



Camp near Bell Plain Dec 26 1862

My Dear Father, Mother and Sister Mary,

As I have got a few moments to spare I will write you a short letter, a short one because there is just nothing at all to write about. We are now in camp near Bell Plain as you see by the heading of this letter we came here last tuesday and most likely we shall stay here for some time most of the men are logging up their tents already as if they were going to stay here all winter but that is not at all probable. Burnside in my opinion will <sup>not</sup> go into

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Coll. 184 Box 1/

Date: Dec. 26, 1862

Description: Letter from John Parris Sheahan of Dennysville, Maine to his family, about conditions in the Union Army during the Civil War, around Belle Plain, Virginia.

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the great work which he so plainly  
sees before him, he will not do  
as McClellan did last winter lay  
in camp and let the rebels fortify  
every hill that we must pass  
over in our advance upon the  
city of Richmond, to talk of  
going to that place the way  
either McClellan or Burnside first  
attempted has proved folly,  
we cannot do it and we might as  
well wind up, they have fortified  
the whole line of our advance  
see how our men were slaughtered  
at the Battle of Fredricksburg and  
what did we gain by it? I will  
tell you, we gained nothing but disgrace  
we must start on some new  
rout or we never will reach  
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Can you not see it? of course you can. I am in hopes that we shall whip them but truly things look dark. Perhaps you would like to know how I spent Christmas well I will tell you. I was on guard till 7 in the morning when I came off from guard I got my breakfast and then went to see the Coln., and he signed a pass for me for all day so I put the saddle on my horse and started I rode about two miles and I came to the 6<sup>th</sup> Me. I inquired for company F. and found it Bill was sitting on a stump back to me. I spoke to him and he left the stump quicker. I stayed with him all day

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bread and pork fried - you  
sent me a dollar in your  
letter and as he had no  
paper and no money I gave  
it to him,

I must close for it  
is time to get supper  
I got your letter of the 13<sup>th</sup>  
two days ago,

Your Obedt  
John P. Sheahan

here is a piece of the Capital  
which I got when I was in  
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