

Camp Near Fredericksburg Va Feb. 2nd 1863

Dear Sister

It is with pleasure that I take my pen to write you a few lines in answer to your very kind letter which I Recd. night before last. I also got one from you a week ago last Saturday with \$5.00 in it. I was very glad to get it too. Our Regt. got paid off Saturday so I will enclose a check for twenty dollars (\$20.00) Judah will have to endorse his name on the back of the check and he can get the money for it any where. We got two months pay. We shall probably get two months more pay shortly say about 20 days from this time. I wish you could get me a pair of Boots if it would not be too much trouble and send them, you can direct them just as you would a letter. If you conclude to send them have Morseman make them by the same measure that he made my other ones. With heavy Soles well nailed and the longest legs he can cut out. There are some awful mud holes here in Virginia and lots of little brooks through which we have to wade. The boots that he made before are pretty well worn out they leak badly & hurt my feet. I dont want to wear Army Shoes if I can help it Since I wrote last we have changed our camp to another place about a mile further up the river. We had to go up the River about 7 miles on the 17th of Jan to build roads for the Pontoon bridges. we started at 2 oclock in the morning and stayed two days. then we came back and stayed about 3 days in camp and then went back to finish the roads and guard the bridges we had a pretty hard time of it it rained after they started with the bridges all the time The bridges got lost and the Artillery got stuck and the Officers were most all of them drunk and the men were most awful wet and cold. I dont think there will be another move made before Spring. the Roads are in a horrible condition now. The night we came to this camp-ground it snowed all night and the next day. The snow has not all gone off yet it is quite pleasant now. We had to build new shanties here. I have got a real comfortable one. It is 7 X 12 feet, with a quarter pitch on the Roof, and a good mud fire-place. I shall be jack of all trades when my three years are up. I have just finished my washing. I can cook my own food too. It is the easiest thing in the world to sharpen a stick and put a piece of Beef or pork on it and broil it over the fire. I like this camp life I do that is, I like to look on There have been quite a number of Resignations among the officers in this Regiment lately, and I know of a "goodly" number of privates that would Resign but for "Circumstances beyond their control" Give my love to Edwin and Louisa tell them I have not forgotten them and I will write to them as soon as I can There would not be much use in complaining to the Officers about the lost money. I presume it was one of them that got it. The most of them are a pack of drunken Rowdies. Capt. Nelson is going home on a Furlough in a few days, the most of the men hope that he will stay at home. Give my love to Fannie & Frank. I was very much pleased with Fannies letter. She will soon get so she can beat her Uncle John Her Composition is better now and her writing is but a little inferior. I have not got a "Rebs." skull yet but may be I shall if they dont get mine before the war is over If I do I will send it to her.

[cont'd]

February 2, 1863, continued

I must close this lengthy epistle for I am getting tired of writing and I suppose you are tired of reading too by this time. The reason I wrote so much is that I am so hoarse that I can't speak aloud and I got mad and went to writing. Otherways I am well and hope this will find you all enjoying the same blessing. Give my best respects to Judah and tell him he could not occupy his leisure time in a more profitable manner than writing to me occasionally. I hope you will send the Boots. If Morseman has not got the measure tell him to mark them No. 8. You will find out there is as much inconvenience in having relation in the army as there is Honor. I won't bother you any more this time so Good bye

John N. Porter

P.S. send me a few Postage stamps they are scarce here  
I got them you sent to me