

Here I will copy most of the letter I received from Dr. Booth, which I did intend to send you to read, but was afraid to trust it to the mail. Since his return, he has been to see me twice, given me every little particular I wished to know. Brought me two locks of John's hair, one of which I shall save for Isa. I feel that I cannot be grateful enough to him for all his kindness.

U. S. Naval Hospital
Aug. 20th, 1864 Pensacola, Fla.

I hope you will pardon the liberty I take of addressing you, Miss Boston, but having become conversant of the anxiety you must feel with regard to the disposition of the body & personal effects of our departed friend, Mr. C., I am constrained to write you. It is impossible for me to give you many of the circumstances relative to his death. But I can say truly: "He stood amongst his men bravely, pointed some of the guns himself, whose shot told upon the Federal vessels." I could but notice this. I saw him move from gun to gun, cheerfully encouraging his men; but too soon the captain of one of our best guns was mortally wounded, & I went below with him. In a few minutes, the poor wounded were crowded upon one, & you can form but a faint conception of my feelings, when I turned from the limb of a poor little fellow who was also mortally wounded, & saw the mangled form of our dear friend in the arms of one of our men. I felt his pulse - but there I observed no signs of life. I put my hand over his heart - but ah! his noble heart had ceased to beat - dear Comstock was dead. But he died bravely - gallantly - & the Captain's coxswain, Gardner, who picked him up, told me, "He only raised his head a little & said, 'My men, stand to your guns to the last.'" It draws bitter tears of anguish from my eyes, as I recall the mangled form of my dear friend. As soon as I saw life was extinct, I told the men to take his body to his room, & lay him gently down, while our good Paymaster assisted

in looking after it. As that time, I had more
than I could attend to in my hands. The piteous
cries of our poor wounded men heart-rending,
& I could only move from one to another, & re-
lieve their pains in their dying moments as
best I could. I was kept almost constantly
with poor little Murray, who lingered about
2 1/2 hours but he bore this agonising pain most
patiently. After his death, kind Mr. Richardson & my-
self attended to the decent burial of our men, with
most appropriate services from that zealous,
good Christian. After this, I had the bodies of
Mr. C. & Mr. M. nicely washed & dressed, & towards
night carried aboard the "Metacomb," which
brought us here. I wish desperately prevailed up-
on Mr. Capt. to let me preserve the bodies until
morning & deliver them to some officer at
Fort Mifflin, who would mark their graves. but
this I succeeded in doing, & gave them to Capt. Thom.
Mr. R. took charge of Mr. Comstock's trunk, & he is
now in New Orleans. I hope you received the writ-
ing desk, & contents. Do pardon this sorrow
bringing letter but I believe it will be kindly
read. Dear Respectfully, &c.

I omitted several parts which you already
knew, or which were of no particular interest,
but if you know you will be gratified as I was, to hear
all these particulars. Dr. Booth laid him out in
the very clothes he wore the last night that I saw
him, but he says that his face did not look red-
dead at all. Rev. Wm. Carter buried him in the
little graveyard at Fort M. an hour before sunset.
I may have written you some of these items
before, but I have had so many letters to write
relative to him, & have seen so many different
ones, that I often become confused, & forget what
I have written.

How do you like your new position? Two weeks
more of rest for me, & I shall begin my labors.
I think I shall be more happy & contented, when
I become engaged in some earnest occupation,
though it will require a great effort on my part
to make the beginning. I have not yet receiv-

1864

(At the Beginning of the Letter.)

Here I will copy most of the letter I recieved from Dr. Booth, which I did intend to send you to read, but was afraid to trust it to the mail. Since his return, he has been to see me twice, given me every little particular I wished to know, & brought me two locks of John's hair, one of which I shall save for Ira. I feel that I cannot be grateful enough to hom for all his kindness.

Copy of letter written by Dr. Edwin G. Booth, furnished by Mrs. J. T. Fry, Selma, Ala. Nov. 1924.

U. S. Naval Hospital.
Aug. 20, 1864.
Pensacola, Fla.

I hope you will pardon the liberty I take of addressing you, Miss. Horton, but having some conception of the anxiety you must feel with regard to the disposition of this body and personal effects of our departed friend Mr. C. I am constrained to write you. It is impossible for me to give you many of the circumstances relating to his death, but I can say truly he stood amongst his men bravely, pointed some of the guns himself, whose shots told upon the Federal vessels. I could but notice this. I saw him move from gun to gun, cheerfully encouraging his men: But too soon the Captain of one of our best guns was mortally wounded, and I went below with him. In a few minutes, the poor wounded were crowded upon me, and you can form but a faint conception of my feelings when I turned from the limb of a poor little fellow who was also mortally wounded and saw the mangled form of our dear friend in the arms of one of our men. I felt his pulse--but then observed no signs of life. I put my hand over his heart--but bh, his noble heart had ceased to beat dear Comstock was dead. But he died bravely--gallantly, and then Captain Coxswain Lerner, who picked him up, told me, "He only raised his head a little and said, "My men stand to your guns to the last." It draws bitter tears of anguish from my eyes, as I recall the mangled form of my dear friend. As soon as I saw life was extinct, I told the men to take his body to his room, and lay him gently down, while our good Paymaster assisted in looking after it. At that time I had more than I could attend to on my hands. The pitious cries of our poor wounded men were heart rendering and I could only move from one to another, and relieve their pains in their dying moments as best I could, I was kept almost constantly with poor little Murray, who lingered about two and one half hours, but he bore his agonizing pains most patiently. After this, I had the bodies of Mr. C. and Mr. M. washed and dressed, and towards night carried aboard the "Metecomet" which brought us here. I with difficulty prevailed upon the Capt. to let me preserve the bodies until morning and deliver them to some officer at Fort Morgan, who would ~~mark~~ mark their graves; but this I succeeded in doing, and gave them to Capt. Thorn. Mr. R. took charge of Mr. Comstock's trunk, and is now in New Orleans, I hope you receive the writing desk, and contents. Do pardon this sorrow bringing letter, but I believe it will be kindly received. Very Respectfully.

Edwin G. Booth.

(At the end of the Letter.)

I omitted several parts which you already knew, or which were of no particular interest, but I know you will be grateful as I was, to hear all these particulars. Dr. Booth laid him out in the very clothes he wore the last night that I saw him, but he says that his face did not look natural at all. Rev. Wm. Carter buried him in the little graveyard at Fort M. an hour before sunset. I may have written you some of these items before, but I have had so many letters to write relative to him, & have seen so many different ones, that I often become confused, & forget what I have written.

How do you like your new position? Two weeks more of rest for me, & I shall begin my labors. I think I shall be more happy & contented, when I become engaged in some earnest occupation, though it will require a great effort on my part to make the beginning. I have not yet receiv- (Remainder of letter is lost.)