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Hed Island May 23rd 1864

Col. Thos. Stuart Ward,

My dear father,

For the last few weeks I have been so busily engaged with the duties of Sergeant Major and some times those of Adjutant added to them, that I have been unable to collect my thoughts enough to write to you, but as I have at last returned to my company an account of the man in whose place I was acting, having resumed his former position I hope to be able to write home oftener,

In about forty days I will probably be able to start home on furlough; if not then, I will be almost sure to get off the next time, which will be some time in the latter part of July or the first of August. It is becoming oppressively warm here, and if it were not for the sea breeze I do not know what we would do. The general health of the regiment is excellent for my part I never enjoyed better

and what is more, I inform every day, at present I weigh nearly 160 lbs. We are getting plenty of good rations, with the exception of water, of which there is neither enough nor is what we do get good, being fresh of all things from some brackish Bayou and then left stand in the sun until it becomes full of filth and vermin, and of this miserable stuff we only get one gallon per day for each man. The exchange papers which I sent up to higher authorities have never been returned and it is rational to suppose that they were disapproved. Our recent great successes have doubtless raised the hopes of the people a great deal, and well it might, for such a continuation of victory has never been experienced since the war began by either party. We have driven the enemies troops from an immense amount of country which caused thousands of their brave men to bite the dust, in order to get, and it requires every man that they can muster

to hold the ground on which they stand. If Lee can only rout Grant's army in Virginia the effect that it will have on the war will be immense in our favor and it is fair to suppose that the Yankees will be willing and even anxious to close a campaign which has been so disastrous to them from beginning to end.

Great will the consternation on the minds of the Northern people when they reflect on the immense mortality of their armies, and the question will be asked — "What has become of the hundreds and hundreds of thousands of troops, amounting in all to nearly two millions of men called out by Lincoln, when he can now scarcely find enough to cope with the handfull of heroes in the Rebel ranks?" — history will answer that they have gone to their long homes, sent there by the the messengers of Death, — disease and minie balls.

I would like to hear your opinion on this currency question, it will obviously

be the means of benefiting our Confederate money but it will be accompanied by immense inroads on private interests and purses. The way the law reads, if a man has a hundred dollar bill and retains it until January he will lose not only the face of the bill but also three or four dollars besides. The discount first of all is 33⅓ per cent, he then has to pay 10 per ct. per month until the bill is taken up or exchanged.

From all I can hear from the surrounding country, the prospects for crops are very fine this year, I hope you will succeed well with yours.

Please give my love to Jane and all enquiring friends. Hoping that this will find you in good health and spirits I remain

Your Affectionate Son
Dudley H. Ward
Co. G. 2d Regt. Texas Vol. Infty.
Galveston Texas