

Head Quarters Co. 1st Regt
Camp Buena Vista; Jan 6th 1848

My Dear Father & Mother,

I am happy & this morning I have the happy privilege of writing you a letter. I received on yesterday evening a letter from you dated Nov. 30th being the last I receive I have received from home; Ma. informs me Sister Amanda is or was to be married in a few weeks from the date of that letter I must assure you I was not a little surprised to hear of it. I was struck with a burst of imagination and wonder: to find in so short a time could make so great a change in the human character; more especially under existing circumstances; great are the changes that befall us (and a great one to the old adage: great are the changes of this world of wonder you may perhaps, wish to know, my private opinion in relation to this matter: I am ready to acknowledge my opinion on such matters are of but little value: owing to my own inability and experience and you are no doubt apprised of the difficulty which occurred between myself: and Mr. Gency: more than two years since; which has been the last word ever passed between us: and consequently I had but little idea of him: or his ability towards supporting a family: and owing ~~to~~ to my past life: but: as this I have no right to express my own: opinion in relation to so important a matter. And under such feelings I will close this subject: hoping however, that it may all turn out for the better, and that their brightest days are yet to dawn upon them.

I must assure you I am somewhat at a loss to know how or what to write in this letter as all is uncertainty with me here: One day a hope springs up: that things will soon take a change

and I may yet live to return again: tho perhaps
in a moment time; something occurs that blasts
every opinion and prospect into insignificance
and contempt. And altho the duties and trials of
a soldier are not to be described: I am determined to
try to look upon every thing for the best. When I left
you twelve months since: I then hoped by this
time: our career would have been finished: be our
doom what it may: tho alas twelve months have
passed away: a many a beloved heart has been ~~cast~~
doomed to an untimely grave: And tho I have been
one of the fortunate to escape the clutches of death
in a foreign and unhealthy climate: The road before
me is yet dark and gloomy what ~~is~~ to be the result
of my future days; time can only determine: in all
my future letters: I have expressed a happy mind:
~~and~~ as I could not believe other wise: than a peace
would be made: and it appears as the most
enlightened minds have been doomed to disappoint-
ment. And we are yet left to live a life of suspense
danger and disappointment: And I must acknow-
ledge the sad of being: a life of this kind perhaps
for one or two years yet to come: must be horri-
ble in the eyes of every one: who is disposed to do
justice to his Country and himself, could we have
active service: it would be a different thing: for then
we might had some hope: of having our names
enrolled with the many: who the world now looks
upon with wonder and respect. Tho as I before said
the idea of remaining: as we now are in garrison of
a Country for years to come: And should we after all
the trials and chances: then escape. Killed up with
the duties of the service without honour or distinction
pay or reward: is distressing. And dear Parents
I perhaps have here expressed myself too openly upon
this subject. Tho why should I ^{not} keep it hid: from you
who have so much experience: and whose happiness is
so much connected with my own

I have heretofore openly expressed myself to you
I in one of my former letters; expressed and anxiously
for a Commission in the Regular Army; which I find
from your letter you was kind enough not to let go un-
noticed; I layed down in that letter many advantages to
be derived from a Commission: tho' to be frank my pen
cannot describe: the difference between such a comf: and
a non Comf'd officer: in the service: As whilst one affords
an easy comfortable life: rewarding you with a sum
sufficient: to save a reasonable recompensation for your
time: The other is an office of trouble more responsibility
exposing you to all the hardships: tyrants may wish to
put upon you: without pay barely sufficient to keep
life and decency a going: and finally when your career
is finished without: honour or reward: for your deeds tho'
they may have been double of that of the former, you state
in your letter: you would not fail to lend me all your influence
in my behalf. I can only add I must ever be thankful: for
your continued kindness: and here hope: my claim
may not be over looked: when I enter the service you
was kind enough: thro' your influence to get me a post
in the Non Com Staff of the Va Regt. Since that time I have
ever endeavour'd to fill that office: with all the care: and
ability: I possess: tho' I am confident: had I remained
with my Company: I should have been better off: as
they has been a vacancy for Lieutenant in the Company
by the resignation of Lieut McCormick: and had I rema-
ined: I am confident: I would have been elected: whilst
as I remain as I am I can never: receive promotion
as the officers: are compelled to be elected from the ranks
of the Company: And I have now determined in a very
short time to return again to my Company: I have
spoken to Col. Hamtramck in relation to it: and he thinks
my chance should the war continue: will be decidedly
better: as Lieutenant Washington is now at home: on sick
furlough: and cannot possibly recover in time to
return and must resign: which will open a nother

vacancies: I have consulted many upon this
subject, and all think it the best course to pursue
as the office I hold: is very little better than
a private, and place me in a situation never
to be any thing else; Should the war last five
years, tho I will have a nother talk with Colr
Hamtramck; and in my next letter, let you know
I have been speaking to Colr Hamtramck in relation to
my applying for a commission; and he is firmly of the opin-
ion that my claim be pressed; I will succeed as my sit-
uation in the army, and the post I hold under his command
will be a strong recommendation in my behalf; I must close
by again requesting you to assist me all you can, in getting
a commission; as that to me would add more to my future
destiny, than any thing else could.

adieu J. W. Brock.

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Mr. Archibald Brock,

Charlottesville, Va.

Rockingham County

Virginia, U. States

From the
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P. S. There is no news afloat here, reports has reached
here quite lately: that a large force of Mexicans are
concentrating at San Luis, and Durango, and will prob-
ably attack this line again, reports number them at 25,000
our forces here now are not more than 2500, and no sign
of peace; we are in tolerable health now; write soon
and give me all the news, also tell me how your chance
will be for a commission; my love to all
and ever believe me to be with much regard yours truly
J. W. Brock