

[Different handwriting at top]
No. 219 Mailed at Port Royal S.C.
Feby 15
Recd Feby 20

[Letter]
Jacksonville Florida
South Carolina
Feby 9. 1864

Dear Father

I will try and write a line to you from this new position. We arrived at this place day before yesterday morning 7th inst. Three companies of our Regt. (Cos A. B. & "D") were on board Stmr [steamer] "Maple Leaf" with "Genl Seymore" [Seymour], commdr of [the] Expedition—as advance—we approached the city—following close to the gun boat. As soon as the stmr could get up to the wharf Co "D" was the first to land. Your son was in command (Capt. Jones was sick.) With my Co. (Maj. Appleton landed with Co.) [we] advanced and scoured the city. As we were landing, the enemy were drawn up (about 50 cavalry), fired a volly into us and at Stmr, wounding one man. They then "skedaddle" [skedaddled]. We followed them up as fast as possible, firing into them. They, being on horse-back, got away but [we] succeeded in cutting off two of them.

I deployed Co. as skirmishers, and advanced cautiously. Captured two men and one Horse. After Cavalry landed, of course they went on ahead. I followed on as support—with my "Co."

Our Cavalry captured 10 of the enemy's cavalry. We returned to city about dark. Reported to Genl. with prisoners. He said I must take charge of them during night—that I was responsible for them. Then my Co. must do Provost duty and guard at Hd Qurs [Headquarters]. I did not sleep at all. He kind of scared me. Joined Regt yesterday morning, doing Picket duty and here I am now, all safe and sound feeling well—but not much to eat.

Capt. Webster has gone on with his Regt.—saw him as he passed us. Genl. Seymore [Seymour] with his Army has gone on with intention of attacking enemy. He had good success as far as we learn—captured quantities of guns, etc. "Finnegan" [Finegan], with his rebs, Skedaddled. Col. Hallowell is left in Command of Post.

Hope to hear from you soon. Write often as you can.

We are roughing it- I can tell you have not anything with us- living under God's own sky- sleeping on the ground with [a] big fire at our feet- but when we are on duty at picket line can not have the last named comfort.

Jacksonville is, or was, a very pretty place—but War has ravished it. It is made desolate and lonely.

Must close
Your affc Son
C M. Duren
Lieut. Commdg. Co. D
54th M. Vols.

Transcribed by Nicole J. Milano, University of Florida, 2008.