

Mrs. Andrew Upson
Plantsville, Conn.

(Envelope is postmarked Nashville, Ten Dec 8, 1962, with a 3- cent stamp. Letter is on two and ½ sheets of stationery folded in half and is written on ten sides in ink)

Loudon Valley-
Dec. 7th, 1862

My Dear Wife,

We have winter in earnest. Friday afternoon it commenced snowing & continued till some time during the night – At 2 o'clock A.M. Lt Lewis, who was officer on the guard, came to the tent & said there was an eclipse of the moon. David & I went out to see it – I thought there was not much fun standing in my stocking feet & speedily got back under my blanket – The next morning, Saturday, while at breakfast I recd. notice of being detailed on picket – A few moments later I reported for duty – The snow was about 4 inches deep & the wind in high glee – The men didn't feel very cheerful over the prospect & gladly would they have hailed deliverance from the work before them – You have seen days when the snow filled the air & the wind flew searchingly (**Pg. 2**) into every nook & corner – It was pretty much so as we filed off in long line over the hills yesterday – There were 90 men – Got to our posts about 10 ½ - After distributing the men along the line I went to my own quarters – The same from which I wrote you last Sunday – But how changed the scene – The wind came howling through the woods, the pines moaned – The stream was half bound in icy filters & for anything to be seen to the contrary I should have thought myself in New England. The 2d Leiut. of the Portland Company was with me - & also Jo. Hitchcock most of the day – at 4 o'clock he went on duty for the night – Our shelter was such as rails set up against a chestnut tree & covered with pine boughs afforded – At one side of the entrance, stones were laid up for a kind of fire place and I assure you we piled on the wood freely – We burned up one good (**Pg. 3**) sized rock oak & part of a locust – It is fortunate that we are in a country abounding in fuel – But there will be less if this brigade winters here – We chatted – turned one side & the other to the fire, looked out across the hills & valleys at the driving snow – boiled our tea, eat dinner & supper, speculated upon the depth of snow & temperature at home, got up a good supply for the night fire – had a two hours visit from a Pennsylvania Captain who was at Antietam & gave us a long account of the fight & so the day wore away – I felt in good spirits – but the men were anticipating a hard night – We sat around our good fire till about 9 o'clock thinking how snugly you were at home & then spread out our rubbers upon the ground, rolled up in the woolen ones & without boots 2 or 3 feet from the fire went to sleep – When we were waked up (**Pg. 4**) by getting cold we unfolded ourselves & piled on a fresh lot of wood until all right & then took another nap – This morning I didn't know from any of my feelings but that my rest had been in the most comfortable place imaginable – You, probably, being told that I was out picketing, would think the chances for comfort infinitesimally small – But we make great mistakes – A healthy & cheerful man can bear without any real strain upon his constitution what to

