

CSI 19th U.S. Inf., 1st Bn. (3/1/XIV) 4

Bivouac near
Tullahoma June 30/63

Dear Parents,

We left camp at Murfreesboro bag and baggage on the 24th inst. about 9 o'clock A.M. As soon as we started it commenced raining and rained hard all day. At night we camped near Hoover's Gap about 17 or 18 miles from Murfreesboro on the Manchester pike. Here our advance met the enemy who disputed our passage through the Gap. We laid there all night in the rain and on the morning of the 25th we moved up into position among the hills and bluffs around the Gap. The pickets kept up an incessant fire, the enemy's sharpshooters picking off our men. With the exception of some artillery fighting that was all that was done. The rain still kept pouring down in torrents. We were wet through and on short rations. On the morning of the 26th we formed our line of battle the Regular Brigade in front, the 16th & 19th taking the advance, the rest of the Brigade acting as reserve. The rebels were just behind a hill 3/4 of a mile in front of us with an open field intervening, waving with wheat ready for the harvest. As soon as we commenced moving across the field the enemy formed a line on the hill and opened a battery giving us a severe fire. We started upon the run making for them as fast as we could giving cheer after cheer as we advanced. That was a nice little charge. I thought that every minute would be my last. There we were running toward the hill with a battery firing at us and a line of musketry. We could see them plain and as the wreaths of smoke curled up from the muzzles of their guns we thought that we were sure to be hit, but nothing could stop us. We were going to have them off of the hill or die every man of us. As soon as we got to the hill the rebels seeing that their fire would not stop us, turned and run. We were so exhausted that the line was halted and my company sent forward as skirmishers. We advanced and drove them into some woods 800 yds in rear of the field and held them there. Then our batteries which had got into position they opened upon them with shells, and they replied. 'Twas splendid. We being between the two fires the shells whistled over us very musical indeed. One shell fell about 10 ft. behind us and exploded hurting no one but making us dodge. We were soon relieved as skirmishers and returned to the brigade. Another brigade having relieved ours, we went to camp. One man from my company was shot through the head his brains coming out. He lived and was conscious for a day or two. Several were killed and wounded in the brigade but not so many as would be expected from such a fire as we were exposed to. The enemy were driven out of the gap. On the 27th we started for Manchester our battalion guarding an ammunition train. The roads were very rough and we were until 2 o'clock Sunday morning getting into Manchester. At Manchester we had a chance to get something to eat and clean the mud and dirt off a little. At 7 P.M. on Sunday we started for Tullahoma 12 miles distant. After going about 6 miles we camped, laying out with no shelter during the night. We had a shower which we highly appreciated having no

blankets. It has rained more or less every day since we left Murfreesboro. We have remained waiting for the battle to open at Tullahoma where it is said that Bragg's whole force is. We that is our battalion is still guarding an ammunition train. It is an important trust and if the rebels get in behind us and attack it we will have to fight. Still there is perhaps less danger than to go into the midst of the battle. You must excuse this letter. It is the best I can do. I am still safe, thank God. Give him all praise. Uncle will you please send this to Father & Mother as soon as you can. Good bye. Love to all. Soldiering has commenced again in earnest.

Yours truly
A. B. Carpenter

Source: Augustus B. Carpenter Letters, Civil War Collection (MSS #619), Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University, New Haven, CT

Camp near Deckard Tenne
July 9th 1863

Dear Brother,

I am very much obliged to you for your photograph. It gave me great pleasure to gaze once more upon your roguish face. It was a fine picture.

I am sorry now that I sent that miserable thing of mine home. I am pretty sure that I don't look quite as bad as it represents. We have moved about 3 or 4 miles from where we were when I wrote last. The roads are miserable. It has rained every day since we parted from Murfreesboro the 24th of June. I was pleased to read what Mother wrote about Rosecrans not moving at present in her letter of the 28th when we had been out 4 days. It was not published in the Nashville papers for two or three days after we had moved.

