2nd N.C. Cavalry, Aug 18, 1863

Dear Brandy Station

My dear Wife.

I will write to you today to repay, if possible, your long and highly interesting letter of Aug 7th, one week ago just today. Your letter interested me though so much of the contents was very sad news to me, and enough to make me weary of this sad world. I know (and you must not think I have just learned this) the state of our family relations is too much for one to bear, who has tried and so much desired to live in peace, love, and harmony with my parents and sisters. That arch-finder the old maid has played havoc with our earthly happiness and if ever very much jeopardize our hopes for a place of rest in the world to come. How can any one who lives in a continuos strife here expect to gain a place in heaven. How can any one who is so unmerciful expect others to forbearing and loving ----
I am astonished that Ma should treat you so when her only son (for whom I believe she has a strong attachment) is away, and his life hazarded, and therefore to the same extent your happiness, every day. She certainly cannot think I am espousing a wrong cause, and she will wreak her vengeance on my innocent wife: for all she has ever said in my hearing has been to encourage me to join the Army. It is her unruly tongue controlled by the most unhappy temper born knew anyone to possess. That has caused her own unhappiness and that of her family. Pa knows all this and yet he will be angry with me if I ever intimate my desire to go somewhere that I may bring up my children away from the influence of such, and where you and would live in perfect earthly happiness as it is possible for man to enjoy— and where he knew he would be ever welcome and where he might enjoy the pleasure of seeing his children and grandchildren.
happy and content. This surprises me. I am, as you say, you are, sometimes willing to hear the edict that would drive us from this home to seek shelter where we could, and thus we might know what we had to depend upon; the world could not blame us for leaving and thereby throwing our obstacles in the way to reconciliation. It has thus very often. But my love, this war compels us to submit to many hardships besides those of actual battle and army life, and this unhappy condition is our plague while others have theirs. In saying so I know I advise a thing hard to do and one that will make us old in our youth by the trouble, but be of good cheer, and bear with the faults of others as much as possible. Control your conduct with discretion, and forgive as much as your conscience tells you to be forgiven. The balance resent and maintain your rights. In the end we will see gains, and though a hard trial it is not. Act independently as you think is just to all.
In reference to my duty I would advise you to show only such as you please.

It is natural for them to want to hear from me, but very unnatural that they should now write to me. Other parents write to their sons in the army, visit them, aid them in every way they can, do everything in their power to alleviate the hardships of the army life, but mine seem to think he is away, can support himself, pay his debts that were made by his trying to make something for himself, does not care to ever see or hear from us, and we will spend our time in annoying and making his wife unhappy, and showing her how much more or think of our sons-in-law that are at home than of our son, your husband, that is away fighting our battles for us and those honored gentlemen. We must aid this in gaining property, love them, visit them, and sacrifice anything for their comfort, but it is too great a sacrifice to do anything to please our Son. Thus I feel a great importance.
in the army anyhow and may as well make this money as to let it slip. This sum would just pay out of debt and we could then begin to face for the future. I am economizing in every way I can, by depriving myself of every thing I can, except smoking tobacco.

The fear of future want for you and the children has frightened me often out of a meal. I will send you some money by Jeff when he comes. You must keep it for your own use and use it as you like.

I came to the Regt. yesterday as Mr. Allin was going away and St. George would be alone. I am worse out of bed. But with the state of our Regt. now there can and there is a very great spirit of solicitude amongst the men and officers as to the commanding officer, and I fear the spirit is extending itself to higher offices and the others. The men seem to make no allowances for the contingency of war. They lay down complaints of their pay.
As far as I know the Enemy are perfectly quiet. We hear their drums long evening and morning across the river. Our Army is still about Orange C.H., and some say they strengthen every day by men returning from home the Pitts. Others say desecrations are frequent & numerous. Such things are apt to be exaggerated in the army. I see no prospect of an immediate battle. though I believe it cannot be long before the two armies will be facing each other on the battle field.

Although we are so unhappily situated though others may not love and appreciate your sweet dispositions equally still I am ever the same and my heart is ever devoted to you. I love you and believe my wife the best parent & most amiable of all women. I am sure all our children are so smart and pretty they will love us and console us in our age. You will bless them the proud of all children. My love to all & Kisses to the dear children. That remember their father - your dearest and one your own husband.
I have determined to send Jeff home with my horse - Benno. He has been in service two years, and this is much longer than most of horses can stand it, and I fear if I keep him here much longer he will die soon and be a total loss to me. If I can get him home and Oa is willing to feed him for me this winter he will get fat this winter, and in the spring I can bring him in to the service again. During the time he is at home I will either go along dismount, or if I can sell the old black I bought from Penn. I will buy one that will do to ride. There is a little horse and in by the state that I have an idea of buying, if I will be allowed to do so. Jeff has been riding her, but he has now gone home to buy himself some horses. I sold one of my pistols for $55, and if I can get $175 or $200 for the black, the pistol there will almost pay for the mare. If I get her I will wait until about Nov. and ask for...
a keen of absence to buy a horse and bring the little guy home. I am going to make my being dismounted obtain me a furlough before long. Four of the have gone from our Reg't and Capt. Clements of the 10th Va. Cav. a V. Baptistian has a leave of absence on the same ground. He was married in March and is almost crazy to see his young wife again. These soldiers are sad men and love to visit their wives. Clements is from Texas, and he and I often talk of the Lone Star State. If my plans for mounting myself do not work out I shall go to the dismounted camp and stay there until I have gained enough money by some means to buy me a horse — and at the same time I shall be doing all I can to get out of this Reg't. I think I shall go to Infantry. Some Bo in Inf. offers $200 for an exchange from Inf. to Cavalry. I shall take up the first one that is in a Reg' that I like. I am compelled to stay