

From Mrs. Jessie L. Salls
585 South Broadway
Nyack, N.Y.

A CHRISTMAS LETTER DEC 25, 1862)

A letter from a soldier to his cousin (my mother), To get a letter from a soldier was evidently as much of a romantic event as it was in the First and Second World wars, when the girls wrote to "the boys" to keep their courage up and got letters in return. I sent a copy of this letter to my son in World War **II** when he was far from home on Christmas Day, to show him how Christmas was not too cheery for his ancestors in the Civil War days and how each generation in our family has had its wars.

Camp Vermont Dec. 25, 1862.

Dearest Cousin;

I wish you "Merry Christmas" and suppose that in all probability it will be a merry one to you but it is no Christmas to me. Neither do we have any Sunday in the army. We have had preaching only three or four times since we have been in the service. It is customary to have inspection on Sabbath morning and dress parade in the afternoon, unless there is work to do in which case of course we do it. When I wrote my last letter to you and received its answer I was on Arlington Heights. We stayed there nearly three weeks when we were ordered to pack knapsacks and march we knew not where, but after marching about five hours found ourselves in our present camping ground (Camp Vermont). I presume it got its name in consequence of so many Vermont regiments having encamped here. It is ten miles from the Heights and about the same distance from Washington and three miles from Alexandria where the gallant

Elsworth was killed. The Capitol building and Washington ~~Monument~~
Monument are in sight, also Fairfax Seminary and on the whole
I think we have a very pleasant Camping ground though not quite
so sightly as the former. We there had a full view of Washing-
ton and Georgetown but this camp has the advantage of the other
in being on higher and consequently healthier ground. We have
been here two weeks and we are again under marching orders and
will probably leave tomorrow for Fortress Monroe. All the army
corps seem to be in motion at present. I presume I shall again
be in battle before long and perhaps may fall but my trust is
^{The}
in God of Battles and dear cousin I wish you to pray that
if consistant with His will my life may be spared, if not that
I may be admitted to those Mansions prepared for them that
love Him.

Uncle Sam has not paid us yet so I cannot send my picture .

Please write soon. Give my love to all and believe me as
ever Your affectionate cousin
M-----.

This letter is one of a packet of letters from this same
cousin. He did finally send his photograph which looked like
a much older man, having a beard and he wore the uniform of
that time.

Rockland Co.

Mrs. Jessie L. Salls
585 South Broadway
Nyack, N.Y.