

My dear wife:

Near Decherd, Tenn.

I have just been looking over some things which
are written, and adding some new scraps to the contents of a book
which I have with me and my thoughts have gone back to that old book
which you inquired for when I was home. It has troubled me not a little
that I am unable to remember what I have done with it. It does not seem
possible that I left it at home at all. But if not where is it?
I am sure I can not find it in any of my drawers, but could not
remember to have written it into any of the things which I ever
took with me. I am of course of everything which I am ashamed to take your
eyes - either to see or to be seen. I wish you would get Rosetta to
look every three or four consecutive seconds and see if
she can recall some account of it. She ought to know
it by description. It seems to me however that I must
have lost it - as I lose most things - by being too
highly "cute" with it, and have entirely for-
got what it is! It seems to me I gave it to some one.
Are you sure that it is not even now in your possession?
I should not wonder if you had it somewhere, after all. Can
I have given it to Maria? I should not wonder. She was the
only one at hand to whom I could entrust anything confidential.
Let me see. I gave her some books and she asked me
if it would suit any of them when I was at home. It may be
it may be. I cannot tell. If you can discover any trace
of it elsewhere, you can ask her. If she knows nothing

about it, it is just lost and nothing short of an advertisement will ever bring it to light. It troubles me though there is some nothing in it, it is particularly private to me, and I would rather lose almost ^{any} other earthly possession than that little book. I think I am doing pretty well in writing to you, late. I wrote yesterday, and the day before and have now another letter commenced. But I will not write any more now for I hope for a letter today, and will then fill the sheet.

Affectionally,
Wednesday Morning, Albion

July, 15th 1863

Good Morning Darling, I have just risen and as breakfast is not yet ready I will spend this pleasant morning hour in writing to you. According to expectation I got a letter from you last night. It is a very long one, to be sure, but the great care attracts my attention. You must make in your special business to give it the "color" of mine, as soon as possible. You know that if the prospects continue as good as they now are for ending this war, I shall be at home in a few months, and surely you would not wish to welcome me with a more begone appearance, and even a distressed one.

You certainly must not let the cause which you espouse make your cheeks pale. You say you will not give up. Do not, assuredly, my dear, I do not. It seems so just

and right that it should be so. It seems - I know not why that we shall both be grateful, sometime, that it is so. Besides that we had no reason to expect that it would be otherwise. Was it to be supposed that after so long and imprisonment, and so low a diet, for so many months, that it could be otherwise than as it is? Never mind it, my love, the joy you soon will come in due season, I doubt not. Are not the prospects bright now? I really expect that the South will succumb very soon. I may be mistaken but do not think I am. They had hard enough time to live before with all success on their side. Why they have lost more than 100,000 since June 15th only one month. - Thus comes the end of Hickerburg, ^{the prisoners,} killed and wounded, must have been more than 30,000. This besides the loss of the position. Fort Hudson to Hickerburg will pretty nearly ruin the hopes of the before despirited Confederacy. Now, if we add to that the discomfiture of Lee in Penn. and what I regard as certain, the capture of Morgan, they must feel themselves pretty nearly crippled. I think a general amnesty will soon be proclaimed to all who lay down their arms in a certain time. You cannot imagine how general the feeling here is, towards the Union. Secession has no longer any advocates here. They have seen and felt all its evils. I don't like the feeling which you say seems to prevail with some in regard to Pete H. - I may have made some such remarks as that ascribed to me in regard to him and most assuredly if I should meet him I should

~~and then~~
feel it my duty to relieve the world of your
felix. I do not hold any feeling of personal
hate or personal enmity against him, however. I could not
so condemn myself. I do hate him, because he is a
northern renegade, a renegade too, from the lowest &
lowest motives. He is not a conscript - (or at least, if
he is, it is because he could not volunteer with a position
which suited him). To show that I have no antipathy
of feeling towards him, as D. Huntington merely, I
believe, say, that I have spent two days in trying to
learn the whereabouts of his wife. I am of the opinion
that if she is in Winchester, I will go there in a day
or two, and inform her in person of the opinion
in this region are. I shall appreciate the news of going south
of the Jersey hills. I should like to see you if I could feel a
personal hatred for it.

I have a sweet dream in which
you figure prominently which I am writing to see fully
filled. It may not be but I think it will. But Oh! I had
forgotten to tell you. Do you know I have been making
a reform since I returned to the Army I have given
up entirely the use of indulgence in profane words and
intoxicating beverages. Perhaps this does not surprise you
at all. Very well, then I have one more wonder. I have aban-
doned all use of tobacco. I have given the splendid merchandise
which I brought back to me a poor scryte and abandoned it en-
tirely. How long I shall continue this course of abstinence
habit I know not. I like it well thus far. The latter wonder has
only been in existence a week. - Give my love to all the sis-
terhood. - I pray that we ~~never~~ may never lose its music to
your care, until I remain

Your Husband
Albin W. Bourger

Thursday Morning
July 16th 1863.

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

Dear Mother
July 15th 1864

[The body of the letter is almost entirely illegible due to extreme image degradation and noise.]