

Kansas Memory



John Brown, Jr., correspondence

Section 6, Pages 151 - 162

John Brown, Jr., wrote these letters to his wife Wealthy Brown during the early years of the Civil War. He enlisted and served as a Captain of Company K, 1st Kansas Cavalry (later the 7th Kansas Cavalry). Colonel Charles Jennison headed this regiment. It appears his wife and son John were living in Ohio, probably Ashtabula. The letters start while Brown is on a recruiting trip in Canada and Michigan. Many of the letters in January 1862 are written from Camp Jackson and Camp Johnson near Morristown, Cass County, Missouri. Brown's letters from February and March 1862 were written from Humboldt, Allen County, Kansas. Brown writes from Camp Wendell Phillips near Lawrence from most of April and May 1862. The last few letters are written from Madison, Indiana, on his way home to Ohio. The letters are very descriptive of camp life and names of many of the men in his company are mentioned. Several letters mention associates of his father's such as William Partridge and Richard Hinton. Almost every letter mentions how much he misses his family. Native American scouts are also mentioned by Brown as valuable to the war effort. Brown discusses the problems of determining local residents' loyalty in the war on the Kansas Missouri border in his letter written January 21, 1862. In the letter dated January 26, 1862, and continued on the 27th, Brown writes that he sent ten black soldiers to save a slave mother and children whose owner was planning to take them further south. In his letter dated March 9, 1862, Brown describes the execution of a soldier named Driscol from Company H who stabbed another soldier, was court martialed, and shot. Brown sent a letter of resignation, because of his continued poor health, to Gen. James Blunt in May 1862.

NOTES ABOUT THE IMAGES: Brown frequently made notes in the margins. To make it easier to read these images, the pages with these notes are included twice--first with the original orientation and then again rotated ninety degrees to aid in reading the note. A letter from Hannibal, Missouri, is dated December 7, 1861, but the content of this latter and subsequent letters makes it apparent that this letter was written sometime in January 1862 but before the letter dated January 11, 1862. The images for this letter are placed in the correct order for content but will seem out of order chronologically based on date. The last letter in the group is missing its first page however the content, about primarily family matters, makes it apparent it was written in late 1861 or early 1862. The text version is one file that presents the letters in chronological order, except for the exceptions noted above. It is necessary to scroll to the appropriate date.

SEVERAL PAGES IN VARIOUS LETTERS ARE WRITTEN IN A NUMERIC CODE. This code, between John Brown, Jr. and his wife, encrypt private messages between the couple. A key to the code and transcriptions of those letters can be found filed with the original letters. The code key and transcriptions are available in the repository upon request. Access is restricted to these particular letters; researchers under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian, or provide written permission from same, to see those transcriptions.

Creator: Brown, John, 1821-1895

Date: February 14, 1861-November 29, 1863

Callnumber: John Brown, Jr. Coll. #833

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Madison House, Madison Indiana

Mon Jan 23rd / 1859

leaving me to come as soon as possible & go to Pa &
the business before negotiation closed if I can, if not,
I may leave you from Ottawa — I may
have much incline to this, as
being the worst course
I have all abandoned all
hope of being with you Thanksgiving Day —
I can no more leave than I can no
longer hope of saving a drowning
man. Who will be as faithful
as my Johnny to my Johnnie
to my Johnnie be in equal
need.

John Brown, Jr., wrote of my arrival
about 10 o'clock, & that I would write
again to Jay, probably from Cincinnati
this morning. Went to the Hospital
yesterday. Was at Dr. Doctor's till about
12 M^o — The boy didn't know me
as I had my glasses on — but seeing
me intently through them, he came forward
half believing & half dubting his master;
his face flushed with excitement & with
tears in his eyes grasped my hand —
he knew my voice though I did not
know his as he said in a whisper "is this
your Uncle John?" — He did not say
that my womanly weakness showed themselves
at my eyes — I was glad yet very sad
for Jasper in the compassion of his

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heart for your feelings, has not overstated the dangers of his case. It seems that a Military Commission in passing through this General Hospital indicating how the several cases should be disposed of, had recommended that Jasper should be discharged. But with 1500 patients on their hands it is not much wonder that action on his case had been indefinitely postponed by the competent authority here. The Commission recommend only, did not, perhaps could not, "order" his discharge - So here it is, and might be for ought I see, until Dooms-day, were no special efforts made on his behalf. - Hau worked all day making five different trips on foot to Camp - 1½ miles distant, to get the Executive Officer Dr Schultz, to examine Jasper preliminary to making out a certificate of disability constituting a further recommend for a discharge. This

Note: "me at your service" handwritten on the left side of the page.



