ATTACKED THE GREY COATS..." A SUPERB UNION SOLDIERS LETTER DESCRIBING AN ARTILLERY BATTLE IN GEORGIA.

"1ST MICH., RUFF'S STATION, GA., JULY 7TH, 1864". 7 FULL PP, NEATLY PENNED, 5x8. "...WE HAVE MARCHED & COUNTERMARCHED TOWARD ALL POINTS OF THE COMPASS... (WE ARE) 6 MILES SOUTH OF MARIETTA ON THE RAIL ROAD...

SEVERAL MILES FROM THE CHATTHOOCHEE RIVER & 15 FROM THE CITY OF ATLANTA. THE ENEMY ARE NEARLY ALL ACROSS THE RIVER WHERE THEY WILL EVIDENTLY MAKE ANOTHER STAND. SOME OF OUR CAVALRY CROSSED THE RIVER BELOW THEM YESTERDAY & ATTACKING THEM ON THE FLANK, CAPTURED 800 OF THE 'GREY COATS'. WE MUST BE REDUCING THEIR ARMY SOME, FOR ASIDE FROM THOSE WHO DESERT TO OUR LINES, ONE CAN SEE SQUADS OF FROM 20-100 MEN BEING SENT TO THE REAR ABOUT EVERY HOUR OF THE DAY... THE ENGINE WHISTLES OF BOTH OUR OWN AS WELL AS THEIR TRAINS CAN BE PLAINLY HEARD... (ON JULY 4TH) THERE WAS A GRAND DISPLAY OF FIREWORKS... THE ROAR & BELCHING OF FIRE FROM THE ARTILLERY AS THEY SENT THEIR DEADLY MISSILES WHIRRING THROUGH THE AIR & THE EXPLOSION OF THE SHELLS AS THEY REACHED THEIR DESTINATION, ALL TENDED TO CREATE A PYROTECHNIC SCENE WORTH BEHOLDING. BUT DEATH & DESTRUCTION WAS THE RESULT. HUNDREDS WILL NEVER SEE ANOTHER SUCH A SIGHT NOR WITNESS THE DAWN OF ANOTHER 4TH OF JULY MORNING... THE REBEL SHARPSHOOTERS ARE VERY SEVERE ON OFFICERS & TAKE ESPECIAL PAINS TO SHOOT AT ANY OF US WHO MAY CHANCE TO GET IN THEIR SIGHT. I HAVE GOT ONE OF THE BRIGHTEST NEGRO BOYS WITH ME THAT I HAVE EVER SEEN. HE BELONGS TO A COL. ROBERTS OF THE REBEL ARMY & WAS ACCIDENTALLY LEFT ON THEIR RETREAT... NEAR ETOWAH RIVER. I CAME ACROSS HIM & HE APPEARED SO BRIGHT & INTELLIGENT FOR A NEGRO THAT I (KEPT) HIM. ABOUT 12 YEARS OLD. SAYS HE IS GOING HOME WITH ME... " DESCRIBES DEATHS OF HIS FRIENDS. V.FINE. $60.00.
CANONSA, Sept. 29, 1864, 4 Full P.P. CXXIV...YOU HAVE NOT HEARD FROM ME SINCE MY ARRIVAL IN NEWBERN...

THE BOYS LEFT NEWBERN NIGHT BEFORE LAST & THEY WERE A JOLLY FEELING SET. I ASSURE YOU, & WE POOR DUCKS LEFT BEHIND FELT ABOUT AS FAR THE OTHER WAY....I FEEL BLUE ENOUGH....I TRY TO BE AS JOLLY AS POSSIBLE....WE CAN'T BUY STUFF TO EAT AS WE DID AT FT. SPINOLA NEAR NEWBERN. I AM LUCKY IN COMING HERE FOR THE CITY OF NEWBERN IS AT PRESENT A VERY UNHEALTHY PLACE. THE DISEASE NOW RAGING THERE IS SUPPOSED TO BE THE YELLOW FEVER, & MEN ARE DYING OFF THERE AT A GREAT RATE....CAPT. ROGERS HAS GONE HOME & IT SEEMS AS THOUGH I AM ENTERING THE SERVICE FOR A NEW TERM, WITH A REPUTATION TO MAKE....ALL MY PAST ENDEAVORS TO WIN A GOOD NAME HAVE COME TO NAUGHT WITH THE DEPARTURE OF CAPT. ROGERS....I MAY BE FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO RETAIN MY THREE STRIPES BUT A LARGE NUMBER OF SERGTS. IN THE REGT. HAVE BEEN REDUCED & AMONG THEM SOME MEN THAT WENT THROUGH THE WHOLE CAMPAIGN WITHOUT LOSING A BATTLE....I SENT MY JOURNAL FOR NEARLY TWO YEARS (HOME) & YOU MAY FIND SOME INTERESTING NOTES IN IT, BUT TAKE GOOD CARE OF IT FOR I PRIZE IT MORE THAN GOLD....THIS WAR IS NOT GOING TO LAST ALWAYS, & WHEN IT IS OVER I THINK THE PLEASURE THAT I WILL FEEL KNOWING THAT I STUCK BY THE OLD FLAG THRU IT ALL WILL AMPLY REPAY ME. I SHOULD LIKE VERY MUCH TO RECORD MY VOTE FOR OLD ABE THIS FALL BUT I SUPPOSE THAT CANNOT BE. I SHOULD THINK THE MANY DEFEATS OF THE ENEMY WOULD DISCOURAGE THEM BEFORE LONG FOR THEIR CAUSE MUST BEGIN TO LOOK HOPELESS, EVEN TO THEM. I THINK GEN. EARLY HAD BETTER GET PRETTY NEAR RICHMOND WITH THE REMNANT OF HIS ARMY BEFORE HE LOSES IT ALL, FOR IF SHERIDAN CAN GET AT HIM HE WILL CERTAINLY DEMOLISH HIM. IF WE CAN ONLY WHIP LEE'S ARMY WE SHALL BE ALL RIGHT....A FEW MONTHS MORE (AND) THE VICTORY WILL SURELY BE OURS...."GIVES HIS PHILOSOPHY ON BEING TAKEN A P.O.W. OR BEING KILLED IN THE FIELD AS AN ALTERNATIVE.

