

Camp Release Minn. Oct 8th 1862

My Dear Aunt

You may think it strange that I should come away out here in the wilderness to write you a letter, but you know the peculiarity of my style. This country is all prairie which gives me a sufficiency of elbow room, - I make a great spread when I write, - and that is my main reason.

Camp Release, which has been our place of sojourn since the 26th Sept is situated in Stout land, about 60 miles above St. Ridgely, on the Minn. River, west side, and directly opposite the mouth of a river laid down on our State maps as the Chipewa.

You have probably heard of some of our doings, as I see the papers are making a very considerable thing of this Indian war. It is a big thing to have a 'northwestern department' set off. to have a Maj. Genl. in command - & to talk of 'thousands of troops' to be hurried to the north west for a 'fall campaign'. All that sounds huge & gloriously military. But the fact is, that the 1200 men here, with only one considerable battle, have settled the back for these savages, unless it is intended by the government to exterminate everything Indian. If such is the intention, then the grandeur of a huge army may be opportunely introduced into this wilderness of waste, & many a good pleasurable man

good friend of the white, and faithful observer of
 trade, though he be Indian, will fall by the unthinking,
 merciless bullets of an enlightened and christian
 people. What I mean, is, that we have no right in
 justice & truth to kill any man or race of men who
 have ^{done} us no injury either in word or deed. We have
 with this comparatively small force squelched this
 outbreak, & punished, or will punish when we have
 completed the work now on hand, the offenders, & sent
 them where they can cause no more anguish except
 in remembrance. Why, then, this immense mobbing
 of troops & legions into the North West? Can anyone tell?

With the exception of our day's battle, we have had
 a very quiet and common place journey since we left
 the fort, which we did on the 18th Sept, for the purpose
 of capturing the prisoners and property taken and held
 by the Indians. We crossed the Minn. River at Fort Snoddy,
 then kept along the river. We continued by easy marches
 and without noteworthy incident until the 22nd, when we
 camped about two miles below the Upper Agency or mouth
 of the Yellow Medicine river, and on the south side of a lake
 called Wood Lake.

We camped about 2 o'cl P.M. of the
 22nd sent out after wood and other
 supplies without discovering any
 signs of enemy. But the next morning
 when our teams set out for the Agency
 to hunt up some potatoes, they had
 proceeded about a mile when a
 swarm of Indians sailed out of the



late grasp and find upon them, the wonder is that the
boys were not all killed; - five were wounded. As soon as
the firing was heard the 3rd Regt. formed and rushed out
for the train, and finding them on the way back pushed
on after the Indians. After about a half hour's skirmish
they suddenly discovered that they were surrounded, and so
began a retreat for camp. They were then nearly a mile
away. It was then the 3rd began to suffer. 'Benj' was among
the first wounded. The force of the ball was spent, else it
would have been instantaneously fatal. He was struck
just below the prominent part of the back of the head
and a little on the left side. He fell, stunned, but his
comrades seized him up & carried him along, he soon
recovered his senses & was finally able to paddle into
camp alone. While the boys were carrying him, one of them
was struck in the back by a ball. He was caught up by
two when one of them, again, had his leg shattered, & so
it went - Benj' is now nearly right again. I dress his
wound every morning - His hurt has not prevented his
attending to his L. Master's business, except for the first
two days. As soon as we saw the 5th were being entangled
the 7th Regt. were ordered out, & took a position to the right
hand of the lake. By that time the Indians had got into
the ravine of the Creek above & below, & lying behind the
steep banks began to make the balls whistle around our
heads after a highly interesting manner. A shell or two
was thrown ahead, when away we went, charging ~~at~~
them until they were satisfied. It was very tolerable sport
for us, I mean, 'but death to the frog'. The ravine bottom was

drawn with the naked (if so they fight) bodies of the
savage assassins. Our loss in the Charge was one man
killed, & one or two with slight flesh wounds.
On the left of the Lake, the 6th held the Indians from
flanking our camp. Our killed were two from the 3rd
Regt., one from the 7th Regt., and one from an inde-
pendent Co. of Indian Scouts, the Rivelle Rangers.
My mind who fell in the Indian ranks was properly medical & perhaps more
on our judge of my thankfulness when, on my
return to camp, Benj. (whom I had heard was severely
wounded) came out to take my hand.

Two days further march brought us to this place,
where we found a camp of friendly Indians, who while
the others were down fighting, got the prisoners into
their camp and entertained themselves, so that when
the hostile bands returned from the fight they found
a "fire in the rear" from them, they had settled and
persecuted. The Indians had robbed and destroyed the
property of friendly Indians as well as of whites.

We have arrested several from among these friendly Indians
who have been guilty of murder & other infamous deeds. Regularly
we shall have a large number more, all of whom will be
put to death, and the savage marauders obliterated.

Well, how do I like soldiering. I do not think it is the normal
triumph of society, by any means, and is only to be endured
for the sake of having our sights of peace. War is a hard
school for anybody - a terrible waste of property - saying nothing
of the many brave boys who fall - Speaking as a soldier, then,
I am getting nicely, have better wealth than when at home
still, - we shall probably go down to Dixie in a few weeks.
My love to Uncle, Grandmother & Cousins - & to the friends on the
hill. Tell Norman I shall write him soon.

Be kind remember me to your father & Aunt

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Sent to the place

New Ulm Brown Co Minn Nov 28/62

Dear Aunt Mittie

Your good long letter was most gratefully received last evening. I am glad to learn of your good health, and the general well to do condition of all our kith & kin. Please remember me kindly to all our friends. I cannot enumerate them all. Give my love to Grandmother & much "little Libbie" & Rural Lea - my regards, compliments & congratulations accompanied by a very low bow to Mord. Chummy & his worthy lady - "Long may they wave" & their shadows increase & multiply.

Ha, ha! Aunt Mittie, some of our boys "enlist in our 'irrepressible conflict', some in another. I had hoped you would never wish to have yours return. Well a day, such is life!

