

Camp near Suffolk. Va.

May 2<sup>nd</sup> 63

Dear brother & Sister [Melville J. Titus & Samantha E. Titus, older sister and brother-in-law]

I received your

kind letter about 15 minutes

ago I was glad to hear from

you we are well & getting along

very well we had quite a skir-

-mish yesterday [This was part of a siege by the Confederacy of Suffolk, VA from 22 April to 14

May 1863.] about 200 of our

men crossed the river [The Nansemond River] & made

an advance on the enemy at the

same time 3 of our forts afired

on them our regiment was orderd

across but they shoved them

selves in so Larg aforce that

we was stationed in rifle pits

but the grape & canester made

them soon hunt their holes

we had 4 killed & 37 wounded

it was a pretty heavy loss for

the number engaged but their

[written in margin]

we would one good

old time wouldent we

orders are to have our canteens

ready to fall in at dark

I will write to Hannah

in a day or two

I hope we may soon

meet again

must have been far greater

than ours for they opend no

batteries on us they came out

in plain sight of where we

was we could see shells burst

right amongst them one shell

struck a horse & burst just as

it struck I suppose it was afield

officer onit I tell you the battle

field is no desirable sight

we did not go out till half

past four & came back before

sun down I don't know what the

object was in sending afew

men across unless unless it was to try

their strength it loocked hard

to see men brought off the

field on the stretcher some  
shot in one place & some in  
an other there has some of  
the wounded died since last  
night if we had crossed the river  
some of us would have met with

the same fate my prayer  
is to God that I may ever  
be ready so if it is my fate  
to fall on the battle field  
that may fall with the  
armor of Jesus on my desire  
is first to serve my God & then  
my country I had to lay this  
aside for Dress parade & supper we  
had oysters for supper we try to  
make our selves as comfortable  
as we can the health of our  
regi[ment] is quite good at present  
we are in General Terrey's [Brigadier General Henry Dwight Terry] brigade  
first division of the 7<sup>th</sup> army  
corps in the defence of Va.  
General Peck [Major General John J. Peck] is in command here  
General Terrey is from Detroit Mich[igan]  
I don't see but what we get our  
mail just about as quick  
as we did in Alexandria [Alexandria, Virginia] the first  
mail we got here was Wednesday  
&& I have had 7 letters two each  
day till to day I got one

if I could not hear from  
home often I should be very  
lonesome a few lines from home  
revives a soldier very much yesterday  
after we was in in line to go out  
I got a letter from Hannah what  
would have been mor precious just  
then the mail came just as the  
Drum beat to fall in & the letters  
was distributed after we got in line  
while I am writing the rifles are popping  
but they don't make much nois  
when they come Sic on the big guns  
I heard Truman [Truman Titus, Melville's younger brother] was to work for  
you this summer if so give him  
my best respects Thomas Clements [Private Thomas J. Clements]  
& Charles Godley [Private Charles A. Godley] was left to  
alexandria they are sick

we have to get up every morning at  
3oc & stack our guns & keep our strap  
on till morning they expect if  
the rebs attack us that they will  
do it very early in day I dont  
think that ever will attack this  
place well I guess you will get sick  
by the time you get it read  
or guessed at for I cant hardly read  
it my self from your affectionate  
brother S. Holt  
To M. J & S. E Titus  
write often as  
you can  
my love to all