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Camp near Jackson Tenn.  
February 8<sup>th</sup> 1863.

Affectionate wife and children. I seat myself  
down to the desk to write you an other letter  
to let you know that I am still well as usual  
I have got over my tooth ache, minus a tooth,  
and I hope that this letter may find you enjoy-  
ing the best of health, and doing well too. We  
are still in camp near Jackson Tenn.  
but do not know how long we will stay here.  
I am tired of this place and hope we will be  
ordered away soon, there is nothing here that  
will interest any one to enliven or keep ones  
spirits up, every thing drags, a long as if the  
world had stoped moving and stood still,  
nothing arouses us but the tap of the drum, we  
are drummed out of the bed in the morning, then  
drummed to breakfast, then to guard man-  
tiring, then to dinner, then drummed to  
battalion drill, then drummed to dress parade,  
then drummed supper, then to bed again, in  
fact we despise the sound of a drum it has be-  
come disgusting to hear the sound of a drum,  
again am most heartily tired of looking around  
me and seeing no body but Soldiers dressed in  
Lincolns clothes & Lincoln caps, go where you will  
golden you will there none but the Lincoln line  
ling, some seem to be contented and happy, some  
sing, some talk polite, some pray, but most of  
them are as wicked as the bad one would be  
willing to receive them, and I do believe the  
present administration at Washing<sup>ton</sup> is doing more  
make men wicked than all classes of Indians  
put together, for they might take some steps to  
have this monstrous war brought to a close  
over



I think they must stop soon for want of money  
the green backs now are only worth forty cents on the  
dollar in gold, and I guess that it wont be long be-  
fore the people wont take them at all and then  
the war must close, if the common soldier tolle the  
green backs for what they are worth in gold he  
then only get about Six dollar a month for his  
labor, and if the goverment dont do something  
more to make good the pay of the soldiers,  
their families must suffer, and that they will  
not bear, there is great dissatisfaction at this  
time about pay we are all strapped and one  
cant say to another your strapped without  
being insulted in the same way, well speaking  
of money I will say that I was down to the  
city this afternoon and there I learned that there  
was one paymaster a live in Memphis and was  
moving in this direction, in fact we expect  
to get some of our pay this week, we think that  
we will be paid off up to the first day of Jan  
1863, but that may be uncertain, I went down to  
the city for to attend to the wants of Captain  
Bishop, who is sick, he stay here in his tent sick  
about one week and then procured a room in  
town where he would not be so much exposed  
to colds, he is a little better his disease is in his head  
doctor Hide is staying with him, the captain being  
sick puts a good deal more work on me than  
I ought to do, because Willison dont understand  
drilling and dont seem to be able to learn,  
but I perform my duties cheerfully, and I  
think that the men use all of the opinion  
that I look more after their interest and will  
fare than any other man in the company  
but I dont want to boast, for self praise is  
scandal, it is very muddy here to day, the snow is  
melted off that fell last week and that makes mud  
we had some cold weather last week that made me  
think of old Boston in 23mas



This is Sunday night and I am all alone in my tent writing this letter to my kind wife and beautiful children and I hope that they are thinking about me a way down here in an enemies land, Subject to all the hardships that the Soldier is exposed to, be of good cheer and keep up your spirits, dont get on my account I will do the best I can to take care of my health, and if there should be some gray hairs among my whiskers you need not envy them they will be honorable hairs to me, and I want to wear them home to show you how I keep my face dressed down here in Tennessee, I would be glad to be at home to night & talk to you all night and tell you all about how we get along and what we do and what we see and I would take a man a life time to tell all that he hears in the army, about fighting, about peace, about everything that you could think of, good and bad, this is the third letter that I have wrote to you since I got two of your kind letters at the same time, you said you would write to me on Sunday and I have looked and waited this long & dont get your letter in answer to mine, hope you got mine before this time I tried answer all of your letter promptly as I could and all of your questions too, the soldier has a bad chance to write sometimes, I wrote to you about trying to get to come home, and wanted you to advise me what to do what you thought best to do, it may be that they stoped the letter as they have stoped the circulation of the democratic paper among the army, but I will tell you the truth and that is I am going to get out of this scrape is possible, but prefer honorable to dishonorable means, if I can get out honorable then I could come home with a good face on but if a man should be forced to run off from the army then he would have to go when he was not know, to avoid the law, I cant stay there long



