

In Camp near Fredericksburgh Va.
November 22d 1862

Dear Sister

I have just received your letter - finished by Ellen - & should think the people of Willsboro were taking the draft to heart - more than I should as long as there is to be none.

I see the state is entirely in the hands of the Democracy - and that enlistments for the Army have completely withdrawn the moral influence from the state. When the one hundred & seventy or eighty Regts. get back there you will see the political base of operations [sic] changed.

We came here day before yesterday after a tiresome march of many days - the 2d and 9th [?] Army Corps are here before Frederick - in the hands of Genl. Burnside & he has ordered them to "skedaddle" and take their women & children with them.

That is, the Rebs have possession of the City & we are on the opposite side of the river & Burnside has ordered them to surrender in a given time or remove the women & children - they have been moving everything they could out of the City - but yesterday our batteries commenced shelling the train when it started out and it has not left yet. I am well - and Sergt. Major of the Regt. Shall have a commission as soon as there is a chance. I expect we are bound for Richmond & think we shall leave here soon. We have been marching for several days now about 15 or 20 mls. pr day - without stopping to rest eat or fight - but have marched three columns abreast, one in the road and one each side of the road - over the fences - & our trains reach back five or six mls. It is a sight worth seeing to see an army on the march - we have had rainy weather for three days and it is very muddy, but I think we will have to move mud or no mud - with the consolation that we can stand anything the Rebs can.

I recd. a letter from Father with postage stamps and was very glad of them.

Frederick is a pleasant looking place & the third City - I believe in Va. it is situated on the Rapahannock and we can look across the river and see its nice steeples and white houses and shall probably go over there and occupy the premises as soon as everything is ready. Our folks have been firing at the cars today but I have not learned whether they done [sic] any damage or not. Our Regt. is out on picket and I shall get the news when they come in. I am having a little easier time since my promotion - have got rid of carrying a musket and sixty rounds of catridges [sic] and have a better tent to live in and am anxious to travel farther south. Wilcox is reviewing his command this afternoon. The sun is out again - the bands are playing and everything looks well. The land is covered with tents all about here and nothing can be seen but white tents, troops & baggage wagons, passing backwards and forwards after supplies.

Tomorrow is Sunday and I have just heard that the Rebs are to leave today or have help tomorrow. Sunday is the day for a fight and I expect to see Fredericksburgh taken.

I wrote Father several days ago and suppose he has recd. the letter before now. Ask him if he ever received that letter with the five dollars enclosed. I have never heard of his getting it and I am sure I sent it. Write often and I will write when I can.

Yours &c,
Wm. A. Barnard Sergt. Major
20th Mich. Inf.