

Camp Hamilton Fortress Monroe

March 23, 1862

My Dear Wife,

Your kind letter was received yesterday and I assure you it was a most welcome epistle. I had been looking anxiously for it for many days and at last I had the joyful satisfaction of receiving it.

I am very sorry and feel quite concerned on account of your health. I wish you to consult Dr. Parker at your earliest opportunity. It makes me homesick but I do not know how long it will be before I can come home as no one is allowed to leave this place now either soldier or civilian. There were 20 boat lodes of soldiers landed here to day amongst them the regiment that Capt Luke Harmen from Allegany belongs to.

Do not worry on my account for I feel confident that my life will be spared through the mercy of God until such time as I can get home. I do not want you to be dependent upon anyone neither do I want you to undertake to support your self. I have been drawing 20 ½ dollars per month since the 1st of February. I will send you 15 dollars as soon as I can get a 20 dollar bill broke and 5 dollars will last me until we can get some pay. I want to send money enough then to pay Mother the 10 dollars that she sent me last fall out of my next pay. If you think you could content yourself better at Bradford I want you to go there or where you can feel the most at home. I was very sick all night and this fore noon. I can assure you I miss your kind hand to sooth my brow or to fix up some little comfort. I was taken vomiting and could not keep any thing upon my stomach. About 3 o'clock this morning it turned the other way. Then I had cramping in the bowels every 10 or 15 minutes at first then once in about 30 minutes - it gradually wore off and I was able to take a little food upon my stomach and retain it at 2 this afternoon. I got up about 4 o'clock and feel at this time 6 o'clock PM much better. I think I will send to Philadelphia for 10 copies of my photograph. I can get them for 30 cents a peice[sic] and you can give 1 to Anna 1 to Oscar 1 to Arlando(?) 1 to Thompsons(?) 1 to Hurnts(?) and the balance to whom you have a mind to.

9 o'clock PM. I have just returned from the Chaplains tent where we have had a prayer meeting which I assure you I enjoyed very much. I think our Chaplain to be a very fine man. His name is Lyttle from Warren Pa. He belongs to the Methodist persuasion. This is the first prayer meeting that I have attended and enjoyed myself since I have been in the Army. This is our first meeting we have had. We are to have another on Wednesday evening God in his mercy sparing our lives. It is evident that there is to be one grand advance upon the enemy from this point or else they would not be sending so many troops here. But I think the 58 Regt will be kept back and perhaps lay here all Summer. I hope and trust that I may get my discharge for my pay is not adequate to the amount of work that I have to do. If it were not for you and Ada I would not care but if I could do any good be willing to remain but as it is with your poor health I feel it my duty to return as soon as I can. It does me good to read your letter to see how much confidence you place in God who is able to do all things and some to the uttermost. Oh, I feel

that God has blessed me with a good Christian wife whose earnest prayers are ascending to the throne of grace in my behalf daily praying that God may shield and protect me from all danger and spare my life that I may return to the bosom of a kind companion.

There has 20 steamers loaded with troops arrived here to day making in all now here about 150,000 men. This Army is not to be supposed will lie idle for any great length of time.

I hope and trust that you will try and keep your self as quiet as possible and not worry so much as I fear that you may worry yourself sick. I shall come home anyway as soon as they will grant any passes from here for I must see you if it costs all my wages.

I will write you again on Wednesday until then believe me your loving husband.

N.F. Marsh