Near Nashville, Tennessee,
May 12th, 65.

My darling,

We are as buoyed up with the prospect of getting home that it surpasses every other thought and every other theme of ambition. The boys are constantly trying to gather grape vines across & abroad around camps to gratify the universal desire for news as to what is occurring next here and we are to move northward—how soon we are to be mustered out and all that, every ten minutes during the day some body brings a new version of the old story about the troops being around Louisville (camp) below Columbus &c. You have no idea my love, how great is the suspense, just now. The war being over—no longer anything to rail so here, we wonder and wait and long for the Talmudic word that shall transform us from an over wrought army into citizens free-independent men once more, to come again to our long wrong homes, to have our loved ones set up and build the chairs back and make room for us around the fireside circle again, resume our old places and once more be happy with those who are so dear to us.

You need not be alarmed, dearest, about my going to war again, I have had enough, I am not in favor of the next war. I come back to building manhood again, emerging from my teens with the experience I have & should like my place to be a West Point cadet and go into the regular army, but that time is passed.
and I have no regrets, as for the volunteer service, I have done my full share and am content, I long to be at home where I can cultivate the arts of peace and domestic enjoyment, with those I love, and by whom I was loved. I hope I will give you some account of our grand review the other day. It was a very fine day to be remembered by the 17th Corps. Just as my eyes closed one chilly and wet, having no fire in our tents and being too wet to stand outside, we had to go to bed to keep warm, most of the day. This morning we left an early one and I will let the colonel know, the one (an uncle's friend) after leaving the tent have to go to General Harding's place a mile or two from here to see his books. I believe I told you about it before. This is such a delightful country around here, what a pity it is not owned by white people. Day before yesterday we went to the 17th in the city, got our chins and caps off with some Union boys about the regiment and with them white gloves and paper collars on, made a 'broad smile'. They never had their fine ties broken by the enemy's shot and shell and by marching through corn fields and through thickets, as the old 17th corps, since we returned from our ride I have received your letter of the 1st last Monday. It is so good to get some kind loving and interesting letters, what will I do for such nice letters when I get home, & must mind I must then get them right away from you, dear wife. Yes, and that won't be all I'll get from those letters, will it my dear? And let me just ask Mother's suggestion and
and try to take some of the weight off of Virginia's head. It is perhaps as well now that the war is over a good deal, it relieves you a good deal, does it not? and then the main thing we all have to endure for physically, after a while she must begin to learn her books, and be a little lady. O what tremendous events are upon us as a nation! When I think of what is transpiring around us, and I am completely overwhelmed with amazement and wonder, you must not be too impatient, my dear, for the soldiers (soldiers) to get home, I fully realize you are in a position of imposition, you must not forget that our army is a tremendous force of human machinery. It has taken more than four years to organize it, and certainly it cannot be disorganized in a day. The great machine must be unwound piece by piece at a time and taken apart very carefully. It is not very apparent that we (the troops) will be mustered out first after three in hospitals. Next week, it is asserted, we are to be placed in part of our camps, perhaps not more than half dozen that is complete, I understand most fully the importance that attaches to the great sacrifices and heartburning and self-denials endured by our dead and those who have stood contented as it were in our little home courts during these long years of grief and pain and suffering. I know, my dear, you too have your feet filled there in the glory that shall envelope the returning heroes, you too shall have your place in history and live while the memory of this great war shall be divided in this and in all future generations, and your name shall
mistletoe close to my aching heart, where your legitimate place has never been vacant, but when through the dangers and vicissitudes of this long struggle your image has now been an anchor of hope, and when your kind loving words bearing words of counsel and encouragement have come back as shield and a safeguard.

A great sentiment is beginning to prevail in the army about going to Mexico to drive Maximilian out of that country. I have no doubt that thousands will flock there as soon as our forces can arrive. To a young man who loves for glory and romantic adventure in curtailing Spain and invalids, but, as I am, I love but little ambition with direction, and when the subject is talked of I tell them my wife has notified one in advance that she is not in favor of the next war. That will not be the theatre of the greatest event since its first few years, and I think it will prove in just as much to your liking and carry the army and with the help of my health I want what interests them is in Y. in that way just as well.

What kind of a demonstration will we do after folks meet with habiti when we come to town? The good people will have to receive some other form of greeting than the old one "how are you; when are you going back?"

I really have no idea as vivid as that, but it is over here with hope gazing as me all along the side roads. I almost think I was with the back way, with my friends habituated, I went hard to acquire myself in the next to look upon an old veteran, for I am getting as a flag. I can almost stand up by myself. It takes one clear to look about. Rounding over books done alone, not much serious though, is it? All things considered. As to view Johnson and Pahlow; I think perhaps they are well situated in that old hotel stand. They ought to beAtkinson, by all means. I never got rhody's letter that he spoke about, but when it came from the secretaries, how will I miss ella to be and say? Do they have McCauley back again? I will see how you have anything to say.

Then your N. is getting hot and quite cool now the weather is very good and I must go to, so good night love, until I come with you in your next letter and I wish you the best possible of your days on a bit of paper.