

Headquarters Provost Guard

Key West,

June 12, 1862

Dear friends,

I am a 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 Tortugas 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 came 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 someone 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 away I would blame myself very much as I think I can take better care of them than anyone else. What makes me feel this more is the fact that the other day Capt. Keck's 1st Sergeant was accidentally shot while out fishing by one of the 90th Regt. Keck 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 - George Watson and J. B. Gardner. The latter will be back 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. Weiss's death - as well as Charley Hileman's. 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 one patriotic one on the 4th of July. So far you will see I am kept busy and at the same time enjoy 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 Keck has not yet sent those articles up you had better write to him and tell him to send them. I sent by him a Sword of a swordfish - a box of shells and 2 volumes of Chambers Information. His direction is Capt. Keck, 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 Brannon 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 and we have many Apples, Bananas, Oranges, Limes, Plantains, Coco Nuts are 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 hard though.

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 would 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 don't forget the one down here out of all creation having a jolly good time amid the sweltering heat of Key West. While I have been writing the sweat has been running off of me but the mosquitoes have not troubled us for several days - so it makes no difference about the heat.

What has become of Uncle Luther and George Leisening? 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 Grandmother. Remember me to all friends. More soon.

Yours,

J. P. Shindel Gobin