

Worksheet #11

**July 23, 1864 THE CHRISTIAN RECORDER Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

For the Christian Recorder.

A LETTER FROM A SOLDIER.

Morris Island, South Carolina, June 8, 1864.

MR. EDITOR: - What do you think of this? We rally to the defence of our imperiled country; we freely offer our lives in its defence. The Government acknowledges the value of our services, and yet they permit our brave men to be treated in a shameful manner. When I enlisted at Boston, Mass., Feb. 21st, 1863, I enlisted on the same terms as other soldiers - clothing, rations, and pay. But all their promises are false and untrue. We have been serving nearly sixteen months, faithfully and truly, the Government of the United States, yet not received one cent of pay. No! they come with woe-stricken face and say they can pay us but \$10 a month, and \$3 deducted for clothing, which leaves us but \$7 a month. Just let them think of Fort Wagner, James' Island, and Olustee, Florida!

The men of the 54th have suffered terribly, and still they have the cheek to rest these brave men of color out of their rights. When the 54th left Boston for the South, they left many white men at home. Therefore, if we are good enough to fill up white men's places and fight, we should be treated then, in all respects, the same as the white man. We have families as well as the white man. The State of Massachusetts has given our people nothing. We, that came out of other States to fill up her regiment, the 54th, for the sake of the service, for the sake of the country, for the sake of justice, and the rights of our gallant regiment, we call upon the authorities of Mass., in behalf of this noble regiment; and, if not, we should like to have an honorable discharge. This regiment has, for many a day, mourned the loss of their gallant Colonel Shaw. The contrabands are better off to-day than the men of the 54th. If there are any slaves, the men of the 54th are as much slaves as any. But the day will soon come when God Almighty will drop the weight on their own shoulders that they are pressing on the black man.

Yours humble servant, H.I.W.

Source: [http://battleofolustee.org/letters/soldier\\_54th\\_mass.html](http://battleofolustee.org/letters/soldier_54th_mass.html)