

William W. Bentley letterMS.0117

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1862 June 13

Title Statement

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

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Unit ID

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Unit Date

1862 June 13

Language

English .

Creator

Bentley, William W. (William Weldon), 1839-1924

Extent

1 items

Physical Location

Manuscripts stacks

Repository

Virginia Military Institute Archives

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

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Biographical / Historical

William Weldon Bentley was born in 1839 in Montgomery County, Virginia. He graduated from VMI in 1860. During the Civil War he served as a Lieutenant Colonel with the 24th Virginia Infantry Regiment. Following the War, he was farmer and stock breeder. Bentley died on July 23, 1924 in Richmond, Virginia and is buried in Hollywood Cemetery, Richmond.

Scope and Contents

This collection consists of one letter from William W. Bentley to his mother (dated June 13, 1862). The letter discusses his feelings about war, his comfort given by his belief in God, and life in camp.

Keywords

Confederate States of America. Army—Virginia Infantry Regiment, 24th
Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1860
United States—History—Civil War, 1861-1865—Personal narratives—Confederate
Correspondence

Description of Subordinate Components

Letter to mother

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5415

Unit Date 1862 June 13

Language English.

Scope and Contents

Written from "Camp near Richmond," Virginia. Letter discusses his feelings about war, his comfort given by his belief in God, and life in camp.

Keywords

Confederate States of America. Army—Virginia Infantry Regiment, 24th
Correspondence
Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1860
United States—History—Civil War, 1861-1865—Personal narratives—Confederate

Transcription

Camp near Richmond June the 13th 1862

My Dear Mother Your affectionate letter of the 7th inst was received on the 9th (last Monday) whilst I was at Mr. Robertson's. I had written to Lucie the day before or I should have answered your dear letter sooner. I came out to camp day before yesterday (Wednesday the 11th). I never fared better from home anywhere than I did at Mr. Robertson's. He & Mrs. Robertson were very kind & attentive & they both protested very much against my coming out so soon. I am in some better health than I was sometime before I got unable to attend to duty but I am still unable to stand much fatigue which is incident to our hard life.

Oh that God would in His infinite goodness bring about a speedy peace. My prayers are earnest & oft repeated to Him who ruleth for support & deliverance in these troublous & turbulent times. The clouds seem to thicken & grow darker & friends & comrades in arms are going to their long homes. May God make me thankful that I am still spared when so many have fallen. Oh! My Dear Mother you do not know how my heart aches & how sad I feel when I think that I may never see you all again on earth, & that my body may not rest under the sod of my own dear home but may be left to moulder on the field probably with the bodies of the wicked invaders.

The mortality in this division has been very great in the late engagements, particularly among the officers. Everything is managed so badly when going into battle. At the battle of Williamsburg poor Willie Radford & myself stemmed the torrent of missiles with not more than eight or ten of our company & some time we were not supported by any company in the Regt. I will endeavor to do my duty & may it be the will of Almighty God to spare me to see the independence of my country achieved. I derive great comfort from the precious promises of Our Lord & Savior. May God give me faith to sustain me under every trial & to feel full assurance of His Favor in this life & in the world to come.

I feel very anxious to hear from Dear Kent. I sincerely hope he is at home by this time. I wrote a long letter to Grandpa a few days ago. You said in your letter that [he] had started Dr. Otey down here. I have not seen or heard any thing of him--suppose he did not come. Kent did not tell you, from what you said in your last letter, that those handkerchiefs were for you & sisters. I did not want them & got them for you. When I left home last you asked me to get some & send them back from Richmond which I could not do at that time with safety. I have as many clothes as I can take care of & as many as I need. I gave Kent two hundred & fifty dollars when he was down here. I would be very glad to hear that he was at home & that his substitute had been received.

Genl Jackson has been very successful in the valley in spite of the Yankee combinations to catch him. He is the Christian Patriot. In all his official dispatches he attributes his success to the blessing of God.

The weather for the last day or two has been exceedingly warm. We are now encamped three or four miles from the city with our bivouac nearly in the bogs & swamps. We are held in a constant state of readiness to meet or attack the invader. The men have orders to sleep on their arms. Provisions are very scarce and very indifferent. I get a little coffee by paying two dollars a pound & sixty five cents a pound for bacon. I fared well (after I got so that I could eat something) at Mr. Robertson's. I never drank better coffee anywhere. Mr. Christian advised me to not even offer him pay--that it might offend him. He made me promise to come back if I got sick again & said I must come to see him whenever I could get out of camp.

I must close hoping that I can write you often until I can return in peace to my dear home. God grant that it may be so. Give much love to my dear sisters & my dear brother whom I trust is with you. Remember me kindly to Miss Vic. Do not allow yourself to feel too much anxiety for me my Dear Mother. I have committed myself to the keeping of my God & I pray earnestly that I may be held up under all circumstances by His omnipotent arm. May the blessing of God rest upon us all & bring us together in health is the daily & earnest prayer of you devoted & affectionate son, Wm. W. Bentley