

Frank H. K. Barker Letter

Co. C. Ninth Regiment Mich. Infantry

Citizen Nov. 7, 1861

From the Ninth Regiment

We extract the following from a letter received from Frank H. K. Barker, who is in Capt. DeLand's Company, Ninth Regiment:

Tuesday, Oct. 29th, 1861

We are present encamped at the mouth of the Salt River, Ky. [The Salt River enters the Ohio twenty miles below Louisville, on the Kentucky side - Ed.] We expect to move soon. Our journey was a tedious one, I assure you. We arrived at Jeffersonville, on the Indiana side of the Ohio River, Saturday night and slept in the cars. Going through southern Indiana we found some switches turned for the purpose of throwing us off the track, but we saw them in time and escaped injury. Our train stopped once in some woods, and found three men had a large log just ready to roll on the track. They ran away as soon as we stopped.

I heard the roar of artillery distinctly for several hours Monday night while at Jeffersonville. At sunset, same date, we noticed a strange boat on the opposite of the river and a black flag bearing the skull and cross bones. Our officers and men filled three small boats and went in pursuit until dark, when they returned, having accomplished nothing. The next day we ascertained that 500 rebels were encamped some fifteen miles above, and they were some of them. We have a secession spy a prisoner in our camp.

I have just ascertained the name of our camp. It is "Camp Duffield." We are within thirty-five miles of Gen. Buckner's rebel army, which is reported strong, so you can see we expect warm work soon.

The health of the men is good, and I hope it will remain so. Excuse this brief letter, as I am in a great hurry. I shall write you again soon.

FRANK H. K. BARKER

FROM THE NINTH INFANTRY

We are permitted to make the following extract from a letter written a few days since, by Frank K. Barker, of Co. C. Ninth Regiment Mich. Infantry, stationed at West Point, Ky, to his brother in this city:

Camp George Duffield  
November 28th, 1861

It is thanksgiving in camp today and thus far has rained incessantly. This is the first day of thanks I have experienced since our arrival here as we have no duty whatever to perform and I can write a few lines. Our Captain has just returned from Louisville, from the presence of Gen. Buehl [sic], and while there a lady called upon the General for a pass to Nashville, and was told by him to wait ten days, when the road would be open to all loyal people. We are positive that Buckner is completely surrounded, and will be whipped or we will within the ten days mentioned. Our Captain thinks we will winter here, and act as rear guard to our army. We are soon to receive some large Columbiads [sic] to shell the rebel rascals with if they attempt to plant a battery on any of the surrounding hills. We now have ten brass six-pounders and one rifled gun with plenty of grape and cannister. Our breast-work on the hill is nearly finished, so much so that we can use it. It looks saucy to see those brazen backed monsters mounted on wheels staring a fellow right in the face, and it requires no small amount of nerve to face them; but the wild excitement of war will drive men over any and every obstacle that may come in their way. I thought our military encampment at Jackson was large, but I assure you it was tame indeed compared with what I have seen since my enlistment. We have some 300 sick in our regiment. Thirteen have died. Nine of our company are sick, but none in it have died. My health is good, and for a man who has not had his clothes off in over two months, with the cold ground and a little straw for a bed, is much better than I could expect. There is no similarity in the life of a merchant and a soldier. The fatigues and privations of the latter, patiently endured, make, or ought to make them their country's pride; the laurels they win are won clearly.

Frank

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