

THE
SOUTH CAROLINA
HISTORICAL MAGAZINE

APRIL 1960

VOLUME LXI

NUMBER 2



THE SOUTH CAROLINA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
CHARLESTON, S. C.

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BELEAGURED CHARLESTON:
LETTERS FROM THE CITY, 1860-1864

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In the main, war consists of the unheroic; its history is most faithfully told in terms of the ordinary deeds of ordinary people. This is true no less of the home front than of the firing line, for while the prosaic life of the civilian may offer little of the soldier's chance for fame and glory, it is nevertheless the stuff of which the sinews of war are made.

The following letters reveal how a civilian on the Southern home front during the 1860's responded to assault, siege, and blockade as the enemy closed in; they do not tell of the spectacular done in valorous fashion, but of unadorned living by ordinary people in extraordinary times. The theme is how the trials of conflict came to Charleston and her people—less through the fighting itself than through the strains imposed by the Union blockade, spiralling inflation, growing shortages, and disrupted transportation. Charlestonians inevitably suffered disappointment and discouragement as the crisis deepened; yet, as reflected in these letters, they did not surrender to despair. Gala weddings and holidays like Christmas provided opportunity both for festivity and feasting; goods smuggled past the Federal cordon of ships helped to keep living above the level of simple subsistence; and in most respects, in spite of Union shells ripping up sections of the city, everyday life appears to have gone its usual way.

The writer, Charles Kaufman Rogers, addressed most of the letters to his sister, Emeline Rogers Divver or "Liney" as he most often called her. For reasons of safety, apparently, she and her children had moved in 1860 from Charleston to Timmonsville, a small town in the interior, where they remained throughout the period of correspondence. Throughout his letters Rogers displayed a constant concern for her well-being and happiness; he was especially troubled by her persistent homesickness, and he wrote full, complete accounts of things and people she knew in the city. A few of the letters were written to Belton Divver, Emeline's husband, who served in some minor capacity with the Confederate government in Richmond.

Except for what the letters themselves reveal, little of a detailed nature can be established about the life of their author. From the time of his birth on September 2, 1839, until sometime in the seventies, he was a resident of Charleston. His education in private schools there was sound if not exceptional; his religion was Episcopalian. About ten years after the close of the war he

moved to Darlington, where he became an official of the county government until his death on February 13, 1896. During the conflict itself he served for about two months in 1861 with the "Vigilant Rifles," a volunteer company of state militia. After his discharge he shouldered his military responsibility by joining a volunteer fire department in the city, service which carried exemption from the Confederate conscription act. Moreover, since such duty was irregular, he was able at the same time to find regular employment with an auction firm until 1863, when he appears to have become a speculator in wartime goods. Lamentably, his letters abruptly stop late in 1864 and thus reveal none of the closing drama of Charleston's capitulation after a long and proud defiance of the enemy.

On the whole Rogers was a writer who paid attention to the niceties of grammar but was often careless about such matters as spelling and capitalization. Except where clarity required, no changes have been made in the original style or form, but "&" has been rendered as "and" and periods have been substituted for terminal dashes. In order to save space, certain unessential and repetitious passages have been eliminated.

The manuscripts of the letters here reproduced were made available by Mrs. David L. Allen, a descendant of Rogers, to whom the editors are sincerely grateful. We are also indebted to Mrs. Nathan Toms of Petersburg, Virginia, the daughter of Rogers, for her courteous help in supplying the biographical data about her father. Finally, Professor Abbot wishes to express his appreciation to the University Center in Georgia whose grant-in-aid made possible much of the research necessary for the editing of the collection.

Charleston So Ca 6 Jan'y 1861

Dear Liney

I fired the Cannon, to the great delight of those Corcoran Boys. About twelve o'clock I escorted Ma to Mrs Bonner and then I marched down to Fehrenbach where I ate a "solitary dinner".¹ Peter Cuttino promised to meet me there. He says that he came then and not seeing me went off, but I don't believe him. In the afternoon I went to Mrs. Roempke who had a house full of people. Had a good time generally and made up for what I had lost. One thing however I didnt relish. There was a large fire in the grate and every window was shut down. Moving about and playing with the girls got me into a perspiration and coming out in the cool damp air gave me a cold in my bones and for several days after I was in great pain. Saltus and the rest of the Demons

¹ This was a combination tobacco-establishment-restaurant on East Bay Street. Charleston *Daily Courier*, February 19, 1862.

were out on duty that day and of course I was at a complete loss for some one to prowll with.²

Ma reports having had a good time at the Bonners. The children were well supplied with Santa Claus. The Cordrays contributed a Crying Baby, Box of toys and some sugar plums. Anna took charge of the first and was so successful in accomplishing its fate that before the end of the week it had gone where all toy-babies go.

