

Sept. 7, 1863
No – 146
Mrs. Andrew Upson
Plantsville, Conn.

*(Yellow envelope postmarked Washington, D.C. Sept 9, 1863 with 3-cent stamp.
Letter is one large sheet of lined stationery folded in half and is written on four sides in
ink.)*

Camp of the 20th C.T.
Near Kelly's Ford, Va.
Sep. 7th, 1863

My Dear Wife –

Yours of the 4th with account of visit to New Haven for my clothes is recd. – I hope you did not ask Cap. Woodruff to take the things – He has more than he knows how to bring – You can express them to Washington - From there I can get it – Direct to me just as you do a letter & it will come all right – Boxes arrived here last week – If we move I shall get it sometime – It is not my luck to lose anything in that way – Glad you chose the dark blue – That is as I should have done – Hope the clothes will be well made – Had rather pay more for good substantial garments than half price for shame – All such goods are higher than a year ago – You understand I like long tailed shirts; see also that the buttons are lousy – Grappers I do not wish – have enough now – But a pair of drawers would be acceptable – I want a hat. The one I got at Annapolis is already broken in three places & looks seedy enough – It will decidedly be the worst looking on any officer soon – Buy me an army regulation beaver it may cost five dollars – But nothing else will stand the **(Pg. 2)** wear & look decent – You can put a lousy star on the side – a red star – The other fixings I don't care for – I have been in doubt between a well made cap & a hat – For the best quality of either the price is nearly the same & I tell you the cheapest are those that cost the most – that is if you get a genuine no 1 material – The regulation hat can be folded together & packed in the box – I suppose you will not like to go to the city again for this – Perhaps you can send by Ed Hotchkiss, giving him my old cap as a sample for size – Believe I wear 6 or 8 – a hat is better for stormy weather – I don't know of anything else – You can put in any little matter that comes handy – But look out about fruit & preserves – The one may set & the other get spilled & spoil the clothes – They would taste good but I fear some disaster & prefer to run no risk – Perhaps you think me extravagant – no – but I am a little proud just now – However it is certainly true that nothing but an article that can be wet & still keep its form & color is worth much – I am studying economy in all this – Your statement of indebtedness & what has been paid in the last year I have carefully looked over – We have made a good stout pull upon the mountain & reduced its proportions very perceptibly – If we sail clear another year I hope to see it down to 1000 – I did not expect you to pay E. L. all your **(Pg. 3)** spare funds – You must keep enough for your own use – Don't strict yourself for comforts – Dress well & live well – Make a respectable appearance & don't be afraid to buy a right down good silk or merino because it may spoil a greenback – Hold up your head & feel yourself

(9-7-1863)

queen in your own kingdom – You asked in one of your letters if we have tea – Yes – The commissary has soft bread part of the time – We run our establishment according to circumstances – Sometimes fresh beef & potatoes – sometimes beans & bacon – sometimes rice & hardtack – sometimes a little of each & not much of any make our meals scanty or abundant – But we long ago learned that eating is not the sum of a soldiers life – If you were to ask me tonight what I wished for breakfast in the morning my answer would be a dish of pickled cod & eggs with soda crackers – Aye – how many good entertainments in which the above elements figured you have got up for me! – Why, I would not exchange places with Prince or Potentate if the fates would permit me to happen in when you gather about the table now a days – I suppose lima beans are eatable now – But it is not wise for us here to allow fancy or memory to indulge in any flights through New England gardens or to hover with half folded wings over the really festive board that is thrice spread in so many distant homes – Don't think though that we grasp knife & fork with irresolute hands, or (*Pg. 4*) that we lack the promptings of hunger & appetite because juicy steaks or a sweet roast never inspire our movements – Mules have been known to eat banded hay & I am certain moldy, unleavened, long kept sea biscuit has quieted many a stomachs cravings, whatever were the sensations carried to more fastidious organs – If Dear Uncle Sam's market grows lean we resort to philosophy – Plum puddings & all the effeminate operations spent upon pastry & deserts have ceased to beguile us – We follow a simple diet & have no head aches – Negatively considered this is a paradise for cooks – They need not rack their brains to determine what the next meal shall be – If fortune decrees that we should celebrate a dinner, for instance, the hero of pots & spiders just solves the daily problem, which plus cups coffee minus sugar – minus milk multiplied by spoons equals water out of the brook which proves what we shall drink – Officers you know all drink as the streams of this region are after tinged with clay the report that some of them get muddy headed is fully accounted for – Having got so far the cook generally shoulders half a dozen canteens & starts off to what a Virginian calls the branch – On the way he meditates upon solids – the counterpart of drinks is meats – O. Yes! bacon (Bacon & Philosophy I told you above) that is a positive quality – Everything else in the category of rations has been sooner or later on the right flank of nothingness; but hail to hog – that never runs below zero – There is no news here – No sign of movements – Drilling conscripts & the varied duties of which each day brings its quota keep us out of idleness & so time runs on – We are almost yearlings – The nights are beautiful – only cool towards morning – I have a blanket & sleep warm – Upson generally looks out for that – David & I entice the very best of Morphiou's gifts out of 3 ½ feet breed the of pine poles – These babies must have a letter – The pink looks pretty – Whose fingers picked it?

As ever yours,
A. Upson