

Camp near Dalton Ga.

Dec 2<sup>nd</sup> 1863

Dear Father

On the 29<sup>th</sup> of Nov I wrote you a short letter stating that I was not hurt in the battle the loss in my company &c. I hope that note went through, I sent it down by a sick man who was going down the rail road to be mailed at some point as there was at that time no post office here. I tried to send a dispatch but the Government had taken possession of the Telegraph office and would allow no private dispatches. I hope that you have heard from me by this time. I am very anxious to hear from

Crenshaw & John Buckner's Division  
 was ordered off (to East-Linn I  
 think) just before the fight, but  
 when the fight commenced ~~and~~  
 a part of the Division were  
 ordered back and they were  
 in the fight. In my last note  
 I wrote that Crenshaw and John  
 were in the fight, but from  
 what I have heard since I am  
 left totally in the dark as to  
 where they are now or as to where  
 they were on the day of the fight.  
 I have made every inquiry I  
 so far have failed to hear from  
 them. There have been so many  
 changes in Brigade Divisions &  
 Corps lately that it is very diffi-  
 cult to learn the whereabouts of  
 any Brigade.

I think that if C. & J. were here they would have succeeded in joining me, and I can therefore ~~conclude~~ be inclined to believe that they are with Buckner & were not in the fight at Chattanooga but were in the fight at Cleveland. It is to be hoped that they are safe and that you have heard from them. Please let me know as soon as you can.

On the evening of the 22<sup>d</sup> of Nov our Regt went out on picket about 14 miles in front of Missionary Ridge. We had a very quiet time till about 2 P.M. on the 23<sup>d</sup> when a courier came from Gen. Manigault stating that the enemy were in front of the post in line of battle at-

vanishing. Next as we were the  
 sentinels and, were to watch &  
 report any unusual movements  
 of the enemy it was strange  
 that Gen. Mansfield - a mile  
 in our rear while we were  
 in a few hundred yards and  
 in plain open view of the  
 enemy should have to give us  
 information. Col. Davis, Maj.  
 Pierce, & myself were about 200 yds  
 in rear of the pickets & of course  
 thought our pickets would inform  
 us of any movement of the ene-  
 my. We laughed at the courier  
 & told him - first we supposed  
 that the Yankees were drilling.  
 We however walked up a hill  
 on our left - and looked at  
 the enemy through a field -

class which Col. Davis had.

It was a customary thing for the gunners to drill in front of their fort and in trench works. When we looked at them we all agreed at first that they were drilling or forming for review. But after taking a good look I saw that they were all formed in double column at half distance, that there was just distance between the Regts to bring them in to line and that as far as I could see along their lines in either direction this was the case. Pullin can tell you that it takes but a few seconds to deploy by the right and left flank into line of battle from double column at half distance.

I told Col. Davis that they were going  
to advance, but formed in that  
manner to make us think they  
were drilling as usual. We  
then immediately ran down and  
ordered the reserve deployed.  
But before this could be done  
the enemy were firing on our  
pickets. Our Regt had a  
line three quarters of a mile long  
to defend. The Reserve deployed  
under fire, and the men fought  
well for a while, but they could  
plainly see the enemy advan-  
cing in three columns and  
we only a line of skirmishes.  
The Yankees came straight for-  
ward, never halting once.  
Of course we were driven;

We made several stands but as  
no support was sent us we  
were driven back. The enemy  
took the two hills half way between  
our rear and theirs.

