

Fort Fisher Jan 26th/65

Dear Cousin

You may perhaps be surprised to receive a letter from Fort Fisher, and perhaps you may be somewhat surprised to hear from me at all. or to say the least. you no doubt. are surprised at having not heard from me in so long a time. so you see I am determined to make out that you are surprised in some way. I am sorry to have kept you waiting so long. but circumstances . which you know "alter cases" have prevented. I have in my possession four letters from you which I will now endeavor to answer. though I shall not attempt to do them justice.

You say you think I will owe you a good long letter. I think so too. and will do the best I can towards it. though my paper, pen, and ink are all very poor. They are what I "confiscated" from the Fort. so you must excuse all on account of its being "reble"[sic] paper. captured in Fort Fisher. which is one of the greatest captures of the war. I received two of your letters while on the Steamer Haze on our first trip to Fort Fisher. which proved a failure. We were gone twenty two days -- Christmas was not a "Merry" one to me. for we landed on the beach above Ft. Fisher. and got a good ducking. then had to re-embark after dark. making all together a very unpleasant day of it. On New Year's Day I was in "Old Virginia" again. but did not write for several reasons. one was. the weather was very cold and stormy, and we had no quarters. another reason was. because we were busy building winter quarters. and still another because I that that we would certainly have a few weeks rest and so I need be in no hurry to write letters until our quarters were arranged. Therefore judge of my surprise when the order came to "pack up" and pursue for another expedition. We left our Camp at Chappins Farm. on the north side of the "James". the Second time. on the third day of Jan. 1865. embarked on board the Steamer DeMolay the 4th inst. and came in sight of Ft Fisher the evening of the 12th. Early the next morning (the 13th) the Monitors and Gun boats opened. About nine oclock the troops began to disembark. and by eleven oclock all my Regt was landed. We were in hopes that our Brigade would not have to charge upon the Ft. but we were doomed to disappointment. We got the order on Sunday about ten oclock. to move towards the Ft. (I had no further doubts as to where we were going and so made up my mind to take the joke as coolly as possible. I came out all right this time and am thankful that it is so. Our Brigade did not lose many owing to the majority of them being on picket at the time. I was surprised that they were not relieved in time to join us in the charge. We captured over two thousand prisoners. besides the wounded including a May Genl, a Colonel, and two Majors. We also captured 72 guns, in Ft Fisher, and enough more in Ft. Caswell to make the number at least one hundred. Since taking the Fort, we have captured eight blockade runners and can accommodate as many more as see fit to avail themselves of our snug little harbour. So much for Fort Fisher. Now I will proceed to comment on a few points in your letters. I think with you that I will have to yield the point with Myra -- and will write when I see fit. In one of your letters you wished that I was going to be there on a certain evening for "three reasons." The first two I got along with well enough but the third was a "poser" who that someone else is I would like to know. especially as you say said person would not be pleased to see me. Now I claim that unless you were going to tell me who that person was you should not have said anything about it for you have now made me anxious to know.

My box has not yet made its appearance. but if he directed it to the Regt it will come -- I would like very much to get it. for I have had nothing but "shingles" to eat since the night of Dec 8/64.

I think Gertrude will be please with one of your pictures. and so would I. I like to see ladies skate though seldom get an opportunity. am willing you should learn if you feel disposed. I hope your patients are all right by this time. You asked me to guess on your age. Well -- I should say you were eighteen or nineteen, and I think I am not far out of the way. I must close by sending love to all. Yours as ever -- Milton