

White Plains Jan 18/63

Dear Margaret

I hasten to acknowledge the receipt of your most welcome and unexpected letter, it was handed me while in bed undergoing the penance of a severe headache, it quite roused me up, Kate was obliged to read it for the edification of the family, as Randy was anxious to hear what Mrs Tweed had to say. It forcibly reminds me of 'bye gone days' to see your familiar hand writing once more, I have selected myself to write without being ready or in plainer words having sufficient time to expatiate on the contents

of yours, but I take the liberty of
judging you by myself that you had
rather have a short answer be it ever
so poor, than be treated with neglect,
the undeniable fact is of late I have
had but very little time for letter
writing, I make it a standing rule
to write to Tom every Sunday I feel
that to be a duty as well as pleasure
You ask me if Brother Tom sent
you any word I will answer
by enclosing his "Round Robin"
together with his last, which will
give you a better idea than I
can in this short space of his
doings and whereabouts, You
will see that he has some bright
spots in his chequered life,
The first Sunday of our New Year

I wrote him a very doleful letter, I
got in just such a moralizing strain
about the war and its consequences
as you did, but his answer was so
cheerful, that I have concluded they
won't see the dark side and that the
Soldiers mean to enjoy themselves while
they can, Margaret I wish you could
find time to write to Tom I know
it would please him so much, and
tell Cousin Lizzie to write him he
would like to hear from her, please
give or send my best love and kindest
wishes for her welfare Kate met
Mrs Larmer in the Cars, she told
her Lizzie was spending the Holidays
with you, Kate made a flying call
at Bloomingdale on the Bride's Mat
she was then and there informed

of your remissness, in not calling on
the Bride. You had better take care or
you will be beyond the pale of forgive-
ness. I will reserve all comments
until I see you, but I must tell
you of the last excitement "I suppose
I was going to say" she is taking riding
lessons at Randolph's Establishment.
I presume you have heard of the
Death of Mrs Child we feel as though
we had lost an old and valued friend.
As I have not time to copy this, I must
make a correction, it was Amanda told
Kate that you had not made the Bridal Call.
I shall have to reserve all local news
until I see you face to face, at this present
time I cant say when, but I hope soon.
Kate may possibly leave here this week.
Give my regards to your husband, love to
Emma, answer this if you have any spare

Isabel
Yours affectionately
- Yours remembered -
Moments, Kate wishes to be remembered -



Fort Mc Henry May 6th 1863

Dear Sister

I suppose you must think it strange I have not written before but the fact is I have been so busy the last two weeks that I could not hardly get my company accounts ready for the first of the month. Capt Andrews left the Company about two weeks ago and took an appointment on Genl Morris staff as assistant adjutant Genl so I had all the company acc^t to look over with him before he could transfer the Company over to me as Lieut Comdg, I also had the pay and muster rolls to make out and have to go on guard about every four days. if you dont consider the above apology sufficient you shoud come down here and take command of 90 men. Keeping an infant school or being superintendant of a society of indignant females isnt a comparison to it

Col Morris with six Companies left for Harpers ferry about ten days ago and the rest of us start this afternoon we are all packed up, tents struck

and are only waiting for 5 companies of the 5th artillery to relieve us to start.

I am officer of the guard inside of the fort and am writing this in my ^{guard} tent it is now raining quite fast and I don't expect a very pleasant trip as we will be all night on the road.

Your Boy came safely to hand and we had on Christmas morning just in time for us to have a splendid Christmas Dinner Ben had shot some Canvas Back Ducks which with the contents of the Boy made us a glorious feast we postponed dinner until after dress parade and then took our time at it. you must know Horton, Shomard, Ben and myself keep quite a Hotel we have 3 tents together making about 30 feet in length all floored with boards. in the front room we have a large Brick fire place and chimney. The next is our dining room and the last is our kitchen which if you could see you would not be ~~surprised~~ to show to your most fastidious friends we have a splendid cooking stove and apparatus which I purchased in Baltimore for \$10. and have since been offered \$20. for it, every body says I stole it

it was so cheap one of my Company who has been Steward on board ship and his wife who is a first rate cook and good looking woman cook for us.

Your nut cake was eaten on Saturday evening in our chetang as we call it by two of the prettiest women in Baltimore Mrs Dr Richardson and her friend who I think was the handsomest girl I ever saw. They came over to the fort in Carriages, to hear Capt Andrews deliver a lecture in the Chapel on that evening, but as he slipped and sprained his ankle slightly the night before, they came over to his tent to see him, and then adjourned to our mess room they pronounced the nut cake the best and the first they had ever eaten, and I judge it was, for they managed with the help of a couple of bottles of champagne to eat it all up. one of the ladies was the wife of the cashier of the Bank of Commerce in Baltimore, who was not present. I called at the bank on some business a few days after to get a check of one of my men cashed, on seeing my name he asked me if I was the same gentl. that entertained the party his wife was with. he said his wife told him they had a delightful time the best they ever had in the fort.

