

Frank W. Sevey Collection

Guide to the Frank W. Sevey Collection, a soldier from Kenosha, Wisconsin, who was in
The 1st Wisconsin Cavalry, Company A and the 1st Wisconsin Heavy Artillery (1861-1865)]

DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

Repository

Civil War Museum, Resource Center Kenosha, Wisconsin

Language of Material

Material in English

Abstract

This collection consists of 61 documents mostly written by Frank W. Sevey to his wife Mary. Mr. Sevey made his home on the north side of Wisconsin State Hwy. 50 and lived on the first farm west of the Village of New Munster, Wisconsin (a place known as "Whiskey Hill" in Kenosha County). Settlement records validate that the Sevey family was well established in Kenosha County for well over 100 years.

Mr. Sevey was a native of Brooklyn, Ohio and enlisted in the 1st Wisconsin Cavalry on August 22, 1861. In February, 1863, he was honorably discharged from his cavalry duties for an illness that led to a disability. In September, 1863 he reenlisted in a Wisconsin artillery regiment. He was discharged on October 28, 1865 at Alexandria, Virginia with the rank of corporal. Veterans Administration Records indicate that Frank Sevey was admitted to a Veteran's Home for care on February 3, 1875 where he passed away on April 30, 1875. He was buried in The National Cemetery (Plot: 5-2 2A).

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Use Restrictions

None.

Preferred Citation

(Identification of item). The Frank W. Sevey Collection, The Civil War Museum,
Kenosha, Wisconsin

Provenance:

Special recognition of thanks is given to Mr. Derrill W. Sevey, great-great grandson of Frank W. Sevey, of Kenosha, Wisconsin who compiled and transcribed Corporal Sevey's hand written letters and donated them to the Kenosha Historical Society on February, 22, 1960

Processing Information

Processed by Frederick J. (Rick) Holtz, October-November, 2014

COLLECTION OVERVIEW:

Accompanying these personal letters to his wife are a few government documents indicating Corporal Sevey's length of service, locations of his discharges and hospitalizations, and a record of his burial date and location.

(Reader's Note: The first 15 documents chronologically Corporal Sevey's service during his time 1st Wisconsin Cavalry, Company A, while the remaining documents follow his reenlistment into Company D of the 1st Wisconsin Artillery).

COLLECTION LIST:

Doc.#1 of 61: A letter from the Veterans Administration, Wood, Wisconsin, dated, June 23, 1944, to a Mrs. Frank Sevey, great granddaughter of Corporal Frank Sevey. The reply letter is signed by P. G. Froemming, Manager.

Noteworthy: This letter is in reply to Mrs. Sevey's letter, dated, June 10, 1944 advising her of where her great grandfather spent his final days, the date of his passing, and location of where he was buried. It also states that her \$1.00 she enclosed for processing of information was deposited in the Finance Office but will later be returned to her in the form of a government check.

Doc. #2 of 61: A two and one half page summary of the the history of the 1st Regiment, Wisconsin Cavalry (source: www.civilwar.nps.gov/cwss/template.cfm).

Noteworthy: -Organized at Ripon and Kenosha, Wisconsin on September 1, 1861 to February 2, 1862.
-Encamped at Benton Barracks and Cape Girardeau, Missouri and attached to Vandever's Brigade in Southeast Missouri until October, 1862.
-Continued service in Southeast Missouri, later the Army of the Cumberland through October, 1864
-Final service included the 2nd Brigade, 1st Division of Wilson's Cavalry Corps serving in Mississippi through July, 1865.
-Scouting and patrol duty made up much of the 1st Cavalry's activities.

-Some of the more notable operations of the 1st Wisconsin Cavalry included an Expedition after Greene's guerrillas (1862), The Chickamauga, Georgia Campaign, Battle at Resaca, Dallas, the assault on Kenesaw Mountain, Siege of Atlanta, participation of the capture of Jefferson Davis, and many more.

Doc.#3 of 61: First letter to his wife Mary from Camp Harvey, dated, February 14, 1862

Noteworthy: -The many long days in camp leads him to think they “will be disbanded” and he is “tired of nothing to do.”
-Is tired of “the soldier's life” and doesn't think he will reenlist.
-Would like her to knit a dozen pair of socks and he will buy the 3 pounds of yarn to make nine or ten pair.
-He reminds her to “take care of herself”
-He thinks he can get a long weekend pass (Saturday to Monday), and if so he will bring money when he gets home.

From your Dear husband,
Frank W. Sevey

Doc.#4 of 61: Partial letter (most likely to his wife, no date/location found).

Noteworthy: -He mentions a talk with two soldiers named Hank Sorg and Satry Aulf who told him they had been in for 3 or 4 weeks.
-He describes the horribleness of southern river water “giving us the back door quickstep” and also describes his journey from Kenosha down through Chicago through Springfield and then on to Alton and St. Louis.
-Once there they had to march in hard rain “in mud up to their knees”.
-His daily duties include “cooking for one hundred men day and night”.
-Notes the Illinois Cavalry “got their pay yesterday but they say nothing about our pay.”
-Concludes by saying, “We have orders to march to Salt Cake (Salt Lake) which is half way to California”, and has hopes of seeing her again.”

From you husband Frank Sevey

Doc. #5 of 61: To his wife from Benton Barracks, (April ?--no exact date given).

Noteworthy: - He mentions to his wife that he is well and that the horses and equipment have been recently received.
-He hopes that he will be one of the ones who will be furloughed soon to get home and see their wives.
-He tells her that he has signed a roll that enables her to draw money each month (ten dollars), starting the 1st of May and "you will get it every two months", and that "she need not go hungry."
-He apologizes and is sorry that he thinks his being away is ignoring her needs.
-He knows she has had a hard time of things and expresses, "If I had stayed home last fall, I could have been a great deal better off." "Its green here now as it there in June".."and the stall horses and cattle can get a good living on the prairies".
-"Give my love to the girls". "I asked Jack if fifteen dollars will do it."
-"I am bound to send that much to you-ten from my wages and five that comes to you, and that will have me three dollars per month." "I believe that can do me just as well as nothing for you for six or eight months, that you have had nothing." "But Mary, I am going to do better for you."
"If you would read this to your folks" and "give my love to father and mother and tell them I would like to see them once more for all."

Good by this is from your Obedient Servant,
Frank W. Sevey
Benton Barracks, St. Louis, Missouri

Doc.# 6 of 61: To his wife Mary from Jackson, dated, June 23, 1864

Noteworthy: -Writes that his health is not so good and not much news to write about.
-Mentions the death of a soldier named Samuel Day who fell from a boat and drowned, and another soldier, John Rainboth, who died from brain fever.
-Had not received a recent letter from her reminding her that she must write him immediately when she gets one of his letters. (He reminds her "she has received 4 or 5 of his letters" to his one received.
-Exhorts her to continue to be kind to the children and "kiss them for me".

Yours until death,
Frank W. Sevey

P.S. Please write to John Clouse. "I will send you the money as soon as I get paid."

Doc. #7 of 61: A partial 2 page letter (fragment) to his wife. No date or location given.

Noteworthy:

- He mentions his health has improved and nothing here "very dangerous".
- Would like her to send pictures as he has none of her or the family.
- Asks, "What do the people of Wheatland think about the war?"
- Gives a description of the prices of things like flour ("selling for twenty dollars a pound", "potatoes are selling for ten cents a pound", "eggs are selling for sixty cents a dozen", and "butter for seventy-five cents").
- "Food is scarce here" and "a dollar doesn't go far".
- Thinks he will be able to send her fifty dollars next month.
- Reminds her that "Every day some of the boys get letters" and, "Since I came here, I've only had two from you."
- He would like to hear how his father and mother are getting along in these hard times.
- "Would like to know where our girls are and what they are doing".
- Concludes with, "Have you got any garden this summer?"

Doc. #8 of 61: To his wife, dated September, 18, 1864, from Helena

Noteworthy:

- Mentions receiving her note from July and could not answer her on account of his feeling badly.
- Asks her "to pass on his respects to his folks" and that their children are well.
- He asks her if she is still living on the farm or have moved. (Reader's Note: Getting the indication that she and the children are living with his folks).
- Requests that she write him soon as there is nothing to do here all day but read old newspapers "a month old".
- He tells her the diarrhea is holding him down but feels better, and that "four have died out of our regiment since yesterday morning."
- "General Steel thinks some of us are being sent up to the cape again ("Cape Girardeau"?), remarks that, "I shall apply for a furlough to go home as it is more healthier there than here."

