Ca 1863 SEPT. 20

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Dear Laura

Your letter was received a few days ago. It was the only one except Hines that I have received (or Bro James) since we left our old camp near Chattanooga. I was very much disappointed not to receive that barrel with its valuable contents. We sent to the Express Office yesterday and inquired after it. They said that nothing had been received in Chattanooga in two days and that they did not know when they would commence receiving. I would not be surprised then if the barrel was still in Montgomery, as it was delivered there (Hines said) on the 20th So you see that was just about two days from the time they said they had not received anything in two days. Perhaps if it was inquired after in Montgomery it

might be found. In the mean time we will keep a close watch out for it when it gets to Chattanooga. Bro James nor myself can go to town but we will get the Post Master who brings our mail to inquire for it. I hate losing that barrel so much.

You told me to tell you all about those two young ladies I took supper with. Well I am sorry that I did not have an opportunity of cultivating my acquaintance with them, as we were ordered off from that place the same night. They were very pretty girls but not near as pretty as some of the Alabama girls. Tennessee can't reach Alabama yet. Gen Hindman keeps us so close in camp that we are totally denied any chance whatever of visiting the "fairer sex." I wish Gen Withers was in command of our Division yet. He did

not seem to care how much we visited the young ladies just so we did'nt rob their milk houses and chicken roosts. But if Hindman sees a fellow in a house talking to a young lady he would be pretty apt to have him "marking time" or standing on his head in her presence. That would'nt pay at all, would it, especially if it was me. So you see that when we do get a chance to take supper with the young ladies it is quite a treat, and a rare thing, and we can appreciate it. I wish they would move us away from here where there were some ladies, for there are none near here. I anticipated a good time at Ringgold before we left our old camp but Rosecrans interfered and roused us all up and has been the cause of our marching a great deal more than I like, besides depriving me of a nice time at Ringgold.

Will about the movement of our army now I know nothing. Bragg has completely out-generaled all of us now. We are camped in five miles of town still and policing as if we were destined to remain here a long time yet. But we draw seven days rations this morning which looks as though we were on the eve of a long march. I expect they will keep us here until we eat three days rations and then have us to cook the other four days rations for marching. We cant hear where the enemy are stopping, so its hard to tell where the fight will take place. I dreamed that we were into a battle last night and I got shot twice in the side. I thought I groaned like all the world. I soon woke up and found a knot on one of my bed poles poking me in the side and giving me cramps. You may imagine my surprise when I awoke and found it was

only a knot sticking me in the side instead of a minie ball. I came to the conclusion that it was a narrow escape - turned over - and went to sleep again. That makes two battles I have been into. One at Murfreesville and one with the bed poles: and I think the bed-poles scared me the worst. I was wounded in the difficulty with them, but came out safe at Murfreesville. But with all the faults of my pole bed I prefer it to sleeping on the ground all the time, and I am quite sure I prefer it to another such a fight as Murfreesville. However if Bragg meets his formidable adversary again in battle I shall be very apt to be there to lend the aid of my weak arm to his efforts in defeating the enemy. I hear that there are three Divisions of Johnstons army coming to us

instead of two. Walker's, Breckinridge's and French's. That is all for the better. But if Rosencrans only knew what re-inforcements Bragg has received he would not dare to fight him.

I have just heard that our barrel had arrived in town. That is certainly good news. So you see that no one has had an opportunity of reading your letters as you anticipated. Brother James has just left for town to bring it out to camp. I am in hopes that there is something in it that has not spoiled. But I expect that the vegetables have certainly spoiled.

There were three desertions in our Regiment last night. I think they were among the first that have deserted out of this Regiment. Perhaps this may rouse up the hirelings of the Regiment and start them to deserting. but

I hope not. Some of the Alabama Regiments have disgraced themselves by deserting, but ours heretofore has had comparatively no desertions, and now it looks as if it was going to follow the example set by the mercenary portion of the army. I hope that those there may be the last. I don't think there is any unusual dissatisfaction among the men now, and consequently no cause for any more deserting.

Since writing the above Bro James has arrived with the barrel and the contents examined. The cabbages were nearly all ruined. The outer portion of them was completely rotted. But we succeeded in getting enough sound cabbage for one good mess. The beets and onions were good, but the corn was all spoiled. The letters and papers came safe and sound to me; for which I am under a thousand obligations to

the Donator. It was well that you took so much pains in fixing up the letters with the glass. For Brother Johny's letter was ruined on top of the vegetables. It was perfectly wet with the perspiration from the vegetables and almost dropped to pieces when lifted up. Everything had decayed and rotted so that the barrel was not hardly half full. I wish we could have gotten it before it got in this condition.

Give my love to all my female friends, and tell them that the Tennessee ladies are not their equals yet although there are some very pretty ones among them.

Love to family.

Your Affec Bro

Thos B Hall

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