

Fort Colville, W.T.

14th April, 1861

My dear mother:

Mary's letter of January 28th and Nannie's of February 8 were both received together by the mail before the last.

I was absent when they came--20th, on information of an affray between some miners and Indians on the Columbia near the mouth of the Pend d'Orielle in which five Indians and three whites were killed. I was sent up with 60 men of my company. I left here the same day at 10 o'clock and reached the post of the British commission at Old Colville in time to cross the river with my company and pack animals before sunset. I then dined in the mess of the officers of the commission which occupied me until 9 o'clock when I went across again to my company. I had scarcely wrapped myself in my blankets when it commenced raining. It continued to rain, snow sleet or hail almost without intermission for five days and as we went out without tents our blankets and clothes were wet during all that time. Arrived at mouth of the Pend Orielle 22 about 12 o'clock. Distance marched from here 63 miles--remained at Pend Orielle until 3 inst during which time there were only two days without rain or snow. When I arrived at the Pend Orielle the Indians to the number of 50 had assembled at the mouth of the Kootenay 35 miles further up the Columbia and the same distance north of our boundary, entirely out of my reach. I was glad afterwards that it was so when on investigation I had learned that the affray had been a whiskey fight and confined to the parties engaged of from ten to a dozen on each side. It took my messenger whom I sent up to the Indian camp to summon the chiefs to meet me more than a day to march it, traveling as he was obliged to do on snow shoes while the chiefs came down to my camp in their birch bark canoes in between four and five hours. The matter was settled to the satisfaction of all parties.

The miners, who had been much frightened and were all about leaving the country resumed their work and the Indians dispatched to their hunting ground.

I had fine weather on my way back and being in no hurry took my time and did not arrive until the 6th

I am completely disgusted with the dilatory course of Maryland. Have applied for a leave of absence which may possibly enable me to leave in six weeks. Will resign as soon as I learn that Maryland has learned at last what she ought to have done already and will be compelled to do.

The union is at an end--the only question (if it is a question* for Maryland) is the choice between the sections.

With love to all

affectionately J.G. Archer

Fort Colville, W.T.

1st May, 1861

My dear Mother:

I wrote you in my last that I had applied (sic) for a leave of absence and that it was possible that I might get it by the 1st June. It is scarcely possible I can get it before July as there is no other officers present with my company. And the probability is that I will not get it before November for it is a general rule not to grant leaves during the summer and early fall months. For a month past I have been holding drill every morning at 5 1-2 o'clock and breakfasting at 7

Cpts. Fletcher and Frazer and Lts. Carr, Harvie and Alexander of our reg. have resigned. They ~~are~~ were on leave at the east at the time. (Harvie married Miss Meade near Richmond)(Carr married Miss Watts of Roanoke)

I am so thoroughly disgusted with the shameful attitude of Maryland in the impending crisis that I forbear to say a word on the subject. Oh that I could have been at home from the day of the presidential election until now that I could have joined my work ~~with~~ voice to the call ~~of the few there~~ who seemed to see and appreciate the interest and honor of Maryland.

With love to all of you

J.G. Archer.

Fort Yamhill,

12th July, 1861

My dear brother:

It seems idle for me to write on the questions which now absorb all the interest of every man in the whole country. Before my letters reach you the events to which they relate with their immediate consequences have become history as indeed they already have, before tidings of them come to sadden, to mortify and humiliate me in my remote solitude.

I had sent forward my resignation before I received your letter advising me not to resign. I sent it with the utmost honor and righteous indignation against the isms of the north people and the base and who are upholding them in Maryland. Napoleon is reported to have said that Providence always was with that side which had the heaviest artillery but I humbly believe that the battle is not always to the strong nor the race to the swiftest. Maryland will sometime stand again and it is awful to contemplate the just vengeance she will visit upon those of her sons who have betrayed her to her foes.

How much have Gov. Hooch Hicks and his party to answer for in suffering the constitutional voice of Maryland in this government--only let a convention of her people have spoken and it would have been obeyed whatever it might have counselled.

I arrived here today and expect, as Col. Wright promised me, to be relieved from the command of the fort in a few days as soon perhaps as I can complete the complete the papers commensurate with turning over the company.--ordnance, commissary and quartermaster store of the post making out mustering and pay rolls etc.

