

Camp Stephens
June 25th [1861]

Dear Sister:

I received your long expected letter on Saturday evening by Redwood of V.M.I., was very glad to hear from home.

I have written home four times since I left, once from Staunton, twice from Winchester, and once by Mr. Gupton.

We are still in Berkley about four miles from the enemy, although the enemy are all around us, reported to be 1200 strong, but still are afraid to come across the river. Stuarts cavalry bring in prisoners almost every day. John Cummings is out today with twenty men, I expect when he comes

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back he will have one or two prisoners.

We drill six times a day, once before sunrise, directly after breakfast, then from eleven to twelve o'clock, and three times in the evening. We have four regiments of Virginia troops here, about 3500 men in all, Col. Preston's, Col. Gordon's, Col. Harper's, and Col. Allen's.

We have some trouble with the traitors here. Yesterday Major White's troops took down a Union flag and brought it past the camp, trailing in the dust. They do not allow us to drink anything but running water for fear the wells are poisoned; there are two wells near the camp but both are guarded. It is a beautiful sight to see the camp at

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night, a thousand lights twinkling here and there through the woods, the merry laugh of the soldiers, the roll of the drum, the rattle of the arms all combine to render it a novel sight to me.

I never saw so many persons I knew in my life, every third person speaks to me. Someone is here almost every day from Lexington, three or four are here today. Judge Brockenborough, Uncle Barclay Pogue, Sam Gold.

The drum is now bearing for dinner, I will go up and see what sort of a one we will have.

After dinner.

We had a first rate dinner, stewed chicken, beef, bread,

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molasses, rice and water, all good except the bread which has been baked too long but still good enough for an appetite which has been sharpened by three hours drill. I am learning to cook first rate feed. I can make fine coffee which we drink with a little sugar and no cream and strong enough to make itself. Altogether we get along very well in the feeding line.

Our Captain is the biggest man on the ground except one, if you could see him strutting along as proud as a peacock you would think he was Jef. Davis, Gen. Johnson, or some other big bug. Today whilst out drilling, he was walking so big and his head so high that when

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he came across a ledge of rocks, he could not see them and fell head over heels and great was the fall thereof. He hurt his leg a good deal and his hand slightly. I reckon he wont walk so big hereafter.

The people here think a great deal of our company, it is considered next to the best company on the ground. Cols. Gordon and Preston

disputed which should have us, but we like Col. Preston best and consequently joined his regiment.

I spoke in my last letter about taking a spy, we have the gent yet and will keep him until a convenient season.

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The talk in camp today is the war is about to stop; the only foundation which they have it upon is that the General Commissary has been ordered to bring up no more wagons and not much provisions and they think that the reason for there not buying up more.

Uncle Barclay Pogue is going to Lexington tomorrow evening and will send this by him but will leave it open until morning, perhaps here will be something new.

[June 26th]

We took another prisoner yesterday evening, a savage looking chap. The wife of our spy came here this morning to see her husband, but old Jack dont like his looks.

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He has been talking to his wife about an hour and is still at it; I dont know what he will do with the gentleman.

The Captain is very stiff this morning and cant leave his bed, without great pain, his leg is bruised very badly and swollen a great deal. He spoke about going up to Martinsburg if the cowardly scoundrels would attack us, he would stand a bad chance not having the use of his legs.

I mess with Arnold, Ruff, Hallett, Jones, Turner, Godwin, Watson, Woods, Paxton and I tent with Redwood, Nelson, Myers, Mitchell, Strickler C.

We have religious service every night, having four parsons,

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better off than most companies.

Ma., I wish you to have me a pair of shoes made like the ones I have, Deaver has my measure. The ones I have are not worn out, but I ought to have a pair by the time they do. Have them made and send them to me by the first one that comes to the fourth regiment of Virginia Volunteers. There are three companies from Rockbridge in it and some one comes down almost every day.

From the looks of things we may stay here some time but I do not know. Write as soon as you can by someone if possible or direct your letters to the care of Capt. J.J. White, Liberty Hall Volunteers, Winchester, Va. All Well, Ted
Excuse this scratch.