



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE  
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

**SC-11848a: Colonel Marcus M. Spiegel Collection, 1861-1864.**

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1863 January

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American Jewish Archives website.

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Wm. H. Bell opposite  
Mill River Bend La Jan 3/63

My dear dear good Wife!

May the year 63 be of  
at least as happy a turn to  
you as 62 and as much  
happier as God in His infinite  
mercy may bestow in answer  
to the sincere and warm prayers  
to Him by offered for your well  
fare by your true & devoted  
Husband. M. M.

By the dispensations of kind  
providence I am again permitted  
to sit in my little Study Room  
and write to you my good Wife and  
speak of my dear Children and  
Kind Friends. Even after going through  
a week of fearful dangers, hard  
ships and privations more than  
full than I ever did before



you when death danger & destruction  
raged at a furious Rate, God had  
permitted me to come out with  
out a scratch and with more  
greater loss than the <sup>one</sup> spur of  
my Boot, my Rubber Over Coat  
my Pants & Coat torn to pieces  
in the Woods by the Rabbits  
advance and Excitement.

However before I go any further  
I would simply say if your duties  
in Chicago are so important as  
Paper Pen & Ink so scarce that  
you can write so few letters &  
so very short ones to me I  
think you had better go to Okin  
for to night our Regiment  
received 1100 letters and but one  
from you to me and that written  
on half sheet and half of that  
only from you, although it was  
short so sweet yet I am selfish  
I want longer ones and more  
of it. I have written that one  
three times & will now stop read it  
again. I have done so & God bless you  
it is good but I want more of it  
yet I feel happy, whereas had I not read that



I would to night feel miserable

Before I commence with a dissection  
of the Siege of Vicksburg, I will  
say I am happy & glad to hear of  
my Hamlin being such a good  
Gon steaming so well & looking so  
cheerly. I hope by the time I am  
home he can read the newspaper  
for this Po in German and English.

I heard to day Lizzie did not  
speak out very loud in school, she  
must speak out well and be a  
very good young Lady so her Po  
can feel proud of her. I am glad  
Mosey takes his Hair Oil so  
good, that is just the thing he  
wants, oh but it would do my  
soul good to see little Hattie sit  
on the floor. Sarah's short  
letters do me much pleasure  
I hope she will continue.

Why dont Michael write.

We Calculate as soon as we  
are settled again to Elect Brother  
Joseph as Suttler of our Regiment  
Has he gone in the Carter Business  
for good?



While I am writing, the Ladies  
Cabin is occupied by the Steer-  
board Officers playing Pathe  
by our Officers reading the  
Papers of the 29th in which  
we got the news of Burnside's  
defeat, just as I always  
said, nobody but McClellan  
can lead that Army and  
every other General will get  
whipped. A Heavy Thunder  
Storm is raging outside, the shocks  
of Thunder fairly shake the earth  
and more especially our boat  
and the rain is furious, Oh  
how I pity the poor boys  
who have to stand picket.  
While I write I can hear the moaning  
of the sick which grieves me much  
we have about 50 on my boat  
& about 200 in the whole Regiment  
3 or 4 on my boat are dangerous  
15 very sick & the balance  
unfit for duty, but such is  
saddening & such is the contract we  
~~have~~ entered into, now for the fight



Dear Sister

I have already given you a short sketch of what happened Sunday the 30<sup>th</sup> and if I am not mistaken I think I said in that letter that the conduct of the boys of the 130<sup>th</sup> would do to bet on & I can now say I was perfectly right & their conduct for a new Regiment was never surpassed. Now my dear if in this short description the all important I comes frequent and as also what I done, you must not think me egotistical for I know that, that very particular part of it is as much interest to you than anything else done and as it is not considered for publication it can matter but little to anybody else.

Saturday at 10 o'clock <sup>am</sup> we were ordered to form close Column of Division and advance through a thicket, after throwing out skirmishes to cover our front & flanks we done so and advanced. I should here say, that in my last I have told you that I had seen the Plan of battle and that it was a gigantic movement



in that plan it was intended that not much  
of any thing would be done before some  
kind of a junction with Banks and  
Grant could be quite or nearly made  
but in the meantime it is reported  
that the news came that General Mc  
Clemens of Ill was coming here  
to take Command, when General  
Sherman shall have said, he  
would go to H - C or Vicksburg  
before McClemens came." whether  
this be so or not that must I do  
know in less than 48 hours from the time  
the first plan of operation was  
shown a second one was ordered  
changing into an immediate attack  
by our Army all along the line  
from James Bluffs a high fort  
on the Yazoo River to Vicksburg  
a distance I think of 7 miles.)  
Very Well as I said we advanced  
through the thicket and while there  
to our right and somewhat in  
advance Canaday was briskly  
going on, we steadily advanced  
untill we advanced engaged  
into an open field when we  
deployed from Close Column to



battle line. By this time fighting on  
our right of both Musketry &  
Artillery was briskly and lively  
progressing, but only occasionally  
a stray shell or wandering  
musket ball would whip a portion  
lines, we were ordered to halt & lay  
flat on the ground. After laying  
thus for about  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an  
hour our folks (Lindsay's Brigade  
of Morgan's Division) succeeded  
to drive the Enemy and we had  
to follow up as reserve to Lindsay's  
Brigade. Another stand was  
made fighting commenced livelier  
than before. This continued until  
about an hour before night when  
it ceased for a short time  
then and then only did I do  
anything that I would not repeat  
now nor hereafter. I invited several  
brother Officers to go up with me and  
see the battle field, two of them  
accepted and we started to see the  
dead and wounded. When we  
came to the left of our lines  
we inquired for the dead and  
wounded, and learned they had



they had all been carried to a white house  
beyond the line, now to get there  
we had to cross a high fence or Road  
along side (that is behind its right  
Bank lay our Soldiers with their  
Muskets on the fence on the left  
of it was a kind of a narrow Slough  
and opposite the Slough brush and that  
Forest full of Rebel Soldiers and if  
anybody has an Idea that going  
along a Road which is probably as  
long as from Henry Liebenstein's Store  
to the Sherman's Home on each side  
loaded Muskets (though the Rebels  
you could not see) now if anybody  
thinks there is any fun in this let  
him try it; As I gave the invitation  
I did not want to back out  
I tip a my hat, gave Charley the full  
depth of my Spurs and galloped  
through, saw the Gamblet safe  
though a many honestly meant  
bullet came whizzing past me  
and my friends who came  
along away behind as they could  
not catch up with Charley, after  
my and learning our loss was about  
60 killed and wounded we galloped  
back and arrived safely with our boys.



I almost wished I had stayed out, for when I came out I found out that I was detailed as Brigade Officer of the day. I took a piece of cold meat & bread all I had since morning jumped on my horse to post my Pickets a job which took me until after 11 o'clock ~~until~~ to post them & carry the countersign to them. When I returned I took my blanket wrapped myself up and laid myself beside my horse and slept like a prince until 3 o'clock A. M. when we were called up and stand ~~at~~ to arms, at about 5 P. M. the fall opened by heavy Artillery fire, where I was the night before looking at the wounded as well as to our left (by Steels Division on our right by A. J. Smiths Div. and on our Extreme right by Morgan L. Smiths Division. I might as well stop here and give you a description of our unfortunate field of operations. Starting from the River as we did and marching in a kind of a north Eastern direction we come after about 2 miles marching to a Bayou which runs or rather winds



Remember I have  
to commence on the Sunday  
morning flight. The mail  
is going. God bless you

AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVE

Ever yours

Marcus





Check 4

I have already said to you by day  
break Sunday morning we all  
stood to arms and as the day ad-  
vanced & the Sun seemed forcing  
its way through a dense fog,  
which prevented anyone of seeing  
his neighbor two feet from him,  
which of course led me to the conclusion  
that the awful and terrific Cannon-  
ading and Musketry not far from  
us our own right amount be a great  
deal of it & indeed. As the fog cleared  
away we could plainly see the works  
of the Enemies Cannon along the Hill  
side and across the Bay or  
playing away with a rapidity  
as though the meant to annihilate  
us but were as vigorously answered  
by our own. Our forces on our  
right shortly advanced, driving  
the Enemy by inch who in turn  
contested every inch of ground  
with a valor worthy of a better  
Cause, which from the advantage  
of their position made it hot  
work for us



As our advance slowly gained ground  
we followed being the 2nd Brigade  
from the reserve and when by good  
we were just in front of a Gap  
coming from the Hills where the  
Enemy's Guns played furiously  
We were ordered (our Regiment)  
to return & file left along the bank  
take a position on the 2nd Slope  
from which General Morgan  
said I expect a flank attack  
hold that position at all hazard  
untill relieved or reinforced.

