

Letter from Andrew David Blood to John Wesley Blood

Note: Original letter was written with lead pencil and the blank spaces are places where the words were so badly erased by time that they could not be transcribed. Andrew would have been 28 years old and was discharged less than 6 months after the letter was written. The letter was transcribed by Audrey M. Waite who has possession of the original which appears to be a piece of wrapping paper that is about 18 inches by 24 inches.

Savannah, Ga., Jan. 1st 1865

Brother Wesley:

It is with pleasure that I sit me down to address you again. My letter will be brief as you will observe that I have but little room on this small sheet. To begin with, I will wish you and all of our folks, a happy New Year and also all of the friends of mine that are there at our home tonight. One thing I wish you all to understand that I have not paper to write upon but I thought I would take a sheet of some size, therefore I will use this. Well the arrived in which, if I live, that I am coming home, a place where I shall be willing to stay and go to the no more if all is well, the ninth month of this year I will be seated with friends around the telling them where I have been and through what dangers I have passed. Would that I were there tonight instead of the beautiful city of Savannah. Beautiful did I say? It is a most splendid place. I have been all over it. It has some beautiful monuments, one is a fine affair I tell you, then it has a splendid fountain in the city park, the city is filled with shade trees; the principal ones being live oak, Sycamore & magnolia, they are handsome and they to the place also neat and large. There is at present but little business being transacted here at the present but it will all be in running order and going on the same as this exception, it was run before by rebels and now by Yankees, as the deacon said "a slight" I want to say I thank God for that difference. Yes Wesley, we are drawing this war to a close..... as our armies can march over it. My opinion is, it is at its death throes months more and they will be dead and peace will reign through this fair land from ocean to ocean and from North to South. Then we can return to our homes and friends to join with them their joys and sorrows.

When peace comes again to our distracted country it will be the happiest day that you brother can march home to meet his parents, his brothers and sisters. When the husband and father can meet his long cherished wife and little ones. When the young man meets her whom he has just joined in the holy bonds of matrimony, and leave her, his darling, to save his country. And last though not least when the lover marches home to the fair lady whose heart has been enshrined within his own for years, when this takes place it will be the happiest day that man ever saw.

This morning at half past ten, I went down to the city to the

Presbyterian Church and heard a very good sermon preached by what I suppose was a rebel until our entrance to the city. He was the regular Pastor of the church, his text was a part of the eleventh verse of the fifth chapter of St. James. He was a good speaker and he spoke well, but he did not have a word to say, either in his sermon or his prayers about Old Abe or any of his soldiers and I can tell you there was a host of soldiers there and some pretty prominent ones, one of which was Major General Sherman and there was one more and that was I. This Presbyterian Church is a large one and a beautiful one. It was crowded full today, all that could be seated. I have also been down to the city this evening to the Baptist Church, an other large and beautiful one, heard another very good sermon by the pastor of the church, his text to be found in Matthew the seventh chapter and the thirteenth and fourteenth verses.

Now please tell me where and what you have been doing today. You have doubtless been in company with some nice young lady. That priveledge has been denied me this year but I do not believe that if I live it will be the next. Are you going to the Academy this fall? You wrote me before I left Atlanta that should go since which I have not heard whether you did or not. One thing I would like to ask and that is have you all forgot that I am off down here in Ga. I should at least think that is the case for I have not heard from you in a long time. One thing more, did my vote get home in time for the election? If so, what did the copperheads have to say. Well Wesley since it is New Years I shall have to tell you what I have had to eat and if you can beat it you can tell me in your next. For breakfast, wheat and Indian pancakes, pork, coffee and sugar. For dinner, Indian meal, coffee and sugar and hard tack, for supper, hard tack, coffee and sugar, so if you will squint close you will see quite a variety, but after all I hardly think it was quite as good as my old mother would have done by me if I could have been there, nor as good as Lydia would have done and still another, I have a faint idea that could I have been with Miss. Fannie today that I should have had better fare than I did here and one thing I do know if I was with that fair lady tonight that I should enjoy myself far better than I do here. I do not wish to have you infer, by what I have said that I am having the worst time in the world, for I am not. Our Regiment is encamped in the city parage grounds just outside the city park. Our duty for the present is provost duty in the city and my being sergeant, I am not called upon very often and therefore as far as I am personally concerned, my duty is very slight. It is about half past ten in the evening and I am seated at my fireplace a writing this short epistle to you. My house is about eleven feet long and eight feet wide, is about five feet to the eaves, is covered with a shelter tent, has got a good bunk in it for three of us to sleep in, has three stools, a table, shelves that answer all purposes for a buttery and some tin plates and cups, with a good birch fireplace with an oven in the bottom for baking purposes. I believe this gives you a pretty good view of the situation. One thing though you have failed to see and that is blankets to cover us nights. All we have got to cover us nights is our overcoats and rubber blankets but it is not as cold

