Tell Mr Cobb that Lyn is well. Butt is also well he is getting along admirably. Bingham is as wan as anticipated

Buena Vista July 10th 1847

(1)

Dear Arthur!

I have already written to you, yet received no answer. Write not be ceremonious but 'chat you a few lines' again. I am off duty today and will devote a portion of my leisure to epistolary conversation with you. I have nothing to communicate which is likely to afford any great interest to you, as news is as scarce here as 'good behavior' and that is the scarcest article in Christendom, just at this spot. My last was written to you on the eve of my departure from China and was mailed at Monterey. I suppose you have received it, and I imagine the answer is 'en route' to Mexico. I remained in Monterey two days and three nights, which enjoyment gave me ample time to visit all the spots of fame and interest in and about the city. On our road to Monterey we passed through the city of Cardenas. It is the prettiest place I have ever seen. A perfect Eden. While there I luxuriated on Oranges, pomegranates, Melons, peaches etc. etc. - Monterey is a fine place. I visited the celebrated Black Fort. It is a strong fortification and almost impregnable. In walking down the principal streets the marks of myriads of musket-balls are visible on the walls of the houses, here and there, can be

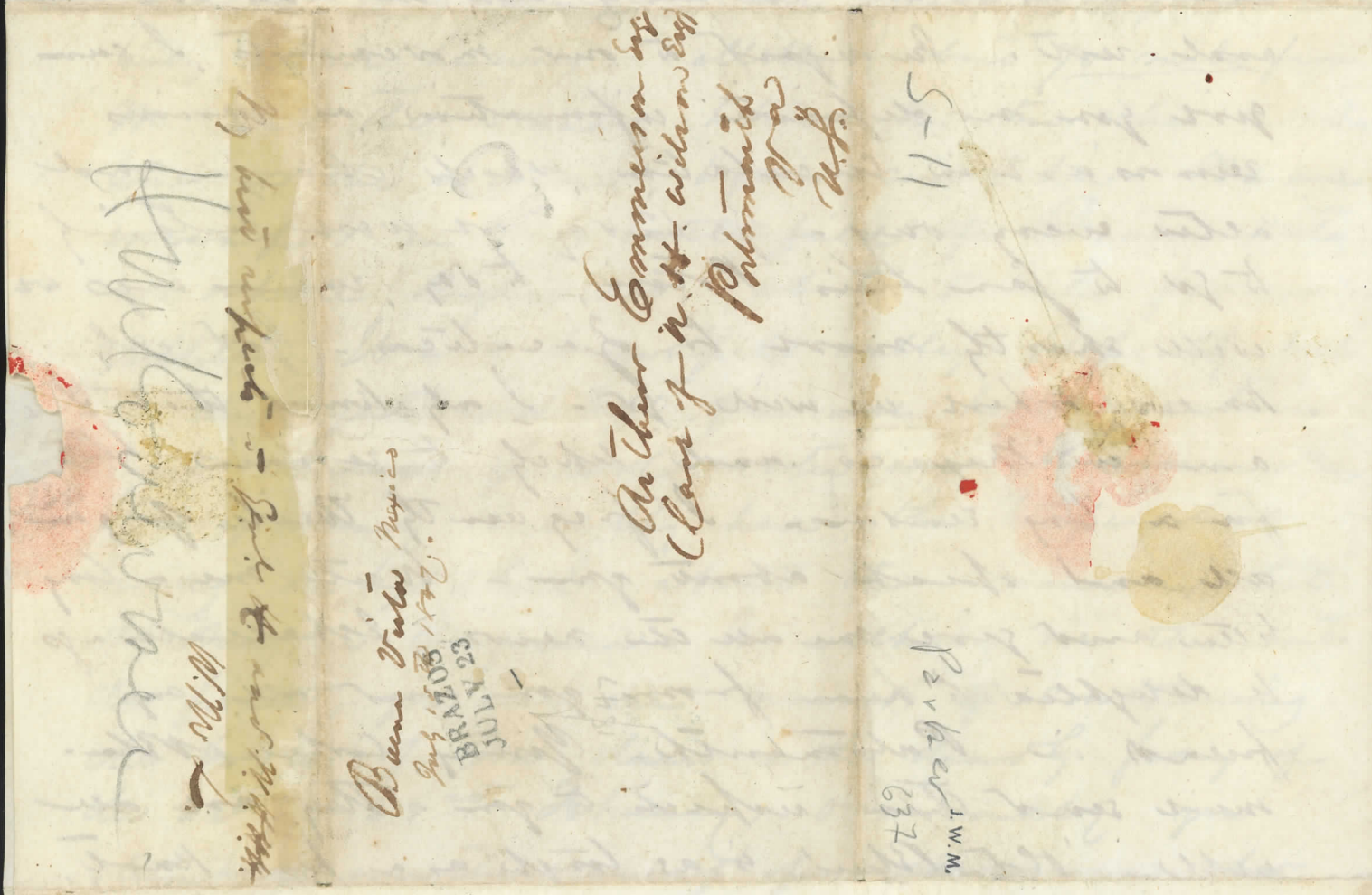
a fine exercise - but is very dusty - Regulars also in force all are now remaining here -

