

Dec 21, 1862

Darius S.  
Richard

Dec 21/62

Salmonville Va, Dec 21<sup>st</sup> 1862  
My Dear Brother,

I take this opportunity  
to write you a few lines to let you know  
that I have not forgotten you. My health  
is not very good, at the present time,  
I have got a bad cough, and am quite weak  
having to lie on the cold, damp ground  
so much, is enough to kill the toughest  
man that ever lived. I thought when  
I enlisted, it was for the benefit of the  
Country! but I was much mistaken.  
It was to come out here, and throw our  
lives away, to fill Shoulder Straps  
Officers Pockets. Such damnable work  
I never heard of, before. The Battle  
here, at Friedicksburg, was a regular  
man slaughter, our loss about 28,000  
men, and nothing gained.  
I suppose you'd think strange of my writing  
as I do: but I think, this will never  
be settled by fighting.

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Old Jeff Davis says, he can support a war in the State of Virginia (with what help he gets from England) 20 years. Well, I don't believe a word of that, but if he can support <sup>over</sup> 2 years, he can do better than the North and West, I think!

Our army is composed of two years men, three years men, and nine month men; well, the 2 years men, nine month men, time of service, is out, about next June. There are about 16,000 men now at Washington, sick, and wounded in the several Hospitals.

And an equal portion at Alexandria, New York, and other places, and thousands have been shot down since this commenced.

Now I think, if it is not settled up before next Spring, our army will be so small, that it will

be impossible to conquer by fighting. But the Lord knows what is for the best, and may his will be done, is my prayer. I rec'd your letter, date Oct. 10<sup>th</sup> but we have been moving about so much, I have not had time to answer it before.

But I want you to write to me as often as you can, write all the news you can hear. Give my best respects to <sup>the</sup> Suldaah, also your wife and children. Tell Suldaah to write as often as she can, and I will try and do the same.

Now I will close by saying I hope this will find you all in good health, and good spirits.

I remain your Brother as ever,  
Darins S. Richards