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**From the Ninth Regiment**

*A Visit to Kentucky – The Position of Affairs There – The Michigan Ninth and its  
Officers – The Blight of Slavery*

Correspondence of the Detroit Tribune  
CAMP HAYCROFT, Elizabethtown, Ky.  
February 9<sup>th</sup>, 1862

Having business with some of our Michigan regiments in Kentucky, I have taken a trip to the “dark and bloody ground” of “Secessia;” and the information of those having friends in the regiments visited, and those whom business or duty may call to visit them, have noted my trip and a few of the “scenes by the way.” I left Detroit last Tuesday at 9:45 P.M., via Michigan Railroad’s to Cincinnati, which city I reached at 11:30, the next day. Nothing presented itself unusual on the route but the sight of two regiments of troops in camp in the open field, in their cloth tents, while the snow covered the ground, presenting a very cold and uncomfortable appearance, and anything but the farced pleasure of “life in camp.” At twelve at noon found myself aboard the mail packed *Superior*, bound for Louisville. In Cincinnati the snow had nearly disappeared, and mud, muddies, muddies, was the expression from many lips. As our noble boat rounded to, the sound of music, sweet music, charmed my ear; it was somewhat louder but no less sweet than I had heard before; the “Last Rose of Summer” was the tune, and as the sun had broken forth to give joy and gladness, it was almost easy to fancy the tune corresponded to the day. In looking for its source, I found it was from the stream organ of the Phek just starting for Wheeling. I could not but wish some of our noble steamboat men, who have business in their heads, and “music in their souls,” might place such instruments on the splendid steamers on our noble river, where the water is purer and sweeter than the yellow, muddy Ohio, which has been spreading herself, and whose waters have “riz,” sweeping off much valuable property from her banks. Having never before passed down the river, and wishing to see what I could, I took my stand on the upper deck, as the afternoon was pleasant, and the scenery varied, and having often seen the sign, “do not speak to the man at the wheel,” I did not disobey orders given in other places, which led the pilot to remark to persons in the wheel house that I was not a Western man, or I would be asking questions, and obeying the orders last, but seeing I was of “an enquiring mind,” invited me up to the pilot house and pointed out objects of interest to me. We passed in succession Lawrenceburgh, Aurora, Rising Sun, Vevay, Madison, and some other towns on the Indiana side, and Petersburgh, Warsaw, Guelph, and several other towns on the Kentucky side.

In many of these towns business seemed to have left, and prosperity and growth long since ceased, and they were fast going to decal. The principal institution and the only one doing business (and it exists in every town,) was the distillery. From this remark

I would except, Lawrenceburgh, Aurora, Vevay and Madison. The contrast in the appearance of the country, and the buildings too, is very great, about Cincinnati, on the Ohio side, the fine farms, well cultivated, the neat farmhouses and out-buildings are an age ahead of the poorly cultivated lands and cottages of logs and small frame buildings, with the chimney outside, and no barns or out-houses on the Kentucky side. As you go down the river along the Indiana shore farther down, the difference is not so marked, but enough to show which is the "land of the free and the home of the slave."

We arrived at Louisville about 11 o'clock the same evening. Thursday morning I called at Gen. Buell's head quarters to procure a pass, as in these times of war is necessary in order to get within the lines or before you are permitted to take the cars, or go in to the country from the city. At 10 o'clock, as soon as the office was opened, I found a large number present asking for passes, none of which are granted without proper certificate that they are proper persons and have business with the army, or are going to see the sick and have been sent for, are allowed. Some were granted, some not. My experience at Washington to procure passes across the lines of the Potomac caused me to go prepared to pass the lines in Kentucky, and I had no difficulty, but was delayed half a day as there are but two trains a day on the Nashville and Louisville Railroad, at 7:30 A.M., and 3 P.M. On arriving at the cars at 3 my pass and baggage were examined to see I was all right, and had no articles contraband of war.

An amusing scene occurred to us, and the individual concerned seemed the most amused showing the vigilance of the officials, and that those who get ahead of the Provost Guard are smart. An aged gentleman, whose countenance was indicative of honesty and benevolence, came into the cars with his traveling satchel. On taking his seat, he said "Well this is war. I am over eighty years of age, have always gone when and where I pleased before without asking anybody, and never before was searched or had my baggage examined, and I should not care about it now if I had nothing but my bread and dinner for a lunch, and did not want that seen or pawed over, but, said he, laughing heartily, I am satisfied if it will curtail and cut off secesh and that is the object of it." After the train was under way the papers were all examined again, which caused some dissatisfaction among those of secession sympathies, many of them having taken the oath of allegiance to obtain papers.

