

3-8-1865

## Richard Baxter Foster Letter to his wife March 8 1865

Richard Baxter Foster

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order that it may go.

I do not forget my dearest that it is ten years ago today that you and I were married. Do you?  
I do not forget our side that day. I do not forget that at this time of night that day I was at a Temperance meeting leaving you alone during the evening an act that I was always ashamed of, and that I would not be guilty of tonight if I could join you. The speaker that night was McFarland afterwards Lieut Col of the 19<sup>th</sup> Iowa and he nobly gave his life to the country at Prairie Grove Dec 7 1862 the very Sunday that I first joined the 1<sup>st</sup> Regt at Patterson Mo. Peace to his ashes and let his name be held in deathless remembrance. But as for us dearest love. do we love each other better now than we did 10 years ago? I need not ask the question. From the distance of 3000 miles our spirits flash to each other the answer that we do a thousand fold. I say a thousand fold and mean all of it. Even our separation since Nov 20 1862 (except those 15 days of low and joy in Jan) has not diminished but increased our love. Can we not feel a well grounded confidence now that our love can sustain all shocks and all dangers, and can survive any unfavorable circumstances?  
I cannot I must not on this anniversary night of our I never forget the dear children.

Brazos Santiago Texas  
March 8. 1866

Dearest Lucy,

It is somewhat discouraging to attempt to write letters home, or any where else since my return to my post for there seems to be no mail to carry them. No mail has arrived at this Post since I came here. One went out one day on the Skirmisher and I had one long letter in it. I had another letter just finished but just missed the connection. There is no possibility now of making any guess when another mail will be in or a chance to send letters out. Meanwhile all I can do is to write letters occasionally and wait patiently for a chance to send them.

The Commission that I asked for as soon as I got here to investigate my stay, met yesterday. It was charged with the investigation of Col Brown's case as well as mine. They took our testimony in the forenoon and were to meet in the afternoon to form an opinion on the facts. I have not heard yet what report they concluded to make, but from what they said to me and the opinions they seemed to hold I judge that their report will be favorable. I do not expect to lose any pay for absence without leave. Though I suppose I will lose half my



pay. for one week for being absent "with  
leave" that much more than 30 days  
in one year. According to existing orders  
if an officer is absent more than 30 days  
in any one year except for sickness. though  
his absence may be justifiable he loses half his  
pay for the time over 30 days. The order is  
unjust and is only another instance when  
we in the West who never ask for a leave  
but once in 3 years suffer for the faults  
of officers in the East who censure one  
way and another to stay at home half  
of the time.

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I am enjoying myself now very well. Just  
at this time my duty is lighter than it ever ~~was~~  
has been before since I have been an officer.  
If it continues this way I am going to find  
a substitute for hard work to keep me  
from being homesick by studying. There are  
a good many books in the regiment  
and among others we have the last edition  
of Webster's Dictionary bought with regimental  
fund and of course belonging to the regiment.  
I have been studying it nearly all day except  
when drilling and it makes my head ache  
to find so many things in it that I want  
to learn. When I tell you and my boys to im-  
prove every chance to learn. I only ask you  
to do what I intend to do myself.

The fact that in the judgment of the same  
Board I had improved in 18 months from the  
qualifications of Second Class first Lieutenant to

those of first Class Major shows that I  
had done something. I had to work too  
hard last summer to have any chance to  
study, and do not know now what I  
may have to do this, but if I can I shall  
study a good deal. I am also teaching  
a school of the Sergeants and Corporals  
of the Company about one hour each day.  
I take great pleasure in that. The men are  
very much interested, and thank me every  
night for the lesson. I never saw a body  
of men so anxious to learn as our regiment  
now are. I wish father could be among  
them. I think he would find himself more  
at home than he is in at saw-mill, and  
enjoy himself better.

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Several of the younger officers of the regiment  
also are studying and have spoken to me to  
hear them recite Arithmetic, History, Geography,  
Grammar & Algebra, which I am glad to do  
for the sake of reviewing these studies myself.

As for this new Dictionary of Webster  
I shall buy it and send to you when I  
can get a chance and you have a  
home so that you can take care of it.  
The drum is beating for dress parade I  
must quit now and after dress parade  
supper & school.

9 o'clock P.M. I am informed that the  
Steamer that Genl. Wallace is on will go  
tomorrow and that she will take the  
mail. so I hasten to finish this letter in