On the night of the 26 ult Major Anderson and his men after spiking the guns and burning the carriages &c at Fort Moultrie retired to Sumter. Nothing was known of this until next Morning (Thursday). You have no idea of the great excitement and indignation it caused. A military committee was sent down to investigate the matter and Anderson stated that he had acted upon his own responsibility. The fact is both he and the Government were a little scared and the rumors that the garrison would be attacked and massacred to a man by a Carolina *Mob* only increased their fears. Anderson no doubt had *discretionary orders* and he took advantage of them to strengthen his position. Our people look upon it as a breach of faith on the part of the Federal Government as every assurance, that no rash or unauthorized attack would be made upon the Fort [had been given].³ That afternoon the Palmetto flag was raised on the Custom House, Castle Pinckney and Fort Moultrie. Our troops occupied the last two places. The same course has been taken with the Arsenal. The Military responded to the Call made on them Cheerfully and readily. At Morris Island and Fort Johnson Fortifications have been raised. I suppose that now there are at least 1500 men at the different points in the harbor. Preparations for war are actively prosecuted. The Buoys have been removed and the Beacons and light Houses extinguished. Within the past three days five or six Companies have arrived here. They are each about 100 Strong. They have had positions assigned them. The dispatches from Washington at times are certainly warlike. Old Buck and Gen Scott⁴ no doubt mean Coercion, but the reports in a degree are so contradictory that it is a difficult

² This was apparently an acquaintance named James C. Saltus, a member of one of the militia companies performing patrol duty in the city. Photostatic copy, Muster Roll of the Vigilant Rifles, November 1, 1861, in the South Carolina Archives.

³ The decision of Major Robert Anderson, Federal commander of the troops in the Charleston area, to move his forces from Ft. Moultrie to the more defensible Ft. Sumter was apparently his own. For an account of his action and of the minor crisis it provoked in Charleston, see Charles E. Cauthen, *South Carolina Goes to War, 1860-1865* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1950) Chapter VII.

⁴ President James Buchanan and General of the Armies Winfield Scott.

matter to decide as to how much reliance may be placed on them. It is best to keep cool and quiet yet make every preparation for the worst. Old Buck and Scott may find it very easy to plan Coercion, but I'm afraid that by the time they are ready to execute they will find the whole Southern Country side by side with *So Ca*. I have joined the Charleston Riflemen and as soon as I can get my Uniform I will be into service. I'm ready if we have to fight. The Company is on duty at Fort Johnson.⁵

.
As ever

Charlie

"Tuesday"

Charleston S. C. 5 Feby '61

Dear Liney

. . . We are glad to hear that you get on so well. I must again advise you *not* to be so uneasy about home. It is no more than [than] natural yet at the same time it will do you no good. Keep up your spirits. Dont let your mind run on hearing from home and dont fret because every week doesn't bring a letter. Everything goes on right and square with us although the times are warlike. Do not place any confidence in what flying reports you hear about here or rather this place, until they are a week old, no matter from whom they come. I have seen dispatches here in the papers too headed "from a most reliable source" and "on good authority," turn out in a day or two to be either wholly unfounded or greatly exaggerated. I understand that Aunt Jane writes nothing but "War" "War." I fear that she colors her accounts a *leetle* too highly.

. . . I do believe that with the exception of a few days it rained the whole of last month. We are having fine weather now. As Uncle Jacob says its too fine to be in a store such fine weather.

