

1-1-1862

Arthur McKinstry to Mother

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Third Regiment, Excelsior Brigade,

COL. NELSON TAYLOR, Commanding.

Camp Wool, Jan 6th 1862

Dear Mother,

I have been very busy of late in helping to fix tents or rather houses for the company, but I think it is time to turn over a new leaf and tell the best friend I have how I prosper. On New Years eve I got a very long letter from Wm. in which he told me that my articles were looked for by many

with interest and that they were becoming an attractive feature of the paper. I have endeavored all along to make the Censor the military gazette of the country and I believe that I am succeeding. There is no other paper which has a regular table of the sickness and deaths and I have a private opinion of my own that there is no other paper that is likely to. In the meanwhile I keep strictly up to the duties of a soldier so that when I want a little liberty I can get it. My health is very fair and I am recovering something of the elasticity which I lost in Mexico and have never enjoyed since in a greater degree than now. There is just snow enough on the ground to whiten it a little but I am so hardened to this life that I do not suffer as much as I used to at home under the most favorable circumstances.

Just now I am writing upon my bed and the backlog is getting well ablaze, while we have oak wood enough piled up to last 24 hours.

My watch proves to be a very good one and I could sell it at a profit if so disposed but when I get a good thing it is my general disposition to keep it and not run the risk of having a poorer article palmed off upon me. If I only had your pantry and library to run to I should feel very contented. As it is I have access to a few French books and as we have a pretty smart Dutchman in the tent I mean to get an "Ollendorff" and make him teach me Dutch which he agrees to do. My tent is floored with heavy plank hewn by our own hands, and so long as I have an ax, an auger, and a jack knife I will agree to live as warm as you do. Upon a pinch the ax alone will answer.

2981 '9

I heard from Aunt Eliza a few days ago and as letters must eventually be destroyed here I send it along with this; and Cyrus' business card as well.

You can hardly imagine how much good Mint's letter did me it was such a good long general friendly thing.

He tells me that it is very possible that Uncle Willard may visit the capital before long. If so I hope he will visit the 3^d Regiment. There has been much exultation here on account of Patsy winning the gold prize medal for shooting.

Old Chantagna still comes out no. 1 and the city roughs are more disgusted with us than ever. And now Mother you must either write yourself or make Frank do it so that I can hear from home often. Mint tells me that you were all well when he was out but I like best to see it over your own signatures.

Give my love to Father and the boys and to Jennie and John. Sante Jones sent home for a box, if it has not been sent just remember me in it. Sepuchka or pork pie well seasoned would be likely to keep.

Your aff son Arthur.