

LOOKOUT VALLEY, Nov. 4th/63

Dear Frant

We got a mail day before yesterday & I was much pleased to get two from you; one dated October 2nd the other the 19th; It was the first time I had had a letter in six weeks; & you may guess I felt well; I got eight - two or three from our folks; we were at Bridgeport until the 27th Oct. building corduroy road & getting out railroad ties, The morning of the 27th we got our breakfast & packed up our things by rail light just light - we started marched seventeen miles drove out a regiment & a company of rebs & staid all night in their camp. they left about half an hour before we got there. Whiteside, I believe was the name of the place, it was not much of a place nor are any of their places here. The houses & folks all look just like Dave Harmons. some little houses 22 feet square will have five or six women in, twice as many children. but our journey; they had us up before light & started about ten o'clock we came in sight of Lookout mountain & saw the smoke of the cannon although we could hear no report we were ordered to load; marched along till about two all quiet when a sharp firing broke out right ahead & five or six bullets came zip over our heads, & a cavalry man came back wounded. Our faces paled a little & lips closed for we expected a big fight but there was no run in us; every man was ready we were deployed right & left as skirmishers "that is one line each" man five faces from the other

We skirmished about half a mile then were ordered to charge & the way the rebs got out of our way was fun. the fighting was mostly on the right wing of the regiment I was on the left our Co. is the left Co. one of our reg't. got his finger shot off by our own men. our faces were red enough when we stopped for we went nearly a mile on a dog trot knapsack, canteen & haversack, on with gun & ammunition; we then formed in column & started along the road they began to shell us from Lookout M. but they hurt no one only quickened our pace a little, one burst right over us & a piece struck about three feet from me to the right, I made up my mind they'd got to hit closer than that to kill me. we soon got out of reach & formed a junction with Grant's men. They cheered us & we them till this old valley fairly rung. I tell you if the old flag did not look good as they waved it & welcomed us

to their aid & if they were not pleased I never saw men that were for we opened the road so they could get provisions, they were on quarter rations; we went to sleep expecting to have a good nights rest. but about one o'clock, I was waked up by heavy musketry firing right in our rear on the road we came. We were ordered to fall in & march right up where they were fighting & lay down, expecting to go in for sure; we could see the flash of the gun; & hear the orders—the second brigade charged right up the hill & drove them out of their rifle pits; two regiments drove seventeen hundred; so we did not have to go in after daylight we went up & the breastworks our fellows drove them out of. The second brigade lost between two & three hundred killed & wounded. I saw twenty of them laid out to be buried one fellow was shot three times through; it looked tough & I thought to myself will this ever be my fate but thinks if it is, it will be quick & all my suffering will be done here below. I hope it may not, I want to see this rebellion put down & get home & enjoy life as men should, the laws respected & constitution lived up to until that can be done I might as well be here as there. I am just as well contented as I should be there. I guess more so, you said you heard I was a copperhead. I thank God it is not so I'd just as soon be a rebel & sooner far be dead. No! if it had not been for those sneaking crawling things I can't call them men we would had this war ended; & not be our lives & suffering all that a soldier has to suffer, we'd been at home the north & south both been better off. Frant you'll not find many copperheads among the soldiers, they are home cowards & fools that are willing to be picked round by the southern chivalry; I hope I am not made for that purpose. We have been on duty everyday had our straps on expecting a fight, but I do not think ~~not~~ we shall have one, we have got our position & got it fortified if the rebs think it safe - let them come, we have breastworks to fight behind our rations are a little short but we get a long well. I never was tougher in my life nor felt any better. I have hardly thought of home latly; I was sorry to hear you were unwell so you could not go back to school. I hope the next term may find you well & ready for study. I would like a few apples & a little cider but try & get along this fall without. I have not seen either since we came through Nashville. Bill sends his best respects the other boys are all well. Be of good cheer Frant & get well there is better times coming. Tom just called me to supper so good bye & believe me to be your true & affectionate friend Edgar. Write soon. I have no other envelope so excuse this great awkward one & poor writing.

Chattanooga Nov 30th/63

Dear Frant

I will take this opportunity to write you a few lines. There is thirty of our Reg't. here today we came here with ninety-one prisoners yesterday. We left the Regt. Friday morning at Parkers Gap about twenty-miles from here towards Atlanta. The boys are all right. Our regiment lost only six in this fight & they were wounded, none of them dangerously; we were right in the midst of it for three days, but were lucky enough to get out allright. The Enemy had the best position I ever saw, they held a range of hills clear round our men had to charge up them to drive them off. Our loss is comparatively small considering the amount of fighting there was done. They were at it some point or other all night & all day for three days. Our victory is complete. Chattanooga is full of prisoners, they are coming in all the time, the report is that Hooker took 1000 last night. I got my blanket last night - I have had no blanket nor overcoat in eight days I have been a little cold now you may guess. There is no snow but it is very cold here at present. The report is our Corps is coming back if it does probably we shall go back to our old quarters, if not we shall go to the front again tomorrow. My knapsack is in the old camp paper & all I should not had a chance to write but the sanitary commission have a large room on purpose for the soldiers to write home. So I stepped in here & went to writing. They have to draw wood about two miles so they don't keep much fire & I am colder than a bar. The lieut. was just in & spoke about going so I must hurry. Excuse this short letter I will be better next time. Write soon

From you friend, Edgar Shannon      Goodbye Frant.