

7/20/62

Beaufort, SC

Dear Friends,

This is an awful hot day such a one you never saw or felt in the North. I eat a hearty dinner of roast chicken, sweet potatoes, corn and green fig pie and after having smoked two or three cigars, tried to sleep but it was a no go. The weather is too warm even for that so I concluded to write an answer your letters of the 6th which I received this morning as I came in from picket. I spent last night about 4 miles above here with my company picketing Salt Water Creek and its junction with Broad River. We were in the midst of melon and corn fields and nigger hamlets. The boys always fare well but the sand flies, fleas and mosquitos are all so bad you can scarcely live. I rode around the country from one post to another all night, smoking cigars and eating watermelons between times. About ten o'clock, I visited a concourse of contrabands engaged in a prayer meeting. A room about the size of our parlor was packed to its utmost capacity with all ages. One venerable looking darkey led off. Although their worship is not of the most refined order, yet no one can doubt their sincerity. I do not know when I have enjoyed such a musical treat as their singing was. It was really harmonious, and I never heard it equaled the old familiar revival tunes were made to echo and re-echo through the woods in a manner utterly indescribable. The night was dark and the cabin situated in the midst of tall pines, the rustling of the breeze through the tops of which seemed to unite in concord. I listened to the prayer of the leader and manner in which he poured forth his illiterate petition to the throne of Grace for the success of our arms and the release of his pace from thralldom was really affecting.

Impressed almost involuntarily by the solemnity, I spread my gun blanket on the ground, threw myself upon it and gave myself up to thoughts. For a short time, I had almost retrieved my entire life. My thoughts reverted to scenes of boyhood joys, and home comforts and a sigh almost escaped me. Coupled with a wish that I could again behold them. I was shortly roused by the shrill cry of "Who comes there" – the spell was dissolved and I sprang to my feet and with revolver in hand awaited the reply. It came "a friend" and mounting my horse, I once more resumed my watch for the Rebels.

We have nothing particularly new here, a contraband came in the other day with a Charleston newspaper, stating that the Rebels had evacuated Richmond. How nice it is I cannot say. I suppose you knew all about it North. Most of the troops have left here for Virginia. Whether or now we will go, I can not say, but I think not. I

think Brannan and his command will be kept here to hold this place. It is a very pleasant place and I do not care about leaving while it is so warm. I have my tents furnished finely equal to any parlor in the North. Spring seat chairs and Mahogany tables are common. I saw the death of Susan Ann Hendricks in our Allentown paper we got here. I support others with the family in their deep bereavement. Per Sue, the pace was short, but she is out of trouble.

The drum I sent by Brookins is mine. I want it taken care of. The things in it also belong to me. My epaulets and some bed clothes I did not need. Also a couple of shells and a ruler I had made at Key West. Take good care of the latter.

Did you get the box of coral and the things I sent by Capt Reek. He says he gave them to a hat peddler from Allentown to take care of.

Enclosed are 2 photographs. Take good care of them. I have Col. Good's that I will send home by express this week. We have an express office here and any box you want to send will come all right. If you send one direct it plain to Port Royal, SC.

The 45th Regiment have gone to Virginia. The Band were all out to see me. They all look well particularly old Ed Bucher. They do not like their Regiment however. Charly Brumm who is a Lieutenant in the 76th PV came to see me last week. I was glad to see him. He tells me he is married to Virginia James. The Sunbury American came last night. It is hard to get papers here. I wish you would occasionally send me some. I suppose Annie is at home today. I wish I could look in a minute or two. Write soon to Port Royal, SC.

Yours,

Shindel

P.S. General Brannan has given me my old office and I hold a Court Martial tomorrow, 21st.