I think, when I wrote you, we were at Camp Release opposite the mouth of

the Chipewa river. About the middle of Oct. we fell back down the river about 30 miles to the Lower Agency bringing the Indians, Gen Sibley had collected, with us. At that point we were in camp until the 8th inst. that station was called "Camp Sibley". From there we again fell back, still bringing our "gathered articles" along, to Camp Lincoln, situated a mile and a half above Mankato, & just on the bend of the Minnesota river as it turns toward St. Paul. The expectation was that we were going south, & would march across to Winona, & so, out of the state, the removal of troops from the state, especially troops that had been snatched from the harvest field & without a day's furlough granted to provide for families and arrange matters being, raised so heavy a protest, that the order sending us south was countermanded. After remaining in camp for 10 days, guarding our four hundred "articles", which

quarters were assigned the troops and this Company started back toward the wilderness to take up our winter home. We are now 30 miles above Camp Lincoln on the bend of the river, & about 18 below Fort Ridgely - on the west side -

We are occupying a fine large hotel that fronts on the main street of the little town of New Ulm. The town & the surrounding settlement for miles is exclusively German. It is through this region that the Indian depredations were particularly severe. More than 500 people were killed within a limit of 10 miles about here. The Indians attacked this town on two successive days, & burned about three fourths of it. It is now a little larger than the Grove. Every building has bullet marks upon it.

We are as comfortable as we could hope to be - a little more Yankee, & a little less distance to Redwing are occasionally suggested as improvements - Our company is

present in excellent health. My own health
has certainly not suffered from soldiering
as I have gained 16 lbs in Avoirdupois
since enlisting, & feel immensely hearty.

On the 15th inst I bid Benj goodbye
at St Peters as his Regt, the 3rd, were
starting for St Paul and the South.

He writes me from Ft Snelling that a
furlough of 15 days has been granted them
so I suppose he is now enjoying a visit
at home - Wish I could be there -
He said they expected to go to Arkansas &
Vicksburg -

I have great hope that the end of this war
is near at hand. Our hope has rested in the
hands of Pres. Lincoln & I believe that at last
he is in earnest, and terribly in earnest - I see
no reason why we may not hope to see the work
of this rebellion broken before the opening of the
new year. It is contrary to my rule, to hope for the
best, hope for the worst, & if disappointment comes, it
will be a happy one - But in this case I think
we may be warranted in hoping for the best - But
let us not be disheartened while our country remains.

Affectionately yr nephew
Dan

Mankato Minn March 7th 1865

Dear Aunt Martha

Your letter is reassuring -
making me only the more desirous of soon
hearing from you again, for it fills
me with grief to hear that good, dear
Aunt Susan is possibly going from
us - to her an overruling net. to us
the removal of a landmark of affection
whose absence we shall often and
sorely miss - whose loss, so long had we
possessed it, we are astonished at having
to meet. How strange it will be to have
no "Aunt Susan's" - but, instead, another
"grave in the Greenwood of the soul". To us,
the younger ones, Aunt Susan was not
mortal - for how could a heart so full of
affection and welcome for us all, be
suggestive to us of mortality; and how

could we permit the thought of death
to come near the memory of one whom
we have all loved so long & so ardently -

As one and another of those we had
learned to think would be with us always
have been called home, we begin rapidly
to grow old; - we begin to distrust this
world as we learn that,

"There is no union here of hearts
that hath not here an end."

Well, they all must go, all those
venerated forms, all those elderly, kind,
and cherished friends, and I have often
wondered what will be when they are all
gone - whom shall we look up to and
revere them? We may love their memory
while we strive to follow in their footsteps.
But how strange it will be, for then we
shall be getting old - old men, & old women,
"There were hearts that were true & faithful & kind
Whose love, like angels, was true
And the older we grow the better we know
That these were our treasures, dear Love."

I fear that before this may reach you, Aunt Susan may be no more. If she is still spared to us, ~~which~~ I earnestly hope she may be, will you remember me to her with much love?

Poor Margaret is learning, early, how earnest a thing it is to live. Mitchell writes me that the physician has given his opinion that Otis cannot recover. How blank must be the future of that life whose support & greatest joy is taken from it almost at its threshold. It is not in human power to fill and comfort the aching void. How hard for a young and sincere heart to exchange its life joy for the widows weeds, black, as is the blackness that lies before it even "to death's dark portal" - Human sympathy palls before the magnitude of such a grief.

With love to all - Good night, much, yours, Sam & off. Ellen - from Mrs. Brewster, I send
to my dear Paul

Of myself I have little to write. as military ^{room} resolves itself into an uninteresting regimen after we get located at any place. There is study and drill. and a regularly recurring day of "study" - which when it is performed has nothing to show for itself but a certain lapse of time.

The portion of the 7th Regt located here are still in charge of the Captured Indians. We expect that in the course of two or three weeks we shall start up the river again. stopping either at Fort Riggby or the upper Agency until grass comes. The move whences the Indians may appear. It will be a hard and probably tedious campaign, but we are all ready & anxious. - You got puzzled among my nonsense.

We, old bachelors, are pleased to regard marriage a pledge of conflict, not unlike the tying of cats together by the tails. which conflict, you perceive, would be, as Seward says of our national struggle, "irrepressible", as long as the confining knot continued tied - Now if I recollect rightly you said something about loving your boy - he is married - ~~which~~ in the Christian view, is an irrepressible conflict - Pardon the jokes & the jests -

Medalia Minn. - 24 miles S.W. from Mankato

Friday April 24. 1863

Dear Aunt Martha

Your last letter has waited a long time for a reply - which nothing but military duties has delayed. At last away out here in the west corner of America, with nothing to do this bright, sunny morning, and nothing to do it with. The opportunity has happened along. As will often occur to soldiers, we have cut down our communication and find ourselves, outside of a few light military duties, quite completely handed. Unless we take this leisure to answer up & overtake our correspondents - Books and newspapers rarely venture out as far as here, & we left our winter home too suddenly to bring along a store. I went up this morning a messenger arrived in Mankato reporting that the Indians had attacked the settlers about 20 miles south west from here - Co. G was eating breakfast when orders came to be ready to march at a moment's notice. That means get ready pretty quick. In three quarters of an hour we were on the march, as lightly loaded as possible, for we expected to march fast, the day promised to be hot, and we supposed we should

possibly

return in a day or two. Another Co - K. joined and away
we came says for Indians. At 6 o'clk PM this place
was reached - by a rather sorrowful crowd - He expected
to go further on the following morning, but the scare
being over, and a good force of Cavalry being on hand
the infantry remained here, the Cavalry going on to
pursue the Indians. They pursued the Redskins about
60 miles west, to Lake Shetek, there a storm blotted
out the trail, and the pursuit had to be abandoned.

