

From  
Mary  
Lynn

W H A T   G R E A T - G R A N D P A   S A I D

T O

G R E A T - G R A N D M A

(Copies of letters written by Dr. Thomas B. Grayson,  
a surgeon during the Civil War, to his wife, Carrie,  
during the years of 1863, 1864, and 1865)

Carrie Grayson wrote on the back of one of these letters:

"This letter is more precious to me than all the earth's wealth."

As instructed by Dr. Grayson time and time again in his letters, his wife would never allow anyone to read them and asked that her "love letters" be buried with her.

At her death, these letters (wrapped in a small black silk velvet envelope-type wrapper) passed to her half-sister, Aunt Sally McArthur. When Aunt Sally died, they went to Aunt Cora, who left them to Aunt Louise Sims.

Aunt Louise came across them recently, and was going to distribute them among the living heirs of Dr. Grayson and his wife. At that point, I told her I would much prefer a copy of all the letters than to have any one of the originals, as I was interested in the "whole" story. She has graciously allowed me to type the copies, which I have done with the help of her daughter, Sarah Louise Chandler. We have not proof-read these copies, and must explain that the original writing was at times quite difficult to decipher.

Dr. Grayson was beautifully educated, and wrote well. However, the change in script handwriting, and the condition of the 104-year-old letters made it difficult to follow at some points. For these, I apologize, and want under-

- Jimmie Fay Compton Reese  
Dallas, Texas - Dec 1964

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Brother of Carrie McArthur Grayson)

Dr. Grayson's Discharge Certificate is dated May 5, 1866, which is more than a year after the date of the last letter listed above.

Of the envelopes with the letters, the return addresses showed:

Thos. B. Grayson - Waul's Texas Legion, Co. B, 2nd Battln  
Thos. B. Grayson-Co. A - Timmons Regiment, C.S.A.  
Thos. B. Grayson - Surgeon - Timmons Regt., C.S.A.



Camden Ala.  
April 30th 1856.

My Dear Miss Carrie:

Boldness, you know, is often times a most potent and & successful weapon and therefore in my commencement I have made a generous and unceremonious "call" upon it, to rush to my succor, in this an hour, when ideas and sentiment are almost as sparse as "Roses in December". I came from our good friend Clint's this morning and as you may imagine was "slightly sprinkled" not only with rain but wind. As I was passing the P.O., a Dutchman known not alone in Town but even over the broad and extensive domain of the proud, romantic County of Wilcox, hollered out, "Vell dom I shee von letter fer mit de showcase in the P. O. by Shurss, I bet I know who he from." I, of course, entered the office with as little agitation, as circumstances would permit, got it, left, and read it.

The labors of yesterday, though I admit, were imposing and arduous, fatigued me not at all. I, however, plead "not guilty" to the charge of having told "many S - b." And I have your curicsity excited have I? Exercise that forbearing patience you once had me upon, and when I next see you I will endeavor to "prescribe" (as the Doctors say) something that will result in instantaneous mitigation of the perplexing malady.

As you have been kind enough to leave it to my pleasure about "that great day of days", I will say the 3th will be the one. Judge Jackson even if defeated will be a competent individual for the purpose we desire but about this let me say, I will do what I deem best, with which I am persuaded you will be satisfied.

I wish I knew how many waiters you intended having, so that I could make my arrangements "accordin", and let me now give you warning, be not surprised if you see me Saturday or Monday evening. I am glad "few" will be present. You must do all the inviting yourself, as I shall ask not one save those who are waiters - who they will be I know not, unless the ones I mentioned, - Dr. Bettis and your beautiful and fascinating Cousin Alexander G. Will these answer, you think?

Should I not see you Saturday or Monday evening, I shall most certainly without unavoidable hindrance, meet you Thursday evening the 3th, at candle light, or near that time.

That your "excited curiosity" may not much annoy you is the wish of

Thomas B. Grayson

(This letter was written just a week before  
Tom and Carrie were married - May 3, 1856,  
at Canton Bend, Alabama, by J. C. Jackson)

July 3rd 1856.

My Dear Carrie

I was getting ready to go out to Mr. Bonner's this morning but a few minutes before I had got ready to leave, a messenger, in haste, came for me to see a little child dangerously sick with fever.

Since getting back to town to day, I have had three calls: So you see as much as I desire to see you I cannot come this evening. I expected you home this evening, or to morrow. I shall come out as soon as I can.

If you get no better let me know it and I will come out no matter at what sacrafice.

Come home tomorrow morning, if you possibly can. I am sure you do not want to see me as much as I do you.

Yours affectionately

Tom.

I have been very \_\_\_\_\_ since you left.

July 20th 1856.

My Dear Carrie

I find it impossible to return to Bro. Wm's this evening and thinking it too highly improvident for you to remain longer as you were the other evening, in plain words, cestive, I send you a dose of cream of tartar, which you will please dissolve in a glass of water and take. You know Carrie, I would not insist on your taking a dose of medicine did I not think you actually demanded it. If, however, since our conversation, your bowels have been restored to healthy action you need not take it, but Carrie, please take it, if tis necessary. May you have a pleasant night's rest, is the wish of your affectionate,

Tom

(These two letters were written just two months after Tom and Carrie were married. They do not show the place from which they were written, but since they mention Mr. Bonner's, I am assuming Tom and Carrie moved to Texas immediately upon getting married - though I have no proof of this assumption.)

Mouth of the Bernard      Jany 12th 1863

My Darling Wife,

Scarcely had we accommodated ourselves to the pleasant invitations and joyous conveniences of the commodious house in which we were "quartering" at Velasco, before that great annoyer of the soldier's comfort and ease, ("Military Necessity") compelled our move to this place. Our camp is now situated at the Mouth of the Bernard river, some thirteen miles South West from Velasco. We are encamped in the sand, on the open beach and but for the little tent in possession of our mess we would be entirely exposed to the freaks and inclemencies of the weather. We left Velasco about dark last Sunday (the 10th) and came to this point in about 3 hours, carrying our guns and knap sacks on our backs. This you may well guess was a good walk. The weather, however, was quite propitious on pedestrians, as it was cold enough to prevent the exercise of walking from being fatiguing. But for a hard place in the heel of my right shoe which slightly abraded the skin of that portion of the foot which occupied it, I would have done remarkably well. Many of the "Old Vicksburgers""caved in!" There are only some eighty troops here. (All from Waul's Legion, composed of Capt. Bradley's Co., (with the exception of two or three on the sick list at Velasco,) Capt. Hogue's Company and some ten from Capt. Pamfrey's Company, <sup>all</sup> also under the control and management of Capt. Hogue. The object in sending us here is to guard and protect the Negroes who are throwing up "the works" (the following was written and marked through: that are being thrown up here.) The fort will be completed in two or three days. The Yankee gunboats shell the position every day or two, as yet they have done no injury. When a gun boat comes in sight we go in the fort, send the Negroes out a mile or so under a guard. We do not expect to shoot any, unless a landing is attempted to be made by the Yankees. Yesterday while the blockade was in sight there were several ladies with us in the fortifications. They were quiet and intrepid. Should we get into a fight I think my man Oliver will leave at "double quick", he having the utmost horror of gunboats. I have no idea he would go to the Yankees if he had a chance. The night we came down

here I caught a very severe cold, which annoys me very much, otherwise my health is remarkably good. We expect to return to Velasco in a few days. When I get home with you and "the babies" I think I can fully enjoy domestic life. Oh, how I long for the time. The latest letter I received from you was Dec. 6th, a long time between them is it not? I shall write to you often and my dear girl, you must do the same. Remember me affectionately to the little ones and kiss them for me. May God protect and preserve you and them is my daily prayer. Goodbye, my darling -- Write soon to your own devoted

Tom.



Galveston, Texas, Sunday

March 5th, 1863

My Dear Darling,

Once again I find myself engaged in the pleasing task of writing for your benefit. I have no news of any particular interest to communicate except that we are well and driving on much after the usual fashion of soldiers in the camp. I \_\_\_\_\_ out to the barracks yesterday & am of opinion that the location is a better one than we had in the City. Stubbs and Perdue, of Freestone Co, whom Capt Bradley recruited while up, arrived yesterday but were unable to give us any thing except general County news. I am getting not only quite anxious to hear from but very anxious to see my darling Carrie. Furloughs have entirely stopped. When they will recommence it is impossible to form anything like a correct opinion. I heard it said \_\_\_\_\_, Gen. Howe says, if his influence can have any weight, no more will be granted during the existence of the war. Having his family with him and feeling none of the pains consequent when separation from those nearest his heart, I am prepared to give credence to the rumor.

A man who attempted to desert to the yankees a few days ago, was shot to death with musketry on the 3rd inst. I did not witness his execution, having business in my office. Some of his company who attempted to rescue him and prevent his execution were captured and are now in the guard house. In due time they will doubtless follow in the same track. The troops here are becoming much demoralized and I would not any time be surprised at a general outbreak. It is reported here that Bob. Adams has deserted. I hope it is not so, -- Among other reports going the rounds is one that Jo Davis on Tuesday night next will marry a very wealthy young lady of this City.

You must remember me affectionately to our little ones, and write often. May God bless my dear darling Carrie, and our little children. Write soon to your own devoted

Tom

As a detail will leave in the morning for the purpose of carrying the horses home I'll add a little to my short letter. It is now about night. I feel much better than I did the fore part of the day. "The detail" that goes home with the horses are only allowed twelve days to go and come in, which will allow no time whatever to stay at home. But for this I would make an effort to be one of the detail. But the idea of going home without the privilege of staying some days does not suit me. Therefore I shall remain quiet and like "Micawber"; trust to luck for a favorable "turn up". It is not yet decided who will go. Gus Burleson will, on account of his puny condition be one I suppose. When he gets home by reporting to some army surgeon he will probably procure a certificate of disability and may thus get to remain at home some time.

I am now fearful that Doct. Jim Bonner in consequence of this last change will not come to us. I hope he will, however.

There is not so much difference in the cavalry & infantry service as is generally supposed. A horse, particularly a starved one, is quite troublesome in camp. The reason assigned for the temporary dismounting the cavalry is the utter impossibility of obtaining forage. I hear that our Colonel is making a strong effort to get our Legion in garrison at Galveston. I hope he will succeed as we will then be in good, comfortable quarters, not subject to forced marches nor the thousand and one little changes so frequently and uselessly made as well as in direct communication with home. We spend the time as pleasantly as we can but you may be sure in a dull and monotonous way. The army, at least the most of them have forgotten the words, "Remember the Sabbath Day etc."

Be sure and send me the things I write for by the first opportunity. I hate to trouble you so often but I am so conditioned I cannot avoid it. Again I invoke the blessings of heaven on my dear wife and our little children.

Good bye till next time.

(This is an undated page that I have not been able to place with any surety, though I assume it belongs early in the group of letters.)

Velasco Texas Dec 25th 1863.

My Dear Wife,

No one more deeply than myself regrets the necessity which causes on this cheerful Christmas morning the absence from "Home, Sweet Home" of so many husbands, fathers, sons and brothers. As, however, their "stay away" is for the benefit and common good of country and her loyal citizens, it must and should without murmuring be endured. Though reason and philosophise as best we may the sweets and attractions of home are ever present, like so many ghosts (though not at all frightful) to haunt the soul and teach man that "the rigors and roughs of evil and heartless war cannot efface from the heart the beautiful and indellible image of household Gods. It is held by some, that it is the duty of the Soldier to banish from his mind all thoughts of family etc. I, as a matter of course, give no countenance or support to any such stupid, unfeeling notion. In camp thoughts of home and homefolks contribute much towards our content and happiness and is the great spur which pricks the sides of intent on to brave and virtuous action. Show me the man who has succeeded in banishing from his mind the fond recollections and joys of his home and I'll show you one who is totally extinct to all the noble feelings and generous impulses of human nature. Tongue is not able to tell how much delight and heart-felt joy it would give me to be with you and "the little ones" today and I assure you that "though absent in the flesh I am with you in the spirit". I, therefore, by the use of pen, propose to contribute as much as I can towards your enjoyment.

As I, in this remote and dull military camp, drive my pen along, in my mind's eye I plainly see Arthur, Willie, May (Kate is yet almost too young) with their little cousins in childish glee fondly enjoying the great and mirthful Christmas, not in their happy childish simplicity bestowing a single thought on the shadowy past or venturing a solitary conjecture as to the far off, uncertain future. May the future be always as bright and joyous to them as is this day. This is, I know, a foolish prayer; God in his own truthful record having written, "Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble". When I contemplate seriously as to who enjoy this present mode of existence most, observation and experience lead me to conclude that children and negroes do, being never disturbed by "the force of mind or power of reasoning", proving beyonde doubt, that ignorance is bliss when folly is wisdom." From this you must not conclude that I either under-rate or do not appreciate the power of reason and thought, for with Solomon I agree, that "happy is the man that findeth wisdom and the man who getteth understanding". The idea I mean to convey simply is, that man has not yet as a class elevated himself to the proper mental standard and those who have ascended the ladder but little ways, have contributed little or nothing to their capacity for the enjoyment of this world. Now, is not this true? The world, in all its vast regions of lenght and breadth is the home of but few philosophers. The man who schools himself in moral science and walks in obedience to the promptings of a conscience "void of offence towards God and man", is, in my opinion, philosopher sufficient for the measure of his own day. I do not here employ "moral science" as a term of limited sense but in its broad and ample meaning, comprehending God and his wonderful works together with the duty of the creature to the great creator.

Dec. 25th 1863 (Contd)

War, it matters nothowsoever skillfully and humanly conducted, is a great and desolating evil, often entailing upon those engaged in it more of misery and suffering than it makes as the sum total of good to both parties. As cruel and rough, however, as it is, it teaches us many valuable and important lessons, prominent among which is, our dependence. As long as man puffs himself up with the leaven of his own vanity he imagines himself a "monarch of all he surveys" and depends upon his own frail arm and sense for that for that power and direction necessary to pilot him safely across the breakers of life. But strip him of this vain and erroneous imagination and at once with child-like confidence "through the atoning blood of a precious savior" by this exercise of Faith, he turns to look to God (several words here obscured by torn paper) finisher of his destiny. To me it seems, this war has already continued sufficiently long and has glutted its blood-loving appetite to such an extent as should show us not only the good but the horrors of strife. But it seems both parties are slow and loth to learn the lessons an all-wise Providence would give us through the deathly and bloody institution and still defiantly cry, "My voice is yet for war".

During the past ten or twelve days quite a number of ~~schooners~~ schooners have run the blockade at this port. A majority of them, so Madam Rumor says, are loaded with guns, amunition and army stores for "Old Jeff". On Wednesday the Yankees played quite "a trick" on our pilots. A schooner came in sight and as is usual with the "blockade running", made signal for a pilot. Three pilots, not thinking but what it was a vessel desiring to come into our port, jumped in a yawl and went out to them, when to their great surprise they found that it was a Yankee boat. They took the pilots on board, carried them out on sea some thirty miles, when they allowed them to take the yawl and make to shore if they could, which they succeeded in doing about 12 o'clock last night. They in future, will I guess, be rather particular before they board another boat. A courier came in last evening with a dispatch to Genl. Suckett that a schooner loaded with guns and powder was beached on the coast some eighteen miles from here and that the Yankee Gunboat was cruising around and evidently meditated her destruction. A large detail was sent down (here about half a line is torn too badly to decipher) protect her. Among the number are Charlie, Frank Daniel and Gid Walker. They had to walk, of course, carrying their guns and 40 rounds of amunition. I came near being sent myself. I would not be surprised they did not have a brush with the Yankees. The poor fellows are right tired this morning, after having walked all night. Two waggons loaded with guns and amunition have just come in from the vessel. They report the Yankee Gunboat 4 miles off.

Well, I have just finished Dinner and of what do you guess it consisted? A rich and delicate repast indeed: Just such an one as an epicure or a Lord, (or a poor soldier) never enjoys particularly on a Christmas day -- Blue beef rendered intensely hot by high, full season of red pepper and a thin cake of half done corn meal. I hope you had a better dinner and that you condition was such as to enable you to do it ample justice. I do not think Jeff Davis or any of his friends need have any fear of a mortal epidemic of gout among the soldiers in this region. This morning I had a fine mess of good fresh bay oysters, fried in the most improvised style (beef tallow). As a general thing we get the best of beef, good corn meal and a scant allowance of molasses, sugar and flour. The reason why we are so short to day is that the detail who went to the schooner's assistance carried with them two days rations.



Dec. 25th 1863 (Contd-Page 3)

You may well imagine how anxious all were to spend the Christmas at home, with their families. The cruel and unbending necessities of the time denied them the happy privilege, and like good boys and good soldiers, we submit without a word. There is, I hear, some prospect of changing the location of our camp in a day or two. Where we will go I do not know, it may be further across the coast, it may be to Houston. Genl Waul has not yet assumed command of his brigade. It consists of the Legion, the 2nd Texas Regt. and Hobby's Regt. The rumor in camp now is, that the condition upon which Waul's brigade was mounted, was, that he would take his command East of the Mississippi river. If this be so, I doubt if his men are ever mounted - they have enough of the other side of the river. I would like to ride, though I would not do it, if the condition was as above stated, if I had any option in the matter. Camp rumors are oftener untrue than true, hence I pay no attention to this, though it may be true. There is no telling when we will get to come home. It may be in a short time and it may be not before the termination of the war. I hear nothing of the enemy's movements below. Do not know what they are doing. Nothing much I presume. The camp is a poor place to get news. When in Houston I renewed my subscription to the Telegraph (Tri-weekly). Do you get it? We, it seems to me, in this place are cut off from the rest of the world.

I begin to think with old Master Horace Greeley that "the soldier is at best a mere machine", at least such it appears is the estimate placed upon them by those (or at least some) in authority. Some of the boys are now in houses. I, Arch Huckaby, Uncle Ben, Charlie, and Frank Daniel have a very good tent, in which we can protect ourselves very well from the weather. So far we have had very favorable weather for camping out. Several of the boys are complaining, among them is Arch H ckaby. He is the most home sick man I ever saw.

The boys who went out to assist the schooner have come in, all tired down and hungry. They saved her without any sort of fight. Her cargo was most valuable.

In one of your letters you intimated that you would like for me to write longer letters. I always write as much as I can. Yours are always agreeable but then to me they appear most short. Ever since I have been out I have written to you every four or five days and I do hope you will do the same. You can form no idea how much real good they do me and how badly I feel when all the rest get letters and I none. You need not rely on other correspondents to keep me "posted in matters and things" as I have none. I have received but one letter, besides those from you, since I left home and that was from Julia.