We started and as we came out  
of Range of the Shells & out of  
immediate danger I saw what  
I deemed to only it, I felt for the  
time relieved. We made our point  
deployed the Regt & laid down  
on the ground just then our  
boys came with a dinner of  
which we heartily participated  
not having had any breakfast

We had scarcely done dinner  
when an Aid galloped up, ordering  
us to the right where the ground  
had been stubbornly contested



and the fight severely raging.

The Bugle sounded the Assembly and my boys came in, we threw them into close Column by Company and marched to Scene of Action.

As we came near the roaring of Cannon and the crackling of small Arms was furious & terrific, the Shells burst all around us and many times the cannon within a very near space of Charley & myself.

Genl Morgan ordered us to advance to the Battery and when ordered to advance I did so furiously & manly.

As we came to our Battery it was perfectly awful, there were 20 of our Cannons playing with all the velocity they could & at the same time drawing all the Artillery fire of the Enemy.

Our Regiment was in an awful place, and for a new Regiment behaved like Veterans and just then I became perfectly enraptured I could talk to every man, show the danger, but the fear of death had perfectly left me, I dashed best forward felt proud and



was admired and applauded.  
Just then Genl Morgan came  
he had talked to Col March &  
came shook hands with me  
& said, "Col Spigel I am  
proud of you as an Officer  
I feel doubly proud of so gallant  
an Officer one more charge for  
the good 'old Flag and the day  
is ours" by that time he told me  
shortly to go back a little piece  
cross the Bayou & get up the  
Hill in the Woods & charge on  
the Rebel Battery, while De Coney  
Brigade should charge to the  
right. We started & when we  
got across the Bayou we had  
to go up a straight Bank  
very high which Charley made  
handsomely until he got  
almost up the Bank to where  
the top bended outward & he  
could not make it, I jumped  
off got a root sawing myself  
around it, taking Charley by  
the reign he made a leap &  
cleared the thicket



Sheet 5

When on top and as soon as our Reg. waked  
up we formed in line advanced over  
Shinnishes & cautiously felt our  
way not knowing how soon we were  
to meet the hords of the Enemy, the 49<sup>th</sup>  
Dmd. had in the meantime come up  
& formed on our right after advancing  
some 300 yards we halted Col. French  
& I advanced by myself to ascertain  
their position using my glass, we  
probably only crept 100 yards when  
we discovered the Rebel flag, promptly  
waving on their rampart, we returned  
and advanced under command.  
When our Shinnishes came to  
the point probably where Col. & I had  
previously been, they saw the Rebels  
& commenced firing the Rebels answered  
with vigor, we then promptly advanced  
our whole line as also the 49<sup>th</sup> and  
the stray bullets then came thick  
and as soon as we felt the  
bullets we called in the Shinnishes  
& vent at them, by the noise  
that firing I remembered as being



as I live, Our boys stood bully & I  
soon saw the Rebs were shooting  
to kill, we fired & loaded & fired  
& yelled until we drove them  
into their Rifle pits & kept them  
there thinking every minute  
DeCoursey would charge from the  
top & we would have to form again  
but thank God he did not charge  
and we did not have to after a  
fire of two hours & a half we  
were relieved by Genl Frank Blair  
s 10th Brigade & we retired with  
the loss of 1 officer & 11 men killed  
& 61 wounded in the 2 Regts  
nothing particular during the  
night only cold & nothing to eat &  
very tired Thus Ends Sunday  
Monday Morning opened like  
Sunday with heavy Canonading  
the Rebels having planted many  
new Batteries during the night shelled  
us vehemently & it became necessary  
to change our position, At 9 o'clock  
A.M. we were ordered to advance  
our Regt. to the main Bayou &  
support our folks by firing a  
Pontoon Bridge across the Bayou



Our Boys advanced steadily though under a  
fearfull fire of a many shell as well  
as Bullet whizzed about our throats  
day. We knew that by a signal from  
our Division which was the firing of  
12 Guns in rapid succession a  
Crossing or attack should be made  
along our whole line. The ~~Signal~~ <sup>Signal</sup> was  
given and all the Batteries opened  
such such a firing I never before  
heard it was awfull, Terrific grand  
& fearfull & from where we was engaged  
we could see De Bomeys Brigade make  
the Charge they were to make the day  
before, assisted by Blair's Brigade  
which were to do the day before  
but in vain, such were the prepara-  
tions that in less than an  
hour both were repelled with a  
loss of killed wounded & missing  
of no less than 2500 men.

We were kept under fire untill  
9 P. M. at 4 P. M. it commenced  
raining in consequence of the heavy  
artillery fire. When at 9 P. M.  
all but 100 men of our Regt were  
relieved we found our camp beds  
about half mile in the rear



The boys had scarcely laid an hour when the Rebels commenced shelling us shaming the Range of our Camp we had to change Quarters a thing we had to do twice after that having three men wounded by two shells, the rain poured down all night at about 3 o'clock P. M. I took sick and was very sick all night

Tuesday nothing of importance, the Rebels gave us privilege to come over to their line and bury or take out our dead, I went over to & I only wish I had not, Oh such horrid sights, they had stripped all our dead of everything but their shirt & Drawers. Tuesday night we were ordered to take possession of the rifle pits in front & protect a battery by throwing 5 Comps in the breastworks which our men threw up during the night, very little firing Wednesday occasional shelling but everybody asked how can we ever do anything with our force against their Gibraltar, as every morning showed us new Batteries which they had been planting



Sheet

6

Before I close I must relate a little incident that happened to me on Wednesday, I was sitting greasing my Boots which through the rain & mud had got stiff, I sat on a log where I slept the night before when a shell came & buried itself within three feet of me but fortunately did not explode had it exploded I would have made bad work of me. Wednesday night at Camp we were ordered to advance Picket our Pickets was out & it was about 8 o'clock when we received orders to evacuate then came the try of war the anxiety of mind was awful. Our Regt was to be the last Regiment to leave and our Pickets the last of all I was fearful that if the Rebels would hear our Artillery move they would make an awful attack on us by shell & otherwise & then we were to be the last. But they were not wide awake and without relating the whole, let it be enough to show that when



detachment of a Company of Picket  
arrived safely on the other side  
of the Slough my heart expanded  
& my praises went plentifully  
to the Everliving God. We were  
the last to leave the field but ar-  
rived safe at our Boat

Our Expedition is a grand  
achievement, it is said we  
are now going up the Arkansas  
River if we do I hope we  
are more successful

You must be satisfied with  
this imperfect description

Our Regt & Col French  
and myself earned a share  
of which we & our children  
can be proud

I have such a bad  
place to ~~write~~ write

God bless you

Your loving & ever true

Marcus

Spunked  
Ganey 6/63

Charley is not very well



Str. J.K. Bell opposite  
Millikens Bend La. Jan. 3/63

My dear dear good Wife!

