

[Letter to Dr. John Watts in Texas from his mother in Virginia]

August 2nd 1861

From VA – to Dr. Watts in Alum Creek [written in blue pen beside date probably added by someone else later]

My dearest Son

Your letter and my dear Effie's dated June, but post July 11th reached us on the 21st at dark, as the mail just then came in for a month to two past the mails have been very irregular – the trains are continually going and coming, bringing troops or taking them away. there never was such a time hardly in the History of the country.

We have had several conflicts with the enemy in which our troops were almost invariably successful and the Federals routed, but never on this continent was such a battle fought as was at Bull Run on the 21st ult [month passed]

The "Grand Army" came on from Washington in flowing spirits – their motto was 'on to Richmond in five days.' They came in the full tide of glory expecting every thing to give way before them, but oh what a reverse. Our brave soldiers completely defeated them after hard fighting. The battle commenced about 8 in the morning and lasted 10 hours. The loss on our side was about 500 killed and from 10 to 1500 wounded.

[Page 2 – back of Page 1]

On the other it was very great with the loss of upwards of 60 cannon and many thousand of the finest arms, munitions and equipment of all sorts. among the spoils were 30000 hand cuffs to handcuff the rebel prisoners I suppose

A great many sick soldiers are here now and a great many of the wounded have been brought up since the battle. There are between 1500 and 2000 sick and wounded together here and at the University. The ladies are very attentive to them. I have been with them a good deal. About 40 or 50 have died. If our people had been defeated the Yankees would have been upon us before this time. My little Effie is safer with you at present. I sent two letters to you of different dates, which you had not received when you wrote. I hope you have gotten them.

I feel thankful to the great giver of every good and perfect gift that our grain crop is so abundant and that the horrors of famine will not be added to those of war. May we praise His Holy Name for all His mercies to us.

[Page 3]

The militia was called out in mass and Annie was dreadfully distressed about Perry's having to go but the order was countermanded, and he will stay. The call caused great excitement here. Albemarle has 18 or 19 companies in the field fully one tenth of the white population. It would be bad to take all off. I hope you will have no such times as we have here. Should your Brother in law come to Virginia I hope he will certainly make Charlottesville in his way and if possible spend a few days with us, it would be a great gratification to us all. If the war continues Virginia will want all the men she can get. The Federals have a [pop---ion] of all the Ke ---wa?] Valley Wise is out there doing what he can – the Union men are very strong were it not for that there would be no trouble

Heard George Noel was killed in the battle of Bull run. I hope it is not so. Many poor fellows bit the dust that day. there are many interesting incidents connected with the battle I would tell you if I could – You have heard of it already or soon will

[Page 4]

I am so glad sweet little Mary talks about us all and [*unclear*] little Johnnie can ride on the horse. How glad I would be to see you all - well perhaps we may one day, if the Lord should will otherwise I hope to see you all in a better world where parting will be no more.

Give my love to Elisa, when I write to you I mean it to her also. I thank her for her kindness to Effie – You will have to keep her awhile longer. It would not be safe to venture before the ports are fully open

The weather is warm now tho' we have had a rather a cool summer. Vegetables are getting plenty – no roasting as yet tho' ours are silking. Fruit is not very plentiful – our trees bore but little – the vines are full of grapes

Vic sends her love to all, she is too busy to write if she can get me to do it. I received a letter from Annie to day – her health has been bad all summer – one of the twins was complaining. The other children were well.

[Rest of letter missing]