

Fairfax Courthouse Virginia

Sunday Oct 26 1862

Friend Bethiah

It is raining

Bethiah this is the second time that I have endeavored to give you a ——— sketch of our satisfaction in regard to camp life (?) and don't find anything in the shape of a ——— Now I hope and trust that I shall get an answer to this that will renew my spirits
Bethiah you will excuse me for writing with lead for Mack is writing with the pen We feel so poor in pocket that we cant afford but one pen between us Pens and papers is mighty scarce down here.

October 27th 1862

Bethiah There was so much going on here yesterday that I did not finish my letter and lam glad I did not for I can tell you something about our shelter 1st it is nothing but very thin twilling (sp? 2nd it is not much better to shelter one from the storm than so much ——— It rained steady all night last night and the wind never blew harder in old Portland than it did here last night. Some of our tents are fluttering like sheets in the wind It is impossible to keep them down This is what a soldier has to contend with and I fear this is simply an introduction Our breakfast this morning was cold pork Muddy at that and hard tack That was delicious I tell you Neither tea or coffee Perhaps some would like the style of living but I don't fancy it. Mack says that hes doing up a nice thing on letters he has written to his Aunt Wilent (sp ?) to day Also to Mart and George.
We have had an opportunity to enlist in the Navy. We have half a mind to enlist. Do you think it would be a good idea or not. Ten of our company put their names down. Our Capt says that it would be a vague (?) idea for us to think of such a thing. I have written six letters home and have not received one yet. I guess that my folks don't care much about me or they would have written me as much as once. Mack and I have kept up good spirits so far and are looking hence for the time to come when we shall return to our friends in safety and I trust if we ever do we will be crowned with laurels. But if we never do time will keep alive the many associations we have enjoyed in Old Portland.

Hon young runners
I beg of you to excuse all mistakes and obliged.
Remember me to Saily (sp ?) and also ——— Cuez (sp?)
From your absent friend
Elial W. Skinner

Pvt., Co. E