

Dayton, Ohio Dec 24 1861

Dear Robert

Your letter of the 15th just has come to hand, dated at Rolla MO. You make no mention of having received any letters or papers from home. I have written twice, once to Rolla, and again directed to Burton Barracks St. Louis, with news papers. We are all sorry to hear of your sickness, at the same time glad to learn that the worst is over and that you are getting better ___ by adding to your hard crackers & tea, a little beef soup, would be both palatable & nourishing ___ of course you occasionally get fresh beef, boil it well and thicken with pounded crackers or flour, or corn meal, then add cabbage, potatoes, turnips, onions or any thing that you can get that will give the soup something of a relish, you must all learn to make the best shift with the materials on hand. We have a letter from Willie a few days since inclosing \$120 to pay some of his dues here, they are all in good spirits with a fair prospect of; on to Bowling Green in a few days. Dick Phillips brot [brought] the letter and reports favorably of all he saw. He says a Michigan Brig asked the privilege rebuilding the bridge that was lately burned by the Rebels over Bacon Creek. In fifteen hours the bridge was up ready for crossing. These Michiganders are smart fellows, they be that. Mr Die also dined on his return from Camp (Niven, or now) Wood with Gen in Chief Newel at Louisville who told him that a forward movement was destined very soon. We must have upwards of 80,000 men now between Louisville and Bowling Green an all sufficient force to drive the Rebels out of KY. We just hird [heard] of Gen Popes success against Prices advance in the neighborhood west of Rolla. At the time he hird [heard] the news we supposed that your Regiment might have been in at the capture of the force of 1300 Rebels 200 wagons 1000 mules & horses. Although we fear it is too good to be true yet it seems to be confirmed by late advices from Missouri. Their has been quite a number of Recruits from Dayton since you left us, among others is Petigrew the wagon maker on Wayne St. Longsheth and all most a full Company left in Oct for St. Louis. Now in Benton Barracks all first rate men attached to the Sharp Shooters. Ashley Brown was at Gaiety last week for the purpose of drawing his pay but did not get it. Still lives in hopes. Saw Dick Norris who is quite well. Capt Mike Noland has got a Lieut Colonelcy at long last in a Hamilton Brig. Col Thomas J. Smith of Dayton is finally out on the war question has been making spirited ____ speeches of late. Lieut Sarn is at home wating for something to turn up, he made many inquiries about you the other day.

You no doubt have hired [heard] by the papers how Charles Anderson made his escape from Texas. Eliza and the girls are expected home on Christmas. Charley goes to Washington to try to affect an exchange for Will Jones who is still in Texas a prisoner of war. I will be glad to meet with Capt Young, and do him all the good I can. I go to Columbus next week first to attend the Annual Meeting of the State Agricultural Board which meets on the first Wednesday of Jan. The Legislature meets on the first Monday, so that I will be a few days in advance of the session Monday. Cousin Lizza and Jennie Price are with us & quite well. Patterson and Frank

Whicker are both in the Secesh Army, as I learn from Charley Brown. I had a letter from Mr Dryden of Palmyra MO saying that the buildings on the leased lot on Main Street was burned down and lost to the Heirs as the Leasors are worthless and no insurance on the property and that no money can be collected from them or any one else at present. Mr D is a staunch Union Man which more than can be said of many men in Palmyra. I see by the papers that the Rebels are at work destroying the Northern Missouri Rail Road again. I cant see why the state authorities or army does not enforce the law against the lawless Devils – the Secesh are hangin Union men in Tennessee for burning bridges. It is simply redicules to think of stopping this Rebellion by any other means than shooting and hanging for Unionists are getting out of all patience with the manners of trifling with the enemies of the country. We are all in ecstasies over Popes success in capturing the Rebel McGoffin & others. Tomorrow is Christmas. I hope you will enjoy a hasty plate of soup as a holiday repast. Try and preserve your health.

As every your affectionate father

J. Patterson