

Richmond May 26th
1862

Dear Sister

I take my pen in hand
to write you a few lines before the
Yankees get me. we expect a terrible
battle every day close to the city
as they are not more than a few
miles off. there has been some
skirmishing already and the
 booming of cannon is distinctly
heard here indicating the storm
approaching that is about to burst
upon us at any moment. I expect
to take part in the performance
Jeff Davis says he is deter-
mined to defend Richmond to
the last extremity. you know that
the Merrimack has been blown
up. what do you think of it.
I tell you what I think. it
was from what I can under-
stand since that it was con-

necessary if not criminal. as
I see no good reason for so doing
she could have laid at the mouth
of James River and protected
it from the ingress of the enemy
Gunboats. There is something
rotten in Denmark. a dispatch
came in to day stating that
Jackson had gained a victory
at Winchester. I hope it is so
if the Yanks whipt us here I
shall despair of our success
I wish we had Old Beaure
gard here I would have ten
times more confidence than
I have in the others all put
together except Price and
Jackson. Johnston in my
opinion is too fond of retreat
ing and not fighting. that
is the reason I believe that

The enemy is so close to us now
being at the very gates of the Capital
that it is a wonder that they didn't
evacuate Virginia altogether.
Why when they have chances to attack
the enemy they won't do it. but
wait and look on gaping un-
til ~~the~~ McElleran outwit
them and then they have to
so retreat and destroy their
I stones we ought to have a General
like old Bonaparte he never
waited for the enemy to attack
him but always attacked them
whenever an opportunity came
but Beauregard and Jackson
approaches nearer to him in
that respect than the others
he would went right into
Washington at Manassas
if old Davis had let him

well let things be as they may
look out for a small row
over here before many days
in which I wouldn't be sur-
prised if somebody should
get hurt. I understand you
don't receive my letters regu-^{lar}
although I answer you every
time you write it is the
carelessness of the Post office
blacks I reckon. Give my
love to all and accept the
same for yourself. Good
bye until I write again
from your affection^{ate}

Brother Henry W Smart