

June 26th 1863

Dear Nettie,

I have not received a letter from you for some time but conclude a letter from me will be acceptable. (conceit?) We have been in rear of this place now 33 days & do not seem to be any nearer taking it than we were then. It is reported that armed forces are all around us, & are only delayed from attacking us as they do not know our force. I hope we get inside the works before they do attack us.

I live now in the woods. I am away from the regt. as I am troubled with diarrhea, & cannot do duty. There are two other officers with me. We have a tent fly stretched over us & sleep on India rubber blankets. I have two shirts one pr drawers & one pr socks. I lay in bed while my Ethiopian is washing them.

All the rest of the officers are pretty much the same way as we were not allowed to bring any baggage with us.

By the way, speaking of Ethiopians, reminds me of the account of the loss of the Negro regiment at this place. I see all the New York papers report their loss at 600. Now this is not true. Their total loss in killed & wounded was 70! making quite a difference. They did not go over the rebel works as there was a dense swamp between them & the works across which they could not get. They have since crossed it. Our regt. has been engaged here twice & is not mentioned in the papers at all. The fact is Genl. Banks does not allow any news paper correspondence, so the reporters have to send home the rumours they hear.

Some amusing incidents occur here. For instance. The 75th N.Y. regt. lay on the right of ours in the rifle pits, so close to the rebs. that they could talk to them. One night one of the rebs. sung out, "I say, Yanks!! Where's Hooker?" One of the 75th immediately replied, "gone to Stonewall Jackson's funeral." This reply was satisfactory & there were no more questions asked. Our boys would sing the National Airs, to which the rebs. would reply by singing Secesh airs! You would hear our boys offering to trade hard tack (army biscuit) for corn bread, & telling the rebs. to come over & get them. Such is war. Shoot at one another one minute & laugh & joke together the next.

I had green corn for dinner over three weeks ago, and green peas nearly two months. Strawberries & Black berries were out of season some time ago.

There is nothing more at present. Give my love to baby & all enquiring friends.

Yours with love,

Frank