Jalapa Aperile the 20 - 1847

Dear Cousin

I write you a few lines in haste informing you of my good health and allso of the late battle which came of yesterday, Glory enough for to days fighting we left Vera Cruz the 8 for this place and after marching 4 days we was halted by the enemy wh had fortified a position a pass through the mountains and had a force of twelve or fifteen thousand men This is the renown place where they gained their independence from Spane The attact was commenced the 17 about twelve oc. by Gen Twigs division which was composed of the Rifle Regt and some infantry Regt who had bin sent to cut out a rode to gain a position on a hight to plant a battery when we reach that place we was fired on by the enemy at the same time a charge was ordered composed of the Rifle men and one other Regt the fight lasted till near sunset we drove them in to their forts we pursued them with in two hundred yards of ther batterys The night was imployed in planting abatry upon the

I have before mentioned The next morning
the battle was renued after about one
hours of cannonading on both sides
we was ordered to charge on their battrys
here was the most tryng seen I ever
witness the Rifles position was in
a place where they was exposed to the
cross fire of three forts and you may
depend they employed their time in
showring our ranks with Grape and
canester shot but all of this was not
sufficient we marched up to the
cannons mouth shot & and drove
the gunners from the cannon and
turned them upon their own ranks
The way they earnest was a sight not
often seen The loss on the american
I have not ascertained our Regt 9 killed
and fifty nine wounded. G company
one killed wounded 15 mortaly 3
The number on the opposite side of
killed and wounde I have not hurd
~~the~~ The number of prisoners taken
is a bout seven thousand and arms
ammunition and comessery stores now
end to them. amongst the buty taken
was General sante Anna carrage and

cork legs I have not time nor space
to give you any thing but a few
of the particulars This is one of the
most pleasent places in Mexico
the atamosphere is bland and delitefu
There is snow to be seen here the year
round I think there is but little
difference in the weather here and in
Indiana at this season of the year
yesterday was the first rane that
I have seen since I have bin in Mexico
that would lay the dust It is said
that the Ripple Regt will be left
here to garison this place and
I hope it may be so Gen. Worth
with his divisim is pursuing santeanna
who retreated from the battle field
with about 2000 troops towards the
city of Mexico Generae Vega was taken
prisner some rathers killed their name
I do not now there was one who
commanded in vera cruz who was
a on parlow of Homer killed
but I must close direct your letters
to vera cruz to be forrowed to Com
I Regt of Mounted Ripplemen
nothing more but remain cousin
(Corp) Benjamin Wingate
Mr Ephraim Doty

Battle at Contreras

NEW ORLEANS weak 1847 cds on SFL to Lexington Indiana. Mexican War letter datelined "Jalapa April the 20 1847" is from an Indiana soldier detailing a battle with Mexican soldiers. Jalapa is about 50 miles northwest of Vera Cruz and about 10 miles inland. Cover was transported probably by Army courier to New Orleans and placed in the US mail to be sent to Lexington Indiana.

Letter from Benjamin Wingate to his cousin Ephraim Doty reads in part as follows:

"I write you a few lines in haste informing you of my good health and also of the late battle which came off yesterday, glory enough for to days fighting. We left Vera Cruz the 8th for this place and after marching 4 days we was halted by the army. We had fortified a position, a pass through the mountains, and had a force of twelve or fifteen thousand men. This is the renown place where they gained their independence from Spain. The attack was commenced the 17 about twelve oc by Gen Twigs division which was comprised of the rifle regt and some infantry regt who had bin sent to cut out a road to gain a position on a height to plant a battery. When we reach that place we was fired on by the army at the same time a charge was ordered comprise of the Rifle men and one other regt. The fight lasted till near sunset. We drove them in to their forts. We pursued them within two hundred yards of their batteries. The night was employed in planting a battery upon the I have before mentioned. The next morning the battle was renewed after about one hour of cannonading on both sides. We was order to charge on their battery. Here was the most trying scene I ever witness. The Rifles position was in a place where they was exposed to the cross fire of three forts and you may depend they employed their time in showering our ranks with grape and canister shot but all of this was insufficient. We marched up to cannons mouth shot and drove the gummers from the cannon and turned them upon their own ranks. The way they ?? was a sight not often seen. The loss on the Americans I have not ascertained. Our Regt 9 killed and fifty nine wounded. G Company one killed wounded 15 mortally. The numbers on the opposite side of killed and wounded I have not heard. The number of prisoners taken is about seven thousand and arms ammunition and commissary stores no end to them. Amongst the booty taken was General Santa Anna carriage and cork leg (?) . . . This is one of the most pleasant places in Mexico. The atmosphere is bland and ?? There is snow to be seen here year round. I think there is but little difference between the weather here and in Indiana at this season of the year. Yesterday was the first rain that I have seen since I have been in Mexico that would lay the dust. It is said that the Rifle Regt will be left here to garrison this place and I hope it may be so. Gen. Worth with his division is pursuing Santa Anna who retreated from the battlefield with about 2000 troops toward the city of Mexico. General Vega was taken prisoner some others killed, their names I do not know. There was one who commanded in Vera Cruz who was off on furlow . . . Direct your letters to Vera Cruz to be forwarded to Com G Regt of Mounted Riflemen."