving the Rebs before them. I will soon be with my old regiment again, enjoying its pleasures and hardships. God knows it will seem good to me.

★ ★ ★

City Point, Va.
October 16, 1864

Dear Friend,

You say I have friends in Pine River. Well, I suppose I have, and that's not the only place I have friends. No, Herbert, if my friends at home should all desert me, my brothers in arms would yet stick by me to the last. I have never seen a happier time in my life than these two weeks past since I have been with my old true-hearted friends.

I have got a permanent detail at division headquarters, as provost guard for General [Samuel W.] Crawford where I am now doing duty. I have no picket duty to do, no knapsack to carry on a march. In a fight we have to form a skirmish line in the rear of the main line of battle and keep the skeddaddlers up to their knitting, besides taking care of prisoners.

We have plenty to do here, and the best the service affords. We have for variety mackerel, potatoes, beans, pork, beef, onions, warm light bread, sugar, coffee, molasses, pickles, pepper, salt, and vinegar. I never drawed half so many rations before, nor I never had so good an appetite. I am getting as fat as a pig.

We have to put on a great deal of style. We are the best drilled company of one hundred men you ever saw together. They furnish us shoe blacking and white gloves, and we have to have all new clothes on while on duty or parade. We are a regular band-box company.

On the [presidential] election question, there was a great many of our boys for Gen. McClellan until about a week ago. We were on picket about a mile from Petersburg. We had been on scarcely a half hour when we were up on our breastworks, both us and our Johnny friends with daily papers in our hands. We made a few exchanges of papers, when General Crawford and staff made his appearance. But the Rebs still remained on their breastwork, and hollered, "Hurrah for McClellan." Our boys hurrahed for Lincoln.

We then began to talk the matter over, and we all agreed that what the Rebels liked was just what we had no right to like, and if it was going to do them so much good to elect McClellan, we just wouldn't do it. Since that you hardly hear McClellan's name mentioned in our regiment. Three weeks ago they would have given him a majority. McClellan is played out in the Army. Herbert, you may bet it now lays with the citizens of the North.

★ ★ ★

Near Petersburg, Va.
November 1, 1864

Dear Friend,

The boys are in the best of spirits. Old Abe had distanced McClellan on this track. The Reb prisoners say they should stand it four years longer if Abe was elected, and we told them we could stand it for forty years, and anyway, as long as Abe lived he should stay at the White House. They are pretty spunky. They are just as good soldiers as us, but not better, but we slightly outnumber them.

★ ★ ★

Camp near Petersburg, Va.
November 22, 1864

Dear Friend,

We haven't been paid off yet, but we expect to every day. But we may not be until next month. If not, I will have one year's pay coming. I shall send it in Government bonds if at all possible. I will send all except fifteen dollars. If I happen to get put out of the way, I want my mother to have it all.

The Rebel deserters come in here by the hundreds every day. They say it is common talk with both officers and privates that as soon as they hear for certain of Lincoln's reelection, they will desert if it is a possible thing. They say when Abe is elected their last hope dies forever.

★ ★ ★

Near the Jerusalem Plank Road
December 15, 1864

Dear Friend,

I received your letter last night and was very glad to hear from an old friend, especially when so worn out with marching. For eight days we were on the march night and day. We tore up forty miles of railroad for the Johns [Johnny Rebs].

It was the most successful raid of the war, especially for the infantry. We have one of the finest flocks of horses and cattle captured that you ever saw.

We have not been paid off yet. We expect it this month certain.

★ ★ ★

Camp of the Provost near the Jerusalem Plank
January 3, 1865

Dear Friend,

I was just thinking, Herbert, that had I not enlisted I would

4. THE CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION

likely have been going to school this winter, hugging and kissing the Pine River belles, sleigh riding, and having all the fun imaginable. But why should we mourn departed souls or cry for spilt milk? Here I am, well and hearty after three years' hard service, and only one year and a bit of a chunk to stay; while there is hundreds of others who have not stood the racket of one campaign, and now they lay deep down in the Virginia mud, taking their last sleep. No, Herbert, I have no reason to complain, even while comparing my fare with that of the regiment.

We will be paid off by the fifteenth of this month, so says the officers. Herbert, what say you to going west after I get home? I think we would like it where the game is plenty. The boys are all talking strong of it here.

★ ★ ★

Headquarters, Third Division, Fifth Army Corps
January 22, 1865

Dear Friend,

There is no news of importance, excepting the capture of Fort Fisher [North Carolina], which you have heard of before this. For fear you haven't seen Leslie's [Illustrated Newspaper] I will send you a picture, as drawn by one of my tent mates.

