

Harney Depot, W.T.

25th June, 1860

My dear mother

The last mail brought letters from Nannie, Mary, sister Hannah and Albert of 2nd, 16th, 29 April and 2 May. My love to them and I will write when I have leasure time.

Lt. Camp with 20 men of my company are out on the boundary line, I will have discharged 50 of my company whose term of service has expired, by the middle of next month so that I will have but about a dozen left here at the post.

Nothing is doing here but building and gardening. I ride out frequently but there is no shooting at present. In the course of two weeks now the shooting season will commence with Plenty of snipe, ~~geese~~ and grouse. I am admirably prepared for it. I have a fine dog given to me by Major Reynolds and an excellent gun which I got last winter.

Maj. Lugenbeal may send me out with my dozen men here to take command of the escort now with Lt. Camp. I think I would rather go than not as it would enable me to visit the summit of the Rocky Mountains and while there on duty I could take an excursion 150 miles beyond into the buffalo country.

Three hundred recruits are coming across the plains to join our regiment so that in the fall our companies will be full again. Tell little Henry that I accept his commission as captain of his company provided he will give me leave of absence until next fall, a year.

Affectionately Yours

J.G. Archer

The Snipe shooting season has commenced. It will be 10 days or so before the grouse will be fit to shoot so that I expect to have plenty of game for my table and plenty of sport for my leisure time.

I go to the marshes with Lt. Hughes this evening ~~Harney~~ Depot W.T.
to shoot

9th July 1860

My dear mother:

By the last mail I received letters from home--^{late} and Mary, dated 12th and 18th May. We did what we could here to celebrate the national anniversary, 33 ? guns were fired in honor of the occasion-- I did ~~what~~ ---demolishing a cold collatio^{so} ? at the Com d off -- played several games of billiards, dined quietly at home and afterwards took a ride on horseback with Mrs. Lugenbeal on our return found the mail arrived--finished the day ~~sed~~ reading letters and newspapers. Next day Lt. Wilson of the Royal engineers came up from the Columbia, spent the day and dined with me. He is the only officer of the British Commission ~~no~~ who has yet arrived in our vicinity. They will be engaged this summer between the Cascade Mountains and Lake Pend Oreille and will winter at temporary quarters now in course of construction near the Hudson's Bay company trading post, on Columbia river, 15 miles hence. About the 15th ^{inst} ~~1860~~ I am directed to proceed on a tour of inspection of the depot of supplies at Lake Pend Oreille and of the escorts along the boundary line. I expect to return by the last of August. I regret that I could not have gone two weeks earlier or that I will not remain absent until the middle of September in order that I might have time to go over into the buffalo country east of the Rocky Mountains.

I hope to get a leave to go east in October of next year. I might just as well as not have gone when Wickliffe did, but I know it was no use to apply then for a leave although of all other times in

in ce tainity my se~~r~~VICES would have been dispensed with this summer and summer is the time I would rather be at home. The whole of the official correspondence of Gen. Harney has been published by congress and has just been received here. I was not before aware that he was so justly appreciated at Washington. General Scott's remarks published with the correspondence, contains the following, viz:

"This act of the secretary with the ?? that went direct from him to Gen Harney on th ..may it is hoped somewhat latter of the... notion that he and his principal staff officer (Pleasanton) will be su.....Washington no matter what blunders either of them may commit officially" and close with:"I beg permission to add that the obligations of my station compel me to suggest doubt whether it be safe in respects to our foreign r lations, or just to the gallant officer and men in the Oregon Deparrment , to leave them longer so great a distance subject to the ignoranceand caprice of the present head quarter master of the dèpartment."

Gen. Harney goes home ona year's leave, has doubtless gone over this --and Col. Wright sufceeds to the command of the department.

Affectionately. J.G. Archer

Harney Depot W.T.
22nd July 1860

My dear mother:

I received by last mail Nannie's letter of 3rd June. I am sorry you are not going to Rock Run this summer now, especially as the place is going to be appropriated by others. It would be all very well I suppose if the place were for rent and you could no more for it(\$ic) as your own residence and for its association but I think I would about soon think of asking anyone to lend me his tooth brush as his home.

