

Camp near Savannah, GA

December 27<sup>th</sup> 1864

Mr. James Scott

Dear Sir,

As the Captain is going to start for home tomorrow, I thought I would write you a few lines that you may see that we are still in the land of the living. After one of the greatest raids that has been made during this war, we find ourselves once more quietly encamped at Savannah, GA. It is hardly worth my while to write much about our last campaign for I suppose the Captain will tell you all much better than I can write it. We left Atlanta on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of November and arrived at or near this place on the 9<sup>th</sup> of December. The distance marched 300 miles. After leaving Atlanta we marched in a southeast direction passing to the right of Milledgeville about ten miles. The 20<sup>th</sup> Army Corps passing through the city. We (17<sup>th</sup> Army Corps) struck the railroad at Gordon, a small town on the Georgia Central Railroad where the Milledgeville Road forms a junction with the Georgia Central at this place. We worked a great portion of the night in destroying the railroad station and other public buildings. We followed this road all the way to Savannah. Its destruction is complete. I don't think there is five miles of the road between here and Gordon that was left unmolested. Its destruction is complete. There is not a station house or any public buildings left standing. The next place that we came to of any note was Millen. It is where the Augusta Railroad forms a junction with the Georgia Central. At this place our prisoners were confined for a while. They were kept in a stockade without any shelter to keep them from the storms. But I need not recount the cruel treatment they received for it has been told often enough for anyone to know. I had the satisfaction of seeing the town burn to ashes. A grand sight indeed. As I looked at the burning town, I thought of the southern boast, southern independence or subjugation. I think of it but a taste of the subjugation part if they will and must have it. For such is their doom and I think the day not far distant when they will have to choose between the two; return to their allegiance to the Government or annihilation. Our lines were formed around the City on the 10<sup>th</sup>. The left on the Savannah River and the right on the Ogeechee River. Sherman laid siege to the City but Mr. Johnny Reb concluded that it would be better to evacuate than to be surrounded and compelled to surrender. So they evacuated on the day and night of the 20<sup>th</sup>. Leaving all their cannon to fall in our possession, but 10 pieces of small caliber. There is a great many siege guns, also some commissary stores. They burned some three or four gun boats and also one steam ram.

There were some steam transports but how many I did not hear. We are encamped about one mile from the City. It is a nice City having a population of nearly 30,000 before the war. I have been over the principal part of it. There are some very nice parks. But the monument of General Pulaski is the finest specimen of marble that I have ever seen. It is about 45 feet high. He was killed at the Siege of Savannah in 1779.

The news of Lincoln's reelection was good news for us and was hailed with cheers. It was a hard blow to the rebels. I have just read his message. I like it much. It is poor news for Mr. Davis. I must close for the Captain is going down to the boat today. The weather is pleasant. J. Morrison is well, also D. McLane and the balance of the boys. I see that Old Lisbon is taking quite a start since the railroad is being completed. I hope it may keep going so that by the next time I can go up to the Watson House in street cars. Write soon and tell me all the news. My respects to the rest of the family and inquiring friends.

I remain ever,

David M. Watson

P. S. Direct to Savannah, GA