I lost five men here. I don't  
know whether they are killed  
wounded or unhurt, but they  
are all in the hands of the  
enemy. Their names are Corp'l  
W. M. Wanner private J. M. Summers  
Geo. Hatch, Henry W. Hurst and  
Private Smith. Our brigade

was formed that night to charge  
and retake the hills but the  
order was countermanded  
and the whole time was spent  
from the bottom to the top  
of Missionary Ridge.  
Here we built very ably

Log Creek river. On the 24<sup>th</sup>  
 the enemy attacked and carried  
 Look out Point. We had but  
 a small force on the mountain  
 and 2 Brigades Mattballs and  
 Mooses did all the fighting on  
 our part. The fogs at Chattanooga  
 are often so thick you cannot  
 see a fire ten steps off. This was  
 the case when Look out Point was  
 carried. It is said that the enemy  
 gained our works in many  
 places, before our men in our  
 could form and get in them.  
 It seems as if it was a bad  
 piece of work that might  
 our forces on Look out point  
 were withdrawn. Missionary  
 ridge was now the object of  
 the enemy.

I agree with a great many there  
 in thinking that whilst the  
 line of our Division (Composed  
 of the Massachusetts and Anderson's  
 Brigades) was very weak it  
 was rendered weaker by almost  
 half by a very foolish disposition  
 of the forces. I will tell you  
 how it was in our Brigade & in  
 all the others it was the same.  
 Our Brigade had to cover the line  
 of the Ridge between the two roads  
 and was to have in reserve.  
 Instead of placing the whole  
 Brigade behind the breast-work,  
 over half of it was sent down  
 to the foot of the ridge.  
 It is at least 350 yards from  
 top to bottom of the Ridge,  
 and the men at the bottom

of the Ridge had these orders: They were when the enemy advanced to fight a little and then fall back up the ridge and form behind our breast-work. Between 3 and 4 P.M. on the 25<sup>th</sup> the enemy advanced in 3 columns against us. I forgot to say that our line on the ridge was in single file or one rank & no reserve and there was no space of between 50 & 100 yds between Brigades open. Now I say that the men who were under the hill should have been held in reserve behind our lines on the Ridge, to assist any part of the line that was crowded. Far over a quarter of a mile in front of the Ridge

was an open field and the ridge  
 was all cleared off. As soon  
 as the enemy cleared the time  
 bear and came into the fields  
 our batteries opened on them  
 with considerable effect, though  
 though their lines were broken  
 and their ranks broken they  
 never hesitated but came  
 straight forward. They came  
 in an order but seemed as if  
 they were a great heaving mass having  
 all and heedless to all ~~but~~  
 the one fixed purpose of reach-  
 ing the top of the Missionary  
 Ridge. It was a sublime specta-  
 cle and I could <sup>not</sup> withhold any  
 admiration. On they came and  
 swept before them our own  
 under the Ridge.

These poor fellows seemed the most  
 of them to be panic stricken.  
 Numbers of them never attempt-  
 ed to climb the ridge but  
 laid down in sinks and holes  
 for the <sup>enemy</sup> to come up and take  
 them. Indeed it was enough to  
 exhaust the stoutest to run up  
 that ridge with a yelling foe  
 behind and a thousand bullets  
 buzzing on the ear. I was on  
 top in the breast works & was  
~~surrounding~~ watching every thing.  
 A great many of the enemy  
 had started up the hill before  
 our line that was under the hill  
 could get to the top. They were  
 completely exhausted when  
 they did come up and were  
 of no account at all.

As soon as they got fired between  
 us and the enemy, our opened  
 our fire. They never had get-  
 in a hundred yards of our front.  
 our fire was so destructive that  
 they split to the right and  
 left and crowded Dea's Brigade  
 on our right and Anderson's  
 on our left. I was trying  
 to keep my men cool and make  
 them reserve their shots all the  
 time but whenever the enemy  
 came in 200 yds I told all to  
 fire and they would scatter  
 from our front. My men  
 were in fine spirits and were  
 calling out to the enemy to come  
 closer to come on, and were  
 calling to me all along the

time, that Captain Ince killed one  
and I killed an officer. Do  
you see his sword?

