

Natchitoches La April 3rd 1864

Dear Mother

There is not much to write about but will write a little so as to keep the communication good. We have not made a verry long march this last week. There has been 3 bridges to build & bad roads some of the way so we have not made but 70 miles. We passed through the famous pine woods where the people take all the niggers & mules & cotton. We found plenty of the two last articles but the darkies met us in the road before we got there. On this side of the woods the rebels have burned all the cotton clean. I saw one place where they had burned 550 bales & the owner was perfectly willing that it should be done. This town is on the banks of the Kane river & is quite a pretty little place of about 3000 inhabitants when they are all at home, which is not the case now. I saw some verry good looking young ladies but they looked verry cross X & dont like the Yankees.

I got the box last Sunday when we were at Alexandria. Every thing was all right. The pickels that the young ladies sent are verry nice & I would thank them in person if I had the time to spare, but as I have not you will have to do it for me. I gave Foote the can of jelly & kept the blackberries for myself & they are verry nice. I put on one of the shirts on this morning & it seems real good for you know I have not had a clean shirt on in more than two years. The rebels are reported in force about 30 miles from here & mean to show fight. I almost hope they will for we have chased them nearly far enough. It is more than 100 miles from here to Shrevesport & I think we shall have to go up there to fight them if they fight at all. I will write a little to Gust to day if I get any more time. Please remember me to all the people. Tell Aunt Kate I am verry much obliged for the wine

Your Affectionate Son  
CJ Hardaway