

Harrisonburg, Virginia  
Sept. 26<sup>th</sup> 1864.

My dear Sister,

Since you last heard from me we have had some hard fighting with the Rebel army in the valley - The morning of the 19<sup>th</sup> we were ordered to advance and attack the enemy - The 6<sup>th</sup> Corps was first to engage them, quickly followed by the 19<sup>th</sup> Corps, to which our Regt. belongs - The battle raged with great fury from early morn till night, when the Rebs commenced to retreat down the valley, closely followed by our victorious, but very tired boys - The rebel loss in men and material was very large; they left all their dead and wounded on the field, besides the large number of prisoners taken who were unhurt. We captured 31 cannon and a large amount of small arms, with any number of battle flags &c. Our Brigade made one of the most splendid charges of the battle, driving the enemy from his position and running them entirely through a thick

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Date: September 26, 1864

Description: John W. Day of Berwick, wrote to his sister in Great Falls, New Hampshire, describing a battle with Confederate forces in Shepardstown, Virginia (now West Virginia).

woods for over half a mile, but not being supported properly, were compelled to fall back before the greatly superior numbers of the enemy: The loss of the Brigade in this charge was very heavy, six hundred & thirty one killed & wounded and quite a large number taken prisoners by the enemy: The loss in our Regt was larger in proportion to the size of it. We lost sixty one killed & wounded and eight missing — Willey, Stillings and Manson are all right —

We have followed the retreating enemy over 100 miles through the valley, picking up many prisoners on the way who had fallen out through exhaustion and fatigue — our own troops are nearly knocked up by the rapid and hurried march and are resting at this beautiful town to day — Capt. Skinner was hit on the head by a piece of shell and his hat torn to pieces. He was only slightly wounded & is now with us again.

The Rebs made another stand at a place called Flint Hill, near the town of Strasburg, in which our Brigade was not engaged.

How long we stop here I don't know, but suppose that we will resume

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the march down the valley to morrow.

Earley, with what is left of his army has made his escape through the mountains and it is not likely that we see them again soon.

The Rebel government will not let us go much further down the valley if they have to send half the troops from Richmond to drive us back. If we succeed in getting to the City of Lynchburg, we will hold the Danville Rail road and cut off all their communications with the South & west and they would as soon sacrifice Richmond as let us hold possession of Lynchburg —

So you see that there is doubtless much hard fighting ahead of us yet and I trust that He who has thus far shielded me will protect me to the end —

My love to all, and hoping  
to hear from you soon

I am  
Your Affectionate Brother  
John W. Day.

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