We all firmly believed that  
we could hold the Ridge against  
any force. About this time  
two more columns of the en-  
emy came forward, but they  
never got any closer in our  
front. I was near the right  
of our Brigade & could see the  
left of Deas Brig. The enemy  
in dense masses were around  
me a knoll on the ridge where  
Deas Battery was. The 34<sup>th</sup> Ala  
(Mitchell's (Regt) from our Brigade  
was sent to reinforce Deas  
Br. We had now been fighting  
over an hour and our men  
were getting weaker and

still more confident. Of course  
 we all had to lie down behind  
 our breast works. My compa-  
 ny was on the right of the column  
 and the column rested on a knoll  
 the top of which was about  
 ten steps on my left. It was  
 an elevation of some ten  
 feet and I could not see  
 anything in our line on my  
 left beyond it. About this time  
 Capt. Hazard of our Regt. who was at  
 my side, squatted down suddenly  
 as if some one were aiming at  
 him and said, pointing to the  
 top of the knoll mentioned, "Shoot  
 those gunkers!" I rose up imme-  
 diately and looked up there  
 and the first man I saw up  
 there I thought I recognized.

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as a man in our regiment who  
wears a yankee hat, I told him so  
and ordered the men not to shoot  
there. But Capt. Hazard, raised  
up to look <sup>again</sup> and suddenly squa-  
ted down again saying "these  
yankees." I now looked again  
and saw right in the summit  
of the Knoll 2 yankees kneeling and  
loading and behind them a  
squad of them. I ordered a  
few of my men around so  
as to confront them, thinking  
that they had not broken our  
line on this Knoll and that  
we could easily whip them  
back up to this time. The  
right of our Regt was fight-  
ing cheerfully. But I looked  
and saw the left of Deas' Brigade  
giving away. For some time  
shells had been passing over  
our heads from our own  
battery on our left and

and men would ask what it meant, I would tell them our battery was making the hill cross again. But when I saw the left of Deas Brigade begin to give way and the yanks in our breast marks in ten steps on my left - I thought it time to take a good look. I raised up on my tip toe at the risk of having a hundred bullets hit through me and looked to the left. You cannot conceive of my astonishment when I saw yankes orders of marching all along our breast marks and yankes by thousands marching over and pushing forward to put us off Andersons Brigade -

and the left of ours was and  
 The gophers had our Brigade  
 batt'n, and Anderson's;

I saw also Deas Regt next to  
 us running. I knew that if  
 we stood longer, captivity or  
 death would be our fate.

It required more courage to run  
 than to stand still. I gave the  
 order to my men to get away  
 or all would be captured. They  
 seemed to be thunderstruck but  
 taking round saw the danger  
 and ran, I followed. We had  
 to run out in ten steps of the  
 yankees and they poured a heavy  
 volley into us. Here I lost eight  
 men. Lt. Warthrop I think was  
 killed. He was seen to fall full  
 length on his face.

Private, F. Vandustian, and S. A. Chambliss were killed. Private S. W. Fox was severely ~~wounded~~ ~~injured~~. These are all that I know were hurt, the following I only know are in the hands of the enemy but fear that some of them are either wounded or killed. Capt. B. B. Churchill Private, Thomas, Driver, J. H. Fox The 8<sup>th</sup> man is missing but I cannot say that he is in the hands of the enemy, his name is J. W. Barnes. The line was rallied after running nearly half a mile back and my company was immediately thrown out to cover the front of the Regts as skirmishers.

Soon after dark we fell back  
 to Chocomaungo H<sup>o</sup>, &  
 The weather is very cold now  
 and we have suffered a great  
 deal. I have been writing this  
 letter in the cold and open  
 air. We lost all tents & flaps  
 and have nothing to protect us  
 at all. My health is good.  
 The condition of the army  
 is not one tenth as bad as  
 I understand is represented  
 in the news. I hear that all  
 blame will be attached to Manzanilla  
 and the Brigade for marching first.  
 It is not so. Anderson's Probe  
 first - I saw one Smith whose post  
 came up he told me that Bulling  
 was much better. Write soon  
 your Affec Son  
 G. A. Hall

