

May 25, 1864

My Release from Libby Prison

Ed. Censor: - Having been a prisoner for ten months, and confined in the famous Libby Prison at Richmond, Va., and having experienced something in my own person of the severe discipline, hardships, and sufferings and filth of that loathsome receptacle for Union officers so unfortunate as to fall into the hands of southern chivalry; and having been released from such bondage through the kindly request of Miss Amorette Jones of Fredonia to her brother, Mr. S. H. Jones of Mobile, Alabama, I cannot refrain from expressing in a public manner my heartfelt and lasting gratitude to Miss Jones for such kindly mention and requests. I am unable to express the gratitude of heart I feel for the interest ^{thus} ~~been~~ taken in my welfare. Indeed words, when called to express the range and better emotions of the soul, are tame and meaningless. I would also extend to the worthy brother of Miss J. who so kindly came from Mobile to Richmond and obtained my release, every expression of regard. May God protect and bless them through life.

The circumstances of my release were as follows: Miss Jones wrote to her brother at Mobile, stating the fact of my imprisonment at Libby, and requesting him to go to Richmond and ascertain my circumstances and furnish me with money and provisions or anything I might need for my comfort.

On the 22d of March, called at the office at Libby and asked to see me. I was called to the office and was not a little surprised to find that I had even one in the south that cared to look after my welfare. - After a brief consultation, he briefly stated the object of his coming. He offered me money or anything that could be obtained in the city that could be made conducive to my comfort. I declined his kind offers, saying that I was as well cared for as my fellow officers, and did not wish to live better than they. Although under the conditions I could not consent to receive anything from him by way of any kind, and still there was one thing I had much anxiety about and that was my liberation, that I would be very grateful to him for any influence he might be able to exert in my behalf in this request. He very willingly consented to do what he could for me. On the 25th of March he called on me again, and stated that he had made the necessary arrangements with the proper authorities and that I was to be sent north as soon as possible. I of course was much rejoiced at such arrangement and hoped in a few days to breathe once more the air of freedom. "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick." I found this to be emphatically true. Day after day and week after week passed and I saw no sign of fulfillment of the promise made to me. Hope had failed and nearly gave out, and the old gloom of prison and prison life had settled about me. But on the 30th of April, I was called quite early in the morning and allowed to pass out. As I passed out and along the street, I could hardly realize the fact of my release and the strong emotions of the soul came welling up from the great foundations deep within the heart. How I then wished to meet those

that under God had been the means of my deliverance and thank them for their kindness.

Mr. Jones had acted the part of the good Samaritan in looking after the interests of the "Chautauqua boys" who came to his notice, some of whom he named. I remember however but the following: two Enrighams, L. Stevens, G. Soper, Mike Walden and _____ Ellis. Mr. Jones is a man of wealth, and is Sup't of the M&OR.R. He stated to me that he had no connection with the army, and had nothing to do with the war and did not mean to have.

Yours&c. J. B. Fay

Capt. Co. E 154th Reg. N.Y.V.