-”Mary please write soon and buy me a half a dozen stamps as we cannot get them here as money is scarce.”

-”We got our last pay the fifth of July and we have got to wait four months this time.” “Respects to all the folks”

Frank W. Sevey

Doc. #9 of 61: To his wife Mary from St. Louis, Missouri (--)-23, *(sometime mid-late 1862

“I (thought that you)”

(Reader's Note: The first page of this letter are incomplete thoughts or sentence fragments that fail to fill in the details or the subjects. It is likely that Frank was attempting to write a letter and this page was the beginning of it. Instead of throwing or discarding what he wrote, he included it as the first page along with page 2 or 3.

Frank's health is in serious decline and he is hospitalized. He is showing that his serious illness is keeping him from writing his complete thoughts, and he feels done in that he feels neglected, or misunderstood by his family back home as to his medical condition.

So it is likely he enclosed the first portion of this letter to gain sympathy from his wife and others).

Noteworthy:

- He mentions writing a few lines “to Madison” and “expects one (a letter) every day.

-He tells her that “he wants to know why Madison didn't send the money to her (\$40dollars) and that in four months now he has “not had any pay”, and “thinks it may be another two months more before he sees any.”

-He has been in the hospital and during that time was unable to sign for his pay, and “will have to wait until next payday”. By then he will “have eighteen dollars coming for six months (“if I get a discharge then, I shall get all my pay here”).

-”That is all today”. “(--)- your humble (servant)
(F.W. Sevey)

(Page 3)

-”When you write to me I want you to write more about the children and what about the old folks thinks about the war, and tell me how they get along”. And if I should come home what shall I bring you and the children”. “Tell me what Henry wants”.. “I know he wants something” (-) buy and (-) (girls).

Frank W. Sevey

Doc. #10 of 61: (No date to connect later). To his wife.
(Reader's Note: It is possible that from this brief communication Frank Sevey is feeling so poorly that he is giving his wife “final instructions”, thinking he may never make it back to her and home alive.)

Noteworthy: -”Mary, I want you to keep all that I send you if you can get along without it but if you can't sell you will find a letter in the box somewhere and in that you will find some money soon enough and send it in this letter. You can't blame me for this money business for I have done all I can get it this is all for this time.”

Frank W. Sevey

Doc. #11 of 61 (Reader's Note: Too much of this letter is to pale to read. The letter is dated 186(-) and was written probably before Frank Sevey took ill and was hospitalized in St. Louis).

Noteworthy: -”I am glad I can write.”
-”I and sixty (-) are at a place, a small town where there are prisoners”.
-”I see pickets on the other side of the river.”
-”We jumped in the river and overtook a ferry boat, capturing 15 men.”
-”Later on we headed up the road about 3 miles where we met a rebel force and could not tell how many there were.”
-”With only 15 of us available we decided to get away and save our lives after fighting half an hour.”
-”In time we killed 11 of them and wounded fourteen while they killed 3 of us and wounded (-).”
-”We caught a good many prisoners in a small place four miles from the Missouri and Arkansas line, capturing too a small steamboat.”

- "We then marched 3 miles north of this town."
- "I have to write very fast and I can't write any more." "I am well and hearty."
- "You need not write until you hear from me again."
- "So good by my wife this short time." "I cannot correct mistakes this late hour."

Doc. #12 of 61: (Reader's Note: There is no date and location to connect this letter.).

- Noteworthy:
- "I will write a few more lines and then close my letter."
 - "In your other letter you spoke of selling a part of the lot in case you could sell and buy that lot of Bimers Harman and I can send you one."
 - "If you could do that I would like it better."
 - "(--)-the best you can and it will (-)..(-) come home until my pockets are full of (-) and then we will try and do something."
 - "I think a great deal of my family but when I know that getting along will with a little of my help, I shall stay three years in full if I can make anything."
 - "I am well and hearty and hope you are and the little ones and I am very thankful for the (-) you sent too. It is very nice."
- This is from your Humble Servant
Frank W. Sevey

Doc. #13 of 61: (No date to connect the date or location of this letter).

- Noteworthy:
- "I saw the ball went through his left arm and through his side and the ball came out on the right side of the back bone and the ball went (-) (-) and killed him two minutes after he was shot."
 - "The doctor livid (lifted) (too) days in the time he had his arm taken off (close to his shoulder) and that was a sight to see."
 - "I stayed with him until he died Mary."
 - "I will tell you what we have to eat. We have hard crackers, coffee, (-) beans, pork and pudden from corn."
 - "Good thing we don't have to do (--)-for we could not stand."
 - "It is very warm and pleasant here."
 - "(--)- any thing (--)"
 - "With this time you must write (-) for I feel (--)-enough (-) this with a kiss."
 - "This is from your affectionate Husband."
- F.W. Sevey

Doc. #14 of 61: (No date/location to connect this letter from Frank Sevey to his wife Mary).

Noteworthy: -"Six months and a great many old close (clothes) will be in the box that you can use for something."
-"I shall send some blankets and I want you to keep them until I come back."
-"This big blanket is worth five dollars and with a little mending the others will be very useful too."
-"I will send you another letter before I go but you need not write for we will go on Tuesday so it will be of no use for you to write so Mary good bye."
-"If I should not see you again, kiss the children for me."

This is from your Dear
Husband

Frank W. Sevey

Doc. #15 of 61: (No date/location to connect this letter).

Noteworthy: -"Mary, I have nailed up the box and did not think to put a letter in it so I thought I would put this in the letter."
-"You will find the box in Burlington (Wisconsin) in care of Malcat."
-"I thought that would be better." "You can do anything you have a mind to if you will keep the coat that James brought home and keep the two rubber blankets,"
-"When I come home the little blue coats will make Hank some good clothes."
-"The overcoat and dress you can sell and get a good price."
-"When I get my pay, I will send you all the money that I can spare and I can spare one hundred".....
-"I will close this and for an answer write soon."
-"This is from your husband."

Frank W. Sevey
Until Death

- "I should have sent ten dollars in this letter if I could have borrowed it, but could not, so you must get along without this month."

Doc. #16 of 61: (No date/location to connect this letter).

Noteworthy:

- "Mary, I had this letter all closed up last night to send off this morning."
- "I was going to send the receipt showing the box was paid here, and I went and seen the express Agent, and he said he would make it all right."
- "I must come and see him in four days and then I will send you the receipt and then you can get your money back."
- "The Agent said they must have made a mistake in New Orleans some way, and I want you to get a receipt from the Agent at Burlington showing that you have paid four dollars and a half on the box, and then send it to me."
- "This paying for one thing twice over is played out with me."
- "Mary, I have nothing more to write tonight unless I put in a little fun."
- "There are some beings whom fate has always kept out in the cold, yet sometimes each matures can find no relief in this world."

Answer this soon, Frank W. Sevey.

(Reader's Note to the Second Portion of Frank Sevey's Letters and other Documents. You will remember that Mr. Sevey became ill while in the cavalry, recuperated from his illness in a St. Louis, Missouri hospital, and was honorably discharged on December 8, 1862. He then reenlisted in the 1st Wisconsin Heavy Artillery on September 6, 1863, listing his home residence in Wheatland Wisconsin. It should be noted as well that his letters to Mary through his discharge and application for disability become significantly longer in length, and much more descriptive).

Doc. #17 of 61: A page record of the First Wisconsin Regiment of Heavy Artillery that lists the following information. His residence was Wheatland, Wisconsin, and his reenlistment date is September 6, 1863. Under "REMARKS" are the words, "Vet. Corp: M. O. August 18, 1865 (his discharge date).

Doc. #18 of 61: A page and three quarters history of “The First Regiment, Wisconsin Heavy Artillery” (taken from the website address: <http://www.civilwar.nps.gov/cwss/template.cfm>). A more detailed history of the first batteries of the regiment (from “A” -”D”) are given.