May the year 63 be of at least as happy a turn to you as 62 and as much happier as God in his infinite mercy may bestow in answer to the sincere and warm prayers to Him offered for your welfare by your true and devoted Husband. M. M.

By the dispensations of kind providence I am again permitted to sit in my little State Room and write to you my good Wife and speak of my dear Children and kind friends even after going through a week of fearful dangers, hardships and privations more fearful than I ever dit before. Yea where death, danger & destruction raged at a furious Rate, good God permitted me to come out with out a scratch and with none greater loss than the one Spur off my Boot, my Rubber overcoat, my Pants & Coat tore to pieces in the Woods & by the Rabbid advance and excitement.

However before I go any further I would simply say if your duties in Chicago are so important or Paper, Pen & Ink so scarce that you can write so few letters & so very short ones to me, I think you had better go to Ohio, for to night our Regiment received 1100 letters and but one from



you to me and that written on half sheet, and half of that only from you. Although it was short and sweet, yet I am selfish; I want longer ones and more of it. I have written [i.e., read] that one three times & will now stop and read it again. I have done so & God bless you; it is good but I want more of it. Yet I feel happy, whereas had I not received that I would to night feel miserable.

Before I commence with a description of the Siege of Vicksburg, I will say I am happy & glad to hear of my Hamlin being such a good Son and learning so well & looking so hearty. I hope by the time I come home he can read the newspaper for his Pa in German and English. I heard to day Lizzie dit not speak out very loud in school; she must speak out well and be a very good young Lady so her Pa can feel proud of her. I am glad Mosey takes his Hair [sic] Oil so good, that is just the thing he wants. Oh but it would do my soul good to see little Hattie sit on the floor. Sarah's short Letters do me much pleasure; I hope she will continue. Why dont Michael write?

We calculate as soon as we are settled again to elect Brother Joseph as Sutler of our Regiment. Has he gone in the Oyster Business for good? While I am writing, the Ladies Cabin is occupied by the Steamboat Officers playing Poker, by our Officers reading the Papers of the 22nd in which we



got the news of Burnside's defeat; just as I always said, nobody but McClellan can lead that Army and every other General will get whipped. A Heavy Thunder Storm is raging outside, the shocks of Thunder fairly shake the earth and more especially our boat and the rain is furious. Oh how I pity the poor boys who have to stand picket. While I write I can hear the moaning of the sick which grieves me much. We have about 50 on my boat & about 200 in the whole regiment; 3 or 4 on my boat are dangerous, 15 very sick & the balance unfit for duty, but such is soldiering & such is the contract we entered into. Now for the fight. I have already given you a short sketch of what happened Friday the 26th and if I am not mistaken I think I said in that letter that the conduct of the boys of the 120th would do to bet on & I can now say I was perfectly right & their conduct for a new Regiment was never surpassed. Now my dear, if in this short description the all important I comes frequent and as also what I done, you must not think me egotistical for I know that that very particular part of it is as much interest to you than anything else done and as it is not considered for publication it can matter but little to anybody else.

Saturday [December 27] at 10 o'clock A.M. we were ordered to form close Column of Division and advance through a thicket. After throwing out skirmishers to cover our front and



flanks, we done so and advanced. (I should here say, that in my last I have told you that I had seen the Plan of Battle and that it was a gigantic movement. In that plan it was intended that not much of anything would be done before some kind of a junction with Banks and Grant could be quite or nearly made but in the meantime it is reported that the news came that General McClernand of Illinois was coming here to take Command, when General Sherman shall have said, "he would go to h--l or Vicksburg before McClernand came." Whether this be so or not, that much I do know; in less than 48 hours from the time the first plan of operation was shown, a second one was ordered changing into an immediate attack by our Army all along the line from Gaines [Haynes] Bluffs, a high fort on the Yazoo River, to Vicksburg, a distance I think of 7 miles.) Very well, as I said we advanced through the thicket and, while there to our right and somewhat in advance cannonading was briskly going on. We steadily advanced until we emerged into an open field when we deployed from close Column to battle line. By this time fighting on our right of both Musketry & Artillery was briskly and lively progressing, but only occasionally a stray shell or wandering musket ball would whizz apast our lines. We were ordered to halt & lay flat on the ground. After laying thus for about 1/2 to 3/4 of an hour our folks (Lindsays Brigade of Morgans Division)



succeeded to drive the Enemy and we had to follow up as reserve to Lindsays Brigade. Another stand was made and fighting commenced livelier than before. This continued until about an hour before night when it ceased for a short time. Then and then only dit I do anything that I would not repeat now nor hereafter. I invited several brother Officers to go up with me and see the battle field. Two of them accepted and we started to see the dead and wounded. When we came to the left of our lines we inquired for the dead and wounded, and learned they had all been carried to a white house beyond the Line. Now to get there we had to cross a high Levee or Road. Along side, (that is) behind its right Bank, lay our Soldiers with their Muskets on the Levee; on the left of it was a kind of narrow Sloughs and opposite the slough, brush and that brush full of Rebel Soldiers and if anybody has an idea that going along a Road which is probably as long as from Henry Liebensteins Store to the Sherman House, on each side loaded Muskets (though the Rebels you could not see), now if anybody thinks there is any fun in this let him try it. As I gave the invitation I dit not want to back out. I tipped my hat, gave Charley the full depth of my spurs and galloped through, ran the Gauntlet safe though a many honestly meant bullet came whizzing past me and my friends, who came along way behind as they could not catch up with



Charley. After seeing and learning our loss was about 60 in killed and wounded, we galloped back and arrived safely with our boys. I almost wished I had stayed out, for when I came out I found out that I was detailed as Brigade Officer of the day. I took a piece of cold meat & bread, all I had since morning, jumped on my horse to post my pickets; a job which took me until after 11 o'clock to post them & carry the countersign to them. When I returned I took my Blanket, wrapped myself up and laid myself besides my horse and slept like a prince until 3 o'clock A.M. [on December 28] when we were called up and stand to Arms. At about 5 A.M. the ball opened by heavy Artillery fire, where I was the night before looking at the wounded, as well as to our left (by Steele's Division), on our right by A. J. Smiths Division, and on our extreme right by Morgan L. Smith Division. I might as well stop here and give you a description of our unfortunate field of operations.

Starting from the River as we dit and marching in a kind of north Eastern direction we come after about 2 miles marching to a Bayou which runs or rather winds.

Remember I have to commence on the Sunday morning fight, the mail is going.

God bless you

Ever yours

Marcus

I have allready said to you by day break Sunday morning we all stood to Arms and as the day advanced & the Sun seemed plowing its way through a dense fog which prevented anyone of seeing his neighbor two feet from him which of course led me to the conclusion that the awful and terrific Cannonading and Musketry not far from us on our right must be a great deal of it at random. As the fog cleared away we could plainly see the smoke of the Enemies Cannons along the Hill Side and across the Bayou, playing away with a rapidity as though they meant to annihilate us but were as vigorously answered by our own. Our forces on our right slowly advanced, driving the Enemy by inches who in turn contested every inch of ground with a valor worthy of a better cause, which from the advantage of their position made it hot work for us. As our advance slowly gained Ground we followed, being the 2nd Brigade from the reserve, and when by 9 o'clock we were just in front of a Gap coming from the Hills where the Enemies Guns played furiously, we were Ordered (our Regiment) to return and file left along the bayou, take a position on the 2nd Slough from which General Morgan said, I expect a flank attack; hold that position at all hazard until relieved or reinforced. We started and as we came out of Range of the Shells & out of immediate danger, I am not ashamed to own it,



I felt for the time relieved. We made our point, deployed the Regt & laid down on the ground. Just then our boys came with a dinner of which we heartily participated, not having had any breakfast.

