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Head Quarters 5th Maine Regiment
Camp in the field Va.
July 12th 1862

Governor Washburn

Dear Sir

Allow me to address you in a few lines as being senior officer of this Regt and not knowing that any one has written you I thought I would give you a hurried account of our Regt since Col Jackson left. I asked Gen Slocum also Col. Bartlett acting Brigadier of our Brigade to write you in regard to the state of our Regt. also requested Dr Brickett to inform you the condition of our wounded and sick on the day after the battle. I should have written you before but thought I had better let the smoke clear away first.

On Friday the 27th our Regt was called upon to support a battery that was placed to guard a bridge near the Gains place, we were at that time under Col. Jackson and our lamented Col. Heath we were held in that position until about four o'clock P.M. we were then relieved by a Regt from Smith's Division, we were then ordered with the rest of our Brigade to cross the Chickahominy below at Woodbury Bridge which place we crossed at about five o'clock P.M. we went from

then on to the field of Battle. Col. Jackson was wounded very soon after we got under fire, Col. Heath was killed almost at the same time, I was talking with him but a moment before he fell, he was very cool, and not the least exerted, I think he was one of the bravest men I ever saw, and his loss can never be made up to the Regt. it was then between the hours of six and seven P.M.. At the time Col. Jackson was wounded he was near the left of the Regt., so I was not made aware that he was wounded until near dark, but as soon as the fact became known to me I took charge of the Regt. or what was left of it, as many had left with the dead and wounded, as we had no stretchers at the time it took from two to four men to carry away one wounded, so in a short time our Regt. became quite small, but it still held the ground it so dearly obtained as we drove the rebels from it. It was here that the noble Col. Heath fell. Our Regt. held its position until twenty-seventh New York on our left and sixteenth on our right fell back, the order then came to fall back which was done in good order. Our Regt. was the last to leave the field it was quite dark at the time and our boys had been aiming at the blaze of the rebel muskets for some time. I can truly say that our Regt. did honour to itself. It was then nine o'clock, I then started for our ^{in company} camp, with the ninety sixth Regt Penn. Vols. we arrived in camp about eleven o'clock P.M. with about two hundred and fifty of our Regt. I think there were about four

Hundred when we went into action, and seventy of that number were killed or wounded the rest who were looking after the dead and wounded came into camp before light Saturday morning.

Our camp that night was anything but pleasant our Col. laid on his cat wounded, our Lieut. Col. was left on the field dead, five of our ^{line officers} wounded and missing which was one third of the officers present at the commencement of the action, we got but little rest that night we laid on our arms and were called into line of battle three times during the night Saturday morning June 28th we were called out to support a battery also to march in view of the enemy to draw the attention from the left wing of our army, but we came near paying dear for our show as the Rebels got a good range and fired shell and solid shot directly over our line we being at the time in line of battle some of their shot went but a few feet over our heads the whole length of our line, we were then placed in a different position and remained in line of battle until two o'clock Sunday morning, ^{when} we with the rest of the Division were ^{ordered} towards the James River, we arrived at Savage Station at sun rise and rested about two hours we then moved on to White Oak ^{Swamp}, there rested and ate dinner, at two moved on ^{towards} and rested Charles City Cross Roads, then went on picket this being the third night since our men had had any rest, Monday morning our Brigade was ordered back to the batteries of our Division also to blockade roads.

The first part of the day we had but little to do but at two P.M. the Rebels brought a battery to bear on our Division, it was soon silenced by ours with small loss there was no one hurt in our Regt and but few in our Brigade the Canonading was the most terrific I ever heard, more than one hundred shot per minute many of them were thirty two pounders, it was kept up until near sundown we were then ordered to charge on the enemy but they fell back before the charge could be made we laid on our arms until about two o'clock Tuesday morning then moved on towards our destination we arrived at Turkey Bend at nine all safe. The Rebel lines were within shelling distance for some miles on our front. we halted and ate our breakfast of hard bread and coffee as ~~much~~ we had not seen for a week, we rested a few hours then moved on down the river about two miles, there took dinner and rested until three o'clock in the hot sun in an open field. we were then ordered on picket as we expected the Rebels would be in on us from the north side of the Chickahominy as we heard they had crossed Bottom Bridge also at Long Bridge our Brigade and finally the most of our Division were on the same line. at five Tuesday afternoon we commenced a breast-work of timbers and earth and at nine our line for miles was very strong, we laid on our arms until two o'clock then came to Harrisons Landing, arrived about nine o'clock A.M. in a heavy rain, we pitched our tents in a beau-

tiful wheat field, but in a few hours the wheat disappeared and the mud was knee deep, we remained ^{at the Landing} ~~in this place~~ until Thursday afternoon, when we came to this place where we still remain.