Noteworthy:

- Frank Sevey's “Battery D” was mustered in on November 7, 1863, where it had been ordered to New Orleans, Louisiana on February 9, 1864.”
- ”Attached to the Defenses of New Orleans, Louisiana, Department of the Gulf, through July, 1864.”
- ”Attached to the District of Launcher, Louisiana, Department of the Gulf, through June, 1865.”
- ”Guarding the Defenses of Washington, D. C., 22nd Army Corps, to August, 1865.”
- ”Garrison at Fort Jackson until July 23, 1864, thence moved to Fort Berwick near Brashear City, and duty there until June, 1865.
- From Brahsear City ordered to Washington, D.C. and there mustered out on August 18, 1865.
- During entire term of service, the “Regiment lost 4 enlisted men killed and mortally wounded and 2 Officers and 77 Enlisted men by disease, with a total of 83 casualties”

Doc. #19 of 61: A letter to his wife Mary from Camp Washburn, Milwaukee, Wisconsin dated, April, 1863

Noteworthy:

- Frank opens his letter reporting to his wife of his arrival into camp around 10 A.M. with an extended delay in Milwaukee the previous day.
- He reports that he is “feeling better all the time” but only has in his pocket “20 cents” and states that he “has sent all the money home” to her.
- He requests that she write him “as often as you can” and that he will write her “once in a while”.
- He has just “drawn (received) his clothes except for an overcoat that had three worn holes.
- In the meantime he requests that she “get money as needed from father' and that “he expects to get some more money in a few days.”
- In closing he asks Mary when she writes him, “to write more about the children and about what the old folks thinks about the war”, telling him “how they get along” and if he should come home.

Frank W. Sevey

Doc. #20 of 61: A letter to his brother and sister dated, August 3, 1863 (no location given).

Noteworthy:

- Opens telling them he received their letter yesterday being glad to hear from them and reporting that he is doing well.
- Expresses concern to them saying, "It has been a good while" since he has heard from them reminding them that he has corresponded twice to them with no replies.
- His work the past four months under Mr. Purfield has him feeling "pretty low".
- He mentions that his recent job of "having one hundred thousand feet of railroad timber."

(Note: Pages 2 and 3 are confusing and muddled mentioning a child's name "Willie", that "Frank (he) is "getting lazy", and that a woman nearby "wants him to fix a stove pipe."(?) Specific feelings and thoughts by the writer are incomplete at best and it is almost as though someone else (not Frank Sevey) is finishing the letter.

Doc. #21 of 61: To his wife Mary, dated, January 17, 1864, from Camp Washburn, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Noteworthy:

- His opening lines to Mary indicates that he is well "with exceptions (cramps) which "he came down with yesterday morning", but is not taking any medicine.
- The doctor sees "that he must keep still and in doors."
- He mentions "Dr. Sanborn's bill" was "forty some odd dollars", and he told her he set up a payment program with the doctor over the course of the next two months.
- She could expect "seventy dollars" of that, and to "tell father he must take good care of you until I get my pay", and that he will pay him back "every cent."
- In concluding he tells Mary that "the doctor came to camp" with him and stayed with him through the night. His throat is still sore and writing is hard work for him. Frank states to her, "You must answer this soon."

From your Frank W. Sevey
Frank adds, "The pay master said that we would get our pay Monday,
and if we do so, I will come home on Wednesday."
My Love To all My inquiring Friends

Doc. #22 of 61: To his wife Mary from Fort Jackson, February, 21, 1864

Noteworthy:

- He opens by mentioning that he has not forgotten her and is a great many miles from her, and that he cannot "give the details" of our trip.
- He relates his witnessing the hanging of an Illinois citizen who shot a soldier and was hung for his crime.
- They spent their last night in Cairo, Illinois before boarding a boat to New Orleans. They were on the boat seven days mentioning "I never before in my life saw all the sights", and "we are seventy five miles below New Orleans.
- He describes the fort as having "one hundred big guns and that "two of them carry a four hundred and fifty pound ball."
- "We fired one shell".."and it went seven miles before the shell bursted", and he saw it explode.
- He describes, "Its so warm here we have to go around in our shirt sleeves" "and sweat".
- Their present camp is situated about four miles from a plantation where they gathered "some oranges and lemons, saying, "If I saw one, I saw a thousand bushels on the trees "All he wanted was to eat my pockets full".
- In honor of General Washington's Birthday they had a thirty five gun salute that morning and the same ceremony at night again.
- He reports to her that they are "twenty five miles from the ocean and the Gulf of Mexico."
- He "thinks from here we will go to Texas, and says where he now is "is not very healthy here." "I've seen one crocodile that was about 10 feet long" and "his body equally as large as mine". He has seen 40 or more of them and that " a ball" cannot pierce their skin.
- Now that he is more settled, he can write more often. Expects to "be paid off in a few days".
- "We still drill four times a day." Among his diet consists of "eating hard crackers three times a day" and "two cups of coffee" daily, while they eat meat meat and potatoes "three times a week."

From your affectionate Husband, Frank W.S.

Doc. #23 of 61: To his wife Mary from Fort Jackson, dated, April 4, 1864

Noteworthy:

- He writes in his leisure time that "I am well and in good health" and hopes that "these few lines" will find her the same.
- He apologizes that he couldn't write her Sunday on account that he had "guard duty."
- He reports at present he has no money to send her and in "talking with the Captain, they hope "to be paid within less than 10 days."
- Frank researched Mary's "State Bounty" and said that she should be getting it every month.
- He wants her to write and tell her "if Pierce has moved and who has got the place."
- "There are some ten or fifteen men in the company that are going on Navel gun boats and I am one of these." The reason that we are going _____ are starving to death here." " We don't get more than half rations in July". "They say them that has lived here say the white people can't live here for it is so warm and unhealthy." "There is a narrow neck of land each side of the river." "It is (-) land that can't be tiled". "Its like our slew land in the north."
- Not much else to write about, am "closing with these few lines."
- "Mary you must answer those that you can." "This is from your affectionate'-Frank W. Sevey

Doc.#24 of 61: Addressed to his Dear wife and family, from Fort Jackson, dated, April 17th, 1864

Noteworthy:

- Frank reports in his opening that "I received two letters from you today", "and was never so glad in my life" as one he mentions as "the boy" "was getting letters all the time and I felt bad".
- These new letters made him feel part of the group and important again.
- He talks about "getting of General Inspection which takes from half past eight in the morning until twelve", and "we have to stand right out in the hot sun all the time"having the guns inspected." "There's about six hundred of us and it takes a long time."
- He informs Mary that she maybe "getting some of the bounty" which could be up to ten dollars, and that he heard about it when he was at home sick.

-He tells her to “keep up good cheer”, “making yourself happy as you can be” for he shall “see her sometime.”

-Frank begins on page 2 telling Mary that he “has never thought of getting killed in battle” but hopes he does not before he sees them all again.

-He is going to send all his money home to her and tells Mary, “you know that I love and respect you and the children.” “If we have a little family trouble now and then, we will do better next time that has all passed and gone.” “When I look back and see what I have done and said, I am sorry for all of that.” “But I have forgotten it and will try and do better for the future.”

-”There are a great many boats passing up and down the river from the gulf to New Orleans, and we are only twenty five miles from the sea coast.” “I think sometimes that I would like to on the sea.”

-”When I get back home I will settle down and be steady.” “I went to church today and the priest told us about the battle that we had on Red River the 8th and 9th of this month, and the loss of our troops killed and wounded and missing was five hundred fifty.” “They took our troops and one hundred wagons loaded with ammunition, provisions, as well as several pieces of cannon.” Our troops have been ordered “from here up there.” “I hope we will have to go and then we will have something to do .” “ If we stay there three years we won't have anything to do nor get hurt by the Rebs.” “The sickness is all that will hurt us.”

-”We have 100 cannon and the largest one I can crawl into it with all ease.”

-”I want to know if you got a satchel from Mr. Belden as I let Jim Lewis have one to send a blanket and Belden was to return it to you.

(No ending of the letter, signing off or signature here).

Doc. # 25 of 61: To his wife Mary from Fort Jackson, dated, April 22, 1864

Noteworthy: -He lets Mary know that he is well, feels like writing, and will write as often as he can for he does like hearing from her.
-He can send her “two more dollars” this time and mentions that he put in a dollar in his “letter of the 17th”.

-He requests that she send the letters “by the way of New York and then they will--” (incomplete)

-Page 2, Frank mentions many of the Union boats cannot run down the river “as the Rebs has got Fort Pillow”.

