

7-6-1862

Letter, Thomas Stevens to Sue Nelson; 7/6/1862

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The following is the complete text of a letter penned on July 6th, 1862, from a Confederate soldier, Thomas Stevens of Noxubee county, to Miss Sue Nelson, who later was to become his bride. The original letter, smudged and faded, yet readable, was discovered in 1961 by Mrs. Tom Douglas of Macon, a descendant of the marriage.

July 6, 1862

Camp near Abbeville, Lafayette county, Miss.

Miss Sue

I received yours on the 6th instant in which you appeared surprised at the reception of my epistle. It affords me so much pleasure to hear from home that I intend to correspond with every one that proves punctual. It is true my composition is very imperfect though if you do not consider me burdensome I would like to keep up a regular communication. The news from Virginia is of the most flattering description. Our loss I fear has been very heavy, but victory has been perched on our banners. The great Napoleon has been whipped out of his wits.

God grant that peace may spread her millions of blessings over our distracted land and let friends return home to meet with all who have been near or dear to them. What would produce a greater change in a fond parent to see his noble his gallant son return home after offering himself as a sacrifice on the altar of his country.

But the next question that arises is what shall we do? We must drive them back to the rivers and the sea. I reckon you have heard of the move from Tupelo of Nineteen regiments, amongst them is Tucker's. They were ordered to Hudsonville which is about eight miles above Holly Springs. The Yankees have possession of Holly Springs. They drove us out though we killed and wounded fifteen with the loss of only one wounded but not of our company. The bullets whistled all around us for ten minutes. After falling back we formed on a high hill bantering their calvary but they kept themselves back. Our Colonel ordered the bugler to sound a retreat and about the time we got straight in the road the cannon opened fire. One bomb bursted a little distance to the right of our company which was my first initiation. Our object up there was showing a Scout that is to find out all ~~XXXXXXXX~~ we could about the enemies.

You spoke of Capt. Foote not being elected Col. It was not the fault of the Noxubee boys. Foote is by far the smartest man but neither of them have much knowledge of tactics.

Corn is fine but needing rain very much. Our marches are very unpleasant. It is very difficult for me to discern my file leader. The health of the company is improving rapidly. I wish you would abuse Brother and Lady for not writing though I have received one from each one of them. I have received several letters from neighbors and they all complain for the want of rain. I expect we will have a battle here in a few days. Everyone is expecting it though we may all be disappointed. They may send a great many of their troops to Virginia or Vicksburg. But I feel confident that Matt and I will be in a battle very soon. Direct your letter to Oxford, Lafayette county, and try to send by some member of the company. My best regards for your father's family. I am still an absent friend.

Thomas Stevens

The following is the complete text of a letter passed on July 6th, 1862, from a Confederate soldier, Thomas Stevens of Madison County, to Miss Susan Nelson, who later was his wife.

Tell Mrs. Stevens I can hear nothing of McCarr as I am some distance from the Louisiana regiments. He may have gone to Virginia or Chattanooga, or preferably he may be going to Hudsonville. I would give one dollar ~~for~~ freely to eat a vegetable dinner out of your Mother's garden or sister's. I wish I could be at home when water melons commence ripening. This is a great fruit country. Early apples are ripening. Watermelon vines have just commenced running. I have seen several small ones.

Camp near Abbeville, Lafayette County, Miss.

Ladies up in this country are very much devoted to the southern cause. One lady attracted a great deal of attention by waving a pair of cotton caps. I am willing to give every cent in the world to close this despicable war. Do not infer from this I am low spirited for I enjoy myself finely when the Yankees are not shooting at us.

You must excuse the brevity of this letter and the paper being soiled as it is very difficult to keep paper clean in camps. I will try and do better in the next.

been purchased on our business. The great Napoleon has been whipped and his wife.

Thomas

God grant that peace may spread her millions of blessings over our distressed land and let friends return home to meet with all who have not met or dear to them. What would produce a greater change in a land sought to see his noble his gallant son return home after offering himself as a sacrifice on the altar of his country.

But the most gratifying news which we have at present is that we have been sent back to the river and the sea. I would not have been part of the army that fought of Nineteen regiments, engaged them in battle. They were ordered to Hudsonville which is about eight miles above Holly Springs. The Indians have possession of Holly Springs. They drove us out though we killed and wounded fifteen with the loss of only one wounded but not of our company. The bullets whizzed all around us for ten minutes. After falling back we fired on a high hill bordering their delivery but they kept themselves back. Our Colonel ordered the major to send a retreat and about the time we got straight in the road the cannon opened fire. The tank bursted a little distance to the right of our company which was my first battle. Our object up there was sending a scout that is to find out all movements we could about the enemy.

You speak of Capt. Foote not being elected Col. It was not the fault of the Nineteen boys. Foote is by far the smartest man but neither of them have much knowledge of tactics.

Care is now being taken very much. Our marches are very unpleasant. It is very difficult for me to discuss my little letter. The health of the company is improving rapidly. I wish you would advise Brother and Lady for not writing though I have received one that said out of them. I have received several letters from neighbors and they all explain for the want of paper. I expect we will have a battle here in a few days. Napoleon is expecting it though we may all be disappointed. They may send a great many of their troops to Virginia or Yorkburg. But I feel confident that West and I will be in a battle very soon. Direct your letter to Oxford, Lafayette County, and try to send by some member of the company. My best regards for your father's family. I am still an absent friend.

Thomas Stevens