

Camp near Acworth Georgia June 9, 1864

Dear Mother

As we are halting here today for the first time, in more than two weeks I will improve the opportunity by writing to you.

I went over to see Will this morning He is tolerably well. The 1st has nine officers killed and wounded in this campaign and a great many men. The lightning struck in the Regt last week and killed one man

You have more intelligible accounts of our fights here than it is possible for me or any one actually engaged can give you as we know only what is going on immediately around us and get along remarkably well if we succeed in attending to our own business without paying any attention to that of others.

We have been continually on the move since leaving Cassville and almost always under fire. We had quite a hard fight on the 25th of last month. Our Division lost about twelve hundred, Our Regt lost forty five men and one Officer captured. He had charge of the Ambulances and had gone out driving the night after the fight to gather up the wounded and managed to get through our lines into those of the Rebs who gobbled him up; so we are informed by prisoners that we have taken.

The country that we have fought over is extremely rough and hilly, covered with dense pine woods, affording the Rebs any amount of almost impregnable positions. Sherman is fighting them very cautiously only pushing them hard enough to prevent them from sending any aid to Richmond.

He seems determined to beat them by good generalship rather than hard fighting. He keeps our connection with Chattanooga open, and our supplies are \_\_\_ now to Acworth six miles from here. We are supplied abundantly with rations so far, which is fortunate as the country affords nothing in the way of forage. The few farms that we see are planted in wheat and corn although they have been heretofore devoted to cotton, nearly entirely. The better class of inhabitants have left their houses and gone toward Atlanta with the Army. What few that I have seen do not seem to care which side whips.

Hookers Stars or Iron clads as we are called, have won a great deal of credit here. Even the Army of the Cumberland acknowledge that we do fight.

We are laying here within sight of large Camps of the enemy and can hear their bands playing and their Artillery and wagon trains moving.

The Pickets are divided by only a small creek and trade coffee, tobacco & newspapers as friendly as if there was no such thing as war. But that is just being broken up for Stonemans Cavalry are drawing up in front of us and the Reb line will be driven back. It is the intention of the Cavalry to find out their position, so that we may know what to do tomorrow.

The rifles about a thousand yards off have commenced their cracking; a position of the Cavalry having dismounted and advanced across the creek on foot. The Rebs are falling back through the woods along our whole front.

The Rebs won't go very far though before they reach their own

lines of battle and our men can only make them expose their positions so that we can work to advantage.

This soldier's life is a queer one. Here around me are men writing letters, reading, playing cards, sleeping, talking, laughing, eating, making coffee & while within a thousand yards are five or six hundred of their comrades facing death at every step and making the hills ring with the sharp crack of their carbines.

Killing and being killed has got to be so common now, that it is no excitement at all and looked upon as a matter of course.

I think that there is no doubt but what Atlanta will be ours before the expiration of this month. It is about thirty miles from here then and we have to cross the Chattahoochee River which may take some time.

That Lieut got my valise and sword at the Express Office and brought them with him.

Will received a letter from John this morning. He seems to be having a gay time at Baltimore. He expects to stay there during the term. I am glad that he has got into such a pleasant place.

I must close this as this is all the paper I have. Tell Steve that I wish he would write as I have heard nothing from home direct. I saw Lieut Belding of the 93rd Ohio who told me all the news. Remember me to all

Your affectionate son  
R Patterson