seen the effects of the artillery. Every house in the place is a fort in itself. And I cannot see for the life of me, see how our army ever took the city. I did not see Old Zach, as I had not time to go to Camp, about four miles from Monterey, where he was. Saltillo is about 70 miles from M. and the scenery between the two cities is sublime in the extreme, beyond conception. We are encamped on the battle field of Buena Vista, our whole Regiment, about 5 miles from Saltillo. It is a beautiful valley perfectly level in the right and left of us are high mountains and springs of cool water are all around us. It is extremely healthy here, the temperature being delightful, about the same as that of May in Virginia. In walking over the battle field, you can see mounds ~~of~~ containing the bodies of the slain in the deadly fray of the 22d. & 23rd. February. Occasionally you stumble over the corpse of a Mexican who was left unburied on the plain. The health of our Regiment is excellent, and the men are all in fine spirits. We are under the command of Genl. Wool. He is as strict as the devil and what with drills, parades, reviews, Police duties &c one scarcely has anything else. I forgot

you my word this soldiering in Mexico, is no child's play. I have seen the elephant, but this does not satisfy my curiosity I want to get one of his tusks' - or rather to feel the force of his snout, and to ascertain certainly how he takes his' natural rest'. In regard to our movements, I can give you no definite information, as various rumors are in circulation, which change and alter every day. Yesterday we were certainly to go to San Luis Potosi, to day, rumor says we will shortly move to Zacatecas. God only knows where we will go. I only know that I am in Mexico and likely to remain here for a long season. I frequently think of you all and speak about you. Write me a long letter and give me all the news. I shall always be delighted to hear from you and all my friends in Portsmouth. Young, Cole & Williams send their respects to you. They are all well. 'Old Blue' is as tough as a pine knot, nothing seems to hurt him in the least. I wrote to John a few days ago. also to Bill Haviland. Remember me to both of them in the kindest manner, as to all the rest of my friends and acquaintances. Particularly to Mr Chandler, Chas. Walker, Dal Wheeler, Charley Williamson, Wash. Rent, Jim

(4)

Parrish. Mrs. Wilcox. Cowper. Joe Schoolfield. Hamlin. Henry Corbin and my esteemed old friend Capt. Jarvis. Little Matty [illegible] delighted to hear from him and will answer his letter in a few days and give him a long account of my travels, adventures &c. Give



My love to all the ladies of my acquaintance in Portsmouth. Write to me often and newspapers would be highly acceptable and the kindness warmly appreciated.

Truly yours
William M. Lee

Buena Vista July 10th 1847

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William M. Levy

Cover: ms "Buena Vista Mexico July 10th, 1847"
straight line "BRAZOS JULY 23" and "10"

Buena Vista was a hacienda, a fortified residence, not a town. This is a very rare usage from the greatest battlefield of the war.