tell me what you think best. If I can get Worles  
place then there will be some chance to get out  
but his paper dont come back and we get no  
word from him so we see that there is not  
any thing done yet and I shant wait much longer  
because Willison and me dont just agree about  
everything and he out ranks me at this time  
but if I get Worles place then I will out rank  
him and then I will make him squeak, I  
have a few things laid up in store for him  
that he thinks not of, he owes me for one pair  
of pantaloons or pair of drawers and one  
Blanket making Six dollars and 40 cent  
If we get our pay you may look out for some  
green backs soon I suppose that the Colonel will  
will be good enough to send some one home  
so that the men can send their money to their  
families, but who I do not know, Mr Rice  
that lives East of Lewistown is down here after his  
boy that is very sick, he has been in the general  
Hospital about a month and is very low at this  
time Rice moved him to a private house the  
same house where Captain Bishop is, to Mr  
Quator they are decent and clever people, Rice is  
going to start home in the morning and I want  
to send this by him I shall have to go down town  
in the morning to see him before he leaves,  
you must write often to me and let me know how  
you all do, and especially if any of you get sick,  
tell me what you hear about the soldier that  
are deserting, if they are sending them back to  
the army, if there is any talk of war up at  
home, for we hear all kinds of stories  
down here and I would like to know  
how it is, well has the children wrote me that  
letter yet I would be glad to see it with their  
names all to it, good bye hoping to get a letter  
soon, I am your Husband and Father  
Wm Standen to his wife and children



Feb 9<sup>th</sup> 63 I am still well to day I went to bed at 11. o'clock  
last night slept untill 6 this morning got up had my  
Breakfast then went down to the city to take down my  
letter to Rice to hand to you, but his boy is gone and he  
gave up going to day so I brought the letter back with me  
and I thought that I would write some more and life  
in it. The Company received a good many letters and  
yesterday evening and I was greatly disappointed in not  
getting one. Sergeant Cole's wife wrote to him that there is  
no letters coming to Leavenworth from the 103<sup>rd</sup> Regt  
but I know as it do you hear of such reports. She says  
that the people there dont know where we are, nor what  
we are doing. they seem to think that we are all prisoners  
or gone up the Spout in some way, but you see we are  
all safe and sound, in camp Reed at Jackson Tenn  
your old nations State. It would have been a beautiful  
thing to have visited this country before the breaking  
out of this war, there is some of the most splendid  
Residences that art or ingenuity can devise but  
many of them are entirely ruined by the effects  
of this war, and it is enough to make any one  
look with disgust on any man or set of men that are  
willing to carry on a war for the purpose of laying  
waste to a country as kindly people as us this, causing  
brother to war against brother, shedding each others  
blood, and taking each others lives, amount that is  
deposed to a compromise of this war ought in be held  
up to society as a villain of the deepest dye, but  
I hope for the better; I think that the majority of the  
counsellors are determined to have this matter settled  
by the first day of April at the furthest, the great  
objection seems to be the taking of Vicksburg, if we  
are successful there then there is some hopes, but I  
dont believe that we can take the place, I suspect  
that the 103<sup>rd</sup> will be ordered there, I hope not for  
that is a hard place, if we should dont be uneasy  
I will take care of myself to the best of advantage  
that I can get, there is always two ends to a string.



