

Co. 24<sup>th</sup> Ala Regiment  
Near Patton Thursday Dec 24<sup>th</sup> 1863

My Dear Father

Your kind & welcome favor of the 9<sup>th</sup> Inst. came to hand a day or two ago, and you have no idea how much delighted I was to hear from you once again. It had been so long since I heard from you, that I had really become uneasy. I could not keep from thinking that something must be wrong or else you would have written. I am sorry that my first letter written after the battle did not reach sooner. In fact I am not certain that you have received it yet. Some how or other it happens, that immediately after a battle, the mails get confused & irregular, & many of the letters never reach their destination. However I am all right now I feel greatly relieved since I have learned that you & the dear children were well. I was very gloomy & low spirited at the time I wrote my last letter & I fear that it made you feel the same way. I always feel sorry after writing you such a letter & regret having sent it. I am very glad to hear that Vic has come to see you at last. I was under the impression that she had given up all expectation of coming home this winter. I know that you all were delighted to see her. How I would like to see her & her little girl. I have been sadly disappointed in my calculations about getting home. I fully expected that I would be able to get home about Christmas but here it almost here now & no prospect for me to get home soon. Both of my Field Officers seem to take by turns in getting sick. As soon as one of them well & returns to duty, the other gets sick. And so

long as either of them remain sick it is impossible for me to  
get a leave of absence. A "leave of absence" is granted to field  
Officers unless they are all present doing duty. This is the rule  
adopted at Fort Mifflin, and a very unjust rule I think  
it is. Those that are most faithful & attentive to duty & who  
never get sick are the ones that receive the honor. Major  
Dix is now at home sick & there is no telling when he  
will come back. If he were here now I could get off  
without any trouble. Every thing now is quiet & will probably  
will remain so for some time to come. I was so sorry  
to hear that poor little Willie had been sick. I never heard  
before of children having the Rheumatism. I hope that she will  
not be seriously injured by it. Will Hunt, that whom he  
wants, his pay last extended, he wants to go to the Medical  
Examining Board at Columbus & get a certificate from it  
recommending the situation & send it to me, or get the  
President of the Board to forward it to me for him. He  
has been looking at the hills for some time. I can  
not imagine what it is that detains him so long. His  
staying away so long has stopped all the rest of his Co.  
from getting a furlough. I am much obliged to you  
for making my kit. I hope I will get it before long.  
It is very cold here now. The ground has been frozen for  
several days. Our fare now is pretty rough, but we get  
plenty of food as yet. I have had nothing but Beef & Corn  
bread for some time. Occasionally I get sweet Potatoes & Rice  
I can't think that our rations are tolerably hard, but  
it is nothing compared to what we have now. Still I

Hd. Qrs. 24th Ala. Regiment  
Near Dalton, Thursday Dec. 24th, 1863.

My Dear Bettie:

Your kind & welcome favor of the 9th inst. came to hand a day or two ago and you have no idea how much delighted I was to hear from you once again. It had been so long since I heard from you that I had really become uneasy. I could not keep from thinking that something must be wrong or else you would have written. I am sorry that my first letter written after the battle did not reach sooner. In fact I am not certain that you have received it yet. Some how or other it happens that immediately after a battle the mails get confused & irregular & many of the letters never reach their destination. However I am all right now I feel greatly relieved since I have learned that you & the dear children were well. I was very gloomy & low spirited at the time I wrote my last letter & I fear that it made you feel the same way. I always feel sorry after writing you such a letter & regret having sent it. I am very glad to hear that Vic has come to see you at last. I was under the impression that she had given up all expectation of coming home this winter. I know that you all were delighted to see her. How I would like to see her & her little girl. I have been sadly disappointed in my calculations about getting home. I fully expected that I would be able to get home about Christmas but here it almost here now & no prospect for me to get home soon. Both of my Field Officers seem to take it by turns in getting sick. As soon as one of them gets well & returns to duty the other gets sick. And so long as either of them remains sick it is impossible for me to get a "leave of absence". No "leave of absence" is granted to field officers unless they are all present doing duty. This is the rule adopted at Army Head Quarters, and a very unjust rule I think it is. Those that are most faithful & attentive to duty & who never get sick are the ones that never get home. Major Pierce is now at home sick & there is no telling when he will come back. If he was here now I could get off without any trouble. Every thing now is quiet & will probably will remain so for some time to come. I was so sorry to hear that poor little Willie had been sick. I never heard before of children having the Rheumatism. I hope that she will not be seriously injured by it.

Tell Newt that when he wants his furlough extended he must go before the Medical Examining Board at Columbus & get a certificate from it recommending the extension & send it to me or get the President of the Board to forward it to me for him. We have been looking for Mr. Wells now for some time. I cannot imagine what it is that detains him so long. His staying away so long has stoped all the rest of his Co. from getting a furlough. I am much obliged to you for making my vest. I hope I will get it before long. It is very cold here now. The ground has been frozen for several days. Our fare now is pretty rough, but we get plenty such as it is. I have had nothing but Beef & corn bread for some time. Occasionally I get sweet potatoes & rice. I used to think that our negroes lived tolerably hard, but it is nothing compared to what we have now. Still I never complain so long as I get plenty nature.

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I expect you all are living finely now on Hog & Hommony, Sausages, Spare Ribs etc. While you are eating them think of us poor fellows here in the army.

This is the third Christmas that I have been absent from home. From present prospects I think I shall quite a dull time of it. I suppose Mother will give ~~xxx~~ a Dining and invite you all up. Oh don't I wish I could be there with you. Tell Vic that she owes me two letters. I have written to twice since I received his last letter at Shelbyville.

Give my love to Pappa, Mother, & all the family. Kiss the dear little ones & tell them howdy for Pa. God Bless You.

Good-Bye  
Your Devoted Husband,  
Newton.