Stead Quarters 2nd Dir. 3 9th Corps Newfort news the 2 March 5th 163 Dear hellie: - 4 1 I Know Econo distrustfull you are of my excuses and of my other lamest avowals Jeverally to I shree by no means open a Conspondence with you by making it's commence: " ment sur elaborate apology Which the fair object of for when it should be intended rould haugh at incredulously. hot a bit of it. I Couldn't mite to you nor anybody else from Washruftin - nor from any place This lede of Yorkland_ nor dia I - and all because

a bash and barred Concatenation of advictions advice Circum = stances Conchired in An entrely unlooked for - and - as the newspaper puffs day - "in a hethesto unfrecedinted manner." Nor did I have my picture Taken - as according to promise because I couldn't sit down in any place but a railway can long enough thave it done - and They don't lake good photographs of a fillow "riding on a rail" But I much repet my inability to have undergone the daguesse of they process - but shall take the Rachert and most favorable opportunity of doing that fame. But hellie, you must kind me · your picture - for insaturfactory as your Counterfiet presentment

would be to one as a substitute for its original, I am afraid it will be The heavest approach to your own sweet fact and form which I shall be able to enjoy for many a long and weary day. Indeed hellie I want is very very much - and I know You don't want me to annoy you with craxing - and then ague know how dearly I shall cherish it. I want it for a Kaluman - for the other went with me as a food angel of Safety through three how and bloody battles. We are delightfully Artualid i our camp. It is betwaled upon the bank of the James River and overlooks the scene of the

baute of the monton of mer : = uman. Indeed This place has been The field of many of the most interesting operations of this war. I lainly to be seen from the door of my tent are two fin centinels of the Sees - The evin Clads Sanganmon and Galena, and a half mile or more below Them, using from the furface of the broad Stream are the dismanted remnants of the old Frighte Cumberlands musto. They stand there to mark The bally prave to which the iron Sheathed monster of Richmond to authlessy and fudduly Sent her. I wish you were have to enjoy a light as there Acenes: and if we remain an fortues morroe - as we

may do - during the Commy April and fimmer, - I hope to be able to unduce you to realize That wish. Buch pleasant as This Comp is, I feel a sad longing - a lovely, weary Since - mon which my Thoughts me constanty recurring to other seenes and other faces than those around me. I find myself, morning non and night making duan pictures of a little brown Collage where domen = body holds the warmesh and sofush for portion of my heart. I see a fair of Kindly - and as I hope, not unloving lys

but on me; - and these I bear the honort truthfull Juileles words of the mutin of her Ly speaking to me, quelly and calmby and Charmingly through a pair of life a Joddees might envy! This is a lasting day dream and sught vision with me. Can you guess its unport ! Can you devine who it is That his meathed a web of softening sudness around my thoughts: I know you can - and Millie - whatever might be the resultion "I'd offer thee This hand of mine If I could love thee less; But hearts as avarm and fuire as Theme Should never Know distress. ... My fortune is too hard for Thes.

This is my timest homely avowal Millie. I am not Jesting with you now. I am glad to lele you frankly That I love you with all' my worthers heart - But lis us both make light of this fact - fact as is is, for it is worse than unders to make The matter a serious one - Do, hellie you may laugh as the Conficients of a fevor old bachelor - and when me of these days - you may gladden the board and finde of some most fortunate lord of creation you have my consiste to print your finger at me - or my hicture and say - That old Chap was

dead in love with one once" and Then if I an presento I avice Day "yes, - that's a fact - and I am not Cured of the malady yet -- even a hay Century hince I would Say that - if present to tell you to, I Day. Now hillie, darling, mite & me at your eachest convenince, a letter for you will keep me in a stock of happines for until its Successor Cimes - as least. Present my regards to your hother and Kiss your little fisters for me and in my name; and accept from me unbounded love and ill address Ha 200 2nd Die 9th Corps Jomiss hellie Vimil? Portund me S

CINI COM mar 863 EN Miss Nellie Vernill In Care of Byron Varice So Portand marine

