

1-16-1862

Letter from William McKinney to His Cousin Martha McKinney, January 16, 1862

William M. McKinney

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Camp of 15th Ind Regt - - 2^d Brigade -
1st Division - Left Wing - 14th Army Corps -
Department of the Cumberland
near Murfreesboro Tenn - Jan 16th 1862

My dear Cousin Mattie -

News of the 2^d ult was only received a few days since - I wrote you soon after the battle - which you have doubtless received at this time - you have also read other accounts of the same engagement - and by this time know most of the particulars - I need not write you anything more concerning that engagement - it was terrible enough I assure you. We have been out on another of our hard expeditions since my last writing - Left Camp at Midnight of the 12th with three day rations in our haversacks - returned to Camp late yesterday evening - We marched in all - about 60 miles - 20 miles a day - did not accomplish much - took some prisoners - do not know how many - nor do I care - we went out to Nolensville - thence toward Shelbyville and toward Columbia - But the marching was nothing - when compared with the other hardships - the weather was cold - and the rain fell in torrents for 26 hours, while we were out - I passed two nights out - sitting by four fires - on logs - the rain falling in torrents - never closed my eyes while we were on the expedition -

By yesterday morning when we started back - the
whole country was afloat - all the little brooks were
swollen into large streams - it was a regular road for
20 miles - sometimes we waded through water for
a quarter of a mile - where it was 2 feet deep all the way -
and waded through streams up to our waists - the air cold -
freezing - Last night was very cold - ground froze solid -
to day the wind blowing a regular North West - and
snow falling - It was a hard expedition - I believe
I am about the only officer in the Regiment - but what
is either sick or complaining hardly - almost all
the men are sick - I have only 9 well men in my
company to day - both Lieutenants and Ordery sick -
I feel very clamorous myself - but keep moving - many
such expeditions at this season of the year - will
kill up the Army - The day before we went out
on the last expedition - my boys got brick and put
me up a nice chimney and fireplace - so I am
quite comfortable notwithstanding the cold -
Have an abundance of dry cedar wood to burn -
and can sit comfortably - It is as cold as
Greenland to night - must be very cold with you.
Would that this were over - and me all
at home with our friends - as to the Regular's service -
I was only joking - I could not be bribed to
enter the service - this is regular enough for me -
I am willing to quit - any time - the sooner
the better - I would like a little civil life now -

Should like to see that cousin Gullie McKimney -
I am very partial to the name - hope she is as
gay a girl as some others of the name I know -
Hope you had pleasant times during holidays - I posted
mine on the battle field - about that miniature - I
am looking for it every mail - are you not going
to send it; I would like to be at one of your Aid
societies - I know I would have a good time - as
to that Dutch girl - I shall expect to meet her as
soon as the war is over - if I live to get through it -
About the first name I will make after I get out
of this engagement - will be to enter into another for
life - and I want to have the other party justified -
so there need be no delay in the matter - Write
to Cousins Minnie & Emma both to night -
Wish I had an abundance of news to write you
this time - but have not - and do not feel like guessing
much to night - My kindest regards to all - hope
to hear from you soon again -

Your affectionate Cousin

Wm McKimney

You will perceive by the heading of this that the
Bregade and Divisions have changed numbers -
direct accordingly -

me