

If Jeff or any one writes, address me,
Care of Major Hupgood, paymaster, U.S. Army,
corner 15th and F streets, 5th floor.

Washington D.C.

Washington Monday forenoon
I send my love to dear sister Mat, and little sis - and to
Andrew and all my brothers
December 29, 1862.

Oh Mat, how lucky it was you did not come - together, we could
never have got down to see George.
Dear, Dear Mother,

Friday the 19th inst. I succeeded
in reaching the camp of the 51st New York,
and found George ^{alive and well} - In order to make sure
that you would get the good news, I
sent back ^{by messenger to Washington (I dare say you did not get it for some time)} a telegraphic dispatch, as well
as a letter - and then ~~came to Harpers~~ at
Burlington. I have staid in camp with
George ever since, till yesterday when
I came back to Washington - ^(about the 24th) George
got Jeff's letter of the 20th. Mother,
how much you must have suffered, all
that week, till George's letter came, -
and all the rest ^{must} too. As to me, I know
I put in about three days of the greatest
suffering I ever experienced in my life.
I wrote to Jeff how I had my pocket picked

in a jam and hurry, changing cars, at Adelphi, - so that I landed here without a dime. The next two days I spent hunting through the hospitals, ^{walking all day and night, unable to ride} trying to get information, - trying to get access to big people, &c - I could not get the least clue to anything - O'Dell would not see me at all. But ~~Friday~~ ^{Thursday} afternoon, I lit on a way to get down on the government boat that runs to Aquia Creek, and so by railroad to the neighborhood of Falmouth, opposite Fredericksburgh - So by degrees I worked my way to Ferrero's brigade, which I found Friday afternoon without much trouble, ^{after I got in camp} When I found dear brother George, and found that he was alive and well, O you may imagine how trifling all my little cares and difficulties seemed - they vanished into nothing. And now that I have lived for eight or nine days amid such scenes as the

camp^s furnish, and had a ^{practical} part in it all, and realize the way that hundreds of thousands of good men are now living, and have had to live for a year or more, not only without any of the comforts, but with death and sickness and hard marching and hard fighting, (and no success at that,) for their continual experience - really nothing we call trouble seems worth talking about.

George is very well in health, has a good appetite - I think he is at times more wearied out and homesick than he shows, but stands ^{upon} it ^{the whole} very well. Every one of the soldiers, to a man, wants to get home.

I suppose Jeff got quite a long letter I wrote from camp, about a week ago. I told you that George had been promoted to Captain - his commission arrived while I was there. When you write, address Capt. George W. Whitman
Co. K. 51st New York Vol.
Ferrero's brigade
near Falmouth Va.

Jeff must write oftener, and put in a few lines from mother, even if it is only two lines - then in the next letter a few lines from Mat, and so on. you have no idea how letters from home cheer one up in camp, and dissipate home sickness.

While I was there George still lived in Capt. Francis's tent - there were five of us altogether, to eat, sleep, write, &c. in a space twelve feet square, but we got along very well, ^{the weather all along was very fine} - and would have got along to perfection, but Capt. Francis is not a man I could like much - I had very little to say to him. George is about building a place, half hut and half tent, for himself - (he is probably about it this very day) - and then he will be better off, I think. Every Captain has a tent, in which he lives, transacts company business, &c. has a cook (or man of all work) and in the same tent mess and sleep his Lieutenants, and perhaps the 1st sergeant. They have a kind of fire place - and the cook's fire is outside on the open ground. George had very good times while Francis was away - the cook, a young disabled soldier, Tom, is an excellent fellow, and a first-rate cook, and the 2^d Lieutenant, Pooley, is a tip-top young Pennsylv. ^{vacation} Tom thinks all the world of George - when he heard he was wounded, on the day of the battle, he left every thing, got across the river, and went hunting for George through the field, through thick and thin. I wrote to Jeff that George was wounded by a shell, a gash in the cheek - you could stick a splint through into the mouth, but it has healed up without difficulty already. Every thing is uncertain about the army, whether it moves or stays where it is. There are no furloughs granted at present. I will stay here for the present, at any rate long enough to see if I can get any employment at any thing, and shall write what luck I have. Of course I am unsettled at present. Dear mother, & love, Walt.