

UC Davis Archives and Special Collections

MC200: Folder 7: Mother [Francis Carr Fowler], June 6, 1898

This transcription from the original letter contains language contemporaneous of the time and is being presented as part of a historical record.

Port Tampa Fla. 6/6/98

Dear Mother

We arrived here OK and have a fine camp on the beach and are not more than 200 feet from the Gulf of Mexico. The bathing is perfect and as we do no drilling to speak of on account of the heat. We spend most of our time in the water. The weather is very hot 120° above but as there is always a good breeze from the ocean and as we are getting used to heat we do not feel it as much. We left Chickamauga Thursday as [sic] nine o'clock in the morning and had a hard march over sandy roads for 13 miles and a good many of the boys were knocked out, but I stood is alright and had the only squadron in the Reg. that went through without a man dropping out. Arrived here Saturday night six o'clock.

The bay is so full of transports and they are loading them with food and mules as fast as possible and I think some of them will get away tomorrow. We don't know when we are going as we are not brigaded with any other regiment but are under the special orders of Gen Miles.

Both Tampa and Port Tampa are under martial law and the papers here are not allowed to print any news in regard to our movements so we do not know anything about how the war is progressing. This letter will probably get to you several days late as most of the mail is held for several days and we were told today that the mail might be held until after the troops get away as they did not want the time of sailing made known.

All kinds of fish are in the bay and some of the porpoises are 8 and 10 ft. long but are harmless but farther out there are sharks and we take good care not to get on their beat.

The place where our camp is located is called Palmetto Beach and is a great winter resort. The Palms are from one to ten feet high and we cut the leaves and use them for beds, which make a soft comfortable bed.

I am glad to hear Gordon likes his position and also that Amelia is much better. Will answer May's letter as soon as I can get hold of another stamp, they are scarce articles here & I wish that you would enclose a half a dozen next time you write. No use sending [illegible] are hard to carry.

Hoping that everybody is well at home and that the baby is not getting in to trouble by running away everyday as her father did. I am

Your loving son
Herb.

Co. L 1st Ill. Vol

Port Tampa

P.S. Received your last letter O.K. Tablets arrived O.K. and have all I can carry as we are allowed to carry no knapsack and must roll everything in our blanket.