That reminds me that I got a letter today from Lt. Harker who has been for two months at Pend Oreille where he has built a log cabin. He will not be there when I arrive about the last of next week and wants to say that his house will be at my service during the two or three days that I stop there on my way to the Kootenay country--yesterday the hottest day indeed the first very hot day we have had, I rode out to look for ~~600~~ grouse which are now large enough to shoot and while I was beating up a thicket which I could not ride through my horse broke his bridle and went home, leaving me to walk back five miles-- the worst of it was that I did not find a single bird the whole day. Today I went with Maj. Lougenbeil and Dr. Bessien to visit the British Commission. The major invited them all to dine with him next Wednesday. I have volunteered to furnish him game for the entertainment it would be a hard matter to entertain them decently without it and am going out early tomorrow morning. I am to furnish the grouse and Lt. Hughes the snipe and ducks.

The Paymaster Maj. Regan is expected tomorrow. I have postponed my trip to Pend Oreille and the Kootenay for his arrival and will be able to start next Thursday; I will be back by the last of August. During my absence I expect my house to be plastered and otherwise finished.

We are beginning to live pretty well again on trout, game and excellent vegetables. I will make about five hundred bushels of potatoes and other vegetables in proportion for my company. The strawberry season is just over, the strawberries were not so abundant as they promised but we had several messes of them.

We heard of the arrival at Fort Benton of the party of escorts for our regiment with whom Lt. Carr is coming, but it is uncertain when they will get here. I will write by the next mail to Nannie, Albert and Kate. With love to all, affectionately

J.G. Archer.

Harney Depot,

31st July, 1860

My dear Nannie:

I enclose a paymaster's draft for \$100 with which please pay the amount of Henderson's bill--go to Webb's watch and jewelry store and inquire for a watch which I left with them when I was at home

It was ruined by the fire in my wardrobe. I directed them to get new works for it and inform me when it would be done together with the price and keep it for further orders. Some considerable time after they wrote me that for \$50 difference a new watch exactly like it could be furnished and requested an answer which I neglected to give. I desire you to tell them now that I want as I distinctly told them before the old case to be repaired and fitted with excellent new works.

I will then be greatly obliged if you will in some way, if possible, that will make no talk and produce no mortification to her, procure its delivery to its original possessor, Miss Ellen Cassell. I desire you to use your best judgment and the greatest delicacy in this matter and if you do not see how it can be properly accomplished, keep the watch until you hear from me further. If I knew her present address concerning which I neglected to enquire when I was at home I would have it sent to ^{me} her by Wells & Fargo's express to Portland, Oregon whence I could easily get it and then forward it to her myself. I think that would be the better plan under the circumstances.

If you desire it particularly, you may show this to Mary.

I want with the watch a gold key of the pattern in which this ^{parts?} dovetail into each other and can be turned only one way. I Think it is called the "drunkard's key."

My dear Nannie:

Harney Depot, 3rd July, 1860

I start tomorrow morning for Lake Pend Oreille and the Kootenay country. I have postponed my departure a long time awaiting the arrival of the paymaster with whom I had business and since his arrival for several days waiting for the eastern mail which is due now but ...Pend Oreille, I think no more than 60 miles off, is 150 by the most practicable trails. It, as well as the Kootenay valley is represented as swarming with mosquitoes, worse even than the Ojibwas where we were last summer. We are however well protected against them, taught by last summer's experiences. I made a requisition for mosquito bars for the whole command under which we can sleep in peace and until bed time we will wear gloves and veils. These articles, which at home we ~~use~~ are accustomed to regard as badges of effeminacy are however not necessary here when the mosquitoes are not more troublesome than they are at Rock Run. I shall take my dog and gun with me and fishing tackle and expect to have a pleasant jaunt.

The commanding officer's state dinner to the British Commission passed off very agreeably to every body.

I greatly regret the resignation of Col. Steptoe, not only on account of his high character and my great esteem and liking for him but also because his place is to be filled by the promotion to our regiment of Capt. Ketcham who is in every respect of the very slightest specimens of humanity. Carr will soon be with us. He has been, during his leave of absence, all over Europe, has seen the battle of Solferino and Lord, how he will expostulate when he comes..I think of sending out a small deputation of officers to meet him a few days journey in order that he may talk himself down to a more moderate flow of eloquence before he reaches me. With love to all. Affectionately J.G. Archer

1st Aug. My pack mules have been gone some two or three hours. I am just mounting my horse to follow, our mail not yet arrived.

