

Mike

Camp in Lookout Valley Tenn.
Nov. 6th 1863

My Old Friend Frank

The little leisure I have I can not pass by without attempting to ans. your kind and welcome letter rec. a few day since. Frank I was indeed happaly surprised by rec. a letter from you. I am glad to know you have not forgotten me as I know I have not you neither any of our old times together, were they at school or elsewhere, and I am in hopes that as pleasant and happy times will again com But perhaps never. Let us only hope for the best in all things.

You see by the date of this note that we are somewhere near where Rebs ar said to be. Sure enough we are. I wish no one to sing it to me as I have seen and heard them much. We are in fare view of Lookout Mountain and too its very summit where Mr. Johny Reb has some big sounding guns, but they avail them little or nothing. But I must say they waist a great amount of Powder and Shells.

We left Bridgeport, Ala. the 27th ult. and the following day mid-afternoon reached here, distance about 25 miles.

As we came to the margin of this Valley one Regt. of our Brigade the 73 Pa. advanced and deploid as skirmishers. The 154 were nex in reserve. We proceeded unmolested for some time in this way, but the time was to come, and did come when we encountered Rebs. The 73rd exchanged shots with them, that is their pickets, But to be sure of success the 154 must come in which they did with a right good will. We formed in line of battle & deploied a little and pushed on. Soon we were on double quick and at once dashed over the 73rd and at the same time commenced cheering & hurahing eagerly. We dashed acrost a field about 50 rods and there came to the foot of a steep hill covered with a thicket of bushes where the Rebs wer but we sent them to hunt their holes in the Mountain. We had not much more that got to the top of the hill before Shells commenced coming from the top of Lookout but they drove us back not a bit. The whole of the 11th Corps was united in passing threw. One a little way and we came in fair range of their guns and the shells came hurting no one as I saw but learned since that one man was wounded and a horse or two killed. We went not more than a mile & a half before we camped for the night. But about midnight I awoke and could hear constant musketry and frequent cannonading. One Brigade of our division had a hard fight. We were just behind in reserve but did not have to take part in the fight as the Rebs were smartly whiped without.

On our right the 12th Corps was fighting at the same time the Rebs were repulsed at every point. I can tell you no more particulars. If you can read all of this you will do well. Geo. Waterman is here and well the same as myself. We are about 4 miles from Chattanooga. It seems that our strong efforts here can but be crowned with success. Your Uncle Salmon sends his reagards and says when you write to him he will to you. You will Please remember me to all who may enquire and write me again Soon and excuse imperfections.

I remain your old
friend & school mate

M. D. Bushnell

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LETTER WRITTEN BY MARTIN D. BUSHNELL OF NAPOLI, NEW YORK,
MEMBER OF CO. H, 154TH NEW YORK INFANTRY, TO FRANK CONGDON,
RANDOLPH, NEW YORK, POSTMARKED NOV. 12, 1863

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[Phil Palen collection]

Kelley's Ferry Tenn.
Jan 25th/64

Friend Frank

You are perhaps by this time thinking me very negligent in writing you and I can not say but that you are justified in so doing, but I hope the crime is not so great but that Pardon may be rendered me. I sincerely ask it.

I recd. your last some time since and being rather destitute of the necessaries for writing have not until now attempted to answer it.

I am yet enjoying good health and of course the life I am persuing is not less agreeable and good.

For the last few days the weather has been exceedingly beautiful. Today is like a pleasant May day in Cattaraugus. It reminds me of days gon by when we were about to finish sugaring and enter upon the duties about the farm.

The ground is becoming quite dry, and in fact evry thing is quite favorable for an active campaign at present but it is not at all probable that we shall enter upon such. Doubtless the weather will soon change and rain will predominate which will make porage [sic] our best foot-holds.

You[r] Uncle Soloman is at home now I suppose, and will undoubtedly tell you more about recent campaigns than I can on paper if I should try a long time. You of course know that we did a big thing not only for our selves, but our Countrys glorious cause.

The date of this not[e] tells you the name of the place which we (The 154th) are ocupants of. It is situated on the Tennessee River about 8 miles west of Chattanooga. Here several small boats land which transport army stores. Our duty is to handle and take care of them. I am thinking that if we got destitute in the line our fingers will get long and crooked and catch onto something occasionally.

Until to-day there has been only two Companies (H & I)" here. To-day the remander of the Regt. came here from Lookout Valley and relieved another Regt. here doing said duty.

We have erected comfortable Quarters and get plenty of rations and of course practice high and aristocratic living.

We are very refined in Stile and manners as it is of course necessary for Soldiers to be.

I hope that my brief description of our living will not make you envy me my comfort. I mus say that I allmost do yours teaching school. I am thinking that I shall be very rusty if I live to get home in regard to literary matters, but I guess I will know how to Shoulder Arms & right-face. Well all right, my duty is here and let it be performed here.

You wished to know about Ned Worden. I think he was taken prisoner at Gettysburg and is either at Richmond Va. or at Anapolis M.D. I have heard that the Boys were paroled.

The Boys Present of your acquaintance are well. I close for want of space. Please pardon imperfections and write soon. I am as ever

Yours,

M. D. Bushnell

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LETTER WRITTEN BY MARTIN D. BUSHNELL OF NAPOLI, NEW YORK, PRIVATE, COMPANY H, 154TH NEW YORK INFANTRY, TO FRANK CONGDON, ESQ. OF NAPOLI. POSTMARKED JAN. 30, 1864 AT NASHVILLE, TENN.

