

William Burton Lance Letter

Murfreesboro
McDowell Camp
60th Regiment
N.C. Troop

October 22, 1862

My dear father and mother:

I seat myself this evening to drope [sic] you a few lines which leave me only tolerable well. I have a bad cold and have had now for two or three days but I hope it will soon wear off and I sincerely hope these few lines will reach you and find you all enjoying good health and doing well. I have nothing very interesting to write to you at this time any more than we had orders this morning to cook two days rashings [sic], to march down to Nashville, but while we have to leave here, we stand in readinest [sic] every day looking for orders.

There was a bad accident in our Regiment yesterday evening. There was some of our men cleaning of some guns. One man than belonged to Reynolds Company was cleaning of his gun and went to hand another man a piece of sand paper and his gun fired and shot one man by the name of Eliga Night. It killed him instantly. The ball went through his neck just below the ear and the ball struck another man in the shoulder and lodged somewhere in him. The doctor says that it is a doubtful case whether he gets over it or not. They are going to bury Night now wile I am writing. The health of our Regiment is tolerable good only we have plenty of mumps here at this time.

Dear father, I would like to see you all very much but I can't at present and I fear I never will see your face any more in this life but I hope that we all will be prepared to meet in a better world than this where there is no more war – no parting of friends. You have no idea how bad I feel when I think of home, when I think of my little children that I once had the opportunity of being with them all, and the pleasure that I have had with them. It nearly breaks my heart when I think of them but I will try and put it off the best I can. Tell Delia I would like to be at home with her, to help her to take care of the children if it were possible for me to do so. I would much rather be at home than here where we have to lay and sleep on the cold camp ground. When we leave here, we will have to leave our tent and take to the weather as it comes. I want you to ask John Presley if he

will cut wood for Delia for what he owes me even if she has to pay him a big price for work or if you have got any work that you want done, get him to do it if he will.

I will close for the present, hoping to hear from you soon. Direct your letter Murfreesboro, Tennessee, 60th Regiment, North Carolina Troop, in care of Capt. Fletcher.

I remain your son.

W. B. Lance

To you all at home no exceptions.

Note: William Burton Lance, born circa 1833, died in Union Prison, Camp Douglas, Illinois, on January 8, 1864, in the Civil War. (#946 CSA) His widow was Delia Praytor Lance. His son, Philip Layfayette Lance, eventually founded the Lance Peanut Company of North Carolina (which sells "Lance" snacks still today). The original letter from W. B. Lance to his parents is framed and on a wall at the Lance Company in North Carolina today.