

Camp near the head of Devil River July 31st/49

My Dear Doctor

I improve the opportunity offered by an express to San Antonio to write you that I am in good health and pretty good spirits. We make slow progress having made but little over one hundred miles per month. We are now about two hundred & twenty-five or thirty miles beyond San Antonio and for the last fifty have been traversing a hilly country and one very interesting to a botanist. I have had good opportunities of securing everything in flower & fruit owing to our slow movements and long delays at several encampments.

I have made a very fine collection of seeds but the Cactaceae and bulbs I must almost entirely neglect for want of facilities for transportation. I have had more difficulties to encounter than I anticipated. I was thrown by Gen. Harney into the Commissary train and here I meet with but little sympathy. I was kindly received by Maj. Van Horn & Maj. Henry but I am separated from them often as many as twenty or thirty miles. For one month I boarded with one of the messes since which I have been obliged to cook for my victuals.

Just think of that, Doctor—a literary and college-born man turning cook for a living. Well it's some consolation ^{to think} that when I get out of this scrape I'll not get into exactly such another. However I hope I shall be able to go over the same ground early next year under more favorable auspices. As I wrote you before

Helenie I shall have to return to San Antonio in the fall
if war and winter do not overtake us too soon and
stop up our way.

I have been studying on the several contradictory
letters I have written to you—contradictory I mean as
to the amount and means of subsistence which I wished
you to send me. This was the result of the circumstances
in which I was placed. Sometimes I was spending money
as fast as I could wish & the next day perhaps I could
not buy for money what I wanted. Provisions are now
getting scarce and can not be bought for I save my money
—when I get to El Paso I may have to pay enough in
one day to board me in Boston a week.

The last arrangement made would set my mind
at rest if Doctor Baker were confident that my draft
would be duly paid—but I have very little confidence
that we shall hear from you before we return to
San Antonio—and so we must continue in the same
state of uncertainty.

My list of numbered plants and seed now runs up
to nearly eight hundred containing as before some
duplicates and some seeds with ^{out} corresponding
specimens—these are most of them very fine ones &
if I can get them safely to Cambridge you may ex-
pect a rich treat in the study of them—though they
are not remarkably rich in your favorites.

I am in excellent health and improve it I do as ear-
ly the mood of idleness I have frequently heard the remark

as I passed a company of men at play or sitting in conversation
"that is a mighty industrious man"

I can't think of any small specimen accessible to send you
at this time.

With the best wishes for the health of yourself & Mr. Dana
I remain

Yours

most respectfully

Charles Wright

P.S. A Mexican has just brought me a fine bachelor button
with heads much longer (2 inches) and of a paler color than the common
by cultivated species.

C.W.

John Gray

Cambridge

Neay.



Wright, Charles. 1849. "Wright, Charles July 31, 1849." *Charles Wright correspondence with Asa Gray*

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