

Alexandria, September 24, 1863

Dear Frant,

How much more pleasant it would be if we could converse as we used to! I could say more in half an hour than I can write in a week. I am always glad to get a letter from you. I write to a good many people to get all the news and pass the time, but it makes no matter how many letters I get, yours are read first and with the most pleasure.

Your letters are a great help to me here to help me do right. This is the worst place I have been in--there are the most ways to tempt me to do wrong. But when I am tempted, I think "What would Frant say?". I TRY to do right, and trust that I am as good at least as when I left home. Would I were a good deal better; there is need of it.

How good it would be to go up to the camp meetings and fairs!--but I cannot, so I will content myself. I cannot say I hate this kind of life. There is a great deal of excitement, and much to please--something every day.

I went three miles beyond Culpepper yesterday. For sixty miles the whole distance is a picture of desolation. The meadows and cornfields are covered with bushes, the fences are all burned, barns torn down. The chimneys of the houses are all that's left to mark the places of once-happy homes. Hardly an inhabitant is to be seen. In going this distance, we pass places which have been the scene of many bloody battles--Fairfax, Manassas, Bull Run, Bealeton, Brandy Station, Warrenton. . . .

Kilpatrick's cavalry passed us last night. They had a heavy fight with the Rebs yesterday, across the Rapidan. The troops have orders to have eight days ration ready to carry and seven to draw with the teams. I think there will be a fight soon--a large one, too.

And now, Frant, goodbye. Write soon, and believe me to be as ever your true friend,

Edgar.

[*The Jamestown Sun*, Friday, July 7, 1961]