

Sept. 5, 1863  
No – 144  
Mrs. Andrew Upson  
Plantsville, Conn.

*(Yellow envelope postmarked Washington, D.C. Sept 7, 1863 with a 3-cent stamp.  
Letter is on one sheet of stationery folded in half and is written on four sides in ink.)*

Camp of the 20<sup>th</sup>  
Near Kelly's Ford, Va.  
Sep. 5<sup>th</sup>, 1863

My Dear Wife –

Yours of Monday evening last is recd. Have been quite busy for three days – Company writing & duties great & small have filled up my hours – Wednesday night after dark we had a detachment of conscripts from New Haven numbering 148 – Only 8 have been assigned to Co. E. But another lot is expected soon & I suppose we shall be further favored – Those given to us are fair looking & apparently good disposed men – Four of them are old soldiers – Of the whole 7 are Americans & one Irish descent – In other companies there is a much greater sprinkling of nationalities – Capt Guilford has a number of Italians, organ grinders & that sort – Taking the whole detachment they are better looking (**Pg. 2**) men than the regt. expected - But the 20<sup>th</sup> with so large a mixture of strange elements must undergo great changes – I hardly know how the thing will turn – We still have enough of that representative feeling & influence to shape the character of the whole body in a measure, but of course the new will exert a power of its own & we shall more or less take the color that such a blending of materials must produce – As I look at these volunteer regiments, next to sentiments of general loyalty state pride should be appealed to – We carry the banner of the Commonwealth side by side with the national emblem & of those aspirations which incite to laudable exertion in carrying on this struggle certainly due regard for the homes & communities to which we respectively belong is no mean agency – Men are appealed to as citizens of this or that state & it is well that we should exhibit enough of emulation in honorable action to (**Pg. 3**) feel that we can hold up our heads with the best – Not enough attention has been paid to this matter here before – Opportunities the most timely occur, but where officers themselves catch no afflatus from the associations which spring up along the way of this life it can not be expected that men generally will feel the movement that leads to ennobling conduct – The thoughts that actuate most seem rather below than up to the standard of the occasions through which the times carry us – No agitations of human affairs ever struck deeper, stirring up the desires & principles to which human nature pays allegiance & so in effect preparing a new crystallization of ideas & organizations – You know I have thought it a privilege to live in these times – The days are big with wonderful progeny & as week after week gives birth to the occurrences that compose that great family of facts hereafter to be pictured on the historic page (**Pg. 4**) we are more & more impressed by the manifestations of Divine overruling – Wonderful are the providences of God! So far the nation has only more & more reason to adore his mercy – The lessons of this war have

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brought many a better morsel to the taste of thousands – But below the first sensations of displeasure are found consoling reflections on which the philosophic soul can stay its agitated & grieved nature while it surveys the grandeur of the Supreme Ruler – Great over turnings must yet come – There will doubtless be rending of social bonds & commotion through the organizations of civil life – The throes of a great struggle between the antagonisms of our old system – But a calm Deity directs the universe – He also holds the sparrows – Certainly the hope of mortals now is in his superintendence & mercy – I feel disposed to thank him anew for my blessings, such as a loving, faithful wife & four little ones – our sons & daughters – This is a hasty note & I have been interrupted so much that I thought it might fail of the post – Love generally gets clear down in this corner – But the spark would be a flame only given it room –

Upton

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

Will write to the babies soon – Must go now & drill the recruits -