

Fort Taylor, Key West, Fl

January 24, 1863

Dear friends,

Your letters of the 4th and 11th were both received, the one several days ago, the other this morning. The news of Aunt Mary's death, although in a manner expected, was nevertheless sudden and afflicting. Thus it is, one after another passes away and are forgotten and still the world moves on, the inhabitants eat, dance and are merry. Life is truly a fickle thread.

The friends of Sgt. Haupt are certainly a singular party. They must think we have an abundance of money to send home strangers and pay \$70 for it. However, it makes no difference to me. It was to him I made the promise, on his death bed, and I fulfilled it more for his sake than any one else's. So I care not what they do but I cannot help thinking that his body has been thrown around enough without being disturbed at home. Common humanity would seem to dictate it should be left alone.

You had better not send any boxes here as the express does not run. I have not received any of the boxes sent me, nor the barrel from Mrs. Wilson but Mrs. Stinson, the Express Agent, at Beaufort promised to forward them to me and I have no doubt she will. I do not think, however, we will remain here long. The indications are we will soon be relieved and sent into the field. I shall be glad of it as I am tired already of garrison duty.

I hope General Cameron has been elected U.S.L. from Pennsylvania. He is the man from the times and the one that should fill the position.

I am sorry to hear Warren McEwen is so poorly. I had hoped he would get better at home. I am also sorry to hear of Mr. Reardons going to leave. He is a fine man and

it is to be regretted that he must be sacrificed to those rebel sympathizers. If I were at home I would buy it but here in the Army I have very little use for it.

I intend going over to Havana next week and will have a lively time there. It is only sixty miles from here and boats are running between the two places almost every day, so I want to see the place. This week the Rebel steamers *290* and *Oreta* were both in there. I may get a sight at them. At all events I will get to see Havana and the Island of Cuba as I intend going out some distances into the Country.

Tomorrow is my birthday whence I believe I will be 26 years old. Crackey. I am getting old and still single. To save time I have half a notion to get married here. Don't you think is would be a good idea.

Fighting is going on all around us. At Galveston the Rebels gave us rather a neat whipping but it was the fault of the Gunboats. By this time, however, it is all right again. A vessel from New Orleans brings us news of the capture of Vicksburg and consequently the opening of the Mississippi. I begin to think the War is about over.

Give my regards to Grandmother and Uncle Sol, as well as old friends. Write soon.

Yours,

Shindel