



Georgia School for the Deaf.



Cave Spring, Ga.



*Copies of Letters of Brown and Blakeslee*

# Georgia School for the Deaf.

Cave Spring, Ga.

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Copy

January 3, 1899.

Mr. G. H. Blakeslee,

Lomax, Nebraska.

My dear Sir and Comrade:

I say comrade, because there has never been a time that I could not cordially take by the hand in true comradeship, any man that wore the blue, and came out and fought as a man, for what he considered the right. The fact that he honestly fought me, made me respect him none the less, and I have always found it that way with the boys who fought on the other side, wherever I have met them. I have yet to hear one bitter expression toward the Confederate soldier from a man who really fought us for conscience sake.

Your, to me intensely interesting letter of December 22 came several days ago, and I take this first opportunity of complying with your request.

On the morning of Sunday the 15th of May, 1864, we were placed out on the brow or brink of the hill - I did not know until you wrote that it was called "Red Knob" - about seventy-five yards in front of our infantry line, and instructed to throw up works for our guns, and this we proceeded to do, after having placed brush up in front so as to conceal our operations from the Federals. We understood, that as soon as our guns were ready, the Confederates would charge the position occupied by the Federals on the ridge across the Dalton road, about 800 or 1000 yards on our front. Between one and two o'clock the Federals brought out a line on said ridge as if preparing for an advance, and we pitched into them with our guns, and were giving them the best we had, when the first thing we knew the pickets came running past our guns with the announcement that the Yankees were right on us - and some of them had passed our first gun before I left my gun - ( I was gunner of #2, the guns being numbered from right to left) in fact two or three of them were parting the brush in front of my gun, and I shall never forget how they looked as they came through. Each of them seemed to be about ten feet tall and big in proportion. I left my gun double shotted with canister, as two friction primers in succession had failed to do their work. Our supporting infantry, Gen. John C. Brown's Brigade of Tennesseans, were as much surprised as we were, and barely had time to get into the trenches in time to stop your advance. This will explain why our Battery overshot you. Gen. Cumming's Brigade was to the left of Brown's, and I think Reynold's to the right. When I got inside of our Infantry line, I found a member of my detachment named Wharton who was afterward killed at Nashville, a personal friend and

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as gallant a soul as ever drew breath, and we two hunted round, got us up a musket apiece and remained in the line till after dark. All the other members of the Battery had gone to the rear. We were told that an effort would be made to retake the guns, and I wanted to be present to let off that double charge of canister at you fellows as you ran. Every now and then I would take a peep out at my gun which I could plainly see from our line, and well do I remember that flag of which you speak of having been planted beside our guns. If I mistake not, it was along side of my gun. By the way, I shed my first blood here too. When I had secured my gun, an Enfield rifle, I crawled up to the line, and told some of Brown's men that I wanted to get a pop at a Yank. One of them said, "there is a fellow out there sharp shooting, I know where he is but can't see him"; so we foolishly stood up, I to aim, and he just behind me to tell me when I had the proper direction- I blazed away, and had just brought my gun to the position of "carry arms", when Mr. Yank fired, striking the stock of my gun just below the muzzle, filling my right jaw with splinters, and denting my gun so that it could not be used again. I thought the whole jaw had been shot away, and slapped my hand to my face to find out if it was true. I very bravely went off to find another gun, but having had such a close call in a place where I had no business to be, you may bet your life that I didn't find it.

We lost twenty-seven men killed, wounded, and captured in this engagement, in less time than it takes to tell it, only four of whom ever returned. Among the captured was Sergt. Sidney Blassingame, a tall, angular fellow, with fiery red hair that he always kept cut close and large ears that stuck out on the side of his head like those of a bat. He was known as "Big Red", and I guess there were men in the Battery that never knew that he had another name. He was a splendid fellow, and I seriously doubt if he ever knew what the sensation of fear was. One of the boys that was captured with him, told me this story, and I've wondered if it was true. Knowing the man as I did, I have been inclined to believe it. He refused to surrender, drew his sabre, and commenced using it, when a Yank tapped him on the side of the head with his musket, stunning him; another one started to thrust his bayonet into him, when one of your Lieutenants knocked up the gun, saying, "You mustn't kill as brave a fellow as that", and thus saved his life. About thirty of us got together at the recent reunion in Atlanta, but "Big Red", who is still alive, was not among them, and I have never had the story from him.