When I say it rained every day I do not mean that it rained steady all of the time but that if there came a day in which it broke up there would be a very heavy shower before night that would flood the ground and make us all wet and disagreeable. We are now laying in camp waiting for rations. The supply trains are stuck in the woods at Elk River and it is impossible to get them through fast enough for us to continue advancing at present. If we had had good roads and pleasant weather we might have been a great way south of this. The rebels were half starved when they skedaddled through here and the country is completely stripped of everything, so there is no chance of our subsisting on the country.

We are not as comfortable now as we were at Murfreesboro. All baggage has been reduced together with the transportation. All the officers are all living in one large tent, as thick as three in a bed. We are short of rations but do not grumble. It is our business to serve the country and we must practice self denial, and do all in our power to quell this wicked rebellion. We are living on good news now, viz: Gen Meade is whipping Lee in Pa. and Vicksburg has fallen. National salutes were fired by nearly every Battery in this army. We are doing the business now if we can only keep it up. I am in hopes that Gen Meade will do the thing up right with Lee and capture him. Then the backbone of the rebellion will be broken in earnest.

Mother says that you and Harren will be the only help that Father will have this summer. You must be When you are tired and sweating under the hot sun in the hay field, think of the thousands of poor soldiers who are plodding along here dirty and thirsty and foot sore with their heavy knapsacks on their backs or walking through the mud in some swamp with hardly anything to eat and at night have no soft feather bed to lie on at night but lie down on the ground with no covering [illegible] all night. You have no hardships to experience or endure with hope. You have plenty to eat and a good place to sleep. You should be thankful that you are living in a country where the war does not affect you. There is no danger that a large army will encamp upon your farm, and destroy your field of young corn &

Camp King near
Deckard Tenn
July 13"/63

Dear parents,

I received yours of the 4th inst last evening. I can remember how I used to go down street after milking, especially on such occasions as the 4" of July. How many cows do you have now? We had no celebration on the 4". We left Elk River on that morning and had a hard time in getting through the mud. At noon while we were resting, the Batteries fired a national salute, which made the woods ring as the echo reverberated from hilltop to hilltop. Our 12 & 18 pr. parrot & Napoleon guns speak here. We had a splendid time at Hoovers Gap the day before we made the charge. We lay on the edge of a bluff, right in the edge of woods, and our skirmishers were through the other side of the woods, and as neither party were desirous of advancing, owing to the frequent heavy showers, we had not much to do, and nothing to disturb us, save the occasional whistle, and "chug" into the mud, of a bullet, as some "reb" happened to get a long range. About 600 yards behind us was a hill that tapered up to a point, and very high. We had one gun up there, which took 14 horses to draw up, and 3 more guns lower down, and 2 others at the foot of the hill, which had the range of the valley to the south, and also two more guns on the point of a hill to our right. The rebels had their guns posted on the different points of the hill in front of us, and all that day whenever the showers would break up, and it would stop raining, they would open the fire. Our position being between the two fires rendered it most exciting and charming. The snapping cracking sound of the report, the sharp shrill screeching sound of the shell as it pass through the air, and the dull deadening sound it makes when it strikes the ground and explodes, has an irresistable charm, and attraction which causes us to gaze with awe and admiration on the scene. That was pretty much all the fighting that day. The next day we made our gallant charge, in the face of musketry and a Battery. I have always thought twould be a nice thing when I was a boy and read in history the description & accounts of battles, but the reality of the thing is far different from the romance. Yet the excitement of the moment in a measure drives away fear, and perhaps pride more than courage does the rest. I do not think but what everyone, although they may be called the bravest of the brave, feels in some degree a little "shaky" just as he is going under fire. That is fear, but his pride overcomes it, if he had no pride he would run. I suppose you have been to church today, a privilege I cannot enjoy. The weather is not so very warm here. We have had today a splendid shower. our camp is in the woods, plenty of good spring water, and plenty of shade. Blackberries are here in abundance, but we have to go beyond the picket line to get them, which obliged us to keep only one eye on the berries, while the other is on the lookout for the Rebel guerillas. Officers sometimes take out their companies to pick and gather large quantities. They are very healthy, besides

being a luxury. The process of transporting rations & supplies to us from Murfreesboro is very slow, owing to the extensive rains. I believe the railroad is now in good condition as far as Elk River, and soon rations will be plenty. We send out nearly everyday a foraging party to get hogs and beef and other eatables, which answer our purposes. Sugar is very scarce, and is what we need very much. Apples and peaches will soon be ripe, and green corn in about a month. Then we will live like old times, when we were down here last year. It takes a hard heart to forage and resist the tears, cries, and touching appeals of old men & defenceless women whose sons and husbands have been taken away from them and compelled to fight against their own interests, many of them. That is the hardest part of this inhuman war. None can appreciate the inestimable blessings of peace so highly as these poor people who suffer all.

