

AMBROSE ABBOTT and LYDIA HANK TO MACK

Steubenville Nov 12 1864

Dear friend Henry We recd yours of the 7th yesterday it found us all well and glad to hear from you and all anxious to learn if possible what was Alvins fate but it may be a long time before any such welcome news will reach us but we are hoping and praying if he yet lives that he may yet safely reach us once again but the anxious delay and suspense is almost equal to the worst reality If there is any possibility of your reaching the ground dont fail to make the examination and see if he was left there and if you can ascertain where the prisoners were sent that were taken from around there I have not time to write more Lydia will finish but let me say dont fail to write to us every week for we shall feel lonely enough without any letters from the army and it shall not cost you any thing but the writing I will send you paper and envelops and dont put any stamp on them I will pay the postage here. Good bye write soon yes every week and if you hear or find any trace or any probability of Alvins whereabouts dont fail to let us know at once your friends truly A & M Abbott

Dear brother I was truly glad to hear from you once more it does me good to hear from you but O how lost I am since I cant write to Alvin it seams as if I cant pass the time away without writing to him but I hope and pray that I may yet set my eyes on him one minute think I wouldnt feel any more lonesome as I couldnt see him any how but it was so much company to write to him it seamed almost as if I had never seen him. when I think of the danger he was in of both firing it seams all most impossible that he is living but O the consolation I have that he was a Christian it cheers my drooping heart when I think of it and why should I mourn if my loss is his gain if that should be the case but O the thought that I can never see his dear face again all most breaks my heart well Henry write often for we are glad to hear from you I received a letter from nan thursday they was all well from your lonely sister L Hank

[On one side of a small scrap of paper included with this letter was some scribbling; on the other side, Lydia added this explanation: "Little gardner wrote this he said he wanted to 'ite let ta pan hen' he cant say Henry]

Note: This letter was addressed in Mr Abbott's hand to "Henry McK Ewing" at his regiment. It is the first time I have run across the use of the proper initial in all the war letters I have handled. Father himself discarded the "K" in "McK" and signed his name when he enlisted as Henry Mc Ewing and it led to much trouble as it was the natural thing to connect the "mc" with Ewing, making it McEwing, instead of treating it as a middle name.

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