

Camp Griffin. Ca
January 1. 1862

Dear friends-

A "Happy New Year" to one and all clustered around the "ingle side" at home, or rather to all who around the social board today gave a passing thought to those of us far away from home and friends. I went on picket yesterday morning, and was relieved this morning. So the entire programme of the departure of the old, and advent of the new year was open to me. I passed the night in "watching," but somewhat differently from the watch meetings at home. I spent from 8 to 12 at night on the outposts, and we were in expectation of an attack all the time. This kept me constantly on the line, among the men preparing for an attack. At 12 I was relieved and moved with my men back to the main reserve where we built a huge fire, and six or eight officers of us gathered around the fire, and spent the time, in telling yarns, cracking jokes. Officers from the 7th Maine, 49th & 33rd New York were present. Occasionally one shot or two would bring us all to our feet, but as all would be quiet again down we would go, and into the fun again. About four o'clock this morning, I spread my blanket on the ground, and with a stone for a pillow, slept.

peaceably my first sleep for 1863. I got to
Camp about 9 A.M. and found your letters
awaiting me.

Ed, I wrote to John Mesner, about
coming down. I suppose he received the letter.
I have made room for him in my Company. I would
like to have been at home on Christmas, and had
set my heart upon going, but somehow or other
Col Good and Gen Brannen both do not want
me to leave at present. The fact is we are daily
expecting an engagement, and they seem to think
my Company will ~~be worse nothing~~ do as well
as they expect it to unless I am there. I have the
Crack Company in the Regiment. Yesterday was
muster day and Sam Miller received the premium
for having the cleanest arms in the Regiment.
However, I think I will get off before long, if
nothing occurs unusual. I will send you some
recess trophies the first chance I get.

I am sorry
to hear of Mr Tice's illness but hope he will be
well ere long. I should like to have him in our
Regiment, as our chaplain is worse than none at all.
I have seen him so tight that he had to hold
himself up by a tent. We have plenty of fun with
him, though such as smoking him out, putting
big trees before his tent &c.

Ed give my best respects to
Miss Warner, and if she does not go home before the

first of February I think I will get to see
her as I will make a desperate effort to spend
my birthday at home. Mother if I get there I
want you to cook a dish of stultz and knep. I
have been wishing for them all day. Yesterday I
went into a house on the line and bought a mince
pie and cup of coffee of a girl there. They were just
rate, but mother could beat them.

Mother suppose you
pay a visit to Washington. I will meet you there
pay all expenses, bring you over here, and give you
a good time generally. Now do, it will be good for you.
When you write again just mention the day you will come.
I stop at the Clarendon Hotel but will meet you at
the cars.

Attie I am pleased to learn of your
progress in Music. I think you are improving in
your letters also. I hope you will continue to do so
and ere long you shall have an instrument of your
own. Is Miss Ranthraff your teacher yet?
Where do you practice.

I had not intended mentioning
the following. but for fear some of the boys may and
an incorrect story get out, I will tell you. The other
night while on picket Mark Shipman fired upon
some man crawling up to him, or he supposed he was.
Sergeant Fiers and myself went out to the line to
see the cause of the report, and some one attempted to
shoot at us, but his cap snotted. The fellow

Made tracks in a hurry. before we could catch him, but I think he got badly frightened anyhow. You do not say anything about this and do not be alarmed, as he could not hit us, it was too dark and if he had fired, or his gun gone off. we could have shot him, by the flash. We have not lost a man on picket in our entire division.

How were you at Engels with that party you mention. I have heard a good deal about Jake Beckers present and would like to know something about it. Where did he get it, and what is it? eh!

How are you reading any? I would like to know something about your progress.

I am all in my house. Bill has gone "out town" and Reed is out visiting. The wind is blowing a perfect hurricane around the house. I have my house jafused all over now, and I tell you it is the best this side of Gen Smiths head quarters. Jake Reiffer just came in. He was on picket with me last night and tried for about two hours to catch some guinea hens for a New Year dinner. They were too wild for him, and so he filled his lavender with potatoes out of a hole he found. He wont starve in this country. Remember me to all friends and all unite soon.

Yours

Shindler