

C. Gap Ky. May 28th 1863.

My dear Father

Bolling received a short letter from you yesterday written on the 20th.

We are all glad that Jim has been promoted. He should have been Captain long ago - He has had to contend hard and under very trying circumstances and among false friends.

As soon as Sulzner left the company I suppose Jim was without any one who could or would aid him in any way. But it was the interest of some to drag him down.

He could not counsel for himself at first but has now I hope learned who to trust and how far. I suppose he is now commanding a good large company of effective men & has gained that much at least by consolidating with Samps.

I suppose you heard of our Bridge disaster on our march from Bean Station to Morris-town perhaps I mentioned it in one of my own letters but I am not sure.

Joe's company had several men severely hurt who are now in Knoxville Hospital.

Joe Roy and Ray were badly hurt but will recover. Lieuts Bond & Screws were also on the bridge and received a pretty severe shock.

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but are entirely well now. The bridge was about 100
ft long and 15 or 20 high across a creek.

There were about 20 or 30 on the bridge when
it fell and of course terrible fright among
them. Duncan Roy died in the Hospital a few
days ago but not from any hurt on the bridge
though he was on it.

Capt Wise is now on a 40 days furlough at
home - His course has not rendered him pop-
ular with the good or bad officers or men of
this Battalion. He is strict enough at times with
his company, but has not succeeded at all as an
officer. He is very seldom for duty when he is
here and I don't think has ever been on Bat-
talion drill with his company, ~~or~~ ~~since~~ I
Perhaps has been with them once or twice but I
think not and we have drilled a great deal
since he has been Captain of his company.

Polling however says he is worth them all. I
cannot see what foundation he asserts it on.
I no has a great deal trouble on his account.
My own opinion is that Capt Wise has done
himself great injustice - the most intelligent
and qualified it would seem in every respect
to make a good officer. If any one of our Cap-
tains he has entirely failed.

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He is honorable and true I believe too but I think his failure must be due to his want of health. Capt Duval made the same signal failure and it was partly due to that cause. Major Stubblefields resignation was accepted on the 18th of this month but not recd here till yesterday. He leaves for Coosa in a day or two. Walden you know is the Senior Captain but Genl Gracie says he must not rise until it is published what action was taken by the Examining Board at Knoxville as to his qualifications. I believe it is Bollings object now to keep the Majors position open as an inducement for some Battalion to join him as they it will be more convenient in the disposition of Field officers of the Battalions. Col Reeves of 4th Bat. has forwarded his resignation. Capt Dillard still at home in Talladega recruiting for the Bat. is next in rank to Walden is an uneducated but a brave and conscientious officer much superior I think to Walden Wise Crumpler or Reeves. We have present between 390 and 400 officers and men of whom about 360 are effective - the rest are sick and wagoning. I think we will be in an engagement with the enemy in less than two weeks.

Our Battalion is alone on the Kentucky side of the Gap - the enemy are reported at Barboursville about 30 miles from here in force of four or five Regiments. - still a larger force reported at London Ky. about 60 miles from here.

Our force here is Gracie's Brigade

63. Reg. Tenn. Vols

42. Reg. N.C. Vols

43. Ala. Vols.

Hilliards Legion

Baxter & Kamm Batteries Tenn. Vols

& Hart Ga. Cavalry Regt which is not in our Brigade. Gracie has a fine Brigade is young ambitious and will assault the Yankees strong enough I think if opportunity arises.

Our great difficulty is to procure meat, some 8 or 10 men refused to drill two or three days ago because they had nothing but meal to eat. they were put in the Guard House

But some better spirits than night came round & serenaded Bolliq - He told them that as they manifested so cheerful & proper a spirit under the trying times if they wished it though they did not ask for it he would release those in the Guard House - They were released & we are doing tolerable well now living on beef & corn meal.

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Our beef is out to day and I cannot say when
we will get any more.

The country here is completely fraged with
But little rain here of late - needed badly to
bring out crops.

I do hope the enemy will not conquer us by
starvation. If we are destroyed fighting to the
last I shall not hate it so much.

It is hard to keep some of our better
soldiers up to the fighting point on short ra-
tions - then there are traitors many a one in
our army - yes here in this Battalion and say
a one for reconstruction - peace on any terms.
I think however the dogs and traitors can
be forced for fear of the latter to fight
for us if we can only feed others who would
be true if fed properly - but who would stand
the test of starving a little. It is a fine
time for traitors to gain influence and some
of them are doing it by taking the part of
discontented men when the thing cannot
be prevented.

I think there is a large reconstruction party
in Ala & Ga especially, and hundreds of down
right traitors in both states.

There is plenty of evidence - see how the rebels
invaders are treated & feasted.
It hurts me more than the losing of the whole

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of Mississippi would, I am one who wishes
to see the Black flag raised though I be the
first one to suffer, & there are a great many
coming to the same opinion.

Our best men are the ones to suffer all any how
I see that Vallandigham is in the South.

Genl Martin I think was right in not rec-
ognizing the flag of truce but in receiving
Vallandigham as a political refugee and not
as a convict. What do you think of the North
West and of the effect of Vallandigham being
sent here? What of the War etc.

Whether we are to lose every cent and every
life in the Confederacy I am still in favor
of prosecuting the war. And right now I
think we ought to turn our guns and
bayonets against traitors at home and
here in our army.

I suppose though it is policy to let the
thing rest quiet if possible.

Must close for the present. Battalion are
on picket duty to day.

Tell Sol I have written to her but she does
not see me - What preparations are Montgom-
eries making for the enemy, will they welcome
them with "bloody hands to hospitable graves"
or with wines and cakes &c.
Wm. J. Crossman
Crossman Hall

C. Gap Ky May 29th 1863

My dear Father

Bolling received a short letter from you yesterday written on the 20th.

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Yr af son

Crenshaw Hall