The Indians in this raid (supposed to be from) to 50
according as the people who looked at them were
reckoned) killed seven, and wounded 10 or 12, butchering
scalping and mutilating as last summer -
A detachment of ²⁵ soldiers was in the neighborhood but they
were unfortunately so cowardly that not an Indian
was injured - Two soldiers had a woman & two children
in charge bringing them into the stockade, when two
Indians appeared near by. The soldiers instantly ran
leaving their charge to the mercy of the savages, who
killed one of the children & left the woman & other child
for dead - Such instances of petting are so common
among the citizens, that they almost cease to be
remarked upon - Many a man has thrown away
his gun & sheddled leaving his wife and children to
tributal onrins of the savages - That is probably owing
to a want of presence of mind, & may not perhaps be
very remarkable - but such a want of equanimity in
a soldier is inexcusable.

In a few days we shall return to Mandate, preparing for our summer campaigns, & start up the river. Some Co's of the 6th Regt have already gone up as far as Yellow Medicine where skins are being collected. I saw Maj McClann a week ago Monday on his way up the river in charge of a detachment of troops - he seemed to be enjoying unusually good health.

This station - called Medalia Station - is a quaint looking establishment, built away out on the prairie - with a view in every direction of ten or twelve miles. There is about as much settlement as on Rock Prairie in 1848. Though most of the families are gone, but few daring to remain to bar the Indians. The prairie is already quite green with the first flowers, and in the morning the whole horizon is shimmering with prairie chickens. I can almost think myself again on the old farm at the house.

The Indian prisoners we took last summer and guarded all winter, were on Wednesday morning last put aboard a steamer at Mandate and sent to some place below, where, we have not yet learned - perhaps to Allen Pl. perhaps to Fort Randall in Dakota Ter. where, it is the intention of government to remove all the Indians in this State. No more of the Indian prisoners will be taken. This is a strange age we have hit upon. The Cheyenne, last called

and is the Anglo Saxon - A Negro is worth from
\$300 to \$1500. - a white man, according to the
conception act, is worth \$300. while in ^{our} ~~the~~ southern
army our soldiers are regarded as so much less
valuable than ~~much~~ flesh. that they may die
by thousands in bearing burdens that ~~much~~ ^{men} have
withstood and should now bear - And up there
the murders of white men, women & children
are too sacred to meet a murderer down -

Well, the messenger is about ready to
leave for Waukegan & America -

My love to Uncle, Grandmother, Love & J. L. Linn
& Virginia Russell - The kindest regards to all
Yr nephew

Paul

P.S. The messenger will be gone in a
few days by one of the vessels &
for days ago

C Grove, Nov 3rd, 1863.

Thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving, as every one well knows, as a religious festival of giving, and giving thanks. It was at first celebrated, in New England only, but it is now observed in many other states. It is always anticipated with great pleasure, especially by the children, who are sure they will have such a nice time, Thanksgiving. There is also a great bustle in the kitchen for several days before the long expected time, ^{arrives} and are the pies, (the most prominent of which are pumpkin) puddings, tarted cakes, concocted for the occasion. The farmer without even a sigh, or dear, kills his best turkeys, and geese, for what would a Thanksgiving dinner be, without at least a fat turkey. The poor are not forgotten in all these preparations.

and their hearts are often gladdened by receiving
a basket filled with many comforts, and perhaps
luxuries. Thanksgiving morning, is spent at church
listening to the voice of some dear pastor, as he with
grateful heart thanks God, for the many blessings of
the past year. After church, a large company of relatives,
and friends, generally assemble at a dear grandparent's
to have what is called an old fashioned "Thanksgiving
visit." After dinner has been disposed of, all assemble
in the parlor, where the time is always ^{happy} spent in
conversing, singing, &c. In the evening various games
are played, in which the old, and young ~~and old~~
participate. But how different the Thanksgiving of
1862 from preceding ones, for many dear fathers,
sons, and brothers, were absent. They had gone far
away to protect the dear old flag, which a traitorous
hand was endeavoring to crush. Many of these soldier
boys are still on the battle field. Others have gone to
their reward. God grant that peace may soon be
restored to our unhappy country, and the family circles
which have so long been broken, may once more
be united.

Calumet.

Northwestern Depository & Agency of the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society.
BELOIT, WISCONSIN.

The more than nine hundred bound volumes of the Society, are believed to contain the truths of the Gospel, clearly, faithfully, and pointedly written, and possessing the great requisite of reaching the heart of a child. The *Wald-Spring* is increasing its circulation.

The M. S. S. S. has all the requisites for S. S. extension, and with the pecuniary, as well as powerful sympathy of its thousands of friends in the North-west, the hope is to do very much in the way of aiding the Savior's friends to "gather in" the half million neglected children in this immense field.

R. A. BURNELL, Agent for the North-west.

"He who plants one truth (especially a Bible truth,) closely in a child's conscience, enthrones there a hundred Governors."

"Children are a problem of which the future history of the world will be but the solution."

"The chief concern of a State should be the education of its children."

"He that sows forth and weeps, bearing precious seed, shall, doubtless, come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

"Sow by the side of all waters; for thou knowest not which shall prosper; this or that or both be alike good."—Ezra. The great joy of earth is saving souls, and the great joy of Eternity will be that souls are saved.

