

Near the Chickahominy, Va May 25th 1862

Dear Mother

I received your letter yesterday mailed the 17th it seems as though they were a good while coming through and I must have quite a grist back on the road if you have written every week. I do not write from Richmond as I expected I should when I wrote last. We have marched four days the past week and are only thirteen miles nearer Richmond than we were one week ago The marching has been awful for the last week the weather has been verry hot, and it is almost impossible to find any watter to drink along the roads, and when we do find any it is so thick with mud that it has to be sucked through the teeth to strain it, but where we are encamped now we have an excellent spring it makes me think of the old spring at the School House at home. I think however I would rather take a drink from the one up there than this one just at the present time. The country keeps improving in looks the farther we advance. We left Whitehouse last Monday and marched to Tonstalls Station on the RailRoad, then the rebels had burned two bridges but had not disturbed the track nor building at the Station. Here I saw the first regular Contrabands that have come in there was twelve boys came into our camp the first night that we were there. They were the regular old fashioned Virginia Niggers such as I have never seen before, they were all hired by the officers in our regiment and had not been in camp an hour before they were dressed in uniform (cast off clothing of the men) some of them are verry bright they sing dance and make fun generally for the men it is a great deal better than a fifteen cent nigger show at home just becaus it is original. I think it would make you feel ten years younger if you could see their performance. The fare has been rather hard since we left York Town have not had anything to Eat but hard bread and Salt Horse, but we are doing a little better now for we are living on Hoecakes sweet potatoes and strawberries. I guess that is something that you have not had yet this season. I have forgotten to mention in my other letters that I had been promoted to Corporal, did not feel myself very much elevated was the reason that I forgot it I would like to have some of those fellows down here that are blowing so much about Genl McClellan. I think we could take some of their blowing propensities out of them in double quick time. I think the General will come out all right in a little while if they let him alone. We are lying near the Chickahominy waiting for bridges to be built and I suppose as soon as that is done we shall go into Richmond in a hurry Porters Divission is held in reserve now so we do not have to break the way any more and I am not verry sorry for it either. Col McQuade at the 14th has been promoted to Brigadier General which I suppose you have heard of long before this. I can not think of anything more that would interest you in any way so I will stop right here.

Your aff Son

CJH