

Camp Washington Lang. Tex. 1862

Dear Sister

Yours of the 29<sup>th</sup>

of Dec. came to hand to day & I proceed to answer it immediately.

I was very sorry to hear of the sickness of Capt. Moody's company and very sorry to hear of the death of so many of the boys, but it is the fate of war & the adage is true that disease takes off more than the sword, for there has more than 40 of this Regt. died of disease, while there has not been but 5 killed and 12 or 15 wounded in our late battle on the head waters of the Vertigres River, called the battle of Ghestinella, however I hope the next time I hear from you to hear of Cy and Andrew's entire recovery from the measles & mumps, also I want you to write me how to direct a letter to Cy. I received a letter from Tea stating that Grand father & aunt Mary were very sick & I feared, the next letter I received would bring news of the death of one or both of them but I was very glad to hear by your letter that they were both recovering, Tea also wrote me word that Harriet was dead, I was very sorry to hear it for she was a faithful negro. There is but little sickness in this Regt. at this time though there has been a great many cases of the measles and mumps and some few cases of the pneumonia but no case of the small pox yet, and I hope it will not get into this Regt. at all notwithstanding it is at Fort Smith some 25 miles distant from this place. I have written to Tea twice since we returned from the campaign and battle and in one of them (the first) I give as full a description of the battle as I could & you must make her send



you that letter if you wish to read a full  
description of the battle however I will give you  
a short description of the battle. After cooking 4  
days provision on the night of the 25 Dec I made  
biscuit for near 3 hours without ever stopping I we set out  
on the morning of the 26<sup>th</sup> while one of the coldest  
northers I ever felt come full in our faces I to  
see if we could find the enemy I forgot to say  
that we were drawn up in line of battle on the evening  
of the 25<sup>th</sup> on account of the Indian pickets to the  
amount of 200 or 300 running ours of 40 in 20 camps, and our  
pickets reported the enemy to the amount of 5000 or  
6000 drawn up in line of battle behind a long ridge  
some three miles off. Col. Greer's Regt. under command  
of Lt. Col. Lane was sent forward as the advance to  
bring on the fight with Col. Stone's Regt. to sup-  
port him under command of Lt. Col. Griffith while  
Col. Young & Co. Entobles Regt. supported the  
first two, but the report was false or else they  
moved off behind the ridge so we could not see them  
all the time we were drawn up we could see their  
spies come to the top of the ridge and then return  
and then some more would come up. It was thought  
to be spies of the party that run our pickets in I  
and after traveling about 12 miles we crossed a large  
creek and directly after we saw a large smoke. Some said  
Indians while others laughed at the idea myself among  
the latter and soon after we saw the smoke I took a  
biscuit & piece of pork out of my pocket and after  
dividing it with my billi partner we commenced eating  
and laughing at the idea of getting into a battle for  
just as we commenced eating the order was given to cap  
our guns, but our skepticism did not last long for  
we had not gone more than 200 yds before we heard a gun



fire toward the van of the army and then 3 or 4 and then  
15 or 20 and directly about 300 or 400 along a line of something  
near  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile, as my friend said Sam that sounds  
like battle, they were firing at the advance guard under  
Capt Short of Col Green's Regt. though none of their  
balls took effect for they were shooting 100 or 500 yds.  
The order of battle was as follows, the Indians occupied  
the top of a very steep and almost inaccessible hill with  
very large rocks all over the side of it. There was  
300 Seminoles and 200 Osages and Choctaws making 500 on the  
top of that hill and they had pledged themselves to hold it  
or die and they could have held it if they could have  
stood a charge like white men for our little army of  
1580 could have held it against 10,000 drilled troops, this  
500 were sustained by about 2,000 in the valley back of  
them, and now to the order of battle on our side.  
Col Griffith was ordered to the right to dismount and  
charge the hill on foot while Col Lane and McEntosh's  
Regt were ordered to the center and Col Young to  
the left. Col McEntosh commanding. After all was  
formed the order to charge was sounded by the bugle.  
Col Lane Young and McEntosh's Regt charged gallantly  
on horse back while we charged through a creek about  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  in later and ice and the same in mud - but when  
we got to the top of the bank on the opposite side  
from where we started our Col saw that we would  
not get into the fight on foot so he took the respon-  
sibility of ordering us back to our horses. So we charged  
through the creek again and got back to our horses but  
we were so exhausted that we could hardly mount our  
horses but when we did we made them get faster for  
the other Regts had got the start of us and were  
likely to gain the laurels of the day, but by moving  
to the right and charging another hill we got the lead