We have not seen the paymaster yet. Some think he will not get here until March.

I was over to the Thirty-Eighth the other day. Had a good visit with Charley Cook, Bill Barr, and several others. We all went to bed in a bombproof [shelter], and about twelve o'clock it commenced to rain. When it had rained about two hours, the whole thing caved in, and let about two foot of water in onto our bed. Was we not in a pretty fix.

Then our tent fell from the top, and left us with no cover except the heavens, and we was obliged to stand up and take it until morning. It was then you could hear the boys say, "Oh! if I was only at home. What did I enlist for?"

"Oh!" says Charley, "I wish I was in my old mother's clothes basket and under the bed."

I told them that was nothing, but they couldn't see it that way. They have it pretty hard. They are on picket every other day, and if they miss roll call they are on every day. They are all sorry they did not go in our regiment.

★ ★ ★

*Jan 31, 1865 → Lincoln proposes the
13th Amendment*

Near the South Side Rail Road, Va.
March 1, 1865

Kind Herbert,

I have just been paid off.

We have had some hard marching and fighting since I last wrote you. I received your letter the day we had the fight at Hatcher's Run. We have just got settled after the hardest campaign we have had for some time. Our division lost one quarter of their men. Our brigade suffered the most of any in the division. I tell you, it was pretty hard laying down in the mud nights to sleep after a hard day's march.

Deserters come in every day. Our boys trade and converse with the Rebels, while on picket.

★ ★ ★

Camp of the Provost Guard

March 21, 1865

Friend Herbert,

The Rebs have sent more peace commissioners to Washington. There is pretty strong talk of a settlement. They know their only terms of peace.

★ ★ ★

Near Burkville, Va.

April 19, 1865

Friend Herbert,

I have seen some pretty rough times since we left camp near Petersburg. We marched about thirty miles the first day, slept all night, in the morning had a fight; got pretty badly licked. Our loss was pretty heavy. The Rebs attacked our column while marching in four ranks. The boys had no time to form a line of battle. We (Provost) formed our lines and tried to stop stragglers and send them back, but they couldn't see them go back [because of fog]. But they said they would stand as long as we would, so the line formed and we held the Rebs for about half an hour, though our loss was great.

The Johnnies (Johnny Rebs) then got on our left flank and everlastingly made us git. I never run so in my life. The trees was knocked endwise with shot and shell. The flying Yankees could be seen biting the dust in every direction. Twas a horrid sight. But our men rallied at a creek and fought rather than swim. We then turned on them, gave them a Yankee yell, drove them [back] over the same ground, and advanced one mile beyond our first line, but our loss was the heaviest.

We laid on the field that night in the rain, expecting to go in to it in the morning. But instead our whole corps moved to the left, and left that field, for we had word from [General Philip H.] Sheridan that he had been overpowered by infantry and cavalry combined. We marched about fourteen miles, made the attack in the rear of some formidable fortifications of the Johnnies.

The fight commenced, sun about two hours high, and at dark we had a whole Rebel division killed, wounded, or prisoners. Our division charged. They charged five times. It was charge after charge. The Rebs flew like chaff, but night closed the ball or we would have had the whole force.

That fight the Rebs say was the lock-picker of Richmond. They were April-fooled, although they have just the best kind of breastworks. We followed the remnant of that force night and day, skirmishing and taking prisoners and stragglers until we got them all except a few that took to their homes for safety.

We then followed after the cavalry, got in ahead of old [Gen. Robert E.] Lee, cut off his wagon train and some artillery fortified in his front, and compelled him to go about ten miles out of his way. As soon as we got him started, we (the Fifth Corps and Cavalry) again marched night and day to meet him again at Appomattox Court House, while the rest of the army followed him so close he lost his rear guard and the men of his train that was left.

The last day's march Sheridan came back and said if we could make the court house that night, we might expect glorious results, for it was the door that closed old Lee in on all sides, and retreat was impossible.

28. Dear Friend

We reached the court house at about two o'clock in the morning. Lee had not yet arrived, and we rested two hours. Lee's columns could be seen at daylight, advancing slowly, driving our cavalry in the direction afore him. The cavalry came flying back. We lay behind the top of the hill. We poured in a volley [of bullets] and charged. My God what a skedaddle. We chased them through town.

Just at sunrise we came upon their force that was massed. We halted our artillery of one hundred guns, got into position, and when about ready to open the ball a second time the white flags were hoisted from every tree, and Lee wished an interview with Grant. Didn't want to surrender to Sheridan; preferred a man of his rank. I saw the whole maneuvering from the top of a house. The two generals met under an apple tree. Lee surrendered the Army of Northern Virginia.

