

back to our old camp near Brookis (sp?) Sta (Station ?)
 May (?) the 9 1863

Dear Cousin Betthiah

I now take my old rusty pen in hand to write a few lines to you. I suppose that you have heard about this last battle before this time. This Regt started from here four weeks ago today. Our Co had 65 men when when we left now we have got thirty men Our Regt & the — crossed the River in boats & drove in the pickets & held the ground till they laid down the pontoons & half the Army crossed then went back cross the River & staid till the next morning Then we crossed the River again & guarded the supply train through then we was placed on the left to support the Battery our Regt and the 29 about sundown Old Stonewall maid a break Our Regt was in the rear when he broke in He took them by surprise every Regt wrun one Regt wrun did not unstack their guns when Old Stonewall came came to our Battery the Old Twenty 9 lay on the ground right behind it and our Regt stood back about 15 rods behind the 29 when they charged on our Battery the 29 wrun & did not fire a gun then the Artilley run past us then our Kernal ordered us back behind the pit We fell back behind that We lay there and fired ten rounds apiece. I tell the grape & bullets flew like hailstones We staid there until every Regt had left but ours We dropped their Cullars three times before we left the ground Our little Kernal walked behind his Regt & cheered them He said that we had got to leave the ground but when we left we would leave with honor.

We staid there until they began to cum around us on three sides then we had orders to retreat. We had about 20 rods to run before we got to the woods with a whole Army behind us When we was running our men fell like leaves My Knapsack strap was cut off by a ball and then fell off I did not stop to pick it up so some Rebel has got your likeness and my Testament that Ceeles (sp ?) gave me & my little — pipe & all of my Close (Clothes ?) but I did not care anything about the Close but I followed the Cullars in to the woods I did not run ahead of the Cullars our Capt stood right by us our Cullars got 26 ball holes through them you can judge how the balls flew our Col was was wounded we do not know whether he was taken prisoner or not you must excuse this writing for I am so near worn out that I can hardly make a mark when we lay behind the pit one poor fellow that lay beside of me was shot in the top of the head he did not know what hurt him they was about two weeks that we did not sleep more than one hour at a time They — us — Rifle pits it rained two days and nights We slept on some bales to keep us up out of the water We had nothing to cover over us after we left our knapsacks I tell you we had a hard time I do not want to see another but expect that we shal for the Army has marching orders. They are going to cross again Old Stone wall can out wit all of our officers but Old Hooker done well I tell you that the Rebels was piled up in piles I thnk that killed five to one They was piled up ten deep before our Artillery Old Hooker stood behind his men & cheered them all through the battle Sunday We was not in that that was the hardest battle that ever was fought You will hear the news in the papers better than I can tell you

Give my love to Mart tell him that I will write to him when I get time & feel a little better than I do now tell him that I weight 150 Lbs now tell — that I received his letter & hat all right I received your letter the night before we crossed the River give my love to Cate tell her that I had got a letter about half written to her when we got marching orders. Had not time finish it so I put it into my knapsack thinking that I should finish after we got where I could mail it so it was left on the battle field for some Reb to read Remember me to Uncle & all the rest of my friends I will give you a list of those that are missing on the other page Write often I do not believe that you can read this I will close with a good night.

Osar M. Taylor, Pvt., Co. E