Well, how are the dear little children? Well I hope. You must kiss each one of them for me. How I wish I could have been with them to day.

If you can, when Capt. B. returns I want you to send me the overcoat, a tooth brush and a good lot of tobacco. I mean a big lot. You can find plenty of the Confederate \_\_\_\_\_ in the County. Arch Huckaby desires me to present his compliments to you, Mr. and Mrs. B.

I hope you have had a pleasant day and trust the time is not far in the future before we will be permitted to worship under "our own vine and big tree". God bless you and the children is my daily prayer. My respects to Mr. and Mrs. B. Write soon to your affectionate husband,

Tom.

The above is the only Christmas gift I am able to give you this time. Accept it at what it is worth. "A Merry Christmas and happy new year to you all."

Velasco, Texas      January 20th, 1864

My dear Wife,

Your much prized favor of the 1st Inst. has just this moment come to hand, and though very unwell, with cold, I propose to answer it immediately. I had a slight chill day before yesterday and pretty high fever all night, all occasioned, I think, by exposure.

About ten days ago, our company had to make a "Force March" in a cold norther to the north of the Bernard, and as a natural consequence the most of us caught severe colds. Henry Cmmons and Mr. Snowden of our company are both quite sick. Snowden was sent to the general hospital at Columbia about the first of the month. We hear from him occasionally. His disease is Rheumatism and I would not be surprised if he is not a cripple for life. Emmons has typhoid fever. He will go up to Columbia on the next steamer. In the Army, the sick are cared for no better than if they were dogs. Those high in authority seem totally dead to the kind and sympathetic feelings of nature. In the great hereafter some of them, I have no doubt, will suffer for their misdeeds. The man who can rougthlv use a poor soldier is base and black hearted. As I expected, you all seem to have suffered much anxiety about us during the cold spell that is not yet fully over. I have no idea it was as cold here as up in your region and though I do not think I ever in my life experienced such severe weather. All the way we could keep from freezing was to remain in bed with hot bricks piled around us. Fortunately, for us our guard duty was very light. Several of our pickets froze to death on post.

The Militia whose escape and desertion I wrote you about from the Bernard was captured by some of Green's Men at Sandy Point and brought back to this place. Genl. Sucket had them heavily chained, and closely guarded. I was one of the guard. They were sent up to Houston yesterday for trial.

I got a letter from Capt. Wilson last evening, (of the 7th). He enclosed a copy of Capt. Allen's "Halcyon Songs". The old man must have been drunk or crazy.

Remember me to children. I will write to you in a few days. I am too unwell to write more at present. Kiss the children for me. God Bless you and them I pray. Write often to yr. devoted,

Tom

Camp near Perry's Landg, Brazoria Co., Texas  
Jany 31st 1864.

My Dear Wife,

I again find myself seated for the purpose of writing you a few lines and trust they will find you and our dear little ones in good health. Ever since I last wrote you I have been on the "sick list", am now quite feeble but slowly improving I think. I had a chill every day for several successive days, (with a bad cough). I missed the chill night before and last night. Today I am thirsty and feverish & it may be, I'll have a chill before morning. Two of our company are quite sick in the hospital at Co. \_\_\_\_\_ (Mr. Snowden said \_\_\_\_\_). Two others besides myself are on the sick list in camp (Gus Burleson and Mr. Rowland). The former, if there is any sort of chance, will be sent home on "sick leave". He is suffering with chronic diarrhea, and will not, I think, as long as he remains in camp be likely to improve any.

Before this reaches you Mr. Ballard will have got home, I presume, on a visit to his wife, who he heard was in a dying condition. I told him he must be certain to see you and tell you to send me some money, three pr. of socks, a hat or cap and any other little thing you might think proper to send. I wish you also to send me a blank book if you desire to hear from me often, as we are entirely cut off from the paper market. In this time the generosity of friends has supplied me for some time past. Capt. B. saw Genl Waul in Houston on his return from home and learned that the order mounting his brigade has been countermanded for the present, which in my opinion will turn out to be during the war. Many of our governmental officials are capricious and fickle in an extreme degree. Genl. Magruder has issued a positive and \_\_\_\_\_ stringent orders against any application for furloughs as under "no circumstance will any be granted". What has caused this unnecessarily brutal order I know not unless it be that the Commanding General is so lustful and rakish in his nature as to be totally dead to those feelings and impulses which so sacredly subsist between families, -- If this order is long maintained in force demoralization will inevitably occur to a certain extent, for husbands yet consider their families high above all else. Tell Arthur and Willie I have some sea beans for them but will not be able to get any more shells unless we are moved back to the Gulf Coast. How are May and Kate? Not a day passes but what you and them flit across my mind a thousand times. I do hope they will not forget me before I see them. "Old Andrew" who went up with Capt B. told me a good many extravagant tales in reference to Arthur. I hope you keep Arthur and Willie employed at their books some of the time.

Charlie and Frank Daniel are fat and saucy, both of them some what injured by the associations and influences of the camp. You must present my compliments to Mr. and Mrs. B. Remember me to the children. Kiss them for me. God bless you and them, I pray. Write soon and often, my dear darling, to your own devoted

Tom.

Arch Stuckaby presents his compliments to you, Mr. and Mrs. B. You had better, in future, direct your letters to H uston as they will be more promptly forwarded.

Camp near Perry's Sdg. Brazoria Co. Texas  
Feb 2, 1864

My Dear Wife,

"The poor soldier in camp" is sometimes blessed, notwithstanding the mountain height of his privations and toils and particularly so did I feel last Sunday evening, when I was presented with your cherished favor of the 4th. You need have no fear about the welcome of your letters, for I assure you they are always prized beyond the power of expression. You can have but a faint idea how much "heart-joy" a letter from home occasions, even if it but contain the single line traced out in your own well known chirography, "All are well".

How thankful should man be to his Creator for the superiority with which he has entrusted him and how careful and wary should he be in the use of the "talents" he has entrusted to his guardianship!

Sunday was a beautiful, bright, balmy day and I feel glad, though I record it myself, to say - I spent it, as a good boy should, in reading my Bible. Generally speaking, Sunday in the Army is spent as other days, and few seem to regard it as in the least sacred.

I am very sorry to hear that Mr. & Mrs. B. take it so to heart in reference to Mc's entrance into the Army. They should feel proud that they can add another gallant soldier to the Army of the U. S. Capt. B. could not under the circumstances extend his furlough. He regretted it very much but military law is stern and rigorous, compelling obedience under all circumstances, it matters not whom it may incommode. He can draw all the clothing he wants from the Quartermaster's Department. We are looking for him every day. I wish he would come on so I can then hear from you directly.

I hope you succeeded in getting me a hat as I have been entirely bareheaded for some time. Oliver has just come in with a very nice supply of Palmetto, out of which he promises to manufacture for me a fancy hat in a few days. He has yet to carry it through the bleaching process, which will require several days.

Right here I was interrupted by the announcement that dinner was ready, and when I marched up in boldness to the table, found the same old familiar "Blue beef and corn bread", patiently waiting gastric efforts. Speaking of dinner reminds the great enterprise undertaken yesterday by Jimmie Mc and myself. Capt. B who in consequence of the painful process of cutting "wisdom teeth" has not been able for several days past to eat anything solid, expressed a desire for "a custard". I and Jimmie volunteered our services to make him an egg or transparent pie, which, of course, caused much mirth in the mess, they in their philosophy never having dreamed of our proficiency in the culinary art, but imagine their surprise and our gratification, when we brought up "two pies" that would have tickled the palate of an epicure - for which the Capt. "tenthousand thanks", accompanied with the declaration he had never eaten anything, in his life, half so good. My experience in "needle work and culinary department" promises to render me quite an efficient aid to the housewife when I get home.



Feb 2, 1864 (Contd)

For Aunt Mollie's benefit, just here I write, that Doct. Ben is now intently engaged in a game of cards and has just remarked "I've a very poor hand, indeed". You may say to her, however, that I do not think he has lost much money, as he only plays with gentlemen and for no other "stake" than amusement. You may further tell her, he has preserved quite a discreet and dignified bearing since his camp residence began. He has posted himself thoroughly in the Bible since he has been out.

The mail has just come in. I got nothing. Capt. B. got a Pioneer of the 4th - I have not read it yet. The two you spoke of sending me have never arrived. The one you sent in your letter was greatly appreciated. It was read and re-read by all the company. An order has just been extended through the command to be ready to move at sunrise with one day's prepared rations on hand. We will go to Cedar Lake I think. Direct your letters to Houston.

Tell little May I had a sweet dream about her the other night. I thought she came running to where I was sitting, jumped in my lap, encircled my neck with her arms and gave me a sweet kiss - one that an angel would have enjoyed.

How are Masters Arthur and Willie? Tell them to be good boys and be sure to learn to read by the time I come home. Tell May she must learn some "sweet songs to sing for me when I come home, and little Kate must also improve in every manner."

Charlie and the boys generally are in good health.

You must bear my absence and privations with patience and fortitude, all the while remembering the justice of our cause and the extreme goodness of the Great God. Oh! how I would like to be with you but then my Darling, you will know duty calls the able bodied and the young to the field. Our all is pending and if we refuse to do our duty, we deserve not freedom.

My respects to Mr. and Mrs. B. Kiss the little ones for me - God bless my darling wife and our dear little ones. Write often. - to your own devoted -

Tom

Camp near Perry's Sdg Brazoria Co., Texas  
Feby 7th, 1864

My Dear Wife,

I am glad to inform you that since my last letter my health has improved considerably. Having missed the chill, and gotten rid of "the cold" from which I so severally suffered, I begin to feel as stout and athletic "as in days of yore". I am now able to devour my full rations of "beef and bread". Soldiers generally, I have noticed, complain very bitterly of "the army diet". I have no doubt that in many instances, perhaps the majority, the censure is just. Since I have been connected with the army our rations have been very good the best part of the time - indeed much better than many of the soldiers have at home.

Soldiering is very demoralizing. Why it should be I cannot see. The militia are deserting and going home by scores. Our legion is now principally engaged in watching and guarding them. But for the fear of captain and punishment two thirds of them, at least, would leave. There are no advantage to the service that I can see, as in an emergency they cannot be relied on. I suppose, however, our legislature in its wisdom, has determined to keep them "in" six months longer. If there is any use they can be put to at home I think the wisest policy would be to let them "depart in peace", as by their disobedience and general want of discipline (patriotism first written but struck out, and discipline written over) they force extra duty on the regular soldiers, who at any time, are subject to being called out to suppress their mutinies.

No, I do not believe the history of this war record much valor to the credit of State Troops. Why they are so worthless and troublesome, as soldiers, I must confess, I am unable to divine, as they represent the most stable and reliable class of our population. It must, in a great measure, be attributable to a want of proper management "in the high functionaries who have them in charge. Despite their reprehensible conduct I can never bring myself to the lamentable conclusion that "the brain and sinew" of our land are wanting either in patriotism or in courage. Of the "Texas Militia" I had hoped better things, but alas! how deceptive are the calculations of humanity. "The memory of San Jacinto" inspires them but little.

A part of our command, (two companies) are on detached service at the mouth of Caney - where we would now be, but for the "outbreak" among Texas' State Troops a few days ago. I am of opinion we will go down there in a few days - It is about thirty miles from here. I have no doubt the first engagement between "the Yanks" and "the Texas army" will occur in that region.

As soon as I get some paper I'll write you a long letter. The last letter I received from you was by Capt. B. Doct. Ben and Charlie got letters yesterday of the 26th Jany. My paper, as you see, is exhausted. Remember me to our dear "little ones" and kiss them for me. God Bless you and them. Write soon to your devoted Tom. -

Camp Near Perry's Sdg. Brazoria Co. Texas  
February 17th, 1864

My Dear Wife,

I find myself once more engaged in the pleasing occupation of writing for your benefit and hope the one prospect of an interesting communication will vanish as I proceed. I have no news whatever to tell save that the health of the command is very good. I fear, if we remain in our present encampment during the spring, we will have many visitations of illness. I am earnestly hoping that the application of our Colonel to get us in garrison at Galveston will be acceded to, as we will then secure good, comfortable quarters and also be in direct communication with home, which you can easily see by this time is much to be desired.

Some of the command, fearing another "Vicksburg Scrape" do not relish the idea much. As for myself, I am daily bringing myself to the conclusion there will be but little fighting in Texas. In this, I may be mistaken, but it occurs to my mind, that the grounds upon which the opinion is based are tenable. To look into the future of a war, whose progress and features have already time and again misguided the wisest among us - is far beyond human ken. But it is a fact patent to all, that each day's effort lessens its vigor and exhausts some of its energy. Among the soldiery, a vast variety of opinion exists on this subject, some professing to see the end clearly in view, with the giant young Confederacy looming up - the wonder and courted ally of the world - while others especially conscious of a distinctness of vision, behold nothing but misery and annihilation in store for us. I am happy that I am able to assure you, that those who hold the former opinion are distinguished not only for their good and unexceptionable qualities as soldiers but also for their cleverness of judgment and good sense. The latter are just the reverse.

The mail has just come in, bringing letters from Fairfield, as late as the 7th, but I am sorry to say, had nothing for me. Arch Huckaby got a letter and is distressed and doleful at the account he receives of the health of his Father's premises. He is, I think very susceptible to invades of "the Blues". There is but little of the philosopher about him. It seems totally impossible for him to make the most of the world as he finds it. I am beginning to think unless we do this, we will be cheated out of much of this world's good and ease. Philosophize and act how we may, it is true that "man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble", and the sooner we recognize the fact, the better will it be for us, as its recognition to a sensible mind superinduces that preparation of heart which will ultimately secure "a heaven of eternal rest".

And the Rev. Caperton is giving out as "A Missionary" to the army. Grand and glorious person! How very kind of him! Surely his sacrifices of the joys and pleasures of home for such a charitable work will be duly appreciated, but seriously, without intending any slur on religion, I am of opinion he would be much more efficient and at the same time performing a holy service, were he to shoulder his musket and "mark to the roll of the drum". The Army on account of his age and strength, will have very little patience with him, I imagine.

While I think of it, I will just say here, that if you receive this before Jim Bennet leaves, send my watch by him as it is a piece of jewelry almost indispensable in the army. Get Mr. B. to put a strong buck skin guard on it.

February 17th, 1864 (Contd)

You need not send me any paper as I secured a supply by paying \$11.00 per gr. for it. My "old hat" has about "given up the ghost". In a few days I shall be compelled to don "a little skull cap" or else go without covering for my hear.

When you see Aunt Mollie B. you may tell her that Doct. B. is in his usual puny health, measuring about 7 ft. and 17 or 18 inches in the girth, with a good appetite and very little to satiate it on. Tom and Rock are also doing well. Tom is our principal cook and no doubt by the time the war is at an end can publish a book as voluminous as that of Mrs. Leslie, particularly if allowed to expatiate on "fry flitter" and "drop dumplin'". You have no idea what an institution in camp the combination of Tom's "fry flitter" and "drop dumplin' makes.

My mess is quite inclined to "literature" today, for three out of the four are as intently engaged in novel reading as if life contained no fiction at all, but unfortunately there is but little in camp upon which to fete such a luste. But there is one good thing about all this, which is, we have our Bibles, to which at all times, we may with profit and interest resort.

The militia have all obtained furloughs and gone home. They had just as well be there for the good they would do here.

The last letter I received from you bore date of the 25th & 28th. of Jany, which I immediately answered. I wrote to Mr. B. a day or two since, and sent it up by hand. Capt. B. could not give Mc. the desired extension in consequence of general orders from headquarters. We will of course take the very best possible care of him. I sincerely not have long to undergo the privations and hardships of the army. When the husbands now in the army get home there is some danger of their tainting their wives by a general indulgence of all their whims and caprices. There is of course no danger of such a catastrophe to those whose wives are free from these vices.

Well, how are the little ones? You can form no idea how intensely I yearn to be with you and them. Willie and Kate I hope have long ago got well. Tell Arthur he must be a good boy and help you take care of his Brother & Sisters, and Willie that he must do the same. Tell Miss May and Kate not to forget me.

Arch H. sends his respects. My respects to Mr. & Mrs. B. and now, my darling, let me beg you to write often. God Bless you and our little ones is my constant prayer. That we may soon meet is the earnest wish of your own devoted  
Tom.

Jimmie McIlvene is unwell from cold. Capt. B is yet suffering from neuralgia. He thinks he is cutting teeth. Do you know or can you tell why the folks at Fathers never write to me?



Camp near Mouth Caney, Matagorda Co., Texas  
March 6th, 1864.

My Darling Wife,

One week has elapsed since I wrote you the last time. We have been looking for Mc and Irvin Bonner daily for a week or more but as yet we have no news from them. They surely will be in camp in a day or two.

Dr. Jim Bonner leaves in the morning for Houston and I shall this this by him. He is moving "heaven and earth" to get some soft place in the army and in the matter exhibits more industry and energy than is consistent with true patriotism.

I am still Acting Surgeon of the command and will continue to act in that capacity till the Surgeon returns. When he gets back I rather expect I'll be appointed Asst. Surgeon, in which event I shall have to go to Houston for examination, when I shall come home if permitted to do so.

There is little or no sickness in the command. Some of the conscript negroes hereabout are quite sick. I was ordered over to see some of them this morning. They are, I am satisfied, badly managed. These negroes are mostly from the counties contiguous to this section.

In taking a seat on a rough log last night I completely used up the best pr. of my breeches. When you have an opportunity send me a good pr.

I have not heard from you since the 14th. I shall write again in a few days.

Give my love to the babies as well as a sweet kiss. God Bless my darling and little children. Write soon, my dear, to your own devoted,

Tom.

(This is one of the very few letters that was not written in full on both sides of the paper. It was sent "Favor of Mr. Simpson", and addressed directly on the letter paper, without being enclosed in an envelope, to: Mrs. Thos. B. Grayson, Fairfield, Texas.)

Camp on Cedar Bayou

March 12th/64

My Dear Wife,

I am glad to inform you of the safe arrival of Ballard, Company and train. The boys all look well and were gladly received by their comrades in arms, particularly as they brought with them a good supply of substantial eatables that are quite rare in camp. Such manifestations of the good will and providence of the people at home towards the brave soldiers in the field, is duly appreciated and you may be sure will be remembered to the last day of existence.

I am still acting surgeon of this command, and have no idea how long I will remain in the capacity as the duration of his absence is uncertain. When he returns I rather suspect I will receive the appointment of Asst. Surgeon, in which event I shall soon have to report at Houston for examination, and then I shall endeavor to extend my visit on as far up as your domicil.