I kept a sort of Diary, but not realizing at the time its importance, I did not make it full enough. Of this battle I find the following:

" Sunday, May 15, 1864 - 8 o'clock A.M.-

Moved to the ridge on the right of the Resacca road, two and a

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half miles from Resacca. The position we hold was taken by Gen. Stevenson yester day afternoon."

2 - P.M.

"Yankees advanced upon our position . Our Battery was about 50 paces in front of the entrenched line. The boys stood to their guns till the Yanks were in the embrasures of the guns, when they were forced to leave, having no support nearer than the intrenchments."

5 - P. M.

"Went up a few moments ago to see the Battery. Everything is as we left it except that the stars and stripes are floating over it. Neither party have possession of it. The Feds can not remove it till night, when our men will go out and bring it in."

Later.

"Yanks still moving to our left. Our army retreating from their position in front of Resacca."

As to what Battery the two guns to our left belonged, to which you refer, I can not say positively, but they must have been Rowan's. I have always understood that Rowan's Battery was the first to our left. This was his proper place, as our Battery was on the right, Rowan's the center, and Marshall's on the left in the Battalion organization. Write to Capt. W. L. Ritter of Baltimore, Maryland, who was first Lieutenant of Rowan's Battery at the time, and its Captain after Capt. Rowan's death in battle at Nashville.

I have never read Johnston's Narrative, as the bitterness he entertained toward President Davis, made me think that he could not write in an unbiased way, and for the same reason, I have never read Davis's "Rise and Fall of the Confederacy". Prejudiced men can not write in an unbiased way.

Being in Quebec a number of years ago, I ~~visied~~ visited the Monument on the Plains of Abraham, on one side of which is the name of Montcalm, and on the other that of Wolfe. I wondered then, if some day the coming generations would not read on our Monuments the names of Lee and Grant, of McLellan and Stonewall Jackson, of McPherson and Walker, and in this case all Americans, and all having fought for what they considered the right as God gave them to see the right.

I did not know who fought us at Resacca, but was under the impression that it was Ohio men, and I wish I had known when I called with some friends on President Harrison, at the White House, that it was he that led the charging columns on our position, as we could have made it very entertaining to our party, consisting of two gentlemen

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from Canada, one from Illinois, one from New York, one from Minnesota, and one from Washington.

I have never seen a map of the field of Resacca except one about 3 inches square contained in some Railroad publication some year ago. I am sorry I did not see your map that was on exhibition in Chattanooga I was there and had a grand time with the boys in blue, as I always have when I get with them, I was in Boston during the G. A. R. meeting there, and I'll never forget the cordiality with which I was treated all the way through. Some years ago, I was talking to an old Yank at Columbus, who it was developed had confronted me on several occasions. When some friend from the North who was not in the war, remarked, "Well Connor, I don't understand how you fellows can feel so jolly over the matter". The Yank said, "O, it was always that way when we could get the officers out of the way. We had many a game of poker down between the lines."

Felix Corput, who is President of our Board of Trustees, is the youngest brother of Capt. Max Van Den Corput, who is alive and with the exception of his white head and beard, is about as he was at Resacca. His address is - 826 Decatur Road, Inman Park, Atlanta, Ga. These people are Belgians, and the name is Van Den Corput, and Felix has Americanized his by dropping the Van Den, but the Captain still holds on to it. The Captain has two sons, Gustave, has a permanent position as Surgeon in the U. S. Marine Hospital Service, and the other Rex, is a Captain in the 3rd Immunes, and stationed at Santiago. He will make the army his life work.

No, I don't think you are working for self glorification, but believe you are actuated by a desire to get at the truth of History, and there is no better way to get it than from a multitude of evidence gathered from the living actors. It was glory enough for you to have swept up that deadly slope on Red Knob as you did, and glory enough for us, that notwithstanding the sly march you stole on us, we succeeded in holding you at bay until it suited us to retire. If you have had your painting photographed, send me one.

There was a dispute among the boys as to the distance from our Battery back to our lines, and it was funny how they varied. It ran all the way from 25 yards to 300 yards. You see I put it at the time, at 50 yards. In 1868 I was back on the ground, and found it to be about 75. But I have an indistinct recollection of the shape of our line, except that just behind our Battery there was a sharp angle that as I remember, amounted to almost a right angle. But how the lines ran, right and left, I don't remember. How far do I miss it in the enclosed diagram? I shall be glad if you will send me a tracing from your map of Red Knob made at the time.

