



Civil War Letters

Written by L.S. Willard

Letter 1, March 14, 1862

Benton Barracks

St Louis, Mo Mch 14 | 62

Very Dear Mother

I wrote Abby a long letter the other day but dont know as you would get the benefit if it. For in her letter she spoke of going with Sister to her new Home in Galna[?]. I am well and doing as well as could be expected think by taking good care of myself I can stand the campaign and shall be very glad when we get out of this for it is not the pleasantest place in the wourld. it is very mudy now so much so that we have not drilled any to day. tomorrow is Sunday but a Soldiers Sunday is very little different from any other day in the army in fact I have not heard of any preaching here on Sunday. Our Regt has received their sabers and colts and Whitney Revolvers which are the best in use we have not received any pay as yet. And the men and Officers are very much in need of money probably we will not stay very long here there is some expectations of our being sent to Arkansas if such is the case we will probably soon see Active Service which I am anxious to see to try the mettle of the 11th Ills Cavilry. I think we have a good Regt and have no doubt they will make their mark if Opportunity ever offers.

Suppose Sister O.[?] is married hope she has a good man and will live happy. now if Henry gets married I will resolve to live a life of Single happiness. And expect to any how. but there is one thing I am pretty sure of and that is this not to join the Regular Army when the Volunteers are discharged Mr Tripp is well and enjoying himself seemingly well. should be very glad to hear from you and Mr Hathaway direct to St. Louis Mo care 11th Regt Ills Cavalery. please remember me to all

Very Affc Your Son

LS Willard



Letter 2, March 19, 1862

Benton Barracks

St Louis, Mo Mch 18| 62

Much Respected Parent,

Your letter of a recnt date was received by me in due time was very glad to hear from you although it was rather brief, letters are very acceptable in Camp I assure you. I often think I will sit down and write to everybody I ever knew for the purpose of getting letters in reply.

I succeeded in getting a pass yesterday to visit the City to learn what I could about the death of George he dies at the Military Hospital corner of fifth and Chestnut Street of Pneumonia on Marsh 2nd was admited there Feby 28th he came here from some point on the North Missouri R.R. he had all the care when there that could be given to anyone. I have the number of his grave and the number of the graveyard where he was buried. his affects consisted of what clothing he had only. I could not find out what wages were coming to him as his Officers failed to leave a descriptive Roll with him. the Hospital is a very fine one and one of the largest and best buildings is the City.

there is a large Quantity of Troops here but they are coming and going all the time but papers are not allowed to mention the arrival or departure of any Regiment there is some very good batteries here which have just been fitted out and will probably leave amediately the defences of the city which there hasbeen so much sayd about are certenly very formable they were put up by the late Gen Fremont but thanks he is not in comand of this department now. as you are aware our Troops are being rapidly pushed forward and it is telling on the rebels very fast. and god grant that this Rebellion may be speedily put down and very affectively is my prayer. our stay here will probably be very short now where our destination is I don't know. but hope it will be in an active field some where for I am inclined to think that there is good material in the 11th Ills Cavilry.

I received a letter from Hiram[?] Alden today he wants to inlist which I have answered. doyou suppose he has [illegible] any such idear.

Should be very glad to here from you often. Please remember me to all. Very Truly Yours LS Willard



Letter 3, April 13, 1862

direct your letters care 11th Regt Ills cavalry Gen Grants Devision West Tenn

Pittsburg Penn

Sunday April 13 1862

Dear Mother + Father

one week ago this morning commenced one of the most terriable battles ever fought on this continent I wrote to Wm amediately that Mr. Tripp and myself were safe and ask him to inform you as soon as possiable. supposing you might feel some alarm before this you have got full accounts of it and I have no heart to describe the fearful scean the slaughter was dreadful on both sides such as I never want to behold nor have I any desire to see another battle hope I may not. Still I find that I have as strong nerves as most men and never expect to falter in duty.

what newspaper accounts I have heard of this battle dont give the credit as I think it should go but I dosent say more on that subject now. undoubtedly there will soon be an other engagement eather here or at some place at no great distance. have no thought but our folks will be victorious.

Mr Tripp has been sick for a week but still is about sometimes am afraid he is going to have a serious time this climate dosent seem to agree with our men one thing it has been raining most of the time and is very mudy but this morning the sun has come out and it is rather plesant. I think of Home and friends continually and of the time when I shall once more be amongst them for this is anything but a plesant life no comforts whatever. I have no ideas this war will be of long duration now and God grant it may be brought speadily to a close I have not receaved a letter since I left Peoria and am getting anxious to hear from you, please excuse this writing for I am sitting on the ground and holding the paper on my knee.

Ever your affc Son

L.S. Willard