

CHATTANOOGA HISTORY CENTER

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2015.001.073 transcription

2015.001.073(1)

Chatta Tenn Jan 4/64

Friend Hibbard-

Your very welcome letter was rec'd upon my arrival at Louisville about ten days ago. I staid [sic] there three days and was six days in getting to this place- four days from Stevenson[?], raining like the very devil, standing and waddling in the mud two days to the very top of my ears. Skirmished and fought with the thieves, had extra guards detailed to watch my baggage, and then they rifled my pockets and stole a blanket. Others had every thing stolen.

You allude to your present position and wish to know of the prospects here. I don't wish to offer any encouragement fearing that you will be disappointed. But there isn't any one that I would more gladly assist, and if I learn of a shake [?] I will get in strong for you.

Rad. may possibly get an appointment as paym[aster?] in the regular army. If he should he has promised me the position as his clerk. In that case you could join Bill. The prospects for Rads success are devilish slim and he does not wish to have it known that he is expecting any such good fortune. I assure you I will do all in my power elsewhere

2015.001.073(2)

but you can see how it is- every Paym[aster] has his own individual friends and acquaintances to whom he offers the position to first. It is just about as easy to get to be a Major General as it is a Paymasters Clerk. Much good luck &c assists a man wonderfully. The pay as I have told you is nothing at all \$1,000~ per year and your transportation paid while on duty. Of course one can save a little- three or four hundred dollars perhaps. We have presented a petition for an advance of pay to \$1,800~ but whether we will get it is a very doubtful question. We may get an advance of pay but probably it will not exceed 12 or 1400 dollars. To be sure there is much to be seen that cannot be valued in money. I would not be deprived of what I have seen for ~~ and then again I would not make my last trip to Louisville and return ever again for ~~~ I don't know much. Can't write any more tonight.

Good night

Jan 3-/64

I cant tell what day of the week it is and I cant find a man that knows

Bill is paying anything and anybody in fact is trying to accommodate an army

2015.001.073(3)

for 100,000 now[?]. He is trying to support his reputation as a clever fellow. He is not ordered or expected to pay anything, officers or regiments, but I'll be damned if it does not come pretty thick and fast.

Our business here now is to pay Veteran Volunteers or rather Bill has charge of the payment in the field. The pay due and a months advance pay and the bounties, premium and clothing acct all amount to about \$200. We take five different receipts in duplicate for the above amounts and then the enlistment papers muster out rolls making a back load from a regiment.

We came here the first of Nov. Have I told you that I saw the battle of Lookout Mtn-Missionary Ridge? We had a splendid view of nearly all of the movements.

Until I saw this battle I have never been able to read an account of a battle and be very much interested in the account, for the reason that I did not understand it. I could not conceive anything of the movements or of the beauty and grandeur of a whole army drawn up in line of battle. I never wanted to go home as bad in my life as I did the first of Dec. and when we left Louisville

2015.001.073(4)

I expected to [be] able to do so but the fight opened[?] and paying was delayed. After the regular payments were made then came the Veteran Volunteers, but I am satisfied "I am content" What I have seen here has more than remunerated [?] me for having lived so long. We expect to return to Louisville the last of this month. We have got cords of vouchers God only knows whether we will ever be able to touch bottom with them or not. We have handled about \$1,500,000~ already.

We have had very unpleasant weather here of late- rain and mud and three or four days that were very cold for this country. The thermometer stood at twelve degrees and I do not think I ever suffered more from the effects of the cold. I am glad you visited the girls in Boston. I do not hear from them at all except through those at home. You speak of their marrying in Orwell[?] It is nothing after you get used to it. With them it is a mere [?] business transaction a sort of speculation. Jane tells me that Amanda and Earl went to N.Y. on their marriage tour. Jane understood that Amanda took along a keg [?] or two of her best butter to defray the expenses (?) Did I ever tell you of Amandas calling my attention to a loving couple that were dancing in the sett [?] with us. She punched me in the belly with her elbow and for a moment I imagined a jackass had kicked me.

[Addendum on top of Page 3]

Please give me the address of your friend Smith [?] who is somewhere in Grants Dept~

[Addendum on top of Page 1]

Let me hear from you soon. If there should be a chance for you here of course you will have to come without a moments delay.

Yours truly

Allan Smith[?]

2015.001.073.b(1)

Envelope addressed to Mr. E. H. Phelps

Chatham Mass.