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Letter from William McKinney to His Aunt, February 6, 1862

William M. McKinney

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Camp Whipple Feb 6th 1861

My very dear Aunt,

Some of the 3rd inst was

brought on while partaking of my sumptuous
supper of hot coffee, light rolls, fried potatoes,
and beef steak, all gotten into eating order by
the aforesaid "contraband". All further operations
were immediately suspended until after the
perusal of the epistle. Indeed, I experienced more
pleasure, than in the perusal of a Morning Paper,
containing the particulars of a recently fought battle,
at the breakfast table in a splendid Dining
Saloon, Alas! Yours is the first letter (except

those I found here on my arrival) I have received
since my return from my travels in
North America, and you may well imagine
a foreigner would greet the first reliable news
from his native country, gladly. The fact is,
I had commenced thinking my visit to
my friends had proved rather disastrous to
my correspondence, supposing, that since

... they had caught sight up, but met, being
... acquainted with the aforesaid
... had concluded he was not the
... but that his further acquaintance
... had better be
... perhaps the chance
... of that 16 year old
... mentioned suppositions are entire
... I do indeed hope so, particularly on account

of the manner I bear for the ...
It does seem a very long time since I left
... the collector of our ...
... well
... I am very, very sorry,
... indeed I am sorry I so grievous my dear
... of that little indiscretion
... of mine; it does seem like the dear old lady
... will never entirely recover from the effects.

I hope I will not have to be accountable
for any decline in her health on account thereof.
Indeed she is very pathetic over it, even very
eloquent, I almost shed tears over the recital of
the terrible "rubber" and wrong that had been
committed by the "atrocious villain", President.
I should think the man, indeed, branded in
crime, that could commit such a deed