Genl. Magruder has issued an order to inaugurate a general system of furloughs and accordingly four of our company start home in the morning. Among them is, I am glad to say, Arch Huckaby. The poor fellow has been very "blue" for some time past in consequence of continued illness in his Father's family.

I presume you have heard of the death of poor Reden Owen. In camp I found him a noble, whole souled gentleman. In the event I am made Surgeon (Asst) it will require a considerable sum to uniform me. I have got the money from Jim Hancock and sent an order in favor of his wife on Father which I hope you will see to being promptly paid.

I have no news whatever to communicate. There is some little sickness in the command, none in our company. The two batallions are encamped some six miles apart and I have to visit the sick in each every day.

In one of my recent letters to you, I expressed the opinion that the "Yankees" had relinquished their designs on Texas. The Scouts recently returned (a few days ago,) report not a yank on the pennisula. I hope the war will soon spend its forces, and that we may be permitted to go home, in the enjoyment of a peace nobly won and an independence fully merited.

Present my compliments to Mr. and Mrs. B. I must stop to let Mc have the pen and ink. Remember to the little ones and kiss them for me. Write soon my darling - and direct your letter to Brazoria, Brazoria Co., Texas. God bless my darling wife and dear little children is the constant prayer of your own devoted

Tom -

Camp on Cedar Bayou near Brazoria, Texas  
March 17, 1864.

My Darling One,

Once again I find myself engaged in writing for your benefit and sincerely trust the pleasure of its perusal will equal that experienced in its writing. I assure you my darling, that next to the pleasure of receiving and reading your dear letters is that afforded in writing to you. I have nothing of special interest to communicate save that the command is still enjoying good health. Mc was a little sick yesterday but to day is "all right". He and Irvin have gone into a mess by themselves. I told Mc they could come in with us but he said Irvin preferred a different arrangement. They are near us and we will take the best of care of them. They are both good boys and it will ever be my pleasure to advise with and administer to them in the very best manner I am able.

We are still having severe wintry weather. There was as large a frost this morning as I ever saw. But then I don't know that we should regret it, as it is good and healthy weather. I and Charlie, since Bob High left, sleep together. We, at least, I, sleep coldly last night.

The Surgeon returned yesterday. If I want to I can easily be Asst. Surgeon of the command. The duties of staff officers being much lighter than those of a private, I think, I shall take the position, in which event I think, I will be able to be at home with you, at no very distant day, which I assure you will be a very great inducement towards an acceptance of the position. (I have lost my pen) (Now writing with pencil)

During my presidency of the medical department I got on without any trouble whatever and flatter myself that I earned the good will and opinion of the whole command.

Tell May I tried to get her a beautiful gutta percha ring yesterday but failed and to do so I went into spieces of gambling. Mc says you must tell his ma, the very first time she has an opportunity, she must send him something good to eat. Poor fellow, if he gets to "hoaning" already I don't what he will do before he gets through. (Typist's remark: that last sentence was poorly written, and not completely decipherable).

Our camp has been excited to some extent on "the recognition question" for some days past. I shall never give credit to any thing of that sort untill I see it officially announced. "The Yanks" have left the Penintice(?) and their expedition against Texas is now everywhere admitted to be a failure. I am rather apprehensive that all the troops but few will be transferred to La. I hardly I think we will go, our transportation being insufficient.

Remember me to the little ones and kiss them for me. Mc sends his love to you and all. My respect to Mr. and Mrs. B. - God Bless you my dear wife and her little children. Write soon to your own devoted

Tom

Camp Sydney Johnson near Mouth of Caney  
March 25th 1864

My Dear Wife,

I am truly thankful that I once more have the privilege of writing to you and sincerely wish I may be able before I conclude to communicate something that will contribute, at least temporarily, to your comfort and pleasure, though I must confess that the general barrenness of camp life is so great, as to preclude the probability of anything very interesting.

Camp life, I assure you, is dull and monotonous, affording no delight or amusement. It is true we pitch, jump, "laugh and talk" and do many other boyish things to beguile the time, which I must say despite of all this, drags heavily on. He who imagines the soldier's life one of ease and comfort knows nothing of it and will I trust never be so unfortunate as to undergo its better rough experiences.

When, however, we reflect for what we are contending, we should busy and cheer ourselves with the thought that sooner or later our independence will be established and that then "under our own vine and fig tree, we will worship, (Where there is none to make me afraid)" according to the dictates of our conscience". I cannot bring myself to the belief, even in our darkest, saddest hour, that anything other than ultimate triumphant success is in store for us.

My faith in God and the precious promises vouchsafed in his word unto those who "the right pursue" is too tenacious and unwavering to think for a moment that we will ever be delivered to the savage cruelties of a merciless and mercenary foe. A calm and contemplative perusal of the scripture is all sufficient (in my mind) to eradicate despondency in regard to our present struggle and it is the remedy with which I would medicate "weak-kneed" croakers and white-livered cowards. In its wings, it hath healing and in its breath life.

We seldom receive any newspapers in camp and therefore are almost totally ignorant of what is being enacted save in our own narrow sphere. To alleviate this condition "our mess" made a joint purse and sent up for the "Tri-Weekly Telegraph" but as it seldom finds its way to us, we are but little benefited by it.

The Blank book you sent me I am using as a kind of journal and when I get it filled will send it home to you - which if you will take the trouble you can read. Having nothing else to write I make a few extracts (With their dates): "Sunday March 20th - A glance at my book shows that for two days I have not made an entry. I cannot say that the camp has been duller than usual and must therefore ascribe my silence to a natural disposition in myself to indulge in idleness. I was never accounted, even by those who most flatter me, as very industrious. Camp residence is by no means calculated to remedy this "ailment", but on the contrary tends rather to make the disease more constitutional and difficult of eradication.

Very few of "the inhabitants of camp" ever seem to think of the Divine injunction, "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it Holy". The same merry round, gambling mania, vulgar dialogues, Songs, et., etc., in which they pass every other day is "the order" of this. Aside from the privations,

March 25th 1864 (Contd)

general suffering, and inhuman cruelties of war, it is to be regretted as it sears the conscience, blunts moral sensibility and makes charity "as a sounding brass and tinkling cymbol". At the final day of reckoning what an account will the fiendish authors and cruel perpetrators of this unmerciful, savage war have to render. Then will there weeping and gnashing of teeth.

I have passed the day so far in a commendable manner, (reading my Bible) which I am satisfied it is always my duty to do - the Great unerring God having said "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life and they are they which testify of me". The Bible is the great lamp (or as someone has expressed it, "the bright candle of the Lord"), which by its effulgence illuminates this pathway of man, enabling him to traverse the tortuous course of life in safety and ultimately lighting him into the chambers of a perpetual bliss.

The more I read it the greater is my interest in it increased and I must state that it may ever be so. As I trace its golden pages and sum its rich promises, I am at a loss to know why it is that rational man does not arduously strive to bring himself up to its standard. True in the beginning he may become weak, faint-hearted and discouraged but by perseverance he will at length be enabled to realize God's declaration, "I am always with you".

(The remainder of this page - about 3/4ths of it - is too dim to read. The above was a continuation of the journal entry for Sunday, March 20th, and was followed by the entry for Monday, March 21st. It appears that Dr. Grayson's ink was diluted at this point, and the writing faded out.)



Camp Sydney Johnson April 5th 1864

My Darling Wife,

I commence this letter not expecting to finish it for two or three days to come, as our mail courier will not leave again till Saturday. I should have written you yesterday but I was erroneously informed the mail would not be sent off till tomorrow. It left, however, this morning and consequently I had no letter in readiness. Your dearly prized favor of the 12th was received on the 2nd, just one long, long, month having elapsed between the reception and the writing of your two last. A large budget of mail was brought in today for our command. I got nothing and was somewhat disappointed as several received letters as late as the 25th. (Among them Capt. B. Charlie, and Uncle Ben) Your letters of the same date of Uncle Ben's always come in a day or two behind. I can account for it on no other supposition than a failure to get them into the office in due time. Could not you and Aunt Mollie make some permanent arrangement for the regular transportation of your letters to the office? Such an arrangement, if made, with regard to the departures of the mail would insure a more regular and punctual arrival of your letters, which is, I assure you, no small item situated as we are.

You will, I hope, write to me very often and when you write bear in mind that your letters are never burdensome but on the contrary always pleasing and full of interest. They to me are the most fruitful sources of happiness in camp life. Mc, poor fellow, has not yet received a line from any of you and did you know how much he takes it to heart you would write to him. He is driving on very well, and I've no doubt will make a No. 1 soldier. The visiting vices of camp will make but little, if any, inroad into his moral habits, as he is a boy of remarkable firmness and a keen and nice discriminating power of judgment as to right and wrong. Charlie and Frank Daniel have made progress in certain directions that will never profit them anything. They are slow and loth to take the advice of their older friends. This, however, you must keep to yourself as its publication would occasion uneasiness and pain without the least benefit to them.

A horrid case of bestiality occurred in our lines yesterday of a nature too horrid and revolting to admit of other than this general mention. The young man was a german of fine appearance and sprightly intellect. I've no doubt 'tis the result of moral vitiation superinduced by the contaminating influences of camp life. Poor boy! I am sorry for him, notwithstanding the punishment his crime merits. The german element of the army is almost entirely demoralized. There are at this time some twenty of them confined in the Guard House for disobedience of orders. A few executions would be "wholesome" so far as they are concerned.

On the 2nd we changed the location of our encampment (a few miles). We are now on Cedar Bayou, in a beautiful cedar grove. The bayou is a nice, clear, limpid stream, and affords the boys a fine field for operations against the "piscatorial tribe". They have constructed substantial and huge rafts upon which they play and sport, in ease and pleasure, on the water. The "invasion" upon "private rights" by the 2nd Texas and a portion of this Command has incurred the wrath & indignation of the Dist. Commander and as a punishment he, I understand, threatens to keep them closely garrisoning "the Fort" at Caney and if that does not correct their "stealing" proclivities to transfer them to the soil of La. So far as our Company is concerned I can say they have never trespassed in the least - they know too well what Capt. B. would do with them.

April 5th 1864 (Contd)

These outrages are always the fault of company commanders - a proper discharge of their duties would soon remedy the evil. The 2nd Texas Regt. is famous for its "sleight of hand" as well as its valor in battle.

Our Regt. received a battle flag as a present to day from three young Ladies at Houston. It is beautiful. Since I last wrote to you the two battalions have been consolidated and a regiment formed. So "The Legion" no longer exists being now among the things that were. Ours is Co. A.

The Surgeon has again absented himself and left me in command of the medical department. He expects to return in three weeks, when he promises to let me, in consideration of my services, though I will tell you now as I have before done, do not look for me till you see me.

In a letter written a few days ago I told what kind of clothes I wanted. I do not want you however, to give yourself any unnecessary trouble about them as much as I desire them. When you see any of Father's family you must give them a good "feminine" scolding for not writing to me. I think they treat me badly particularly Miss Harriet, to whom I wrote when I first came down and not a word from her have I got, yet. You are all too much disposed to wait for letters in order to get to answer them. If I adopted this rule I'd not write near as often as I do. But my Dear you must not imagine that I am grumbling at you. If your letters would only travel faster you would do pretty well. So you are blameless.

Camp Lubbock Houston Texas April 17th 1864

My Darling Wife,

As you will discover from the heading of the above we have again changed "our base" & are once more quartered in proximity to the detestable city of Houston. On the 12th we received orders to move at once to Anderson (in Grimes Co.) and accordingly we set out on foot on the morning of the 11th, walked to Brazoria (13 miles) through mud and water by 2 o'clock, where we waited till next day 1 o'clock for a steamer, which in about 3 hours landed us safely at Columbia. There we camped till next morning (yesterday) when we took the cars, arrived at the depot late in the evening, staid till morning and came down to the "barracks" and are now told that we will be kept here for some time.

What the object of our stoppage is I cannot tell - some of the "knowing ones" think "a lot" of the Yankees recently captured in Ia. will be sent here and that we are to garrison them. There may be truth in it. I cannot say. A few days will determine.

At Columbia I met your letter of the 7th and assure you was glad to get it. I cannot tell when I'll be able to come up to see you. Soon I hope. Dr. Blackmon will start up in a few days. During his absence Tom Blackmon will take his place.

We will begin to look for Arch in a few days. As we expect some "good things" by him we impatiently await his arrival.

As I came down from the Depot this morning I met Bill Campbell & Lady on the streets. I had a short conversation with them. They are both looking well. I saw a Lady in Columbia whom I first took to be Miss Clara Duff "that was". A second look at her caused me to change my opinion.

Tell Arthur and Willie to be good boys. I will write to Willie soon, and to Miss May and Kate give my best love.

One of our command was shot last night in the city. The poor devil deserved it I expect. He has 6 buck shot in one arm and 2 in the other.

I will write again soon. You must write often. Kiss the little ones for me.

God bless my dear Carrie and little children is the constant prayer of your own devoted - Tom.

I send you a pack of envelopes. Dr. Adams is in the city. Mc. is well and sends his love to all.



Camp Lubbock, Houston, Texas  
Apr 20th, 1864

My Dear Little Willie,

I have been thinking for some time past that I would write you a little letter. Uncle Ben leaves for home in the morning and he promises me he will carry it to you.

Pa wants to see Ma, Buddy, yourself and little sisters very much, and you may be sure that just as soon as I can, I will come home. I hope you have not forgotten Pa.

You must, my little boy, be a good child, and always do what your dear Mama tells you. She loves you and will not ask you to do anything that is wrong. God does not love the bad boys that are always quarreling, fighting \_\_\_\_\_, and disobeying what their parents tell them.

You must study your books. If you do not study and learn to read and write while you are young, you will be very ignorant when you get to be a man. Everybody will laugh at you and call you a lazy fool. Don't you know if Pa did not know how to write your Ma would not hear from him and he from her.

Tell Buddy and Sister May they must also be good children and obey their Ma. How is Sister Kate? You must kiss the dear little thing for me. Your Cousin Mc is well and sends his love to you. Also your Uncle Charlie. Kiss Ma and the children for -

Your Dear Pa.

My Dear Carrie,

I wrote you a day or two since by Lt. Bonham and consequently on this occasion have but little to say. By this time, I hope that my darling has entirely recovered and now in the enjoyment of perfect health is feeling his \_\_\_\_\_ in this lowly Vale of tears.

You have no idea how much I desire to see you and how earnestly bent I am on coming home the very earliest opportunity. The Surgeon is still absent and consequently I am first here till his return. I think he will be back in a few days. At least I hope so.

Bill Campbell and lady left for Freestone yesterday. I sent by them some cloth, out of which I want you to make a coat and pair of pants. If there is not enough for a frock coat, you can make a long jacket for me. I hope by the time you get them done, I will get home and this will allow you an opportunity of testing the fit.

Mc is well. Mr. B's big John is in camp with us to day. I think he has dodged his overseer. Remember me to the little ones. Write soon and often.

God Bless my Darling Wife and our little Children. Likely we will leave here soon - perhaps tomorrow. Good bye, my dear till another time.

Your own devoted - Tom.

My Dear Darling,

On yesterday evening I was made the glad recipient of your dearly prized favor of the 17th Inst. and assure you it made me happy beyond the power of expression, to learn from your own lips that you and the little ones were in good health. As impious and unholy as I may be deemed, you may be fully assured that no day passes that I do not in a spirit of humble dependence, send up my petitions to the Almighty Father for you and the children. This war, if it accomplishes no other good, has taught me to place my trust and reliance in God. If it would but impart the same lesson to all others how soon would our present vocation be changed for the better. I am firmly convinced, that ere another twelve months makes its circle the Southern Confederacy will be an acknowledged power. This conclusion is forced upon me by a combination of reasons and circumstances too \_\_\_\_\_ and complicated to be "wearied out" in the length of an ordinary letter. Our recent grand victory in La, has filled every heart with joy (and made even the bright dawning of day appear to many who before were despondent - in fact, "whipped".) Such in my esteem will be the fate of the yankees every time they venture to meet us in free and open field. Our present notion is that most of the prisoners captured will be sent in this department for garrison - if they are, our duty for some time to come, will be to guard "yankees". We are hourly expecting orders to go to Anderson, Grimes Co. I wish they would come as we would do much better then and also be much nearer home. It is thought that will be one of the depots for the "yankees" that are to come over from La. From what I've seen since I have been here I cannot resist the conclusion, that Houston is the Sodam as well as Gomorrah of Texas. But for the moral effect I don't know but it would be well enough to let the enemy have possession of it a while. If they would let them, "the traders" have their way, I doubt not, they would soon run them out or break them.

The few yds of cloth I sent you by Mr. Campbell cost me \$2.40.00 a sweet price indeed. Will I not be dressed finely when I get it on: You must try and squeeze out of it a suit-(coat (or jacket) and pants.

While I think of it I'll say Mr. Bonner's boy John is here almost naked - I have just a pr. of pants and jacket. I shall start him home in the morning I think. As he ran away tell Mr. B. he must (if he gets home) keep his arrival a secret and particularly my connection with it. Genl. Magruder is discharging all the negroes owned in this section and retaining those who live in "the up" country. This is unjust and should not be tolerated.

I have just returned from church. We had a fine, excellent sermon by the Rev. Mr. Castleton of the C. P. Church. Text, "Be godly". He and Mr. Carver of the Methodist church intend to preach to us every day as long as he remains here. How long we will stay here I cannot tell. It is supposed we have been brought here to take a part of the garrison that it is to take charge of the prisoners recently captured in La. There will, I am told, be a garrison here, one at Anderson and another at Hempstead. We, I presume as I have told you, will go to Anderson. The things you sent came safely to hand, the watch I presume Arch H. kept. If it is at all out of repair I am afraid it will cost all I have to have it mended. So if you have not sent it before this reaches you keep it as I expect to come home in the course of 2 months. In the meantime if you can send it to Corsicana do so. I now remember that I

April 24th 1364 (Contd)

loaned my Anatomy to Jo Davis. Get Father to get it. It has my name in it. He can ascertain where Jo left his things. It is, I presume, among them. Do take care of my books. I value them very highly. In answer to your enquiry about the pillow I answer "yes" but am fearful I'll have no way of transporting it. Send it along though as it will not in case of necessity take long to burn it. That, you see, is a convenient way we soldiers have.

Well my dear, about coming home, I don't know what to say except that I will be with you in two months. I have no idea you are half as anxious to see me as I am you. If I had supposed telling "Grandmother" "good bye" would have had any effect in obtaining "a leave of absence" I would have taken the greatest pleasure imaginable in telling her "farewell" a dozen times a day. I will surely call on her when I come up, especially about Dinnertime if it is convenient. Give the old lady my love when you next see her.

