

Captain William A. Barnard, 20th Michigan Infantry, 1862-1865

Envelope: Miss Ellen A. Barnard, Willsboro, Essex County, New York

May 22d 1863
Louisville Ky.

Dear Sister

I have your last letter - and was ordered here last week with about half of our line officers to be mustered out of the service as an enlisted man & into the service again as a com'd. officer. My papers are not properly made out & I am delayed here several days - & shall probably be obliged to return to the Regt. at Columbia & make another journey here in the course of two or three weeks. Louisville is quite a large City - & I like stopping here after marching through the country so long. Kentucky is a rich farming state - but the niggers neglect it awfully & seldom get over a half a crop. The country where we have been is very hilly - & I should judge it was all through the Eastern part of the state. It is nearly as bad as Western Va. There are no villages back from the important places - except the county seat of each Co. There they build a Court House - and houses enough around it to get up about such a place as Willsboro.

What part of Ky. did Jennette Frisbie inhabit - and ask her if she has any word to send to her butterant¹⁷ acquaintances in case I happen to see them. We are having pretty warm weather here now & shall have to suffer from the heat this summer. We have warm days and generally pretty cool nights as we did in Va.

Let me know when you will go to Ausable Forks and whether you think you will like living there any better than Willsboro. I never could distinguish any great differences - but should miss Lake Champlain if I was obliged to live there in the backwoods.

If you go there I shall have to get there via Willsboro when I get my leave of absence.

I am well but loosing [sic] flesh some this spring since we commenced marching. When I write nothing about my health you may reckon [sic] (as the Kentuckians say) that I am "right smart" and well enough to do duty.

Remember me to Uncle Chas. Sheldon, Jule, Sarah, Eunice & all your Willsboro squad of associates and tell them this Ho [?] Cake & butter-milk region is growing in grace & loyalty and must soon be uncomfortable for any but Abe's own children.

There is a report that Buckner is trying to get into the state with 17,000 men - by advancing at three different points but I do not think he will come far enough to meet Burnside. Morgan is afraid to fight us - & will let us alone as long as he can find anything to steal. Write soon.

Yours &c

Wm. A. Barnard