

The Death of Private Clarence Fuller



(Above) an undated formal portrait of Clarence Fuller

Clarence Fuller, a private in Company C of the 67th New York First Long Island Volunteers, was killed in action at the Second Battle of Marye's Heights (also known as Second Fredericksburg) which occurred on May 3, 1863. The following letters were written by Lewis Young and Warren Reaser (both of whom were fellow privates in Company C of the 67th NY) and mailed home to Fuller's family following his death. The transcription of these letters, shown below, was provided to the 67th NY Historical Association in 2017 by Buffy Jackson, whose great great grandfather's brother was Clarence Fuller. Note this transcription contains added question marks and annotations by the transcriber of what the written words may have been referring to.

Envelope Cover: Mrs. Sylvia Fowler (Fuller), Painted Post, Stuben (Stueben) Co, NY, postmarked Washington DC May 9, 1863

Letter # 1:

Camp nere (near) Bankesford (Banks Ford), VA, May the 6 1863

Mr. Fowler (Fuller), Dear Sir, I ? myself to write a few lines to you yesterday. I write to you of Clarence's death. He was killed the 3 of May. He was killed about one mile over the ? of Fredricksburgh. We made the charge at eleven oclock and he was shot after we cased? the hills. He was killed about 2 oclock. I was about 8 feet from him when he fell but as I was knocked

senseles (senseless) by the same shot I did not see him fall but I soon came to so I know he was hit close to the body on the left leg. The only words he sed (said) were those Oh my God, I am a dead man. I don't think he lived to exceed 25 minutes after he was hit. He died very easey (easy). Now my object in writing this is more to send his money home than anything else. He had ten dollars and 35 cents and 2 ? stamps and the receipt for the money he sent home when he was payed (paid) off. I shall send his knife, the knife he was hit with the same ball that killed him. His handkerchief I shall send home now. I want you to send a receipt for the money, knife, pocketbook, handkerchief, and the express receipt for the captain. He's got to have them to show that these things was sent and received. He has to give an account of everything to the wars department. I have written the hole (whole) perticklers (particulars ?) of this death. This was a very hard fought battle and ended in hour (our) defeat of casc?. We had to retreat across the river. I have no more to say at present. Hoping to here (hear) from you- oh there was one more thing- L Warren Reaser went to see if he could see where he was shot but he could not find him. He was buried as all other soldiers that fell on the battlefield. I shall always remember the spot and can go to it at any futer (future) time. I can't think of no more to write. I shall exspect (expect) to here (hear) from you soon. L. (B or R) Young, Warren Reaser, you can write to either of us.

(on the back) The pocketbook, knife, handkerchief cannot be sent at present but I will send them as soon as I can. L. (B or R) Young

P.S. There is one thing I like to forget and that is this, that this was his request to have his things sent to his mother if he got killed in the battle. Warren Reaser

Letter # 2:

Camp Shaler ?, VA, May the 22 1863

Mrs. Fuller, in compliance with your wishes I take the present oportunity (opportunity) of writing to you in regard to Clarence's business I shall send you his descriptive list/bill/? and all the knowledge you want will out of ? The Capt ses (says) to say to you not to imploy (employ) a little ? lawyer but to get some one that knowes (knows) how to do the business. He ses (says) mabey (maybe) you can find a a good man in Elmira. If not, there is (a) company in New York that attends to such business. Their names are James & Brown No. 2 Park Place, New York. This is all the information you want or rather all that I can give you in regard to his death I know nothing more only he was buried by our own men that was detailed for that purpos (purpose ?). I know of nothing more to write at present only that the boyes (boys) are all well. I would like to here (hear) from you soon so I shall know you have got this letter, Mr. and Mrs. Fuller, I remain your obedient servant, Lewis (B or R) Young.