Linyakwatun, W.T.

9th August, 1860

My dear mother:

I left Harney Depot on the morning of the 1st inst., traveled nearly south the first day to Spokane river, thence east up the Spokane to a point nearly south of this and thence to this place where I arrived on the 6th, the whole route, except except about 50 miles of prairie on the Spokane being through heavy timbered country. Linyakwatun is a depot of supplies at the crossing of the Pend Oreille and Clarks Fork of the Columbia about 12 miles below Lake Pend Oreille. It is pretty and ~~pleasant~~ situated on a grassy point of land jutting out to the river and the breeze that sweeps over it keeps us free of gnatts and mosquitoes and although I found it so delightful a place, that I have stopped here until now to wait for my mail, answer my letters and ?? my animals. Yesterday the expressman came in bringing a letter from Nannie dated June 18th. She mentions of receiving my letter from Walla ~~but~~ Walla but no mention of having received one the first of May which I sent by Pony Express. No mention is made either of what you intend to do this summer. I should conclude that you intend roasting of stewing your shins for the rest of the summer in the city. I found no one here but a half dozen soldiers (the depot guard) and for the first day had the whole place to myself. The sergeant gave me the key of Harker's cabin where I found tables and chairs and in fact everything I could think of wanting. Dr. Kennedy and Mr. King, the naturalist and quartermaster of the survey came in from the north and extended the hospitality of the place. I have just sent out my little train, consisting of a serveant ~~and~~ a packer and three pack mules. I will leave at daybreak tomorrow and overtake them before they reach the next shopping place.

My course hence is nearly north, 100 miles to the 49th parallel thence about forty miles east where I expect to find Harris' observatory

and thence if I have time I don't know how much further east to Mr.
Gardner's station at the summit of the Rocky Mountains

With love to all
affectionately yours
J.G. Archer

Camp Mouyie (or
Monju) British Columbia
16th August, 1860

My dear mother:

The evening of the 9th instant I left Lenyakwatun (The depot on the Pend Oreille or Clark's Fork of Columbia River--my two men whom I had sent on in the morning with the pack mules, with directions to stop for me when the trail turns off to the north, found the river, passed by the halting place without observing it; I didn't discover their error until it was too late to turn back and had to push on twenty miles further before they could reach grass for pasture. I arrived at the appointed camping place at dusk- I rode on as fast as the ground would permit and as long as there remained light enough to see the trail. It soon became quite dark and I had to bring my horse down to a walk--I could always tell when I got off the trail by the simple fact that the timber was so dense--immense pines and cedars as large again as your largest chestnuts--and so much obstruction by fallen trees that it was just impossible to proceed anywhere else. I kept on slowly in this groping manner until near 12 o'clock when my horse refused to go on and whenever I spurred him, ~~he~~ would strike off from the trail and get tangled up in the timber. I then waited an hour for the moon to rise, but when it came, its light could make but little impression on the deep darkness of this forest. So I tied my horse to a tree and lying down by a log slept soundly until morning when I started on at the earliest daylight and by 9 o'clock reached my next halting place. Here my animals had a good rest and pasture until next morning--11th, crossed the Kootenay river at a point called Chelemta, 64 miles from Lenyakwatun--12th travelled a little west of north 25 miles down the Kootenay over one of the worst of trails, generally high upon the snow hills, up and down and around and across the most rugged rocks and ravines; for the most part shut in from any view

by having timber, but occasionally from some high rock beholding a scene of great grandeur--a vast solitude, miles and miles of the broad, slow river with its islands, lakes and sloughs bounded by ranges of high wooded mountains.

