

Camp at White Oak Swamp VA
June 8th, 1862

Dear Friends,

Three days after the battle, Casey's Division was ordered back seven miles to the rear, on the Chickahoming where we now are. This morning being Sunday I concluded I should not be interrupted and I sat down to write you but had written only one line when we were ordered to "fall in line" immediately and away we went some 300 of us, infantry and cavalry, on a reconnaissance out about 4 miles, but the Secesh had left and after staying till night and taking one prisoner we came into camp again where my eyes were gladdened by the welcome sight of a letter from home (leaving date May 31st). Need I say that I was glad to hear that you were all well, and just as glad to inform you that I to am enjoying good health and although not as comfortably situated as I could wish yet am quite contented.

This morning a letter came here for Court Cooper. I opened & read it. It was from Lib [Whipple]. In it was a sheet of paper, an envelope, & postage stamp all of which I use in sending this letter for Court is not here. Tell them to send no more letters here to him for he will not get them. The last I heard from him he was in hospital at Yorktown, getting better after being very sick. He is probably in New York or Philadelphia. Just as soon as we hear from him I will write. Please pay back to Libbie the writing materials I have used and tell her to excuse the liberty I took with her letter. I had 3 letters for Court but when the Secesh took our camp at Seven Pines my knapsack & letters all I had of course went up, and his with the rest. You will no doubt feel highly honored that the letters you have written to your son are now being perused in the Capitol of a great and mighty nation like the Southern Confederacy. Yet so it is, although the idea is rather laughable after all. You will read that Casey's Division did not fight well, but I say we did, for the enemies whole force of from 40 to 70 thousand came down upon 6000 of us and we had no one to reinforce us till it was to late. They surprised us and had us in front and on one side, exposed to their fire and we had to retreat or they would have taken us prisoners. The 92nd stood firm till they were ordered to retreat, and if we had stood 30 minutes longer there would have been nothing left of it. Co. I went in with 29 men and had 2 killed & 8 wounded and two missing. I made up my mind that it would be all day with me, for the bullets flew like hail and I did not think it was possible to escape. They whipped past my ears, and cut the bushes and stumps around me and while retreating a perfect shower of lead rained upon us, but he that guides each whistling bullet and the hissing shell saw fit to turn them away from me and my life was spared still longer to praise him who doeth all things well.

Read the list of killed and wounded of Casey's Division and then you will believe that they did what they could.

The boys from De Kalb are all well today. Courtland Green of Hermon Co D died June 2nd (he is the cattle dealer that I went to Connecticut with) he is a brother of Loren Green I believe.

I have written two letters since the battle, to you and I will repeat what I say there, "send me paper, envelope & stamp if you wish an answer", for we are as poor as Job's turkey just at present.

There is a report that our Division is to be ordered back to Washington in a few days. I will write as often as I can, and wish you to do the same.

From your affectionate son,

John

My Love to all, my best respects to Mr. Hurlbut & lady & infant 'ry.