

Beaufort, S.C. July 13/63

My Dear Cousin

Yours of the 30th Ult.. is recd. and I hasten to reply. On the 27th Ult.. we left our old camp at Hilton Head. and embarked on board the steamer Boston for this place. which we reached on the morning of the 28th (Sunday). It took two days to get "settled." again. On the 4th of July the "Declaration" of independence was read. by Major Cunningham. of the 8th Maine Vols. (preceded however by Prayer.) after which Col Higgins of the 1st S.C. Volunteers (Colored) made a speech, which was quite spicy. and created considerable laughter among the Soldiers. He is an old Massachusetts Lawyer. We also had music by B[rigade] Band.

You are quite right in supposing I can find no fault with any friends for not writing. for they are very prompt. I don't know what Rogers. could find to write about. in order to fill 9 pages. I guess he must keep a journal. I can't get any good photographs taken so have concluded not to get them taken. I would like to have spent the fourth at your house. I think I could have enjoyed myself. but I think I would make a rather poor "Gallant." I would also like some "cherry pies." My health is better. than when I wrote last. I think Beaufort a much healthier place. than Hilton Head. and it is the most beautiful and romantic place I ever saw. The houses, or rather "mansions" are nearly all very large and airy. and are situated several feet back from the road. and surrounded with trees and rose bushes. in fact Beaufort is filled with trees and you can hardly see the town. not because there are so "many houses," but because, there as so many trees. We have recd good news. up to the North, to wit, Vicksburgh is ours, Lee has been defeated and his retreat cut off. [?] is marching on to Richmond, and if the news in regard to Lee, he [truly?] will take it. Then we have interesting news from this department. -- Marrisce Island. is in the possession of our troops, and it is expected that Sumpter has fallen. though this may not be reliable, but it will be ours. if it is not already, for Genl Gilmore is bound to be successful if he loses ten thousand lives. and the whole of the fleet. in the attempt, and I "Glory" in his "Ranks." I believe you never saw a fig leafe, therefore, will send ones in return for the "roses" you sent me. Tell Mary. I hope she will find time to write a few lines next time . and now that I have your photograph. tell her that I would like to have hers also. if it will be convenient for her to send it. and I will send mine as soon as we get back to Virginia. (if we even can). You ask if it is "warm" down here: I rather think it is. and the flees and mosquitoes. are so troublesome, especially at night. that it is impossible to sleep with any comfort. Give my love to all the family. and believe me as ever Your loving Cousin, Milton