

The attached letter was written in 1864 by Albert J. Cory, a Private in Company I, 42nd Ohio Volunteer Infantry to Joseph Calland, then 17 years old.

Albert Cory was born in New York in November 1831 but grew up in Shelby County, Ohio. Some notes on Albert J. Cory

- 1850 Green Township, Shelby County, Ohio census, age 18, born Ohio
- Married Hannah Woolley October 14, 1852, Champaign County, Ohio
- 1860 Green Township, Shelby County census, age 28, born New York, occupation Mason. Wife Hannah, 26, born Ohio
- Enlisted November 3, 1861 at Tawawa, Shelby County, Ohio in Company I, 42nd OVI. Captured at Cumberland Gap, Kentucky September 18, 1862. Mustered out in Columbus, Ohio as a Private on December 2, 1864.
- 1870 Green Township, Shelby County census, age 38, born New York, occupation Farm labor Wife Hannah, 36, born Ohio
- 1880 New Palestine, Shelby County census, age 48, born New York, occupation Mason and plasterer Wife Hannah, 47, born Ohio
- 1900 Township 3, Tuolumne County, California census age 68, born New York. November 1831, married 47 years, occupation Mason (had not worked in 8 years.) (Hannah, age 66, in Shelby County, Ohio)
- 1910 Township 2, Mariposa County, California census, age 78, born New York, married 59 years, occupation Mason. No wife shown. (Hannah, age 76, in Richmond, Wayne County, Indiana)
- Entered Sawtelle, California National Military Home on April 26, 1915. Wife listed as Anne Cory, Richmond, Wayne County, Indiana
- Died there on December 2, 1915. Buried Los Angeles National Cemetery.
- Hannah Cory died on June 1, 1917 at age 83 in Richmond, Indiana.

U. S. General Hospital Indianola, Texas
February 9th A.D. 1864

Mr. Kaland,

Dear Sir, I at last have taken my pen in hand to let you know that I am well and in hopes this may find yourselfe and family all well. Also to aknowledge my negligance for not having writen to you ere this as I had promiced you I would. I have no doubt that an abridged history of my life in the army would be desirable to you, but as I feal myselfe incompitent for such a task, you I hope will excuse me for nearly giving you a short sketch of what has lapsed before me since in the Army.

As you will probible recollect I volunteered on the 4th day of November A.D. 1861, and on the 24th day of November I went to Camp Chase, whare I remained two days and got a leave of absence for five and went home again, and at the expiration of the five days I returned to camp whair I remained until the 10th of December following, when the Regt. had marching orders to go to Kentuckey and up the Big Sandy Valey to drive the Rebel forse under Humphrey Marshal from that State. I was with the 42nd Division (as I am a member of that Regt.) until we got to Louisa some 28 miles up the Big Sandy River whare as five of the boys of the company that I belong to was taken sick and I was detailed on their account to go on duty in the Hospital whair I remained for 68 days and nights not averaging 4 hours sleep out of 24 hours.

The hospital was then broken up and I was sent to Ashland, Ky. whare I was taken sick and lay about two weeks when I again got well and joined the Regt. as it was on its way down the river as our forses had succeeded in whiping the Rebels at Midle Creek and Round Gap. The troops on account of the hills and bad roads was forced to get along without tents and but one blanket at night together with the winter skie over them, and when we got to cold and could not sleep this way we got up, tore our blankets loose from the frozen ground and thawed out the best we could by some pile of rails or bords that had been gathered together and got fire to. Thair was always more of a cold nite around the fire than thair was asleep.

So after we left the Big Sandy we went to Louisville, Ky. whair we lay about two weeks when the Regt. was ordered to Cumberland Ford, which plase we reached the frepart of May; and on the seventh of June took up the line of march to Rogers Gap and thense up the Valey in order to come in the rear of the Rebel forses at Cumberland Gap, but the Rebels near finding the intention of Gen. G. W. Morgan, our commander, they evacuated the Gap as their supplies would have soon been cut off had they not done as they did. So our troops marched in on the 18th day of May and took possession of the Gap without firein a gun. This place is by far the strongest position that I as yet have

ever seen, and its forts I think never can be taken by storm, but it is a very easy matter to surround it and cut off the supplies.