We arrived at Elizabethtown at 5 ½ P.M. This is the County seat of Hardin county, forty-two miles from Louisville, the head quarters of Brig. Gen. Ward, and the headquarters of our 9<sup>th</sup> Michigan Regiment. Col. Duffield, as President of the Board to examine officers of the various Regiments in General Buell's division was absent at Bardstown, but I found seven Companies beautifully located on the land of Cap. Haycroft, in honor of whose whole-souled loyalty and efforts to promote the Union cause the camp is named. One Company under Capt. Newcomb is stationed at "Nolin," ten miles further on the road, to guard the Railroad bridge at that place, and two Companies are at Mulrose Hill, West Point, under command of Major Fox.

Friday was pleasantly spent in intercourse with Lieut. Col. Parkhurst, Adjutant Duffield, Dr. Smith, Quartermaster Irvin and the officers and many of the men with whom I was acquainted, and who had many enquiries to make about home, sweet; and it seemed to afford them great pleasure to see a Michigan man, and one that could sympathize with them and furnish information for though they speak in the highest terms of their officers, who are very kind, they cannot always answer enquiries about home,

and the mails are very irregular, and many letters sent each way never reach their destination, as I heard in my own case of four directed to Col. Duffield on important business, but one reached him. I had also the pleasure of witnessing their drills, for these are kept up whenever the weather will permit, I saw them skirmish drill, and witnessed their marchings, loading and firing, which seemed to be with all the precision of regulars, and no regiment can excel them, for they have the best of instructors in their officers, and are men that learn. I was also pleased to see the large number at dress parade, and to hear read in the orders the promotions of Lieutenant Irvin, Quartermaster, to a post of increased usefulness under Major General Buell, at Louisville, and of Lieut. S.S. Barrows to be 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant, Sergeant Major Doublaire to be Lieutenant, and acting Quartermaster, Commissary Fox, son of Robert Fox, to be Lieutenant, and several others. I do not now remember. Young Fox left his studies at the University to take a place of responsibility and labor, and I rejoice that his efforts have been appreciated and himself, Lieut. Barrows, and others mentioned, are receiving reward due to merit. The superior business qualifications of Quartermaster Irvin, have found him favor with Gen. Buell, and he has been detached from his regiment to Louisville, where he has charge of purchasing the forage for the division, a very responsible post, and for which he business qualifications fit him well. Ere he took his departure, he invited me to visit the Hospital with him, where he spoke many a kind word and bade the inmates a farewell.

It is cause for rejoicing that the officers of the 9<sup>th</sup> are acquainted with their sick in the hospital, and while mothers and sisters and friends at home prepare articles for the comfort of the soldier, the sons and brothers and husbands among the officers take good care to see they are appropriated to those for whom they were designed. The hospital building are among the best in town, and but fifty six were in its ward, and these all seemed to be doing well. Fevers of the typhoid phase are the most prevalent. In passing we saw two ladies of the place who had come in to minister to their comfort. The Surgeons are men of skill and devotion to their profession, and have hearts as well as learning, and to Assistant Surgeon Smith are we all greatly indebted to the improved health and condition of the men under his care, and who is here in the 9<sup>th</sup> as he was while with the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment [in] Alexandria, one upon whom they could always rely, being there as here always at the post of sick, and who, by the skill, kindness, and attention to those under his care is more deserving a promotion to the highest rank in his profession than many "I got of."

There has been some planning in the regiment for its benefit, and I could but regret that Capt. Millard had been allowed to resign instead of being cashiered, but he has gone without his true character, and others maybe deceived as this regiment was when they received him. The vacancy has been filled by the promotion of Lieut. Nye to be Captain, and I hope soon to hear the same concerning Lieut. Barrows as Captain, and the promotion of others I might mention. I heard among the men that other promotions would probably be made, and that if their worthy Colonel gets his deserts there might be another Brigadier General from our State. (This was before his return from Bardstown.)

On Saturday evening Col. Duffield returned, and spent Sabbath with his men, attending morning service at the Baptist Church with the Lieutenant Colonel, Adjutant and quite a number of officers and men of the regiment. The Chaplain being unwell, we had an excellent sermon from the Rev. Capt. Wilkinson, whose occasional services are well appreciated, by the regiment, and whose earnestness and intelligence commend the

