

Keefers Barracks
N. C., Nov 21st 1863

Dear Maria

I should have written you yesterday (Sunday) but as to day is your "birth day" I presume it will answer just as well even if it is one day later. I would like well to see you this eve and see how my good wife looks at ~~the~~ thirty - do you feel any older than you did yesterday? The fact is I am getting to be an old man's very one take me to be much older than I really am - the other day in guessing on ages I was set as high as 35 and now set me under 30 so I expect when you and Fred again by Sarah Boyer she will not exclaim "How much younger he looks than Maria" but just to the contrary I don't feel any older as I know of than I did ten years ago but I have to dispense with my boyish capers, which is a great effort sometimes.

Well M - the long looked for box has got along and to my great pleasure I got my shirts and the best of all a "Love letter" in one of the shirt pockets - You would have been glad to have seen me when I unfolded the pkg. you say, well I will assure you my countenance was somewhat shortened for my old shirts had got very small and badly worn and one towel only remained. Had the braid on the broom not pleased me I would not have taken