Camp Lookout.
Near Tampico Mex.
Christmas-day.

My Dear Amanda,

On a day like this it seems to me that my thoughts, even more than usual, are turned on you. I am constantly contrasting my situation at present with that of last year and in thinking on what you were probably doing at this time in Greensboro'. I came out to my present encampment two days ago. It is a beautiful situation about two miles from the centre of the town. Our Regiment is divided up into small detachments of one and two companies at different places around the city. Most of them are in the forts about town. My Company and the Greensboro' Co are together on the main road leading to the town and about 1 mile from the nearest fort. If an enemy should come to attack the place we will have the first chance at them and if they should come in too large a body we are ordered to retreat to the fort. When we first got here an attack was confidently expected every day, but now all this there are various rumours afloat, about Santa Anna's coming here, it is not the opinion of many that the place will be attacked soon - if at all. It is only guess work tho', no one can tell much about it. We will probably remain here until about the 1st of February, when a movement will probably be made towards Vera Cruz. Gen'l Taylor & Patterson are expected here soon and also Gen'l Scott. I think it probable that we will take shipping for home from Vera Cruz at what time it is hard to form an opinion.

[illegible] but little thought, a year ago, that I
should be spending this Christmas in Mexico. What
changes one brought about in one short year! But this
changed as to place and far remote one from the other
I feel and know that there is no change in the ardent
love of our hearts one for the other. On the contrary
distance has only made us more dear one to another.
I never needed to be assured of this in regard to
yourself, nor have I even, before this, been ignorant of
the extent of my feelings for you, but it has caused
me to see and know how utterly worthless were all
the pleasures of the world to me without the society
of my dear wife. I know feel that there is nothing
else worth living for in this life. It is sweet to
me to look back upon the joys I have known
with you; but it is still sweeter to look forward to
those which I anticipate when we meet again.
If I could embrace that dear form of thine once
more, enjoy the sweet kisses from thy lips and see the
beaming of love from those soft blue eyes Oh! Mamma
I feel sometimes, like I had been a great fool
to give up all these joys, to come upon this expedition.
If to ever being compensated for it, that is entirely
out of the question. I never could be. No honours
could ever do so, altho' as you always said I was
very ambitious. The only thing which will in any way
compensate me will be the delight of being again
united with my wife after such a long separation &
the pleasant reflection that I have discharged my
duty to my country. This last feeling you cannot
so fully realize, but I assure you it is a gratifying
one to a man who loves his country as every one ought to do.

[illegible] you meet me in Mobile by the 1st [illegible] may next [illegible]

The mexican women here are better looking and bitter more fashionably dressed than any I saw at Camargo or Matamoras. They all have black eyes & hair. I always prefered blue eyes before, but I shall hereafter like them still more. How I would like to see my Mamma's clear pretty blue eye. And our little daughter has eyes like her mother, has she not? I will love her all the more on that account. You suppose me to be jesting or flattering you but it is neither — It is the truth.

You will want to know how I am spending X-mas. Well, in the first place, this morning before breakfast, we made a large egg-nog, having procured for that purpose some 10 or 12 doz.^n eggs & other materials. It was very good, tho' not equal to that which yr Mother made for us last christ-mas. I was made a little sick by it, from which you might infer that I had drunk too much, but it was not so — The boys seemed all quite lively & jovial. Some have been singing and dancing & playing the violin: all are talking a great deal of home. I was invited to a large egg-nog party and dining to day, where most all the officers were invited, but I did not feel like going. I missed a splendid dinner, but some how I prefered our plain Camp fare and remained out here all day. To night I partook of a fine supper composed principally of a very fine venizon which John Hobson killed to day. John stands the campaign as well as any man in the Reg't. He has fattened a great deal & looks much better. There is no better soldier in the company than he is — While I am writing the boys are singing and dancing out on the ground: — some of them have not yet got over the effects of what they have drank. Altho' the sale of liquor is positively forbidden, yet occasionally they manage to get hold of some of it — I never saw less dissipation among the same number of men

are encamped on one of the main roads leading into town and we can get almost any thing we want from the Mexicans as they pass to market. They carry every thing on pack mules or packs and hardly ever use carts or wagons. It would astonish you to see how they can pack a load on these animals. Sometimes they will be entirely hid by the load which is upon them, & very often you see only their heads uncovered. They are very cruel to these animals. They follow after them with long sharp pointed poles and the poor animals receive but little mercy at their hands. I went out in the woods near our encampment to day and gathered a great many lemons growing wild. Any number might be collected in a short time and they are of an excellent quality. I wish I had an opportunity to send you a barrel of them & other fruit. If we should return home from this place I would be certain to try the experiment to see whether they would keep or not. Our time commenced on the 4th of June last. Nearly seven months have passed away. I long to see the 12 months at an end. I hope Mr Webb has not tendered my resignation and if he has not, I will endeavor to get back before the 24th of May — in which case I could retain my office. The people ought to be willing to indulge me, I think even if they should be subjected to some little inconvenience. It is a matter of great importance to me to retain my office and I sincerely hope it will be in my power to do so. As you know, for four months, no appointment could be made, unless I resigned and if we should not be disbanded in time, it would be right and proper in me to procure leave of absence by 24th of May & return. I should dislike very much to do so, but my mind is made up as to the importance of the step as well as its propriety unless you should differ with me in opinion. So write me what you think of it. I fear Mr Webb will tender my resignation before he gets my letter. I have not said a word about my dear children — God bless them all three — Kiss them for me — Your own true & devoted Husband S. Morse