My pen is so awful bad I shall have to cease. Remember me kindly to the little ones - Give them all a sweet kiss for Papa, and my darling, I hope, will write often to her best friend and own, true and devoted Tom.

If you do not take great pains you'll not be able to read this, but with the pen I have I have done the very best I could, so I know my dear will not fuss and scold me, I

Galveston Texas, May 4th 1864.

My Darling Carrie,

Once again I find myself at my desk writing for your benefit & how happy it would make me to know, its reception and perusal would cause and create in your bosom those feelings of joy and gladness which I experience in the writing. I assure, my dear, nothing except a letter from you gives me in camp half the pleasure I experience in writing to you. To be sure when I discharge my camp duties in the manner I should -- which I always endeavor to do -- there is within me "a still small voice" that speaks words of gratulation and encouragement, but then, what are they in comparison with the sweet and sacred pleasures that arise from the only possible manner of communion (I have) with the being dearest to me than all the earth. How few in life contemplate as they should the tender and sacred relationship subsisting between husband and wife. Correct and refined ideas on this subject would make of this earth a very paradise. Since this unholy war commenced, you know, I have always had an earnest and aching desire to be a participant of its glories and miseries, I know when I say that no latent feeling of ambition has created this wish that I speak truth. It has been nourished and fostered by an honest wish to render to my country that service and duty which every good citizen should, in times like these, feel himself bound to do. Whenever I am called upon to perform a military duty I feel exactly as if I were doing something for you and our dear little ones. Have you ever seriously thought what would be your and the condition of our little innocent children were the purposes of our enemy crowned with success. Degredation, dishonor, shame and misery would be your as well as the portion of all true and loyal Southerners. Therefore it strikes my mind as one of the strangest of all things, that with these facts prominently before the eyes, men should desert, shirk and evade a just service in all possible manners, and I can account for it only on one supposition, and that is - ignorance coupled with cowardice. The night previous to our departure from Houston to this place thirteen men deserted - some of them were esteemed as good men and were from our sister County, Leon. At 3 o'clock tomorrow evening two men of Cook's Regt. are to be shot publicly for desertion. They attempted to go to the Yankee fleet. I do not care, though I think the punishment just, to witness the execution, though I'll have to go as an order has just been read that no soldier will be excused from attendance. Some of the men - poor unfortunate fellows, if ever caught, will be very apt to travel the hard road. Military law from a combination of circumstances must necessarily be vigorous and unbending.

I understand Jas. Kirksey is attached to one of the companies on the Island. I have not yet met with him. There are a great many of the Freestone negroes at work here. They annoy me very much about getting them off home. Reuben has been quite sick with pneumonia. I took him in the quarters with me and shall keep him till he gets well. Mr. Robinson's man, Beebe, has been also right sick with flux - I also took charge of him. I do not know that his master will ever thank me for it. I shall do every thing I can for the "up country" negroes "thanks or no thanks".

(5th)

The execution of the prisoners aluded to did not occur today, they having by a general order from the commander been given forty eight hours more in which to prepare to meet the monster death. We have just received orders to be in readiness tomove to Nibbllets Bluff. So there now is no longer any doubt but our destination is La. I am willing to go any where my country needs my services but I know it will be hard for me to endure a campaign with proper resignation, when I cannot hear from you, but this one thing I can & will do, write to you regularly wherever I am, and be constant in lifting to heaven a voice of supplication in behalf of you and the children, and you my darling, must do the same. Let us bear our separation as we best can, placing our reliance upon a merciful and just God.

I hope our orders for Nibblet's Bluff will meet a countermand at Houston, for if we get over in that country, there is no telling when I'll get to come home. If you can, send me the clothes you made of the cloth sent you, when Dr. Blackmon comes. Tell Mr. B. I want him to send me five hundred dollars - I have \$300 yet but as we are going where the enemy is thick and where Confederate monev is almost worthless - so I want to be prepared for any emergency.

You must remember me kindly to each one of the children and tell them Papa is very anxious to see them. God alone knows how deeply entwined in my heart strings are the happiness, prosperity etc. of my wife and children, and how earnestly I pray for the time to come when I'll be permitted to return to them and with them enjoy an independence which I have, in an humble way, contributed to bring about.

Present my compliments to Mr. & Mrs. B. God bless my darling and little ones, I earnestly pray. Write to me, my dear, as often as you can. You are ever present in my thoughts, and mind. Mc is well. Again I say, write often and God bless you. Your own devoted

Tom.



Galveston, Texas

May 29th, 1864

My Darling Wife,

You will not, I know, when I tell you that the unusual period between this and my last letter, has been in consequence of right severe sickness of several days duration either be surprised or \_\_\_\_\_ at my silence. I am far from being well yet, but today, feel as if hence forward my improvement will be more rapid. I desired very much to write you by the last furloughed men but on account of the reason above stated could not do so.

I sent up by them some surplus clothing which your own ingenuity must dispose of. The coarse white shirt, in which they are enclosed, I had no use for when I drew it, but did not know but what you could appropriate it advantageously among the negroes in some way or other. The breeches I have never worn, as you will see.

I and Arch H. went out and witnessed the Catholic service today. Although I have had frequently repeated opportunities of attending their church, this is the first time I ever availed myself of any of them. It is quite an exhibition to one who is a stranger to it, and I must confess bears very much the semblance of mockery to the worship of the true and living God. Though I would by no means declare them impious or hypocritical, as there is that in their general attitude and mien which is the picture of devotion and intensity.

Well now my dear, I reckon you want to know when I'll be at home - this is a hard question to answer but I have just been told by Capt. B. that I shall go next which will be by the 25 June, so I want you by that time if possible to have me a conveyance of some sort at Navasota so that I may get home without walking myself to death. But I'll write you again in a few days as to the time, as I may get off earlier. So put yourself to work and see what arrangements you can make to help me on and write to me in reference to it without delay. The best way you can manage it, I think, is to get a buggy and horse (which I reckon Father will furnish or help you get) and send it by Mr. Cotten to Navasota, then he will find Jim Cyrus who will make some arrangement to keep it till I come up. The reason, I prefer a buggy is that Oliver will come up with me and I may want to bring up some things not portable on horseback.

You can say to Mr. B. I cannot do anything now toward the regular discharge of his negro, as he is not in the City. The Military authorities have seized Irvin B's boy Wat. He was one of the (Bonner) negroes who first ran away from here. Tell Riney Reuben is doing finely and I understand is so well appreciated here that he has secured a French Negress for a wife. Whether or not he is yet blessed with a "petit polles vous francois" heir I do not know. I do not think he cares much about going home.

One of our company is at the hospital here very sick - His recovery is doubtful. His name is Danl McNeal. I heard this morning he was a little better, and I hope the poor fellow may get well. Oh my Darling, you have no idea how distressing and hard a thing it is to be sick in camp, away from those who love and watch us tenderly. During my sickness, I felt that if I could have you with me even but for an hour, I would willingly give the world.

May 29th, 1864 (Contd)

Capt. B. is trying to get a leave of absence but as he is Judge Advocate of the Court Martial and in command of the regiment, it is doubtful when he will get off. I saw Jim Kirksey the other day. He is in fine health and looks as proud and gay as ever. He is on the gunboat Brazos City.

It does look as if our recent brilliant succession of victories on our lines must exert a powerful effect on the duration and termination of the war. The soldiers are all jubilant and confidently (most of them) expect to be at home for good in at least another twelve months. When I look that far in the future, it seems a long, long time to be away from my dear Carrie and Children but yet my heart would leap for joy did I know that even then it is certain that the war will be at an end.

The telegraphic wires commenced yesterday to send us, what it said was glowing news from Va. and Europe but before a single item got through the wires broke and so we did not get the news. I hope it is something good.

I saw Thos. Compton Sndy and Sister in law at the Church today. Tom goes back to Houston next Thursday.

Mud Island

July 24th, 1864

My darling,

I have just time this morning to say to you, I have arrived safely in camp, finding all the boys well. The command moved to this point two or three days ago. I am already anxious to be with you and when I think of the long, long time that must intervene before that pleasure will be mine, I feel sad. I hope our little ones are improving. Give them all my best love and a kiss. Be certain and send my hat by Mr. Jackson. Mc is well. Write soon soon and often. Continue to direct your letters to Galveston. God Bless and defend you and the little ones is the prayer of your own devoted,

Tom.

Mud Island July 25th 1864.

My Dear Carrie,

I sent you a very short note the other morning, announcing my safe arrival in camp and as the mail will leave tomorrow I'll write you more fully.

The command preceded me two days to this place. Luckily, on my arrival at Galveston I found a waggon harnessed and ready to embark for this camp, which we jumped into and took "a ride". This is an "out of the way" little Island between Galveston City and Velasco, some thirty miles distant from each place. It is strongly fortified, and for what purpose, I cannot imagine unless it be for the protection of blockade runners as I am satisfied its occupation by the enemy could result in no evil to us.

I am sorry to say, our regiment the evening when it left Galveston forcibly entered several stores and abstracted therefrom as many of "the good things of life" as they deemed suited to camp life. They only entered such houses as were conducted by "jewish gentlemen" who have never turned their hands over in aid of the cause, and who doubtless had they an opportunity would willingly embrace & espouse "the yankee scheme". Soldiers, as bad as they are reported to be, rarely if ever outrage any who treat them properly. The community as a general thing every where regard them as roudies, failing to treat them as gentlemen, which as a matter of course arouses a better feeling of indignation, and they are ever ready upon the slightest pretext to apply such remedies as they deem wholesome.

You need not, I know, be told that I am very anxious to hear from you and the little ones, and I trust you'll write as often as practical. Tell little Kate I'd like so much to be at home to give her water out of "the dour" at night. Remember me to Arthur, Willie & May and tell them Pa says they must be good children. I am already home-sick and would give almost all I possess for the privilege of being at home 6 or 8 months with my darling. Kiss the little ones for me. May God guard & defend you and them, I pray.

Mc. is well and was quite disappointed at not getting a letter. Did you send him any socks by me? If you did, they are "non est invectus". My saddle bags were not opened till I got here. Be sure and send my hat by the first opportunity as the "fancy one" did not stand the trip very well. Again I invoke heaven's choicest blessings on you and the little ones and for the present to my darling one Good bye -

Your own Tom.



Sunday Evening  
Mud Island July 31st 1864



My Darling Wife.

I will not, by a kind & merciful Being, I feel assured, be held as having committed any sin on account of spending this evening for your benefit, and sincerely trust that no greater crime against "the decalogue" may ever be imputed to me.

My recent home visit has, in not the smallest degree, diminished my anxiety to be constantly with you. In fact, I don't know but what I miss you more than ever and am always involving "the fates" to "turn something up" that will send me speedily and permanently to you. But how long this painful, unhappy absence is to be endured I have no means of telling, and can therefore but resign myself to the gentle wooings of hope till the blessed period arrives.

My nature is not, I know, demonstrative and "fussy" yet I believe no one ever lived who loved wife and little ones with a deeper, holier and more real affection than I do. But our "courting days" and "love-making" are long since over, so what need of my talking so.

Mr. Brown arrived yesterday. He was detained several days in Galveston for want of transportation. I was a little disappointed in not getting a letter by him. I was so much in hopes I would hear that you and the children were steadily progressing towards good health. I have had many anxious apprehensions in reference to little Kate and shall continue to be annoyed by them till I hear from you. While at home I could watch and see the tendency and progress of her disease and therefore my mind was at ease. As soon as I left I began to entertain fears something wrong might occur.

I have had a very severe cold ever since I've been in Camp but am much better to day. This is the most disagreeable camp I ever saw. Cut off and isolated from the rest of the world, flooded with rain every night, besieged by mosquitoes and Sand-crabs, to say nothing of the thousand and one other inconveniences. Our wood and water is boated from the City of Galveston, 30 miles. Had Robinson Crusoe been drifted to these shores, I think it quite likely the world had never known his history. We are completely surrounded by water and a Yankee gunboat about three miles to our front.

Tell Mary Ann Jim Blackmon was recently heard from. He was at Johnson's Island and doing well. Mc. is well. Give my love and a sweet kiss to each one of the children.

I pray fervently that God will bless you and them. And now my darling, for the present adieu. Write woon and often to your own devoted,

Tom.

Fort Randall Mud Island

Augt. \_\_ 1864

My Darling One,

Though but a day or two has elapsed since I wrote you, I cannot permit this favorable opportunity to pass without availing myself of it. I have had but one letter from you since my return to camp and I assure you I am growing quite anxious for a line! The mail failed to come in yesterday. We look for it to day some time and how happy I'll be if I get a letter from you containing the glad tidings that you and "ours" are well. If this war continues much longer, I am fearful I will grow as foolish as a love sick swain and as demonstrative as the young husband on his honeymoon, but what matters, if it gives us enjoyment.

Last night was very disagreeable. It rained heavily and drenched us all "from head to foot".

Jackson and Burleson have not yet arrived. We are fearful sickness or something serious is detaining them. Doct. Blackmon went up to Galveston a few days ago to get a furlough, if possible, by substituting his son Walter. When he returns, I shall make an effort to get home and you need not be surprised, if I am with you by 1st Oct<sup>r</sup> or middle of Nov<sup>r</sup>, though I want you to keep this design entirely to yourself.

This is one of the most lonely and uninviting spots on the face of God's green earth. Yet as "the military" seem to regard its occupation as essential to the protection of our "line and base" we should resign ourselves calmly and endeavor to keep up that equanimity of temper and jollity of spirits which chases away gloom and despondency. I am told, I do not know myself, that I am quite popular in the Regt. as Surgeon. This position is hard to fill satisfactorily to the men and the only course to pursue is to go along the even of your way, looking neither to the left nor the right.

Remember me affectionately to the children. Tell them I want to see them very much. Now my darling let me beg you to write often. May God shower upon you and the little ones the choicest blessings of heaven, defending and shielding you from all danger and harm. For the present I must say "Good bye" to my dear Carrie, not, however, uncircled with the wish, that it may soon be permissible to greet each other by the warm hand-pressure and sweet, sacred kiss of a genuine and never dying Love. God Bless you. Let me hear from you soon.

Your own devoted Tom.

Fort Randall Mud Island,  
August 28th, 1864

My Darling Carrie,

Since I last wrote to you I have had the pleasure of receiving your dear favor of the 6th by Mr. Burleson, The mail will be in sometime during the evening and I confidently expect another letter from you. I am very sorry indeed, to hear of Doct. Wilson's strange conduct. I had frequently congratulated myself on your nearness to a good and reliable physician. The ways of men are mysterious and past finding out. If any of you get much sick you had probably better call in Dr. Anderson. But about this you can exercise your own good sense.

The reason I asked you if Mc had any socks with my clothing, was because he insisted he must have. He is badly in need of some. I have proffered a division with him. The candle moulds and pins sent for by your sister I could not get. I thought I wrote to you about them. If when Doct. Blackmon returns he can bring them, you had better send my woolen undershirts and a winter vest. I sent the ring I had made for you and very sorry there was not enough to make one also for sweet little May. If you will send me a piece of guttapercha, I'll have one made for her. Gutta Percha in camp is almost worth its weight in gold.

As to whether Capt. Bradley's Co. was engaged in the "Heidenhammer Tobacco raid" I can tell you nothing of my own knowledge as on the night it occurred I was in Navasota. I think however, it was representated but by none with whom you are acquainted. Genl Hawes has issued an order holding the commissioned officers present for duty responsible for the damage done. They have remonstrated against the act and say that if persisted in they will resign. How it will terminate I cannot tell.

The mail has arrived but no letter for me. I have just heard from Oliver - he is no better. I am fearful he will die. Mud Island is dull. The mosquitoes are again tormenting us very much. We have a good deal of sickness in the command; none, however, of a serious character. Give my love and a sweet kiss to the little ones. When I get a letter from you I'll write a longer letter if I can spin one out. God bless and watch over you and the little ones. Write soon to your own devoted

Tom.

Mud Island Sept. 5th 1864

My Darling Carrie,

With grateful heart I announce the safe arrival by yesterday's mail, of your very interesting and dearly-prized favor of 25th Ult. I feel that we have great cause to lift our hearts in praise to the "Almighty Throne" for the kind and protecting providences vouchsafed unto our house during a season of distress, sickness and death.

The intelligence of so much sickness in our county, you may be sure, arouses our anxiety and whenever we hear that death has claimed a victim, particularly in the family of the absent husband or Father who is boldly battling in his country's cause, a feeling of gloom and sympathy asserts itself despite our best directed efforts to suppress them.

We have had during the past month, a good deal of sickness in our command - very little, however, of a serious or fatal character. Before this, you have I presume heard of Oliver's death. He died at the hospital in Galveston on the 27th of August. When I transferred him there I knew chances for his recovery were rather against him, but at the time felt absolutely certain to retain him here where he was exposed and where we had not proper remedies for his complaint - Death would inevitably ensue. My only regret is that I did not send him off earlier, though I hardly think it would have made any difference in the result of his disease.

Arch Huckaby is very much disturbed about "home affairs", having had no letter since the 5th of last month. He bears a cross of this sort with as little patience and fortitude as anyone I ever knew. But to own up seriously and truthfully, "Camp is rather a bad stage for the delineation and display of those virtues and characteristics which make the sum total of the Philosopher. No philosophy or strength of mind is sufficiently powerful to control solicitude or uneasiness occasioned by absence from "loved ones" from whom we do not hear, and right here, my dear, you see a strong reason impelling you to write frequently - this is why I write so often, even at the risk of annoying you with "trash." - I have had no particular reason to complain of not getting letters since my return, though, I think, you had as well write every seven instead of every ten days.

When Dr. Blackmon went up I sent the ring I had made for you and hope it may suit to a T. I was very sorry there was not enough of the material to make one also for May. A friend presented me with a nice little one the other day, which I'll send. I fear, however, it is too small.

It is the intention, I think, in a short time to detail a man from each company to go home to collect winter clothing. So if you intend to send me any thing you had better have them ready. I don't know that I will need any thing but an overcoat and vest & probably a pair or two of socks. My old black overshirt and the woolen undershirts already on hand will be sufficient in that line.

How is your tobacco crop turning out? Well enough I hope to send me some soon. It is quite likely that as soon as Dr. Blackmon returns I may come home. This I have already intimated to you.

Sept. 5th 1864 (Contd)

I put on my boots for the first time this morning. They are quite comfortable and very generally admired.

I am sorry to hear that Dr. Jim has returned home in such bad health and sincerely trust his future will not be as gloomy as his friends imagine.

Tell Arthur he must cure himself of that "pain in the stomach". This, I know to be quite common with boys of his age about school time. How is Willie? Has he broken any more watermelons? Is he as fat as ever? I am very glad that May and Kate are improving so. Tell May she must be certain to learn "that song" by the time I get home as I shall insist on her singing it. I hope there has been an improvement in Kate's temper corresponding with that of her health.

