

Head Quarters Indiana Pt South-Castles
Key West May 12. 1862

Dear friends

The Mail by the Baltic has just arrived, but the letters are not yet distributed so I don't know if there are any for me. The Mail leaves in 10 days or how for the North, compelling me to hurry up if I wish to get this in.

The news of the evacuation of Yorktown has set every thing upside down here. Salutes are being fired, whiskey is being drunk, and jack cut up generally. It is too bad that we were taken away from them, when they are having such a good time of it. And our old division in the advance too. But our turn will come, and we are expecting it every day now. The paymaster is to be here in the next steamer, and after that for the field for glory and victory or death.

Enclosed find a receipt for a box I sent home. It is filled with coral I gottered at Tortugas. I suppose it will be filled with sea dust, therefore in washing it out, make a pretty strong solution of salt water and hold the branches down and dash the water over it. Mind now hold the butt up and branches down, or the dust will

get in the Coral, and then it is very hard to
get out, in fact it is almost impossible. Then
set the Coral in the sun for a while and it will
bleach a most beautiful white.

My Company is
drilling Heavy Artillery at Fort Taylor now, and
get along finely. We drill twice a day, two
hours each time. I go down with them, as
business in my office is rather slack just
now.

My men are all getting along finely. None
of the men from town are sick. I have only
one man (Gardner) in the hospital, and he is
improving. I am in splendid health - None
better. The weather has been quite pleasant
for a couple days, but is very warm again
to-day. However we are getting used to it
and don't mind it any more. But time
is up I must close. Write soon. With
love to all I remain

Yours

Shirley