March 11, 1864

My Dear Huny,

I do not feel much like writing. But will drop you a line just to let you know that I have joined my Company and Regt. All safe and sound.

I arrived at Washington Saturday at 5 P.M. - I found Uncle Owen enjoying much better health than when I saw him in July. But he has not yet regained his strength. When I was in Washington this year.
find out; they say here that we are going to be ordered home to fill up our companies, but I do not hardly believe in it; we have nothing to do here and no one to do it, so there is no prospect of an advance here immediately, although General Grant is in this Army in person; it has been raining for two days and it is horrible muddy here. Clark is well, I suppose you know that John Lovejoy is in a desk in Washington. Give my love to all the family. Please write as often as you get time, to your half-brother, Eugene, Edward.
Talking of going down South for his health, I suppose he has already gone, as they were thinking of going the first of this week.

I have not heard from Lizzie since she has been at Rochester. I suppose she and Ida will come together. I find everything dreadful dull and dreary here. Most of the officers and men have gone home since I have been gone, and they have not yet got back. I was the first one that got back that week at the time that I did.

I do not know what they are going to do with the regiment, nor can we.
Beaufort, S.C., March

Dr. Mother

We are now three

The war of Rebellion origi-
nated. We landed first at Hilton
Head, but the Rebels attempting
to cross over to this island we were
ordered here to to strengthen the
Post. Beaufort is a beautiful
place. The houses are large and
very fine. On our first arrival
here the weather was very warm
and pleasant, but the last few
days have shown that March will
be March here as well as else-
where. The days are very pleasant
but the nights are cold.

I have made an application to be
Examined by the Board at Hilton
Head. It was approved and today
Endorsed by the Col.
Head Quarters US Forces
St. Helena Island S.C.
April 10th 1847

Dr. Broo

I have not heard from you since my arrival in this Dept. That is the reason. We have been moving from one Station to another for the last five or six weeks and now I think that we are settled for some time. The Head Quarters of the Regt is at Hilton Head, we were ordered to this Post three days ago (that is to say) and have just begun to get settled down. St. Helena is one of the finest Islands on the coast. the soil is very fertile and some of the scenery fine. There is a great deal of speculation in this Dept at present from the North are coming down here and investing in the Abandoned Plantations. Buying them at the top prices. Some of them are clearing from five to Eight Thousand Dollars in a single Season. Any one that knows anything about farming or the Cotton Culture can make a good thing out of a small investment. Capt. Bosh is Past Commandant here. While I officiate as Provost Marshall Commandant of the Picket line Company Comte
This is the 2nd of a 5pt thing in Soldiering. In the accomodation of Capt. Lath used myself & 2 small tents one large hospital tent a horse which I use almost entirely, the Capt. not being much of a horseman. There is a good deal of snottiness among the Negroes & soldiers. All the white troops in this Depot have been ordered north and their places supplied by colored soldiers. There is very little action here. No fighting nothing but drill & labor on the fortifications. Give my best regards to all my friends. Write to me often also send me Protection Chicago & St Louis papers. Your Affr. Austin
St. Helena Island, S.C.
April 17th, 1862

