

In Camp. ^{Head of Milk River} 11 miles above
Aug 26th 81

My dear Girl,

I have just returned from a scout with the Company in the County North and East of here - and as far down as the Curve of the Big Bend - have ridden today over 50 miles started at 6 am - and got back at 10 o'clock at night - we were among thousands of Buffalo the greater part of the day and killed about 40 - could have killed ten times that number - as this were very fine - The whole bluff country north is alive with them - and from all indications - at the Rockies - south it will be the same - I reached today what will probably be our farthest point from Assiniboine - about 125 miles - tomorrow we go back as far as Browning - then cross Milk River and go toward the Rockies on arrival there will be much nearer home - and in a nice country - though this is very fine - wonderfully so - for grass. No Mosquitoes now worth mentioning - which is a great relief - Since we

have good meat and plenty of it. I am all right -- do not feel a bit tired after the long ride today. would send you in a couple of Buffalo tongues but they would spoil on the road. From the Rockies - it will be practicable to send them in. we brought in a mule load of choice pieces and the men are stuffing themselves.

We will have no permanent camp here. The Buffalo are moving and no Indians or half breeds have been set against. There are traces of but few the whole expedition is a mere put up job. probably by the Agents - (at Belknap and Fort Beck or Kopley Creek.) The Grosventres are now with the Buffalo. and there are enough here available to feed all the Indians in the country without discriminating each other.

Should we find any Indians there are no hopes of our being able to kill any of them - However - Apart from being absent from you - it would be more pleasant - out here than serving at the Post.

I am ever so glad to learn that you are better and hope you will be all right in a few days - do not again neglect to call in the

reaction when he is needed. Cabernus has
been made Chaplain - to keep him out
of mischief. I expect to be made Chap-
lain tomorrow - as there is no one else here
at all suited for the position. Miller shoot
ducks - Kid Okrum and the doctor massacred
some Weppalo and an Antelope today. Barnhart
and Wheeler have not killed anything yet, but
are good at picking bones

Regards to all and love to the
lads. Write all details - as before.
The fire, toward Sweet grats, was important
they did not notify us from the Uteys - any
thing about it

As to orders - The new ones were
made to more half breeds as well as
Indians. They are to be named and if
found again between certain restrictions
the location of which they know nothing about
are to be arrested and tried by civil courts.
That is they are to be tried "next-time"

There is nothing in any of the orders
looking to a protract stay out.
In fact if the fires were properly
there will be no range here in a short
time for anybody or anything

The whole country is on fire on
both sides of Milk River
Bully for the fire? Bully for the Buffalo - H-O
for the orders! also for everything!

The Service will make and refer to
at least every five days - All
Do not know

Bellevue - 10th

My dear wife

Have just had dinner
with the Agent here. and returned to
the camp - which is close by the Agency -
we go down the river tomorrow - there
are 22 lodges (the same ones I drove
away from the Post in July - thirty miles
below here - 10 more a few miles beyond
there - and at the lakes - near Woody
Island Creek - where I went on the
last - Decr. - a large camp. Other
Camps of Cree and Half Breeds are
reported at the head of Milk River
and down about the rocks. We
go down the old trail and at the
old rate of a few miles a day. The
Indians will probably keep a couple
of days travel ahead of us. just far
enough to drive away the buffalo.

Last night camped on Box Elder
13 miles from the Post. It was
very cold. but of course we were
comfortable. The Courier with this

is to start in a few minutes -

As usual. the Agency here is full of exaggerated reports. as all the information is derived from Indians

This Expedition chief not-originate with the Agent - here - I questioned him closely - and Major Klein wrote him an official letter in reply to which he said that it was none of his work.

I have no idea that we will catch an Indian in a half-breed - on the trip. They will keep away from us and it will be very easily done. So it looks at present:

Under orders now in force we could not - (theoretically) do anything if we did capture them. The result will of course be that we will be laughed at as before - and the Indians will be rendered more impudent.

From all accounts they are now really afraid of us. After a while they will get over their fright - and give trouble if this thing is kept up -

Do not worry Harley - It is safer than at Cassinabaine - here in fact - so safe as to be already.