here as it is there for as yet the ground is not frozen and we have not seen any snow yet this winter nor do I believe we shall. It is so warm here that there are lots of flies in my shanty. I will bid you good night and I guess you will think it time when I tell you that I began this sheet since dark and have been to the city to an evening meeting.

Tuesday morning, Jan. 3rd. Again I resume my pen or pencil, rather. We have just begun to fortify the city. I was out on detail yesterday. They are building some as large fortifications around this city as you or (I might almost say) anybody else ever saw, to give you a slight insight, I would say that the bottom of the works are thirty feet thick and they are to be from ten to twelve feet high. The ditch in front twelve feet wide and as many deep. These works are to be filled with heavy calibre guns and you can judge what kind of a thing it would be for an enemy to assault. A small force you will readily discover will be able to hold it.

My bunk mate is Franklin J. Crick and George P. Brown. And now for a little piece of news, George is a black Republican now, until a short time previous he was a McClellanite. I will tell you how he came to get converted. The day that we came into the present camp we was rather short of provisions, and George thought he would go to one of the houses and see if he could buy something, accordingly he started and it appears the first one he run into was a family that previous to our arrival were slaves. He went in and found them almost as white as any of us. Presently there was a young lady entered the room, he inquired if he could get a cake baked there, they told him he could and they went right to work to get it and while they were to work he talked with them, and they told him that they had fed lot of our prisoners and had helped them to get away and so on. When the cake was done he offered to pay them and they would not take a cent for it. The young woman, was about sixteen years old, and very good looking and as white as I am. George came back to camp and here is what he said, Says he, Blood, I went away a Democrat but I have come back an abolithionist, when says he, that a party ask me to vote for to enslave such a people as the young lady I have seen today then, says he, I cease to be one of their number any longer. Says he, I shall vote the ticket no more.

And now for a short account of our march from Atlanta to this place. We started from Atlanta, Tuesday, Nov. fifteenth and went just outside the town and there waited for the wagon train to get straightened out and then went on and stopped that night about one mile from Stone Mountain.

Wednesday Nov. 16 Broke camp this morning at seven o'clock and marched somewhere in the neighborhood of twelve miles. The weather was very good as yet we have not found any thing of any consequence to forage.

Thursday Nov 17, Broke camp this morning at six o'clock and soon after starting I was put on the flanks in charge of five men to

keep a sharp lookout so to not get surprised by the enemy as our road runs through a valley and it would be an easy matter for the enemy if they so disposed to charge on our train. We were out until noon and while out there we shot a turkey and took it to camp and it was the fattest one I ever saw. Part of the time we were out a quarter of a mile from the road and part of the time a mile. We passed through one of the prettiest cotton fields today that I have ever seen. We have had a hard march. It is said that we have made twenty miles today.

