

July 28, 1863
No. 123
Mrs. Andrew Upson
Plantsville, Conn.

(Yellow envelope is postmarked Georgetown D.C. Jul 29 1863 with a three cent stamp. Letter is on one sheet of lined stationery folded in half and 1/2 sheet of lined paper and is written on six sides in ink.)

Union Battalion
July 28th, 1863

My Dear Wife,

Yours of Sunday night is at hand & perused. The \$10 green back was snug inside – It makes \$25 you have sent me – Shall pay up board bill here & Smith & I intend to mess ourselves after to-morrow – Guess I will run down to Washington to-morrow & see how the pay roll reports me – Also find out what Col. Ross did & learned at the War Dept. – Yesterday morning, I applied for a 7 days furlough, stating the circumstances of fathers condition – Col. Hall approved it & thence it went to Gen. DeRupy - If he don't kill it Gen Heintzelman probably will – Shall not know the result before tomorrow or next day – Have no expectation that it will come back granted – I have no news to tell you – Things creep along slowly – We have frequent rains – plenty of heat – The thunder is extra fine – Berries are abundant – But there is little in what transpires to satisfy an ardent temperament – (**Pg. 2**) I must get some books & go to reading – Yesterday was busy issuing clothing to my men – They are well provided now – Have very little trouble with them – They toe the mark according to order – But in a new set of cooks last Saturday – It made a little stir, but the company likes the change – Have heard nothing from Co. E – Guess I shall run down to Alexandria & see if the Capt. directed my letters there – You need not be surprised at not hearing from Millard's folks – Excepting him they were not brought up to write letters – I don't remember that any one of the family ever wrote us formerly except Aunt Jennette – Father got about one letter a year – That is friendly, very – But it is all as you get accustomed – Some people live year after year & don't go to church or worship God – It is not to be wondered at that others become so habituated to the lack of correspondence that the last thing they expect is a (**Pg. 3**) note from friends – How much comfort & happiness – also suffering & sorrow is transported in every days mail bag – Only think of the hearts all over the country to made light or heavy according to the tenor of each missive handed out the delivery orifice of 80000 post boxes! What an amount of time & labor is given to this one luxury of our times! – By this I reckon your box of old letters must be full – If thou sent in reply were also added the pile would surprise us both – Great is the comfort of letters in the army! We should thank the Govt. for what it does to keep up the blessings of the post to all who go forth in the nations cause.

(7-28-1863)

It has begun to rain again – We are having a splendid display of electricity - & the prospect is fair for a wet night – I think of the boys in front – They are not so well situated as myself – But then these summer storms are not much - Last winter through those many days & nights of snow, rain & cold I took no little satisfaction – We got so used to (**Pg. 4**) all the hardships & variations incident to our condition that it made very little difference what was the weather – As I look back now to Pleasant Valley – Loudon Heights, Loudon Valley, Fairfax & Stafford each camp is invested with scenes of interest & attachment – We had troubles & vexations disappointments at all those places – Sometimes anxious thoughts filled our minds – more often than yours – There was much to disturb our equanimity – But not the difficulties & trials are most prominent now – The pleasures that were strewn along so plentifully stand forth most prominent – The happy events & days of joy color the retrospect so that the periods spent at one place & another seem each better than the one now flying by – So it is apt to be – The present is never quite brimming full – (Those ten days in Washington were as near so as any I remember) – Some ingredient is apt to be wanting & that we suffer to neutralize even blessings laid upon our heads – Ungrateful creatures we are! Not satisfied with what God gives us, but either ambitions for something more or complaining about the quality of what we have – The lightning is very bright off in the west – Now & then it lights up the camp like the sun – A man belonging to the 4th N.Y. Artillery which garrisons these forts was drowned in the Potomac today – He went in to bath & was taken under by the current which is very strong near the bridge - Had a letter (**Pg. 5**) from Julia Ann today – Hear from nobody else except you & Wm. J. Clark – Should not suppose I had another friend in Southington that writes letters – Well, doubtless they have not so much time as I – Yet it does seem as though 10 minutes could be found – Some of those people are educated enough to get up a short note in that time – Why, bless me if they can't do so much with all their opportunities what might be expected were they in the army! - The draft I see is not likely to get many men for our depleted regiments – But the idea of the towns buying off those who should be drawn is outrageous – That is the most insulting thing that was ever flung at the soldiers – Damn the patriotism that gets behind such a breastwork – I feel like saying so much to any man who runs away from the responsibility of sustaining the government – The perverseness of northern democrats is beyond my expectation – They will only awake to the true character of the rebels when they feel their boots as some of the Dutch copperheads did lately in Pa. - The extent to which party spirit has prejudiced the great mass of those who support the opponents of the present administration is alarming – I don't know where we are going when the madness of partisan feeling is so virulent – God help us to do our duty & stand firm by the right – That the welfare of the whole country is bound up in the success (**Pg. 6**) of our arms & the overthrow of the rebellion is only made more plain by the riots & bitter enmity which have been awakened by enforcing the conscript act – We are in a very critical stage of the contest – There is need of nerve at the north now – If our authorities waver & cower before the frowns of a threatening populace, or allow the object of the law to be practically defeated through disability – of the conscripts farewell to good government –

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We shall have a despotism soon – But I hope Conn. will be found right at the core & the thinned ranks of our old regiments soon show by their increased numbers that there is something dearer to us than ease – Of one result I feel sure – Those men who now play upon the ignorance of the Irish will some day reap a terrible harvest for the mischief they are sowing – Mark my works, this agency to which they resort is not to be so easily controlled – The spirit actuating both the leaders & the led is devilish – You & I may live to see the same deceived rabble commending the chalice of anarchy & plunder to the lips which have inspired them for the infamous work of today – It is dangerous to play with fire – Better accept no alliance with innate enemies for the sake of a temporary triumph –

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

Again my candle is nearly gone – Still it rains – Are you abed? Would I could look in & see – My Dear, once in a while I think of many happy scenes – When shall we renew them?

Ever yours,
A.U.