-”We came down here and there has been a battle up in Red River and there is going to be another big one before long.” “I hope I shan't be in it.” “No more news to tell for now.”

(No sign off and unsigned).

Doc. #26 of 61: To his wife Mary from Fort Jackson, dated, May 5, 1864

Noteworthy:

-Lets her know, “nothing much to write now” but he is still well, and hopes she and the children are too.

-He tells Mary he will write every week now as long as stamps are available.

-He is doing a great deal of sewing “for the boy” but “they can't pay me before they get their pay”. He thinks he has about twenty two or three dollars of work but that he “owes some to the boys” but not as much as they owe him.

-One of the officers went to New Orleans and Frank asked him to get some stamps but “he has not returned”. Yet he heard that he was in the Hospital.”

-Mentions how very dry and warm it is “and the mosquitoes are troublesome.” They have caused “James Lewis to be in the hospital with sore eyes.”

-He tells Mary that he has been talking with the “Clerk of the Company today about the “Family Bounty” and the clerk told him that “ all the reports” have been made monthly and have been sent to Madison.

-Frank concludes by entreating his wife “to write as soon as you can and tell me the news.”

From your husband until (-)

Frank W. Sevey

Doc. #27 of 61: To his wife Mary from Fort Jackson, dated, May 9, 1864.

Noteworthy:

- Writes that he has been on guard duty and “is well as usual”, and “hope this will find you and the children well.”
- ”It is so warm here that I don't know how we live but all the men here are well.”
- ”Not much news this morning”...”I have not had but three letters from you”. “May get our pay this week and if we do, I will send it all.”
- ”Write as soon as you can” with much news. Frank

Doc. #28 of 61: To his wife from Fort Jackson, dated, June 2, 1864.

Noteworthy:

- He is getting money now every day, keeping a little in his pocket with him.
- They have moved out of their tents into new barracks. The tents were so warm and many of the boys were getting sick.
- Fifty two soldiers have been admitted to the hospital with fevers and chills. “I was down with rheumatism about two weeks but I have gotten better.”
- Lieutenant Henry is sick here and going home soon.
- ”The mosquitoes are so thick at night that people have to make smudges of smoke around in the fields for the cattle to stand around.”
- ”I have been writing every time the mail leaves here.”
- ”Write as soon as you can”... “and give my respects to father and mother and the girls.” Yours until Death

“Send me them pictures as soon as you can.” Frank W. Sevey

Doc. #29 of 61: To his wife from Fort Jackson, dated, July 3, 1864

Noteworthy:

- Not sure when they will leave this place.
- Just arrived, 500 Negro soldiers.
- The 91st New York Regiment is going home on furlough this week, “as they have been out almost three years.

- Expects to get paid this week and while the “soldiers pay has been raised sixteen dollars a month”, he expects fifty dollars in pay and it will cost two dollars to mail a total of eighty dollars home.
- He mentions that he doesn't earn enough extra by sewing, and only uses some for tobacco when he is not sick.
- Promises her “I am going to save all my wages and bounty while I am in the army, and send it home for safe keeping.”
- ”If father wants any money and you have any more than you want to use, you can let him have it, for father has done a great deal for us.”
- “I have not forgotten him nor mother.”
- When we do get paid “then it comes all in a lump of a hundred and ten dollars in my pocket all the time by sewing, and I can send some of that at once in awhile in a letter.”
- ”I will close this for the Negroes are hollering supper, nothing but coffee and bread.”

So good bye Yours, with love,

Frank W. Sevey

Wait until I write again fore you write.

Doc. #30 of 61: (No date given), to his wife Mary, from Fort Jackson, Louisiana, Battery D, Wisconsin Heavy Artillery

Noteworthy:

- He reports he has been to the hospital, being there five days and is out now and has returned to his company. “That was when” he was in New Orleans.
- He states that while he was in the hospital, “he was thought of a great deal” by the men in his company.
- Frank reports, “I am going to sign over to you ten dollars per month” in speaking of parties unknown when he says, “they are most half married.
- James Lewis is now sick in camp with diarrhea, “and I am as scared as I ever was”.
- ”You must write and tell me how the doctor gets along with his twenty six dollars, that he was afraid that he would not get what you want him to.” “When I send money, that will be the first of the month.”

-”Write as soon as you can and tell me all the news you did not speak of.”

-”I think a great deal of my children and write all the news when you write” Address my letters to Fort Jackson, Louisiana, Battery D, Wisconsin Heavy Artillery”

Frank W. Sevey

Mary C. Sevey

Doc.#31 of 61: Addresses his wife Mary, “Absent and dear Companion”, from Fort Berwick, September 13, 1864.

Noteworthy:

- He received her letter last evening and glad to hear from the little ones.
- He received her August 29th letter on September 12th and wishes he could get a letter from her every week., “but is glad to get them as small as they are.”
- He mentions he was “surprised at his being Absent Without Leave as he had been given a pass to New Orleans but was to go back on the same boat that he he came up on. They were unable to get back to camp for two weeks. And having problems with his explanation to the Lieutenant (whom Frank deemed, “the meanest man that ever lived), he survived the report “without any harm coming to him.”
- He boasts to his wife Mary, “I can handle a canon as good as the best”, and “I shall be a soldier as long as this war lasts if I don't get killed in some fight.”
- ”We have fifteen hundred rebs in five miles of us and we can't see their pickets every day.” “The time is coming...and we are ready for them at any time..”
- ”If I could get a letter every week, write anything about our girls.” “I would like to hear from them..” and more from father and mother.”
- ”Don't know when we will get our pay” as “we are way off here and so far alone.”

-He tells her that she should get her pay from Madison, and he doesn't think the war will last much longer, mentioning that our army "has taken "forty thousand prisoners from the State of Georgia" all "while the Indians are playing the mischief up North and in Oregon." (no signature).

Doc. #32 of 61: -To his wife Mary, from Fort Berwick, September 23, 1864

Noteworthy: -Writes that he is well and "nothing to do this morning", and that he would like to see her and the children at the present.
-"Oh, I know you feel lonesome." " I know especially when we have those long rainy days, especially for three or four days when I have to stand and do guard duty."
-"I don't want you to worry about me and one John Clouse". "We are both handwriting, one in German and one in English."
-He was pleased to hear from her and that she and the children are well.
-"I will tell you all about my being away from Fort Jackson." "I and four other boys got a furlough for four days, and when the furlough was up I did not go back." "So when I was ready to go back, there was no boat to take me back." "I went to General Sherman's headquarters and told him how I was fixed, and he told me that was not very_____, and asked me if I had a good spree." "I told I had and he said he would give me transportation to my company."
(Reader's Note: Frank obviously did not meet with General Sherman personally, nor does he explain to Mary what he did with himself in all that time away from his company).

Doc. # 33 of 61: To his wife Mary from Fort Berwick, dated, October 10, 1864

Noteworthy: -"Dear Companion, I received a letter from you last evening, and I was glad to find you in good humor." "That last letter before this-- you was in such(-- that I would not answer it. (Reader's Note: Is it possible that Mary was angry with Frank from reading his September

23rd letter and his lack of giving his wife information as to why he was away from his company for so long?).

-He tells her, "now I am the heaviest man in the company", and that he has been "promoted to corporal", and thinks he will be a Sargent before too long. He says, "There is not an officer in the company but what thinks a great deal of Frank".

-He "doesn't have so much to do" as he did when he was a private.

-Mary spoke of his picture _____ (sentence incomplete here).

-He is unable to get to New Orleans from this point on and he will send her money "every day now."

-He doesn't want Mary to be discouraged with him. He tells her he has "two more years to serve" and that he "shall go to Mexico the next pull" as "there is money to be made in this country."

-He will send her money in his next letter and ends, "Write the news when you write."

Frank W. Sevey

Doc. #34 of 61: (at side: "One kiss for you"). To his wife Mary from Fort Buchanan, October 21st, 1864.

Noteworthy:

-He opens by telling her that he has not forgotten her, and that his health "still keeps good."

-He reports that he is as good as they boys "that gets letters", and that the company battery has been moved to "the other side of the Bay and on the same side that Brasher City is." "It is a pleasant very pleasant place here."

"I guess it is healthier here and there is a good many sick in the company that are dying gradually." "There is a good many more that have gone home sick", and "some died on the road going home."

