

Camp of 100th Penn. Vet. Vols
March 22. 1864

My dear Jane

The days labors have closed (and a lively day it was) and before retiring I sit down to send you a few lines in answer to your No. 47, of 13th for it may be a good while before I can get an opportunity to write you again. I had scarcely time to read your letter, but some part of it required an immediate answer, and lest it should cause any delay in your operations I will answer now. It is in regard to your building operations. I approve all the arrangements you have mentioned. I cannot name any particular size. If it will accommodate 50 to 60 sheep I suppose it will do. You can consult your father who knows better than I do what size is necessary. It was only yesterday that I received your No. 42 of Dec. 14th. In it you mentioned the purchasing of the cow that you tell me in your last letter that you sold. Strange that I got word of her purchase and sale in two days. I cannot imagine where they keep letters so long.

I have just read your letter a second time. You are making decided improvements in letter writing. You have written quite a long one, and a very funny one too, for you. I cannot reply to it in the same way - not for want of fun, for of a certain kind I have had almost too much of it to day. I have been uncommonly busy. We had orders to march tomorrow morning at 4 o'clock. That is what made the fun. All were enjoying themselves here as though they were to remain all summer, and some regiments have not yet realized that the order is not a joke. They have accumulated so much baggage that they can't take the fourth of it along with them, and are looking around in stupid wonder at what will be done. I can easily tell what will be done - They must go and leave it. We got a good start and have turned over all surplus baggage to the Post or shipped it home by Express. I sent two books by Express in Lt. Justice's trunk to N. Castle. One, Mitchell's Astronomy of the Bible, the other the "Silver Sunbeam" belongs to John Haworth. You can get them anytime you are in N. Castle from Old Mr. Justice.

The most disagreeable feature of tommorrows program is that Lieut. Justice and I must dissolve partnership. He has been appointed Division Commissary for Genl. Stephenson. We have been put into the Second Brigade of the First Division of 9th A.C. It was agreed that I should stay where I am and manage the Quartermasters department of our regiment. But as I am not commissioned I cannot act legally and they have sent Lt. Weller here for the present to sign any necessary papers. They have written to Col. Dawson from Harrisburg, stating that they cannot promote me over the heads of all the other sergeants in our company unless he can give them some good reasons for doing so.

He is bothered more about it than I am. He says he will appoint me Sergeant Major as soon as the present sergeant major's commission comes in, and from there I may be promoted without any objection. This is Col. Leasure's usual way and would have been the best at first. As it is, there will be a delay of at least a month, and perhaps more. There is said to be "luck in leisure," and in this case I can see some. Had my commission come now I would have had to take command of Co. as none of their officers are here. With our present prospects, that is not a very desirable place. We start on a march to Lee's music, and as our popular song says "Many brave boy's must fall." After a while our officer will be here, and then I can be detailed as quartermaster or if Lt. Justice is promoted in the meantime, (which is now very probable as Gen. Burnside has it in hand) I may be commissioned as quartermaster. Let it be as it may I am not worrying anything about it. Before you receive this you will see by the newspapers what is going on. Anyhow I can see by the movement that something will shortly be done, and can smell the battle, not afar off. It will no doubt be a desperate struggle. Some of our officers are alarmed. Maj. Claire resigned today. I don't know why. Capt. Hamilton takes his place. Johnny is not here yet. If he had been here today he would have been made Brigade Commissary. Willie, I will keep here in this department. I speak as if I had all to do with it - well so I have. I am quartermaster in all but the name. Our new brigade is a wretched affair. We are in with some of the newest and worst regiments here. One, the 57th Mass., came only last night. I am afraid that in action we will not be much account. The 100th has seen its best days. Our Commanders are new men and strangers. Perhaps there are enough veterans in it yet to maintain our reputation in new fields, but it is to be tried. Our old Genl. Ferrero has command of the "niggers." They will get a chance with him. Capt. Curtin is with him also.

I have written this evening to Rob. M'Bride to come on immediately. I got him a clerkship with Capt. Curtin. He wants to try the army, as his pay as conductor is not enough. Had M'Bride is here. He has command of a company of niggers. The whole of this camp has been in an uproar today with the preparation for a move; they will continue all night. I have all my arrangements ready, and can leave in five minutes. But I must first have a sleep which I have plenty of time yet to take. It has commenced to rain again. I believe we start for Washington or Alexandria, but that is only my guess as our destination is not announced. From the suddenness of the move I know that it is of importance. Henderson George is detailed to go with Lt. Justice to the Division. Baggage is cut down to the smallest allowance, and everything indicates a rapid march and an active campaign. My big desk goes away with Lt. Justice, and I have a little one about

the size of a hat box, so that I will not be able to get at things to write as well as usual on a march. I will however try to let you know how we get along again as soon as possible.

I have not heard from Phila. since Rob. M'Bride was here. You will have had later news from there by this time than I can send you.

It is getting time to turn in for all who have to start at four o'clock in the morning, so I'll [go] to bed to dream of you darling.

With much love forever

William