

to the  
Mr. Pearson  
States  
but whether  
the expedition  
my doubtful  
with all  
of the  
North  
again  
I am  
said  
of our  
side  
last  
from our  
Peak  
Camp  
about  
even  
the  
from  
Shelbyville  
out  
the  
stage  
of  
the  
last  
evening  
after  
dusk  
by  
Gen  
Chalmers  
Squire  
and  
made  
it  
back  
to  
our  
old  
camp  
last  
night.  
I  
was  
very  
tired  
travelling  
but  
the  
road  
being  
good  
we  
traveled  
along  
without  
any  
difficulty.  
Had  
it  
not  
been  
for  
a  
few  
of  
our  
men  
who  
were  
sick  
and  
could  
not  
travel  
we  
could  
have  
gone  
further  
but  
it  
was  
very  
disagreeable.  
The  
wind  
blew  
from  
the  
west  
and  
was  
very  
strong.  
The  
air  
was  
very  
cold  
and  
we  
were  
not  
able  
to  
keep  
our  
clothes  
on.  
The  
men  
who  
were  
sick  
were  
very  
ill  
and  
some  
of  
them  
died.  
The  
men  
who  
were  
not  
sick  
were  
very  
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The  
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The  
men  
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tired  
and  
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of  
them  
were  
ill.

Dear a Robin Roost - something that I never  
heard of before. Rouse the citizens informed  
some of the men how to catch the birds at  
night. The boys let me into the secret and  
I consented to go with them. We found the  
Robin Roost after it became good dark and to  
my surprise I found the Cigar boxes perfectly  
loaded down with Robins. We put about  
half of our party up in the trees and the rest  
went round with sticks to frighten them  
out of the trees around them when they  
would light on the trees in which the boys  
were up when they would catch them with  
their hands, fill them and put them in  
their Haversacks. We caught 100 in a  
very short time and returned to camp  
having been gone but a short time. I was  
glad to remain longer although I don't  
know that I had a very strong inclination  
to do so, but I had the notion of a des  
for one year to see camp without per  
mission from Genl. Munnagall. The Major  
Commander. It was very wrong for me  
to have you hear from Mr Morris family  
the Battle.

to go being a commissioned Officer but the  
temptation was so great besides the pleasure of  
eating the Birds afterwards, that I could not  
resist. They were the fattest birds that I ever  
saw. I am told that they get fat eating the  
Cedar Berries, of which there are any  
quantity in this Country. The Bird Roost  
covered about a half a mile square and  
every Cedar Bush & sprig was loaded with  
them. I have often heard of Pigeon Roost  
but never before of a Robin Roost. The principle  
growth in some portions of this country is cedars  
from the size of your arm up to three feet  
in diameter. All the fences and houses  
are built of cedar. In some places for  
miles you will find nothing but one dense  
cedar forest so thick that you can scarcely  
ride through it. A portion of the ground on  
which the battle of Monmouth was fought was  
covered with just such a forest, and when  
the Cannon Balls from the British Batteries  
would come tearing through them it would  
look frightful. In my last (Sunday's)



Camp Near Shelbyville, Tenn.  
Tuesday Feb. 10th, 1863.

My dear Bettie:

