

Oct. 25, 1862

Dear Friends,

Yours of the 19<sup>th</sup> is received. We are having a Holliday just now as the masons are at work in the kitchen and it is closed and I can write as much as I please. I am glad to hear of the good health of you all and sincerely hope it will continue. I approve of you moving out of the Old Tavern and really urge you to do it for certain and not spend another winter there in the cold.

I trust Marvin (Holt) will get the house raised; for such a high rent demands a high house to correspond with it.

I have been expecting to see Morse here but he has not come yet. Yesterday 100 men in our Division were sent down to Fort Schuyler and 600 more from the Island are soon to follow them. Fort Schuyler is about 5 miles below this Island toward N.Y. City and the men sent there go into Barrack and will do military duty and remain there for the winter instead of going to their regiments as they are not considered strong enough for service yet. Among the rest going is my Irishman Quin. He came on the boat with me from VA, and slept in the same stateroom; and has been in the same tent all the time and it seems rather lonesome without him. He and a Sergt of the 19<sup>th</sup> Regulars and myself, made a room for ourselves out of our blankets and lived quite easily but now they are gone and there is only 3 of us left in the tent, and we three are sergeants and a deaf nurse of battery K whom I had forgotten to mention, keep house here alone. One of the Sergt. (Tucker of the 7<sup>th</sup> Michigan) is the worst fellow I ever saw for getting off jokes and wise sayings when he and I get together, Something has to come but we are all going out of tents soon for it is getting cold weather and we have no fires in the tents. It is not the sleeping in the cold that we care about but sitting all day without a fire. Yet no one complains for we are all used to it but if you wish to know how it feels, sleep in the barn a few nights and stay there a day or two without a fire.

Where are Clinton (Townesley) and Sherwood (Townesley) and Tom Wells. I can't hear a word from them although I have written.

I have written to (Albert) Stevens but get no answer and don't know what has become of him. I have not heard from (Cortland) Cooper nor any of our boys since I left. If you know anything about them please let me know it.

At last, I am gaining strength as well as health and I begin to feel like myself once more. I can walk 5 miles or more and not feel as though I was coming to pieces over it. Last Tuesday I couldn't get a pass to go off the Island so I put on my citizen's coat, went down to the wharf, walking past the guard as though I did not see him, went aboard the ferry boat and crossed and took the cars to N.Y. Stayed over night and went down to the wharf next morning to go up on the Government Boat to the Island. But the Capt. wouldn't let me go without a pass. Just then Capt. Morgan (military commander of the Island) came along; says I to myself "here is a guard house operation for me" for I concluded that he would put me under arrest for being here without a pass; but I went up and asked him if I could go aboard, he said yes and away I went. I had been aboard about two minutes when I ran across the head Sergeant of the Guard and he knew me too, but he said he shouldn't disturb me at all and so I came off all right.

I had a good time in the City. As a matter of course, but I must confess that my heart was sad as passed the Park Barrack's where our Regiment was quartered last spring and thought upon the changes that had taken place since that time.

I thought of (Charles) Fox and Smith who were with us then, and of other gallant ones who are now wasting away in hospitals or sleeping their last long sleep in the Chickahoming Swamp and I wondered why my life was spared to return here once more. But man knows not his destiny and must wait for time to tell the welcome or unwelcome story.

Yours John