

Jacksonville Fla Mar 13th 1862

Darling Emy,

My last was written I believe while we laid in the river at Fernandina. I expected to have given you a description of that place, but did not get on shore there, as we were ordered to accompany the fleet to this place. We left two companies of the Reg^t at F. and the sick are with them there. There are also two other Regts left at that place. so this is the whole of the land force that came One Co. of these was left at Mayport a miserable little place near the mouth of the river, another Co. Has gone on the gunboat "Huron to St Augustine so you see that we are scattered around some.

I intended to have given you a full description of our journey but we have moved around so much and I have not found a chance to write that I shall be obliged to defer some of it until I get home.

In fact this is the first place that we have seen since we left Hilton Head with the exception of Fernandina that is worth describing. The whole coast, is a succession of sandy islands covered, with wood making about as dreary a landscape as you ever saw.

Jacksonville is situated on the St Johns river about thirty miles from the mouth, ^{^it} is a very pleasant place, and the voyage up the river was the pleasantest ride that I have had since we started. The place contains usually about 3,000 inhabitants but some of them have left now, but the most of them remain. The rebels learned that we were off the mouth of the river, where we were detained three days waiting for a favorable time to cross the bar, which ^{^is} a very difficult place to get over, there being just the depth of water on the bar that they gunboats draw, so that the keel of the Ottaw dragged on the bottom, if it had not been perfectly smooth at the time she would have struck hard enough to have spoiled the vessel.

Our delay caused the people of Jacksonville a great loss of property, there was a Regt of Miss troops here, with some gurilla parties of "natives" who were bent on destroying the place rather than leave it for "the damed Yankees." The people here are largely engaged in the lumber business. There are a great many mills all along the river. The night before we came up the river the rebel soldiers were here and burned ^{^nearly all} the mills and a large number of other buildings, besides large quantities of lumber. The amount of property destroyed is estimated at a million and a half in value. We were received by the inhabitants with every appearance of gratitude as though we had delivered them from their worst enemies

One man remarked to me that he wished we had arrived a day sooner, as we should then saved his property, ~~bu~~ as they had burned everything that he had, leaving without anything in the world, and that he had to take his wife in a canoe and steal away in the night to save their lives. I heard a great many people say that they could sleep now, without fear which would be a great relief to them, hardly any of the having slept for three nights, being constantly in fear that the city would be fired. The people here ^{^are} in a very bad condition, every necessity of life, is very scarce and. brings enormous prices. Salt, poorer than you ever saw used, is worth five dollars a bushel. Coffee is not to be had now at any price, the last that was for sale here brought 1,00 per pound. Tea is 2,50 per pound, Flour 16,00 per barrel, and other things in proportion.

A man told me that the pants he wore cost 12,00. I have bought better for 3,00. His boots cost thirteen dollars, I have seen as good sold for 2,50.

The weather here now is about like the first of June in N.H. Roses and other flowers

are in bloom.

From the window where I am sitting, I can see peach trees in bloom, and, ripe oranges on the trees. The birds are singing just as they do there, in June. Last night was very warm. We had the windows all up in the room where we slept, and it was too warm at that for one blanket over us, and the mosquitoes were drageing us around the floor most all night.

I tell you, the mosquitoes are awful here, I have seen them stand flatfooted on the ground, and steal the coffee out of our pint dippers! If you can beleive that let me know, and I will I tell you some more. We have ex[^]cellent quarters, here, the men are quartered in large stores, and such buildings as are not occupied. The room that I occupy is an office of some kind, in a large and The Dr occupies the room accross the entry from this which is hansomely furnished, with everything nescessary for comfort. There is a han[^]dsome bed in his room, with a mosquito bar all over it. There is no bed in this room but it is handsemly furnished for an office, with desks, chairs and tables. It was offered to the Dr by the owner, who is a true Union man. There is no one in the building but the Dr. in his room, and one other man in this room with me It is not certain how long we shall remain here. We may leave in a day or two, but I hope we shall stay here three or four weeks. It will be nescessary to leave a force to protect the prople here from the rebels, who are so exasperated with them for remaining that they will destroy the place the first chance they have

I have not been around the place any yet, but have a pass from the Provost Marshall, which I received this morning which I intend to use as soon as I finish my letters, which I am anxious to do as soon as possible. As the Ottawa which has gone up the river, is expected back soon, when she will return to Port Royal, so there will be a chance to send them along. By the way I forgot to tell you that we came here on the vessel.

My health continues good and I am in good spirits as usual. I like the Dr much better at present that I have for some of the time that I have been with him. And now darling I suppose that you are thinking that this is not much of a love letter. But you know that I am better at loving than at express it at any time. But you are in my thoughts at all times, and I look forward to the time when we shall meet again as the happiest day of my life. This separation will then seem a blessing, as it will show me the contrast, the blessings that are in my posession. You may be assured that it will be no light matter that will tempt me to leave my darlings again. Keep up good courage dear Wife for the time is coming when you will have a better husband with you than you ever had before. Give my love to Father & Mother and the rest of the family and beleive truly Your affectionate husband

Leander

P.S. We have not been paid off yet. We have been moving about so that the Paymaster could not get to us.