Hilton Head, S.C. Oct 30th, 1863

Dr. Father & Mother - Having an opportunity between drill hours I thought I would improve it in writing you a few lines. I started from Fair Haven Thursday night. With the rest of the Conscripts marched down to the wharf, got aboard an old shell of a ship, had to lay down on the floor all cramped up till towards morning when we anchored off Rickers Island on which were encamped 500 York State recruits. We waited there till towards night for the Steamer which was to take us and the York State recruits to Hilton Head. The York State recruits went to Morris Island. We sailed within sight of Fort Sumpter, could see the flash of the guns and hear the report from some of our batteries that were firing on the Fort, also from ships. We arrived at Hilton Head Monday night about 9 o’clk, did not land till next day noon. I was seasick as a horse a day or two. There were between 7 and 800 men on board the Ship so that we did not have much room to spare. Some of them were pretty rough, a good many lost money and watches. Some had their pockets cut open and the money taken, others were choked. The Sea was awful rough Sunday. We all had to come on deck to get our rations of coffee, salt port and hard tack. The deck would be wet and slippery. The ship would rock first to one side then the other, and the boys would slide this way and that with their hot coffee scalding themselves and others. I am in the 6th Regt. C.V., the 8th Maine and 76th Pennsylvania Zouaves are encamped here with us. It is considered quite healthy here. I am well all but a cold. The nights are quite cool here. Penre is cook for Co. E.

There is a fellow that bunks in the same tent with me, says he is acquainted with Jo. He is from Farmington. His name is Griswold. He is awful homesick. I want you should write me all the news what Jo is doing, how Tom gets along etc.

This part of the Island where we are encamped is a complete bed of sand, there is some grass growing but not a stone to be seen. The timber is chiefly yellow Pine. We are encamped close by Fort Beauregard which fires a gun every noon as a signal for dinner. We have soft bread and coffee for breakfast, salt beef or pork and bread for dinner, bread and coffee for supper. I wish you should send me a paper once in a while. Now write all that is going on.

Direct your letters

to Henry E. Hall

Co. F 6th Regt. C.V

Hilton Head

South Carolina