

Camp Butler, Newport News, Va -

Monday, July 29th 1861

My Dear Wife:

Your letter of the 26th Friday, was received last night & also a letter from Mr. Stebbins - I take a few moments this morning to write you a line or two if only a half sheet, before the boat gets here. It was pretty warm yesterday and is going to be today, altho' it is cloudy. We have not had so much hot weather here as we generally get at home in Vermont. Some days however when it is clear & warm the sun pours down with a fierceness that our boys are unacquainted with -

There was some little excitement in camp yesterday. A telegraphic report came from the fort yesterday that a fleet of boats was coming in here from the enemy. The boys got the story that they were coming in to demand the surrender of the place within twenty four hours - A rumor had already been thro' the camp that a balloon ascension had been made at the fort & twelve thousand of the enemy were at Newmarket Bridge. As if to confirm the rumor of our expected attack the sloop of war Dale came up the river and stationed herself on our left, while the Monticello took position on our right, - the Penguin being here already -

I had just got comfortably lain down for a good