of Mr. Cochrane tells me that Messpleys are in great glee  
having heard that James Messpley was orderly  
sergeant, which is a great mistake, he was detained  
to do extra orderly duty as orderly at Colonel Dur  
ham's head quarters, that is he was to carry papers  
from one office or Regiment to another (that is  
what we call the Colonels paper) but as he had no  
honour he could not go, but James makes a good  
soldier, little Gorman Anderson is back in the comba  
ny again, we have dismissed all of the rizzers  
in our company long ago, and David Reeves is doing  
our cooking for us (that is for the Captain, William  
and myself, & Reeves compose our mess) we pay  
him seven dollars a month to cook for us, I  
pay one dollar of that only, Reeves and I draw  
our rations, and the Captain and William have to  
buy theirs we all eat together, we have full rations  
at this time that is of bread and meat such as it  
is we have been drawing flour a part of the time for  
a short time past, and Reeves and I have exchange  
our flour for bread, we get a pound of  
bread for a pound of flour, (light bread that is good  
for an old mans teeth, we get no vegetables  
of any kind, ~~we~~ bread and meat and  
bread, washed down with coffee three times a day  
plenty of sugar no cream, butter is worth fifty  
cents per pound, down here, coffee sixty cents.  
Salt more to be had, as the army is, I suppose  
with it the citizens have to pay a high price  
I dont no how much, calico and all kinds of  
clothing are very high, and factory more to be  
had at any price, boots from 10 to 40 dollars a  
pair, so you see that it cost something to live  
down here, private boarding five dollars a week,  
board at Hotels ten dollars a week, and that  
paid in advance at that, single meals fifty  
cents, good Dear June the mail has just come  
and with it comes your kind letter that you



Commenced on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of February, 1863  
and I read it with the greatest of pleasure read it  
over twice before I quit. I was glad to hear that  
you and the children was all well, I was  
glad that your paper was good enough to come  
and see you, and that your mother brought you  
some butter I know you needed it, it seem strange  
that letter go so irregular from here home, or  
from home here, you think that if you was here  
that you would manage to be taken prisoner and  
then be paroled and come home, but suppose there  
was no chance to be taken prisoner, then you  
could not be paroled, or be exchanged, you ask  
me what did I mean by saying that they would  
not catch me sleeping, well I will try to tell you  
what I meant, If we ever get into a tight place I  
will Skeddaddle in the right way to be getting home,  
I would hate to be taken prisoner in a battle for  
fear it might be to long before they would parole  
or exchange me, the best way seem to be to go  
into the country and fall in to the hands of the  
carnital parties, and they will parole a person  
but the great trouble is they will take a man of all  
he has, and then let him go, but I think if  
I ever undertake it I will make it pay, the great  
trouble is to get through our own picket lines  
without being taken by them and brought  
back inside our own lines, but if I ever get  
out side of the lines they will never be  
able nor sharp enough to catch me if  
I should die in the attempt, I know  
that I am needed at home, to help you take care  
of my things, I know that it is hard for you to do  
so much out door business, my dear wife do  
you think that I would want you to do more  
than your share in providing for our chil  
dren, do you think that I have lost all  
feelings for you and them that makes me  
cry out it don't hurt me to see tears of



8) of affection for being absent from such a  
kind family, I will send you the last dollar  
that I got from the government for my pay to  
help you a long till I get home to help you to  
provide a living for my family - - -  
I think there is some mistake about the taxes it  
must be that 14 dollars and 80 cents is all that is  
due on the house and lot and personal property  
we used get Mr Wesley to see if there is not some  
mistake about the taxes, I wrote to you about  
the note you gave Johnson you better get it  
back from him, I will see Captain Wood find  
out if a mortgage given her will be of any use for  
them but I think it will not, you can tell them to  
him that is any thing that we have got, I will  
make out a bill of sale for him and sign it  
and he can let you keep possession of it  
if he wants to, I will tend to it right away  
I will make every effort in my power to get  
home, I am truly sorry that I was so fool  
hardy as not to take your kind advice and  
stay at home and run my chance with  
draft, I see that the abolition Congress is  
going to pass a conscript law and that  
will not leave an able bodied man at  
home in the north, their policy seems to  
be to take all the white men and kill  
them off for the sake of freeing a few  
niggers, I dont feel much like fighting  
to free niggers at the expense of my life, there  
is now conscripts in the Hospitals of General Grant  
among about six thousand men that are sick  
and wounded, dont that astonish you, but  
such are the effects of war, I would as soon  
be dead as to be conscripted out of these  
Hospitals, they dont give a man as much  
attention as you would give our little dog,  
and when he dies a nigger has his name