I am going to move

our mess room to Harpers ferry, all except
the chimney, on which I have put up a
notice to let. We have had summer weather
almost to warm for comfort. I received
Randy's letter and think he can bear us all
at letter writing I sat down to answer him
and wrote about ten page but was interrupted
so continually that I gave up in despair, but
will try again as soon as I get settled once more,
for I certainly think he deserves an answer, and
give a new collar, for his exploit in rescuing
Catherine from the well. I think I can bear
him barking now. Give Randy my love and a
kiss for me tell him when I write it will be
directed to Randolph Merritt Jr and no body
must open it before him. I must stop for
I hear the drums of the relief coming and must
get my guard ready for a start, give all love
to Father, Kate, and Randolph, tell them they
must write as they have more opportunities than
I do. Uncle Sam has not yet come down
with the Spondolicks but promises to pay about
the 15th of this month John Jenkins and Ham Lockwood
spent Saturday and Sunday with us at our hotel
we had a great spread for our Sunday dinner, you
may guess they left on Sunday night for Washington.
Give my regards to Mr Mills and Penning, Sam
Enoch and Tim, Eliza Cornell, and Mrs. Lewis,
and all who ask after me, write soon, direct
6th N. Y. V. A. Care Wm H. Morris Harpers ferry. If I
don't write often you must acknowledge I write a good
long one. ~~Capt~~ Andrews does not go with us the United
field has no chance for him notwithstanding Court house
speeches, write soon

Yours affectional Brother Tom

Camp Millington

Baltimore Oct 27. 1862

Dear Sister

I have just received your "Round Robin" and as we are under orders to be reviewed by Genl Wool to morrow and then move to Fort Mc Henry on the next day I take this - chance to write fearing I might be so much engaged for the next few days that I might not have time to write to you and thus lay myself open to the charge that I have forgotten you all at home but believe me there is not a day ~~but~~ that goes over my head but what I think of you all and sometimes wish I was with you.

I suppose about the time that Mag Tweed and Eliza Cornell and yourself ~~was~~ ^{were} writing to me last Sunday, I was cooped in my tent with a very sore foot with Sicut Platt on one side of the tent, myself on the other, - raining like ~~hazes~~ ^{hazes} all around us and an intelligent contraband under shelter of a shelter tent with axe in hand ready at a moments warning

to drive in the tent pins and thus
secure us from all danger of Tent
wreck (Goatkin aside as Artemus Ward would
say) It rained and blew for about
36 hours right smart down here and
that is about as good a description of
the storm as I can give you

I have been skimming
my foot for the last week in hops
and Poppys and Thrups, and am
getting tired of travelling around on one
foot and have made up my mind
to put on the boots to morrow if it
is possible

As your letter is signed by
no body in general and one or two
in particular you must use this as
my answer to them all

Tell Lizzie Corne
that an American Buzzard has been
roosting on the top of a barn within
good rifle shot distance and that I have
often been tempted to draw a bead on him
but have refrained on account of my
religious scruples so you see she can
have some hopes of me yet I would put
in some poetry here but the Librarian
has stepped out for some Lager

and the quotation is not in my mind
Eys Horatio (That's Shakespeare anyhow)

"As for Mag's Cousin May,
Dear Mag, Respected Missus. (Recollect
this is for friend Mag) say to her for
me that the old adage better late than
never - never came in better season than
the way she has applied it on the occasion
when she narrated those few remarks
to her Cousin Tom Tell her that I have
just been presented with a copy of
the Church Service Simplified by
our Chaplain (who by the by lingered in
my tent until I asked him if he
would - and he said he would - and
after bestowing his blessing on me took
his leave after getting outside of about
a Bottle of my best milk (a. goat)
but "goatkin" aside Mag says it rained
some up at White Plains last Sunday
that's nothing; it rained so hard here
that I was compelled to lay on my bunk
all day reading Victor Hugo's "Misérables"
and thinking what lucky "Misérables"
they were compared to me under the
circumstances. as I was home Sunday
you must not expect any more

from me now Give my love to
Kate and Rana Little Rana Father
and all the rest of my friends
Tell May and Lizzie I would
like to hear from them when we
get settled at Fort Ma Henry I
will have more time to write and
will improve it

Affectionately
Your Brother
Jim



Mrs Richard Sweed
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N. Y.