

Jan. 16, 1864
Mrs. Andrew Upson
Plantsville, Conn.

(Envelope is postmarked Nashville, Ten. Jan. 19, 1864 with a 3-cent stamp. Letter is on one large sheet of lined stationery folded in half and is written on four sides in ink.)

Tracy City, Ten.
Jan. 17th, 1864

My Dear Wife –

Last Sunday I was in mountains by the railway two miles from ...Tantallon & expected today would find me still there – But the week has rolled around – the still, holy First has come again – has passed – I may almost say, for it is after 11- & my location is, both as to place & privilege, far more fortunate than there was any reason to expect – My quarters are spacious & never so comfortable – my duties full of interest, affording me what I have often desired – an opportunity to see more of these country people – I am thrown into the society of men & women – or rather they are thrown into my presence – the responsibility is not irksome & you may congratulate yourself on having a wish gratified – For last nights mail, which I got up at 2 o'clock to read, brought yours of the 7th in which you desire for me a comfortable place – Now give thanks – let them be hearty – Not only for what is told above but for what is to come – I have taken board at the family of an Englishman who has been here about eight years – He is about 50 years old but has a younger wife who is a fine woman – She tries to make everything pleasant – is a good cook & surprises me by setting so fair a table – Why, I am eating off crockery – yes China plates – drink tea & coffee from a china cup & sweeten it with a spoon of silver, brought from the old country, & more than a hundred years old – They keep a cow & pure milk colors & flavors the beverage of morning & evening – The good housewife can make short cake or flippers – She mashes the potato for dinner & has a plum (**Pg. 2**) pudding & sauce for second course – Stewed peaches & even cheese stand on the table & tonight just think – I ate two fresh, fried eggs – done exactly right – May the hens that laid them be honored with the chat of a polite rooster – one thing more, luscious honey made a most tempting addition to the jacks this morning – Now because I mention all these items don't think me so given to appetite that my living is the first & the last subject thought of – Rather because present circumstances contrast so strikingly with the almost universal experience of soldier fare do I enumerate & describe the varieties & style of this table – It will cost me a little more than to provide myself, but I am liable to be ordered away any moment & in that case I shall pass no regrets for so much indulgence – These people have four young children – two boys – two girls – Nor do they look like the common run of southern youth or infancy – but carry clean skins, rosy cheeks & are clothed with some appreciation of decency & good taste – The youngest about our Mary's age – sits on my knee & I imagine her that thick set Gridley girl you write about – They are all under 10 years I guess – the boys come first in age & are dressed entirely in soldier rig – that is garments made out of blouses & pants given away by our troop – The

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eldest boy has a sergeants chevrons on his sleeve & I see by their conversation how war enters into the burden of their thoughts & sport – Tonight when I went to tea she had the children sitting around the fireplace & was instructing them from the Bible – I think few of these southern households, if examined, would repeat the scene – (**Pg. 3**) Tonight there has been a prayer meeting in my quarters – Co. B. like our E, contains many religious men & as they were going to have a little circle in their cabin I invited them to this room & requested them to ask others – We spent a very agreeable hour & propose to assemble again next week if here – There was formerly a meeting house at this place, but it, as everywhere in the south, has fallen into disuse – The schools have gone the same sad way & the rising generation with war on one hand & no reforming influences on the other are likely to know little of the Sabbath or the Savior – There is a great work to do here & God grant peace may come before all trace of religious forms & their meaning have passed from the recollection of the inhabitants – The country here is wild & to a large extent clothed in native timber – I walked out a short distance onto a hill today – the inhabitants of this vicinity have rather better houses than are found in many parts – they came from the old country or from the north & a perceptible superiority is evident over the common class of natives – They all have good gardens & fruit trees set out – Children are plenty – You remember how they swarmed at Wellsboro’ – It is just so here - & they look healthy – far more plump & rosy than one sees traveling among the Tennessee populace – The elevation of this region gives it the temperature of those in more northern latitudes – The English family tell me there is always a good breeze in the hottest weather – not far from Tracy City a dozen miles or so – there are springs to which invalids & others resorted (**Pg. 4**) during the warm weather – Ten or twelve stages run from this depot to carry passengers & the productions of the country around found a ready market – But that gathering place of sick & loafers is deserted, perhaps in ruins – The stages are gone & dullness reigns – The day has been remarkably quiet – Much like the solitude of a wilderness – Stepping out on the platform I could hear the voices of children & perhaps see here or there a blue breeches, but nothing indicated the prevalence of war – These undisturbed Sundays are delightful if there is only reading matter at hand – The family where I board have some books & I can borrow enough to kill ennui - Wish you would send me more papers – forward me a Tribune every week – If I stay up in this side place there will be need of all these helps to maintain contentment – Besides I want to be able to put a northern Journal into the hands of a citizen occasionally – You ask about furlough – I have not applied yet – Could not get home if it were in my hands – there is no use coming without money I suppose too Lt. Doolittle’s absence on furlough is all that will be allowed at one time - By & by I shall try the thing – Don’t grow too uneasy over the matter – Besides, now that the Col has given me this place I wish to stay long enough to show him that he has not misplaced his confidence – Nothing would please me more than to come home – But guess, according to what you say, the best thing is to write letters – Will try to remember Norton & Morse in a few days – Have answered Sam C. Shepard’s today – As I am far away from everybody who hears from Southington the more necessity exists that you should post me on general matters – Take time to tell me

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what occurs - How does stock look? What of Jenny's Stable & the harness - Have you got the sleigh fixed? Just run over such matters occasionally - I suppose Harriet Andrus thinks me cruel - Guess I will devote a leisure hour to her if one happens along - And here comes the bottom line - Love to Ida, Frank, Willie & Mary - Regards to all -

Yours truly,
A. Upson