and killed about as many as Col<sup>l</sup> Gours & Youngs and  
more than the Arkansawyers did however we did not  
get off without getting 4 killed and 12 to 14 wounded in this  
Regt among the killed was Lt Litsu of Capt Throgmorton  
Co who is very much regretted by the whole Regt<sup>n</sup> and Thos-  
Arnold of Waco Capt Rosses Co they were both shot  
in the brain and both died bravely, young Arnold killed  
the Indian that killed Lt Litsu and just as he was killed he killed  
an Indian that wounded a Mr Whittington of Capt R<sup>s</sup> Co Mr W<sup>s</sup>  
at the same time killing the Indian that killed young Arnold.  
I will close this part of my letter, for, as I told you I ~~did not~~<sup>do not</sup>  
intend to give a full account of the battle in this, but  
Tea will get one with a full account of it. The Indians loss is from 300 to 400  
Betty I have not received but three letters since I left  
home one from Mr Vanhorn one from Tea and one from  
you. I have not written very many letters myself but I  
could not, for we have been on the march at least 5/6 of  
the time since we left Texas and have traveled not less  
than 5000 or 6000 miles. I have once been within 100  
miles of St Louis. But notwithstanding all that I  
have written some 12 or 15 letters to the family, all to  
Tea and father. If I do not write to all of you while  
I am on the march it is no fault of mine for it is  
all I can do to write at all, but while I am in  
winter quarters I will try to write to all I can, I  
know I ought to have written to you but I thought  
you would learn all from Tea's and father's letters,  
as well as how to direct your letters. So you see that  
it was not because I did not wish to write to you, but  
because I could not help it very well, and now I intend  
to propose a plan by which you may all hear from  
me when I am on the march as well as for me to hear  
from you, It is this.



I will write first to one and then to the other and when the one written to receives it you will seal it and send it ~~to~~ to the other, both writing as soon as you receive it. Now this seems a little selfish but it is not for ~~as~~ I said before it is impossible for me to write many letters when I am on the march <sup>1<sup>st</sup></sup> because I cannot carry the material and <sup>2<sup>nd</sup></sup> because I have not got the time, but notwithstanding all this I will write as often as I can and while I am in winter quarters I will write to all I can. For my greatest pleasure is in receiving and reading letters, and all my friends seem to think that I should open a correspondence instead of studying the disadvantages under which I labor. They may also think that they ought not to write because I cannot write to all of them in a different letter but when I have a number of ~~friend~~ friends in one town or neighborhood I could write to them all in one and by that means keep up a correspondence with several towns and neighborhoods and also keep them informed about what is going on here. Tell them to write, as many of them as will and if they will not be satisfied with ~~at~~ me writing to all of them I will try to write to all that write to me. I will now close this part of my letter and give a few items about the army the war and Gen McCullough. In the first place something near 10,000 troops <sup>are</sup> quartered in this state composing Gen McCullough's brigade <sup>it is</sup> composed of 4 Regts Texas cavalry 3 Regts <sup>of</sup> mounted riflemen of Ark <sup>ansians</sup> = 3 or 4 Regts <sup>of</sup> Infantry and two battalions, one from Tex and the other from Ark, 4 Regts <sup>of</sup> are camped on the Ark River and the others on White River. It is thought here by all the wisdoms that we will make a move towards St Louis or ~~to~~ Kansas. I cannot conjecture what we will do but one thing is certain if we can ever come



up with those rascally Dutch we will give them such a thrashing  
that I think they will be sorry they ever commenced this  
unnatural war. It is said that Sigel has resigned but  
it is not credited here. The United States have  
succeeded one commander with another in rapid succession  
ever since we have been in the service 1<sup>st</sup> Fremont then  
Hunter and then Halleck who now commands. Betty I have  
continued this letter farther now than I intended to, with  
a great deal that will not be of any interest to you so  
I will close it as soon as possible. By stating in reference  
to Gen McCullough that he is one of the worst slandered men  
I ever saw and the truth is he has been lied on generally.  
The government has endorsed all his proceedings here.

One thing I forgot to mention, that while we were foraging the Indians were  
barking like a dog, howling like a wolf & yelping and gobbling like a Turkey.

This leaves us all well and doing very well and I do hope.

This long but badly written letter will find you all enjoy-  
ing the same blessing. Give my love to all enquiring friends  
and accept the love of your brother, Sam.

Your small note was very thankfully received and would  
have been more so if it had been longer, but I think  
you will do better next time, and be sure you don't  
let the shortness of my note be an excuse for not  
writing me a long one for I have nothing to write you  
more than I have written to your Aunt Betty, except for  
you to give my love to all the girls of Fairfield for  
God bless them I love them all, it is them that make  
a home worth having and life a blessing.

Now you must not criticise this letter too closely  
for it is badly written and worse it is badly put  
together.

Now I must close but before I do accept the  
kindest regards of your friend Sam, Love