We had scarcely done dinner when an Aid galloped up, ordering us to the right where the ground had been stubbornly contested and the fight severely raging.

The Bugle sounded the Assembly and my boys came in. We threw them into close column by Companies and marched to Scene of Action.

As we came near, the roaring of cannon and the crackling of small Arms was furious yea terrific. The Shells busted all around us and many times they came within a very near space of Charley & myself.

General Morgan ordered us to advance to the Battery and when ordered to advance, dash furiously forward. As we came to our Battery it was perfectly awful; there were 20 of our Cannons playing with all the velocity they could & at the same time drawing all the artillery fire of the Enemy.

Our Regiment was in an awful place, and for a new Regiment behaved like Veterans and just then I became perfectly enraptured. I could talk to every one, knew the danger, but the fear of death had perfectly left me. I dashed back & forward, felt proud and was admired and applauded. Just then General

Morgan came; he had talked to Col French & came and shook hands with me & said, "Col Spiegel, I am proud of you as an Ohioan; I feel doubly proud of so gallant an officer. One more charge for the good Flag and the day is ours." By that time he told me shortly to go back a little piece, cross the Bayou & get up the Hill in the Woods & charge on the Rebel Battery, while De Courcys Brigade should charge to the right. We started and when we got across the Bayou we had to go up a straight Bank, very high, which Charley made handsomely until he got almost up the Bank to where the top bended outward & he could not make it. I jumped off, got a root, swang myself around it, taking Charley by the rein; he made a leap & cleared the Thicket when on top and as soon as our Regt reached up we formed in line, advanced our Skirmishers & cautiously felt our way, not knowing how soon we were to meet the hordes of the Enemy. The 49th Indiana had in the meantime come up & formed on our right. After advancing some 300 yards we halted & Col French & I advanced by ourself to ascertain their position using my glass. We probably only crept 100 yards when we discovered the Rebel flag, proudly waving on their rampart; we returned and advanced our Command. When our skirmishers came to the point probably where Col & I had previously been, they saw the Rebels & commenced firing; the Rebels answered with vigor. We then promptly advanced our whole line as also the 49th Indiana. The stray Bullets then



came thick and as soon as we felt the Bullets we called in the Skirmishers & went at them, Oh the noise [of] that firing I remember as long as I live. Our boys stood bully & I soon saw the Rebs were shooting too high. We fired & loaded & fired & yelled until we drove them into their Rifle pits & kept them there, thinking every minute DeCourcy would charge from below & we would have to from above but thank God he dit not charge and we dit not have to. After a fire of two hours & a half, we were relieved by Genl Frank Blair and his Brigade & we retired with the loss of 1 Officer & 11 men killed & 61 wounded in the 2 Regts. Nothing particular during the night, only cold & nothing to eat & very tired. Thus ends Sunday.

Monday Morning [December 29] opened like Sunday with heavy Cannonading; the Rebels having planted many new Batteries during the night shelled us vehemently & it became necessary to change our position. At 9 O'clock A.M. we were ordered to advance our Regt to the main Bayou & support our folks laying a Pontoon Bridge across the Bayou. Our Boys advanced steadily though under a fearful fire & a many shell as well as Bullet whizzed apast me that day. We knew that, by a signal from our Division which was the firing of 12 Guns in rapid succession, a crossing or attack should be made along our whole line. The Signal was given and all the Batteries opened. Such a firing I never before heard; it was awful,

terrific, grand & fearful & from where we was engaged we could see DeCourcy's Brigade make the charge they were to make the day before, assisted by Blairs brigade which were to do the day before, but in vain. Such were the preparations that in less than an hour both were repulsed with a loss of killed wounded and missing of no less than 2500 men. We were kept under fire until 9 P.M. At 4 P.M. it commenced raining in consequence of the heavy artillery fire; when at 9 P.M. all but 100 men of our Regiment were relieved, we found our wet Beds about half mile in the rear. The boys had scarcely laid an hour when the Rebels commenced shelling us and having the Range of our Camp, we had to change Quarters; a thing we had to do twice after that, having three men wounded by two shells. The rain poured down all night; at about 3 o'clock A.M. I took sick and was very sick all night.

Tuesday [December 30], nothing of importance. The Rebels gave us privilege to come over to their line and bury or take out our dead. I went over too & I only wished I had not. Oh such horrid sights; they had stripped all our dead of everything but their Shirt & Drawyers. Tuesday night we were ordered to take possession of the rifle Pits in front and protect a Battery by throwing 5 Companies in the Breastworks which our men threw up during the night; very little firing. Wednesday occasional shelling but everybody asked, how can we



ever do anything with our force against their Gibraltar, as every morning showed us new Batteries which they had been planting. Before I close I must relate a little incident that happened to me on Wednesday [December 31]. I was sitting greasing my Boots which through the rain & mud had got stiff. I sat on a log where I slept the night before, when a shell came & buried itself within three feet of me but fortunately did not explode; had it exploded I [sic] would have made bad work of me. Wednesday night 4 Comp were of our Regt ordered as advance Picket. Our Pickets was out & it was about 8 o'clock when we received Orders to "evacuate". Then came the tug of War, the Anxiety of mind was awful. Our Regt was to be the last Regiment to leave and our Pickets the last of all. I was fearful that if the Rebels would hear our Artillery move, they would make an awful attack on us by shell & otherwise & then we to be the last. But they were not wide awake and without relating the whole, let it be enough to know that when [our] detachment of 4 Comps of Picket arrived safely on the other Side of the slough my heart expanded & my praises went fleuently to the Everliving God. We were the last to leave the field but arrived safe at our Boat.

Our Expedition is a grand failure. It is said we are now going up the Arkansas River; if we do I hope we are more successful.

You must be satisfied with this imperfect description.

Our Regt & Col French and myself earned a name of  
which we & our children can be proud.

I have such a bad place to write.

God bless you, Your loving & ever true

Marcus

Finished

Jany 6/63

Charley is not very well.





Received of Mr. [unclear]  
[unclear] [unclear] [unclear]  
[unclear] [unclear] [unclear]

Stamun Bay West I.S.C.  
January 8, 1863  
Landed at the mouth of White  
River Ark.

My dear dear little children!  
I have very kind, loving  
and encouraging letters of the 27th  
(one with several others enclosed  
came to hand last night and I  
really think it does me more  
good than all the medicine on the  
boat could have done, it was  
a good old letter to give me much  
comfort. I have written you a long letter  
given you a partial history of the fight at  
Vicksburg, they were awful terrific but I  
suppose that ere this you have it in the  
papers, it may be that you will  
be very careful about it but whatever  
the day it was an awful defeat  
and with such wounded killed and  
wrecking I don't not but to  
do the same. I too men too for duty  
than to day we left Memphis for  
Helena, the only successful part

part of the operation was the evacuation  
of our forces and whether the success  
can be attributed to the skill of our  
Generals or the weakness of the Rebels  
is a matter to be decided by the  
Historian hereafter. I forget to say  
to you that Charley in consequence of  
hard riding and exposure but is  
better now. I also forget to say to  
you, that in the morning after the  
evacuation, the Rebels left their posts  
and we were coming marching down  
on us and I stood in the Pilot House  
of the boat and must say as they ad-  
vanced Hatch and determined they  
looked well, their skirmishes in ad-  
vance who as an officer on a horse  
raised his sword, all fired and flat  
on the ground, then Colani advanced  
within 150 yards of our boats and fired  
our boys fired, the bullets came as  
thick as hail around me as I walked  
on the American deck making my boys  
lay down and fire, we entered the Channel  
just by my head, but they got the web  
of the bargain for our gunboats which  
went up the River a piece and got to  
the Head of them and opened a destruction



[upside down text]: Adress 120<sup>th</sup> O.V.

