

Annapolis Md. April 8. 1864

My dear Jane

Yours of 3d inst No. 45 came to hand to day. It is just a month since I left home and was wondering why my letters were not coming. I supposed however, that Johnny was back again and that you would send word by him. I see however that at the time you wrote he had not been there.

I think when he was there, he might have explained why I could not come. I suppose I might have gone off like many others, without permission. As to getting permission it might have been possible, but I could not reasonably expect it under the circumstances, as the Colonel was depending on me to attend to the business of the regiment, and some one must do it. But most of all, the reason that I did not try to get off, was on Lt. Justice's account. He was not at all well, and he was depending on me, so that I could not disappoint him. Dick Holmes was there to be sure, but he will not do in a pinch, or somehow it has by a kind of common consent all round fallen on me. Willie was very useful too, and I expect he will not loose by it. Our Commissary Sergeant has not come up yet. I think he never will. I hear he is drinking very hard, and he has the consumption. The men here think I am trying to get his place, but I am in hope that Willie may. I don't want it. I have at last succeeded in getting into the line. It has not been announced yet, but the Colonel has sent to Harrisburg for my Commission. I cannot say that I am over well pleased either, for the idea of leaving Lt. Justice is far from an agreeable one. Lt. Kirk is made 1st Lieutenant, but if Capt. Blair has resigned he will probably be made Captain soon and I will be first Lieutenant. I hear no more about being quartermaster, but I could not be till I had been a Lieutenant or Lt. Justice promoted. I do not expect that he will be, for he has not enough political friends. However he will be out of the regiment as soon as we are formed into a brigade. Then there will be an opening. I learn that the President has nominated Col. Leasure as a Brigadier, but he declines wearing the Star till he hears whether the Senate confirms him or not. He will no doubt command a brigade anyhow. I think Lt. Justice continues to hope that Dick Holmes will be made Quartermaster yet. He had always been trying to get him in when he left, and though he does not say so to me I can tell by his setting him to work, that he is trying to bring him into notice. It is too late. If he has not in two years and a half, qualified himself, he can't succeed now. The Lieutenant sends him after everything now and makes him do all the business that I used to do. It may be that he wants to make him able to do more than usual as I will soon be gone, yet I think he also has the other object in view. I think he will try to get Willie appointed Commissary Sergeant if the vacancy occurs. He

likes him very much, and has kept him with him ever since he came here. He has also been making him practice in arithmetic. As to his going to be examined by Gen Casey's board, it will be useless. I shall not advise him not to do it, but I know he could not pass. The requirements in Arithmetic, Grammar, History, Geography and Betterletters are too much for him, and even in tactics his experience and instruction is even worse. Both he and I have been too little in and too long away from the ranks to come anywhere near passing such a board. He has not received any letter from J. yet. I will let him act just as he chooses however, when he does hear of it.

Lt. Justice is beginning to feel better. He has had his chills farther apart lately.

We have had very bad weather until the last two days. We have been obliged to keep within doors. But yesterday it dried off, and looked like spring, and so to day till near evening when it commenced blowing cool with the appearance of rain. While I write the wind is blowing our tent and candle as though it would go out. I cannot tell you much about what we are going to do. Regiment after regiment arrives and quarters around us. Most of our old troops from Tennessee are now here. They look more like veterans than we do. Many new regiments have also come, making their appearance in the field for the first time. The force is evidently a larger one. Our camps cover miles of ground. Genl. Washburn who was in command at Milldale has arrived and taken command of the fort here. He is one of Genl. Grants' old favorites. Every regiment is still on its own hook yet. We have only 560 men in our regiment here yet. Our recruiting parties I hear are ordered back. If so Johnny will soon be here.

I have got all the papers along for last month and as Dick Holmes is so industrious I think I may get off for a few days. Col. Dawson wants to go to Phila. - his wife is there. If he goes I think I can get along with him. He may get a pass for three days, and as he has never been there he may take me too to pilot him to Germantown. I want to go so as to get my uniform. I can't get any here. It may however be impossible to get permission. Two Colored regiments left today. They sailed for Hilton Head. Perhaps that is where we will all have to go. We heard that there were to be ten nigger regiments with us, and these may be our advance. We would rather go there than to the Potomac Army. A few days will tell - where. Col. Leasure says that he has sent on all the Corps except the stragglers. They no doubt will also soon be up. The weather will soon be fit for operations and we will then start somewhere.

Your operations too will soon commence. You will have your garden on hand, and then the farming. You must have had more than enough on hand with your cattle family, between sick cows and

horses. I hope you are better off now. I will not expect you to write very often till your hurry is over. I may not be able to write very often either. I must study pretty hard, for I am lamentably behind on tactics. I will have to take command of our company unless Lt. Kirk comes. If I get along in it as well as is expected of me my chances for the Captaincy are better than Kirks, though I don't want it unless I have to remain in the line.

This is my birthday. Do you remember just a year ago I wrote you from Florence in Kentucky. Where will I write from next year? or will I be home? or where? Next Monday will be your birthday too dear. How I would like to be home to congratulate you. You must not coax me too much love for fear I will go. If commissioned I can resign and go home, but still it would not look well, and neither do I think it would be right to leave the boys now so near the end of the rebellion. I do think we can finish it in another campaign. As soon as it is definitely settled I will not stay a day.

Please remember me to your folks & believe me still.

Yours affectionately

William