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6-4-1862

## James W. Drake to H. R. Miller (4 June 1862)

James W. Drake

Hugh R. Miller

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### Recommended Citation

Drake, James W. and Miller, Hugh R., "James W. Drake to H. R. Miller (4 June 1862)" (1862).  
*Correspondence*. 614.

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Richmond, June 4<sup>th</sup> 1862

Co. Hugh R. Miller,

My Dear Sir,

Yours of the 24<sup>th</sup> (Ult. from Oxford) came to hand this morning, and not having rec<sup>d</sup>. the telegrams mentioned, I went immediately to the Telegraph Office and learned that none had been rec<sup>d</sup>. there for me - I then went to Co. J. R. Davis' Office, and found that he had not come in - I then addressed him a note, but receiving no reply up to 4 Oclk. P.M. I called at his Office again, found him in and was told that he had replied to my note immediately on its receipt, but it has not yet come to hand. He had received your telegrams, and replied to them, instructing you to come on to Richmond as quick as possible - He will also instruct the Secretary of War to telegraph you again tomorrow.

Knowing that you were absent from Pontotoc, and not knowing your exact whereabouts, I have not written to you, but have written repeatedly to Mrs. Miller, so as to keep her advised of what is going on hereabouts.

Well, Sir, (You are aware of the falling back of our  
Army from the Peninsula to the immediate neighborhood  
of Richmond, along up and down the Chickahominy, which  
is said to have as bad, if not a worse swamp than Cummeback.  
Last Saturday was a week ago, say 24<sup>th</sup> Ult., a heavy Skirmish  
took place some 12 or 15 miles from here, in the direction  
of Hanover C.H., in which we lost 150 or 200 killed, and of  
course the Yankees lost more - From that time until  
last Saturday, say 31<sup>st</sup> Ult. The opposing columns watched  
each other till they got so mad they could stand it no  
longer - So, on Saturday about 10 or 12 O'clk. our men  
pitched into the Yankees, and the Yankees pitched  
back again, and until dark put a stop to it, they  
had one of the hardest and most desperate fights that has  
come off since the war began - The 2<sup>d</sup> Missi. was into  
it of course, and lost quite a number killed & wounded -

The Casualties in Co. G. were Jas. Read, killed; Mann  
ahan, wounded in left leg, which had to be amputated below  
the knee; Sergt. Parksdale shot through the left hand, M<sup>c</sup>.  
Anally, shot in the foot; young Combs, (not the Lieut.)  
shot on the head; Peter Pickens was slightly wounded, but  
not having seen him, I have forgotten the exact character

of his wound - The wounds, except Mannahan's, are com-  
paratively slight; at all events not dangerous, and the par-  
ties will soon be up again - I listened to the Cannonad-  
ing and Musketry firing till dark - Our men drove  
the Yankees from their entrenchments and their Camps  
and captured an immense amount of Army Stores and other  
good things - And at the dawn of day next morning, say  
Sunday, the fight was resumed, and continued till 12  
O'clk. Noon, with a desperation not heretofore attributa-  
ble to the Yankees - Our men say they fought like  
tigers, but we drove them from the field, capturing sever-  
al hundred prisoners, 16 pieces of the finest description of  
field Artillery, 1500 or 2000 stands of small arms, and a  
great many good things - But, Judge, when I got out  
to the Hospital near the battleground, and saw the dead who  
had died after being brot. off the battle field, and heard the  
cries and groans of the wounded, and saw the legs & arms  
that had been amputated and thrown out on the ground, I  
could not resist the idea that war is a horrible thing -  
Our boys escaped unhurt, thank God - The armies are  
now in front of each other, and every body is expecting the  
fight to be renewed daily, and doubtless would have been renewed

This morning but for the fact that it rained tremendously, all last night, and till 12 O'clk. today. A great battle is certainly just at hand - Gen. J. Johnston was badly, but not dangerously wounded in the fight on Saturday. I would telegraph you now if I thought it would reach you, but it is hardly likely it would. -

By the time this reaches you the newspapers will have given you a pretty full account of the battle, the killed, wounded, &c. and who they are.

We lost an unusual number of field officers.

It is believed that the obstructions thrown into the channel of James River, and the Batteries erected on <sup>the Bluff</sup> about 8 miles below here, are such as to preclude the approach of the enemy's Gunboats -

The people of Richmond seem much better satisfied since they have been assured that Richmond is to be defended at all hazards, and to the last extremity.

I am glad to hear that you have succeeded so soon in raising your regt., and hope that you will soon be here to take the field against the Yankees - and now that we have enough prisoners to exchange for all of our men, I want the exchange to be effected, - and then I want the black flag.

Remember me kindly to Mrs. Miller and other friends, and may God bless you.

Very Respectfully  
Your friend

J. W. Drake



Gen. W. Drake

Col. Hugh R. Miller  
Oxford.  
Mississippi

My  
Oxford  
with Reg.