I have been down to Fort Johnson with the Company. My stay was limited to two days as we were relieved by another Co. I had plenty to eat drink and smoke but nary fight. I actually felt sorry to leave as I expected to be there at least two weeks. I was out on a Steamer one night last week with a detachment acting as a Coast guard. The Company has been drilling and meeting, so my time has been devoted

⁵ The Charleston Riflemen were a part of the regular state militia of the 17th Regiment of Infantry, dating back to 1806. Fort Johnson was located on the harbor side of James Island. *Charleston Year Book*, 1883 (Charleston, 1884) *Appendix*, pp. 542-44; *Charleston Daily Courier*, December 12, 21, 1860, and May 8, 1861.

to the State. I am Just as great a soldier as anybody now. Tomorrow afternoon we parade as an escort to the Aetna Guards.⁶

.
As ever

Charlie

Charleston, S. C. 20 Feby 1861

Dear Liney

.
The preparations for War are . . . [progressing] quietly. The people hardly notice the big guns and heavy shot and piles of powder. The fact is we have become *used* to it. The "floating" battery is nearly finished. It will be launched shortly. The intention is to sink it as near to Sumter as possible and it is thought that with the four heavy guns which it carries, considerable damage can be done to that fortress.⁷ On Sunday it was reported that Anderson was suffering from an attack of pneumonia and to night it is reported that he is dead. I doubt the truth of the latter.

.
I see by this mornings paper that the "Uncle Sam" had arrived out *safe*.⁸ I am glad to hear of it particurly [*sic*] as my friend Jordan is aboard. I did not see Capt Hopkins. He did not come up home, was not in port very long and I could not find him when I did attempt a visit.

All the city Companies except the Artillery have been withdrawn from the Various posts in the Harbor. The "enlisted Volunteers and Regulars (about 2000 in all) are in possession now. There is a strict watch kept every night on board the steamer. The Riflemen take a turn tomorrow night. We are armed now with the Minie Rifle and Sabre bayonet—a very formidable weapon.⁹

⁶ The Aetna Guards was a fire-engine company devoting itself part-time to military duty. *Charleston Year Book, 1883, Appendix*, pp. 542-44.

⁷ The "floating battery" was, in some respects, a crude forerunner of the ironclad warships of the era. Constructed of pine timber that was covered with two thicknesses of railroad iron and boasting four heavy guns, the whole presented a formidable appearance. Anchored just to the west of Sullivan's Island, it played an active part in the bombardment of Ft. Sumter on April 12, delivering 490 charges against the fort and receiving, without damage, 163 direct hits in return. *Charleston Daily Courier*, April 15, 1861. A drawing of the battery in action can be found in the *Confederate War Journal*, I (1893), pp. 4-5.

⁸ Apparently a merchant ship, later becoming a blockade runner.

⁹ For an account of the raising of troops in the state during the war, see Cauthen, *op. cit.*, Chapters VIII and IX.

"Old Abe" is on his way to Washington. He has been indulging in Sundry *Stupid*, Free love and coercive speeches. He is an old fool. Even his own party say so and advise him to keep his mouth shut. He cant hold a candle to Jeff Davis our President. That was a fighting speech of Jeff's. He means what he says and the northern people know it too, but my paper is running out, and for further particulars of the two men, the Southern Confederacy &c I refer you to the papers.

. . .

As ever

Charlie

Fort Pickens Sept 26th 61¹⁰

Dear Folks—

The boat came up on Tuesday but there was no package or letter for me. I wrote on Sunday and of course I could not expect anything with certainty. Suppose you did not have time. At least a dozen men have received reinforcements from home. Joe Gidierre's *Ma* sent him a basket of Roast Beef (very fine) chickens Cake &c. He is in my mess which has *feasted* for two days. Segars are scarce just now. I wish you would send me some, say 50 at 3 cents and 50 at 1 cent—get them from Buero's woman and I will pay her when I get home.¹¹ If you have sent my other things please make another package of the Segars (they will just fill a box) as I am very much in want of them. The pipe I brought down has been broken and I cannot describe the kind clearly enough for you to get another one. The old clay thing that I have now gets so hot that I do not enjoy it. Please dont forget my [*Four or five lines missing.*] The heat was intolerable the day we left. I was wet through my uniform. Laid down that night on the ground. You can imagine the result; for once at least in my life my clothes did not smell like "otter of roses". I did not wash and change until last Saturday night and then I felt like another being. What I took of[f] were so strong that I thought best to let one of the cooks wash them which he did at a very reasonable charge. Hereafter I will do it myself. We have been supplied with Mosquito nets both large and small. The latter are intended to cover the head when walking about; I and many others

¹⁰ Fort Pickens was on Battery Island, a small strip of sandy soil, just south of James Island. *Charleston Daily Courier*, May 8, 1861; John Johnson, *The Defense of Charleston Harbor* (Charleston, 1890) pp. 21-22.

