



James C. Christie and Family Papers

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St Louis Arsenal

January 30 1862

Dear Brother. I got your Letter this fore noon. and now sit about answering it. You want a description of what I see in this Place



If Kentucky to-morrow unfurls the banner of resistance, I never will fight under that banner. I owe a paramount allegiance to the whole Union—a subordinate one to my own State. HENRY CLAY in the Senate, 1850.

I will try to do my best

to give you all the Pen pictures I can. The Arsenal grounds are about one and a half mile in length, about a quarter of a mile in width. one end of it is on this street I believe. The other end runs down to the River. at the upper end where our tents are pitched. It is well timbered with large oak trees interspersed with Hickory. Down close by the River there is a large Store house. above that and west of this there is

a space of ground on which stands
a great number of guns. carriages
travelling forges. caissons. and all
things in connection with field
artillery (Light) On each ^{end} ~~side~~
facing to the River (or east) are
quelling houses for the officers,
in front of these houses are small
flower gardens. In one of these houses
lives Cornell Callender, he is the
Commander of the Port, and Chief of
the Ordinance department.
He is a man of about 45 years
of age I should think. he is about
five feet 6 or eight inches. in height
and intelligent looking. General
Mac Kindry lives in the other
he is under arrest I believe for
frauds committed, under Belmont
he is a Scottish looking fellow
and if you recollect the Pen Picture
that was given of him about
8 months ago you have the

likeness of the man, there are
some more houses in which some
of the other officers reside. But more
to your taste will be the machine
and Blacksmith shops. In the smithy
they have five fires going night and
day. There they make Iron axles
for ^{all} the wheeled carriages, and other fixtures.
The fires are all blown by Blastings
stead of bellows, as all the Black-
smith has to do is to turn the
cock and the fire is made to burn
up just as bright as they like.

When his Iron is heated up to the
right heat he takes it out of the
fire, and as he turns it on the
anvil. There are four men with
heavy hammers, mauls it into
shape. By a door communicating
with the rock shop. I entered, and
found, 14 Boys busy at work, making
rifle balls ready for the cartridges

on each
meters. They sat by the side of a
long trough filled with melted
Beeswax: they Pick~~ed~~^{up} a Ball in
their ~~left~~ hand, then with a small
brush. they dope the end of the Ball
with this fluid. The Balls are then
taken to the next building
where there are other Boys
who ^{wrap} ~~wrap~~ ^{strong} Brown Paper
round the Ball: leaving an
empty space above the Ball
for the charge of Powder. They
are then carried to the stor-
erooms, where they are kept for
future use: On one end of
blacksmith shop. The Machine
in shop is found. it has an
engine of twenty horse power
on one end. it Drives 10 or
twelve light Lathes for turning
the shot and shells smooth
and Boring out the space



into which the charge is inserted. They also turn the shells for the gun carriages and carrions, Traveling Forges, and all such instructions. They have also one Biffling machine. They have two machines for making Minnie Balls; through the first they pass the Bar lead it is made smooth and round then it is put into the next where it comes out all ready for the Cartridge makers; However they make the most of these Bullets by hand: one man can make 18,000. Every sixteen hours. There is a large building where they turn shots for the shot and spherical shell

They are fastened on the
sabat. with the strongest
kind of hoop iron such
width as they use on Pails
and some wider. In several
large houses there a great
store of every thing pertaining
to the destructive part of
an army. firears. There are
four of our ~~two~~ mens. Bodies laid
away in the ground. Since
we came into this state, one
german 3 american the
last one a very superior
young man. Morally speaking
mentally he was inferior
to none in the company
he belonged to Highforest
Olmsted county Minnesota
Henry C. Steppin by name.

But I have some very good news
to tell you. We have got old
guns to drill with, and one
sergeant and two men
as drill masters from the
Ordinance Department.
The Officers and ~~sergeant~~
go and get there lessons, and
then they give us ours. We have
also to drill in Infantry drill
each day. There are about 10
of our company on guard each
day. I was on yesterday. Tom
is on today. I have got the paper
that Sarah passed. Since that
I have got two more from home
also one from Uncle Tom Bew.
I'll tell him he must write
to me. Before I will own him
in any other way than in this.
But that he must not quit
sending papers.

I am glad to know that you are
doing so well, in hauling the
~~the~~ wood, and that Father is
getting some more out of Ramsey
for the money he owes him and
uncle William. it seems you
did not go to the Pleigh sides
with Sarah, and the rest of
the merry makers. I hope
you are all well as usual.
Give my love to all and
saying I will have to go
to drill very soon. The Rifle
rounds now, and having been
at this letter at times since
^{day before} yesterday. I will close and
say no more at present.

Write soon

Yours

Tom is waiting

William Christie

forwarded
Feb. first
1862