

Feb 4<sup>th</sup> /63  
Head Quarters 108<sup>th</sup>

Dear Mother

It is a long while since I have written to you, and when I went to bed last night I determined to spend the greater part of the day in writing. On waking this morning I found my tent full of smoke, and every prospect that it would continue so during the day. In addition to this, I was put on duty as officer of the guard and had about given up all hopes of any comfort for the day. On going past Hd Qrs however I looked in at the Majors tent and seeing a good fire no one to improve it I walked in and appropriated it for my own use. So here I am at his desk (comfortable for the first time in two days) and here I shall stay until routed. Our tent is a very nicely arranged concern and in warm weather we can have a splendid. When it comes round cold however with the wind at the north, our chimney smokes dreadfully, and we are obliged to put out the fire and shiver in the cold or go and stay with our more fortunate neighbors. The last few days have been the coldest we have experienced in Virginia and the men find it difficult to keep comfortable. Mr. Hanvey still stays with us, and has now good prospects of success. Dr. Ely has returned to the Regt and is hard at work trying to regulate ~~the~~ its sanitary condition ~~of the~~. Although yesterday was the coldest day of the season, our numbers at dress parade were greater than they have ever been in this camp. The 108<sup>th</sup> has been dreadfully abused by all the R[ochester] papers but it is at present and always has been the largest and best of the three Regts in our Brigade, all of which were organized at the same time. Last night we rec'd no mail, but the evening before I received two letters and four papers (pretty good for me). One of the letters was from Farley but as I wrote to him by Harris I hardly think I shall write to him until he answers that one. Mary's last letter I shall endeavor to answer this afternoon, but if there is no opportunity to do so then will have to put it off until tomorrow. My box is still at Acquia (*sic*) Creek but I expect it daily. Any thing you can send by the returning officers will be acceptable. Fathers letters containing one dollar I never received. It, I mean the \$, was probably not concealed as well as the money he sent before. Give my love to the girls and the rest of the family and believe me your affect son. <sup>1</sup>

Sam

Mail boy is here.

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Notes:

<sup>1</sup> For Mr. Hanvey see Feb 3, 1863 letter

The Major was F.E. Pierce.

Dr. William Smith Ely had been retained at the Smoketown Hospital since the previous Sept. (see Jan 8, 1863 letter to Mother).

Farley Porter was his brother and Mary Elizabeth was his sister.

Joseph S. Harris was 1<sup>st</sup> Lt & Quartermaster, 108<sup>th</sup> NY.

As today it was equally hazardous to send cash through the mail, especially military mail.