

Elmira NY

Nov. 24<sup>th</sup>, 1864

Dear Mother,

I have received no letter from home since my return, although I have written once. I presume there may be one on the road somewhere.

Do you remember the anecdote of the drunken man who was found holding on to a lamp post and who being questioned as to what he was doing, replied that he was waiting for his house to come round so he could go home? Well it has been nearly that way with me, for although I haven't been drunk, yet I have held on to this "military Post" and at last my Regt has come round to me, and is now on duty at this place. The 92<sup>nd</sup> left the field in Oct. and came to Albany to muster out, but the War Dept. having decided that their time would not expire until the 31<sup>st</sup> of Dec. they were ordered to report to Elmira to serve out the balance of their time and accordingly arrived here on the 19<sup>th</sup> and were quartered at No 1 barracks. I have been over to see them once. They number about 40 men. In consequences of this I shall not be mustered out until Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> and cannot be at home before January 1865.

I think it would be better to hire the cow kept at some good place than to buy hay for her and if you cannot get her kept for a reasonable amount perhaps it might be advisable to sell her if you can get a fair price seeing she is so independent in her movements among the village gardens, you can decide the matter among yourselves I presume.

I send you (\$10) in this letter and will send ten more if this gets through safely.

It is Thanksgiving day and our mess have had a good dinner of roast turkey, generously furnished by ourselves. We have 7 mince pies and some cake reserved for supper, our plan being not to have all the good things at once. The expense is about twelve dollars divided among 23 of us not very costly you will observe.

I feel that I have much to be thankful for on this day, not the least of which is that I have been allowed to serve my time for the last year at this place, a privilege accorded to but few soldiers I assure you. I trust that I sufficiently appreciate the advantage I have enjoyed.

Last night we broke up a tunnel, which we have long been watching, capturing 6 men. They were within 4 feet of the fence and would soon have dug out, it would have been death to them if they had however for we had a man watching for them outside. They were much disappointed after all their hard labor to find themselves captured. They were calculating on spending Thanksgiving outside. We have broken up three tunnels since my return and I hope I shall be able to sleep all night, tonight a thing which I have not done for a week past.

Hoping to hear from you soon. I remain as ever

Yours

John