It was at one of these open spaces where the winds long ago had swept down the trees and left a spot where grass could grow and near a cold spring that I stopped for the night--spent the evening pleasantly strolling around the rocks which afforded the best view--dined heartily on grouse on which I killed from one to half a dozen a day. The ^{evening} morning was delightful temperature and clear. I went to sleep with the perfect assurance of a sound night but about 10 o'clock was awakened by the most terrific storm I ever witnessed. The mountain seemed afire with almost continuous blaze of lightning and with the roar of thunder and crashing of great trees formed a scene of sublimity to which in my opinion the ridiculous is vastly preferable.--13th, left the river traveling a little east of north 20 miles, arrived at Mr. Gardner's astronomical station in time to dine with him--Gardner broke up his camp the next day and proceeded toward his next station on the summit of the Rocky Mountains. I should like to have gone with him but on account of the circuit he has to make to the north which makes the distance 250 miles from Monye instead of 150 as I had supposed it was, I will not have time. I have come up here to his first traveling camp with him. He ~~would~~ goes on tomorrow while I remain here two or three days to recruit my animals, shoot and catch trout in the Monye river. I will finish my letter when I get back to Colville

Lenyakwatun, W.T. 26th August. Arrived here 22nd, found Mr. King the Quartermaster of the commission. This place is I think one of the most agreeable in the whole of Washington territory. The river is wide and deep with many low points projecting into the stream--the water has

fallen more than 15 feet but instead of a margin of base mud to ---the banks, green beautiful grass has grown up as fast as the water has receded-- If I had my books with me as well as my fishing tackle I would rather spend a month here than at an eastern awaiting place... I ^{came} ~~have~~ to day by a different route which was not passable when I first came out here on account of the high water which covered many points of the trail I will cross again to the north bank of the river thence down the river fifty miles to St. Ignatious mission--cross again to the left bank and thence across the mountains 45 miles to Colville.

Colville depot

2nd Sept., 1860

Left Lenyakwatu 26th alto, traveled ten miles the first day and camped at mouth of Vermillion river--~~next~~ day 20 miles, camped on Pend Oreille--next day camped at the mission at an Indian village of about 100 Indians--next day 20~~00~~ 29th Indians canoed me over and traveled 15 miles to Summit of Pend Oreille mountains, six ~~miles~~ thousand feet high, next day 30 August 30 miles to Colville--stopped at 11 o'clock at a creek at the foot of the mountain and let my horses and mules graze for ~~xxx~~ three hours, bathed in the cool stream--shot a half dozen grouse, dined saddled up and started again, got into Colville at 4 o'clock p.m. found my ~~house~~ house finished, plastered, painted, nicely floored.

The settlers in the valley in the midst of their wheat harvest Everything and everybody looks well.

Affectionately yours
J.G. Archer.

make a government sufficiently strong to be effective for the necessary purposes, and at the same time guard against the possibility of any combination of incidents to control the minority without their consent-- it was though the object was secured when each state was made equal in the federal senate --the southⁿ has no refuge except in the right of secession ..that the south is completely at the mercy and forbearance of the North--in other words enslaved although not yet oppressed--she has the choice now of asserting her rights and of demanding some guarantee for that reservation--if she waits until Lincoln is elected it will be too late--her morale will be gone, her place of strength seized, ~~the~~ her officers in the federal army ~~would be threatened with~~ threatened with the rope for treason if they refuse and compelled to fight against her and yet at the last she will be goaded into what would now be a constitutional act, but will then be -- -- let her states now secede and the result will be the peaceful establishment of a purposeful Southern confederacy , an effectual attempt in the passing the north to force those back, or else after the---a reunion with a new and perfected constitution capable of effecting what the old constitution sought to effect.

I anxiously await the action of Maryland when she succeeds I desire her to consider my services at her disposal --I will thus come home to her.

with love

Your affectionate brother

J.G. Archer

addresses to my dear brothers)not mother)

R.H. Archer.

Colville depot, W.T.

17th Sept, 1860

My dear mother:

I received Nannie's letter of 17th and Mary's of 2nd July by the last mail, one less than were due as I had not received a letter from you by either of the two previous mails.

I had just got ready and was about starting to the Coeur d'Alene Mission (about 15 miles beyond Lake Coeur d'Alene and about 150 miles from here)) to secure and bring to Colville, a ~~61st~~ detachment of 150 recruits. They are en route across the plains and Rocky Mountains and form a portion of a larger body of recruits for the different regiments in Oregon and Washington territories. Coeur d'Alene is the point on the route nearest to this point. I was just about starting when an expressman came in from Major Black who is in command of the recruits saying that on his arrival at Coeur d'Alene he would detach four officers to conduct the recruits into Colville so of course there was no reason for me to go--If ~~90~~ it were not for the American and British commission which will both winter here we would I fear have a rather lonely time. Capts. Fletcher and Frazer and Lt. Camp and Harker and Dr. Bennin have all applied for leave of absence and will all get it-- Wickcliffe, VanVorst and Carr will be due soon. Carr had started with the recruits but a rumor reached us that he met with an accident while coming up the Missouri river which obliged him to return and possibly may detain him until spring.

