

Balto 13 Dec 1857
Sunday

Dear George

Your letter of 29 ulto arrived two days ago, and gave us all great pleasure. - We were writing to your sister at the time and Doc gave her in his letter a full account of you.

Lt Col Johnston arrived the same day in Washington, & I expect to hear by Jim McLane (who has gone to spend this day with his sister and the Colonel) how you were when Johnston left Leavenworth -

Charley May arrived in town today from New York, and I paid him a visit at Oelrichs, but did not find him at home - His brother Henry told me of their meeting in New York a few days ago -

I called on Lambert Gettings and he and his daughter Mrs Henry both send you their congratulations - Dr Simons had left Belknap and was stationed at Verda not far from San Antonio^② - Gettings had a letter from Sibley from Laramie - He did not see Mrs. Sibley when he was in New York a few days ago - He heard from some army officers that she had gone to Boston -

Your Aunt Sprigg told me this morning that Col Lee was at Arlington - Mr. Custis will is not at all to her taste and I confess it surprised me - He has given very little to his daughter Mrs. Lee, and some lots of but little value in Washington to the Colonel. Arlington with all the precious relicts of Washington are bequeathed to Custis Lee - other valuable lands to the other two boys, and 10,000 to each of the four girls. This appears to be without much consideration for two such worthy heads of the family as Colonel and Mrs Lee, but perhaps the old man thought that the large estate of Ravensworth which

will fall to Mrs L. at the death ⁽³⁾ of her sister in law Mrs Fitzhugh will be an ample provision for her and at the same time will enable her to equalise the fortunes of her children if she thinks proper to do so -
We buried Col Davies last Wednesday with an appropriate escort -

Your uncle Richard says he saw Mrs Hazard a few days ago and she spoke of a letter just received from her husband at Heavenworth in which he mentions your engagement and your good fortune in obtaining so fine a girl for a wife -

Mr Anthony Kennedy has gone to reside in Washington, and has rented his house (ready furnished) to your uncle for one year - He has been in possession since the first of this month, and the family was expected last evening, but did not come -

Tom Mercer's wife has a son and Dick's wife a daughter born about the same time - I believe Mrs McCall also expects to be confined very soon, and I have no doubt Nilly's wife will follow suit - ⁽⁴⁾ I saw Willy lately and found him so much improved that I really feel interested for him and regret more than ever the imprudence which led to his being dropped - It is supposed that about one fourth of the officers who appealed from the action of the Retiring Board will obtain some relief, but if it be true that only one half of the whole number of retired, furloughed, and dropped officers have appealed, then not more than one out of

Eight, will be rescued from the condition, to which they were reduced.

I understand that Mrs. Marvin is now at St. Augustine and I am surprised we have not heard this in a more direct way. Her husband's family reside there but no mention of her going to Florida has been made to us from Newport. Your sister has been enjoying herself at New York for three weeks, and Wally will go tomorrow or the next day to bring her home. We shall expect them in a week or ten days so as to be with us at Christmas - Your Aunt Edgar had a party at her house last Wednesday and Mary has been treated with the greatest kindness and consideration. I need not tell you how worthy she is of it, and how little risk there is of her being spoiled -

Beckie spent the evening lately at Ellis (?) Cohens, and met Colonel Taylor there. He spoke of you kindly and also of your intended. Miss C. said she now thought there was a probability of Mrs B marrying Dandridge - for when she made inquiry on that subject very recently, her friend Miss N. W. remarked that she "was afraid there was some truth in it." Now I am sure you will agree with me that it was not being discreet in Miss W. to make this speech, or in Miss C. to repeat it - Therefore he can't All agree there is to be an increase of the army and vigorous efforts are being made already for the promotion of officers - Among others Major R. C. Buchanan of our state will be run for a Lt Colonelcy - his brother in law, Capt. Charles Winder has just got back from Newport Barracks where he escorted a sister and I found out today from Lambert Getting who is a cousin of Buchanan that the friends of the latter would work hard for him - the family influence you know is powerful & the Lloyds

Keys - Murray - Rusts Gettings and Howards will all be active on the occasion - but others will be equally active for other officers. I understood from Mrs. Johnston that her husband was a relative of Mr. Floyd, and I should not be surprised if something grew out of that relationship for the advantage of our friend - Lee and he are certainly the strongest claimants for the command of a new Cavalry regiment (and I might perhaps to say that they have the strongest claims). First I do not think it would be very prudent for either of them, so near as they are to promotion in the present Cavalry Arm, to abandon that safe position for a "less secure one in a new corps which may be disbanded as soon as the Mormon difficulty is settled." - The same reasoning applies to Sacket and Wood, Captains in your regiment and Vandorn and Smith of the 2 Cavalry who would certainly run some risk by taking promotion in a new Corps which may not be permanent.

Of course I shall be on the alert and look after your interests - but you must not allow your aspirations to get the better of your calm judgment; and considering how much was done for you by the last administration, I confess I do not see much chance of your being again pushed above the heads of your seniors - I have no doubt you will get your brevet if any brevets are given and I believe they will be given. The plastering will all be finished at Harlem before the 25 inst and the painting and papering is a week afterwards, but I find the rooms so damp that I will not venture to move for a month, and not then unless it is safe to do so - I have made up my mind to have the library

in the long room next to the stable and to use the old library as a drawing room - Tom will carry out the details satisfactorily - We shall place the Elk Horns in the hall over the back door so as to be seen on entering the house - The skins, Indian weapons and ornaments will be arranged in the library -

Tell Maria we shall have a nice apartment for her next to the one in which you were born, almost thirty years ago.

With kind regards to her and to Major & Mrs Hunter I remain

Very truly yours
G H S

Captn

G H Stewart
1 Cavalry
Fort Leavenworth

P.S. ^① Your letter was written on my birth day and you will see by the enclosed that I did not forget you on that day -

P.S. ^② 14th Decr - Governor Walker has got back to Washington from New York where he has been making I presume great exertions to sustain himself -

④ I have seen Charley May who speaks in the highest terms of Maria &c as well as of her uncle and aunt -

⑤ Your aunt Spriggs note reminding me of my subscription to the Aged Women's Home has a reference to a young lady which will not fail to interest you -

④ Robert Oliver has bought a farm in Baltimore County 800 acres for 40000 and his brother Harry has purchased Mr. Williams' farm near Col Lloyd's at 90 per acre -

③ I received a kind letter from Col. Cooper a few days ago -

② I think we informed you that Nannie Donnell is engaged to be married to Mr. Kernighan of New York -

Mr Donnell's old House, Willow Grove, is a Water Cure establishment

① I did not see Mrs. Simons - Dr. Palmer has got back and gives an interesting account of his cruise in the Niagara.

P.S. 16 December - Willy went to New York this morning