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certificate made by the Executive Officer in
"Duplicate, together with duplicate
"Final Statements" and Discharge in
duplicate must be approved by the
"Surgeon in Charge" here, Dr Grant,
these have then to be forwarded to Indian-
apolis Ia, where they receive the
approval of the Medical Director of
the Department - then they go to the
Adjutant Genl. Commandg Department for
his Order & when this is given they are
sent here, when the Surgeon in Charge
is for the once, Authorized to discharge
the patient & Soldier — What do you
think of getting a girl through such a
mill, Dr? — Amid the whirl of
Cares & business which is pressing upon
every hand, You are most fortunate if
you can get the attention of Officers long
enough to an individual case to give it
a fair consideration & more than fortunat-

Your right affec son. John

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Letter from John Brown, Jr., to his father, John Brown, Sr., dated October 1, 1861. The letter discusses the preparation of a "Final Statement" for his discharge, the approval of the medical director of the Department, and the care of O. Henry. It concludes with a request for money and a note of thanks.

John Brown, Jr., to John Brown, Sr., October 1, 1861

Dear Father -
I have now got ready a "Final Statement" and Discharge in
Duplicate which will be approved by the
"Surgeon in Charge" here, Dr. Grant,
these have been forwarded to Indian
apostle, Sa, where they receive the
Approval of the Medical Director of
the Department. Now they go to the
Adjutant Genl. Command of Department for
his Orders & when this is given they are sent
out here, when the Surgeon in Charge almost
is for the one, authorized to discharge
the patient & soldiers - What do you
think of getting a small thought such a
bill. Da - I am the whole of
Cases of miners which is breaking upon
me at your care of. Write upon
and I will do my best to forward
you every thing. You are most fortunate
in getting the attention of Officers long
enough to an individual case to give it
a fair consideration & more than before

Good night, ever yours, John

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If you can get their promise to "attend to it soon." This I have got, and have also awakened in their minds some individual interest in his behalf. They give encouragement that he may be discharged within seven or eight days - It seems to me long to wait especially in view of approaching winter, but I am resolved at whatever sacrifice to myself, to stick to the boy through thick & thin - Should he obtain a "discharge" which I think is likely, nay probable, I could not leave him to come home without my constant care on the way. Even with the best of care he may drop off soon with "Duck Consumption" I do not say he has this now - I hope not, yet I fear. - He has youth and large Hope & Will, in his favor so we will hope and do all we can to rebuild his organism. His face is fresher, and ^{he} is more full faced than I expected - Yet his cough & what he spises makes me anxious about him. I shall write you every day or other day until I leave - Shall also write Mr. Wronan and Mr. Lassenstein at once. I have thought since supper that perhaps you and Harry & Johny had better return

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Madison House Madison Indiana
Wednesday eve, Novem 25th 1863

Dear dear Wife, & all the friends:

You may eat your thanks - giving dinner tomorrow with thankfulness, for success has so far crowned my efforts that yesterday the Executive Officer, Dr Schultz re-examined Jasper and to day his "Certificate of Disability" and "Discharge" papers have been made out and duly signed here. To night, they will be forwarded to Cincinnati for approval of the Medical Director and for the "Order" of Gen' Burnside's Adj'tant. So that we may expect their return here and his final discharge within three or four days from this time. When I communicated the good news to Jasper about an hour ago, the sparkle of his ^{eye} flushed face spoke louder of his satisfaction than he could in any other way. — Shall probably go from here by the Malt Boat to Cincinnati - there I shall have him conveyed to the house of our true friend H R Smith on Mount Adams - He will be received there with every attention - thence after a nights rest, as speedily as possible consistent with prudence, home where I hope to find some of you at Margaret Detwells - As I shall stop there.

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You may be surprised I am glad to write so encouragingly for I have had much difficulty to surmount.

My expenses thus far are between \$25- and \$30^x — much more than I expected at this stage of proceedings, but often the costliest, are the cheapest things in the long run. So I think in this case.

When I went into Ward No 1 yesterday I found Jasper solving an equation in Algebra on a slate. The book ^{of state} belonged to the Hospital. He is able to sit up most of the day. My anxiety is great that he does not take any new cold on his lungs. Shall be as careful of him as if he were an infant. Tell Hannah I shall care for him better than she could —

In my last I wrote that perhaps Harry and you and Johnny had better return at once to the Island, leaving me to fetch round when I could as I was determined to stick to this case; but now as I can begin to "see out of the woods" I think you all had better wait until ^{it} come —

To-morrow the ladies of Madison give to the soldiers here, including those at Hospital a Thanksgiving dinner, I am informed they have 300 Turkey's cooked up and other things to match — A thousand blessings on them. Motherly and Sisterly hearts and sympathy are not alone confined to ^{the} home of the soldier. Our soldiers are learning every day that our country is their home — Shall write you nearly or quite every day — With love, good bye — Yours John Brown Jr.

