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Helena, Ark., May 14, 1863.

Dear Mary:

When I last wrote you, we were on the eve of starting back in the country. The detachment was composed of our regt. and the 33rd Iowa Infantry, with a hundred and fifteen men from the 3rd Iowa Cavalry, and two pieces of the Dubuque Battery. Another detachment acting in concert with us, was made up of the 5th Kansas, the 5th Illinois, and the 1st Indiana, all Cavalry, making in all about 1200 men with three small steel rifled Howitzers. Our detachment numbered near one thousand men.

We took what is called the Little Rock turnpike and the others the St. Francis road. We went on without anything to break the monotony of the march for the first day (hearing occasionally of Guerillas but never seeing one) and having marched eighteen miles, camped for the night about as tired a lot of men as one could wish to see. The country we passed was desolation itself. The road ran through one continued series of plantations of the best land in the world, all deserted, not an acre under cultivation. The houses were almost all empty, and when anyone was to be seen, it was the wife and children of some poor white trash (as they call them here) who wither voluntarily or involuntarily were in the Rebel army, and were obliged to stay from sheer necessity. The poor things looked frightened to death, and well they might be,

for many of the troops, especially the Kansas regit. was composed of men who had their homes spoiled by the raids of the Rebels and have about as much feeling for a Secesh as a wolf has for a lamb.

We camped in a lot near a small brook, and proceeded to help ourselves to beef out of a drove of cattle near by (shooting some eight or ten for that purpose). By request of Maj. Gray I mounted a horse and started off with him, in company with fifteen or twenty cavalry through the woods to see about a bridge, said to want repairing some two miles off. We started off at a good gallop, through the woods, over logs and through the mud. After riding about a mile, my horse made a blunder and brought up against my leg, and the leg against a tree, standing just in the wrong place. The tree got the worst of it, for my knee knocked the bark off clean, and stood it first rate. It was not badly hurt and we went on until we brought up at a house, where there were four women but no men. We found we were on the wrong track and put back to camp, which we reached just at dark and were soon all fast asleep. Some of the men did not rest well, for I found in the morning, that a hive of honey and several chickens and ducks had found their way into camp from the same plantation we visited in the woods. They somehow were drawn irresistably toward our camp. We were all up before light and got our breakfast, and were ready to start at sunrise. A good many of the boys made up awful looking faces when they tried to walk but soon got over it. I was

all right except my knee which felt rather stiff, but before night that was all gone and I felt it no more after.

We had several alarms the second day; the first just after noon. My company was rear guard of the Infantry, but we had another of Cavalry about twenty rods farther back of some twenty men. We heard three or four shots in quick succession, when the Cavalry came rushing up and said we were attacked in the rear. I immediately formed my company for an attack, and waited for some minutes, and as no one came in sight, went on after the train; my place being to guard the wagons. By this time the alarm had got to the front and the column all formed for battle. Some men were sent back to the rear, and we soon found that the cause of the alarm was from some half dozen Rebels in our rear, shooting a nigger that had followed us out from Helena for the purpose of plunder. Some Rebels happened to see him and popped him over. They are death on every nigger they catch, giving them no time for repentance. We caught some five or six in the course of the day, some known to be Rebel soldiers and some guessed at. We had some half dozen alarms all ending in smoke, when having traveled twenty miles we camped near a house. Just before getting there we came across a flock of sheep, the real long legged kind, which made it very troublesome to catch them, but we managed to get two for our company - that made us very comfortable for meat. We met a woman from Fayette County Wisconsin, that had started for Arkansas to get the body of her son, who was killed there. When

we went up White River, she very foolishly thought they would let her pass through, but she was mistaken. The Rebels took her horses the first night, and everything she had, except the metallic coffin. She was here today, and we have raised enough money to send her home. She will probably go back with less confidence in the Rebels than she had when she came down here. We passed a few fields of wheat today, perhaps altogether a hundred acres, and maybe as many acres planted with corn and one little patch of cotton, all else was a dreary waste.

The third day out we struck the open country, beautifully varied by groves of timber and prairie, with no inhabitants, or very scattering. They say the prairies are not good lands, but I do not believe it. They look as good as any North. There were large droves of fine cattle, so we had plenty of beef. We caught some three or four more Guerillas today, among the quartermaster and a Captain of Col. Dobbins' regt. who is ahead of us somewhere, and we have hopes of bringing him at bay tomorrow. We had a big alarm today and formed a line of battle in approved military style, and waited with beating hearts for the appearance of an enemy. It soon turned out to be a part of the rear guard who had got a little behind and were coming on at a gallop, kicking up quite a dust. I had begun to think, that the Cavalry were ^a set of cowardly scamps, and opinion now fully confirmed after seeing them perform. I tell you a man hates to stand and fight with four good legs under him, that he knows will carry him out of dangers and they won't do it sure.

We camped the third night in a grove on a beautiful prairie and nothing disturbed us, except a big rattlesnake six feet long, which was soon dispatched. Once in the night some sneaking fired at one of our pickets but did no damage. In the morning we started on, and about noon a Cavalry man came rushing back, saying that a column of the enemy were approaching. We got ready for another fight but it proved to be another scare, being part of the other detachment, driving some cattle into the camp. The two roads meeting at this place. They had been scouring the country to our left without finding any enemy and happened to meet us at this point. We all started on in the morning and after a three miles march brought up at a deep stream, called Bayou Devon and could not cross. The point we were aiming at was Cotton Plant, some five miles from here, and said to be the rendezvous of all the Guerillas in the country. But we could not get across without losing too much time, as which we could not well afford to do, seeing we had but six days rations on the start, four of which were gone. We turned around now, being about seventy miles from Helena. Col. Clayton with the Cavalry took a road round by a place called Madison. We came back by the same road for two days when we turned to the North and camped. We got news in the night, that Col. Clayton had come across Marmaduke on his retreat from Missouri, and had a brush with him. Finding them too many for him, had crossed the river in the night and left. He had two men killed and some wounded. If we had all been together, we could have

cleaned them out easily.

Today we destroyed as much as ten thousand bushels of corn; as orders were to destroy all we did not want. We have also taken all of the mules and horses, so there is not one left in the country. We marched to within twelve miles of Helena and sent in for rations and instructions. We got orders at two P.M. to come into town, which we executed by marching in at seven o'clock. The last part of the march was the hardest of the whole; as we came toward town everything was flooded and the mud was plenty. We were glad enough to get into our tents, but were not half as tired as on the first days march; and in the morning everyone was ready for duty, in fact much better than when we started.

You cannot conceive of the desolation of the country through which we passed in the march of 140 miles. I do not think there is 1000 acres that is under crop. They have no teams to put in any with, and what the poor creatures are to exist on is more than I can tell. If they had teams, there is not a nigger left, every one except some poor decrepit thing not able to crawl, have left. There are some 200 of all sizes and colors in with us. They take everything loose and start. It is hard to see old men and women that were worth three or four years ago from \$100,000 to \$500,000 reduced to beggars, living on corn meal ground in a coffee mill with scarcely anything besides, only meat. No tea or coffee or anything in shape of the necessities of life. They have nothing left to get away

with, if they wanted to but where would they go to and be any better off is the question. Truly the way of the transgressor is hard. We had lots of fun on the trip once in a while some of the women would give us a free lecture on matters in general, and Abolition in particular, but most of them were friendly and all terribly scared.

I have got to go and lay out a new camp, and will try and get time this afternoon to finish this letter. When we got back we got lots of news, among which was the taking of Richmond, Port H_uudson and in fact nearly all of the Confederacy, all of which we received with much caution, not placing much reliance on anything we heard. It has turned out about as I supposed it would, but as Gen. Fiske remarked today: "If we have not got them, we can take them any time we want them."

One of the boys from the 29th Regt. was here today and says the 29th was in the fight at Grand Gulf, and lost 75 men and that the Regt. was on the march to Jackson when he left. We got news today that this is the day fixed on to make another attempt on Vicksburg on both sides. We shall wait with much anxiety for news, until we hear the result. We seem to have struck a lucky streak and if followed up, may close the thing up soon. We seem to be a fixture in this place and I think we shall stay here all summer. We move our camp in a day or two on the bank of the river, it being considered much the healthiest place. The only water fit to use, is the river water, and there is always a breeze or nearly so on the river bank.

I found a letter from you when I returned, and from it I infer, you have written some, I have not received. You spoke about writing about mother's sickness, and you said nothing about receiving any money, so I think you must have written some I have not received. A mail boat was burned between Cairo and Memphis and perhaps your letter was burnt with it. You want to know if I want anything sent, you have anticipated every want.

We can buy most of the things we need, but have to pay high. Butter is 50 cts. a pound, eggs have been 50 cts. per dozen, but can be had for 25 now. I bought three bushels of potatoes yesterday for \$1.25 a bushel but no one but officers can buy them, and we have to certify that they are for our own use. Private dealers ask \$3.50 a bushel for them. I believe that in my last I mentioned about the money Gill paid you. If you get a chance to send, you had better spend it for quinine, that is if you do not give it back to the donors. You must use your own judgment about that.

Capt, White is sick and has applied for a furlough. He will most likely start for home by the next boat. I do not see as there is any chance for me to get sick. I walked every mile of the road we went over, and grew better every day. I suppose if I were to get sick I should want to get home terribly, but it seems now as if I would not give a straw to be at home unless I could be well, so that I could enjoy it. It is late and I must lay myself down, I will not call it going

to bed. Somehow my tent never seemed so lonesome as it does tonight. Writing to you makes me so want to see you all that it seems as though I must go home anyway. I shall be very anxious on mother's account until I hear from you again and more on your account, for fear you will make yourself sick in trying to do too much in taking care of her. It does seem as though she had been sick enough, so that she ought to live the remainder of her days in peace. Now my dear one Good Night and may you sleep as sweet as I shall.

May 16 -

We are having very nice weather, not uncomfortably warm, and the nights delightfully cool. We never have any like it North but I suppose we shall have to pay for it before long.

We have rumors this morning, that Price and Marmaduke have joined their forces and are marching on this place, but I guess it is all bosh. But let them come if they want to, I think they will be glad to get away again.

Have you your garden made? How did your strawberries and grapes winter? And is your shrubbery all broken down? I want to know about everything. You spoke of buying the cow. I hardly know how to advise in the matter. The cost of keeping is full what a quart of milk would be besides the trouble. If you have a good girl that you can rely on staying, perhaps the best plan would be to buy one. It is much better for the children to have plenty of milk and often a great help to you to give them bread and milk for a meal, when you do not feel

like cooking. You will have to judge for yourself in the matter.

I want all the children to write, every one of them and as soon as I get the new camp made and we get moved, I will write to each of them, the dear little creatures. Kiss all the children for me and take lots of love to yourself.

Yours

Edward.

Helena, Ark., May 22, 1863.

Dear Mary:

Two of my men are coming home this morning and I improve the opportunity of sending a few lines although I do not think I ought to write another word to you for two months to pay you off for not being more prompt in answering. I have not heard from you in over two weeks. I had started writing early this morning but finally waited until the mail came in hopes to get a letter but waited in vain and was mad as a hornet. I feel more anxious to hear on mother's account, and knowing how sick she was and that you were taking care of her. I have been very uneasy for fear you would overwork yourself and be sick yourself, and not hearing from you makes it almost amount to a certainty. Let me hear from you if you cannot write but a line.

