

Sallee_L_A_Letter

Del. Rio, Texas, Feb. 26th, 1910.
Comrade J.A. Reeves.

Camden, Arkansas.

My Dear Sir and friend:-

I will now try to fill my promise for the daughters at Camden and others.

The two armies Generals Bragg and Rosecrans were in line at Murfreesboro and both planned to attack on the morning of Dec. 31, 1862. It so happened that our line moved first and Hardys corps routed McCooks corps with slight effort. We had gone forward until confronting a lime sink where we had to break ranks to pass. Just as we came to it Harry Hill saw about fifteen Yanks has stoped in this sink and ran forward with gun at ready and commanded "Surrender." We then passed and closed up. I looked back and these Yanks having their guns I dropped out to hurry them out as Harry was calling out to fall in. I think it was not over three minutes when I returned to my company. (C. 1st Ark. Regiment) I moved rapidly but when I came up to the line I found my regiment had moved to the left and uncovered General Granburys brigade of Texans. As I paused to look for my flag two good looking young men dropped out, dashed their guns to the ground and knocked the blood from each of their noses and not over five seconds later [crossed out] picked up their guns and ran to take their places. The Yanks though running were keeping up a fire and about this time Capt. Duffie of the 6th Ark. was shot in the foot and I think disabled permanently. Others were wounded by this desultory fire. These texas young men manifested a cool indifference to danger that I never saw before or after. They had a scrap of their own the cause I do not know. In our immediate

front we had but little to stop us but the 6th Ark had some fighting on our left and killed a Brigadier General. After 3 o'clock when I carried Brother George out of the cedar brake mortally wounded, and returning to the line I met same two Texas boys coming out, one badly wounded, other having him on his back taking him to the rear.

Our line moved up and after crossing the Galatin Pike entered a deep draw parallel to Nashville Pike, when the 15th Ky. Federal Reg't. suddenly appeared over a sharp ridge in front of our regiment, the 1st Ark. They were at short range and a volley from our regiment literally cut them down killing their Major. Soon after our Major Don MacGregor was shot in the thigh dying soon. While in this draw and pressing forward in a dense cedar brake and under an awful fire of artillery all the shots passing over our lines save two, one killing Backus of Co. C. and one killing Babe Cook of Co. B. By this time we were moving slowly but pressing into the most dense cedar brake. Brother George was by my side and I noticed we were getting ahead of the line and cautioned Brother George twice not to get ahead of the line fearing we would reach the enemies skirmish line, and did. Brother George was in slight opening when my [sic] feet caught some fine vines that threw me and before I could recover George had pressed through the dense cedar and between two skirmishers. George shot the one on his left and loaded his gun and as he was capping [^same] a second skirmisher to his right, the distance being not over ten feet, pushed his gun through the cedar and shot George, the ball entering the right side of abdomen and lodged against the left hip. I was up to him as he fell and said to him, "George I was afraid of it." As I stood talking to him and he to me, a shower of bullets came from main line at 60 to 70 yards in an old field. I pulled George [sic] around and sheltered both as much as I could by a small gum tree until the volley was over. I

said to George "I'll be back directly" and rushed out to the edge of the field and found line of battle at about face and moving off at common time in good order. I continued to fire until they were 150 to 200 yards away in the field. All I can say as to the effect of the fire is I do not know, they were not over 20 yards at first and well closed up but seeing the line get thin the last two shots I directed to the left which was still closed up to be sure there was no waste of shots. Some have asked if I killed any? I must say I do not know. I did not look for dead ones but was loading and firing at moving line. When I counted up was eight cartridges short. After they were getting at some distance I went back to Brother George and [crossed out] got him on my back and passed both guns to rear of line to where one of my company took the guns. General Hardee passing said "Thats right men take care of your guns." I crossed the draw then in rear of line and struck the Galatin Pike at a grade in the hillside. I had to move down to my left for less grade to cross with Brother. I wish to state here, above the grade where I had to turn four men were sitting in a group by a tree, I suppose playing out. Just at this time a most terrific cannonading was coming and as I found a crossing shell struck in the midst of these four men killing all but one and I learned later. I turned with Brother on my back to look, seeing them sprawled out in all directions with groans and piteous complaining. I passed to the rear and found an ambulance and carefully placing Brother George in it I returned to the front. Cannonading was still coming when a shell bursting in front and above me one piece striking me on right chest whirling me half way around and knocked the breath from me for a few seconds, the shell striking on my blanket, as soldiers wear them are about sixteen double and a good protection. The shock scared me but as I

recovered my breath I felt quite satisfied at the close call. Soreness followed, ribs have grown out of shape and causes weakness as I am now getting old.

