Benton Barracks, Dec. 25th, 1863

Dear Father and Mother,

Your letter of the 16th arrived two days ago, and I take this Christmas morning to answer it. A poor Christmas offering I know, but then it is like the widow's mite. It's all I have. I wish you all a very merry and happy Christmas, all the happiness you can enjoy and then a little more to fill up the measure of your happiness for the coming year. I do not know how the people did celebrate Christmas in this country, but I should think it was by making all the noise they can. All night they were ringing bells and firing guns, nearly all night in London. It was all right I suppose, but it sounded singularly enough to me. I had intended it got to London today and see for myself how the people did pass their time.