

Jan 2nd 1862 8 o'clock PM

Dear Wife

I thought I would write a word to you and the children alone. I do not begrudge you of the happiness you enjoy in hugging that sweet little Nellie and being hugged by that little Man boy but I would like to enjoy it with you and partitake with you of the sweets of married life. I dream some nights of being at home with you but wake in the morning only to be disappointed. I hunted the Camp all over to find something that I could send to the children in a letter for Santa Claus but could not find anything so they will have to take the will for the deed.

Dear Daughter Clara, I am very much obliged to you for the santa clause you sent me. I have not had any candy or raisins since I have been in the army only what you sent me. Be a good girl and help your Ma, from your Father F. Strickland

Dear Daughters Lottie and Ida, I thank you for the candy and raisins you sent me and would like to send you some, but I have none, nor can't buy any here, but if I live to come home and you live, perhaps I will buy you something. Be good children and love your Ma, and take care of the Baby. From your loving Father F. Strickland.

We have a funeral in Reg't. tomorrow. We have mustered for pay, and some think we shall get 4 months pay by the 10th or 15th of this month, but I do not know whether we shall or not. I hope we shall as you must need some by this time and I certainly do; but this is another game of this war not to pay the soldier for 6 or 7 months and let his family suffer at home for want of it.

We have got our Rubber blankets. I was sick when I left Fairfax and could not carry knapsack south. Capt. Told Woodford and I to leave ours there and he would get them carried for us but they didn't come and I'm afraid we have lost them. I had two shirts, 1 pr drawers, 1 dress coat, stationary liniment and that pretty little Testament of yours which I value above all the rest. I hope to get them something but don't know as I shall. Give my love to all taking a large share for yourself & children. Yours forever, F.

Why don't the boys write once in a while if they read my letters. I want they should answer an occasional one, the same address will conduct the letters to me. They come to Washington and are distributed and sent to the several Divisions, there distributed among the Brigades, there amont the Reg'ds, there amont the companies. About the box we can do nothing until we go into winter quarters so that we shall be pretty sure to stay 4 or 5 weeks in one camp, so we shall have to let that rest for the present, it costs too much to get it when we are marching about without any certainty of staying more than one night in a place. We have been here over 2 weeks but don't know as we shall stay another night. There is no way that this war can be settled or compromised that will bring any more reproach upon our government than the way in which it is conducted should bring from all the civilized nations of the earth. We may stay here until the present arrangement until 9 out of 10 of all the once happy homes of the North will have vacant seats in their circles, before this war will be settled by fighting.

Tell Father I am very sorry that I didn't answer his inquiry about the sleds but it was not intentional.

Tell Libbie that Dr. Rugg is Assistant Surgeon in our Reg't. They are all out of medicine and can't get any more, and one fifth of the Reg't. is sick, we numbered 960

Jan. 2, 1863

menwhen we came here, now we number about 560 fit for duty. The nights now are cold but we haven't had any snow of any account. The wind is very cold here, seems to cut right through a fellow. Give my love to all inquirers and save a large share for yourself. Kiss all the little ones for me. I have one small envelope I will try to write a little to the children this evening if I can. Yours for Ever,

F.

The sequence of this letter seems jumbled, but there were no pages numbers and there was writing on both sides of pages, along the margins, and upside down on the heading of some of the pages. I copied it the best I could.