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MC200: Folder 8: May [Fowler], June 19, [1898]

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

Sunday June 19  
Picnic Island  
Port Tampa, FL

Dear May;

I received your letter day before yesterday and I was glad to hear from you. I saw by it that you are through with your season with M. Field & Co. and suppose that you are not a bit sorry.

We are still on Picnic Island and don't know how long we will stay here but I expect to go everyday, but do not know where.

The weather is very hot here and I do not see how the boys that are coming [sic] from Chicago next week to join us, are going to stand it. I expect that they will be sorry that they ever left Chicago for a week or two, but they will soon get used to it.

Last Tuesday the thermometer registered 131° but that was in the sand on the beach. It generally is between 100° and 115° in the sun, which is pretty warm weather.

We spend about half of our time guarding government property which is scattered all over this part of the country. I go on guard as corporal of the guard and have a snap, as the guardhouse is generally located in a warehouse or a hotel we get some good meals and sometimes have beds to sleep on which is a luxury.

I have not met the young man you spoke of but will probably meet him soon, as I am acquainted with almost every person in the reg.

Joe and Lee are well and with the exception of a sprain to Joe's foot neither has been sick since we left Chicago. He is all right now and at present everyone in the company is in perfect health.

When I am not on guard I spend the days about as the following

Get up	6 o'clock
Breakfast	7 "
Drill	7 to 8:30
Swim	8:45 to 11:00
Sleep	11:00 to 12:00
Dinner	12 to 12:30
Sleep	12:30 to 3:30
Swim	3:30 to 5:00
Supper	6 to 6:30

After supper is when we play ball and do our visiting. You will notice that most of our time is spent in sleeping and swimming the reason for that, is, that the weather is so hot that it is

impossible to do any work down here after nine o'clock in the morning, and even the people that live here do all their work early in the morning and, after the sun goes down at night, the result is that the streets in the town are deserted in the daytime.

There are about fifty niggers to one white man here and they are the worst lot I ever saw. Most of them have no homes and they sleep on the docks and on the sidewalks. They dress in rags and are the dirtiest lot I ever met. The coons in Chicago are kings compared with them.

As it is supper time I will close for this time. Write soon,

Your loving brother,  
Herb.