Lt. Ala Regt In Trenches
Before Petersburg Oct 15th 1864

Dear Laura

Your letter of the 9th inst was received yesterday. Since I last wrote we have not moved at all nor has any thing of importance occurred along our lines, more than a few false alarms some heavy & beautiful mortar shelling, having from 12 to 18 shells frequently to meet high in the air & pass northward & southward bound. To the rebels no damage was done. The boys enjoy this sport finely now & yell all the time it is going on, thus showing the Yanks with what contempt we treat their fiery missiles. Genl's Johnson & Gracie are now in the Trenches with some ladies, taking them around to see all the great wonders of the lim. These are the first ladies who have ever come into the trenches & it is a novel sight to see them nicely dressed with parasols hoisted & walking up & down the trenches. The boys are all perfectly carried away, but the most mischievous of them say they cannot help wishing the Yanks would throw a few shell over, to try the courage of the ladies - I dont know what they would do if the Yanks were to commence shelling

for the doors of our bomb proofs are too small to hastily admit a large pair of hoops.
I expect after this we will have many visitors from the ladies here, it once being inaugurated. Here is the place to see the soldier in the actual discharge of his duty facing the enemy & prepared to strike a blow for his country at any moment. Our army is being largely reinforced by the return to their commands of detailed men. Men at hospitals who elsewhere would not be able to do duty, but here are as able as any one & others who should have been brought in months ago. In many instances negroes are being substituted for these men. In this way some three or four have been brought into my company & there are as many more who can, & perhaps will be brought in, in the same way. Thus you see if every company should by this order be reinforced as mine, the army would be recruited by 5000 infantry, besides cavalry & artillery. This I consider a small number for, for an instance every company in our regt have as many men detailed as mine & several of them have three or four times as many. At present we are in A P Hills Corps, or some say that he simply commands Beauregards any temporarily. That Anderson will be put over us soon. I hope he will. No body seems to like A P Hill

His old troops, I was surprised to find, have no confidence in him scarcely. Anderson, by all is much preferred. We daily expect fighting here are ready any time it may come. I wish Grant would do his do, & quit for the winter. You must not get uneasy about Lee & his people Lee knows how to take care of his men & make them take care of the country. Things, its true are a little blue here, but don't be too quick to get despondent. There still remains a brave army & gallant leader here to contest the advance of the enemy. A few days back we had all become very hopeful about Hood & his army but since we have been kept so much in the dark as to their movements, whereabouts &c for the last few days we have become very uneasy & I fear that Sherman has Hood in a much worse fix, than Hood has Sherman. I don't like Forrests sudden dash into Mississippi. However I shall be confident & hope for the best. I thought if Hood could get Sherman out of Atlanta there would be some chance for McCellans election & thus a shadow of a chance for peace in the course of human events. We have gotten one or two letters from Hines since he went to Tuscaloosa but seldom or never hear from Jim. I should like the best in the world to spend Christmas at home, especially as it has been

so long since I have spent one there, but I fear as you said there will be employment here for me all the winter. At present, I see no prospect of the campaigne's closing, I am perfectly willing to stay here forever if by it I can keep the Yanks from conquering us. I went home last winter and therefore shall not complain if I do not get home this winter. Once in two years should satisfy any of us, when the country is so pressed. I expect my only chance to get a furlow this winter is to get wounded which I hope may not happen. We are getting along very well. I wrote father that Lieut Jones was killed on night of 4th. Since then we have had no casualties. I saw your letter to day, to Bolling, of the 30th, & I think from the disconnected manner in which it was written you must have visited fathers brandy jug just before writing. I have just finished my dinner of poor beef & bread & feel very lazy. Therefore shall have to close this. Write oftener than you have been writing. Love to All Give my love to Miss McGlenn & Our Sets Good Age

Your Affct brother
John E Hall

ALA. DEPT. ARCHIVES & HISTORY MSS

Oct 11th. We have just finished another move. We go a way from bad to worse. No news [illegible]

J. E. Hall