A rumor has reached camp this evening to the effect that yellow fever is raging in Galveston City. I am fearful it is true. If so many a poor soldier will go to his \_\_\_\_\_ home. I am very fearful it will extend this far, as we derive all our supplies etc from Galveston.

I am very fearful the punishment inflicted on the amorous (word?) "colored population" in Freestone is not sufficiently severe to atone for the crime they commit. Every one of them, as soon as proper testimony could be procured, should be immediately hung or burnt. I look upon this as one of the most hienous crimes that can be perpetrated.

Since the foregoing was written I have been through the command and find considerable excitement exists in reference to the yellow fever report.- Charlie and Walter are both on the sick list - though neither of them sick much. They are both able to devour their rations.

Taz Watson is very much distressed on account of his brother's death. Mc is well and grumbling because he does not get letters. You must remember me kindly to the little ones and give them each a kiss for me. May God bless and protect you I pray. Goodbye darling till next time. Write soon

to your own devoted, Tom.



Fort Randall Sept. 12th 1864

My Dear Carrie,

Your "short but very sweet" and interesting favor of the 31st August has just come to hand and though but few days have elapsed since I wrote to you, I cannot in justice to feeling and inclination await the departure of another mail.

I need not tell you that I am sorry to hear of your cough and feverish disposition and that I hope by this time your health is restored. For a morbid condition such as you describe, small portions of Ipecac and calomel in combination make an excellent antidote, and though I wish it may not become necessary for you to resort to them, yet I would advise that you do so, in the event you are not better.

It is truly distressing to hear of the vast amount of sickness now prevailing in every part of the country. I think it attributable to the excessive amount of rain that fell some time back, succeeded by extreme heat. I informed you in my last, that yellow fever was reported to exist in Galveston City. For some days our camp was "a blaze" of excitement in reference to it and even yet the fears of many predominate. Latest reliable accounts deny its prevalence as an epidemic but admit that a few sporadic cases have occurred. My opinion at this distance is, that it is nothing more than the same malignant form of congestive fever that is prevailing in the "up" country. The best accounts represent it as wanting in some of the essential elements of yellow fever and hence I arrive at the above conclusion.

The only thing at all pleasant in association with our present position is the mild and gentle breeze from the Sea which keeps the atmosphere temperate and equable. From eight to ten o'clock is the warmest part of the day here. About ten a breeze springs up and continues for six or eight hours. The nights would be pleasant indeed but for the swarm of mosquitoes always buzzing and singing around. We fortify against them by smoke, which until we get to sleep, is as annoying (at least to me) as the mosquitoes. They bit me awfully last night. How much longer we will remain here I cannot tell.

We received an order yesterday to send fifty of the command to Galveston for duty. They went up on steamboat this morning. None from our company was among the number. Capt. Bradley is in command of this post, being the ranking officer present. Our Lt. Col. is absent on court martial, our Major under arrest for disrespect to Genl. Hawes, and Col. Timmons absent sick. At one time we thought the latter was dead. Capt. B. received a letter from him the other day - he has recovered and in a few days we expect his "Military form" to grace the camp.

I have received the appointment of Surgeon and as soon as Doct. Blackmon returns, expect to be ordered before the board for examination, when, as I before wrote you, I shall make a most desperate effort to visit you and the "little ones". I think I shall be successful as I have, what is generally deemed, a good ground for leave of absence. I have no idea you possibly can want to see me half as bad as I do you.

Sept. 12th 1864 (Contd)

I sometimes think I am "right foolish" for a man of my age, but then if it be weakness to love my darling wife and keep her ever present in mind and thought, I am willing to bear the odium of such a reproach. The thought that sooner or later this cruel war will end and we be restored to each other's companionship is an elixir, of which, I would not, for the world, be deprived.

The Hospital Steward, whom I have had in the office all the time since I've been here, was reduced to the ranks a few days ago. He was a good druggist and punctual in his business. I think he was unjustly dealt with. I have now a young man with me from Leon Co., who promises to become quite efficient and handy. I thought he was a mere boy but he tells me this morning, that he is a married man, and so I hope "Oh, fellow feelings" will make him "wondrous kind". Gid Walker wanted the position very much but as he was not thought suitable for it failed to get it.

By the way, while I think of it, I heard yesterday from a Gentleman from Leon Co. that Mrs. John's was married again, several months ago.

Tell Mr. Bonner if he needs the money I borrowed from him to let me know without any sort of hesitation as I can make arrangements to pay him without any serious inconvenience. If I do come home soon and the board does not behead me, I shall want to bring a horse with me on my return and therefore if you do not want him, get Mr. B. to fatten "old gray" and make the best trade he can for me. A good pony would suit me better than anything else. One that can live on grass and nothing, if necessary, is preferred.

Having just dined heartily (on "Stewed beef and corn "flitter") with a small piece of "Ginger" bread for dessert I resume my pen and hope you have had a better dinner with a good appetite.

In reference to going home to live next year I want you to use your own discretion and choice. Like you, I do not think it "too well", to rely altogether upon the generosity and kindness of friends and relatives. If you conclude to go, get Father and Mr. B. to find out what repairs are necessary and have them made. My understanding was Cantelon was to have the house covered and the fence thoroughly repaired. You should let Father know so as he will not rent the place out.

I am not willing to take \$20. per month for it any longer than til January and also if you do not return I am not anxious for it to be rented.

Did you get the ring I sent you by Doct. Blackmon? Tell May I sent her a little black one in my last letter but am fearful I'll not be able to get her the horse and dog. I am so glad to hear of Kate's continued improvement. How are Masters Arthur and Willie? You must remember me affectionately to each one of them. My paper is about exhausted and I'll have to stop, though I feel like saying something. I know not what, that is yet unsaid. May God Bless my Darling Wife and our dear little children. Write soon and often to -

Your own devoted Tom.

Mc is well and still quarreling at not getting more letters. My respects to the family of Bonner's generally.

Continue to direct your letters to Co. A, as I have not changed my mess.

Fort Randall Sept 23rd 1864

My Darling Wife,

I know I cannot employ the leisure hour I have this morning more innocently and at the same time agreeably, than in writing to you. I am truly thankful that my health continues good.

In looking over my diary, among other things written on the 21st, I find the following: "Two mails have come and gone and yet no letter from my darling Carrie since the 31st Ult. I will not wrong her by harboring even for a moment the thought that the fault is at her door, for as unworthy as I may be of favorable consideration from her, the sacred and holy feelings of her nature invest her with the noblest attributes of Woman and the fondest affections of a wife.

I was not alone among the disappointed. I have the sympathy and association of Co. A entire. And then there is my poor friend Arch H. who has not had a line since the 3rd Aug. The poor fellow takes it quite hard and accounts for it in various manners.

The patriot who on the tented field gallantly braves danger, disease and death for his country's cause and his country's good, never loses sight of his "girls" at home and when it so happens that his line of communication is interrupted, confusion and discontent similar to that which insues upon the successful execution of a "flank movement" by a wily General, invariably arises.

I endeavor to relieve the tedium and dullness of Camp Life by reading, playing at drafts, and in conversation. As the latter in camps is too generally on light and trivial subjects, and they not infrequently course and unchaste, I spend but little time in it. As for "drafts", I manage most generally to blunder and hurry to secure my own defeat and consequently it is a game of but little interest and fascination to me.

I find more real solid and beneficial enjoyment in the examination and study of my profession and if I am careful of my time, I doubt not, I'll return home much better "posted" in medicine than when I left. The physician above all men should be liberal in his mind and education. Thrown in all kinds of society and all sorts of circumstances, unless he be a man of great native strength of mind, supported by order and discipline of cultivation, he will find it impossible to adapt himself to his protean sphere."

And now My Dear, just here I must record that another large mail came in this morning, without bringing "a Sweet Line" from you. Walter received a letter of the 15th Inst., in which his Pa was good enough to inform me, "All Mine" be well. This is, of course, consoling but is not altogether sufficient to relieve my disappointment. I had rather receive one kind, affectionate line from My Carrie than all the messages that could be penned between now and "dooms day".

You may think I indulge in extravagant and passionate language such as suits the years of "the whining school boy" or the indiscretion and ardor of the "love-sick swain", but could you penetrate the impish recipes of my soul and heart, you would there read an affection and love for "darling wife and dear children" as lasting as eternity and as pure as heaven. God speed the day when families now disjointed will be reunited.



Sept. 23rd 1864 (Contd)

How much longer this cruel war will continue, God only knows. The South has gone too far to give up at any thing shorter than utter extermination. If I read aright, "the signs of times", a manifest and decided reaction is going on in our favor in the enemy's own border. My opinion is, the election of Gen'l McClellan will culminate in the settlement of difficulties by the 4th of July next, and basis honorable to the South.

Some, however, think not - and would prefer the success of the greatest enemy to humanity and basest tyrant, who ever lived, Abe Lincoln. The election of Lincoln on the other hand, would, I am satisfied, result in the division and rupture of northern feeling and sentiment to such an extent as would bring about a conflict, or rebellion in "Yankee Land". So taking either horn of the dilemma, I think there is much reason for hope and joy.

As I have before stated, so I now declare, as my opinion, that the South can never be subjugated, and that this is a fact, which is every day becoming apparent to our enemy.

But alas! Millions yet unborn will feel the horrors, cruelties and evils of this dreadful war and I have not the least doubt but its wicked authors and tyrannical wagers will yet be made to feel the inhumanity and woe they have so lavishly meted out to others. God, in his own good time and way, will punish their offending. While it continues our way and duty is plain, with a firm reliance in God and the justices of our cause, let us bear with becoming resignations, the privations and afflictions that may befall us.

We have nothing recent from the Sect. of War with us. Gen. Walker has assumed command of this department.



Fort Randall Sept. 29th 1864

My Darling Wife,

This morning I was made the happy recipient of your esteemed favor of the 11th Inst. which in spite of its age was much welcomed.

Upon arrival at Houston, Mr. Awalt was ordered back into the interior in consequence of the general prevalence of yellow fever, and hence the delay. The accounts from Galveston this morning are truly alarming. Citizens and soldiers are dying at a rapid rate. Mr. Warren Chandler of Capt. Bradley's Co., who was at Galveston with the wagon train, died day before yesterday with it. I think he lived in Leon Co. and had a wife and several children. Capt. Wickland, one of the last officers in the command, died in Galveston on the 26th. He was a German.

We have had but one case of it here as yet. He died this morning (and has just been buried). So soon as I found he had it, I had him removed from the camp. He caught the disease at the Galveston Hospital. I attended him throughout, but do not feel at all, as I was always being cautious when I went where he was. He also was a German. I think there is very little danger of its spreading here. Though God only knows and to him we must look for immunity and protection. The weather is as unfavorable as it possibly can be. It rains almost every day and immediately after turns hot and warm.

I am sorry to hear of your "headaches and cough" and hope they did not long last you. I am somewhat surprised that Doct. B. has not delivered the ring I sent you. He surely will do so.

Quite a discussion is now going on in reference to the war, its prospects, etc. Many sage and philosophical opinions are expressed, all of which are as "muchly wasted as desert air".

The parcels sent I and Mc by Mr. Awalt have not arrived. He had no way of sending them. We will not get them in a month if that soon.

On the 23rd and 24th I wrote you a long letter, which I hope you received in due time. Arch Huckaby got a letter (of the 17th) this morning. It contained news of sickness at home and has rendered Arch more than usually melancholy.

The health of our command is good and I pray God the pestilence now desolating Galveston may make no further invade on us. If, however, it comes, I suppose the only honorable course left us, is, to breast it like men of valor and determination. Man cannot successfully run from death for the fiat has gone forth from the eternal throne, that sooner or later it will overtake us all. As I before remarked, I have but little apprehension that it will rage here. We have the place under as strict a quarantine as the nature of circumstances will admit of, and hope by so doing we have affected much good.

It is now thundering heavily in the West and I am fearful before night, we will have another hard rain.

I received a letter of the 18th this morning from Julia. She promises in future to be quite punctual. To this I hope she will adhere as her letters are quite interesting and readable. She gives a gladdening, poetic description of little Miss Bradley No. 2. I understand she bears the poetical name Lucia, in honor, I suppose, of her distinguished Paternity.

I have already informed you that yellow fever has been officially announced in Galveston City. It is said to be raging furiously, many having died from it. I am told the ladies, as, however, they generally do, are nobly standing up to their duty, waiting on and administering to the sick and suffering, in every manner possible.

There are fifty of our Regt. (acclimated men) on duty in the City. This morning, I hear, that two of them have the fever. Our command is very uneasy account of its proximity to us, and I have no doubt whatever, if it breaks out among us but what there will be a general "stampede." We have the place as strictly "quarantined" as the nature of things will allow. Yesterday we received intelligence that it had made its appearance in Houston. All furloughs, details, etc., have been stopped till "the epidemic" is over.

So you see, it is very doubtful whether I'll be at home as soon as I had reason to expect a little while back. If we are not moved from the State you may calculate pretty safely on spending the Christmas with me. So you must "hoard up" a lot of good things and prepare to entertain me with your "best foot foremost"

I do not think there is any probability of our removal from here before winter. All things considered, we prefer remaining till that time. We have had a shower here every day for a week past. The health of our command is very good.

Mc Bonner is "vitiating" by by degrees. I am sorry to tell you this and of course, I do not want you to mention it to his father and mother as they will likely mention it to him and thus secure for me his hatred or dislike. He very seldom comes about me and when he does approach me, it is in a distant and formal manner. I do not know why it is. I have never lectured or spoken at all horribly to him. I would not write you this, if I did not know you would keep it, as I have asked you to do.

Now, my dear, as I have written you a long letter you must excuse me for this time and do, please, be certain to write at least once (if not oftener) a week. It is a bad plan, I think, to send your letters to Dr. B's for mail - For no doubt they sometimes remain there several days before going to the office. Find out what days the mail leaves for this direction and write and mail them accordingly.

You must give my love and a sweet kiss to the babies. May God Bless and watch over you and them is my frequent invocation to his \_\_\_\_\_. Till next time I must now say to my darling wife, "Good bye". Write soon to your own  
devoted -

Tom

Sept. 29th 1864 (Contd)

Our command is almost destitute of Medicine. We are daily looking for a supply.

Maj. Genl. Walker has moved his headquarters to Anderson in Grimes Co. He is very precious of his own carcass but cares, I imagine, but little what becomes of the common soldiers, having taken no steps to remove them from the malignant miasma.

By the next mail I shall look for another one of your dear letters. You must remember me affectionately to the little ones and be sure and give each of them a sweet kiss for me.

I shall write again in a few days. Till then "Goodbye". God bless my Darling Carrie and Dear Little Ones.

Write soon and often to your ever -

Devoted, Tom.

Sept. 30th

Learning that if I sent my letter to the office yesterday, it would not get off any sooner than if I kept a day longer, I thought I would retain it and add anything of interest that might occur.

It rained heavily again last night and this morning we had another as hard rain of two hours duration as I ever saw fall. The whole surface is one vast sheet of water, and indications now are we will have more rain before night. Oh, how I long to see a big moon burst forth its appearance, so the pestilence isolating Galveston would give way. I have already written to you that all furloughs, details, etc. have been stopped by Gen. Walker's order till the disappearance of the epidemic which, judging from what usually occurs, will be the middle of Novr and perhaps some later. I hope the prayers that ascend daily to an all-wise throne for its removal may be speedily and effectually answered. If the "Yanks" could have Galveston a little while now, they would soon learn something of Southern disease. But I've no doubt it is extensively prevalent in New Orleans.

I got a letter from Jess Awalt the day I did yours. He had been ordered by Gen. Walker to report for duty in Austin Co. at Bellville. You can say to Mc's folks he is doing finely - is as fat as a pig and always grumbling at not getting letters from home.

What have you concluded to do about living next year. As I before wrote to you, I want you to consult your own feelings. I am very much afraid by too great an intimacy we may destroy all the Bonner friendship. If you do stay there, I think you had get Steward and Ellen and let Mr. B. have them to put in the field. They and Big Ellen would, I reckon, pay your board. It is no little thing these times to provide for a family.

I have just learned that the cars only run twice a week now between Houston and Galveston. And hence our mail matter is liable to meet with a longer delay.

Sept. 30th (Contd)

One of Capt. Bradley's Co. (J. W. Dunagen), a nephew of Mrs. Stubbs, deserted two nights ago. He was in the guard house for some misconduct. He is but a boy but is completely ruined and I am afraid will come to some bad end.

Why do you not Physic yourself for the headache and cough? A dose of morphine and Carb amonia (Sp?) in combination will relieve your head and a little Hire Syrup several times a day will cure the cough, I reckon.

Tell May when I come home, I'll try and make her a little rocking chair.

God bless you and the Babies and speedily hasten the time when we may meet to enjoy each other's companionship. -

Tom.

Fort Randall, Texas, Oct. 10th, 1864

My Darling Wife,

About two hours after I had finished and mailed my last letter, (of the 5th inst.) I was very unexpectedly presented with your letters of the 19th and 25th of Sept., also one from Judge Walker. We were not expecting the "mail carrier" till the following day. The surprise was highly agreeable and could such happen more frequently I would be glad.

Your declaration that my letters are such treasures of interest and gladness is, as you may know from similar situation, highly pleasing. When one knows his communications are not annoying but on the contrary give satisfaction and delight to the One he loves most of all on Earth, he too feels a pleasure in the thought they have been written, and every time he engages in such a work feels an inward conscientiousness of being employed not only in the discharge of a most sacred duty but that he is also contributing to the happiness of a fine and dear companion.

My letters cannot possibly be more dear to you than are yours to me. It is rare they escape a dozen readings. The camp is so dull and monotonous as to render it quite a task to frame a letter anything like systematic and readable but then when writing to you I "pen away", knowing that "affection doth cover a multitude of sins", and believing you not disposed to criticise a "well-meant" effort.

I did not know I had made myself indictable on the ground of short letters. On the contrary I sometimes feared you would grow weary of their length and be tempted to request a greater condensation and more concise form of composition. It is impossible, however, always to be "long and lengthy" without being dry and uninteresting, therefore when you get a short letter, do not pout, but keep your sweet, cherry little lips in proper position. When you suppose I have not much to do, you greatly err.

The medical charge of four hundred men is no easy berth, to say nothing of the reports, communications, requisitions, etc, etc, which my official position compels me to make from day to day and they are in exact form, if one does not wish them returned with a reprimand. "The military" are quite particular and fastidious in all they do: There is a form for everything which must be closely followed; they even go down to miniscule and require a certain fold for a communication, which if not observed, is never read or examined, it matters not however important its subject matter may be.

