

1863

Chattanooga Tenn.

Sept 29<sup>th</sup> 1863

My dear wife:

I wrote to you several days ago when we first fell back here, but whether you received it, or whether it even left town or not is more than I know. I have been so busy that I have had no time to write to any one else besides that no mail has been allowed to come or go most of the time since we have been here. I know you have been very anxious to hear from me, after our late great battle, but really I have not particularly desired to write to you at present since a battle has been imminent here and I did not wish to leave you in quite so great uncertainty when I did write.

At present we do not look for an attack and we shall not advance until we get reinforcements at least. The rebel lines are within two miles of us and their pickets are not more than 200 or 300 yards from ours. We are therefore constantly on the qui vive and skirmishes are of frequent occurrence.

We can hold this point against almost any force for a long time at least. Our defenses are extensive

line and complete. The enemy would be seriously disappointed I think in some things if they should attack us.

The battle of Chicamaqua Creek was I think the most desperate of the war. There was very little artillery employed as the ground was nearly all covered with woods and bushes and shrubs being difficult to handle. Under the circumstances, the movements of the enemy were so thoroughly concealed thereby that we could not use it to advantage. The rifle and the bayonet were the weapons which decided that fight. We made a charge in which the 103<sup>rd</sup> having only 126 men drove a rebel brigade at least 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> miles, captured the commander of the division - Gen. Adams whom I helped to take from the field, and nearly or quite as many other prisoners as there were men in the reg<sup>t</sup>.

This was dear glory for us however, for among others we lost that noble fellow and brave officer Capt Abbott Spalding. He was wounded through the knee, at the bone just below the knee and we supposed that he would recover with only the loss of his limb. On Tuesday <sup>(27<sup>th</sup> inst)</sup> it was amputated and on Friday Morning - the 26<sup>th</sup> - he was seized with cramps which loosened the ligatures and caused hemorrhage of which he died almost immediately.

A nobler man never gave his life to a sacred Cause!

I was not struck by any missile - so as to injure me at all - during the whole battle. It seems marvellous that it should be so, as probably no officer in the reg<sup>t</sup> (though I do say it myself) was so much exposed unless it was Capt Spalding. During the Charge on Sunday I was nearly all the time several yards in front of the reg<sup>t</sup>. I was in truth nearly wild with excitement and cared no more for bullets or steel than for a shower of feathers. And yet so far as anything concerning the fight ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> extended I was ~~not~~ <sup>not</sup> enough. I knew we were charging too far and went behind the ranks to tell them so, and when he said it was according to orders I returned, but in one hand and sword in the other cheering on the men -

But I will not try to tell you of that battle now. At some other time, and under more favorable circumstances, I would relate it. I know that you will be thankful enough to hear that I am still alive and well. Oh! how sweet the thought of you - my darling wife - has been to me through these long days of blood and danger. How often I thank God for my treasure, and rejoice in the memory of the heroic sacrifice which gave me to the Country, seen at the nuptial altar.

I have not heard from you in a long time  
but have no doubt there are a host of  
letters on the way for me - It is not so long  
either. I had two from you on the first day of  
the battle just before we went into action.  
You cannot guess how it cheered and strengthened  
me - I had a letter from Angie too - but as the firing  
began almost immediately after they were put into my  
hands I only glanced at it. I read yours while the cannon  
were booming and what and hell flying thick &  
round me - God keep you in his loving care  
and I trust that we may meet once more  
in the constant prayer of

Your Husband  
A. Wheeler Bourger

W. S. I am now in command of  
Capt. Spalding's old Company "E"

Albin

I have not birth day  
forgotten your  
being through I  
have to neglect it



Mrs. A. W. Trudgee

Commeant  
Ashtabula Co.

Ohio