¹¹ The Charleston directories for 1856 and 1861 list Emmanuel Buero, fruiterer, at 102 King Street.

have found but little use for them since we moved into Barracks, but the fleas and *Bed* Bugs bit feircer than ever. I would gladly exchange the latter evil for the other. The fleas are an eighth of an inch long and the bugs from the little red ones to the big black ones. Their bites are awful, causing large welts and splotches [*sic*], and I have seen the flesh swell on some in spots as large as the palm of the hand. Dr. Framp-ton says that is a kind of rash, but I dont believe it. There are too many fleas and bugs caught in the course of a day. I hooked some camphor one night and rubbed it over me which afforded much relief. The Cap-tain is trying to get some penny-royal or some weed which it is said will annihilate all vermin.

I was on guard Monday. The sentinels called my attention to the fire which was seen very distinctly. I felt very anxious about home, and was much relieved next day on learning its location. You must excuse this writing. I have charge of one of the big guns, was fixing the platform when it commenced to rain and I embraced the opportunity—hard work affects my hand. Please write soon. I hope that Ma and Liney are better. Kiss the children for me . . . Has old George been home lately? I captured a real Gallinipper last night—it is exactly like a musquito but an inch long. This information is for Sara Louisa especially. Write soon. My Respects to all. Will write again on Sunday if I hear from you by that time.

Yours as ever

Charlie

“Sunday night”

Fort Pickens Octr 6/61

Dear Folks

I really intended to write you a long letter this morning, but I felt so poorly that I gave up the idea—laid in my bunk and read until noon, When the Str [steamer] arrived with large reinforcements for four or five in my mess. Our supplies had been exhausted for several days and we were put to our wits to obtain something a little better than the general fare. I need hardly say that it didn't take long to have an understanding with the cooks. I caught cold on Friday night, for next day I sneezed incessantly. This morning my throat felt sore but after diving promiscuously into the supplies aforesaid mentioned it became as smooth as the neck of a sweet oil bottle. We live high sometimes. in fact its higher than most of the mess do at home. Just think Beefsteak or ham, fish and shrimps for Breakfast. Roast beef, chickens, fish with egg sauce,

ham, okra soup, tomato sauce and once we had a large dish of Game for dinner Curlews, marsh hens and Black birds. Every variety of fish is caught in the neighborhood Sheephead, Whiting, Crocus &c. A fellow brings in the camp now Trout and Bass fully eighteen inches long—two for a quarter—is that cheap? I have been over to Legareville twice, rather a pretty place.¹² It is a summer resort and of course all the planters are there now. I saw several good looking girls. The people both white and black are a sharp set. We have to pay 25 cts for every doz of eggs 50 and 75 for chickens and sometimes an advance on these prices is charged. You try to *Jew* the negro and he tells you “they blang to Massa—”. We buy Butter at 37 cts which is the only thing that we get reasonable compared with city prices. It is a first rate article will try to bring some when I come up..

I am well pleased with Capt Tupper and his officers—feel just as much at home as I did with Capt Joe.¹³ I make a platform for some balls the other day and he was so pleased that he got me to make another. We also gave me another job in the Carpenter line, but I thought that it was time to have an explanation as he was evidently laboring under a wrong impression—told him that I was more accustomed to driving a pen than a saw or jack plane. He generally calls me *Mr. Rogers*—not as particular in addressing one as Sergt or Corpl as the case may be, as Capt Joe used to do

Yours as ever

Charlie

Monday Octr 14/61

Dear Folks,

Your kind letter of the 8th and the Kettle came duly to hand—many thanks. I was really glad to hear that Ma is better. It makes me feel in better spirits, for you must know that when I got your letter saying that she was so sick again I had the strongest notion of quitting the camp. I hope that your next will again report improvement. Saltus and Jimmy Rhodes left here saturday. The former is on a few days furlough,

¹² For a picture of Legareville and notes on its destruction (Aug. 20, 1864) see this *Magazine*, XL (1939), 163-4, and XLI (1940), 117.