We lay there the first six weeks without any annoyance whatever from the enemy, when they first made their appearance. They were encamped at the base of Clinch Mountains. Our brigade together with the 14th Ky. or rather about 375 men of each Regt. (the 22nd Ky., 16th Dv., and the 42nd Dv. formed our brigade) and one battery of six rifled pieces was sent to Taywell on a foraging expedition. However, the desire was to have the Rebels play out their hand before they were ready. On the 3rd day of August on the morning after we started the scurrying began, which was kept up until the 6th day of August when the Rebels made their appearance in force.

We had a heavy skirmish with the 16th Dv. and one section of the battery. The battery was got out but 61 of the 16th Dv. was taken prisoners and but two were killed. The rest made their retreat in such a manner as to draw the enemy into a galling fire of the artillery which checked the enemy's advance, they not knowing our forces or rather the strength. Their General sent about eight thousand around to get our rear. This, however, was detected by our scouts when our commander made preparations for a retreat, which many of the enemy afterwards told me was so managed as to deceive their best officers, and we beat the enemy in passing the road they had contemplated getting in our rear at.

But our officers were not satisfied as they had found the strength of the enemy, which was about fifteen hundred cavalry, about thirteen thousand infantry, and about five hundred artillerymen of which we had but about sixteen hundred all told commanded by Col. John F. DeCorsy, and in the four days lost 61 men taken prisoners, 2 killed, and eleven wounded. While I saw in a Rebel paper an account of their wounded was nine hundred and about one hundred killed, but as I looked from the hill we were on to the one the enemy was on I could not help thinking there was more than twice that number dead on the field.

We went back to the Gap that night and by the morning of the 16th of August the enemy made their appearance in force, and on the east side of the Gap where the fighting was commenced the enemy, however, keeping back far enough to keep out of range of the large guns in the Forts. They soon, however, took a very large force around to our rear and cut off our supplies. Gen. G. W. Morgan had sent for reinforcements so we felt pretty well satisfied although we were surrounded by the enemy who was about forty thousand strong. But our hopes were to be blasted as it regarded our reinforcements doing us any good, for about the first of September a dispatch bearer came in to the Gap with the sad news that our reinforcements had been badly whipped at the big hill east of Lexington. Gen. Morgan then began to

forme his plans to cut out, which proved a successful one after a hard march of 16 days.

They reached the Ohio River at Greanupsburg on the night of the 17th of September and when I was on my way with the other troops leaving the Gap I was ordered back to take care of 24 sick men in the 42nd Dv. that was left thair. I went back and the next day was taken prisoner. I was in the Rebels hands one month and thirteen days when I was again in America, or at least I felt so.

I went home, was home eleven days, when I went to Columbus and tryed to get transportation for the Regt. (which had started down to Vicksburg) but instead of getting transportation as I had anticipated, I was ordered to report to Carole Camp. I staid thair a few days and then ran away from Carole Camp and met the Regt. just above Vicksburg and just after our troops had got so badly whiped at Chickasaw Swamps. Our brigade was then composed of four Regts. as the 54th Indiana had been attached to it. The loss of killed and wounded in the brigade was 1264 men. Our Regts. loss was the lightest, which was 88 men killed or wounded.

Our troops then went up the river and attached the enemy at Arkansas Post, and on the 11th day, January, 1863 the fort with between seven and eight thousand of the Rebels fell into our hand. I was sent with the sick of our Regt. to St. Louis from this chase and joined the Regt. again at Youngs Point about the 20th of February folowing in March was mooved back to Milikens Bend, lay thar until the forepart of Aprile when we mooved on to Richmond, Louisiana, thence to Perkins Plantation, whair we lay until the 28th day of Aprile when we was marched on bord the boats (that had run the blockade at Vicksburg) and was run down the river until we got in fair view of the Rebel works at Grand Gulfe whare the boat was tied up on the Louisiana side whare we lay that night the most forenoon.