Col. Lewis got back three days since looking first rate and he says Capt. Williams means to come in a few days but thinks he cannot stand it and that he had advised him to resign. Capt. Townsend is also at home as I received a letter from him yesterday saying he would get to Whitewater in a day or two and would call on you. Col. Whittaker will go home in a day or two; he has tendered his resignation but has not yet heard anything from it and is now trying to get leave of absence, but he says he will go anyway, if he does he will be dismissed from the service, so the place will be vacant. There is and has been lots of figuring for the position and I think the thing is bound to kick up a mess in the regiment the best way you

fix it, and I am afraid will seriously affect the regt. It seems that Capt. White has been figuring for a promotion from the Governor ever since the organization of our regt. and in all probability will be commissioned Major. If he is five of the Captains will resign and if their resignations are not accepted will do as Col. Whittaker says he will do, go home anyway. I should hate very much to quit the service in such a way but had rather than stay here and not have our rights respected. I was offered yesterday a Colonel's commission in one of the black regts. that are raising; at least was offered the influence of every General in Helena and that amount to about the same thing as the appointment. If Capt. White is made Major I shall wish I had taken it. What would you think of my taking such a place, providing I had another chance, and tell me just how it looks to you.

The drums are beating Assembly for Battalion drill and I shall have to close, but if I can get time before night to write more will do so.

In one of your letters you wanted to know how much I had to pay on the boxes and barrels. The last box cost nothing and I shall be out on the others not far from \$20. There were several of the men away at Memphis and other places so I sent their things to them, and of course was out the cost on them. If any of them ever get back I shall get it again, but several of them are discharged and the rest will be I think, so I consider it gone up.

I received a letter from George yesterday and he has bought me a watch, paying \$35. for it. Good Bye.

Yours in haste,

Edward.

Helena, Ark., May 22, 1863.

My dear son Willie:

I was going to write more to your mama, but have concluded to write to you. I have come in from Battalion drill and feel pretty tired, but still I think I will take the time while George is getting dinner to write you, but I have lots to do this afternoon. First I have to go down town to transportation papers for Mr. Calkins and Rodgers so they can start home today; then we have to go on drill at two o'clock and drill until five, then I have all my company business to attend to; so you see my time is employed every minute.

I wish that I knew what you were doing today. I rather think you are in school learning to be a man one of these days. You must always be at the head of your class and get the name of being the best boy in the town, then I would feel proud of you. I know you can be and know you will.

You must see that the things are taken care of well in the garden and yard. I expect you will have a first rate garden so that if I should happen to come home this Summer you will have lots of good vegetables for me to eat.

I have just heard while I have been writing this that Haines bluff at Vicksburg is taken with 9,000 prisoners, but hardly believe it is so. If it is they will have Vicksburg in a few days. Write to me as soon as you get this.

Your father.

Helena, Ark., June 1, 1863.

Dear Mary:

Your letter came to hand yesterday evening, and I felt much relieved to hear from you again, and that you were well. I have been more anxious about you for the last two weeks, than at any time since I first heard of your getting well, a short time after I left home. I have fully made up my mind, that you were sick and have thought of you night and day. I am also very much pleased with the letters from Willie and Lillie. They must write every time you write. I think Willie writes very plain and I can read Lillie's well enough, but had rather she would than to make letters. I know she is not old enough yet to write very well, but she will soon learn if she keeps trying, but I had a great sight rather have her print me a letter than not to send any at all. I guess I can read Etta's too, if she sends one, and dear little Sasa, bless her heart. I would go on foot until daylight to see her five minutes. Give them all a good hug for me. According to Willie's letter you must have a very early garden and a good one too. He also wants to know if he can go to the Dutch school. I calculate, if he and I both live I shall have him study German and some other languages, but I want to have him learn our own language first thoroughly. I do not think he is quite old enough yet, he must learn to talk Dutch all he can with the German boys and girls he associates with, and it will help him very much when he

comes to study the language.

Since I last wrote, we have moved our camp again, to our intense disgust. We had the nicest camp I ever saw. Had brick floors in most of the officers tents and bricks drawn for the rest, had shaded the streets with young cypress trees and had just got it so that it was the admiration of every one that saw it. Then we got an order to come back to our old camp, God knows for what. I expect though, that our General in command has heard of a Guerilla or two and wants us between them and him. Anyway we got the order night before last at sundown and we were all moved at twelve o'clock that night. There was some swearing, but most of us thought that the English language could not do the case justice and very judiciously said not a word. We have things very comfortable again, we have had experience enough in making camps so that it is soon done. We have had fourteen regular camps in five months besides our marches and trips on boats. We have built five large ovens and it has become a proverb with us, when anything is said about moving, that we cannot go until the oven is done. We have never used one more than two days after it was finished before we were ordered on some expedition or other and of course had to leave it.

Now Mary, about sending things down here; if you have a chance almost anything you could send would be a rarity but I would not take upon myself to get up a box to send. When any of the officers come, I shall be much pleased to receive anything you

may send. You need not be afraid of sending too much horse radish or anything of that kind. We can buy pickles for fifty cents a gallon of the Commissary and almost everything in the entire line cheaper than you can at home, I mean the officers. We get things at the contract price without any charge for transportation.

You have once or twice spoken of Mrs. Warne speaking to you about George. Say to her for me that George is of the very best boys that I have. He is always ready to do his duty and always without any grumbling or asking any questions. I shall give him the first vacancy in the company officers. If it had not been for stinking Scenten leading him away from his duty he would have been a sergeant before this time. I put as much confidence in George as any man I have.

We have been waiting for the last ten days with our mouths open ready to hurrah over the fall of Vicksburg and have almost given up its being taken; not from any bad news, but when one is very anxious about anything, that is long delayed, he gets suspicious about its ever coming. I cannot see how Grant can fail since he has whipped them in six pitched battles and has them entirely cut off, and I cannot see how the Rebels can get troops enough to interfere with him. Massed in his rear, he holds all the positions for forty miles back his gunboats control the river; the bridge over big black is destroyed and the railroad useless. A week longer must close them out; it is only a matter of time. Vicksburg taken, the army of the West

will soon be behind Richmond and there will not be any false reports then. I do not pretend to say how long it will take to do so, but I have long thought that was the only way the Rebels in Virginia would be cleaned out. The fact is they not mean fight in the East and either can not, or do not. Whatever they do almost all the real hard fighting, even in Virginia, has been done by Western regiments and they have always been put in the front, I sometimes think on purpose to get them all used up. In fact I have not a doubt that it has been the fixed policy of the McClellan clique to destroy in some way every General and every man that wanted to fight to hurt the Rebels. There is an awful day of reckoning for them coming some day and it believe Seward is the worst one in the whole lot. It is getting late and I must close. If you were here to sleep with me I think we would manage to pass the night if my bunk is narrow, don't you?

Yours ever,

Edward.

Helena, Ark., June 6, 1863.

Dear Mary:

I received yours and Willie's welcome letters and as I have an opportunity of sending a line by some of the boys that are coming home on a furlough I just succeeded in obtaining for them, and they leave in ten minutes. One is James Baldwin and the other's name is Rhinehart and lives in Palmyra; they have leave of absence for thirty days.

The Governor was here today and luckily Col. Whittaker's resignation was accepted just in time for him to appoint Maj. Gray to fill his place. The officers have had a meeting and recommended Capt. Townsend for Major and I have been appointed to wait on the Governor to present the proceedings of the meeting which I shall proceed to do this evening. The Governor makes a review of our regiment at five o'clock. I hope the Governor will make the appointment we asked, and if he knows what is good for the regiment he will.

I received a letter from George Redington (little George) yesterday. He gave me quite a history of his shooting, but left me to guess at all other news. I have not as much time to write as I thought I had. If there is a chance to send anything I would like some of the Whitewater soap; the kind that will take grease out of clothes.

Yours ever,

Edward.

Helena, Ark., June 7, 1863.

My dear daughter Lillia:

Before I go to bed tonight, I will write you a letter, to tell you how much pleased I was to receive your letter and to learn from yourself how well you were getting along with your studies. I expect when this war is over, and I come home, you will be the best scholar in your class and a very nice well behaved young lady. But while you are learning your books, you must not forget to help your kind mama all you can. While I am away, you know, she has hard times in taking care of you all alone, so you must help her all you are able.

I was very much grieved to hear of dear grandmother's death. You must feel very lonesome without her. Does grandpa feel real bad since she died? I shall not write you any news in this because I have been writing ma a long letter and will hear all the news in that. Now my dear little girl Good Night. Your pa feels pretty lonesome tonight, and if he could see you, he rather thinks you would get kissed pretty hard.

Your father.

Helena, Ark., June 7, 1863.

Dear Mary:

It is Sunday and not having much to do, I of course feel lazy and lay on my bunk until it has grown so warm, and the flies so troublesome that it was impossible to stand it longer. At last in a fit of desperation have set down to write, although not in very good humor with myself or anybody else.

First I will write what has taken place in a military line since I wrote last. We have (or at least the Generals have) been in a perfect fever over news of the advance of Price; and in consequence have kept us in readiness for any emergency. Day before yesterday, I was sent with my company out to the front for an advance guard and stayed twenty-four hours; when I was relieved by a company from the 43rd Indiana. We passed the time quite pleasantly and only had one alarm in the night. George Winslow was on guard and he saw something that he thought was a man. As it would not halt when ordered to, he fired away at it. We were most of us half asleep but the report had not half ceased the echo through the woods before every man was on his feet, wide awake with rifles firmly in hand ready for any emergency. I sent two men to find out the cause and found what was taken for a man was a big dog, which in the darkness was creeping through the woods. The moon soon came up full and clear making it nearly impossible for an enemy to get near enough to a sentinel to fire on him, and we all lay and slept until morning. Through the day we had nothing to do, as the

Cavalry pickets were out beyond us, but at night they were drawn inside our chain of Infantry pickets, some half a mile towards camp from us so that we occupied the extreme post.

The lines were open six or eight days since for such citizens as wanted to come in for the necessaries of life, on condition that they took the oath of allegiance and got a pass from the General in command. There are a great many women and some men, coming in all the time. Poor, lean, hungry looking creatures we could not help feeling sorry for them, although we knew perfectly well, that at least nine out of ten were Secesh of the vilest kind, with a fair chance of the tenth one being in the same rank. They all have the wild, scared, strange look, that is invariably seen on the human face, when living in such a state of fear and excitement as exists all through the South. Poor things, there is an awful future in store for them, no matter whether the North or the South succeed in this war. It will take years to get to comfortable living and a generation for things to be in as good a state as they were three years since. They must suffer this winter, and we shall have to open wide our storehouses in the North, and deal out with no niggardly hand to keep thousands of our erring brethren from dying of actual starvation. God help them, for they do not seem disposed to help themselves. Taking the negroes away from them has used them up, at least in this vicinity, and there can not be a doubt that if it had been done at first, this war would not have lasted one year. But I digress, I was going to tell you what we were

doing and not write a political essay.

