

From Lewis Stafford to Kate Newland

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Camp Washington  
near Clinton mo[.]  
July 6th 1861

Dear Kate,

I learned - just now - that a bearer of dispatches was going to Fort Leavenworth in the morning and take this as a favorable opportunity to write to you again. We arrived at this place on the 4th pretty well tired out, so much so that it did not at all seem like the 4th of July. There are now under the command of Major Sturgess near twenty-five hundred men. I presume our destination is to Fort Smith[.] We do not know. I had anticipated that the Rebbels would [MS. illegible] this

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have made a stand and fought for the principles and rights they make so much noise about. But it appears that they run from us as fast as we approach within sixty miles of them. How much farther they will ask the Troops of the loyal state to chase them is a great query in camp. I understand that in Virginia they have been met and conquered.

They showed themselves there, men, but here in Mo[.], they seem in my estimation to lack [*text stricken through*], properly speaking want, the necessary courage to make savages, for they, when they think their rights are intruded upon and that they are going to loose their homes and all, will fight for them. But here, they flee like a Thief when an officer is after them.

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If the rebbels are defeated in Virginia it will tend to end this war sooner than some at first supposed. How soon it is done I do not care, the sooner the better[.] The troops took posession of a Printing Press at Clinton, on which a secession Journal had been printed, and issued a Union paper on the [MS. illegible][.] much to the gratification of the Union people here. I could not get a copy to send home. It is gratifying to see how glad the people are, [when?] the troops pass through their country with the greates order that can be maintained. They supposed that the country was to be laid in [MS. illegible] as we passed. This gives to the rebbels

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a good opinion [of] northern soldiers. How long we shall stop here I do not know. It is generally understood that Genl[.] Lyon meets us here and that he is but two days march behind us. It is hoped he will come and take command as we have men traveling this [*text stricken through*] far for nothing it seems but to show off the strength of opposition to rebellion. This may be a very

fine thing, but it does not seem so to a great many, who perhaps, ought not to express an opinion.

The country here seems to be [*text stricken through*] well settled, and mostly by people from the Slave States. Clinton is a pretty little town, neatly laid out. It has been a verry hot bed of secession, but secession in this place is now pretty generally squelched and I do not see the school houses and churches in the towns we pass through as numerous as [MS illegible] they are in our Kansas towns. Next sheet --

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The "Grasshopper Boys" are getting along finely. Mr[.] Barnes appears to like soldiering as well as could be expected. I apprehend you had a verry nice time on the 4th. as in most places they made some preparations for celebrating that day. I hope you did not allow some good looking fellow to become a victim. I beg pardon. Ah, frown not, sweet Lady, unbend your soft brow. [MS. illegible] word of thine is precious ever. Hope I get, ah still remember. Faith and trust and Love, are gems celestial to us poor mortals here below[.] "I ask no pledge to make me blest," "In g[azing?] when alone;" ["]nor one memorial for a breast," ["]whose thoughts are all their own".

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"Nor need I write - to tell the tale," my pen were doubly weak. Oh! What could idle words avail, unless the heart does truly speak," Time tempers all things, adversity purefies. The serging billows of the ocean wear the granite away. But woman, true womans love, lives and lives forever. I sometimes think that our destiny is forever damed, That all the various scenes of life through which we pass, is but the working out on our part of the great destiny, foreordained from him who created us. But how eventful and changeful my life has been, and this single fact drives me to an other belief. Could it be a part of mine to attempt so many things and succeed

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in all as I have don to a great extent in business of all that [kind?] congenial to my tastes. Forgive me for intruding, this nonsense upon you[r] mind. But I am now determined, that as soon as this war is done with and I am discharged, to make but one single object the pursuit of my life. With you to love and to love me, I think life will be happy. Why should it not be so. Often I dream of this. All the foregoing may seem the hight of nonsense, to you, but to beg a thousand pardons, if so I sent you several letters, all directed to [MS. illegible]. If you will now write to me I shall be much pleased to hear from you.

Yours with affection always,  
Lewis Stafford

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P.S. Write soon and inform me whether you have received letter[s] from me. I send this off immediately. I will write again as soon as an opportunity occurs to read a letter. Untill then I will think of thee dear Kate.

Lew Stafford