Headquarters near Suffolk.
April 20, 1863. 7 P.M.

General:

Your communication of 3 A.M. this day is received.

When you hear of the presence of such of the enemy's forces as you refer to, or of any in your vicinity, the Commdg. Genl. desires you to use parties of your cavalry in close reconnoissances to ascertain with some certainty, their character, intentions and strength. If found to be not too formidable, attack them at once, with your whole force if necessary, and destroy them before reinforcement can be added.

The cannonade that you heard last night arose from a successful effort of the enemy to capture one of our river batteries. Under cover of darkness and the fire of his gun boats and land batteries, he landed a force near Häll's point and took possession of Tibbings Battery, by a surprise.

I send as you request some letter paper and envelopes.

I am General very respectfully,

Commdg. Brigade.

Gillam

cc