"When this passing world is done;
 When has sunk yon glorious Sun;
 When we stand with Christ in glory,
 Looking o'er life's finished story,
 Then, Lord, shall I fully know—
 Not 'till then—how much I owe."

"Christ is the way, the truth, the life divine;
 Seek thou on earth to take this Christ as thine;
 For he that lives in Christ, in Christ shall die,
 And dwell with Christ in Heaven eternally."

Beloit, Wis.,

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[1864?]

Dear ones at Home,

Have not had a letter yet, but I will still keep writing, writing, and I guess there will a letter come by and by. I have been very busy since I came. The evening I saw there was a Young Men's Association formed here in these Rooms. The next day we got between them and four hundred papers for the Office ready. Dr. Burnell and myself were working at them

until twelve o'clock at night.
Stamping and directing.
This was done after our meet-
ing in the barracks. I had
the singing in our evening
meetings. Yesterday I took
charge of afternoon three
o'clock prayer meeting.
There were over 140 at our
three o'clock meeting. At
our meeting at the barracks
last evening. The Chaplain of
the Reg^t made some very in-
teresting remarks. The boys
in the 114th all love him. He
is a good man.. and does a
great deal of good. Our
intercourse here in the Rooms
with the Soldiers is very bless-
ed. How many Soldiers thank
God for the Christian Commission
Hall they may. For it is a

Godly institution. purely
Christian the whole of it.
Oh how I wish the Churches
north were more interested
in it, more ready to lend a
helping hand. How we need
(for instance) a larger library
to circulate among the Sol-
diers, the love to read. We
have all kinds of papers, but
we want more books. We
sent some papers to Libbie. I
wish you would rather take
some extracts from the history
of the Commission, and other
things of interest, and have it
published in the Gazette.
So that many in our region
may become better acquainted
with the C its objects and
aims. We have sent broad-
cast this information all

over the North. May God
speed the day when Christian
will be more alive to this great
work. I believe to a great
extent the Churches are dead
morally dead. as regards
the great work of converting the
world, and aiding every good
enterprise ^{that} for the Glory of God
and the bringing of the Gospel
of Christ to every needy soul.
I am glad there is a day
coming that will try the souls
of men. Let us who are con-
nected with this good work be
faithful. You are connected, for
you have a representative here.
The Church at Emerald Grove
has a representative here.
and I am glad of it. It
ought to have more missionaries.
I hope God will raise them
up out of the Sabbath School.
May God bless the S. S. in my
absence. With a great deal
of love. Off Yours Love

Dear ones at home

Have not had a letter yet but I will still keep writing, writing and I guess there will be a letter come by and by. I have been very busy ever since I came. The evening I came there was a Young Men's Association formed here in these rooms. The next-day we got between three and four hundred papers for the office ready. Br. Purnell and myself were working at them until twelve o'clock at night. Planning and directing, this was done after our meeting in the barracks. I lead the singing in our evening meetings. Yesterday I ---- took charge of afternoon three o'clock prayer meeting. There were over 140 at our three o'clock meeting. At our meeting at the barracks last evening the chaplain of the Regt made some very interesting remarks. The boys in the 114th all love him. He is a good man and does a great deal of good. Our intercourse here in the Rooms with the soldiers is very blessed. How many soldiers thank God for the Christian Commission. Well they may for it is a Godley institution, purely Christian the whole of it. Oh how I wish the Churches north were more interested in it, more ready to lend a helping hand. How we need (for instance) a larger library to circulate among the soldiers, they love to read. We have all kinds of papers but most want more books. I've sent some papers to Libbie. I wish you would Father take some extracts from the history of the Commission, and other things of interest-and have it published in the Gazeter so that many in our region may become better acquainted with the C its objects and aims. We have sent-broadcast this information all over the North. May God speed the day when Christians will be more alive to this great work. I believe to a great extent-the Churches are dead morally dead, as regards the great work of Converting the world, and aiding every good enterprise that is for the Glory of God and the bringing of the Gospel of Christ to every needy soul. I am glad there is a day coming that will try the souls of men. Let us who are connected with the good work be faithful-you are connected for you have a representative here. The Church at Emerald Grove has a representative here and I am

glad of it. It ought to have more missionaries. I hope God will raise them up out of the Sabbath School. May God bless the --- in my absence. With a great deal of love, Aff Yours ----- ? Lorn.

St Louis Mo. July 1. 1864

Dear Uncle, Aunt + Cousins

It is my opinion, now
that when a man says "he wouldn't give a snap" he
says much more than he imagines he does. Experience
has brought me this conclusion. Two loads with a couple
proceeding for remaining quiet (but not for exhibiting
lustre) were rattled asleep near Hannibal, and sometime
afterwards, it might be days or less, waked up somewhere
away down in Illinois - down where they began to
shade off for Egypt. Two hungry mortals they were then
and one looked into the others face and said, "schnapps!"
The other answered him, and said, "schnapps!" and then
they both said, "schnapps!" - and quickly lowered down
from its hangings overhead one carpet sack, gazed upon
it, and said, "schnapps!" Then opening the sack, the true
value of a schnapps soon became apparent to them. And
when they discerned head cheese also, then they thought of
their Aunt again. Hereafter when they travel they intend
to have an Aunt at each end of the journey - at one end
at least, and may, they never do more.

I am very sorry that we could not know how our base stood here, and so could not venture to extend our visit in Wisconsin. There are a dozen more places that I wished to visit, and where we did go, it was like bidding friends good bye in a dream. But it was better to make our stay short, than our friends ashamed of us.

Since coming here our soldier life has continued as mutable as ever. Changing and shifting, a home here, then there, then nowhere. all duty, no duty, then an unspectacular duty. Our Captain resigned the next week after we reached here, and on the same day Lieut. Belcher was sent to Cairo with prisoners. The next day I was detailed as pr. M. for military skips to report at Banton Barracks, five miles from here. Is here I am running the Co. and the "Riggers" too. Perhaps not in less than a week I shall have another to look after. It is a fine school for adjusting one's temper. Though like the rolling stone, the soldier is not likely to enjoy any great augmentation of money comforts.

