

[Different handwriting on top]

No. 223

Maild. P. Royal Mch 6

Recd Mch 15

[Letter]

Jacksonville, Florida

Feby 29, 1864

Dear Mother

Dont be frightened Mother, but this is the only sheet of paper I have or can get, and this was given to me for the purpose of making some kind of a report on to send in to Head Quarters. Its so long since I have written a letter on a decent sheet of paper that I could not resist the temptation. I guess can beg another sheet from the Adjutant in some way. For a wonder we have been in camp two days without a move. When we came in from the front we were quartered in the city. Next day were ordered outside about ½ mile at a beautiful grove just at night, and as we had got fixed somewhat comfortable, firing was heard at picket line. Report came that enemy was 4 miles out in force and would attack us in the morning. Well, we had to give up this spot remove nearer town. Were drawn up in line of battle, commenced throwing up works, and in less than two hours we had a complete line of earth works. About the quickest piece of work I ever saw done. Each officer in command had to exercise what Engineering Capacity he could scrape up and it was not bad—if I do say it—for when the Engineer Corps arrived they had very few suggestions to make. Dont need to show men who have been in front of Wagner much about earth works. Well we remained in trenches two nights when we came to the conclusion that we were sold, rebel videttes around disturbing our line, next day came out side took up our camping ground. Yesterday as soon as we got a little fixed, had to go to work making out Muster Rolls and monthly reports, etc. To day we had Muster and Inspection

But I think you would a good deal rather have me tell you about how I manage to live without tents, without our trunks and all the luxuries of camp life without money too. I'll try and tell you something about it. My shelter consists of a small board hut just large enough to crawl into—something like this:

[drawing]

In front of this is a square place built out just high enough to stand up in, [which is] open at top. This is made of green bushes—makes it very pleasant indeed. Here is where I am writing now. Tis eve—candle bums very quietly—a large fire is burning just in front. Here is where I eat (Army rations) & I wish that bbl. would come which Gilman has sent. Then I would live.

9 PM. Have just had Roll Call gave men a few instructions about keeping equipments on gun close by their side.

Call my non-commissioned officers to my quarters gave them a lecture00

now I'm seated again to finish this letter.

Mother I want some more of my photograph you may think I'm going strong, but I get others in return. All the officers of Regt. I want to get. My book which you gave me is full and more than full—I want a dozen [*sic*] more.

The duty of taking names of those in Rgt. who have not been vaxenated [vaccinated] has been assigned to me. Tomorrow morning I go with them to the Surgeon in town and see that it is done. There are a few cases of "Small Pox" in Hospital (not ours) but one established about mile away from any one in the woods, [and] great care is used. Have I had it, no fear of it but should like to know.

I recd letter from Capt. Hutchings to day. [He] sent his photograph—tis good—he has not forgotten me.

I must close letter and get into my "Kennel" and rest. I have a great deal of care just now. Men all lost knapsacks and clothing in the fight, and we have to draw new for them. This is hard work.

Government will probably give them a new outfit—so that I shall not be accountable for much.

aft.

Charles

Give very much love to all at home. I long to hear once more from you.

Me Your Affc Son Charles

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