

CAMP NEAR FREDRICKSBURG, VIRGINIA DECEMBER 19, 1862

DEAR WIFE I NOW TAKE MY PEN IN HAND TO LET YOU KNOW THAT I AM WELL AT PRESENT AND HOPE THAT THESE FEW LINES WILL FIND YOU AND THE CHILDREN THE SAME AND ALL THE REST OF THE FOLKS NOW I WILL TELL YOU ABOUT OUR FIGHT IN FREDRICKSBURG WE STRUCK TENTS ONE WEAK AGO TODAY IN THE MORNING? ABOUT FOUR O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING AND MARCHED TO THE BATTLE GROUND AND LAID THEAR [THERE] FIVE DAYS AND NIGHTS ON OUR ARMES ALL THE TIME WE RETREATED FROM THEAR ON TUESDAY MORNING OUR ARMEY LOST BADLEY OUR RIGMENT [REGIMENT] WAS IN THE FIELD ON SATARDDAY [SATURDAY] NIGHT THEY MAID [MADE] ONE CHARGE ON THE REBELS AFTER WE CROSED [CROSSED] THE RIVER THEY THREWED SHELLS IN OUR RANKES WHEN WE TRIED TO CROSS THE RIVER BUT DID NOT KILL ANY OF OUR MEN BUT IT WAS ANAROW [A NARROW] CHANCE FOR US THE MUD WAS THROWED ALL OVER US BY THEM THE BULLETS OR BALLS? WHISTLED BY OUR HEADS IT LOOKED VERY HARD TO SEE THE DED [DEAD] LAY ON THE FIELD SO LONG I SAW A GREAT MANY MEN FALL THE REBES WAS BEHIND STONE WALLEs AND IN HOUSES SO THAT WE COULD NOT SEE THEM AND THAY [THEY] HAD RIFELS PITS TO LAY BEHIND WHEN WE WEN[T] IN I NEVER EXPECTED TO COME OUT ALIVE BUT I DID AND I THANK GOD FOR IT IT WAS A AWFUL THING TO HEAR THE MEN CRY FOR HELP ON THE FIELD ON SATARDAY NIGHT IT WAS VERY COLD WE LAID RIGHT IN WITH THE DED [DEAD] AND WOUNDED THAT NIGHT AND THE NEXT DAY THEN WE WAS RELIEVED BY A CALAFORNA [CALIFORNIA] RIGMENT [REGIMENT] ON MONDAY NIGHT THEN WE WENT BACK IN THE TOWN AND LAID THEAR [THERE] THAT DAY WITH BALLS AND SHELL ALL AROUND US THEAR [THERE] WAS SHELL STRUCK IN THE YARD BEHIND US WICH [WHICH] THREWED DURT ALL OVER MY COMPNEY [COMPANY] THE COMPNEYS [COMPANIES] ON BOTH SIDES OF US JUMPED AND RUN BEHIND A CHURCH CLOSE BY SOME OF THE BOYES GOT UP TO RUN AND I MAID THEM LAY DOWN

AGAIN THEN THEAR WAS THREE OR FOUR MORE COME RIGHT OVER US ON THE OTHER
SIDE OF THE ROAD ONE MAN WAS STRUCK IN THE HEAD RIGHT OPISIT [OPPOSITE]
OF US THE BALLS STRUCK ALL AROUND US BUT DID NOT STRICK US WISH I COULD
HAVE SENT YOU SOMETHING THAT I GOT IN TOWN BUT I CAN'T SEND YOU MUCH I
WILL SEND YOU SOMETHING TO REMEMBER ME BY AND TO REMEMBER FREDRICKSBURG
ENY [ANY] WAY IN THIS LETTER AND MORE IN THE NEXT NOW THIS HORSES HEAD
IS FOR THE CHILDREN IT WAS TO BAD TO SEE THE GOODS DISTROID [DESTROYED]
IN THAT VILAGE CHAIRS SOIFFAS [SOFAS] PANIOAS [PIANOS] TABELS [TABLES]
DISHES EVERY THING YOU COULD SPEAK OF FLOUR PORK WHISKEY AND SOFORTH I
HAVE GOT TOO LITTLE MATTS AND A BIBLE AND A DISH FOR YOU IF I CAN SEND
IT TO YOU WICH I HOPE I CAN I HAVE GOT ONE LETTER FROM YOU SINCE I LEFT
HOME THAT WAS NIGHT BEFORE LAST I WAS VERY GLAD TO HEAR FROM YOU BUT
SOREY [SORRY] TO HEAR THAT ESTELLA WAS LIKELY TO HAVE FITS BUT GLAD
TO HEAR THAT YOU WAS ALL WELL AT PRESENT TELL EMA THAT SHE MUST BE A
GOOD GIRL OR I SHANT LIKE HER MUCH I AM GLAD TO HEAR THAT THAY [THEY]
LEARN SO FAST TELL THEM THAT I THINK OF THEM VERY MUCH AND HOPE THAT
THEY WILL BE GOOD GIRLES UNTIL I COME HOME TELL THE CHILDREN THAT I
AM GLAD TO HAVE THEM PRAY FOR ME AND I WILL PRAY FOR THEM AND YOU TO IT
IS VERY HARD FOR THE MEN HEAR [HERE] NOW I AM SOREY TO HEAR THAT YOUR
[?] WAS OUT SO NEAT AND THAT YOU HAD TO SELL YOUR DRESS? FOR TO GET
SHOES FOR THEM BUT I CAN'T GET MY PAY YET AND AM SOREY FOR THAT YOU MUST
TRY AND GET HECTOR TO GET YOU SOME WOOD I AM SOREY THAT I CAN'T COME
HOME THIS WINTER NOW I MUST GO FOR WE HAVE JUST HAD SOME NEW RECRUTS
[RECRUITS] COME IN AND I MUST TEND TO THEM NOW SO GOOD BY FOR THIS TIME
I SAW A LITTLE GIRL IN FREDRICKSBURG AND IT PUT ME IN MIND OF MY CHILDREN
AT HOME HER FATHER WAS WITH HER BUT IT LOOKED HARD TO SEE HER THEAR
[THERE] AND THE BALLS FALLING ALL AROUND HER THE PEOPLE HAD ALL LEFT
THEAR NOW KISS THE CHILDREN FOR ME TELL THEM THAY MUST BE GOOD GIRLS

AND MIND YOU NOW GOD BLESS YOU ALL AND KEEP YOU FROM HARM.

FROM JOHN M. YOUNG TO HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN
ROSETTA R. YOUNG & ESTELLA YOUNG IDA YOUNG EMA YOUNG

I MUST TELL YOU THAT I HAV [HAVE] JUST GOT YOUR LETER AND HOW GLAD
I WAS DANEL [DANIEL] DECKER IS WELL AND SO IS READ I GESS [GUESS] THIS
LETTER IS LARGE ANNUGH [ENOUGH] THIS TIME.