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[Phil Palen collection]

Camp of the 154th N.Y. Vols.
Lookout Valley Tenn.
March 12th 1864

Friend Frank

What say you to my writing you a letter this warm and pleasant afternoon while all is quiet within the lines and in camp save the mingling of voices which are not often hushed? Please don't say that I shall not for I fear I should have to prove myself disobedient which you know sometimes causes a breakout between parties. Don't want that you know.

Now Frank if I write you a letter not fit to read you must not think it an axident but just believe I am too lazy to think and act.

Your welcome letter came duly but I must confess that I have been very negligent in answering and should you not choose to pardon me I shall not hurt you, neither shall I if you do. So I can not tell which you will do, but think you had better render pardon.

Frank I am as tough as a pickled owl and as fat as one Dicker Lady.

The weather is beautiful and evry thing well. The Boys all appear happy and many enjoy life tip-top.

I[t] was rumered threw camp to day that we were going back to the Army of the Potomac, but a rumor it is.

Yesterday our Brigade went on review before our Corps commander Maj. Genl. Howard the one armed hero. We displayed our best military skill which you know must be great.

Your Uncle Solm, is well and doing well. I was on picket with him the other day and we could do nothing to better amuse our selves than to talk of old Cattaraugus and the many things which have there transpired.

I suppose you are by this time well acquainted with Miss "Mc. Roberts" and are fast making preparations for the future. But be careful and not get caught in a snare 'cause it would make you "holler" right out"

Tell Joseph that he must not go over to Mr. Stone's very often cause Mat Woodworth will be in his hair when he comes home. If Francis goes there when he gets home and you see him going by your house just head him off and turn his course to the opposit direction, cause you know it won't do for the boy to have his "head" all the time as he is not a good "Stone" Mason.

What a letter I have written. Don't let it be seen.

I close by sending my respects to all of your people and my best wishes for your future welfare.

From your old school
mate and Friend

M. D. Bushnell

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LETTER WRITTEN BY MARTIN D. BUSHNELL OF NAPOLI, NEW YORK,
PRIVATE IN COMPANY H, 154TH NEW YORK INFANTRY, TO FRANKLIN
CONGDON OF NAPOLI. POSTMARKED MARCH 17, 1864 AT NASHVILLE,
TENN.

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[Phil Palen collection]

[Phil Palen collection]

Camp of the 154th N.Y. Vols.
Lookout Valley, Tenn.
April 21st 1864

Friend Frank

Perhaps I had better improve my leisure this beautiful morning in responding to your last which came duly. What think you?

I am well aware that I can not write you any thing of great importance for such I have not. We are yet in the same old camp but know not how soon we may leave for another position. You have perhaps learned that the 11th & 12th Corps are consolidated under the name of the 20th A.C. commandog [sic] by fighting "Joe Hooker".

We belong to the 2nd Brigade 2nd Div. It is the original 2nd Div. of the 12th Corps commanded by Maj. Genl. Gerry he who by order of "fighting Joe" dashed his "White Star" Division around the cliffs of Lookout Mountain and continually fought for 12 or 15 hours and as you know made the "Johnies" schedite [skedaddle?]. The Div. is lying at or near Bridgeport Ala. and we are some expecting to go there to June but know not.

The weather is about as it has been for some time not very warm and a little rain occasionally. I am as fat, lazy & ugly as ever. The boys are generally feeling well.

Some of the Regt. are to day being examined by the Col. for recommendations for furloughs of 30 days to join the free military School at Philidelphia Pa. and that preparitory to a "commish" in a collard [colored] Regt.

I think of no one of your acquaintance that is so doing, in fact I don't know how many nor who are trying their luck. Bushlin made up his mind that he belonged to a very good Regt. and had better let well enoug[h] alone". You see I heard I might get to be Maj. Genl.

Well Frank you don't want to let that honey of yours lift an other bucket of syrup and strain herself no sir! that will never do! You should been around and done that your self.

As you requested I inclose some leaves. They are Laurel, and perhaps some wild flowers.

Remember me to all who may enquire. My best wishes for your future welfare and I close.

Truly Yours

Write soon

M. D. Bushnell

[Phil Palen collection]

Liberty & Union

Napoli Oct. 29th 1864

Esteemed Friend

Your kind favor of the 25th Inst. is at hand and with it I am much pleased and will now improve my leisure in responding to the same.

I can inform you that I am enjoying very good health now with the exceptions of a "tip-top" cold. My limb is doing very well. Is nearly healed.

I left Atlanta the first day of this month and reached home the eleventh, was very successful in coming with the exceptions of a few detentions.

I am not discharged from the service nor do I choose to be until I can wear an artificial limb. I am on furlough of thirty days which time expires to morrow. I intend to go to Dunkirk Monday or Tuesday to get it extended. I shall report at the U.S.A. Hospital in Buffalo. If I do go there I think there will be no trouble but what I can get a furlough to come home and perhaps may be allowed to remane at home the greater part of the time.

Frank the only trouble I have here is with the women both old and young. They all seem to think that an Invalid like me are fit subjects to receive all of their sweet [tripes?] &c &c and you see it is rather tough on one like me. Now don't you think they ought to quit?

However tough I may be I am bound to live through it all.

You speak about drilling for oil. Now be careful and not get led to believe that you had better get a claim of your own with an "Oil Well" on it and go to drilling on your own hooch with your own drill for you know you would be liable to break the point off of it and besides all that the oil might swell up and bust your well open and then what a fix you would be in.

Perhaps my ideas about drilling for oil are not at all correct but you see I have a kind of an opinion of my own getting up. But enough of such and I close.

Please accept this miserable scrawl for a letter and also my best wishes for your future wellfare. I am Sincerely Yours. Write again to Napoli.

M.D. Bushnell