Army Mississippi

Left Wing

Steamer Key West No. 2

January 8/1863

Landed at the mouth of White River Ark.

My dear dear Wife & Children!

Your very kind, loving and encouraging Letter of the 27<sup>th</sup> Dec with several others enclosed came to hand last night and I really think it done me more good than all the medicine on the Boat could have done; it was a good old letter & gave me much comfort. I have written you a long letter giving you a partial history of the fights at Vicksburg. They were awful terrific but I suppose that ere this you have it in the Papers. It may be that the Papers will be very careful about it but whatever they say it was an awful defeat and with sick, wounded, killed and missing, I doubt not but that to day we have 8000 men less for duty than the day we left Memphis & Helena, the only successful part of the operation was the evacuation of our forces and whether the success can be attributed to the skill of our Generals or the neglect of the Rebels is a matter to be decided by the historian hereafter. I forgot to say to you that Charley in consequence of hard riding and exposure [was sick] but is

better now. I also forgot to say to you, that in the morning after the evacuation, the Rebels left their forts and in mass came marching down on us and I stood in the Pilot House of the boat and must say as they advanced stately and determined they looked well; their skirmishers in advance who, as an Officer on a Horse raised his sword, all fired & fell flat on the ground. Their Column advanced within 150 yards of our boats and fired; our boys fired [back]. The bullets came as thick as hail around me as I walked over the hurricane deck making my boys lay down and fire; one entered the Chimney just by my head, but they got the worst of the bargain, for our Gunboats quietly went up the River a piece and got to the Rear of them and opened a destructive



Steamed Key West at 2  
Landed on the Arkansas Shore  
January 9/63

My dear dear good wife & Children!

No, I intend to keep you posted  
on the military movements of the  
Army of the "Mississippi" of which  
your "Lodge Lord" is an honorable  
member. I will again write to  
you or for him. We left the Mis. River  
this morning about 10.0. Coats started  
up White River until we came up  
to what is called the "Cut off" a  
bout 8 miles up, we left White River  
turned into the "Cut off" and  
came from that into the Arkansas  
River, traveled up Ark. River some  
50 from the mouth where we landed  
for the night. A few miles from  
here is a Rebel forte called  
Arkansas Post, renowned as  
one of the oldest Indian trading  
Post in the Union also a great



for Emmeison Permetto, "Rev.  
Hunting" stories. Coming up the  
River we received more friendly  
demonstrations from African  
Girls & Women than we received  
since we left Covington. At one  
place, there had about 10 girls con-  
gregated on Glorvach with their  
Dogs and Hamms with them  
waving their red and white Hags  
and screaming, "Hunt for the  
Yankees" from this appearance  
near as could judge them as they  
stood on the River bank, I think  
they were out hunting.

About an hour ago I was shown  
the "plan of operation" for to move  
in "talking the Rebel" job, I think  
the plan is a good one, but I  
am very slightly thinking the  
Rebels have a "plan of operation"  
also and it may in many in-  
stances not precisely agree with  
that of our Commanding General.

Now as I always like to be an  
observer with you about these matters  
I would now like to give you my opin-  
ion about to move operations



In the first place let me say to  
you that although I know but  
little of the new Commanders of this  
Army Genl. McClelland, I have  
nevertheless most implicit confidence  
in him, while for our old Commanders  
I had nothing but contempt and de-  
testation and looked upon them as  
utterly unfit to lead an Army.  
Now our folks Judge the Rebel force  
at Arkansas Post 8000 men, pretty  
well fortified with many guns  
among them two of 120 lbs Caliber  
and the plan is to surround them  
now my opinion is that if the Rebs  
had but 5000 men they will not  
stand fight to 20000 or 30000  
men with a fleet of gunboats  
to the front of them but they  
will evacuate to night, and if  
they stand fight it is evident  
to me that our General has been  
wrongly informed and he will  
not surround them as easy  
as he thought he would, but  
we will find another victory  
but at the same time I feel  
almost certain we take this point



As far as I am concerned  
I feel gay and cheerful to  
night and am ready for another  
fight, but for the sake of the  
250 sick & wounded boys & daily  
increasing & crowded on the floor  
of the Cabins of our two Boats  
I would wish this Expedition  
would soon settle down some-  
where and let the poor boys off

This thing of being crowded up  
on a boat for 3 weeks and only  
being taking off for the purpose  
of exposure of a fight is not a  
very desirable situation.

I expect to give you a long &  
elaborate history of our operations  
at Oak Post. To night it rains  
the climate is not near as warm  
as Vicksburg the air now is  
freshing. Out of our 860 men  
we took from Memphis 3 weeks  
ago we can not take over 350  
in the fight to morrow, yet most  
of them would be all right in a  
few days on "dry land" to gather  
strength. My love to the children  
and all God bless you all  
Mason



Steamer Key West No. 2

Landed on the Arkansas Shore

January 9/63

My dear dear good wife & children!

As I intend to keep you posted on the military movements of the "Army of the Mississippi" of which your "Liedge Lord" is an humble member I will again write to you a few lines. We left the Mississippi River this morning about 10 o'clock, started up White River until we came up to what is called the "Cut off" about 8 miles up. We left White River, turned into the "Cut off" and came from that into the Arkansas River, traveled up Ark. River some 50 [miles] from the mouth where we landed for the night. A few miles from here is a Rebel fort called Arkansas Post, renowned as one of the oldest Indian trading Posts in the Union, also a great [place] for Emmerson Bennetts "Bar [Bear] Hunting" Stories. Coming up the River we received more friendly demonstrations from Arkansan Gals & Women than we received since we left Covington. At one place, there had about 10 Girls congregated on Horseback with Huge Dogs and Hounds with them, waving their Red and White Hankerchiefs and screaming "hurrah for the Yankees". From their appearance as near as [I] could judge them as they stood on the River bank, I think they were out hunting.

About one hour ago I was shown the "plan of operation"

for to morrow in taking the Rebel fort. I think the plan is a good one, but I am very slightly thinking the Rebels have a "plan of operations" also and it may in many instances not precisely agree with that of our commanding General.

Now as I always like to be on record with you about these matters, I would now like to give you my opinion about to morrows operations. In the first place let me say to you that although I know but little of the new Commander of this Army, General McClernand, I have nevertheless most implicit confidence in him, while for our old Commander [Sherman] I had nothing but contempt and detestation and looked upon him as utterly unfit to lead an Army. Now our folks judge the Rebel force at Arkansas Post 8000 men, pretty well fortified with many guns, among them two of 120 pounds Caliber, and the plan is to surround them. Now my opinion is that if the Rebs have but 8000 men, they will not stand fight to 25,000 or 30,000 men with a fleet of Gunboats to the front of them but they will evacuate to night and if they stand fight it is evident to me that our General has been wrongly informed and he will not surround them as easy as he thought he would, but we will find another Vicksburg but at the same time I feel almost certain we take this point. So far as I am concerned, I feel gay and cheerful to night and am ready for another fight, but



for the sake of the 250 sick & wounded boys & daily increasing & crowded on the floor of the Cabins of our two Boats, I would wish this Expedition would soon settle down somewhere and let the poor boys off.

This thing of being crowded up on a boat for 3 weeks and only being taking off for the purpose of exposure of a fight is not a very enviable situation.