My Brother,

Voyage of the 27th U.S. has just reached me. You are now chief in the death of Uncle Owen, as well as the County have met with a sad loss. I cannot hardly realize his death when I first heard of it. I should only be too happy to comply with your request and get a furlough if it were possible but for the present I fear that it is not. After my examination, I shall make application for a short leave of absence. I shall probably be examined within two or three weeks. It will depend some upon circumstances as I do not wish to go before the Board until I am thoroughly posted. And at present I have no copy of the Tactics books that I brought with me not being the kind that were examined in. I have been using a copy belonging to the Chief cook of my Regt. He has been appointed one of the Board, and wishes to use himself. I have sent to Clarke for a copy. As I have not been able to find one in the Department it is legistative cavalry Tactics by Armstrong and that the Board would take into consideration the fact of my not having been able to get books.
HE an at present very pleasant. situated on one of the finest Islands in the Leeward Leaff Leof is Post Comendant. While I combine the functions of Post Adjutant Company to Picket Comendant se, our quarters are on the Sea shore and very pleasant indeed. In this Department you can have all the transportation that you want. There is a second tent here in charge of a detachment of the Invalid Corps that had for his private accommodation two wall tents one large hospital tent; one A tent (used as a privo) one sofa, one mirror, 2 dog chains three beds, 1 card table, one dining table, wash stand, clock three lanterns. in fact about four terms as much as an Major General in the Army of the Potomac has. Nearly all of the white troops on this Dept have been sent North and their places supplied by colored troops. There is a great deal of speculation here in cotton lands. Men from the north come here buy these lands at low prices, hire the negroes for little or nothing and make a big thing out of financially. But when the final day of settlement comes I fear that some of them will remember that passage of scripture. "That shall it profit a man though he gain the whole world if he loses his soul." I think that is not the proper translation but it is near enough for the purpo
I cannot see much difference between the
circumstances here and with us. There are high
hills here the most of the time and the weather
is cool. Corn is just beginning to show through
the ground. The trees are not fully leafed
out yet. The only machine shop in this Dept
is on this Island. And we are stationed here to prove
it there is a horse diminish for the use of
the Officers. and all in all we have very
pleasant times. I am sorry to hear that
Mother goes away to fulfill her dependency. If we
only put our trust and dependence on God
He will support us. And the poor is equally
as great at one place as another. If I live I
shall try and get home this summer if I do
not let us believe that we may meet in that
happy and better world above. My health
has never been better during my life than at
the present time. I am very glad to know
that my friends do not forget me that thought has kept me up a good many times
when I perhaps otherwise by I might have
given over to fulfills of dependency and/home
sickness. When I am busy I am happy
When I am not I am off course. Give
my love and best regards to all of my friends
Write to me often. By the way there is an
old friend of Brandeis and he kept
Wells formerly a Lawyer in Kansas
He is Adjt Genl on Genl Burnetts Staff.
Send me your Photograph when you write
next. I shall have some taken as soon as I
can get them. Will send Specimens around.
I wrote to Egbert Norton the other day if he
does not yet I'll tell him that I sent him a
letter and want one in return.

As Ever your affec

Austin Austin

P.S. When you write direct to Hilton
Head S.C.
St. Helene Island, S.C.  
May 16th, 1864  

My Mother,  
It is some time since I have written to you as I have been waiting for the mail to arrive from the North. It came last week bringing two letters from you one from Mr. A. one from Mr. Clark. One from which all of which were very acceptable. Owen is the regular line of steamers being used for transport troops. We had failed to see our mail for three weeks. We have rumors here of a great battle between Grant and Lee. Presenters that came in two or three days since from Savannah say that there was a rumor current in that city that Grant has captured two of Lee's Army corps. Late Southern papers say that there has been hard fighting but claim the victory for Lee. It shall probably hear more definitely by the next steamer.
This is a terribly dull Dept at present nothing doing. I have not been stationed yet as there is no cavalry being raised just there. My Application is on file however and apparently I shall be among the first. I am ready any time. I want to keep for Major and think I will. Have you seen the Custer in the East Atlantic? Life on the Sea Islands is written by a Miss Dingle. Teacher one of the teachers on this Island of African descent. She is very intelligent and quite pretty. We have had black bananas here for several days. Oranges, figs. & other tropical fruits abound. (But very precious as many of the trees have been destroyed by the soldiers).

Give my best regards to all my friends. If we conquer a peace and I get my leave this summer I will try and get home this fall or winter God sparing my health. Life. Tell Lizzie Blanchfield I have not seen a my last letter.

PS I have not yet a that letter from you yet. I wish you would send me a photograph of Uncle Frank.

Yours Aff. Love

Orrin
St. Helena Island, S.C.

