

Nov. 18, 1863

*(Letter with no envelope is on one sheet of stationery folded in half and is written on four sides in ink.)*

Stevenson, Ala.

Nov. 18<sup>th</sup>, 1863

My Dear Wife –

Last night I sat up & wrote to you & the children – Today I have been very busy over muster rolls & have only just finished the job – Lt. Royce was away until after noon & so I had not so much help as would have been convenient – Besides the box – that very box – arrived this morning & of course I could not forgo the pleasure of seeing the contents – Really I did not expect it much before Saturday – You see it came in 9 days – That is quicker than the average at Stafford Co. House last winter – Corpl. Hotchkiss discovered it among the Express Matter this morning – it came in sometime during the night – I was too busy even to go down to look for it, though when I gave the letters to the mail agent this a.m. I noticed a good pile of boxes & read one or two directions, among others one for Maj. Gen. Jos. Hooker, but did not suppose my own was in the lot – Charley & H. Grannis brought it over to my tent & we proceeded at once to unhook & uncover the welcome articles – On raising the lid it was apparent that something had been leaking – First came out the hat, pretty well stuck up with what we supposed jelly or preserves – Next the boots, which showed signs of the same daubing – I began to fear the lot was like to open bad – But we were soon at ease – The boots of course were (**Pg. 2**) not the worse for such an application, nor any better either – One pair of stockings & the fish caught the greater part next to the hat – That I fear is so stained that it will not wash out – I have attempted to get it off with the sponge, but you know it is bad to wet the felt clear through – The hat is of first rate material – a right down pretty one & I feel sorry enough that a little more sodder was not used on that can of pear pickles – That was the offending repel & leaked about half – not quite, its juice on to the other things – The leak was from the top- around the lid – All such things must be secure or such disasters will occur – You see these boxes get tumbled & hurled bottom side up & every other way – It was hooked strong enough & had no bruises – but some how the can was not tight or became leaky – I tell you though the pears are delicious - & so is the spiced liquor – the acid part is so good I could drink it right down & wish for more – But I only indulge by tea spoons full so that it may last – The smell of cod fish regaled my nostrils pretty quick & you may believe I tasted that at once – How delicious that too – Then I saw a chestnut which got between my teeth very suddenly & next moment a walnut followed it – They tasted so well that three of four disappeared – Then we hauled out more bits of fish, crammed in here & there – Cod fish makes good packing – besides it won't spoil & you hit upon the right way of getting it along – The cans of milk, stockings, shirts, (**Pg. 3**) drawers, paper, gloves all came out right – My shirt unfortunately absorbed some of the pear juice, but I have sponged it pretty much out – That is a beautiful shirt – far handsomer than my old

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one though I always thought that pretty enough – The buttons suit me & also the needle work – They add very essentially to the dress for we often go without vest & you know a shirt makes or unmakes a man & perhaps also his wife – Certain I am no officer in the 20<sup>th</sup> can sport a better one than this, that is from his wife's needle – I suppose Julia Ann made it – Well, tell her you will probably get the credit just as often happens in the world one sows (sews) another reaps – This time I happen to do the wearing – I must write her thanks as soon as I can get into the garment, which shall be about next Thanksgiving Day – Don't know but I will dress up now, try those new pants – the hat, gloves, boots – vest, shirt – drawers, stockings & get a picture taken – Though did you know old clothes are the best for that? Anyhow soldiers think so & the results seem to justify their opinion – The gloves are just what I wanted – they fit my hand better than any pair I ever had on before – Shall keep them for extra occasions – The boots are a tip top article – but not what we want here – We in the field want long legged fellows that come clear up to the knees into which the pants are tucked – If Ensign calls that a military boot he is an ass – Very likely he sells them to officers loafing around where (*Pg. 4*) sidewalks abound – But down here except for dry weather in camp or when we wish to appear with pants outside they are not the style I meant or should buy – However I don't wish you to consider me finding the least fault with you for I know you did the best you could – But it does surprise me folks are so green up in Connecticut & especially in Hartford – If we stay here in Stevenson I can use them very well – But on the march they are too short topped – There is one difficulty about fitting my foot – A boot long enough is always too full in the hollow – Guess I will send to Capt. Woodruff – for he knows just what we want – Strange I did not think of him before – But wait a bit on this matter – The quality of the boot is excellent – And I found something in side of them that pleased me too – That hoarhound & the lozenges & troches – glad you thought of my tastes & possible wants – Have nibbled a piece of the candy – how nice it tasted – Shall lay these things by for times when they will especially come handy, useful – My stars – what butter! O it smelt richer than balmy breezes – I just spread a little on a bread crust & you may say I feasted – Guess a half of a pear did not spoil the relish either – Then a slice of fish & some more bread & butter & next half a pear set me up so much that I forgot all about Alabama & the rancid grease we have supposed was worthy of being called a dairy product – Why, do you eat such butter & pickles & fish up north? My stars – this southern country don't begin to know the comforts of a northern home – And these southern women are perfect barbarians so far as the art of cooking goes – O, the noble chivalry! O, glorious confederacy! It is time their heads were broke so that some adequate notion of their stupidity could penetrate the vanity & blindness by which they have deluded themselves – Tonight I tried a cup of tea with the condensed milk – Like all the other things that hit the right spot & I feel as though my cup of blessings is very full – So good did the tea taste that I drank three cups – Now, Wife I suppose these articles ran up to quite a sum when you had footed the cost – I don't know what it is nor do I much care – Whatever be the amount they are worth a vast sight to me – The surest guaranty of health is to keep up the system & we need once in the while something to break the tame monotony of army

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living & start the palate – Many seek the remedy in whisky – It is cheaper for me to receive in this way some of those common varieties of food which with you are not luxuries but by scarcity become such to us – The same things bought here, fish could not be had would cost more for than by express – So I am acting economically – Send the price of the boots, gloves, milk, butter & what you paid for freight I notice \$4 marked – You need not send me another box until I write further directions, but you can have some things ready, so that nothing may be lost when I do order it – The cod fish is about as good as beef –

*(Written upside down on first page in upper margin.)*

Yours of the 14<sup>th</sup> came tonight – It contained \$2. Wait a bit before sending any more money – Elbert Frisbie is quite down – The surgeon is trying to get him a furlough & you may see him home soon – As for myself all straight & hearty – Had a black boy commence cooking tonight – So you see how the good things come all at once – Two weeks & over since this box would have been worth a thousand dollars – Don't know but it is worth that now – Any how I have a heart full of gratitude & love to you for all your kindness – Here is to my wife – God bless her –

A. Upson