Affectionately

Yours, J.G. Archer

Colville Depot, W.T.

5th October 1860

My dear mother:

The last mail anxiously looked for brought no letter from home. We are brightening up a little here. Several of the gentlemen of the commission are here. Lts. Barker, Van Voast (sic) and Wickcliffe and wife are expected today and the officers of the British commission make us frequent visits--generally they are very agreeable people, especially Mr. Lord and Dr. Lysl both of whom have been mostly all over the entire world, the latter on Arctic and Antarctic expeditions.

The winter has commenced but not with any thing like the severity of last season. Today after a snow storm the weather has grown quite warm. All well. With love to all at home.

Affectionately

J.G. Archer

P.S. I enclose a draft for \$100 for the year 1860 for newspapers and periodicals as follows:

To be sent to me at Colville Depot, W.T.: Blackwood's magazine, Baltimore Weekly Exchange and Richmond Enquirer (Weekly)

To be sent to Nannie: Blackwood's magazine.

To Willie Smiths in The Illustrated London News or if that is not interesting as I suspect it is, send something that is.

Commanding officer Co I, 9th infantry; Colville Depot: London, Edinburgh, Westminster and British.

Harper's Monthly and Weekly.

London Illustrated News.

New York Herald, Weekly. New York Times (do)

The balance of draft to be kept for further orders.

Colville Depot, W.T.

5th October, 1860

My dear Mother:

Lts. Kautz, Hardin and Carleton arrived 30th ulto with the detachment of recruits of whom I wrote in my last letter. They came by steamboat to Fort Benton on the upper Missouri, thence Lt. Mullan's new emigrant waggon road across the Rocky Mountains to the Coeur de Alene Mission and thence leaving the main body of the recruits who proceeded direct to Walla Walla came on here over the Indian trail. They speak of their march as a very pleasant one. The Rocky Mountains from all I have been able to learn about them are a very small affair. The pass by which the detachment crossed as well as other passes further south is so gradual that for the course of the streams you would never know you were ascending on the one side or descending on the other. They are as nothing to the Cascade range in comparison with those high Sierras, Lt. Kautz who has just returned from his European trip says the Alps are not to be mentioned nor is Mt. Blaine to be thought of when you look upon the great peaks of Mount Baker or Adams, Rainier, St. Helens, Hood or Jefferson. The Cascades and not the Rocky Mountains are really the great mountains of America extending in a continuous under the different names of the Andes or Cordilleras in South America, the Sierra Madre in Mexico, the Sierra Nevada in California and the Cascades here from the south of "South to the north of North America including in their range all the lofty peaks and volcanoes of the continent.

Kautz, Hardin (sic) and Carleton left us day before yesterday en route for their respective regiments and companies. Major Lugenbeel left 30th Sept. and Capt and Mrs. Fletcher 3rd Inst so that Capt Frazer, Lt. Hughes and Dr. Besnin (sic ...this time legible and clear) are the only officer left with me.

The entertainment of our guests, the arrival of the recruits attention to the work of the unfinished post and the preparation of the monthly papers for the mail have kept me pretty busy for the last few days. I will have more leisure when I next write. Give my love to all at home. Tell Bob I was glad to learn by the newspapers that he is the Breckenridge and not the Douglass wing. I would know very little of Maryland affairs if it were not for the newspapers

I remain, my dear mother,
very affectionately yours

The departure of so many officers for the east this fall reminds me a little too much of how pleasant asuch a trip would be for me. But it is well I did not apply for as there will be so many other officers of my company, I could not have obtained a leave--neither can I hope for one next summer as Col. Wright, in command of the department, has decided that none will be given during the season for field operations.

Colville Depot, W.T.

