

[Camp near Hagerstown, Maryland]
Saturday Morn, October 4, 1862

Dear Mother

I will try to write a few words more this morning. Your last letter was speaking of the Battle of Bull Run. We were out there but not engaged. Oh! wasn't it disgraceful to think how General Pope let them get in his rear there at Manassas. I could not hardly bear to think of the idea of retreating from there. Our men were all pretty well discouraged. They said a great many of them that if we ever had to retreat again, they would surely desert and I think if we had been whipped in Maryland, that we should have $\frac{1}{2}$ of the old army. About the time of the "change of base" on the Peninsula, a great number of the men belonging to McClellan's army were down on him as severe as any of the papers could be. But all the while I stuck by him and told them that if he ever had the chance, he would more than retrieve his fallen fortunes. He has done it—and his men are more confident of success than ever before. I have always managed to look on the bright side so far and when others were looking for disasters, I have been hopeful, thinking that all would be right in the end. Just as our Maker has will it. I believe He will prosper the right although some of our leaders are trying to make a political thing out of this war. I know I enlisted with the right spirit, in what was a right cause, but party spirit has interrupted and set one side in a great degree the real principle with which this war commenced.

I may be wrong in my ideas of the subject but it seems to me as if our members of Congress and a great many of the cabinet didn't care how long this war was prolonged. But I shall still keep on hoping that we may have a speedy and successful ending up of this war.

General Brooks is Military Governor of Hagerstown, Maryland. It is quite a place—nearly as large as three of Townsend. They call it a city. I guess it is not though. I am pretty well now. There was about three days after we got into camp here that I was pretty hard up with severe diarrhea. I have lost all of that cayenne pepper that I had not used. I want you to send me five dollars if you can spare it because I need some very much. We don't know when we shall be paid and we can buy some things that we need here and I must have that at least. Some way, after we are paid the next time, I am going to make out an order and draw my allotted pay—what there is of it—and have it sent you by Chas. A. Forbush, Springfield.

I suppose I must tell you that I have got over going on picket and standing beats in guard for the present, and fatigue also. I have been with the colors since the Battle of Crampton's Gap as color guard. It is a little easier than going with the company. I suppose I am entitled to Corporal's stripes but I think it will be doubtful if I take them because folks that don't behave well sometimes get them taken off and that makes their clothes look bad.

The Battle of Crampton's Gap was fought my birthday—the 14th—[and] I shall always remember it. If I ever reach home, I will give you a more definite description of these battles. I hope the time will soon come when I can see you all and now I will close. I shall expect you will answer as soon as you receive this and be sure and send me some money—either 5 or 10 dollars—as I have only one shirt to my back and that is ragged and we cannot draw any from government that are fit to wear, and I want to buy me some pocket handkerchief as I have none at all. And I want some paper and pepper and ink and pens and a number of other things.

Send me enough so that I can get these things and have three or four dollars left for spending money. I have not had any for about two months and we are where we can get these things without paying such abominable prices as we have to the sutlers. Direct your letters as usual. Give my love to the children and keep a good share for yourself. I think of you all every day although I have not had any chance to write to you. Goodbye, — Hen

The reasons of my not writing before was that I hadn't any writing paper or postage stamp but I made up my mind that if I could borrow the needed articles, I would write now. I will see if I can borrow envelope and stamp. So hoping to hear from you soon, I will close. From your son, — Hen

Excuse the many mistakes and shortness of paper and will try and do better the next time, — Hen