If you should ever come our way, drop in to see me.

Hoping to hear from you again, I am

Yours sincerely,

W. O. Connor.

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Copy-

Lomax, Nebraska, Jan. 8, '99

W. O. Connor,

Cave Spring, Ga.

Dear Sir and Comrade:

I am just in receipt of your good letter of the 3 inst. and I hasten to write a few words. I went to get linen sheet to copy map on, but I find I have nothing large enough to anyway show positions, and I do not know when I may send for any more - this is my excuse for the miserable sheet upon which I have made a hasty copy- a rough one at that- but it ~~contains~~ combines all the general features of the original. Your sketch I judge to be correct, although I have but little remembrance of anything beyond your lines, excepting where we crossed the Oostanaula at "New Ecotah" Mills which I also sketched - On separate sheets I more fully describe by letters what I have referred to. Now Comrade, you can't believe how much good your letter has been to me, and as I realize the kindly feeling that prompted you to answer my inquiries, it is the true fraternity of the - American Soldier- I trust you will accord me the privilege of publishing portions of your letter, illustrating the great fraternity that should exist between us; also portions that shed light upon matters that have been the subject of discussion between us Yanks for many years. I have some time wondered how you men would act if we should run together some of these fine days- because possibly some might feel a malignity toward men who done our best to run over you that day. I am in correspondence with the Col. of the 31st Miss. and some comrades of the 33rd Miss., who ran over and through my regiment at Peachtree Creek July 20, and I am sure although we took and give good hearty blows there, it would be a great joy to meet those men today. God bless them all.

It was claimed and so stated in the Official Records that Capt. Corput was captured at his guns- fighting them to the last- Now I saw and talked with many of the prisoners, but I did not learn then that Capt. Corput was one of the number. I know we got some of your men while they were still working their guns. I would like for certain to state whether he surrendered there. At "P" on map as the left of my Company of which I had charge, was swinging into line, a man hatless and coatless jumped over the works and almost into my arms; of course he surrendered. He stated to me he was Captain -----, I can't now tell who. His sword was gone; he stated that a shell had knocked it out of his hand. He wore officer's belt and scabbard. Standing a moment thinking what to do, he says "What are you going to do with me, for God's sake lets get out of this".- I was glad to skip out of that scorcher that was being played on us from our right, and by your rifle-men to the rear. Part of the way down the hill I turned him over to an enlisted man of a N. Y. regiment, when I hastened back to the crest of

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the hill, where I found some of our boys crouched behind -(in front) of your works. Soon all but 27 of my regiment came back and got behind the dirt pile. 'Twas then Sergt. Hess jumped upon one of those Napoleons and swung out the colors; a moment later a rifle ball struck him fair in the head and he fell in the folds of our flag, and his blood discolors it today. Let me tell you something of this man. When about 8 rods from your line, a rifle ball struck him in the wrist, shattering his arm and cutting through the staff. He never dropped the flag, but catching it in his left hand, went forward- Soon after his death the other Sergt. raised the flag and planted it near one of your guns until after dark, when we removed it. Hess was the match for your "Big Red". I saw several instances similar to your statement of him.

I forgot to say that Capt. J.H. Culver, Company A - 129th, was the only officer that stayed on the advanced position of 129th till he was relieved at 10 P. M. 27 of 129th was with him. There were about 300 of our men between your guns and your main line; most of these were of Harrison's regiment, 70 Ind., and were in a measure protected by the ledge- that I have shown in map. Capt. Culver now lives at Emporia, Kansas.

I should very much like to meet you, but think I might prove a bore to you by my tales of Resaca and elsewhere.

Harrison stood by your left gun, resting one hand on ot, talking with Capt. Sedgewick, 102 Ill., when a rifle shot passed through his whiskers just grazing his skin. He thought it best to lay low.

I shall be glad to hear from you at any time. I will send map in other closure. Let me know if you get it.

Most fraternally

Your friend,

G. H. Blakeslee.

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## KEY TO THE MAP.

