

Tuesday or Wednesday. We shall  
turn over all the stores to the Ord.  
office there, & then as we have  
no other business we shall go off  
somewhere & get a good place  
to see all that is going on. I  
presume he will report to Gen.  
Banks for duty, which I fully in-  
tend to find out Col. Chickering  
and go in once more with him.

I hear that Col. C. is now acting  
Brig. Gen. & if so I do not expect to  
have much trouble in getting  
a place on his staff. I can tell  
you better however after I come  
back here, which I presume  
will be in about ten days, than  
I can now. I am not going  
to take anything with me, save  
my overcoat, sword, blankets  
& Haversack. In the letter I

ORDNANCE OFFICE,

Headquarters Department of the Gulf.

New Orleans March 7<sup>th</sup> 1863.

My Dear Mother

You have had so many false al-  
larms & so many "last letters" from me  
lately, that I dare say you scarcely  
think we shall ever move. This  
however is positively my farewell  
for a time, and you need not be at  
all alarmed if you do not receive  
another letter for three or four  
weeks. It is a certain thing now  
that we must have a fight with-  
in a week or ten days, and everything  
tends to make us believe it will be  
a terribly hard one. There is very  
little actually known down here  
in the city, but I have been with of-  
ficers who have just come from Baton  
Rouge & who are going back imme-  
diately, and they all agree in saying  
that before this day week we shall

either before Port Hudson in position to lay siege, or else shall be back here from New Orleans, having been driven out of Baton Rouge. Gen Grover who has been in command there since we came down, was in the city day before yesterday in consultation with Banks, Sherman & Emery.

We know that the rebels have been threatening that plan for ten days past, & have even taken down of our pickets, within five miles of the town. I am very much of the opinion that they mean to attack us there before many days, while at the same time their rams & gun boats come down the river & engage our fleet.

They have a much larger force than we have if recent reports speak true & it is a possible thing that our advance to Port Hudson

may be commenced by a retreat from Baton Rouge. If on the other hand we go on & attack them, we shall have at least ten miles of fighting to do before we get to the rail lines of defense.

A more one way or the other is certain & it is no treason to say so, for you will probably have had full accounts of the whole thing through Southern Sources, long before you receive this.

Gen. Banks & staff go up this afternoon. I have spoken to the Head Orderly & he tells me that they have orders to prepare for two weeks absence, but it is possible that they will return before that time is up. We have applied to the Lt. Master for a boat for the Ordnance Store, & expect to get one tomorrow. The shall load her up & Lieut. Hill & I are going up on

5  
have put some few things I  
may need in the field, - hand-  
kerchiefs, comb & brush &c, and  
in the other side I have got some  
crackers, & gingerbread, you sent  
me, a box of sardines, & my flask.

If I find I need clothes or any  
thing I have not got with me, I  
shall send down for them. In the  
mean time I shall have them  
removed to the Storehouse & kept  
safely for my order. Once up  
there I do not expect to write  
a single line to any one, so you  
see this must last for some little  
time. I do not in the first place  
think I shall have time, & in the  
second I doubt very much whether  
we shall be allowed to send letters  
any where, until the affair is set-  
tled. - one way or the other. If  
I do get a chance to send you a  
line however you shall certainly

hear. I am glad enough of the  
move, for I want to get up river  
once more, and a little excitement  
in the shape of a charge, or storming  
a Secesh battery, will do me lots  
of good. I shall take the very best of  
care of myself in not needlessly  
running into danger, & mean  
to keep my proper allotment  
of arms &c. The Mississippi  
came in today with a large mail,  
and I am in hopes of receiving it  
tomorrow. The McClellan & George  
Washington are also both due, so  
that it cannot be long before I get  
some more letters. The spurs you  
sent me are very much admired by  
all, & I'm bothered awfully to know where  
I got them &c. They are the most con-  
venient thing of the kind I have ever  
seen. With best love believe me  
Your ever loving son  
A. S. P.