

2-13-1862

## Letter from Josephus Thew (Roanoke, N.C.) to his father and stepmother, Daniel Thew and Betsey (Lobdell) Thew, February 13, 1862

Josephus Thew

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Feb the 15<sup>th</sup> 1862  
19

Roanoke North Carolina

Dear father and Mother once more I will  
 write and let you know that I am well  
 when we left annapolis we went aboard the  
 merrimack it was a large boat we was on her  
 five weeks, tossed by the waves of the briny  
 ocean it was a hard place for the poor  
 soldier but the thought of his Country  
 soothed his drooping mind you that are  
 to home know nothing that we have to <sup>do</sup> in  
 I would like to have been a dog and been under  
 my fathers table and picked the <sup>fell</sup> crumbs that  
 I was well and am well now the 4<sup>th</sup> of february will  
 be long remembered in this Country for  
 the bloody fight that we had that  
 day we had twenty gun boats in the action  
 our fifteen thousand soldiers it was a splendor  
 dous sight to see our gunboats open fire on their  
 forts and to see the troops landing on their  
 soil the 22<sup>nd</sup> Mass and 21<sup>st</sup> Mass was the first  
 to land and was soon joined by the 51<sup>st</sup>  
 newyork and we marched about 1/2 mile  
 from the boats and formed a line of battle

and thinking that we would have a fight  
freely might but we did not our regiment  
was on guard that night it rained all  
night we was in the thick woods the foe  
in front five thousand strong a thinking  
Every moment to have to lay our luck in the  
battle field that might we had one man  
shot but not killed (Berley Saturday  
the 25<sup>th</sup> <sup>mass</sup> reg. June Jersey came by us with their  
long lines as far as the Eye could see going to  
Commence the bloody fight soon after they  
passed us we could hear and see that the fight  
it was begun and we formed a line of  
battle and hastened to the field  
of action on our way we could see the  
Effects of war with the dead and  
dying all along the road some with  
their arms and some with their legs  
and some with their heads shot off  
one I saw fallen that was in our <sup>into</sup> way  
passed by me and said when he  
left home his father told him not  
to be shot in the back but he was  
shot in the back and it was his  
death wound the Enemy chose  
our strong position



it was the best place that was  
on the island for them they had a  
masked battery of five guns it was  
close to the edge of a swamp and on the  
right of the fort they had two <sup>and</sup> thousand  
infantry and they was the best <sup>of the south</sup> soldiers  
and on the left was the dense swamp that  
you could see in your life tho the site  
and back of the fort was dry land and  
this Swamp was full of under brush  
and small pine trees and the water  
and mud was waist deep we did  
not mind the mud we the water  
the action lasted two hours and  
one half and we <sup>the</sup> out of banked  
them on the left and we was so close  
that we could pick their guns off  
and hit their heads when they  
struck them above the water our  
General Reno climbed a tree and  
saw them when that the rest of the  
army could not be come down and  
Colonel Craig of our regiment

ordered us to work a Charge and  
you had ought to see <sup>the</sup> us in  
that Charge in the water and <sup>my</sup> ~~my~~  
waist deep and see the rebels  
from their boats. The Enemy ~~had~~ <sup>had</sup> ~~lost~~  
over two hundred killed and some  
hundred wounded our regiment lost  
five killed and thirty wounded the  
union army ~~lost~~ <sup>lost</sup> twenty five  
killed and ninety wounded we have  
taken for thousand prisoners of war  
and fifteen hundred stand of arms  
thirty Cannons and a number of <sup>horses</sup>  
to feed the whole army for three months  
you must Excuse my boresetting  
I have to write on a box I did not get  
but altho' a ball hit my hand and  
fetched a little blood this from  
your son

Second Brigade Josephus, then

Disc your letters to Washington  
in care of Capt. in Richerson  
No 1 the regiment Mass  
Barracks expecation

Daniel Thompson  
Clinton County  
New York

NEW YORK