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the inexperienced seems impossible – I have suffered vastly more winter nights at home than has yet fallen to my lot here – Keep my feet warm & I will risk the rest – The men said the night brought little rest to them – Their opportunities were about the same as ours – We got back to camp this morning at 11 o'clock – Capt. W thought the night was severe enough in camp & looked as if he expected me to complain – But I have become so hardened that it is about the same in one place as another o'nights - I believe of the two when it don't rain a hive booth is better than a tent – I tried to think this morning how you were (**Pg. 5**) busied – getting breakfast, dressing the children, getting ready for meeting xc. xc. But it is impossible to realize such things as true – We have so long been separated from the habits of civilized life & the customs of home that now these are products of fancy – How strange to see folks preparing for church – to hear a Sabbath bell – to listen to a choir – Most of all to sit down comfortably & worship God with his people – I found your letter of last Sabbath evening waiting for me – it came last evening – The one written Tuesday was recd. Thursday – You did not say anything about Mr. Bingham & his family or how long you staid with them – I was pleased at the tone of your Sunday night missive - Guess it is the best of the lot – You were on the right track then if never before – It has seemed to me that you, in the responsibilities imposed by the situations of our affairs, had something to awaken high (**Pg. 6**) resolutions & develop a noble spirit – If you think me rendering honorable service to our county & to mankind it is my wish that you rejoice because such is the fact – I am your husband & what speaks well for me does for you – Then those dear little ones we have no reason to be ashamed of, nor, as far as I know of any part of our personal or married history – We have been faithful to each other & there is no fear with me that we shall not so continue to the end – To be the matron of a household, & especially to carry well the duties of both father & mother, as you & hundreds others are doing, is no ignoble service – I could wish that all the wives left at home would point the finger of shame & indignation at those husbands who pine over having enlisted, rather than write letters expressing only sadness & widowhood – Situated as you are what lessons of patriotism & manly doing (**Pg. 7**) can be implanted in our children's minds – If you feel the dignity of a mother, & I hope you do by this time, it will be a real pleasure to mold their characters for time & eternity – Seems to me there is a soil about as good as the average in each of our four & if we put in good seed there must come by & by a rich harvest of usefulness & honor – In other respects too your situation is one worthy of high appreciation – So long as the Lord pleases I hope to carry well the responsibilities that rest upon me – The people of Southington may not yet know it, but some day they will, that they owe me more for getting out of the draft as cheaply as they did than they do any other man – Had they properly seconded our efforts at the first all that after expense would have been saved – But so it is in the world – some labor others get the benefit of it – I ought to be thankful that my treatment has been (**Pg. 8**) as fare as it has – About matters at home you had better carefully look the subject over & advise me what is best – It is a little singular that

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affairs have come round so soon – You perhaps recollect I advised not to have father come to stay permanently – If the war continues along & to tell the truth I expect nothing less, I should advise to sell all the stock except two cows & the horse & one or two hogs – Sell the grass standing & be at no expense for hired help – If you wish to manage the farm, with me to advise, getting a good fellow to do the work I am willing you should try – Father don't know how to get along easy & never did – He will work – You had better talk with him – ask him what calculations had better made ahead & see how he feels & try to ascertain just what he would prefer – I don't believe he knows what he would like – Capt. W. read his long letter of which I spoke before us in the tent – It was a good one & I am glad he favored the Association – You speak of writing to Julia Ann & Rees. – I have been thinking about them sometime – Will attend to their cases at the Earliest practicable moment –

Yours Ever

A U –

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Monday Morning –

The sun shines pleasantly but the wind is cold – Two men died in the hospital yesterday, one of typhoid fever belonging to Portland Company – which has lost three by death – The other was an old Irishman 60 years of age – When asked why he enlisted, he said because he had two sons in the 12th Regt. & he hoped to go where he could see them – His complaint was asthma & swelled limbs – There are about 30 now in the hospital, none from our company – Ten have died out of the regt. since we went to camp at New Haven –

The rumor is abroad this morning that we shall leave here soon. I have no facts to justify it – But it would not be strange at all if it should prove true – Gen. Geary, who has so long been encamped upon *(Pg. 10)* Bolivar Heights moved several days since towards Winchester – We belong to the same corps & may follow or go elsewhere – Another rumor is that we are already out of Kane's Brigade – If that be true it is not formally effected because our pickets have gone out as usual this morning – I only give you these as specimens of what we hear every few days – Still they may prove true & they may not – If we have to leave a pile of stuff will be thrown away – Everyone has got more then can be carried – A call to march & bivouac now would put some of our fellows to their mettle most severely – I have no fears for myself but I know well enough there are scores that would break down in a week – I see plain enough that old men are not the material for an army – Above all things a man must be stayed up by moral convictions & unwavering willingness – You know what we do with our hearty assent is easier done even if it is difficult – Pancakes for breakfast – Mittens, candlesticks xc. all delivered by Mr. Smith –

My love to Ida, Frank, Willie, Mary & all