About noon there came up a shower, and the way it rained and hailed was a caution, but our oilcloth blankets kept us dry (they are a great institution for a soldier) at least all but me. I put mine over a lady the guard had stopped and were keeping from passing out until they could sent to the General three miles off. She had bought thirty yards of cotton cloth, and as the officer was instructed to let it out only in small quantities, he kept her waiting until he had official authority as to what a small quantity consisted of. She was a very nice appearing lady, and made me think of Celia - just about as fat and good natured looking. I rather think she may thank that fact for not getting wet. When we were relieved and got back to camp, we found everything in excitement; the enemy were coming sure and every man was ordered to be under arms all night and reliefs of three companies ordered to be in the rifle pits until further orders. Our turn would not come until five o'clock in the morning so we all turned in with our arms by our sides. At daylight I went out with my company, and shortly after it began to rain, and the way it did was awful. It kept on for two hours, and stopped in ten minutes, then commenced to hail and blow. The hail did not come down, the wind blew too hard for that; it came sideways, first one side, then the other. Fortunately the stones were not very large, and we escaped without serious damage. It kept on until five minutes before we were relieved. When we got back to camp, we found things

in a delightful state of confusion. About one-half of our tents had blown down and the balance might as well for everything was saturated. We soon fixed up the tents and two hours sun made everything all right again. The alarm ended as all others had. Some Cavalry man had seen someone, who told him, that Price's advance were camped in a hollow close by and without investigating had scampered on to the General and given the alarm. A thousand men were kept up in the storm. I am afraid they will cry "Wolf" so much that the wolf should happen to come the cry will not be heeded.

I see they had a fight in the Western part of this State with what is said to be part of Price's force. I think he is fully as likely to be there as near us, and more so, for he has the chance of running off into Tozas there which he would not have this side of White River. More anon,

Edward.

Helena, Ark., June 8, 1863.

Monday morning

As the mail will not go out until this evening, I postponed finishing this last night. This morning I woke feeling awful sore and lame all over; but after stirring around felt better. As the Colonel was obliged to go to town, I had to take the regiment out to drill for two hours since which I have been to town and bought some tinware and other things we needed, and have got up a good sweat and feel all right except a slight headache.

The paymaster is down and we are to receive two months pay tomorrow so you can be on the lookout for some money. I think I can spare \$200. providing there is a chance of being paid again soon. The payment we get now is for the months of March and April, so there will be two months due on the 1st of July.

I sent a little box by Baldwin, it was the one my watch was sent in. Give it to one of the little girls if you do not want it to keep your locket etc. in. There is nothing here I can buy to send you and the children so you must buy them something for me and yourself a new dress for the 4th of July.

I am heartily glad you have a good girl and hope you will keep her. You did not tell me her name or how much you had to pay; but that makes no difference. You had better pay a good girl twice.

The order allowing 5% to have furloughs for thirty days

is much appreciated. It is the non-commissioned and privates, the commissioned officers have no chance. Baldwin and Rhinehart came home on that order, and I can send one more as soon as they get back.

I have not written to Willie this time. I will write to him as soon as I get time.

It must have been a hard blow for Calkins family it does seem too bad, that he should get so near home and not see his wife and children before he died. His son feels very bad. The doctor was much surprised, when I told him of his death. He says that he saw nothing about him, when he left, that ought to cause his death.

Some of my boys tell me that they are raising a company of artillery in Whitewater. I hope they will succeed in filling it. Chafee's case seems a proof that it is hard to keep out of the army after once fairly in. When he first got home he wrote to Schram that he was out and he be damned if he did not stay out. The next letter he said that as soon as his health would permit he would be with us. The next he was raising a company. Let me know how he succeeds when you answer and who has joined. I do not think much of the Artillery, but better that than none. Tell Fred that if he gets in a fever to go, not to go in anything but an Infantry regiment. There are more reasons why than I have time to write. I will only mention one, that the state of morals in the Cavalry and Artillery service. They are a set of roudies with out exception, rank and file; great blowhards and

the first to run. Perhaps I may have been unlucky in my association with them, but the rule held good so far. As soon as a man gets fairly in either of them he seems to lay aside everything honorable. You need not make public what I have said, I have only said it for fear Fred would join that Artillery company, and would be sorry to hinder anyone else from enlisting.

I believe I must tell the children one thing about my dogs. They went after a fox one night a month or more since and the last I knew of them, they were howling like all possessed on the track. Someone must have tied them up, I thought they were gone sure. About a week ago, I was writing one night and Kate came into the tent almost tickled to death. Yesterday morning I found six little puppies that she had found somewhere. Now the question is what shall I do with the little ones? I do not believe I want so many. Give my best love to all the friends and tell Celia that it is about time I heard from her.

Your affectionate husband,

Edward.

Helena, Ark., June 11, 1863.

Dear Mary:

One of my men left for home today on a furlough. I meant to have sent a letter by him but did not get time to write. I have been Brigade Officer of the Day and had to be in the saddle all night riding over the picket lines. Such a ride, up hill and down into hollows, sometimes so steep, that I had to lead my horse and hang on to the bushes to get up at that. When it is dark as pitch in the thick woods it is interesting, especially so, when one is all the time expecting to be made a target for some skulking rascal to practice shooting in the dark. I tell you a man keeps ears, eyes and all other faculties fully employed. Hardly a night passes but someone is fired at but luckily so far no one has been hit, although night before last one man got a bullet through his haversack, lodging in a loaf of bread.

I sent today by Adams Express Co. one thousand and fifty-four dollars for my company to the bank of Whitewater, including \$250. for you and \$250. for Mrs. Gray and \$100. for Mrs. Schram. I will enclose you an order for yours.

Gilbert Olson is the man coming home today; he is one of my best corporals, always ready and willing. You must show him a good deal of attention. I sent by him a Secesh toothpick, that Jimmie Caward picked up and gave to me. Put it up somewhere out of the way. I shall send home from time to time any of the

various kinds of arms in use as I can get hold of them. I have now a breech-loading carbine that I shall send the first opportunity. Have them kept where they will be dry.

I think that I may come home in July, if Vicksburg is taken. I think there will be no doubt but that I will. If it is not taken no one will come unless they are sick, and the surgeons will testify that it is necessary to save their lives. I hardly think I want to come home on those terms. Do you want me to? Oh dear, I feel sore and tired after my long ride - if I could only be at home tonight wouldn't I like it? But on the whole if I had to be back in the morning I rather guess I would not go.

I stopped to go to sword exercise; we practice half an hour each evening and some of the officers are getting so they handle the sword very well. I will write more when I feel more like it. So Good Night my dear ones.

Yours ever,

Edward.

Helena, Ark., June 16, 1863.

Dear Mary:

Yours of the 10th instant came to hand this evening. I was at headquarters and about to start for my quarters to write to you, when the mail came in and I waited until it was looked over to see if I was favored with a letter. I was pleased to hear that you were all so well (as I always am) and shall go to bed feeling much more at ease than if your favor had not reached me tonight.

I have not been feeling very well for the last few days. Have a slight attack of Helena Quickstep, but feel much better tonight and think I shall be all right in the morning. I have been taking quinine, pain-killer, and whiskey and my head feels rather large and rings like a kettle. The way they all got mixed was in this way: a bottle of quinine and pain-killer got broken in my medicine chest; the quinine soaking up the pain-killer, so I put them in another bottle and filled up with whiskey. A more villainous compound to swallow never passed a man's lips. I have given several of the boys out of the same bottle and it has always cured them without fail. I think I shall apply for a patent on it as a cure for all the ills the flesh is heir to from colic to cholera.

I have been to town today and have bought a new hat. Paid \$5. for it. It is the first cent I have paid for clothing of

any kind since I left Wisconsin. Do you not think I have been prudent? But I shall have to have some new clothes before fall and if I come home this summer will have Macbeth make them, as he has my measure. I will write to him, so that he can have them done by the time I get there. Col. Gray, Schram, and myself talk about coming about the middle of August, if we can get away and we can if Vicksburg is taken. If it is not taken it will be a question whether any of us can come.

Schram started tonight for Memphis with a prisoner that the Provost Marshall wanted to send up. He will bring back Fred Tucker who has been there since some time in February. He was sent there sick, while we were down the pass and has been detailed for duty there. I have tried several times to get him. I rather think he will come this time.

Now about a Negro regiment: I made an application for the command of the next one raised, which will be the third. I could have had the command of the 2nd regiment if I had wanted it. I did not then want the position, and do not now, if everything goes as it ought to in the 28th, but if Capt. White is made Major, I do want to get out of this so to prepare the way made the application for the Negro regiment. I think that there is not a doubt but that I can get the place when the regiment is organized, but shall not accept if things go right here. If I do go, I shall take George Winslow with me for an Adjutant, and several men of my company for other officers. They are all in an excitement for fear I am going to leave them and nothing short of my being placed in the dishonorable position. I should

consider myself in if an officer were jumped over me would induce me to leave them.

Tell Celia that I certainly wrote to her last, and think I did to Ira but will not be sure and shall chance another to him soon, for fear I may be mistaken. I wrote to father but have not yet been favored with a reply. Please say to him to let me hear from him soon. I think Frank must have a hard lone-some time. It does seem as though she had suffered and endured long enough to have a place of rest for a season. I have often thought what she has been called upon to pass through and hope there may yet be a future in store for her, that will make amends for all her sufferings.

You say you have got the little girls each a flat (wouldn't I like to see them with them on) and one for yourself. I do not know about that one. I rather think you want to put on airs, and make yourself look young and cut a swell. Haha how comical you must look. Don't wear it out until I get home to see how it looks. Is it a green one with a pink bow on each side, and blue strings, and a couple of yards of tri-colored streamers? Or have you put it on a la Quaker without any trimming at all? I think my watch is a good one or will be after I get it regulated. I think the girls dress is very pretty. Wasn't little Sasa proud to get on that red dress? Bless their little souls, all of them. Willis's sacque (that is the way you spell it, is it right?) must look comical enough. Do you use your machine to do your sewing with and does it help

you much? Now my dear one Good Night, and may your dreams
be pleasant and mine be of you.

Your husband,

Edward.

Helena, Ark., June 24, 1863.

Dear Mary:

I received yours of the 16th this morning and will write you a short note now. The mail closes at 12:00 so that I have not much time to write very much and then I am so all-fired mad at what has been written to Whitewater that I could not write much if I tried. I wish, if it is possible, you would get the letter that John Miles wrote and send it to me; I do not want to say anything to him about it until I have positive proof of what he wrote. If I can get the letter I will make an example of him that will do the backbiters good or I am mistaken. About the reports that I was selling quinine I do not care very much, except that I should like to know who wrote such stuff, and I have taken steps that will unearth them I think.

It has commenced raining again like great guns and the way the water comes down is a caution; it sometimes rains hard up North but it cannot compare with this country. It has rained perhaps twenty minutes and everything is quite respectably flooded, the water running through and under the tent, and the way it is battering on the tent is furious. I expect every minute the tent will blow down and the prospect for dinner is dubious.