-He is happy to be where he is in that he can get a meal every night, and hopes he will be with his company together for another year.

-He is going to send her "this box of clothing" but cannot until he "gets paid" He attaches an inventory in the letter of what items are enclosed in the box and states that she can sell them for the

suggested prices. The inventory includes-

1 three Blue Blouses at \$3 dollars each

2 two flannel Shirts “ \$1.50 each

3 one Dress Coat “\$8.00 each

4 one Pair pants “\$4.00 each

6 one Rubber that I “\$9.00 “

had forgotten which

\$32.50

\$1.50

Total \$34.00

-Frank recommends that once she sells these things for those prices, “you had better _____ and buy something else for yourself and the children.” “And if you can't, you had better keep them until I come home for they are worth that to me.” “There is nothing that fits me, only the Over Coat”.

-Other items Frank describes to his wife that she will find include- “ a nice little watch”, “two books (one for you and one for John Clouse's sister)”, and “two brass medals.”

-He tells her his guard duty is late due to his new rank of corporal and that he he “had to go to the City to draw our rations.”

-Frank closes with, “I know Josey must be quite a lady by this time.”

-”So good night all.” “This is Frank”.

“Your only beloved husband.” “Answer me this right off Mary”.

Doc. #35 of 61:

To his wife Mary from Fort Buchanan (near Bracher City, Louisiana), dated, October 26, 1864

Noteworthy:

-Noted that he received Mary's last letters “on the 24th and on the 9th” and “very much pleased to hear” that all are well.”

-He tells her, “As soon as I get my three years out, I am coming home and staying there”.

-Frank reminds her, “The rest of my days you spoke of my having a woman better than you are” and that “there is not a white woman here.” He also states, “The stories you may have heard” about him are all “damn lies”.

-He complements her on her writing so well and can understand well what she is writing. He would like her to write more often but not to wait for his letters as, "I am very busy now."

-Frank explains, at present "I have to act as Quartermaster Sargent and have to draw a ration for the company", and he will write as often as she does. "I leave it to you to write soon."

"This is from your Affectionate
Frank W. Sevey

Doc. #36 of 61: To his wife Mary, from Fort Buchanan, dated, November 3, 1864.

Noteworthy:

-He mentions that he "received a letter from sister Mary and you", and "glad to hear that the children are well."

-Frank enjoyed sister Mary's letter so much that he "will send her another envelope and stamp.

-He promises to send his wife a picture but has to wait until he gets paid again. To send everyone in the family a picture of himself will cost around two dollars for six pictures.

-He is up very late as most in his company have retired and mentions "Sister Gertrude" and the fact that she has complained of his lack of writing to her. He explains, "Mary, you know I have not got the same feelings to her as I have to sister Mary." Frank recalls and reminds her that Gertrude in the past "made a great deal of trouble between you and I."

-In closing he responds to his sister Mary's remarks that "you (Mary) send Henry and Josey to school as much as you can", as he "can see the effects of poor schooling."

-He must close now, its late and he is responsible for getting up early to draw his men's rations.

"Give this letter/to Gert and tell her that I will write to/her again".

"This is from Husband F.W. Sevey

Doc. #37 of 61: To wife Mary from Fort Buchanan, dated, November 17, 1864

Noteworthy:

- He was pleased in receiving “three letters from you last evening”, “and so glad to hear that you and the children are well.”
- Frank reports that his weight is now at two hundred pounds.
- He confesses, “I dream very often of a woman and have the good feelings with them” (in his dreams).
- “I think as you do that I think there is more comfort at home with a family of a Dear wife and little ones than there is way down here in Louisiana over two thousand miles from his home, and among the rebs.” “And I don't know when I(or he) will be taken down with a ball of lead or iron.” “But we have to take our chance for that we shan't die until our time comes.” “Then we will have to be ready or not if I live to come home.” “I shall have more than one shirt when I come.” “If I don't have more than one shirt when I get ready to come, I shan't come for I should be ashamed to come.”
- Frank expresses his gladness for getting such a good fitting coat as he payed six dollars for it.
- He expresses some guilt on his lack of sending her money regularly since last July, while instead spending his money in New Orleans on liquor and getting drunk instead.
- ”Mary, you shall have one hundred dollars this pay day.”
- He tells her that “John Clouse is with me and he is well and wants you to tell his mother that he sends his respects to her as he has gone out hunting bees for honey.”
- In closing Frank states, “Send me your picture, Josey's and Hank's” , and he will send his as soon as he gets money to get his picture taken. The picture costs 10 cents apiece.

Doc. #38 of 61: To Mary from Fort Buchanan, dated, November 18. 1864

Noteworthy:

- Glad he finally had a chance to finish the letter “he commenced last evening”, and reports that “John Clouse has got rheumatism in his back and it has blistered.”
- James Lewis is well” as is most of the Battery. “ Jim says

he would like to be there to our house today to dinner.”

-Frank supposes “how very ugly the weather must be this winter” and that “the grass is growing down here”, and “we don't need to have no fire as it is warm enough to sleep under one blanket.”

-He brings up, “We have not got paid yet but when we do you shall have one hundred of it.” “There is an express office right here and as soon as I get it, I will send it to you.”

-”Answer this soon and write the news.”

Yours truly,

Frank W. Sevey

Doc. # 39 of 61:

To his wife Mary from Fort Buchanan, dated, November 25, 1864

Noteworthy:

-Frank opens with “Its Christmas”, and he is in “good spirits” recalling they were together “one year ago today”.

“I think God will remember us for He is good if we will remember Him.”

-”I will say one thing Mary.” “I never saw any one improve so fast in writing as you do.” But “I don't like to hear of Gerts keeping company with that boy.”

-Frank complains saying, “He is too young to be a father” and without the experience in the world..” “You can tell her Mary that I think she can do better for herself and her little boys by waiting a little longer.”

-”Jim says he had a real good dinner with you and he thinks that I have got a real pretty woman for a wife.” “He took quite a shine to sister Mary” and “that we had some pretty children.”

-”Around the first of the month we will get our pay and you shall have some if you get one hundred and fifty dollars from me.”

“You will want to save a hundred of for when I get home so we can buy a team of some kind, working the land.., making a good living.., and clothing and schooling our children..”.

-Frank tells her he has no more to write but requests, "I hope you will do some more" .and "answer this as soon as you can."
"Give my respects to father and mother and the girls".

"Yours til death"

Frank W. Sevey

-Frank post scripts, "Mary, I have not got a sign (idea) of a thing to send you for Christmas, so you must excuse me this time."

Doc. #40 of 61:

To his wife, (An incomplete 2 page letter, neither dated or signed).

Noteworthy:

-Frank is discussing how Jim liked his dinner on Sunday and fell in love with sister Mary. Jim said Mary "was the smartest Dutch girl he ever saw in his life..." "but he said I had the flower of the family" (in her).

- "You don't hardly speaks of Gert" but,, "only says that she is living with you this winter." "You don't tell me if she is to work or play or married or single..." "I am glad she is with you Mary". "You won't be so lonesome for I know how that "old lonesome" feels.

-Frank explains "in this little fort there is forty eight men" and they live together in "twelve little shanties" with four in each. He describes the size of each shanty as being "eight feet one way and ten the other way"... "so you can guess how much room we have." Each has a fire place but it is so warm we hardly keep a fire going.

Doc. #41 of 61:

To his wife Mary and children from Brashear City, Louisiana, dated, January 12, 1865. (His first letter of the new year).

Noteworthy:

-He is enclosing a "poor taken picture" of him explaining that his eyes are "almost shut on the account of neurology that he "had in one side of my head last week."

“My clothes were not in good condition” and “I did not have time to slick up a bit.”

-Frank reminds her that she should get paid very soon and with some of that money he is going to “get a dozen photographs” explaining who in the family will get one.

-”I will close this and wait for your picture.”

Frank W. Sevey

Doc. #42 of 61:

To his wife Mary from Brashear City, Louisiana, dated, January 15, 1865

Noteworthy:

-Frank reports receiving her “welcome letter dated on the 5th of January” and happy that everyone was well.

-He instructs her upon receipt of his latest letter to travel to Burlington (Wis.) and take the enclosed receipt “for that box”..”and get her money back”.

