

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

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

Camp 20th Mich. Inf. Crab Orchard Ky.
Aug 3d 1863

Dear Sister

We have been here several days - and expect to stop in camp until the health of the men improves. I am well with the exception of a sore heel - that has troubled me for some time but is getting better. I have applied for a "leave of absence" but there are so many ahead of me that I shall not probably get it until the last of this month or some time in October.

I shall try to get home as soon as possible but it is difficult getting papers approved when there are so many applications - but my turn must come soon. Burnside is near Knoxville with the 23^d Corps - and we shall be kept as near supporting distance as possible - but the 9th Corps is about as good as unfit for duty from the effects of the Miss. Campaign - and will not attempt the journey over the mountains via Cumberland Gap to join the 23^d Corps until we are better able to endure the march.

We have been to Miss. got "Vicksburg" and "Jackson" on our Colors by order of Genl. Grant won a glorious reputation all through the Army of the Southwest - and the country generally and are waiting orders - for some other two months journey. The 9th Corps is kind of of a standing detail to go to any part of the country at a moments notice.

Crab Orchard is the Saratoga of Ky. noted for its sulphur springs and was a favorite place of resort before the rebellion made it unprofitable.

We are enjoying all the benefits of the springs and find it a quiet & healthy place here and our convalescents are coming up every day. We are near Stanford, Lincoln Co. and have not very hard work patrolling Ky. now Morgan is secure - and done making raids.

I shall apply for thirty days leave - which is ten days more than Michigan officers get. I want time to make a visit home - and stop at Marshall on my way back to the Regt.

We have been having heavy frosts and cold days & nights and the men are suffering with ague among other afflictions. Hundreds of our men came back from Miss. covered with boils & running sores caused by the heat.

I have no war news to write. We have about settled all difficulties in this dept. and in the West. I have not received any letters lately. My letters always come in the mail four or five at a time - and it is hardly time for them yet. I lost all my baggage coming from Miss. and would be glad if you can send me one or two pairs of woolen stockings by mail. I cannot get them nearer than Cincinnati and do not like to do without them. They are so much better and more comfortable than the Army socks on the march. Write soon & give me all the news. I send the song "My Michigan" to Emily and want her to learn it and sing it all through Willsboro - and on my account when I get home. It goes in the same tune of "My Maryland" and "My Kentucky".

Yours &c

Wm. A. Barnard
1st Lieut. Com'dg. Co. "C"