Monotonous. The command is very pleasantly repeated and conducted. but it is provoking to be within easy reach of Indians that should be considered hostile and not be allowed to go for them.

Ben will be able to answer by return courier if it is not kept secret - when he is to return -

Probably it would be well to address to the great Campaigners of the Milk River Invincibles

Of course matters have not developed much - at this early date but I see no prospect for developments - in the future

Be careful of your health and drink plenty of spirits from time to time -

Yours Every
Walter

Camp 20 miles
below Agency - 11th 1881

My Warden's wife,

The Indian
mail came in with the mail
and your letter was of course
most welcome. It is snowing
like the devil tonight but warm
and with but little wind. No
accidents since leaving the fort
excepting one horse of E. C. got
into quicksand in Milk River
bed - and had to be dragged out
with ropes. Several men got very
sick - which was not pleasant
this morning being quite raw and
chilly. We in camp tonight in the
timber on the River bank. When
the wind is not felt - at all have
an abundance of fuel. Barnhart
and Fuller have bad colds. One
man kicked by a horse not seriously -
Indian Scouts joined today - 10 of them
the same ones we had before. Got
some fresh beef at Agency. and some
Chickens today - consequently can
serve on the question of fresh
the first lot of Indians (Crows) have

some baggage for covering the Snows of
 the United States of America. I want
 a whole bag-full - and am consequently
 in a deplorable condition. Our Office
 at the Agency in place of O'Connell's will
 go back to the Agency for the express
 train. I do not think it safe for him
 to be remaining around that Agency
 much. The doctor's wife is very fas-
 cinating and has about the style of
 complexion that he would like. She
 is a dark complexion with a black
 name and - other points.

The Agent's daughters have
 three babies between them. The
 youngest is a beautiful young one
 a year about 18 months old. I
~~have got to a ~~Wagon~~ ~~with~~ ~~her~~.~~
 and got wet all over as usual in
 such cases.

The snow continues. We
 will remain here tomorrow -
 perhaps. till the train gets up.
 This trip will be much shorter
 than the preceding one. Do not
 send me any official mail unless
 it requires immediate attention
 life is too short to answer business
 letters in cold weather, and of

2
 Skipped - Scouts go out to look
 for the Camps of a Secret Pat-
 tomorrow. Will probably find
 them you also. The present
~~uncertainty that we will go~~
 down one day March further
 with the train and then sent
 with the mounted force
 beyond - to the bend of Milk
 River - then sent toward
 the rocks and return finding
 nothing. We are in great danger
 of being captured with Buffalo
 meat. but otherwise will probably
 escape harm -

Pray for us, that we may be
 saved from the "Pestilence that
 stalketh in darkness" and the
 "whoop-her-up-Liza-games" that flit
 after night fall. Our name is Toby -
 whether from choice or necessity - I
 suppose it would not make any
 difference. wouldst get any credit
 for it. anyway.

The Agent - Under Director and a
 Foreman came out to see us
 this morning - bringing Buffalo
 Mittens and Leggings for those who
 needed them - They also brought

it should be pleasant - I want to be
out after Buffalo - The work is very
monotonous so far - as the recruits
have to be constantly watched -

~~Present~~ ~~and the cavalry~~
and the cavalry have to wait - or walk
half the time -

Will write whenever
possible, do not expect a letter under
four days after receipt of this
one - as we will be doing nothing
excepting getting a little further
away -

Don't fret yourself so
much - The Indian Alliance
business is all humbug - some
idiotic lie or other -

As ever
Samuel Jones
please

Camp

Priests Grave - 13th 31

My Marley wife

Boys by Nicholas
 Rec'd today - Wagens go back
 to help the train up with
 Jorag - Expect it here tomorrow
 Here night - Have been in
 Camp in the timber on the
 River - ~~Don't~~ ~~think~~ ~~it~~ ~~is~~ ~~at~~ ~~all~~ ~~since~~
 the storm began - such
 comfortable -

Plenty of wild ducks
 and chickens - also get
 Buffalo and Antelope meat
 all well. Night before last
 and last night - the tem-
 perature must have been
 below zero - but we are
 sheltered from the wind -

Thirty miles below -
 30 camps of Walbrees
 were seen day before
 yesterday but no attempt
 was made to reach
 them - There is a large
 camp of Assiniboin
 about 20 miles down
 the river (these belong
 with the Grosventris) they

2
send us up whatever
information they have
from time to time
when the train gets here
we will move one day
March down the river
and scout from there
do not expect to catch
anything but halfbreeds
thought there are or have
been Camps of Cree on
or near Woody Island
Creek - we might as
well have remained at
the Post until the trans-
portation with ferge started
as to have waited for it
here. As before - we
were started a week or
so too soon

2 Halfbreeds passed us
the day we left the Post
in sight of the Column -
These went on to work the
Camps - Coching their Art
the side of Belknap.

