Pottsville, Pennsylvania

Sept 28th 1864

My Dear Father,

I am permitted one more by a kind providence to write you again. We have had a hard battle. I’m no doubt have read of it in the papers before this will reach you. Furnish you will see first hand. It’s in the road at Athens, Ala. Capturing that post he then came on up capturing every bridge and block house and destroying all the road from Athens back. Our regt that is what is left of it, here (the most of it being at Decatur) was in the fight from Sunday morning until Sunday night they went 12 mile down.
the road and fought back from there to the edge of town. I was not in any of the fight except the fight of yesterday (Monday). Yesterday morning our advanced was three miles from town and the battle opened at 6 A.M. Our right was under fire of one battery of artillery for two hours and a half and gradually fell back to the town while our artillery continued playing on them when not in range. Then back it was a hard fight and lasted from 6 A.M. until 12 at night when they left and have not been heard from since. We had a good force of reinforcements Tuesday from Nashville so they would have captured
as all - I was on kind Blacksmiths Body Guard and was under fire most of the day - I hav heard of Musket Balls Whizzing near ones head and if shells and that Whizzing all around one but never knew what it was before - it makes me feel a little queer at first but he soon gets so he don't notice a shell falling and bursting near him they burst in a few feet of as several times I did not get a scratch myself but there was plenty that I see turn all to pieces - John Baker caught a Musket Ball in leg but it was a flesh wound and he is around again walking with a stick and will be well in a week - Billy Thomas also got a...
a slight wound in the arm from a shell but he will recover soon. You do not know how many men that were wounded or I will not mention named now.
I intend to send a list to the Adjutant of our Regt.
As soon as is can be prepared.
He had one limb torn almost to pieces by a shell. Dr. Davis was captured. Our Right fought like veterans old troops here said they done well.
Some Forrest shelled the town for two hours but did not do very much damage.
I went out over the Battle Field every few steps you could see Federal dead and rebel dead yet unburied.
Georgia was not here. He is a Democrat but Commissioner has been cut off from them for a while. The report is here that Maj. Williamson with 26 of our Right went from
Ducate & asking to confirm that command and more captured then I will write as soon as I find out.

Real Prisoner Day they sent this prisoner north of the Stonewall via 7th and 4th and thence to Richmond.

I hope our Company did not go to actions for if they did they are prisoners.

If Rubinson Alex Cranch Jr. Bromwell Link Brownham and I are all here and all got through the fight safe. I want you and Aunt letters by Adie Dyer. 20th I have not heard from you since the 19th wish I am very anxious to hear from you. I don't know when this letter will reach you but I hope ever for the friends must be anxious about us if the
Papers have given particular
of the fight. I will close
you off soon...

James B. Safford
My Dear Father

I am permitted once more by a kind providence to write you again. We have had a hard Battle – You no doubt have read of it in the papers before this will reach you -- you will see first struck the Road at Athens Ala capturing that Post.

he then came on up capturing every Bridgr and Block House and destroying all the road from Athens here – Our Regn that is what is left of it here (the most of it being at Decatur) Was in the fight from Sunday morning until Thursday night they went 12 miles down
the road and fought him
from there to the Edge of town
I was not in any of the
fight except the fight of Yesterday
(Thursday): Yesterday
morning our advance was
three miles from town.
And the Ball opened at
6 A.M. our Regt was
under fire of one Battery
of Artillery for two hours
and a half we gradually
fell back to the town where
our Artillery could play on
them when we drove them
back it was a hard fight
and lasted from 6 A.M. until
12 at night when they left
and have not been heard
from since – we had a
good force of reinforcements
Thursday from Nashville or
they would have captured
Us all – I was on Gnrl Starkweathers Body Guard and was under fire most of the day – I have heard of Musket Balls whizzing near ones heard and of shells and that whizzing all around one but never knew what it was before – it makes one feel a little quiet at first but he soon gets so he don’t notice a shell falling and Bursting near him they Burst in a few feet of us several times I did not get a scratch myself but there was plenty that I see turn all to pieces – Jo Baker caught a musket Ball in leg but it was a flesh wound and he is around again walking with a stick and will be well in a week Billy Thomas of the 8th Ind Cav also got a
slight wound in the arm from a shell but he will soon recover you do not know any more that were wounded so I will not mention names now.
I intend to send a list to the carrier of our Regt as soon as it can be prepared
We had one list torn almost to pieces by a shell – Dr Davis was captured – Our Regt fought like veterans old troops here said they done well – Gnrl Forrest shelled the town for two hours Our did not do very much damage – I went out over the Battle Field this morning every few steps you could see federal dead and rebel dead yet unburied – Georgie was not here he is a Decatur but Communication has been cut off from there for a week – the report is here that Maj Williamson with Co H + C of our Regt went from
Decatur to Athens to reinforce that command and were captured there I will write as soon as I find out. Rebel prisoners say they sent their prisoners south of the Tennessee via Florence Ata and then to Richmond. I hope our campaign did not get to Athens for if they did they are prisoners. W Robinson Alex Smiths Jo Bramnell [[Lin-]] Branham and I are all here and all got through the fight safe – I wrote you and sent letters by Mr Suran written 20th I have not heard from you since the 17th [[one word]] I am very anxious to hear from you – I don’t know when this letter will reach you and I hope soon for the friends must be anxious about us if the
papers have given particulars
of the fight – I will close
now – Write soon
Your Off son
    James B. Safford