Here I am back at our old camp at Shelbyville again, all right side up but somewhat fatigued from our late march last night. I wrote you on Sunday last from our Picket camp about seven miles from Shelbyville on the Tryue Pike. We were relieved from duty out there last evening after dark by Gen. Chalmer's Brigade and marched back to our old camp last night. It was very dark travelling but the road being good we travelled along without any difficulty. Had we been favored with good weather we would have had a very pleasant time of it on Picket, but it was so extremely cold and wet most of the time that it was very disagreeable. This week passed off very quietly. We did not hear of a Yankee being within ten miles of us during the time. I had some rare sport one night while there catching robins. About a mile from our camp was a Robin Roost something that I never heard of before and the citizens informed some of the men how to catch the birds at night. The Boys let me into the secret and I consented to go with them. We reached the Bird Roost after it became good dark and to my surprise I found the cedar trees perfectly loaded down with Robins. We put about half of our party up in the trees and the rest of us went around with sticks to frighten them out of the other trees around them. When they would light on the trees in which the boys were up when they would catch them with their hands. Kill them and put them in their haversacks. We caught 150 in a very short time and returned to camp having been gone but a short time. I was afraid to remain longer although I must confess that I have had a very strong inclination to do so, but it was a violation of orders for any person to leave camp without permission from Col. Mannagault the Brigade Commander. It was very wrong for me to go being a commissioned officer, but the temptation was so great besides the pleasure of eating the birds afterwards that I could not resist. They were the fattest birds that I ever saw. I am told that they get fat eating the cedar berries of which there are any quantity in this country. The Bird Roost covered about a half a mile square and every cedar bush & tree was loaded with them. I have often heard of Pedgeon Roost but never before of a Robin Roost. The principle growth in some portions of this country is cedars from the size of your arm up to three feet in diameter. All the fences and houses are built of cedars. In some places for miles you will find nothing but one dense cedar forest so thick that you can scarcely go through it. A portion of the ground on which the battle of Murfreesboro was fought was covered with just such a forest, and when the cannon balls from the Yankee Batteries would come tearing through them it would look frightful. In my last (Sunday's) letter I acknowledged the receipt of your letter of the seventh Jan., the first you wrote after hearing of the battle.

You mentioned in your letter that you was very fearful that the smallpox would be at Mr. Lacy's. I hope not but if it should you must caution the negroes against going there. Oh if you were all to get sick at home I should be tempted to run away, desert and go home. I am sorry to hear that poor old Jake is getting so bad off. I don't suppose that any thing can be done for him that

Page 2:

will benefit him any. I have had no news recently of any interest. Everything remains here remains quiet. Gen. Johnson is here but I have not had the pleasure of seeing him. He had a review of all the troops here yesterday but our Brigade being out on picket was not present. I have not learned the object of his visit here. I suppose that it is merely to see the condition of the troops and see the position of things generally and perhaps also to see whether it will do to give Gen. Rosecrans another fight if he should come at us again. I have no fears of the result if he will meet Gen. Bragg on anything like equal terms. In fact I don't believe that the Yanks can whip us with the odds they now have against us, but I can't see that much is to be gained by fighting such a superior force even if we were certain of getting the victory, as it would be impossible with so inferior force to the enemy to follow up the victory and turn it into a rout so as to make it very beneficial to our side. Our men all prefer a fight to retreat but of course they cannot see the good to be accomplished by it so well as our Generals. It is now becoming to be the opinion of a great many thinking persons that we will have peace in the spring, but some how or other I cannot have much faith in that belief. There is very evidently a strong opposition to the war springing up in the North and Western States since Lincoln's emancipation proclamation but whether it will come to a culminating point before the expiration of his time of office or not. I think very doubtful but I formerly believe that it will come then with all its force. They are evidently getting very tired of the war and the great masses of the people of the North would be glad to see it stop even upon the terms of a recognition, but things have to become very deeper etc. before they will rise up in mass in opposition to the powers that be and attempt to put them down by rebellion.

Tell your Papa that it is getting almost time that I was getting another letter from him and Mother. How is Zinc getting. You did not speak of him in your last letter. I hope that he has entirely recovered. Tell Dr. Peibles that I will write to him before long. I should have done so long ago but some how or other I have failed to do so.

Little Newt is well. Billy Coleman, Jim Dotson, Billy Cox, Wells, Joe and Bill Leonard and Jim Hooper are all well. Tom Leonard I suppose is at home. I understood that he was sent home from the hospital in Georgia. I am looking every day for Hoodenpyle to return. He has been due several days. I hope when he does come that he will bring me at least a letter from you. Remember me to old Sister Smiley. Does she keep always as busy as ever. I suppose that Mag and Julia have both heard from June & Ira since the battle. Have you heard from Mr. Norris' family lately. I suppose they are all well.

It is getting very cloudy again and I fear that we are going to have some more snow or rain. Remember me to all the dear children and tell howdy for Pa. The dear little Babe can almost walk and I have seen her but one short while. It will soon be a year since I left my dear old home with all that are near and dear to me besides. Oh will it not be joyful when we all meet again. God grant that it may be soon. May kind heaven bless you.

Good Bye,  
Your devoted Husband,  
Newton.