

### The Camping Party.

WINCHESTER, KY.,  
July 30, 1887. }

*Mr. Editor:*—I went yesterday evening with my wife and others to visit the "camping party" near Boonesboro.

They have pitched their tents near the site of the old fort, about 30 of them, boys and girls, chaperoned by those accomplished and kindly ladies, Mrs. Lizzie Tebbs Prewitt and Miss Stanley Jackson. They have chosen well. Near the sulphur spring on one hand and in reach of the iron water on the other. The old elms and maples on the river bank meet the sycamore grove near by giving a perfect canopy of shade during the long hot day and spreading their protecting arms over the sleeping tents at night. Then the river with its limpid water, soft, sandy beach, a good, fair bottom just deep enough and not too deep, woos the bathers night and morning. We were entertained in good old fashioned style and the supper was worthy of a Kentucky home. To add to the attractiveness, the boys have improvised a platform, and to the music of a good string band, merry feet dance away the hours and happy hearts keep good time. The tents, white in the deep shadows, the camp fires gleaming wierd on the dusky faces of the cook and his staff, the hospitable board spread and inviting, the pretty girls in their piquant and picturesque camp costumes, the gallant beaux in the ease and abandon of out-door life, altogether make a picture and a memory which will out-live the fleeting scene and will follow the dear children like an inspiration through life. Over this matchless picture the moon at its best filtered itself in soft, silver spray over tents and camp fire, and belles and beaux, hallowing and blessing all with a delicate and ethereal beauty almost beyond the beauty of earth.

Imagination might easily transform the scene and the actors and Titania might touch them all with her magic finger. But I prefer pretty girls to fairies so I want to keep the vision as I saw it. And the choice of camp was wise aside from its physical attractions. Every foot of the soil there is classic ground. Here, within a stone's throw of that group of tents, the fierce struggle for the life of our State began, and, just over yon hill, under that great elm which stretches its patriarchal arms as if in blessing over the camp, the first law making body for Kentucky assembled. The men, brave and wise, keeping watch with loaded rifle while the pen did its subtle work, and a code of laws for the young State, simple, yet full of strength and wisdom, was formulated and given to the people. Here,

too, just at the mouth of the ravine across the river, and in full view of that handsome couple near us, who, by the way, don't seem to be just now thinking of what happened then, those five cruel Shawnee Indians surprised and captured pretty Betsy Calloway, her sister, Frances, and Jemima Boone. At that point the old pioneer took the trail followed by John Holder, Samuel Henderson and young Calloway all tense and throbbing, for the first hunted his daughter the others their sweethearts.

Just above us and in sight, within two weeks from their capture young Samuel Henderson married Betsy Calloway and in due time two other weddings followed while feasting and dancing lent their charms to the nuptials.

Thus our fathers fought and wooed and danced, and here are their descendants "tenting on the old camp ground" where memories walk with them as they go and where the past speaks to them as an oracle.

I believe they are worthy of such an ancestry. That the girls have more than the beauty, worth and grace of the pioneers, and if tried in the crucible of necessity they will be found not only pure, beautiful and good, but strong to do and brave to endure as any mother of them all. And our boys too can not only dance and flirt and play the beau, but when the time comes, as it will come to all, they can and will think and work and fight if needs be, and are in every way such as a great and brave people are made of. Kentuckians all, "To the manor born" "taught to ride, to shoot and to tell the truth."

We spent a charming evening with them and left reluctantly at 10 p. m. Lucian Richards kindly rowed us down the river to our conveyance—beauty lingering and following us. The camp fades, the bright water beneath and the moon sailing overhead. Our old hearts warmed and loving more than ever our people and our goodly land and thinking more and more of the pride and the hope of the State "our girls and our boys." May God bless them as we love them and they will have nothing further to ask

Yours,

H.