

Sep. 22, 1863
No – 159
Mrs. Andrew Upson
Plantsville, Conn.

(Yellow envelope postmarked Washington, D.C. Sep. with a 3-cent stamp. Letter is on two sheets of lined stationery folded in half and is written on eight sides in ink.)

Camp of the 20th
Near Raccoon Ford, Va.
Sept. 21, 1863

My Dear Wife –

Yours of the 17th came in last night – I have recd. a letter three nights in succession – This is better luck than I expected & of course our experience in Culpepper woods is much relieved of its tediousness – I have written you twice – Yesterdays letter was short, because we had orders to move before it could be finished & I stopped short & sent it along – We did not go over a mile before encamping this time on an open field – That is the men's tents – The officers are just in the edge of woods – The chaplain had given notice of preaching at 10 o'clock but the more knocked his plan dead & when we got to a stopping place all were too busy putting up quarters (**Pg. 2**) for any other business – So our Sunday went as the majority do in the army – I thought of you, probably at church & realized fully the blessing of peace & the privileges that can be enjoyed where it reigns – The object of our move yesterday probably was to secure a healthy camping ground – These woods are not so pleasant at this season – We want the sunshine – Besides the ground is mostly flat & a short rain would make the whole surface muddy & then comes sickness – Another purpose, I imagine, was to get the whole corps where it can be quickly used – Gen. Slocum now has his force within a short distance of his own quarters - But the picket line is further away than before – The rebs over the river have been very busy fortifying – They have quite extensive earthworks & guns in position – Saturday I went out on to an open field & could (**Pg. 3**) about a mile distant their preparations going on – Guess they are strong enough over there to hold their own – The general opinion is that we shall not attempt to cross here – Just what our movement means is a matter of considerable speculation – Cols. & Brigs. no less than privates are in doubt how to regard it – Gen. Meades knows, but how many others you can guess as well as I – We shall not stay long as now located – Our whole brigade is on one field, extended in two lines of three regiments each – This makes us pretty thick – The fences are suffering – This section has not had the army visitation before & rails are plenty – But they vanish like cob webs before a tempest – A new house two stories high stood about ½ mile from our first location – Friday night nothing remained but the chimney – The boards had all been taken to make bunks – Yesterday the 46th Pa. regt. arrived (**Pg. 4**) on the field just before ours – In ten minutes from the time they had unslung knapsacks I looked about 100 rods to the rear where I had seen a decent sized one story house & nothing but the frame remained – In that short time they had stripped it entire & the covering was traveling off

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on the backs of soldiers – Short work is made of all these indications of previous civilization – About 2 miles south of us in this side the Rapidam there is quite a fine place which is the possession of a Stringfellow, relative of the Kansas notable of that name – It was near this house that I viewed the rebel works beyond – While standing there I saw 5 soldiers come out the garden, which includes an acre or more & is planted with corn, potatoes, beans, cabbage xc; they were driving half a dozen hogs & shoats – Seeing me they acted as if suspicious - You (**Pg. 5**) know plundering is strictly forbidden - Finally one of them came up & asked if I should report them if they took a pig – It would not do for me to tell them to go ahead – nor did I care to stop their work – I answered that fresh pork was good for a change, at which he lifted his blouse & showed a large knife & pistol, as much as to say we understand – When returning I crossed their track again: they had two shouts & two fat pigs walking along ahead – My opinion is that Stringfellow had better get his porkers over the river or somebody beside Virginians will eat his prospective bacon & spareribs – The rebs were encamped on this side until a week ago to day – Pleasanton drove them across in a hurry last Monday – An old dark who came into our camp Saturday says he attended a review across the river week before last – Took “Missus” over to see it. (**Pg. 6**) This is a good region for farming – The soil is rich & timber plenty – John Minor Bolts owns in this county – We are about 7 miles from Culpepper Co. House on the point between Cedar Run & Raccoon Ford – If you have a map of the state you can see our location exactly – We hold the Rapidam on one side, the rebs on the other – I have a map of Va. bought in Washington – Could not enjoy myself without it – It is in pretty constant use – For borrowers abound – About fire wood – If you had rather burn wood than coal, you may cut off what remains in the corner of the lot next south of the old plain – I believe there are one or two sizable chestnuts – Let those stand but cut all the rest clean – If any will do for rails that can be saved & used on the fences – Next get over the fence into the plain lot & follow (**Pg. 7**) the same rule – You may cut down any apple trees that are useless – But big logs will cost more to work up than smaller wood – I guess if you can use part coal & part wood that will be the cheapest – Unless you keep Aroma – He ought to be able to get the wood & chop it – What wages do you give him? Have you one cow or two – Don’t sell your meadow pastures – Just give your own cow & Jenny full swing there – But be cautious & not feed too close – The plain lot feed I would not sell – If you can sell the farm do so – I want you to get fathers opinion & also Josephs as to its value & if they can assist you in disposing of it advantageously employ them – My notion is that real estate will depreciate for a time when the war ceases – It will be best for us take advantage of the times & sell when business is (**Pg. 8**) good & money plenty – There are many things that give value to our place & I want you to make the most of them – The location is every way favorable – That old canal & brook are each important features – If a man of means wanted a spot to fix up he could hardly suit himself better – The saw & grist mill, church, school, village – all these matters must be brought out – It is a good little farm & combines more natural conveniences than any other within the circuit of Plantsville – You must get enthusiastic over its charms & make others see them for they are there – Set your mark at \$5000 for

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everything except household effects – The opportunity for a fish pond & fountains which the canal & brook afford are so fine that they must be appreciated –

(Written side ways on first page in upper margin.)

I must stop for inspection will write further about the farm xc. –

Yours ever

A. Upson