Friday Nov. 18th. Broke camp this morning at five o'clock and soon came to a little town by the name of Social Circle. I tell you this before the war to all appearances was an aristocratic place. The boys made a break for a store there was here and it was laughable to see them come out, some with their cups full of sorghum and some with their hands full, etc., etc.,

Sat. Nov. 19th. Started on again this morning at five o'clock and passed through a place called Madison. This is a beautiful place and as I said about Social Circle, it has been and perhaps is now a very aristocratic place here. George Brown got him a negroe and he staid with the company until we got almost through when he was turned over to the Government. Our Division was detailed to go off by itself for the purpose of destroying the Rail Road and all Government property that we can find. Stopped tonight on the farm of a Confederate Government contractor and I tell you it was enough to make a cat laugh to see the boys after his hogs, hens, sheep, potatoes, turnips and finally every thing else that they wanted. There was but little restriction put up on the men. I should think we killed from twenty-five to forty of his hogs and his other things went in the same proportion and when we left the next morning we burnt his cotton houses and Gin and a large amount of corn that he had gathered together for the rebels. We also destroyed the rail road that runs past him to Augusta.

Sunday Nov. 20th. Started out again this morning at eight o'clock. It has been a bad day but for all of this we can take the sweet potatoes and pork if it does rain. We, along about these days lived well I can tell you give me some sweet potatoes and fresh pork and I shall risk but that I shall get along all right. It has rained pretty much all day. Stop at night at a small place where there is a Confederate Gov't tannery. Stay here all night and in a very pretty piece of woods and the next morning set fire to the tannery and all cotton and cotton gin and then resume our journey.

Monday Nov. 21. Started out this morning at eight o'clock and struck the Milledgeville rail road. It has rained pretty hard all the forenoon. Stop for dinner at an old planters and his things had to suffer I can tell you. Took a Rebel Colonel while here. Do not stop here but a short time and then resume the march again and march until after dark when we camp for the night.

Tuesday Nov. 22nd. Broke camp this morning at eight o'clock then we stop three quarters of an hour for dinner and then go on and

stop about five o'clock outside of the town of Milledgeville and form out Co's and march through the Capital of the State of Georgia. We passed through this place by Co. front. I have seen a great many places that was handsomer than this but there is some pretty buildings. The State house is a good one or I should say was a good one. The Milledgeville Hotel is a big one I can tell you. We marches through the city and stopped about a mile from town and go on picket.

I do not know as anything has transpied worthy of note therefore pass this day over.

Thursday Nov. 24th 1864. Break camp this morning at seven o'clock and was until noon getting out of the city on the account of waiting for the waggon trains to get out of our way. We march until three P.M. before we stop for dinner and then we have one hour to cook our potatoes and pork, have to get our wood, build our fire and get our water, then cook and eat and whether you believe it or not a man has got to get around about as fast as he knows how. Go on and stop at ten at night. I can tell you the eatables have to suffer in our locality were ever we go. We are having the very best of weather. As yet we have not found any of the rebels.

Friday Nov. 25, 1864. Start this morning at eight o'clock and march through a splendid country until noon when we stop for dinner. The rebels are in our front as we can hear them skirmishing pretty sharp out in the swamp that is right ahead of us. They have burned the bridges that have crossed the swamp. We do not move again until dark. We are waiting for the Engineers to repair the road so that we can get across. At dark we start and cross the swamp. There are nine good sized bridges in the space of a mile. We went about two miles before stopping for the night. Camp of a steep side hill.

Saturday Nov. 26th, 1864 Started this morning at six o'clock and went very slow as our forces are a skirmishing with the enemy. They are driving them right along as though they were so many sheep. We don't make but six miles until noon. Stop for dinner at a little town called Sandersville. It is a very pretty place. Stop here a couple of hours and then resume our march. Go about six miles and camp for the night on the rail road. You will at once percieve that this on his side is nothing more nor less than a memorandum of our march from Atlanta and when I began it I intended to have given it all the way through, thinking perhaps it would be a little interesting to you but as I have only a half sheet of this small paper I shall have to wait until I can get hold of a sheet of suitable size and then I will finish it. I am forced to close for the want of room. I remain as ever, A.D. Blood to J.W. Blood.

P. S. I would thank you for some postage stamps. Please tell all the family to write and also my friends if any.

N. B. I have not received a letter from any of you at home for a long time.