

Camp near Bell Plain Va
April 8th 1863

My dear Father
I received your
letter of the 30th two days
ago but as I was on
picket I could not answer
it for there was no chance
to send a letter into camp
The rebels are coming across
the river all the while a
large number came across
while we were on picket
they all take the oath of
allegiance and go north
many more would desert if
it was a possible thing
while I was on guard
on the banks of the river

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Date: April 8, 1863

Description: Pvt. John Sheahan on hatred of slavery

I saw a rebel soldier
come down to the river
and beg to be helped a
cross but as our pickets
have orders not to leave
their beats we could not
help him. for a month
they say they have been
on half rations, $\frac{1}{2}$ pint
of flour $\frac{1}{4}$ pound bacon is
what is allowed for a
day and that is all they
can get.

it does look pitiful
to look across the river and
see them I have not seen
two of them dressed alike
they have not got any
uniform and the most
of them are dreadful
ragged so much so that
they suffer a great deal
with the cold.

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I wish that some of
the Dennyville folks could
see what I have seen
since I have been out
here it would make their
blood run cold. I hated slavery
before I came here but now
I know what it is I have
seen it and if I hated it
before I had seen it now
my hatred is double what it
was then.

I must close now
for I have got to go on
inspection

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