

Camp Hamilton Fortress Monroe Va  
March 30, 1862

Dear Wife,

It is now 1 o'clock A.M. The sick are all quietly sleeping except for one poor fellow who is delirious with fever and he has a great deal of trouble. He is lost and don't know where he is, somebody is going to carry him off. Then again he is busy with some kind of work at Home and so it is all the while. He has laid quiet for a few moments and I hasten to reply to yours of the 23rd Inst. which I received yesterday while at dinner. Your kind letters are most welcome messengers I assure you.

Tell Ada that her Pa thinks a great deal of the little letters that she writes him. I take good care of them and keep them choice.

I expect we will stay here all summer. I mean this Regt. perhaps we will go into the fort. It is necessary to keep 5 or 6,000 troops here to maintain our position and for a coast guard. We are under Major general Wool and in all probability we will be kept back. The Division from the Potomac that has landed here are making advances and more troops land here every day and march on by us. Before the enemy can reach us they must meet and defeat 100,000 or more that are in our advance so you see that we are comparatively safe for the present. Our troops now occupy big Bethel(?) the enemy evacuating without firing a gun. Our troops are upon the advance towards Richmond and ere another sabbath shall roll around they will occupy that place in my opinion. We know nothing here only what we surmise. You will notice that there is nothing said in any of the papers of the movements at and around fortress Monroe. There is nothing made public as yet. I think we will be paid off again this week but we may not. Our Regt is drilling every day and begin to make a respectable appearance. There is nothing that looks finer than a well drilled regiment of soldiers in full dress with their bright gunns and glistening bayonets. Oh, how I wish you could be here for one week. You would enjoy it so much. Then again this is such a pleasant location I think a trip here would be beneficial to your health. But I suppose you would not be allowed to come here now.

Bradford must be a lonesome place now. There are a plenty of vacant houses there this spring. Welches(?) folks have moved away. George Walker and Mrs. Ensigns(?) Franks folks and Lomis's is going. Harper talks of leaving for the season and will if the Rail Road does not go on again. Loomis and Welch are going over on the the Sunbury and Erie Road. I think they have a job on this road.

McCarter has moved into Mrs. Ensigns houses. I think they must feel very lonely. I have half a mind to settle in this vicinity or some where else if this war ever closes. If the rebels property is confiscated we can buy cheap off the government and if I have to remain in the service for three years I mean to have my share of it. But I think that I will get my discharge within a month. The judge don't want me to go home and he did not make my application until last week. He was waiting to see what would turn up for my benefit. Webster is a little deeper than myself he has no position at all. The Col made him lance Seargeant which gives him the

Rank of a Seargeant but the pay of a private. He is detailed on special duty all the time and does not go into the ranks at all. He will not go home he says until he gets his discharge if he has to serve the three years. Holmes makes a capital officer we think him the best in the regt. Our Col is the same old granny yet he does not know enough to chew gum altho he has been very pleasant towards me since we left Phila. I think he will get a polite hint that he had better resign before long.

It has been raining ever since Noon yesterday a slow drizzling rain. The wind is seaward which makes it a little chilly but not cold. We have had very pleasant weather thus far since we have been here. We had a few flakes of snow the other day to be seen in the air. I saw the Darkies planting melon seeds yesterday and other vines. This indicates that they do not expect any more cold weather. I do not know whether the leaves are starting out on the trees or not as I have seen nothing but Pine and evergreens yet. I saw a lot of weeping willows. They are leaving out. As soon as they begin to make this forward movement public I think that they will then suffer people to depart from this place and I shall try for a furlough for thirty days altho 15 days is the extent of a privates furlough upon ordinary circumstances.

We have service every Sabbath and Prayer meetings every Sabbath and Wednesday evenings. Our Chaplain comes in and attends prayers every night in the Hospital. I think him a very fine man.

Give my love to all and keep a large share for yourself. Except a kiss and believe me  
Yours in affection.

N.F. Marsh