

Camp Griffin, Va.

November 12, 1861

Dearest friends,

Your favors, written on Sunday, were all received this evening and although it is growing late, I will answer them ere I retire. I have not got the blankets yet but I am informed they are in Washington and intend sending in for them tomorrow. It is very cold at night and I am truly grateful for these gifts, as they will serve to keep my men warm and when that is accomplished I am satisfied.

I feel sorry for John Buyers. He would make an excellent officer I think. I receive letters, or rather, the men receive them from their friends asking if they cannot get into my Company. If that Drummer comes I will again be full. My only loss being that of poor little Boulty. Two of my men, D. W. Kemble and Peter Wolf, are still sick with the fever but they are getting better. Kemble is nearly well. Peter Haupt and John Bartlow are almost well. Both will go to duty in a few days. The balance of the Company are well with the exception of colds, this weather giving most of us a taste. Last Saturday we were out on picket in all the rain. It was very disagreeable. I was in Command. I made the men build huts or rather finish them and took possession of the Kitchen of an old darkey's hut for my headquarters. It had a big fire place in it and I had a rousing fire built and laid down before it. I did not dare sleep as 2 Companies of Rebel Cavalry had been near our lines all day and we expected an attack. They made it up higher where the 5th Vt. were stationed who killed and captured a couple of them. I lay there all night waiting on them and thinking of everything. Home and the friends there, I assure you, were not forgotten. I could not keep laughing as I set down to take a lunch out of my Haversack to think of how Mother would look if she could peep in and see me. Just before daylight I got asleep and the men went to Camp with out me. I had told Capt. Stumble to take them. I did not get in till 7 o'clock.

Our fire is out and Bill is trying to make it. He is using my gum pillow for a bellows and is blowing away at a terrible rate. I don't believe he will make much.

So Dr. Fisher has the small pox. Well, the disease never frightened me. I went to the Hospital where Boulty was and there was 26 cases there at the time. I also sat by him when he was full of it. Harriet Wharton has a fine scab on his arm. He will send it to Uncle Doc tomorrow and then you can get the family vaccinated. I have him send it up for that purpose. I will get some more and send them. Mine as well as Bill's is off and lost. But there are plenty of others in my Company that I can get over I will.

It appears to me Artie Shissler must be descending to a low degree of morality. If he wants to keep a girl he ought to pay her bills any how. [Unreadable] must be a nice place to visit. I think the Army would improve his morality anyhow. I pity his sisters and mother but he should know better.

Hunter is getting along very well, but there is little laziness about him yet. He looks better than he has for a year. I don't think he has hurt himself cutting timber. I save him all I can and will do so but I do not like him to complain. I tried to get him a furlough to go home but could not get one. So he will have to remain. I think after we get into winter quarters we can all get a chance, but we don't expect that to be until after we have had a fight and gave them a good whipping which will be before long or I am much mistaken now that the news are in from the fleet. What a glorious fight they made. That is carrying the war right into their midst. I wish we were along and think perhaps we will be sent there yet to reinforce Gen. Sherman.

Mother, I am not surprised that you think so much of Maggie Donnell. She is a very fine lady I am sure. I am much obliged to her for the stockings as well as to the other ladies for their kindnesses to me and my men. I shall never forget them. It does my heart good to know that I am remembered and so kindly by those who have known me all my life. God bless them.

There is nothing particularly new in Camp. Our Chaplain, who don't know as much Scripture as Sam Snyder, got tight as a brick today and all the men saw him. We are going to try to have him removed and then I will make a strike for Uncle Luther. But this is confidential and I don't want anything said about it at all. Now mind, Mother, don't tell all your cronies for sure as you do, everybody else will know it.

Abbie when I get to town I will go and see your friend if she is good looking. You do not improve as much in your writing as you ought. You should write a much better letter at your age. I am afraid you run about too much and do not attend to your books. The same I fear is the case with Ed. You will both find out when too late that you are neglecting golden opportunities to reap knowledge. Now both of you write miserable letters. Why Pops letter is worth a dozen of them and Mother beats you both. Now I want you to try and see if you can't do better and endeavor to improve yourselves in this as in all other branches.

We expect to be paid off this week. Remember me to all friends. All write soon.

Yours,

Shindel

Abbie, give Mollie a kiss for the gloves and when I get home I will give her one, too.