

Portsmouth

July 15th 1861.

Gentlemen -

On reaching my quarters at this Island yesterday, after an absence of a week, on business connected with the Command here, I learned with no less surprise than sorrow, that there was much sickness in camp, among the Officers & privates of the several Companies. I immediately, signified in writing to Genl. Walter Proctor, who chanced to be here, my determination to vacate the building assigned to me as quarters by order of the late Governor Ellis, & now occupied by me, for the use of the sick in camp. I also addressed a note to one of your number (Capt. Gilliam) requesting him to vacate for the use of my Company two of the four houses in which his company are quartered. The request will I have no doubt be cheerfully responded to. I also addressed to Dr. Warren this morning, a note informing him of my determination

to put him in speedy possession
of the Hospital for the better accom-
modation of the sick.

Within the last two hours, and
several hours after the note to Dr. Warner
was written & dispatched to him, I
~~have~~ your note of July 7th has been
put into my hands, in which you
request me to do, what my own
sense of propriety, ^{or leaving the condition of my camp} suggested was
proper to be done, ~~or leaving the~~
~~condition of the camp.~~

Insofar as the general tenor of
your note would seem to imply that
you attached some blame to me for
occupying the Hospital building for
quarters, I ^{have to} ~~small~~ remark respectfully,

Insofar as blame seems to be attached
by you to my occupancy of the Hospital, I
have to remark. First - that the orders
issuing from the State Government for the
quartering of troops on the Island, directed
that the Hospital should be made the
nucleus of the encampment. One order
specially assigned it to Capt. Lilliam - an
order made at his own request. Secondly -
that two of your number Captains
Lilliam & Johnston, were anxious to get

here at an early day, that they might get possession of this building, & would have done so had they arrived in time.

Thirdly - Not for some time after the arrival of the forces here, there was no surgeon at the Post, except those attached to the Company of Capt. Gilliam & his own company, the latter of whom attended ^{sick of} several of the Companies, & the negroes at Beacom Island gratuitously. When Dr Warren came, he was not authorized to take charge of the Hospital ^{building}, nor has he ever since been. He made no demand upon me for it.

Fourthly - as the Companies successively arrived on the Island, I went in person with the General Commanders, & assigned to them as quarters, all the vacant houses on the Island, putting Capt. Johnston into the house of Mr J. B. Fowle, who had requested me in Washington to quarter my company there. In addition to this, I took my tents to the fort & left them there for the use of each Company ordered there to garrison the fortress. They have been used by Captains Johnston & Gilliam, & are now in use by Capt Sharp. Had I taken them away, the fort could not have been garrisoned.

Insofar, as the remark about the ceremony attending the decease of private Wheeler, seems to imply that had he been in the hospital instead of in a private family, that lamented ^{melancholly} ~~unfortunate~~ event would have happened otherwise, I have only to remark, that my judgment differs with yours upon the subject. I believe that he received far better attention in the family of Mrs Gaskill where there were females to provide for his wants, than he would have received in a hospital under Dr Warren or any other surgeon.

I have felt constrained to make this plain statement of known facts, in vindication of myself from censure implied in your note, but I trust not intended.

Very sincerely
Yours &c

To Captains.

James J. Smith.

J. W. Johnston.

J. H. Sharp &

H. A. Gilliam

Portsmouth

J. S. Warren "Capt."
Washington D.C.