

Camp Griffin

November 6, 1861

Dear friends,

Your favors were all received last night and I was very glad to learn of your continued good health. Mine never was better. If I keep on improving until Spring I will weigh 200 pounds or something less. You ought to see me eat - St. Helena can't I go into it. Yesterday we had boiled cabbage and potatoes for dinner and I think I eat as much as you could put in a common sized hat. Last night I received a box of eatables from Mrs. Jane Wilson, containing a number of presents from Mrs. H. B. Masser, Mrs. Masser, Mrs. Rockefeller, Mrs. Dewent and herself. They came very acceptable I assure you. I wrote to Mrs. Wilson today acknowledging the receipt. She has my warmest thanks.

I am glad that you are succeeding so well in the blanket business. I was satisfied the people there would not see us suffer. The weather is getting very cold but I have a stove in my tent and am fixed up in apple pie order. I am writing along side of it now and it is so hot I can hardly stand it. It beats California fireplaces hollow. They smoke too much for comfort when the wind blows the wrong way and if it won't smoke of itself some fellows will stop up the chimney with something and make it smoke for you. This morning my stove pipe was stuffed full of mud but I found out who did it and I have an idea he will catch it tonight.

I am extremely sorry that John Buyers has so much difficulty in getting his Company up. I think I've got about all the best boys from that place with me. The other day they gave all men a opportunity to leave and join an Artillery Company that wished to. I drew up my Company and told any that wished to start to the front. The Col. gave the same order but not one of my men left - nor could they get one of them to go. I felt good over it, I tell you.

Tell Mrs. Kemble I will take the best possible care of her son. He has been sick with the fever but is getting well again. He was not dangerous but merely under the weather - not fit for duty.

Father's letter, as they all do, contained the quintessence of all the news in town. Those are the kind of letters I like to receive. I had determined to spend the evening with "Sallie" "got life on de hill" but when I heard there was letters for me I came to Camp in double quick. I found a letter there from Annie, too. She and the rest are well. I wrote to her on Sunday but she had not got my letter yet.

Mother, I don't want you to work so hard to get those blankets for my men. There are plenty of others to do it. I am much obliged to all concerned for the liberality manifested thus far. To Miss Maggie Donnell, my sincere thanks are due. God bless them all.

D. W. Kemble and John Bartlow have been getting the fever. It is broke on them both and they are getting along finely. Will go back to duty in a day or so. Peter Haupt had a boil or something on his neck. It has been opened and is getting along well. I send him and Bartlow over to sleep at a house where a couple of young ladies take care of them. So you see, there is one benefit derived from running after Virginia girls. Tell Mrs. Davis I will take excellent care of myself, as well as the ladies. We have a guard around the house all the time so they can't get away if they wished to. Mrs. Stewart, the woman we arrested, she was a scrounger. I took breakfast there a couple times when out on picket. We had a nice time. Some of the officers were afraid of her but she knew if she attempted to poison us, death would be her portion in a short time. She is now confined in Washington. Her Mother, too.

My men are all well with the exceptions named. The weather has been very unpleasant for the last few days. We go out on picket tomorrow morning at half past three. I hope it will not rain but I am prepared for it if it does. I bought a pair of boots that come up to about a foot below my suspender's buttons. They are

double all through. Cost me nine dollars. I also had my overcoat lined all through. So you see, I am prepared for anything.

I was at Washington on Sunday. Abbie, where does that lady friend of yours live? If you tell me that and her name I will go and see her the next time I go in. I am a kind of privileged character - can get a horse whenever I want one, and can steal a pass or borrow one. I did that last Saturday. The Colonel bet I could not get to town. I won the bet.

I have nothing to send you but the enclosed which I had in my jacket. It will show you how we manage the countersign or password as it is called. Remember me to all friends. Write soon. God bless you all.

Yours,

Shindel