I wish you would all send me your photographs. I was very much pleased with Frank's. He could not have sent me a better present. Charlie Carpenter and myself keep up a correspondence. I do not see what his corps will do now at Vicksburg, as it is captured. Give my respects to all enquiring friends. Write soon. Good bye.

Yours Truly
A. B. Carpenter

Source: Augustus B. Carpenter Letters [19 US], Civil War Collection (MSS #619), Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University, New Haven, CT

Tullahoma Tenne.
August 2d 1863

Dear Parents:

I have nothing new to write about, still I know that you would like to hear from me. We are having pretty easy times here now. Most of the troops have gone to Manchester about 12 or 15 miles east of here. They captured a lot of flour & grain also a lot of ham & pork, that was destined to feed the Southern army. We have expected to hear of a fight out there as it is rumored that a considerable force of rebels are in the neighborhood. In consequence of the removal of our forces to Manchester, the defense of this town has depended upon a very small force, viz: 5 companies of 18" Ohio Volunteers, our company, a company of 4" Kentucky Cavalry, a company of 7" Penn. Cavalry and a few sick men at the convalescent barracks, in all amounting to about 500 men. We have been expecting an attack every night, thinking that if the rebels heard of our small force they would make a dash upon us and get some of their men whom we are holding as prisoners. Some how or other the prisoners got information that some of the Bush whackers were coming in to release them. The other night, they got pretty sassy. I was on guard that night and I got information from one of the sentries that they contemplated making their escape that night. I went down to the prison and gave all the sentries strict orders, and examined the rooms to see if no small arms had been smuggled in. The prisoners that night did not take off their boots as usual, and in the course of the night one of them raised a window, but the glitter of the polished steel bayonet, and the sharp distinct click of the lock of an Springfield Rifle as the hammer was being raised, suddenly gave "Old Butternut" a fit of the "ager", consequently the window dropped. No attempts have been made since. Yesterday we sent off six of the worst ones up north some where. The country all around seems to be infested with these infernal guerillas, they capture or hang all the union men, destroy their homes and act like the devil generally. About a dozen union men were compelled yesterday to leave their homes and come here for protection. They said that about 100 guerillas were in their neighborhood, and swore that they would hang all the union men they could catch. General Smith says that he knows how to use hemp also. This is the state of affairs in Tenne. & a part of Kentucky, and it will take some time to settle all these difficulties. How thankful you ought to be that you live in a land of peace comparatively speaking. I am in good health and expect to serve my country some time yet. I am not fit for anything else. I have no trade, or business education, and farming is too hard and confining, and I am getting used to soldiering, so I guess that I had better stick to it. Give my respects to all and write soon. Direct 19th U.S. Infy, Tullahoma Tenne.

Yours Truly
A. B. Carpenter

Source: Augustus B. Carpenter Letters [19 US], Civil War
Collection (MSS #619), Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University,
New Haven, CT

Camp Scribner Cowan Tenne
August 9" 1863

Dear Parents,

I received your kind letter of the second inst. last evening. I know that you had a great deal to attend to and therefore did not wonder at your not writing. You must not work too hard. I have thought a great many times that I should like to be at home this month and help you through haying. It is a wonder to me how you all have the impression up north that we are in Georgia or Alabama. We have been in camp here nearly 4 weeks. Tomorrow we expect to move from here, and go to Stevenson Ala. Will not be a long march, and if it is managed judiciously will be accomplished with very little hardship, that is for old soldiers. I wonder if you are enjoying as beautiful a sabbath at home as we have here today. Somehow everything seems holy. The bright rays of the golden sun bring to us as is wide incense from heaven and every leaf as the mountain breezes gently sway them to and fro seem like so many tongues. Speaking of God and praising him for his goodness our ears are greeted by the solemn strains of sacred music executed by the different bands of the Division. All we want is a church, that blessing you are enjoying today and listening to the words of consolation and noble advice. Here those who delight in worshipping God have the blue canopy of heaven overhead, the green field and leafy bowers below and content themselves in listening to voice of nature and the teaching of their own conscience.