Yours truly,
J.G. Archer

Fort Yamhill, Ore,

18th July, 1861

My dear mother: Arrived at Fort Dalles 7th inst and received orders to continue to Fort Yamhill and assume command of that post. There was no choice except to obey except leave my company en route without an officer. Proceeded next day by Steamboat down the Columbia and up the Willamette and to Yamhill ~~where~~ thence to Dayton, thence marched 36 miles to Fort Yamhill where I arrived 12 o'clock. This is the most beautiful, delightful and desirable post on the Pacific coast. The country is fertile and well cultivated. The post itself situated on a hill overlooking the Yamhill river which is here about the size of Deer Creek. The view from my quarters is very like that from Priestford but more ~~beautif~~ beautiful. Everything ~~on~~ on which it can rest for many miles distant is green as emerald, the faint green paling into blue in the distance, the coast and mountains.

A low gap in its mountains lets the delightful sea breeze from the ~~Dead~~ Pacific ocean which is only fifteen miles off.

In command of this post with no one to interfere with me I know of no situation which under ordinary circumstances could have been ~~agreeable~~ more agreeable to me. In all human probability too I would have been left quietly here during the war but by here it would enable the U.S. government to send other officers to fight against my people and when I get home I will be able to fight for them. I have just turned over the command of my post and company and all the govt. property to Lt. Sheridan of the 4th infy and tomorrow I leave for the east. I have obtained from ~~Gen.~~ Gen. Sumner a leave of absence of sixty days based on my ~~resignation~~ resignation which I sent off about the 10th of May last ~~so~~ so I am no longer a U.S. officer.

Fort Vancouver, W.T. 23rd July

I am here as the guest of Capt. Black. The officers here treat me with great kindness and hospitality, especially Black, Capt. Morrow and Col. Wright and his family. The colonel gave me duplicates of his photograph

taken on visiting cards. Mrs. Wright asked me to send one of them to Nannie with her love

San Francisco, July 23

..t ere are so many federal officers going east in the steamers that I fear that should I go that way I will be recognized. I leave this evening by steamboat for Sacramento thence by overland mail stage to St. Lo. Should I find on arrival at Fort Kearney that I will not be able to get through Missouri I will get horses and ride across outside the Kansas settlement into Arkansas.

Col. Wright's parting with me was very kind. He expressed real regret at my leaving his regiment but not a word of disapproval of my course. I think he was satisfied I was right although he could not say so.

Nashville, Tenn

24th Aug, 1861

for
Arrived here last night en route from Richmond Va. I had thought of going ---- and reporting to Pillow but am anxious to I can directly be in the help of Maryland, besides I want to be near Bob whom I was told in San Francisco is in the C.S. army in Virginia.

Louisville, KY

23rd Aug, 1861

My dear Mother

Arrived here yesterday after coming overland from San Francisco. Ran the gantlet all the way from St Joseph through camps of Northern soldiers and travelled in the same cars with companies of men from the north. Was not recognized and met with no other danger than the inspection of my baggage in Indiana opposite this place.

Whenever you write to me send your letters under cover directed to Major John Copenton, Louisville KY . I am as yet undecided after arriving in Nashville, Tenn., I will go to Richmond or to southern Missouri whichever I may conclude will be best for the cause.

God help the people of poor, Maryland. Evermore, my dearest mother, with -- of love, your son, J.G. Archer.

Richmond, Va, 27th Aug, 1861

My dear Bob:

I sent in my resignation dated 10th May waited for an answer from from Dept. hqt and started off on seven days leave to report myself to Gen. Summers as a passenger going --roing--rode down to Ft. Walla Walla (210) miles and found that my company was ordered to Ft. Dalles Oregon/. As I had left my company without an officer and as there was no officer at Colville available for the duty, I returned to Colville and brought my company down. On the way I received orders to take my company to Fort Yamhill. There was no option but to obey or else leave the company en route without an officer

Richmond Va, 27th Sept,
1866

My dear brother:

