

again) such a desolate place
as Alexandria - not a light in the
streets after dark, - not a hotel to be found,
and in fact not anything but mud.

Talk about Jersey mud, - it's dust
compared with the streets here!

Being Sunday moreover, the
stores were all closed yesterday &
hardly anyone except soldiers to be
seen in the streets. The inhabitants
may have been to church - I don't
know.

This morning I found out
from some deck hands on board of
the "Croton" that the Achilles had
gone up to Washington again, so I
took the first dispatch boat and
joined the A. again in time for
breakfast. She had been down
the river abt. 50 miles - towed up a
bar, & pulled the "Washington Hunt" off
a sand bar - nothing very exciting.

We shall run down to Alexandria by
& bye, & I presume be sent down the river
again after schooners. All hands
still well, & everything going on right.

Most affectionately
A.P.P.

~~The board Steamer "Achilles"~~
~~Monday Mch. 24th/62~~
~~I have just got back~~
~~from a land cruise, of two nights~~
~~and one day duration.~~ Saturday
~~afternoon we got word that we~~
~~should not be ordered away until~~
~~Tuesday, & I thought it would be a~~
~~good time to go up to the city, see Aunt~~
~~Letty, & get in the city, but went up to Aunt Letty's~~
~~in the evening, & finally decided to stay all~~
~~night.~~ So far so good; - but when
~~I came back to the dock in the morn-~~
~~ing, behold the boat had gone. As one~~
~~on the other boats knew where she~~
~~went or what she left, but I knew~~
~~she could not have gone up the river,~~
~~so I hid around until I heard orders~~
~~given to the "Suzanna Jenkins" to go down to~~
~~Alexandria.~~ I went down in the "H.J."

and on board of the Golden Gate (where the Dr. M. has his office) and ascertained that the Achilles had been ordered down the river to bring up some barges etc which were wanted. I knew that I had some hours before me, a dinner, and perhaps a supper, to get and so started to look for the most pleasing of my wants - dinner. I found the "Nanshon" was lying at the upper dock waiting for troops, so I walked up to see Capt. Wilson. Took my dinner with him and stayed there all the afternoon watching the embarkation of the different regiments.

The whole scene was splendid. Each boat as she received her complement moved out into the stream with the band playing, soldiers cheering etc, & lay there until the whole were ready. Then they started together - first the Metamora, then the John Brooks, Nanshon, South America,

C. Vanderbilt, Arrowsmith, Keanebeck and others, following. The whole of Gen Smith's division went down & I believe a few thousand of the Howells. Later in the afternoon I met Capt. Loper & walked down to Pier 5 with him. He looks really tired out, & indeed does more than any other two here. I found out from him that the Achilles would probably be up before night - so I waited on the docks, & on board of the Golden Gate, until I got tired & then went on board the ^{Wm. Kent} to see Capt. Kirby. I met a Mr. Clearman (son of Mr C. - Sturges Clearman & Co) on board, and sat talking with them all the eve. Got my supper on board, & finding that the Achilles had not come up & that no one knew anything about her, I accepted his offer of a bed. I never saw (and never want to see