

CAMP NEAR FALLSMATH, January 16, 62

Dear Frant

Once more I seat myself to pen a few to a friend who though far away, is ever near in thought; and how often do I fancy myself talking with you; and Frant, when I think of you I always think of you as that same truly good and affectionate friend that you were when last we met and then I think how liable we are to change and then I wonder that when we meet again we shall look to each other as when we parted if we ever do. If we are changed in manners and appreciation we may not be changed in the kindness of spirit towards each other. Frant, you said in your letter that it has been four or five weeks since you had any letters from me. They must have got lost or laid by for I wrote one and sometimes two every week. Only the time when we were on the march from Fairfax here and then I did not have time and the first two or three days could get no paper. So I hope you will excuse me and now Frant this is the second letter I have wrote this year. I will keep track and number each letter and you do the same and then we shall know whether any are lost or not. We have had quite a march of late; Tuesday night we were told to have three days rations in our haversacks full of pork and hard tack and went to bed at 11 and slept till 1 when we were waked and told to be ready in half an hour. We got ready and started and marched until about 9 in the morning when we stopped and rested and ate a few hard tack and then went to work building corduroy road down to the river, we stayed til the next day till three and then had to march back 9 miles to camp and oh, if it did not seem like home to get back to our tent for we had just gotten up a nice tent with a new fireplace in it. It is the moistest place you ever saw. While I have been writing this letter, the order has come to get three days rations ready and be ready to march at any moment. I think we shall go in the morning. We may go tonight. I can give a guess where I trust to kind providence, however, that we shall all come out safe and return home to enjoy the comforts and pleasures of peace once more. I was over to the 64th the other day and took supper with your father and I am sure he is just as \_\_\_ as he ever was. He was well for him I heard today that he was in fact, in command of the regiment so it may be he is in \_\_\_. But he is not insane nor out

of his head. I have done my washing. The wind blows regular. It could blow our tent over last night. You spoke about the cold weather. It has been very warm here thus far the nicest winter I ever saw. We have got a nice fire in the fireplace and wood enough to last all day and I have got my batch of writing to Frant Hunt. Babcock and Neil Worden tents with me and we are having pretty nice times and it seems too bad to have to leave but that is the way with war. You have got a good lot of studies I guess they will keep you busy, but then Frant, the more industrious you are, the happier you will feel. You thought it was a hard road to travel but you would not have to travel it long. Frant, stick right to it and travel that road just as long as you can and remember there is no excellence without great labor. How I would like to be there to go to school. Could not I enjoy it. I may have a chance to go to school yet and I may not if I do I believe I shall improve the time you said you were studying music. It seems to me that is the nicest study that a person can pursue as well as one of the most useful for there is nothing like music to sooth the soul. A school boy will stop his play to listen to it, the gambler will stop for a moment to think of youth and while listening to this sweet sound and the soldier after he has marched through mud and rain and lays himself down to rest on the wet ground will lay and think of the dear ones at home until the tears come in his eyes and he falls asleep to dream of scenes of which perhaps he may never partake. Yes Frant, I have laid in my tent and heard the brass band which accompanies the brigade till the tears run down my cheeks before I would think Frant I will send you some verses, rather a song, and I wish I could send the tune when it sung good, it is the nicest thing I ever heard. The cottage by the sea. Childhood's days now pass before me, forms and scenes of long ago. Like a dream they pass before me, calm and soft as evenings glow. Days which knew no shades of sorrow, there a heart pure and free. \_\_\_\_\_ hailed each coming morn in the cottage by the sea.

Fancy sees the rose trees climbing round the low and rustic door and below the white beach shining where I gather spells of yore. There my mother's gentle warning as she took me on her knee and I feel again like mourning in the cottage by the sea.

When the years may roll above me, though in other lands I roam, yet I never can forget thee childhood's dear and happy home. And when life's long day is fading, oh what

pleasure it would be on some faithful breast reposing in the cottage by the sea.

From your ever true friend. Write soon. Edgar S. Write often.