I have not been able to get a majority for you but Gov. Letcher has promised to give you the Lt. Colonelcy vacated by my resignation which I tendered to him on that condition--my purpose and expectation in offering my resignation was to fall back on my confederate army rank and serve as a volunteer aid. I filed my resignation yesterday and this morning much to my surprise received a promotion to Colonel in the provisional army with orders to take command of the 16 companies of Texans which have lately arrived here. I have met with many kind friends here, chief among them Gen Anderson, late of the U.S. Senate from Tennessee, Phil Dandridge whom I thin has been my most effective friend and Dandrecge's friends all of whom treat me as their own. I desire you when you meet Major Carr to remember that he is my especial friend, the same Carr who was called X Tampeco Car when we were in New York. Capt. Pickes, late 9th infantry now Col is in command of the district where you are going. He is a strict disciplinarian but most kind to you. Col. Mallor your immediate commander you will find as kind as possible. You must accept the Lt Colonelcy. I will try to get you orders to report to Col. Mallory in time to send them up to Fairfax Station so that you can meet them there

Call at the post office when you come to Richmond. If you do not find a letter from me call on Maj. Weston at Exchange Hotel

J.G. Archer

Richmond Va, 1st Oct, 1861

My dear Bob

MyOodadd The governor has appointed you a Lt. Col. of
Virginia Voluntee s. I wroteyou befo re that I could not get you
a majority. You will be with my friends, Col. Picket and Col.
Mallory . Your orders I have sent to Fairfax Station, Care of Maj.
Spunnier?

(

You are orderd by the Sect of War to report to Col. Mallory at Tappahannock
near Fredericksburg, Va. Col. Pickett who commands t em and Col.
Mallory are both my friends.

JGA.

Richmond, Va, 29th Aug, 1867

My dear brother:

I have entirely recovered my health and today
moted all my baggage to camp. I had scarcely got comfortably fixed before
Gen Wigfold@ in whose brigade the 4th and 5th Texans are included
sent for the field officers of hhe Texans to come in to see him.
He expects the president to allow him to take over rgt. up to the
Potomac day after tomorrow.

I saw Garnett who told me he had seen yo at Fredericksburg, also

Richmond Va, 29 Oct. 1861

My dear brother

I have entirely recovered my health and today for the first time moved all my baggage to camp. I had scarcely got comfortably fixed before Gen Wigfall (?) in whose brigade the 4th and 5th Texans are included sent for the field officers of the Texans to come to see him. He expects the president to allow him to take our regts up to the Potomac day after tomorrow. I saw Garnett who told me he had seen you at Fredericksburg, also Lemington (?) who had seen you at your camp

Write soon and tell me everything you would say if I were with you. Hope you like your position and your officers Remember me kindly to Pickett and Mallory Yours affect

J.J. Archer

To Lt. Col R.H. Archer, 55th Va Volunteer Infy.

Another letter Nov. 4 from Camp Near Richmond, worried how Brother bob is getting along.

June 13, headquarters tex brig

Dear Bob I have been appointed brigadier and assigned to the command of the Twx brigade. Can you---scratched out and be my aid in camp yours
Lt Col Archer.)to) P S Mallory says he intends to nom you for lt col in case counsell does not accept but does not want to let you know..

Dumfries Va

15th Nov, 1861

My dear Bob:

I sent you a few days ago a letter received from Nannie dated Oct. 25. I all well at that time. I was delighted to see by your own and Pickett's letters that you are doing so well and receiving so much kind attention and are so well liked by Pickett and Mallory. I will always remember them for it and will never lose an opportunity if one should present itself to put a spoke in their wheel. Give my best love to them both. Yrs. affty. J.J. Archer.

(Lt. Col. Robert Archer, 5th Rgt (or 55th) Virginia Volunteers,
Toppohannock, Virginia.

Col. J.J. Archer, 5th Tex. Volunteers.)

Headquarters 5th Tex. Rgt. 4 Dec. 1861

Dear Bob:

The fight has not yet come off but the general expects it this week. I have been suffering for two days past with diahrea and am taking good care as I can to get in good fighting order--am a good deal better today. We have not begun yet to make huts, waiting to see if Abraham is coming.

Our letters from home were captured with the bearer, Mr. Brown, brother of the young gentleman whom you met at Weston, who is now a prisoner at Ft. McHenry. I am confident now that with diligence and close attention to everything you will have no difficulty. Yours affectionately
J.J. Archer.

