

Fort Taylor Key West Fla
July 1. 1863 -

Dear Friends, I arrived from my fishing excursion last night or rather this morning and found your favor of the 19th awaiting me. As a mail will leave tonight or tomorrow for the North I take the opportunity of answering it immediately. I am not in the best writing humor having had considerable of a time on our trip. We visited Cape Sable on the main land of Florida and remained hunting deer & watching for turtles, until the mosquitoes drove us off. After we got out in the Gulf we were becalmed for two days and ran out of water and were without it from yesterday at noon until this morning at 1 PM when we arrived in Port. The sun was very hot but we did not suffer much. If we had been becalmed another day we should have suffered greatly, as no water could have been had, and we met no vessels.

Enclosed find a couple leaves I picked at Cape Sable, Fla. at the
spot where during the last Indian war, the Harney hung fifteen Indians

It appears the Rebel raid in
Pennsylvania is rather serious. Would
to God every Copperhead in their vicinity
would suffer from it. And here
Ed I wish to say a word to you. If you
are invited to address loyal men, do so,
fearlessly, but in a gentlemanly manner,
and if you are interfered with let
me know it, for by the Great Jehovah
if a man harms a hair of your head
I shall answer to me for and in pro-
portion increased tenfold. I am able
to attend to them any way - with sword,
fist or Nature's weapons, and will do
it at whatever cost. And you prepared,
and if you are harmed, do not fear
to defend yourself.

I have some articles for
Annie that I will send her by the first
opportunity. Her and Mother must not
think themselves forgotten, but it is
difficult to get anything here, except
from Havana, and as I will visit
there again in the fall I will then
provide for all. In the meantime
let Abbie give Annie half of her
towels and I will send them both
more.

Father don't say any thing
about his cane and repairs. What
aid he think of them. The Cigars are
the genuine Havanas - Such as you
seldom see North. They would cost
about 10 cts apiece at home. The cost
me \$125 - a thousand in Havana in
gold.

I should like very much to see
Annie's children, and Annie herself. I
saw in another person's letter that she
looked so badly. I wish I could
get to see her. I had hoped for leave
of absence this summer, but it is too
late now. As I would not leave my
men when the fever season is so close
at hand, and besides, there is a proba-
bility and a strong one that we will be
ordered up to Fort Hudson shortly, as
Gen Banks is very short of men. But
you must take the best care of Annie
as I want to see her as she was, when
I see her again. I don't suppose
she misses much by the absence of
Pat & Kate.

I had hoped Keller would
have killed Sipe Simpson for the blow he gave
him. The traitor deserves to die.

What is my name on the list
for, to be drafted, I should like to
know. I suppose if I was selected they
would send for me. That is rather cool
I imagine.

I suppose the money has
reached home by this time. It is singular
it is so long in getting there. Major
Babbitt, the paymaster by whom I sent
it should have expressed it about the
10th. It was directed to F. M. Smidel Esq
and the package contained over \$2100. If
it has not arrived when you receive
this, write to Major Babbitt, paymaster
U. S. A. Washington D. C. inquiring about
it.

Everything is quiet here now.
Nothing going on. There will be a
small time on the 4th. I will do
something in the talking line.
The men are in excellent health and
spirits. No sickness at all among
us as yet. Remember me to
Grandmother and all friends. With
love

Yours

Smidel