

St. Charles, Ark. July 27th, 1864

Dear "Libby"

I expect you will look for a letter from me informing you of our whereabouts and whatabouts as I could give you no definite information concerning our programme for the future in my last. We stayed at the mouth of White River three days when our fleet consisting of five transports and three gunboats steamed up the White for the purpose of occupying this place.

This great town stands on the first spot of ground above high water mark after we leave the mouth of the river. Here the bluff is about 75 feet above the water at present and is consequently a very sailable place to fortify. It is 90 miles from the mouth of the white and 25 from Ark.-Post, the scene of our operations nearly two years ago.

We had a very quiet ride coming up here there being not a house nor plantation to be seen in the whole trip. The river is rather shallow in places and the navigation difficult. It took us almost two days to make the trip; landing on the 23rd inst.

The Brigade had not half landed before there were 300 spades at work intrenching and we have been as industrious as beavers ever since. The detail is now increased so that one half of us are on duty all the time being up at work half of each night. Yet there is a cheerful disposition among the men and we now begin to feel quite confident in our ability to hold the place against any number that is likely to be sent against us. We have six good Forts nearly finished, the whole being connected by rifle pits and I believe that 2200 of us can surprise twice that number of rebs if they undertake to capture us. The town itself is of no importance there being only three houses: remaining. The citizens say it was quite

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a town before the war but the inhabitants are gone and the houses destroyed. The reason for occupying this wilderness place is to prevent communication being cut off from the troops at Davals-Bluff and Little Rock. The climate is delightful I think it full as cool as that of my native state we have a cool northwest-breeze every afternoon which seems to put new life into us after breathing the malarious atmosphere of Louisiana.

The white is a clear pretty stream larger and of much more importance than is usually supposed. It is navigable 400 miles at all seasons.

There are plenty of catfish in the river which we hook sometimes although it would be considered late in the season for fresh fish at home. Our facilities for mail are not very good there being no regular line. We have to send by any boat that may be going down. I dont know when we shall receive mail again we have seen none since we left Morganza.

We know very little of what is doing in different parts of the country until ten days after date. The boys say if Grant should take Richmond we would not know it until we are discharged. I think or at least am afraid there is not much probability of learning of that place being taken very soon. If we are fortunate we shall be where we can read news near home in about four months time. Then there will be a short time at least that I shall not be obliged to write to a certain friend but can see and converse with her. I am expecting to enjoy the privilege of reading two or three letters from her when we get mail again and you shall hear from me often, if I am a long distance in the wilderness.

Yours truly and affectionately

Leonard.

P.S. Direct to the 42nd Regt. _____

Gen. Lee's Brigade

St. Charles, Ark.

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