

January 1863 - Simon Huntington, 101st Ohio was injured in this battle, by Leslie Korenko



Simon Huntington wrote to his family on January 7 from “Hospital No. 4, Nashville, Wednesday – Dear Folks. Well here I am, not in camp of the 101st OVI as heretofore but in hospital No. 4 flat on my back so helpless that I can scarcely kick, bite or scratch. After helping drive the Rebels from Nolansville and taking one cannon from them, we found ourselves Tuesday night the 30th, Dec. [before] a large army in front of Murfreesborough. On the morning of the 31st, we went in but soon being flanked in consequence of the next Division on the right of us (Johnsons) giving away, we had to retreat, firing as we went. After hitting me twice without hurting me much, the Rebels succeeded in throwing an ounce of lead plum through my left leg below the knee, cutting the largest of the two bones in two. After lying on the cold and

wet ground for 12 hours, the Secesh took me in a government wagon to our hospital...

After being in Rebel hands, but in care of our nurses and Doctors till Sunday noon, our men drove the Rebels away and sent us Monday morning to this place. I arrived here at 12 o'clock at night most used.

I am in a good hospital and well cared for. Am in considerable pain and a good deal of the time I can't make my bow leg fit a straight bed. Things will be fixed different soon. I could be moved to Cincinnati if it could be done by water. I shall not be able to be up for a long time as my leg is broken. The Doctor says by care the leg can be saved. John Ward was not in the fight. I wrote to you a week ago Sunday but had no chance to send it. I put it in my ridge box and tore it up while lying on the field. If any of you come here I think I can be moved. Yours &c. Simon.” His underlying fear is very apparent; as he realized that he may never see his family again.



Erastus Huntington, who was already traveling south, learned that his brother Simon had been injured. The account of his injury and subsequent letters chronicling his decline and finally his bravery in the face of death appeared in the pages of the Islander. ‘Ras’ was now at the Nashville hospital where he stayed with his brother for 10 days. “January 10 - Nashville Tenn. – Dear Mother [Emeline] – I am in hospital No. 4 with Simon. I came here about 10 o'clock this morning; found he was here by the medical directory. Asked the ward master if there was a person here by that name, he said there lays the only 101st boy we have. I went to his cot. Well, I can't tell you my feelings when I saw Simon with his left leg amputated above the knee, lying asleep. He soon woke up and you never saw a happier person in your life than he was. I feel very anxious about him. You had better come to Cincinnati where I can telegraph if necessity should require it. He is too low to talk much to him so I have got no particulars. I telegraphed before I saw him on the strength of what Capt. Fernald told me last night. He is in good spirits but I feel very uneasy. I don't suppose you can get here but I will take him to Cincinnati on a hospital steamer as soon as he can be moved. We can't get him home before spring it is most likely.

I saw John Ward, Bill Hutton, Jacob Rush and Brad [Severy] to-day. Bradford is very sick. Bill is getting better. The other two are tolerably well but not on duty. It did the boys a great deal of good, you can imagine, when I took hold of their paws. For all I am worth, I would not have missed being here this minute. Nothing would have saved Simon except one of our folks and if he gets along all right I shall give my expense credit for the principal and a thousand per cent interest. If the worst should happen, I certainly want to be here to go home with his body.

A young lady came down with us. She is the wife of a Capt. Vorce from Ohio and a fine woman. She came to see her husband who is badly wounded. Her powers of endurance are truly remarkable. We had to ride on an open platform car from Lebanon Junction 6½ miles to Colesburg, then [we paid a man] to give us a ride from Elizabethtown, 12 miles (after walking

eight miles from Colesburg to Elizabethtown) to Nolin Station. There we had to stay all night, 20 of us crammed into one room about the size of our parlor. It was awful. We had to get in the car about 8 o'clock and sit there until most 11, as there was only one passenger car. Those who did not get seats had to take freight cars for it. We chose the former. There was no fire or stove in the cars so we had to grin and bear it.

We took supper, lodging and breakfast at the St. Cloud Hotel for the moderate sum of \$3.00 (I mean the living was very moderate). No vegetables of any kind. The fare consisted of meat, bread (!) and Pea coffee. The water run short this morning so I had to leave the table thirsty. The State House is certainly a very handsome building, but don't compare with ours at all in my estimation. There is lots of news but I am too much agitated to write more. Erastus"

January 12 1863 - Hospital, Nashville, Monday - Friend M. K. - "Deliver me from ever being housed in a hospital full of wounded soldiers again. I have seen more deaths in the past two days than I ever expect to again. The excitement is all that keeps me alive, and I am looking forward to the next week very anxiously. Simon's fate will most likely be determined in the next three days. The Doctor told me Saturday that the chances were decidedly against him. I asked him how long it would be before he could tell which turn it would take. He said two or three days. That is if he didn't keep growing worse during that time he would stand a good chance to get well.

This is the third day since his leg was taken off and he is gaining slowly, is in good spirits, and says he wants to get aboard of a steamer pretty soon and go to Cincinnati where he can see Father and Mother and where he can get something to eat.

I got half of a chicken for him yesterday costing 50¢. The price I cared nothing about, but I had to hunt two hours to find a piece even at that price. Could find no apples at all, but heard there had been some small ones in town at 5¢ each, neither are there any potatoes at any price. In fact there is no fruit or vegetables to be had anywhere this side of the blue grass region in Kentucky.

I paid for dinner at the St. Cloud Hotel in this place, \$1.00. Bill of fare - roast beef, pork and bread and a piece of pie. Got one glass of water. When I sent for another the waiter said the water failed...dinner at Sandusky would be no comparison to it. There you would get four times as good a one, at one fourth the price...

This Hospital is nearly a mile from the State House, on a hill, very pleasantly situated. It used to be a high school building; is high between joints, windows on all sides, which gives it good ventilation. A man died of lock jaw last night in this hospital, caused by a wound received at the last battle.

Simon was wounded in the left leg below the knee, about 8 o'clock Wednesday morning Dec. 31st. Lay in the field until the rebels drove our forces off the field, and about dark they carried him to a camp fire with other wounded persons.

Afterwards (the next day he thinks) they took him to a sort of hospital where he stayed until Sunday morning, when our forces captured it again. Simon says it looked dark until our forces came up and it made him feel good then. Monday forenoon, he was put into an ambulance and had to lie there till the whole train was loaded up. Stay three hours. Then he says the ambulance went like 60 over everything and most used him up. He laid in this hospital from Monday night at 11 o'clock until Friday without much change, but Friday afternoon the Dr. said he could not live in that way and took off his leg above the knee. His leg bone, below the knee, was all jammed to pieces by a bullet. He has not got over however the effects of the chloroform and morphine yet. He says he was struck three times. Once by a spent ball, that did not hurt much, and one ball grazed his chin, that he thought had taken his jaw off, but only benumbed it for a short time.

He and Jerome Holly were the only Island boys in the battle that day. The Secesh soldiers were picking our Soldier's pockets as they lay around the campfires. Simon asked them if they hadn't any more respect for themselves or their cause than to do that. A Lieutenant stood close by who told them to stop it, so he saved his watch and pocket book. They confiscated his

knapsack, guns, etc. If he lives through it, he will stand anything. I never could have gone through as much. Yours, Erastus”

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