

April 23, 1863

[John L. Barstow]

Opelousas, La. April 22nd 1863

104 miles west of Brashear City

My Dear Sam^l

I want to write you a long letter, but I cannot do it here, as I have no paper or pen, and have to write, laying flat on the ground, no chair, no table; when I write you last it was just as we were starting for the enemy, & I had not heard from you for a long while & felt very anxious to know the reason - I knew that I was going into action & that as likely as any way I might never write you again - but a merciful providence has brought me safe, out of ten thousand perils since I wrote you before. After I wrote, I started off immediately, crossed the Bay, & there stayed (on the ground) three days for all the rest of the Army to cross - then started - the 8th Vermont ahead - in about 2 hours we came upon the rebels - their first shot was a six pound Cannon ball - it came within 4 feet of me & the Regiment; we thought this was pretty close but soon found that it was nothing to what we were to have - for 7 days & we were right under the enemy's fire, and sometimes it was fearful - 4 men in my company were hit, many were ~~were~~ have been worn out - when we have marched at all we have had to go at least 15 miles a day - fording rivers & fighting our way along - if you want the particulars you must buy the New York & Boston papers & read the Letters of the Correspondents - While I was asleep one night in a cornfield, the mail boy came up & woke up & gave me a letter & a paper - the letter was from you dated Feb^y 28th in which you said you was sick - It is of

I cannot get any other paper or any pen or I should not send such a letter. I will try to get a pen & a paper to write with. I will try to get a pen & a paper to write with.