Chickahominy river Va. May 13th 1862

Dear Pa

It has been so long since I wrote to you that I expect you have concluded that I am either killed or a prisoner, but I am still well and in our company. I guess we were as much surprised as you all were, when we heard that we were to evacuate Yorktown. We all hated to leave very much and were anxious to fight them there, but I expect it was a wise move in Gen. Johnston. We lost everything we had except what we could carry on our backs. I have got one knapsack and one blanket, 2 shirts, 2 pairs of drawers, 4 pairs of socks and 2 fatigue shirts. I have only 1 coat and pair of pants. I could not conveniently carry any more. I lost my overcoat but don’t want another one till I write for one.

We left Yorktown at about 8 o’clock on Saturday night more than a week ago, and marched to Williamsburg, a distance of twelve miles over an awfully boggy road, and reached there about day. We then stayed there that day and the next night, and started off from Williamsburg early the next morning, but had gone only a few miles when we heard that they had commenced fighting about two miles from Williamsburg, whereupon we marched back to Williamsburg in quick time, where we staid several hours before going to the battle ground, our brigade being held in reserve. At last our brigade was ordered there, and we went in almost double quick time, splashing the mud, which was nearly knee-deep, but we didn’t mind the mud then, we were anxious to get to the fight. When we got there our brigade was drawn up in line of battle in a field near some woods, in which they were fighting furiously. Our brigade after standing there a while, moved on into the woods to the assistance of our men there, but we didn’t get there in time to fire a gun at the Yankees, for our men had run them just as we came up. We staid in the woods till dark, and then marched back into the field where we had to stand all night on our feet, waiting for our men to bury the dead and bring off the wounded. That was the worse night I ever spent, for we were thoroughly wet, (for it was raining all the time) and very cold, and we were very tired, having been marching nearly all day, but we could not sit down, for the ground was wet and very muddy, so we had to try it standing up all night. I went to sleep and came very near falling down in the mud several times, and some did go to sleep and fall down sprawling in mud. After staying there till nearly day we marched on through W’sb’g and twelve miles this side, and camped for the night. We started on the morning, and have been marching nearly everyday since. I think we will make a stand here at Chickahominy river. The Yankees have kept up with our rear guard all the way, and it would not surprise me if we have a fight before long. We are faring very hard now, don’t get enough to eat, but we buy some and make out to live. Jud, who is in bad health, has just been discharged and is now hurrying me to give the letter to him to carry to Ga.

Love to all,

Excuse my abrupt conclusion

Your son

Henry Bunn