10-1861

Letter from Wilbur F. Armstrong to Thomas S. Armstrong

Wilbur F. Armstrong

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Sir,

I read your note last evening and have, on account of its postmark, to send my answer. I suppose it, I was much surprised and not a little disappointed to learn that I was rung up again and you may suppose I am in no very amiable state of mind. I am, you may rest assured, that had I known this at first I should have stayed in your company and let all these bright visions of "Pentanancy" and other pass. Still, others go, as I have undertaken and will go through the war as private, but I'll be dogged if I fancy the idea.

In my opinion this Jenkins will hereafter carry himself in a very proper manner and so this chance for his place amounts to just nothing at all and as for the other Companies have insufficient officers and they will retain them till the end of the war. If you see at a single glance that any chance for promotion is taxation plume. "Could not in justice to the company appoint him Soldier!"

Strange, passing Strange! That idea never occurred to the old gentleman until after I had obtained his promise.
and had joined his company. Oh justice how art piled to British hearts And men have lost their reason! Strange infatuation! And does he think to escape me? No by the Eternal Gods! Justice is mine and I will repay! (You will please take notice that part of the above is sarcasm and part from Shakespeare) but to be serious about the matter I am sadly disappointed and don’t like the idea of going as a private in a charge Company but such is my inductible fate and all I can do is to grudgingly submit your chance in proportion to our difference of years is but little better. We have been told most magnanimous.

I am thoroughly acquainted with the prospects before us The “mastery, marching” displayed by our leading generals is enough to make one burn with envy when by a “mastery advance” the war could be ended in less than two months.

Well nothing more to the station last coming with a harelip to take you home but send me a soldier like all I have to say about the matter is this be very careful of yourself and write frequently and keep on the good side of the officers and be friendly with Sister and work your way up if possible and do what you can for me and be very friendly with him even become confidentially intimate and “trust in Providence and keep your powder dry” as Cowen hath expounded it.

Do your duty as a soldier and a patient, keep up a good heart and all will be well. We are fighting for our country and our dear land and that is the difference. Let us be good and get some of that spirit that animated the American Revolution.

Well I declare I don’t know what else to write about as news is so scarce in this letter. I am enjoying myself very well in the society of the Union ladies but I shall probably go home tomorrow.

Now you talk to Littlefield and get him to tell you just what my chance is and tell him that I shall claim from Sleather a position as good as the one he promised me and I believe which may be by the use of a little overworking of mine for me a position.

Well I am then writing and will close by wishing you all prosperity Yours truly

Write immediately
Norwich Ohio

Sunday Eve

Dear Bro

I rec’d your note last evening and having an opportunity to send an answer I was much surprised and not a little disappointed to learn that I was humbugged again and you may suppose that I am in no enviable state of mind and you may rest assured that had I known this at first I should have stayed in your company and not let all these bright visions of "2nd Lieutenancies" and Orderlys pass. Well, others good as I have enlisted and will go through the war as privates, but I'll be dogged if I fancy the idea.

In my opinion, this Jenkins will hereafter carry himself in a very proper manner and so this chance for his place amounts to just nothing at all and as for the Orderly other companies have inefficient officers and they will retain them till the end of the war. So you see at a single glance that my chance for promotion is tarnation slim. "Could not in justice to the company appoint him 3rd Serg!"

Strange, passing strange. That idea never occurred to the old gentleman until after I had obtained his promise and had joined his company. Oh justice thou art fled to brutish beasts and men have lost their reason.

Strange infatuation. And does he think to escape me? No, by the Eternal Gods! Justice is mine and I will repay.

(You will please take notice that part of the above is sarcasm and part from Shakespeare,) but to be serious about the matter, I am sadly disappointed and don't like the idea of going as a private in a strange company but such is my inevitable fate and all I can do is to quietly submit. We have been sold most magnanimously.

I am thoroughly disgusted with the prospect before us. The "mastering inactivity" displayed by our leading generals is enough to make one turn Secesh, when by a "masterly advance" the war could have ended in less than two months.

Well father came over to the station last evening with a horse to take you home but found no soldier there. All I have to say about the matter is this: Be very careful of yourself and write frequently and keep on the good side of the officers and be friendly with Porter and work your way up if possible and do what you can for me and _____ Gillespie and be very friendly with him even become confidentially intimate and "trust in Providence and keep your powder dry," as Cromwell hath expressed it. Do your duty as a soldier and a patriot, keep a good heart and all will be well. We are fighting for one country and our dearest interest and let us try and get some of that spirit that animated the ancient Spartans.
Well I declare I don't know what else to write about as news is so very scarce in this town. I am enjoying myself, very well in the society of the Union ladies but I shall probably go home tomorrow.

Now you talk to Gillespie and get him to tell you just what my chance is and tell him that I shall claim from Gebhart a position as good as the one he promised me and I believe John may by the use of a little wire working obtain for me a position.

Well I am tired and will close by wishing you all prosperity.

Yours truly,

W.F. Armstrong

Write immediately.