

ROBERT McDOUGAL TO MACK

New madrid

March 25/62

Dear Friend Hank

Yours of the 23 ult duly came to hand the 8 inst and found me well and right glad to hear from you Now hank allow me to apologise for not writeing sooner. for as soon as you know the sircumstances surrounding me you will acnolegd that I am not to blame. your letter found the Co between heere and Point pleasent this Co was streched a distance of 9 miles we was divided in 4 squads and was out poasts we had to stand guard every night and day for 19 days last saturday we joined the regt in camp while out we had to be armed all the time sleepe on our arms every night as we did not know what moment we would be attaced we was in a place that was swarming with rebels both of soliders and citizens but our unexpected and unwelcomed appearance among them soon made the former fly for security and converted the latter over to good strong unionists and would do any thing to acomodate us we took several prisoner at first but they soon made themselves scarce severall of the boys have got revolvers which they found on there persons. we had good times lived on the fat of the land helped ourselves to the best we could find severall times we rambled off and came in sight of the enimys pikets. when the sight of our rifles would make them fly to Camp in consternation. there is but little use of me trying to give you eny account of what our forces has done heere for you will probably know more than myself about it we have routed them from the fort of[f] this place leaveng every thing behind them they are now on the other side of the river we are waiting for the river to get smaller before we can cross I under stand this morning they have planted a battery across from the lower fort both partys appear to be play ing ball across the river the rebels is in large nombers at No ten, a place up the river ten miles it is a strong fortified place and will be hard to captur if they stand out about it the report is at present. we shall have a bloody fight heere soon. I do not know how meny troops we have heere. but there is a large number. I think I have not told you we left St Louis the 25 of Feb dropped down as far as Commerse. then marched to this place by the 3 inst just after the bombarding commenced and there have been more and less ever since there have been but few of our men lost yet the disablement of one of our siege guns was our worst injury as a ball from the fort struck it in the mouth killed two and wound five. we are now waiteing for orders and redy to execut them we drill every day our horses fare rather the worst as we have nothing to give them but Corn of which there is an abundance of it I think I shall be safe to say there is millions of Corne in this part of the State. the inhabittance heere is hard up as they can get no clotheing of eny description at eny price hardly. they are entirely destitute of groceries and provisiones except meal and bacon O I forgot to tell you that I came across Albert Beard the 3 inst he appeared to be all right had no chance to talk to him. I under stand Cy Lewis is in this place but I have not come acros him yet I wish you would tell me which Regt & Co he is in as I would like to see him. I was sorry to heere of Miss Fullertons death. but as you say such things must hapen. I now close with the hope of heering from you soon and remain as ever your friend Robert Mc Dougall

Now Hank in regard to your request Sircumstances will not allow me to comply with if it was in my power I would willingly do all I could as it is I will but that will not be much. my reasons are these all the money that I could spare I have sent home as mother needs all the help I can send her we have not been paid of[f] in 3 months pay day is every 2 mos but we left St Louis just before pay day and owing to affairs heere we have reseived no pay yet. and I dont know when we shall get it those are my reasons and I think you will not blame me for refusing to do you the small favor. the weather heere is very warm considering the time of year please write soon Direct to New madrid MO. this leaves me well and I hope it finds you the same

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Note: This letter is another one with no envelope. I wonder why Mack would ask a friend in the army for a loan. We'll never know.

WKE 121996