Hdg. 5th Tex Rgt.

Camp Neabsco near Dumfries 18th Dec. '61

My dear brother:

I have just received a letter from Major Weston who says of you "I have lately seen several officers of his (yours) regiment and

never he rd higher praise than t ey pay to his social and military
quali eis.

I congratulate you my dear brother. O^{ly} just continue to strive in
every possible way for excellence in military performance and neglect no
means of ^{acquiring confidence} ~~procure~~ the ~~confidence~~ of your regiment --my officers
are almost all in elligent gentlemen, but unfortunately owi g to
their marching through the Louisiana swamps during the bilious season and to
the measles which they took after ? at Richmond and the sea~~side~~
march from Brooks Station and in ^{insufficient} ~~different~~ clothing, two thirds of my
regiment is sick.

I write home occasionally but with very little expectations that my
letters will ever reach their destination. From all I can hear from
Maryland the States rights people are badly off and likely to be worse--their
crops are or will be seized, their negroes , horses, wagons , disposed without
compensation into the ~~federal~~ federal service and I suppose at last
all their property will be confiscated and they will be utterly destitute
on the world. For a long time past it has been impossible for property holders
to collect any money for rent and many a fluent families for instance
have been obliged to open boarding houses.

We are camped three miles north of Dumfries on the Alexandria
road on the neck of land between Powell's run and Neabsco creek about 1-2
mile from F. Point The ~~enemy~~ ~~sent~~ ~~in~~ ~~two~~ ~~steam~~ ~~tugs~~ ~~and~~ ~~burnt~~ ~~an~~ ~~old~~ ~~fish~~ ~~house~~ ~~on~~ ~~the~~ ~~shore~~ ~~.~~ ~~It~~ ~~happened~~ ~~to~~ ~~be~~ ~~down~~ ~~there~~ ~~with~~ ~~Gen.~~ ~~Wigfall~~ ~~(?)~~
saw the whole thing. We had no troops then or battery, only a cavalry picket
of one-half dozen men. They kept up a great firing of shells at us but did no
harm.

The general still expect an attack here, by land and water.
Best regards to C^{ols}. Pickett and Mallory.

Yours affectionately J.J. Archer.

Hd. Tex. 5th Volunteers

Near Dumfries, Va. 8th Feb.
1862

My dear brother: I send you a letter which I opened thinking it might possibly be intended for me.

I read it and ~~and~~ answered it. --in Gen. Wigfall's absence since 24th Dec. I have been in command of the brigade. Don't like temporary command doing routine duty away from my rgt. with almost the certainty of going back to it when a fight comes on and finding my own regiment fallen away from the state of discipline which I had slowly but carefully brought about. So slowly as well as yourself and ~~and~~ gradually and ? that they know nothing about it. I am on the best possible terms with all my people here and have become warmly attached to Texas and Texans. Indeed my dear brother I cannot see that I have any other home than my regiment.

Our mother and kindred are in a foreign land.

Our Maryland is throttled every day I see her across the Potomac-- the cruel heel of the disgusting despot trampling upon her bosom ~~and~~ and I can see no chance to ~~be~~ relieve her or avenge her. I ought not to dwell on this subject or to ~~direct~~ ^{direct} your thoughts into a ~~channel~~ ^{channel} which I use all measure of occupation to ~~divert~~ ^{divert} my own from.

Lt. Col. R.H. Archer, 55th, Va Rgt.

Camp Neabsco near D.

50th Texas Brigade 23 Jan, 1862

My dear Bob:

I send you a letter from cousin Kate Van Bibb--? have not had a letter from home since the one I send you long ago. Have got all the regiments of the brigade into winter cabins. Wigfall will resign 22 Feb to take his seat in C.S. Senate. Ben McCullough will possibly be transferred to command of this brigade. I understand he wants it.

Wigfall I am satisfied will ? the appointment of Col Hood of 4th

Tex Regt for brigadier. That will change our positions and send me back to my regiment under his command. With love to Pickett and Mallory.

Yours affectionately J.J. Archer
to Lt. Col. R.H. Archer, 55th Rgt Va. Vols. Toppahannock

The officers of my regiment all say they want to keep me for their colonel but think I would make the best brigadier and it is with the officers of Hood's regiment.

