

Crampton's Gap 6 miles from  
Harpers Ferry Sept 18<sup>th</sup> 1862

Friend Brommy

According to promise I  
take this my first opportunity to write to you.  
One week ago last Sunday I took out my  
portfolio and was just going to commence a  
letter to you when I heard the Captain  
holler out "fall in! fall in!" and I hurried  
out of my tent and was told to take sixty rounds  
of cartridges and our guns and blankets and  
be ready for a march in half an hour. We were  
all ready at the appointed time and started  
about three o'clock P.M. and marched here.  
I do not know how many miles but it seemed  
a great way to us you may be assured. I  
saw General McClellan <sup>and Staff</sup> at Georgetown.  
He looks just like his pictures. We passed  
Phil Wales and his company and saw  
him and Jesse Hubbard and Ed Holmes  
and Jim Londa. Ed Holmes is here now.



his company are engaged in the fight  
now going on at Harpers Ferry. They  
have been fighting three or four days  
there, we can hear the cannonading  
very plainly from here, yesterday seemed  
to be the hardest fighting of any  
day yet. It sounds very much like  
twenty five or thirty horses on a barn  
floor kicking and stamping, and  
every little while we here one of those  
great siege guns which sounds just  
like distant thunder. But Sunday  
I was still closer to a battle as  
you have probably heard, which  
was at the taking of this gap from  
the rebels. They had I have heard  
about sixteen Regiments in the  
field while we had but about  
five thousand men. There is  
no hill around Cherry Valley to  
be compared to this in length,  
steepness, and difficulty of  
ascent, we came in sight of them



about three o'clock P.M. when we drew  
up in line of battle but soon found that  
we were too far off to fight with  
muskets so we were moved about a  
mile and a half nearer, when our  
battery opened upon them. We were soon  
greeted by a screeching whizzing sound  
and soon a cannon ball struck about  
six rods in our rear. The infantry  
were then moved a little farther  
toward them under a small hill  
while our battery still kept up a  
brisk fire and was as often answered  
by the rebels. I tell you the balls  
and shell whistled over our heads  
like hail. I tell you it is an ugly  
sound to hear those shells coming  
toward you. Well we lay under the  
hill some time longer when we  
were ordered to charge upon them  
all but our Regiment was soon on  
a double quick (we were in the reserve)  
and then the musketry opened.



upon them there was some noise  
It was a desperate assault. but our  
men carried the day with a comparatively  
small loss. Next day we were marched  
over the <sup>Battle</sup> ground and it was a tough  
sight. I tell you, the ground was  
literally strewn with dead rifles, guns,  
straps; cartridge boxes, cap boxes, swords  
sheaths + etc we took from five to seven  
hundred prisoners. they are a ragged  
looking set as I ever saw. they were  
made to bury their comrades, they  
put as many as fifty-three in  
some graves. I do not know how  
long we will stay here, we are liable  
to be carried away at any moment.

I send you some confederate money.  
I have some other small things which  
I picked up on the battle field which  
I cannot send in a letter. I must  
close for want of paper. Give my respects  
to Mr Hall + Lady, tell our folks I am  
well. Yours with Respect, E D Hills  
Sergeant, Co G 121<sup>st</sup> Regt Washington D.C.