Our army held the field up to near Nashville Pike for three days and nights, 3rd day General Bragg was arranging to fall back to Tulehenia, Tenn. for winter quarters. My Capt. W.H. Scales came and relieved me to go and see Brother George. As I went to town I passed over the most stubbornly contested part of the line and for half a mile or more there were two thirds of the double line and one third or the [crossed out] single line dead men in the moon light all stripped to the under clothes by prowling citizens as our men had no use for such clothing. A most ghastly scene.

When I arrived at the hospital Dr. Rollin Young of Corinth, Miss. and a number one good man said that there was no chance for Brother George. I remained with him that night and next day at 10 P.M. the brave good boy passed out forever, 21 years and 2 months old. At 2 o'clock I learned that the Hankee Cavalry was moving up next street and would be in soon to take all as prisoners. Rain was pouring down. I went to our Ass't Surgeon, gave him \$50.00 with request to mark his grave so I could find it when the war was over. An ambulance came to the door to take the body of Capt. Spence of Co. B. 1st Ark. to Col. Butlers apple orchard for interment but was informed that it was by the Masons and could not allow me to go. This was unkindest cut of all and I could only go and press and kiss the dear boy's cold forehead and leave him forever. The rain was pouring down and as I launched out into it I confess tears were pouring in full keeping with the downfall, and such a parting of two orphan boys I the oldest and he the youngest of six orphans I hope the dear daughters will appreciate.

I met the Ass't Surgeon only once after. He gave me the \$50.00 and stated he had not spent any for marking. His grave is now marked "Unknown."

Now to close I wish to say his company and regiment voted George W. Sallee a gold medal and any one that examines Vol 20, Record of the Rebellion will find his name mentioned three times. This as I in the ranks saw the great battle of Murfreesboro Tenn.

Signed:

Lycurgas Ashbrook Sallee

W.H. Scales
Macon, Miss. _____ 189____

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(hand written note: "Heading gone")

Command and mortally wounded right near the ?abattis? at Franklin He was Capt of Co "G". The Captains who were in 1st Ark at Franklin were, Garrett myself & Hickersmith (acting field officers in order named), and Spence and Manees, commanding Companies B & I. I send you the paper with Dr. Cunninghams article. He is editor of a very good Confederate Magazine published at Nashville, Tenn, Monthly @ 1.00 yr. So far I have seen nothing further from him. If you will write as you prosper I think there is no doubt, about getting your article in our local papers as these matters now attract great interest. I also send you few copies of N.O. Picayune giving account of the doings at Chattanooga or Chickamauga which will be of interest if you havent [sic] seen them.

With best wishes I am truly

Your friend

(signed) W H Scales

P.S. You ought to get Copy of "Records of the Rebellion" published by the Government. Vol XX, Series one, part 1, giving orders & Correspondence in reference to Battle Murfreesboro, in which is the order of War Department awarding a gold medal to your bro Geo W. Sallee for gallantry at Murfreesboro.

(signed) H

W.H. Scales

Macon, Miss. March 26, 1902

Mr L.A. Sallee
Arishopa, Col

Dear Sallee

The near approach of the Reunion at Dallas, Texas brings prominently to mind, memories of those who will be there, as well as of there who were with us during the "60's".

I think I havent [sic] written you since the Reunion at Memphis last year. I saw very little of that. My wife went with me and was taken down on night of arrival with acute rheumatism, and unable to leave her bed. Everybody at the house where we stopped went down town day and night, so I had to stay with her, and only got down to reunion, one day. I met Jessee McMahan, Joe Rives, John Carroll, Harry Sing, and perhaps one or two more whom I dont [sic] recall. Genls ?Goran? & Smith were there, but I did not see either of them. ?Goran? lives in Memphis. Smith lived in Jackson Miss but died recently. Mississippi has large number of Veterans, but I meet very few who laid down their arms when the Armies surrendered in the field. Our County Camp has 75 enrolled.

One man Jessee Knight , was in 7th Ark. and disabled by gunshot wound I think at Chickamauga. Also one man who was in 3d or 5th Conf. but dont [sic] think he saw much service. Most of our membership were in Cavalry and in the late formed Commands, but we have say 20 @ 25 men who saw great deal of active service in both armies, and stand to their Colors until disabled captured or the surrender, and this class have the respect confidence & veneration of everybody.

I have about concluded I will not go to Dallas, though "barring" the crowd it would be pleasant to do so. I had an urgent invitation from Rives & McMahan to stop off at Camden, which I suppose I would enjoy, though I doubt if I should see half dozen Comrades.