My health thus far continues good, but the atmosphere is not as invigorating as in Minn. - The men complain of feeling dull and heavy, and give their weights as 1200 + 1300 lbs. Last week the weather was remarkably fine, warm pleasant and breezy as May. I had fire in my stove but

over drawing the work. The mud was nearly dried up, and
the mud trap passed out with a bewildering gun whirled
down could find a turf. On Friday morning last we turned
out to receive Maj. Gen. Rosecrans, who has taken command
here in place of the doubtful Schofield. The weather was fine
and inviting. So we marshalled our Blackest boots, donned
our best blue + trap, and to all appearances were very
likely to do our portraiture. Before we were quite ready to set
out in search of our hero, the sky became thickly clouded,
and then was a smell of rain-water in the air, and before
we had proceeded a half mile the richest and artiest show
of the season was supplying itself into the backs of our coats. The
latent mud pervaded the time and took in water without stint.
Nothing daunted we misted onward through all the principal
streets. At length we came to a halt. The storm kept on,
and after an hour's standing, with a lake in each boot,
we were aware that the Gen. "was postponed", + we could return to
our quarters. Another mile + a half of modest moping brought us
home, the occasion being over the weather also retired, and
the remainder of the day was smiling and lovely. Don't
Nelson love a joke, whether in making you crack a meat
tip nut, or in catching you out without an umbrella?
The suburbs of St. Louis for mud is not equaled by the mouth of the Ganges.

My informal letter to Helen and to her amiable little group, reads a little more so.

I enjoyed the great privilege of seeing Maj. Gen. Grant a few evenings since, Mrs. Grant and four children were with him. He is here making his family a short visit.

For some reason I have heard from him only once since I came here and that was ten days ago. Just around a letter from Benj. He is well - and reports that the troubles in his regiment are mostly removed. They have a new Col. and some other officers have been promoted with a vacation. Benj. says he hopes to make out a visit in a few days, think I shall be pleased to see him.

What is Don's address? If I heard it, I forgot it. And I am not sure that I did not promise Libbie something. If I did, she must please remind me of it, and I will immediately comply. Donations, I hope, we may take another look at the time of apples. May my time be more ample than and the side not low.

Please extend my regards to all the friends. Tell Aunt Susan I am going to write her a note shortly. Over her, if you care to give a little young man. My compliments to Miss Southwick if she is with you. I regret that the brevity of our visit precludes my forming a more extended acquaintance with her.

We have a thousand thanks to you all for striving to make our time the most and the most pleasant, to us that you are successful. I need not affirm how day may we whom old acquaintances and some new, more deliberately. I wish I could be with you. Off a master pencil with his pencil and send it to father - It would gratify him greatly.

Russell Cheney & family
Cousins
Boscawen

As ever

Yrs affectionately, Dad

St Louis MO Feby 1 1864

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Mary eve + A. Lee, 1995

Dear Uncle, Aunt & Cousins

It is my opinion now, that when a man says "he wouldn't give a snap" - he says much more than he imagines he does. Experience has brought me this conclusion. Two lads with a *comitis proclivitas* for remaining quiet (but not for exhibiting luster) were settled asleep near Painsville, and sometime afterward, it might be days or less, waked up somewhere away, down in Illinois - down where they begin to shade off for Egypt. Two hungry mortals they were there and one looked into the others face and said, - "schnapps!" The other answered him, and said, - "schnapps!" and then they both said, "schnapps!" - and quickly lower down from its hangings overhead one carpetsack, - gazed upon it, and said, "schnapps!!" Then opening the sack, the true value of a s(ch)napp soon became apparent to them and when they discovered hard cheese, also, when they thought of their Aunt again. Thereafter when they travel they intend to have an Aunt at each end of the journey - at our end at least, and may they never do worse.

I am very sorry that we could not know how our case stood here, and so could not venture to extend our visit in Wisconsin. There are a dozen more places that I wished to visit, and where we did go, it was like bidding friends good bye in a dream. But it was better to make our stay short, than our friends ashamed of us.

Since coming here our soldiers life has continued as mutable as wind, changing and shifting, a home here, then there, then nowhere, all duty, no duty, then the unexpected duty. Our Captain resigned the next week after we reached here and on the same day Lieut. Belcher was sent to Cairo with prisoners. The next day I was detailed as Pro. Mar. for recruiting Negroes to report at Benton Barracks, five miles from here. So here I am running the Co. and the "Niggers" too. Perhaps that in less than a week I shall have neither to look after. It is a fine school for adjusting one's temper though like the rolling stone, the soldier is not likely to enjoy any great augmentation of mossy comforts.

My health thus far continues good, but the atmosphere is not as invigorating as in Minn. The men complain of feeling dull and heavy and give their weights as 1200 & 1500 lbs. Last week the weather was remarkably fine, warm, pleasant and coaxing as May. I had fire in my stove but once during the week. The mud has nearly dried up and the new grass peeped out with bewitching green wherever the sun could find a turf. On Friday morning last we turned out to receive Maj. Gen. Rosencrans, who has taken command here in place of the doubtful Schofield. The weather was fine and inviting so we marshalled our blackest boots, donned our best blue & brass and to all appearances were very likely to do our prettiest. Before we were quite ready to set out in search of our hero, the sky became thickly clouded, and there was a smell of rain-water

in the air and before we had proceeded a half mile the richest and wettest shower of the season was emptying itself into the backs of our necks. The XXXXXX mud perceived its time and took in water without stint. Nothing daunted we mixed mortar through all the principal streets. At length we came to a halt, the storm kept on, and after an hour's standing, - with a lake in each boot, - news came that the Gen. "was postponed", & we could return to our quarters. Another mile & a half of mortar mixing brought us home. The occasion being over the weather also retired, and the remainder of the day was smiling and lovely. Doesn't Nature love a joke, whether in making you crack a meatless nut, or in catching you out without an umbrella? The capacity of St. Louis for mud is not equalled by the mouth of the Ganges. I enjoyed the great privilege of seeing Maj. Gen. Grant a few evenings since. Mrs Grant and four children were with him. He was here making his family a short visit. For some reason I have heard from home only once since I came here and that was ten days ago. I just received a letter from Bery (?). He is well and reports that the troubles in his regiment are mostly removed. They have a new Col. and some other officers have been favored with a vacation. Bery (?) says he hopes to make me a visit in a few days, think I shall be pleased to see him.