(no d te--no place)

my dear Nannie

I am told that the legislature of Maryland has passed a law to punish with fine and imprisonment not only those who write to but all who receive letters from former "rebels."

That being the case I suppose the rebels will cease to write to their friends in Maryland (especially to those who have any property to confiscate) and will not expect their friends to write to them--and when ~~once a day~~ ~~they do~~ ~~happen to~~ ~~receive~~ ~~a letter~~ they will not acknowledge it except or at least from whom it came.

I received a letter a short time since announcing the death of Sylvester Finley. He was at home in Nashville on furlough when he was accidentally killed by a pistol, which went off in the coat pocket of a stranger.

Bob is well. I saw him about six weeks ago. It would do mother good to see him. I have not seen him look so well for many years. He ~~writes~~ ~~write~~ to me often and always says something affectionate of mother and the rest of you. I am not far from him, that is not more than forty miles but neither of us can take time to visit the other. You know this is a busy season. I received a letter ~~tho~~ a day or two ago telling me how mother and all of you are. I sent it to Bob after reading it. Mother of course knows why I do not write. Kiss her and all her children for me my dear Nannie and know that I am always affectionately yours, J.J. Simcoe 1st April 1862. SIMCOE...

August 23, 1862

Between Hazel and Hedge in River

NHdqrs Archer's Brigade

T Bro Bob

Sent :Philip ba k with horse

You can use your judgment about horse.

Have my black horse.

Dr. Montgomery not yet reached here. Bob evidently been sick.

Letter hard to make out.

Clark County Va

5 Nov. ~~1860~~ 1862

My Dear Bob

We are bivouacked about half way bfrom Berryville to the ford at Buckass Gap (Spell) two miles from ea h

The enemy has possession of the gap and we are holding the ford

Day before yesterday Hill sent me in command of the three smallest brigades to picket the ford. In the afternoon and supposed they though we had no force. Th I kep the troop completely concelld they sent down about 1,000 men who drew up in lines along the s ore tat the ford I opened on them with 19th Georgia Rgt. and two battalions. The enemy soon ran away out of sight. and sent hack a whiteflag after a little whie to c rry back their killed and wounded

I sent over a party the next morning and picked up 27 rifles

Got letter from Nannie and opened and read it

Th they are all well Miss Van Bibber wants to know if you got ~~some~~ yarn ocks sent to you by Tom Shields

Camp Gregg near Frederickburg

12th Jan 1863

Dear mother

Last fall a year ago was the time fixed and anxiously looked forward to by me for a rival home

I started east then and I had expected and have seen on the way ever since traveling in new ~~roads~~ routes and in encountering many obstacles and difficulties and dangers. but never losing sight of the object of my journey. and by the blessing of Providence, the prayers of my good mother and sisters and comrades I would look---it is promised land (very faint)..and now as I have almost reached the end as I look back at the dark night and dark places see, bright and pleasant and as I look forward my heart swells with the thought of meeting you all again

I believe you have been informed of my movements, including this last three days battle of Manassas after that I was

After that I was at the capture of Harper's Ferry (Massachusetts Ferry at Sharpsburg, Sharps ? and Frederickburg (Battle of Sharpsburg and Frederickburg)

and when we started from Harper's Ferry to Sharpsburg I had been sick in bed before and was weak and sick (too weak and sick to move my horse) but went by ambulance and had to stop on the way and lie down for an hour but after my brigade had passed and I heard the sound of the battle when Longstreet was engaged and the sight of my troops going in without me I got well again, mounted my horse and overtook my brigade just before it came up with the enemy I never felt better and stronger than during the whole time of battle.

When it was over I found myself completely exhausted and lay in a stupor all next day

The third day I was well again and commanded the brigade in its battle of Shepardsstown.

The first of December I went to Richmond sick and was there when the ---- came down that the enemy was possessing it.

I took train and joined my brigade a little before daybreak. I wrote you from the battlefield by flag of truce suppose you got my letter. Frano Wooten, who was mortally wounded, has since died. He had been on Gen Hill's staff became separated from him but came to me and asked me to take him in. He was shot from his horse.

