

Camp "2" miles from Richmond

May, 20 1862

Dear uncle & Aunt

I address these few lines to you to let you know that I am yet ~~I~~ alive but not very well I suppose you have heard of the evacuation of York Town by the rebels but however I must write a little about it, we discovered that the rebels had left early in the morning. Sunday May the 4th our cavalry and light artillery was soon in pursuit of the flying ~~force~~ fugitives about one o'clock the army was in motion and division was ordered forward to support the advance, our knapsacks was slung and away we went we continued the march until 12 o'clock when we halted and rested 10 minutes

about this time our Cavalry came up
with the rear guard of the enemy
and had a brisk skirmish with them
killing several and taking 20 prisoners
we lost 2 killed and several wounded
we kept up our march until
about 11 o'clock when we halted for
the night It commenced raining
about 3 o'clock in the morning
but rain never affects the sleep
of a hard soldier 5 o'clock found
no need for another days march
there was one brigade in the
advance of ours, and they came
up with the enemy about
9 o'clock they found them
strongly fortified 1 1/2 miles
south of Williamsburg
This line of defence was calculated
to defend the town and to destroy
any army that might march
against it from the south ~~or~~ east
our General (that is Hooker)

did not wait for any parlay
but began the battle it commenced
by skirmishing on both sides
but that was soon paid out
as the rebels opened fire from
2 forts and 4 redoubts which was
galling to our men the rebels
then threw a heavy force
into the woods skirting a slash
with the intention of making
a flank movement upon
us as they knew we had
but a small force compared
with their one Div. this time
the first Brigade had shot
their ammunition all away
and was badly cut up
they fought bravely and with
the ut most coolness but
Brigade then was ordered up
(that is the Excelsior)
to relieve the 1st Div. Brigade

the third was in the advance of
the 5th next by the next and the
first that is the Regiment
that I belong to was on the
left flank the second Regiment
was not there The order was
given to forward and my we
went on at double quick the
mud was knee deep but on we
went when our Regiment
arrived at the edge of the field
the Colonel gave the order to
bring knap socks we did so
and then fell into the
slashing before mentioned
our felt flank had hardly left
the road when we was challenged
to halt we halted and looked
to our left and there to our
surprise stood a Regiment
drawn up in line they asked
what Regiment we was we
answered the first Colliers
they did not under stand us
and they asked a gain we
answered as before they asked
for our colors we wanted them
but as there was so far

2
no more ⁵ with out one
think I cant get any but a camp
up the line they did not see
them, we did not fire at them
because their uniform so resemble
d, one of our regiments call herdans
sharp shooters that we thought
perhaps that it might be them
and then they were so close to
our lines all most on to our
hospitals we did not dream
of them being so close and they
thought that we were some of
their own men as they had sent
a regiment to a camp the ground
that we did but that regeme
nt, had come in contact
with the advance of our
Bregade the rebbles then asked
what state troop we was
we answered New York
they shouted lay down your
arms we told them we could
not see it

they fired a volley at us
and fell back we fired at
them but held our ground
the Rebels moved 3 times upon
our flank but was after
driven back our Regiment
^{fought} nobly and bravely, the rest
of the Brigade fell back and was
relieved but as we was separated
we had to take care of ourselves
and we never gave an inch of
ground whilst we had of carriage
in our ~~car~~ our men fell thick
and fast but still we fought
our Colonel was severely wounded
3 times the lieutenant
Colonel the same shot through
the thigh My Company was
on the left flank of the
Regiment we are armed with
rifles and they did their work
of death at all most ^{at} every discharge
we held the right wing of

the enemy and kept him
from flanking us the enemy
went that in and around us
like a storm of hail the first
man that fell in my company
fell by my side shot through the
head he was our first corporal I look-
ed around in the rear and saw
another shot square through the
forehead he expired instantly
he was a noble boy I knew him
when he was a little boy
then the right of the regiment
fell back and left our little
company to breast the storm of
death that was incessantly
poured into us we held our
ground until our ammunition
was all gone and then we fell back
Just at that critical moment
our reinforcements came
up and ~~and~~ supported by
artillery we soon drove the
Redbills

from the field they left
a great many of these killed and
wounded behind them we lost
in our Regiment 333 killed and
wounded we lost in our Company
10 killed and 26 severely wounded
and 6 slightly wounded which
will soon be able for duty I am
among the wounded
our Regiment lost 7 Captains 5 killed
2 wounded (there was only 9 went
in the field as the other was sick)
13 Lieutenants out of 18 that went
into the field 5 killed 8 wounded
we are had a beautiful
Regiment but it is only
a skeleton Regiment now
we are on the advance in ~~Regiments~~
Benclerans Camp and are
ready for another fight soon
because this pack wrighting I have to
wright on my knee Good By
wright soon Direct as before only
ad Hookers devotion

Nelson Perera