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## Richard C. Bridges to Sister M., 5 November 1861

Richard C. Bridges

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Camp near Brandy Station Va October 5<sup>th</sup> 1861

Dear Sister M,

I received a letter from you a few days ago being the only one I have gotten from miss in a long time, I was surprised to hear that you had not received my letters for I have written constantly to you and Sister Carri all the time I suppose it is all owing to the bad state of our mails in your section of the country, I can account for it in no other way. We have been having some spirited times up here on the battle scarred plains of Va this fall. Our Summer campaign closed after our bloody repulse at the heights of Bull Run and the fall came and found both armies on the old line of the upper Rappahannock, crippled and worn from one of the severest campaigns ever endured. Our Army was reduced by sending Longstreet's old invincible corps to check the advance of the prosperous Dutchman Rosecranz in Tenn, and the Gauss played the same game but too late to save their favorite leader from a crushing defeat. After recruiting and gaining strength we again assumed the offensive on the 7<sup>th</sup> of Oct, and crossed the river flanked Gen Meade's intrenchments and compelled him to run for his intrenchments.

at Washington Then commenced a perfect  
race the Yankees running and we pursuing. At  
night we would nearly catch up with them and  
probably would have a light skirmish but then  
we would have to halt on account of night while  
the Yankees would continue to run all night Thus  
it was that Meade outman I see to Washington  
We had some very lively little fights on the way  
the principle of which was at Bristoe station  
in which my brigade was engaged losing some  
fifty or sixty men killed and wounded I was  
along but did not get to fire a gun Although I was  
near enough to have killed my Yankee It being contrary  
to orders to fire until ordered I never wanted to  
shoot so bad in all my life Gen Meade being safely  
hid behind his entrenchments at Washington Gen Lee  
gave up the chase and returned to his old line on  
the Rappahannock having captured about 3,000 prisoners  
and torn up ever foot of rail road on the Orange  
and Alexandria R.R from Bristoe to the Rappahannock  
We are now camped on this stream about three  
miles from Brandy Station in a nice groove where  
wood and water is both plentiful and handy  
Our army is in a good state health and spirits  
so far as I am able to learn We are well clothed

the only thing that is scarce ~~being~~ clothing  
being socks Yesterday the paymaster gave us  
a call and paid us two months pay. We  
are very well fed our rations being beef and  
flour which is good enough for any soldier.  
We have no tents except such as we have taken  
from the Yankees. Some of the troops think we will  
make this our quarters during the winter. And  
some are so confident of this that they have  
begun to erect cabins. I hardly think we will  
have such good luck as to remain idle all  
this winter; We are living too well for it to last  
long — Well sister you remarked in your  
letter that Hugh had left me alone in my  
company. It is true I have lost the most of  
my friends in the Company but still I have  
some remaining. I sometimes think I will  
try to get a transfer to Billy Gray's Company in  
the Sixteenth but then I do not know that I would  
be as well satisfied there as I am in my present  
situation. A soldier should try to make himself  
satisfied wherever he is placed; thus I will  
endeavor to do. I was very sorry to hear that  
Mr Koronan and Brother James had found the  
army for I know neither of them are able

of return in Va  
about Virginia. Such would well continue to be my post office address  
to direct your letters to Capt. Wm. The Regt. Mass. Vol. Richmond Va

to endure the hardships and exposure of camp life I was glad to hear that Mr Alford had come out safe from the terrible siege of Vicksburg I had not heard from him in a long time and was quite uneasy on his account I am somewhat disposed to look all those who endured that arduous siege as heroes I have formed a better opinion of Pemberton's army since then — I visited Billy Gray the other day he was down on his knees before a piece of dough large enough to have worn out the patience of a much larger man making out biscuits biscuits large enough to knock down the walls of Fort Sumter with his health seems to be as good as I ever saw him Jim Alford is acting as assistant surgeon of the Regt They have not heard a word of Frank Ray yet since his capture You need not be uneasy about sending me clothing I drew an overcoat an overshirt and a pair of shoes from the Government the other day that cannot be surpassed in point of comfort I know some of your warm fears would be a luxury just now but do not trouble yourself about sending them to me I can get along without them I would like for you to send me some socks if you can I need them I hope Mollie has gotten well of the whooping cough I want to see her very bad Tell sister Carrie I will write to her in a day or two For the want of space I must close Gray for your brother Richards