We have not yet heard who is to be Major. Since Capt. Williams came back we have reconsidered our action and recommended him, on account of his being the ranking Captain.

When Capt. Townsend was recommended we expected Williams would be unable to come but he looks now more able to stand fatigue than Townsend. Dr. Smith returned this morning looking very well; he is just in time for Dr. Miller was taken yesterday and we should have been without a surgeon. Dr. Hawes ought to be hung for the way he has acted since he joined the Regiment and, though I do not think he has been used right, he has no business to keep the Regiment without a surgeon; and he has not done any duty worth mentioning since he came and many times we have suffered severely in consequence.

There is nothing new in the military line as everything seems to be waiting on both sides for operations at Vicksburg to be brought to a focus. We have had about our usual number of false alarms. The night before last everyone was up and our Company sent into the rifle pits until morning, but it all ended in smoke as usual. I was Brigade Officer of the Day and spent nearly the entire night riding through the woods and hills to visit the pickets and outposts to see that all were on the alert; Lt. Schram went with me after two o'clock just for the fun of the thing and we had a gay ride from that time until sunrise.

I can't think what made you think from what I wrote that I was not on the best of terms with all the officers of the Regiment. However I am, with one exception, on the best of terms and highly respected and respect them all; and that one

I have had a word of difference with but I shall not mention his name as his family are not in Whitewater, Waukesha, or Milwaukee.

I will write again in a day or two. I have commenced this No. 1 and will try and number all I write. Love to all.

Your husband,

Edward.

Helena, Ark., June 30, 1863.

Dear Mary:

I received yours of the 21st instant yesterday morning and should have answered by return mail, only we are all pretty well stirred up by the news of Capt. White's appointment as Major. As I before predicted, it will be the disruption of the 28th Regiment. We held a meeting of the officers present with the result with which you can acquaint yourself, when you read the copy of the resolutions adopted thereat. This morning the resignations are all on and it remains to be seen, what will be done with them. One thing is certain whether my resignation is accepted or not, I shall not stay in the regiment if Capt. White is Major, and I shall not be alone. I have made my resignation in as strong language as is consistent with military discipline, and hope it may be accepted, but I have very little hopes of it. I think it may result in all the Captains being dismissed for tendering their resignations without proper cause in a military view, but do not care if it does. I have not a doubt but that the appointment was made entirely for political reasons, and that the Governor thought that in securing Capt. White's influence it would help his re-election. But he never made a worse mistake in his life; where he would have got the entire vote of this regiment, he will not now get one - as if every other officer in the regiment has not as much influence at home as White has.

We have had our regular two months muster this morning and are now ready for the paymaster, should he come this way. We think he will be here in the course of ten days; but such things are rather unsafe to depend on.

Capt. Kenyon leaves for home today on leave of absence. I wish that I had applied for a furlough so that I could have gone too, then if my resignation was not accepted, I could have stayed at home and let them muster me out for absence without leave. But I have all along thought I had rather come home in August, so that I should be away in the most unhealthy time and have made no effort to come before.

You speak of spending so much money. I do not see how you have got along and spent so little after what you have paid. George, Macbeth, etc. You have used less than \$200 since I left. You also say that I had never asked you to tell me how you spent it. I have not been at all anxious to know, having perfect confidence that you will use it to the best possible advantage. Of course I would like to know how much it cost you to live, and whether the money I send you keeps you comfortable; and how much you have to pay for articles you have to use, and in fact of any minute detail that takes place in your life. Mary, I do wish that you would write me long letters and let me know all that is going on, and your views and opinion of the events that are happening, not only at home but throughout the land.

It is getting very warm and have written this morning until

my hand is cramped tight to my pen and dinner is ready. I want to go to Capt. Stevens tent to see him and Capt. Kenyon is just coming after a puppy to take home with him so I will not wrote more now.

Yours ever,

Edward.

P.S. When you read the resolutions let Capt. Kenyon take them. He will have them published. E.S.R.

Helena, Ark., July 3, 1863.

Dear Mary:

I have been all day hard at work making my Quarterly Report and in various other camp duties. This evening I have been on a committee to make some arrangements for a proper observance of our natal day but from what we have learned others have arranged matters for us to celebrate; it may be to our cost. We have had many rumors of a force of Rebs in our rear for some time and have been well on the alert. Tonight since eight o'clock news has come in that Price is within a few miles with 18,000 men and will surely make an attack on us tomorrow or next day. The odds are largely against us. We have reported for duty of all the various kinds of arms but 3800, but on a pinch we can add from our teamsters extra duty men, and those reported for light duty, nearly 1000 more, but they have four to one the best way you can fix it. The fight will be a desperate one, if it comes off. It may be all scare, but somehow I think it will come. There is one thing sure that we cannot run. There is not a boat here except a ferry boat and one gunboat, so we must whip them or surrender.

I have packed up all my papers and clothes; loaded my pistols; filled my pockets with ammunition; have examined every cartridge in my company; filled up every box that was not full; talked the men into good humor; and sit down to write you this line, and shall write but few lines more and go to bed. We

are ordered to all be under arms at half past three, whether there is an alarm or not. I was a good deal disappointed in not getting a letter today. I have not heard from you in ten days and begin to be anxious to hear. I would give \$25 to get one from you tonight. I shall not write more tonight but will fill out the sheet tomorrow if I get a chance.

Yours until death,

Edward.

Kiss the dear little ones Good Night for me.

Helena, Ark., July 6, 1863.

Dear Mary:

We are all in a perfect fever of excitement today over the taking of Vicksburg, and cannot think what to write and could not write it if I could think. I will only say that we were not attacked last evening, although we spent the night in the trenches. All the dangers we are now in is that everyone will get tight; they have already hollered themselves hoarse. I will write fully when I am a little less nervous.

Yours ever,

Edward.

Helena, Ark., July 7, 1863.

Dear Mary:

I will, according to promise made yesterday, try this morning to give you something like a description of what we passed through on the ever to be remembered Fourth of July, 1863. Such another I never wish to see, although ending so gloriously for us and the cause we are fighting to uphold. As I wrote you on the evening of the third, we received information at dark, that a force of from 18,000 to 22,000 men were within three miles of us, all ready for an attack sometime in the night or early in the morning. We had received so many false alarms that nobody believed there was any cause for alarm, but somehow I felt a perfect assurance that they would come, as I wrote you that night, and made my calculations accordingly, and about twelve lay down to snatch an hours sleep. At three o'clock the drums beat the assembly, and we were quickly under arms. Still, almost every one thought it all nonsense, and we were sitting around, talking of everything but a fight, until a few minutes after four, when bang, went the alarm gun on Fort Curtis bringing every one all standing. Still, hardly any one believed then there would be a fight, and after a few minutes settled down again, thinking perhaps it was only meant for a salute at sunrise, in honor of our natal day; but in about ten minutes all such notions were scattered by our pickets beginning to dance, first by pop, pop, our right, then pop, on our left, then a dozen

pops, and a volley in front, a bang, bang, bang, from two batteries of four guns each, one on our right, and one on our left, then an awful roar from the gunboat Tyler, a sixty lb. shell howling and screaming through the air over our heads, and plunging into the timber a mile or more beyond us, and exploding with a roar almost as loud as the gun that sent it, and that came back as evidence that its mission was accomplished. Thus the ball was fairly opened. By this time they came swarming out of the woods, first one regiment, then a brigade, then a whole division, until there were over seven thousand massed to charge on two of our batteries, manned by two companies of the 33rd Missouri, and supported by four companies, making not over 150 men. The batteries were C and D. Our regiment was in the center, at battery B, about 800 yards to the right, in full view of us, but could not be seen by the gunners of our forts. Up to this time there had been a heavy fog that concealed all their movements; but shortly after sunrise the fog lifted and everything stood out in bold relief to us, but concealed from the forts.

The hills are so abrupt that they could get within a hundred yards without being seen from the works. Oh, what terrible feelings came over us as they slowly made their way up the hill, we all the time thinking that they were entirely out of range of our rifles, and that we could do nothing to protect the batteries. At last in sheer desperation, we commenced to fire on them, without as we supposed, doing one

particle of good. On, on they went, yelling like demons, up to the breastworks, and in an instant were driving the brave little band of heroes that stood until they actually crossed bayonets with more than thirty times their number. The gunners stood to their guns, until the last time they were discharged, they were not twenty feet off. They as soon as possible after they got possession of the two batteries, massed their forces behind the hill, and made a desperate charge with three brigades on our principal work, Fort Curtiss, but they had gone their length, and their success soon proved their ruin. As they charged down the hill (and a braver charge was never made) how grand they looked, and how for a moment, our hearts almost ceased to beat as those ranks of daring desperate men came over the hill, and we thought all was lost, they were met by a storm of shot and shell, and by a murderous flank fire from our regiment, we, by this time having got the elevation, and every ball went through their ranks: but still on they came, and some of them nearly reached the fort, but fiends themselves could not stand such a fire, and they broke in all directions. Part of them started back up the hill, and part of them ran into the deep ravines. Not one in three ever got away. Some two hundred came into the hollow on our side, and crept into a ravine and commenced to fire on the gunners but unluckily for them, they were not covered next to us. Our first fire killed fifteen, and wounded half the rest of them. They ran for the cover of the hill, but not one in ten reached any place of safety. One

whole regiment got into another hollow, and after about an hour fighting surrendered.

There still remained, in the batteries taken and lying behind the hill, ten times our number, but everything was waked up, and they could not leave cover, it seemed without meeting shot and shell with minnie balls for sauce. Now came the last struggle. Our men formed a charge up the hill to retake the forts, and we were ordered not to fire. We being on the hill, on the flank, could see the enemy and knew the number our men were charging on. There were not over 100 of our men to charge on at least 1500; but then all of our guns and batteries were aimed at the brow of the hill, and the danger was not as great as would seem. They crept cautiously on up the hill, until they could look over, and as they saw the masses opposed to them, fired their guns and broke down the hill. The rebels not knowing how many were coming got scared and ran also, and I think of all the laughable sights I ever saw, that beat them all. The rebels ran one way and our men the other, and each supposed his next step would be his last. We now opened on them with our rifles, and oh how they were cut down. Every time our boys fired they yelled and if they saw a man fall they yelled twice. I had been trying to get permission to go with my company behind a ridge within thirty rods of them, being perfectly sure that we could have taken every man when they started to run. I tried again and finally obtained permission to go. The boys all started with a yell, and ran down the hill, across the flat and up on the other side; but we had

nearly half a mile to go, and before we could get to the rear of them, nearly all had passed. But we stepped up and made prisoners of 118 not wounded, and God only knows how many wounded. The hollow was full of them. We now found how terrible had been our fire when we thought we were doing nothing, while they were charging on the first battery. We killed Gen. McCrea, Col. McKee, one major and three lieutenants, and wounded another major, two captains, and half a dozen lieutenants that we got, besides several officers that we saw them carry off, and how many men I can not tell. The hill was strewn with them. A short time after the fort was taken, three officers came riding up to it when some twenty of my boys and Captain Williams fired on them, mortally wounding as we afterwards learned, Gen. Parsons. We thought, from his actions, that we had hit his horse and made him unmanageable, (he was a splendid black charger), for he ran like the wind as far as we could see him, followed by the other two.

