

Stafford County
Dec. 7th 1862.

Dear Pa,

As Bob Nickens is going down the country to-morrow, I embrace the opportunity of writing you a few lines intending to give you a brief sketch of the enemy's operations in front of Fredericksburg. On Thursday morning the Yanks attempted to cross the Rappahannock at three points by means of pontoon bridges in this attempt they were foiled at two points, above & at Fredericksburg. At the town they were repeatedly driven from the pontoon bridges by our Infantry, when becoming engaged they wantonly shelled the town. They combustible shell set it on fire & nearly consumed the town. On Thursday night they were allowed to cross the river and occupy this side of the river - both at & below the town. On Friday our line of battle was taken, but nothing of any consequence occurred - merely a desultory firing

being kept up between Longstreet & the enemy - On Saturday morning as soon as the dense fog was lifted from the flat lands adjacent the river so soon was the cannonading commenced. And our artillery though having every advantage of position were fairly beaten. Of Longstreet's movements I know but little - nothing of interest - but about eleven o'clock A.M. line after line of Infantry (Yankees) was seen advancing across the distant fields: and on they came with flying colors & a perfect line till within 500 yards when our artillery opened upon them, & every shot opened great gaps in their ranks, but they closed up & still came on.

The line nearest us broke through a Georgia Brigade and came up within one hundred & fifty yards of the Purcell Battery - Orders were then given for our Brigade to move forward, but owing to some inexplicable cause the 40th & 50th Regiments went apart of the way and then

went in a contrary direction with Brock's entrenchment in the lead; but the 47th & 2nd Va. Battalion with Bob. Mayo & the gallant Taylor went straight to the scene of action & arrived there in due time to save the Purcell Battery - here we fought for five consecutive hours five times our number, and finally drove back four successive lines of the enemy - About this time when the Yankees were flying for dear life's sake old Stonewall rode up and exclaimed "well done my boys" - Every man who knows of the fight speaks highly of the 47th & 2nd - Mr. Lawson, Mr. Cook, & Mr. Pritchett of my company were killed & three other wounded. Col. Lyell was slightly wounded but still retains the field - The Yankees have re-crossed the river, and it is said are going towards Aquia Creek.

I wish you to send ^{Prince} by Bill Mickens when he comes up, if possible -

Have him shod, send me a bridle (double-
head-stall & reins) and a surcingle - If you
want the mare I have I'll send her down,
or pay for any other horse you may buy
in his place - Give my love to all &
write soon

Affectionately
Your Son
Wm Brown

Broun, William. William Broun to Edwin Broun, Caroline County, VA., December 14, 1862.

FileName: ua24-19_cw1_18621204

Letter from William Broun to his father Edwin Broun. [Caroline?] County, Virginia. December 14, 1862. 4 pages on two sheets of paper. References the Battle of Fredericksburg.

Subjects:

American Civil War (1861-1865); Brockenbrough, John Mercer, 1830-1892; Broun, Edwin, 1819-1904; Broun, William, Captain, 1842-1908; Confederate States of America. Army. Purcell Artillery; Confederate States of America. Army. Virginia Infantry Regiment, 22nd; Confederate States of America. Army. Virginia Infantry Regiment, 2nd; Confederate States of America. Army. Virginia Infantry Regiment, 40th; Confederate States of America. Army. Virginia Infantry Regiment, 47th; Confederate States of America. Army. Virginia Infantry Regiment, 53rd; Fredericksburg, Battle of (Virginia : 1862); Jackson, Stonewall, 1824-1863; Longstreet, James, 1821-1904; Lyell, John Warner, 1839-1902; Mayo, Robert Murphy, 1836-1896; Personal correspondence; Virginia--Aquia Creek; Virginia--Caroline County; Virginia--Northumberland County; Virginia;

[Caroline?] County Dec. 14th 1862

Dear Pa,

As Bill Nickens is going down the county tomorrow, I embrace the opportunity of writing you a few lines intending to give you a brief sketch of the enemy's operations in front of Fredericksburg on Thursday morning [December 11] the Yanks attempted to cross the Rappahannock at three points by means of pontoon bridges in their attempt they were foiled at two points, above & at Fredericksburg. At the town they were repeatedly driven from the pontoon bridges by our infantry, when becoming enraged they wantonly shelled the town [?] combustibile shell set it on fire & nearly consumed the town. On Thursday [December 11] night they were allowed to [cross?] the river and occupy this side of the river, both at and below the town. On Friday [December 12] our line of battle was taken, but nothing of any consequence occurred. Merely a desultory firing...

