

Chestnut Hill Genl. Hospital Philadelphia
Friday, June 26th 1863

My Dear Mother

I have just received a letter from you & Annie dated the 15th & am very glad to find that you are all well. I have been very anxious to hear from home & it seemed as though I should not get any more letters. I wrote back to Alex^a as soon as I got here to forward my letters & this is the first. I shall look for another in a day or two. You have doubtless been expecting me for some time, and I am sorry that I wrote about coming as I did- but I thought that I could get a furlough without any trouble as soon as I got able to get around but I should have learned by this time that disappointment is the rule and success the exception in these military matters. There are a great many men here who have hoped for, & been encouraged to expect furloughs & who might as well be spared as not, but only a few have got them from here. I think however, that after the 1st of July which is payday, & when there is to be a general examination (it is said) that a good many will be sent off & discharged. I think I shall have to wait till then & if we cannot get furloughs we shall get up a petition to be sent to our own State They will muster us for pay next week & if my descriptive list happens to get along (which it certainly ought to) I shall get two months more pay. I wrote to you last Saturday & had sent Annie a check for \$70.00 which I hope she will get tomorrow. I know she must have been in need of money for a long time. While at Brooks Station I borrowed \$(2.00) two dollars of Walter Gray which I expected to have returned before this. If you see Mr Pierce soon or have a chance to send I wish Annie would send it to his wife. Perhaps Mr Gray & Norman both have got home before this time. I want to have you and father also go to Randolph or somewhere and have your pictures taken together for me to keep. I wish Anna would try & get little Porters likeness taken too. I have sent for Lloyds U.S. Map colored in counties to be sent to Annie, and I have just got a reply. that the map has been sent, if not by mail it will be at Randolph Express office. They also sent me as a sample a sheet map of Virginia, which I am very glad to get & wish I had had before. I think a great many of those maps might be sold & a man could make good wages at it, if they have not been through Catt & Warren Counties with them. I they sent a circular with the price of them which you have got ere this. There is great excitement around here about the Rebel invasion & the people in Philadelphia are becoming alarmed thinking about fortifying &c. The fact is that the North has got to raise more men. This thing has got to be fought out now & we have got men enough to do it too. It had better be done at once than to be prolonged for years. I am glad they have concluded to put the negroes in- they are just as able to fight as whites & if they will not they certainly do not value freedom much. It seems to be established so far that they will fight. What are they doing in your parts about the new call.

I dont know of much else to write. I am going to draw some more clothes here in place of those I lost. shall get a dress coat

(Asher Bliss, Jr., June 26, 1863, cont'd.)

in place of mine that was turned over when we left camp in the spring & a shirt & knapsack to keep my things in though I may never want to carry it. I think I shall get one good flannel shirt from the city that will cost about \$2.00. I have just got a good pair of suspenders at 50 cts & a handkerchief at 25 There is a man in the next bed to mine. (we have good beds here) who paid a dollar for a pair of suspenders no better than these. This is the way soldiers in the field have to pay for things when they are risking their lives & sacrificing their comforts for the sum of 40 cts per day.

They are planning for a big celebration here at the 4th & the President is to be at the city. I hope we shall be in possession of Vicksburg & Lees army scattered before that time. My foot is getting along slowly, but is healing up as fast as it ought to I think. It does not pain me & I can walk by stepping on the heel, but I prefer to use the crutches a while longer & then I shall have to use a cane for a while.

They give out 8 passes a day from our ward to go outside or to the city. There is a railroad & the fare is 36 cts down & back & they say that the head Surgeon here Dr Hopkinson owns the R.R. & I think there is some speculation about the establishment. There are not as many visitors here as at Bedloe & they say that the Dr does not allow them to come here & "pet his men" There are about a hundred 9 months men doing guard duty who will leave soon & they will detail men to take their places If they wont discharge me I shall have to go in as a nurse or do guard duty. Perhaps I can get a place as clerk as they have to have a great many. I must stop now & I will write again the first of the week. I shall try to get away from here as soon as I think there is any use in trying.

Love to you all from

Asher Bliss Jr.

P.S. There are some men here from Col Baileys Regt. 86th N.Y.

(Envelope addressed to: Rev Asher Bliss
Corydon Warren Co
Penna.)

(Courtesy of William A. Petersen, East Randolph, N.Y.)