Camp Moore,
Columbus Ky Jan 15th 1862

Dear Louisa,

I would have answered your letter before but we have had such exciting times lately that I have not had time to write. We have had two or three alarms. The intensest excitement was aroused through the whole army. One of the alarms was on last Saturday night at midnight. I had some business to attend to that night and had just got to bed. I was thinking of you all at home, and of your last letter, when (about a mile off) I heard a sharp ringing sound like the crack of a rifle. This was rather an unusual sound for the time. In a short time it was succeeded by another, then by two or three reports in quick succession, then by a volley and afterward scattering shots. Then I heard a voice in camp crying out, to arms! to arms! they are upon us. You must know that Captain Faulkner was sick at a hotel in town a mile off. Our 1st and 3rd Lieutenants are at home. Lieut Kerr therefore was in command of —

of the company and myself acting First Lieutenant. When the cry was raised, I sprang lightly out of bed expecting to receive orders at any moment to fall into line of battle. I dressed myself quietly but quickly and by the time that I was equipped orders came to turn out the company. We were soon in line of battle. I expected certainly we would have a fight. I was unwell but went out. It turned out to be a false alarm. From some cause the pickets had shot off their guns and run in. This alarm cost our Regt a fine soldier. When we were getting ready a good many were sighting caps on their guns to get the tubes clear. One of these guns happened to be loaded. The muzzle was not held up, it went off. The ball, after passing through a log six inches thick, hit a Sergeant in another company in the head and passed almost through fracturing the skull on the farther side. The shot was from a Maynard rifle. They are not much larger than a pistol, their barrels being only two feet long. They are breach loading guns. The Sergeant who was killed was a favorite in his company. He was a noble-

soldier, and perfect gentleman. That company went out to fight with a gloom pervading the whole ranks. I understand that two or three soldiers were killed in other Regiments in the same way. This was the cost of a false alarm caused by the foolishness or cowardice of picket guards. Gen. Heathan seemed to be everywhere that night. He made one poor fellow "mark time" from midnight till day break for shooting off his gun. Marking time is stepping out with one foot and then the other but bringing them back to the same place so as not to move the body. Don't you reckon the poor fellow got tired of marking time before day? This is a common way of punishing in the army.

The next day after this alarm we heard from Gen. Heathan that 20,000 Yankee's had landed on this side of the river ten miles above here and that 60,000 more were coming. We thought that the battle of "Gog and Magog" was about to take place and we began to make arrangements for dis with our friends to dispatch to our papa's to come on and carry our last remains home. I did think rather seriously about you all at home. For Genl. Heat-

have had us at work all night that night. It was extremely cold and was sleeting but we had to work. He told us about the 20000 Yankees some of the boys made light of it thinking he wanted to get work out of them. He held up his right hand to convince them and took an oath that it was so, "so help him God." and that 2 days later he expected the greatest & bloodiest battle on record would be fought here. But the very inclement weather has conquered & driven back the Yankees. To day some gun boats came down and gave us a few rounds. No body hurt. All is now quiet. You said in your letter that father judged from what I said about the water that boots would not do for me and he would send me shoes. I regret it much, as shoes will not do half so well, and boots are needed here more than at any place I know of. I cannot go to town without getting my ankles muddy & wet. I have written you a long letter Leolie. Keep on as you have been doing & don't wait for me to write every time. I cant find much time to write. Tell Sis and Hines I think they might find time to answer my letters. I am almost well. Love to all

Your Affec Bro
Geo A. Hall

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