-”By the time you receive this letter you will have my money and my picture.” “I sent five dollars in a letter and sent by express twenty and my picture in another...” “I could not send any more.”

-Frank asks her not to send him anything more now as he doesn't know if he will receive it. Because he states, “ We don't know how long we shall stay here.. or if we should move..and it would only get lost.”

-He ends by saying, “It makes me mad for you have had to pay for the box all over again.”

yours til Death

Frank W. Sevey

Post Script- “This money I sent to Fox River Station

Doc. #43 of 61:

To his wife Mary from Brashear City, dated, January 18, 1865

Noteworthy:

-Frank reports receiving her “kind letter” on the evening of January 1st, and mentions that he followed up on the issue of having to pay twice the fee for the sent box by contacting the

“Station Agent”. All will be made right and he will send her the four dollar receipt so she can get her money.
-He reports that he is well and “feels encouraged of this war” and has heard talk that peace will be made by both sides in the following summer.
-He concludes, “I never did think so much of home enough since I have been married”...especially in “the last two or three months and have thought a great deal of our folks.” “My mind is on some of you all the time.” “Oh, I must tell you what I had for supper....a piece of boiled mule and a small piece of bread and a pint of black___(coffee?) without any sugar. “..We don't often have any kind of meat for Supper.”

Write soon. Frank W. Sevey

Doc. #44 of 61:

To his Dear Wife Mary, dated, January 27, 1865, from Brashear City, Louisiana

Noteworthy:

-Frank informs his wife that he is “now well and enjoying good health”.
-He imagines his family as having “cold weather now” in Wisconsin..and states “not much rain now” and “have not seen snow yet.”
-He tells her he “hopes for peace soon” and that by next January he will be home experiencing a Wisconsin winter.
-He thinks “there is a great cry of peace in the mouths of rebels” as “they are coming into our lines every day.”
“They can no longer stand to fight any longer” as “they could not get enough to eat.”
-”A woman came into our lines today and said that we have killed her husband in the last skirmish and that she had nothing to eat nor nothing to live on.” “She came for support or she and her little girl would have to starve and perish and that made the colonel done with them.”
“I don't know but I know when we killed her husband, he was a lieutenant and commanded one hundred men.” “He

was killed along with twelve others and twenty six of them were wounded.” “We only lost three men.”

-Frank reports that John Clouse “lost his speech” and “caught a very severe cold”.

“I am well so Good Night”

from your Dear

Frank W. Sevey

Doc. #45 of 61:

To his wife Mary from Brashear City, Louisiana, dated, January 29, 1865

Noteworthy:

- Frank mentions that few lines he he had received from her and credits her short writings to the interruption of visiting company that has taken all what she wanted to say away from her last letter. “Our camp is in an uproar” as the colonel informed the company that he expected a major attack in the next several hours.

-He continues, “I don't know how soon we may be in the hands of our enemy” and “for my part I am not going to be taken prisoner of war.” The boys are up and can see the enemy fires in the distance.

-He reports of seeing a large house across the river where “we have kept cases of small pox (remainder of letter is somewhat indistinguishable in thought.

-”You must write as often as you can and give my love to your father and mother and your sisters.”

Good night all.

Frank W. Sevey

Doc.#46 of 61:

To his dear wife Mary and family from Brashear City, dated, February 7, 1865

Noteworthy:

-Thanks her for the “welcome letter” and reports, “ I don't see here anything from that Box nor the money that I have sent you.” “I have sent five dollars in a letter and twenty by express and would like to know whether you have received it or not.”

-He continues with, he got his 2 months pay recently from New Orleans and got resupplied with stamps, and he will send her some stamps shortly.

-Frank entreats Mary to be saving her money as he states, “I might loose my life in this rebellion”.

-He is trying in every way to preserve his health so he can see her in spite of “all the bad disorder of smallpox” around him and he is trying to be as cautious as he can.

Good Night. Yours truly,
Frank W. Sevey

Doc.# 47 of 61:

A short letter to his sister Libby, from Brashear City, dated, February 13, 1865

Noteworthy:

-Frank thanks her for her kind letter dated January 28th and hopes she will stay with Mary until he gets home (reminding her the rent from her home will support her and her child).

-He mentions to his sister that he has found a special man for her stating, “I think a heap of him” that would suit” her better while acknowledging that he was never assigned such a task to be on the lookout for a man for Lib.

(Reader's Note: The following remarks made by Frank give insight to what he thinks would be a solution for the thousands of now single women from widowhood or single sweet hearts left behind and alone thus ushering in a national, political, and social acceptance of the practice of Polygamy.

-” I will tell you what I think about it.” “I think these young widows and old maids like you Lib would take up with most kind of a man.” “There are so many women in the country

now that are as there are not enough men to satisfy all the women unless they take two apiece.” “And I think it will take two good ones to satisfy me when I get home.”

-Frank mentions he is “so sick” of war news and he can't “bear to hear a man talk about the war.” “The rebs has got so tame that we can get in site of them every day.” “There was six of them came in under a flag of truce today to be protected by our government.” “They were stout looking men.” (Frank did not end this letter with a sign off or signature).

Doc. #48 of 61:

To his dear wife Mary from Fort Buchanan, dated, February 27, 1865

Noteworthy:

-Frank reports receiving his wife's most recent letter and comments (probably of a recent picture Mary sent of Gertrude, ...) “Gertrude looks better to me now than she ever did.”

-He complains “why the girls don't send their pictures” to him, and he would like to hear from them, hoping they will improve in their school work and “learn well”.

-He states that he “will send a nice book to Hank” and send his daughter Josephine a “real nice present”.

-He tells Mary to remind the children to “be kind to your Mother, and your little Sister and to your Brother and to your cousins also.”

-Frank changes the subject asking Mary to comment on.. “You did not tell me whether Lib got a letter from August or not and what does she seem to think of Hank Sorg”.

(Reader's Note: This is the special man/soldier that Frank thought would be a good match for Lib). Frank concludes, “I am not going to say anything more about it.”

-On page 3 Frank tells Mary, “I want you to get someone to go to the house this summer and fix it up so that you can stay in it another winter.” He mentions the house needing

some “new gable ends” and “fence boards” and “have father draw them from Burlington (Wisconsin).”

-He will send her more money soon and wants “to come home next fall.”

-He concludes the letter by stating, “See to it that you raise something on your little piece of ground” , and he doesn't want to come home in the fall and see nothing but weeds growing.

“Give my best respects to father and mother and also the girls.”

“Remember this my dearest Mary and sometimes let your thoughts dwell upon one whose whole heart is yours.”

“I remain as ever your devoted”

Husband Frank Sevey

“Tell Girt that A. has fell in love with her picture and tell the girls I shall haunt them until they send their pictures.”

FWS

Doc.#49 of 61:

To his wife Mary from Brashear City, Louisiana, dated, March 15, 1865]

Noteworthy:

-He mentions his joy in receiving 2 letters from her at one time that evening and is grateful that all are well and “that Henry is better”.

-Frank “did receive a letter from John who told him that he would soon purchase a small farm “near where Ed has gone”, and that his “sister is in Iowa” and will get her address soon so that he can write her.

-He goes on to mention, “When I get out of the army, I would come and see him, and Frank doesn't understand “why the girls don't send their pictures”

-He concludes by asking, “Did you get any money from Madison?” “I hope so.”

-”I must close this and go to my couch of rest.” “I remain your til death.” Fran W. Sevey

write Soon

Doc.#50 of 61:

To his wife from Brashear City, dated, March 23, 1865

Noteworthy:

-Frank happily reports to her upon “receiving a bag of tobacco this evening” and while doing so, “found a letter dated February 21st”, noting, “It has been on the road some 30 days.”

-He remarked, “that piece of hard tobacco in with the letter ...was the best tobacco I had since I came down here!”

-Page 2 Frank responds with, “Am glad to hear that you are well” and reports that the mosquitoes tonight are so bad there, he cannot do much more writing.

-He just acquired some stamps now but could use “ a good pair of socks”, telling her, “If you have got time to knit them, they would come very good.

-He complains that dress coats have gone up in price from \$7.50 to “\$12a dollars now”, and pants that cost \$3 dollars are now up to \$5 dollars. (Frank brings this up because his annual clothing allowance decreased from \$35 dollars to \$28 dollars or “\$7dollars less now”).

