

Missionary Ridge near Chattanooga Tenn. Oct 5<sup>th</sup> 1863

Dear Et,

Dr. DuBose has gotten impatient to go home and I avail myself of his kindness to write, and say that I am quite well. I can never be too thankful for all God's mercies to me & mine. I do hope, by this time, our dear The has exhibited signs of complete recovery. The doctors here insist that from his symptoms, there is but little of danger to apprehend – that he will gradually recover as he gains strength.

I send you enclosed \$250 which is borrowed from my present months pay. You must manage to make that take you home, somehow or other. I have no idea how much it will take to defray your travelling expenses from Marietta to Monticello, but I suppose it will be somewhere in the neighborhood of \$150 to \$200 dollars. I have, to some extent gotten over my impatience for you to be at home, and am entirely content for you to remain where you are till the wounded (Willie & Capt. May) can be taken along with you. By the way, how in the world does Willie expect me to get the fine mare without an order from him for her!! You only say “she is at the wagon yard of the Texas Rangers, near Rome, GA.” If he will send me a written order for her, on whoever has her in possession – so that I can get her, I will send any distance for her: But if I were to send to the “wagon camp” of the Texas Rangers, with a verbal message for her, the person having her in possession would give me a short answer for my pains.

You continue to worry yourself about Hindman, etc. Well, the fact is Hindman was ordered by Genl. Bragg to attack the enemy in McLemore's Cove at daylight on the morning of the 12<sup>th</sup> Sept. He did not do it – but for one reason or other (perhaps good reasons) delayed till about 3 p.m. and then it was too late – The bird had flown. It now turns out that if he had come up to time & made the attack at daylight as ordered, he would have captured the whole of Negley's Division (6,000 men) with a large train of wagons – and then there is no telling how much more of Rosecrans' Army would have fallen an easy pray to our arms - & most likely the whole of it would have been captured, killed, or scattered, saving the bloodshed & battle of Chickamauga, etc. and preventing any possibility of a concentration of the enemy's forces, etc. Genl. Bragg has suspended Hindman from his command & preferred charges against him. Whether or not Hindman will be able make a good excuse I do not know. And it is not for any one to determine beforehand. So I am content to await the developments of the trial. On the morning of the 20<sup>th</sup> at Chickamauga, Genl. Polk was ordered to attack at daylight and did not do it till about 11 o'clock, loosing four or five hours of daylight, which if we had had, nothing could have saved Rosecrans whole army from complete rout and capture! For that failure Genl. Polk is also suspended & charges preferred against him. In his case too, we must wait for the proof. I like Genl. P. personally very much and am inclined to think that Lt. Genl. Hill is the true party to blame for the delay, but as he was under Genl. Polk on that occasion, of course Genl. Bragg could only look to Genl. Polk as he was the man to whom Genl. Bragg gave the order. Genl. Wood of the Ala has been compelled by his Brigade to resign on account of his bad conduct on the field of battle. Forrest too is said to be in arrest for disobedience of orders. I do not know certainly whether this is so or not – think it very likely that all of this will create a greater sensation at home than in the army: The troops were never in better fighting trim – Spirits excellent and confident of

their ability to cope successfully with Rosecrans on any field. I do not think there will be a fright here. We will not attack the enemy in his entrenched position at Chattanooga – the game is not worth the sacrifice it would cost. We will either flank him or he (if he should be heavily reinforced) may attempt to flank us – when Chickamauga will be repeated.

I have said that I was willing for you to remain at Marietta a short while longer – to tell you the truth, my dear Et, without knowing how it may occur, yet I have a lingering hope that by some chance or other, I may get to see you again before you go back to Fla: I sometimes, when thinking about you, almost make up my mind to ask Genl. Bragg to let me run down on one train & come back on the next. I would do it to a certainty if it were not that we are in the face of the enemy. We will shell him occasionally just to annoy him – not with any hope of making him leave Chattanooga by that means. Wheeler has gone to his rear, & we are in hourly expectation of hearing that some of his communications have been cut. In this way he may be induced to fall back towards Murfreesboro, where the forage & provisions are easier of access & his lines shorter & more easily defended.

Give my love to Mother & all the Monroes & McLearys, etc. Kiss Willie & The & Pat for me. A bushel of kisses for yourself. The fact is, Et, I believe every day of my life, makes it more essential for me to be with you. I can't stand this thing of being separated from you, half as well as I could five years ago: Another kiss from

Your  
Patton

Davidson sends five dollars to Alice for washing

Transcribed by Christopher A. Baker, University of Florida, 2008.