

Cum gratia
April 24th 1863

My dear Father,

It has been some time since I wrote home but not through neglect on my part or because I had forgotten you. You all think of you very often & would enjoy above all earthly blessings the pleasure of all meetings once more at the family board. I believe the anticipation of the time when peace again shall visit us & we be allowed to reunite once more at home is all that keeps up many of us. It is indeed a sad & devastating war. I know that many have parted never to meet again, but still I try to be cheerful under all circumstances. In fact I am often forced to feign a cheerfulness I do not feel & try to encourage my men with hopes I do not experience myself. I believe this is indeed the darkest hour of our trials. My men & indeed the whole army of East Tenn have for the last 13 days had only one & a half pounds of bacon to eat. I was told five or six days ago by Gen Gracie that there was not enough meat in this whole Deptment to subsist the army in it for five days and he said that Gen Slocum of the Depty had told him that when that gone out he knew not where the next beefs to come from.

We have had none for some time & don't know whether any ever will be had or not. I cannot but believe that there is mismanagement somewhere. It seems to me that there ought to be meet in the possession of the government in the country & why they should be trying the patience of the troops as they do when certainly the R. Road to Knoxville ought easily to supply us I can't tell. I fear it will be impossible to keep up an army under such circumstances. It is believed by many that our army is now equal to the Northern. If so it seems to me that we should at once invade Kentucky & supply ourselves. However I hate to write despairing letters & I believe this is the first I have written so you must excuse it. I have no doubt as to our ability to meet & conquer the Yankee hordes but it seems to me that our Generals are slow & should be doing something before we do actually starve out. I am afraid that they are basing their calculations on the 80000 Yankees whose term expires in May. However we can only hope for the best. We certainly must fight as long as a man is left or a crumb of bread to eat. It is impossible to surrender now & even if we could make honorable terms I hope that no one would be base enough to entertain such an idea as peace on any grounds except eternal separation from men who have proved themselves fiends & demons incarnate. I hope Mr. C. C. will also succeed in his Bill about foreigners. What sympathy have we met

from England Ireland or France or any other
nation, there is no doubt but that the ignorant
snobs of foreigners in this country have brought
on it its present condition. It is a disgrace & a crying
shame on us that we have not dismissed all
their consuls long ago. Let the South adopt a
total non-intercourse system with foreign nations
after this war & we will be if not a richer yet
a better & happier nation by it.

Since I wrote last ~~letter~~ as you may see by the date
of my letter we have been moved back to the Gap
in company with all the Legion. Tomorrow we start
again for "Beans Station" about 30 miles from here and
about ten miles from the Knoxville & Va. R. Road.

You must hereafter direct your letters to Beans Sta.
I believe that Sandford's & King's Battalions stay here two
or three days after we leave but will then follow
us. The 6th Tenn. under Col. Fain remains here perma-
nently. Gen. Grace is doing all he can to get his Brigade
transferred to Alabama. I hope he may succeed.
I still think Gen. G. a good officer. An attack was
made some time ago by some officers of the 6th
Tenn. on his character through the papers, ~~but~~ their
statements I know to be utterly false. The majority
of officers in their own Regt. bitterly condemn
their act & I learn that the whole thing was done
by some discontented spirits who had been made to know
their places by Gen. G. I think he inspires universal
confidence in all the Alabamians under him
& also most of the Tennesseans of whom he has one
Regt (the 6th) only.

I received a letter from Jim dated April 3rd in which he says he was well. Johny has stood his examination before the Board at Knoxville & I suppose did excellently from all I can learn. The greatest mistake (and only one) he made was merely a mistake of omission rather than commission. In answering a question he forgot to put in one item which he knew perfectly well.

We are in good health.

Again I repeat it we all often wish we could be with you. How is Sister? Give her my love & tell her I think of her often ^{now} ~~and~~ ^{knows} ~~nothing~~ ^{but} ~~nothing~~ ^{except} myself now often. Tell her she must not think hard of me for not writing oftener than I do, for though I have no bad health to complain of yet I always have a great deal to trouble me, not more however than I can very easily bear and you may tell her that I shall try to write oftener hereafter. I would give my existence to be there now to nurse her while she is sick. Tell her for me to cheer up. It may be yet that the war may end soon & we may all yet meet at home together and more in peace & happy union.

Remember me to Laura Carrie & all the children. Write soon.

Yr affe son
Rolling Hills.

P.S. Don't forget to direct letters
to

Bean's Station

Tenn.



Cumb^d. Gap

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Yr affc son

Bolling Hall Jr.

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