One of them, on a splendid cream, came back in about ten minutes. He had just got to the fort and was giving some orders, when he was knocked from his horse by one of our balls, and the horse was led down into the ravine. I kept watch of him, and when the rebels ran started a man before they were out of sight, and got the horse and have him now, and shall try and keep him. He is the prettiest riding horse I ever saw. The man who rode him was a Major Victor, an Aid to Gen. Holmes. While we were struggling against six or eight times our number, Marmaduke, with

six or eight thousand men, made an attack upon our right, and Col. Dobbins, with nine hundred cavalry, four pieces of artillery and one brigade infantry, made an attack upon our left. I could not see either of them, but knew, by the incessant discharge of cannon and small arms, that the struggle was desperate; but as every one had to fight for himself, neither the center or either wing could spare a man to help the other. We could only wait, with what patience we might until we could hear of the result, which we soon learned was as glorious as our own had been. Now as to the result of the battle.

We now have the reports of all the regiments and batteries, and they sum up 227 killed, wounded and missing. Some forty are known to be prisoners, and a large proportion of the balance are missing, either killed or prisoners. Perhaps part may be accounted for. Six of the wounded and killed were officers, one a Captain and the balance Lieutenants. One was killed by one of our own shells, which took nearly all his head off. Of the enemy we killed two Generals, Genl. Parsons of the famous fighting Missouri Brigade, and Genl. McCrea from Arkansas, two Cols., three Majors, and God only knows how many Captains and Lieutenants.

I saw three Lieutenants lying in one place, and we have buried, that have been officially reported, 327 men, besides what they buried themselves and quite a number buried by the citizens, many having fathers, sons and brothers killed among the rebels. We know that a good many have been buried by the Rebs.

In one place there were sixteen new graves, and how many

there were put together we cannot tell. Through the woods, graves are scattered in all directions for miles around. Then we have something over 1500 prisoners, not including what were given up by them to us, wounded, after they retreated, the number of which is not yet definitely known, but is supposed to be enough to swell the list to 2000. Dr. Castlebury, our medical director was out to their hospitals, and the Rebel surgeon on charge was an old chum of his. He informed Dr. C. that their killed and wounded amounted to over 2500, which in figures very nearly agrees with ours, if he includes those who are not wounded among our prisoners. If he does not we have the figures too small by over a thousand. We have it bad enough, and I had rather we would be right than him. If he is right, we have killed, wounded and taken prisoners, just a man apiece for every one of us engaged, for we number a few less than 3500, not including the negro regiment forming, who never fired a gun.

They made the men reported for, the day before we went into the fight, up to 3800. I do not think but that they would have fought if they had had a chance, but they were placed on the extreme left between the Levee and river bank close to their camp, and stayed there all day and were not molested and of course could not fight. We have already picked up over 3000 stand of arms, besides what were carried off by the citizens and negroes, which number is quite large, for every man you saw had all they could carry. We have learned that the night after the battle they had a regular stampede. First they got reports that we

were largely reinforced and were marching to attack them. A horse got loose and ran through their camp, scaring others until it was magnified into an attack by us and they all skedaddled and scattered in all directions.

If we had had 2000 men more so that we could have followed them with what we had, we could have crushed them fine. As it was we dare not leave the town unprotected and follow them, for we knew that Genl. Frost was a few miles down the river with 8000 men, and if we marched out, he could march in, so we had to let them go in peace. Now as to the force that made the attack upon us. As near as I can get at it, there were just 14000, consisting of the famous Parsons Missouri Brigade, numbering 2500. They have fought thirteen battles, and never failed in a charge before. Next Genl. Payrims Brigade of 3000, Genl. McCreas Brigade of 1500, Genl. Marmaduke with something over 6000, and Dobbins Regt. of 900, with eight pieces of artillery manned by 200 men, making in all 14100 actually in the fight, with Genl. Frosts division of some 8000 for a reserve, the whole commanded by Lt. Genl. Holmes and Genl. Price, so that you will see we had no small number of unskilled officers to contend with. Now as to how we were commanded.

The first in rank here is Genl. Prentiss. He is commander of the district of Tennessee, but has nothing to do with the handling of the troops, being a sort of Commander in Chief of all. Next Genl. Salomen. He was at that time commanding the troops and the port, and the handling of all the troops, and to him is due the credit of managing the whole fight. And well has he done it. Never was a General more respected, or obeyed with more

alacrity. Any one from the drummer up would go into a fight under his lead with perfect confidence, no matter what odds they had to contend with. Of our own officers Col. Gray was the only field officer we had, and well did he acquit himself. He was just where he was needed every time, and at the right time, cool, and collected, quite delighting the men and inspiring them with the confidence he himself seemed to feel. He is a capital officer.

There is no use to discriminate, when all did more than was required of them. Lt. Schram was acting aid to Gen. Soloman and rode three horses nearly to death carrying orders. Lt. Watts was with me, cool as a cucumber. The only time I saw him excited was by being hit on the finger by a spent ball that came through the top of the breastworks. He thought the man behind him had fired into the bank instead of firing over, and was using some rather ejaculatory language about such carelessness until he picked up the ball and saw that it was none of ours. If it had come one inch higher he would have sworn very loud.

I think another of my men got the lower part of his ear stung slightly, and another got a ball through the leg of his pants. Why half of us were not hit I cannot see, for every foot almost all about us was hit by bullets.

I had to stop writing to go with my company to a celebration in honor of the taking of Vicksburg. We have had speeches from all the Generals, and many others, including Col. Gray and Adj. Savage. Now as I write, the very heavens seem to shake by the continual discharge of all kinds of artillery, from a

three-pound gun to a 200-pound mortar. Everybody is half crazy and many before night, I am afraid, will be more than half drunk. I suppose there is no use of my writing any news about Vicksburg - you will get all the particulars before this reaches you. I will only say, that Gen. Prentiss said just now that he had had a dispatch informing him that there were 31,000 prisoners and 170 guns with small arms innumerable.

There is one thing that I saw in the report of the battle that needs correcting. All the praise is given to Gen. Prentiss, the gunboats and niggers. The 1st had now more to do with the fight than Gen. Pope did. He was simply here and that was all. The gunboat Tyler lay in front of the town and threw shells away over our heads, not knowing where they were going any more than a boy knows where a stone will fall that he has thrown into the air. All the damage we can hear of being done by them was by a shell that went full a mile beyond us and happened to fall in the woods where a Rebel surgeon was dressing their wounded and killed twenty already more than half dead. As to the niggers, they were not in the fight at all, as I said before and did not fire a gun. To Gen. Soloman is due the praise as (sic) directing all - even the Cavalry fought as though the whole thing depended on them, but then they were dismounted and fought on foot and had no chance to run.

I will not attempt to describe the horrors of the battlefield. I have read dozens of descriptions by the best of writers; but nothing ever written can give one the faintest idea. As I

passed among and over the dead and dying, picking up those whom we thought could bear moving, I thought nothing of the dreadful scenes around, but after the excitement was over, I walked over the field, and O what a sight. God forbid that I ever see another. I will not say more about it the thought is bad enough. I received yours of the 1st this morning and will answer it in a day or two, so Good Bye for the present.

Yours ever,

E. S. Redington.

Helena, Ark., July 12, 1863.

Dear Mary:

I will write you a few lines today, although I do not feel much like writing. I have been quite sick for two or three days and today have lain down most of the time. I think there is nothing the matter but the ague, and hope to be over it in a day or two more. The ague is like everything else here; you have all of the symptoms and no well defined paroxysms.

I have made an application for leave of absence. I made it before I was sick. Dr. Smith told me today; he would give me a surgeons certificate on which to make an application. I told him I would not do it; if I could not get one well I would not sick. I think that we, Schram and myself, will get ours through. All the Generals approved them here and they have gone to Gen. Grant. If we had been a day sooner they would not have had to go to Grant. An order came out on that day that all leaves of absence not founded on surgeons certificates must go to Gen. Grant's headquarters for endorsement. We ought to hear from them in four days more, and if we get them you may look for us home soon. If Col. Lewis comes back before we leave or is likely to come in a week, we will wait until Col. Gray can come with us; he cannot leave until Lewis returns.

White mustered in yesterday; rumor says that he will resign. I hope he will and stop all trouble in the regiment. He has not done any duty as Major and I hope he wont. Quite

a number of my boys are having ague and bilious fever, caused by the excessive fatigue of the 4th and 5th, and lying in trenches for two nights. The last in particular the day was excessively hot and just at night, it rained terribly and we had to lie in the mud all night, as best we could. I expected all of them to be sick. I received the medicine by Gilbert. He and Reinhardt are both first rate. That sneak of a Baldwin has not come yet. I have written to Graham today to arrest him as a deserter. He is not only making himself liable to severe penalties, but is keeping others from coming home.

I tried today to get a furlough for Strong. He has something like the dropsy the Doctor says. He can do nothing for him here but I could not get the furlough because Baldwin has not come back.

Kiss all the dear ones for me, I hope I may do it myself soon.

Yours ever,

Edward.

Helena, Ark., July 19, 1863.

Dear Mary:

I received yours of the 12th this morning with great pleasure. I was very anxious to hear from you and to know that you had received my letter, letting you know that we were all safe. It is very singular, that my letter was the only one of the hundreds that were mailed the same day that should have got through. None had reached Waukesha on the 13th. How mine got the start, I can't say, but I feel very much obliged to someone, or some circumstances, that brought it about.

When I last wrote I told you that I was rather unwell. Since then I have not done much duty, having the jaundice very bad. Am now nearly well again, but not strong. My skin would have passed for an Indian without any questions being asked. My natural color has pretty much come back, and if I can keep quiet for a day or two longer it will be all right. I have been sorely tempted this morning though. Our regiment has gone out on a two day's scout and in all my life not one thing made me feel worse than to see my company go, and I not with them. As there is no prospect of a fight I was finally persuaded not to go. Schram has gone with them. After leaving men for two days picket and guard duty, those on detail and the sick there were only 21 to go, but as no other company had as many as mine I was satisfied. The expedition went partly as a scout, and

partly to get fruit and vegetables. The apples and peaches are just getting ripe and we want some of them. We are very much in need of vegetables. There are none to be had here at any price.

I have not yet heard from my furlough, since it went to Vicksburg, and almost begin to despair of getting leave of absence. I had made up my mind that I was coming home, and I shall feel terribly disappointed if I cannot come. Schram has been as uneasy as a chained bear. He says he never wanted to see his family half as bad. He wants me to tell you to ask Mrs. Schram if she is not going to write to him any more. He has not had a letter in some time. Col. Gray has gone out with the regiment; he is in good health though he was a little out of sorts last week.

I think Col. Lewis is doing a very ungenerous thing in staying away and keeping him here doing the duty of three officers. Some men are so supremely selfish that they cannot think of anyone but themselves. You must have had a great time at Astalan - as for Park, the poor miserable fool.

What the D_ did Mary ever marry him for? I hope you abused him well. I wish that I had him in my company, wouldn't I make him toe the mark. If I come home I don't want to see him. I wish you and Libby had got one on each side and just _____ all over him.