What is Lorna's address? If I heard it, I forgot it, and I am not sure that I did not promise Libbie something. If I did, she must please remind me of it, and I will immediately comply sometime. I hope we may take another look at the bins of apples. May my time be more ample then and the cider not sour.

Please extend my regards to all the friends. Tell Aunt Susan I am going to write her a note shortly, coax her, if you can, to grow a little younger. My compliments to Miss Northrup if she is with you. I regret that the brevity of our visit prevented my forming a more extended acquaintance with her.

We have a thousand thanks to you all for striving to make our time the most, and the most pleasant to us. That you were successful I need not affirm. Some day may we rehearse "old acquaintance" and form new, more deliberately.

I wish Russell Lee (?) would strike off a "master" piece with his pencil and send it to father - It would *gratify him greatly* -

As ever

Yrs affectionately Dant

Russell Cheney & Family

Emerald grove

Wisconsin

* My special love to Delia and to her amiable little group Bella & Sibbin (?) included.

Benton Barracks Feb'y 11/64

Dear Aunt Martha

I think myself very highly favored today - I have almost had a furloUGH - have been much more than half way home at any rate - Imperius, I have a good long letter from my most highly esteemed Aunt Helen, a family letter (of eight pages) from Cousins Col. McCarren & lady - that is to say, Anna. Helen, a good long letter from Emma and her friends and peculiar. Now this little surprise partly came upon me when I was bringing orders, after a weeks fasting, and their promptings you may be sure were elicited. I snatched off my hat, and was about to jump over my chair in the office but they were saved from the attack by being sent across the hall where they were having a "May" at dinner and a special occasion. Feeling to jump over chairs that were not there, I fell to reading.

Mac & Anna were still enjoying life at Fort Smith. He is now Col. of the 2^d Minn. Cav. - (which regiment I saw by the Chi. Tribune has been ordered to New Orleans though efforts were being made to have it retained in Minn.) They was just been enjoying a two weeks visit from Mrs. McCarren. You know she & Anna are great shrimps. Mrs. M. is a rare woman.

Oliver's death and Margaret's comfort are of course
engrossing all the thoughts of the folks at home.
Poor Margaret she has certainly drunk deep of sorrow.
Our warmest sympathies and sincerest condolences ~~are~~
far short of reaching the depths of her bereavement.
We can only surround her with sympathizing hearts
while the kind hands of Heaven allay her grief and
soothe away her troubles in joy-bright ~~the spring~~ from
sorrow. Little Lillian too, he seemed to comprehend
his loss with an understanding far beyond his years
and wept as though his heart would break when the
last sad ~~etc~~ were taking his father away from the
reach of his affectionate little heart and hand.
You say you think a great deal of your nephews and
nieces, but not more than I do of mine, and there
I can understand you. I wish a certain one of your
nephews were as worthy of your regard as little Lillian
is of mine.

A late letter from Benj. gives me reason to expect
a visit from him this week. He would have been here
~~before this~~ but the officers of his Regt are few and their
duties heavy. The officers in their colored regiments
have more cares too, than we whites do. Some of the
Argues can neither read or write, so that the officers
must be pen, eyes, and ideas for the whole company.

I had foretolded your request for a letter to
Bowie as I mailed one yesterday, on the strength
of the notice I found in the last paper sent you.

I amplified the direction so that he will not fail of receiving it. If he doesn't call on me on his way up, I shall not call on him when he gets drafted, just present that idea to him in a forcible manner.

What am I doing here? Why, I am watching three "niggers" as they drift and drift this way and that along the piazza in front of the office. Perhaps you think that that is not much of a business. Well, it isn't as hard as marching from 12 to 20 miles per day in pursuit of a "phantom" in breech-loading leggings.

I have about as much business as the clerk of a vacation school district. Yet I am not disposed to "take on" because I am not on guard every other day. I flatter myself that I can sleep soundly every night just as comfortably and satisfactorily to myself as can any other military individual, and my wish is to cultivate all kindly talents.

My duty here is the enlistment of negroes. And since the 25th ult. I have put through a total of three, which you see is heavy and engrossing labor.

I wish you could take a tour of two hours around and through these barracks almost any afternoon. The parade ground is fully sixty rods in width and as long as from your house down to the stone store. On each side extending the whole length is a row of quarters, one story in height, and with a continuous porch in front. Along this, the east end, are three Messes. The ground is almost a perfect level, & when covered with

troops in drill is a fine sight. The buildings have a gleaming coat of whitewash and look as clean as an eye. Between the Barracks and the street on the W. side is a fair ground, a fine large area - a beautiful grove of oaks is scattered over the central part of the ground and in that grove are the buildings erected for the use of the fair, but now occupied as hospitals. Containing quarters and officers connected with these departments. The amphitheater - a large circular building two stories in height and surrounding an arena eight rods or more in diameter, is the main hospital, every part of which inside and out is kept as clean and sweet as "mother's milking". And then the ventilation too! a mammoth robin's nest full of blackbirds! The building is about 127 feet long and occupied by the families of soldiers in some cases, paid by refugees from the hands of tyrannical masters. Some distinguished characters and noted personages are engaged there, as I learned from hearing their roll call this morning. "Geo Washington" "Deak!" "Mellie May" "Lee!" - "Andrew Jackson" "Hyatt!" - "Henry Clay" "Geo Sabin" - "Alice Cony" "Joe Kent" - & so the list dropped in here and there making in all a remarkably illustrious family - Beyond all these buildings are some fine lawns with rose-gardens and a fountain. At their place out the front gate and take the street car to town or my path to breakfast I would prefer to have you take breakfast with me if you can possibly stop -

I have written to you but I mean to all - with love.