FINE AND UNUSUALLY OBSERVANT SOLDIER. $42.50
My Dear Hattie,

I have been quite unwell for several days, and the battery having been on the move most of the time, have had but little time to write and indeed felt more like resting when I got into Camp than attempting to do anything. But today I am feeling better as we have had an opportunity to rest since yesterday noon and the first thing I do is to write a letter to my darling girl. I have not had a letter from you since the 27th of June the day of our last battle but hope to get one soon.

When I last wrote you we were nearly three miles of Marietta and
(3) three miles distant—since then we have marched and countermarched toward all points of the compass. Yesterday at 12 o'clock M. we arrived at the aforementioned Station, six miles south of Marietta on the Rail Road.

We are now seven miles from the Chattahoochee River and (15) fifteen from the far-famed city of Atlanta. The enemy are nearly all across the river where they will evidently make another stand.

Some of our Cavalry crossed the river below them yesterday and attacking them on the flank captured 800 of the “Grey Coats.” We must be reducing their army some for aside from those who desert to our lines, one can see squadrons of from 20 to 100 hundred or even more being sent to the rear about every hour of the day.

The cars arrived here last evening and passed on to near the
the river as fast as they could repair the
Road. I had not been to the Railroad
since leaving Cassville May 33d and this
was the first train of cars that I had
seen since May 9th.

The road is repaired so rapidly that
the cars keep close in rear of some
part of our Army, and as the enemy
run trains close to their lines the
engine whistles of both our own as well
as their trains can be plainly heard.

Did you have a pleasant
Fourth-of-July? What did the good
people of Coldwater do to celebrate the
birthday of our Independence?

We had a very quiet day but just as
sunning there was a grand display
of fireworks. There was the flash and
rattle of musketry with the whistling of
the Minnie balls. The roar and belching
d of fire from the artillery as they sent
their deadly missiles whirring through
the air by the explosion of the shell.
as they reached their destination all tended to create a pyrotechnic scene very beholding. But death and destruction was the result. Thousands will never see another such a sight nor witness the doom of another 4th of July another

F. W. Smithley, one of my men, who was wounded on the 27th, returned alive on the morning of the 29th.

On the 30th of June the 22nd Ind. Battery Capt. Deming Condy joined our division and as it had never been in an engagement the Captains were anxious to participate in our 2nd Capt. Shields 19th Ohio and I agreed to let them have the privilege of using his battery this first opportunity that occurred. On the 31st inst. we drove the evening some two miles and finding a place for a battery Capt. Deming moved forward with his but as he had got into position...
was struck in the breast with a musket ball and taken to the hospital where he died the next day—One of his lieutenants was also wounded but not seriously—

The rebel sharpshooters are very severe on officers and take especial pains to shoot at any of us who may chance to get in their sight—

I have got one of the brightest Negro boys with me that I have ever seen. He belongs to a Colonel Roberts of the rebel Army and was accidentally left on their retreat before our Division May 25th near Etowah River. I came across him and he appeared so bright and intelligent for a Negro that I came to the conclusion to take and keep him. Should judge that he is about 12 years of age—Sage he is going.
home with me -
Mr. McMechen says correct you could only get a box as far as Chattanooga enough as no freight, but that for the government can be sent over the road from there without a special permit. I sent a man to Chattanooga in a few days since and told him to buy me some clothing and provisions if he could possibly get a permit to bring them over the road. He has not returned yet, but are expecting him daily. On the 4th Dr. Crawford of our Div. Hospital sent me some cold fish & potatoes, wife crackers, two lemmae, Corn starch, pudding and a bottle of Porter for my dinners. It was gratefully received and lasted me two or three days. Nothing can be had here for love nor money, but we are getting used to it and like the Drickman's wives will learn to live on nothing in due time.
Darling Davieko I could have a few days rest and that the time might be passed with you - it would be so pleasant but I never could think of such a thing for it cannot be bought to pass and only makes one longer to think of it - I did hope that this campaign might have been over with in this so that I could have obtained a leave of absence for a short time this Summer but there is no prospect of it at all - We are to rest here two days and then off we go again -

You should not envy [Bradley] their happiness but rather rejoice that even can be happy if even we are deprived this pleasure of each others society - But darling I must close as I have perhaps already written too lengthy a letter - May he who governs all things guard and protect us amidst all dangers and in long return me in safety to my dear girl - Burns