

## Headquarters 30<sup>th</sup> Regt. N.Y.S.V. Falmouth, VA...1862 May 5

Dear Brother and Sister:

I would have answered your welcome letter as soon as I got it but I could not find time until now. Since I wrote to you last I have had considerable marching. When I got your letter I was at a place called Bristoe, about 10 or 12 miles beyond Manasses Junction toward Richmond. We left there on the 15<sup>th</sup>, I think it was at dark, marched 9 miles on the Railroad tracks at night then halted at a place called Cattlett Station on the Richmond Railroad where Gen. McDowal had his quarters.

We stayed there but one day. We started off again on a different road. Gen. McDowal reviewed us as we passed him. The Regiment all cheered him in turn. As there was none of our troops in that direction we had to move cautiously. We had to move in Battle Order. It would take up too much space to describe the Country. As we passed we had to cross some very deep creeks over bad roads and through woods. The day was very hot. We were told 15 Miles was one days march. A good many threw off their Knapsacks and Overcoats on the road, Big Men Too, not able to carry them with the heat. I did not throw a thing away although my Knapsack had more in it than those that threw theirs away.

No troops being, as I said in this direction we went only 10 miles when we came upon the enemy pickets. Our Cavalry when the Rebels saw them coming they were feeding their horses at a farm house and a couple of them in sparring the girls of the house. When our fellows charged on them they did not even wait to take the feed bag off their horses heads but jumped on and put off as if the devil was after them. The Girls ran to the woods, as they were fools enough to believe that we would murder them all. The Farmers in Virginia some of them are very innocent and will believe anything.

We kept driving in the Rebel Pickets until we went 6 Miles farther. We halted for the night as we supposed after going 16 Miles, but only got a cup of coffee ready and ate one hard biscuit, you know are the kind they are, Regular Sea Biscuit. We had to file our teeth to eat them. After getting that we had to move on again as we were informed by the Scouts that the Rebels made a Stand. We went 5 Miles farther making 20 or 21 Miles for the day. I could sleep anyplace then so I laid at the foot of a tree in a wood where we stopped, but only got an hours sleep. At 1:00 O'clock we had to move on again very cautiously 1 Co. of Cavalry in front.

After going 5 Miles more they waited until our Cavalry Co. came up. Our Cavalry charged on them. The Rebel Infantry fired on our Cavalry from behind an ambuscade, killed 4 or 5. We could not get up as fast as the Rebels could run away so we could not get a shot at them. They kept up fire for a little while. We threw off our Knapsacks on the road as soon as the news came that the advance was at it. We went up on the double quick but when we got up they were across the Rappahannock River. Our Cavalry chased them up all the way. The Rebels burned the Bridge across before all their own men had crossed, it was pitched and all ready for a match 2 days before they heard we were coming, it was a rough Battle or skirmish for a little while, 8 of our Cavalry was killed and as many wounded.

The Infantry did not fire a shot as we were too far in the rear. We were too tired after the long march, as it was, we hurried up on the run. It was a sad sight to see, dead Men laying in the road with bullet holes in them. Our artillery fired a shot at the Enemy as they were retreating on the other side of the Rappahannock and killed several. We halted here at this place where the Enemy ran away from. It is a village and the oldest village in the State but one and that one is YorkTown. There is a paper Factory and a few other business places also, but the dirtiest place I ever saw.

On the other side is the City of Fredericksburg, quite a large place. They surrendered that to us also. We saw at the sport on Good Friday. It was on the day we came here. We got lots of flour,

corn, grain etc. In Fredericksburg from the enemy. Our Brigade was the first to come here as we are the advance of Gen'l McDowell's Army. He commands a Corps. Gen'l Auger is our Brigadier. We are preparing now to move on Richmond as the Rebels have evacuated YorkTown Saturday night last, 3<sup>rd</sup>. Yesterday our Army held that place. We have two Pontoon Bridges across the Rappahannock opposite the City of Fredericksburg and can cross any time we choose. They are fixed so we can make a bridge in an hour or take it up just as soon. In a few days, likely tomorrow we will start for the Capitol of the Southern Confederacy and intend to meet McClellan there. The Rebels probably mean to attack us before we get there, but we will SALT THEIR HIDES FOR THEM nicely.

New Orleans is ours and most all the prominent places in the South, the Rebellion is nearly over. In a few weeks Virginia will be clear of Rebel Troops, all together Victory will soon Crown Our Army and if the Lord spares me for a couple of months longer I think I will be on my way home. I would like to see you and if I can I will, if I Live. I hope you will get along well and live happy in your new Home. Hoping soon to hear from you again. I will conclude by sending my Love to William and yourself, Rose, Johnnie and all the others, I don't know how many. Good Bye.

**P.S. :** I had a letter from home a few days ago. They are all well also, one from Kate. She sends her Love to you. You think she is troubled about me being here and feels as bad as any of my own. I think She does and if I live to go home safe I think She will be my Own and I think I will have a better bargain than She will. My Uniform is light blue pants, dark blue jacket, Military Brass Buttons quite plain. Anything fancy would not do for the mud and dirt we go through. You would like to see Annes Young Ones. They are as handsome and as cunning as little Foxes, especially my Little Professor. Coming here we marched 30 Miles in 24 Hours. We are the First Brigade, Kings Division. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade did not get here for 14 hours after. They call us the IRON Brigade. It consists of 1 Regt. F Cavalry, 1 Regt. of Sharpshooters, 1 Battery of Artillery, 4 Regts. of Infantry.

**This Is A Beautiful Country.**