Feb 22nd

Benton Barracks, Feby 14/64

[Transcript prepared by
Margaret A. Lee, 1992]

Dear Aunt Martha

I think myself very highly favored today - I have almost had a furlough - have been much more than half way home at any rate - XXXXXXXX. I have a good long letter from my most highly esteemed Aunt Mim (?), a family letter (of eight pages) from Cousins Col. McLaren & lady - "that is to say" - Anna. Then, a good long letter from Omin (?) XXXX XXXX and peculiar. Now this little surprise party came upon me when I was hungry indeed, after a weeks' fasting, and their furnishings you may be sure were relished. I snatched off my hat, and was about to jump over every chair in the office, but they were saved from the attack by being but across the hall where they were having a Maj. at dinner and a special occasion. Failing to jump over chairs that were not there, I fell to reading.

Mac & Anna were still enjoying life at Fort Snelling. He is now Col. of the 2 nd. Minn. Cav. - (which regiment I see by the Chi. Tribune has been ordered to New Orleans though efforts were being made to have it retained in Minn.) They had just been enjoying a two weeks visit from Mrs Misiroll (?). You know she & Anna are great chums. Mrs M. is a rare woman.

Otis' death and Margaret's comfort are of course engrossing all the thoughts of the folks at home. Poor Margaret, she has certainly drank deep of sorrows. Our warmest sympathies and sincerest condolence come far short of reaching the depth of her bereavements. We can only surround her with sympathising hearts while the kind hand of Heaven allay' her grief and soothes away her troubles in to joys - bright, tho spring from sadness. Little Gilman, too, he seemed to comprehend his loss with an understanding far beyond his years and wept as though his heart would break when the last sad rites were taking his father away from the reach of his affectionate little heart and hands. You say you think a great deal of your nephews and nieces, - but not more than I do of mine - and there I can understand you. - I wish a certain one of your nephews were as worthy of your regard as little Gilman is of mine.

A late letter from Bery (?) gives me reason to expect a visit from him this week. He would have been here before this, but the officers of his Regt. are few and their duties heavy. The officers in these colored regiments have more cares too, than we whites do. None of the Negroes can either read or write, so that the officers must be pen, eyes and ideas for the whole company.

I had forestalled your request for a letter to Lorna, as I mailed one yesterday, on the strength of the notice I found in the last paper sent you. I amplified the direction so that he will not fail of receiving it. If he doesn't call on me on his way up I shall not call on him when he gets drafted. Just present that idea to him in a forcible manner "What am I doing here?" Why, I am watching these "niggers" as they shift and drift this way and that along the piazza in front of the

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I have written to you, but I mean to all - with love, DanL.

* Direct to "Benton Barracks Mo" - omitting Co. & Regt.

Bulwark Barracks No. March 13 1864

My dear friends

You have probably heard from Lorne since his visit here. I am very sorry that he had so little time. He was here only about two hours. He was so desirous of getting along to see his wife that I couldn't have the face to declare martial law over him and hold him here the week out. A man with a young wife has no business in the army "ha! ha! the wooing o' it" - I could not help being amused at Lorne's eagerness to get along, though he gave me no time to rally him about it. Lorne need not be afraid of her husband's running away from her - an assurance which probably gives her little wife.

Lorne seems to have enjoyed his winter's work greatly, being very enthusiastic on the subject of his labors. He will be anxious to try it again some day; & he should, for he is happily qualified for such duties - his father's suavity, & his mother's under heart. But first let him go and see his wife.

Russell Lea & Aunt Muttie's kind letter of the 23^d was welcomed in due time. I am no judge ~~in matters~~ of art, the sketch book struck me as containing a better assortment of picture elements (critics will please keep their eyes on their books) than any other book that I had seen. There is quite a field for Russell Lea's fancy in making combinations of this & that and mounting sketches in some degree original. Does Russell Lea have an eye for portraits?

I was so dull when in Wis. that I presume that more than half the promises I made have been forgotten. I know I made Libbie some promises about something. Think it was concerning my carte de V. — was in hopes she would speak of it, for I would not, for the head that's on me, commit so fine a blunder as that of promising such a thing undelivered. But I will venture to enclose "a token", & if I am wrong I am not afraid of Lis. On the contrary I am a thousand times obliged to her for her kindness in favoring my little album with two keepsakes which I prize most highly.

A letter from Benj. yesterday says that Libbie will have a letter in a few days. That boy has been so busy, and so absorbed during the last six months

He has but little heart for divisions.

Of the great war news you are as well posted as we are here. Everybody seems to feel that upon the success of our movements this spring rests the continuance of the war. If we fail in any one great attempt the struggle will be protracted two years at least. On that account most of us are well satisfied to know that Gen. Sherman has returned safely, as they would have been, had he taken Mobile. Had his expedition proved disastrous, our song would have been sung for this year. I am still hoping that the coming summer may see the end of the array of arms. After that a year more will see the end of our soldiering in this cause.

The union people of this state are looking with great anxiety for the development of Gen. Rosecrans' plans. Thus far he has proceeded very slowly and cautiously. Under Schofield and Gamble the state was entirely in the hands of rebels. Annihilation of Districts, the state troops, & the entire crowd of Provost Marshals, were all rebels at heart, although professedly loyal. A buckwhacker could not be caught and if shot down in the bush, or his horse burned

his case would be fully investigated, Union men
imprisoned or murdered, on suspicion and all
lopes to rebels upains as effectually as possible.
But if a Union man presented his case to the
authorities, they could not help in any way, had
no power to make him amends, and concluded
that if he could not think himself safe, he had
best go out of the neighborhood: at least they
were unable to afford him any protection. So the
rebels have been comforted, and the Union man
turned away to be despised or ruthlessly murdered
by assassin traitors. We thought that the brutality
of the savages on our Union borders, were the peculiar
province of a wild, barbarous people. But the deeds
of everyday in Wisconsin show that there is no find
that can equal "monstrosity, the villainous imitation
of a rebel. Then, think that after all this base
iniquities, they can, under the President's amnesty
proclamation, moult the oath of allegiance and
enjoy their homes and their property, while loyal
men dare not for their lives return to theirs. Is it
not enough to make the loyal men 'radicals'?

