

May 16th/62

Dear Sister;

As we are to lay quiet today, and being the day appointed by President Davis for Thanksgiving, I will write you a few lines. I received your letter by Mr. Vanner but the carpet bag was sent back to Staunton.

We left our camp near Staunton on the day after I wrote and came as far as Buffalo Gap. The next day marched to the top of Allegheny Mountains, from there across the Shenandoah to within ten or twelve miles of Monteray, there the enemy made a stand. The engagement commenced near dark and lasted until nine o'clock that night. We gained the field but at rather a dear price as we lost 60 or 70 men killed and between 300 and 400 wounded. Our brigade was not engaged. The next morning our brigade was put in front

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and drove the enemy past McDowell, camped two miles the other side, having captured a large lot of ammunition, tents &c. From there marched to the Parkersburg road, and camped. The next day continued the pursuit within two miles of Franklin, the county seat of Pendleton. There the enemy made another stand. Our regiment was the first sent up, our company together with two others were deployed as skirmishers. We drove in their pickets, one of the companies losing a man. The enemy had set the mountain on fire which we passed through. We were halted within sight of the enemies batteries stationed on a hill. The regiment was two or three hundred yards in the rear, the enemy fired on each side of us, we lying behind trees so that they could not see us but some the boys kept

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exposing themselves until they attracted the attention of the enemy, when they turned their batteries on us. A first a shell burst within four yards of Captain White, throwing the dirt all over him but not injuring any one. The place was now very dangerous so we fell back behind a ledge of rocks just in time to escape a shower of grape shot which certainly would have killed all of us if we had stood where we were. After firing two or three times they again turned their attention from us to some regiments which were on our left. Now was the time to endeavor to get off the hill, so we fell back two or three hundred yards where we met the burning mountain, you can imagine our dilemma, the enemy in front and a burning mountain in our rear. We managed to get through the fire and joined the regiment again and came

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back to camp, got our suppers and slept two or three hours. The next morning finding that the enemy had again retreated we would no longer pursue, fell back to this place, twenty miles from Staunton and suppose on tomorrow we will go to , having marched the distance of 140 miles without rest but I am willing to march further to get back in the Valley. I do not care how soon I get to Staunton as I have had this suit of clothes on for over three weeks. I found my knapsack again, one of the regiment had taken care of it for me but the clothes had been wet so long that they were no account. The stockings I will send home as they are very good except some holes in the feet.

This is my eighteenth birthday, how different from my last which was spent at home and the low mutterings of the storm could just be heard and now has burst with all its fury upon our beloved land.

[In top margin of Page 1]

This is Thanksgiving Day and have I not cause to give thanks that my birthday finds me, as I hope awakened from my sins and looking forward to a blessed eternity. I hope I may spend this year to better advantage than I have my others. When I get to Staunton I will send home some things I cannot keep this summer, among other things my overcoat, as they say we will have our blankets and clothes to carry; if they do that I do not think I can stand it as my back has been troubling me for some time.

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If I find that I cannot stand it I will get Uncle James to have me detailed to help him in his contract or get a transfer to cavalry. He can have it done as he is acquainted with influential men in Richmond.

[In top margin of Page 2]

My paper is full. Give my love to Agg and babies

Good bye
Ted