

December 13, 1863  
Mrs. Andrew Upson  
Plantsville, Conn.

*(Envelope is postmarked Nashville, Ten. Dec. 16 with a 3-cent stamp. Letter is on a large sheet of lined stationery folded in half and is written in ink on four sides.)*

Stevenson, Ala.  
Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>, 1863

My Dear Wife –

It is 1 ½ P.M. We had rain yesterday & it is not yet clear - though the sun has made two or three attempts to shine - This morning, for an hour or two the temperature was quite cold – In fact most of the time that much may be said, so that lively walking or working brings perspiration – You have often after a storm at this season noticed that rains are succeeded by warmer changes; but these generally prove brief & the wind soon drives up scowling clouds – It is about like that here now – I observe the sky wears a colder look than this A.M. & I doubt not we will have a touch of winter tomorrow – About ten the birds sang like spring – Larks are seen in large flocks & in some places black birds – also various kinds of little creatures that rustle among the fallen leaves or hop about in the tree tops – I like the climate but detest the mud – Still for two or three weeks our traveling about Stevenson has been comparatively dry – But the roads mostly are bad, the creeks high, & doubtless for two or three or four months we shall experience the beauties of a southern winter – if we lie still, of which there is every appearance, I imagine our share of comfort, & discomfort too, will be meted out as the days pass along – Whether we are better off moving frequently or resting in one spot a long while it is difficult to tell – With fixed quarters we get many more conveniencies & gradually settle down to a kind of civilized life – our arrangements at the present time certainly partake of the agreeable – Royce & myself have a good wall tent & fly – the fire place & writing desk of course contribute greatly to ease & cheerfulness – For often the soldier must do his pen work without any facilities in the way of seat or table & if he enjoys the luxury of a fire more frequently it is at the cost of dirt & smoke – I wonder we have not all of us become tanned like to hams, so much have we first & last undergone the process that **(Pg. 2)** give a leathern hue to the epidermis – But now we can assume an easy posture for body & elbows if letters are to be answered or muster rolls to be prepared – And while doing this by night or day a satisfying warmth radiates from the neat pile of blazing oak & beech – Besides these two elements of an outfit we have one fixed seat covered with a gunny bag cushion, the same material forming a tasty tidy for the back – That stands by the hearth corner & is so far an article of luxury that visitors are usually requested to occupy it during their stay – I frequently drop upon it & by aid of vivid fancying convert it into a willow or cane arm chair placed by the hearthstone of a Northern home where loving wife & happy children & plentiful substance all conspire to make the picture of human happiness as nearly perfect as can be expected on the earth – “George

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Washington” has his “little house” completed –It stands just to the rear of our quarters – It is made of logs, with chimney & sundry fixtures of his own contrivance & there we commenced yesterday to take our meals - He will cook & keep the dishes & provisions in his house – He always speaks of it as his “Little House” for it is two weeks since its foundations were laid – That had a kind of poetical effect & one fact pertaining to the cabin really justifies such an association – About half the sticks that compose the walls are covered with soft fine moss, so that you would think it had stood for ages – The trees growing in low grounds here often are covered as with a tight fitting robe of green velvet – Until now the kitchen ware & culinary operations pertained to the tent – Thus you will see we are adapting in some degree southern styles – But property & lumber always accumulates with prolonged residence & our quarters were gradually getting filled with sundry evidences that more room was necessary – The “Little House” will relieve ours of the surplus & so with the cleaning out of cupboard & cook fixtures we shall maintain more than heretofore the character of those whose means enable them to support a kitchen separate from the living apartment – We celebrated our last nights supper by indulging in a stewed chicken – “George” had prepared it with port & potatoes & we voted the meal a fitting dedication of so important a structure as (**Pg. 3**) the house in which lived a “boy” bearing the revered name of him whom all call the Father of his Country - The fact of eating fowl, I suppose, suggested to me the subject of laying eggs – You know I once speculated somewhat in that manufacture – I chanced to ask George if the pullet was going to lay – “No sir” – adding there was no rooster – We discussed that point he maintaining that there could be no eggs without chancleers aid – More than that; he declared roosters laid soft eggs – he “seed em do it” – and sometimes hens laid twice a day, “surtin sure” – Our habit now is only two meals – breakfast at 7 or 8 & dinner anytime from 3 to 7 – which is also called supper – Yesterday I worked on my Orderance Returns for the 3d quarter – We have hardly had a chance to make these out - The quarter ended Sep. 30<sup>th</sup> – But at that time we were on the way hither & since our arrival in this region until lately there has been no leisure – Have them complete & shall forward by the same mail that takes this – They go to Washington – I have a large bundle of your letters that I should like to send home for preservation – also a good many papers pertaining to my affairs during the period I was away from the regt. But for the present see no way to get them off – Your letter of Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> I recd. this morning – Let me tell you something – Your work before any mans – If somebody wishes Aroma washing day insist upon having the water brought first – You must look out for yourself & if you are in need of his services keep him. I don’t care who calls – You are “master” there – rule, even if you have to discommode a neighbor – What tract of wood is it which father sold Miles? It seems strange that Miles abstains from writing more particulars to me – He did not fill a letter sheet with his running hand – I expect Horace will be adviser in settling the estate – but don’t you get uneasy – Hope to hear soon from you as to your consultation with Joseph – My desire is that he take hold so that I may know what is the state of things – I don’t know as he, by any arrangement, can take much part – I shall not worry myself (**Pg. 4**) over this business, neither shall I be careless of the interests

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belonging to me & the children – I am sorry that W. H. does not see how he is belittled by the influences to which he so submissively yields – But she is a trump in her way, there is no mistake about that – I don't believe you have the face to withstand her designs – Come, if you see things going unfairly just let them know that you see it – I wish to avoid every appearance of cautiousness & I still hope Miles will be a man in this affair – If he only carries himself well he may go his way with his wife & I won't ask any odds - But may it please the Lord to help him out of the chains that enslave not so much him as his usefulness & good name – About letters I am going to number mine & hereafter when you speak of receiving one specify the number – I always tell you the date when referring to yours, but you speak of receiving mine but give no clue by which I know the one alluded to – Somebody has sent me a Southington Mirror with lines around an extract from a letter of C.A. Sutcliffe – The people of the town do love to make fools of themselves – I wish they knew how silly they appear in making so much ado over every tale & rumor that gets to flying – I notice Brother Burritt too spread himself characteristically at the Lector of the Upson that has become M. C. – There is a comic farcical almost, look to those proceedings – We down here don't care a pin for puffs & resolutions – Deeds – not speeches – acts – not promises determine the position of each one – Guess you better subscribe for the “Mirror” & send it to me after reading yourself – Also the Tribune whenever anything good appears – We have a renewal of the rain – a thunder storm – It is wet – wet – wet – But we are dry inside – Ah, last year my fate generally took me on picket – None of that now – We are better off & further too – The Chaplain preaches at 11 – “The Fears of the Lord xc” – Not many in attendance – But here is the bottom – of no 4 foolscap – you asked for this kind – Do you like love on foolscap? Here 'tis' – yours – May you all be happy – Is Mary's face sore now?

Truly yours,  
A. Upson