

Poliner Tenn June 5th 1862

My Dear Wife

Your kind letter of 25th ult. was received in due season, and I was so glad to hear from home again, and know that you were all well; tell Royce I hope he will not be quite so tired when he writes again, for I am always very glad to receive his letters. You say the weeks and days do not ~~seem~~ ^{seem} half as long now that you are receiving letters often, well May, I have written you just about 3 times a week since I came to Tenn, and the mail has run quite regularly considering all circumstances, but I fear that for a time it will be impossible for our letters to come and go as they have done, as we are on the move, yet you must not make yourself uneasy, but keep in the best spirits you possibly can, being assured that I will write you every opportunity that I have to send one. I wish you would write me as soon as Lucie gets so as to creep. I do wish I could see her. I was very glad to hear that Mother is better, hope she may recover entirely. I was very glad to hear that G.P. had gone to Dover, and really hope he will stay there. Bic Cooper's bill has increased 50 cts since I left, he only claimed that I owed him 4.50 when I left, which you can pay if he has not left town, if he has you need not send it to him. You say that Lieut Beard called on you, and was to come to us the next week, he has not got here yet, when he comes I will take the medicine and also the wine. You said that you really hoped

there would be no fighting at Corinth, but that we would surround
the enemy, and force them to surrender! well, instead of forcing
them to surrender, we have let them slip through our fingers,
although my opinion is, that it is about as well, (though evidently
not intentional on the part of Gen Halleck) as we have taken
quite a lot of prisoners, and the effect of such a retreat upon
the army (Ruler) is disastrous; they are deserting daily, and I have
no doubt this army will become decimated more by that "sheddable";
then it would have been had we fought, and driven them.
Corinth is evacuated and "nobody hurt." One rather curious
incident occurred, which I will relate. In Gen Pope's Division
was a battery of 32 lbs "Paro Guns" that had not been
used, and on Friday morning (30th ult) Col. Dubois, (Chief
of Artillery, Gen Halleck's Staff) went out to put them in position
just to test them, and gave them a good elevation, directed
them toward Corinth, and fired! the distance from Corinth
was two miles, and the first shot struck a Rail
Road engine, entirely demolishing it, and killing the
engineer. I suppose the Confederates thought the Devil
was to try, if we had guns that would do such
execution, at such a distance. On Sunday morning 1st
inst Lieut Boston and myself mounted our horses
and spent the entire day in looking over the town
and surroundings of Corinth. The town had been entirely
deserted, not a person (except one negro woman) nor an
article of furniture (of any value) had been left. some
flour, sugar, molasses, camp equipage, corn (which was burning)

was left indicating that they left in quite a hurry. Corinth is a young town, said to be four years old, had contained some 1500 inhabitants, and should think ^{been} quite a place for business. I left the town satisfied that the rebels had intended to make a strong fight, having been strongly fortified but were suffering for the want of water, and believed they could do better by leaving, and driving us a little more southward, well we shall see, what we shall see. Link and I got to camp at about 10 P.M. tired, and were just getting ready to retire, when orders came to prepare to march (with 3 days cooked rations) at daylight on the morning of the 2nd; we were ready but did not leave till 12 M.

We took a westerly direction, and made through the west woods 5 miles the first half day, at night it rained very hard and we camped under our canvas, wagons &c, not having time to pitch tents, at sunrise next morning we were on the move again, at about noon (3 inst) passed through Pinedale, a very pretty town on the Mobile & Ohio RR. Here the inhabitants were of all shades from a few white complexions, to as black as negroes ~~and I saw some indications~~ that ~~had~~ the South are really fighting for the liberty or 'ties' they have so long enjoyed. I can "see the point" now. The places of business were all closed, many standing on the corners of the streets, no demonstration of any kind being made. The truth is there is but little Union feeling or sentiment here, and the more we court and try to persuade the rebels by friendly legislation, the harder they

wild fight us. I have become no more an admirer of
"Southern Institutions" than when in Illinois. On the night
of the 3rd we camped 18 miles east of Bolivar, on the
4th marched through a rough hilly country to the Hatchie
river, and today are in Bolivar in Camp, where we will
probably remain about 4 days unless disturbed by the
enemy, our supply train having returned after freeze.
The force here consists only of Gen Wallace's Division.
Bolivar is a very pretty town on the Hatchie river, and
Miss Central R.Road, on high ground; the male inhabitants
have generally gone into the Confederate Army. ^{June 7th} Our Officers
have obtained much valuable information from Negroes and
while I write our horses are eating Secesh Corn that will
not cost the government very much. The RR Co have
not tried to run a train over the road it being
in our possession, as is also the Telegraph. Gen Wallace
has captured quite a quantity of Sugar. Can &c. The
inhabitants really believe that they are whipping us at every
point. it is surprising how ignorant of the true state of things
they are: they ~~conclude~~ ^{conclude} that the western boys will fight,
but New Englanders they believe to be consummate cowards.
Where we will go from here I do not know, but rather ^{suppose}
toward Memphis. Water very good, and very little sickness
in camp. I have been in my saddle since Sunday morning,
feel really tired, but my health was never better, and the
trip across the country, I consider worth a great deal
to me, obtaining a better idea of Southern character than

could be obtained in any other way. The inhabitants are not
pleased with our remaining here, as our pickets surround
the town, and their friends, ^{in the Army} find it impossible to come
and visit them. We have taken 3 Lieutenants prisoners, who
were looking about to learn what they could. The Negroes
are very communicative, and in many instances utterly
refuse to work, evidently supposing that we have come
to liberate them from bondage. I saw a Lady slave yesterday,
the property of a Scotch Colonel, who is as white as
many of the Sailors of Dixon. We are asked 40 cts per lb
for Lard \$1.00 for Butter, which amounts to not selling it
to us, as the boys cannot afford it; they mean that we shall
have nothing to eat if they can by high prices prevent our buying.
The first day we came our cook bought Butter at 4- per lb and
milk at 5 cts per qt. but they in some instances refuse to
sell at any price asserting that they dare not do it lest
they be arrested and punished. I have a most excellent
cook, who knows how to milk, and thus you will
conclude that as often as once a day, I get a nice dish
of bread and milk. Our boys have never been so healthy
since we left Camp Butler as they are now, and I doubt
not we will enjoy good health through the summer. We
have seen no fighting, yet, but are ready. I have just
learned that the mail leaves this morning and
must close, though there were some other things I wished
to say; give my love to all the friends, and direct
to Wallace's Division Army of the Tenn in the Field.
Affectionately Yours
John