

Chattanooga Tenn.

Nov. 27<sup>th</sup> 1863.

My very dear love.

I have just telegraphed you of my safety and now I must write a word, but O I am so exhausted, am nearly dead for sleep and rest otherwise tolerably well.

Thanks — O, thanks to the Great and Good Being who has been so kind and merciful to poor unworthy me, O Rhoda, dear, I do think I have been under his special care and protection, for when I look back and think over again what an ordeal I have just passed through it makes me almost tremble with awe. My heart has been filled with his praise, for his great deliverance in this trying time! Join me, O, my dear wife, in ascriptions of praise — to Him give all the glory! We have been in the midst of the greatest battle on record, it has been a comprehensive, masterly and unprecedented victory, successful and complete in all its parts. The result is not only a victory but a complete and perfect rout of the great army of treason and rebellion in the south and west. On last Sabbath day Bragg's army encircled us from river around to river, occupying a high range of mountains thought to be perfectly impregnable. On Monday at one o'clock our army moved out to the front in full view of from their camps. — They thought we were having a grand review, at a given signal we commenced the attack and charged right into their camps in the valley and drove them back to their position on Mission Ridge. It was a complete surprise, I had the right of the front line of our Brigades but didn't lose a man.

we halted and threw up a line of defenses during the night,  
the next morning, Tuesday. Hooker attacked them on the right  
and drove them off Lookout Mountain, we lay and looked on,  
in amazement and wonder, we usually moving Sherman crossed  
the river on our left and turned their other flank. At 3 o'clock  
a signal of six guns was fired and the whole line moved forward  
our corp being in the center had to charge across the valley right in  
the face of Mission Ridge. By this time our regiment had changed places  
with another and was in our second line of the Brigade, moving across  
the valley about a mile our front line drove them out of their breast  
works at the foot of the Mountain and halted a few minutes as if to  
rest, we halted and our men lay down, we were now right in  
front of the whole ridge, and all along the top of the ridge their lines  
battered up, their batteries opened with grape and canister, and their  
infantry was just pouring their deadly volleys down the hill side until  
it beggared all descriptions. The front line faltered. To ascend that  
hill, O it looked like rushing right into the very jaws of death!  
I was along the line and told my men to be prepared to scale that  
hill! for I saw what was intended, although not one of us had been  
told what we were expected to do, the front line was still faltering  
at the foot of the ridge which was yet <sup>an eighth</sup> ~~a quarter~~ of a mile ahead of us,  
all cleared open ground, sure enough! before I had got clear along  
my own line, the word came, I gave the word and every man sprang  
to his feet and started - double quick. I struck the foot of the hill, closed up  
on the front line - pushed right through and over them and up the  
hill, O Rhoda, but it was a hot place, bullets fell down that slope  
as thick as hail, all sense of fear left me, I took off my hat  
waived to my men and dashed along back and forth along the line -  
all the commands I could think of was - forward - forward men -

forward! it was enough the boys caught the spirit, and not a man  
of mine flinched nor fell back until wounded, my poor horse  
was perfectly wild with excitement, he leaped over brush and logs and  
rocks and never missed his feet. Up-up we went slowly, steadily  
gaining ground by inches, our poor boys dropping all around me, still it  
seemed to me I was safe, up, up went, and still the leaden hail poured  
it's deadly volleys, here a man gains a tree and fires, there one gains a  
rock and charges his gun - reloads and starts forward, I become and  
hallowed forward until my lungs almost gave out, we were gaining the hill  
slowly but surely - pushing on up, up, then my poor horse gets a wound in the  
top of the head, shakes his head but goes right on, first to one side then  
to the other, we are nearly up, he receives another wound in the shoulder  
the poor fellow staggers, I got off, turned his head down the hill  
and said to myself go poor fellow, but he wouldn't go back, but when  
around and charged right up the hill again, and I lost sight of him,  
he was going right into the rebel lines, but we were now nearly up the  
and the rebels were beginning to break - a few minutes more and we  
gained this work, - were on the top of Mission Ridge with enemy  
flying in confusion down the opposite side, I was nearly exhausted,  
my men were perfectly frantic, we struck the top of Ridge right at Bragg's  
head quarters, captured a number of prisoners, they said Bragg remained  
there until we were half way up, before he quit the spot, as soon as we  
could get into line again we started on, ours and the 4<sup>th</sup> Ind, in pursuit  
directly here came one of my men with my horse, he had caught him,  
I mounted him again, it was now dark, followed on about a mile  
when the enemy halted on a hill covered with thick woods, here we  
stopped and fought them for a solid hour without any support but  
our two regiments, finally re-inforcements came and again we drove  
them and occupied the ground too tired, and too dark to go farther

General Weymer gave us great praise and well he might,  
General Sheridan came up also and complimented the boys.  
It is needless but perhaps not idle to state that just as the fight closed  
Cool Seave and the Adjutant came up.

Then my dear wife, I have only given you an outline, I despair trying to  
give you a picture of the reality. It is considered one of the most daring  
battles of the war. It was viewed from one of our fronts by General  
Grant and a number of others. I enclose a copy of Genl Thomas's order  
of computations, to show that I am not writing this to excite you my love.  
Major Moore was shot in the right hand just as we started up the  
Mission Ridge but he came on up and fought well, till he was ordered  
to the rear, he was not in the second hitch after dark, I had it  
all alone, here my horse was struck twice more there, but they were  
spent balls and did not hurt him much. The second was the most  
ugly of the two fights, for it was perfectly dark. We lost heavily in both,  
our loss is fifteen killed and one hundred and twenty five wounded,  
among the killed was poor Son Williams, the bravest of the brave,  
Capt Roseman was wounded, Hunter, slightly in the corner of his mouth  
Major's wound is only a flesh wound across the palm of the hand  
and will heal rapidly, he will get a furlough by it and be home in a few  
days, none of the officers wounds are <sup>serious</sup> fatal, ~~no~~ officers killed, <sup>but</sup> eight  
wounded, Moore, Hunter, Roseman, Weiser, McClure, Brady, Leim  
and Shotts, no others that you know, I believe  
Then my dear ones, I must get a little sleep.

God bless you is my daily prayer,

Oh what reasons I have to be thankful!

I will write again in a day or two,

unless we move somewhere which is quite  
likely, but as soon as possible my love,

you will let Papa's folks know of my safety.

Oh what a victory, what a victory! Your own McClure