

Camp near New Market Va.  
May 2<sup>nd</sup> A. D. 1862.

Robert S. Allison Esq.

My dear friend:

I intended to have written you a letter ere this, but have been so busy since I joined the Regiment, that I have had but little time for correspondence. I have now a moment's leisure and will improve it as suggested above.

My route through to Winchester was highly interesting to me, as I had never been over the B & O. R. R. before. It could not fail to be, to any lover of travel and grotesque natural scenery. The two points of special attraction, to wit. Cheat river and Harper's Ferry, were particularly so. I had almost said, intensely so. But I will not add to the innumerable efforts already heretofore made, to describe them in public prints and elsewhere, which are no doubt familiar to you, if they are not indeed familiar from personal observation. Stopping over night in Wheeling, by the way, I got a peep at Genl. Fremont, whom I had so much desired to see, but was <sup>not</sup> close enough to give you a very accurate description of his personnel. Suffice it, that I was very much deceived in his appearance, his hair was closely shaven, brushed to one side, mixed with grey, temples almost white, with beard neatly trimmed - and withal, looking more like a Presbyterian clergyman

Looking out for a call, I have had been my ideal of his gallant  
mountaineership. But while I am writing, rumor fills the air that  
he has moved his forces through the interminable mountains of his De-  
partment already and occupies Staunton a head of this Division  
some 120 miles, with whom our advance has formed a junction and  
effectually driven the terror-stricken rebels from this part of Virginia, so  
much for the Pathfinder. Well, after resting a few days at Winchester  
I started on a march to find my regiment, some 35 miles ahead. I took  
my gun, but an occasional mounting a wagon with which the road  
was almost lined. Then footed it again, so in two days I made the  
landing. I found the regiment encamped in the wet and mud, our  
company without their tents, with nothing to shelter them but booths of  
brush and sticks, with a few oil-cloths. They had not seen their tents  
for 28 days. They bore evident marks of hard usage, and even of  
demoralization, you may imagine my feelings, at the prospect before  
me. Lieut. Adair has been sick at a private house near Winchester  
since the 20<sup>th</sup> of March. I had forebodings concerning my own health  
when I saw this specimen of soldiering, but I have stood it finely  
indeed, but it has been better since with us, our boys got their tents on in  
a few days, and all fixed and just beginning to live again, when  
on the evening of the 26<sup>th</sup> we were accosted by the Adjutant in almost a whis-  
per, announced, "be ready with 3 days cooked rations, we move to night at one  
o'clock" all was silent in camp that night save the "busy note of preparation"  
a short nap - a cup of hot coffee, our brigade was in line of march,  
precisely at one. I might have been sensible, but here was a new  
class of sensations, and I determined to see it through, our course was

by the turnpike, the night dark but clear, about a mile on the way, we halted  
not knowing what was the matter, but presently three or four powerful volleys  
of musketry broke out on the still air, away ahead of us, it was our  
cavalry driving in the enemy's pickets, on the opposite side of the bridge  
which the rebels had destroyed and our men had just rebuilt. (as usual) it ceased  
and on we went, without hindrance until the dawn of day breaking over  
the Blue Ridge mountains on the east, revealed to us at once, the full view  
of our whole division, for miles either way along the road, and the most  
beautiful country I ever beheld, <sup>we</sup> were approaching Mount Jackson where  
it was reported Jackson was to fight us. The bridge across the river here  
was in flames, and our column again halted, while our cavalry could  
be seen in all directions reconnoitering the position. All at once Ashby's  
artillery let loose on them, with perfect fury, a passage was soon found  
over a rail road bridge, and our artillery wagons went ahead with  
great rapidity in full gallop, and soon gained an elevated position  
and in less time than it takes me to write it, Damm had them planted  
and was pouring shot and shell into them at rapid rate, our brigades  
then moved up in double quick time and crossed over immediately in the  
rear of Damm's battery to support it, we remained in that position until the  
battery ceased, the enemy had as the boys say, "skedaddled," we then  
deployed as skirmishers, through the woods for two miles, passing  
through the enemy's camp, our cavalry made a charge on them  
with a yell that made the welkin ring, but the enemy again  
escaped, we again took the pickets on double quick into the town.  
Here just at the foot of the town another bridge was in flames, and  
we had to ford it, passing on a mile beyond, where they attempted

to make another stand with like success, here we gained a fine position on a hill, but again in a few minutes the firing ceased and we took a cup of coffee - marched back to the town, took off in a circuitous course, over the roughest road I ever saw, for 10 or 15 miles, intending to come on to the main road ahead of them and surround them, but arriving just at sundown, all exhausted with fatigue and hunger, to find no bridge to cross the river again we encamped for the night - on the naked ground, the next morning forded the stream with our whole brigade, marched about 5 miles and entered this town, New Market, where we joined the rest of Shields and Banks forces, who had kept the main road, in the mean time we learned that Jackson's whole force had left here that morning before breakfast, on being asked why he run so, he replied "who in the h—ll wouldnt run with 20 miles of Yankees after him. Our march the day before was through or under a very hot sun all day - and was continued about 18 hours on but one cup of coffee, and a few crackers, considered by some to have been one of the hardest of the campaign. I was fortunate in getting to ride a portion of the time, and also to ride across the stream, was very tired but suffered none from it afterwards. But I must close this already too long account of what may not be interesting to you.

I have procured a line specimen of Confederate scrip, which I send you, in this. If you should be indebted to any of your secession friends in Ohio, you might make a tender of this scrip to them. They certainly could not object to it, for it is all the kind used by their brethren down here. I have been unwell for a few days but am about over it now, occupying out as good with me pretty well, if the weather were good all the time. I received a letter from my wife day before yesterday. I was glad to learn that our little darling had been worse since I left them, but Rhode says its better now, uneasiness about them is my greatest trouble and care, but I hope they may get along well, I was glad to learn that they had concluded to make a visit to Pennsylvania. I think it will be beneficial to them all. Remember me to Mrs. Allison and believe me  
With much regard  
Yours truly, Milton Barnes.