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Madison Inda
Sunday evng Nov 29th 1863

My dear wife and all the friends:

Jasper's Discharge papers
Came on ~~this~~ morning — He is now in the ~~Reading~~ Room
of the Hotel where we are both waiting for the
Mail Boat from Louisville to Cincinnati due here
in half an hour — Shall if nothing happens be
in Cincinnati to morrow (Monday Morning) Shall
not leave Mr Smiths there until Tuesday morning
as I have to get his back pay there, and I want
to let him rest a day and night at his hospitable
home — — Then on Tuesday to Cleveland — Shall
remain there over night if I think he had better
rest there — Wednesday then at farthest I
hope to meet you at — Bury Hill Station —

In haste Yours

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of past days to meet him. He wishes to be remembered to all who used to know him. — When in Chicago Gilbert Hubbard gave me a kind of Canvass Trunk — that I have filled with such things as I shall not immediately need and made it ^{as} secured with a rope and chain, and marked it plainly. Capt. John Brown Jr. Jefferson Ashtabula County Ohio. Care of Express Agent Ashtabula O. — It is now left in the Care of W. H. Burnham of this place — a colored man, who will put it into the hands of the Express Company if either I or you should so order. I also left the sword and belt which was given me in Chicago in his hands marked in the same way. I leave them here as I shall have to use a Cavalry Sabre I want to keep them however, as they are a present from my friends —

You It is possible that I may not return, and for this reason I have had these things properly packed and labeled, and left subject to my or your Order, or the order of my Agent — You say that you have to leave the house in Dorset by the first of April — I am sorry as had hoped I might again meet you all in that little brown house once more. I would be glad to have you and Owen and Smith find

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a tidy comfortable house where you can have good water, a nice little garden spot and pasture for a cow, and rent the place for a few months. I wish you could get such a place without going away from Dorset. Nor out of the neighborhood of our dear friends the Edwards family and others of our friends there — I have become exceedingly attached to them all — Indeed it seems to me as if wherever our home is, there they would be too — How kindly and affectionately I was treated by all at H. C. — If I had been an own brother, I could not have received more kindness — I shall write them today informing them of my safe arrival here. God bless the dear friends at Cleveland who have been so kind and true to you. Say to them that their kindness and sympathy is not wasted on unappreciative or ungrateful hearts —

In one of your letters you asked if I would be willing to sell out my interest in the oil and oil claim in Penna for \$1000? I am willing to do what you with the best advice (including of course Smith's, David Adams, Owen, Jerry and others who are best posted and

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would care for our interest in the matter would recommend. At the same time it seems to me that a \$1000 - would be a small price for that interest. If the flow does not essentially diminish, - giving unmistakable evidence of ultimate failure, no one can say it may not continue for years — On the other hand it may fail — the oil may take fire & and we might not soon if ever realize from it so much money as \$1000 — All this I wish to leave to be determined by the combined wisdom of those who have the best means of knowing and who have our interest at heart in the matter. If the question were to turn on my own judgment, I should be slow to say yes in answer to your question It seems to me our interest is worth really a great deal more, but do as you may all judge is best and I will be satisfied — I am most of all anxious to get a nice little home for you and Johnny and there be with you. Should be glad if we could derive from our oil interest a constant, if only a small revenue But at any rate, I am sure I can earn in some way a comfortable living. To make my family the happiest family is my ambition when my duty to my country and

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humanity is performed - Keep up good cheer my love. Be both Mother and Father to our darling boy. I hope, and will hope, that I shall before many months come to you again.

I expect we shall get our supplies tomorrow and be on our way Tuesday morning - I must have this letter in the office by tomorrow morning early - Shall probably write you a word tomorrow evening - if we should leave next day My thoughts are with you always. Give warmest truest regards to Queen Langetta and all at the Edwards house. Say to Martha that she must consider the letters I wrote home as to her too. and so to all all the rest - I have so much to do and think of that one letter must suffice to a good many.

My precious wife, and Johnny my darling boy, I kiss you. Good bye for a short time - Johnny I thank you for the little cards with your name printed with your own hand. I keep them all, and think how much pleasure it will afford me to teach you to write and teach you a great many things. You will remember me every day wont you? -

Do send off letters very, very often wont you You have been so punctual thus far, It is my very life to get letters from you You will remember this I am sure Again my own my love, Good bye Yours always John