

Magnolia House
Covington, Ky
April 6. 1863

My dear Jane

Here I am yet. I wrote last on board the Steamer Coal Hill from which we disembarked last Friday. Since then I have been pretty busy getting our wagon train put in order, the lost pieces of harness etc replaced. As soon as we can get the horses all shod now we will be ready to start, but will not be permitted to go until ordered. We soon ascertained that our regiment was at Lexington, one hundred and twenty miles south of this place. There is a rail road from here direct to it. Johnny left us to join the regiment on Saturday morning. We will probably go by the turnpike which is a much shorter route, and will take us about four days.

You can again turn to your map and follow our journeying. You will find us now on the South bank of the Ohio river opposite Cincin. Both Newport and Covington are directly opposite Cincin. and the two first named places would form but one city if they were not separated by the Licking River. Across this river there is a good wire suspension bridge. They have commenced building a suspension bridge between here and Cincin. The piers are partly finished, but for the present we cross in ferry boats. This is a pleasant quiet city about the size of Harrisburg. It seems strange to me to be again amongst people. Everything here looks as usual in a city, except the soldiers who are on guard at every corner. Although in Kentucky and it a slave state I have not seen one darkey yet, while on the Ohio side opposite there are plenty of them. I went to Provost Marshals Office to get a pass to go about the city and over to Cincinnati. Found his clerk to be a Lawrence Co. man, a graduate of Wilmington College and got my papers without any difficulty. Having the pass all right and seeing it advertised that G. F. Frain was to lecture on Saturday Evening we went over to hear him, and was well repaid for the trip. He delivered one of his inimitable "Young America" lectures, just in keeping with the style of his lectures delivered in England.

The Quartermaster had nothing for me to do on Sabbath, and just after breakfast I went across the river again. I hunted up Thomas Nicholson. I found him unchanged in appearance - he looks as young as when I saw him last. His wife looks twenty years older, partly from age and partly from the loss of her teeth. He lives in a very neat frame house that he built. His father, sister and younger brother live with him. His father has had a stroke of paralysis and has lost the use of his right arm, and besides is hard of hearing. His mother is dead. Alexander is here too, but was not in town. He has been in the army and

knocking around generally. Thomas says he has kept on drinking etc until the last three months when he stopped and during that time has been sober and steady. I went to church with them. They go to a small church called the U.P. Mission Church. Mr. M'Cure preached. He is from Beaver Co. Penn. and an old friend of Mr. Brown our chaplain. They have a fine Sabbath school. In their infant class they have two hundred scholars. After preaching I went back with them to dinner, after which we had a regular old fashioned Irish "crack".

On coming back to the hotel, who do think you was waiting to see me but Had M'Bride. He left Petersburg the same day that I did, but came to Cincin. by cars. Genl. Burnside sent him to clerk at the Commissary of Musters. Col. Leasure sent on a protest against him staying, but it amounts to nothing. Had wants to stay as he gets a good deal more pay, and it is a nice place. In the evening we all went across again to hear Frain lecture on New England theology & missionary enterprize.

This is Election day in Cincinnati. Politics run high now in Ohio. Every one is excited about it. The Copperheads are active. If the election passes by without bloodshed it is more than is expected. The mayor has ordered the drinking houses to be closed, and I was surprized this morning by the arrival here of the 36th Mass. regiment from our brigade to be ready to cross over and keep things quiet if necessary. I saw several old army acquaintances among them.

Thomas Nicholson has just been over to see me. He wants me to come over and spend the evening with him. Can't promise for we may be gone before then for all I know. He says there were several big fights already in the 4th Ward. His family are going to disinter and bury again his mother. They had placed her temporarily in a vault. The weather here is not so pleasant as it was at Newport New. It is rather raw and chilly. Although now some weeks further on in the season vegetation is here just at the point we left it in Virginia. The crocus and daffodil are just blossoming and the young leaves and buds making their appearance on some of the trees. At many windows I see pots of flowers that have been nursed inside, and here and there an Oleander set out in the front yard. It is a feature of this place and Cincin. that they mostly have a small yard in front of their houses like the ones on Summer St. Philadelphia. From using the soft coal so much now Cincin. is nearly as black a place as Pittsburg. Their buildings are fine, and every one appears busy. No signs of war to be seen here. It was generally supposed that our Corps had been sent for to guard bridges, garrison posts etc and have an easy good time generally, but I learn that such was not Gen. Burnside's Expectation. The opinion there is that there is a good deal of work to be done in Kentucky this summer, and that we are

to do it. Since I commenced writing a rumor arrived that our regiment had a Skirmish with the Enemy yesterday. I have no time now to trace it farther than Capt. Curtin's Clerk, but as Johnny promised to write, I will expect reliable information by this evenings mail.

It didn't look to me as though I was soldiering any more. Since leaving Baltimore I have not got any hard tack, have been living at private houses and hotels and becoming unfit for a soldier. Norman Maxwell is here too, and that is all of our regiment in this place except two of the men who were left here sick. One of Capt. Bentley's men and one in my company. I have to go to see them at the hospital this afternoon.

I have not got any of your letters yet darling, and for that alone I wish I was again up to the regiment. They are the only things that bring you very near to me, and am anxious to handle again even a piece of paper that you have looked on if it had not a single word written on it, but how much sweeter to read thoughts and words fresh from your pen and heart, reminding me of you and your worth. If I remain here a day or two I will write again, but if we leave here to night shall probably not be able to do so for a week.

With much love darling

I am your Affectionate
William