-Page 3. “You can tell Mrs. Snider that she need not worry about John, for John is doing well”...”being as hearty as a buck”..

-Frank announces that if he stays well, he may send her a pair of candle sticks.

-Page 4. Frank is unsure about Hank's religion or where Hank attends church but knows “he is not a Catholic”, but “that he is a good man that will make a good living.” “I am not going to write any more about him...as the girls can write for themselves.”

“So goodnight.” “I wish you all well.” “I remain yours until Death.”

F.W. Sevey

Doc.#51 of 61:

A short note to Mary from Brashear City, Louisiana, dated, April 5, 1865

Noteworthy:

-He received two letters from her yesterday and is glad to hear that she is well, and he is well too.
-Frank reiterates, "I think I shall come home this fall if I can get a furlow." It would probably be in September.
-His writing at the present time will be short and fears "the girls" might be mad at him for such a short letter.

F.W. Sevey

Doc.#52 of 61:

A letter from B. L. Sevey from Middleburgh, dated, April 16, 1865, to his brother, Frank Sevey

Noteworthy:

-Is glad to hear brother Frank is well but that he (B.L) is not doing well.....
due to his "lungs are badly affected", pointing out, "I have never been well since I was down South."
-He tells his brother Frank, "We had some bad news here today/"
.."Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Seward are reported dead"...
and comments, "I don't think that the theater..was a fit place for him."
-On page 2 Frank remarks, "I have not heard from Lucinda these 10 years, and I don't know where she is."
"Where she is there is no help for Mary." "She is a mean dirty nasty dirty thing, and if she ever comes to m house again, I shall treat her very cool. (At this point B.L. Sevey
continues his ranting about Lucinda but the reader gets no specific information as to what things she did to anger B. L. and his family).
- Page 3. He asks Frank, "Where was John when he wrote to you?" "He was out to my house about a year ago...and talked of going west." "I live twelve

miles from Cleveland on the turn pike when you come home this way.” Ed lives another 20 miles “from me”.

-B. L. mentions that he “has been drawing a pension this three years..but I have been drafted since I came home, but they could not hold me, and I don't look much as I used to.” “I can't work more than half of the time now.”

-Page 4. B. L. asks Frank, “Have you got wounded yet, and how do you like it, and how many battles have you been in?” “I think the war is drawing to a close very fast... and I can't think of more nonsense to write.”
From your Brother. My respects to you.

from B. L. Sevey to
Frank W. Sevey

Doc. #53 of 61:

A letter to his brother (Frank) and sister from Penfield, April____, 1865 from J. O. Sevey

Noteworthy:

-Page 1: J. O. tells them he received their letter “about a week ago, and explains his obligation to answer though he is short on time.

-He mentions his yearly work in Penfield gets him two hundred dollars a year plus his board.

-He would like to hear from the rest of the family and knows his brother, “B.L.” was discharged and now lives in Cleveland. J. O's recent letter from his brother notifiys him that B. L. is “not able to do anything yet.”

-Page 2: J. O. states that “Lucinda is in Iowa and her new married name is “Townsee” and has 4 or 5 children.

-J.O. doesn't think this woman will ever see him again because he states, “I have got a woman”. (Reader's note, this letter does not go into the details of just

exactly what he is talking about here. Was he having an affair with Lucinda? We don't know.).

-J. O. learns that "Uncle Charles" of Wisconsin has died and explains that the town of Penfield right now has many sick people.

-Page 3-J.O. concludes, "I don't see anything about your wife that is so soft__you said that you wanted my wife's picture and mine." "I will send hers if I can get it taken in time."

- "I want you to send your picture in the next letter..".

- "Do not forget to come down here this fall."

- "Ed and his wife has you to their fathers__". "This is all.

Good bye

Write soon

J.O. Sevey

Doc.#54 of 61:

To his wife Mary from Brashear City, Louisiana, dated, May 7th, 1865

Noteworthy:

-Page 1: Frank apologizes for his lack of being able to write a correspondence at a particular time when he got payed and had to go out on a scouting party.

-He states, "I am well and hearty", and he sent the all the money" that he could "this time."

He will send more when "the war is so near to a close" and his aspirations are to "be home in July or August."

-Page 2: (missing)__"has sent me hundred dollars to Father", and tells Mary, "I want you to be saving your money and make good use of it."

- "Can't write any more this time", ... "Give my respects to father and mother."

I remain yours till Death

Frank W. Sevey

Doc. #55 of 61:

To his wife Mary from Brashear City, Louisiana, dated,
May 12, 1865

Noteworthy:

-Page 1-Frank begins telling Mary how lonesome he is stating, "I don't know what else to do" other than write her.

- "I am going to get six photographs taken and send four of them home and send the other to Ohio..."

- With his \$103 dollars left of pay he has paying trying to pay off some recent debts including \$16 dollars "owed to the government for clothing"...

- He "drawed over forty two dollars of pay for last year" and "was paid only 6 months" and is still owed 2 months pay for March and April" ..

- "I have been in this company two years and a half and have not saved much but the war is almost over and now it is time to do something after the horse was stolen out of the stable."

- "Look it up...I hope you will take care of your money." ... "I will fetch some home if the war don't come to a close by the first of August." "I shall be home on a furlough ." "I do want to see a white woman so bad that I can't get my pants on in the morning."

- "...I must close thisand you must excuse this poor letter for I have no good place to write." "So give my love to Father and Mother and Sisters.

Yours truly,

Frank W. Sevey

John Clouse is well and James is also.

Doc.#56 of 61:

To his wife from Brashear City, Louisiana, dated,
May 17, 1865

Noteworthy:

-Page 1- Frank opens with, "I received your kind letter of May 5th, but I am sorry to hear that you are dissatisfied with my short and brief letter." "I will try and satisfy you this time that is if good words and gentle means will do it..."

- "Dear Wife, I am well and I hope this will find you enjoying the same".

-Page 2- Frank explains that he has been very busy "the last two months" that he's "been unable to write". He was assigned to be an independent scout to scout the country around" and report to his command what he observed. He mentions being gone three weeks on that assignment, "and everybody thought the rebs had got me. He states, "I stayed two nights in a rebel camp but they took me to be one of General Lee's men".

(Reader's note here: Where those rebs unfamiliar with Union uniforms or were they blind, not to mention Frank's Wisconsin accent and dialect!)

-Frank continues, "Lee's men...had gave a parole to go home after staying with them (the rebs) for two days.

-Page 3- After returning back to his company he was ordered to New Orleans to report to the General where he had been and what he had seen, and was in New Orleans two days.

-He tells Mary that he sent her one hundred dollars to John Clouse's Mother and "sent the same to _____"

-Frank also mentions that he was assigned another scouting mission and "asked George Morris if he would write a letter to her".. for he had to "go away again."

-Page 4- On his last page of the letter Frank begins,
“So you see the reason that I have not done better in
my writing you so you need not feel so bad about me
for I am the same Old Frank but a better man.”
“I done the best that I could for you this pay day.”
“I will try and do half as well next time.”
“In the next letter that I get from you, you will feel
better.”

I give my best respects to all of my
friends and I remain your most Beloved
Husband
Frank W. Sevey
answer this soon

Doc.# 57 of 61:

To his wife Mary from Brashear City, Louisiana. Dated,
May 26. 1865

Noteworthy:

-Page 1- He received her two letters “yesterday” and
“they were more pleasing to me than any other I have
had in a long time.” “I am glad that you think so much
of me as to want to see me once more.”
“I hope myself that we will once more meet again.”
-”We have got some 80 or a 100 men that their time is
out in September, and I think we will all come home.”
-...”I don't think I can do better at solderin”...”I can't
hand you a hundred dollars a year if I had to work for
it.”

-Page 2- “There is one thing I would like to come home
and see you and stay with you.” “But I can make more
money in the army and I hope I can stay__.” “My time
out is only 17 months more.” “That is a short time.”
“I think without any joking that we will be home this
fall if we don't have to go to Mexico.” “There is great
talk in the papers about one of the reb Generals and
the Emperor of Mexico of joining together and keeping

this war up for another year.” “This Kerby Smith has got 15,000 troops more to be slain or surrender.” “They can take their choice for Sheridan is after them...” “We are hearing all kinds of stories down here.” “We heard there was a great many_____”.

