

Fortress Monroe, Va -

May, 18th 1861

Dear Mary:-

A steamer came in today from New York bringing a large mail for the soldiers, but no letter for me. I suppose that the letters that you or Susan wrote must have stopped at N. Y. Peckett and John Pritchard got letters, and from them we learned that folks were generally well at home - We are now quartered in Willard's hotel. Instead of going into tents in the Fort as we expected, it was finally decided to take up our quarters here - We have a large, cool room on the first story, and are as comfortably situated as can be. There are five of us here, Anderson, Peckett, Stearns, Pritchard and myself - Peckett and I sleep together, Anderson in the other bed, (a narrow one) and Stearns and Pritchard on the floor - Our cooking arrangements are in small field in front of the house - For dinner today, the officers had fried potatoes, pork, bread and ice water, the latter a luxury that we have not before enjoyed - We had some rice, and toast for tea last night - The steamer that brought the mail, brought also thirty cattle, so we shall have some fresh beef again - The men complain a good deal of their living, salt beef and hard