### FIELD OF RESACA.

- A- The gun on which Sergt. Hess, 129 Ill. was standing when killed. Here our colors were planted.
- B- Stump in cleared fields behind which was a C. S. Sharpshooter, who was killed by 102 Ill. Sharpshooter, Geo. Dheu, and buried by myself and Tom Wyckoff.
- C- The stump from which Dheu fired the fatal shot.
- D- The most advanced position gained by the 3 regiments that passed beyond your guns.
- E- Location - Where Division formed in Column by Regimental front for the advance.
- F- Where 51 - 129 Ill. rest- of Co. "G" - 13-
- G- Projecting ledge, a protection to 70 Ind. while holding Battery.
- H- The point on Gen. Howard's line from which Walker's great painting was made.
- X Deployment of 1st and 2nd Brigs. here.
- X Gen. W. F. Ward severely wounded here, Harrison taking command.

This map is contrary to prescribed rules of map making. In it we are facing the direction as we moved to the attack, the top of the map being nearly S. E.

At the angle held by Corput's Battery the main line turns nearly due east to the river.

At the point marked Brown's Brigade the Confederate dead were buried, burial parties reporting the number at 500; in 1895 the graves were yet plain to be seen, many of the slabs still at the head of graves.

① Near this place there lay a dead Indian, who had two scalps of white men in his belt. The officer in charge ordered the Indian to be left without burial, it is said.

Prisoners report that the 32 - 45- and 23 Tenn. Infantry was supporting your Battery there. Capt. J. C. Brown, Co. K, Second Georgia, now of LaFayette, Ga., told me personally at Louisville, Ky. 1895, that he commanded the 2nd Georgia that day and that he made was supporting you. Other statements which he made showed that he had forgotten much; he said we got only 2 of your guns there. Since then I have somehow doubted his word about being on that line at all.



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The Heavy Red lines show C. S. A. field works.

The Heavy Blue lines Union Regiments.

Thin Red lines show the line of march to the attack; 3rd Brigade bore to left and was lost sight of in the pines.

O- Where I was slightly wounded.

P- Captured a Johnny Captain here; don't know who he was.

K- 2nd Brigade scattered by terrible fire of Confederates. The 2nd Brigade was to keep to right of our Brigade and support us on the right flank; just after crossing the Dalton road the canister from your guns turned them from their course, and crossing our line of march to the rear, took to the bush on the northern slope of the hill, gaining which, they prostrated themselves on lines as shown. I located these positions from a few of their dead lying here. This map is a copy on a small scale of the one I made for Maj. Gen. Dan Butterfield on the field May 16, 1864, and which is published in connection with Walker's great painting.

First Brigade, 3 Div. 20 Army Corps, was commanded by Gen. W. T. Ward until wounded, then by Col. Benjamin Harrison, 70th Ind.

Second Brigade, was commanded by Col. John Coburn, 33 Ind.

Third Brigade, was commanded by Col. Wood.

The Third Division was commanded by Gen. Dan Butterfield, who had been formerly Gen. Hooker's Chief of Staff. Soon after this Butterfield was called east by War Dept. Gen. Ward Commanded Div. and Harrison became permanent Commander, the possessor of a General's Star.

My painting is from sketch made May 16- the landscape was viewed from just to the rear of the two guns at your left, which were run into position just as we crossed the Dalton road. From here I illustrate the advance of our line up that dread hill side. My foreground show Confederate working these guns, supported by infantry, taking it as cool as possible, under the hurricane of death that Wheeler's Battery rained upon them. The dead lay thick around while I was there. I have ~~no~~ no photo of this painting. It will cost about \$1.00 each to get them say 18 X 12 inches. I am sending out some of Lookout Mountain to friends who had part there. Should I get this copied, I will try and remember all of Corput's men I can hear of.

G. H. Blakeslee.

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Copy-

January 13, 1899.

G. H. Blakeslee,  
Lomax, Nebraska.

My dear Sir and Comrade:

Your favor of January 8th with map came yesterday, for both of which I sincerely thank you. Money could not buy that map from me if it could not be replaced, and at the next Reunion of the Cherokee Artillery, which we hold in August of every year, it with your letters, will inject a good deal of additional interest to it, and I only wish you could be here with us. If you could, we would mighty soon show you how we would act toward one of the men who charged us on the 15th of May, 1864. It would do our hearts good to have you, and I know it would do your heart good to be with us.