Under sporting rules, (as be-
fore) we can do nothing if
disposed to - and the

whole affair amounts to nothing
 excepting to give employment
 to a forage train at great
 expense. The Report about
 war between Cree Halfbreeds
 and Grosventris - is all nonsense.
 If we had started with a
 mounted command - and
 the pack train - and had
 one company of Infy - to scout
 a few ways with forage
 and follow down the river
 to be met by us when supplies
 might be needed - we could
 have scouted the whole Res-
 ervation and been back as
 far as Belknap tonight - As
 it is here not scouted at
 all - excepting by a few Indians
 which should have been done
 before we left the Post at all.

Of course the Indians paid
 no attention to Brown - Why
 should they? I am glad you
 answered Evans letter -

It will make it all right -
 don't be at all uneasy, Ret -
 there is not the slightest occasion
 nothing is going to happen -
 The storm is over - and

The snow will soon disappear
 Our horses are smooth shod -
 and are troublesome in con-
 sequence - but - in a day or two
 we can travel - (Think of a
 Post at this latitude without
 Horse shoes?)

It is very dull in camp
 as we brought but little reading
 matter - I sleep most of
 the time - Major Klein is
 a pleasant Comely Officer -
 and we get along in Camp
 nicely - He is however tied
 up by orders on the first -
 instance - and lack of trans-
 portation in the second -
 and can do nothing - of
 course - Regards to all
 As ever
 Evering

The waters are starting and
 I have had but a few minutes
 time in which to write as
 the Currier came in but a
 little while ago

My Camp - Rickett's Creek
30 miles below Belknap

22^d Oct 81

My dear wife

Nichols came in this evening from the Bend of Milk River having passed by our trail to Woody Island Creek. As he met here on the way down - you must have my letter written after going to the Half-Breed Camp.

Next day we started for Woody Island Creek. Marched 16 miles and camped in a pocket in the bluffs. Sent Scouts the next day - who returned that night reporting a large camp of Crees on Woody Island. They also captured a Coyote on the way and brought in 7 bucks and their outfit.

Next day we went to Woody Island and formed a camp of 200 Coyotes of Crees. It was a complete surprise to them - as they were just moving out to go to the Bend of Milk River. They offered no resistance - but submitted

2
quitting - H. O. and the Inty with
the train went into camp by
them at once. The Company was
sent down the bluffs along
the creek to hunt for some
we went a circuit of 20 miles
getting back late at night.

It was very cold, and the trail
in the creek bottom for 5 miles
of the way very muddy.

Next morning the Cree camp
broke about 8 o'clock and moved
off on the north side toward
the line. At the same time the
Infantry and Train got ready
and started on the back trail.

We remained with the gun
detachment for a couple of
hours until the Cree had
gone, and then followed.

Camped in the same place
we started out from - that
was yesterday - and was the
only day of decent weather
we have had on the trip.

Today we came in here - 16
miles. Tomorrow we go up to
the Priest's Gravel Camp - and
then will probably have a 50
mile run after some few

3
Lodges reported to be on a creek
above. which ride will bring
us into Belknap. Scouts will
start from here in the morning -
and if the reported camp has
moved. will save us this long
trip - which however will not
delay our return if taken - as
the Infantry and Train will
continue up the river. Today
has been cold. and windy. with
a prospect of another similar
day tomorrow. As we go up the
river we will burn all the
half breed Shacks. ~~tomorrow.~~
at least - than then down.

