

Aug. 2, 1863
No. 126
Mrs. Andrew Upson
Plantsville, Conn.

(Yellow envelope postmarked Washington D.C. with a three cent stamp. Letter is on one large unlined sheet of stationery folded in half and one sheet half the size and is written on six sides in ink.)

Camp Distribution
August 2d, 1863

My Dear Wife,

We are once more here – Our battalion recd. orders last night to report to Col McKelvey & this morning we did so – leaving our camp at 6 ½ & arriving about 10 ½ - It was hot as an oven – We sweat ourselves wet as swimmers – Fortunately teams carried our knapsacks – Had they been on our back I don't know whether we should have got through – The men were not pleased with the idea of retuning to this place unless they could be sent at once to their regiments – Nor are they any better satisfied now – that a little experience is enjoyed of what may be expected here – It is much hotter then on the hills around fort Ethan Allen – The water is not as palatable & the smells decidedly worse – I have no desire to remain here a single day – Would rather go to my regiment or anywhere else – Nor will I stay – Presume McKelvey would be glad to detail me & very likely I could be of service to the Govt. But the officers here do not suit me & you are aware how I detest the *appearance (Pg. 2)* of avoiding regular service – I can not help feeling that this is not the field for well men or officers if they can go to the front – Our companies will probably be disbanded to-morrow – though I have no positive information to that effect – Will write you daily or as often as convenient – Have called upon our boys in Convalescent Camp but did not find them all – Mr. Stevens looks bad – Guess the old man will have to be discharged – Bishop, Ed. Jones Wiard & Hale Smith look better, though do not feel able to do much duty – Griffin has been sick but is better – Did not see him or Bunnell or Adkins – Found Wightman in the hospital attended by his wife & Ed. G. Neal – He is greatly improved – His wife & Neal intend to start for home to-morrow – Have not seen any of the paroled boys – They are still here – but heartily tired of their situation – Why there is so much tardiness about their exchange I know not – The management displayed all through the departments is loose – But perhaps none of us critics could do any better – Soon after arriving here the postmaster informed me there were two letters in the office – I sent for them & got word they had just been remailed to New Haven, the clerk supposing I belonged to the 27th (*Pg. 3*) which he knew had gone home – I at once informed the post master & he ordered the mail overhauled – They were taken out & delivered – Found them to be Ida's & Julia Ann's letters of June 10th – sent to Annapolis – Thence they were forwarded to the regt. & from there back to this post, arriving this very morning – for they bore the Washington Postmark, Aug 2d – It is curious that they & I should meet here at nearly the same hour after such rambles – I have

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read them – They were intended for you, but I guess it is not worth while to pay postage & return them unless you wish it – This movement has knocked our mess dead unless we are to be kept here for sometime – In the latter case we shall continue it – Our cook is the best for a man I have ever been acquainted with – Why he can cook a piece of meat & make it taste rich – Dirt he abominates – His taste is excellent - Best of all he is of a religious turn & hangs on to me - He was downcast enough when orders came last night to break up. But I consoled him with the supposition that we might still keep together & that pleased him wonderfully – He belongs to the 121st N.Y. – hails from Herkimer County & at home taught music on the piano – You never would suspect it from his looks, but I guess he tells a (**Pg. 4**) true story – Were we situated favorably I should hold on to him – A new project has been brought to my notice – The govt. is about organizing an Engineers corps – It will be got up in same way as regiments of infantry – There are some different classes of rank - Officers & men get better pay – It has occurred to me that I could raise two or three companies for this service in Conn. if the privilege were granted – These engineer companies would be attached to different brigades & corps of infantry in the army & they would be in constant service to construct bridges, make & repair roads, construct fortifications, lay pontoons & all that sort of work – Many times their work would be hazardous, but as a general thing the fighting would fall to others, though as I understand even the engineers would be armed – The commissioned officers all ride horses – I understand just what is needed of such an attachment to the army when it is on the move & could conduct it in such a way as to make it very efficient – The greatest advantages would result if some little things were attended to – Many times a trifling sluice broken down has detained a whole corps from two to six hours – Energy & foresight are great qualities & put in requisition at such times would benefit the country quite as much as though displayed on the battlefield – I have a mind to call on Adj. General Thomas & have a talk with him – But what’s the use after all of throwing oneself into new field of extion & responsibility! – Maybe (**Pg. 5**) I could ly off here, take my ease like others, get my \$107.50 per month & leave the country to her fate – Of course I should feel rather sheepish until the belittling process was complete – But in the round of a year or two Upson possibly might be able to not hate himself for such indifference – Retaining the respect of others is quite another thing – Maybe we are sometimes too sensitive about the opinion of others – Rascals seem to carry clean faces & I notice hold up their heads – Still don’t admire the base qualities of men even though they are appreciated with many virtues – The true heart must always chose gold to copper or any alloy – Since writing the above I have seen Capt. Vedder – He informs the Lieut. Jenkins, who you will remember as stopping with his wife at U.S Hotel was taken prisoner again at Gettysburg – He has gone to Richmond again – That is tough – To be in Libby these days must well nigh fry them alive – I must say the romance of his year of 1863 is rather more than engages my aspiration – Should prefer to have the scenes a little more varied – A long tramp they were put through this time & if no better provided for wet weather than we were before they must have been drenched often – 140 men & 10 other officers of his regt were gobbled up – You speak about the grain bins in the corn house – If the

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rye will sell as well now as by keeping I should prefer not to store it – You better consult with Joseph (*Pg. 6*) for his better posted than Miles on that subject I guess – If it is stored some props will need to be set under the floor – Before the old ones spring down so much by the wright that the floor of the bin dropped below the sides & so let the rye run out – Tell Miles of this & by no means put much in the bins until they are made secure – Has he harvested the oats yet? How much of a crop did he raise – You have not told me about the young grass in the stubble fields – Especially up in the plain lot let me be informed of its appearance – Have you greased your wagon this summer! Aroma might do it for you – These hot days remind me of father & I fear he suffers much. Which room does he occupy? I recd. a letter from Ida at Fort Ethan Allen – Will write to her & the children soon – Glad you have a Gridley in your family – Is her head or face spotted with sores now? Can't realize that she is able to run alone – Does she go out of doors much? She & Willie must have some good times now – Well here is another letter full of all sorts of matter – I am suspicious the berries will not be so plenty here as at Ethan Allan – Wish we were back there this very minute – But it is better to accept thankfully whatever comes along – A few days make put us far elsewhere – Shall go to Washington in a day or two & get my pay – The boys were mustered here last week – Love to Ida, Frank, Willie & Mary – How is Grandmas health this summer?

I am ever yours,
A. Upson