Knoxville Tenn. Dec 6th 1861

Dear Brother & Sister,

Enclose you a letter quidate to inform you that I am not well and cannot write as before the siege, except the protracted night work has tried me out and reduced me in health. I believe I was never so poor at this season of the year at the present time.

I went to sleep last night for the first time since Nov 28th and slept all night. Every night for the last 18 I have been called up to guard yard on picket or some other duty. It seemed a relief to lay down without being engaged with cartridge box and gun.

I have been washing all day tomorrow and feel as though I had lost a great deal. Suppose you will have heard all sorts of rumors concerning us the soldiers being doubled and as all out now, suffer starvation.

They supposed they were going to starve us out, but did not do it however, they are much nearer to it than was expected. We have had enough meat but I have had something else miss; in the next thing to it.

We have been having about one third of a salt graham loaf of black bread but if it had been as good as others it would have been a luxury. It was made of corn meal and wheat meal and had enough for the soldiers. We kept it carefully for we thought we got short of ammunition, it would do for cartridges. Bread played out a week ago and we are now drawing 3 1/2 of corn meal which makes me about enough. It is nice made in mush and tastes some like hominy it is not sifted for the less it would be too neat.

Officers and men are short as we for they could only buy at commission yet black bread is twenty five cents per loa
Knoxville, Tenn. Dec 6\textsuperscript{th} 1863

Dear Brother and Sister,

I sent you a letter yesterday to inform you that I am yet well and tough as before the siege except the protracted night work has tired me out and reduced me in flesh. I believe I was never so poor at this season of the year as at the present time.

I went to sleep last night for the first time since Nov. 16\textsuperscript{th} and slept all night. Evry night for the last 18 I have been called up to go on guard, on picket or some other duty. It seemed a relief to lay down without being combered with cartridge box and gun.

I have been washing all the forenoon and feel as though I had lost a good deal. I suppose you in New England have heard all sorts of rumors concerning us the papers have doubtless had us all cut up, taken prisoners in a state of starvation &c. The rebs supposed they were going to starve us out, but did not do it. however they came much nearer to it than was agreeable to us. We have had enough meat (beef & pork, [?]) but everything else, minus or the next thing to it. For bread we have drawn about the same as one third of a 5 ct. graham loaf of bakers bread, but if it had been as good as bakers it would have been a luxury. It was made of corn meal and wheat-[?] sour and hard enough for a soldier. We kept it carefully for we thought if we got short of ammunition it would do for cartridges. Bread played out a week ago and we are now drawing 1 lb. of corn meal which makes us about enough. It is nice made in mush and tastes some like homony it is not sifted for the loss would be too great.

Officers were as short as we for they could only buy of comissary and get black hard tact, two oz. of coffee & two
of sugar for 5 days. Officers were on duty as often as privates Orderly Sergeants stood on guard evry night. Our Chaplain stood on guard one night to relive the boys a little. By the way our Chaplain is the first and only conscript we have had join our Regiment. He is a glorious good fellow no stick up about him. By the way how did Thanksgiving pass off in Boston?

I suppose the turkeys and mince pies and puddings were in vogue as in days gone by. Alday the boys were talking of the Thanksgiving diners they had had and the good times of the past. It was not much satisfaction to us to talk of such matters on our present fare. However good times are coming on [?] supply train is on its way from the Gap and short rations will only be of things that were. We hear that Grant has whipped Bragg if so we shall soon be in RR communication with the north via Chattanooga and Nashville. It will seem good to get papers and mail direct We all wish a God speed to the railroad. Burnside has had his five engines and cars all huddled up at the depot. Yesterday forenoon the rebels had hardly got out of night before the iron horse was a puffing and the locomotive whistle greeted our ears again. We used to talk with the rebel pickets most evry day. We would shoot at each other all day and towards night as we grew tired and the firing would slackon, some rebels would make the proposition that if we would stop shooting they would, we would reply agreed then would begin the conversation at first the talk would be very civil and we would joke and talk very friendly. Soon one side or the other would begin to twit then grow more sassy till shooting ended our truce. Every day some rebel would ask us where Brownlow was. We would reply by asking where John Morgan was. Three times a day the bands in the city played Yankee Doodle Rally round the Flag Days. Red White and Blue.