

May 27th, 11 oclock P.M. (1863)

Deaar Katy,

I have just finished writing a letter each to Clara & Lottie and expecting that I may not have a better opportunity to scribble a few more lines to you, I have lit another candle and now I commence. I have just been out. It is a beautiful moonlight evening and were you here and felt well, I think you would have an invite to take a walk in camp. However, there is but little to be seen, here you see a tent lit up, perhaps someone playing cards or billiards or some other game of chance or amusement. Mine is lit up for the purpose of conversing a while with those who are dear, though distant. Well I can hear the rumbling of waggon wheels along the roads, And South West of here, I can hear the picks and shovels at work, where our folks are busy building a fort and I understand that they are fortifying all round now, as though they were expecting an attack, but I think they need not be much afraid of the Rebs attacking us here very soon, but I like the plan of being ready in case they should.

The whippoorwills make so much noise and I am so sleepy that I can scarcely think of any thing to write. I am so glad that you have the Freeman sent to you. I thought I would write to you about it, as soon as I got some money to send you to pay for it with, but did not think of it when I sent my money. I began to feel rather anxious to hear from my letters which I sent my money in, but I hope you have got them ere this. Abner has been quite sick but is some better today. There are several cases of fever in the Rgt. Two messengers have just rode by at full speed, probably carrying dispatches of some kind. I think I wrote all the news in my last which I sent night before last, so I must stop by wishing you more pleasant dreams, I remain now as ever you affectionate Husband Frank. O! do please leave off that abominable "Francis" on the end of my name!

May 29th In. How are you today? I hope you are well. As I did not get time to send my letter off yesterday I will write a word with a drum for a desk, I proceed. I rec'd your kind letter last night was very glad to hear that the money had arrived safe. I thank you for the neck tie, which is just as good as if it had cost \$5, also for the other stuff which you sent, although I had gentian that you sent me before, yet the manifest desire to do good, and care for my needs is just as worthy of thanks. I have read a little in the little book you sent me, I think it is good.

We have moved our camp, and are now encamped on an elevation in the wood, very shady and pleasant, Our Gen'ls are constantly fortifying now, building forts, and digging rifle pits, for the defense of Aequia Creek, and the R.R. from there to Fallmouth, (or Fredricksburg). Our field officers are moving the timber of which their old quarters were built

and seem to be making preparations for a short stay at least, but I don't suppose they know much more about it than we do. I answered your question in several things sent by the good folks at home to soldiers in the field Hospital in my last letter, and the answer there given I believe to be pretty general, although there may be some exceptions to it. I hope there is. This world is so full of iniquity, and especially here, that I sometimes become almost discouraged and feel like giving up and was it not for the confidence that I have that God will eventually bring it out right, I should completely despair. I long to see the time when the iniquities of a large share of the Officers in this Army who are engaged in selling (as it were) the rights of the worthy and competent, to those of their friends (personal) who are neither worthy nor competent. If I could see my friends I could tell them just how the machine is run but will say no more now, I have had to stop three times since I commenced writing and have lost my writing desk to boot, so you see how a soldier has to write. I now hold my report book on my lap and write on that and have no good pen, so you must excuse this scribbling. Yours as ever F. Strickland

I will write a little to Ida, but you will have to read it for her as I cannot write it with the conveniences I have so that she can read it.

*(Courtesy of Virginia Strickland Judd,
Westfield, N.Y.)*