Cairo Ills.
Monday June 8. 1863

My dear Jane

Here I am sitting writing on a stump. Look at the picture in Martin Chuzzlewit & you can see me. I wrote you last Wednesday 3d and have not had an opportunity since, so rapidly have we moved. I think I stated then we had marching orders, but am not certain. We received them that day - to have 8 days rations and be ready to move at a moments notice. It was done and suddenly our destination was changed. Instead of crossing the Cumberland into Tennessee we were ordered back with all haste in the opposite direction. At half past two on Thursday morning we were woke and started. I gave Willie my horse and we passed through Columbia at 4 o'clock. We proceeded to a very fast gait. The road soon showed the evidence of a march as the day began to get warmer. Paper collars thrown off by the officers, stockings & extra baggage by the men strewed the way. Later in the day the men began to tire out and here and there in a fence corner you see a man with blistered feet or some other thing that has stopped him. We came on till near Green River bridge. The wagons overtook me. Stevenson gave me his horse. I rode around the Stockade at the brigade, but the motion of the horse made me sea sick and I was glad to overtake him and give him back. My stomach was too bilious to stand jolting although I could walk very well. Towards evening we reached Campbellsville and passing through it pitched camp in the woods, with orders to start early in the morning. We marched 20 miles that day. Campbellsville is a rather pretty village with one church, a town hall and a Masonic hall. It was not called for Campbell the founder of the Campbellites although he lives near there, but for old Dave Campbell a tavern keeper. Here the people had nice gardens and fine rose bushes etc. On Friday morning we started again at sunrise and marched 20 miles more arriving at Lebanon at half past eleven. This was the fastest marching ever we made. The brigade left before we had our wagon ready and got an hours start of me. I walked all the way without stopping once & did not get up to the troops till about 10 o'clock when I caught sight of them from a hill. Before climbing it I came across one of Co. G's men who had fell sun struck & I staid with him till the wagons came up and had him put in. The road was strung along with men who could not keep up. Some threw away their blankets & some their knapsacks. The rear guard had to hire wagons & or carts to bring in men who could move no further. We stopped for coffee on the outskirts of Lebanon before taking the cars. I got my coffee with the company. Such a tired set of men I never saw. Johnny's feet were badly blistered. He said he would have given up only for shame. Many took their shoes off and went barefoot. Many are [galled] badly.
I felt quite well again. I took no supper the night before & took tea for breakfast & by that time my stomach was all right. I sweat through any clothes & my left thigh has the skin rubbed off the inside with my heavy cavalry pants. It is nearly well now. My penis was also galled & bleeding & is hacked yet & very sore but as our marching is over for a while I think will be well enough in a few days. It is no slow work to march 40 miles in two days. The other brigades & divisions of our Corps are also on the march and will soon be here too.

When we got to Lebanon our paymaster was there, and he said he would pay us off if we waited. The Col. agreed to wait & he commenced & paid us all. I received $27.70 for two months. Johnny could not get his because he had not yet been mustered in as a Lieutenant. We were not all paid till midnight. There was great speculation as to where we were now going. At headquarters we thought it was to the Army of the Potomac once more. Some thought to Vicksburg. Some to Harpers Ferry or Point of Rocks to stop Stewart's threatened raid into Penna... I could get no chance to write you, but determined to telegraph as soon as we came to Louisville. We started from Lebanon at midnight on Saturday. They put us in cattle cars and did not even sweep the dung out of them. But we were so tired we did not care. We spread our gum blanket on the floor & Lt. Justice, Johnny & I slept as sound that night as ever we did. We woke up in the morning near Louisville. Johnny went with his company & the Lieut & I took a walk through town. We got our breakfast at an eating house. We bought a coat & then we crossed the river to Jeffersonville. Here I asked the Col. which way we were going for I thought that if it was East I could let you know in time to see you at Enon Valley. Then he told me it was West & so it was no use sending word that I was going farther off. We got away from Jeffersonville in the afternoon in cattle cars again. One passenger car attached behind for officers this time. I got into it with Lt. Justice & have been so fortunate ever since we reached Seymour Jnc. towards evening and got coffee there. It was ready for us having telegraphed ahead to have it. Here we change cars and take the Ohio & Mississippi RR. It takes three trains to take us all. Willie comes with the last train in charge of our baggage. We arrived at Vincennes early on Sabbath morning. There we got hot coffee & bread. Things now become natural again and look like a free state. We left Vincennes passing through many pretty towns & villages. The people heard by telegraph of our coming and were out with flags & bouquets at every station at Clay City nearly all the women in it came down with baskets & buckets of pies & cakes and handed them round without charge. This is different from the Kentucky people that we were protecting charging 25c a quart for buttermilk. The girls came distributing bouquets. I got a pretty
one from a little girl that could hardly reach it up to me at the car window. The colonel made the band go out & play for them. On we went all day in this way till at last we reached Sandoval. Here we have to change cars again. The people here were quite as kind. One old soldier came back from a house he went to for butter, with a large roll, saying the old lady would not take anything for it. She said she had a son down where we were going & hoped he would be treated the same way when he needed anything. After considerable delay we got off once more. Our second train was seventy miles behind at this time so the telegraph operator told us. We came on to Centralia & had coffee & beef. The second train now overtook us and we left. In the first train there is the 2d & 20th Michigan and only Co. E of the 100th. We passed another night in the cars arriving here at Cairo at sunrise. Such a place – it can hardly be described. Dicken’s tells no more than the truth in M. Chuzzlewit.

I went up to Headquarters with the Col & staff & at the St. Charles Hotel got some of the dust washed off. They got their breakfast there. I went to an eating house and got a better one for half what it cost them. I went to a place called a Grocery store & bought there two sheets of paper & envelope & am now sitting on a stump in the swamp at Co. E's quarter.

The other two trains are not yet in. The place is crowded with troops. The river is full of boats & gunboats & we are destined for down the Mississippi.

Whereabouts on the Mississippi? That is the question the men are now discussing. Are we going to reinforce Grant at Vicksburg? We think we would be too late to do him any good. I think that probably all the troops at Memphis and other points near him have been sent to him at once and we are going to fill up as fast as possible. It may be we are going to join Rosecrans. However, a few days will tell & I will write as soon as possible. When my desk gets out of the cars & we get under way again I will be able to write oftener & better.

I am sorry we are running off so far from the mail. The last I got from you was on the 17th May & there must be more than one on the way, but I can't expect them now for weeks.

I am very well now & have no fears of the malaria's of the Mississippi as I have never had the shakes & even if it threatens I have an ounce of quinine in my knapsack. The only thing bothering me is the sore P____ but if I don't have to walk or ride for a few days it will be all right again.

I got a couple of ledgers from Phila. at Lebanon out of the mail that arrived there.

Hereafter please direct to me Co. G 100th Penna.
care of Lt. Justice A.C.S.
Via Cincinnati
3rd Brigade 1st Divis. 9th A.C.
till I find whether our Corps will be changed. The company &
regiment will bring it right even if the Corps is changed.
I will hasten & close this now dear for fear we move before I
get it in the post office.
With much love - I remain dearest ever yours
Affectionately
William