

Sept. 21<sup>st</sup>, 1864

Miss Co,

Yours of the 9<sup>th</sup> recd yesterday. I hasten to acknowledge the pleasure occasioned by its reception. I've been in a "quandary", not feeling sure that any letter sent to Griffin would reach their destinations. I found that Sherman would probably "turn up" in Hood's near again compelling the evacuation of Griffin and possibly Macon; in the event of which very unpleasant catastrophe, you would be "on the wing" and some Yankee might take your mail. But it's thought that out of respect for the sympathies and affections of the great number of Georgians now sojourning unpleasantly in the "Old Dominion", Hood has agreed to the [...] of ten days, to allow us all to write an affectionate farewell to the loved ones at home, before he betaketh himself unto the great swamps of the Ogeechee and Altamaha. This is certainly the only favor we have recd at his hands, and in the name of 20,000 Georgians who don't expect anything from Gen. Hood, I beg leave to render him our thanks. Of Gen. H. as a patriot I have the highest opinion, but it was unfortunate to select him as the commander of the second army of the Confederacy in [poverty] of numbers and importance. His generalship was untried, and his enemy was skillful and energetic. Disaster was inevitable. Sherman with an overwhelming force splendidly discipline and appointed, [flooded] with success, confronted an army of demoralized soldiers led by an untried general, whose most effective area was 1000 Georgia militia. The Army of Tennessee, I fear, will take up winter quarters amid the delightful marshes of the Okefenokee region, or quake with the "ager" among the aromatic rice-ponds of the SouthEast, where their [chiefest] enemies will be a soldier's appetite and "long-billed" mosquitoes. Here's where the next campaign will find them, and if the army remains true to its ancient reputation, it will have arrived at the "jumping-off place", and "jumped off" too, before a twelvemonth shall have elapsed. You infer justly, from these [...], that I'm very "blue" about the situation in Georgia. I expect to see my beloved old state overran by the enemy, sharing the fate of her sisters, Louisiana and Mississippi. Need I tell you that gloom overspreads our national sky? I do not despair, but I feel keenly that we are at the crisis of the revolution. Oh! That this is the darkness which precedes the dawn, and not the darkness of eternal night! This is the last struggle—now is the time for every resource, every power, every muscle to be stretched to its almost tension, and the blessings of peace and natural honor will crown our toil and compensate our losses. To accomplish this every man is expected to do his duty. Everybody is required, else all's lost. "There is no special providence for the Americans", was the exclamation of the elder Adams in 1776. Let us adopt his sentiment and work with all our strength to secure our independence.

I am not very well at present, but am on duty. What a recreation a furlough of 24 days would be now to me, you may imagine. But three officers of our regiment of those who began this campaign have remained with their command without respite, during the entire time. Many have visited home in the interim, and the remainder with the exceptions as above have served a tour in the hospital. As for myself, I belong to the can't-get-away crowd. In fact I hardly feel

right to leave the regiment to visit town. It's my home, and many familiar faces in the ranks of the 45<sup>th</sup> GA are endeared by a thousand ties to me. I see no prospect of a furlough soon, as I never get sick enough, tho' I'm frequently annoyed with petty complaints. A slight wound is desirable, but if the Yankee occupy Geo., I hardly know what to do.

Sometimes I am almost ready to yield to the demons of despair, but the thought of those behind me in Georgia nerves me to endure all and suffer all. The ladies of our land deserve independence, if the sterner sex are recreant, and for them only do we now remain in the field. Allow me to express my sympathy for you this juncture, I hope you will not be compelled to leave home by the fortunes of war. Home, oh! How sacred—once a refuge when the world was closed upon us—to leave it now to seek an asylum elsewhere, must cruelly rend the tender ties of affection. That God will avert this calamity from you is my prayer.

Convey to Mrs. H. my best wishes for the welfare and happiness of her family, Write soon.

Yours truly,

E. S. Mitchell