

Lewisburg
August 29th Thursday 1861

Dearest Mother,

I cannot stand that miserable ink again, so I will try my pencil. You see by this I am still here. I expected to get off about the 1st of this week, but Mr. Alexander said I was not well enough, and that I had better stay this week, and next week he could take me down in his wagon. He is a true Southerner in heart and action and would give all that he possesses some \$35000 for the cause of necessary. He has now living with him at his own expense a maiden Sister, another Sister, or rather a wife of his brother (her husband having died last winter) and some 6 or 8 children & a brother. This latter has had quite an eventful life. He studied for the law when young, and promised to distinguish himself in his profession when the Mexican War broke out. Fearing a proscription he joined a company from this portion of the state, and served during the war. He does nothing now. I am told by young Larew who is in our company and a nephew of Mr. A's [Alexander's], that his senses are somewhat impaired, and that he has very peculiar opinions, but so far as I have had intercourse with him he appears a very sensible companion. The farm here comprises over 400 acres. There is a fine (for this country) limestone spring near the house, and a good spring house attached to it, in which they keep milk &c. [et cetera] very cool. This spring is a great delicacy for this country, as there are but few limestone springs and those only in one portion of the country. I have been drinking nasty freestone water almost exclusively, ever since I have been here, as they have nothing else in the Kanawha Valley. The springs however are very small, only a little trickling stream, nothing to be compared to the splendid gushing we have in our springs at home. I have been living on milk ever since I came here to Mr. A's [Alexander's]. It reminds me of the nice fresh milk that used to be on the table at Wheatland, and often makes me sad to think about those bygone times. I have been amusing myself reading a good deal. There is a small library here of books of almost every description. I have been peculiarly interested and affected with a little poem of Cowper's in which he addressed a likeness of his Mother, commencing thus: "O that those lips had language! Life has passed, with me but roughly since I heard thee last, Those lips are thine - thy own sweet smiles I see, The same that oft in childhood solaced me; Voice only fails else how distinct they say, Grieve not my child, chase all thy fears away." If you can get a copy of Cowper I wish you would read it. It has a powerful effect on the feelings. I have also been studying Hardee's Tactics, particularly the 'Skirmish Drill.' It is strange I can't hear from you. I enquire at the off [office] continually, but no letter. I know you write but can't understand why I don't get your letters. I suppose you get mine. I have written a good many. This makes the 3rd since I came here. They ought to reach you in two days. There is a story here in circulation that Floyd met the enemy at the Crossroads the other side of the Gauley and killed & wounded about 100 besides taking a number of prisoners. Gen'l F [General Floyd] crossed over the Gauley some distance above its mouth, while Gen'l [General] Wise is approaching the enemy on this side near its mouth. Some more troops passed through town the other day. Mr. A [Alexander] brought me out yesterday evening from town a Richmond 'Inquirer' of the 27th that he said he had begged for me. I should think public opinion at the North would revolt at the suppression of the freedom of the Press. If you get a chance by any one coming out here you would do me a great favor by sending me out a couple of gray flannel shirts plenty long enough, not like that short col'd [collared] shirt. I have had considerable trouble with the latter. A jacket out of the same material or out of grey cloth or cashmere would do as well. Did you ever get the other shirt from the woman as I wrote to you to do? I have

determined not to accept the 3rd Lieutenant I wrote to you of. The charges here for shoes and boots are enormous. \$6 for a good pair of shoes! Mine that I got in Lexington to march in are beginning to wear out, but I will have them patched as long as possible. It is hard work to get things washed, except by enormous prices, such as 10 cts. [cents] a piece as we had to do at Greenbrier W.S.S. [White Sulphur Springs], and in the Kanawha Valley. I have commenced cooking and washing, myself. On Sunday Mrs. Alexander, one of the Rockridge Rangers, a relation, who had been staying here for several days somewhat indisposed, and myself started off all on horseback for church. The people here and indeed a majority in Greenbrier are Presbyterians. I attended the Methodist Church in preference and heard a very plain spoken old gentleman discourse on righteousness and its fruits. They have also a Northern Methodist Church in town & a large congregation. I was put on a pretty wild mare, and thought she intended to run off or throw me at 1st but I held the reins [sic, reins] pretty light and no accident happened though she was very sprightly. When you write again tell me something about the wounded in Col [Colonel] Allen's regiment, whether any have died and who &c. [& etc.] Where is Willie Wilson, now? Did he join the Botts Greys' or did he stay at home to protect (?) his mother?

Friday Morn [Morning] 9 AM. I am just on the point of going into Lewisburg. I anticipate finding a letter at the P.O. On Monday next I expect to start off for camp Mr. A [Alexander] is going with his wagon. I will write soon and tell you where to direct. Your devoted Son, Eugene.