

LETTERS FROM EVERELL F. DUTTON TO ROSINA PAINE

Camp Dement, Dixon, Illinois
June 3, 1861

My Friend Rosa,

When I returned from Sycamore, I found your welcome letter awaiting me. I see by the envelope you are loyal and true to the "Stars and Stripes."

I acknowledge you set me a good example by answering so punctually, and that I have not followed it precisely, but the reason I have not is this: When I left you it was understood you and your father were coming out here in two or three days, and I have been expecting you ever since. Was almost sure that ere this I should see Rosa, but have been disappointed from day to day and concluded I would not wait any longer. Is my excuse satisfactory? If not, I will go to Sycamore soon and explain and ask pardon over again.

If you come out here on a visit to Mrs. Wardner, I will try and get up there once at least while you are here. She is expecting you and has been for the last week.

I have had to work very hard since I returned. Our Captain has been gone most of the time and I have had to drill the men and, I assure you, have had no spare time. We have to drill now about 7 hours each day, and it is a little harder work than I am used to, but I get along first rate. Never felt better in my life and am weary enough each night to sleep well, but I presume it is on account of having a clear conscience.

I really do not believe I should have a very easy conscience, if I had showed the white feather and gone back to Sycamore as some of the "Brave Volunteers" of DeKalb County did.

It is rather lonesome for me since John left. I have seldom felt worse than when he left, but I will not condemn him for going back. When I enlisted, I little thought it was for three years, but as long as my name was on the muster roll I never would scratch it off. We are no longer "Illinois State Militia" but "United States Soldiers."

About that Ambrotype, I shall expect it in your next (that is, if you answer as poor a letter as this is) for I have wanted to look at you very much for the last week and, if I had had your likeness, should have looked at it at least a dozen times, so don't forget to send it.

I shall try and visit Sycamore sometime the last of this week. Can't say I shall get away, though, for we have masters here.

The men are getting along nicely, and enjoy themselves hugely, especially evenings. Tonight the whole camp was very lively, hardly a shanty but that they were dancing or singing.

Edwin Young came into camp today with Captain Mayo. He says his father did all he could to stop him. I hope he will stay.