22nd October, 1860

My dear mother:

..Major Lougenbeel returned last Thursday accompanied by Bvt. Lt. Colonel Emory of the Cavalry, acting inspector general who completed his inspection of the post and was away again by 11 o'clock the next day. Dr. Hammond of the coast came in from the Rocky Mountains a week ago. We have since heard from the eastern-most party of the boundary survey that they do not expect to get off the summit of the mountains before the last of October. They are likely to have a severe time coming in and I would not be surprised they should lose some of their men although through intense cold and snow.

Lt. Camp who is with the party and who has a leave of absence to commence from his return here, will not, I am afraid, be able to get home this winter. Carr has not been heard from since he came back sick from the detachment of recruits at Fort Benton.

You will have heard before this of the massacre of emigrants on the road from Salt Lake to Walla Walla. We know very little about this except that it was a terrible affair and that Capt. Dent has been sent out on the road with his company and about 40 dragoons.

This event, will I think, ensure the erection of a post somewhere in the neighborhood of Boise river which empties into Snake or Lewis river of the Columbia about 300 miles due south from Colville. It is probable that in the spring the boundary commission having finished its survey, that this post will be reduced by one or two companies which may be sent to build and garrison the new post in the Boisee(sic) country. It is represented as the most desolate and most extensive of all the deserts west of the Rocky Mountains. Nobody is anxious for the lot to fall to himself. We have been enjoying delightful Indian summer weather for the last three weeks. All well. Love to all

affectionately Yours J.G. Arther.

Fort Colville, W.T.

27th January, 1860 (7)

My dear mother:

By the last express I received letters from Albert and Sister of 28th Oct and from Nannie of 3d and 27 November

I am surprised you should not be aware of the change made last spring in the mail arrangements from for California, which accounted for the apparent irregularity of my letters home.

There is a weekly overland mail from San Francisco by which I believe all the letters are sent--but the mail is carried only twice a month. ~~There~~ There is also a pony express from San Francisco which carries letters in a much shorter time for \$5 a half ounce. I have only sent one by that way. We have only just received the results of the presidential election. The permanent sectional majority has now control of the executive branch of the government and will maintain it to the end--it will soon have congress and the federal judiciary pass any acts whatever decided them to be constitutional by the judges and execute them by the president at the head of the whole physical force of the country-- Against such an array the ~~the~~ minority of its state will be completely at the mercy of the majority --in fact enslaved by it. The minority, the south, will secede for the right of secession is all that is left. The result may be a peaceful establishment of a southern republic, the North may try to force the seceding states back into the union or after peaceful secession a reunion may come to pass with a new and better constitution which will do what the old constitution intended, preserve the rights of each state against the power of the absolute control of the majority. I think and hope the latter may be the result. By this time you will probably know. I await with great anxiety the action of Maryland my first and last duty is to be with her if she secedes, at the moment she does I throw up my commission in the USA, return home and offer my services to the governor. Received letters from Carr and Harvie, 17th Nov, both married, first to Miss Witts of Roanoke, other to

Fort Colville, W.T.

17th March, 1861

My dear mother:

By last mail I received Mary and Nannie's letters , dated 7th and 18th of January.

It seems wonderful how calmly they can ignore the great events that are transpiring around them. I do not think they would take so little notice of it if it were only a thunder shower guided by a kind providence but here we have a revolution? with the and black republicanism ...g..../////////??? .

I do not care so much about their own opinions on the subject but I want to know what part all our friends and relatives are taking-- what would I not give to be in Maryland now.

The course of Maryland is so plain I cannot comprehend how she should not be autonomous. The constitution was destroyed the moment a permanent majority was organized, able to control eventually every branch of the government . The union was destroyed by the consequent succession of the southern states. The question is, shall we take advantage of these events to make a permanent harmonious reunion of equal states or not. It can be done but not by the adoption of any ...? some radical change is necessary.

Something that will ~~10000~~ give security for all time to come against the abolition powers of the majority , for all parties and for all sections.

Every state, whether North or South, which values its rights, should secede and remain out of the union until constitutional powers were adopted that would require at least three fourths of the electoral college to name a president and the same or nearly the same proportion of senators to pass a law. I would almost favor a veto on the passage of laws placed in the hands of the senators from any one state.

Nothing much short of this will restore harmony and a feeling of security to the country, no peace that is not made on some such basis can be lasting. It would be a pity for letting the opportunity pass by for correcting the mistakes of the old constitution.. With love to all