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**LETTER FROM WILL TO MA, 1864**

The letter is from Will, on picket near Bermuda Hundred [VA], 9 Aug. 1864, to his mother, name & place unknown. He lists clothing left behind in Richmond and mentions washing clothes and buying vegetables. He further tells of hearing the explosion of a torpedo in the James River while writing this letter.

A Charles Hamner is mentioned as receiving a food box from home which he shared with Will. Charles Daniel Hamner, a Lynchburg resident, was a lieutenant in Company G of the 11th Virginia Infantry at the time of the writing of the letter.

Will mentions in the letter that his mother is to send future mail to Terry's Brigade, rather than Kemper's. During the time that the 11th Virginia was encamped at Bermuda Hundred, William R. Terry was promoted to brigade commander.

The letter was written in pencil. A typescript copy of the letter is included.

SOURCE: Bell, Robert T. *11<sup>th</sup> Virginia Infantry*. Lynchburg, VA: H.E. Howard, Inc., 1985.

On Picket Near Bermuda Hund  
August 19th, 1864

Dear Ma

I received your letter of 5th on yesterday and hasten to reply to show you how much it is appreciated. It is the first real long letter I have received from you for a long, long time, and I assure you that it gives me the greatest pleasure imaginable to get such.

The author you quote from in reference to a soldier's hardships is entirely mistaken when he says they receive the merest pittance in return. The fact that he is doing his duty to his country is in itself sufficient pay, and then these privations are made pleasures then he knows that they are for those he loves better than self and that they love and honour him the more for it. --and again, in your letter you seem to think -- after reading William Milton -- that you have in some way neglected to bring up us children in the proper manner. You should not do so. You have done your duty in the sight of God and if the tree (as they often with the best of training do, but I pray Heaven we may prove exceptions) should prove knotted and bent, it is no fault of yours but their own, and God alone thro their hearts can make them straight.

You wish to know what clothing I left in Richmond. I left 1 Grey Jacket, 1 pr. Blue pants, 1 Calico & 1 Marsailes Bossom shirt, 2 pr. Socks & 2 pr. drawers, 2 Collars & 2 cravat with a little paper of those buttons that Jim sold me in the bottom drawer of the beaureau up stairs in the room for guests, and 1 Black Jacket, 1 pr. Grey pants, drawers, 1 shirt (cotton) and some smoking tobacco in a Knapsack with my overcoat & Blanket thrown over it in the next room (the one with the blue furniture). I drew forty-four (44) dollars from the Gov't. the other day, but have loaned all out that I have not spent and that was very little. I have to pay 50 cts. a piece for washing down here and it is such a dirty place that it counts up pretty fast, besides the vegetables I buy are not as cheap as they might be, but I can scarcely do without them and keep the health.

I am surprised that Miss T is just cutting her wisdom teeth -- why I feel almost old enough for my heirs to cut theirs (not wisdom). You had better deputize Sue to tell her this and it may remove one impediment that is now in my way to supreme felicity. That is the difference in our ages and by-the-by, I reckon I will have to drop Missie & yourself as correspondents & write to Nell and Sue as they could & would tell me more than she does & says concerning her "galliant louvier," -- even Kate Selden tells me more (thro Chas. Hamner) of her (T's) incomings and outgoings. She says that T. has turned her affections Northward and ceased to think of the once happy soldier, is this true? Must I commit suicide or --or shave? No, I won't believe it till I get (what the Examiner calls) authentick information.

Just then, as I wrote there was a tremendous explosion in our front -- suppose it to be the bursting of a torpedo in the James River -- don't know tho, it may be most anything. It is of not much consequence I reckon or rather serious result on our side or they would be cheering like mad.

MS2064

I forgot to tell you that I also left a pair of Scotch satin shoes with my other things in R. Ed may have taken some of this clothing and if anything is missing you had better write to him to know if he has it. save those pants that you spoke of. I am under many obligations to you for them.

Give my love to my uncle Joe(?), Miss T and tell them to make haste and recover, also to the rest of the family especially Aunt Poll and Nell, but excepting the greatest share for yourself, believe me as ever.

Your devoted Son,

Will

Direct your letters as here before with the exeption of Kemper's Brigade, instead put Terry's as he has now been promoted to the this place.

Write soon another long letter and tell me all that is going on in L. Give my love to all at Grandma's the next time you have an opportunity.

[on the back was written the following:]

Chas. Hamner got a box from home yesterday and we had one of the best dinners you ever saw.