Camp of Recruits October 19, 1862

My dear Children

I thought I would write you a letter all to yourself Bert, but I have no time to night, so I'll send this to you and Willie and my dear little Siss. I hope you will all be good children and obey your mother and love her. She has a great deal to do to take care of you and you should try to help her and please her and try to be agreeable with each other. You should pray to God that he would help you to do this. Ask him for Jesus sake and he will do it. Jesus likes children to pray to him. He loves children, and he will answer your prayers as much as big peoples. Learn to obey him and your mother and teacher. Bert, if you ever be a soldier you must learn to obey. It is easiest to learn it now. The soldier should do just what he is told at once, asking no questions, but doing it quick and well. He will then get along. So will a boy or girl. I had to do a good many things that I never did at home and no one dared ask me to do. I did it all and the men that came with me wondered at it. But now I have nothing to do but see that other men obey the orders given them.

I would like to see you here and show you this camp and the things in it. It is a very curious place, and some very funny people in it.

There are no walls around it, it is in an open field but there are a lot of soldiers all round it with guns and they will not let any one out or into it, without an order from the officer who commands it. You ought to be thankful for the opportunities and privileges you have for the soldiers do not have them. The saying is that there is no Sabbath in Camp, and it looks very like it. We have had five Sabbaths in Camp, and they looked just like other days. Today Mr. Bovard called to see us. Just after he went away two preachers came and had worship. Our Colonel came out and called for all who wanted to join. He stood by himself during the services, bareheaded in the sun. It was very nice to hear the soldiers sing the old tunes we used to hear at home. They sung hymns that I did not know. The preacher gave us a very nice lecture. When he spoke of our wives and children at home, many of the roughest of the men cried. I am glad the preacher came. There are many wicked men in camp. They play cards and pitch horse shoes on the Sabbath. Our Colonel is a good man and tries to stop it, but there are so many men he can't watch them all.

Tell your mother that we have to pack up our knapsacks and start away from here at 8 o'clock tomorrow morning. It is going to be a stormy night. It is raining very hard, and Big Willie is out with ropes tying our tent for fear it blows down. Some of them have blown down while I am writing this. Willie will have to stand out on guard four hours to night. I will be out two hours
in place of one of our men who is sick today. Henderson George is officer of the guard and will be out all night.

Now dear children, kiss your mother for me and try to be good children till I come back, and if I don't, let us all try to meet each other in heaven where we will not have to part again.

Your affectionate father, W. Taylor