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2015.001.061 transcription

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Chattanooga, Tennessee

May 18<sup>th</sup>, 1864

Wednesday Evening

Dear Friend Lottie: -

When I went to the Battery to get my supper, I found a letter awaiting my perusal. Before I got to my tent one of the "Boys" told me there was a letter for me at the Captain's tent. Something told me that it was from you. Just then supper was of minor importance. I hastened to the Captain's tent. The Clerk said "Young, it is from her!" Said I "What her?" The Clerk said he would not tell me but would give me the letter and then I would know. He handed me the letter – my heart gave a leap, as I saw the well known handwriting. Clerk said I must read the letter there, and as he had a fire I sat down and read it. He was not benefited much, though. I merely

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told him that he was right, and that it was from "her." He came to the conclusion that it was, and more, he said that I was mightily pleased with that letter as he could not [sic] read human nature and that he had always been told that he was a pretty good judge. He was right. I was pleased with the letter.

I beg leave to differ with you as regards receiving letters. I think that I love to receive letters better than you. As evidence I will say that as soon as I get a letter I sit down and answer it, the same day or the furthest the next day following that on which I get a letter. You wait – a week and sometimes more, that, I think, shows pretty clearly which loves to receive letters best.

For the present I have no household duties to perform. I have been detailed from the Battery, as "Mounted Orderly" for "General Court Martial." I have for my room what was once a parlor, and, I should finely(?), a very nice one too. Now it is occupied through the day by the court, through the night by myself and the clerk of the court. It is in a long two story Brick. The house is surrounded by large oak trees, which are inhabited by some of the prettiest birds I ever saw. And, Oh! they are sweet singers (they haven't sung much today though) season for that is then the weather is so cold

that we are obliged to have a fire in the room, and when we go out we are obliged to wear our overcoats. Yesterday we could hardly bear to have our under coats on, it was so warm.

Yes, we are where we can get books, but hardly our favorites. If I could only get a few such books as the one I lent Orpha last winter I would be much pleased. You read that didn't you? It was "The Old Homestead" one of the best novels I ever read. If you did not read it go now and get it, it is worth reading. She took it home with her.

There are a great many more in the hospital now than when I wrote you before. The Army has been fighting for a week, car load after car load of wounded arrive here every day, some of

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them very severely wounded too. Some of them are not so badly wounded but they can walk(?) around and crack a joke about going home a cripple.

Our army has got the enemy surrounded now, so [illegible] says and I guess that for once she is correct. I hope so at least. I want to see them all bagged, I want them so completely whipped this summer that they will be glad to come back to the best government that sun ever shone on.

I now remember using the expression I caused(?) me no anxiety until you said that I had said it. Then I felt rather anxious to know what it was, fearing that I had said something that I ought not. As it is, I am satisfied I would like the opportunity of doing that same thing tonight. Oh! how I would enjoy it. It makes me feel good to think of it. I have a horse now in Smethport I would not have to depend upon the neighbors. I will live to do it yet, I hope. I think that the war will be ended in less than a year, perhaps some of the troops will be mustered out before winter. I would that I was one of them. I would stay in McKean Co next winter, wouldn't I enjoy myself hugely, though, I'll bet "all my old shoes and boots and shades(?)!"

Tell Cassie that I thank her for wishing me happiness and prosperity. I want her to tell me where I can find "a good and worthy companion for life!" I want to find such an [sic] one. I am coming down to tea with you some of these times, and when I do come you will know it soon after I get up from the table. I have an awful appetite. "I could eat a mule and chase its rider!" Excuse the expression, it is a common one here, and, withal, a very expressive one anyhow.

Tell Mr Brewer that I thank him for the invitation but circumstances over which I have no control will prevent me from accepting it. I shall be obliged to "Beg leave to decline!"

My companion thanks you for wishing him such good luck.

I do not know of anything more to write about unless I tell you that there is a lady in the other part of the [illegible] that is playing on the piano. It is a real treat to hear something that is civilized, if it were not for shoulder stripes I might get her invitation to spend the evening there but as it is I must stay where I am and enjoy the music from a distance. Oh! I love music! You will not get as long a letter from me this time as you did before. I have not yet been to the cave. People say it has been explored 7 miles. I cannot hardly believe that. You will have an afternoon's job in studying this let

[sic] out and then I don't believe you will make any sense of it. If you can you will do better than I can.

I shall expect you to write as soon as you get this,

Your sincere friend,

George L. Young