

Camps Butler, Newport News, Va.  
Wednesday, July 3<sup>d</sup> 1861 -

My dear wife:

When I wrote Laura I promised to write you the next day, but I commenced a long letter to Mr Indoe which I did not finish till this morning - Between that and my negligence I have not commenced one to you till today - If I had written it might not have made much difference as the boats have been rather irregular, and the mails are dependent upon them. What makes it still worse for us is that the Cataline was burned last night and we have lost our mail boat. We have not yet learned how she took fire but it is said to be by accident - We saw a light in the direction of the fort last evening but had no idea what the trouble was - There are now three boats lying at the wharf but none of them brought the mail and we shall probably get none today - We feel such a deprivation a good deal, for each one does not get a letter, some of the others do and if there is any news of general interest we all get it -

My letter to Mr Indoe, which will be published next week contains the same account I sent Laura and some of the incidents of the next three days. I believe when I closed Laura's letter there was some little anxiety in regard to an attack on account of the stories