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Fulkerson Family Papers
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ALS. Samuel V. Fulkerson to his mother.
1862 March 9

Winchester
9 March 1862

My Dear Mother

Not having written or heard from home for sometime, I will write you a short letter today. You will see from the heading of this that we have not yet gone to Manassas and I cannot tell when we will go. We will not get away, unless Winchester is evacuated, while the present state of things exists here.

Genl. Banks with his army has been maneuvering about twelve miles in our front for several days. On day before yesterday we thought that we were certainly in for a fight. Banks attacked our outer posts, when we packed our baggage and sent it to the rear, and marched the men on the Martinsburg road about two miles from Winchester, where we drew up and waited for the approach of the enemy. But after skirmishing with our pickets an hour or two, he withdrew again. We lost only one man, but not of my Regt.

We have not a large force here, and I do not know what Genl. Jackson will do if the enemy advances upon us. All of the public stores have been sent away, and many of the citizens have left. There are a good many here who sympathize with the Yankees, and will be rejoiced if they get possession of Winchester. This is such a beautiful country that I should regret to see it fall into the hands of the Yankees.

Since we came back from Romney we have had three different encampments. First on the Romney Road, but when the enemy crossed at Harper's Ferry we moved and took position on that road about three miles from Winchester; and on yesterday we moved to this place, which is on the Strasburg road about three and a half miles from Winchester near a village called Kernstown.

It is doubtful about how much I will write as I have been over six hours in getting this much written. In a letter from Col. Gibson he asked what I wished you and Kate to do in case the enemy got into our county. If they should get in, and you are willing to do so, I think that you had better remain at home. Refugees have a hard time, and when people leave their homes everything is destroyed. Mr. Faulkner (Honl. Charles J.) told me that his wife had saved his property by staying at home. But if it should come to the worst, and you prefer it, leave and let

the property go. I care little for the property except on yours and Kate's account. For myself I feel that I have no home so long as it is threatened by the enemy, and I would willingly give up all I have, and commence the world anew without a thing, rather than that the enemy should subjugate us.

We are very hardly pressed now, and it depends upon the spirit of our people whether we bear up against it, or give way under it. When I see so many men and especially officers shirking duty and who seem to make it a study as to the best manner in which they can get around duty, I almost despair. Many are all the time seeking personal ease or pursuing schemes of personal advancement, and would appear to be willing to sacrifice their country to attain their object. I suppose though that all wars produce the same class of selfish men, and that we must expect to be cursed with them. I do not intend to be troubled hereafter with the reflection that I did not do my duty in this conflict.

I did have some hope that I could go home for a short time this winter, but do not now expect to do so. If I had the permission I would not go now, while we are so near the enemy. Besides, so many of the officers are absent that it would be highly improper for any more to leave. In the absence of Col. Taliaferro I still have command of the 4th Brigade, which now only consists of two regiments and four pieces of artillery.

I learn that we have had very high waters in our country and that much damage has been done. I was sorry to hear that Uncle James had lost his dam. I take it that he will not get his mills to running again for some time. If any of the fence about the creek washed away, get Mr. Hughes or some one to help Lee put it up. Today (Sunday) has been a very spring-like one. Citizens say that this has been a very wet winter here and not as much cold as usual, but still the ground has not been clear of snow since the first of Jany. Scarcely any ploughing has been done here yet, and little else in the farming line. See if you can't get meal and flour from Mrs. Hopkins' mill; If not try at some other place. Henry Roberts might furnish you with meal.

I suffered for two or three weeks with a severe cold, but kept up and am now nearly well again. Jas. Vance is well. He spent this Sunday in building a chimney to his tent. He has said several times that he would not fix up any more. He has built a good many chimneys, but had soon to leave them.

Give my love to Kate and Selina. Tell Selina that she ought to write to me. You and Kate must write soon, and tell me where Ike and Abe are. Tell Amelia Vance that I will write to her when I can. I have nothing to write about but army movements, but they will have as much interest to you as anything else.

Your son,
Saml. V. Fulkerson.

