

*Steamer New York at Sea Dec. 18, 1861*

*Dear Mary*

*We left New York yesterday about 5 P.M. by steamer New York for Annapolis. We passed Sandy Hook light about 8 1/2 and stood out to sea this morning land is nowhere visible. This steamer has on board the right wing of the Regt also the Col., Lieut. Col., and Surgeon of the Regt. The left wing is on another steamer commanded by the major. They sailed in company with us but owing to the roughness of the weather they parted company with us in the night and this morning they are nowhere to be seen. The weather is still quite rough and it troubles me to write. Please excuse my bad writing. Some of the time it rocks so that I cannot write at all many are seasick. It was quite amusing to see them staggering about the deck, but still they were to be pitied. I wrote you a few lines from New York yesterday. I hope that you have got it. Quite an incident occurred while passing through the narrows by a recent act of congress all vessels passing the Forts are required to come to and report themselves. A vessel just ahead of us run by without doing so when a ball was fired at her which struck just ahead of our bows and sunk into the water with a tremendous splash in a moment more we were treated in a similar manner, a 24lb. cannon shot was directed across our bows a presumptory order was given - heave to or we will sink you. The order was complied with, when the officer from Fort Diamond cried out what ship is that. The reply was the transport ship New York, with troops bound for Annapolis. We were then directed to pass to the right of the guard ship and come to under her bows the guard ship now sent up 3 rockets one of which burst displaying three balls showing the red white and blue light was burnt for sometime. These were signals to the fort that all was right. We passed one ship today, saw several others, some of them were standing*

east, bound I suppose to some foreign port. Some of our men amused themselves by shooting ducks, seagulls and wild geese. Others are fiddling and dancing and no small number are engaged playing cards. So the day has passed. It is now 4 1/2 P.M. We are in hopes to make Cape Henry before dark, but it is uncertain. I have an opportunity to send this by a gentleman returning.

We entered the Chesapeake Bay about 10 o'clock last night. Our progress was very much retarded; by reason of the lights being gone on the Virginia shore. We had to stop frequently to make soundings. After having felt our way near to the entrance we discovered the first light that had greeted our eyes for many hours. It was the light boat stationed there to give warning of the approach of vessels. They rung their bell which was the signal to the guard ship in the channel. Soon the long dark outlines of a ship was visible, as we slowly approached her the officer from her deck cried out what steamer is that at the same time displaying a formidable looking array of guns. Our pilot replied that it was the U S transport steamer N.Y. with troops bound for Annapolis. We were then permitted to pass on. We are steaming up the bay in fine style. We have passed several vessels. One steamer also one man of war who saluted us with a gun.

The weather is very fine. Warm as summer, there is not a ruffle on the water. I can discern occasionally a house on the shore, the habitation doubtless of some arch traitor.

10 A.M. We are now sailing close to the shore. The sun never shone brighter, we are continually passing fishing smacks and other craft, from whom we frequently receive cheers. The bay is full of ducks and our men

have shot quite a number. An English ship has just passed us bound east. The boat containing the left wing of our regt has not yet made her appearance although we have run very slow since we entered the bay to enable her to overtake us.

I shall have to give you different directions for sending Letters instead of Annapolis you may send them to Washington D. C. where a general mail is made out for all the Rgts. I suppose that we are to join Gen. Burnside's division now filling out from Annapolis. When you write me send me one stamp for I do not know as I shall be able to get any before we sail for the south.

We find it much more comfortable in this latitude than at Hartford. You must write me good long letters and as many of them as you can. The steamer has got the shakes so that I cannot write very well. It is occasioned by the crowding of steam they are going quite fast. I miss your society very much and hope to hear from you often. I will not attempt to write more as the vessel shakes so much.

Tell Marshall and Aunt Mary that I send my love to them and all the rest of our friends. Tell Ann and Charles to write. Remember me to Father particularly.

I remain yours as ever

George