Columbia College Hospital
Washington March 17th 1868

Dear Mother,

Your ever welcome letter of the 8th inst.
came duly at hand and was pleased to learn that you
are all so well and happy at Home and to know
that I am made happy myself, although I cannot
be there to enjoy it with you, which would add
much. I also received the J. W. Freeman and a
letter from Henry yesterday dated the 18th. I was
somewhat astonished to see what progress the young
Uncle had made in writing spelling and composition,
since I last heard from him, and should judge
from it that he had not been kept from School
on act of sickness and think he must have occupied
much of his time with his books while at Home.
I am glad to see such progress under such adverse
circumstances for it shows what he would do if
he had the opportunity. I often wish and as often
regret that I did not occupy my time more to
study while I was at Home and had the opportunity
But I imagine by this writing that he has something
of men act to occupy his time and attention since
he has been permitted to be called Uncle. How
I think my little niece must be something of a mentor
from acts thus far and I am hoping to hear
from soon yet I live in hopes that I may be able sometime to go and see for myself. We have had very unpleasant weather in the last two weeks, it has either rained or snowed nearly every day and when it has not we have experienced a cold March wind which I often am made to think an uce to endurance of it the snow is all gone now and the wind has nearly dried up the mud. I was surprised yesterday and found that I had gained several lbs since within the past two weeks and I think I am as sound and as well as I ever was in my life although I cannot expect to have as much living as we do her with none at all on my little cistern yet I have got along full as well as I expected and intend now to return to my Regt as soon as not before the 1st of April 44 of The New England Soldiers who had been here in the Hospital three months and were not likely to be ready able to do duty for some time more and yesterday desinted for Plymouth from R.S. They would have been willing to go if they had been paid as they had been mustered here and had just been signed the pay rolls and were expecting to be paid off at the hospital this week. Then will be a large portion of those who are not able to go to their Regt dont to their own State in a few days if we are paid off in a few days or when we are paid off get my discharge from the Hospital and then get a help from the Provost Marshal and go direct to my Regt thus anxiously going
to Convalescent Camp I will enclose a letter from Howard E. Henderson our Commissary Sgt whom I saw spoken of before as he came here with me. You wish to know who were my roommates and whom from the 1st one from N.C. beside myself he came with me his name was Small Longtin A.C. from Nashanny: Jno. Wentfall 17th N.Y.; J. H. Phillips 15th N.C. J.W. Smart 16th Pl.; Henry Parker S.C. Conn and J. Thomas Shaw is our attendant as Contract nurse not a soldier from Worceoda and although from different parts of the country they are all good fellows and as we are all well enough to go the museum for our meals and plenty in good spirits we have thus far passed the time away very pleasantly.

Well Mother we have been spending our time since dinner in the building for the purpose of being paid off you may be assured that we were somewhat surprised at 11 oclock to learn that we were to be paid off. This P.M. I do not know why it is but they do not pay any attention in paying off at the hospitals to the Alimentation Books so that I know the whole amount eighty dollars four months pay. But tell S. that he say or mind it if he receive my regular alimment as such who do the business are not very correct as there is some mistake somewhere I know of their case where they have been paid at the Hospital and receipt their regular Alimment beside as if they are a mind to send mine let it come.
I will tell you what I am going to do with this money, as I have intended to do, but was not certain if getting paid off before it for the July—and in that case I should be up a stump. I am going to buy me a small boat of about 22 tons, with sails and masts, and will be to carry back with me, and am going to buy up and sell waiters. I might as well do it as any body else do and make their profit of money who know nothing of the trade; for instance, you can go and buy a watch for $20, and sell it for $40, or something take it right up on the name, then is a great deal of traffic in the thing, and if there is any thing to be made I am going to make it. I cannot lose much any how. And if I should be fortunate enough to get a good prize, I should not have much better else to do. And now I must go to the Post Office, and write my letters, and get ready to start. I have no time to write to you but will write you at the next opportunity. Good-bye, and I hope you will not be angry. I have not heard from you. I hope this will not be a draft, but I must close this note as it is almost written. I am going to buy a boat, and I wish I could set down and write letters at home. I hope to write to you some time. Please come to see me a little. Much love to all, with warmest regards. As ever, your affectionately, Chas. D. Murray.