

Head Quarters Provost Guard
Key West June 12. 1862

Dear friends

I am in Provost Guard today and take advantage of the spare time to write again to you, although I doubt very much if I can fill up a letter, as there is nothing going on to write about. I had expected to go to Fortugas this week to hold a Court Martial but the paymaster came and we put it off until next Sunday when I will go over. I was visited this week by two officers from the 7th New Hampshire Regt here, they come up on a visit. They are a first rate set of fellows. -

The paymaster paid off our Regiment this morning. The men will send some money home as soon as they can get a chance. We have no Express from here, but I think the Gen will detail some one to take the money of the Brigade to New York. If I was not so busy I would make application myself to go but I do not think I can get off. In addition to my Judicial duties, I am now compelled to assist in the examination of the officers of several Regiments. This will take some time so that I cannot tell when I will get through. Besides, I do not like to leave my men. If anything should happen while I would be gone I would be much obliged to you.

of them than any one else. What makes me feel this more is the fact, that the other day Capt Reeks 1st Sergeant was accidentally shot while out fishing by one of the 90th. Regt. Reek is at home, and I know he will feel very bad when he hears of it.

My men are all getting along finely. The men from town are all well. I only have two sick men. Geo C Watson & W B Gardner. The latter will be out in a week or so, and the other is not very dangerous. So all the reports they get up in regard to sickness in my Company or the Regt are false, and I want you to brand them as such. I was sorry to hear of Dr Meiers death - as well as Stanley Heilmans. I see however that people die at home as well as if they are away from it. I still continue in excellent health. Yesterday I weighed 155 pounds with thin clothes on - that is to say light flannel clothes. My appetite is splendid and I am as happy as a Lord. Everybody in town knows me and I am at home all over. I expect to deliver an oration at a Masonic celebration on the 24th of this month, and also a patriotic one on the 4th of July. So you will see I am kept busy, and at the same time enjoying the confidence of citizens and soldiers.

Mother I don't want you to interfere
with the news father sends me. His letters
are the best I receive from town, and I think
it is not fair for you to read them first. So
father when you write, just give me all the news,
and don't let Mother see the letters. Ed generally
writes about 15 lines. He must be full of business
as every letter I received from him since I have
been here was written in a hurry.

If Reck has not
yet sent those articles up, you had better write
to him, and tell him to send them. I sent him
a Sword of a sword fish - A box of shells, and
2 volumes of Chambers Information. His direction
is Capt Reck, Allentown Pa. Let Ed write
and tell him to send them up. I am having
a box made that will be beautiful. I will send
it home as quick as I get a chance.

As the sickly
season advances, the General Government takes
every precaution to keep off the Yellow fever
and other epidemics. After the 20th of this
month no fruit will be allowed to be sold
on the Key. It is coming in very fast now
the fine many Apples, Bananas, Oranges, Limes
& Lemons, Cocoa Nuts, &c in abundance. I am
very fond of them all, and do not believe
they will hurt any body but the General
thinks they will and so we have to do
without them. It will be long then I

Bill Fry is a good Soldier, as good a
one as I have. I would have made a Non-
Commissioned officer out of him but he has
not accept it. With 1000 men like him I
could whip 5000 Rebels. He has been very
well, but he has a little ear ache just now.

I would
like to be home when Annie comes. But do
not think it possible to get off. However, when
you all get there, dont forget the one alone
here out of all creation. Having a jolly good
time, amidst the sweltering heat of Ky. Weather.

While I have been writing the sweat has been
running off of me. but the Mosquitoes have
not troubled us for several days - so I make
no difference about the heat.

What has
become of Mark Luther & George Tidening
I wrote to both when I came here but
have not heard from either since. If you
see them remind them that I am
still alive

Give my love to Grandma
Remember me to all friends
Love

Yours
J. P. Smith