

# Samuel W. North Letter and Transcription

## August 25, 1862 - Camp Staunton

### Introduction

Fred Ziegler most likely wrote letters home between August 28<sup>th</sup> and September 29<sup>th</sup>, 1862, the date of his next letter home, but unfortunately they are not part of the museum's collection. Perhaps those "other" letters were lost or divided among several family members, somewhere along the way.


Sam North's second letter, dated September 1, 1862, is a letter of homesickness and admonishment to his brother and family members for not writing regularly. In the beginning, Sam indicates that he'd better write another letter home instead of waiting for the reply to his first letter or he wouldn't hear from home for a long time. At the end, Sam repeats himself twice, with a desire to hear all the news from home. It didn't matter to the soldiers if their family members might have thought it very boring to describe their everyday chores, step by step, even if the soldiers themselves had done those same chores day in and day out for their whole lives. Sam references Co. K, 126<sup>th</sup>, Fred Ziegler's Co., and he also speaks about news the camp has gotten regarding the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Bull Run, also known as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Manassas, August 28-30, 1862.

There was another young man from the area, Joseph A. Davison of Antrim Township, who enlisted in the Civil War. He also wrote letters home to family members. After Fort Sumter fell in April 1861, President Lincoln called for 75,000 troops to protect the Union. Each northern state had a quota to fill. Young men from all over Pennsylvania volunteered and headed toward Camp Curtin. By the time many arrived in Harrisburg, the Federal quota had been met. Gov. Curtin asked the Pennsylvania legislators, and they agreed, to fund the remaining men's salaries. Those men became the PA Reserves, all enlisting for three years. According to Bates' *History of Pennsylvania Volunteers, 1861-1865*, the 35<sup>th</sup> Regiment was organized on June 22, 1861, at Camp Curtin, Harrisburg. Joseph A. Davison, Antrim Township, enlisted in Company D, 6th Pennsylvania Reserves; he was made first sergeant of the company. Camp Curtin served as boot camp for enlistees, where they learned how to handle their Harper's Ferry muskets and served on guard duty. Orders were received on July 11, to be ready to march on July 12 from Camp Curtin, Harrisburg, to Camp Biddle, near Greencastle. Co. D was stationed at Camp Biddle from July 12 to July 22, during which time Maj. Hershberger, Chambersburg, continued to drill the men. On August 1, 1862, Davison was promoted to first lieutenant and to captain on September 19, 1863. He became brigade inspector of the 1st Brigade. After the battle of Gettysburg, Davison received the honorary rank of major and lieutenant colonel for his brave conduct at the battles of the Wilderness and Spottsylvania Court

House. Davison's September 3, 1862 letter was written four days after the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Bull Run. The sickness of his Captain may have been malaria, which was virulent in the low, wetlands in D. C. and northern Virginia. By the time Fred Ziegler and Sam North enlisted in August 1862, Joseph Davison had been in the war for over a year.

Will any of these three men's paths cross in battle during the coming months?

Bonnie A. Shockey, president  
Allison-Antrim Museum, Inc.



Camp Stanton  
Sept 15<sup>th</sup> 1862

Dear Brother

As it has been ~~about~~ a week since I have written home I think I had better write now or I will not hear from there for a long time a gain. I get a little impatient to hear from home it was ten days between the last letters. you should be prompt in answering our letters as we move so often and then our letters are detained we are sometimes under march <sup>and</sup> for three or four days expect to leave any hour of the day or night we have been started out two or three times and then ordered back again there was a good deal of excitement when it was known that Jackson was

manassas, we struck our tents and sent them back with our wagons. We moved up on a hill in order of battle loaded our guns and lay down and slept beside them but in the morning the tents were ordered back and we pitched them and have been here ever since. we were out the other night guarding a Rail Road bridge it rained on us and we had a muddy march into camp still we saw a finer part of Virginia than I have seen yet. we took up thirteen straglers from McL army but had orders from our Col to let them pass on Co. Brown was out alone ~~with~~ <sup>was</sup> out guarding a provision train <sup>they</sup> bring in a deserter from the rebel army. They say that their camp was shelled just after they left it. Co K Green