I expect to give you a long & elaborate history of our operations at Ark. Post. To night it rains; the climate is not near as warm as Vicksburg; the air more refreshing. Out of our 860 men we took from Memphis 3 weeks ago, we can not take over 350 in the fight tomorrow; yet most of them would be all right in a few days on "dry Land" to gather strength. My love to the children and all. God bless you all.

Marcus



U.S. Post Jan 12/63

The flag of the 120th was the first  
planted on the Rebel Fort

My dear dear Wife!

Yesterday was a glorious  
day, we met the enemy and  
fought them terribly & took them  
beautifully, some 700 of them  
with everything.

I am so excited to say much.  
Our Regt was the first to  
charge & we charged up to the  
ditch of the powerful fort  
& then fought them under  
the most terrific fire for  
an hour and half.

I presume I have no 2 inches  
on my whole body where the  
bullet did not whizz a pass  
me, at my head such perfect  
hailing of bullets & whizzing of  
shells, cannon balls tearing  
up the ground big enough  
to use the holes for graves  
of its unfortunate victims.  
It is perfectly awe inspiring  
terrific yet most delightfully  
glorious to get out unharmed.

For the first time my  
dear Wife let me say to  
you I believe I am a  
soldier, every inch, no fear  
perfectly cool, yet snap enough  
to encourage my men



I will only say, I have a  
good Horse (a perfect match  
to Parroffs Horse) I call him  
Jimmy, have a good Saddle  
and bridle, and a splendid  
Colts Revolver.

Our boys had 68 horses  
which we turned over.

You have no Idea of  
the Amts. of Wagons, horses,  
Mules, Ammunition, Clothing  
Commissary Stores, Cannon  
and Rifles our possession.

It is decidedly the most  
glorious and complete  
Victory of the War, with-  
out much loss.

Every thing came out perfectly  
as planned by your eff. & plan.

We can not be to thank-  
full to God for his kind  
preservation, my heart is  
to full

Ever your true  
loving husband  
Marcus

Our loss is 6 killed 27 wounded  
Ed and 9 missing

My love to my dear Child  
All



Ark. Post Jan 12/63

The flag of the 120th was the first planted on the Rebel  
Fort.

My dear dear Wife!

Yesterday was a glorious day. We met the enemy and fought them terribly & took them beautifully; some 7000 of them with every thing.

I am too excited to say much. Our Regt was the first to charge & we charged up to the ditch of the powerful fort & then fought them under the most terrific fire for an hour and half.

I presume I have no 2 inches on my whole body where the bullets dit not whizz apass me; Oh, my God, such perfect hailing of bullets and busting of shells, Cannon balls tearing up the ground big enough to use the holes for graves of its unfortunate Victims. Oh it is perfectly awe inspiring, terrific, yet most delightfully glorious to get out unhurt.

For the first time my dear Wife let me say to you I believe I am a Soldier, every inch; no fear, perfectly cool, yet snap enough to encourage my men. I will only say, I have a good Horse (a perfect match to Barcrofts Horse); I call him Linny. Have a good saddle and bridle and a splendid Colts Revolver.



Our boys had 68 horses which we turned over.

You have no Idea of the amount of wagons, horses, mules, ammunition, clothing, commissary stores, cannons and rifles our folks took.

It is decidedly the most glorious and complete victory of the War, with out much loss.

Everything came out perfectly as planned by Genl McClernand.

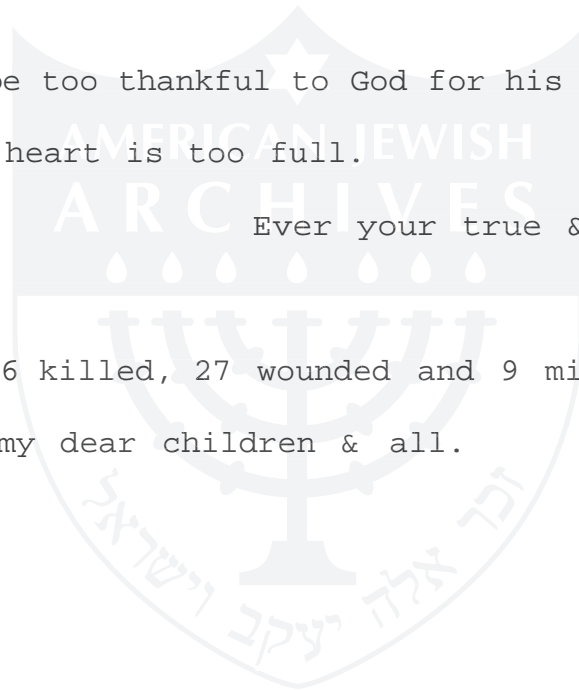
We can not be too thankful to God for his kind preservation; my heart is too full.

Ever your true & loving husband,

Marcus

Our loss is 6 killed, 27 wounded and 9 missing

My love to my dear children & all.



Ms. Gs 1204, Reg. 02.5  
Cust. Post Jan 15/63

My dear dear wife!

To day I had got  
apart for doing some tall Coors  
pending, but alas for the united  
anticipations, we have marching  
Orders. On the 13<sup>th</sup> we pitched tents  
and scarcely were they up when it  
commenced raining and poured  
down like fury until

Board Jesse H. Bell Jan 16/63

Yesterday in all the Storm we had  
to strike tents & get on board the boat.  
We are much more crowded than  
we have ever been from the fact that we  
had to take all the stuff &c of  
the Rebs as well as themselves & get  
There will probably be \$200,000<sup>00</sup> worth of  
Goods our folks can not take.

Whenever a mail comes every body  
gets letters except I and I often  
could shed tears that I get no



Hd. Qrs 120<sup>th</sup> Regt O.V.I

Ark. Post Jany 15/63

My dear dear Wife!

Today I had set apart for doing some tall corresponding,  
but alas for the ruined anticipations, we have marching  
Orders. On the 13th we pitched tents and scarcely were they  
up when it commenced raining and rained & stormed like fury  
untill



Ms. Gs 1204, Reg. 02.5  
Cust. Post Jan 15/63

My dear dear wife!

To day I had got  
apart for doing some tall cones  
pending, but alas for the united  
anticipations, we have marching  
Orders. On the 13<sup>th</sup> we pitched tents  
and scarcely were they up when it  
commenced raining and poured  
down like fury until

Board Genl H. Bell Jan 16/63

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the Rebs as well as themselves & get  
there will probably be \$200,000<sup>00</sup> worth of  
Goods our folks can not take.

Whenever a mail comes every body  
gets letters except I and I often  
could shed tears that I get no



few letters from you, but I have  
said so much about it that  
I will say no more.  
I expect we go to Viersbunz  
again. The mail boxes  
and I must close

My love to all I feel much  
better than I have for two  
weeks past and if it were not  
for a thundering big bile on  
my leg I would feel bully.

Could you not write, say one  
letter every week?  
Ever, Ever, your true  
& sincerely loving husband,  
Marcus

I expect Joseph here soon

Board Jesse K. Bell

Jan 16/63

Yesterday in all the Storm we had to strike tents & get on board the boats. We are much more crowded than we have ever been from the fact that we had to take all the stuff &c of the Rebs as well as themselves & yet there will probably be \$200,000.00 worth of Goods our folks can not take.

Whenever a mail comes, everybody gets letters except I and I often could shed tears that I get so few letters from you, but I have said so much about it that I will say no more.

I expect we go to Vicksburg again. The mail leaves and I must close.

My love to all. I feel much better than I have for two weeks past and if it were not for a thundering big bile on my leg I would feel bully.

Could you not write, say one letter every week?

Ever, ever your true  
& sincerely loving husband,

Marcus

I expect Joseph here soon.



