

Fort Ethan Allen

Friday, Sept 5th 1862

My Dearest Wife

You will perhaps wonder why you have not heard before but there is difficulty in the way of my writing often that are not easily understood by those not used to Camp life. I consider it a great privilege to be able to write without molestation, but if could only leave this poor body in our tent and transport myself by telegraph or some other way to Ward Benton's kitchen and sit down with my wife and family one short hour it would make me inexpressibly happy. My health still holds out, in fact I am healthier than at home and I wish I could hear as much from you. I hope you will write before long. I will give you my address at the close of this letter. I want you to write all how you get along in the house and out the door. I talked with Arthur in Hartford before we parted and I think he means to do well. His greatest trouble seemed to be that Mother and Grandmother didn't place quite confidence enough in his ability to transact the business of the farm, perhaps he was partly right. I am sure I cannot tell. I hope he will conduct so as to be worth(y) of your confidence, and I hope you all will succeed in being a blessing to each other and receive the blessing and favor of God who can and will make all things to work together for good to those who love Him. I wish Arthur would write to me, I think he could not be better employed. When you write please tell me about your new meeting house, about the drafting, and any & every thing interesting. I am very sorry to be obliged to say that our which were left at Camp Chase were overhauled and many things lost. I lost nothing of importance except my needle book.

That I miss very much. If as I have been informed the Friends should send us a box of things for our comfort, I would like very much to have you send me another marked with my initials. We have received our tents and are now quite comfortable. We are located on a hill about as far from the Fort as you are from Blatchley's (?). At the foot are a plenty of good springs of pure water and we think it a very pleasant location. Some things such as butter, pies, etc., we miss, but we can buy cheese for twenty cents a lb and smoked herring were for sale here today at one cent apiece. I eat three. Yesterday some of the boys got about a bushel of peaches off from a tree and we had them stewed for supper. They relished (?) quite well on the whole. We are faring as well as I expected. I don't know of any one of Com(pany) who I (know) that is sick, ditto the Madison Co. We are under the command of Col. () (?) acting Brigadier Gen. who is a fine looking man and visits the camp about once a day. Dinner is now ready and I must close, I suppose it will be boiled ham which if well cooked is good enough as it is not the best. Now please write all of you when you can and tell any of my friends I would like to hear from them. Pray often that I may be returned safe home.

R. W. Benton

Address R. W. Benton
Foote Rifles
14th Regt C.V.
Washington, D. C.

Camp Defiance Sept 7th 1862

My Dear Wife

I spent the few moments I have to spare in giving you a little information out our whereabouts and state generally. We had supposed that we were to stay at Fort Ethan Allen, but Sunday just as we were preparing to attend divine service there came a report that Stonewall Jackson was crossing into Maryland at Harpers Ferry and we received orders to march posthaste to Rockville, Md a little this side. So we packed up our blankets, took our guns, and a little past noon began to march. We marched all the afternoon and half of the night stopping occassionally to rest. About 2 in the night we bivouacked till Sunrise and then commenced marching again reaching this place a little past noon pretty well tuckered I tell you, but it is was surprising how soon we got rested today - Tuesday - we feel quite current again. We have had not fighting to do yet, and where we shall be called to next I cannot tell. I wish you would not trouble yourself in my account as I am getting along quite well, much better than I expected - yesterday I felt a little of my old bowel complaint, but feel better today. When you write tell me how Arthur gets along with his farming and and a bout your home affairs generally. I write a short letter for want of time, but not of inclination. (^{Lt.} Linton(?)) Fiske remarked at night he would like his wife's night cap with her in it. I second the motion. Your loving and never forgetful husband.

(S) R. W. Benton

Clarksville, Md Sept 11th 1862

My Dear Wife

The day I wrote you we again had marching orders. We bivouacked in night before last and also last night today we are in this and it is rumored that there is a prospect of a battle but I think it quite doubtful as there are so many untrue stories in circulation. I am at the present moment sitting in company with S. D. Crittenden in the commissary waggon. Last night I was quite weak on account of my bowel complaint and got excused by the surgeon from any duty but marching and happening to get a chance to ride I took advantage of it and now the army is a mile or two ahead. I feel better now and as I am afraid of being blamed I think I shall go on and overtake the Regiment this afternoon. I am told we are about half way from Washington to Harpers Ferry. As a number of the other men have been affected similarly to myself and after recovering were healthier than before to be affected(?) in the same way myself. at least I am not much discouraged yet. I should have started out before now - 2 o'clock - but it rains and I preferred to run my risk and wait a little longer. And now my dearest Wife I cannot but express to you my full conviction that if I ever should reach home you will all seem nearer and dearer to me than before. But some things that I expected to miss very much I find I can do very well without. For instance, I think that although the ground is very hard to sleep on at first if I ever return home and it was not for the musketos (mosquitoes) I would prefer sleeping on it to all the soft beds in the world and as for the musketoes there is none here. I can write no more now and don't know as I can send this. Yours now at all times and till death - for which I pray often that I may be prepared.

