

Andersonville, Ga., August 4, 1864

Today, my dearest, there is no sick call -- reason, no medicine -- and I have a few moments all to myself which I intend to make use of in writing to those whom I love most. A nice quiet time I shall have at least for a little while, and such a relief and such a good time for writing that I enjoy it. I like to get off to myself where I can think undisturbed, of my wife and little boys and of the folks at home. I should like very much to know how you are all getting on today, what you are doing, what the little boys are doing, how much you think about me and how much the boys miss me and think about me. Bless my wife and little boys. I cannot tell how long it may be till I shall see them. I hope it will be but a short while. Is it two weeks today since I left, or will it be two weeks to-morrow? I have forgotten what the day of the month was on which I left. You must tell me.

I am still doing very well here, and have no duties to do that I can not easily perform. I am usually engaged at the stockade from 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 12 o'clock. Yesterday our orders were to send to the hospital all who could not walk and absolutely needed medical assistance. Can you guess how many were sent? Nine hundred and fifty seven. One of them whom I had decided to send and had him already labeled, as they call it, died before I had finished examining the other cases. This is not the only case of the sort which occurred in other detachments. Such deaths as they are -- men dying in the hot broiling sun. To those who are prepared, what relief death must be. But profanity -- and such profanity -- is so common among them. I can not think that many of them are prepared to die. The sight of a dead comrade has no softening influence on a Yankee. They are accustomed to it and I don't know but are hardened by it. On Tuesday I

was at the hospital and saw four little Yankee boys -- two to each litter-- running around carrying off the dead to a place used for that purpose. They were in a great glee -- seeming to enjoy it a great deal, and as soon as they had moved one body came back, asking in the true Yankee voice, "is there another who wishes to take a free ride for nothing."

In my rounds through the stockade (about which I told you in my last letter) I met up with one fellow who said he wanted to take the oath of allegiance. He whispered this in my ear, and as he had a good looking face I promised to do what I could for him. So I asked Capt. Wirz, commandant of interior of the prison, whether he paid any attention to one desiring to take such an oath. He replied he did not. I was wondering how I could get the Captain's answer to the prisoner, but yesterday at sick call some one strangely saluted me and I recognized the man who wanted to take the oath. He seemed very sorry to hear that I was unsuccessful, but told me to try to have him detailed as shoe maker or carpenter. If I hear that men as the above are needed I shall try again.

The weather here is very hot as we are in the pine woods and have to sleep on the ground, get amazingly dirty. Stanley, a remarkably cleanly man ordinarily, has found small lice which distresses him greatly. I have yet found none, but am glad to find one man whom the vermin trouble as much as they used to do me. He declares he will go in the tent to physic no more Yankees.

I am very sorry that the raiders have so interrupted communication. I can not get your letters, nor can you get mine. However, hoping that some of your letters had reached Mason before the road was torn up and the bridges destroyed I wrote to the P.M. at that place to forward all

letters addressed to me to this place. I hope I shall get them today. As soon as communication is resumed you will then get my letters, and I yours. You will then see that I have written home and regularly. But lest your letters should not come right, don't be too fearful of repetition. Write me all about home and home folks, our little crop, and anything you can think of. Did Mr. Houghton get his detail? Did Mr. Parker get home -- is Gullan Grant at home still? Where is your Mother and how has Henry got? Wilson has quit plowing by this time -- Can't he put the horse in the pasture? I could ask more questions, but will not now. Tell Percy to be a good boy and father will bring him something. Ask him what I must bring, and tell me what to bring Jenny. He too, I am in hopes will be glad to see father. But I must close now, dear.

From husband

J.M.H.