In Picket Near Jones crossed
20 miles north of Washington
Dec. 24th 1863

I commenced this letter the 21st expecting to finish it the next day but as I wrote you before we were ordered off into pursuit of the rebels. I don't know as I can make this letter as interesting as to copy from my memory down the events of the 17 day siege. Before beginning this I will tell you our situation at the present time.

Our trenches came up Sunday night, but yesterday we were ordered out marching and went about 15 miles to town. The rebels were due (probably) to go back to check the rear three miles from camp, so here we are stationed by the roadside waiting our orders of fight and continue the hounds of the great numbers of civilians who one month returning to their homes having left with us.

A great many young men being left of those who were surrounded at Richmond they fear the rebels will put them in their service again in the subjugation of our farms. I went out looking this morning supposed to be buying a certain kind of corn meal in one day of onions to make the people in a state of distribution nothing badly to be obtained at any price whatsoever there was left by the rebel our quarters lasted for leaving but little for the owners are hundreds are destroying of their effects and starting north principally for Ky. They all say they will to death if they stay here. All the rebels seem to want bread in to get the subsist and the conscripts Oh! you had ought to hear the people here express their hatred of the rebels.

Many of the conscripts and unpaid prisoners say they will must be taken alive by the rebels they will stand to death first in our lines. We are at half and quarter rations yet but we have been able to foreage so as not to suffer but foreage not playing out but strengthening them by eating barley etc. every morning between noon and 10 o'clock by 24th and sometime from noon to 10 o'clock by 24th
On Picket Near Lanes crossroads
20 miles north east of Knoxville
Dec. 24th 1863

I commenced this letter the 6th expecting to finish it the next day but as I wrote you before we were ordered off in pursuit of the rebels. I don’t know as I can make this letter more interesting than to copy from my memorandum the events of the 18 days siege. Before beginning this I will tell you our situation at the present time.

Our knapsacks came in Tuesday night, but yesterday we were ordered out scouting and went about 4 miles returning towards night we had hardly time to draw out half lb. of flour and meat before we were detailed to go on picket nearly three miles from camp, so here we are stationed by the roadside burning any quantity of rails and examining the passes of the great numbers of citizens who are now returning to their homes, having staid within our lines while the rebels [?] the country. I have conversed with a great many young men living east of here who were surrendered at Vicksburg they fear the rebels will put them in their service again, so they seek protection within our lines. I went out foraging this morning succeeded in buying a canteen full of cane molasses 50 cts and one [?] of onions 10 cents the people are in a state of destitution nothing hardly to be obtained at any price what corn there was little let by the Rebel our quartermasters take leaving but little for the owners use hundreds are desposing of their effects and starting north principally for Ky. they all say they will starve to death if they stay here. All the rebels seem to want here is to get the supplies and the conscripts Oh! you had ought to hear the people here express their hatred of the rebels.

Many of the conscripts and paroled prisoners say they will never be taken alive by the rebels, they will starve to death first in our lines. We are on half and quarter rations yet but we have been able to forage so as not to suffer, but foraging is about playing out, but every day since Grants late victory brings us nearer the north by R R and steamboat communication, two steamboats loads of
of supplies have reached me on the Oklahoma river and from me to the 8th of this 1st day, and 1st days which last year we complained of.

By the way, breakfast is the night before Christmas and while dinner sitting by the big red fire. General Bull Market is swarming with a promiscuous crowd of gentry.

Memorandum.
Monday Nov. 10th. The day's roll was beaten at 2 P.M., and we left our old little houses and got into tents to live near the main roads and fell into line, marching to the semi-circular ridge north of the city and formed a line of battle covering the depot and buildings.

Nov. 10th. Left our arms cold and dusty nights as we moved into the city, the while one in our tents and encamp our camp ground, they were engaged in making bottles and digging little pits on the side of our little city.

On Friday, no gloom on our line, the rebels are mostly our own left, we have pitched in and front. The numerous dwelling houses stones and until north of the depot buildings are ordered to be burned ready to be burned homes are left at every house ready to apply the torch as soon as the 1st drive in one picket line.

The citizens have left their dwellings in a great hurry, some leaving most all their furniture cows and pigs and the soldiers have commenced furloughing me and got a lot of rations in the whip potatoes flour pork meat molasses & c.

Nov. 20th. Relieved from picket at 6 A.M. Fell into the city and dug little pits with the assistance of negroes and civilians on the bluff east of Ft. Statt. During the dry days
of supplies have reached us via Tennessee river and soon we expect the luxuries of hard tact and pork which last year we complained off.

by the way tonight is the night before Christmas and while I am sitting by the big rail fire Faneuil Hall Market is swarming with a promiscuous crowd of goose buyers.

Memorandum

Monday Nov 16\textsuperscript{th} The long roll was beating at 5 AM and we left our neat little houses built of pine timbers we had worked so busily on the week previous and fell into line marched to the semicircular ridge north of the city and formed a line of battle covering the depot and buildings.

Nov 16\textsuperscript{th} Slept on our arms cold and frosty night

“18\textsuperscript{th} We moved into the city the rebels are in our front and occupy our camp ground they are engaged in planting batteries and digging rifle pits in the site of our little city

19\textsuperscript{th} On picket, no firing on our line the rebels are mostly on our left cavellery pickets in our front The numerous dwelling houses stores and hotels north of the depot buildings are ordered to be cleared ready to be burned two men are left at evry house ready to apply the torch as soon as the rebs drive in our picket line.

The citizens have left their dwellings in a great hurry some leaving most all their furniture cows and pigs and the soldiers have commenced pilaging we all get a lot of rations in the shape potatoes, flour, pork meat molasses &c &c.

Nov 20\textsuperscript{th} Relieved form picket at 5 AM. fell back to the city and du rifle pits with the assistance of negrows and citizens on the bluff east of Gay street During the day I was