

The Civil War Letters of MEEKER G. GRIFFIN

The seven letters in this small collection detail some of the events relating to the Civil War experience of Private Meeker Griffin. Griffin mustered in Company C of the 56th Regiment of the New York Veteran Volunteer Infantry in 1861 and later transferred to the Navy on December 31, 1863. The letters are written to family members in the hamlet of Keyserike, town of Rochester, Ulster County, New York. Griffin's letters discuss two major subjects: station in Washington D.C. from December 1861 to February 1862, and life aboard a gunship on the Mississippi River near Cairo, Illinois from April to November 1862. While at Washington, Griffin writes of visiting the White House and meeting President Lincoln, family news back home, recovering from dysentery, and an accidental death of a soldier in Company H. The letters written from the Mississippi River concern troop movements, payments, Griffin's work as "messenger boy" and "powder boy", food rations, acquiring boots, and an illness suffered by a John Schoonmaker. There are also brief descriptions of battles experienced while aboard a gunboat