You speak of having furnished some pictures of Lookout Mountain, from which I infer that you took part in Hooker's celebrated Battle above the clouds. During this fight and for a week or two before, Corput's Battery occupied a position near the extremity of Lookout Pt., the old earthworks that were used, being still pretty well preserved. Being unable to depress our guns sufficiently, we had nothing to do during the battle but to look on, and I with others, had the rare privilege of standing on those jutting rocks and looking down on this battle without being in a particle of danger. It was a privilege of a lifetime. Many a night before the battle opened, have I stood on some prominent point, gazing upon the scene below me, the Camp fires of Grant's Army spread out on one side, and those of Bragg's on the other, with the peaceful stars shining alike on the blue and the gray, that were soon to meet in deadly conflict. We brought our guns off after dark, and as we came down the Mountain road, to our left we could hear the Infantry fire and see the flashes of their guns through the trees, that looked like myriads of fire flies. Passing through Ross's Gap and around behind Mission Ridge, we were run up to the top of the Ridge the next afternoon, in a position almost over the tunnel on the Southern Railway, just in time to assist in the repulsing of Thomas's charging columns. We had gained, as we thought, a big victory, and were in high glee, but about dusk, we could see the dashing to and fro of Couriers and Staff Officers, and pretty soon orders were issued to Capt. Corput to save the guns if possible, but if not, to save the men and horses at all hazard. We got off without any loss.

Capt. Corput was not captured at Resacca, and the Captain of whom you speak must have been some Infantry Captain. It was Brown's Brigade of Tennesseans ( Gen. John C. Brown, afterwards Governor of the State) that supported us, because I stayed with them all the afternoon, and know what I am talking about. What particular Regiment was immediately behind our guns, I don't remember.

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G. H. B. 2-

Our present Governor, Col. Allen D. Candler, was a Captain in the 34th Georgia, and in Atlanta the other day, we had a talk about the battle, which he remembered distinctly, but he did not remember whose Battery it was to out immediate left.

You are at perfect liberty to use my letters in any way you see proper. Again assuring you of my appreciation of your kindness in sending me the map of the battle field. I am,

Very sincerely,

W. O. Connor.

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Copy.

Lomax, Neb. Jan. 16, 1899.

W. O. Connor,

Cave Spring, Ga.

My dear Sir and Comrade:

I am just in receipt of your favor of the 13th inst. and hasten to reply. I shall take great pleasure in sending you a small photo copy of my "Lookout Mountain", and trust you will appreciate it, tho at the time, you was looking north while I was looking south. The conclusions fought out then, are but memories now, but thank God, most of them are proud memories for us all. And today above the graves of those who fought and won, and of those who failed-but who all fought for what they deemed the right, we sign our truce of peace, and hide the nation's scars behind the glorious mantle of American Manhood and the soldiers fraternity.

I am glad you wrote me this last letter, for it helps in my history, and gives me knowledge that I have long desired. I was aware that your people had at least one battery on the crest of Lookout, and I have depicted them, at least show their guns' position on the mountain by the puffs of white smoke there. You will please remember that in my picture. It is a representation of how matters stood at just 12 M., Nov. 24, 1863. Now at the points shown, was firing. I represent the firing from 4 different points. The question with me now, were these guns all of the Cherokee Battery, or were there more guns than yours on the crest. These guns did not seem to be stationary, but at least part of them were fired from different points. I have tried at various times to find out whose guns were on the crest, but never learned before.

It seems as if we'uns were always looking up to you'ns those days, but lucky for us it seems we most always got up to your level.

Now that you may not mistake me, I wish to give a little bit of our military history. My command belonged to the Army of the Cumberland- first under Buel, then Rosencrans. I think in August '63 we were transferred from the 14th A. C. to Granger's Reserve Corps, which gave such good account of themselves on Thomas' right at Chicamauga; after that the Reserve Corps was broken up, and my Brigade was, upon the arrival of Hooker from Va., placed in Howard's 11th A. C.

By the reading of history you will find that the 11th A. C. was ordered to co-operate with Sherman on Bragg's right at Mission Ridge. One, or possibly two of Howard's Brigade reached Sherman after he crossed the river, but my Brigade did not.