Head Quarters 2nd Div. 9th Corps Newport News Va

March 5th 1863

Dear Nellie:

I know how distrustfull you are of my excuses and of my other earnest avowals generally so I shall by no means open a correspondence with you by making its commencement an elaborate apology which the fair object for whom it should be intended would laugh at incredulously. Not a bit of it. I couldn't write to you nor anybody else from Washington -- nor from any place this side of Portland -nor did I -- and all because

[page 2]

a vast and varied concatenation of adventitious adverse circumstances conspired in an entirely unlooked for -- and -- as the newspaper puffs say -- "in a hitherto unprecedented manner." Nor did I have my picture taken -- as according to promise -because I couldn't sit down in any place but a railway car long enough to have it done -- and they don't take good photographs of a fellow "riding on a rail." But I much regret my inability to have undergone the daguerreotyping process -- but shall take the earliest and most favorable opportunity of doing that same. But Nellie, you must send me your picture -- for unsatisfactory as your counterfeit presentment

[page 3]

would be to me as a substitute for its original,

I am afraid it will be the nearest approach to your own sweet face and from which I shall be able to enjoy for many a long and weary day. Indeed Nellie I want it very very much -- And I know you don't want me to annoy you with coaxing -- and then you know how dearly I shall cherish it. I want it for a Talisman -- for the other went with me as a good angel of safety through three hot and bloody battles.

We are delightfully situated in our camp. It is situated upon the bank of the James River and overlooks the scene of the

[page 4]

battle of the Monitor & Merrimac. Indeed this place has been the field of many of the most interesting operations of this war. Plainly to be seen from the door of my tent are two grim sentinels of the seas -- the iron Clad "Sangamon" and "Galena", and a half mile or more below them, rising from the surface of the broad stream are the dismantled remnants of the old Frigate Cumberland's masts. They stand there to mark the watery grave to which the iron sheathed monster of Richmond so ruthlessly and suddenly sent her. I wish you were here to enjoy a sight at these scenes: and if we remain at Fortress Monroe -- as we

[page 5]

may do -- during the coming spring and summer, -- I hope to be able to induce you to realize that wish. But pleasant as this Camp is, I feel a sad longing -- a lonely, weary sense -- under which my thoughts are constantly recurring to other scenes and other faces than those around me. I find myself, morning noon and night making dream pictures of a little brown cottage where somebody holds the warmest and softest portion of my heart. I see a pair of kind -- and, as I hope, not unloving -- eyes

[page 6]

bent on me; and then I hear the honest truthfull guileless words of the sweetest of her sex speaking to me, quietly, calmly and charmingly through a pair of lips a goddess might envy! This is a lasting day dream and night vision with me. Can you guess its import? Can you devine who it is that has wreathed a web of softening sadness around my thoughts? I know you can -- and Nellie -- whatever might be the result

"I'd offer thee this hand of mine if I could love thee less; But hearts as warm and fine as thine should never know distress. My fortune is too hard for thee" --

[page 7]

This is my honest homely avowal Nellie. I am not jesting with you now. I am glad to tell you frankly that I love you with all my worthless heart -- But let us both make light of that fact -- fact as it is, for it is worse than useless to make the matter a serious one -- So, Nellie you may laugh at the confessions of a poor old bachelor -- and when, one of these days -- you may gladden the board and fireside of some most fortunate lord of creation you have my consent to point your finger at me -- or my picture and say -- "that old chap was

[page 8]

dead in love with me once." And then, if I am present I will say "yes -- that's a fact, -- and I am not cured of the malady yet;" -- even a half century hence I would say that -- if present to tell you so, I say.

Now Nellie, darling, write to me at your earliest convenience. A letter from you will keep me in a stock of happiness until its successor comes -- at least. Present my regards to your brothers and kiss your little sisters for me and in my name; And accept from me unbounded love and believe me to be ever

Yours truly Capt Henry R. Mighels address Hd Qrs 2nd Div 9th Corps Newport New Va.

[envelope]

Miss Nellie Verrill No 69 1/2 Cumberland St Portland --