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Big Creek Gap, May 13, 1862.

My dear Wife,

Yesterday I rec'd two letters from you dated 26th & 30th Apl. It was a regular treat — bread to the hungry and water to the thirsty. I was so much relieved to hear of the condition of home, after so long a time. I rejoiced to know that you were all well and had a reasonable supply of bread and were trying to be cheerful. We are so far from the road here, that you may hear all sorts of stories about us and our doings. My advice is believe none of them until you hear directly from Camp. Ours is a dull, laborious, monotonous life. Shut out from the world, with barely the absolute necessaries of life, much hard marching, and not even the remote prospect of danger to excite and stimulate. We long for more of the real and less of the ideal warfare.

It would please us much to go to Va. or Cumberland or North Ala or anywhere out of East Tenn. There is a natural protection to this part of the Country. The Cumberland Mountain runs through the northern Counties of this State in East Tenn. There never was but three or four gaps through which wagons or artillery could pass. And Gen. Gallekoffer effectually stopped all of them, except Cumberland Gap. The gap here was once a wagon road; but not it is with great labor that man can get through it. The Gap is about 12 miles long, up the bed of one creek and down the bed of another, with the mountain closing close in on each side. The timber, through the gap is cut down in every direction; and in many places large masses of rock have been blasted from over hanging precipices and made to fall directly in the narrow passes. Cumberland gap is fortified. So my notion is that if we get a fight we must cross the mountain, or

wait until the enemy comes around the mountain.

We heard a kind of rumor yesterday of fighting at Corinth and Yorktown. But no particulars.

Col. G is still unwell & I fear will remain so until he can take some rest. He ought to go home, but he is very conscientious of the discharge of his duties, and fears that his services might be needed here. We are trying in every way we can to get in to some other field of service.

My health is perfectly good & in fact I am growing stronger every day on this hard usage.