

Behind Breastworks,

Near Hanover Junction, Va.

Just on the South Bank of the
North Anna River.

May 26, 1864.

My Dearest Bellie,

Some time since the
mail brought me fifteen letters at once.
Amongst them was yours. I cannot
do better than give you a line to-day
just for greens and to satisfy you of my
continued entity and healthfulness.

I have written to Byron two or three
times but have as yet received no
reply - no doubt he has written but
the mails don't come once in a cat's
age. I hope they go oftener.

Since my last to him written about
the 16th we have changed our position
a few times and are now a few miles
nearer Richmond - meantime we have

been under fire a few times
and lost a few more of our
officers and men. You have
the photograph of Lieut J. S. Roberts
of our Regt - he was killed
in a charge we made ^{two} nights
before last - poor fellow! he
was brave as steel, and a
good friend. Tuesday P.M. while
we were building entrenchments
under fire a solid shot passed
directly through another one of our
officers - Lt. W. F. Boyes - and his
grave is now marked just under
a tree near by. So they take
them one by one, score by score.

When will all this strife and danger,
and sacrifice of life and production
of sorrow and misery cease?

The soul cries out to God with strange
fearful earnestness to know the reason
of all this.

I cannot give you any idea
of what we have passed through

these last twenty-two days.
It is enough to say that there never
was such continued persistence
and call upon endurance in the
history of this war. We have
for consolation (?) the assurance
that Grant will never give up
till he finally accomplishes his
plans. I sincerely hope he may
be successful and bring to a
close this outrageous, unnatural
war.

The birds sing just as sweetly as
ever, and the flowers spring up
and blossom tenderly and lovely,
but the eye is closed to all these
pleadings of nature for harmony
and concord; the ear crushed
with the diabolical roar of guns
intent on murder.

Never before have I fully ex-
perienced what war was. It is
now made lucid to the vilest
dregs! — I am in a bad

State of mind - am out of cigars -
am all out of roots. A letter
from home to-day would do me
good - will one come?

You wish to make a bargain
with me do you? if I wont say
anything more about your flirting
you wont say anything about my
smoking! - indeed! and did I
ever complain about any of your
candle lectures on that latter
point? - it strikes me that you
never caused any particularly
uncomfortable feelings in my
sensitive conscience when you
blew me up! on the whole I
rather liked to hear you talk
and you may keep on doing so -
I can stand it. When I feel
in the mood of bawling you
about your beaut, be sure
you will get a broadside.

I do not find opportunities to
write to all. Many Good (give

her my love, God bless her) and
all other consious will have to wait
till more peaceful times for letters
from me. I do not know when
Add is, cannot you send him some
of my letters? Also inform other
inquiring friends that I am as
yet all right, thanks to a kind
Providence.

We are having hot, hot weather
with frequent showers, both are
not always comfortable.

Lt-Col. Merrill commands the
Regt. I still act as Adj. and
get along nicely - wish I had
a good pair of boots!

My love to all. Good P.M.
Thine Ever.

Wash.

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