Herbert, I think the war is played out. I think I shall be home by the Fourth. We have a chance now to enlist in the regulars for five years, but I can't see it.

Oh! Herbert, isn't it awful about old Abe. I would like to have the killing of old Wilkes Booth.

I am in hopes I will be where I can give you a better account of our campaign, as well as have a good visit with your honorable self. I think the time is close at hand.

→ April 14, 1865 } on Good Friday
Ford's Theatre }
Washington DC }

Camp opposite Washington
May 21, 1865

Friend Herbert,

We have had some hard marching since I last wrote you. We marched through the city of Richmond and arrived once

more on the banks of the old Potomac. Tomorrow is the grand review of the Potomac Army. Next day comes Sherman's Army.

That review will be a big thing, I expect. The Rebs is played out, and I expect soon to be home. We hear some talk about keeping the vets, but I can't think our Government is mean enough to do such a thing. If they do they will have trouble with them, if I mistake not.

The time never went off so slow in the world as at the present time. When we were in the field we knew we were needed, and we were willing to stay. But now there can be no earthly use in keeping us, as we can see.

Oh, Herbert, I never could stand soldiering in time of peace. Deliver me from being a regular.

I hope we will be home by the Fourth of July. What a gay time we will have, Herbert. I think I shall not stay long in Wisconsin. I think I will spend my days in old Virginia. There is a good chance for me beyond Richmond, which I will tell you of when I see you.

Write soon, Herbert. I am out of money. Please send me ten dollars.

From your ever true friend,

Hugh C. Perkins

After the war the friends had their reunion. Then Hugh Perkins returned to school in a neighboring town, and later moved to Sherwood Forest in central Wisconsin, where he went into the logging business. In the last letter in the existent collection, dated May 29, 1881, Hugh wrote: "I have got to be a very poor hand to write letters, but I like my old friends as well as ever."

These letters were compiled and edited by Marilyn Gardner, editor of the Monitor's Living page. She is the great-granddaughter of Herbert Frisbie, to whom the letters were written.

**American History 8
Mr. Ruppert
Portfolio Assignment**

- Directions:**
- Each student will create his own portfolio for this course. This portfolio is different from your English portfolio. **DO NOT CONFUSE THEM.**
 - Your portfolio is a work in progress. You will hand in one portfolio assignment for each chapter we cover this year in American History 8 (5 first semester and 7 second semester).
 - After turning in your portfolio assignment each chapter and receiving a grade - **YOU MUST KEEP THESE GRADED PROJECTS IN A FOLDER.** These projects will be corrected by you (based on comments/suggestions made by Mr. Ruppert) and handed in - in book form - at the end of the school year as part of your Final Exam grade.

Final Portfolio:

- The final corrected portfolio is due at the end of the school year
- You will select what you feel are the best 10 out of 12 of the chapter portfolio assignments to include in your final portfolio.
- These ten assignments must be corrected "clean" copies and will be placed in a binder.
- Your completed portfolio must include:
 - a) a cover with design, title, your name, your teacher's name, and date
 - b) a table of contents
 - c) all pages numbered
 - d) an introduction and a conclusion to the portfolio
- This final portfolio will be worth 40% of your 4th marking period grade.

Premise: Any history teacher's ultimate goal is to make history come alive for his or her students. We, as a profession, have been known to go to embarrassing extremes in the attempt to convey the "human or feeling" side of history (which goes far beyond the simple recall of the names, places, dates and events, important as these may be!). What teacher doesn't want his or her students to identify with and possibly even respond, "I felt like I was there!" after giving a lesson on the dire circumstances faced by the Cherokee Indians on their infamous "Trail of Tears" during the 1830s. Well...NEWSFLASH... no longer must Mr. Ruppert grapple with the pressure of having to recreate history "live" every day in the classroom! I have solved this struggle once and for all! Yes, I have done what so many frustrated history teachers have failed to do before me...that is (THIS IS A BIG SECRET!) I have perfected a TIME MACHINE!!! And you will have an opportunity to use it once per chapter to travel to the past to either tell me firsthand about your own experiences in history (The History Journal) or to gather (create) primary source items (newspaper articles, posters, etc.) from the past which make history come to life.

Step #1: Create an historical identify (may be a pseudonym such as "Dr. Travelocity") which will be your persona throughout your historical travels this year.

Step #2: Wait for specific instructions on each chapter's suggested time travel destination and accompanying assignment.

Step #3: Get your imagination ready to convince me that "you were really there!"