R. W. Benton

Clarksburg, Sept. 17th 1862

My Dearest Wife

I hardly know how or what to write for we have been marched from one place to another with such rapidity that I have almost forgot the day of the week and month and everything else but I can assure you I have seen all of the horrors of war that I ever wish to and I sincerely hope that it will soon be over. Tuesday night - I believe - when we were lying at Yatesville we had ninety rounds of ammunition dealt out to us and we were told we would soon be called to use it. Wednesday we lay along behind the hill where we were Tuesday a severe battle going on all the time the shot and shells flying around us thick and fast but fortunately none of us were hurt. But soon we were called on to march on to the field about a mile distant. We were soon in battle array and charging along through fields of corn. The enemy commenced pouring in on us a tremendous fire - the shots fell like hail in a few minutes I was struck by a minnie ball in the side of my neck several of my comrades laid me on my blankets and carried me from the field since that I have been lying with the other wounded in a field about a mile distant where I with some difficulty walked - I think my wound is not a bad one but I bled so much and being rather weak before I have but little strength but I begin to feel better and hope soon to be able to be about. I hope you will not be discouraged about me. I am so much better off than hundreds of others I feel great cause for thankfulness. Richard Hull was shot dead at least so the other boys told me. Poor man! E. I. Field was badly wounded and died last night. The other Guilford men I have not heard from. Oh you don't know the dreadful scenes we have passed through. The dead, the dying, and wounded are lying all around me, and I think may amount to thousands. Pray the Lord that this war may soon end. We have it is said

gained a great victory, at least - we have plenty of prisoners. They almost all say they are willing to give up but the officers will not permit it. Ozias Leffingwell and Wm. Jones of North Madison have taken care of me they are both very kind. They lent me this paper. Mine is all lost and everything else I brought with me.

Yours affectionately,

R. W. Benton

Camp Dover (?) Terry?
New Haven, Sept 25th 1862

My Afflicted Sister

I have just seen Mr. Bartlett and he has informed me of your bereavement: by which I am so much overcome that my hand refuses to write more.

At Home Sunday P.M. September 28

Little thought I when your husband and I last parted I should see his face no more in this world, but he has gone to that home where the weary are at rest and the wicked cease to trouble. I sympathize with you sincerely in this affliction. I was attached to him from his early Boyhood on to riper years & when his connection was perfected with you, the attachment was more binding than ever, but they are sundered. but the memory of the past still lives. I had never in imagination pictured out you Sister Hannah to be left a Widow with Children demanding your constant care but "Man's destiny is not under his own controll". You have the promise of protection of the Widow's God & Father of the (?). Put your whole trust and confidence therein. Nerve yourself for the conflict, knowing that ~~as~~ my days are so shall my strength be.

Should Dwight bring on the remains of your Husband for burial, I shall endeavor to be present at that time, provided I get a permit from the Com(nder) of this Post. I have been in Camp over two weeks. How soon we are under marching orders I know not. (A?) Family are all well ~~that~~ are here. Ella & Anna. (Orton?) at Sea 2½ months. Sarah at North Guilford. If I have any thing that you want in the way of council you shall have it freely. In my affliction you have been so kind that I cannot but feel gratefull & am ready to render to you all that is in my power to do. When the

time comes that you can write do let me hear from you.
You & I are all that is left of this Band of Brothers &
Sisters that met a few years since around the Grave of a
beloved Mother. We may never see those that are alive.
probably I shall not. Then write me when you feel that
you can. With these few lines I bid you good night.

From your Brother

Alvin B. Rose

27CVI CoF

Corporal

Cap'd May 3 '63 Chancellorsville, Va

Par. May 14 '63

Must out July 27 '63

Frederick City, Sept. 26th 1862

Dear Friends

I once more sit down to write sad news to you. Mr. Benton is dead. He died last night a 6 o'clock. I have been staying with him since I found him in the hospital. We did not think his condition immediately dangerous unless he should take to bleeding. The Dr. told me to watch the wound & if it set to bleeding he would not stand it long. but it had not bled since & the nurses thought he might get along. He has never complained of the wound but of pain in his limbs. I have stayed by him & rubbed him with liniment. He thought I could cure him if I could be allowed to stay with him. He seemed to (get) be easier through the day. He would look at me & say "Oh, Henry you can't think how much better I feel. If you can stay with me I shall get along first rate". But it proved to be that he was dying gradually. He passed away without a struggle at 6 o'clock last night. I held his hand in mine & he appeared to know me long after he could speak. I would speak to him & he would answer by a slight pressure of the hand. The Doctor says his death was probably caused by not being taken care of. He was allowed to walk here from the Battle field. The day he arrived here he had walked 8 miles & had lost so much blood that he was very weak. Dr. Rockwell is pronounced to be a hardhearted wretch by all of the men. Ward said he thought if he said anything to the doctor about not being able to walk, he would not be used well (should subject himself to insult & abuse. So he tried and did the best he could. I took the things from his packets & have kept them myself. He had about Twenty Dollars with him. I have had to use some four Dollars sending telegraph dispatches & probably may have to more as I have spent nearly all of my own. I thought likely

you would be anxious to get the body brought home, but find it cannot be unless it is embalmed & enclosed in a matalic coffin which will cost some \$80.00 Dollars & the Express Company charges some \$25.00 which makes a cost of \$105.00. This I could not do & I did not know what you thought about it so I Telegraphed last night to find out. I shall come on with it if it means if I get a pass. If I do not, I will send his things the first opportunity. I will write again soon if I do not come and let you know about it. If I do not send the money to you I will write to our folks and have them pay it to you.

From Your True Friend

Henry B. Dudley

Co I 14th CVL

Discharged, disability Jan 30, 1863