

[page 1. All indentions are meant to reflect those found in the original letter.]

Brazos Santiago Texas
March 30, 1865

Dearest Lucy,

I am officer of the day again for today and will take time that I can spare from my duties to write to you. If I wrote as often as I think about you I should do nothing else, and bitter was my disappointment last night to wake from my dream and find that it was a dream and that you was not by my side.

All day yesterday the wind blew furiously and this morning great [sand] drifts like snow drifts in the north all piled up before every door. This _____ did not make it really cold but still it was chilly enough this morning to make a little fire agreeable. It is now quite dry down here. That is we have had no rain for a good while, the air is damp enough every morning (except when the south wind blows) from the exhalations from the sea, [illegible sentence where a tear in the paper is]. The weather is also getting so as to feel quite hot some days.

We ought to have another ___ by this time & I get come more bitter, For want of that I have been reading your February letters over again & find some points in them that I have not answered or noticed.

You say that Walter would go to Taber for mail if he knew the way. I want he should know the way not only to Tabor but in ever other direction and for more than 12 miles. When I was Walter's age I never had been 12 miles from home. It has been a great damage to me that I did not learn to act for myself and to think for myself and depend upon myself when I was a boy.

[page 2]

Practically I think the damage was greater than all the good I got from the books I read. Walter ought to be able now to start and come to me in Texas if it was necessary.

He ought to be able to go to Sidney & buy goods. I want him to learn this summer to go to different places by himself. There will be plenty of occasions that he will need to know how to travel & take care of himself. He must learn it immediately.

You ask me what is the pay of Major. It has been about 130\$ per month. I don't know whether Congress raised officers' pay or not. I have heard they raised the Compact[_]tion of notions [nations?] from 30 cts to 50 cts & took off the tax, but I have not seen it in any papers. If they have that will make the pay of 1st Lieut about 140\$ & Major about 180\$ a month. There are two things that I meant to do and I am afraid I must do both I want to get the rank of Major and I want to come home to you before the 1st day of October. I am afraid I can't do either.

The degree of my desire for the two things known is very different, and I want to go home the most. It is impossible to tell now whether I can do it or not but I think the chance of doing it as soon as I want to is poor. I will have been in the service 3 years on the 17th day of September. I will have a better chance to resign after that than before. But after that if I am here I would not have time to get home as soon as I would like to. Now I am going to scold you a little. You say

[page 3]

in one of your letters that you don't know that [that is scratched out but still legible] but I would get along better without you if you shouldn't live. I wont scold you but little for I dont suppose you think so. It was a little wicked to say that. It would be mighty wicked for you to think it. In another letter you say you could not live without me. Do you suppose I could live any better without you? If one of us should die this year or next, I suppose the survivor would live as long as possible and do as well as possible for the children. But it would be a terrible blow to either of us to be the survivor of such an event. I dont want it to bear. I dont want you to have it to bear.

Charlie & Orvin had had luck with their feet. I hope they are both about again.

You say you have filled the Album and have photographs enough for another. I will get you another one sometime but do not know when. You want to know if I inquired about the [illegible sentence where tear in paper is. Unknown words or letters are represented by the lines in the brackets] [chills] [___] S[___]. I did such they had [___] come. I ought to have mentioned it.

I hope you have left "Lonely Island" before this time for some other place. I feel in great trouble about where you will live this summer. I am afraid Abbott will refuse to take 400\$ for his land [land is scratched through but still legible] house. I hope father has sold the Salt Creek claim & bought as [___] a house in Taber for you & mother to stay in this summer & has gone as is going to Missouri to buy a place. I think Roswell will send you some help and I think you will need it. And I hope to be able to pay him back with interest at some future time. I feel quite confident now that when I get out of the Service

[page 4]

I can do well in Missouri. I think I can see the day not very far off that we will live together in comfortable circumstances and look back on all our long hard struggles as the freed slaves already look back on their former state of bondage.

At the same time I expect to continue in the work that I am now engaged in (for the elevation of the down trodden negro) as long as I live. This war is breaking up the ice laying the foundations all the work is to be done here after. I do not think I shall ever get out of that work.

I think about 25 colored men of this regiment & Capt Mc, Lt. Anderson, Charlie Bonsall & myself will settle together in Missouri, put up a mill & schoolhouse. I am sorry for your headaches and low spirits. Dear Love how gladly would I share these sufferings with you as I share the cause & will share [illegible sentence where tear in paper is] has been sick & the children with colds.

You hear that Sid is going to marry Miss Ashton. I sincerely hope it is so. I esteem her as a modest sensible worthy young lady. I should rejoice to see Sid mated with her, I don't suppose I am likely to meet Charley Webster. Still it is possible. I shall watch for a chance. I hope to hear in some of your letters something about Garry. Father thinks I will stay in the army five years? I think not, Still if I could resign & stay with you next winter I dont know but I would go in again next spring if it was necessary.

Dearest, God bless you and the dear children
is the prayer of

Baxter