

Fortress Monroe. Va

Apr 4th 1862

Dear Mother

Your last letter came along as fast as possible and found me on Kalorama Heights all well and doing well. I was sorry to hear of the sickness at home but we can't always have good news. I was not particularly sorry that the General Infantry had left the barracks and trust that General, Infantry, and barracks are all doing well. I rec'd your letter March 28th at noon and in 30 minutes after orders came for the Regt to march to Alexandria and we all took up our beds and walked.

Stayed there two days and then took the steamer, John Brooks for Fortress Monroe (180 miles from Washington down the Potomac & Chesapeake Bay) where we arrived at 6 A M April 1st. Having had Diarrhea for a few days, I stopped at the Hospital. I was under medical treatment two days, which wound up the Diarrhea and then pressed me into service as a waiter and that is the way they work it. When a man gets well they don't send him right off but keep him to wait on the sick ones. We have a large Hospital & some 200 sick in it but no very hard cases. There is an immense army gathering here, numbering at least 130,000. General McClellan came last night and this morning the whole army are marching where? Perhaps to Richmond, it may be to Norfolk, which is only 9 miles from here. No one knows! But look out for a fight in a few days. When I shall see our Regt again I can't tell, but think I may join them in a week if they will let me out of the hospital.

We belong to the 2nd Army Corps commanded by Gen Sumner. In Gen Casey's Division and Palmer's Brigade. The Monitor (that whipped the Merrimac) is here in port. Her steam is kept up all the time ready for a start. She does certainly answer the Rebel description of "A cheese box on a raft" If it was not for her the Rebels would burn this place & the shipping I think through, Fortress Monroe has got some heavy guns for her if she should come. I have seen the dents in the Monitor where the rebel balls struck her and they are not very bad dents either. Just across the bay and only 4 miles from us is

Sewals Point, where the Secesh live and not over 2 miles us is Hampton now occupied by our troops. At Alexandria we saw the 16th Regt and the boys are all well and as black as niggers.

Tell Dan to stir up himself and not lie there and rot. He has ambition let him use it. He is not the worst off of any one in the world. He will not be allowed to come into the Reg. again and will soon have his discharge.

We have many sick ones that have come in today and we are very busy indeed. They would hardly give me time to write this letter & I must close it now my respects to all friends. Mr. Hurlbut's letter shall be answered soon. Hoping to hear from you immediately I remain,
Your dutiful sonny, John
Direct to Fortress Monroe, VA.