¹³ The first of these was Captain S. Y. Tupper, originally head of the “Vigilant Rifles,” a fire engine company that did part time military duty; the second was Captain Joseph Johnson, commander of the volunteer company of “Charleston Rifles.” *Charleston Daily Courier*, September 5, December 21, 24, 1860; January 30, February 14, April 16, and May 8, 1861.

and the latter stays in town altogether under a requisition from Ripley.¹⁴ Old man Whittemore is making soap and candles for the Confederate States.¹⁵ Since we came here at least twelve men have been taken from us in the same way. I think it rather hard—those that happen not to be directly engaged in C. S. work must do the “sojering”. I asked the Capt Friday night for leave. He said that there were so many applications that he could not promise—and if Ripley took any more men he would give up the post and get relieved. He went to town next day and got back yesterday and there is a report “that we wont be relieved” until 1st December as there is no Company “in town to take our place”. I dont believe it however and at present cant say when I will be in town. I will see the Capt this afternoon and may learn something more definite about the result of his visit.

The contents of the Kettle were very acceptable as our private provisions had been out for several days. Joe Gidiere got a basket at the same time, so we have resumed our usual high style of living. We get fresh beef three times a week—if it gets here before dinner we get it fried for that meal and for breakfast next morning and then at dinner following we are bound to get that detestable soup—poor house soup—*slush*—I cant go it and its so with the majority of the fellows. The complaints of those who have to eat it are loud. Fortunately our mess is in with the cook and we always get a piece roasted. . . .

Charlie

Sunday

Charleston July 13/62

Dear Liney

. . . In the first place I think that you are the *most home sick young woman* that I ever heard of. Its about time for you to know better and also to do without a Ma and after all I have said about a probability of an attack from the Yanks, you ought to be able to reconcile yourself to a temporary sojourn amongst *strangers*. From all that you have said of your Host and hostess it would not take me more than a week to make them think that I was one of their oldest acquaintances.

¹⁴ R. S. Ripley, commanding the Confederate forces in the First Military District of South Carolina (the Charleston area). Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

¹⁵ The Charleston papers regularly carried announcements of C. Whittemore, 2 Radcliffe Street, manufacturer of soaps, candles, and tallow. The owner of the establishment later moved his business to Orangeburg. Charleston *Daily Courier*, July 25, 1862.

There is one thing certain you must drop all such expressions as "*La me—this place is lonely*"— "*time hangs heavily*"—"Wish I was in Charleston—" &c &c or you will never see Ma up there with you. She has just worried herself nigh to distraction (worse than Miss Rosa) and said last week when I was moving, that she wished that she could close her eyes and see nothing or know nothing more. This very desperate expression was descended I suppose from our great grandmother by the mothers side.

People seem to be again falling into that apathy which the Fall of Fort Donelson and Nashville &c found them in. They seem to think that the repulse on James Island and at Richmond is going to shorten if not end the War, and that same old story "Foreign Intervention is looming up again."¹⁶ (I hear of several families returning to the City—now that the height of folly. You may just rest assured that the Yanks will make us a Visit this fall and they will come prepared too, with their best Ironclad gunboats. Now I dont admit that they will *get in*, but it would (in case of such an attack) be well for all females to be *out* of the City.) . . . (The Drugget *4 yards wide* can be bought for 5 dollars per yd. Matting, wht or chk 1 yd wide— 50 cts by the piece or 60 cts to cut other widths in proportion—Serpentine Braid cannot be had). Ma will attend to what things you have ordered and send them up as directed. Am glad to hear that you are getting on so smart with my Socks. Will have to make you a handsome present when I come up. Would like very much to get those shirts made. Suppose next year this time the last one will be finished Thats one reason I want to get Ma in the Country.

