

Camp Copeland March 21. 1864

My dear Jane

I am likely to get behind hand in writing if I don't do better hereafter. It is a whole week since I wrote last. I did intend writing almost every day last week, but somehow one thing after another turned up to prevent me from carrying out my intention. I would have managed to send you a note had not Johnny been going out there, but when he started I knew that he could tell you all about our circumstances here. I would have liked to have gone too very much, but I could not well do so, the way I am now situated. If Lt. Justice had been well I think I would have gone back again, even if only for a few days.

John Haworth sent me your letter of the 13th and as I did not expect one so soon it was only the more welcome. I have attended to the teeth, and have a very good fitting set, with which I can eat anything that I have come across yet. We have not had any hard tack to try them on, but from the way they tear up tough beef I think the crackers won't stand before them.

Our camp is a rather poor one. However, we have escaped the worst part of it, and have our tents pitched in an open field outside. With me it has been all bustle and business, and I have had very little time to spare. I have been to Pittsburg a few times. Willie and I went in to Pitts. on Saturday night and only came back this morning, remaining at John Haworth's all the Sabbath. We found them rather upside down, preparatory to moving, which they commence doing to day. They are going to a house not far from where Rob. M'Bride used to live out near the drove yards.

There have been a great many visitors out to the camp to see us. J. D Kirkpatrick came last week and stayed all night with us. He took your garden seeds and will send them on by mail to you. I was afraid to send by stage for fear the mud had prevented its running up as far as N. Liberty, and via N. Castle would have given you a long trip. He will send the other things soon, probably as soon as he gets over the moving business. M. Whitten was also out here, and had a long talk.

Our men have nearly all gone off - home probably - there were only 150 in camp last night, but they are gathering in to day. It is at last decided that we are to go with Burnside - Even the whole Corps, and the remainder of it that we left in Tennessee is now on its way here to join us. Our present destination is Annapolis, but where we go to from there has not yet been made known. We will take the cars of the Penn. R.R. on Wednesday, and probably will go through Phila. as I notice that a large bridge on the Northern Central R.R. is burned, preventing us going via Harrisburg unless it should be repaired in time. We will probably remain at Annapolis two or three weeks before embarking. I feel a great relief at getting away from here, and am glad too that we

are to go with Burnside instead of back to Tennessee. I would just as leave be a thousand miles from here as where I am and yet unable to leave and go there.

You will have seen a great many of our neighbours back again by this time. Some were sent back, recruiting, and some got leave to go, some also ran off without leave. Johnny had a narrow escape for getting off. He could not have gone if Lt. Justice had not come up. He was just as uneasy as any one well could be, and nonetheless so when Sam George had gone. By the way I saw a package at Haworth store with your name on it, and had the curiosity to open it to see what was going to you. On taking off the wrapper I found that it contained a nice writing desk with a silver plate on the lid with "Martha McKee" engraved on it. You can guess the rest as well as I can. I shall not be the least surprized if your little brother should come back to us a married man, though he has not said a word to make me think so. The married men will be in the majority in our regiment now.

We have come across the Christian Commission at last. It has ventured out into the field - far away from civilization - even out to the destitute Camp Copeland, and the benighted Roundheads are basking in the sunshine of its munificence. A seedy looking pale faced youth has been giving us all a Shorter Catechism with Geo. H. Stewarts name printed on the cover. I must never more say I have not seen the real life Christian Commission.

Our old Chaplain Mr. Brown has also been out here several times. He is in Pittsburg on business connected with the publishing of his history of the 100th Regt. So between him and our New chaplain we have at present two of them, backed by the Christian Commission but I cannot yet see any great improvement in our men.

I had an introduction to our new Chaplain Mr. Dickens, and did not find him the man I expected from Mr. M'Watty's description. He will take very well if he holds out as he commenced. He tells me he is from County Down, and is as pleasant a man as one would wish to see.

We are getting plenty to eat, but there appears to be something bad in the location of our camp. The men are getting sick. Generally with the ague, but there is also a good deal of Typhus fever, measles, mumps and few cases of small pox. Willie and I are very well and for my good health I have great reason to be thankful.

In reviewing my good fortune and good health since I engaged in this business I am afraid I have not been thankful even to the limited extent I am capable of, but hope to not altogether forget my great giver and benefactor.

How is your own health darling? You don't say anything about yourself. Let me know how you are dear. I feel interested in

anything you have to say about affairs at home, although I may not appear to notice every particular in your letters. I stated in my last that you need not write till I could tell you where or how to direct. I can hardly do so yet, but till I can give you further information you can direct to Care of Lt. J. Justice Q.M. 100th PVV. Annapolis, Md. When we leave there you will see for where by the papers before I can let you know, and then you can direct accordingly. It may be then a good while before we get any word from each other, but when we once land there will probably be a Steamer once a week or oftener.

Hoping to hear from you soon by Johnny. I remain  
Yours affectionately  
William