is out yet guarding a portion train  
(of cars). I wrote to newville some time  
ago and have not had an answer yet  
give me all the news from there when  
you write. our boys are all well  
I was never heartier in my life  
I can lie down on the ground and  
sleep as sound as can be. we have  
to get up at daylight to roll call  
then we have company drill then <sup>fast</sup> breakfast  
then at 8 o'clock is guard mounting.  
I am on guard about once a week  
we go on in the third relief at 12  
M. out until 2 then off till 6 on till 8  
off till 12 P.M. on till 2 off till 6 on  
till 8 then dismissed and a new  
guard put on. I forgot to tell you  
that they divide the guard into  
three parts or reliefs. we are to have  
Rev. Nichol of Chambersburg (for  
east) Chaplain, he will be on

this week. we expected to get Mr. Price  
but would not say anything to you  
about it he was with us at <sup>hours</sup> ~~hours~~  
and said he would accept it if we  
wanted him. Still we will be  
satisfied so we have regular <sup>mon</sup>  
preaching I have not heard <sup>any</sup>  
since I left home. the news are that  
the hundred and 7th were in the  
fight of Saturday James Carson was  
first here he says that Capt Dick  
is killed and Geo Duncan was  
the first man killed. Frank Kelly  
was taken prisoner but made his escape  
Dick was shot in his neck and fell once  
and ran again and fell again it  
is thought he is dead we heard the  
cannonading all day ~~we are in~~  
we are in Gen. Custers brigade now.  
the boys are all well satisfied with  
soldiers life. give me all the news  
and write soon and let us have  
all the news from home

## Transcription

Camp Staunton  
Sept 1<sup>st</sup> 1862

Dear Brother

As it has been about a week since I have written home I think I had better write now or I will not hear from there for a long time again. I get a little impatient to hear from home it was ten days between the last letters. You should be prompt in answering our letters. As we move so often and then our letters are detained. We are sometimes under marching orders for three or four days expecting to leave any hour of the day or night We have been started out two or three times and then ordered back again there was a good deal of excitement when it was known that Jackson was (Page 2) manassass [referring to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Bull, a.k.a Manassas, August 28-30], we struck our tents and sent them back with our wagons Were drawn up on a hill in order of battle loaded our guns and lay down and slept beside them but in the morning the tents were ordered back and we pitched them and have been ever since. We were out the other night guarding a Rail Road bridge it rained on us and we had a muddy march into camp still we saw a finer part of Virginia than I have seen yet. We took

up thirteen stragglers from McC,[lellan] army but had orders from our Col to let them pass on Co. C (ours) was out alone Co,s A&B were out guarding a provission train wagon they bring in a deserter from the rebel army. they say that their camp was shelled just after they left it. Co K (Greencastle) (Page 3) is out yet guarding a provission train (of cars). I wrote to Newville some time ago and have not had an answer yet give me all the news from there when you write. our boys are all well I was never heartier in my life I can lie down on the ground and sleep as sound as can be. We have to get up at daylight to roll call then we have company drill then fast breakfast then at 8,o Clock is guard mounting. I am on guard about once a week We go on in the third relief at 12 M. out until 2 then off till 6 on till 8 of till 12 P.M. on till 2 off till 6 on till 8 then dismissed and a new guard put on. I forgot to tell you that they divide the guard into three parts or, reliefs. We are to have Rev. Nichols of Chambersburg for Chaplain. he will be on (Page 4) this week. We expected to get Mr. Bruce but would not say anything to you about it he was with us at Harrisburg and said he would accept it if we wanted him. Still we will be satisfied so we have regular preaching I have not heard a, sermon since I left home. The news are that the hundred and 7<sup>th</sup> were in the fight of Saturday [*August 30*] James Carson was just here he says that Capt Dick is killed and Geo Duncan was the first man killed Wash[ington] Crilly was taken prisoner but made his escape Dick was shot in his neck and fell rose and ran again and fell again it is thought he is dead we heard the cannonading all day ~~we are in Gen~~ We are in Gen tylers brigade now. The boys are all well satisfied with soldiers life. give me all the news and write soon and let us have all the news / from Sam