Camp 59 Ala. Regt.

My dear Father Brabsons Ferry Feb. 21st 1864

Yours & Laura's letters of Jno Fitz - just recd Capt Wise leaves on sick furlough - I do not think he will reach you before Johny returns. You seem to think us in winter quarters safe & sound - not so - we are constantly marching - are now lying exposed on the banks of the French Broad, a stream as large as the Ala. river, to the inclemency of the weather - the river is frozen over - This morning the centre of the stream gave way & ice in great masses is floating down with such a roar as it rakes the edges of the other ice still unbroken that you can ~~not~~ hear yourself speak scarcely. Of course it is the most disagreeable task imaginable to write - your fingers freeze before you write a half dozen lines - ~~However~~ so you see I could not so easily keep a journal - Our orders are to keep three days cooked rations all the time - I believe we will shortly move against Knoxville. With all this exposure & hardship I wish you could see my legt. You would be astonished to see how cheerful the men are & their fine spirits - They believe themselves invincible & I know it against anything like an equal force. It is the largest I know of More men present for duty - no sickness - Everything working well - I almost hate to see them go into another Chickamauga I should lose so many gallant fellows

It is due the whole brigade to say that a good spirit pervades it all through & without doubt it is the best in the service You may always be confident that it will fight well & my regt. particularly so - never feel uneasy on that score -

There is a deep growl here against the substitute men - I tell you if we ever get a chance we will make them suffer If they keep on as they are doing it will result in giving the Pres^t dictatorial powers to force them in - I wish it was done now - I see there is a great change in the army among the original secessionists. I was talking to an officer the other day who is a very keen intelligent lawyer & who was an original Sep. State Secessionist - He remarked that his views of both men & measures had undergone a radical change since the war began - That he once followed brilliant men who could make fine speeches but his observation had shown him that they were not always the best guides for the country - He said he had commenced looking around for men of common sense & thought that hereafter his selections should be from among them - He also said he believed the Cooperationists were right - that is the true Cooperationists. He then said that it was a great loss & misfortune to the State that Fitzpatrick was not elected Senator - that he once did

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did not believe in him but now thinks him the most competent ~~make~~ man we could get - This feeling is not confined to one man either I do not believe - Sometimes I wonder whether there are really no Sep. State action men in the army or whether those who were and so have all changed & commenced abusing their own side - Certain it is that they have few defenders here & many detractors -

I must hasten to close - Capt W - is about leaving -

My health was never better - I have again become stout & strong though my leg is some weaker - I can still stand more than most men - I am sorry it is so far from home & takes so long to get letters. Send me all newspapers - There are two 59 Ala Regt so in directing letters to me do not put the number of regt at all but simply to Gracies Brigade & if you write to Crenshaw direct thus

Adjt C Hall
Col. Hall's Regt.
Gracies Brigade
Ala. Vol.

I must close - Good bye
Yr offc Son
Bolling Hall Jr

ALA. DEPT. OF ARCHIVES & HISTORY