

Headquarters 5th Brigade
9th Division, 13th Army Corps.
Big Black River, A. A. Bridge
May 30th 1863.

Dear Mollie.

Once more I have the pleasure of writing
you a few lines, though it may never reach you - The best
news I have is that Pothenbaugh is a live. That being the main thing
that has been interesting me for some time past. Under showers of
iron and lead hail. Could easily discover that I was in love
with self. and was of the opinion that I had not a rival in
the world, if so. And certain not in the Confed -
We came to this point on the 25th to garrison the point. and take a
rest. which was exceedingly welcome - After fighting seven
days in a fight. There is not any use of spending time to describe
the fighting I have witnessed since the Army crossed the river
for. presume the news papers are full of reports giving the partic-
ulars of all the fights. And you may be tired of the subject of war
as it is almost the only topic of the day - Must admit that while
under fire. in rear of the fortifications at Dick's Burg. that I
was some what tired of the subject. especially the reality.
That is one of the strongest points in this continent. The country
is very rough. and broken. And their fortifications extend from
Chickasaw Bluffs to Warrenton. Though our forces have cut
them off from Keynes Bluffs. and Warrenton. And have
communication with the M. & R. at both points. Our rations
come in by way of Yazoo R. & Keynes Bluffs. at the
point where our Army was defeated in the winter.
Our troops are at many points within 250 yds of the forts and
have batteries erected in short range. Our sharpshooters
keep them cannon silenced. So they lay still and take it
until we undertake to charge. then they fight the works
at some points have been carried. And the stars & stripes planted
in place of the infamous stars & bars. I saw a charge made

on one of the forts. 12 of the men got on the inside. 11 of them were killed instantly. 25 rebs that were manning the artillery. thought the whole Yankee Army was coming. and surrendered - to the one - and he brought them out, under a galling fire. Genl. McClelland commissioned him as Capt - on the field.

This point is 7 miles from the city. And we can hear the cannonading plainly. it has been terrific to day. We all feel very anxious to know the result. Undoubtedly they cant hold out much longer. Deserters state that they are suffering for want of water. The Gunboats are lying at the landing & reported, and constantly throwing shell into the city - Let this suffice on that topic.

Believe I have never told you any thing concerning our African Soldiers - The able bodied negroes that come into our lines are formed into companies. and Regts and mustered into the service of the U. S. I have not had the pleasure of seeing a regt. Uniformed & armed, but suppose they will look like any thing but soldiers. Some may think they wont fight but I think they will be found missing at the first round.

The good people of this County especially ladies frequently enquire what we are going to do with the Slaves - we tell them that they can dig trenches for our army - &c. The country through which we have passed looks some what desolate fences torn down. Yards destroyed - &c. No crops or cattle every thing in the eating line - Its amusing to see the boys catching the chickens - turkeys and killing pigs. Sheep &c. Carrying off their hives. Molasses and corn meal - Some times the people ask if we are going to let the slaves go. I. no. says Genl. Wele Sam has plenty to feed the South. And will take good care of the Ladies. Yesterday I was very much amused at four or five fine ladies & Gentlemen who belong to an aristocratic family near by us - They came in riding with rope reined bridle - girths without saddles - The ladies almost do. They called at our head quarters. And came in they informed us where they lived. &c. They had business

with the Genl. that was to get something to eat. Now changed the scene, a few months since they were riding in fine Coaches - and on fine Horses - drinking nice wines - Now the Coach is used for the purpose of halving poor wounded soldiers. And some Cavalry man rides the horse in search of Rebs.

And perhaps we find a Spree on the wine -

I have had the pleasure of seeing them now & then -

One said to Brother that it was hard that the innocent ladies should suffer because the men were fighting -

He asked her if she ever made any Rebel flags or Band Boni Blue flag. Oh. Yes - Then that's the way you don't aid the rebellion said he - - Stop -

Nellie if I was not fearful that you would accuse me of being a scold - or grumbler - I would tell you that your letters come very seldom. I have received but two letters since the 3rd of March. The last one was and was the first of April. Sometimes I think you have forgotten that there is such a person as Pedronpawgle, or grow tired of the correspondence - hope not - Will let time explain - Write soon -
May He is friend of mine in good heart the
Yours as ever
W. H. P. Doct

P.S. Excuse this short note -

I am now A. A. Adjut. Genl. 11th Brigade
and have but little time to spend

Rebel. from the friends of
Black River Bridge

[1863]



W. S. Mollie Emmick
Grand View
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