

often  
here - am  
very much  
pleas'd with  
The contents  
enough to  
last for  
week. There  
others of  
my friends  
for  
28<sup>th</sup> day  
of  
Feb.

Camp Stearns  
Dec 23<sup>rd</sup> /61

at our old camp near Winchester, broken  
down, lame, hot, blind, crippled & what  
ever else you can think of, but still  
licking. I will give a detailed  
account of my trip to Maryland.

In the first place firstly on Sunday  
night the 15<sup>th</sup> we were wakened up by the  
drum at 2 o'clock and ordered to strike  
tents pack baggage eat as much beef &  
bread as you could stuff in you &  
be prepared to march by 4, to what  
place it was a mystery to us all, but  
we thought we were bound for Romney  
so at 4 when we started in the opposite  
direction we were all puzzled to know  
where we were going, after a while we  
got on the road to that abolition hole  
of Martinsburg (which by the way ought to  
be buried as close to the ground as pine

could get it) & encamped about two miles from it, staid all night Monday & until 2 o'clock Tuesday when the order come to take your blankets, leave tents, baggage, &c there to be taken care of by the sick (4 by the way Watson made it convenient to have some ~~well~~ & was consequently left behind & did not share in the glory of the expedition if there was any glory in it) (in my favor him I will strike out on the main subject again) We left at 3, took the road to Williams Port, went about 5 or 6 miles on it, struck to the left, got in the woods, & got lost completely, after a while we got the road again & took a new line for the Potomac got in sight of Morgentau by day break and within sound of the Potomac, took about an hours sleep & struck for the river when a bomb shell hit us good morning and told us to night about -

Having found out where the Yankees were  
we went a little more cautiously, stum-  
bled around until night when Pack detail  
men from each company (did not happen  
to get your humble servant) the detachment  
went to the river towards dam No 5 [which  
by the way is the main dam on the river  
getting opposite the dam they were told  
to lie close and dodge Yankee bullets  
after a while crowbars, axes, picks, &  
shovels without number were piled up  
on the bank and a barrel of Whiskey -  
old Jack gave each man a tin full too  
some himself & told them to pitch in the dam  
at the dawn. So for the first time  
we found out what the expedition meant.  
For fear you dont knowe what all this  
non sense means I will tell you in  
plain English what it meant. We went  
to take down the dam above Harpers fer-  
rie which is the main dam on the canal &  
furnishes Washington City with coal water

V.C. & by which they get nearly all their supplies. The detachment worked all night the Yankees shooting at them all the time about day in the morning they went out and staid until the next night when they went back again coming out by day the next day. Getting right hungry by this time we went out of the range of their guns & cooked enough provisions to last for two more days we went that night to finish the dam when the Yankees had set fire to a mill near there and could not work at it that night because it was too light & they could not shoot at us.

Headquarters Valley District

When I had written this far an order came for us to report to headquarters at Jackson as I am ordered by today I will have to close. I will write soon. Red P.S. My box has just