



Camp near Harpers Ferry.

Virginia Nov 16. 1862

Dear Father, Mother, Sisters, and
Brother,

Not being on duty today
I am going to pass away the time
writing to you. I am well as ever
I was and getting tough and
I think its about time we all began
to toughen after passing through
what we have for the last few
~~days~~ weeks there has hardly
been a day in three weeks but
what we have been on picket
we have now and then a little
fun when we are out such
as capturing a little fresh
meat and I've filled my
canteen more than once with
milk. I dont calculate to steal
much neither do I mean to starve

Well Father I think I will ^{give you} a short
history of the tramp we took the
last time we were on picket we
were out about 2 miles from
our camp there was six men
detailed out of each company
myself Dowd and Barnard and
Horace Torley and a couple of
others were sent out of our com-
pany us four were at one post
one would stand and watch
two hours and then another would
take his place my turn to ~~watch~~
watch came from ten to twelve
I had been on my post about
about 20 minutes when I saw a
dark object about eight rods of
it was so dark that I could hardly
make out whether it was anything
or not but I thought at first it
~~was~~ a man I drawd up my gun
to halt him when thinking that
it ~~might~~ might be a tall story.

or something of the kind and if I halted it the boys would ~~be~~ laugh at me for halting a ~~stump~~ stump so I thought that I would watch it awhile I kept an eye on it about half an hour but it did not stir so I went to walking to keep warm the moon come up pretty soon and there there was no man stump or anything else to be seen I don't know whether it was anybody or not but I was very shure that I could see something its well for what ever it was that I dident see it moving off it might have come across a fall if I had well the relief come out and I went back where the other two were to sleep a few hours well I had a pretty good sleep and did not wake up until morning we cooked some

meat and eat our breakfast
and then sat around the
fire talking and reading
some old news papers that
we had picked up on the
ground nearby at about nine
o'clock we saw two horsemen
coming up the road they
came to a house about 80 rods
from us and stayed around
there quite awhile it was
so smoky that we could
not see them very plain
~~we~~ thought they were rebels
spying about our pickets
Dowd spoke and says
Welch I think we had
better go and see what
all this means we took our
guns and started out
that way we got out far
enough so we could see them
and they turned out to be
a couple ~~ladies~~ riding out
ladies

we walked down the road they
saw us coming and they started
off down the road we walked
on for half a mile and sat
down on the bank side of the
road they rode down the road
there horses on the rim we
sat there awhile and went
of across the lots toward a
house to get something to eat
but not getting anything we
went back to our post we
had just got to our post
when we saw three rebel
cavalry men coming over
the hill where we had been
sitting just then a company
came to relieve us and they
took our post and we were
free to go back to camp but
we watched the rebels they

come up within one hundred rods of us I would have all ^{givers} I have got for a horse a piece for us to have used one hour they would have hurried up a little faster I think well they rode toward the house where we had just been and from there to a house over the hill out of sight. we began to pick up our things to go back to camp and was just starting when our Major who had come out with us come running up without any horse and said he wanted ten men that didnt care where they went ~~and went~~ and were not afraid to go anywhere we jumped up and he said that he was eating dinner and the reles rode us they were the same ones

we had seen they rode up
one jumped off and untied
his horse another fired at
him the ball going through
a girls dress and drawing
blood on her side they
rode off with his horse saddle
and overcoat he then come
where the pickets were. well we
started off after them double
quick we went on double quick
a mile and a half and surrounded
the house of an old secesh
but found nothing he said
that he had two sons in the
rebel army and that there had been
400 cavalry at his house that week
we took one of his horses and told
him if he was a union man he would
get pay for it he said God knows
that there is no union about me
we started for the camp four of
us Dowd Barnard and Folley

went off to a house and were
brought to have some dinner
before we marched to camp
we went into a house the woman
was scared most to death she
thought we were rebels she said
that the rebels had searched a
house only a few rods from
there that day she said
that they had on our
uniform and that was what
made her think we were rebels
she got us some corn bread
and milk and she would not
let us lay down our guns
long enough to eat she said
the woods were full of rebels
she sent her children
behind the house for fear
the rebels would fire on
us and hit them and told
them to keep watch and
tell us if they were a army
that was the first time I ever
eat at a table holding my gun

we eat all the corn bread we wanted
and sat and talked awhile the
woman said that the rebels
had been there two hours
before but we did not hurry
any for nothing would have
suttled us better than to have
had them fired on us it was
a large log house and we
could have whiped four times
our number we never would
have surrendered you can
depend on that for we were
a squad that never gives
up to a scesk we started
out and got to camp just
dark the horse that we took
wasnt near as good as the
Majors was. he lost a nice
saddle besides. but I think
we will make it up soon

that is the first horse
the 123 has lost and I think
it wouldnt have lost that
if Dowd and I had stayed
in the road where we were
about half an hour longer
we would have stepped
behind the rail fence there
and when they come up we
would have wiped them
out I think that the ladies
we saw riding out rode down
and told them that we
were coming down the road
and they started out to take
us prisoners I think they
would have failed if we had
been there yesterday we
marched six miles over to
Maryland Heights to work
on a fort there they are
mounting cannon all
around here today there

was three hundred more
went over they have been
drawing up guns with ropes
all day today they came back
to night they say that the
troops on Bolivar Heights
were drawn up in line of
battle all the afternoon its
reported that Stonewall
Jackson is but eleven miles
from here and approaching
all the time our Brigades
quarter master is moving
his stores back out of the
way and I think something
is going to be done at last
Burnside has superseded
McClellan and now were going
to have war in earnest for
my part I am glad of it
for I have seen enough of
this playing war if were
going to have war I say let it

be war and the sooner the
better for my part I want
to follow Burnside into
Richmond ~~later~~ between this
and New years and I think
if they will let us go we
can do it but I must close
I received letters from
Sarah and Susan last
night but I have wrote so
long a letter to you that I
have not time to answer
them and dont know when
I shall have for I have got
to go on picket tomorrow
give my love to them the
next time you see them
dont send me any love
untill I send for it for
they come through yet as
they should give my respec
to all the folks up there
I send my love to you
and all of the family write
some of you as soon as you
get this From your son Henry



Mr. Luther Welch
North Hebron
Washington Co
N. Y.