

Enlists in the Army; departure September 20-25, 1861

[September] 20th [1861] –

Rested moderately well from 8 to 5 ¼ . Ella wept considerably because of my going away, and I could sleep but a few minutes at a time. I would it were different, but I am satisfied it is the will of God, and we ought to submit as cheerfully as possible. Night warm. Morning pleasant, cloudy. Breeze brisk, s.w.

I bade the folks good bye at 7 ¼ and started with Ella and Mary to Carondelet. We got across the river at 8 ¼, and went up into the little city. We spent some time in town bought Ella a pair of shoes for \$2, two pair of stockings for 40^c, bought some cakes, and paid \$1 for having my watch repaired. We went to see the gunboats building near town, and not long after we went to the ferry boat, where our separation was to take place. When the boat was read to start I bade Mary good bye, and then, taking Ella into my arms, kissed her, encouraged her all I could, exhorted her to faithfulness to religion and confidence in the Lord, and bade her good bye. I left her bathed in tears, and could not refrain myself. I then went a few steps along the bank and sat down upon a stone, I got up went on a few steps farther and sat down again. I watched the boat till it landed on the Illinois shore and then, seeing Ella and [Mary] leave it, I watched them till they disappeared in the distant.

Then with a sad, heavy, heart, I started for St. Louis. O, may God protect my wife and me, and soon bring us together again, and make us happy. I left Ella with \$2.45 and had \$2.90 myself. I gave her my watch and requested her to wear it till my return.

I went up on the cars to the arsenal at a cost of 10^c. We met a train going out loaded with soldiers—the 26th Ills. Inftry. I was detained at the arsenal some time for want of a pass, or an officer to pass me out. I inquired for the 1st Iowa Cav. and was informed that it was just outside in the grove. I went to the camp indicated as soon as I got out, but found it to be a battery of artillery. I there learned that the regiment I was seeking was, probably, at the Fairgrounds. I proceed there by street cars at a cost of 15^c, but the regiment was not there. I met an old acquaintance at the fairgrounds doing a job of plumbing, and had some conversation with him. I went back to Fourth street, at a cost of 10^c, getting down about dark, and hunted up a boarding house to lodge in for the night. I was shown to a room, took a wash, went to supper, and returned to the room, with a paper to read. I saw quite a number of prisoners at the arsenal and one was astride of a high trestle .

Day warm, cloudy. Some rain. Breeze brisk, s.w

21st –

Rested poorly till sunrise. Night cool. Morning cool, cloudy. Breeze brisk, n.e.

After breakfast I read the morning news, paid my bill, 75^c, and started again on the hunt of the 1st Iowa Cav., feeling very sad and lonely. O, that this cruel separation could be avoided, but the will of God be done, I know not till now how much I love her. I went to the Provost Marshal's office, but could not hear where the regiment was.

I met a man there, who was recruiting for a battalion of cavalry, under an order from Gen. Fremont, to consist of no more than six companies and no less than four. I took his address: Lieut. Olmstead, Fremont Ranger Battalion, Camp Sturgis, St. Louis, Mo. I then went to Gen. Fremont's headquarters, and there learned that the 1st Iowa Cav were still in

Iowa, not having left home yet. I went to Camp Fremont, the quarters of the General's body guard, as I learned that Lieut. Goff of that battalion wanted recruits. The Lieut. was not in camp and upon looking about I did not like the appearance of things, and so left. Olmstead's representations suited me better, and I went on hunt of Camp Sturgis. I hunted till near night and was unsuccessful, I could find no one who knew where it was. Tired out and disheartened I sought the boarding house at which I staid last night. Several regiments left here this evening, I suppose, for Lexington, Mo., where some hard fighting has been going on for a few days past. Day cool, mostly cloudy. Breeze moderate.

22nd Sunday –

Rested very well till after sunrise. Night quite cool. Morning same. Clear. Breeze light, n.w.

Got a paper from the landlord and read till breakfast was called. After breakfast I returned to my room and spent a few minutes I would love to go to church today, and keep quiet, but my money is nearly gone and I must find some place to enlist today. I paid my bill-75^c –and stated out. Went to the Provost Marshal's office, but could not learn the whereabouts of Camp Sturgis. I then went to the river and saw the 1st Mo. Cav. and North Western Rifle regiment start out on boats, for Lexington, I suppose. I met with Mr. Kühner, of Columbia, and a German, formerly of Collinsville. I saw several Collinsville boys in the 1st Mo. Cav.

