

Lebanon, Ky. Apl. 13th 1863

Dear Father

I have just rec'd. yours of Mch. 17th, as it went to Washington & followed the Regt. & our mail was detained in Louisville about two weeks after we got here. I have written once since we have been here. We came here from Bardstown about two weeks ago & our brigade is all here now. We are in the Dept. of Ohio under Burnside & he has his Corps (the 9th) scattered in brigades all about this part of Ky. & I think is trying to drive the Rebs. down through Cumberland Gap & fight them somewhere near Knoxville Tenn. in a body. There is nothing about here but small parties of plunderers - under Morgan.

We had a grand review a short time ago - by a Ky. Genl. and showed him a drilled brigade & rather astonished him. They have an idea here that the Army of the Potomac is no better drilled than they are - and all the Ky. regiments about here call us abolitionists and would fight us as soon as they would the Rebs if they dared to - or wasn't [sic] afraid of getting the worst whipping they ever had any idea of. They think we are here to enforce the proclamation & we have had several little fist fights with them - just to show them our style. Some of our privates went down town soon after we got here and drove the Ky. Regt. provost guard out of the town & we have done the provost duty since then ourselves.

There was a little excitement here yesterday caused by the 18th and 22^d Mich. Regt's. leaving here on the cars. They had quite a number of runaway niggers with them & the Ky. Genl. that commands the post here called out the 11th Ky. and gave orders that no nigger should leave with them on the train - so the Col. of the 18th Mich. had his men load and told them to shoot the first man that touched a nigger if it was Genl. Munson [?] himself. Munson concluded he couldn't stand a fight alone & sent for part of our brigade - & the Col. com'dg sent him word that the 1st brigade was minding its own business & wouldn't fight on his side - & also sent word to the Mich. Col. to stand his ground & send for help if he needed it. The affair is not settled yet - but the niggers will go with the Mich. men or the Ky. forces get the worst catalogue of maimed & deceased [?] soldiers they ever had yet.

I recd. the stockings with your letter but have never got the tippet yet. I cannot get leave of absence now but will try in the course of two or three months - we cannot get but 15 days leave now - and I want 30 to visit Willsboro & stir up the Copperheads thoroughly.

I do not know exactly how many men there are in the 9th Corps. but I think about 30,000. If Ellen's school is out she can write me about once a week & I will write as often as I can - we had no opportunity to write on our journey here & have a poor chance now as we are ordered to prepare for active service and have nothing more than Va. transportation which is just what ^{each} man can carry on his own back. The Co. officers are allowed one tent - a small satchel to carry their clothes in & a small mess chest - about twenty of us - the last ones promoted - which includes those promoted in the field have not been mustered yet as commissioned officers & have not recd. their pay from the first of Nov. up to the present time. We cannot be mustered until we get our commissions or receive our pay until we are mustered & have to go where the mustering officer is to get mustered. When we got our Com's. we shall probably make a raid on Cincinnati & find him - get our pay - & officers uniform.

We have seen no snow of any acct. during the winter and are having pleasant weather here now but rather cold nights.

The Peninsula Campaign failed on acct. of McClellan's incompetency - & the battle of Fredericksburgh failed on acct. of the jealousy of Burnside's subordinate officers. It was the best planned battle yet & would have certainly succeeded if Burnside's Genls. had not thought he would receive all the credit of a victory. Franklin who commanded the left guard division crossed the river just below where we did with sixtyfive thousand men and only took one division into action - and at one time drove the Rebs. & fairly turned their right flank but brought up no reinforcements - and the Rebs. rallied & drove him back - when if he had brought up his whole force as directed he would have done all he was expected to do & we should commenced [sic] the attack in the center & done our part - but after Franklin failed it was to [sic] late to flank the Rebs. as they sent a heavier force to the right - and we finally left in disgust for our side of the river.

The whole thing will be ventilated by the Com. on the conduct of the war & every one will have a chance yet to know the cause of our failure.

When Burnside gets his corps together and meets the Rebs here in Ky. or East Tenn. the country will find out what we can do. We can lick this Union Ky. Cavalry here with cornstocks [sic] - & drive their Infantry out of the state with blank catridges. The Union Ky. troops do not amount to anything - & have no reputation anywhere except for calling the Northern troops who come here to fight their battles - abolitionists - sent here to enforce the proclamation.

I wish our brigade could camp on Denny Lynch [?] farm for 48 hours just to show him what complete desolation we could make. We are waiting anxiously to hear from Charlestown - & hope to hear of its successful reduction to chaos. Hooker will fight the Rebs on all possible occasions, everywhere, he can find them as soon as the traveling will permit. He is making every preparation and the Rebs are afraid of him. Direct to Louisville Ky., 20th Mich. Inftry. 1st Brigade, 1st Division 9th Army Corps.

Yours &c

Wm. A. Barnard
Lieut. Co. "C"