you ask if I have the head ache this hot weather? I do not. I am almost entirely free from the headache, and when I do have it which is only once in a great while, I have it very light. Sickness is almost unknown to me now. There is nothing like living out in the open air, enjoying God's goodness in everything. It is a wonder to me that I have not before this had the rheumatism from laying on the ground in all weathers cold, hot, wet and dry, but it has not effected me in the least.

I shall not I fear be able to go home and see you all this fall. You must all send me your photograph. Tell Homer I am very thankful for his. I should know him if I had come across it anywhere in the world. I shall not complain if I do not get a leave this fall. There are thousands who are in the same condition as myself, and in fact even worse. And if the draft does no more good than it appears now to do, I shall not want to go home. Every man is needed now in the field, or any emergency. Who knows but that any day a strike may be made that will crush the rebellion at one blow, if there are enough to do it. We will all stay here, and fight for those who are so selfish that they cannot sacrifice their own comfort and business affairs for the good of the country, and those very same people attempt to hide their selfishness under patriotic motives by saying that others can fight while they must stay at home and produce food and money to feed us and pay our expenses. Tell those who strive to be exempted and who pay their \$300 that we are thankful for small favors, but we pity them for their want of patriotism. I send

love to grand mother Carpenter. I am proud to know that she calls a patriot, and I shall strive always to maintain that title. I also send a great deal of love to Grandfather Grant's folks, and thank them for their deep interest in me. Give love to all the friends, reserving a goodly share for yourself. Why will not "Ed" write to me? I have received my commission from the War Department, and have sent it to Uncle Brigham who will then send it to you, or take it in person. I want to have good care taken of it, put it when you get it in a safe place. Such a parchment as that is worth working for. Good bye. Write soon.

Yours Truly
A. B. Carpenter

Source: Augustus B. Carpenter Letters [19 US], Civil War Collection (MSS #619), Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University, New Haven, CT

"Camp Dawson"
Crow Creek Valley Tenne.
August 16: /63

Dear Parents,

I wrote you one week ago today from Cowan. We left there the next morning and travelled over the mountains marching 15 miles. The weather was warm, but we stood it remarkably well. The next day we marched 10 or 12 miles which brought us here. We are now about 10 miles from Stevenson Ala. The road that we traveled was very rough. Our artillery and transportation had a hard time in getting along. Some places the road wound along the tops of hills, right on the brink of precipices several hundred feet down, and occasionally a wagon would upset, sending its contents helter scelter down the hill. After exercising a great deal of patience the things would be gathered up and we would be ready to start again. The country after passing the mountains is very beautiful, splendid fields of luxuriant corn, which furnish an abundance of food, greet our eyes on every hand. Springs innumerable along the banks of "Crow Creek" of cool sparkling water moisten our parched throats, and cool our heated brows.

The march was not so very hard, yet it was harder than there was any necessity for. We are only encamped here for a week or so to repair the wagons, and perfect the means of transportation. I expect that we will soon be going to Stevenson, from there perhaps to Bridgeport.

We had divine service this morning in the camp of the 18th Infantry. Rev. somebody from Cincinnati preached a sermon which he did very well, and to a good audience. Our band furnished the sacred music. 'Twas really refreshing. I believe that nothing of importance has occurred during the week to make special comment.

I see by the papers that Gen. Burnside and his old corps the 9th is coming south. The Corps has just returned from Vicksburg and vicinity. I should not be surprised if Charlie & I should meet here somewhere soon. What is the news about home? Are you all well as usual? Have you got my commission yet? Write soon. Direct as before.

Yours in haste,
A. B. Carpenter
2d Lieut 19th Infantry

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