

muddiest! in the neighborhood of the river, up a steep rocky road, I tumbling and rolling along in the dark for a half mile when we came to a halt and made ourselves comfortable for the night. Cold and wet, or damp, for it didn't rain. We got a fire and a supper after a while. It proved a "failure," the trouble originating by some blunder which waked up the rebs and looked like a move on their part, and so of course the 9th A.C. [Army Corps] or the fragment of it must tramp again to aid the 23rd [Army Corps]. What will they do if we ever leave here?

But early Tues. morn ordered back to camp where we've remained since with our com[pan]y drills, inspections, and lately dress parades, and short rations in spite of all our hopes and promises of better fare and a move North soon. It will come by and by and so we live on and make the best of it. I must confess my spirits have been somewhat tired of late. I long for a different state of things and find myself checking my temper quite often and I remember home and rush to some reading matter if it can be found. The last few days have been cold, cloudy with some rain, but on the whole 'tis a fine climate.

The woods are much cut away from front of the camp and the rolling land with woods with the mixture of pine seems like old N.E. [New England]. Upon a hill some more than a mile away stands a brick mansion painted drab, surrounded by tall oaks, in which Gen'l. Longstreet held his headquarters, and in the valley between is the railroad and the cars come and go several times a day, we are reminded of civilization.

As I write, the 79th Reg't. N.Y. Vols., at our right, are having inspection, the usual Sunday one with knapsacks, etc. and the old piper has just closed. 'Tis a Scotch Reg't. and they have a bagpipe which you know sounds like a cat and our boys always set up a shout when he plays. I don't appreciate it, I must say, but they keep up this national feature and also have the drum and fife, which is now beating off.

But you care little for this and I gladly turn from this camp picture to you at home. At church today I suppose and Communion Day! Need I repeat how much I wish I was with you? Sat over my fire this morning and read a few chapters in the Testament and felt that our hearts met somewhere in the space between us and was comforted! When shall we really meet? But this month and that soon brings my time half out, but today it looks a long ways to the end and I am glad I seldom feel it so, but everything conspires to "longings" today and so I am sober. Are you well? I am glad you have got some of my later letters as I conclude you have by the Serg't. etc. and I hope too, to hear from you by letter quite soon. Did not attend service today for my thoughts were strongly elsewhere.

Health is good as ever and I have my daily chats with Ben who always desires to be remembered.

What of Will and Hattie? Suppose Alonzo and Ellen are 'one' and perhaps you've seen them since. Have felt so little like writing of late that I have only thought of them as by others. A good "bunch of letters" will help me, one of these days. Jos. H. is well. See him most every day.

And how is Lulu? I ought to write her a letter. Tell her there is a sweet little bird [that] sings here every day and I wonder if she hears any? Or do the snow birds hop along on the snow and say anything to her?

Are the rest well? Love to each and all and with hope of hearing soon, believe me, ever your own,

Jerome

Have lost my ink again, so excuse pencil. What of Mrs. Preston?

I read the different articles in the "Ploughman" with interest. A good paper. Send it when you can. Story was good.