

York-Town 21 July 1861

Miss Mollie J. Burton

My Daughter

I wrote you on 7th Inst. Your birth day, you are now eleven years old & I fortyfour just four times your age, we will not stand in that notable proportion - any more, when you get to be seventeen I shall be fiftyone there I shall be threethirties your age, you are now in the green leaf, buoyant, full of hope, the future an expanse, on me the autumnal tinge frost begins to settle, & should I be cut off by these hazards of war it will be but the curtailment of a few fleeting years.

We are woken by the Mornings reveille, to drill, to cook, to eat, to report present & absent, sick & fit for duty, to drill inspect arms, cook & eat, drill dress parade, cook & eat baths, tattoo taps lights out, to bed, these are our daily avocations you do not see much variation; the intervals between furnish opportunities for other things letter writing &c; This is an old and dilapidated town some say, the last building erected here was in 1812, there are crumbling walls and in many places

foundations just above the ground, time having already done its work for them.

Gen John Bankhead Magruder is the commander of all the forces on this Peninsula & when here is commander of this post, In his absence which has been ever since I have been here except about 2 days, Gen Daniel H Hill of North Carolina is commander, Gen Hill is a very unpretending gentleman rigid in discipline, the men have to get a pass to go to the spring & to the river which are not more than One hundred & fifty yards off, I have to refuse a great many of them as it is my business not to let them go unless there is an occasion for their going, we will have a great deal more pleasant time than those Madras that went to Manassas, I suppose Mr. Fry had to stop his building as his workmen & himself had to leave it is disagreeable to Mrs Fry but she must bear it, it is much worse with a great many others, many persons in this neighborhood had their fences pulled down from around their crops & gardens and all turned out to the stock, the families have to move off, If you can find out where Mr. Fry is & what Company & Regiment he belongs to I will write to him & tell him of my experience in camp.

By virtue of my office I have some privileges that Mr. Fry will not, but then I have responsibilities with it that does not make the position more desirable he is gone until next december. I until next may 30th, I have to furnish my own eating, I buy Bacon hams here at 18 cts per pound, butter I had to give 10 cents for 1 lb per Bush; for Irish potatoes, I have a free Negro from Madison County, for a servant a very indigent cook & indifferent servant every way he would be glad to go home & I would be glad to be clear of him if I could get a better one, 5 cents a head for little dark York Calibase, when the weather gets cooler I want to get my eating more of it from home, I wish your mother in reserve for me several small hams & when I want her to send them down I will write, we have no Beef or Bacon that is fit to eat here occasionally we get a few canned hams & great many are made sick here from eating oysters & fish when cold weather comes they will be fine & then we will get fat, but it will be very cold here next winter.

Lieut^t Blankinship & ^{my} Gray & myself
mess together we buy our provisions
& the negro cooks it we pay the
negro 11¢ month, we have our
tents & will move in them tomorrow
now we have 3 guns on the Williams
Army road

Yours truly
^{As ever}

Geo. D. Gordon