

Thoroughfare Gap
Prince Wm. Co., Va.
November 5th, 1862

Dearest Melissa,

I wrote you a simple note this morning saying that I was quite well. Having a moment of leisure, I thought I would give you a hasty history of our trip from Fairfax here.

We are 28 miles west of Fairfax and 48 from Washington. The Regiment started from Camp at Fairfax Sunday at one o'clock p.m., came through Centerville and encamped for the night about a mile east of the Bull Run Battlefield. The ground where we encamp, showed abandoned evidence of the conflict--the field being covered with shell and cannon balls. ed

Centerville is really strongly fortified--the rifle pits and dirt forts extending along the crest of a high hill for miles. The whole country from Centerville to Monasses junction is scattered over with log huts about 14 x 20 ft. with floors, chimneys, windows, etc., etc. which were used as winter quarters for their army last winter. I should judge from the stables that the forces here were mostly cavalry and artillery. The country from Fairfax to Monasses Junction has been thoroughly desolated by war. *Property of Pav. Center Antique Shop
Pav. N.Y.*

On Monday morning we resumed our march at eight o'clock and soon came upon the broken knolls and crests that I should have known from the descriptions at the time that we were approaching the field of the conflict of July 20, 1861. The rebels occupied a very strong defensive position and feeling their strength and security let our ranks walk right into the very jaws of death before they fire upon them. They had their batteries planted upon the brow of a series of broken hills--commanding fully the road and the stone bridge. They lay concealed and let our folks march over the bridge and then form in line of battle in an open field not 20 rods from their batteries. The east bank of Bull Run is a preceptive stony bluff and no way of retreating across the Run except by the Stone Bridge which was dozen hills fully commanded. History has recorded the dreadful events of that disastrous day--with equal numbers engaged, a "fool" could guess the result after inspecting the ground.

A little further along we came over the battlefields of the 28th and 29th of August last. Right side of the road hundreds are buried in common graves. From Gainesville to this place the country has been held by the "rebs" and we "now in a country without the semblance or claim

of a particle of loyalty in it. Everybody here are thoroughly and earnestly rebellious and our boys are trying the virtues of the Confiscation Bill on them fully.

Will write again as soon I can command time. Good-by. Love to you, Dora and Charley.

Affectionately,

Henry