
Voices of the Past

The Letters of Bell Robison

Civil War

1862

Fredericksburg, Va 14th July/62

Dear Mother,

We haven't as yet rec. orders to leave here though the sick are being removed to Washington daily and daily they are being brought from the camps so we have plenty to do. I haven't felt like doing for several days had chills on Saturday but have taken quinine hope I wont have any more I think I had them Friday also. I suppose I ran about too much while in W___ Was so tired and worn out I ought to have taken a good rest before I came here Then we have been told the air here is very impure, but I think by being careful we will become acclimated. I like it in most respects much better here than at W___ it isn't so convenient in many in many respects as you could get things in the Patent Office that belonged there such as stools etc We would have more conveniences here if we were not in such a confined state but I understand that there has been an order issued today to make requisitions for the Summer supplies so perhaps we'll be here sometime yet I hope we wont get all fixed then leave in a hurry but I won't be surprised at all.

We were amazed a few days ago (when going off to the house) in passing one of the sesesh houses a woman and girl were sitting in the yd the former had a large sun bonnet on turned her face away and kept it turned til we passed Then I looked back till she look but she suddenly turned again Nearly all the people here are sesessionists We have one Union neighbor to go to see and we go in frequently.

I am suffering so much with heat and only one calico dress to wear but I hope it won't be much longer as I have sent for those things at H_ and Jane will forward them. I don't know how we will get our washing done. I gave it to one of our contrabands last week and ___ was so _____ - but I'll talk to them about it Perhaps they'll do it better next time I haven't had my white waist done up on that account.

If some of the Northerners were here while I don't think they would be Abolitionists I don't want the slaves to come North one of our Northern women would do as much as three of these contrabands. I have talked to them til I'm tired and they get saucy say if they don't suit me. I'll have to get some body else. I told them I'd just do so All the attendants say they have done some better since I came but whenever I'm out they stop and talk the cook said I should stand over them with a god.

We were so provoked a few days ago to hear that the Provost Marshall ordered our flag to be taken down from a N.Y. store here because of it discomoding the sesesh ladies here by haveing to go out in the street to avoid walking under it the P. Marshall is captain of one of the companies from Wisconsin all the Wisconsin boys condem him very much Some of them know him personally his name is Mannsfield I think he ought to be arrested by all means Gen. King placed him over this city as Military Governor when he gave the order the Merchant told him he wouldn't take it down said if you don't I will he attempted to he would shoot him as Elsworth was shot. I think it ought to be published in all the papers.