

MS92_9_4_01

I am Officer of the Day to day, you would imagine your cousin was quite a distinguished personage, could you be at the Guard House today whenever I pass by there, and here the sentinel there, cry out at my approach, "Turn out the Guard!" "Officer of the Day", and see the Officer of the Guard parade the Guards, and come to a present arms, as I passed by them. But such is their duty, no matter whether the Officer of the Day is a very distinguished man or not. I have to sit up Till midnight to night, to make the Grand rounds of the Guards, visit all the Guard posts at midnight, to see that everything is in proper order and that every sentinel is doing his duty. Our safety in Camp, especially at night depends entirely upon the vigilance of the sentinels, if they should be careless and neglectful of their duty and not guard well, and keep good lookout, in enemy might steal upon us, surprise and capture us, before we had time to make any defense. The weather is very cold at present, the coldest we have felt since we have been in the State.

(to back of the page)

The ground is covered with snow, and the air piercing cold. This is St. Valentine's Day, have you written any of those tender, touching, missives that told upon the heart of the receiver, while he mainly wonders who the authoress could possibly be (.) I should certainly have written some to day, but we have no regular mail established to this Camp yet, and I could not tell when they would go out. We have had no mail for a week and I do not know when this will go out, but thought I would write, and have it ready to send the first opportunity. I have not heard a word from home since I left there with you, nor indeed from any body else, but our dear good Aunt Ann, she told me all about the tears that were shed by my two fair cousins after I left, and how many times their "handkerchiefs" had to be dried before 10 A.M. when cousin Mattie left for her home. I believe I have heard that cousin say, she was tear proof, how is it, did Aunt tell me a story about her! I believe this makes the sixth letter I have written you since my return, and not one word from your yet. I think my perseverance and devotion unparalleled in history.

(to next page)

Saturday evening Feb 15th

No mail yet, nor no opportunity of sending a letter, very discouraging and provoking indeed, but I must write a little mail, as no mail, letter or no letter; when night comes, it is perfectly natural for me to sit down to write, whether I have anything worth the writing or not. The weather is still miserably cold, as cold as any I experienced while visiting you and friends at home. It requires all our ingenuity to keep comfortable here in our tents. We all have little sheet iron stoves in our tents, by means of which we can keep warm if we keep "wooding up" all the time. I keep my "Contraband." "ax in hand" most of the time, he is (same?) an the fire (business?), he says, as long as he can chop, wood and make fires, "his Lieutenant shant git cold," good boy! Will do to keep him, he is a faithful as any, mortal could be, he renders me as

comfortable as possible, and to see that my clothes and boots are always brushed and in order. I think him altogether a good institution, think I could not do well without him, will want to own one by the time the war is over.

(to back of the page)

The name of our camp is now changed to Glenbrook. Camp Glenbrook, Hart County, Ky, is now the address, a very romantic name, and by the way, the surroundings are the most romantic I ever saw, not even excepting places in Western Virginia in summer time, this must indeed be a beautiful place. The country is very much broken, and mountainous, though the mountains are not so high as in Virginia. The whole region abounds in large springs and cascades, fine trees high grey limestone cliffs. Our camp only assumes the name of the Post Office here as that was here before the war. Green River its (. .) a large stream here narrow but deep, the Rebels have burnt the bridge that runs over it at this point, no means of escaping now except by a skiff, and we are yet forbidden to use that, have to confine our roaming yet to this side. I learned by Aunt's letter, that Cousin Will had returned, I presume there was great rejoicing at "Camp McKinney" when he came back, should like to have seen my fair cousin just when she first saw him on his return, suppose was somewhat beside herself. How often did Uncle lose his good old "Virginia Weed" that evening? Was the "fatten calf" killed or not? I suppose if Camp McKinney had just one more recruit, it would have its compliment, and all would be well again. Have you learned that military salute yet, and could you properly meet that old Colonel and salute him as gracefully as he bowed away from us on the cars that day? If you have not, you had better be practicing it, for he will certainly be around some of these times when you are not expecting him, for I gave him your address, I am sure he w(ould?) had (struck?)!

(signed vertically in the middle of the page)

Your affectionate Cousin

WM McKinney