

Picket Camp 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade

My Dear Pettie

Friday June 5<sup>th</sup> 1863

Here we are yet on picket ~~still~~ and no prospect that I see of being relieved for several days to come. It has been raining almost incessantly for the last three or four days. Every thing is very wet and disagreeable and our camp has become as muddy as a pig pen. We were needing rain up here very badly and we have had it now to our hearts content. It will certainly be of great benefit to the crops in this section of country. The wheat crop up here looks very fine. Most of the fields that I have seen, have just headed out, and occasionally I see a field that is beginning to turn. Tennessee can beat Miss. & Ala: making wheat or corn either. I have heard from one or sources, that you were needing rain in Pittsburg, very badly. You said nothing about it in your last letter and I am rather inclined to doubt it, at any rate I hope that your crops have not suffered materially yet. Your wheat crop I suppose is now made and perhaps cut by this time. By the way, what have you and the children been doing all this time for flour! I know that you must have gotten very tired eating Corn Bread. The soldiers in the Army are all getting anxious for the new wheat crop to come into market. Corn Bread & Meat has been all the go here for a long time. A little variation in the way of flour would be very acceptable. The days ago we received orders to cook three days rations and

held our position in readiness to march at a moment's notice. All of our Division marched to the front with the exception of our Brigade, which being on picket could not be moved except in case of emergency. Every body was on tip toe with excitement for a day or two. But every thing was rather quiet to its usual quiet again and the troops have all returned from the front. I have not been able to understand the object of the move, unless it was to make a forced reconnaissance ground. I understood that "old Casey" was up to it was reported that he was sending off all his available force to interfere to reinforce Grant. Our Cavalry was within four miles of Mansfield before they met any force of the Rebels, but they found them thick as the trees. An artillery fight was commenced yesterday morning between our Cavalry and theirs which was kept up until eight o'clock last night. No damage was done on our side. We had a heavy thunder storm yesterday evening. The roar of our Artillery and theirs was both thundering away at the same time. It was very difficult to distinguish one from the other. Every thing this morning is perfectly quiet and we have nothing to fear the near prospect of a disturbance. I wrote your Papa yesterday and to his the day before. I expect a letter from you to day and if I don't get one I shall be disappointed. Have you seen any thing from Beckwith yet. He writes me in my last letter that Jim & Ira had gone there. I have not seen Hunt in about three

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My Dear Bettie:

Here we are yet on picket still and no prospect that I see of being relieved for several days to come. It has been raining almost incessantly for the last three or four days. Every thing is very wet and disagreeable and our camp has become as muddy as a pig pen. We were needing rain up here very badly and we have had it now to our hearts content. It will certainly be of great benefit to the crops in this section of country. The Wheat crop up here looks very fine. Most of the fields that I have seen, have just headed out, and occasionally I see a field that is beginning to turn. Tennessee can beat Miss. & Ala. making wheat or corn either. I have heard from one or sources that you were needing rain in Pickens very badly. You said nothing about it in your last letter and I am rather inclined to doubt it, at any rate I hope that your crops have not suffered materially yet. Your wheat crop I suppose is now made and perhaps cut by this time. By the way, what have you and the children ~~been~~ been doing all this time for flour. I know that you must have gotten very tired eating corn bread. The Soldiers in the Army are all getting anxious for the new wheat crop to come into market. Corn Bread & meat has been all the go here for a long time. A little variation in the way of flour would be very acceptable. The days ago we received orders to cook three days rations and hold ourselves in readiness to march at a moments notice. All of our Division marched to the front with the exception of our Brigade, which being on picket could not be moved except in case of urgent necessity. Every body was on tiptoe with excitement for a day or two, but everything has settled down to its usual quiet again and the troops have all returned from the front. I have not been able to understand fully the object of the move, unless it was to make a forced reconnoissance around Murfreesboro to what "Old Rosy" was up to. It was reported that he was sending off all his available force to Vicksburg to reinforce Grant. Our Cavalry went within four miles of Murfreesboro before they met any force of the Yanks, but there they found them thick as the trees. An artillery fight was commenced yesterday morning between our Cavalry and theirs which was kept up until Eight O'clock last night. No damage was done on our side. We had a heavy thunder storm yesterday evening. The roar of Heavens Artillery and Mans were both thundering away at the same time. It was very difficult to distinguish one from the other. Every thing this morning is perfectly quiet and we have nothing but the rain now to disturb us. I wrote your Papa yesterday and to Vic the day before. I expect a letter from you today and if I don't get one I shall be disappointed. Have you heard any thing from Vicksburg yet. I wrote you in my last letter that Jim & Ira had gone there. I have not seen Newt in about three weeks. His Company is still at work on the entrenchments. They all say that they had rather be there, than with the Brigade. They only work about two hours a day, and have no guard duty to do. Lieut. Dunlap has been ordered back to his Regiment. I suppose that he will call to see you before returns. I received my boots and cap from Mobile a few days ago. The boots cost \$10 and the cap \$25. It is awful to have to pay such prices. Remember me to Mag, Julia and all the family. Tell all the dear children that Pa thinks of them often. I wish I had something to

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send them, but it is impossible here to get any thing suitable.  
May Kind Heaven Bless you my Dearest One.

Good Bye,  
Your Devoted Husband,  
Newton.