Some think of my not writing
by Nicholas last time - He had
a special message for you. and
I did not write because I did not
know he was going until about
10 minutes before he started
having been asleep all morning.
in camp. This has been to me
a most unsatisfactory trip - we
have accomplished nothing which
amounts to anything - as the Indians
have not been lost all all. and
will return as before. We have
gone over no new country and

4 have had miserably disagreeable weather all the time - I am glad that it is nearly over. We will be in on the 26th. Russell and City. I have not changed my clothes since leaving - It has been so comfortable and wretched that I thought it as well to rough it through - in one suit - and not catch cold.

Your Darling Letter is intensely interesting. to me. We had no idea it had been so cold. as - it - but of course ~~know~~ it was below zero - at least. Luckily, were in camp all the time - otherwise many of the men would have been frozen - as they are entirely unprovided for such cold. Am ever so glad you sent the fur cap - The old hat - I have out - is about - used up -.

You must - have about - the only celery at the Post now? It - will be very severe on the companies if they lose their gardens. Do not believe any of the sensational reports the Scouts bring in. Everything we

5
I am sure on the trip could have
been done just as well in one half
the time by fifty mounted men - the
Indians and half breeds are without
transportation excepting carts, and are
utterly helpless against a mounted
Command even should they resist -
as they cannot catch anyone.

The sum of the rumors in
regard to the 18th will probably be
that Gen Roper will not leave Helena
unless he leaves the Department. As
the Territorial influence will compel
him to remain. And that Iges will
Command Fort A. unless we get a line
Colonel for the 2^d. of which there is
no immediate prospect.

The Broadwater movement
is coming out as we expected.

A courier has not been sent in
since here. As we had no one
to send. and were expecting one
from the Post - daily.

Keep all papers for me.

Now Darling we don't want any more
we may possibly get in on the 25th but
do not expect to until the 26th.

A thousand kisses for my dear
Lilla wife — As ever loving
Horn

W. Bellknap
24th - 81

My Darling Wife

Today we drove off
the east of the Indians 32 lodges.
They gave us no trouble - excepting the
ride of about 38 miles - The whole
country here is covered with Slush
and tonight the men cleared spaces
for the tents by rolling large
snow balls over them - These take
the snow up cleanly from the
ground and make the tent floors
tolerably dry. after they are coated
with willows.

This evening we all had
dinner with Ottobon - the Messer
her. and I called on Major
Lincoln afterward - They are
all very kind and do everything
possible to make it pleasant
for us. The men are investing
largely in Buffalo Robes.

Tomorrow we will go within
13 miles of the Post. The

Cavalry 1st Regt and Cooks will go in tomorrow night.

We have seen but little game on the trip, I have not killed an animal - - Buffalo were seen mostly by Agency people between here and the Post. And of the Indians are kept away - they will probably come in near us in large numbers.

May left tomorrow - we will be in by noon. and this tedious trip will be over. I am dirty ragged and disreputable looking but am feeling well. though greatly in need of a bath.

Will send in word by the 1st Regt tomorrow evening as ever through Jones

Home

St. Magazine N.Y.

My dear wife 8th Dec, 81

We have been here one day
and start for home tomorrow -

The weather has been better than
could have been anticipated - even
in the fall. It alone is in the middle
of winter - The horses arrived here two
days ago - Huggins brought them through
with a man from Keogh. Mac and
all the others have been as clear
as could be to all of us - They are
bit in Shacks - - Evans - Heffer - and
Harris the saddles - from Ellis - are all here
Mrs Huggins - Mrs Bartlett Mrs Hinkie
and Mrs Williard are the saddles at
the Post - Am going to call on them

2 tonight - Have been busy all day with
Evans about Ellis Mathis - and have
heard a great deal

All best regards to you -

I am much pleased with the
post. - The quarters are better arranged
than those at A - and although
frame buildings - are better than
ours. We start tomorrow. G. and
will be home in seven days. that is
on the 15th - unless detained by storms.
We bring fifty ponies with us -
no hot water. Feb - I am very comfort-
-able - and am in a hurry to get back
to my darling arms -

As ever,
Very
Kleene

perpetual in future I enclose a paper
that I will trust to your keeping I
thought you would be pleased to have it
May this epistle find you well and
happy

