

Charles E. Nourse to J. D. Nourse, 25 December 1847

City of Mexico Decembre 25th 1847

Dear Brother

By the time you receive this you will have become anxious to know the fate of your absent brother I am now as can be seen by the dating in the great celestial City of which there has been much said, by newspapers political religeous & litterary, Histories and tongues. The trip from Jalapa to the city has been what I would call a forced march, being on an average of 8 leagues per day.

I have neglected so long writing that I'll not attempt to give such a detail as I would wish, but will try and give you some items of what I have seen, heard &c we have passed many beautiful and interesting places, our first days march from Jalapa brought us to La Hoya where Santa Anna like Leonidas of Old, with 300 men (Mexican not Spai-lans) determined to defend the pass, a traveller passing this place would suppose it imposs-ible to carry it manned by a small determined band, what nature had neglected art supplied, sharp rocks, cliff walls, ditches and sink holes, covered the pass for half a mile or more leaving a space about large enough for one wagon to pass, At this al-most impassable pass Capt Walker with 60 men drove Santa Anna and his 300 heroes to the winds, the 2nd day we arrived at the foot of the Castle of Perote which lies in the midst of an extensive valley the first end of which is extremely fertile, the ballance which is about 80 miles appears once to have been a lake now dried up leaving its stagnant scum over the ground rendering it perfectly barren & destitute of all kinds of vegetation, the Castle of Perote appears to have been built for a store house for the produce of the valley, it has nothing else to recomend it, an army can march around it without much inconvenience, a few bombs could kill every man in it and it is very unhealthy.

One day whilst in the valley of Perote after having marched about 25 weary miles pitched our tents and commenced cooking &c we heard the report of guns in the distance, the Indiana regt. were encamped about 5 miles off and it was supposed they were attacked by Mexicans, the long roll was beat every man un-conscious of fatigue or sickness rushed to his tent shouldered his gun and fell

into line ready to be marched into battle, it was but the work of a moment to form a regimental parade, whilst in line some guns which had been loaded in hunting expeditions were in the hurry of the times accidentally discharged, one charge severely wounded a young man by the name of Moore from Eddyville in the company on the left, another charge proved more fatal killing a young man by name C. W. Peterson from Louisville, after these accidents we were marched off at a run for about a mile when we were halted to await farther orders which when they came were that we should go back to our quarters and go to bed, this was the first alarm we ever had, the alacrity with which the men turned out showed pretty conclusively that we took into consideration what we came for. It is to be hoped that we have no more such alarms, one man killed another severely wounded by their own companions is not very pleasant.

On the 5th day of our tramp we reached Puebla where we staid 3 days during which time I had no convenient time for writing or I would have done so

Puebla contains 80,000 inhabitants covering less space than the city of Louisville the streets are flanked on each side by continued blocks of buildings forming complete walls of cemented stone, it seems as if every building is crowded by people of every shape size color and age from 150 years down to just 2 weeks & under, there is enough in Puebla to keep such a chap as I walking round for six months and be interested everyday statuary, fine buildings, fountains where the water is led through statues of men beasts & birds & thrown high in the air, in fact almost everything delight the eye is to be seen, I visited the great church of the city whilst there, On a fine bright Sabbath morning dressed up clean & nice having been confined all the week it was worth a walk from one end of Bardstown to the other to ascend to the bell of the cathedral the and see what could be seen, but to me it has been worth the trip I have taken, to go through the church in Puebla, to describe would be impossible. Paintings, sculpturing, and all that is magnificent that the imagination of religious devotion could devise is there, After a rest of 3 days as I stated before we had to move on to the city where we arrived in 4 days having marched an estimated distance of 110 miles, On the 3rd day of our march from Puebla we came to the top

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[p. 3 is torn on right side]

of the mountain which overlooks the Valley of Mexico, there is no place
nature more beautiful than this, imagine the scene, an unobstructed
view of 50 miles in extent, a wide extended fertile valley, six or seven
cities with glittering spires & domes 3 large lakes, a winding stream, snow capped peaks, and ranges of
mountains, spread out in one vast picture, it's too much to look at, at once

We'll talk of that anon, I am now in the great celestial City of
Mexico on a Christmas day, the City of Mexico I would suppose contains
near about 200,000 inhabitants, for a pleasant place to live I like Puebla better
-a best, it is well surrounded by natural and artificial defenses of which
battles of Contreras Charbusco and Chapultepec give mournful evidence
I have travelled all round the place and seen a heap of sights it would be
-less to try to tell you on paper all I have seen.

I am very well and have been well ever since I left home
stood my ? very remarkably

The mess I am [?] at least those that are here
being too sick to travel was left in the hospital at Jalapa. Jasper was
-tailed out of our company to stay at Jalapa in the capacity of a
nurse, none of our boys have died yet as I know of.

Give my love to my father mother Grand mother Sally Kit Loge Bob Virg
Joebilly Mr. Doom, & take a little yourself, my kindest regards to Bob H. Mr Wilson
& the Ladies generally &c.

It is probable that before the end of the coming week we will take up
our line of march for Carellero where perhaps we may do some tall fighting.
-ing.

No more at present from

Your Brother Chas E. Nourse