

10-19-1863

Letter from Marshall Blair Clason to his father

Marshall Blair Clason

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Bridgeport, Ala. Oct. 19th 1863.

Dear Father: -

I have not written to you for a long time, with the exception of that ^{brief} letter which I wrote some time after the battle, announcing my safety. Our regiment was only actively engaged on Sunday afternoon, when 2 Brigades of our Division reinforced General Thomas. However we were under fire on Thursday, on the field on Friday ~~and~~ Saturday, and under fire on Monday. Our losses all occurred on Sunday afternoon, when we lost 98 Killed, wounded and missing. Fully 1/3^d of those engaged. My own company had 2 Killed, 3 wounded, and 1 missing. ~~My~~ Our regiment charged the enemy three times and drove the enemy every time. In these charges we captured 40 prisoners, and 2 flags. We lost one of these flags, by its captor being shot down. The other flag which we ~~have~~ with us is the battle-flag of the 22^d Alabama Inf'y. It is a blue cross on a white ground. The flag has "Shiloh" and "Memphis" inscribed upon its folds. The flag has 14 bullet holes in it, and the staff 2 bullet marks. The flag is stained with blood. Our regiment finally maintained its ground without flinching throughout the entire contest. The 121st Ohio covered itself with glory. I am exceedingly proud of my regiment. In the published accounts of the battle, we will be recognized as Steadman's Division, Hanger's Reserve Corps. We reinforced Thomas ^{on} Sunday, and enabled him to hold his position, and cover the retreat.

of the night and left many of the army, which had been defeated. High officers have said that "Steadman's Division saved the army." I understand that our regiment will be made the subject of a special order by both Gen. Steadman and Rosecrans for its good conduct in the recent engagement. There was no back down to the 12th Ohio. We frequently charged by ourselves and invariably drove the enemy. The first collision was tremendous but the enemy gave way. *** I was quite cool during the action. I was very little excited. I have understood that I ~~was~~ was mentioned in ~~the~~ correspondence to the Chicago Tribune and N. Y. Tribune as one of the last officers to leave the field. I make no claims to the honor, but I was among the last. I wish you would examine these papers, and see if you can find any such correspondence. I understand that the letters were written by the Inspector General of Steadman's Division.

I have made several offers to the man who is negotiating for the purchase of my land in Illinois. I have made no lower offer than \$700 and this was for cash. He is to give me an answer in a few days, and doubtless will make a proposition of his own. I think I can make a good sale of the land.

How are matters and things progressing with you financially. I hope all is well. The injury to some of the crops north may affect business. I intend to invest my surplus funds in U.S. Securities. I think they are as good an investment as can be made at present, although if I were at home I would like to invest my means with you in your

present business, if circumstances were favorable. I wish you should write me fully concerning your business matters. Should you need any money, I should be willing to lend you all the surplus funds which I may have.

I had quite a pleasant visit from my wife. She is at home and at last accounts in good health.

I am very much rejoiced at Vallandigham's defeat. He was a mean representative of the meanest kind of treason, and I rejoice at his utter defeat. He is buried beyond the hope of political resurrection, and with him that party which seeks the national dishonor and destruction. This victory is of greatest account to us. It crushes one of the most strongly cherished hopes of the rebels. I have never met an intelligent secessionist in the South, who finding I was from Ohio, did not inquire concerning Vallandigham, and what were his prospects of election. Our regiment voted Brough 165, Vallandigham 41. My company voted Brough 30, and Vallandigham 1. I voted the clean Union ticket, or as some might call it the abolition ticket.

Our regiment is now about a mile north of Chattanooga. I am here for a few days on business connected with my regiment. Rosecrans is secure in his possession of Chattanooga, and his present position. Large numbers of troops are being poured in this quarter. The 11th and 12th Artillery Corps from the Potomac are here at Stevenson, and on the R.R. Some of ~~the~~ Grant's army are here, and Sherman's corps of Grant's army is very near here. And yet the general impression is that there will be nothing done until spring. The intervening time will be employed in preparing for a campaign against Alabama and Georgia.

I am in good health and spirits. I feel no special desire to resign. I am content I may get a leave of absence about Christmas. If I can have time enough, I will come home. But you need not expect me ~~xxx~~ There is ~~to~~ be a reorganization of the army, and it is uncertain what corps, division or brigade we will be assigned to. Direct your letters 121st Ohio Inf'y, and the letters will reach me. Omit Brigade, division and corps designations.

Give my love to mother, George and Floretta. I hope mother's health is improving. Write soon.
Your son
Edison

I will inform you ~~for~~ our Brigade, division and corps, when the matter is settled.

I had an opportunity to obtain 2 staff appointments, but declined both.

Bridgeport, Ala., Oct. 19th 1863

Dear Father. —

I have not written to you for a long time, with the exception of that ^[[brief]] letter which I wrote some time after the battle, announcing my safety. Our regiment was only actively engaged on Sunday afternoon, when 2 Brigades of our Division reinforced Gen. Thomas. However, we were under fire on Thursday, on the field on Friday and Saturday, and under fire on Monday. Our losses all occurred on Sunday afternoon, when we lost 98 killed, wounded and missing, fully 1/3^d of those engaged. My own company had 2 killed, 5 wounded and 1 missing. Our regiment charged the enemy three times and drove the enemy every time. In these charges we captured 40 prisoners and 2 flags. We lost one of these flags by its captor being shot down. The other flag which we have with us is the battle flag of the 22^d Alabama Infy. It is a blue cross on a white ground. The flag has "Shiloh" and "Murfreesboro" inscribed upon its folds. The flag has 14 bullet holes in it, and the staff 2 bullet marks. The flag is stained with blood. Our regiment firmly maintained its ground without flinching throughout the entire contest. The 121st Ohio covered itself with glory. I am exceedingly proud of my regiment. In the published accounts of the battle, we will be recognized as Steadman's Division, Granger's Reserve Corps. We reinforced Thomas on Sunday, and enabled him to hold his position, and cover the retreat of the right and left wings of the army, which had been defeated. High officers have said that "Steadman's Division saved the army." I understand that our regiment will be made the subject of a special order by both Gen. Steadman and Rosecrans for its good conduct in the recent engagement. There was no back down to the 121st Ohio. We frequently charged by ourselves and invariably drove the enemy. The first collision was tremendous, but the enemy gave way. xxx I was quite cool during the action. I was very little excited. I have understood that I was mentioned in the correspondence to the Chicago Tribune and N.Y. Tribune as one of the last officers to leave the field. I make no claims to the honor, but I was among the last. I wish you would examine these papers, and see if you can find any such correspondence. I understand that the letters were written by the Inspector General of Steadman's Division.

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I had quite a pleasant visit from my wife. She is at home and at last accounts in good health.

I am very much rejoiced at Vollandigham's defeat.— He was a mean representative of the meanest kind of treason, and I rejoice at his utter defeat. He is buried beyond the hope of political resurrection and with him that party which seeks the national dishonor and destruction. This victory is of greatest account to us. It crushes one of the most strongly cherished hopes of the rebels. I have never met an intelligent secessionist in the South who finding I was from Ohio, did not inquire concerning Vollandigham, and what were his prospects of election.—

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M. B. Clason

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