There are a good many of the boys that have the ague and intermittent fever. It is the worst kind of weather imaginable,

foggy, damp and warm. It seems as if the breath only went as far as ones throat. Love to all.

Yours ever,

Edward.

Helena, Ark., July 24, 1863.

Dear Mary:

I was in hopes when I last wrote that the next time I wrote that I should be able to come and deliver it myself. My application for leave of absence has been now over two weeks on the way between here and Vicksburg. I have about made up my mind that it is either lost or destroyed, but it may perhaps yet come around.

I have recovered my health entirely, but not my strength. It is almost impossible for anyone to get any strength in this confounded malaria we breathe. At every breath, it seems as if the air was too light to inflate the lungs, and one feels all the time, almost the same sensations that is felt in a close, unventilated room. The morning air smells fully as bad as does the air of a room where a dozen have slept and the windows all down.

There is a rumor of another fight this morning. Price is said to be back within twenty-five miles with a force, increased by the concentration of all the troops west of the Mississippi, probably not far from 25,000. If he is going to come, I wish he would come along before we all get sick. We got six ten pound Parrott guns and two thirty pound Parrotts from Vicksburg, and put them in position yesterday, making fully as many guns as our limited numbers can work and leave any Infantry to support them. We have expected reinforcements for the last ten days; but

none have got along yet. I believe we can whip them handsomely with what we have, but a few regiments would not be any in the way, especially in doing guard and picket duty. We have too few men here all the time. The men are on duty of some kind nearly every day, and every third day on picket, which duty will not be as severe as it is when the mosquitoes are a little less persevering. No man can sleep a wink. In camp we are not troubled with them. A great many are unfit for duty, which of course makes it harder on the others, and if we do not get reinforcements, I am afraid before September goes out, there will not be enough for picket alone. There are not as many die but lots more are sick than there were in the winter.

You know I wrote to you that I have taken a horse. I kept him as close as possible until I could turn him over to the Quartermaster of the post and get it fixed so that I could get him again. If it had not been for Schram, I could not have brought it about. He being our acting Quartermaster managed to have him left on his hands, until a board of appraisers met, and by a little good figuring, the proper ones were appointed. Before they knew what horse they were appraising, they put him at \$40. I paid the money quickly and went my way rejoicing. Within an hour an officer came to camp with an order to search every camp for the horse but found he was too late and there is one good horse the post Quartermaster won't gobble, not this time. The man who was killed on him was Col. Recter, chief of Gen. Holmes' a son of Gov. Rector of this state. He is said to be the best

riding horse in the state, although there is nothing very remarkable in his looks, a cream color with a white face and medium size.

I was interrupted this afternoon and could not get time to finish in time for today's mail. I have been through the company to see that they all have a full box of cartridges and everything in order. We are ordered to be under arms at three o'clock in the morning so that we shall not be surprised.

I have no faith in our having a fight, but still we may, so I will finish and mail this tonight, for fear of accidents.

The Paymaster came here today and we will probably get paid again Monday. I hope this fight will come off before we are paid, for if we all get gobbled I would rather the money would be in Uncle Sam's hands than in my pocket. One thing you may be sure of, if they do gobble us, it will be the hardest pill they ever swallowed.

According to the best information we can get from the Rebs, they estimate their loss in the battle of the 4th at 4700 killed, wounded, and prisoners. We never put it the very highest at over 3500, and but few thought the number over 2500, but it seems that we were far below the mark.

I have not written to the children lately but they must not think that I do not think of them, for there is not a moment, day or night, but what I am thinking or dreaming of them. They have not written to me either since I last wrote to them. Bless their souls, how I would like to see them and you tonight. Kiss them all for me and give my love to all the friends. What is the

reason father never answered my letter?

Yours affectionately,

Edward.

Helena, Ark., Aug. 9, 1863.

Dear Mary:

I received your letter this morning and was well pleased to hear you were all well. I believe I never passed so disagreeable a time as for the last two weeks. Between the affairs of the regiment and my anxiety to go home before this expedition started. I have been more than half sick, and today feel almost discouraged. The fact is, although I am well in all respects, still I do not get my strength and get almost tired out before night every day. The idea of marching from here to Little Rock seems to me an awful big job. Perhaps when we get back from the river I may get strength faster.

I wish we could find every Reb in Arkansas tomorrow and fight it out no matter at what odds, so that we could at them. This everlasting getting ready I am sick of. I think it will be some days before we leave here, but we may leave tomorrow. Our Brigade can be ready at a few hours notice any time.

My company is ^{at} Pioneer and will be a sort of an independent command. I am glad to get the place for several reasons; first it takes me away from the regiment; second we have a team for ourselves; and third we are relieved from all guard and picket duties. These privileges much more than make up for work we will have to do in building bridges, etc. Another thing, I can ride my horse, which I could not do if we marched in the regiment. You wanted to know if I had him still and further

say that you heard that he was nearly dead. I have him, and shall keep him, unless the Rebs take him away. About his being sick, he has never been sick. When I got him, his back was very sore and I have not put a saddle on him till yesterday. He is a beauty to ride. I came very near sending him home by Schram and if it had not been for this expedition, I think I should. My plan was to send him to George until I came home, but after thinking it over, and knowing how Willie would feel if I did, I concluded the best thing to do was to keep him here - especially as all the boys seem to think he is part of the company. If he lives until I come home I shall fetch him with me, as the momento of the 4th of July, 1863 at Helena, Ark.

I received a letter from Charles Gilbert this morning and shall answer it before we leave, if possible, if not, will the first opportunity.

I have this moment learned that we are to start Tuesday morning the 11th inst. We have all we can do, night and day, until that time. I have two six mule teams to get together tomorrow, draw tools and materials for complete engineer's corp, besides getting my company ready. We shall have to leave all our tents, our overcoats, and in fact everything but what we wear, and ^achange of shirt and socks, and our blankets.

I am going to send a box to Schram containing several guns, swords and other relics of the battle. They are labeled with the different ones they belong to. If they get through, which I very much doubt, have the guns oiled and put somewhere out

of the way. The long closet upstairs will be the best place. I am sorry Jimmie lost the one he took. It was a Rebel gun made at Richmond. The ones I sent are of different kinds. I mean to send when opportunity offers, a gun of all the different arms in the service so that I can have something to look at when I get home.

So Augustus is at his old trade, prospecting. I am glad he can get some pay, and hope he will find a solid mountain of gold. I had made up my mind to talk to you instead of writing, and now the writing comes hard. I have written a few lines this evening, stopped and wrote to Col. Gray; wrote a few more, then wrote one to little George.

It does not seem possible that it may be months before I can see the children and you. I am afraid they will grow up so much I shall not know them. Do, Mary, try to make ladies of the girls and a gentleman of Willie. I want to be proud of them. I know how much you are tired and how hard a time you have, still I know you will be capable of overcoming every emergency. I have thought much of their different dispositions and have not much fear for any but Etta. She is a temperment that needs kind words and gentle usage more than the others. Her quick perceptions and deep feelings can very easily be entirely perverted. If she ever gets an idea that she has been in any way slighted she will never get over it. I have not said this because of anything that has taken place, but because it would not stay out of my mind tonight. Kiss all of the little ones for me and

take much love to yourself.

Yours ever,

Edward.

Clarendon, Ark., Aug. 17, 1863.

Dear Mary:

I will write you a few lines this morning, although how long it will be before I can send it is more than I can tell.

We left Helena on Tuesday at three o'clock P.M. and arrived here at noon Saturday, at least my company did. Some of the Division did not get in till late at night. We had a good deal of work to do; two Brigades to build entire and many others to repair. Then the road was obstructed in other places by trees that had to be cut out, besides crossways to build across sloughs, all of which we accomplished without belating the train, but in one instance, and then but three hours.

We have thus far found no enemy but a few Querillas, who would show themselves occasionally, a few at a time, but soon disappeared. We caught two or three after a hard chase. The country is as good a farming one as can possibly be, but nearly all lying to waste. There is nothing growing but a little corn and fruit. The whole country is full of peaches, pears and apples just getting ripe, of which we availed ourselves naturally.

I had to stop yesterday having written fully as long as I could write or think. I had the ague three days running, and felt as though it was coming on again, but thanks to a couple of spoonfuls of quinine, I drove it off, and this morning feel weak and nervous as you can see by my writing. My mind is as muddy as the Missouri River and you will have to excuse my un-

connected composition and my not writing very much.

We have commenced crossing the river by ferry and it will take some days to get over. I will write you before we leave the river; just as soon as the quinine stops ringing in my ears. It sounds now as if the whole bellringer family were playing Yankee Doodle. I must close by sending you all my best love.

Yours ever,

Edward

Clarendon, Ark., Aug. 20, 1863.

Dear Mary:

I once more sit down to drop you a few lines. We are still here at this place waiting for our turn to come to cross the river. It is an awful job to ferry an army with all attached. The ferry runs every twenty minutes with four teams and a steamer crosses nearly as often with horses. They have been running day and night for four days and still the Cavalry are not yet over. I hope they will get over tonight. My company goes next as we lead the Infantry. We have laid here long enough and are getting uneasy for something to do. Since coming here we have shod our mules, fixed up our wagons, ground our axes, and put everything in order; now the last thing is done, we are getting uneasy for the start.

Price is said to be at Bayou Metoc, ten miles this side of Little Rock, fortifying his position with a force, variously estimated at from fifteen to fifty thousand. One thing is certain, every man of the Rebs on this side of the Mississippi are there collected together and would seem to have concluded there to dig the last ditch. We have first not far from 10,000 Cavalry, eight batteries of Artillery, altogether some over fifty guns. As near as I can get the figures, not far from 7,000 Infantry, all good and well equipped troops. I would much rather we had more Infantry and not so much Cavalry and Artillery, but if our officers are good for anything, we can

whip 30,000 easy. Of our Generals I know very little. Gen. Steele who is in command, is a regular army officer and looks like a first rate officer. Gen. Davidson is command of the Cavalry - is a foppish looking little fellow. If he amounts to much I shall be mistaken. When we left Helena every one of the Divisions and Brigades was commanded by a Colonel. Since we left our Division commander has received the appointment of Brigadier General. He is a bully good officer and I am glad to see him promoted. His name is S. A. Rice from Iowa.

We need to fill all the commands as they should be; two Majors and four Brigadier Generals, but I suppose a man can be as smart when Colonel as if he had a star on his shoulder. But taking so many officers from the regiment weakens the command more than anything that can be done. Our regiment for instance is commanded by Maj. White and no one has any confidence in his military skill. Of course we are not as effective as we would be under the Colonel. Speaking of the Colonel, Lewis I mean, he is quite sick, and think he will not go any farther. He has a kind of low malignant fever, that resists all treatment. I should not be surprised if he resigned and went home. I hope Col. Gray will join us soon. I am better satisfied with this delay here to give him time to join us before we have a fight. Oh, it is awful hot and I will adjourn writing until night.

Nine o'clock -

Since writing the above, I have been all over town to the

various camps making arrangements to get an early start in the morning, but I am afraid we will not get away until the heat of the day. They are yet eight teams to cross before we start, and most of them will have to be crossed in the a.m.

