

4-2-1862

Letter from Jonathan H. Wells (Alexandria, Va.) to family, April 2, 1862

Jonathan H. Wells

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Recommended Citation

Wells, Jonathan H., "Letter from Jonathan H. Wells (Alexandria, Va.) to family, April 2, 1862" (1862). *Robert F. Hale Papers*. 5.
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This letter is marked "Second Part, 3rd. page". The first part is ~~is~~ *probably dated March 29 - at Alexandria*
Apr. 2nd., 1862.

We left the boat yesterday noon & went up in to the village & lounged about there till 4 P.M. & then started. There is 5 regiments of us which forms a brigade. We travelled about 8 mile we came through where Hampton city used to be & it was a desolate hole. It looks as though it used to be a handsome city. The brick lay there in piles & the chimneys stand there any quantity of them. We marched until into the night & camped on the ground till morning. It was a great plantation of a rebbil. The house lay in rewins & Oh what a peach orchard as much as 8 acres & part of the trees in blossom & any quantity of pear trees. As soon as we got breakfast we was ordered to swing napsacks & off we started & came one mile & pitched our tents. Our tents are nothing but a couple of crutches stuck up with a rail layed in and other rails laid on & our rubber blankets tied together & spread over for a roof. We are close to the woods where there is all sorts of timber that grows in this country. The land is clay and verry wet & nasty when it rains. We have got lots of pine bows & put under us. There is as much as 150,000 troops in cannon shot of here. One regiment said there was rebels about 3 mile off just through the woods & they said the shells came over amongst them yesterday but I don't believe it. The calculation is that we shall go in to battle before many days but I do not dread it a bit. Guns are firing all around, they are shooting rabbits. They caught 2 in their hands by surrounding them. I just heard that Daniel Tarbell was in sight & that he had about 40 letters from F.C. I hope he has some for me. One of the tents right in front of mine just fell down. Peet & Isac Lamprain, Chris & John Martin was in it. They crawled out of the rails and brush looking like stags crawling through a brush fence. I have not told you how my health was. I am getting as tough as a not & nothing to eat but dry seabiscuit & smoked ham & I cant bear the sight of it. The boys mostly feel pretty well. Some of them have the mumps. The mumps have been among them ever since we left Malone. I think I know something about camp life by this time. The eating part goes the hardest with me. How I should like to drop in with you & fill my belly with good mealy potatoes & gravy bread butter cheese pie & so fourth. Down goes another tent & Oh what a laugh. They do not brace their tents sideways so they pitch calf. I should like to be here in the time of fruit for the woods are filled with grape vines chestnut walnut & I dont know what else but I cant tell where I shall be in 2 months from now. I shall have to go where I am sent as all soldiers have to. The rain begins to fall and what a mud hole we shall be in after it rains a while. Daniel dont along yet & I will stop till he comes so that I shall hear from you. When we was at Washington we had the ware news but we dont know now what is going on. I dont know as you can read **this** for I half lye & half sit & write on my knee. One of our company just came in with a grey squerril & the boys are all after him they want some fresh meat so bad.

Friday Apr. 4th.

I will try now to finish this letter. Daniel Tarbell arrived here yesterday evening bringing lots of news from home. He had about 60 letters for the boys & a long one for me which I was thankful for.

J.N.W.