

Well Well Gal how do you do anyhow - I suppose you are having quite a winter up where you are but we are where it don't or at least has not froze any yet this winter - Now Miss Croppy's Tanager is New Year + My Legeris will be small but you can eat them for me - Tell the kids of the coon family that I am well & would like to hear from them - Give my regards to Miss Boy + my little man that his Pa is well & would like to see him to be a good boy & mind his own + learn his books - Well Well Gal

Columbus Kentucky Dec. 30th 1862
Mrs Mary A Berkeley

Dear wife boy & Miss Maria and the balance of Frankline - permit me in the first place to inform you that I am in tip top health at present & hope this letter may find the coon family all the same - We left St Louis yesterday about five o'clock in the evening on board the steamer Platte Valley & travel all night until about ten o'clock to day at which time we arrived at Cairo we stopped there about half an hour & then pulled out for further south we arrived here about two & stopped at which place we are to night - Columbus is about 20 miles south of Cairo in Kentucky and is directly opposite the Belmont Battle field where so many of our brave Iowa boys fell - This is a place about as large as Fayette but more scattered it is all low country here & especially along the River except occasionally a bluff - There are now about 7000 at this place and they are well protected with fortifications which command the River for miles up & down when the Rebels had possession of this place they expended a vast amount of labor & money in fortifying themselves & it is really a stronghold there are some great curiosities here at least to me amongst which are probably 40 Cannons left by the Rebels and