

Edgar C. Buss Letters

Murfreesboro Jan. 13th/63

Dear Brother,

Received your welcome letter yesterday. Also one from Mother and was very glad to hear from home, for it was the first I have received for three weeks, but there was no chance to get mail so I did not mind it so much as I should if we had been in camp.

We are in camp again in Murfreesboro after a hard fight with Brags [sic] whole force and giving them a good thrashing [sic]. Ed the bullets whistled over my head like hail some of the time but I went through it all safely without getting a scratch and I think I was lucky for there was a shell burst nere [sic] me and a part of it struck the tree I was laying behind. It. was a small tree at that. I tell you when heard a shell coming we would hug the ground pretty close, you had better believe, and if one of the boys would get up the Col. would yell 'lay down there' and I tell you they was glad to mind him. But Friday we got tired of it for where we had to lay the mud was about ankle deep. We was a nice looking set of boys the next day, all mud from head to foot and that night we slept where the dead and dying rebels were as thick in some places that you could step from one to the other for rods. I tell you it looked pretty rough, at least I thought so.

Ed I have seen all the fighting that I ever want to. There is no fun in it, at least I don't see where the fun comes in if there is any, and I guess the rest of the boys think the same.

Ed I must tell you how Horace Foote stood the fight. We were ordered to fall in Wednesday morning about ten o' clock and started on double quick. We went about 80 rods when there was a cannon ball come over and struck about three rods from us and bounded and went through the Co. and Horace thought that he was close enough so he just took the back track and did not stop until there was twelve good miles between him and the battle ground and he did not show his self again until the next Monday. After the rebels was so far the other side of town as he went back and the danger was all over. So you see what he is made of. And John Tucker did about, the same only he did not go so far nor stay so long. He got back Saturday night. That was the night the rebels run. There was one more run out of our Company, his name was Wordell, you are not acquainted with him. The rest of the boys stood up like men, and this Regiment and the 110 Ill. fought side by side and I heard General Palmer say that if it had not been for our two Regiments we would have lost the day. So we have been of some use to our country at last, whether we ever are again or not. For my part I wish Uncle Sam could get along without my help in that way again.

There is one thing about Uncle Sam that doesn't suit his boys very well. That is he don't pay them up very often. He has not payed [sic] us any yet since we left and when he will is hard to tell. He gives us plenty of work though. We have been digging entrenchments for three days now and we are not done yet.

The boys send their best respects to you and all the rest. I believe this is all for the present. Write soon.

E. C. Buss

[Note: Edgar C. Buss served as a Private in the Civil War — Capt. Bowen's Company A 100th Regiment of Illinois Infantry Vol. Enrolled August 6, 1862, at age 25, to serve 3 years or during the war. Discharged June 15, 1864, Chicago, Ill., by reason of gun-shot [see footnote below] wound in right thigh and leg. Wounded at Chickamauga, Sept. 1863.]

[footnote: We have the bullet that was removed from his leg.]

Murfreesboro, Jan. 26th./63

Dear Brother and Sister,

I have not had a letter from you in a good while but I will write a few lines to you for all that to let you know how I get along and what I am doing.

I am on picket today about two miles from camp. We came out last night and will go back tonight. We have good times when we are on picket for if there is anything good to eat or drink anywhere nere [sic] us we are pretty apt to get it. There is on the post that I am on, 5 besides mvself. Two of the boys went off to a house to get some water for breakfast this morning and they made the darkies give them a canteen full of milk to put into our coffee and I tell you it made it taste first rate too. And some of the boys on the next post to us got a pig and some other things to eat, so you see that if we have half a chance we don't go hungry here.

Ed, I must try to give you a description of this country and climate. It is as nice a country as I ever saw in my life. Just rolling enough to look nice. It is a different soil from what we have up there. A kind of clay, red in color, and when it is wet as it is at present, it is almost impossible to get around, if you get off the turnpikes. There is pikes in every direction here, and plenty of stone to make more with. The timber land is all full of rocks of all sizes and description, and there is some as nice buildings here, as in the country, as there is in Joliet, and the climate here is fine enough for anybody. It is about like our spring weather is up there. We can lay down on the ground with one blanket over us and sleep as well as I used to up there in bed without taking a bit of cold. After we left Nashville we had to sleep in that way till three or four days after the battle, and it rained almost every other night. So you see we had pretty fine times for about two weeks, but I have stood it all first rate, better that I expected I ever could and I have not coughed as much as I used to in the winter up there.

I suppose that we have gone into winter quarters here for the Quarter masters are ordered to get up sixty days forage and they have been out foraging allmost [sic] every day for over two weeks, and they have got up quite a pile of corn and fodder. They don't use much hay here. It is corn leaves striped [sic] off and tied up in bundles for their horses, and stalks for their cattle. They feed cotton seeds to their cattle now for other

fodder is rather scarce [sic] here at present here among the farmers, and the farmers are rather scarce [sic] here too. No one left but the negros to take care of what little they have got left, and it don't take many to do that. I believe that they will starve before thay [sic] can raise any next year unless they have got a good deal of stuff hid some where and that will be pretty hard for the boys look pretty sharp. I tell you if there is an old log shanty anywhere around they will look around it inside and out and if they have to pry out a log to do it and if there is anything in it, it has got to come out.

Ed, I don't know as there is any news to write, only our Col. has gone home, to be gone 20 days. I suppose you will hear that before this gets there. I believe that is all so I will close till next time.

E. C. Buss

[Note: Edgar C. Buss, Private Civil War — Capt. Bowen's Company A, 100th Regiment of Ill. Infantry Vol. from August 6, 1862 to June 15, 1864. Wounded at Chickamauga, Sept. 19, 1863. Discharged June 15, 18614, Chicago, Ill., by reason of gun-shot wound in right thigh and leg.]