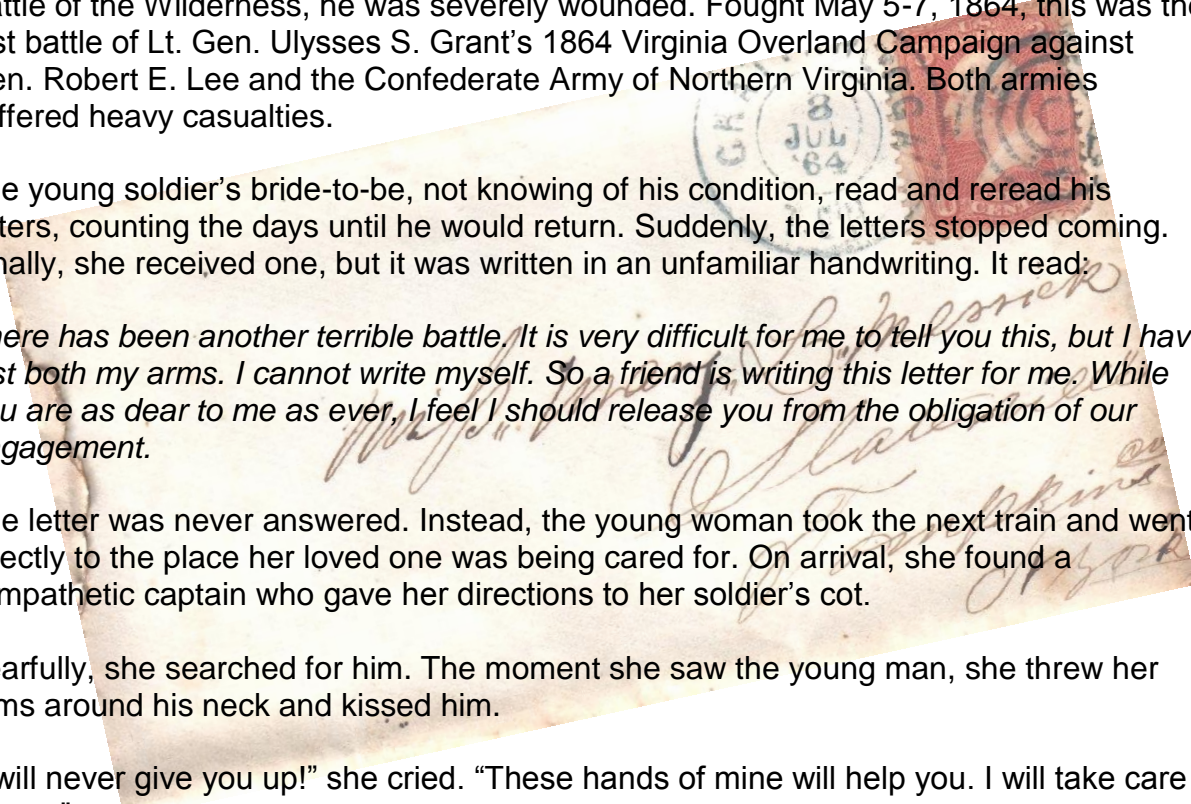


Reunion on the Battlefield

A New England girl had just become engaged when the Civil War broke out. Her fiancé was called into the army, so their wedding had to be postponed.

The young soldier managed to get through most of the conflict without injury, but at the Battle of the Wilderness, he was severely wounded. Fought May 5-7, 1864, this was the first battle of Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's 1864 Virginia Overland Campaign against Gen. Robert E. Lee and the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia. Both armies suffered heavy casualties.

The young soldier's bride-to-be, not knowing of his condition, read and reread his letters, counting the days until he would return. Suddenly, the letters stopped coming. Finally, she received one, but it was written in an unfamiliar handwriting. It read:



There has been another terrible battle. It is very difficult for me to tell you this, but I have lost both my arms. I cannot write myself. So a friend is writing this letter for me. While you are as dear to me as ever, I feel I should release you from the obligation of our engagement.

The letter was never answered. Instead, the young woman took the next train and went directly to the place her loved one was being cared for. On arrival, she found a sympathetic captain who gave her directions to her soldier's cot.

Tearfully, she searched for him. The moment she saw the young man, she threw her arms around his neck and kissed him.

"I will never give you up!" she cried. "These hands of mine will help you. I will take care of you."

That is a beautiful love.

And it is the kind of love that our associates demonstrate daily – using their hands to help and to take care of those entrusted to us.

It is love, indeed, that drives them to do what they do. And it is what fuels our company's mission.

– Beecher Hunter