2<sup>d</sup> Lt. Co. 120<sup>th</sup> Regt. U.S.  
Youngs Point La. Jan<sup>y</sup> 25<sup>th</sup> 1863

My dear dear much beloved and kind  
Wife, never, I think, did man love  
and increase in love towards his  
good and kind Wife more than I do.

To day I received your letter of  
the 8<sup>th</sup> inst in which you trembled in  
suspense and fear to learn of my fate.  
but thank God ere this you have learned  
of my welfare since that day I have  
passed through danger, perils, privation  
and hardships and yet with the help of  
kind Providence I am still hale, whole  
and hearty and though I have seen many  
of my Comrades deposited in the soil  
of Mis. Ark & La, many others down  
with raging fearful diseases, many of  
them mutilated and amputated  
yet the Almighty has kindly preserved  
me and let us pray that he may bless



and preserved me so that I can after  
I am through with war, live in happiness  
and peace and consummate the happiness  
and years for those whom I love so  
much may God bless and preserve you  
for me and grant me the happiness to  
assist you my lovely Wife in raising our  
dear Children in the fear of God and Est-  
imation of the world, I do want to see  
you all my dear and I am sick  
of the war and I do want to get  
out, I do not fight or want to fight  
for Lincoln's Negro proclamation and  
day longed them I can help, yet I  
do not after having undergone all the  
hardship, danger and privation of 15  
months Campaign and then leave it  
in disgrace, as soon as I can get out  
honorable I will and that may be in  
the Spring or before or not until after  
The great trouble is to get a resignation  
accepted, I can not get the Doctors  
certificate of disability for I am too  
well and such a Certificate is the



only thing that discharges a man  
I must await a favorable opportunity and do not expect to get out much before summer, Col. General having the bloody flux is making preparations to get out of the service and if so I think I will have to be out a little while before I get out. Keep up courage, trust in God and all will be right. I think'd very much of getting out before the wool season yet I am not certain whether it will do me any good.

Well I feel good and am in good health, though camped in a muddy bogfield a half mile from the great river which is rising 3 feet every 24 hours and almost up to the loaves yet I feel gay and well for I got a letter from home assuring me all is well at home and that is all I need to make me feel well. My diarrhea is all cured and I can eat like a horse



Let me just explain to you, what a  
fine Supper we had this evening and  
you will agree with me, that for men  
1600 miles from home and dead broke  
we fare fine. Bill of fare  
Coffee and Tea. Brist brits and  
soft Bread, Chicken Pot Pie (rather  
heavy) fried Pot, Dried Potatoes  
boiled and sweet Potatoes baked  
Apple pie, stewed Apples and canned  
Peaches &c is that not grand?  
A Yehudah from Memphis whose name  
I do not know, sent me yesterday  
by Capt. Canyer a Pot full of things  
and we live fine. Now about the  
situation. We are situated on  
the Louisiana side of the Miss River  
3 miles above Vicksburg our  
forces extending down about  
2 miles below Vicksburg, our  
Galle and Endeavoring to finish  
the Canal which Gen. Butler  
commenced last summer in  
order to change the direction



of the Miss. River so as to leave  
Vicksburg in the dry, whether they  
succeed or not I am unable to  
say, but I think that for the  
present there will be no immediate  
fight how soon it commences I  
know not. Dear Regiment which  
left Memphis with about 850  
men & 33 Officers 5 weeks ago  
has now about 350 men & 11 Officers  
for duty & they disheartened &  
discouraged in fact the whole  
Army is discouraged a very much  
disinterested in consequence of  
Lincoln's Proclamation  
which fell like a thunderbolt among  
the troops, I am sorry the old  
man forgot himself and that  
I had advice.

Michael I wish you could be  
here and see the workings and  
hear the Soldiers talk



My new Horse is improving he  
is not as gay as Charley which  
is all right again, but he is  
a very good & sound horse and  
I think he will make a  
splendid horse for family  
use, if God spare my health  
I mean to bring Charley and  
Jimah home with me and  
they will make us a gay team  
and let us trust that many  
may be the happy rides you  
and I will take with  
my gay and furious War  
Horses and they are so gentle  
that you can handle either.

I had a very good letter to day  
from Moses Joseph, one item of  
news is that Fred Wetack bought  
the Union Iron Tavern and will  
in the Spring commene hotel  
keeping Oh what a Lundberg  
and Lundberg. Joseph is still  
at King for Glopman & Moss



The very first chance I get I  
will buy or capture a nice little  
Pony for my son Hamlin and  
if he continues to be such a good  
son I will send it to him  
My Lizzie is a fine young Lady and I  
would very much like to see her and  
see how big she is and how many yards  
it takes of that very fine stuff that  
I am going to buy her a dress of.  
Mosey will get something very pretty  
from his papa whom I am fear  
but he will forget, but your  
sister not let him forget me  
and also learn Fattie to say  
pa as soon as she sees dit, for  
though I am not with them at  
present, my mind, my soul, my  
all is with you all the time &  
let us pray that God in His infinite  
mercy will soon bring me to you  
all and allow us for many years  
to live together in peace and happiness



To Michael far as I can not  
be so thankfull for the many  
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Ever your true &  
loving husband  
Mason



Hd Qrs 120<sup>th</sup> Regt. O.V.I.

Youngs Point La Jany 25/63

My dear dear much beloved and kind Wife, never, I think, dit man love and increase in love towards his good and kind wife more than I do.

To day I received your letter of the 8<sup>th</sup> instant in which you trembled in suspense and fear to learn of my fate but thank God ere this you have learned of my welfare. Since that day I have passed through dangers, perils, privations and hardships, and yet with the help of kind Providence I am still hale, whole and hearty and though I have seen many of my comrades deposited in the soil of Mis[sissippi], Ark[ansas] & La, many others down with raging & fearful diseases, many of them mutilated and amputated, yet the Almighty has kindly preserved me and let us pray that he may bless and preserve me so that I can after I am through with war, live in happiness and peace and consumate the happiness and peace for those whom I love so much. May God bless and preserve you for me and grant me the happiness to assist you, my lovely wife, in raising our dear Children in the fear of God and estimation of the world. I do want to see you all, my dear, and I am sick of the war and I do want to get out; I do not fight or want to fight for Lincoln's Negro proclamation one day longer than I can help, yet I do not [wish] after

having undergone all the hardship, danger and privation of 15 months campayne and then leave it in disgrace. As soon as I can get out honorable I will and that may be in the Spring or before or not until after. The great trouble is to get a resignation accepted. I can not get the Doctors certificate of disability, for I am too well, and such a certificate is the only thing that discharges a man. I must await a favorable opportunity and do not expect to get out much before summer. Colonel French having the bloody Flux [dysentery] is making preparations to get out of the service and if so I think I will have to be Colonel a little while before I get out. Keep up courage, trust in God and all will be right. I think very much of getting out before the wool season, yet I am not certain whether it will do me any good.

Well, I feel good and am in good spirits, though camped in a muddy cornfield a half mile from the great Mis[sissippi] River which is raising 3 feet every 24 hours and almost up to the levee; yet I feel gay and well for I got a letter from home assuring me all is well at home and that is all I need to make me feel well. My diareheah is all cured and I can eat like a horse. Let me first explain to you, what a fine Supper we had this evening and you will agree with me, that for men 1600 miles from home and dead broke we fare fine. Bill of



fare: Coffee and Tea. Buisquits and soft Bread; Chicken Pot Pie (rather heavy), fried Pork, Irish Potatoes boiled and sweet Potatoes baked, Apple pie, stewed Apples and canned Peaches &c; is that not grand? A Yehudah from Memphis whose name I do not know sent me yesterday by Capt Conyer a Box full of things and we live fine. Now about the situation. We are situated on the Louisiana side of the Mis[sissippi] River, 3 miles above Vicksburg; our forces extending down about 2 miles below Vicksburg. Our folks are endeavoring to finish the Canal which Genl Butler commenced last summer in order to change the direction of the Mis[sissippi] River so as to leave Vicksburg in the dry. Whether they succeed or not I am unable to say, but I think that for the present there will be no immediate fight; how soon it commences I know not. Our Regiment, which left Memphis with about 850 men & 33 officers 5 weeks ago, has now about 350 men & 11 officers for duty & they disheartened & discouraged in fact the whole Army is discouraged and very much dissatisfied in consequence of Lincoln's Proclamation which fell like a thunderbolt among the troops. I am sorry the old man forgot himself and took such bad advice.

