Franklin, Tennessee

Thursday, Nov. 13, 1864.

My very dear wife:

I write this beautiful morning under peculiar circumstances. You will see by the date of this that I have not received my commands. I have been trying since last Saturday to reach it, but have not yet succeeded. I will give you a short history of my pilgrimage. I reached Nashville one week ago to-day. On the following day I took a freight train (there is no other kind namespace these military roads) for Chattanooga, reached there the next morning through snow and darkness and snow innumerable, found our corps had gone to Pulaski. I could find no one that I knew, so I took the first train back to Stevenson, expecting to go on the main running down by the way of Huntsville, Ala. I reached Stevenson after dark. The evening and very dark and windy. I groaned around until I found the soldiers' home, and such a home! But it was a shelter from the storms, at least, and I stayed here for the night, and wrote you a short note which I hope reached you. Here I met some officers from our corps who had been
down that road and returned, not able to get through.

Then took the next up train for Nashville and
after a very tiresome and sleepless ride all night, reached
there the next morning (Sunday) on Monday morning
I took the Patoka train on the other road, running
directly south from Nashville, by the way of this black and
locomotive, everything progressed were until about ten o'clock
A.M., after getting to Thompson's station about ten miles
beyond the place, we felt a sudden jar. the train stopped
and heard a volley of musketry, we made a rush for
the door of the car; saw the engine was off the track and to get
some soldiers depot out, guerrillas. There happened

there about two hundred armed soldiers around and
they immediately stopped out and commenced firing.
In there but the cowardly rebels had escaped, we after wards learned they were a desiring party of Forrest's
men, the main body main one men. one hundred men self.
but not more than seven or eight were seen. They had cut
the tracks in a deep cut nearer in the midst of which was
a short curve so that we could not see ahead more than
hundreds yards. the engineer saw it and reversed his engine
but was not quick enough, it went over with a crash,
but hurt no one, the rebels hence at the engineer. Thinking
no doubt to kill him now capture the train, but finally
So many soldiers aboard filled the boat. Finding myself the leaving officers on the train I took command, threw out pickets and prepared to defend ourselves as well as we could and had to stay there forty-eight hours. I was a little frightened at first and confess that unpleasant visions of Libby Prison flitted through my mind for a few minutes. But I soon recovered my self-possession, threw out pickets and felt secure against what might be brought to bear against us. But although we might have been in a much worse fix, we could not think it a very desirable situation to be placed in. So we came, having failed in getting our engine on the track and finding that three bridges were washed away further ahead, I sent a despatch to the Commandant of the Post here to send us another engine to haul as off in the evening came and brought us back to this place, we reached here a little before night and our Illinois Keeps I found a very comfortable hotel to stay in a private boarding house, we have everything as decent as could be desired, with the exception that we are broke, I haven't had a dollar since I first reached Nashville, but I have not counted for anything my shoulder straps are sufficient vouchers, an officer of our staff offered to loan me all the money I wanted, but I declined taking more.
few dollars. I was sorry afterwards I didn’t take more, it is all gone again. I don’t know when I shall get them. Last night some
men, on right hands of troops passed down towards Peru, but the agent got much further
than we did until one of them ran off the track
and the whole are detained or will have to march
a foot through. But I am very comfortably situated and
guess I will remain here until the roads is
then again, which may be several days.
As soon as the accident occurred at Thompson’s
Station, I sent out and arrested all the citizens for
a mile around and held them as hostages, and
had a notion to burn all the houses near but
thought I wouldn’t, an old gentleman by Thompsons
living near came aboard and invited me and two
of the officers to his house. When we went up I found
that he was not prisoner was from his house he promised
a member of his family, he besought me to release him.
I did so and the old man fed us while we stayed and
treated us very kindly. So you see I am very finely
and I don’t intend to get in a splutter about getting
my commissary if I don’t reach it in a month.
There is plenty of our troops around now and
the word is very enough as some try to break on affairs,
I felt a good deal of anxiety about not reaching the
regiment in time to vote, but fortunately we had enough
this soldiers and Pennsylvania soldiers, & some fellows
where we were and if a decent an officer with us
had a lot of those books and fæce sheets, so we had
a hell for each state and voted for Able’s
I am enjoying fine health, and although it has rained
constantly some since I left Smyrna, I am about rid of
my cough. This morning however it has cleared away.