I am now Surgeon of the Rgt. My appointment dates from August 1st. I have the rank and pay of Major, so you see, I am getting quite up in "the picture."

I presume Billy Moore did not leave home as soon as you contemplated, as the letter mailed by him was mailed at Fairfield. Through a letter to Billy Sneed, received yesterday, I heard that Mrs. Moore was about to die. I was sorry to hear it, but it is a road we must all travel sooner or later.

I have heard nothing of "shirts and tobacco" except what you mention in your letter. When Awalt was stopped at Hempstead he wrote to me he had a bundle for myself and some others of Capt B's Co., but had no way of getting them to us. So we will not get them till he comes down, which will not be sooner than next month. I can, I think, do very well this winter without those pretty red flannel shirts. You are therefore at liberty, if there is any use to which your inventive mind can turn them, to appropriate them. As to the



October 10th, 1864 (Contd)

overcoat you and Min had better make your own trades. I shall need 'em badly and would not object to having it around me today. I have during the past night or two slept quite coolly.

If Doct. B. gets back, by the 20th next month, which will be the last day he will have, I am almost positively certain I'll be with you Christmas. He cannot get the detail he is thinking of, upon the heel of such a leave of absence as he has had. He need not think of it. Many of the boys laugh at him very much, as when he first came out he seriously declared his willingness and intention to remain away from home till the close of the war. He has already shown himself quite an adept in laying plans and schemes by which to get home. The reason I cannot get home till his return is that the regiment would be left without any physician at all. I'll get him to take my place while absent. He surely will be good enough to do so. Soldiers are very dependent beings, all of them having masters at whose "beck and nod" they must be obedient. It is well this 'tis so, for without discipline an army is powerless for good and mighty for evil.

When young, I remember having often heard it said, "Such a boy is wild and reckless, : He ought to be put in the army. That will straighten him," Could such doctors have a little experience in the army themselves, I am satisfied they would change their prescriptions, for of all places and positions, the army is most fatal and destructive to the morals and integrity of the young. It requires very great moral courage and fortitude to resist camp vitiation.

Since I wrote to you of Mac's bad behavior, I have given him a good lecture, which I am glad to say, seems to have exercised a good and salutary influence. Naturally he is not disposed to "rowdyism" but on the contrary quite moral and firm in habit; though not altogether proof against "evil communications". In future I am satisfied he will be more guarded. Again I must request you to keep this from his Ma and Pa.

I am sorry to hear that you continue to be annoyed by cough. Did you take the medicine prescribed? Have you any other ailment associated with it?

Soldiers' wives in Freestone are so rapidly learning their "multiplication tables" I could not determine whether you were advancing in another line of it or not. If so "the milk in the cocoa nut" is accounted for. Excuse these allusions, if you please, my dear.

Just at this juncture of my letter I received notification from the Commanding Officer of the Rgt. that there was a gentleman at headquarters who desired to see me immediately. Upon my arrival at the designated place I was presented by Capt. Bradley to a nice, elderly, fine looking gentleman, Doct. Cope, from New Orleans, who received me in a most courteous and friendly manner. He soon informed me he was Medical Director of Hospitals and had visited our "Island" professionally. I soon exhibited everything in my department. He then inspected closely the quarters and works. After getting through, the old gentleman flattered me very highly on the general sanitary regulations of the post. He promised to use every exertion in his power to procure necessary supplies and articles to render the garrison comfortable and secure from disease the coming winter. He has, I think, a right appreciation of his duties and responsibilities, and for the poor and suffering soldier he has a regard and sympathy which often exhibited itself, even in the short time I was with him, in the most tender and expressive manner.



October 10th, 1864 (Contd)

Another "norther" blew up on Saturday the 8th Inst. and today the atmosphere is quite cool. We have had no frost yet. It is generally a week or two later down here than up in your country. I think we will have an early winter. I hope so at least. Many of the men are preparing to resist the inclemency of the coming winter. They are making "sod houses". You would not only be surprised but glad to see how nice and comfortable they can make. Mc Bonner, Gid Walker, and "Mess" are hard at work. I hope when it is fixed, they will be permitted to enjoy the fruit of their labor during the winter. You have no idea how much nice little work is done in camp. We have comb, hat, ring and other manufacturing in abundance and some nice work, I assure you, is turned off. It has now been eleven or twelve days since the yellow fever case died in camp and as yet we have no reason to fear that any of its poison was left among us. I have not heard from Galveston in several days and cannot tell how the fever is there.

A short time since, I had a conversation with a clever and intelligent gentleman of this command, who returned some month ago from his home in Fort Bend Co., near Richmond, and who informed me that the distinguished musician who performed so successfully on Mrs. Gardner's piano was now in that County, going under the name of Major Godat and that he had recently married a very nice and wealthy widow lady (of high family) in that County. The rascal ought to be hung as high Hamam. How destroyers of the peace and virtue of society can be tolerated by the good and true is a mystery to me.

I learned yesterday that Cy. McRae, who at one time clerked in Byro's store near you, is among the victims of yellow fever at Galveston. He was Col. Elmore's "orderly" and was, I think, highly esteemed. I do not wish you to speak of the "Godat item" as I do not know it to be true. It is best, you know, never to circulate such pieces of scandal upon presumption or negative testimony.

How is Arthur doing at school? What sort of a boy does Mr. Campbell say he is? And how does he like Mr. C. and the boys generally? When he is the least unwell, I would by all means keep him at home. He is plenty young yet to lose a good deal of time.

Has Willie any literary aspirations? I am quite sorry Miss May's ring was not larger but it was the very best I could do. If I had a piece of material I would get another made and let Kate take the one she has. Tell May I am fearful she will have to wait some time for her rocking chair, but that if she is a good smart little girl she shall have one as soon as I can get it for her. Assure Kate of a certainty of my redressing all her wrongs at the first opportunity. Give them all my love and a sweet kiss. How are you off in the comb line? If you need anything of the sort I can get some very nice horn ones in the Regiment quite cheap. We are getting almost as ingenius as "the Yanks" and have always been far more honest.

In my last letter I wrote to you of the death of Mr. Warren Chandler of Capt. Bradley's Co. At that time I was under the impression he was a married man, but he was not.

Your letter contained the first news Ed. Burlison had of the death of his daughter. The poor fellow was much distressed.

October 10th, 1864 (Contd)

What have you determined on about living next year? I hope to be able to draw enough money from the Government by the time I come up Christmas (you see I speak positively about coming home) to discharge my indebtedness to Mr. Bonner.

Confederate money is very low at Houston. The gang of speculators ought all to be killed. The money is worthless in Texas, that it is among the Yankee lines. This is a sad, and unpleasant reflection. The worship of Mammon is, I fear, too common South. Until such idolatry disappears from among us, and the true worship succeeds it, I fear the interpretation from heaven in our favor will not come.

Now, my darling. let me beg you to keep up with letters to me. You must not fear of annoying me, as I assure you, the most precious treasures of camp life are golden lines of love from off the pure altar of your affectionate, womanly heart.

May God keep. protect and watch over the interests of my darling Carrie and our dear little children.

Give my respects to the family and be sure to write often to your own devoted,

Tom.

Fort Randall Sunday, Oct. 23rd/64

My Dear Darling,

As I am of opinion it will be no unpardonable invasion of the sanctity of the Sabbath, I propose to devote a portion of the day in answering your esteemed favor of the 9th Inst., received yesterday. I am sorry to hear of our family afflictions and ardently hope by this time they have been relieved. You must take the very best care of Arthur. Do not let him go to school when he is the least unwell. I have generally found the "sore eyes" more speedily relieved by keeping the bowels in a soluble condition by the occasional exhibition of Epson Salts. If in association with them there is fever, headache, furred tongue, offensive breath, and langour and lassitude, a dose of calomel comes in well, which should, if it does not act sufficiently, be followed, in six or eight hours, by the medicine first mentioned. If the eyes are very painful and sore, the diet should be strictly attended to, allowing no strong, rich or exciting food, also protecting them as much as possible from the influence of the light and wind. It is difficult even among adults to enforce proper dietetical regulations, therefore in this particular you must exercise firmness. The best "eye water" I have ever used is made in the following way, viz: Sulphate Tinc. 2 grains, Gum Camphor 3 grains, Water 1 oz, Rose Water 1/2 oz, and twenty or twenty five drops wine of opium. If this (the wine of opium) cannot be obtained, use in lieu a \_\_\_\_\_ morphine or Sandavisus (Sp.?). To this add a small quantity of Spirit (Whiskey or Brandy) just enough to dissolve the Camphor. This is used by introducing a few drops several times per day in the eye, and in washing its vicinity gently with it. (on going to bed or before going to sleep at any time, the lids should be well smeared with fresh (containing no salt) lard or butter.

As "sore eyes" in Texas is apt, if left themselves to become chronic and troublesome, they should never be neglected. By yesterday's mail I also received an interesting letter from Julia, which I shall attend to when I get through with this. She has promised great amendment in her future conduct towards me. Charlie continually complains of neglect at home, also Mc and neither of them, I think, without show of reason. We have considerable news of favorable character in camp this morning, which I trust may be more than confirmed. I am inclined to think a good "whipping" on the eve of the election will do much towards developing "the peace feeling and sentiment" in "yankeeland". I hope the God of battles may soon smile propitiously on our cause and that the fair Goddess of peace may soon take up her eternal abode within our territory. As I have before frequently stated so I now believe, we are ultimately destined to wear the victor's wreath, but how long first, I do not pretend to say. If we are true to ourselves, God in his own good time and manner, will give us our reward. So let us hope and act for the best. I spent the day yesterday in mechanical employment and just as I was about to congratulate myself upon the completion of the nicest pipe in camp, I discovered a flaw which completely ruined it and left me regretting a whole day's labor spent to no good. Nor was this all, I cut one of my fingers badly as well as made a few incision in my hand. The camp is one vast work shop. Everything almost you can imagine is manufactured here. You would be surprised to see what comfortable quarters the boys have made for themselves out of sod. They do not ask northers much odds. Our mess has built a good "sod" chimney to our tent and you can form no idea how comfortable it makes us during a cold spell. We have had several cold "northers" this week but no frost yet. It rarely ever frosts here before November.

Oct. 23rd/64 (Contd)

This cold has, I think, been of sufficient duration and intensity to destroy the "yellow fever" poison and I have no idea it will any longer rage as epidemic. A few sporadic cases may occur. "Mud Island" has proved itself a most healthy locality, and I must confess the loathing I once had for the place is fast passing away. I hope we may be retained here till Spring. Should you fail in getting me an overcoat I do not see how I am to get along this winter. I need it worse than any thing. I think you could get the coat Min made for Capt. B. last winter. She has it at home. By taking off the cape and a few inches of the tail it would do admirably. Do the best you can and I promise to be satisfied. I see no way of etting you any \_\_\_\_\_ situated as I am. Have you abandoned the idea of coming home to live next year? If you can get the house sufficiently repaired, I don't know but what it would be best for you to come home. The rent we get for it is equivalent to nothing and I have no idea any care is exercised over it at all. If you conclude to remain where you are, I would not rent it for Confederate money at present prices nor for a longer time than 3 mos. as there is no telling but we may want it ourselves to summer. Exercise your own good sense in the matter and I'll be satisfied.

I am sorry to hear of Kate's continued badness. I had no idea she was yet nursing. That I presume is the cause of the cough you complained so much of recently. You must tell her Papa says she must eat meat and bread and quit being a Baby. Tell Willie the army is the best place for him to gratify his pugilistic or combative propensities and that he ought to be ashamed to quarrel and fight with his little cousin. I hope Arthur's like for school may become love. The little fellow by this time has, I hope, regained his health and spirits. Tell May I think when I come home I'll bring her another ring or maybe a pretty little breast pin.

I am glad to tell you Mc is steadily improving. The cause of his coldness is not attributable to the cause you imagine. My impression now is that Arch. H. accused him of liking me better than him and told him he thought he ought to Uncle him or else Doctor me, Arch has some good traits but a great many little mean selfish ones. I think he is afraid that I will some day fall heir to the whole Bonner estate. I don't think Mc likes him much and sooner than Uncle him preferred to Doctor me. Mc is well. I don't see why his Pa and Ma are so particular about my mentioning him in my letters - they never send me any word about you, at least he sayd so. If you think it will be of any advantage what don't you have a loom made? Get the lumber at Bonner's mill and Father's Alfred or John can put it together. I am glad to know you have heard from your Pa and family, but regret Jim's and Wm's illness. Is it not a pity that poor Bet Higginbotham survived her disgrace and fall. Tell Min when you see her I had an amusing dream the other night about her daughters. I thought Carter (?) was putting No. 2 through in rough style. Give the children my love and a sweet kiss. May God watch over, bless and preserve you and them. My respects to all, Charley and Mc join me in good wishes to you all. Write often to your own devoted,

Tom.

Fort Randall Nov. 11th 1864.

My Dear Darling,

Several days ago your favor of Sept. 20th came to hand, which, notwithstanding its loiter on the way, was gladly welcomed. In my last letter I informed you, I had heard from other channels of Arthur's recovery and how great a load of anxiety was lifted from my mind by the intelligence. Until I heard his disease was arrested I was almost miserable. I am sorry to hear he has "sore eyes", and that he is so severely annoyed by his appetite. Convalescents from acute diseases usually suffer very much from this plague. Both to the patient and attendant it is perplexing. I have now several in my hospital suffering from a like cause. At such of my visits they importune me for "something to eat" and by all things good and sacred, swear they are literally starving. In all things, my observation has taught me, "child-life" is but the miniature of that of the adult. My experience in the army has confirmed the notion that oftentimes "the man will act the child". I suppose just here I had as well as any where mention, I am entirely without Tobacco and situated as I am it is impossible to procure any except by begging. Of this I get heartily ashamed. You must try and get me some to "chew and smoke". I have learned how to press it and should you have any on hand suitable when I come home, I'll initiate you in the art, provided you do not object. The use of "the weed" is, I know, not only an unnice but (particularly at this time) an expensive and annoying habit, yet such is man's perversity that he will run counter to reason. Charlie is a complete "Tobacco worm" - this is a vice from which Mc is free. Speaking of Mc reminds me that yesterday he strained one of his ankles right badly. Otherwise he is enjoying perfect health.

I had the good fortune some days ago, to make quite a "lucky draw" on the Quartermaster's Department. I got 7 yards of very nice drilling, 3 yds of good, heavy blue flannel, 5 yds of Domestic suitable for drawers, and a substantial pair of heavy winter boots, all for twenty one dollars in Confederate money. The boots I did not particularly need and therefore let Arch C. Huckaby have them, as Charlie will get a pair from home. They would not fit Mc. The other articles I have on hand. I shall keep them and bring them home when I come up, so that you may turn them to whatever purpose you see proper. I could sell them at high figures but knowing the great scarcity and need of such articles I of course would not think of doing it. I have had quite a change made in the "gray coat" you ladies put up for me. I took the skirt of my "old Black" and had it well lined, so it is now very comfortable. I hope you will succeed in getting my overcoat ready in time as it even now quite unpleasant without one. But as I have before said, I am content at what you may do, well knowing you will do the very best you can.

I am rather afraid Doct. Blackmon will not succeed in getting out of the army easily. The orders on the subject of details and discharges are very stringent. I think myself he would be of more benefit at home, provided he would practice medicine. The boys generally at times are quite merry over his patriotism. Their merriment would not disturb him much if he could only remain at home. True patriotism differs very essentially from "bumcumbe and turnbout." I understand a large mail is on the opposite side of the bay from us. The boat is out order -- it is now being repaired. I hope we will get it this evening as I am anxiously expecting a favor from you.

Nov. 11th 1864 (Contd)

Recent indications lead me to believe that as soon as it is safe, we will be carried to Galveston and put, I presume, on heavy provost guard duty. I do not think that after a week or two more than one company (artillery) will be kept in this garrison. I think the "out of the way" location is of itself a sufficient defence of the "strong hold". It will take the yankees some time to find the fort even should they deem its reduction necessary for carrying out their schemes and plans. I hope "the military" know what is best to be done in the premises, and that they will go along and do it without favor or hesitation. Our command still continues in good health. My pneumonia patient is about well. I have several confined in hospital to keep them from eating too much. A great deal, in fact almost all of the Diarrhrea we have in camp is caused by imprudence in eating and hence the necessity of strict discipline. The men object to it at first but soon find out it is for their good and ultimate benefit. This, today, is the winding up of another severe cold spell. We have had no frost yet. I think this must be in consequence of the great amount of mud we have here, for it has certainly been cold enough several times. The mail boat is coming over - I shall stop till I see whether I am among the favored -- Upon opening the mail I found your treasured favor of the 23th ult. and the 8th inst.

I am sorry to hear of the continuance of your cough and trust when I come up will be able to advise something that will effect a permanent cure. I am sorry May lost her ring. You may tell her I'll have her one made of the gutta percha sent and also a pretty little red one for her and Kate. Tell Kate I am glad she has got out of her babyish ways, and that she must surely eat enough and keep well. I hardly know what I can get for Arthur and Willie - something, however, I hope. I intend to try and get a forty or fifty days "leave" this time. Capt. B. thinks I'll have no difficulty in doing it. If possible I'll get you the curds and paper. Getting the curds will be a hard job. Under the circumstances you had better, I think, let Col. Shompson have the house. I sincerely trust Doct. B. will soon make his appearance in camp, and that I may speedily get off and come to you. You have no idea how much I yearn to be with my dear, darling Carrie, and to know that she wants to see me greatly increases my anxiety. I trust this cruel, sinful war may soon terminate in Southern glory and independence. May the Good Lord bless you and our dear little ones is my earnest, fervent prayer. Give each of the children a warm kiss for me. Write soon to your own devoted

Tom.



Fort Randall Nov. 19th 1864.

