

Empire Brigade, Suffolk, Va. Nov 3<sup>d</sup> 1862.

Dear Cousin.

You will pardon my neglect for not answering your welcome letter, <sup>which</sup> which I recd last week. I recd the same time three letters from home. I began to think that they had forgotten me it being two weeks since I had heard from home. They were all well at home. Micha was getting along finely with the farm, which gives me much less care about home matters, which I hardly have time to think of at best. Sib spoke of your loss by fire, in her letter which I was very sorry to hear. You have my sympathy. We are having beautiful weather at present, quite warm and dry. I went out with our Company last night to Garrison Fort which is about one mile from camp and returned this morning to camp. After making preparations for the night I spread my blanket on the ground and tried to get some rest, after sleeping some two or three hours. I awoke up and found my blanket nearly wet through with dew, which is very heavy here owing to the swamp being so near. Last Saturday night I was on

Picket with nine of our men holding a Road Bridge  
I slept none during the night but let the boys take  
turns in sleeping during the night. I heard the  
Rifles firing on both sides of me, and didn't know  
but it would be our turn next, but the night passed quietly  
and slowly. The hours seem long when a person gets  
weary after long watching and listening. Last Thursday  
there were two of Co A's men buried poor fellows they died  
in the Hospital with out the kind care of a dear Mother  
or Sister for Comfort or care for them. They were buried near  
our encampment. I could not help dropping a tear as I  
thought of them, many miles from home and friends.

Thursday we rec'd orders to march with three days  
rations in our haversacks. Well we were soon ready and  
in Battalion line, our Company on the right. And left  
our Camp at three P.M. I didn't know where or how  
far we were to go before we were to halt. On, on we marched  
slipping but a few moments at a time till we had passed  
our Camp twenty two miles on the Road to Blackwater  
when we bivouac'd, for the remainder of the night. It  
was half past three when I spread my blanket to get a little  
sleep or rest, it being so frosty I couldn't sleep. I was quite  
tired after marching twelve hours, and working hard to  
keep the boys along and carrying one of their Bins beside  
my own baggage. There were a great many of the Soldiers  
gave out before we got through, one of our boys told me  
that he couldn't have gone through if I hadn't  
encouraged him that it was but a short way further

And we would stop for the night? It is pretty hard  
work when men are worn out by marching to keep them  
up and in line. We rested till five in the morning when  
our Artillery began shelling the town, then I thought  
the ball had opened. The Rebs did not reply and our Artillery  
withdrew. We were expecting to march right on to the  
River which was but two miles in advance with the hope  
of having a brush with them. The order was given to  
Counter-march by file left which changed the order of  
things considerable. We marched eleven miles before we got  
breakfast, when we stopped for four hours to take our breakfast  
and dinner combined. After resting we again took  
our line of march for Camp which we reached at half past  
twelve, tired and worn out, having but about six hours rest  
in all and marching forty four miles and carrying one  
of us all the way and some of the time two. Upon the whole  
we had a pretty hard march. Our force was about ten thousand  
strong, that of the enemy about fifteen. It was more of a  
reconnoitring expedition than a fighting one. So much for  
my poor description of our march. I have but very little  
leisure, when I am not on duty. I am busy in camp  
so much so that I am behind in answering my letters  
home. We are busy fixing for winter quarters, which  
consist of log huts built up four feet from the ground with  
the tent for a roof. Our Camp will soon look like a small  
town. We have a nice fireplace in our tent which adds  
much to our comfort. I wish you might be here to take  
tea with us some evening. We have Oysters when we wish

With warm bread, Butter (Livingston Co) with other firms. I  
expect to be from home soon. If you will come and see me  
I will have the best the establishment affords. I hope your  
father has returned to you again. I think he is worthy  
of much credit for the interest he has taken in behalf of our  
soldiers and will be long remembered by many as a kind  
friend. Give him my best wishes. I have not passed a Saturday  
in camp that seemed like a Saturday at home. I shall try and visit you  
at the end of this war if my life is spared to see that I can see  
you more than I can write. I must close as it is past eleven  
o'clock. With much love to you, I remain your affectionate  
Cousin Sam.

P.S. please write often your name. Sam.