

Camp Brannen
Key West, Fla, Feb 16. 1862

Dear friends

You cannot imagine my joy on Friday when a steamer arrived and had in the mail on board, a letter from you, for me. It was the one of the 3rd & 4th inst. and as it was the first tidings from home I had had since I left the North, it was doubly welcome. This day being Sunday we have had no drilling. I went to church this morning. I attended Episcopal church and will do so as long as we remain here, for several reasons. - First - It is the largest. - second the preacher is the best and most loyal. 3^d - The most and best looking ladies attend there. The day is very warm and I came out in white pantaloons, white stockings and low shoes. - together with a white shirt & collar. The boys thought I was going to get married. All or nearly all the ladies were dressed in white while the Gents were nearly all clothed in white coats and flannel coat hats. I just thought as I sat there, that about the same time, you were sitting in church at home wrapped up in shawls and overcoats. Now, about four o'clock I am sitting under an awning in front of my markoe, without coat or vest, and sweating at that. I tried to write in my markoe but it was too warm, so a book in

my knees serves for a desk, and if the Mosquitoes
leave me alone for a half hour I will finish
yet before I go to supper.

We are getting things
fixed up nicely here. Our Camp is a most
beautiful one. My Dining Room is an arbor fixed
under a large cactus tree. The birds sing and
Carol merrily around my head while I eat
while flowers give the air a most delightful
odor. Oh! this is the most delightful country
in the world, and if I can once used to the
Mosquitoes, I would not exchange it for the
whole of Virginia. If I outlive this war I want
to settle here, for no better place exists.

However, I
do not think we will remain here long. Probably
not over a week or two. There is already a
large fleet of gun and Mortar Boats in the
harbor and as quick as Gen Brannen arrives
we expect warm work. Either Pensacola or
Mobile, I think will be attacked by us.
Some seem to think New Orleans will
be the joint, but I do not. However
it may be this joint will be our head quarters
and all letters should be addressed here
until we get some other port into our
hands, if which we will give due notice.
But I hear Bill, the Cook, calling me to
supper and I will finish tonight, after Church.

10 P. M. Well I have just come from Chas. & Saw Fleng of girls - good looking ones too, for this country, but nothing to compare with our hearty burym copies at home. They appear like hot house plants, here - too fragile to be exposed to the air.

Next Saturday is the 22nd and we are going to have a fine time of it here, if we do not move. In the day time I am to make a speech - then we will have a greased pig chase climb a greased pole, a wrestling match - a jump match &c for the men, and in the evening the officers intend having a Ball for themselves - so you can look out for fun. Ed says the Ladies are going to have a Refreshment table for the benefit of the Church. I wish you had some of the Oranges, Cocoa nuts and bananas that our boys waste here. Now I would just like to stop in in the evening and see you all. But I will think what a good time you are having.

Abbie I have a box full of the most beautiful shells for you that I will send to you the first opportunity that occurs. You never saw so many or such handsome ones. You must keep them until I get home. I will send you some other curiosities. I have as soon as I get a chance, which I think will be before long. - If I could I would send you a box of oranges.

Mother I should have liked to have met you in Washington, but you left too soon. I suppose Father did not even get to see you there. I am glad you enjoyed yourself so well. Bill Hendricks is now messing with the noncommissioned staff - or rather rooming with them. He still eats with the Company, but not with me. I told him he would have to hunt other quarters, and take care of himself. His "lady mamma" had better come down and take care of him. -

I see Boule's body got home safe. I am glad of it, as it is a load off of my mind. I hope they did not open the coffin though, as it would have been very dangerous.

Oh I want you to write to Homey and have him send me the "War Prep" regularly every week. Pay in advance. The money will reach him more surely from there than here.

I wish Jake Rohrbach was here. I would make him orderly, with a fine chance for promotion shortly. Remember me to Gen Clement, Grandmother and all friends.

Yours

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