

24th April, 1863.

My dearest Ma,

I know you have suffered more than you are able to endure, from our precious Brothers, and as all who are in the enemy's power, I have not heard a word from them yet, but hope to, soon, & will write you, as soon as I do. I hardly know where to begin or what to say; for the past five weeks, since our troops began coming down, our house has been so crowded by acquaintances, soldiers &c. I have been in a perfect straits, not having a single servant in the house. Sister & Jimmie & her family were here with Mr Jones. Jimmie is with me yet, how we all wished for you; but every disappointment is often for our good & tho' we cannot always think so; after so many thousand troops being quartered down here, a country already poor, the people

unable to save even half crops was soon
by stripped, then you can easily imagine
how desolate we felt, when the tramp
of the troops falling back fell on our
ears, left helpless to a merciless enemy.
On Monday they came as far as here,
all of a sudden the shrieks of the child
men the gunkees are coming, they rode
all round the house firing at one door
I at the other, sent to the stable took
old Charley, but the little ones cried
Poleman begged, so did I, they loosed
him, after being told Col Symon had
given us a pass to move from town,
today I hear they have literally
torn up Col Baird, took all their
meat, scattered the meal & over the
yard, took clothes bedding, everything
& took Church B. to town, they gave
the reason he had been sending food
to up country, we don't know what the
state of the people of the Cross Roads
and below, for there is no communication

It has made it a thousand times worse
for this whole section, our army having
come down, it is to be deplored, but can we
see any good resulting to them from fellows
many showed great feeling, at leaving us
so unprotected & helpless. I trust the Lord
will protect us - for it would be giving
us & all we have to certain destruction
to attempt to go further just now. Oh,
wonder the cup is bitter, can we be
enabled to say 'Thy will be done' &
obedient so not being able to get any
money or anything to our parents, I trust
they have not suffered. After the Gen
Reed left here on Monday, they rode up
to Nelson's Camp roads, a mile or so
above a field cannon. For some
time we thought there was fighting,
but it was only bandolier shooting.
I find Jimmie a great deal of company
to me, I had fixed you such a nice
room with makes, crib all ready & a
cradle for dear little Lizzie, even a

high chair to the table waiting for him,
& his little wheelbarrow, dear little ones
of us all. I fear there's sun had set while
it was yet day, the future is dark, but I
trust the cloud has a "silver lining".
Keep up a good heart for the present we
still have, above all to encourage
George, for he has a heavy burden on
his heart, as long as our husband's life
& health are spared, we have everything
Jimmy & I wash & iron, do all the house
work & but cook. I guess there will not
be a migration to this region. We are all
very well & send you much love. Everyone
is ahead & I have scribbled this to you as
Mrs B is to meet Richard tomorrow at
Taff's. I have written you so often & have
not had a line in return, I concluded our
letters both met the same fate, in the confusion
everything has been in. Mrs B got George's
letter this evening, good night dear Ma
you don't know how disappointed I have
been in not seeing you all.

did you a pair of shoes. Yours affectionately
for M & Lizzy by Mr Jones, Betty,