

Camp of the 94<sup>th</sup> Reg. N.Y.  
near Fitzhugh Mansion, Va, June 2, 63.

Dear Mother:

Your letter and Father's, of the 28<sup>th</sup> ult, came to hand yesterday P.M. Of course they were very welcome, I wrote to you last, upon the 24<sup>th</sup> ult, naming a few articles in addition to the list of the day before, that I wished sent me by express; and seeing that Father has included them in the list of his purchases, I know that the letters had been received.

I was not disappointed that the Citizen did not contain extracts from my letters to you, which contained an account of our experience during the recent movements. It was just as well: the paper had been full of correspondence from the Army. I may write a short letter for the Citizen this week, as there are materials for an interesting communication.

The express package will be all right I have no doubt, judging from the list of contents. I think there are three packages from New-York, now at Washington, awaiting an opportunity to be brought to the Reg. I sent to Joe Warren for a couple of steel scabbards, one for Meek & the other for myself (as our leather scabbards are ruined) for several pairs of shoulder straps, a couple of umbrellas (for other officers) a flannel jacket & pants for myself, some stationery & other articles, and have received a letter from him stating that he had already forwarded two packages of plunder, and was about to send another. Our Par-

major promised to bring Express packages to me, but has not done so. I wrote, to Mrs. Mendenhall to get them & keep them at Mrs. Bannermans until she had an opportunity, to send them to me by Mrs. Hill, or some one else, who might be carrying to the Reg. So that I am expecting them, as well as the package from home, every day.

The mandating of our camp routine has not been much spoken of lately. But I have to inform you of an important step from my part, which will doubtless cause you some surprise, inasmuch as I have never intimated to you any such intention; and although you may not cordially approve the step, I hope you will not attempt, to dissuade me from it.

In connection with several other officers, I have made application for the command of a Co. of Colored troops. An order appeared in the Philada Engineer & Washington Chronicle of Thursday & Friday - 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> ult, which gave the necessary measures, to be taken, by those who wished to secure positions in Colored Regiments. For those already in the service, it was necessary, to accompany their letter of application, with a certificate of their qualifications, fitness for command, good moral character, &c. — signed by their Comd'g officers. These letters of application, with certificates, are sent to the Chief of Bureau for Colored troops, Care of the Adj't Genl. to whom they are presented for approval, & he forwards to such applicants an order, to appear before the Examining Board at Washington, at such a date, to be examined as to their physical, mental & moral

planned to command troops. The Ex. Board makes report to the Adj. Genl. of applicants examined & passed, stating <sup>for</sup> what grade of rank each applicant is fit. I have little doubt that I can get the position of a Capt. for which I consider myself just as capable as thousands of others. However I would be quite willing to go into a Colored Reg. as 1st and await the chance of promotion.

I am desirous of leaving the 94<sup>th</sup> as I am entirely dissatisfied with its discipline, and feel that if ever I wish to attain to any proficiency in military, the sooner I get into another Reg. the better.

The policy of organizing Colored troops is an important one & is destined to be extensively developed. The Govt will watch with a jealous eye over the working of this policy, and will take just pride in its success.

Those who pass the examination satisfactorily, will receive authority to recruit in certain districts throughout the Southern & Western States, to which they may be assigned. If civilians they will not be commissioned until their Co.s are ready to be mustered in, or, if already Capt. Officers, recommended for a higher rank, they will secure their promotion in like manner.

Should I be so fortunate as to get recruiting authority, I would of course be able to spend some time during the summer, in recruiting (which may be considered a great advantage) & might get a furlough the same time, which I have no hopes of getting here, as none are granted now. The other three officers, whose application went in with mine, are Capt. Downing, Lieut. Alexander & Rutwell.

With a no. of other officers have since made applications, the idea seeming to have met with general favor: all the prejudices against the policy of arming the negroes & organizing them into Regts, having apparently melted away.

Last Saturday Capt. Bailey of the 157<sup>th</sup> Regt. paid me a visit, staying all night. He more reviewed that day by Gen. Pigeon's orders, that is our whole Corps. Bailey gave me an interesting account of their experience at the battle of Chancellorsville on Sat. when the 11<sup>th</sup> Corps (in which his Regt. is) broke as disgracefully; thereby snatching from our grasp the fruits of nearly bought success which had preceded, & which was doubtless the prime cause of our failure of complete <sup>triumph</sup> success.

It would seem that his Regt. conducted itself nobly, holding its position for some time, in spite of the infamous rout which surrounded them. Their loss was considerable, especially in his Co. He has within a Lieut. & more Serg. left.

When I informed him of my application, with other officers of our Regt. for a position in a colored Regt. he signified his intention of also immediately applying, & of course I passed him as to the "modus operandi".

About 7 o'c, Sat. Sunday, having procured a horse, I rode with Bailey over to the camp of the 58<sup>th</sup> which was not much out of his way, & perhaps less than four miles from here, beyond White Oak Church. It was a beautiful morning & we had a delightful ride. We had quite a visit with Capt. Lady Palmer. He was in excellent health & looked