

Army of the Mississippi Newburg Tennessee  
Friday afternoon Apr 25 1862

My dear friend

I despatched a letter to you on Tuesday crossing just after we landed. The same evening I received yours of 13<sup>th</sup>. I have now received your package of tracts and I think only two packages of papers - possibly thus I don't know what I have missed any mail matter before and cannot account for the loss of this. But owing to the difficulty of transporting so much mail matter across the country it is possible they may have taken the responsibility to throw out some of the larger packages of papers. It is a dismal rainy day in camp now and it has the effect to produce a sort of depressing influence on my spirits. There is a new encampment on high land near the town of Newburg about a mile south of where we landed and I suppose about four miles farther up the river and south from the old battle ground. It is the most beautiful section of country I have yet seen since entering the Army. Our Army of the Mississippi under Gen Pope constitutes the left wing of Gen Halleck's Army with our left flank resting on the Tennessee river. Our advance will be by the same road that Beauregard took when he surprised and captured Prentiss' Division. By looking at a map of this section such as the Paper frequently publishes you will be able to get a very correct idea of our position. We have been waiting all the forenoon for orders to advance having received orders about daylight this morning to prepare two days rations and be ready to march out four miles without tents or baggage. We got ready but the order to move did not come and at noon we received notice that we should

not more till tomorrow. From what we can learn incidentally the  
plan was to march out to day leaving tents & baggage behind and  
bring on a general engagement tomorrow without being encumbered with  
camp Equipage. The same rain of to day I suppose defeated this  
arrangement if this was the arrangement which however I doubt somewhat  
I think the plan is to advance gradually with the whole army about  
two or three miles a day and this course must very soon result in a  
battle or an evacuation on the part of the Rebels.

The pickets of the two Armies have skirmishes every night and I suppose  
we are not more than eight or ten miles from the main body of the  
enemy. Probably before this reaches you a great battle will have been  
fought and we can't tell who of us will fall victims. If there is to  
a battle it will be a very severe one for both Armies are very strong and  
we understand Beauregard is very strongly intrenched. If he decides  
to act entirely on the defensive and it becomes necessary to storm the  
works it will naturally cause a terrible loss of life. But I say again it  
is useless to anticipate. God only knows what will take place and I hope  
I may be willing to submit to His will whatever it may be.

My health is very good now quite as good I think as before I was sick  
I feel very thankful to feel that is so when I need it so much.  
It seems from your letter that your life does not flow out so easily  
as you could wish. You complain of being troubled and fretted by  
the little cares & trials of life. I think you will find this to be  
the universal testimony of those who have had much experience  
in life. We can prepare for great sorrows and meet them  
with countenancing faces but the little trials and ills of life  
are those which test our forbearance & patience. I know it is so  
with myself. I frequently yield to impetuosity and say and do things

for which I am sorry afterwards. It requires the utmost watchfulness and vigilance on our part to overcome these propensities of our nature. I don't know what your peculiar trials are but I don't suppose you have more or greater ones than the average of humanity. I know we are very apt to magnify our own trials and think they are greater than other people have to endure but I suppose they are often very largely the effect of imagination. Of course I don't make these remarks as applicable to you for I know nothing of your situation but I could wish that your associations might all be pleasant.

But I must close for I have some matters which I want to attend to this afternoon and it is only three days since I sent you a long letter. Rose is in full bloom here in the desert garden and I send you a specimen picked a day or two since. I will write you again before many days if I have opportunity. Till then I remain

Your friend & Brother

Oliver W.