

Camp Hamilton Fortress Monroe VA
March 19th, 1862

Dear Wife,

This is my regular day for writing to you and I seat myself to fulfill this pleasant task. How much one is indebted to the pen one can only tell when they are separated from their loved ones at home.

I have not as yet received any letters from you but are waiting patiently for one expecting that every mail will bring it but find myself disappointed and wait with patience for the next.

I visited the fort yesterday and through the kindness of a sergeant of the 99th N.Y. Regt was admitted upon the ramparts as his company was practising with the gunns.

The fort is very pleasantly arranged upon the inside with nice houses for the officers and fine gardens attached with fruit and shrubbery etc. I saw General Wool in the fort he has a splendid house for his quarters the longest and nicest in the fort. I should judge that there was from 15 to 25 acres enclosed within the walls. These walls are about 30 feet thick and some 30 feet high. Outside of this area is a canal about 50 feet wide filled with water with drawbridge leading into the fort. The Union Gun is mounted upon a sand battery outside of the fort. It is some four feet through at the longest place, it has a bore that a man can crawl in, the shot weighs 450 pounds and gunn over 49000#, it is a monstrous gunn and can demolish any wooden vessel at one shot. It is calculated that it can do execution at the distance of 7 miles.

The troops of Camp Hamilton were all called out in review yesterday afternoon. There are some fine regiments here. This forenoon they have all been out in a brigade drill, all of the Infantry, Artillery and Cavalry. I wish you could be here just to see them once it would do me good for I think you would call it the most splendid sight your eyes beheld. All dressed alike, bright guns and glistening bayonets. All the old regiments wear white gloves when upon dress parade. I have heard 3 or 4 heavy guns this afternoon. I understand that they were rebell guns at Snells point. I think from appearances that they are making preparations at the fort to shell them. If so we will have some musick here before tomorrow's sun shall set. We in the camp can look on but I do not think that we will be ordered out as our regiment is not drilled and the Officers are not prepared to command upon the field of battle.

I have been returned by our surgeon as Hospital surgeon. He evidently intends to keep me as an assistant when needed.

I have all of my papers made up by Lt. Col. Curtis and Capt Becker(?) and Adjutant Holmes has sent them to S.L. Casy in Washington to have him procure my discharge. They were sent off this morning. We will await results. Col Jones is laid down as an old fool by all and the talk in the camp is that he is to get a polite invitation to resign on account of incompetency to perform etc.

We have some 13 or 14 in Hospital today and there are some 80 that are marked off of duty for sickness. I want to see you very much and long for the time to come when I can have the exquisite pleasure but can not fix any definite time that I can rely upon. No furloughs are to

be granted here at present. Everything is uncertain and changing in the Army in time of War. I put my trust in God and trust all in him believing that he is able and willing to deliver me from the hands of the enemy and in due time grant me to return to the bosom of my family. Give my love to all enquiring friends and except a kiss for your own dear self and believe me

Yours in Love

N.F. Marsh