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We old fellows of the Army of the Cumberland having been put in good racing trim, while being herded in Chattanooga by you'ns, were rushed by orders, back and forth from one point to another as the fear that possessed our Officers dictated, and not allowed to reach either objection, yet in full sight of what was transpiring all along that great semi-circle- so you see my dear sir, my command (regiment) has no glory, either in "Mission Ridge", or "Lookout Mountain", although it is asserted in some histories that the 11th A. C. were at Lookout Mt., but I hardly believe that a single command- excepting detached men with Hooker, were under fire of your guns that day. Soon after that day the 11th A. C. returned and went into camp in Lookout Valley, and remained there until the 2nd of May following.

I enclose print showing 3 left companies B, G, and K of my regiment in quarters at Wauhatchie, Tenn., with a background of Lookout. This old camp was situated about 20 rods S. W. of the present R. R. Depot at that place. This camp is one of the pleasant memories of those days. My recollection is that there was some battery firing that day from the crest of the mountain. My old command (Sheridan's Div.) broke through Bragg's line on Mission Ridge close by Bragg's Headquarters, where the Government now has a tall steel tower.

I have seen it in one report that the 102 Ill. of our Brigade captured Capt. Corput at Resaca, but I think he (Col. Smith, 102 Ill.) was mistaken, and it was some other officer. I have often raised a hearty laugh on myself at our reunions, when I told the story of the capture of my Johnnie Captain (I won't take time to tell it now) at Resaca, which I think I incidentally mentioned in my last.

It would be one of the greatest pleasures of my life to meet in your reunion, the brave men who stood behind Corput's guns on that 15th day of May, 1864, and grasp their hands with all the vigor that we once would have used to crush out what then seemed to our loyal hearts, treason and rebellion. Having grown to mature age and reason since, we appreciate better the standing of all parties and understand how it was possible for men of the South to look upon their endeavor of those days, as patriotic and unselfish.

Let me give a brief description of my painting. The painting was sketched from Bald Hill, a hill nearest the Tennessee River on the west side of Lookout Creek. This hill was Hooker's position all the morning and up to past noon. Walthall men occupied the R. R. embankment near the river up near to the crossing of the creek, thence as I have shown up the sides of the mountain to his reserved picket post, a point hidden by the cloud formation. At the bottom right of the sketch is a gun of Knapp's Pennsylvania Artillery who are shelling some sharpshooters from the Fryar cabin across the creek. This cabin stood where now is the village of "Craven". The regiment of Infantry moving to the front is the 13th Ill. of Osterhaus Div. 15 A. C. just arriving on the ground- in front skirting along the trees that lined the creek banks are the skirmishers of ours. The right figure on

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black horse is Maj. John A. Reynolds, Hooker's Chief of Artillery, reporting for orders to him. The central figure pointing, giving order to Reynolds, is Gen. Hooker; beyond him on gray horse is Maj. Gen. H. A. Slocum, commanding 12th A. C.; to the left of Hooker, holding Headquarter flag, is Capt. Hall of Hooker's Staff; next left is Gen. Geary- 2 Div. 12 and 20th A. C., whose men are on the mountain. Next is Gen. Butterfield, Chief of Staff, and beyond him Col. Fessenden also of Hooker's staff. At left bottom is Co. K, 15th Ill. Cavalry, Hooker's escort; across the river on the left is Moccasin Point, which no doubt you may have heard of those days, with our Batteries firing on the Mountain. Moccasin Pt. hides Chattanooga from our view; over the R. R. Cut and beyond Moccasin under the cloud is a distant view of Mission Ridge. Our line, reaching from the creek up to the high ledge above is seen facing north and sweeping the whole western side of the mountain. If you could have a good magnifying glass, it would bring out the details more fully than you can get them in so small a copy- crowding so much of history into so small a space, makes it very dense- and you can hardly conceive what it all means- but the landscape (one of the grandest in the world) is all there, and without any figures, makes a good picture anyway. My Lockout is on exhibition most of the time and I have many glowing comments from those who have seen it. I will quote just one from your fellows- one whom you have often heard from in the Veteran- the author of the Charming Nellie Letters- who writes of it:

"The picture recalls scenes of the past, at a time when, the dangers, hardships, and deprivations all over, I can take a double interest in retrospection.

The picture is admirable, lifelike and true to subject. I was often on the mountain, and was there again in 1893. I can therefore testify to the faithfulness of the reproduction."

