

Fortress Monroe Nov. 12th 1861

Dear Soc.

I received your letter of the 9th and was very glad to hear that all the folks were well. I received the four (4) dozen writing cases you sent; also the pens, ink and paper. The last two dozen of cases were damaged when they came here; the paper that was around them was wet and torn, and three or four of the cases are good for nothing. I have disposed of the whole lot, and I wish that you would send me two dozen more; put them in a box and they will come safe; send me also a pencil case just like the last one you sent; same size and same price. If you can do it conveniently, I would be much obliged to you if you would send me some extra brandy and Jamaica Rum. I am well aware that your pockets must be pretty low down by this time, but I hope to be able to send you some money for the things you sent me in a few days, as we expect to get paid in a very short time. Dont send these things if you cant do it without trouble.

There was a large fire somewhere near Norfolk about

three O'clock last Monday morning. I was officer of the
 Guard inside the Fort at the time, and the Sentinels on
 the Parapets told me about it when they came in. The
 rumor is, that the Union men and the rebels were fight-
 ing and so set fire to the city, also that the Soldiers on
 Craney Island and at Pigs Point were in mutiny
 slashing and killing each other. The last named place
 is opposite Newport-News, and the rebels have a strong
 battery erected there. I give you the rumor as I heard
 it; but I dont place much reliance upon it, as it is too
 good to be true. Nothing of any importance has been
 heard here about the Expedition since I wrote you
 last. I was misinformed about the loss of the Great
 Republic which I wrote to you about in my last; I am
 glad to correct the Statement; as it would have been a
 heavy loss if true. There is a large force of rebels
 at Big Bethel; a scouting party from the Regt. left
 here this morning to take a tramp that way. There
 was a rumor here yesterday of a fight between the
 20th Mass Wever's Regt, and some other Regt whose
 name I forget, and a strong force of the Rebels, at
 Newmarket-bridge, which is between Hampton

and Big Bethel, but I cannot trace it to any reliable source.

There is very little encouragement in this Regt. for an officer to do his duty. Let him attend to his business in ever so good a manner, there is very little hope for promotion; others from outside are appointed over him. A private from Duryee's Louises 5th Regt. has been appointed Capt of "B" Co. in place of Berryman, and the consequence is, the 1st Lieut. (a pretty fair officer) has tendered his resignation, and it has been accepted. Now setting aside the injustice of not promoting the Lieut., it is a manifest slight on all the Lieutenants in the Regt.; it means as plain as words can make it that the Lieuts. are not fit to command a Co., as for my part I say it, and without boasting that there is not an officer in the Regt., with the single exception of the Col., or in the City of New York, except he has been in some military academy or in the regular army, who can learn me how to command a company, take it either in company movements or Battalion manoeuvres

or in the internal workings of a company in camp
 such as looking after the welfare of the men,
 seeing that they get good food and plenty of it, look-
 ing after their clothing, their equipments &c., and
 seeing to their comfort; I say again that I don't
 believe that there are many outside of the regular
 Army who can teach me anything about such
 things, but it is no benefit to me here, for I have
 not the first show for promotion, altho' there is
 another captains place vacant in the Regt.,
 but another private from some other Regt.
 or an outsider will be appointed... We are going
 to have some trouble about the vacant post of
 Lieut. Col. The Col. I hear has recommended the
 Adjutant for the position. He is a stuck up
 sort of a personage and thinks he knows
 more than any other man, but he has got on
 the right side of the Col. When he joined the
 Regt he did not know B from a bull's foot
 about a company; he could not even shoulder
 a musket; he may thank that fool Mr
 Chesney for appointing him adjutant; for I am

sure he would never get there by his own merit.

The next candidate is our present Major, he is to use a common expression - a dead beat - there is not an officer here but what could command the Regt. better than he can. The next on the list is Capt Winchester the senior Capt, a rather conceited officer. The last is Capt Hopper one of the best officers we have got, and a gentleman to boot. I would much rather see an officer from the regular service appointed, but in case we cant get one, I shall go for Capt Hopper as I think he is the best man in the Regt. for the place. Just tell Capt Mipping about this, and tell him I want him to work for Hopper; Mipping has got some political influence with Gov. Morgan. I am going to write to the Secretary of War in a few days, and try and get an appointment in the Regular Army, for there is no show here.

Give my love to Alice and the children, also to Father and Mother; tell them that I am quite well.

Remember me to the folks in Williamsburg.
Did you receive my letter with the pens in it?
If you did just let me know. Cant you send

me a likeness of Kitty: Capt Hopper has a
likeness here of his little girl, and she looks
so much like Kitty ~~that~~ I was quite surp-
rised. I shall write to you again in a
short time

Yours

Bill.