

Camp of 9th Army Corps
near Petersburg, Va.
July 24, 1864

My dear Jane

Not from the rifle pits this time, thanks to the unintentional kindness of a silly fellow who tried to get me into trouble. Instead of doing so however he only gave me about a weeks rest. Last Sabbath we got back about a mile to a little brook to get washed, but in the evening there was an alarm of an attack, and we had to hurry back to the rifle pits, where we took our places about dark. We were ordered to keep our arms ready and not go to sleep that night. The men however were so tired that they all went to sleep after a few hours. I kept awake all night. No attack was made and the night passed over as usual with the scattering picket firing and an occasional shell. About noon we were ordered back to the City Point road to be inspected. When there, the inspector a fancy man, who has never been any nearer the front than that discovered that I had no sword on and reported me to Genl. Ledlie [James Hewett Ledlie] who ordered me under arrest. He also had one of our Captains served the same way. However on explaining why we were without them he remitted the sentence so far as the arrest was concerned and ordered us not to appear on duty again till we got one. So not having a sword and not therefore being able to go on duty I went back to Lt. Justice's and with the exception of a visit now and then to the regiment I have remained there ever since. Johnny was there too till Wednesday when he considered himself well enough to go back to duty. He was not well as he ought to be. I was out to see him to day. He still has a fever occasionally. The men are now in the worst pits they have ever been in. It has been rainy, and is raining now, and the rain accumulates in the pits. From the way that the ground lies where they lie they cannot drain them. They are also more exposed to the rebel fire than usual. They expect to be changed tonight as they never remain more than four nights at one part of the line. Still exposed as they have been they have not had so many casualties as usual. Some other regiments have lost more than usual. While out there to day a shell fell into a hole in which there were four officers of the 57th Mass. and wounded them all. There are now only four officers left in that regiment. Our Division loses about 30 men a day. I expect to get my sword by Willie when he comes. During my stay back in the rear I have had an opportunity to get a good many things done for our company back there that I could not do while in the pits, such as making out our pay rolls, descriptive lists for our sick and wounded men and the final statements of those who died and were killed. I have been busy, but am nearly through. By being back I have also missed a turn of picket duty. However, the adjutant

don't mind it. He did not even like to put me on before. He told Johnny that he hated to do it, and had let me slip beyond my turn. If Willie don't get back in a day or two I will go back anyhow. I can easily get the loan of a sword. I could have done so at first but I was too contrary. I have received another commission as 1st Lieut. and will be mustered in tomorrow in Ashton's place. It is still vacant. I will feel better satisfied to go on duty then for in case of any accident you will have the full benefit of my position as an officer which would not have been the case while I was not mustered. Lt. Kirk has been commissioned as Captain. He is expected to resign, but I do not know whether he will or not. Sam Grace is now 2d Lieut. but cannot get mustered in till Kirk gets mustered out.

Since I came back here I have received two of your letters. No. 57 & 58. You see I have been busy for I kept them till Sabbath to answer.

Chambers Weakley is not with his company. He stays back near City Point in some capacity with some quartermaster at the wagon train. He is up to see us occasionally. I saw him last week. He is well. I told Johnny that you thought he might write home oftener. He says that he has done so several times lately. While he was back at Lt. J. I saw him directing a letter to Jerusha - Does he also write to Miss M'k? Henderson appears to have a voluminous correspondence going on with Mary Ann. Somehow they have found out the name from some scraps of paper left on his desk, and they bore him about it a great deal.

Capt. Hamilton was made Major when Maj. Cline resigned. He will be Lt. Col. now, but he wants to quit. He is in very poor health and much broken down. You would hardly know him now. My prospects for quartermaster are all over now. Welles answers so well that they will hardly change him. It could not well be done while he does so well. The only chance will be when he is promoted to Captain by Capt. Critchlow becoming Major which will take place in a few months. But perhaps I will be Captain first and then it cannot be. Who can tell what will happen in a few months here, where we live years in a day? There appears to be some movement on hand. Grant, Meade, Burnside, Butler and all the Generals had a grand pow wow on Friday. Things since then are getting ready for a move or a fight. We can't tell which. It is rumored that the Ninth Corps will have to go to Kentucky. We will soon see, but I kind of doubt it.

While back here the other day we had a visit from Miss Jurdock and three other ladies. They took dinner with us. They brought up some brandy, bitters, Brown's ginger, tobacco, envelopes, hymns etc for our regiment. They are going home soon.

I had some envelopes ready printed ordered sent to you. Did you get them? I remember how women dislike to direct letters. I

had to get some for you for it was sometimes impossible to get a drop of ink out in the front.

Lt. Justice was driven to Fortress Monroe again to get vegetables for the hospitals. He brought us up some butter and green tomatoes. We get plenty of vegetables this summer, but not so much as we did this time last year when in Mississippi. We have had no corn yet, while there we lived on it.

My health is still excellent. Few are getting along as well as I am in that respect. The climate is unhealthy. The nights are lately very cold. The rain of this afternoon has turned into a storm and the wind is nearly blowing the candle out, even in the tent. That is the reason of my scrawly writing on this page. It feels as though it would freeze to night. I wish it would if it would kill the flies. I never saw such swarms. It takes right good manoeuvring to get our victuals in the mouth without the flies going in with them.

The paymaster is expected to be here in a few weeks at farthest. Some regiments have been paid. Our rolls are to go to Washington tomorrow. It will be at least two weeks then before they will be returned. If I am mustered tomorrow I may possibly get paid up to the 30th of June after all.

Harrison Nelson was over to see us last Sabbath. His regiment is within two miles of us. Cowden Craig comes over often.

You will have no doubt a good deal of trouble with your farm this season. Don't worry over it dear. I will be home to help you next year. Your wool came up to your mark after all. And Poor old Jack had to be shot! Was he buried with the honors?

Very few of our wounded men have returned yet, but many of them are well again. I think they have kept them for the defenses at Washington. If so, all right. We can hold our own here without them.

Remember me to all enquiring friends & with much love to yourself I am as ever

Yours affectionately

William