

In Camp May 19”

My darling wife,

I was very much disappoint<sup>ted</sup> by not being able to write to you again, on the evening of the day that I wrote you last, but at dark we were sent out to the front on picket, where we said till dark last night and then we came in to the trenches and laid there last night with out guns by our sides. We are in the same position yet, with the evening in front, and the shells flying over our heads, so you see that I have not a very nice place to write, but my dear little wife shall not be disappointed of her letters as long as I can get any kind of a chance to write. I received another letter from you yesterday, dated May 11” you did not write quite as hopefully the last time as I would like you to feel. You must not doubt, my darling, but God will do that which is best for us. I feel that He has me in his especial care, and after what I have seen I should be blind to doubt that I had been saved by a direct answer to your prayers. I will explain how it was

Last Monday we lay in line of battle, and the shells were ploughing through our ranks, when it came to my mind as direct and distinct as though I had received such an order, that I must move from that place, and I said to Henry, that I must move from there, and got up and went to the left of the Co. and laid down there (Henry moved forward a little) and he told me afterwar<sup>d</sup> that I did not move any to soon, for I had but fairly got away from the spot when a shell struck exactly where I had been lying. I assure you my precious wife that I feel how entirely we are dependant we are on his love and mercy for everything that we enjoy I shall never fail from this time, to return gratefull thanks for all of the blessings that He has bestowed upon me, and to pray that I may return to you and find you all in health. and I hope you will not forget when you are asking His protection for me that He will help me to lead a better life. I feel as though, you are in his care, and that He will be your protection, let what will happen to me. and I assure you that the thought is a great comfort to me. I do not wonder my poor girl feels anxious and worried, on my account, but I assure you that your fears greatly magnify the dangers of my position, and I do hope dear Emmy, that you will try and be as cheerfull and hopefull as possible, for I assure you my own darling, that your happiness is the greatest object of my life. You do no know how much I love you, my dear Emmy, and you never could know by my telling you, the only way for you to learn is to ask your own heart, that can tell you. I feel so thankfull for your love, that I feel as though I could not do enough to make myself worthy of such a love, and at the time I made you the promise you speake of, it was with that idea. If it will be a comfort to you ~~th~~ to have me tell you that I have kept it, I will do as every time I write, if you wish, though I know you do no need any such assuran<sup>ce</sup> I have not tasted any kind of sprite since I wrote you that letter, though you would hardly beleive how hard it was at first, indeed, I was not aware myself, that I had been acquiring an appetite\*\*\* [?] for such stimulant untill I came to do without it intirely. There nothing possible, that I would not do if your happiness was in any way affected by it. I would leave off the use of tobacco if it would make your condition any better or pleasanter and that I would not have done before we were married. so you see that I do love you better than I did then. In fact I love you so much more now, that it seems as though that was silly and not worth thinking of I am very thankfull to learn that your health is improving, I think it would be well for you to be in the open air as much as possible. You must be careful for my sake, of your health, and do not work too

hard. You may think you are not doing much, but you must remember that you are a poor little weak fellow, and are not capable of doing much of anything, except loving your husband and children. so do not fret, darling, because you cannot earn money, like some of the women about there, just think if I would change my little darling sick wife for any of them, and all the money in the world besides. When I get home again, I will take such care of you, that you shall feel your feeble health to be a blessing to you. I am very sorry, that I could not keep that journal, since you would like it, but I tell you Emmy, that when a poor fellow has to carry every ounce that he is able to such a small affair as that is a burden. You may be sure that I have got all the load that I can carry, since I am obliged to burn up your letters. I cannot carry them with me, and do not like to leave them in my knapsack, as it is liable to be lost any day, and I do not wish to have any strangers read my precious letters. I have got 4 now, and after I finish this, I must read them once more and then burn them all but one. You must write often for they are a great comfort to me. You had better direct to Fortress Monroe, as they will come sooner. Our defeat the other day, did not amount to much after all, we got back in good ordre, and accomplished nearly all we went for. The enemy do not gain anythi<sup>ng</sup> by it, and there loss must have been greater than our own, take all the fights for the 2 days together.

Everything looks favorable for our cause, and a speedy close of this terrible war. It will be a cause for rejoicing, when this event shall take place, and I hope that there is none that will rejoice more than you and I.

I received a letter from Elmer yesterday. He is still at Fort [Cass.\*] He says he saw George a short time ago, but I suppose you hear from him. I was in hopes to hear from mother, but did not. I received one from William a few days ago, which I intend to answer as soon as possible. Tell my little darling not to forget me. Tell my Annie that her father loves her best of anything in the world, except mothr I am glad to learn that you have one less cause for anxiety than you feared when I left, though it is all for your own sake, as I should like it best of anything if it could be, without placeing you in an unpleasant situation. But now darling I must say good bye again for a little while. I shall write just as often ~~z~~ as possible May God bless and keep you from sorrow, is the prayer of your  
Leander