

U.S. State of Georgia  
Gosport Navy Yard  
July 26<sup>th</sup> 1864.

Dear Father,

It seems curious for I have heard nothing from you as yet though I believe I have written twice. We have now moved down to the edge of the yard and are putting the finishing stroke on our boilers, we are expected to go to sea in a very few days. I have been a good deal sicker than usual this time from the number of sick from the yard and other vessels. The weather has been very fine but warm and comparatively little sickness. There has been some yellow fever but these cases have been in the town and not among the shipping. This is a great place for it on account of the large number of ships that come in here from the W. Indies and such places. Particularly at this time as vessels of war are here from all parts. I have not spent as much money as usual for the theatre is closed and thus there is no inducement to go on shore at night. I have been to church once or twice and enjoyed the service of the church.



I have not partaken of the Communion since  
I enjoyed it in my own church in B.  
How great is the privilege of meeting in Chris-  
tian fellowship about the altar of the  
Redeemer! And even to give in worship  
from Sabbath to Sabbath! I don't think  
you can conceive how you would feel  
if cut off from the usual meeting of  
Christian people and surrounded only by  
the preparations of war. Oh how I long  
for it to terminate in some way for its  
terrible ravages and sufferings are enough  
to make Heaven weep. One walk through  
the Hospitals one day's view of the sick  
wounded and dying will fully satisfy  
any ordinary persons longings for war. It  
is a very easy thing to be patriotic at home  
attend enthusiastic meetings for mutual  
admiration, and to devise means to for-  
ward enlistments and say to others go, but  
it is not so easy to say "Come." But  
the Commutation fee is done away with  
and most of those drafted will have  
to go under the late call so that I think  
things will come to a focus in a year or  
two. The draft will begin to get the wrong  
men, it will get some of those fellows  
who have just been saying go



and they won't relish it long. Still things look  
more favorable than they have for a long  
time. If Grant hold Lee and eventually  
defeat him, Sherman will look out for  
the others. We may conquer by arms but  
their hatred towards us can hardly be appeased  
and there will be no sympathy of feeling.  
But enough of war. Near us lies the hull  
of the celebrated ship of the line *Pennsylvanian*  
which you have doubtless read of so many  
times. It seems like an old acquaintance so often  
have I read of it. It was burned to the water's  
edge. Also not far away lies what was  
once the noble frigate *United States*, the  
vessel that captured the *Macedonian*.  
In the stream lies the frigate *Brandywine*.  
We are surrounded by objects that have  
clustered around them memories of the past.

I had a very interesting visit to the Hospital  
of Portsmouth; interesting indeed to me as  
a surgeon but sad as the fellow man of the  
sufferers. One poor fellow I noticed lying pale  
but composed ~~but~~ and cheerful he looked  
better than most that I saw. I asked him  
what was the matter - he pointed to his right  
thigh; I raised the dressings, there was  
the wound of a ball through  
the hip joint. Coming out on the inner part



of the thigh. I saw at once it must have  
intensively fractured the joint and  
the bone below. I saw at once that  
though he looked so comfortable and  
cheerful there was no hope. The next  
day, I learned he sank and died. This  
is the sad history of thousands. One  
of the cases I examined subsequently  
turned out to be yellow fever. My  
health has been pretty good notwith-  
standing my confinement on ship-  
board and salt fare and warm  
water. We have very few luxuries  
I can tell you. Most of the time  
we cannot have ice and we have  
to drink lukewarm water; think  
of that when you are drinking  
your sweet cold water. Give  
my regards to your mother  
to Jennie, to Maggie Merrill  
and all other friends. Do  
you know whether Mr. Yates has  
received my letter? Have you heard  
him say anything about it?