

Two Miles from Fairfax G.H.  
Dec 1, 1862

Ever Dear Wife

I again take pen in hand to let you know that I am still enjoying life although I cant say that I'm enjoying very good health at present. But I am thankful that I am a great deal better today than I have been. For 4 or five days I have been confined to my tent for the most of the time. I recd a letter from you last Wednesday evening dated Dec. 19.20<sup>th</sup> (must have meant Nov.) and was very glad to hear that you were all well. As well as to see from the tenor of the letter that the writer was sick. I have had the worst cough that I ever had or hope to have again, accompanied with severe pain in my head, and across the small of my back and occasionally between my shoulders, which made it impossible for me to write if I had thought best to under the circumstances. As it has turned I am very glad I did not, I hope now with proper care and the blessing of God I shall recover my usual health. The boys have taken very good care of me. Woodford is a man every time. He and Abner and James have been very kind to me during my sickness. I could not have been better provided for under the circumstances. Only by being placed under care of her, whose gentle touch and pleasant look it seemed to me would drive the fever from any brow. Oh! Catharine you do not know how much I longed to see you and the children. Last night I coughed a great deal. About 4 Oclk this morning I commenced sweating and sweat my clothes all through. So I had to keep covered up and cool off by degrees. I havent eat any thing but toast and cold water sweeten'd since Thanksgiving when we had some boiled rice and molasses and each a sweet cake which we bought of a Sutler, some beef cooked and if I had felt well, could have enjoyed it very much. Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup> Good morning. I wrote day before yesterday as long as I could sit in the position I was in, on account of back Ache. I was in hopes to feel better the next morning so I could finish my letter. Well we went to bed. Cone, Dunbar & myself. The rest of the boys were out on picket, (and I tell you the army is the place to find out whether a man is a man or a (hog). Cone was sick as well as myself, and when Woodford & Abner & James are at home they would always get something for us first and if there was any thing a little better we had it if we would take it. But when left with Vet, instead of doing as the others did he would eat or hide every thing away from us that he could. They dont any of them like him or Ben. And perhaps they wont tent with us all winter. Last night we had a ration of Molasses which made seven rations or about half a pint. Cone got 1 spoon full. I didn't get any and Vet ate all the rest. About midnight (Mon) the long roll was beat, calling us to arms. We was then ordered to pack our knapsacks and take two days rations. We got our traps packed up and then waited till daylight but no Rebel Jackson appeared. There was 30 rebel prisoners went by here on Monday evening. Bliss is sick with Bilious fever. Robinson has got his discharge (good luck for him). He will be home probably in a week or two. We have all had colds and been sick some. I hope I shall get well without going to the hospital, because a man may as well go to jail as to go to the hospital here. I have bot a pr of boot of Mr. Keech. They were made at Knox's Corners. I have to give him 2.50 for them. They are good boots. There is some talk of our paymaster being in the neighbourhood but fear it is not so. Hope I shall get some money soon enough so you can pay the taxes. If I don't Clark was to have some shingles made some time this winter, and with the shingles and beef you

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must do the best you can. If you cant get the money, write or have Father write to Absolam Smith, Salamanca and have him pay it for me, and you send him the money as soon as I get my pay. He will have untill the 15<sup>th</sup> day of Feby to collect the taxes in, and I hope we shall get our four months pay in January so I can send home 8.40 or more perhaps. I did not get or expect any \$25 government bounty at Elmira. You must think I have been lavish in my expenditures or perhaps you think I have sent it home and it miscarried. I think I answered the most of your inquiries in my last letter and will try and answer the rest on another sheet briefly.