There are a good many of my company sick and others that are absent leaving me with just fifty men. None of them are dangerously sick but have ague or bilious fever.

I feel very anxious to get to Little Rock. That is considered a healthy place with plenty of good hard water and I think the boys will soon feel the effects of it.

This place is beautifully located on the bank of the river on a little prairie and I can see no good reasons why it is not a healthy place. The country is as good as it possibly can be. If it were in Wisconsin it would be as large as Janesville, but the curse of slavery has blighted the fair heritage and nothing but a few cheap wooden buildings compose the town and few dot the fair country around. There is a great future in store for this state when this hideous deformity is removed. The niggers are coming in by hundreds now as I write. I can hear them singing good old Methodist tunes at their camp. There are several hundred waiting for a boat to take them to Helena. Since we have been at Helena, some three thousand have been sent North, and these will follow. They are all women and children. The men are put in the army.

I must say a word about my horse. He is a beauty to ride and no mistake. He carries me as easy as a cradle, and never

seems to tire. I am entirely over my attack of ague, and feel well again, but not very strong and rather nervous.

We had a mail this morning but there was none for me. I was disappointed for when another will reach us is a question. I hope there may be a boat up in the morning, but have no cause to ground it on, only because I want it to.

One word about this river. It is a splendid stream - clear nice water, a deep channel, and good banks. It is said to be the best stream for navigation of any of the numerous branches of the Mississippi. Can such a stream, running through a country, be suffered to be disgraced as it has been? God forbid.

Now Good Night dear ones and the time speed when we can once more meet. God bless you all.

Your affectionate husband,

Edward.

Duval's Bluff, August 30, 1863.

Dear Mary:

I have not had a letter from you in over three weeks, and when the mail came yesterday, and no letter for me, I was not a little disappointed, especially as we are under orders to march in the morning, and the chance of getting another mail is rather slim.

I suppose you and the children are all ready to start for church (how I wish I was there to go with you) while I am just ready to have Sunday morning inspection and shall have to stop writing to do so. The orderly is getting the company in line, and I must put on my (?) and see that everything is in shape.

I have inspected my company and find the guns all in good order, notwithstanding the bad weather. Some of the cartridges were wet and would have done poor service in a fight.

We have had rather strange weather for the last week for the sunny South. First we had a cold North wind for a day and night; the next day it still was cold; in the morning Jack Frost was plainly to be seen; toward night it got warmer; and in the night we had a heavy thunder shower. As we have a good tent I turned over and went to sleep, to wake up in an hour or so with the water two inches deep under us, making one side feel rather uncomfortable. Since that it has been cold again, and now at nine o'clock, it is so cold that my fingers are quite numb and stiff; and the boys are sitting around the fire. In fact it is just about such weather as we have in Wisconsin in October,

when the sun shines smilingly without any warmth.

Duvalls Bluff is a point on White River seventy miles west of Helena, and one hundred fifty above the mouth of the river. It is the terminus of the railroad running to Little Rock, and had when the war broke out, thirty houses besides the railroad buildings, not a vestige of which remains. The Rebel General, Hindman, burned it for what I do not know. The end of the road sticks out yet, the only mark that man was ever here. This is a splendid sight for a town, and if in any of the Northern states, in as fine a country with a railroad connecting it with the interior, and the best river for navigation in the United States, of its size running past it, would have been a city of 25,000 inhabitants. I said it was the best river of its size in the United States. There is uninterrupted navigation for over 300 miles with not less than twelve foot of water, and not wider than Rock River at the fort. Another thing, it is the only river I ever saw west of the Mississippi that was clear water. The Arkansas, altho four or five times as large, cannot be navigated any distance being full of sand-bars and snags. The difference is caused by the Arkansas taking its rise in the Rocky Mountains, and running through the sand plains. The White rises east of the Ozark Mountains and keeps clear of the sand region. It is clear and bright, full of nice fish, and in every respect one of the prettiest streams I ever saw.

Why we are loitering along in our march in the way we are doing is more than I can tell, and I do not believe our Generals

can. We have been here long enough, to have gone to Little Rock twice. The Cavalry are within ten miles of that place, skirmishing every day with Price and here we lie forty miles off, God knows for what, if there is any reason that even he could give, which I very much doubt.

I have entirely recovered from my ague attack and I feel first-rate. Several of my men have the ague. I give them quinine and keep it broken so they are nearly all on duty. One Henry Meyers is shaking now, this was the seventh day since he had it and I did not know it or I would have given him a dose last night. I have to watch all of them as close as I would children.

We are looking anxiously for Col. Gray and Schram. The regiment needs Col. Gray very much, having no confidence whatever in White.

Kiss all the little ones for me, and God bless you all.

Yours affectionately,

Edward.

In camp near Brownsville, Ark.,

Sept. 6, 1863.

Dear Mary:

It is now 1:30 A.M. and we have orders to be on the march at 4:30. Before I call up the boys, will write you a short note. First I will say of myself that I am well and hearty, but considerably worn down by hard work. We have had some heavy marching. Day before yesterday we marched from here to Bayou Metoc twelve miles this side of Little Rock, a march of twenty miles, and back again yesterday. I expect it was some strategical movement but I fail to see it. Part of our force, consisting of the Cavalry, was to take another road and go into Little Rock that day but they failed to do it and were back before we were. I do not know which way we march this morning but think back over the same road. If our whole forces go together, I think there will be no trouble in marching direct to Little Rock. I think Price has crossed the Arkansas River and moved South. The place we are in is the only good place to stop our advance. As they had left there I think we shall have no fight this side of the river.

A large mail came yesterday, but no letters for me. I have had none for a month. The dew is falling, so that my paper is wet and I shall have to close. Love to all.

Yours in haste,

Edward.

Little Rock, Sept. 13, 1863.

Dear Mary:

I have this moment heard that there is a mail to leave in half an hour and will send you a few lines.

Col. Gray reached us last night. I got the parcel you sent by him, for which I am very much obliged, especially for the letter, it being the first I have received in over a month. I do not think Gray looks as well as when he left for home, but he says he is well.

We got to this place on the tenth, after a running fight of nine miles, principally done by Cavalry and Artillery. The Infantry followed up as close as they could get, only once getting in sight of the enemy. Then they were on the other side of the Arkansas River, running like all possessed. In the course of the day, there were some one hundred killed and wounded, all Cavalry. When I get time I will write the particulars. They had the town well fortified, and as near as we can learn, had more men than we had, but they remembered the 4th of July at Helena and got up and left before we could get there, first destroying the bridges and burning eight steamboats, all the cars and railroad buildings and machine shops.

The inhabitants here seem more loyal than any that I have seen South. Many of them seem almost wild with joy.

This is a very pretty town, nearly as large as Janesville and has many fine buildings, among them the Capitol buildings and the United States Arsenal. We shall most likely stay here

a few days and when we get our camp settled, and my writing materials, I will give a more concise record of our transactions.

I have been well since I last wrote and the health of my men has been improving. John Grant and Jimmie are at the Bluffs and will join us the first train. I find the mail is all ready, so Good Bye.

Yours ever,

Edward.

My dear little pet Sasa:

If pa could see you tonight, he would give ever so much, but I do not know but he would hug you to death almost, and want to eat one of your little fat cheeks off. I hope you will not forget your pa, if you do grow so much that he will not know you when he comes home. Now my little pet, Good Night. Pa is going to bed, and maybe he will dream that he sees his little ones.

Your father.

Little Rock, Ark. Sept. 19, 1863.

Dear Mary:

After a fatiguing days duty, I sit down to write once again, and the first thing in order will be to answer your last letter. You seem to have been in rather low spirits when you wrote, and in consequence your communications are on the blue order. Now I do not wonder, that the task you have to perform, should often assume huge proportions to your mind. Indeed the responsibilities you have are more than any woman ought to be placed under, and that you should sometimes feel discouraged, I do not wonder. That you get along as well as you seem to, is assurance to me that you are capable of managing in a way and manner very few women are. When you say you sometime feel that you were unequal to the task, is still another proof of your fitness, for I have always more hopes of a person succeeding in anything they undertake when they are not disposed to overrate their own abilities. How I would like to share your labors and burdens with you, but I will not let my mind dwell on the theme.

John Grant and Jimmie Jessup joined us today. I expected a letter by them, but didn't see it. Jimmie says you told him, you would not send me anything more until I came home. I am afraid I shall have to go without some time unless I supply myself with some here.

Sunday morning. 9/20/63.

I closed rather abruptly last night. It has been so cold

for the last three days, that my fingers were fairly numb. This morning at eight o'clock, although the sun is shining brightly in the room where I am writing, it is uncomfortably cold and I can scarcely hold my pen. The sunny South is not half as sunny as it is cracked up to be, if this year is a specimen. I send you by this mail two Secesh papers found in the postoffice here, and the first number of a Union paper, started since we came. If we stay here long, I will continue to send it, so you can be posted on our movements.

The last time I wrote from Brownsville, we were all ready to start for Little Rock. We were ordered to be ready to move at four o'clock, but the second Division was to go ahead that day, for the first time since leaving Helena. They did not get started until after seven, and in consequence our division did not get off until nearly eight. We marched ten miles, about half of the way across a beautiful prairie without any cultivation. As usual the fools here go to work in heavy timber, and leave better land, all ready for cultivation, lying vacant (my fingers are numb with cold and I shall have to postpone until it gets warmer).

I have been to take a walk through the town, and as I sit down to write, the church bells are ringing the morning service. It sounds the most natural of anything I have heard since leaving home. If there is an afternoon service, I shall attend. I should have gone this morning but my boy has been gone somewhere and I could not get ready. I have just been giv-

ing him a Scotch blessing for it.

But to begin where I left off. We encamped on the bank of Bayou Metor, a stagnant slough covered with green scum that runs for some distance through the country. In wet times, judging from the high water marks, it gets to be quite a respectable stream. The water looked bad enough, but it was wet, and after being boiled did not taste bad. In the morning my company again took the lead, and as the road ran through a densely wooded bottom full of ruts and snags we had plenty to do, we opened the way as fast as the column wanted to move, and after four or five miles came out into a large plantation with any amount of corn, potatoes, beans, sweet potatoes, and melons which we immediately proceeded to appropriate, or at least as much as we wanted. The plantation lies on a small lane called Bouskin Lake. If it were not for the ague, some six or eight kinds of vermin, snakes, a smart sprinkling of alligators, and several other little annoyances, it would be a nice place to live.

We found the first Rebs on this plantation. Our advance guard had quite a sharp fight, and had two men killed and several wounded. 3000 were said to be encamped about here, but they all got up and left. Price was some two miles farther on at a farm house. Our Cavalry were within eight rods of the house for some time, and could have caught him easily if they had known he was about. Price and some other officers were having a good time, and sent their servants to get water. They came into our lines before they knew we were about but they soon left, and our Cavalry

chased them over the river four miles off, taking several prisoners. We found that the Rebel officers had had a quarrel among themselves that morning resulting in a duel between Generals Walker and Marmaduke, Gen. Walker being killed. We camped that night in another big plantation on Mill Bayou, a nice little running stream, the first one of the kind I have seen in Arkansas. The next morning I was ordered back with my company to fix the road. We marched back eight miles and did two or three hours hard work, and came back to camp pretty nearly tired out.