Camp Near Dalton Ga

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almost a mile in front  
Missionary Ridge. We had a  
very quiet time till about 2 P.M.  
On the 23<sup>rd</sup> when a courier came  
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information. Col. Davis, Maj  
Pierce & myself were about 200 yds  
in rear of the pickets & of course  
thought our pickets would inform  
us of any movement of the ene-  
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& told ~~him~~ him we supposed  
that the Yankees were drilling.  
We however walked up a hill  
on our left and looked at  
the enemy through a field

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immediately ran down and ordered the reserve deployed. But before this could be done the enemy were firing on our pickets. Our Regt had a line three quarters of a mile long to defend. The Reserve deployed under fire and the men fought well for a while, but they could plainly see the enemy advancing in three columns and we only a line of skirmishes. The yankees came straight forward never halting once. Of course we were driven.

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We made several stands but as no support was sent us we were driven back. The enemy took the two hills half way between our works and theirs. I lost five men here. I don't know whether they are killed wounded or unhurt, but they are all in the hands of the enemy. Their names, are Corp'l W. M Wagner, privates G. M. Lamar Jas. Hatley, George W. Hurst and Uriah Smith. Our Brigade was formed that night to charge and retake the hills but the order was countermanded and the whole line was moved from the bottom to the top of Missionary Ridge. There we built very shabby

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log breast works. On the 24<sup>th</sup> the enemy attacked and carried Look out Point. We had but a small force in the munition and 2 Brigades Walthalls and Moores did all the fighting on our part. The fogs at Chattanooga are often so thick you cannot see a fire ten steps off. This was the case when Look out Point was carried. It is said that the enemy gained our works in many places, before our men in rear could form and get in them. It seems as if it was a bad piece of work, that night our forces on "look out point" were withdrawn. Missionary

Ridge was now the object of the enemy.

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I agree with a great many others in thinking that whilst the line of our Division (Vaughn's Dea's Manigaults and Andersons Brigades) was very weak it was rendered weaker by almost half by a very foolish disposition of the forces. I will tell you how it was in our Brigade & in all the others it was the same. Our Brigade had to cover the line of the Ridge between two roads and was to have no reserve. Instead of placing the whole Brigade behind the breast work over half of it was sent down to the foot of the ridge. It is at least 350 yards from top to bottom of the Ridge, and the men at the bottom

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of the Ridge had these orders: They were when the enemy advanced to fight a little and then fall back up the ridge and form behind our breast works. Between 3 and 4 P.M. on the 25<sup>th</sup> the enemy advanced in 3 columns against us. I forgot to say that our line on the ridge was in single file or one rank & no reserve, and there was a space of between 50 or 100 yds between Brigades open. Now I say that the men who were under the hill should have been held in reserve behind our lines on the Ridge, to assist any part of the line that was crowded. For over a quarter of a mile in front of the Ridge

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was an open field and the Ridge was all cleared off. As soon as the enemy cleared the timber and came into the fields our batteries opened on them with considerable effect. ~~though~~ Though their lines were broken and their Ranks broken they never hesitated but came straight forward. They came in no order but seemed as if

they a great heaving mass daring  
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under the Ridge

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These poor fellows seemed the most  
of them to be panic stricken.  
Numbers of them never attempt-  
ed to climb the ridge but  
laid down in sinks and holes  
for the <sup>enemy</sup> to come up and take  
them. Indeed it was enough to  
exhaust the stoutest to run up  
that ridge with a yelling foe  
behind and a thousand bullets  
buzzing in the ear. I was on  
top in the breast works & was  
~~surveying~~ watching every thing.  
A great many of the enemy  
had started up the hill before  
our line that was under the hill  
could get to the top. They were  
completely exhausted when  
they did come up and were  
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As soon as they got from between  
us and the enemy we opened  
on them. They never did get  
in a hundred yards of our breast  
works in front of our Brigade.  
Our fire was so destructive that  
they split to the right and  
left and crowded Dea's Brigade  
on our Right and Anderson's  
on our left. I was trying  
to keep my men cool and make  
them reserve their shots all the  
time but whenever the enemy  
came in 200 yds I told all to  
fire and they would scatter  
from our front. My men  
were in fine spirits, and were  
calling out to the enemy to come  
closer, to come on, and were  
calling to me all along the

*[page 14]*

line, that captain Ive killed one  
and I killed an officer. [-]  
you see his sword?

