

New Orleans, Aug. 18th 1863

Dear Father,

Altho' I have received numerous letters from you, I have delayed writing in hopes that I could send home a remittance, which I have been expecting to do for the past month or more. I have had a great deal of trouble about my pay & have not got it yet. Edward [Leslie Molineux] wrote to Uncle Daniel [F. Tiemann] about it, to whom by the by please convey my sincere thanks for his interest in regard to my commission & assure him I am duly grateful for the trouble he has taken in my behalf. If my pay for the five months (from Jan'y 14th to June 10th) is not forthcoming, I shall resign, as I am already sick of the manifest injustice which is practiced in this department. Although this Deptmt. is composed of New York troops nearly altogether I do not know of an instance but what, if any favor was to be shown, the Eastern troops were recipients of them, Massachusetts troops in particular.

There is nothing new here except that a move will be made in a week or so against Mobile, which is a secret I learned by accident. We have some 25,000 to 30,000 troops from Grant's army here & a finer set of fellows I never saw. They are all big strapping fellows & look as though they could whip their weight in any thing. I expect there will be plenty of fighting done in this department in the fall. [Gen. John Bankhead] Magruder is encamped at Franklin (one of the places we had a fight at this spring) with 25,000 men from Texas & is only 16 miles from Brashear City, which is our extreme outpost in West Louisiana.

The railroad to that place which was destroyed by the rebels while we were at Port Hudson is again completed & last Wednesday the first train ran up with a number of officers on board. They had dinner at Brashear & one of the toasts given was "Gen'l. Banks! Our next President"!!!! One thing is pretty sure, if he does run for President he will not get many votes from the soldiers who have served under him in this Deptmt.

While we lay before Port Hudson I was taken with Fever & Ague which I soon broke but I have had a repetition of it and I can not stop it. I have had it for some three weeks now & although it does not put me down much in looks, my bones ache all the time. I break a chill when it comes on one day, but the next day it comes on just the same. I am gradually getting the better of it & I hope in my next to be able to say I have entirely recovered.

I enclose you some New Orleans money used here before our troops took possession. The Patterson Iron Works scrip was often above par as it was considered better than the city securities.

I have not seen nor heard from Joe Stephenson since I have been in town. He was sick with Fever & Ague last time I heard from him.

The Colonel [Edward Leslie Molineux] desires to be remembered to you & all the folks.

There is nothing more to write at present. Give my love to all at home.

I remain

Your affectionate son,

Frank

Direct your letters

Birge's Brigade, 4th Division

I forgot to mention that Boats are now running daily between here & St. Louis, Memphis & Cairo. Gen'l. Grant has mounted Patrols established all along the river between Vicksburg & New Orleans.