

Dear Mother / Sally,

We are presently encamped near a place called Coon Valley and has had ourselves a row with the rebs. I believe this will be the last one of this year's campaign. These past two nits and mornins in this coulee has bin quit cold. It must be time for takin up winter quarters agin.

Both Stuart and pa were on detached duty and not present. It has bin sometime since I have seen pa and am concernd he may have found mischief. The temptashun of potcheen is always present for one of such intent. This may explain why Stosh was a sport in the lieutenant jacket.

The battle was hard fought and the rebs was quit spiritd. LT Stosh was assignd to the rit wing, and in his quest for glory, he on his own accord, attackd what he thought was an uncoverd reb battery. He soon found the only thing uncoverd was his arse as the rebs was awaitn for them. Mother, Stosh came through unharmed cept the multiple lacerashuns on his back side as per the captain's arse chewin. One day I believe brother will make a fine officer, he has already masterd the hasty, double-quick rout step to the rear maneuver. In non-military terms, Stosh was partakin in the "great skedaddlin at Norskedlin".

At the end of the battle I was a guardin some reb prisoners, many of them asked who was the fleet-footed lieutenant on our right. They was quit astounded with his rapidity of retreat and how even the natural obstacles of the terrain could not deter his swift rearward re-deploy. During this action, Cpl Ed McGolemme was captured. Now Ed is a very sly fellow, and so he tells the rebs that he is a cousin to Stosh. The rebs bein awares of the true namesake of the notorius young Johnny abuser, immediatly let him go. Ed remains the rogues' manager still.

Now mother, knowin that you liken Stosh to yourself more than pa's other sons, so as to keep your honor of "no cowards in the family", Stosh did aquit hissself well later in the battle. That basket-wieldin southern trulip will think twice before she ever trys wackin another lieutenant in the union army!!!

Both Stanley and your nephew Basil were slightly wounded. The official reports will state that Stanley rec'd a minor leg wound and Basil a head wound. The rest of the story is that Basil fell while crossing a field to attack the rebs. His fall caused the frames of his eye piece to lacerate his rit brow. It was a nasty looking wound.

Our little band played awhile and were rec'd well; as long as we are not pelt'd with ripend fruit or vegetables we feel we are bein rec'd well.

On Sunday the Father Flannigan ask'd Basil and I to help with a hymn during church. We played and sang the lovely Irish tune; "A Nation once again", the Father had rit some new lyrics. Mother, the family members present all attended church, all!!!!!! Now you may be a askin yourself that I must have misspoken, that a certin brother more likend to pa's mischief perhaps was missed. No mother, Stanley went to church, praise be. Though the good Father Flannigan did not make a special announcement as to the bless'd event, he did seem to direct much of his hell and brimstone preachin towards Stanley.

After church the lovely Teresa and the fair maiden Mildred, you remember her shinny red hair and those lovely blood-shot eyes, made a fine meal of stew, sausage, cheese and biscuits. We all partook generously, but without pa and Stuart, the voracious carnivores of the family, there was plenty of fare left remaining.

We spect soon to be in winter quarters and hope we may attain leaves for home. It will be nice to see all the family together agin, praise be! May good health and fortune be yours mother.

Your loving Son,  
Stephan

P.S Mother, if you receive any ritin word from pa, rit me his where bouts so his sons can convene at whatever ale house he now calls home.