We all firmly believed that we could hold the Ridge against any force, about this time two more columns of the enemy came forward, but they never got any closer in our front. I was near the right of our Brigade & could see the left of Deas Brig. The enemy in dense masses were crowding a knoll on the ridge where Dea's Battery was. The 34 Ala (Mitchels Reg't) from our Brigade was sent to reinforce Deas Br. We had now been fighting over an hour and my men were getting cooler and

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still more confident. Of course we all had to be down behind our breast works. My company was on the right of the colors and the colors rested on a knoll the top of which was about ten steps on my left. It was an elevation of some ten feet and I could not see anything in our lines on my left beyond it. About this time Capt Hazard of our Regt who was at my side squatted down suddenly as if some one were aiming at him and said pointing to the top of the knoll mentioned, "Shoot those yankees." I rose up immediately and looked up there and the first man I saw up there I thought I recognized

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as a man in our regiment who wears a yankee hat. I told him so and ordered the men not to shoot there. But Capt. Hazard raised up to look <sup>again</sup> and suddenly squatted down again saying "they are yankees." I now looked again and saw right on the summit of the knoll 2 yankees kneeling and loading and behind them a squad of them. I ordered a few of my men around so as to confront them, thinking that they had only broken our lines on this knoll and that we could easily whip them

back up to this line on the  
right of our Regt was fight-  
ing cheerfully. But I looked  
and saw the left of Dea's Brigade  
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shells had been passing over  
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my men would ask what  
it meant. I would tell them one  
battery was raking the hill  
cross-ways. But when I  
saw the left of Deas Brigade  
begin to give way and the yanks  
in our breast works in ten  
steps on my left I thought  
it time to take a good look.  
I raised up on my tip toes at  
the risk of having a hundred  
bullets put through me and  
looked to the left. You  
cannot concieve of my constern-  
ation when I saw yankees  
colors floating all along our  
breast works, and yankees  
by thousands crowding over  
and pushing forward to cut us  
off Andersons Brigade

*[page 18]*

and the left of ours was ~~gone~~  
The yankees had our Brigade  
battery and Andersons.  
I saw also Dea's Reg't next to  
us running. I knew that if  
we staid longer, captivity or  
death would be our fate  
It required more courage to run  
than to stand still. I gave the  
order to my men to get away  
or all would be captured. They  
seemed to be thunderstruck but  
looking round saw the danger  
and ran. I followed. We had  
to run out in ten steps of the  
yanks and they poured a heavy  
volley into us. Here I lost eight  
men. Lt. Northrup I think was  
killed. He was seen to fall full  
length on his face.

*[page 19]*

Private F. Vanderslice and L.  
A. Chambliss were killed.  
Private G. W. Fox was wounded  
Capt ~~Wayan~~. These are all that

I know were hurt. The following I only know are in the hands of the enemy but fear that some of them are either wounded or killed. Corpl. B. R. Hubbard Privates Thomas, Driver & J. N. Fox The 8<sup>th</sup> man is missing but I cannot say that he is in the hands of the enemy, as his name is J. W. Barnes. The line was rallied after running nearly half a mile back and my company was immediately thrown out to cover the front of the Regt as skirmishers.

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Soon after dark we fell back to Chicamauga &c. &c. The weather is very cold now and we have suffered a great deal. I have been writing this letter in the cold and open air. We lost all tents & flies. And have nothing to protect us at all. My health is good. The condition of the army is not one tenth as bad as I understand is represented in the rear. I hear that the blame all attaches to Manigaults Brigade for running first It is not so. Andersons broke first. I saw Mac Smith who has just come up he told me that Bolling was much better. Write soon

Your Affec Son  
Jas A Hall