

Keller Bridge near Cynthia Key Nov 29th 1863

My ~~dear~~ Dear Mother

Again I am happy to find myself occupied in writing a few lines to you and I imagine that you may be as much pleased on its receipt - as it has been several days since my last. But I have had nothing of importance to write as is the case at the present time there being no news of note in this vicinity everything going on with that sameness which is the only abjection to a soldier when doing this kind of duty.

I was pleased at the receipt of a good long letter from H a few days ago (which I have answered) and was glad to learn that you and all were enjoying your usual health at Home.

The scenes of Home the past week have been more constant in my mind than usual as I pictured the past Thanksgiving days that I used once to enjoy with you there, and the only but happy consolation ^{is} ~~was~~. Although not permitted to be with you that I was remembered I imagine that you were all together either there or at Mare, as

usual meals perhaps there was an addition on S's
account be that as it may I hope and trust that
you all had a pleasant time and did not lose
any of its enjoyments for fear that I was not
well provided and cared for

The day here was one of the most pleasant that
we have had for a long time as it had rained
nearly all the time previous and has since but seemed
to have stopped on purpose for that day

By invitation Capt Blaisdell and myself took dinner
with a Mr Cook who lives in Town and brother of the
man I am boarding with He is a wealthy man and
therefore everything was served in the best Reg style
for want of room and name I will omit the names of the
different dishes that the table was loaded

As there were several young people there of his ^(relation) kin
I remained until evening and had a very pleasant
time Although they were all rebel sympathizers
especially the young ladies two of them were
gaily dressed and decked in red white and red as most
of the young ladies do in this Co although I think
they are beginning to see their mistake by the recent
success of our Army in Town

You may think my position was a precarious one
but I have become pretty well accustomed to that kind
society here as they are mostly of the cash order even
if their parents are not and I am sorry to say

on my own account

that the puttiest and most agreeable of the fair sex
here in Reg at least in this Co are invariably sober
and diligent in upholding their cause in the presence
of a Union Soldier

Two of our men (privates) in the Regt were married last week
at Paris and are told they were very good looking as
well as respectable young ladies but it is not considered
as a very wise step for a soldier at present - and I am
sure it does not show good sense in a young lady
We all mourn the loss of Gen Burnside I was in hopes
that his resignation would not be accepted although
I don't blame him for wishing to leave the service
which however he can do (in spite of his enemies at W-)
with high honors to himself and his Country and well
knowing that his Command will deeply feel his loss
as a commanding General & friend too and highly
respected by all

Gen Foster passed through this place last week on
his way to the front to take the place of Gen B - do
but I understand that he stopped at Camp Nelson Ky (near
Hickmans Bridge) for the purpose of taking with him all
the troops that could be spared Our Brigade included
therefore we have been living the past few days
under the painful expectation of again taking the
field but our hopes seem a little brighter since
receiving the latest from Genl (Genl Burnside & Hooker)
~~Burnside~~ as we shall now most likely be permitted

to remain Burnside was at our time in a critical position
being surrounded on three sides by greatly superior numbers
the only chance of escape being back this way through
Cumberland Gap and that at our time nearly cut off
causing the people of Key (both loyal and disloyal) to be
greatly alarmed for fear of another invasion

The latest says that Burnside is being reinforced by Gen Wilent
who I have not heard of for some time. He was our Division Genl
when we were in the Army of the Potomac

They are now about filling the quota of troops in this State with
hopes of doing so without a Draft

We have received but one drafted man to our Regt from V.H.

He was assigned to my Co and I a little sorry for him as
he recently resigned his Commission as 2nd Lt in the 2nd Reg
V.H. Vol I am not certain but I am under the impression that
he is fishing for the 1st Lieutcy you know the Colo (Titus) first-
came out in that Regt as 2nd Lt

We have been experiencing regular Vt. weather today 21- froze hard
last night and it has grown colder all day with flurries of
snow (the first ~~the~~ we have had) so that the ground to night
is robed in white and it is very cold so that the water in
the pail is freezing in my cosy Tent although I have
and am sitting close by a rousing fire with my little parlor stove
cranked full of wood but I judge that the weather is not much
warmer in Vt. You need not worry about my sleeping on the ground
for I have got as nice a bed as I could ask and better than many
have at home - furnished by my boarding mistress (Mrs Cook) with
nice wollen sheets and blankets with a handsome coverlid so you cannot
blame me for not wanting to take the field duty at present

" by way of local general as well as local information improvement
if it should be agreeable to the young Colt - I should not hesitate to do so
so before if she had not been living in Benfield and other reasons which you
probably know I therefore subject it to your approval I am now corresponding
with two young ladies in Ben. Vt and am in Connecticut who on a visit
to Ben when I was there in Aug last - so you see I have already a little something
to occupy my leisure hours Mum -
I have written much more than I expected to when I commenced but
hope it will be of some interest and as I have got to the bottom I must
close for now. Much love to all

Across your affectionate son C.W. Wilent

Lieut, Co. D. 9th Vt. Paris Regt