Dear Diary,

Today is June 20, 1861 and it’s been hard for everyone in my family ever since my brother Daniel went off to war. My sisters and I cry every day, just thinking about him and hoping he stays alive and well. My little brother Dean is too young to understand what’s been happening lately with all of us and Daniel and it’s for the best that he doesn’t know so it won’t affect him either. Sometimes he goes around the house looking for Daniel and it’s sad to tell him he’s not here, that he’s off in war, fighting for all of us, but I can’t say it to him he’s too young to know, we just tell him he went to go and buy him something and he believes it and walks away. Momma says she’s also fine when we ask her, but I see the sadness in her eyes and I know she’s lying. I hear her crying sometimes in her room so we try to comfort her as much as we can, I hate seeing her like that. I could never tell Daniel, he would feel so guilty. Poppa has been the strongest with all of this lately. He does get teary eyed every once and a while when it comes to Daniel but he still continues to do his work, and keeps food on our plates even after everything that’s been happening here, and I am so thankful for what he’s doing. I know that soon I will be getting a letter from Daniel saying he’s been fine and hopefully that will take a lot of worries off of everyone.

Dear Aline, July 30, 1861

When I first got here it seemed really cool, and I felt so honored to serve everyone back home. I got to meet a whole bunch of new people and I even found some guys that where my age. They said they live near us but I’m not exactly sure where they mean. We have been practicing day and night and I’ve been getting a lot better thanks to the help of all the people here. The weapons they have here are really neat and I can’t wait to use them again. After we finish practicing we have supper, the food is not that great but I’ve tasted worse, just glad we have something to eat. We just had a battle here called the Bull Run and we found out that about 5,000 people died total. I got so scared when it happened and some of the people I had just met died in that battle. Seeing my friends getting shot and dying on the floor made me just want to run out of there but I stayed strong like you guys said and fought till it was over. Well anyways enough of what has been happening here, how has it been over there back home? Is momma and poppa alright? I miss all of you guys back home and I wish I could see you guys again, but I just have to wait because I know I will. I have to go now supper is ready and if I don’t hurry my food might get taken with all the people hungry and stuff. Bye and take care.

~ Love, Daniel

Dear Daniel, August 30, 1861

I miss you so much Daniel and I wish you could come home. I hope you’re doing great over in Virginia. When you told me about the Bull Run Battle I was so terrified and so thankful that you didn’t get hurt. We decided not to tell our parents about the Bull Run because we knew that they would end up crying if they heard about the deaths and everything. I hope all their families get better with the death of their loved ones. I still can’t believe how many people died in just one battle, it’s very sad and I don’t want to know how many people die in the next battle. I don’t like how late we receive our letters all the time they need to start sending them faster right Daniel?, but hopefully they start coming sooner. I have to go and help momma get some groceries for us. Bye, and please take care Daniel.

~ Love, Aline

Dear Diary,

Today is February 26, 1862 and it has been rough on our family again. There have been some more battles back where Daniel is at and it terrifies me so much. I know he’s a wise and strong soldier but even those die on us. I get scared when I don’t receive a letter from him, and me thinking the worst all the time. Momma has been better with everything happening she talks more; we try not to tell her about the battles and injuries that happen to Daniel because we know how she will react. It gets lonely sometimes back home with him not around, Dean is too small to play outside with and my sisters are always helping out to get extra money. I really hope Daniel comes back home safely soon.

Dear Aline,

How are all of you? Is everything going good back at home? I hope there hasn’t been any bad thing happening. I feel like I haven’t seen you guys in forever, I miss home so much and I can’t wait till I get back home. There have been a lot more battles than I thought there would, but I think this is all going to end soon. After every battle finishes there is blood everywhere and people dying on the floor. I hate the feeling and sight of them there helpless and there isn’t much we can do, and even if we could help them there isn’t much medical attention here. When we have injuries they can’t do much to help us so we basically just have to stay tough and fight the pain. I haven’t had any huge injuries, but sometimes my friends get burned or stabbed and I can hear them welling for all the pain, it terrifies me and seeing them makes me feel like I can even feel the pain. Boy will I be happy when all of this is over.

Dear Daniel,

Things are getting much better now, it’s been a lot warmer back home and hopefully there too. Momma said I can start planting some seeds, for flowers and vegetables, and you know how much I like to do those things. I know it’s still hard for you with all those battles and I know you hate all those sights of people dying and getting hurt but you will through all this and come home. There will probably be more battles but I know you will stay strong and survive anything that happens. Other than the battles happening how is it over there? I remember you used to tell me that you wanted to go around and see other states, of course not like this but it’s still something right? When you come back home I hope you can bring back some good memories and other things.

~Love, Aline

Dear Diary

Today is January 24, 1865, my brother Daniel is coming home soon in a couple of months and I am so exited. It has been a really long time since I’ve seen him and he probably looks a lot different, because it has been about four years. In those four years I suffered more than I’ve suffered my whole life. Everything changed in my life and I felt so alone. My brother going off to war, many of our people dying, my family getting poor it was all too much back then, but I survived all of that. I’m a stronger person and I know my brother and family are too. Something that I am worried about for when my brother comes home is how my brother will act. Will he be boring and too much of an adult?, or what if he’s a completely different person, but worse of all what if he starts having nightmares and acts like he is still in battle, like some of the other soldiers did when they came back from war. My heart would just brake if anything bad happened to him here after all he’s been through. I hope he won’t though he’s too tough for that he will remember all of us and will be just fine When he comes back my family and the people in our neighborhood are going to celebrate and congratulate all the men that are coming back home. I know it’s going to be so much fun and everything will change for the better. I just can’t wait to see him

~ Aline