

Dear Homefolks

Camp Three well being

Feb 10<sup>th</sup> 1864

You no doubt imagine that I have forgotten you or that the Yanks have gotten me, but neither is the case. I have just returned from an eight day picket on the Rapidan where it was impossible to write & though I feel somewhat tired will endeavor to write to-night for the mail to-morrow. I have received two letters since my arrival in camp one from Hun written at Mr. Patters, which as it was first on docket I will answer first. As to your insinuations of my hiring McClelland to buy for me, I have only to say that he left too soon after I got here or perhaps I would have done so. And I would like to know how you know that it is all judge. So Miss Wichey could not stand it & called to see me & instead of being sorry that I was not there I am truly glad that I was in a different climate, for I know that I would have gotten a deser-vent blessing & as I do not like to deal in left handed compliments, there might have been a blow up & so my tobacco interest would have gone up. You ask me how I like Miss B. What would you give to know? I am sorry to hear of Col Fordosis' death. It will no doubt be a great affliction to them all & especially as he committed suicide. May God comfort them all.

The other letter was from Mother, which I have  
just finished reading. I am very thankful to  
you for your excellent advice. Do you think that  
I could for one moment think of returning to  
the beggarly elements of this world after enjoy-  
ing the sweets of a Christian life? I do from my  
heart believe that I have been brought to a sav-  
ing knowledge of Jesus Christ & though I am  
exposed to great temptations still his grace  
is sufficient for me & I never cease to  
pray that he will keep me in the straight &  
narrow path that leadeth to heaven & I trust  
I believe that you never lift up your heart to  
the mercy seat of God without remembering  
your absent son - And has he not promised  
to hear our prayers. Oh do not for one moment  
believe that I could be induced to, for sake  
the cause of Christ, it is the only thing that  
sheds any light upon this dark cloud of  
war, the only thing that smoothes my rugged  
pathway. I will ever endeavour to fix my  
eye upon the cross of Christ as the mariner  
to his needle until I shall safely cruise at  
last in heaven. The life of a Christian must  
be dear to any one, but how doubly dear it  
is to a soldier! How sweet it is to feel that  
I am a Christian when all is dark & gloomy  
around me, the light which emanates from  
the cross of Christ drives away this gloom

which makes my heart so light & happy. What perfect happiness we sometimes feel, but the devil tempts us & we do not always feel so. Oh that we were all Christians! Then this cloud of war would soon pass away, & the bright rainbow of Peace would soon shoot across our political sky, but our people seem to be all gone astray & riches seem to be their only thought, so they are not exposed to the fury of war, they care very little for the poor soldiers. But thank God there are some who think of us! some who rightly pray for us! some whose thoughts are turned to the absent one far far away from home & oh how dear is the thought that they think of us. Even now your thoughts may be with me & your prayers ascending to heaven in my behalf. I thank God for these kind & loving friends & though separated far from them our imaginations can call up their loved forms & faces. I have just had another manifestation of his mercy towards me in being safely spared through the battle of the other day though it was not a severe fight, it requires only one ball to end our lives & many a one passed harmlessly by. What is the time to feel how sweet it is to be a Christian. When the balls are flying thick around you & dealing death all around.

To commit yourself into his care, knowing  
that he has power to hurl by him self the  
minerals of death. As an old Christian  
warrior once said "every bullet has its  
billet" I think is eminently true.

But as I am sleepy & tired I will close  
you have no doubt seen a better dis-  
cription of the late fight than I can give  
I may give you my official report in  
my next. Excuse this scratch I be-  
lieve I am getting more care less about  
my writing every day, but I console my-  
self by saying that all great men wrote badly.  
Give my love to all friends

Yours affectionately  
A. B.