

On the road from Battle ground  
of the Wilderness 8 miles from Fredericks-  
burgh May 10<sup>th</sup> 1864

Dear Brother James:

I suppose you in  
the North are in a most terrible suspense  
in regard to the great battle which has  
been raging for the last 4 days. Such a  
battle probably never was fought since  
the world began. It has been the roar  
of canon & the heavy rattle of musketry  
almost <sup>incessantly</sup> every day since we crossed the  
Rapidan last Thursday. And now as I  
write I can hear the heavy booming of  
canon miles away in a southwesterly  
direction. We are in about as much  
ignorance about the results of the battle  
as you are. All we know is from the  
movements of troops & the thousand  
or more we hear. However we know  
we got round in season to fight Longstreet's  
corps and the same regiment we fought

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On the road of the Battle ground  
of the Wilderness 9 miles from Fredericksburgh  
May 10<sup>th</sup> 1864

Dear Brother James:

I suppose you in the North are in the most terrible suspense in regard to the great battle which has been rageing for the last 6 days. Such a battle probably never was fought since the world began. It has been the roar of cannon & the heavy rattle of musketry almost necessarily evry day since we crossed the Rapidan last Thursday. And now as I write I can hear the heavy booming of canon miles away in a southwesterly direction. We are in about as much ignorance about the results of the battle as you are. All we know is from the movement of troops & the thousand rumors we hear However we know we got round in season to fight Longstreet's Corps and the same regiment we fought

the trenches of Knoxville The 8<sup>th</sup> Ala. Reg.  
They only got in the day before & some  
of the prisoners wondered how we got here  
so soon. We left Bristol Station Wednesday  
the 4<sup>th</sup> marched 18 miles along the  
R.R. camping at Beattown at night  
next morning started at 4 a.m. marched 17  
miles in a south east direction crossed  
the Rapidan at 4 p.m. on the <sup>camping</sup> ground our  
army drove the rebels from the day before  
About dark there was a terrible charge  
made by our troops on the rebel works  
they captured them but with most terrible  
slaughter for it was a continual rolling  
& crashing of musketry for two hours  
It was remarked by many of the boys  
of the hundreds of widows & orphans  
made every moment. We rolled up  
in our blankets about 8 o'clock then  
slept soundly those that could sleep  
I slept soundly till 1 a.m. called up  
and marched till nearly daylight on  
the Fredericksburgh plank road about  
daylight filed right into the thick pine

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in the trenches of Knoxville The 9<sup>th</sup> Ala. Reg. They only got in the day before & some of the prisoners wondered how we got here so soon. We left Bristoe Station Wednesday the 4<sup>th</sup> marched 18 miles along the RR camping at Bealton at night next morning started at 4 am marched 17 miles in a south direction crossed the Rapidan at 4 pm camping on the ground our army drove the rebels from the day before

About dark there was a terrible charge made by our troops on the rebel works they captured them but with most terrible slaughter for it was a continual rolling & crashing of musketry for two hours It was remarked by many of the boys of the hundreds of widows & orphans made every moment. We rolled up in our blankets about 8 o clock them slept soundly those that could sleep I slept soundly till 1 am called up and marched till nearly daylight on the Fredericksburgh plank road about daylight filed right into the thick pine

woods deployed in line and our brigade  
marched in three lines of battle through  
the thick scrubby pines & underbrush for  
about a mile when we suddenly ~~we~~ came  
up with the rebel skirmishers the next  
instant whiz bang went a shell over our  
heads ~~then~~ <sup>then</sup> and another till the air  
was about full of them tearing & crashing  
among the tops of the trees and plough-  
ing the earth behind us they thought  
the lines of battle were further back  
for we were almost under their noses  
before they knew it This shelling would  
continue for 15 or 20 minutes at a time  
then on a movement by our lines it would  
commence each time they would drop the  
shell & shrapnel over us two shell  
burst over our heads wounding 5 or six  
in the regiment two were wounded in  
our company we all lay flat on our  
faces till the shelling was over then  
when everything was all quiet we most all  
dropped to sleep I noticed three fourths of the  
boys were asleep so killing was the calm

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woods deployed in line and our brigade marched in three lines of battle through the thick scragly pines & underbrush for about a mile when we suddenly came up with the rebel skirmishers the next instant whiz bang went a shell over our heads then another and another till the air was about full of them tearing & crashing among the tops of the trees and ploughing the earth behind us they thought the lines of battle were further back for we were almost under their nozes before they new it This shelling would continue for 15 or 20 minutes at a time often on a movement by our lines it would commence each time they would drop shell & shrapnel nearer to us two shell burst over our heads wounding 5 or six in the regiment two were wounded in our company we all lay flat on our faces till the shelling was over then when everything was all quiet we most all dropped to sleep I noticed three fourths of the boys were aleep so lulling was the calm

About noon we had orders to march  
back & we picked our way as best we could  
through the woods then marched by the  
right flank <sup>a short distance</sup> formed in lines of battle and  
marched through the ~~thick~~ woods a hard  
a large growth of hard wood trees very clear of  
underbrush for about <sup>half</sup> a mile here we came  
upon the 3d division formed in three  
lines of battle with skirmishers a few  
rods ahead they were laying down  
and our brigade went right over them  
the 11th had the center of the first line 31st  
Maine the right 18th. the left after laying  
down a minute in front of them a ~~minute~~  
Col. Hornum says forward boys forward  
I looked right at him then and I shall never  
forget the stern look in his face forward we  
went tired thirsty & sweaty as we were we  
encountered a terrible hot fire but we  
advanced several rods closely followed by  
the three lines of battle when we covered  
ourselves as best we could behind trees  
& logs then we pored into the retreating rebs  
a terrible fire they fell <sup>back</sup> into their first line of  
rifle pits then their fire was terrible and hundreds  
were killed & wounded, it seemed as though the  
air was ringing with bullets. In a few minutes  
the rebels began to retreat and we peppered them  
terribly running over the pits & firing at the  
retreating rebs. hundreds of the dirty playbocks  
surrendered as we came up instead of running  
they lay behind the breast-works holding up our chain

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About noon we had orders to march back & we picked our way as best we could through the woods then marched by the right flank a short distance formed in lines of battle and marched through a large growth of hard wood trees very clear of underbrush for about half a mile here we came upon the 3d division formed in three lines of battle with skirmishers a few rods ahead they were laying down and our brigade went right over them the 11<sup>th</sup> had the center of the first line 31<sup>st</sup> Maine the right 17 Vt. the left after laying down a minute in front of them Col. Harriman says forwards boys, forward I looked right at him then and I shall never forget the stern look in his face forward we went tired thirsty & sweaty as we were we encountered a terrible hot fire but we advanced several rods easily followed by the three lines of battle where we covered ourselves as best we could behind trees & logs then we pored into the rebs a terrible fire they fell back into their first line of rifle pits then their fire was terrible and hundreds were killed & wounded of us it seemed as though the air was ringing with bullets. In a few minuts the rebels began to retreat and we peppered them terribly running over the pits & firing at the retreating rebs. hundreds of the dirty graybacks surrendered as we came up instead of running they lay behind the breast works holding up on them