

Aug. 6th, 1863
To Ida & Frank, Willie & Mary – Plantsville, Conn.
Care of Mrs. Andrew Upson

(Yellow envelope postmarked Alexandria Va. Aug. 7, 1863 with a 3-cent stamp. There are two letters, one is on a sheet of unlined stationery folded in half and is written to Capt. Upson's children. The other letter is on a sheet of unlined stationery folded in half and is written to his wife. They are written on eight sides in ink.)

Camp Distribution
Aug. 6th, 1863

Ida & Frank
Willie & Mary

My Dear Children –

Papa often thinks of you – He remembers many pleasant scenes with which one or each of you were connected – He would think himself very happy now to sit down in the piazza & see you play out on the lawn – But that can not be – We are very far apart – Today no business has been done down here – It is the day on which President Lincoln wished the people to give especial thanks for the great victories with which God has blessed the nation – You probably do not understand much about **(Pg. 2)** these things – Yet I think you know what it is to feel thankful – As a general rule we ought to remember that all our good things are worthy of thanks to the Giver of them – God is the giver – He is the author of our blessings – Whatever gives us pleasure or makes us happy is from Him – But we have so many good things every day that we are likely often to forget God as the giver – When we ly down at night & when we look forth in the morning it is well to thank God –

Papa thinks every day about the flowers – We see wild morning glories down here, but they do not look so pretty as what used to grow up over the piazza – I would give my dinner any time to look upon the pink bed, or the dahlias or the petunias, or the verbenas – **(Pg. 3)** Cannot you each tell me something about such as you have blooming now – It would please me greatly –

Papa went out for a walk today – But there was nothing interesting to look at – Not many birds were seen – on the way back a rabbit started up -, ran a few steps & then sat down where I could look at him – He was mostly a brown color – I tossed two or three stones near him but did not wish to hit him – He dodged his head each time & finally started away & disappeared among the bushes –

Tonight the brass band has been playing some fine music – Many of the soldiers are singing & I hear on one side a bass viol – on another a tambourine – But none of it pleases me so much as it would to listen while you & mother repeat some of those fine **(Pg. 4)** hymns or the national airs –

There are some children here in camp – One very pretty little girl & a lively boy about 5 years old – But he does not behave so well as I wish Frank & Willie may – It is a great fault in any child to disobey his parents – Do you each mind what your mother bids, & be

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sure always to regard her wishes – Papa hopes to see you all some day – but it may be a good while before we meet – Learn to do right, my children. As long as you tell the truth & shun evil you will be able to enjoy peace of mind –

Another thing, Love your country & honor those who defend it against all enemies – And now, my children, I wish you may grow up to be useful & happy –

From your affectionate
Father,
A. Upson –

(Second letter)

Camp distribution

Aug. 7th, 1863

My Dear Wife –

I wrote to the children last night – But it did not occur to me that the week is so near gone – I was expecting this evening to send you a note supposing it would reach home Saturday evening – But waking this morning I find it is Friday & with out dressing I have caught the pen to inscribe this – Have got nothing from you so far later than Sunday evening to which I replied last Tuesday - There is no progress in our affairs – We are as at last writing except that our companies are turned over & all their things – that is all to be found – The carelessness & indifference of men is astonishing – (*Pg. 2*) I can tell you no news – James Atwater is here all right – Smith & myself are not permanently located – We are still stopping in the Doctors tent – Another came yesterday to take his place – We all went down to that creek, which you remember crossing when two fellows were in swimming, & took a wash last night - Our conveniencies are not much like those up at Chain Bridge – There we had abundance of water & not a tenth as many men to use it – I am told there are 7000 in the three camps here – As fast as any are sent away others take their place – The institution is like a river ever flowing – We are boarding for the present with Mrs. McDonell – I have told you of her the same with whom I bed before & the bill is not settled - (*Pg. 3*) Paid up everything at Fort Ethan Allen – But the pay masters have gone to the front now – They will be back in a week or two –

The matter of an engineer corps of which I spoke in a previous note I guess you will not hear of again – The man who takes most interest in it will soon go to the front – I have little notion to begin anything new unless it help myself to a certainty – Do not intend to spend much more of my life blowing up an enterprise for some one else to profit by personally – Wife, this is a most selfish world – it is nearly full of selfish people – It is a fact, the heart of man is a black concern – Every day opens to view some new device by which human contrivance displays human depravity – The amount of overreaching & (*pg. 4*) jealousy that prevails among officers is very great – Too many are willing to rise by destroying the efforts & fair fame of those whom they perceive to stand in the way of their own ambition –

But I must dress & go to breakfast – Can't say this will get through for tomorrow evening – The mail leaves here earlier than formerly – My health is good as usual – Though the weather is hot my appetite & spirits are up to the standard – Can't get good berries here as up at Chain Bridge – Peaches are now offered for sale – 2cts each – Watermelons, tomatoes xc are getting plenty – Hope to get something from you today – You will excuse this poor scratch under the circumstances – But is a token of good intentions – Don't you think so?

Ever Yours,
A. Upson