The woods in the vicinity of Bearskin Lake are full of wild fruits, including three or more varieties of grapes, one kind as large as wild plums. Then there are pawpaws and persimmons in abundance. We lay in camp on this creek two days, all the time we could hear distant firing, caused by our advance and the Rebels shelling one another across the river. I wrote you before about our march to Little Rock and taking possession of the town. The Rebels had prepared to give us a warm reception by fortifying well the approaches on the North side of the river by a series of redoubts and forts, connected by well built breastworks and rifle-pits, that would have been serious things to run against. But our General had a better way of getting in. He sent the pontoon train forward in the night, and laid down the bridge eight miles below the town. Before the Rebs knew anything about it, there was a brigade of infantry across and the cavalry crossing. After the cavalry was all over, the infantry came back, the cavalry started up one side of the

river and the infantry on the other. By this time Price had found out what was the matter and he sent down a brigade of infantry with artillery and cavalry, all he could spare, to dispute our advance. They were found posted about a mile from the bridge, and a fight took place, resulting in the defeat of the Rebs after a good straight resistance, carrying off two of our guns which they took in the first part of the fight. One regiment behaved badly, and ran off leaving the guns without support. Out of seventeen gunners, thirteen were killed or wounded. From there to Little Rock there was a continual running fight, the Rebs sticking close behind every fence and tree, fighting until they were driven out, then running for another. While this was going on, Price was leaving and getting across the river as fast as possible. He succeeded in getting everything away before we reached there, leaving his sick and wounded in our hands. They amounted to over a thousand sick and a good many wounded. The sick, wounded, killed, prisoners, and what had deserted and come in since, amount to about three thousand, as near as we can learn. Nearly all the Missouri troops have left Price, and most of the Conscripts from this state. They burned eight steamboats (one a gunboat plated with railroad iron) and large quantities of cotton. They tried to burn the statehouse and arsenal, but had not time before our advance was in town. The arsenal is a nice place, built by Uncle Sam some years ago. The grounds are well laid out and buildings good, but all the machinery is taken away. It is said to be at Arkadelphia, sixty miles South of here, I

suppose we shall go down there some day and see.

There is a railroad from here to White River. All the cars were burned, but five flat cars. There never were but two locomotives; they were partly spoiled, but one of them has been on the track and put in running order. It will start for White River tomorrow, and will be a great help to us in hauling company stores. The distance is sixty miles.

I am very pleasantly situated now; have my company comfortably quartered in a three storied house near the bridge of which I have charge. We are beginning to have easy times since we got the bridge built. It is built of flat boats with timbers put across and planked. It is 600 feet long. Before we came the Rebs had two bridges. They destroyed them all they could by burning and cutting. Out of the two, I got material enough to build one. It requires a great deal of watching. Some days over 500 heavy Government wagons have crossed, besides lots of cavalry and artillery, straining the boats and making them leak badly. I keep six men and a non-commissioned officer on it all the time; that being a man on duty about once in three days for six hours. This is all we have to do, unless the bridge gets out of repair, in which case I call out all the company and fix it up.

I will close for this time and write to the children, so
Good Bye my own dear ones.

Yours affectionately,

Edward.

September 20, 1863.

Since I finished writing I see the letter from you, mailed the 31st of August. I also received one from Georgy Redington. He says he is going away to school, and suppose that his mother will fret herself half to death about him. I rather think he will miss his mother some when he leaves.

So Jake has really got back from California, has he? I suppose by this time he has come West. I would like to see him. Tell him he had better come down here and go into the sutler business. George wrote that they had just heard that Sasa was very sick. If I had not had had a letter of a later date from you I should have been very anxious about her. Bless her little soul, how I want to see her and all of you. I think you must have had a pretty serious time with her, and have been not a little scared, when they were all taken sick at once. You say you have a great mind to come where I am. I wish you were here, for this is a very pleasant and healthy town with plenty of good water. I cannot see why it is not a good place to live, but getting here is out of the question at present. If the boats ran up the Arkansas River, one could come, but at present there is seventy miles to ride before getting to navigable waters, and then the boats come up but once a week. If we ever get back on the Mississippi River, I shall be anxious to have you come, if I cannot get home before that time.

Capt. Morton died since we came here. He got back a short

time before we left Helena, looking fine, but he failed soon after we left, and when we reached here, was taken worse and only lived three days. He was a good soldier, one always ready to do his duty, and always in good spirits. White is also sick and will not stay long in the regiment I think. Col. Lewis must be home by this time. The regiment had lost all confidence in him, and he found it very unpleasant staying. He got conveniently sick and has gone for good this time. He will probably continue to draw pay for sixty days and resign, or be mustered out of the service. Frank Smith has been going around with a cane playing sick, especially when there was a prospect of a fight, but there is nothing the matter with him but the want of whiskey. I believe he would drink whiskey half quinine, rather than not have any.

I like my horse better every day. He has more than twice paid for himself already. In the places I have been in, I could not have gotten along without him. We have marched something over two hundred miles, at least my company have. We have marched some forty miles in the balance, and I have ridden nearly as much more, in looking out roads, etc. Jimmie Caward says that he told them at Whitewater that he was ahead of anything, then I let him ride to where the regiment is camped and when he came back, he said he had not praised him half enough. Good Night once more.

Yours,

Edward.

Little Rock, Ark., Sept. 20, 1863.

Dear Willie:

I have waited a long time in hopes of receiving a letter from you, but have not yet seen it. I have been writing a long letter to your mother and have written all the news in that. I will only write a few lines now just to let you know that I think of my bonnie boy lots of times every day, and hope he thinks often of his pa away down here in Arkansas among the Rebels. I am glad to hear from your mama, that you are so good a boy to work. She said that you can rake and bind and do lots of things. But there is one other thing you must do, that is, take care and keep your clothes clean, and always look tidy and neat. Everybody will think much more of a boy that keeps nice and clean. I hope and expect when I come home to find you a nice young gentleman, the best scholar in school, and the smartest boy every way there is in town.

I wrote ma about my horse, if he and I both live until this war is over, I shall bring him home with me. By that time you will be large enough to take care of him, and the girls old enough to learn to ride. Now my dear son be a good boy, and never do a thing to make anyone ashamed of you.

Your father.

Little Rock, Sept. 20, 1863.

Dear Lilla:

I was much pleased to get the little note you wrote me and sent with mama's letter which I received today. I was also much pleased to see what nice work you could do. I think the braid was put on as well as any woman could do it, and if you braid your dresses well, it must look very pretty. I hope I shall come home before it is worn out, so that I can see it. I hope you have improved as much in your studies. You must write every time your ma does, and tell me about everything. So Good Night my dear Lilla.

Your father.

Headquarters Pioneer Corps 3rd Div.

Army of Arkansas, Little Rock, Ark.,

Oct. 23, 1863.

Dear Mary:

It is now ten days since I have written to you, the longest period I have let pass, without writing to you since I came South. The fact is there was nothing in shape of news to write, and then we have no mail but once a week, and I some way did not get one in the last. We received two mails today and I got a letter from you in each. The first one was dated the 4th of October, the other in September. I think that most of your letters came to hand after a while, although they some-

times take round about roads to get here. But they always keep moving, and after a while get around. First about your coming down here. It is very difficult for anyone to travel now on the Mississippi River. It is so low, and also very dangerous, first from the lowness of the water, causing lots of snags to show themselves, ready to punch a hole in the bottom, then there seems to be a determination to burn, or in some way to destroy every boat on the river. Hardly a week passes, but one or more is burned. I should not want to have you run as much risk as you would even for the pleasure of enjoying your society. If we stay here until the water rises, so that boats run to this place, I think you could come with safety. Dr. Hawes arrived here two days ago. He was three weeks coming and two of my boys got here last night that have been four weeks on the way from St. Louis. So you see, that an addition to the danger, it takes more time then one likes to spend on a journey that ought to be made in three days.

I am very sorry to hear, that Ira is so bad off this fall. I had hoped he would not be troubled more with bad health, at least for some years to come. I am afraid he applies himself too closely to business and is too much shut up in the store. If he had my horse to ride ten miles every day, he would soon be better, if anything would make him so. Tell him to ride horseback long and often. There is nothing like it for him, especially if he can ride so far that he could not get back to his store for a month.

I cannot tell how pleased I was to hear that Willie was a good boy, and learning so fast. I always knew that he could learn faster than any other boy if he was a mind to. I was also much pleased with his letter, and to see how much he had improved in writing. And those dear little girls, if they improve as fast, I am afraid they will get to be ladies before I come home, and I shall not know them. I almost wish Sasa could not grow a bit until I see her, bless her little heart, how I do want to see her and you all.

My company is still on duty as Pioneers. I have the new Corps organized, but can get no cooking materials, and cannot have them leave their various regiments until I can get them, which I hope will be within a few days.

We had an addition today to our brigade of the 9th Wis., Gen. Soloman's old Regiment. They are a find body of men and a great addition to our strength. We have now four as good regiments as ever were mustered, and the three regiments in the other brigade, composing our division, are just as good. Gen. Soloman has a command that he is proud of, and I think justly so. They are all from Wisconsin and Iowa but two. One of them is the 43rd Indiana; the other the 77th Ohio, who stood and fought nobly at the battle of Shiloh, when three other regiments from Ohio ran shamefully and left them alone.

We are having cold dreary weather. Yesterday it rained all day, and today it has been almost cold enough to freeze, overcoats and mittens are in demand.

I have been to Gen. Soloman's quarters tonight, Gen. Rice was there. Amongst us we have gotten up a hunting excursion, to come off at eight tomorrow. I was out with the boys after wood today, and saw a lot of wild turkeys and other game. In the morning we are going to try for them. I do not believe the folks are any warmer here than in Wisconsin. We have had several hard frosts. All the leaves are off the trees and everything has put on the winter fashions. Tonight the wind is howling mournfully, singing a regular dirge over the departed glories of summer.

I sent home \$200 by Lieut. Wiley. I also sent a letter by mail at the same time. I hope you will receive them both. Now my dear ones, Good Night.

Your affectionate husband,

Edward.

Rotta, M 3

May 14th, 1867.

My dear Captain:

Your letter of date Whitewater, Apr.

8th was rec'd. I would have answered sooner but I was absent a good deal of the time. It is with great pleasure that I send you the enclosed recommendation, and writing the same I remembered old times, particularly that dark quiet night before Fort Pemberton, where we built that Battery right under the nose of the enemy, and didn't lose a man. It was well done. Or the battle of Helena, with all its excitement, where you made more prisoners than you had men. I have neither dated nor directed the recommendation. You can do that yourself.

A few days since I also rec'd. a letter from Schrom. He says, he will go back to Cuba. S. is evidently in conflict with himself.

Remember me to Col. Wheeler, and bring him my congratulations to his well merited promotion, also to Capt. McKenzie.

Let me hear from you again

truly yours,

F. Salomon.

Capt. E. S. Redington,
Whitewater, Wis.