[pg.01]

...being kept up between Longstreet & the enemy. On Saturday morning [December 13] as soon as the dense fog was lifted from the flat lands adjacent the river so soon was the cannonading commenced. And our artillery though having every advantage of position were fairly beaten. Of Longstreet movements, I know but little. Nothing of interest. But about eleven o'clock A.M. line after line of infantry (Yankee) was seen advancing along the distant fields; and on they came with flying colors & a perfect line till within 800 yards when our artillery opened upon them, & every shot opened great gaps in their ranks, but they closed up & still came on.

The line nearest us broke through a Georgia Brigade and came up within one hundred & fifty yards of the Purcell Battery. Orders were then given for our Brigade to move forward, but owing to some inexplicably cause the 40th & 53rd regiments went apart of the way and then...

[pg.02]

...went in a contrary direction with Brockenbrough in the lead: but the 47th & 2nd VA. Battalion with Bob Mayo & the gallant Tayloe went straight to the scene of action & arrived there in due time to save the Purcell Battery. There we fought for five consecutive hours five times our number, and finally drove back four successive lines of the enemy. About this time when the Yankees were fleeing for dear life's sake and Stonewall rode up and exclaimed "well done my boys".

Every man who knows of the fight speaks highly of the 47th & 2nd. Wm. Lawson, Jno. Cook, & Jno. Pritchell of my company were killed & three others wounded. [Leut?] Lyell was slightly wounded but still retains the field. The Yankees have recrossed the river, and it is said are going towards Aquia Creek.

I wish you to sent Prince by Bill Nickens when he comes up if possible. ...

[pg.03]

... Have him shod, send me a bridle (double head stall & reins) and a surcingle. If you want the mare I have I'll send her down, or pay for any other horse you may buy in her place. Give my love to all & write soon.

Affectionately Your Son Wm. Broun

[pg.04]

Notes:

1. The Purcell Artillery (Virginia) [A.P. Hill's Light Division] under Cpt William Pegram. Purcell Light Artillery completed its organization at Richmond, Virginia, in April 1861. The unit was assigned to R. L. Walker's and W. J. Pegram's Battalion of Artillery, Army of Northern Virginia. It participated in many campaigns from Williamsburg to Cold Harbor, was involved in the operations against Petersburg and Richmond, and saw action around Appomattox. The battery reported 7 killed and 53 wounded during the Seven Days' Battles, and lost seven percent of the 89 engaged at Gettysburg. It was included in the surrender on April 9, 1865. Its captains were George M. Cayce, William J. Pegram, and R. Lindsay Walker.
2. John Mercer Brockenbrough (August 1, 1830 - August 24, 1892) - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_M._Brockenbrough' Brockenbrough's Brigade served as a member of Heth's Division in the Third Corps, Army of Northern Virginia. This brigade was commanded by Colonel John Mercer Brockenbrough (August 1, 1830 - August 24, 1892), a farmer and a Confederate colonel in the American Civil War. After the war, Brockenbrough lived in Norfolk and Richmond. He died in Richmond and is buried there in Hollywood Cemetery.
3. [Battle of Fredericksburg](#), December 11-15, 1862. [Thurs-Mon]
4. **Bob Mayo**: Mayo, Robert Murphy, 1836-1896 of 47th Virginia Infantry Regiment - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Murphy_Mayo | <https://web.archive.org/web/20200421183901/http://www.47thva.org/pages/oob.html>
5. "Gallant Tayloe:" Possibly Major Edward P. Tayloe of 22nd Virginia Infantry. Is 2nd Virginia supposed to be 22nd?
6. Leut? Lyell: Lieutenant colonel John Warner Lyell - <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/37206052/john-warner-lyell>