

3-29-1862

Letter from Jonathan H. Wells (Alexandria, Va.) to family, March 29, 1862

Jonathan H. Wells

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Alexandria March 29th. (1862)
(Alexandria, Va.)

Dear folks at home:

I find myself seated on the sidewalk this morning with cold fingers. We started at 7 o'clock last night from Washington & came to this city about 15 miles. We got here about 1 o'clock this morning & had to stop & camp rite on the sidewalk brick. I took my rubber blanket & spread (it) on the brick to lye on & Howard Hinman lay on it with me & spread his over us. I slept $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours & woke up half frozen. I got up & walked the rest of the night. I stood the march first rate & feel pretty well this morning. I neayer have found my napsack & things. I drew another yesterday. 4 of us took our stove to pieces & put it in our napsacks & carried it until the rest all tuckered out & threw theirs away & I carried mine 2 or 3 miles before I knew it.

Fortress Munroe- April 1st.

Whilst I was writing on the sidewalk we had orders to swing napsacks so I had to stop writing & start. We marched about 2 miles back from the city & put up on a hill in the woods. We scraped up a pile of leaves & layed down & put our blankets over us & the snow commenced falling. We lay there until we was pretty well covered with snow & I got up & 2 or 3 others we found out that the tents was not coming that night & 4 of us ran the guard & went down to the city & tryed to get lodging but money would not buy it so we had to go back & lye in the snow or sit by fires. The snow fell about 2 inches, the largest snow storm they have had this winter. The 16th. reg't. was stationed about a mile from there. Amherst Stewart, Ambrose Conger, Smith Thomas & lots of others came over to see us. They all look healthy. The next morning we had marching orders again so we got on our packs and fell in to line & had to stand there 3 hours & then started & marched down to the city & stood there till dark then went down to the boat & went in but the boat was so full that our company had to lye on the floor but I had the best nights rest that I have had for a long time. The boat did not start until Monday morning. The day was very warm & still so we steamed ahead & arrived here this morning. We have not landed yet. We are lying here at anchor. Col. Dutton with 3 others took a small boat & went on shore for further orders. They say he has got back & we are going to land here. There is as much as 300 vesels in sight of here. A great many of them loaded with horses, mules & soldiers. There is speculation here. Cheese sells for 25 cents a pound, pickles 30 cts. a bottle. They hold a pint & a half. We have to live on hard biscuit & I cant bear the sight of them. I bought a half pound cheese yesterday. We were paid off last Friday. Mine came to \$58. E. Mulholland took \$1300. \$50 of it was mine. He carried it up to Seaver & he is going to send it home by Wm. A. Wheeler. He is in Washington. He will either put it into the bank or send it to Thomas Mulholland of Bangor to distribute. I have sent 4 lettres to you before this, 1 to Eds folks 2 to Hannah. (I) have recd one from H. 1 from Ed none from you. I will stop now & finish when we get settled.

Good bye-

J.H.Wells.