

July 6, 1863 - Excerpt from a letter describing the changes in Franklin and environs by "Grapeshot."



Franklin, once the quiet and beautiful home of industrious citizens of the United States, exhibits but the ruin of its former greatness. Desolation and decay have passed over it, and the iron ball of Federal and Confederate artillery has crumbled its noblest mansions. Residences that cost their former, now fugitive, owners many dollars, and the skilled artisan many days of anxious labor, have been swept away; churches dedicated to the service of Almighty God, are deserted ruins; and the stately Female Academy, lately the nursery of education, morality and religion, is now the resort of owls and bats. The people have mostly left it, and those who remain and have withstood the simoom that has swept over it, look woe-worn and dejected. Pity are they, for they have not been the willing architects of their own ruin. Franklin is a "deserted village."

Negroes innumerable are here. It would puzzle Linnaeus, the great naturalist, to classify them. They are of all ages, sexes and sizes, and as variegated in color as Jacob's cattle. The tar-black, the half-black, and the "soiled" white, are to be found amongst them, ranging in size from the Lancashire boor to a young stove-pipe. Many of them are in seeming want, for the Government does not provide for all of them.

Deserters from the rebel ranks are coming in daily. They represent the cause of the Conthieveracy as hopelessly lost. Bragg, they say, will leave *ten thousand* deserters and stragglers this side [of] the Tennessee river three thousand, [many of] whom are now scattered in the bordering counties here. Tennesseans Kentuckians are sick and tired of the war; they want to return home; Bragg's whole army is not only disorganized, but disheartened, dispirited and demoralized.

There is no force at Columbia, excepting about sixty [Confederate] conscripts, under a fellow name Nicholson (I believe) who reports daily to the "Commander of the Fort." They throw some mortar guns they had there into the Duck river and fled. Many of the "gay and festive" soldiers were engaged in preparing to be [mar]ried, but "Old Rosey" interposed.

There is a murderous scoundrel named [Cap]tain Perkins, leading a gang of thieves and cut-throats in this neighborhood. He attacks our picket lines every night, and as we have no cavalry, he can easily escape us. His force numbers about 60 mounted on fast nags that he has stolen from his neighbors.

Nashville *Daily Union*, July 11, 1863.