

Aug. 27 – 1863

To his Father

Mr. Levi Upson
Plantsville, Conn.

(Envelope is pre-stamped and postmarked Alexandria, Va. Letter is on one sheet of stationery folded in half and is written on four sides in ink.)

Camp of the 20th C. T.
Near Kelly's Ford Va.
Aug. 27th, 1863

My Dear Father –

You probably know that I have rejoined the regt. Came by cars from Alexandria to Balton Station & thence on foot about 8 miles south west to this point – We have a pleasant location & good water – The region between Bull Run & the vicinity of the Rappahannock is mostly an extended plain & the water is not so favorable as here where springs come out of the hills – Agriculturally I judge the country to be fine, but, as every where within the circuit of the army & its travels, the operations of husbandry are suspended, fences are destroyed & often houses desolate & in ruins – All along the track from Fairfax to Balton the devastations of war were manifest in the charred remains of buildings & cars – Many a train, loaded with supplies has been given (*Pg. 2*) to the flames along this route – Manapas Junction, Catletts, Warrenton Junction & every water tank & bridge was surrounded by twisted rails & rusty trucks, calling to mind the disasters that have attended both sides in this prolonged & varying contest – We now hold all east of the Rappahannock – Opposite us on the other side a small force of Stuarts Cavalry are doing picket duty, & from my present seat a mounted sentry is visible, but beyond range – There is occasionally communication between some of our posts & theirs – But such things are forbidden – Two deserters came within our lines yesterday – They represented themselves North Carolinians & professed to be weary of the war - Said great dissatisfaction existed in the rebel army – Most of Lees force is supposed to be at Fredericksburg – They pretty much give up Charleston – We have encouraging news from that quarter & if it falls the confederacy must go to pieces soon – Our army is hopeful of the termination – But if we have no more heavy fighting it is hardly probable we shall get off short of (*Pg. 3*) our full term – On the whole the prospect is brighter for the country than at any previous period – Abe Lincoln proves himself an able president & seems to me no man who helped elect him can say he regrets his vote –

By letters from home last night I learn of your condition & that you have been able to ride over to my place once more – I wish it were possible for me to behold your face & hear your voice yet again – But judging from the accounts of your present state it is not likely we shall ever meet this side the Eternal Shore – Looking back to your many sacrifices & efforts in my behalf feelings of gratitude & respect possess me – You gave us a good example & sound precepts, & I thank fully acknowledge my obligation, rejoicing that influences so benign were brought to shape the character which I trust is

(8-27-1863)

mine, & over which I hope you feel no regrets – I had cherished the desire that your later years might flow on gladdened by many ripe joys, but unalloyed by the infirmities to which (*Pg. 4*) age is usually subject – Providence seems not to will your destiny to be free from the common lot – Pains multiply & suffering grows with added days – But in the intervals of bodily experience, such as racks the frame & writes its doings in the wrinkled face, there occur sweet memories of what is past & anew visions of beauty & bliss light up the future – I hope, Dear Father, that throwing away all that enlarged observation show to be illusive & retaining only the pure truth, you may recognize the Divine Hand leading you mercifully to a better world – My prayer is for your joyful entrance into the regions of Purity & Peace whenever the All wise shall decree – The consolations of religion are for those who chose them – And those are consolations adequate to every occasion & allotment through which mortals pass as they cross the stream of Time -

May Heavens peace fill your soul when your departure from Earth draws near – Farwell – a filial farewell! The expression of Elisha comes to mind – “My father, my father, the chariots of Israel & the horsemen there of!”

Yours with true affection
Andrew Upson

Aug. 27th, 1863
No – 140
Mrs. Andrew Upson
Plantsville, Conn.

(Yellow envelope is postmarked Washington D.C. with three cent stamp. Letter is on one sheet of stationery folded in half and is written on four sides in ink.)

Camp of the 20th C. T.
Near Kelly's Ford, Va.
Aug. 27th, 1863

My Dear Wife –

Yours of Sunday evening was duly recd. last night – Matters are unchanged here – I see no immediate prospect of a move & do not believe one will take place for some time – The regt. is quiet as a family of quakers – We have a battery on either side of our camp & other regiments are near at hand but one would scarcely believe this is a community devoted to war – Such is the air of stillness reigning around – The field gently rolls & is sufficiently occupied by a growth of young pine 20 feet high or so to furnish shade & give the appearance of a landscape – The Col. has had the thicket in our rear cleaned up – The underbrush has been removed & the lower twigs & limbs of the pines cut off so that we (**Pg. 2**) walk about as in a grove – You know what a vista is afforded when one looks some ways through thick set trees – We have many such here – I can hardly believe my eyes – Just put some of our fine northern houses upon these sites & there would be a perfect picture of suburban, sylvan, rural adaptation – An artist might plant for years & not produce surroundings of greater aptness & symmetry than distinguish our cloth houses at this time – We have so much of what satisfies a refined taste – But our esthetic ideas would be greatly extended & our sense of physical comfort deepened if more variety was infused into our society & living – The latter is short & the former you know, lacks the charm of loving wife & sportive childhood – There is our feature of complete domesticity that I noticed this morning – One of the drum corps has a useful rooster that shares with the Colonels black horse his daily allowance of corn & (**Pg. 3**) oats – Before any bugle sounded the turn out his shrill & juvenile hail to the morning sounded forth – Fated bird – I venture his throat will hardly become used to the habits peculiar to his species before his body falls a sacrifice to the yearning maw of his hungry master – But I am glad he proves true to his privilege; & notwithstanding the days that measure his expanding plumes & tempting development of frame shorten the space between him & the spit his mission is not forgotten – What associations grow out of this trivial circumstance – As he shouted his puerile cock-a-doodle my fancy caught ways & speeded its way over many scenes laid along the shrouded past – But it is not worth while here to attempt a record of such wanderings – I go on picket again this morning – This is written before breakfast – yes – Even before sunrise – But what follows will not have that distinction, for the first rays are just falling upon the paper – Picketing here is just fun – We ly along the Rappahannock, which is about 6 rods wide, flowing between (**Pg. 4**) wooded ridges of pine & deciduous trees – Many a luxuriant arbor hangs over the gentle

8-27-1863)

straw promises to the October waters, if no soldier hand is near, a bountiful gift – These vines all bear small fruit like what we call at home frost grapes – I see no large ones – But there is no fruit of any kind beside – The persimmon trees are barren, & apple & peach trees have been stripped – Suppose you have enough for pies & eating – I observe that the shirt you made me last spring is like to give out – It is no so strong now as the one made a year since - Had you better not when it comes convenient get a good piece of flannel & have Julia Ann fix up another – There will be some chance to send it during the fall to Alexandria at least – I can get it from Millards – Don't think of anything more – Lost my vest – Somebody stole it at Convalescent Camp – neck tie was in the pocket – Have not yet sent for my carpet bag but must – Our sutler is down every week & does such jobs for officers – We have a very good sutler, only his things, like all that these men sell are outrageous & dear – Breakfast is ready & I must leave the table – Here is love & all good wishes for you & the babies, Grandma, Julia Ann & all –

A. Upson

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