

Camp 9th Army Corps
2 miles from Knoxville
Jan. 23^d 1863.

Dear Friends at home:

It has been a long time since I have written or heard from you. The last letter I received from B. was Mary's written thanksgiving to me. I sent a letter to B. at near Rutledge also one while camped at Lees Springs to Mary with some money enclosed. The other boys have received letters in answer to those written at Rutledge and just after the siege. I think it very strange that I do not get any letters. I thought today I would get to writing in hopes that I might in that way bring a letter. My health is very good although we have seen very hard times for the last week as for rations we have not had half what we needed and it was only by scouring the country and picking up

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It has been a long time since I have written or heard from you. The last letter I received from B. was Mary's written on Thanksgiving eve. I sent a letter to B at near Rutledge also one while camped at Lee Springs to Mary with some money enclosed. The other boys have received letters in answer to those written at Rutledge and just after the siege. I think it very strange that I do not get any letters. I thought to-day I would go to writing in hopes that I might in that way bring a letter

My health is good though we have seen very hard times for the last 6 weeks as for rations we have not had half of what we needed and it was only by scouring the country and picking up

at exorbitant prices everything eatable
for man or beast, that we could
live from day to day. I am sure
I don't know what the poor people
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do for food it seems as though
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come from the north. And
especially ^{so} now as we have evacua-
ted all the country north east of
Knoxville that is this side the
Salston river. Last Thursday morn-
ing ^{a little} ~~after~~ midnight we were
called up and ordered to be ready to
march at 5 in the morning,
but morning came and no order
to march after waiting about all
day wishing for something to eat
but not drawing ~~any~~ even our $\frac{1}{4}$
lb of flour as previously given no ^{it} was
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(what we needed most for the last few weeks)
pork corn and so forth was at the depot
under the command of rebels batteries

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at exorbitant prices everything eatable for man or beast. that we could live from day to day. I am sure I don't know what the poor people in this part of Tenn are going to do for food it seems as though they must starve unless food comes from the north. And especially so now that we have evacuated all the country north east of Knoxville that is this side of the Halston river. Last Thursday morning a little after midnight we were called up and ordered to be ready to march at 5 in the morning, but morning came and no order to march after waiting about all day wishing for something to eat but not drawing even one ¼ lb of flour as previously given us it was not to be had, large quantities of salt (what we needed most for the last few weeks) pork corn and so forth was at the depot under the command of the rebel batteries

on the opposite side of the river.

The rebels made a sudden move upon us and forced the troops on the other side the river to retreat. After they were across, the rail-road bridge was burned. This was at Strawberry Plain just week ago. This morning we broke camp at Leed Springs and marched 10 miles through the mud ankle deep went into camp in the woods near the Plain.

Night before last we were up all night most of us going to the river and bringing away salt, pork and so forth. We were so hungry we could eat anything even dry corn and dry wheat the boys actually picked up the corn which was left in the mud where the horses and mules had eaten this they would wash (unless they were too hungry to lug) (tote Tennessee people would say) water $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile and ^{then} brown it in a spider. Our batteries had been exchanging shots with the rebels all day Thursday.

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Friday morning at 1 AM we com-
-menced our retreat first going to
the river and drawing by hand the
guns of the batteries one division after
another took turns at hauling the
batteries until within 8 miles of K.
horses were sent. The roads was terrible
frozen in the morning and mud
ankle deep after the noon we continued
our retreat till one o'clock ^{when} rebel
cavalery attacked our rear they knew
we had no batteries ^{which had ammunition} so they pressed
us hard till night we arrived here
and formed in line of battle
sleeping on our arms at night
This morning we found no rebels
near us. we have ^{had} nothing to eat
except what we brought from the
depot Thursday night within reach
of rebel bullets for the last two days
Perfect everything at the river and
depot was destroyed before we
left large quantities of ammunition
and our coats was burnt.

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Friday morning at 1 AM we commenced our retreat first going to the river and drawing by hand the guns of the batteries one division after another took turns at hauling the batteries until within 8 miles of K. horses were sent. The roads was terrible, frozen in the morning and mud ankle deep after noon we continued our retreat till one o'clock when rebel cavelery attacked our rear they knew we had no batteries which had ammuniton so they pressed us hard till night we arrived here and formed in line of battle sleeping on our arms at night This morning we found no rebels near us. we have had nothing to eat except what we brought from the depot Thursday night within reach of rebel bullets for the last two days. I except evrything at the river and depot was destroyed before we left large quantities of ammuniton and overcoats were burnt.