My Darling Carrie,

Notwithstanding it is a damp, drizzly, cold day I feel that the fire of my heart is sufficiently intense to produce for your benefit, some living coals of esteem by which you may, if particular in the manner you approach them, experience a glow and warmth of feeling which if not thrilling, will at least prove temporarily pleasant and agreeable. I have almost come to the conclusion that in "these parts" the "clerk of the weather" has lost his balance, as twenty-four hours is almost sufficient to give us every vicissitude of weather. The health of our garrison remains unprecedented. We have but four or five on the "sick report", and they convalescent. If our troops elsewhere have as good health they are in good fighting trim, and able to give "the yanks" as much as they can stand to. Sickness is a great drawback to successful movement militarily. While I am strong in the faith, that this war will terminate in our glory and independence, I will not deny but I am quite anxious for that "blessed day" to dawn. I am heartily sick of "war and rumors of war". The one in which we are engaged is felt by all proper. Those who imagine, that are the participants, only suffer its sad consequences, "reckon without their host." We have not yet heard a word from the "yankee elections". To me it matters very little how they result, as I believe "Providence" will so order things as to insure the success of that party, whose policy will most speedily and effectually terminate in the independence and freedom of a brave, honest people who are gallantly struggling for "natural and inalienable birth-rights". It may be that you regard this latter opinion as whimsical and heterodox. In support of it, I refer you to the Bible, Nature's great book of truth, for the assurance, that God will uphold the right and just. I do not, of course, claim that the Southern people in every "particular" are up to this standard. Were this so, long ago our glory had been won. We too have vice, and impieties, for the correction and eradication of which the prolongation of this very war may be the only remedy. When Gen Lee said, "When the Southern people learn to place a less estimate upon cotton bales, negroes, land, etc., and rely more fully on Godly counsel, this war will speedily close," he uttered a great truth, which, I would could be imprinted, in golden letters, on the heart of every Southern "born." As my opinions and speculations will exercise but little influence on our future it is of no avail to indulge them, and so I turn to other matters.

A small species of the lowest villainy I ever heard of was detected a few days ago on the "courrier line" between here and Galveston. The soldiers' letters were robbed of the stamps. A man who is so base as to commit such a theft has descended to the very lowest depth of roguery and crime. For some time past I have been not only prepaying but endorsing (by frank) my letters to you. If they have been robbed it was a lucky expedient, otherwise the letters would never reach destination. I hope the villains may receive such punishment as their crime merits. These men belong to Col Pyron's regiment - the gallant 2nd Texas Cavalry, ~~XXXXXX~~ which after remaining with a short time, I found I cared not to stay with and preserve my own self respect. It is the opinion of the "wise ones" that ere long Farragut will make an attack with his "yankee fleet," on our beautiful little "Island City." It is very well fortified and I do not doubt but its garrison will make a good and effective fight. When "the ball" opens, we of Mud Island will be transferred to the scene of action.



Nov. 19th 1864 (Contd)

We have received an order announcing, that after the 1st of December "furloughs and leaves of absence" will recommence. I will, of course, put in my petition the very first day and, if granted, will be with you by Christmas. How I will manage from Navasota up I cannot tell. I will "engineer" my way as best I can. I think it quite likely Walter will accompany me. I am of opinion he is "tired" of service and would like to be, for a season, near a certain nice, little Miss Julia. Charley will come up in January. When Mc will come I can't say. Charley is now out in the country "foraging". I hope he may be successful in accumulating eating supplies, for you may be sure we are quite tired of "corn bread and beef," We have a poor way of serving it in camp.

(20th)

The weather was so very disagreeable yesterday I did not finish. It turned warm during last night, commenced raining gently & and has continued doing so, six or seven hours. A slight norther is now blowing and it would not surprise me, if the spell winds up with a snow, sleet or freeze. The "courrier" has come in without any mail, so before I am permitted to get another one of your precious letters, several days must elapse. If you could only realize what heart-felt joy they occasion me I know you would be certain to write every 4 or 5 days. Letters it is true fall far short of that satisfaction which is derived by personal companionship but then how blessed and cherished they are to those situated like us. My "army experience" has taught me what a dear wife you are and how dull I've been not to find out sooner the depth of my love. I do not think I love you any better than I did in days gone by but I know that hereafter I will appreciate more keenly your kindness and love to me. What a wife is to the husband he should be to her, and such in future shall be my rule, (unless you become cross, unworthy and crabbed, the very opposite of what I have always found,) I have formed a nice, systematic programme for future management and have no doubt by your cooperation, will be able to make "our" future bright and pleasant and profitable. The development of these plans I'll defer till I see you-

How much real enjoyment and comfort in this life does man rob himself of, by his own obduracy and perverseness. I regard it as a certainty that every one who is not absolutely a fool has it in power to be comfortable, happy and useful. Let him take as his guide nature's great and prominent laws, relying with an honest faith upon the Almighty and omnipotent arm, and through life, my word it, his way will be clear, and secure. An idler in life, like the drone in the hive, is despised and shunned, and surfeeds on bread stale and sour. Industry then is a grant matter for life.

(22nd)

The weather continued so bad I had no opportunity of sending this off. We had a big "freeze" this morning. Yellow fever is of course now over. Give my best love to the little ones. God bless you and them, I pray. Excuse bad writing as under the circumstances I can do no better. Write soon, my darling, to your own true and devoted

Tom.

March 9th 1865 (Contd)

In my inst, I informed you of "the mutiny" as it is called, that occurred here on Sunday night, Feby 25th, and how that Maj. Fly had made his guard fire into an innocent and mixed crowd, which resulted in the death of a young man and good soldier on his return from church. The next day Col. Timmons and Capt. Bradley, who witnessed the whole proceedings, in an assemblage of what they supposed to be gentlemen, all of whom by the way concurred therein, expressed unreservedly their indignation at the indiscreet action of Maj. Fly, for which they have since been arrested by order of Brig. Genl Hawes. No others of the party, as far as we know, have been molested.

The Col. and Capt. can be convicted of no crime against "good order" and military discipline and their arrest is but additional testimony to volumes already accumulated of what unseemly, unmanly shape prejudice and general ignorance will take when left with ignorance at the helm to guide. Is not such conduct on the part of those in authority reprehensible? And is it not, in an eminent degree calculated to sow among ourselves the seeds of dissatisfaction if not demoralization? Draw your own conclusions.

So far as I individually am concerned, I shall ever endeavor to discharge my whole duties and not permit the prejudices and ignorance of those appointed over us, to depress my ardour and enthusiasm for my Country's relief. Such, however, will not be the general feeling.

Saturday 11th (Contd)

The Government is now indebted to me more than a thousand dollars, which I think I'll get in time to pay off those I owe before their war tax is due. The money is now worth something.

Jo. Davis (Capt. Jo) was married last Tuesday night to an adopted daughter of a wealthy gentleman of this city. It is said her mother and the gentleman lived in adultery for a number of years.

There must be a "loose screw" somewhere, as Jo. would never have made the trip. If he gets money, however, he will have attained the great grand idea of his life. I was not surprised to hear she was illiterate and most uncomely in her form, manner and appearance. Presuming that I have already exhausted your patience, I must close. Not, however, without asking you to remember me especially to the little ones.

(By the way, I have just seen some of the nicest cups made in camp of horn that ever came under my sight, which I very much coveted for them). I have not heard a word from you since I left. This evening's train will, I hope bring a pleasing cheerfull line from the dearest of all others to me.

Remember me kindly to all my friends. May God in his boundless mercy, watch over, protect and defend you and ours.

Do not be ceremonious or stingy in writing to your ever devoted - Tom.

Saturday 11th. Business of a character that could not be postponed having prevented me finishing my letter in time for the last mail, I recommence this morning. The past day or two has been most disagreeable and inclement, and has added some new cases to our already long "list" of those "sick", with colds, etc. I am fearful if we remain long in our present position we will suffer some. I hope not however.

The young men - by which I mean the unmarried - of this command have within the past few days become impressed with the belief that it is their duty to make an exertion to get on the other side of "the big river". They say and rightly too - "Nothing is doing nor likely to be done for some time to come on this side - that on the other side the service is active, and that the country needs all the aid that can be afforded on that side - and that they, having gone into the service for the benefit of their country and its cause, are desirous of going where they can do the most good, and hence they have applied for a transfer to the Co.s Mississippi Department. I am of opinion, that the reason which causes the desire of change does credit both to the head and heart of those who urge them.

All the young men of Capt. Bradley's Co. - including Charlie, Mac B., Walter and Tom Black have sent their petition. I have not the remotest idea the document will be listened to with any consideration whatsoever at headquarters I have no doubt an additional reason to this wanted "Change of Base" is to be found in the personal animosity existing in the business of the petitioners to the Brig. Genl. Commanding in this Sub-Dist.

When I left home an indecision was existing in reference to your "quarters" for the present year. Have you yet decided? If so, what are your conclusions?

To Mr. B. and family, I shall to the last day of my life be grateful for his kindness to you, whom I have always found the kindest of wives and truest of friends. But then have we not already reclined long enough on his liberal arm, and is there not danger of his growing tired of his own goodness. If I thought he would receive pay and that I could any time soon remunerate him, the matter would rest on an entirely different basis.

All things considered, I think you had better stay with Father (who is willing and anxious for you to do so) at least till we can get our house in "living order". In reference to the repairs necessary to render the home comfortable, I think by judicious management it may itself be made the revenue of sufficient income to defray expenses incurred in its renovation.

Now, my dear, the conclusion of the whole matter is simply that, I want you to decide your choice and wish in the matter, as I assure you, if there is anything in God's World I desire it is, an ability to render you happy and contented. I have often been extremely pained at the thought I was unable to make better provision for you in this life but then as much gratified at your perfect willingness to share without murmur my humble lot in this "lowly vale of tears". In your reply, answer me fully in reference to this.

Cantonment Raine near Galveston  
March 19th 1865

My Dear Darling,

The space of time intervening between the arrival and departure of Mr. Paul was so very short. I could do nothing more than send you a very brief note. "The old gentleman's" appearance among us was the occasion of much surprise. I happened to be in town when the train upon which he came, arrived. I found him "first" and he seemed to be ill at ease and when I tapped him on the shoulder (having approached him from the rear) asking him what he was doing here, a gleam of joy lighted up his face.

He hastily informed me "urgent business" had brought him down - nothing, however, of distressing or mournful nature. The cause of his gladness was evidently occasioned by the "falling in" with one whom he thought would safely "engineer" him "through". "The old man" seemed highly pleased with the general military appearance in this section. Between him and myself in this matter a wide difference of opinion exists, I never yet having seen anything either in form or management specially meriting admiration.

If retained in our present position during the Summer, I am fearful we will not be comfortable, The barracks being awkwardly arranged. Oh! That Common Sense would assure the general management among us.

We have had a vast amount of rain among us. During such times our camp is as wet and muddy as is possible for any locality to be, the consequence of which has been, a longer sick list than usual. We have none very sick now. I have ordered Gus Burleson before the examining board for a discharge, he by reason of chronic diarrhea being totally unfit for field duty. I am fearful the board will not pass him - its members being foolishly particular as to duty.

The war news received the past few days is by no means flattering to our prospects. The successful march of Sherman through Georgia has necessitated the evacuation of Charleston, the proud city which so long withstood the heavy and fierce booming of artillery. It however, having been done under order from General Lee, we think everything will work right. Unless I greatly err in opinion, the appointment of him as Generalissimo of the armies will accomplish much towards perfecting the general management of our martial affairs. I am as firm as ever in the belief that the Southern people, if true to themselves, will ultimately make their struggle a splendid success. That this success may speedily occur, let us pray thru Jesus to God. (Not sure of deciphering here.)

In Mexico quite a complication exists now. The crown of Maximilliam is yet to come at the price of blood, is now the indication of affairs. His Imperial Legions have been driven far back and defeated in the recent engagements and the number of his enemies is daily increasing. This will please the Yanks and fret Napoleon, - in what their affairs will terminate it is impossible to tell, though we may hope in something good from this side of the house.

If there is any possibility of having my saddle and bridle thoroughly repaired I would like it would be done and together with my horse, sent down the first opportunity. Not knowing when too many may be ordered away, I do not want to be caught on foot anymore. In these things, get Father to assist you.

March 19th 1865 (Contd)

The train has arrived, and I am blessed with the pleasing presentiment that when the mail is brought out to us, I'll have a long letter from my darling Carrie.

I am sorry "our boys" are so bad on Sundays as to debar you the privilege of Church going. I hope, however, your teaching will cause the experience of a change in the general aspect of this matter, in a very short time.

Sunday 20th -

The pleasure I supposed would be mine on the dissemination of yesterday's mail was only imaginative, I not having received "the scratch of a pen." I want "my dear" to understand I donot blame her at all for this disappointment, as I am satisfied the fault lies not at her door.

I attended the Catholic Church to day - quite a crowd was present.- the text was - "I'll arise and go to mv Father. etc."

Capt. Bradley and Col. Timmons are still under arrest. Genl. Walker arrived in the City yesterday evening. What he comes for I cannot tell.

Billy Morris stayed with us last and the night before last. He is well.

You must remember me kindly and specially to each one of the children. Tell Arthur and Willie they must be good boys, learn their books and some good reward will be theirs. You must encourage May in her "journey" towards the field of literature and Kate's badness (she being the Baby) must be "put up with" as best as may be.

Charlie, Mac B. (and in fact all of Capt. B's Co.) are well. Soon I hope to have the pleasure of reading one of my Darling's dear letters. May God bless and protect my dear wife and little children and soon by the exercise of his favor reunite us in family enjoyments.

Write soon, dear one, to your own devoted

Tom.



Cantonment Raine  
April 11th/65

My Dear Darling,

Were I not afraid of arousing your wrath I would really indulge in the commencement of this in a little temper at you on account of the great interval between your letters. You cannot, I know, speed them along on their journey, but then, my dear, you can write oftener than every nine days! Will you not, even at the cost of a little trouble let me hear from you oftener? It never worries me to read your letters. It would be impossible to send them often enough for that. I deem them all, no matter how brief, by angelic visitors commissioned with a tale of interest and devotion from the very dearest one of all the earth to me. Therefore, if you would contribute to my enjoyment and lessen the annoyances of my situation, write frequently. It seems that every hour of my existence you become nearer and dearer to me. I know I love you no better than ever but yet it seems so, because of my separation from you. I wish I were worthy your love and affection and were better prepared to make you easy, comfortable and happy in this life.

A few nights ago I dreamed of an unexpected meeting between us. What a transport of joy filled my soul, when you threw your arms around my neck and gave me one of your warmest and sweetest kisses! My joy, thought but of a moment's lasting, was rapturous and though it was but a dream, I felt even after a realization of this fact, glad in heart. I hope these joys may be ours sooner than we anticipate. How often I sigh to be near my dear Carrie and our little ones and how fervently I pray God in their behalf!

I told you in one of my last notes, you need not expect a long letter from me while poor Arch Huckaby was sick, as I had to devote my whole liesure time to him. He breathed his last on Saturday night, the 8th Inst. ten minutes before two. Mac Bonner, Gid Walker and myself were with him when he died. His death was calm and quiet. His disease was typhoid pneumonia. He was sick seventeen days, and during the whole time, night and day, had as good and as close attention as could have been bestowed upon him even at home. Mrs. Van Sickle, the lady at whose home he died, could not have been kinder to her own son. We have made every preparation to send his body home for interment, under care of Gus Burlison and Mr. Franklin, of Capt. Bradley's Co. Gus will remain home some time on sick leave. Mrs. Van Sickle has promised me she would write to Arch's family and give them the particulars of his illness. Parson Glass visited him often. So did Parson Frank McMillan of Freestone Co.

The health of our regiment is improving. We look for some of Mr. Huckaby's family this evening.

Your letter of the 25th Ult. is the last I had from you. I hope I'll get "a blessing" from you this evening. I imagine if you took as much delight in writing to me as I do in communicating with you I would have letters some oftener.

Galveston City

March 30th/65

My Dear Wife,

I regret that I have only time to write you "a few lines" by Lt. Bonham. I did not know till to day he was going home and my duties have been such as to prevent me from writing till now, which I am doing in the dark, having no candle.

I am sorry to tell you, that Arch Huckaby is very dangerously ill with typhoid pneumonia. We have secured a good room for him in a nice private family and every attention that he could possibly get at home he is receiving here.

Doct. Blackmon returned from Houston to to day. He succeeded in making arrangements for the relief of Jim and the boys with him.

There is no news in the City. The rumor is Magruder will soon relieve Walker and somebody else Hawes.

I am anxiously looking for a letter from my darling. May God Bless and protect her and the little ones. Give them my love and a sweet kiss.

Write soon to your own

devoted Tom.

(This letter was addressed on the folded center to  
Mrs. Thos. B. Grayson  
Fairfield  
Favor of Texas  
Lt. Bonham

Cantonment Raine April 16th/65

My Dear Darling,

Your favor of the 1st inst. reached me yesterday and as water is to the dry, parched thing and as rest to the weary sorefooted pedestrian, so were its kind and affectionate breathings to a soul whose every hope and aspiration is for you and "ours". I am joyed to hear my darling say that in the perusal of my hastily written, disjointed communications she finds "deep and heart-felt pleasure", and I assure you, if such an "raye of sunshine," as long as I am absent, they shall frequently throw their light" in your chamber, & nothing I do in camp is half so delightful as writing to you, except it be the receiving of your letters. The only fault I charge them with, is this one: "A short story", I know, is generally "sweet" but let me warn you, do not conclude that "length" will in the last degree determine your letters of their saccharian "element". The health is "delicate" is it? Perhaps, Darling, this being "All Fool's Day" you are "telling" me (as the word is) but then if your declaration is made in sober, serious earnest (and you are not mistaken as to the cause), I shall have to take issue with you, as such "conditions" rarely if ever occur, except when the best of health is enjoyed. I do not think my dear ought to allow the occurrence of such a thing to disturb her equanimity even for a moment, as it may be the best thing that has ever occurred for our family. This may be esteemed by you as "far-fetched" and abstruse philosophy yet there is reason in it nevertheless. I do not see why this should interfere with your change of residence, but do as you will and I am satisfied. If you will tell me at what time the affair is likely to culminate I shall begin even this early to make my arrangements to be with you.

Doct. Blackmon's papers returned last night "approved" till further orders. I think it a disgrace to any man who preached "patriotism" as he did before he entered the army to accept "a detail" at this juncture of our troubles to follow a profession which in time of peace he abhorred and snubbed, (even when physicians in his vicinity were as "few and far between" as they now are). Then there was heard from him no crooking about the suffering of "poor sick" etc. etc. Oh, Time! Oh, Customs!

Gen. Magruder reviewed the troops of the Island yesterday. At the close he made a speech, patriotic and determined. He shall, he says, never abandon any position in Texas, till the enemy and his guns and boycotts shows that it is untenable. He says he cannot be subjugated. He advises the people to plant corn and let cotton alone. Upon the whole, I liked his speech very much, (much better than I supposed I could possibly do). The General seems to think Texas will be invaded but says he has no idea the Yanks can do much here, as they will be without the power of "steam," which has always been their main reliance. Gen Lee has evacuated Richmond and I expect soon to hear of his thrashing Sherman and then turning on Grant with his own and Johnson's forces in cooperation. Genl. Hawes, I am glad to say, has been relieved of command here. \_\_\_\_\_ Smith, of the 2nd Texas, is now managing things. I once had a high opinion of the old fellow, but recently my opinion of him has changed much. He is a candidate for Gen. and I hope he will be defeated, though I do not like any of his opponents.

