

Headquarters Co. A 159<sup>th</sup> Regt N.Y.S. Vols.  
Birge's Brigade, Grover's Division, Deptmt of the Gulf  
Baton Rouge La. Jan. 26<sup>th</sup> 1863

Dear Father,

Amid the many toils and dangers of a soldier's life nothing is more cheering than news from home, even though it be of as mournful a character as your letter of Jany. 6<sup>th</sup> which I received on the 18<sup>th</sup> Jany. You must not think that because I did not answer it sooner I was not thinking of you, for I think of hardly anything except you and the other dear ones at home, but I have had very little time to myself for the past two weeks, and at no one time have I had an opportunity of writing.

I regret deeply to hear of Grand father's death, but am sure that he has gone to a happier world than this. [Johann Anton "Anthony" Tiemann died December 22, 1862 in New York City.]

I received a letter from Leander on the same day that I received yours. I was surprised to hear through him that he received his letter first for I wrote two letters to you before I thought of writing to any one else. I have written to you either 4 or 5 letters which I hope have all come safely to hand.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> Jany. We moved our camp to a part of the battle ground on which the battle was fought in which Gen'l. [Thomas] Williams was killed. The trees are full of bullet holes. In one tree in our camp was a large piece of shell imbedded firmly in the wood. One of our officers had it cut out to preserve as a relic. We pick up any quantity of musket balls around our camp, but throw them away again as too common for preservation.

We lay at this camp till the 11<sup>th</sup> Jany when we were ordered to pack up ready to start at a minute's notice. The reason of this move was a report to the effect that the enemy had been whipped at Vicksburg, and were coming down in force to drive us out. We were moved in about ½ mile from where we lay, to a spot just north of the state penitentiary. All the troops from outside the city were moved in as rapidly as possible and every preparation was made to be ready in case of an attack. Every morning we were turned out at 5 ½ O'clock and had to stand on our arms (to use the military expression) for one hour. This lasted for about a week and then we got up at the usual hour.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> I was promoted to 2d Lieut. in Co A, one of the largest companies in the regiment. On the 16<sup>th</sup> I was put on "Officer of the Guard," and had about ½ half the regiment looking at me when the guard was mounted. I got through all straight however, and things went on in the usual way. I have a much easier time now than I had in the position of Sergeant Major. My Captain is down with the typhoid fever and it is very doubtful that he will ever recover. The first Lieut. was obliged to resign on account of ill health & the 2d Lieut whose position I now occupy was promoted to a 1<sup>st</sup> in another company but is detailed in command of "my" company.

On the 22d our camp was again moved to a spot about a mile from the other camp. We are and have been in the advance Brigade of the Expedition. It is probable that in about a month we will move against Port Hudson, where the enemy have made every preparation to give us a splendid reception. The place has been since our arrival strongly entrenched and fortified. They have moved troops from Vicksburg and other places, to garrison it, and they now have double the number there, that they had when we first landed.

Harry [Tiemann] I am happy to say has received the appointment of Aid de Camp on acting Brig. Gen'l. [Henry W.] Birge's staff, commander of our Brigade.

Yesterday I was on picket. Every thing was remarkably quiet along our lines. This morning the "Officer of the Day" came out at about 3 ½ O'clock with information that about 30 of our men had got up a plot to desert, and we were to be doubly careful who we passed through the lines. Shortly after a company of the 13<sup>th</sup> Conn. Vols. was sent to our assistance, and guards were posted all along the road with orders to halt all soldiers whom they saw. There was nothing occurred however, so at day break the company was marched back to its quarters. When I got back to camp I was told that six of our men had escaped.

To day we had a grand review of our Brigade by Major Gen'l. [Christopher Columbus] Augur and Staff. When we were marched off to the reviewing ground, a drizzling rain set in which lasted for about half an hour. When the column was formed it stopped raining and did not commence again until the review was all over and we were started for camp again. The review passed off very well indeed, and the Gen'l expressed himself as much pleased with the looks of the regiments composing the Brigade. The Gen'l is a fine looking man. Stout, well built with a fine open countenance, he looks the picture of a genuine "John Bull," although I believe he is an american.

Give my love to Nettie and the children. Tell them that though I am not home myself my thoughts are, and I hope one day to return home to settle down on "our farm in Virginia."

Remember me to all the folks, particularly Grand Mother. Please tell Leander when you see him that I will write to him at the first opportunity.

With much love to you & all at home, & hoping this finds you all well, I remain

Your Affect. Son

Frank

Please send Mr. Dow's directions in your next.

Jan 27<sup>th</sup>

I have taken the liberty of drawing on you for twenty two Dolls (\$22) payable to [Lieutenant] Jacob Fingar [of Company I]. I had to buy a sword & he was the only one who had one to sell. As soon as we are paid off which I hope will be very soon I will remit you the amount.

It has been raining all night, and the weather is very unpleasant, & cold. There is no news since yesterday.

Frank