I was alone or at least had but little ^{help} from any officers till we came here I called on Gen. Slocum and requested that I might have Lieut Col Frick of the 96 Penn Regt. to help ^{me}, the Gen's answer was that I could have him also a horse or anything I wanted as I had been through a difficult week alone without a horse, from that time until the present my duties have been much lighter, I was appointed acting Major after Col. Frick came. we are now in camp about a mile from Harrison's Landing our boys are all in very good spirits we number five hundred and fifty that is the present strength of our Regt. we have a great many detached men away from the Regt. some are attendants of Hospitals at Philadelphia some at Washington and finally there are some in almost every place the Army has occupied. some of our Companies are almost destitute of Officers, we have no Field Officers except acting ones our Adjutant has not been fit for duty but a day or two for the last two weeks. Co. A. has two Officers Capt. Millett and Lieut Whyte. Capt. Millett was not with us in any of the six days fight being unwell at the time. Co. B. has only the Second Lieut left Capt Stevens was badly wounded and Lieut Pillsbury missing. Co. C. is full Co. D. has Capt.

and Second Lieutenant both have applied for leave of absence on account of ill health. Co. C. Capt Saggitt Lost Lieut Lement badly wounded taken prisoner and probably dead Second Lieut Stevens for duty. Co. F. Capt Sherwood on leave of absence since the Battle of Bull Run July 21st 1861 Lieut A. V. Walker present for duty but quite unwell, Second Lieut F. Sanbourn for duty. Co. G. Capt Patch resigned, Lieut Harris for duty and Second Lieut During do. Co. H. Capt G. H. Brown for duty Lieut Shannon on detached service as *aid de camp* to Gen. Hecum Second Lieut G. E. Bricknell for duty. Co. I. Capt C. S. Edwards Acting Major. Lieut J. B. Walker on leave of absence to Maine. Second Lieut J. W. Sanbourn health very poor but compelled to take charge of the company as there is no other officer. Co. K. Capt Buckman for duty Lieut Packard resigned. Second Lieut Lyon for duty. Our Surgeon is a contract one his name is Walker a fine man for the place. Surgeon Brickett contract up. Ass. Surgeon Warren away on leave of absence on account of ill health. also the Chaplain is absent for the same reason. Col. Jackson I learn is to be gone one month. Major Scammon is away on leave of absence on account of ill health so you can see we are rather short for officers. Col. Jackson is now at Lewiston and I hope will recommend to you some good temperate men to fill the vacancies that now exist in the Regt. as we have less than one half our quota fit for duty. I do not ask to be promoted in this Regt. under Col. Jackson but should feel that injustice was done me to have any one jumped over me. I was in hopes

in hopes to be able to obtain a place as one of the Field Officers in the 16th Me Regt. but I see by the papers that the appointments have already been made. I sent you a recommendation from Col. Jackson, Lieut Col Heath, and Maj. Scammon I will also send one approved by Gen. Franklin, Locum and Bartlett if you require it.

I would like a Major or Lieut. Col's Commission in one of the new Regts or either of the others if you thought me worthy of it. but would not like to be a Field Officer under Col. Jackson in this.

I think Gen. Locum also Col. Bartlett will tell you I did my duty faithfully in looking after the ^{of the} welfare of the Regt through the trying scenes which we have passed. I hope you will consider my case as one that is deserving of a better position than I now occupy, I have been in the service near fifteen months and must be I think the senior Captain from Maine I have not as yet seen the first sick day or been off duty except the few days I was in Maine last winter and was then at work most of the time recruiting.

I have given you a true account of our Regt. as far as the facts can be got at. and anything you wish to know I have not written I will be happy to inform you, if you can give me a commission in any Regt you will very much oblige

Your obedient servant
L. S. Edwards
Acting Maj 5th Me Regt.

Capt. C. S. Edwards.

5th Regt.

July 12

Field Office in New York