

May 22nd, 1863
No. 85

Mrs. Andrew Upson
Plantsville, Conn.

(Envelope is yellow and is postmarked Annapolis Md. May 25 1863 with a 3-cent stamp. Letter is on one sheet of blue lined stationery, 15" x 19 1/2", folded in half and is written on four sides in ink.)

Camp Parole,
Annapolis, Md.
May 22d, 1863

My Dear Wife,

Yours of the 18th which I ought to have rec. yesterday came to hand this morning – My patience was well nigh exhausted at the disappointment of the mail & probably you will think a note put into a letter that had been ready some hours not the most agreeable – It brought tears to my eyes when I read how you saw me “missing, probably killed” – Really those were trying days - & you felt I suppose as never before the curse of war – We were momentarily conscious what painful suspense & anxiety would fill the hearts of our friends & often remarked among ourselves upon the subject – We could only send up fervent prayers to the Almighty that he would be your strength & consolation – I rejoice that the good neighbors & relatives remembered you & manifested their kind interest by such efforts to console you – I feel thankful to them all & hope you will express to them the obligation under which they have placed us – I suppose the information that came to hand was very unreliable – It is curious what stories some will tell – Since arriving here we have got hold of some New Haven papers – I notice things in them that have no foundation – whatever – But enough of this – Only you had better take with some grains of allowance most of the letters that are published - Unless you know the writer to be a calm truth teller & actually cognizant of what he relates very little can be believed – I have also seen a pictorial. (Guess it was Leslie's, but can not affirm) with professed illustrations of the (**Pg. 2**) battle at Chancellorsville - Excepting the cut representing the brick house there is very little that one could recognize – Very little is said of the 12th corps: & yet that bore the brunt of the fight – Williams division in particular was under a terrible fire – The battery that caused most slaughter & trouble in our ranks was directly in front of us, the 20th & showered an incessant storm of iron over & upon us – I can give you no description of the scene – Those rebel canon vomited like the mouths of Hell – Nothing could stand such a fire – Had that battery been silenced we should have been all right – I think some of our generals committed a fatal error in leaving such a point to fall into possession of the enemy – I remember telling our boys Saturday that our greatest danger lay in that direction – Had we remained in the position in which we then lay, the part of the entrenchments that had been constructed by our own hands – a much greater slaughter would have taken place – At 12 o'clock Saturday night we were ordered to another part of the breastwork – These were not so well constructed as those we had left & Col. Wooster had us cut & pile on more trees – Some were unwilling to work-

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All were tired & needed sleep – I helped until the work was done & then lay down – We knew there would be fighting on the morrow but none of us had any idea that such a battle as followed was to take place – The firing commenced early, before some of us had finished eating – I remember eating my tea & hard tack squatting behind the breastwork & watching the movements on the hill to the front of us – One of our batteries was posted there & supported by two or three regiments of infantry, among others a (*Pg. 3*) red legged Zouave regt.. The battery worked lively for half an hour – But I observed that our infantry soon fell back, whether by order or not I can't say – Soon the rebs appeared coming round the hill off at our left – It was evident our chance at them was near at hand – We lay still watching their advance until they had got within 8 or 10 rods & then we poured a volley upon them such as must have surprised them – Immediately after the rebel battery got posted upon the very hill spoken of above & began to play upon us I tell you it was trying to see what an advantage had been lost – Fortunately they could not depress their guns quite enough to hit us – Their shot just grazed the breastwork & struck in the bank behind us – Occasionally a shell would burst directly over us, but seldom was anyone hit – I think the most disagreeable sound is that produced by 'grape shot – A bullet hums; a shell makes a screeching noise anything but pleasant; canister & grape go swirling along with such awful motion & power that one realizes the certainty of destruction all around him - I saw the earth torn up as by an unseen force, limbs of trees cut off & ruin wrought in every thing found in the track of those terrible mussels – And yet strange as you may think it these were unheeded in the one absorbing thought of whipping the rebels - The sight of a grey back monopolize every thing else & provided a chance offered to pepper the enemy we were pretty sure to do it whatever the exposure – When firing at some sharp shooters, after the regt. had left my attention was riveted upon them so entirely that I did not hear remarks addressed to me by some of our men who lay close by – They told me afterwards & said they expected every instant to see me (*Pg. 4*) drop – But an unseen hand protected me & I have no scratch or bruise – How thankful I ought to be the God of Heaven!

This morning's mail brought me your old letters, 5 in number forwarded from Washington. They date from Apr. 25 to May 3d – Did you write after the latter date – One contained a \$2 – bill & one 24 postage stamps – I was glad to get them: for they enable me to fill up the vacuum that otherwise would existed in my acquaintance with affairs at home – Besides we have nothing to do & of course any thing to read is greedily snatched – I see our boys were put to much expense in remitting their money – They had sent before I returned from furlough – As part of that business rests upon my shoulders – I am sorry it cost so much – But you know people sometimes make mistakes – I notice you speak about two cows being too much care – The reason I advised keeping two was the fear that one would not be enough for your large family. You must manage those matters according to your own judgment – If you prefer sell one – Sell anything that will bring its worth provided you are not like to want it – I hope you will have potatoes & corn enough planted to supply your own wants – Write me where Miles sowed oats & whether he seeded the ground with grass – I fear father has not long to live – How was he affected by the doubt that hung around my fate? When did you receive the tidings of my capture, which Hitchcock brought back to camp - How he knew it I don't see – I did not

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fall in with him after leaving the breastwork & it was at least 3 hours afterwards before they had me – Probably he surmised such was my condition because he saw all the others around him taken –

I shall send you the \$150 spoken of in my letter last evening - I thought best not to put it on the way before hearing from you by mail – I wrote you on Monday (perhaps it was Saturday) for money – At that time we had no expectation of being paid – Wish you would tell me how you applied the other amount - This you can dispose of as you think best – You speak of Joseph going to Washington – I suppose he will expect compensation for time & trouble – You can arrange that with him – I wrote him yesterday – Give my regards to all the friends & tell them how thankful I feel for their kindness to my family – Here is love to Grandma, Ida, Frank, Willie & Mary – I should love to drop down upon you – But a furlough can not be expected – Be cheerful all & enjoy your blessings –

Ever Yours,
A. Upson

(Written on first page side ways in upper margin)

Thursday evening 8 o'clock – Have just recd. yours of the 20th – So I feel some different from last night – “After a fast comes a feast” – 7 letters from home in one day! I will write again to-morrow. The 5 dollars sent all right – Don't send any more -