Bob is in Richmond doing well but not well enough to be in camp yet.

Oliver Thomas and George Williams are with him. George Williams went to Richmond today. I expect him back soon.

Hdgrs brigade

Near Queens or Guingna s station

28th January , 1863

Grigade headquarters near Fredericksburg

14th june 1864

To Nannie,

Wrote yo ou a ut two weeks ago by flag of truce

too hard to figure out

Next Letter From Fort Sandusky, Johnson 's Island n3q4 Sandusky

28th of July 1863

Hdqs Texas Brigade

3 June. 1862

My dear Bob:

I have been appointed brigadier and assigned to the command of the Texas Brigade. Come over and be my aid de camp.

Yours J.G. Archer.

(letters hard to make out)

San Johnson's Island near

Sandusky, Ohio, 15 Aug, 63

My dear brother:

I have received your kind letter together with the draft. Ma Parsons keeps all money belonging to prisoners and we pay for our purchases by orders on him. There are about 1,600 prisoners here of whom about 1,200 are officers including many most intelligent and agreeable people.

Our quarters consist of 12 buildings within an enclosure of 12 acres surrounded by a high fence. The guards never come inside the enclosure except on special business and except that we are required to put out lights at 9 o'clock p.m. There is scarcely anything within the limits to remind us we are prisoners. The time of course hangs heavy. I am painfully anxious as to how the work is going on but I dwell on such thoughts as little as possible and seek to amuse myself and help to amuse others with cards and backgammon and every kind of game of ball and everything else that idle people find to do except mischief which there is no opportunity for. I have read novels here till I am sick of the sight of them.

affectionately J.J. Archer

(Several letters...much same.

Military Prison~~00~~ Johnson's Island

23rd Oct 1863

My dear Nannie:

Your letter of 17th Oct. just come. Bob and I are both well. We are in the same mess and he stays in my room throughout the day when we are not together. I am sorry that I have not been more punctual about writing more but I know that you all know it is from no forgetfulness or want of affection. Give my best love to mother and all our friends.

Ever my dear sister,

Affectionately yours J.J. Archer.

Military Prison~~0~~

Johnson's Island

1st Nov, 1863

My dear mother:

I have received Nannie's letter of 25th ulto ~~#000~~
inclosing draft for \$50 have had ? from Mrs. Rayburn Mrs.
Chinchton with the thought he would send clothes for prisoner and I got a letter from J I. Williams saying it had been sent. Almost every mail brings me some kind token from the . of my friends, Brackenbirdge and Wickliffe and other good ladies in Kentucky whom I have known personally. Today I received a very kind letter with tender of services from Capt. H. Douglas U.S.A. an old comrade in W.T. who ~~k000~~ having been wounded in the battle of Munfreesboro has been for some time on duty as mustering island at Cleveland, O. I see no prospect of a spending? exchange when it comes I will ask for a parole for at least a few hours with you as I pass through Baltimore. My dear mother I beg you will not suffer yourself to be cut down by this cruel separation. I have an abiding faith which the darkest hours has never diminished that

En route to ^Hort Delaware. Will inquire for you at Marshal House,
Philadelphia. J. Archer.

American Telegraph Company, North, South, East and West

Dated: ~~On~~^{On} Phila June 24. Mrs. A. Archer, 47 McCullough

Enroute to Ft Delaware. Leave at 2 p m. J.J. Archer.

...first part date etc not readable:

..that there was no longer a hotel of that name ~~too~~ then which

I only learned on arrival at Phil. I had no doubt however

that you would at least enquire if not stay at the Grand house which is near
th site of what was the Marshall. I went to the grand and I left my

ddress. I remained in Phil from 6 a m to 2 p m. I am in hourly
expectation of leaving with Johnson, Goodner, Stewart and

Thompson and 45 field officers for Charleston Harbor. Col. R. Morgan is of the
party. It would be hard to find a more agreeable set of gentlemen to make a
pleasure excursion with. You need be of no anxiety for my safety.

I consider it rather an agreeable chane from the monotony of my long
~~confinement~~ confinement . Bob and Lemmon applied for permission

to go with me. I left them both well at Johnson's island. Affectionately
yours. J.J. ~~Archer~~ Archer.