

10-30-1863

## William C. Nelson to J. H. Nelson (30 October 1863)

William Cowper Nelson

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I have finally received the money 61 dollars which you sent me by Mr Paine but years ago -  
ceived the money to-day. I have never been able to get out what became of the pants and blue-  
buttons sent by Lieut. Jones, I have written to the 14<sup>th</sup> to enquire after him.

get a half yard  
of blue cloth  
and have me  
a vest made  
I would be  
much obliged.  
I believe I  
have mentioned  
all the articles  
which I need.

If you  
get them,  
then will  
be no  
difficulty  
in carrying  
them by  
Sergeant  
McKee.  
God-bye  
Yours  
Affectionate  
son  
Wm. C. Cherry.

Head Quarters Casey's Brigade  
Near Brandy Station, Va, Oct 30<sup>th</sup> 1863,

My Dear Father:

Although I have written several times recently I have received no news from home since Mr. Alexander came to us, he brought me a letter and the money which you sent also a small package, but he says that he could not find the trunk at Oklawaha, and so he sent the key back to you by his negro. I hope you will find out where the trunk is, and if you do not have an opportunity before, Sergeant McKee, who expects to go home in a few weeks will bring that or any other articles which you may desire to send me, He is a particular friend of mine, and will take pleasure in bringing anything for me, I am very much in need of undershirts, if you could procure three or four in Memphis, I would be much obliged, I have seen some very nice shirts which were sent to Lieut. Col. Hardin of the 19<sup>th</sup> Miss, they were purchased in Memphis very cheap, a few woolen overshirts would be very acceptable also, but these I can do without, the undershirts I absolutely need, If you could send me a pair of high-quartered shoes, they would be of great service to me, the shoes and undershirts I would like to have as soon as possible, the trunk, hat and other articles it is not necessary to send until Sergeant McKee goes home, Boots are now selling at from \$100, to \$225, hats and shoes at from \$40, to 60, a uniform I am told now costs in Richmond \$700, or 800, I had me one made several months ago, and it only cost about \$125, I have worn it very little and it is as good as new, I shall not need another until next winter, and by that time I hope the war will be ended, I think that the election next Fall in the United States, will bring about Peace, at least I hope.

I received a few days since a letter from you dated Sept 2<sup>th</sup>, it was sent out by Brodie Crump I believe, it was mailed at Meridian and postmarked Oct 12<sup>th</sup> as Mr. Brodie was not very punctual or else made a very slow trip from D.S. to Meridian. You ask me in that letter to give you an account of the expedition into Pennsylvania. I did write you a long account of the Campaign soon after our return to Virginia, but I suppose the letter was lost, as others of a later date reached you; at the risk of being wearisome I will however endeavor to give you some account of the march, although so long a time has elapsed since then, I am fearful that it will prove barren and uninteresting. To begin, We left Culpeper Ct. House June 14<sup>th</sup> and marched 20 miles that day, reaching Sperryville after dark, where we camped for the night.

The next morning the 18<sup>th</sup> we started again and taking a northerly direction passed through the town of Washington and camped that night at Flint Hill, the next day we crossed the Blue Ridge through Cheetah Gap, and camped on the other side of the Shenandoah, having crossed that stream at Front Royal. The next night the 20<sup>th</sup> we camped at White Post a little place about 12 miles from Winchester. Sunday the 21<sup>st</sup> we reached Berryville where we remained until the next afternoon, when we resumed our march and camped that night near Charlestown, famous for being the place where John Brown expiated his crimes on the gallows. This portion of the country is the most beautiful in Virginia, in my estimation, the whole region seemed like a garden, rivaling in beauty, the famous Monocacy Valley in Maryland, through which we passed last year. Tuesday the 23<sup>rd</sup> we left Charlestown and passing within five miles of Harper's Ferry, camped for the night in the

vicinity of Shepherdstown, on the march to day we could plainly see the Yankee flags floating from Maryland Heights, the place we stormed and took last year.

Wednesday the 24<sup>th</sup> we crossed the Potomac at Shepherdstown by fording and camped that night near Boonesboro, Md. On the 25<sup>th</sup> we reached Hagerstown a very nice little County town numbering some 7000 or 8000 inhabitants. Here we had no difficulty in procuring articles for Confederate money, but all articles needed by soldiers had been bought by Quartermasters before we reached there, whiskey was there in abundance, and of course many indulged freely. We found the Rebel sentiment only lukewarm in this place, in fact not more than a fourth of the people pretended to be secesh, and I don't know how many of those were feigning. We left this place however the next day the 26<sup>th</sup> and invaded the great state of Pennsylvania, crossing the line at the little town of Middleburg, where I got a very good breakfast at a Dutch Farmers, by paying a dollar in good Confederate money, I would have paid double for the cup of coffee which I procured, as the morning was cold and rainy, passed through Streencastle about noon, and halted soon afterwards. The next day 27<sup>th</sup> we reached Chambersburg quite a neat little city, the County seat of Franklin County, in honor of the county's namesake, they have a statue of the old philosopher erected on the dome of the Court House, which is quite a large and imposing edifice. We found only two or three stores in Chambersburg where they would sell to us, most of them having either removed their goods, or secreted them in their dwellings which they knew we would not enter. General Lee's orders were very strict and were infringed upon by very few. Some few cases of violence occurred, but they were very few.

We are settled now, it seems for the winter, a great many are putting up chimneys, and some are even building winter quarters, it is not thought for some time that the girls remarks at this point -  
war Camp, Drayger there a week or two, although it is probable that we will remain in this region of country all winter, the weather here is quite pleasant -  
I have a very good tent and with a few more blankets would be very comfortable.

We remained in the vicinity of Chambersburg until July 1<sup>st</sup>.  
Ewell's Corps in the meantime, having gone on to Carlisle, he however arrived at Gettysburg on the evening of the 1<sup>st</sup> forming a junction with the advance of our Corps. that evening two Divisions of our Corps, Heth's and Pender's, had quite a brilliant little engagement with the enemy and drove them two or three miles, gaining possession of the town of Gettysburg, the enemy took up their position on Cemetery Hill about half a mile from the town. During the night the whole of their Army came up, and entrenched themselves on the Hill. the next afternoon we attacked them in force, but although Longstreet drove them back a mile or more on the right we failed in gaining their position. Another unsuccessful attempt was made the next day to storm the Heights, and so ended the bloodiest battle of the war. Their loss is estimated to have fully equal if not more than ours, there could not have been less than 30,000 men put hors de combat, in those two awful days. What a commentary on the boasted civilization of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

On the afternoon of the 4<sup>th</sup> through a tremendous rain we commenced our retreat, passing through Fairfield Waynesboro and Leitersburg we arrived at Hagerstown on the morning of the 7<sup>th</sup> here we remained one week waiting for the Yankees to come up; they did come up, but they dared not attack us, although they spoke of our Army as being a routed demoralized mob. on the night of the 13<sup>th</sup> it having become difficult to get supplies for the troops we recrossed the Potomac on a pontoon bridge, thrown across at Falling Waters some six or seven miles below Williamsport. After which we quietly pursued our way back to Culpeper passing through Martinsburg and Winchester and crossing the Shenandoah and Blue Ridge at the same places <sup>as on</sup> the advance