St 13th Big Hatchee
Rio Grande
Aug't 31st 1846

My Dear Amanda,

Having no more agreeable mode of spending my time on board of this Boat I have commenced a letter to you which I will not close however, before I reach Camargo, as I know you will be pleased to learn something of that place. I scribbled off a hurried letter to you just as we were leaving our late encampment informing you of our move. We have met with nothing of particular interest thus far on our trip up. We are now near Rhinosa; perhaps 150 or 160 Mils above Matamoras. We remained all night & until 12 O'Clock the next day at Matamoras. All the sick had to be left there and I assume you there were not a few of them. The precise number left from our Reg't I do not know, but it exceeded 100. Many of them on the verge of the grave. There were seven of my Co left. I was distressed to leave them. Only one however was dangerous, young Oliver who was Clerk for Perkins & Bray. He is quite ill, but may recover. Dr Anderson staid with the sick of my Co, tho' he is not Surgeon now, having resigned. Dr Moore of Mobile has been appointed Surgeon for our Reg't.

We were delighted at getting off from the place where we were last encamped. It was a pretty place and there seemed to be no cause there to produce sickness, but the crowded Hospitals the long, lank & hollow cheeks and the number of graves there, speak but little in its favor. I was so fortunate as not to lose a single one of my Co but in 21 days there were 32 buried out of our Regt — averaging over 1½ a day — A great many were discharged from ill health and of the no now sick at Matamoras, but few I fear will ever be well enough to do duty as soldiers. Many have that this country healthy, but it is a wide mistake, I think. It might be after one had lived here a few years, but it is too far south for one to enjoy good health, coming even no farther north than we do — When we get to Camargo it will be healthier and the farther we go into the interior the better it will be for us — The land on the River above as well as some distance below Matamoras is very rich. The Mexicans are settled thick along the banks. As the Boat passes along crowds of men, women & children run down to look at us — There seems to be double the number of women that there are men. But the number of children surpasses any thing I ever saw — You see at every

Rancho
a crowd of them of all ages & sizes—
they are generally naked and they laugh
hoblak & clap their hands when they
see the Boat. The women, I observe,
are all neatly dressed, this is diffe-
ent style from the American Ladies— they
are fond of bathing and go in without res-
traint before any body & often in co with
the men. When the boat lands they collect
around to sell milk, bread or something
else. I am trying to learn enough of
the Spanish to talk with them— I have
already picked up some scattering wds
& expressions— I can make a little out
that I did with my French on a former
occasion— Some of the boys laughed and said
they would tell you, when I inquired
of some Spanish scholar, the words to express
"a pretty girl"— "a kiss" & divers other
words of the same sort—— I have seen
some very pretty black eyed señoritas—
but none ever could compare in my
estimation with the soft blue eyes of my
dear sweet Mamma— I have wished the
little boys could have been with me
to see the little Mexicans— It would
have delighted them so much to see their
antics. Little Al, particularly, if will
would have been so much amused at them.

Sept 1st 46

Rhinosa is a town of considerable size. It is about ½ mile from the river on an elevated hill. Some of the buildings are large - nearly all have flat roofs. The streets are very narrow. The Cathedral is a large building and near it is another large building from the top of which I can floating the American flag. It is now occupied by our soldiers. The land above Rhinosa is not so fertile as that below. The river banks are higher and you can see ranges of low mountains at no great distance, which present a beautiful appearance. At about 6 mls below Camargo we entered the San Juan River - a very pretty stream, not quite so wide as the Rio Grande. We landed about one mile & a half, below Camargo on last evening. The town I have only seen at a distance. I shall go up soon after breakfast & give you some account of it. The troops are encamped all along the banks of the river near us - I heard, on getting here, that we were likely to be kept here for a considerable time; whether true or not I cannot say. That we will not be the first to move forward is certain, for some are to come tomorrow & we are not of that number. I dislike, very much, the idea of remaining here unemployed any great length of time. It is very trying to the patience; however I shall submit with cheerfulness. The impression prevails here that there will be no more fighting and that peace will soon be declared. If we are to be kept idle here, in camp, I shall be rejoiced to hear the news. As it will have been the hour of our happy meeting, it cannot be otherwise than welcome news to me - I do assure you, my dear Amanda, that my heart yearns to be with you again. I long to embrace the sweetest & best of wives that any man ever had, and to see the dearest & coolest of children.