

Camp Stonewall
Dec. 5th 1863

Dear Sister:

As we are again in our old camp and the Yanks gone I suppose I can give you an account of our campaign.

Yesterday week we marched down towards Germania Ford and were about forming our line on the left of General Hill, when firing commenced in our rear. General Johnston supposing it to be Yankee cavalry sent out the 2nd. Virginia as skirmishers to hold them in check but they soon found out that instead of cavalry it was the third army corps commanded by General French, so our division about faced, formed our line and advanced.

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We drove their line of skirmishers back upon their line of battle when the firing commenced in earnest on the Yankee side. As yet our line had fired very little. At this time our color bearer was shot through both legs and the colors fell to the ground, I threw down my gun and took the colors, the line was reformed and with a rebel yell we dashed forward, but were met with such a terrible fire that we were compelled to halt, formed our line along a fence and held our ground until dark when we withdrew, being under fire about four hours. I was complimented on the field by General Walker's Adjutant General

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and General Walker also took my name, so you see I have endeavored to do my duty. Major Terry also since our return to camp has complimented me very highly. I now have a very honorable place though by some considered dangerous but I think that one place is as dangerous as another for God has appointed our day and we are perfectly safe until that day comes. Whether I will continue to hold it I cannot say as the colors do not properly belong to our company. But enough about self for fear you think I am disposed too much to blow my own horn,

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a thing above all things I despise. The next day we formed our line on General Hill's left and threw up a line of works (by the way, we, the army of Northern Virginia have become quite a good set of dirt diggers, but I do not think there is any disgrace in using all lawful means to preserve our lives, for enough gallant spirits have already fallen in this carnal war). What a noble fellow was George Chapin, how that family have suffered. But whom God loveth he chasteneth. He intends only their gold to refine, their dross to consume.

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We lay quiet in our works expecting the Yanks to advance, but they were not disposed to do so and on Tuesday night withdrew across the Rapidan; we then moved up to our old camp and now all is apparently quiet. Some think that the campaign is not yet over but unless they do something shortly the weather will declare an armistice.

How much I miss my bedfellow, George Chaplin. You have no idea what an attachment grows between two soldiers, who are constantly together. What a noble fellow he was. A gentleman and a soldier, I wish I could add a professed

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Christian, but can we not still hope, as doubtless he was the object of many an earnest prayer and his life was such a moral one, though I do not place any confidence in morality, still his life was so free from any gross sin that I still have hopes that he now rests in Heaven. May God comfort the afflicted mother, sisters and brother.

I was so unfortunate as to lose my knapsack and now am using his clothes, but I may be able to draw clothes from the Q.M.; they ought to furnish me and must, The shirts I get here are white and get dirty very quick, but I have already gotten too much from home and will depend in the

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future on the Confederacy. If you will send me Elihu's address I believe I will write to him though I never had much influence with him perhaps I may induce him to lead a better life.

Oh! how much more enjoyment I have now, for my part I cannot see how a wicked man can be a good soldier.

Give my love to Uncle James and Lady No. 1 and also Lady No. 2 and all friends. Your bro --

A.T.B.