May 11th, 1861

Dear Sister,

Your very welcome letter of the 7th reached me a few days since. Owing to the transportation of so many troops we have not received our mail regularly for the last 4 weeks, but things being quieted down again, the Boats will probably resume their regular trips. Mother tells me that you have had the Smallpox. You say nothing about it in your letter. It has been prevailing to a great extent here several men in our company having had it. Up to this time however I have passed unseathed. Through that as well as other dangers. You say truly we are getting old. Memory Cheeks are back to the time when Mary & Elizabeth lived. Dermot Sheldon overs your playmates visiting you at our old home on the East side of Main St. And it seems but a little while yet it must be nearly twenty years, and during that time what
What wonderful changes have taken place:
You are thirty one and I am twenty four.
that is the way our ages are counted in your
months, yet in experience & knowledge of the world
as compared with ordinary life how much
older we are, I think to two that ten years of
every day life has been compressed in the last
two. God grant that when this war is over we
that are now left may be permitted to
meet again in this world. And if not in this
may we meet our friends in the world we have preceded
us in the world to come. You see I need
not be surprised to see you down here this
summer. I should be I suppose you for it is
long my round from the Richesburg to N.Y
and from there here. If Grant is successful
I think we shall be able to wind up the Rebellion
this summer. There are H. Elliott & Julian
Bryant here, give my regards to them if you
will it. This is a very dull place for me
nothing doing, and the climate must be unhealthy.
I should think. Part of the day is very hot 98 on the
in the shade when evening comes on it is cool enough
for fires. I have one built every evening in
My best to drive away the scandals.
Write to me often.

Your affectionate brother,

Austin

Miss Nathanus Mossell
Salisbury House, Petersburg.
Hilton Head S.C.
May 27th 1864

Dr. Mother,

Your kind letter was received yesterday enclosing one from Mrs. Hammond. I can hardly realize it but I suppose that he is quite a lad now as he speaks of being in a storm it does not seem to me that I have been long from home. We have just returned from an unsuccessful attempt to tear up the rail road & burn the bridges between Charleston & Savannah. We lost our best boat several times, one hundred horses & equipments without injuring the Rebs in the least. The plan was to proceed to the Main land, visit after dark send a squad of cavalry in the advance to surprise the Rebel Pickets. Make a depot on the Camp of Artillery & cavalry surprising them then to burn a long bridge & burn our magazines & supporting troops. And in case they did not succeed as it now is.
Man proposes bold dispositions when managed at the mouth of the river. The ship that was on a tack just on a bar. We signaled the fleet ship that we were fast, but it was not seen for some time. Finally, another boat was sent back to take off some of our troops and lighten the ship, but it was impossible to float her then. So the flag ordered all the troops to be crowded on the other boat, and we followed after the rest of the fleet. The pilot that we had on board did not seem to know his business and in the darkness we paddled the mouth of the creek where the orders were to disembark and proceeded up the river some 12 or 15 miles past the Rebel pickets. We were challenged several times but paid no attention to them. We proceeded up the river until the Boston, a large transport that was with us grounded. After several ineffectual attempts to pull her off, we moved down the river to report and our whispered on the usual amount of talk. A delay occurred so that when the boats started to her relief it was by night. Our Regiment the 3rd Penn was disembarked.
And advanced some distance from the shore to protect the rest of the boats which
the Ebb tide had left high and dry on the bank. About six o'clock the Rebs opened on the beach
with artillery and in a short time directed her fire on Board the 3rd U.S.C. I also a detachment
of the 4th Va. Cavalry a good many of the men were drowned while attempting to swim to the shore. Those
who jumped over board and were not drowned were captured by the Rebs. Genl. Birney ordered the Irregulars
with one hundred horses & equipments on board. When the tide flowed our vessels returned
& returned to Hilton Head. The sea was very rough.

Several of the Officers were sick. I was one of the
happy few who escaped. This is a terribly dull
day.

Maj. Genl. Foster arrived on the turret and
assumed command. He got it from Rebel sources that
Grant & Sherman have totally defeated Lee & Johnston
that the Rebs have captured Grant Bartlow 3400
men. This is a horrid letter but I am not in the mood
writing. I'll try Phil to write.

My Best regards to all

Your affectionately
Austin.