

Carver Hospital, May 10, 1863

Dear Frant,

Having an opportunity, I hasten to answer your letter--which I received when we were on the ground where we had the battle.

Well, I might as well begin and tell you the news. One week ago last Tuesday night we crossed the Rappahannock and laid down the pontoons. Then we went back to camp. The next day we crossed and lay at Kelly's Ford for 24 hours, then we crossed the Rapidan and marched to the front, making 25 miles in all in one day.

The next day we rested. At evening the Rebs shelled us, but did no damage. Saturday, we built breastworks. There was heavy firing on our left, and at 6 p.m., as we were watching the Rebs, they came right in on our back. We had to just jump over on the other side of our works, and then how we piled up the Rebs! The cannons on our right fired triple charges of grape and canister, and I could see the Rebs fly 30 feet high. But they came up in such solid columns that after we fired eight or ten rounds, we had to retreat or be taken prisoner--and we did not fancy the latter much.

When we had the order to retreat, we ran like split! How the balls did zip by our ears! I bet there was one hundred went within a foot of me going the ten rods back to the woods. Here, we formed again--and again had to retreat. The first time we retreated, I got a wound in my right arm between the elbow and the shoulder. The first four or five days it was awful lame. I could hardly touch it. It is getting better now and it will be all right in one or two weeks.

Our regiment was cut up awfully. There are 261 killed, wounded and missing out of 500 who went in.

In the hottest of the fight I thought of you, Frant. You have been my guardian angel since I came into the Army, and I hope you will continue to give me that same affection you always have. As ever your true and affectionate friend,

Edgar

P.S. I have not heard from the 64th, only that they were in the fight.

[*The Jamestown Sun*, Thursday, July 6, 1961]