

Richard Baxter Foster Letters to his Wife

[All indentions are meant to reflect those found in the original letter.]

Brownsville Texas

July 8, 1865

My Darling Wife,

A mail came in today bringing me your letter of June 11 (in 27 days) and one from father mailed at Plum Hollow a few days sooner and one from Ella which I will enclose with this as I have got one ten cent stamp. Some officers got letters from home as late as June 18, but though I generally have news as late as any of them fortune did not favor me quite so far this time.

I am greatly pleased that you got the \$150 safely and think that was a better way than to send by Express. I paid \$4 last fall for \$100 to be expressed home.

I hope you will make yourself comfortable if you can possibly do so that is if I send home money enough. You have had hard enough time while I was getting little pay and if I knew you was comfortable I should not so much mind being away from you. Still I do not think my duty to my country requires me to stay in the army now any longer [] till I can get an honorable discharge or muster out. I shall act on that principle and come home as soon as that will bring me. I do not see how I can go however till I am paid again. The government owes me today about \$600. I cannot go home a distance of 3000 miles without money. When an officer

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resigns he never receives pay till his accounts are settled, which have to go to Washington. I have abandoned all hope that any consolidation, or any other chance of going out ~~my~~ by muster out on account of orders will let me get home by the 1st of October. I intend to offer a resignation in time to get home by then if it is accepted and if it is not I shall try again for a leave of absence, but my chance for that will be poor as there are offices who have had none yet who of course would not be willing to give way for me.

Under all these circumstances while I mean to be with you if possible, I would still advise you to be prepared to do the best you can without me if I cannot come.

Father writes to me that he could have sold the Salt Creek Claim on the [echool] section for one thousand dollars but does not think he could do it now. It is my strong impression from the facts I learned in January that I would rather have had \$1000 [t_] and gone into Mo. with it than the property on Salt Creek and I still feel favorable to finding a location in Mo when I go home if it will suit all round. I would want you as much suited as my self I would greatly desire that father & mother would be suited with the same locality and settle in the same neighborhood. In fact I am not afraid of having too many friends

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round in a new country or any where else.

Your ~~by~~ buying a house in Tabor does not interfere with this view of the case at all. My length of stay in the army was and is uncertain. A house for you was indispensable, and could be obtained no other way. If at some future time we should want to sell it is highly profitable

we could get as much as we gave in which case house rent is free. If we get more it so much gain: if less so much for house rent. That is the way I reason about it and at any rate the present need of a house is certain and pressing the future need of emigrating to Missouri uncertain and not yet pressing.

If Sid wants to go into Missouri with a mill and location and every thing else suits I would be willing to help him in any capacity that would be feasible, I would rather work about a mill than on a farm and I think that a dozen of our old soldiers would be glad to settle [] we who would always furnish as good lands for the mill as could be desired. I have made some inquiries through Charley Bonsall of a company of which his brother is partner of the cost of a new mill in Salem Ohio. I send the card and letter of the Co. in this. You will please show them to Sid and father.

My health continues perfectly good and I throw the cannon ball 3 or 4

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or 4 times a day till my arm gets lame.

A sort of epidemic fever is now prevailing quite extensively and seems to affect white men more than black. No case of it has been fatal and it usually runs its course in a short time: but it is attended with very severe pain – hence the name “bone-break” fever – and leaves the subject very weak. Col Barrett has had it. [R_] has got it Coffin and Parsons are getting over it. Dr Allen is down with it. Owing to this and so many officers on special duty we are very scarce of officers. This morning report only showed 3 company officers for duty. 1 Captain 1 first & 1 second Lieut. Two officers returned to the regiment today from leaves of absence. One of them Kantrenon will go to Post Headquarters tomorrow.

I am enjoying myself very well. I don't work hard I won't do that I have no doubt I enjoy better health than if I lost sleep on ground. The guard now is principally to keep order in town but it comes about as hard on us as ever. Three times yesterday and today a detail has been sent for an officer to this regt when we had none to furnish but was already on duty. I saw Ed Hills letter in the Glenwood Opinion written from Washington. Is Ed going to marry Mattie? If you and [] and Emma have good luck mother will think 1865 is a good year for grandchildren. I shall think it is a good year for Baxter if he gets home.

Good bye. Baxter