I made another start on the hunt for Camp Sturgis. Went by the street car toward the arsenal, and when near that place I noticed a camp, and, leaving the car, went to it. It was a battery of artillery. I asked for camp Sturgis, but no one knew where it was. I was informed that some cavalry were camps at English's Cave, west of the arsenal half a mile. I started for that place. Just before reaching it I came to a camp which I took to be the quarters of a company of infantry. I passed the guard to go through and for curiosity asked one of the men who they were. He answered the Fremont Ranger Battalion. "And this camp"—"Is Camp Sturgis". I had found the camp I was seeking.

I was shown to the Major's –or recruiting officer's quarters, and had some conversation with him. I told him I wished to join his battalion. Said he—"You are the very man we have been looking for." I spent the remainder of the day in the camp, and went to supper with Company A. The men are all recruits yet and all eat of the same fare, and together. None of the officers or men are yet mustered in to the service. They think they will soon effect an organization.

Day pleasant—mostly clear. Breeze light, s.w.

23rd –

Rested very well in one of the tents till sunrise. Night cool. Morning pleasant-clear. Breeze light, s.w. Soon after breakfast an order was sent up from the arsenal for a guard, and some forty or fifty men were sent down. I went to the arsenal with the major, H.A. Gallup, and was examined and sworn into the service, as a member of the Fremont Ranger Battalion of Cavalry, but at my own request I was not assigned to any company. I was temporarily attached to Company A to draw rations and for duty.

Spent the afternoon in camp, except an hour or so spent in visiting a fortification of earth, with two wings. The magazines are of wood and well protected. Some of the guns are

mounted and some are not as yet. Wrote a letter to Mr. Gardner, and one to Jos. W. Turner of Collinsville.

After supper the battalion was called into ranks and marched to the river just below the arsenal, where most of us stripped and took a bath. We were again called into ranks. The major requested all who were not able to march two miles to see some secessionists, to step out of the ranks. Three men stepped out, and were ordered back to camp by the shortest road. The battalion was then wheeled, marched up a steep bank, and on quick time, to camp, getting several minutes before the three who were not able to meet the secessionists. We had quite a laugh at their expense.

Some pretty severe punishment was put upon a couple of fellows last night. One was ordered to march back and forth, seven hours with a wooden musket – a stick of cord wood – and another two hours with the stick of wood and the remainder of the night in the guard hose. The major and sergeant of the guard had considerable fun testing the camp guard. They passed the guards several times and got the muskets of two or three. It was done to school the men.

24th –

Rested very well till sunrise. Night pleasant. Morning same, few clouds. Breeze light.

Soon after breakfast Company A was assembled for drill and I went with them. After drilling a short time we marched out about a mile, bought one and half bushels of apples for 50^c and then returned, getting back about noon. The other companies went along.

Immediately after dinner all the available men in camp, some forty-five or fifty, were sent to the arsenal to relieve the guard sent down yesterday. I was sent along as a corporal. The guard were relieved and sent back to camp. Part of our squad went on duty and the remainder were ordered to remain within hearing. About four o'clock I was sent out to relieve a squad of men, who were guarding some prisoners at work. I had five men and the number to be relieved was six, beside their corporal. I relieved all I could and left the others unrelieved. The corporal did not know his duty and could not instruct me. I did all I knew, which was to prevent the prisoners passing the lines. They were finally marched away, and I went to quarters.

Day pleasant, few clouds. Breeze light.

25th –

Had but little chance for rest. An intimation was given out the prisoners we were guarding, some seventy or eighty secessionists, intended making a break during the night. The whole guard were called up, secretly instructed, and then divided into two squads. I was place in command of one squad and sent to the rear of the guard house, while the Lieutenant retained command of the other and guarded the front. All were ordered to be quiet, and in readiness for action at a moment's notice. The boys were considerably excited, and rather anxious to see the prisoners make a break, that they might have an excuse to "stick a secessionist." Not one of them, I think, would have been backward if the thing had occurred. All remained quiet, however, and by midnight my men were nearly all called off to relieve the sentinels on regular duty, and I took a nap. From two to four I was on duty as corporal of the guard, and then slept till sunrise. Some seventeen

were sent down from our camp this morning for duty at the railroad stopping place. We were relieved at nine and returned to camp. One of the prisoners got away at supper from some of our men and the Lieutenant was ordered under arrest, but I guess he'll not be hurt. The escaped prisoner was a deserter from the 6th Iowa regt. The night was pleasant. Morning same, cloudy. Breeze brisk, s.w.