Well I am about run down, just wanted to "chat" you a letter, With love to your family & best wishes for yourself. Your Comrade

(signed) W H Scales

Macon Miss Oct 30 1903
Mr L A Sallee

Uvalde Tex

My dear Friend

I have to tell you the sad news of the death of my dear husband & your friend which occurred last Dec 22nd 1902. I could have sent you a paper but could not find your address. When your photo came I knew at once it was you as it came from Colo. I know Mr. Scales would have appreciated it.

Your letter came few days ago. Am sorry your health is not so good, but we are getting old and will soon pass over the vines and be at rest. Mr Scales was only sick three weeks with bowel trouble. You know how noble kind & good he was, and can in a small

degree understand the desolation I feel without him. We had been life loving companions. We were married so young and now my life is empty and desolate. There seems nothing left for me to live for.

Hope your health will improve in a milder climate and with Kindest regards

Your friend

(signed) S.H. Scales

Del Rio Texas
8-8-1912

Dr. W.M. Polk

7th East 26 St N.Y.

Dear Doctor

I am not in good condition but do best I can in statement R R Reck in Feby 1862 at Stone River 3 miles south of Murfreesboro Tenn.

My regiment was furloughed at Evans point Va for 60 days and I came to Nashvill [sic] and made purchase of goods needed. Frant [sic] Donelson fell while there and I came to General Albert Sidney Johnsons camp and spent 3 days with the boys Will known friend.

People were rushing off south as Nashvill [sic] had too fall.

I was late to the train and conductor said "Step right in here", as three cars was full of ladies and doors locked.

This was the baggage and mail occupied by two Bankers and one R.R. director leaving south with funds from Nashvill [sic].

Also copper colord [sic] Negro as Water I and conductor all told.

Stone River out of banks from heavy rains.

Crash came as we struck the bridge.

Our car brok [sic] in two laying corner down.

A pile of trunk covered me and held me down until Watter [sic] rushed in and lifted.

When I got my head above water non in the Carr [sic] save my self & Negro Water.

Negro so scared was plunging and soused was under water twice and had to fight him off like I would a bear. Conductor I did not see any more as he had collected fare and was going out. Was badly hurt as I learned.

Two coaches full of Ladies pitched head long off of tressle ends wedging under Mail & Baggage. And stood at end angle of 45 degrese [sic]. Third car projected in which ?Cal?Leal??Jim? Johnson of Ark only man killed.

I looked about now doing or saying a word. Up on bank was a group of men looking. My cheek was cut right arm hurt. Hat gone.

I yelled at the men on the bank to get round ?tie? that ?Bell? ?rop? and to help get the people out. Answer came "Afraid it will wash away." A second time same answer came. My own tone answered back. It would make no difference if non but you was in it. Get round and go to work not stand there like a lot of cowards. Began to move. Every last seat was broken and all was in a crush as firmly as steel traps.

Working like fighting fire I dumped seats and turned one after another until I came down to nice little lady. The irons was so jamed [sic] through her skirts I could not her loose and told her so. She answered makes no difference and I riped [sic] out a section and no squirrel could beat her climbing.

Cleared first carr [sic]. Took next.

One after another turned loose until I came to a lady and two nice little boys in 2d from last seat. A Capt of Artillery was seting [sic] in last seat and I think had his feet in the window. When crash came he shot through the window braking his leg his leg round hand rod that goes up the steps. Lady and little boys remain with Papa while only head was sticking out of watter [sic]. We tugged at him but could not move and he could not tell us the trouble. I thought he must be chilley [sic] and yelled for a bottle of whiske [sic]. 1/2 Doz was in sight in less than one minute. I gave him all needed and then had to go into the reck for an ax to cut hole in bottom of Baggage and practically got under water save my head to release [sic] the Captains foot from round the bar. Possibly 1 1/2 hours passed and others were passing Capt up.

My thoughts was for a fire to dry out.

(signed) L.A. Sallee

I went back to Albert Sidney Johnsons camp. The men had the news and seeing me coming bear headed came yelling like Indians with a Doz hats to try on.

The second carr [sic] knocked the top from first and carr [sic] projecting off track knocked top off second carr [sic] and all was out to the weather.

When I got out to see tops of both cars was gone down the River.

Do not know how Bankers and R R director got off Reck but must have got of on South side of River.

Correct up in spelling and diction.

You know as well as I do I am not a man of education and will thank you. Make the story readable.

(signed) L.A. Sallee