

William Spencer's Last Letter  
to his Friends.

Helena, Ark. Sept. 7th, 1862.

Dear Father:—Again I will endeavor to scribble a few lines, though with poor encouragements if you don't have better luck getting letters than I do, as I have not received any answers to the many letters that I have written home, except the one from Fidelia, of August 10th, which came through in due time. The probable cause is, they are detained at the Cape, in expectation of our coming up there soon. I wish they would send the letters if they do expect us. I think our going to the Cape is rather un-

I am quite well at present—much better than for some time back, and hope these lines will find you enjoying the same blessing. The health of the regiment seems to be slightly on the mend. We have got a new doctor and plenty of medicines. This probably has something to do with the change. And still, men that appear well cannot stand much hardship yet, and those that are sick do not mend very fast. I am still at work at the hospital taking care of the sick. I have about ten men to care for at a time, six hours on and six off. The hospital is merely tents with pole bunks covered with brush and straw. Rather poor for sick men; but much better than the ground. There have been only seven deaths since I have been there. Only one of them was an old acquaintance, Mark Pease. He died about the 20th, very suddenly, of congestive chills, being sick only three days. I know of no important movements in this quarter. Everything seems to be at a stand-still, though probably getting ready for work when cooler weather comes. The late news from the Potomac are of quite a startling nature. I hope that our side will come out right in time, which I think it will if the new troops are hurried up in the shortest possible time. It seems rather discouraging to have to come back almost where they were a year ago, and all seemingly through mismanagement and the spirit of speculation. That seems to have blotted out every spark of patriotism if there ever was any in our leading men, making tools and slaves of the privates of our army. If the tenth could half be told it would be a black record indeed. I feel as though I want to see one side or the other whip, and that pretty soon. If we can't whip the South let them whip us and have the thing ended before everything worth fighting for is used up by the scourge of war.

The weather has been very hot and dry. Since the first of August there has not been rain enough to wet the ground. It thunders and looks like rain most every day; but don't rain much. Everything is as dry as a powder house.

They have just finished a well close to where Co. G is quartered. The water is plenty and passable. This is much better for the boys; for before they had to draw water nearly a mile.

Nelson Bates was up from Helena to see the boys yesterday. He is well. His regiment steps close to towed. I did not see him, being at the hospital at the time. The Appleton boys are doing as well as the average. Fletcher, Mace, Price and Newton are so as to be about; but not very stout yet. Capt. Paice is at Helena, sick yet; but on the gain. None of the Appleton boys are in the hospital. I have never heard whether the money I sent you from Bloomfield ever reached home safe, or whether you ever got the allotment money all straight.

I must close. Write soon and get in all of the news about what has been done in the diggens since the first of July. Give my respects to all of the friends. Shake the little girls well for me.

Yours, as ever.

WILLIAM.

Letter from E. F. Smith

HEAD-QUARTERS 1ST WIS. CAVALRY, }  
Cape Girardeau, Mo., Sept. 23, 1862 }

MR. E. SPENCER.

Dear Friend:—It is with feelings of the deepest regret that I commence to write you, for in so doing it becomes my duty to break to you the tidings of the death of your son, William E. Spencer. He died at two o'clock a. m., on the morning of the 20th inst. He was put on board the steamer Sunshine, at Helena, bound for this place, but died in about fifteen minutes thereafter. His body was brought as far as Memphis, and there buried.

While at Helena, he was nurse in the hospital for a long time. He worked there too long and too hard; was too ambitious. He nursed others when he ought to have been nursed himself. His disease was hemorrhage. He was sick but little more than two weeks, when he was called to his last account, and I trust to a home in Heaven. He was a good soldier and a favorite in the company.

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I sympathize with you in your affliction. I feel as though I had lost a brother, in losing him. May your affliction be a blessing.

From your humble Serv't, E. F. SMITH.

The foregoing letter was written to Mr. Elihu Spencer, and received just one year from the time of his enlistment. He was in his twentieth year. Maj. Pomeroy says, "He was a good soldier and always prompt."

Nov 20 1862

Appleton Motor