-Page 3- “I will have to tell you the situation.” “We are in a great many houses in this place...that are four or five feet in the water.” “The citizens are all moving to the city of New Orleans.” “We are going to from this place soon and we don't know where we are going.” “But I think we will go to Texas.” “I hope we won't, I would rather go towards home.”

-”I can't write anymore this time and what I have done is mighty poor.” (Reader's note: Frank doesn't specifically state what he means by mighty poor other than the way he feels emotionally. What we do sense here is that he is torn in making the decision to stay in the army and make more money with regular than go home after his discharge and find work locally that pays much less. It certainly gives us the illustration that economic times were hard for Frank's family during the Civil War.)

-Frank concludes saying, “..But you must excuse me this time for you are my dearest and only woman that I think about in this world!” “I will close this and wait for an answer.” “Give my respects to all inquiring friends.” Frank W. Sevey

Doc.# 58 of 61:

A letter to his dear wife Mary from Brashear City, Louisiana, dated, May 28, 1865

Noteworthy:

-Page 1- Frank opens with ..”This is Sunday..and a very fine day.. but we have so much water that is very disagreeable.” ..”The citizens of the town have to go from one place to the other in small boats.” “I have

seen some four houses floating down the bay.” “There are hundreds of people coming in here that the water has driven them from their homes which are dear to them as ours is to us.” ..”A home is a home.”

-Frank advises Mary...”If it is a poor one, it is better than to pay rent.” “Mary, I don't want you to pay out much money on that old house”.....

-Page2- Frank beings, “For when I come home I am either going to build a new house or sell that one and buy another..” “I think there is no doubt but we will be home this fall for all the leading men of the South has given up their arms and came into our poor lines, and gave themselves up.” “The news came in the paper last night..that time was out on the third day of September to discharge them as soon as their papers can be made out.” “We had some ten men that was sick and four of them was in the hospital.” “The rest was in the company about half sick _____ went home.”

-Page 3- “If I was a mind to get some medicine and take it, I could get a discharge in four weeks but I don't want for I have got a good place and I can do better here this summer than I can there.” “I am going to save every cent of my money all but what I want ____ of tobacco, for I have got enough clothing to last me one year.” “To John I am going to send a box of stuff home as soon as the cars can run.” “The water is so high they they have not run in here in four weeks.” “Save your money and be a good woman and I will get home this fall and we will__”.

-Page 4- Frank ends the letter by telling her what some of the boys are doing. “John Clouse and A. Hoffman and two other boys are at card playing and Jim ___ lays in his bunk a sleeping.” “Some are cleaning their guns and some are writing to their friends at home and sweet hearts abroad.” “Mary, when I come home, we will have one good time so good afternoon.”

“Write soon in answer.” “Give my respects to Father and Mother and to the Girls also.”

“Give my love to Girt and tell her I love these young widows.” Frank W. Sevey

(Reader's Note: In his last lines Frank in saying, I love these young widows”, is showing his understanding(empathy) for their sadness and tragic loss, probably reminding him of similar tragic scenarios being played out in the northern states).

Doc. # 59 of 61:

To his wife Mary from Chicago, dated, (no month given, 19. 1865 (Reader's Note: By this time Frank has recently been honorably discharged for health reasons. We don't know why Frank has taken up residency in Chicago. It may be that he is so short of money to live on (sending most of what he is able home to Mary) that he must stay in Chicago make a living by working. We see here that he has procured a position as a city street car driver.

Noteworthy:

“Dear wife, I am well and __ have been ever since a week ago today. “_____ am driving a street car and I am getting \$62 dollars per month and have to pay \$18 dollars a month for my board and ten cents a piece for my washing.” “If you were ever to board me and do my washing, you could make money.” “I can hire a house_ for four dollars per month and if I like the business I shall stay all winter and I shall come home.” (Reader's note: Throughout Frank's letters, he has many times answered his wife Mary's questions about when he will be coming home. The question is, is Frank really wanting to get home quickly? Does he or has he adjusted to his independence living away from his family for so long? Or, is he even afraid of

coming home to a world he has been away from for so long, and would that adjustment be to emotionally hard for him. It may be that Frank has heard stories from other soldiers (relatives and friends) that have returned home and are struggling greatly with their lives. The military after all gave them a sense of purpose, food, clothing, and shelter, etc. With economic times so hard on both sides at the Civil War's end in 1865, surviving veterans as in all wars may have initially looked forward to their return to loved ones, but depression from physical wounds received, loss of manhood, etc., nineteenth century America simply had no or poor ways and methods of dealing with and treating clinical depression, not to mention that lack of understanding and total and complete care of societies and cultures on both sides that had tragically lost so much!).

-Page 2- Frank ends the letter stating, "In four weeks from today" he will be moving to a house closer to his work, and will have the availability to rent it as long as he wishes.

-He asks Mary to decide by making up her mind if she wants to come to Chicago and live. (Reader's note: Frank has already tried to sell Mary on the idea that she can make more money in Chicago as there are more jobs to choose from in a big city than where she is living now.).

- "Write and tell me what you think about it."

"Yours til Death"

Frank W. Sevey

"You can let the cow go."

Doc.#60 of 61:

To his wife Mary, from Houston, Texas, dated,
January 9, 1866

(Reader's note: As suspected, Frank and Mary's letters to one another in the course of his military career have hinted at but not completely exposed their marital issues and disagreements. Frank still feels an economic obligation in support of his family in sending money home and advising his wife Mary, what she should and should not do ("Save as much as you can" or "Sell this or that" or "Think about moving", etc.

Noteworthy:

-Page 1- "Dear Mary, I received your kind letter ___ and was happy to hear from you once more." "I am very ___ that you are ___ very poor ___ and I am very ___ for you but feel ___". "I suppose you know what I mean Mary." "You know ___ very well ___ that I never will come to that place while I live and there is ___".

"I can stay out here and be a man and a gentleman and you need not ask me to come here and leave the place I know." (Reader's Note: We can now see definite "discomfort" and low "self esteem" issues expressed by him toward Mary and other family members relating to personal issues of his character.

The question to consider is, did Frank have the feelings and issues before he enlisted or did his participation in the war in both infantry and artillery regiments and his declining health make him feel that he had to be away and even isolated from his family for long periods? Truly the war is ending soon, and as we have seen his thoughts in letters on both sides of either coming back home to be with his wife and family or living a part. True to being a good provider though, we see

that Frank has always been generous in sending his pay home to support his family.).

-Page 2- ____”It can't run away but we want it here to help pay for another forty.” “There is eighty acres here in a few miles that I am going to get on my discharge____.” “There is a great many soldiers that has got land on their ____.” “You must do your best to sell it and then you can come and not before I can't ____.” “Send you money this time for I was on a spree all last week and spent all that I had and the reason____.” “I was thinking of you.” “I will close this.” “You need not write any more until you (hear from me).”

“I still remain yours.”

Frank Willis S.

(Reader's Note:) It seems in Frank's last few closing remarks, that he is making plans to purchase land where he is currently living, and asking Mary and the family to move to him and start a new life. It is obvious this last letter of Frank Sevey's is a painful and sad one for him to write, and that he is responding to resistance from Mary and others to move. Whatever Mary's decision will be, shows Frank's depression with what he has been going through emotionally and is unsure about happiness in his future.).

Doc.# 61 of 61:

Army of the United States, Certificate of Disability for Discharge

Noteworthy:

-”This acknowledges that Private Frank W. Sevey of Captain T. H. Mars, Company A, of the First Cavalry Regiment of the United States , Wisconsin Volunteers, who enlisted at Ripon, Wisconsin on September 1st,

1861, to serve three years, was born in Ellenstown, New York, is Twenty Seven years of age, five feet 11 1/2 inches high, light complexion, blue eyes, brown hair, and by occupation when enlisted a Farmer. During the last two months said soldier has been unfit for duty 0 days”.

-”I certify that I have carefully examined the said Frank W. Sevey of Captain Mars Company , and find him incapable of performing the duties of a soldier because of Phthisis Pulmonalis.”

-”City General Hospital, St. Louis, Missouri,
December 8, 1862.” Dr. _____

-”DISCHARGED this 11th day of December, 1862,
at St. Louis, Missouri.”

Henry--

Colonel Commanding the Post