Yours &c Charlie

Could not get any stamps yesterday. Will try to morrow they are scarce now

Charleston Sunday Augt 14/62

. . . I dont think that I can do better than giving you an account of my journey home. After smoking my last (but two) segar I retired to bed and found the accommodation excellent for a country place. I charged the waiter repeatedly to pull my leg as that was the only way

¹⁶ These are references to the Seven Days' Battle in Virginia, ending with the withdrawal of the Federal army from the immediate environs of Richmond, and to the skirmishing on James Island between Union and Confederate forces, ending with the repulse of the Federal troops.

he could wake me up, and the black scamp did it to my entire satisfaction. The cars did not arrive until fifteen minutes after, so I had time to make something of a toilet. It was very cold and chilly and I wished for a blanket or overcoat. Had no difficulty in getting a seat as Mr. W anticipated, although it was not as desirable as it might have been. My fellow passengers in the car were Soldiers, sick, lame, and lazy. Three of the first class were just in front of me and there was that Hospital, and dead negro smell about them that is absolutely horrifying to the olfactory nerves. You know I had something of a cold, so you can form some idea of the penetrating power of that smell. Yet with all this I managed to get a nice little nap and woke up just before we arrived at Sumterville where there were about *fifty girls* (some mighty pretty ones) all armed with hot coffee, milk, eggs, ham, corn and every other kind of bread &c &c. Well it was all shared out to the soldiers who enjoyed it exceedingly I assure you. Had a plenty offered to me, but it was done in a manner so shy and I thought more through politeness than sympathy that I had no compunction at refusing it, which *of course* I did as *dignified and smiling* as one in my position could possibly do. I did not like to spoil my appetite either for breakfast by eating at 6 o'clock in the morning. We arrived at Kingsville one hour ahead of time, so somebody said. Had to wait one hour for the Col[umbi]a train. In the mean time I succeeded in making that bundle of lunch (which Mrs W so kindly made up) considerable smaller. Gave the remainder to a little boy who evidently appreciated it. I could not think of passing Orangeburg without stopping, so I stopped, saw a crowd of girls at the depot, but none with whom I could claim an acquaintance. I met *Sam* belonging to *Sol Legare*, one of my Stono friends. He is a son of the old woman who used to send me butter and sell me chickens. The said old woman has left the country and climbed the tree by pegging out and having a funeral. Peace to her ashes. Her husband Sam's paternal *parient* went back to Legareville and was bagged by the Yankees. Well Sam put me in charge of a friend of his who was going up to town and she showed me the *Whittemore* Mansion. . . .

Charlie

Charleston Novr 24/62

Your favors of 9 Octr and 15 Novr came duly to hand. I am almost ashamed to write it is so long since I received the first

In my opinion that letter of the 9th Octr is set to about as doleful a tune as I ever heard not excepting "Days of Absence." Its all nonsense

for Ma to worry herself about me or my feed. If I cant find anything to eat it will be when nobody else can, and if I can't *earn* my feed I had better quit the country and go Sojering. It is true my Salary is Small, it being but \$50 per month and paying \$40 for board makes it look still Smaller. I have no written obligation with Mr. W—but my word is just as Sacred. On the 1st Jan'y \$1200 per annum will be my *asking* and \$1000 my *taking* price and if he dont like it let him better himself. I dont know positively what I will do. Have a strong notion to push out for myself and hang out a shingle. *McBride* advises me to do it and promises me much assistance. I know his influence is worth having. Harry Walker offered me \$3,000 about two months ago, to buy and trade in just what I thought best, profits to be divided, but I had to decline as it would take up too much of my time. and Wilbur would think I was interfering in the various chances of making some money, which occasionally present themselves in the Store. . . .

I am getting pretty hard up for Shirts. Keep those I sent until I come up and I will bring two or three more that need coopering. I have about 10 yds Splendid long cloth that I wish made up. I dont think you know my seamstress. Never intend to be without one for sewing and patching has got to be quite an item with me. I bought a blue pilot Coat little worn for \$9. Then sold my old brown Sack and the dark grey one and a vest, at auction for the same money. Pretty good exchange, wasnt it? Was offered \$20 for my bargain last week. *Dont send the drawers down.* Keep them until I come up. I will have to borrow a valise or something of the kind to hold my baggage this time. Bundles are played out.

