

Camp Curtis Philadelphia Feb 18th, 1862

9 O'clock Tuesday evening

My Dear Wife,

This morning we awoke to behold a bright sun and clear sky. The rain and sleet of yesterday had covered all out of doors with dainty frost and every tree was sheeted with glittering ice from its trunk to its tiniest twig, but the warm rays of the sun soon spoiled this delicate network of ice and the proud cedars looked forth with their accustomed beauty. Indeed this ice vanished before the warm rays of the sun the same as the fine dreams of southern traitors are now vanishing under the influence of fiery union valor and rightful victories.

The people here in this great metropolis are crazy with excitement over the news of the capture of the Rebel armies at Fort Donaldson, Savannah and in Missouri. The streets are crowded with men hurrying to and fro and flags are being run up at all points and salutes are being fired and the bells toll forth in clear and sonorous sounds with peel after peel that another brilliant victory has been won upon the side of God and humanity and that this rebellion against one of the best governments that ever existed is soon to be crushed out.

Our men are still lying idle here doing nothing. I do not think that the men have drilled two hours since we left Camp Curtin and this afternoon is the first dress parade they have had since I have been in Camp Curtis and this I thought to be a most shiny(?) affair. Col Jones represented himself to us to be a man of military experience but we find come to try him that he knows nothing about it at all. He even upon dress parade came swaggering along swinging his arms with a step resembling a sailor upon land as near as anything that I describe it to. I think that he had better get him some boy to teach him the first principles of the soldier before he aspires to a Colonelcy. But he was very unfortunate for us mustered in as Col of the 58th Regt last Thursday, but I mean soon to be out of this. If I ever despised a man from the bottom of my heart it is Col Jones and I find this to be the case with all of the privates and officers of our wing of the regt. I do not know of a man that can bear him.

I would much rather be at home by your side than here writing to you, but here I am and may be obliged to stay here for what I know much longer than I wish.

It makes me sick when I look over the sick in this hospital and see how much they are suffering for want of a consistent course of treatment. It is a great wonder that there is as many lives to get back home again as there is. A many poor fellow has the foundation for a life of suffering aches and pains laid here from his course of treatment, perhaps made cripple for life if not carried to an untimely grave.

I am trying to do what I can to make them comfortable but I cannot control the treatment altho I have in one or two cases administered my own medicine in the place of that prescribed by the surgeon unbeknown to him or the patient which has had a good effect. We have two or three here now which have offered to pay me if I would go down town and get them some medicines, but this I cannot do as it would be subjecting myself to dismissal from the

hospital and placing me in the ranks if not in the guard house and also resulting in restriction upon their privileges.

Webster thinks that his case is worse than mine as he has no plea or excuse whereby he can get his discharge. While he thinks that I will get mine, but he has made up his mind or at least so he talks that he will have to stay until the close of the war unless the Lord sees fit to grant him an honorable discharge by removing him for this vale here below.

I have not had the opportunity of approaching Col. Jones since his return from Washington. If I wish to accomplish anything with him I must have a little patience and wait until I can reach him through the circumlocution channel when he feels just right as he is a sort of fitz man. Why he was going to put a man in the guard house yesterday just because he very politely asked him if it would be convenient for him to change a five dollar note as he could not get it broke in camp. What insolence (I mean in the Col).

If I cannot get my discharge I shall come home on a furlough for I must see you before our Regt marches from this place. Altho it is my opinion that Col Jones business to Washington was to have it arranged for him to keep his Regt here for a home guard for I believe him to be a coward and do not think that he ever intended to go into actual service.

I have lost all confidence in the man and do not believe that he ever intends to fulfill his promises. I know that there is a disposition to ride upon over the Curtis part of the regt, but we are enough for them but enough of this. I will be satisfied if I get my discharge to let him rest in peace if he can.

Give my love to all enquiring friends and keep a large share for yourself and except a kiss from your husband.

Yours in affection

Newton

P.S. I sent you something by express last week, charges prepaid which I presume you have received before this. If you would send me you and Ada's likeness, say a small 25 ¢ melaneotype, I would get them photographed and bring them back with me when I come. You can read portions of the letter to all as I cannot afford to write too many of them.