back waters for home we traveled about four miles back in the woods & then took a straight road for camp where we arrived just at dusk the boys were all very glad to see us for they began to think that we had been taken & were just planting out to find out what had become of us. last night the Pennsylvania pickets were fired on by the rebels & they returned their fire killing three of them & taking two of their horses two of the Pennsylvanians were killed in the fight this morning we can see their pickets from the top of the mill they are very bold for we have not got more than three afoot cavalry here at one time unless they are sure of an attack there is only two hundred men here now there was a man came from Fairfax Court House this morning & he says that they have got three thousand troops there one thousand of which are horsemen we think from the signs this a.m. that we will be attacked this morning if they do we will have to retreat to the fort & I am afraid that we will lose a good many of our men

my love to all

Henry Hutchinson

Henry Hutchinson
June 30th 1861

Camp Mills Minnesota

Dear Brother

I will try & let you know something of what we are doing out here on Monday last we were ordered to the mill to take the place of Co C who were ordered back to the fort we are having a very exciting time of it the rebels are all around us on Tuesday afternoon they picked up one of the Fairfax who was out looking for beeves the next day their horseman came down on our pickets who were within ½ a mile of the mill & captured two of them one of whom was the cavalryman who was in the charge that was made on the Fairfax Court House some time ago he was the man who picked one of them up & cut his head off as he was riding through the town with his company on Tuesday night the

Captain asked for seven volenteers to
a Sergant to go and find out if they
could how large a force there was at
the court house Sargent Holloway was
the man who was picked out for to lead
the party my near all the company were
ready to go well we left it to the Sgt
to pick his own men I was among the
lucken ones for I was one of them
we started at dark on Tuesday night
went out on the road three miles & then
took to the woods where we stayed
until three in the morning when
we started again we traveled about
fifteen miles to make sight if we had
went the straight road not being
acquainted with the country we were
within one mile of the court house
before we knew it we were a little
scared when we saw how near we had
got to I dont know but if we had any
other man to lead us than the Sargent
we would have left for camp about as quick
as our legs could have carried us but as it
was we had a man at the head who we
were willing to follow to the death we
fell back about three hundred feet from
the road where Holloway left us to
find where they had their pickets
posted he was gone about 1/2 hour when
we heard the hoofs of horses & each
one jumped for a tree to cover himself
we saw them as they passed along the road
& counted fifty horsemen besides two of
our men who they had taken prisoners
one of the Sonanes & one regular of the U S
Cavelery the boys wanted to fire on them
but they were too many for us so we
waited until they had passed us when
we made up our minds that we were
to eat our breakfast in the rebel camp
the next morning for by this time we were
surrounded by them for they put out their
pickets as they went along we laid down
in the bushes & laid there until two
in the morning when we started to make