God bless you is the prayer
of your loving mother

A. Doane

Cliff Terrace Sep 15/81

My Dear Daughter

By this time you
must think that I have forgotten you
or wished to slight you, but really such
is not the case I meant to have
written long before this; but since we
came to the hills we have been so crowd-
ed for want of house room and in
such confusion that it quite uncerve-
red me, I hadnt the courage to attempt
to write to any one, nervousness affects
my head and I am easily upset - This
is my apology for not writing sooner
and I hope that you will kindly
accept it - Our life here in the
hills is very quiet, John and I, are
society whatever, I had one female
visitor my irish neighbor -

You would fancy that we were
lonely but John and I love the hills
and enjoy our surroundings - We
have a good vegetable garden, and
in the spring I laid out a small
flower garden in front of the house
every thing grew nicely and made
it look more homelike - I love
flowers, but never saw so many
beautiful wild flowers as grow in
these hills, you can pick a bouquet
at any season of the year - If
you should ever visit Cal. and I
hope you will, you would find it
so different from your cold northern
home - My sons have just added
a large kitchen to the house so
that I have things arranged to
my notion and am quite com-
fortable - Last week Charlie was with
us ~~off~~ and killed a fawn, and a fine
buck within twenty minutes walk

of the house There is plenty of
game - Of the outside world I seem
to know but little, we take a weekly
paper, but I am not interested in the
news as I used to be so I don't read
much

It would give me great pleasure to
meet you, and to see my son one
more, but these long years have changed
me so that I fear he would hardly
recognize me - I am now in
my 65th year and although my health
is good still I can't calculate much
on the future - I have tried to live a
christian life, weak and failing in
many ways but God is my strength
and I place all in his keeping, whether
for life, or for death, and through
the merits of Christ I hope for a
part in the first resurrection

I shall be glad to hear from you at
any time and will try to be more

I have just heard the sad news of
President Conkling's death. What will
all this come to

The milking of a good cow, not
our own. It is nearly a year since
I heard from James - had a few
lines from Geo lately says he has 25
head of cattle 30 hogs and plenty
of feed and dont owe a dollar
Charlie wished me to thank you
for the clothing sent him

I have written to your wife I trust she
wont feel hurt at my long silence
Mr Dexters family are well and increasing
he has 8 grandchildren, and here I am
without one, too had isent it. Did
you write to Mrs Braly? I see by the
paper that Capt Hougate has got himself into
trouble but he is not alone in such business

Please write immediately and direct
as usual to the care of Dexter
Charlie and John join me in love to your
self and wife. From your loving mother
W Double

Cliff Ferran, Sep 20th/01

My Dear Son

I know that you have
~~been expecting to hear from me before~~
this, but I have had my hindrances and
discomfort during this summer, ^{that} is
why I have not written - My sons
are not to blame, John had so much
to do of outside work that I had
to wait patiently for my home to
be made comfortable - We have
all been well as usual, Charles
~~has been somewhat occasionally~~
both have a touch of neuralgia at
times - Just as we have got settled
to begin work Charlie has made
up his mind to sell out, as he is
afraid of losing all that he has
put into the place. Since we came
here the survey has been made

and instead of our being on government land we are on a railroad section, and as the corporation pays no regard to its promises when they think it is to their interest to do otherwise you can't tell whether you will get the land or be turned of and your work go to benefit others. Charlie had five or six hundred and John brought down nearly three hundred dollars and with the exception of a pair of mares worth 60 or 40 dollars and some tools their money is all invested in the place. They paid \$400 for possession and the remainder in making necessary improvements. Charlie still works out to keep up expenses. They failed to get cattle to pasture as they expected, only 65 head at 30 cts per head per month. They had them but three, and the when they were taken to the valley.

