

Letters from Lt. William Elliott, Jr., Company C, South Carolina 2d Infantry Battalion Sharpshooters, to his father and sister in which he mentions his slave servant Frederick. Elliott-Gonzales Family Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill.

Fort Johnson 8th Oct. [1862]

I reached this place my dear Mother precisely at the expiration of my leave of absence, on Sunday morning, and found affairs, in much the same condition as at McPhersonville. The battalion still ununiformed & some officers absent. Major Bing in good spirits at the idea of having his name in print--as one of the defenders of Fort Sumpter [sic]. He says however that the position there to be assigned his battalion will be the center tier in the casemates where I believe, there are no cannon & doubtless our rifles will be of more service there than on the barbette. After one warm & disagreeable day the weather has made a delightful change--and the sea breezes are truly delightful pleasant. Tomorrow Gen. Beauregard will review our battalion, and as I suppose he has seen much of the "rag tag" style out West. We may not shock his military nerves.

Living is harder here than at our last camp--butter not to be had except at high rates, beef worse & fish can be had, but **Frederick has not enterprise enough to do more than catch a small sheephead at the wharf twice.** Today I visit the city to get my uniform left for alteration and will try & procure some lines & hooks. The uniform is quite becoming I think. As the cold weather is at hand--a mattress of some sort will be necessary as cots are extremely cold in winter. Something in the shape of a bug, which when empty will be easily transported, and can be readily filled with pine bark or straw, when occasion demands, would answer.

As I don't wish to put you to any unnecessary trouble in the matter, however I will see today if any cloth answering the purpose can be got in the city and send it up to you. I will write more fully & agreeably (I hope) next time. With love to all,

Yr affectionate Son
William

Fort Johnson, Oct. 13th--1862

Dear Emmie

I hope my scrawl of the last week has reached home, in it I promised to write again soon & I here fulfill that promise, although I've heard nothing thence. You must all be amused by this equinoctial and the cold which succeeded it this morning. It is now however quite warm again, the wind and rain having ceased; so we've doubts as to the settlement of the weather. We've managed to keep dry tho through it all.

You've seen the account of the Review of the James Island troops by Gen. Beauregard. It had been ordered for the day previous, and we were treated brutally, having had to march four miles through a pelting rain in our new uniforms--men & officers--only to be told at the end of the journey, that the review had been postponed. We were immediately marched back again, & there again the next day. I kept my coat pretty dry with my oil skin seertout, but pants & shoes suffered much. The wad resembles the Sahara near Beaufort "boggy sand" as its euphoniously

called. Our Battalion made a creditable appearance being probably the best clothed in the Confederate service; but there was not a Captain present, & so Bedon, myself & Simmons commanded the three companies with Major Smith in Command of our regt. and the 8th Georgia. I made a narrow escape being senior lieutenant, I found after being some time on the ground our troops might be called on to go through the Battalion skirmish drill (differing from that of the Company) & that I would have to act as Major. Now this was awkward, as I'd never seen the drill in books or out of it. But fortunately, there was not sufficient time for this; and t'was allowed to "slide."

With Beauregard I saw Gen. Gonzales, looking handsome and very military. The artillery maneuvers were very fine, especially of Preston's battery. We got back to camp at 3 I think & I found one heel so blistered, I'm obliged to go slip shod. This is owing to the injury to my shoe my mud & water on the first day's march. **Frederick is also sick--with fever. It came out on the 9th day from leaving Adams Run. He was exposed to rain in a wagon, while his master was trudging on foot, and had not therefore the benefit of circulation, -- he returned chilled & next day had fever. It has left him twice however, and this morning I am giving him quinine.**

James Lowndes seems to have a poor constitution as is constantly taking physic; but is intellectually quite energetic. Seabrook too has been sick, and we've had rather a hard time with so unofficered a battalion. E. Rhett is said to be in a consumption--so Bedon is sole officer of his company--Simmons & Boyle of Co. B. Bing Smith exhibits a strange want of energy--such at least as I was led to expect.

The news from the West of Bragg & others is enough to make Old Bedon croak. With Kentucky almost redeemed the "ox" is being driven to grass out of it. With love your affectionate brother

William