Our gun boats opened on the Rebel works. A heavy fire was kept up for about four hours, and one of the most beautiful seanerys I ever saw at 1 oclock the gun boat withdrew with but slight damage. The forses was then marched acrost a nook of land caused by a bend in the river and halted again on the river bank and about four miles below the Rebel works.

That night our gun boats with seven transports run the blockade at Grand Gulfe and tied up to the shore whare we was camped. The next morning all the troops that could be got on the boats was marched in and crossed the river a few miles below and the boats sent back for more. We hear drew rations for a part of the troops and by 1 oclock p.m. the line of march was taken up in the direction of Fort Gibson. We halted about 8 oclock that night for about twenty minutes to eat a bite of grub. The march was then again resumed and kept steadily on until between

1 and 2 oclock that night when the sound of artilery announsed that we had came up with the enemy.

The batterys on both sides continued to fire at a tolerable brisk rate for about one hour when it seased and preparation was being made for the contest the coming day, but the sun had scarsely it up the eastern horison when the roar of artilery and the sound of musketry told but to well that the work of carnage had begun. This was a very strongly contested battle as both partys felt confident of success. That day se purfect lines advancing toward each other to within seventy five yards of each other when bayonets ware fixed for a conflict of hand to hand; but as our troops had the advantage of the hill, they drove the Rebels about a quarter of a mile when the enemys resurve came up and shoved our men back to whair the charge began. When the resurve on our side came up and then drove the Enemy again over the same groups that had been charged over twice befor, but the Rebels now could regain the ground no more. Twas thus the battle raged. Charge after charge was made (our Regt. being in five of them) until about 2 oclock that p.m. when the most desperate charge of the day was made, but as Gen. Logan was about to flank the enemy they was forced to retreat and a general schedadle of the Rebels then began, our forses in close persuit until they had been run through Port Gibson a distance of about three miles from whair the rout began.

Our loss that day in the 42nd Dv. was 61 men wounded and 14 killed and of the Palestine boys, James H. Corwin was killed, W. W. Gray mortaly wounded, Isaac Shanley in jaw and neck not serious. Their was also four more of the company I belong to fell that day.

The next morning the line of march was resumed steadily for the rear of Vicksburg on the 12th of May A.D. 1863. Gen. Logan had a sevear engagement with the enemy near Raymond but succeeded in whipping them and on the 14th Jackson was taken by our forces and then abandoned.

The troops marched back to Champion Hill whair another hard battle was fought on the 16th day of May A.D. 1863 which resulted in our favor, but I hear see more ded men than I had ever seen before. The next day ab Black River another hard fight ensued resulting again in our favor. On the 19th of May our forces closed in around Vicksburg. This you perhaps have a much beeter discription in the papers than what I could give you in this scroll.

After the fall of Vicksburg we again wen to Jackson, Mississippi and after fighting the Rebels thair eight days we took the place and the Rebel General Jo Johnson put to flight. We then returned to Vicksburg. I was again ordered into the Hospital department whair I have been ever since. About the 20th of August we had marching orders for New Orleans to report to Gen. Banks.

In October we was marched up the Bayou Geich , La. The expedition went as far up as Opelouses when we started back, and on the 3rd day of November we had a scratch with the enemy at Bayou Caroncro which was rather a draw game. We then came on to _____ and loaded on the Steamer Clinton for _____ on the 15th day of November, and on the 30th of November our forces succeeded in taking Fort Esperansa situated on Matagorda Island, when a division hospital was hear organised for the benefit of the wounded and sick, which was kept up until the 15th day of January A.D. 1864 when it was broken up and all hands belonging to the Hospital came to this place where a W.S. General Hospital is now being fited up.

The 42nd DV. did not come to Texas, but was ordered up the River to Bayoud Pluckerman and I have not sean any of the Palestine boys since the 14th of November last. The health hear is very good and I never sean finer hear weather any whair in the months of May or June than what we have had hear for the last four weeks. As I have already writen much more than I thought I should when I began I will now conclude this letter hoping you will write to me as soon as you can after you get this. So I remain very respectfully yours.

A. J. Cory

P.S. You will direct to me Indianola Texas in care of J. H. Ledlie, Surgeon in charge of W. S. General Hospital.

Albert J. Cory.