Michael, I wish you could be here and see the workings and hear the Soldiers talk.

My new Horse is improving; he is not as gay as Charley

which is all right again, but he is a very good & stout horse and I think he will make a splendid horse for family use. If God spares my health I mean to bring Charley and Linnah home with me and they will make us a gay team and let us trust that many may be the happy rides you and I will take with my gay and furious War Horses and they are so gentle that you can handle either.

I had a very good letter today from Moses Joseph, one stern of news is that Fred Wettach bought the Union Town and will in the spring commence hotel keeping. Oh what a landlord and landlady. Joseph is still clerking for Hoffman & Moss.

The very first chance I get I will buy or capture a nice little Pony for my son Hamlin and if he continues to be such a good Son I will send it to him. My Lizzie is a fine young Lady and I would very much like to see her and see how big she is and how many yards it takes of that very fine stuff that I am going to buy her a dress of. Mosey will get something very pretty from his papa whom I am fearful he will forget, but you must not let him forget me and also learn Hattie to say Pa as soon as the rest dit, for though I am not with them at present, my mind, my soul, my all is with you all the time & let us pray that God in his infinite mercy will soon bring me to you and allow us for many years to live together & peace and happiness.

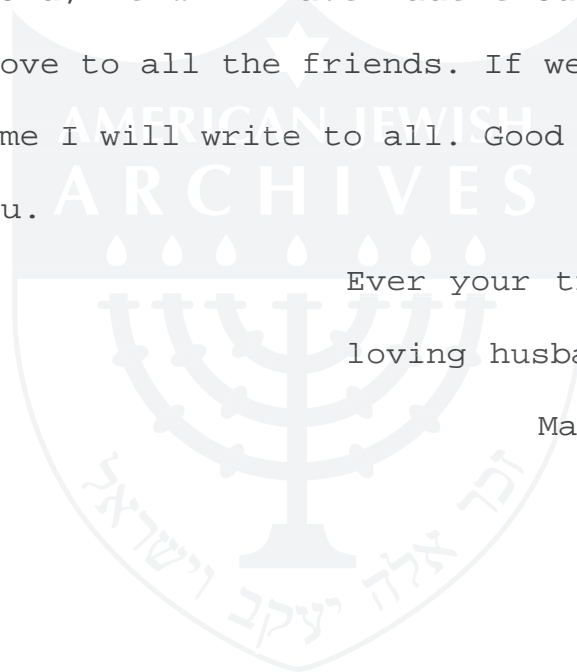


To Michael and Sarah I can not be too thankful for the many acts of kindness shown daily to my dear family, may God bless them. To day I got A. Ruhman a place as Clerk on General Osterhauses Staff; he feels bully. I am looking daily for Joseph or a letter from him. I hope he will come; if he does it will pay. If he has not started yet and intends to come, tell him not to bring over \$1000 worth of stock and after that is sold, he will have made enough to buy from the profit. My love to all the friends. If we stay here and have a little time I will write to all. Good night, God bless and preserve you.

Ever your true &

loving husband

Marcus



of course not heard from family

Head Quarters 120<sup>th</sup> Regt. U.S.  
Youngs Point La January 29<sup>th</sup> '63

My dear kind and good wife!

Your very kind and affectionate  
Letter of the 19<sup>th</sup> inst was received yesterday  
and since that time read and read with  
much pleasure and comfort and I am happy  
to be able to pronounce it an O. K. 1  
Letter after my own heart. I should have an-  
swered yesterday but had no time and to day  
I have been busy this forenoon and this  
afternoon I had visitors and it is only  
now 9 o'clock P. M. that Lieut DeSilva  
of the 16<sup>th</sup> Ohio, who came from Columbus yes-  
terday left about 20 minutes ago.

Your kind letters always give me new  
life and it always seems to me shortly after  
I get a letter from you, "soldiering is not so  
hard after all". We are still camped at the  
same place described to you in my letter  
a few days ago, but a great change has  
taken place since, the rainy and disagreeable  
weather changed day before yesterday in  
a cold afternoon & a clear cold night



and yesterday noon the sun came out  
bright and clear and we had a splendid  
day and to day likewise, most magnificent  
weather, delightful indeed, the wind is fast  
dying off and the boys are beginning to  
feel better and many of those who  
have not been so far gone are beginning  
to feel the benificent & wholesome influence  
of a warm southern Sun in January.

The greatest enemy we have at present  
to contend with is the <sup>Miss</sup> Ohio River, it  
is rising fast and in many places is over  
flooding its banks should it continue to  
to rise and soften or break any part  
of the Levee we would have to skedaddle  
or swim. The Canal built for the pur-  
pose of changing the Ohio Mis. River is  
filling up but not washing very fast &  
I don't very much reckon it will ever  
change the course of the, Father of Waters.

There have been several changes of late  
in our Army, our Brigade is now commanded  
by Brig. Genl. Vandever of Iowa in place  
of Col. Sheldon relieved, our new Brigadier  
seems a very clever fellow, I am not much  
acquainted with him yet, our old Brig.  
Col. Sheldon was a very clever fellow, would  
do anything and everything for me



but in a fight he was the very man  
to select as an associate, for you would  
be sure of being out of reach of the bullets  
and yet <sup>with</sup> all the Army could you find  
a man bolder and more daring before and  
after a fight, than our old Brigadier.  
He has gone back in honor to his old  
Regiment, the 42nd Ohio.

Our Division is commanded by Brig.  
Genl. P. J. Stehans, a German who  
is a Soldier and a gentleman and  
treats me with marked kindness and  
respect. Our Corps was until today  
commanded by acting Major General  
G. W. Morgan of Kenton Co. Ohio, a  
splendid man & brave Soldier, he was  
a warm friend of mine and I am truly  
sorry he asked to be relieved from  
command which was done today and  
Brig. Genl. A. J. Smith succeeds him  
in the command. Morgan is quite un-  
well, but I think it is General Sherman's  
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mand. Brig. Genl. A. J. Smith is said  
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fellow, but to me the loss of Morgan  
is more unpleasant than anything I





[upside down text]: I suppose I've started before this,  
though I have not heard from him yet

Head Quarters 120<sup>th</sup> Regt. O.V.I.

Youngs Point La January 29/63

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beginning to feel better and many of those who have not been too far gone are beginning to feel the benificent & wholesome influence of a warm Southern Sun in January.

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I am under many obligations to Brother Goodman and his dear wife for the many acts of kindness shown you. How can I ever repay them? Give them my best wishes and tell the Professor I will write to him in a few days. To Michael & Sarah & all the children my love as well as to Henry Theresa & the children.

[text in German]..

Onkle Grumpel & familie, Alls Greenebaum & Ladies, Leopold Mayer & family, Hoeneman & Hart Brothers, Gatzler & family & all all &



last not but least Hamlin, Lizzie, Mosey, Hattie & Elizabeth  
from your ever true loving father & husband

Marcus