(Signed) J. B. Polley.

This is but a single sample of hundreds who have written me, on both sides. I trust it may not bring up to you any bitter memories, but it may be a pleasure to all who may be able to say, "I too was there."

Next to the tie that binds together the Comrades who fought shoulder to shoulder, is that which links us to the brave men at whom we shot. Differing from us politically, they proved their manhood, and the sincerity of their convictions, by facing the same death to which we were exposed. That was the true and supreme test, and judged by that, bravery and heroism, love of country and willingness to die for it, was not confined either to the North or the South.

I trust you and I may meet some day in the near future, and

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shake hands with each other as friends and comrades. Had I been a citizen of the South, I haven't the least doubt but I would have been a Southern soldier- but ~~this~~ being a native of the North, I did my best to thrash you fellows. But I can truly say I never felt enmity to the individual soldiers who confronted us, for I knew they were doing their duty, just as loyally and conscienciously as I was trying to do mine. It would be a great pleasure to meet with all you fellows, and more especially your brave old Captain Corput.

With cordial respect and good fellowship, I am

Most fraternally yours,

G. H. Blakeslee.

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Copy.

January 29, 1899.

George H. Blakeslee,

Lomax, Nebraska.

My Dear Sir and Comrade:

Your letter, photograph of painting of "Battle above the Clouds", with news paper containing article on the Battle of Resacca all received for which I thank you, particularly for the photograph.

While I have never been on the "point of view" from which the painting was made, yet my familiarity with the mountain and its surroundings, as viewed both from the mountain, and from the Nashville and Chattanooga R. R. time and again, during the past thirty-five years, I am prepared to say that I think you have not only succeeded in giving a faithful reproduction of the landscape, but, of the battle as I remember it. As you want the truth of history, I must say, however, that I think the four guns that you represent on the crest of the mountains, are erroneously placed, though I could not say positively. I will give you quotations from my Diary, and from this you will get some idea. While I don't think the matter of much importance, yet I know that, individually, you would like to get all the light you can.

Sunday Nov. 15, 1867, 4. P. M.

Left our position to move to Lookout Mountain. Got all up by 12.M. Monday. Selected a camping place one and a half miles south west of first section Cherokee Artillery moved to Lookout Battery. 12 o'clock Lookout Creek.

2 O'clock P. M. Yankees have possession of our entrenchments around Lookout Point".

4 O'clock P.M. Have orders to leave the Mountain with our Battery.

You will see that we were on the Mountain from the 13th of November to the evening of the 24th. During this time, having nothing to do, I visited the point quite a number of times both by day and by night, and not only the point, but strolled around generally. And most of the boys did the same thing. Now it seems to me that if there had been other guns than ours on the Mountain, some of us would have found it out, for you know that for a mile or so from the point the Mountain is very narrow, but I never heard that there were other guns than ours, and only two of them were engaged. Whether we used them



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from different positions or not, my mind is not clear, but my impression is that we did not. I know that after the Union forces had passed our first entrenchments, we did not attempt to use them at all, as we could not depress the muzzles sufficiently to make them of any use. As far as my information goes we had no infantry or calvary on the top of the Mountain. I know there was none near us.

Yours is the first picture of this battle that I have seen that approaches the truth. Soon after the war I remember seeing one, I believe in one of the prominent Magazines, that represented the crest of the Mountain bristling with infantry and artillery, and your men climbing up the perpendicular rocks at the point with scaling ladders, and so on. Of course the artist had a very vivid imagination. There was glory enough in the achievement as it really was, and as you have represented it, without ~~trying~~ taxing the imagination for a single feature. I see that the inscriptions on the copper tablets, which the Government has had placed in the face of the cliff, gives a statement of affairs about as they occurred.- I suppose about as near as it is possible to get it. By the way what a grand work the Government has done at Chickamauga. I believe a person who had never heard of the battle, could read the story of the fight, from the tablets placed by the Government. There might be a little temporary gratification of pride, here and there, obtained by a mis-statement of facts, but I have always found that the actors in the tragedies played from 1861-1865, were perfectly willing to have the truth stated. The men who did the fighting were never ashamed of each other.

Hoping that matters will so arrange themselves, that we may meet some day, I am,

Yours sincerely,  
W. O. Connor.

Letters  
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