May 23rd A.D. 1862.

Robert S. Allbrook Esq.

My dear friend:

I intended to have written you a letter some time, but have been so busy since I joined the regiment, that I have had but little time for correspondence. I have now a moment's leisure and will improve it as suggested above.

My route through to Winchester was highly interesting to me, as I had never been over the B. & O. R. before. It could not fail to be, to my lover of travel and picturesque natural scenery. The two points of special attraction, to wit, the Cheat River and Harper's Ferry, were particular. I had almost said intensely so. But I will not add to the innumerable efforts already made, to describe them in public prints and elsewhere, which are no doubt familiar to you. If they are not indeed familiar from personal observation. Stopping over night in Wheeling, by the way, I got a glimpse of Uncle Tomm, whom I had so much desire to see, but was close enough to give you a very accurate description of his person. But, for it, that I was very much deceived in his appearance, for his hair was closely shaved, brushed to one side, almost white, with beard, and a white kimmer - and without looking more like a Presbyterian deacon.
Looking out for a cache, there had been my ideas of his gallant
maneuvers. But while I was writing, rumor filed the air that
he had moved his forces through the intervening mountains of his De-
partment already, and occupied Staunton as head of this Division
some 40 miles, with whom our advance had formed a junction and
effectually driven the disorderly rebels from this part of Virginia, so
much for the Pathfinder. Well, after resting a few days at Winchester,
I started on a march to join my regiment, some 35 miles ahead. I took
my tent, but and occasionally mounting a wagon with which the same
was almost loaded, then set out again, so in two days I arrived at
landing, I found the regiment encamped in the tents and woods, our
company without their tents, with nothing to shelter them but boards of
brush and sticks, with a few oil-cloths, they had not seen their tent
for 25 days. I saw evidences marks of hard usage, and some of
demoralization, you may imagine my feelings, as the closest before
me. Lines. A trail has been kept at a private house near Winchester
since the 20th of March. I have forebodings concerning my own health
when I saw this aspect of soldiering. But I have lived in finer
indeed, but it has been better times with us. Our boys got their tents on in
a few days, and all fine and just keeping it lines again, when
on the evening of the 16th we were accosted by the rebels, and in almost a whole
night. I remember, the scene with 3 days cooked batters one move to night of one
olde. All was silent in the camp that night save the "Swing met of preparation" with
a sharp mop, a cup of hot coffee, one brigade was in line of march
100 yards. I might have been killed, but there was a new
course of sensations, and, determined to see it through, our course was
left.
by the turnpike, the night dark but clear, about a mile on the way, we halted not knowing what was the matter, but presently there is four powerful rockets of Musquito burst and out the air, away ahead of us. it was our cavalry driving in the enemy's pickets on the opposite side of the bridge, which the rebels had destroyed and our men had just rebuilt (as usual) it ceased and on we went, without din or noise. until the dawn of day breaking over the blue ridge mountains on the east. recollected to us at once the full view of our whole division for miles either way along the road, among the most beautiful country i ever beheld. we were approaching moore's ford when it was reported. jackson was to fight us. the bridge across the river here was in flames, and our column again halted, while our cavalry went to search in all directions reconnoitering the position. all at once sherry's artillery led down on them, with perfect fury a passage was soon found over a rail wood bridge, and our artillery opened with great dispatch in full gallop, and soon gained an elevation position and in less time than it takes me to write it. damm had them placed and was pouring shot and shell into them at rapid rate, our brigades then moved up in double quick time and crossed over immediately in the rear of damm's battery to support it. we remained in that position until the battery ceased, the enemy had in the boy's essay, "skedaddled!" we then deployed as skirmishers through the woods for two miles, passing through the enemy's camps, our cavalry made a charge on their dispositions with a yell that made the walking ring, but the enemy again escaped. we again took the files in double quick to the town. fire just at the foot of the town another bridge was in flames, and we had to ford it, passing on a nice beyond, where they attempted
to make another stand with like success, but we gained a fine position on a hill, but again in a few minutes the firing ceased and we took a cup of coffee. Marched back to the town, took off in a circuitous route over the roughest road I ever saw. In 12 or 15 miles, intending to come on to the main road ahead of them and surround them, but arriving just as dusk dawned, all exhausted with fatigue and hunger, to find no bridge to cross the river again we encamped for the night on the naked ground. The next morning forded the stream with our whole brigade, marched about 5 miles and entered this town. New Market, where we joined the rest of Shields and Bank's forces, who had left the main road; in the mean time we learned that Jackson's whole forces had left here that morning before breakfast. On being asked why he did so, he replied, "who in the H-ll would not run with 20 miles of Yankees after him. Our march the day before was through or under a very hot sun all day, and was sustained about 18 hours on bus one cup of coffee, and a few crackers. Considerably some have been one of the hardest of the campaign. I was fortunate in getting to ride a portion of the time, and also to ride across the streams, was very tires but suffered more from it afterwards. But I must close this already too long account of what may not be interesting to you.

I have procured a line of some Confederate Corr. which I send you in this. If you should be indebted to any of your southern friends in Ohio, you might make a tender of this bie to them. They certainly would not object to buy it to use the money for their homina devotion. I have been unable for a few days but am about now in more camping out agree with me pretty well, if the weather were good all the time, I received a letter from my wife day before yesterday. I was going to learn that our little darling had been worse since I left home, but she says its better now, meant of above is my greatest trouble and care, but I hope she may get along well. I am glad to learn that they have concluded to make a visit to Pennsylvania. I think it will be beneficial to them all. Remember me to Mrs. Allison and believe me with much regard your truly. Milton Barnes.