

MS92_9_7_11

Camp of 15th Ind Reg't 21st Brigade-
Division near Columbia Adair
County Ky Oct 26st 1862

Cousin Mattie

Arrived here yesterday evening after four days march from near Mount Vernon- 90 miles east of this, making about 300 miles marching since we left Louisville last. Are here without tents blankets or baggage and snow eight inches deep and still falling. Snowed all night last night-the wind now blowing as cold as Greenland. I am writing-sitting a huge log fire- the wind blowing the snow all around me-filling my eyes with smoke. This is rough work I assure you- numbers of the men entirely barefoot-many with very poor shoes.

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It looks very hard to see men sitting around the fires-barefoot-shivering with cold-some without either overcoats or blankets. We are expecting our baggage from Louisville here in a day or two- but that is not now and it may not come. Last night-I rolled up in the blanket-so tired and footsore from marching-that I could have slept through an earthquake- when I wakened up this morning- found myself completely buried in the snow. This is what I call soldiering in earnest- but it seems as if we were accomplishing nothing. I- suppose however-we run Bragg out of the State. I presume we will remain here four or five days,- and perhaps longer. I have no idea where we will be ordered to next-nor do I care. We have been living on half rations for some days-and are an half (force?) now and will be for

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some days-until provisions arrive from Lebanon. We have been and now are in a very poor Country- it will afford us little or nothing in the way of subsistence. I do really wish we could get some place where we could get some rest- we have had none for the last three months. I have suffered more on this last march than any other that we have ever made- I have had very sore feet all the time- have marched day after day-the blood oozing from blisters worn raw. I have symptoms of rheumatism similar to that I had last winter- I am dreading a winter Campaign. The truth is-we cannot stand it at this rate-we must be better prepared to endure the cold and rain. I do wish you could look into our Camp to day-and see how we live-you might laugh-but I rather think you would be more likely to cry.

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seeing the poor fellows crowding around the fires-shivering-their teeth chattering together-their feet for toes peeping out of their worn out shoes. We hope to get a fresh supply of clothing soon- but that is not (new/now?)- we started out fully equipped from Louisville- but so long a march through a rough County- has worn most of our clothes about out. I have not slept under a tent or shelter of any kind since (1st/that?) of August-you may imagine your, Cousin is rather a rough-looking Customer-at the least I suppose so- though I have not looked into a glass since I left

Louisville- almost a month ago. I hope we will get a Mail soon-I. know there must be a score of letters for me some place-but they are not here. I have not heard from home for a long time-do not know what is going on there. I wrote you last from near Mount Vernon-about 10 days ago- hope you have received. I am writing to pass away the time-do not know that I will get a chance to send it in a week. When I get a good chance to write you a long letter-will do it-but under present circumstances- you must be content with a short note from your Cousin (signed)
McKinney

(written externally and crosswise, note 1, in pencil)

Had a letter From Abby This morning Will answer as soon as I can.
(signed)
WMMcKinney

(written externally and crosswise, note 2, in pencil)

October 28th have a Chance to send this today-no further news. Weather still cold (and/inch?) snow on the ground-Write me soon-Your affect Cousin
(signed)
WMMcKinney