April 11th/65 (Contd)

I suppose before this you have heard of the killing of Maj. Gen. Wharton by Col. Gen. W. Buylar. The difficulty was an unfortunate one and grew out of some order Wharton had issued Dr. Buylar (Sp?) It does seem that at least while surrounded by foes and dangers such as circumvent us our people should cultivate peace.

I think Mac Bonner will get to come home next month. Since Irvin left he has been messing "all alone by himself". If I can I'll get him with "our mess" soon (that is, if it is agreeable to him.

The petition for the relief of Doct. Blackmon has gone up to Genl. Smith for action. I do not look for it back earlier than the 20th of this month, and may be, not so soon. If he leaves and Col. Timmons does not appoint an Asst. Surgeon, I hardly know how I'll manage to get home occasionally. I intend to set my "mess" to get home by July, if you do not think that is too early. What say you? Is it or not?

You must remember me kindly to the children. Tell May and Kate to be nice pretty little ladies and Papa wants to see them very much. Tell Arthur and Willie to study hard and learn their books well. You must kiss each one of them for me. God bless my dear darling Carrie and little children. Write often and soon

to your devoted

Tom.

Tamola Station Apr 12 1868 (Year :  
clear

Dear Caroline

Your letter of the 19th March was received the 30th and I seated myself at the time for the purpose of answering it, but was interrupted and on Tuesday I had to start to Mobile. Since that time I have been surrounded by so many busy cares that I have found it impossible to steal a single moment of time to devote to any kind of recreation.

I hope you will not think for a moment that anything would afford me more gratification than holding a few moments converse with you, one of the dearest objects of affection, to me, on earth. I think however that under the circumstances you will not complain. If you do I might have something to say myself for it was nearly six weeks from the time we left home until we received the first scratch of a pen from any of you.

I think you treated us a little worse than Mary said I treated her for we are but little over one sixth the distance from you that I was from her. She had some hope that she was not forgotten and I knew that you did not write else I would have gotten the letters.

~~I have been getting my Sunday Paper regularly,~~ but have only recd one letter from you and one from Pa. (Turn over)

Night 13th Apr

You will perceive that this side of the page bears a different date from the other. I thought when I commenced that I would certainly be able to finish, but just as I wrote the last word I was called off to fight fire (this is piney woods) but I think I will be able to reach the bottom before I stop.

Sarah has just finished two pages foolscap and I suppose has given you all the news. Sarah, Edwin, Sister, John and even the negroes want you to come and spend some time with us. Will you come? I hope you say yes. Well if you do name the time you will meet me in Mobile, make haste say quick (in your next letter) for in the language of Edwin we all "want Aunty to come so bad". As I will be station agent it will cost me nothing to travel on the cars and it will cost you but a trifle.

You need not start from home with more than fifteen dollars. If Pa goes to Mobile before you could get a letter to me, come with him that far, and he can come with you to the depot, procure your ticket, and that will be all that is necessary as you can come the balance of the way by yourself. Our door is in stone throw of the Tamola depot. Tell Pa he must let you come. Just name the day you will be in M. and I will willingly, gladly meet you. I can go down one day & back the next. Come- Come- Come- if you only stay until Mother comes out in the summer, come. It would do you good to see how fat Sarah and the children are and how well we are all pleased with our new home.

I accidentally met with Bro. Dillard in Mobile the night before I left there, He was accompanied by Sarah, Uncle Jo Chambers & family and Miss Mary Blann, all of Dallas. I spent the evening very pleasantly with them, and next morning they went with me to the depot. I took them on the cars, but they did not stay long as Bro. D said I was trying to play a trick on them by taking them all off on the cars.

I could fill up a whole sheet more but we could not get in one envelope. Write to one of us as soon as you get this and wait a few days and write to the other. I will write to Pa & Bob soon if I find time. Love to all.

Your Bro. I. G. McA.

April 16th/65 (Contd)

My "wardrobe" in the "socks and shirt line" is getting in bad condition. I have not a decent shirt to wear now, and having no money and no prospect of getting any soon I regard my condition as truly deplorable. My shoes and hat are as bad almost as they can be. When you see father tell he must send me a hat and pair of shoes by the first opportunity and I'll pay him for them as soon as I can draw some money.

Tell Arthur and Willie I am delighted to hear of their improved behavior, and hope they will continue to get better all the while. Tell May and Kate I'll bring something for them when I come home and they must not cry and be bad. You must give each of them a warm kiss for Papa. My ink is so bad, I doubt if you can read what I've written so I'll stop.

God bless my dear darling Carrie and our little ones - shielding and protecting them from all dangers, etc. Write soon, Darling, to

Your own devoted

Tom.

---

This is the last letter in the group in Aunt Louise's possession. As you see, this is an abrupt ending.

Of course, we know that Dr. Tom returned to his beloved Carrie, and that they lived together another 38 years. In addition to the four children they had at the time these letters were written, they had five more.

From a sketchy beginning, I have undertaken to trace the descendents of Dr. Tom and Carrie, and have surprised myself with the large number whose names I have learned. In the limited time available, and without going to too much expense by way of long-distance telephoning, I have rounded up those listed on the following pages.

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It was a genuine pleasure to "get to know" Dr. Tom through the pages of his letters, and to see what a wonderful person he was. I am pleased to have him for my ancestor. It has also been fun visiting with his living heirs, in preparing this genealogy. I hope you enjoy it also.

---

There is a "bonus" in the form of a letter from Carrie's brother, I. G. McArthur, who sounds like a real dear himself. I wonder if he wasn't the "Mc" mentioned throughout Dr. Tom's letters. Another wonder: I never did learn the relationship of Carrie to the Bonners, with whom she apparently lived during these years.



THOMAS BLACKMON GRAYSON - Born March 1, 1833 - Died February 29, 1903 at Winkler, Texas

CARRIE A. McARTHUR GRAYSON - Born June 6, 1835 - Died

Married May 8, 1856 at Canton Bend, Alabama, by J. C. Jackson

CHILDREN OF DR. THOMAS B. and CARRIE A. McARTHUR GRAYSON:

Names	Born	When	Where	Marrried	To Whom	Died
Arthur Wilcox Grayson	: 2-7-1857	: Near Fairfield	: Near Fairfield	: *	: *This date is probably in error; probably 1868	: Nov. 6, 1864*
William Somers Grayson	: 10-3-1858	: Near Fairfield	: Near Fairfield	: Beulah Anderson		
Carrie May Grayson	: 8-11-1860	: In Fairfield	: In Fairfield	: John Lee Robinson		: Nov. 8, 1904
Mary Kate Grayson	: 6-15-1862	: Near Fairfield	: Near Fairfield	: Kit. McConnico - Birdston		: Feb. 11, 1900
Berta Blackmon Grayson	: 10-23-1865	:	:	: W. G. Glass		: April 21, 1905
Martha Rebecca Grayson	: 3-8-1869	: County Line	: County Line	: M. M. Bonham		
John Edwin Grayson	: 10-19-1871	: Woodland	: Woodland	: Annie Manning		
Charles Bonner Grayson	: 10-22-1874	: Near Winkler	: Near Winkler	: Edda Fouck		
Cora Belle Grayson	: 8-4-1879	:	:	: Never married		: 1949

Parents of Dr. Thomas Blackmon Grayson: Father - Squire Grant Grayson - (First Surgeon in Freestone County)  
Mother - Caroline Blackmon Grayson

Parents of Carrie A. McArthur Grayson: Father - John McArthur  
Mother - Christian Gordon McArthur

(This chart was copied from Bible now in possession of Ina Mabel Compton Watson, Italy, Texas, which her mother, Irene Glass Compton, had apparently received from her mother, Berta Grayson Glass)

III.

Carrie Mae Grayson - Married John Lee Robinson

- 1- William Lee Robinson - Married Bell Anderson
  - 1- LaVane Robinson - Married Ella Rogers
    - 1- Johnny B. Robinson
    - 2- Macye Bell Robinson
    - 3- Glenda Robinson
  - 2- William Lee Robinson - Married Maudine Barker
  - 3- Mona Irene Robinson - Married Willis Gordon Slade
    - 1- Pat Slade - Married Thomas Steele
      - 1- Billy Steele
  - 4- Caddie Bell Robinson - Married Lish Roberts
    - 1- Billy Darrel Roberts
    - 2- Mike Roberts
    - 3- Vickie Lynn Roberts

In addition to the four children listed above, Uncle Will and Aunt Bell had two daughters who died in infancy.

- ~~2- Berta Lee Robinson - Married James Ferdinand Compton~~
  - 1- Son who died in infancy.
  - 2- Irby Lee Compton - Married Mary Hays
    - 1- J. S. Compton - Married Viola Forse
      - 1- Glenda Fay Compton - Married Billy Crosby
      - 2- Son that died at birth.
      - 3- James Martin Compton
    - 2- James Edward Compton - Married Ann Fowler
      - 1- Mark Compton
    - ~~3- Mary Lee Compton - Married Joe Kenneth Tyner~~
      - 1- Kenny Tyner
      - 2- Keith Tyner
    - 4- Kenneth Ellis Compton ("Sonny") - Married Suzanne Pour
    - 5- Jimmie Carmene Compton - Married Tommy Casey
      - 1- Kimberly Kay Casey
      - 2- Kevin Casey
  - 3- Marion Earl Compton - Married Nautie Lee Howell
    - 1- Billie Sue Compton
    - 2- M. Earl Compton - Married Laurene Titus
      - 1- William Earl Compton
      - 2- Keith Edward Compton
    - 3- Jim David Compton
  - 4- Charles Ferdinand Compton - Married Carmene Hunter
    - 1- Dixie Charlene Compton - Married Roy Davis
  - 5- Lera Louise Compton - Married Lester B. Baker
  - 6- Sallie Mae Compton
  - 7- Shade Ellis Compton ("Dick") - Married Effie Lee Hukill
    - 1- Jimmie Louise Compton - Married Jimmy White
    - 2- Richard Ellis Compton
    - 3- Charles M. Compton
    - 4- William Edward Compton
  - 8- Jimmie Fay Compton - Married Martin S. Reese
- 3- Eliza Robinson - Died at Age 9.

- 4- James Pressley Robinson - Married Jessie Lewis
  - 1- Katherine Robinson - Married Jake Baker
    - 1- Rudelle Baker
    - 2- Billy Baker
    - 3- Joe Neal Baker
  - 2- Lena Mae Robinson - Married Alvie Cates
    - 1- Elva Mae Cates
    - 2- Mary Louise Cates
    - 3- Marjorie Ruth Cates
    - 4- Betty Jean Cates
    - 5- Lena Frances Cates
  - 3- James Pressley Robinson, Jr.
  - 4- Annie Laura Robinson
  - 5- William Loyd Robinson - Married Vera \_\_\_\_\_ (2 children)  
Married Lilly Grace Frost
    - 1- James Loyd Robinson
    - 2- Johnny Robinson
  - 6- Randall Robinson - Married Daisy \_\_\_\_\_
    - 1- Randall, Jr. ("Bud")
    - 2- Sam Robinson
    - 3- Carolyn Ann Robinson - Married Billy Schick
    - 4- Kenneth Ray Robinson
    - 5- Shirley Robinson
    - 6- Paul David Robinson
    - 7- Paula Robinson
  - 7- Lanelle Robinson - Married Sam Beamon  
Married Doc Clark
    - 1- Jerry Beamon
    - 2- Robert Clark
  - 8- Mamie Lee Robinson - Married Wallace Lavender
    - 1- Donna Lavender
    - 2- Kirt Lavender
    - 3-
  
- 5- Sarah Louise Robinson - Married Ralph Sims
  - 1- Maybelle Sims - Married Ralph D. Hughes
  - 2- Ralph Sims, Jr. - Married Vickie \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3- Sarah Louise Sims - Married Tom Chandler
    - 1- Ronald Lynn Chandler
    - 2- Lyle Sterling Chandler
  - 4- Linda Kate Sims - Married William T. Glazener
    - 1- John Stephen Glazener
    - 2- William T. Glazener, Jr. ("Ted")
  - 5- Martha Virginia Sims - Married Joe White
    - 1- John Sterling White ("Jay")
    - 2- Ginna Jenelle White (Adopted)
  
- 6- Kate Robinson - Died at Age 3.

IV.

Mary Kate Grayson - Married Kit McConnico

- 1- Carrie Bess McConnico - Married Douglas Johnson
  - 1- Kathryn Johnson
  - 2- Dorothy Johnson. Married Rob \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3- Elva Johnson - Married Jack Josey
- 2- Lillian McConnico - Married T. A. McCamey
  - 1- Kenneth McCamey - Married Hattie Bell \_\_\_\_\_
- 3- Grayson McConnico - Married \_\_\_\_\_
  - 1- (Son)
- 4- Garner McConnico - Married \_\_\_\_\_
  - 1- (Girl)
  - 2- (Girl)
- 5- Jarrott McConnico \_\_\_\_\_
- 6- Twin to Jarrott - died at birth.
- 7- Elva McConnico - Married L. G. Kerr
  - 1- Margaret Kerr - Married Jack Chew
    - 1- Sally Chew
    - 2- John Chew
    - 3- Margaret Chew
- 8- Mary McConnico - Married A. D. McKinney
  - 1- A.D. McKinney, Jr. - Killed in World War II
- 9- Johnny B. McConnico - Married Kate Clark
  - 1- Jarrott McConnico
  - 2- Johnny B. McConnico, Jr.
  - 3- (Girl)

V.

Berta Blackmon Grayson ("Aunt Bert") - Married W. G. Glass\*  
(\*Brother to Sally Glass Compton, Mother of James F. & W. A. Compton)

- 1- Irene Glass - Married W. A. Compton
  - 1- William Everett Compton - Married Earlene Foster (Robert)  
Married Jean Fry (Mike)
    - 1- Robert Compton
    - 2- Mike Compton - Married Terri Jameson
  - 2- Elizabeth Compton - Married J. L. Chenowith
    - 1- Betty Chenowith
  - 3- Estelle Compton - Married Mary Lou Wilkins (Billy Rae)  
Married Wanta Mantooth (5 children)
    - 1- Billy Rae Compton
    - 2- Sandra Compton
    - 3- Sherri Compton
    - 4- Francis Compton
    - 5- James Dale Compton
    - 6- Rhonda Compton

- 4- Charles Blackmon Compton - Married Bessie Cooke
- 5- Byron Compton - Married Sammy Sharp
  - 1- Linda Compton
  - 2- Jennifer Compton
- 6- Berlin Compton - Married Jane Sims
  - 1- Barbara Compton
  - 2- Beverly Compton
- 7- Ina Mabel Compton - Married P. W. Watson
- 8- Helen Jean Compton - Married J. E. Penn
  - 1- Ricky Penn
  - 2- Billy Penn
- 9- Will A. Compton, Jr. - Married Billie Davis (3 children)
  - Married Helen \_\_\_\_\_
  - 1- Ronny Compton
  - 2- Susie Compton
  - 3- Randy Compton

(Uncle Will and Aunt Irene had two additional children, that I seem to recall were twins to Byron and Berlin - though the recollection is hazy.)

- 2- Mamie Glass - Died as a child
- 3- Infant daughter who died.
- 4- Ila Glass - Married Harold Allen
  - 1 & 2 - Two infants who died.
  - 3- Harold Allen - Married Geraldine Skaggs
    - 1- Larry Allen - Married Patsy
      - 1- Joey Allen (Adopted)
      - 2- Dean Allen
      - 3- Donna Allen
    - 2- Dean Allen
  - 4- Billy Allen - Married Mattie Anderson (3 children)
    - Married Chloe Boothe (4 children)
    - 1- Betty Allen
    - 2- Martha Jo Allen
    - 3- Billy Michael Allen
    - 4- Danny Allen
    - 5- Jenina Allen
    - 6- Jeannie Allen
    - 7- David Allen
  - 5- Kenneth Allen - Married Dorothy Dintleman
    - 1- Carol Allen
    - 2- Barry Allen
    - 3- Tommy Allen
  - 6- Thomas Allen - Married Blanchie Mae Cannon
    - 1- Tony Allen
    - 2- Tonja Allen
  - 7- James Robert Allen ("Bobby") - Married Jackie Hawthorne
    - 1- Jimmy Allen
    - 2- Steve Allen

- 5- Jack Glass - Married Bell Steele
  - 1- Jack Glass, Jr. - Married Juanita \_\_\_\_\_
    - 1- Jackie Glass
    - 2- Danny Glass
    - 3- Scott Glass
  - 2- Josephine Glass - Married James Coleman (Killed World War II)  
Married Vernon Webb Turner
    - 1- Terry Turner
    - 2- Mark Turner
  - 3- Martha Irene Glass - Married Cody Ward
    - 1- Billy Jack Ward
    - 2- Bobby Ward
  - 4- Grayson Glass - Married Patsy Wasco
    - 1- Sherry Glass
    - 2- Lou Ann Glass

VI.

Martha Rebecca Grayson ("Aunt Mat") - Married Melchia Mark Bonham

- 1- Aubrey Bonham - Married Fay \_\_\_\_\_
  - 1- (Girl)
  - 2- (Girl)
- 2- Louise Bonham - Married \_\_\_\_\_ Stroud
  - 1- Martha Louise Stroud
- 3- Harry Bonham - Married \_\_\_\_\_
- 4- Millage Bonham - Married \_\_\_\_\_
- 5- Grayson Bonham - Married \_\_\_\_\_

(Aunt Mat's family has always lived in Louisiana, and I have not been able to trace them too well.)

VII.

John Edwin Grayson ("Uncle John") - Married Annie Manning

- 1- Cecil Grayson
- 2- Lester Grayson - Died at approximate age of 7.
- 3- Dude Grayson - Married Mattie \_\_\_\_\_
- 4- John Grayson ("Little John") - Married Grace Henderson
- 5- Eloise Grayson - Married Jack Warren

VIII.

Charles Bonner Grayson ("Uncle Charlie") - Married Edda Houck

- 1- Byron Grayson - Died in infancy
- 2- Gordon Grayson - Married Mabel Johnson
  - 1- Jean Grayson
  - 2- (Girl)
- 3- Harry Grayson - Married \_\_\_\_\_
  - 1- Phillip Grayson
  - 2- Martha Grayson
- 4- Horace Grayson (Twin to Harry) - Married Thelma \_\_\_\_\_
  - 1- Nancy Grayson

IX.

Cora Bell Grayson ("Aunt Cora") - Never married.