Camp 17th U.S. Infantry
near Cottetts, Va. 4th
January 13th, 1869

Dear Sarah,

I almost see poverty looking me in the face, for I shall feel poor indeed when my last paper is gone. And this is my last sheet or really, the last whole sheet I have in the world. I am in hopes that Uncle Samuel will do a little something for me in that line pretty soon. Have worked very hard both night and day for the past week. And have got everything in order of
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Off my hands, now. I feel something like a jee-man. They had been sadly neglected by previous officers. I have about given up the idea of getting a Leave of Absence. Col Green has gone, and Capt Rose with new Commands will leave in a few days. Then this command will be turned over to one, and it will be impossible for one to get away.

It will be a responsible position, but not burdensome with labor. So I think I will take things in.

At least there is nothing left one, but to try my hand. I await the result.

We have six small Companies here and one out on the Railroad about 1 Mile distant. Guarding a Bridge that has been blown up by Guerrillas several times.

We are surrounded by the Guerrillas, and have to keep a sharp lookout.

Three of our Officers went out side of our Lines to Colter's house a few days ago and the advised them on a friendly way to return, saying he wished they might remain in safety, but thought it was dangerous. He comes to Camp every day or nearly every day.

The house is about one-half mile distant, in plain sight...
Before the War he was very rich and aristocratic. Now poor as poverty. You cannot possibly judge how some of those people have suffered and do suffer still. The poorest farmer in Killworth is far better off than they. Cant tell people down very strong union, but it is quite hard to decide who is, and who is not union, in these times. It is very comfortable here now. But we have had some extremely cold days, yet I have not been uncomfortable. Have you had opportunity to try these stales yet? If so write what success.
Wish I could come and give instruction, that is if I thought you needed. Don't think I will derived much good of mine this winter. But will keep them stored for future use.

Geo. Robbins came to see me yesterday but did not stop long enough for me to mention this Green.

Dear Sarah, I was invited out this evening and have just returned. Thought before leaving I would close my letter for tomorrow's mail.

We are having as good times as could be expected, although very much confined as are not allowed to leave camp except upon special occasions.
We have good food and plenty of it, but it comes somewhat higher than at Steele's.

Since we have been here it has cost us about $2,00 per day for rations.

Say nothing of what we drink.

I have nothing of interest to communicate and therefore think I will close wishing you a good night and pleasant dreams.

Devotedly yours,

[Signature]