A man came out to see the place and had about concluded to take it at five hundred or fifty, a loss to the boys of two or three hundred. John wants to hold on he is more hopeful. Cattle are high 3 dollars is paid for calves one day old, when a few years ago the dairies sold what they could for \$1.00 and the remainder was knocked in the head. When we came here John had the offer of money to put into stock and he would have taken it but Charlie objected to borrowing. There was no risk they would have nearly doubled the money. I want you to know just how we are situated and when we get fairly settled for the winter I will write again. We have raised a little corn, two acres of good wheat, John thrashed it out with a flail, 10 tons of barley hay, 3 pigs for winter meat, 2 day fowls and

Gibroy Dec 22. 1881

My Dear Son

We have not left the hills yet, and as the rains have set in we cant remove until March, when we will go down to the valley again. Charlie sold half of the range and half interest in the improvements for \$275. the other half of the range he rented one year for \$100 getting back half of what they spent here besides the loss of Johns time - Charlie is anxious to return to the valley on any account, as in case of sickness no female near and so far ^{from} a doctor the expense would be to great - In my last I promised to write again as soon as I learned what we were going to do, but hoped in the

Small
with care

mean time to have heard from
you - Is your work so pressing that you
cant spare time to send me a few
lines now and again? It is a great
comfort to hear from my sons, but
they write so seldom - though I
trust that I am not forgotten.

My health has been good. Thank God
I have little to complain of in that
way. Charlie was down to the city
about this land, and found Uncle
Georges family gone to the country, they
bought near Bloomfield Sonoma Co.
Flora and her family have gone with
them. Bryant has a good trade but he
is a musician, can play on any
instrument, and what he makes
from his music he squanders in
dissipation. They wont keep him
in the country very long. I thank
the Lord that my sons are not
drunkards - Harry Deftin will soon

be as bad as Wheeler it is in
the Davis blood - I heard from George
recently he seems to be doing well
I wrote to James but have had no answer
am not sure of where he is - John
has put in 20 acres of wheat for hay it
is up and the hills begin to look green
and the wild fruit is in bloom
our winters are delightful

Robert Conright died a short time ago
24 years of age.

John and Charlie unite with me
in love to yourself and wife
May God bless you is the prayer of
your

Loving mother

A Doane

I hope to hear from you shortly

Oct 19th

On 12 mile creek
& 8 miles north of Browning

My Merling wife

Day before yesterday

We went out with the 2 Car-Los-
and the gun - and jumped up 35-
lodges of Cree and Halfbreeds. At
the lakes near Woody Island Creek
they packed up and went north without
difficulty. got a good lunch of dried
meat and tea in their camp. Going out
we trotted most of the way, 15 miles
and got back to camp - before sun-
down - snowing all the time - It snows
every day - Yesterday crossed the bluffs
to this point - about 13 miles -
today scouts were out till late
brought in tonight 5 Cree - and
found a camp on Woody Island
Creek - about 130 lodges of Cree
and half-breeds - These we go
after tomorrow - Anticipate no
trouble excepting the tedious ride
in the face of a snow storm -
The Indians brought in were all
on foot except one - This had on
Chuk - a few dogs with traps
and seven Squirrels. These game
out - about two miles from

Camp - and were left on the
bluffs. We offered to release
one of the bucks to go out after
them. but - he declined - Said
they would be all right and
that he was afraid to go after
them. Solicitors! was it not?

It is now the programme to go to
the Camp of Cree Indians - 20 miles
back to our last camp next day
and then on into Assiniboine
you can expect us in Sunday
from this date that is on the 26th
maybe we should find something
else to run after.

This has been an exceedingly
disagreeable trip owing to weather -
and the absence of equipments - also
so many of the men are recruits that
it is a great deal of trouble to care
for them - They are not properly clothed
not enough transportation - but enough
of anything excepting skins and furs.
I have not suffered at all -
but the snowy weather - gloomy
surroundings - and lack of anything
to do which will amount to any
- they render the whole affair
unsatisfactory. I am sure that
all are equally tired of the trip

No Indians and half breeds. we
 moved the other day. have only
 to go one days drive, to be north
 of the line. With the ones we go
 after tomorrow, it will be the
 same. The moment our backs
 are turned this will come over
 again - and go in Kippelo most
 of which are now south of Milk
 River.

Now hearing you do not
 be at all worried I will be back
 in a few days. Keep all my
 mail - till I return - do not
 send anything out - unless it
 be a telegram about the sales to
 officers business at Ellis

On our return we will travel
 as fast as the train can possibly
 be moved - and will doubtless
 start back on the morning of the
 21st - I do not know whether another
 train will be sent or not.
 but certainly not - before the
 22nd -

Regards to all
 As ever
 Yours
 Ewing
 Hiram