

Give Willie a kiss for me and Charlie  
too. Soldiering has spoilt George  
(but it can't me for I was spoilt  
before)  
Petersburg July 9 1864

Dear Sister I received your  
letter today and was glad to  
hear from home. I am well and  
have been since I have been out  
here. Yesterday the boys had a  
little fun to the right and took  
a battery of five guns. it was  
about two miles from where we  
lay we being in the front line  
until ten o'clock last night. There  
was firing at the left at the  
same time and we expected  
the Rebs would show them selves  
very minute but we wer redy  
for them. Wer in the second line  
now but will releave the first  
line in a day or two. All that  
we do is to holde this line and we

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Contributed to Maine Memory Network by Belfast Historical Society  
MMN # 98584

Date: July 9, 1864

Description: William Austin Burgess wrote to his older, married sister, Harriet B. Towne, to tell her how he was faring, about camp life and in which engagements with the enemy he had fought.

can do that. we have a marked  
battery about fore rods to the left  
of us in the front line and  
plenty of other help. There is some  
of our boys shot every day some  
of them in the pits and some on  
picket. There is now and then  
a shell bursts over our heads  
but they don't do much damage,  
and bullets going over our heads  
all the time. This line won't be  
advanced any more I don't think  
and I hope we will stop where  
we are until this war is ended  
(that will be when I am gray headed  
I wish I was at home to go to  
California with you and I might  
have been if I hadn't made a  
fool of myself but it is nouse to  
cry for spilt milk I don't care  
as long as I don't get shot for  
I want to live to see home once

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more I hope I shall be transferred  
for then I will be where I can  
keep clean yesterday I drew a pair  
of pants and this morning I  
took them off and killed sixteen  
large gray backs I can take my  
shirt off any time and get  
fore or five. (there was a shot-  
jess went over my head about  
fore feet if I was at home I should  
be frightened when they come so  
nigh but dont minde them now  
I dont think I shall get killed out  
here Tell Ally I am much obliged  
to him for what he has done  
towards getting me transferred  
I should like to have the minitures  
of the boys but have got no way  
to lug them I wont carry a knapsack  
if I can help it (and I can) I should  
write oftener but I cant get paper  
and stamps I am ashamed to beg

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any more I wrote for some money  
but don't see it coming I am in  
hopes we will be payed off pretty  
soon I have a hundred dollars do  
me now. I have got two stripes  
on my arme and suppose I  
could get another one if I should  
stay long enough but I don't  
care about it. I have not received  
any papers from Jeff. That  
brilliant charge that you spoke  
about was a rough thing the  
dead wer piled up in two and  
three tear deep in some places  
before we went up to the rebels  
works we lay fore hours on  
our bellys with the grape and  
shell and muskets balls going  
over our heads all the times  
once and a while I could hear  
one of the boys give a scream  
and then I would huddle a little  
nearer to the ground and say to  
my self I wish I was in Boston  
Bay reafing topsails in the dead of  
winter it would be better than this  
place but as luck would have it  
I did not get any thing but a scratch  
Give my love to all the folks and  
write often Yours the Copard W A Burgess

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