religion he preaches and practices. Col. Duffield's duties are arduous and trying in the position, in which he is now placed, and he related many circumstances showing the difference of men where freedom exist and the Bibleland common schools are universally known, and liberty to all to think and act is universal. In the examination of a witness in the recent trial for murder, the witness, an Orderly-Sergeant, testified that the prisoner answered to roll-call; when asked to produce his roll, he stated that he had none; when asked how he kept account of his men, he said he kept it in his head and when asked if he could read, he replied No. And such are many of the men in the service in Kentucky. I need not inform you where they were raised, and under what influences. I must be careful here for I shall offend those who love slavery above everything else, and who "would rather shoot a man who loves his country above slavery, than to shoot secesh." But when I hear such noble Union men as Capt. Haycroft relate the persecutions the Union men have endured where slavery exists, I have but little love for them. "*Sacred Institution*" or its apologists and lovers in a free State. The Captain, a very aged man of intelligence and worth, and more enterprise than his neighbors, had to hide himself for a season from the wrath of the traitors in his vicinity; and because he chose, in the exercise of his judgment and conscience, to prior loyalty to his government, his life was in danger from the traitors, *who must not by hurt*, and our armies must not molest. He related to us the case of an aged gentleman by the name of Merrill, who was taken from his house, and after asking him if he was a Lincoln man, he replied that he was a Union man; they said that was the same thing – there was no difference – (more truth than poetry) they put a rope around his neck, and after nearly strangling him by partly hanging, they placed him on the sharp edge of a saw and rode him some distance, and when he would place his hands on the rail to protect him from the pain, they would knock them away. They carried him to a pond and threw him in, and when he arose and tried to crawl out, they would push him back and under water with the rail, until almost exhausted, they left him, and allowed him to crawl out. This is a well attested fact, and the treatment an honorable man, over 70 years of age, received from the 'chivalry of slavery,' and the degenerate sons of Kentucky, and for whom the whole sympathies of many, too many in the North, are expended in this unnatural rebellious.

But to return to the regiment. To show the anxiety of the men to do duty, twenty-five men who were able to travel left the hospital at West Point and came to Elizabethtown, where they all went into camp. At the church service but few citizens attended. There were but nine men in citizens dress and about twenty-five ladies, the balance of the audience being military. Quite a number were present at the depot to attend the funeral services of a corporal of Captain Newcomb's company, whose remains were sent to his friends. The town, though beautifully located, with fine country around it, and everything to make a fine town if there was thrift and enterprise in the country, is dilapidated, and looks forsaken; its old Court House and churches and many of its residences look as though they were about to tumble down, and it appears as though it were built and finished during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, from whom it must have taken its name. I venture the opinion there is not such a town in Michigan, and never will be until we get the full benefit of the peculiar institution. It, however, is better than other towns I saw. There is a very comfortable hotel kept by a Mrs. Hill, and the headquarters of Gen. Ward, where travelers are made very comfortable, and I commend it to any one who may visit there.

Gen. Ward is waiting impatiently for an order to advance, and feels that the suffering of the Union men within the enemies lines ought not to be while we base the force and power to prevent it.

Capt. DeLand, who came home to attend the extra session of the Legislature has not returned, but is now recruiting for the regiment in Battle Creek.

There are two regiments at present at Elizabethtown, quite a force at Shepherdsville, and all along the road, and at Bacon Creek, twenty miles from Elizabethtown, are over fifteen thousand, and at Munfordville over twenty-five thousand, all on the line of the Nashville Railroad, ready, aye, anxious to go forward and crush out this vile rebellion.

Among the number at Bacon Creek is the gallant battery of Capt. Loomis, in good health and spirits, and ready for action when their country calls, having seen service in the mountains. They would prefer for a time some field service. They have been improving their time in camp in practice, and the Captain has made some discoveries in preparing shells that are of great importance to that branch of service and the Government. Capt. Loomis has suffered a great deal with salt rheum on his hands, the diet of the camp being favorable to that disease. He said that at the last inspection his hands were so badly swollen he could hardly hold his saber and that the inspector complimented him by saying he was always ready for a fight; "If he lost his saber he was ready for boxing;" otherwise than this he was looking in the best of health and condition, and I found him, as at Fort Wayne, the agreeable gentlemen, and the active, attentive and successful officer with a command that does honor to itself and the State from which it came.

Passing on to Munfordville on the Green River, and seventy-two miles from Louisville, we come to "Camp Wood," the headquarters of Gen. McCook. Approaching it in the evening when the tents are lighted, a camp of 25,000 troops is a magnificent sight; and if we cannot say with the prophet, "How goodly are thy tents, O Israel, and thy dwellings, O Jacob," we can at least say all honor to our brave volunteers; who, for the love of their country, its constitution and laws, have come forward of their own accord, and are ready to suffer every privation and lay down their lives if necessary to support the principles of the truest and best Government on earth, and put down a rebellion that has for its object the destruction of that Government, and the promotion of slavery, ignorance, and wrong of every description.

W.P.