Capt. S. Y. Tupper is determined to have a *put*, turns up after a long seclusion as "Agent for the removal of Non-Combatants" and no doubt he will take good care of himself, and *put* his carcass out of town with his numerous charge[s] when the time arrives. He says that he could not compromise himself by refusing to serve in any capacity or position that the public service required of him. Oh Consistent and Conscientious Tupper, thou art a great Captain amongst the people. Thy name is a terror to thine enemies and under the sheltering protection of thy strong arm, the people shall flee in Safety.¹⁷

¹⁷ Tupper had seen service, first, as commander of one of the volunteer companies during the battle of Ft. Sumter, then had participated in the fighting at First Bull Run. By late 1862 he had become Agent for the Removal of Non-Combatants from the city, charged with the responsibility of furnishing transportation to all those desiring to leave Charleston. Charleston *Daily Courier*, September 5, 1861, and April 8, 1863.

The people here dont seem at all alarmed and take things like all good people should—coolly. They are past Scaring. I dont think Charleston will ever be taken yet entertain no doubt of a great attack. In that event it will be a great consolation and satisfaction to all like myself to know that those we care for are out the reach of danger. So I think that you all had better stay where you are for a little while longer.

I will follow up my last sentence with the Cheering announcement that I Have found a Boarding house at last. I happened to see it advertised at *No. 10 Orange St* and I sent Peter Cuttino (who is as anxious for a change as myself) to reconnoitre immediately and on his return he reported Mrs. Hoff—\$7 per week—So we round and made our engagements to commence on Thursday morning. Have christened the House *St Bennard* [Bernard?]. Mrs H—will open her eyes when our *Stock* arrives at her door. We have a tub full of Boots and shoes, 2 trunks, Books and Rack, lots of pictures, empty bottles, Uniforms, pipes &c &c. I will sell all my furniture. The bedding and *mattresses* of course will be reserved in short I wont sell anything that does not belong to me.

Mr. Steen was down about two weeks ago. Begs to be remembered. *Capt Swan* has returned. Tried to run the Blockade in a small Schooner, but was chased ashore by the Yanks and lost everything.¹⁸ He brought on his little boy. His wife died of Yellow fever in Nassau and he came near pegging out too. If he had succeeded in getting in safely I would have come in for a share of the spoils. He has a schooner here now ready for Sea and he promises sundry articles if he succeeds in getting back. Wants me to go with him and I like the idea somewhat. Think I will try it on his next trip which will be if nothing happens in January.

As ever

Charlie

[Much of the manuscript of the following letter was undecipherable because of the ravages of time and exposure.]

Charleston Decr 21/62

Dr Liney

I wrote you a hurried [note] this morning so that it would reach [you] in time, informing you that I would not . . . be up your

¹⁸ As late as December, 1864, Swan was still engaged in this activity. He commanded at least three different blockade runners during the course of the war. *Charleston Year Book, 1883, Appendix*, pp. 557-63; *Charleston Daily Courier*, December 27, 1864.

side this week. I can only get 3 days furlough and travelling is so [slow] nowadays with no certainty of [making] connections that I am afraid to ris [a] trip to Florence. The Fire Dept is in a flurry too, the Legislature refusing to exempt them. It is said by our officers that we will not be troubled but that the matter will be arranged so as to preserve the Dep't in its operations the same as heretofore. So many are going away that the time allowed each is limited and a punctual return is necessary to secure a furlough in [the] future. I am sorry that it is so far I wanted to see you badly. . . .

I will send a box by express on *Wednesday*. Each article will speak for itself and anything in the shape of *Christmas* will be for all without any distinction so divide yourselves. The [cotton] *Cards*¹⁹ cost \$40 and I thought best to buy them as they brought over that in Wilmington. . . . The Salt is the Coarsest I have and the cheap[est] for it wont cost anything. I did not . . . it. I would not mention the cost price of [the] *Cards* to anyone. Let it be \$60 if somebody wants a pair. The paregoric cost \$1.50. . . [I] put the price of the other things in each [package] . . . [I] have not bought Spool cotton as I hardly know what you would call a reduced price. I also send you a pr of *Blk Lace Mitts* which I bought in Bull St for \$10. Just out of fun. They are fine goods but are too large for you I expect. You can sell or keep just as you like. [They] are worth \$15 to \$20. . . .

As ever

Charlie

¹⁹ An instrument used for combing out strands of cotton.