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# Voices of the Past

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The Letters of Abial Edwards

Civil War

1863

Stafford Court House.  
Stafford Co., Va  
Quarters of 10<sup>th</sup> Maine Regiment  
February 22<sup>nd</sup> 1863

Dear Friend Anna

Your kind and thrice welcome letter of the 15<sup>th</sup> is before me and right glad was I to get it. Tis a wild stormy day a real old Maine snow storm is covering us and promises well to fairly bury us in snow. Yesterday was a lovely day warm and pleasant. But last night it commenced snowing and has continued since then already two feet of snow has fallen with fair prospect of much more. Tis a rough looking camp scene this the little huts buried in snow and every crevice the snow comes blowing in soon giving us a pretty good supply of snow outside and in. But in all of this tempest some one is to work as we can tell by the boom of the cannon. As yet we can not find the cause of it wether it is a Salute in honor of Washington's Birth day or wether it is to shell out the Rebel pickets probably the first however. Oh Anna that most dreaded of all diseases the small pox has broke out in our Regiment a young fellow belonging to Company G lately returned here from a Hospital in Alexandria and after reaching here was taken sick with the small pox But every thing has been done to prevent the disease to spread far in the Reg. They have built a Hospital some distance from the Reg<sup>l</sup> and they put those sick into it But for all that it will spread throughout the Reg<sup>l</sup> it is a fatal disease and I have always dreaded but it is no use to be discouraged about it for it will be no worse for me than for the others xxxxxxxx

Tis evening the "tattoo" has been beat throughout the different camps and nearly all have retired. No not all for there are many on guard and out on Picket to night with nothing to prevent the cold wind and snow from blowing about them. Little do our friends at home realize the hard ships of camp life But like all of our past troubles it will soon pass away and we can look back upon our sufferings with a smile. My Company was out on Picket last night on the out posts about 4 miles from here and as they were not allowed any fires they had to keep them selves warm as best they might some laid down and slept a short time and waked up only to find them selves covered with snow Since I was detailed to work in the Post Office I have stood no guard duty I am certainly glad of it for I think now that my health which is not very would permit it. Anna you speak of your dislike to boarding house life there is many a reason for any one to dislike. especially those that can and do appreciate home life as I think you do. It is indeed pleasant to recur to the past, to the many happy days past with the home circle 'ere death with its ever fatal sting entered our happy circle and took our dearest treasures from us. Who is there that would forget the past I would not with all its bitter grief and all its disappointments and all its joys blended together serve only to learn us the value of each friend we possess, to learn us to

go forward with a more earnest purpose in life not to think of self alone but to try to be useful to others. And who can not be useful in such a time as this when our country needs every strong arm that can strike a blow in her defense and we need not only the strong but we also need the active cooperation of those that circumstance compel to stay at home which I am sorry to see is with held by many. And I am afraid that there are men at home that would willingly see us beaten by the Rebels ere they would offer any assistance or even speak a word in our favor. But God forbid that there should be many such in the old 'Sun rise State' As for my self I consider it my duty to do all in my power to help crush this Rebellion. As for others they know what their duty is as well as I. You ask if I hear from Charlie Additon ever no Anna I do not I wrote to him once but never received an answer I was very sorry for I thought a great deal of Charley as a friend If Charlie has become disappated as you heard I am very sorry for as you say he might make a smart likely man. How many a one has been ruined (by that fatal curse intemperance) whose prospects in life were bright as they could wish but before they were aware of it the fatal glass had ruined them. Anna you say that your letters are uninteresting pray do not say so again they come like beems of sunshine on a cloudy day and are ever eagerly looked for and I can but feel ashamed to send such letters in return as I do. But here we are in this wilderness far from a civilized people with nothing but the daily routine of camp life to pass through For these reasons I can but say excuse my uninteresting letters. Please write often. I will not close Please excuse my mistakes and accept this from Your Ever True Friend & Brother

Abial. H. Edwards  
Co K 10<sup>th</sup> Maine