

In Rifle pits 100th Penn. Vet Vols
near Petersburg, Va.
July 10, 1864

My dear Jane,

Your No. 57 of 4th instant came last night. I might have answered it the same night, but we dare not light a candle here in the pits, besides it was Saturday night and I preferred waiting till the next day, and would then be writing to you the same day that you would be writing to me - July 12. This far I got when I was ordered out on picket, so I had to suspend my writing and take fifty men out beyond our front line of pits. We have a lot of holes dug in the ground there and put a man in each of them. It is our business to keep a watch on the enemy and give our men notice in case he makes an advance. Johnny was out the day before. He was unlucky. He lost two of his men. One was shot in the arm and one in the head. I got all out and in again without any accident. When I got back last night the regiment was gone and I could not find it. I hunted round for an hour or two and gave it up. I went round to my old place at Lt. Justices and slept there. They wondered what was the matter when they got up in the morning and found me sleeping outside of their tent. After breakfast I soon found the regiment. It was sent back near Genl. Burnside's quarters to a little brook, to let the men get themselves and their clothes washed. We will get staying here a day or two. This was much needed. We were getting to look very hard with lying so much in the ground and sand, and being so far from water.

My clothes are pretty badly tattered. My trousers (the ones you mended at Crab Orchard) are worn through in the seat. I got a new pair & as soon as Mr. Robinson gets the pockets fixed I will put them on and throw the others away. It feels like a holiday today after being on picket yesterday. We are out of range of fire today. Yesterday it was dangerous to put ones head outside the hole. The rebel sharpshooters were up in trees watching a chance. When I got out last night I felt ten years older with being cramped up in one position so long. Fortunately my turn comes only once in two or three weeks. I think Johnny will be detailed away from us soon again. Lieut. Anderson who had charge of the ambulances was killed day before yesterday, and the Medical Director was asking Lt. Justice if he knew a good officer put in his place. He recommended Johnny, and I think he will be appointed. I hope he will. When Willie returns I think Lt. Justice will send for him too. Lt. Anderson had just come over to the regiment to see us a minute, and was shot in the eye while talking to us. There have been no more losses in Co. G since I wrote last, except by sickness. I have had a few men sent to the hospital for that cause. Some of the other companies have had men killed and wounded, but I cannot remember of any from your part of the

country.

The weather has been intensely hot. We had a shower last night, but it did not cool us any. We have a prospect of another this evening. I think it is thundering, but cannot tell precisely on account of the cannonade.

We have received word of the rebel raid into Penna & Maryland, but it does not concern us much. We hope to stay here and finish this affair first. The more men Lee sends away the better for us and the worse for him. If he has sent off any considerable number Grant will soon find it out, and we will advance once more. We will have a pretty hard charge to make in our start, but if we move them once I think we will go clean into Richmond. I would rather see Lee make an attack on us, but am afraid he will not. He made a show of it twice, but did not come on, which was a good thing for his men. He could not dislodge us if he had six to our one.

The paymaster has not been here yet. You will have to depend on the C & A R R dividend for your first money. When the paymaster does come I can only draw pay as a Sergeant till the end of May, and it will take nearly all that to pay what I borrowed in Philada. from Johnny. I have sold my buffalo robe for what I gave for it and that keeps me in money enough to buy my rations so far. If Lt. Kirk gets mustered at Meadville now while he is at home and sends me a certificate of his having done so, I can then get mustered, and if the paymaster has not gone off by that time I can then draw my pay as a Lieutenant but not till I get mustered.

I am getting fatter and stronger. This weather, hot as it is appears to agree with me. Hope it will continue so. The men are living fine now. There appears to be a rivalry between the government and the Christian and Sanitary commissions about feeding them, and they are getting pickles, cabbage, potatoes, lemons, tomatoes & in abundance. We never lived so well before. I have to buy mine now, and get whatever I want. We also get the papers pretty regularly, and see what is going on. They don't however always tell the truth as you will see. For instance they say the 9th Corps is so near the rebel line that they send out no pickets.

The man who wrote that was never out to our front line or he would have known better. The firing at our front line is only at our Corps and the 18th. The rest of the line is quiet. The reason assigned is because our two corps have nigger troops and they try to annoy us. However we give it back to them and I think they are getting the worst of it.

There is a considerable discussion going on about some irregularity in our muster at Blain's Cross Roads last winter. Some think that it will not stand and that the old members of the regiment will all be mustered out at the end of next month when

the three years expire. I do not think so, but it will not be long till then and it will be settled by that time. Some of our men will go home then anyhow. Men are going home frequently whose time is out, and we are receiving many new ones. Many of our old officers will go home then. It will make quite a change in our regiment. Even now it looks different. We have lost four officers who got married when home last winter - strange as it is. Capt. Penticast who was wounded at the Wilderness is back again - his wound is not yet quite healed, but he got tired of the hospital and came back. Capt. Oliver also who was shot in the head is back on duty again - he had quite a piece of his forehead & eyebrows cut off, and went round with a piece of sticking plaster over it. Some men went home with less wounds. It is strange Geo. Leasure does not get hurt. He is the most exposed of all [rest of sentence illegible].

I don't think dear that this was the kind of letter I intended writing yesterday, but I can't now get my diary with your letters in it or my pipe as I had them fired when I commenced yesterday. I had to drop all and go on picket. They are in Douglas's knapsack & he is asleep with his head on it. I did not take anything out to the picket line for fear the rebels might by some chance get a hold of them. I will try and write soon again. I expect to have plenty of time. Hope the rebels will not cut off the mail between Phila. & Petersburg. The soldiers are laughing at the scare at home & say the speculators in stock, gold and provisions, will have to stop a while & do something to save their funds for we don't want to - we have enough in hand here.

I hope they won't get up to Mercer Co. to disturb you dear. If they don't I don't care much where else they go.

Please remember me to the folks believe me

Yours affectionately

William