4-7-1862

Letter from Mary Armstrong to Francis P. Porter

Mary Armstrong

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Churich

Feb 14th 1812

Dear Frank,

With a sad and aching heart do I attempt to tell you of the death of dear brothers. Wallace. I thought you would like to hear about it. He died in 7th street hospital, Cincinnati, Saturday morning, March 22nd, at 3 o'clock. Father had been with him 3 weeks about the first of the last week he appeared to get better, and Father thought there was some hopes of his recovery, and the physician pronounced him convalescent but on Thursday evening he was taken worse and it became evident that he could not stand it long. He continued to grow worse until Saturday morning. He calmly and quietly closed his eyes on earth to open them in Heaven. When told that he could not get well, he
immediately "set his house in order" and calmly awaited the solemn change. He not only died happy but was triumphant and exulted in his hope of Heaven. Father conversed with him frequently upon the subject of death. Rev. John B. White and others called in to see him frequently and prayed with him and he gave abundant evidence that he was going to join the Lord, washed away the stains that surrounded the theme of Heaven. He requested us all to meet him in Heaven. Father brought him home on Saturday night and on Monday, after listening to the funeral discourse by Rev. A. Heath from Ecel. 9:4, he departed. He was not disposed of all that was mortal of our dear William in the burying ground at Norwich. Mr. Heath preached in the Methodist church at North Norwich, in the street, to a large and mixed congregation. He said he never was at a funeral where there was so much sympathy manifested, the whole congregation appeared to be mourners. William was very much loved down here. Mr. Heath preached an excellent sermon in the spirit of the noble spirit that had induced him to enlist in the defense of his country of his patient endurance of his sufferings in his Illness and of his triumphant victory over the last enemy. William was a beautiful corpse. O Frank! I wish you could have seen him. Although very much emaciated, he looked very natural. His features were calm and lovely, beautiful even in death. There was such a sweet expression on his countenance. O Frank! what agony it was to take that last lingering look at that kind one we called William, He is gone! Now that one word! receives through every fiber of my existence. Well we more meet him on earth. His praises, fame is hidden from our view by the fatal clouds of the earth. When I think of it, I think of it in
away the agony seems almost insupportable, but then again I think of his happy death and of his being free from life's dull and anxious cares, and I feel more reconciled. But O Frank it was a heavy trial, a severe trial to part with Miller. He was so young, so full of vivacity and such a dear good brother and life seemed just opening before him that it was hard to see him cut down in the bloom of youth. Yet I suppose the Lord knows best and no doubt He has some wise design in taking him from us. Miller was very patient in his sickness. Father says he never heard a murmur escape his lips all the time he was with him. A few moments before he died he asked Father to raise him up; he did so, and he breathed his last in his arms. Father says he never did not move a muscle, but was so tranquil that it appeared he was sinking into a
April 7, 1862

Norwich

April 7th/62

Dear Frank

With a sad and aching heart do I attempt to tell you of the death of dear brother Wilbur. I thought you would like to hear about it. He died in 4th Street Hospital, Cincinnati, Saturday morning, March 22nd at 3 o'clock. Father had been with him 3 weeks. About the first of the last week, he appeared to get better and Father thought there was some hope of his recovery, and the Physicians pronounced him convalescent, but on Thursday evening he was taken worse and it was evident that he could not stand it long. He continued to grow worse until Saturday morning when he calmly and quietly closed his eyes on earth to open them in Heaven. When told that he could not get well, he immediately "set his house in order" and calmly awaited the solemn change. He not only died happy but was triumphant and exultant in his hope of Heaven. Father conversed with him frequently upon the subject of death. Rev. John F. Wright and others called in to see him frequently and prayed with him and he gave abundant evidence that he was going to join the bloodwashed throng that surround the throne in Heaven.

Father brought him home on Saturday night, and on Monday, after listening to the funeral discourse by Rev. W. Heath from Eccl. 9th Chap 10th verse we deposited all that was mortal of our dear Wilbur in the burying ground at Norwich. Mr. Heath preached in the Methodist church at N[orwich] to a large and weeping congregation. He said he was never was at a funeral where there was so much sympathy manifested; the whole congregation appeared to be mourners. Wilbur was very much loved down here. Mr. Heath preached an excellent sermon. He spoke of the noble spirit that had induced him to enlist in the defense of his country, of his patient enduring of his sufferings in his illness, and of his triumphant victory over that last enemy. Wilbur was a beautiful corpse. O! Frank, I wish you could have seen him. Although very much emaciated, he looked very natural. His features were calm and lovely, beautiful even in death. There was such a sweet expression on his countenance. O! Frank, what agony it was to take a last long lingering look at that loved one we called Wilbur. He is gone!

How that one word reaches through every fibre of my existence. We'll nevermore meet him on earth. His manly form is hidden from our view by the cold ____ of the earth. When I think of it in this way the agony seems almost insupportable but then again I think of his happy death and of his being now free from life's dull and anxious cares and I feel more reconciled but O Frank, it was a heavy stroke & severe trial to part with Wilbur. He was so young so full of vivacity and such a dear good brother and life seemed just opening before him that it was hard to see him cut down in the bloom of youth.

Yet I suppose the Lord knows best and no doubt he has some wise design in taking him from us now. Wilbur was very patient in his sickness, Father says, he never heard a murmur escape his lips all the time he was with him. A few minutes before he died, he asked Father to raise him up, he did so, and he breathed his last in his arms. Father says he did not wave a muscle but was so tranquil that it appeared he was sinking into a