

Guyville Geo. Nov 28. 1863

My Dear Wife

I have nice comfortable quarters in an old house, with rotten windows, a good large fire place, in which we have a good fire. We left our tents behind more than a week since, and have been sleeping in the open air, and as we have a cold north east storm tonight, it seems good to get under shelter, by a good fire. You will think we have suf-
-ficed, but May we have not, we have been continually on the march now for two months, only stopping to fight two days, and all well and in fine spirits, ready for another march, which commences tomorrow morning. I suppose you have had dreams of broken legs, amputated arms, Surgical instruments, bandages, crutches, wooden legs, disfigured countenances, dis-
-torted features &c &c, and awakened, and found it only a dream, and thank God so far as my boys, and myself are concerned it is but a dream! May, many a family circle has been broken, many a wife tonight mourns the loss of a Hero Husband, many a child mourns the loss of a noble Father or affectionate and patriotic Brother, many Fathers & Mothers have given a son to their Country and now mourn his loss, thousands of hearts are broken and bleeding, many a poor wounded Soldier is now suffering from the wound of the leaden bullet, or the bursting shell, some from the thrust of the glittering steel, the Sabre or Bayonet stroke, and we are yet an unbroken family only by distance? Oh my God! May, how thankful we ought to be, and are. I received your letter of the 14th, on the 25th while the battle was raging, and I wished you could have been there (at a proper distance) to have ^{witnessed} the awful grandeur of the scene.

John

I will try and give you some idea of the facts we took in the Battle, and also of the whole thing. First then the plan of attack was for Gen Sherman to cross the River in Pontoon Boats with the 15th A.C. (that is the Infantry) under cover of night, while this crossing was being effected and some earth works thrown up. Hooker was to attack the right, to attract their attention from the left, as soon as Gen Sherman was ready he was to make an attack on the left, that was not intended to be general unless absolutely necessary. Gen Thomas was to come down through the valley, and while Sherman was calling a part one way, and Hooker calling a part to the right, Thomas was to scale the Mountain. You can see the plan and your map will show just the situation of things and the difficulties attending the attacks. If the plan worked well, all right, if a mistake was made, the whole scheme failed. From our position I could see it all, and watch every movement, and such anxiety as men felt I can only know. Now May I will try and tell you how the plan worked. On the night of the 23rd we with 4 other Batteries were stationed on an eminence on the east side of the River, and ordered to cut out the brush and take position during the night. At 12 o'clock we went up and got in position without being discovered, all our fires being built under the hill. The next morning we saw Gen Sherman on the other side with a line of Rifle pits a full mile long, a good pontoon bridge on which artillery was crossing, and a heavy fight going on, on the right, so that we could attack to the Gentlemen on the left quite comfortably. Hooker has done a terrible, yet glorious days work and Lookout is ours, so far all is well, we have captured many prisoners, much artillery and the entire week is in, every man elated, determined and will fight with desperation. Now Gen Thomas must pass through the valley

or into it to be ready to scale the hill at the proper time. The valley is heavily timbered only an open field between it and the river, and it might well be called "The dark valley of the shadow of death". On the morning of the 25th (a morning that will never be forgotten by the thousands who were participants in one of the most ^{conclusive} & strongly - Battles on record) at 7 O'clock the earth was fairly shaken by the roar of hundreds of pieces of Artillery and incessant volleys of musketry right and left. Gen Thomas came down carefully but quickly under our guns (we firing over him) filed to the right into the timber. Soon four columns of Infantry could be seen marching up the hill, led by a Hero (who should be remembered & will be) with the Stars and Stripes floating in the breeze, never did that Flag look so supremely beautiful as it steadily moved up the side of "Missionary Ridge". That may be well now & called "Missionary Ridge" for such a Mission as that Flag went on is only equalled by the Mission of Christ to the world. They are discovered, a galling fire is opened upon them shells are lighted and thrown down the precipice by hand, rocks are thrown down, the enemy are hurled forward on the right and left! some going to the right, some to the left, they are confounded, the time for the exertion of every muscle, in every man has come and most nobly has the call been responded to, every man feels that the responsibility rests on him. The columns of Infantry turn neither to the right or left but move steadily on, the color bearer reaches the top, "will he live to plant that Flag on that Fort, or must he fall and another do it? it must, will be done" are our thoughts God grant he may. He leaps upon the parapet and the battered and torn, but honored Flag waves in triumph over their fort, a moment and another Flag floats from another Fort near at hand. We have captured Artillery, Infantry, and

Dixon will never be called of the men in Chewy's Battery. See
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Missionary Ridge is over - Column after column are
forming a line of Battle on the crest and where
we last night saw a few fires of the enemy are
now a line of Fires from right to left. Thanks be to God
and the brave hearts and strong arms of the free
people of the North. On the morning of the 26th
we are ordered to march in pursuit of the enemy,
leaving transportation tents and off we go, we
overtake him and we forcing him to destroy
ammunition, wagons, artillery &c. Yesterday they
made a stand at Taylor Ridge near Ringgold and
made a desperate resistance but were forced to
yield. The loss on our part has been seven. I do not
know what the loss of the 34th was. The 13th I learned
lost 62 wounded and 4 killed. During the engagement
we knocked a Battery out of position in about 24
minutes. It was playing upon the 5th and 7th
Iowa and an Ill Reg and we just got their range
and threw 40 shells as fast as they were ever thrown
since God made the world, we were sought by
two of their Regiments and received their thanks for
the splendid manner in which we did our work.
I have orders to move at daylight in the morning
and expect it is on a raid not in the direction
of the retreating Rebels but North east, only one Bat
of our Division goes and we ~~will~~ ^{will} catch the other
Batteries have gone back to Chattanooga. The RR
is being destroyed, one gunstock factory has been
burned, and I think the property in this section
will suffer slightly, if not more. I saw 14
Generals together today, Gen Grant among the rest.
I have thus hastily given you some ideas of the
Battle of Chattanooga. I have said but little of
our own work, let the official Report tell, not me.
Good night. It is late and I must retire (John)