I remain as ever

Respectfully,
Emmanuel Lewis

My affectionate nephew & friend
Paul

Burton
Barracks Mo March 13 1864

My Dear friends

You have probably heard from Lorn since his visit here. I am very sorry that he had so little time. He was here only about two hours. He was so desirous of getting along to see his wife that I couldn't have the face to declare martial law over him and hold him here the week out. A man with a young wife has no business in the army "Ha, ha" the wooing o't" I could not help being amused at Lorn's eagerness to push along, though he gave me no time to rally him about it. Louise need not be afraid of her husbands' running away from her an assurance which probably gives her little grief.

Lorn seems to have enjoyed his winters work greatly, being very enthusiastic on the subject of his labors. He will be arranging to try it again some day; and he should, for he is happily qualified for such duties - his father's suavity, & his mother's tender heart. But first let him go and see his wife.

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Missouri borders were the particular province of a wild, barbarous people. But the deeds of everyday in Missouri show that there is no friend that can equal in monstrosity, the villainous inventiveness of a rebel. Him thinks that after all their base iniquities, they can, under the President's amnesty proclamation, mouth the oath of allegiance and enjoy the their homes and their property, while loyal men dare not for their lives return to theirs. Is it not enough to make the loyal men "radicals"?

I remain as ever

your affectionate nephew and cousin

Danl

Russell Cheney

Emerald Grove Wis.

St Louis Mo. April 19. 1864

Dear Aunt & friends

Capt. Betcher & myself have just been around to see the building being erected for the coming Anniversary Fair, in which everybody, as well as all of the rest of the world are supposed to be greatly interested. It is but a short distance, about half a walk, from the principal business streets - 4th 5th & 6th - back to the fair buildings on the 12th St. -



The building, as you may see by the plan above, occupies the entire street, 100 ft wide, from Olive to St. Charles and wings each way on Locust St. - an entrance on each street. It is already erected and looks magnificent - capacious as the heart of the great west. I give a rough

draft of the end view of the building as it now appears.
The roof is broken as you see, like a boat cabin giving



a beautiful supply of handsome skylight

That the minutiae of the internal arrangements are to be done not appears as yet. as the work is not sufficiently progressed -

The labor is principally done by a detail of soldiers who are flying around the spot with as much zeal as though they imagined that the whole undertaking was for their especial benefit, - and perhaps they are right - A company of colored soldiers come down every day from Butler Barracks, to assist in the work. I was thinking this morning that that superb building was very fitly emblematical of the glorious, new temple of Liberty which the true Americans are soon to complete - a building in ^{which} which all nationalities are engaged, and even the despised, down-trodden, black man is not forbidden

to take a prisoner's interest, and later with a prisoner's hands. And when the fabric is completed who are to enjoy the benefits of the ministrations in that temple? Does not the Sanitary Commission bind up the wounds of the colored soldier, bring cordials to allay his pains and surround his bed in the hospital with every available comfort? So will it be when the issue of this mighty struggle shall give us a purer civilization, and a more magnificent national temple. None will then be without the pale of its ministrations. None will be driven from its doors, to go away hungering for freedom, or left to decay and death - because, henceforth, there shall be black and their rights have for generations been denied them.

Have just been looking out of the window at a regiment of veterans undergoing a reception. First came the City Post Brass Band. They had seventy five instruments out today - Isn't that music? None too good for the veterans, though. Next follows the Reception Committee, then an advance guard of Minnistiens, then the veterans, tired, soiled & dusty, worn down, but heartily still; & you would say so if you could have heard them cheer. In the rear more Minnistiens again and on every side citizens, flags, & flying handkerchiefs. These receptions occur three or four times each week.

The 7th & 10th Minn. Regts (both Stations here in the City) were set in great commotion on Sunday night last by orders to be ready to march at a moment's notice. Where or when we were to go was all a mystery. We knew nothing only to be ready - which we were in short order.

It now appears that the move was precautionary in view of Forrest's anticipated movement into Indiana or Illinois. Other troops, Cass. were yesterday sent forward and we may relapse into natural breathing and quiet duties again. But we are admonished that our staying here is not a matter to be counted upon, that this is not a permanent abiding place. There is a strong desire on the part of the citizens to have us remain and I think Mr. Rosecrans knows where he is in good company - if he doesn't, we could suggest to him.

This is the first sunny spring day we have had for a long time, and even today it is the most pleasant to keep on the sunny side of the street. There are no leaves out and the landscape is still as brown as a Minnesota field in April.

Give my love to Uncle Hiram, and Aunt Susan. (I shall write them again soon) & to Standish & Doris.

I would be held in kind remembrance by you all
To affectionate nephew & son
Dan

St Louis MO April 19 1864

*Transcript prepared by
Margaret A Lee, 1996*

Dear Aunt & friends

Capt. R (B)itcher & myself have just been around to see the building being erected for the coming Sanitary Fair, in which everybody as well as all of the rest of the world are supposed to be greatly interested. It is but a short distance, about half a walk, from the principal business streets, - 4th, 5th & 6th, - back to the fair buildings on the 12th st. -

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I would be held in kind remembrance by you all.

Your affectionate nephew & cousin

Danl

Near City Point July 27 64

Dear Henry

Today the director of Sanitary matters in this region visited the 9th Corps Sanitary tent (where I now am) and as he came up, introduced to our Captain - a gentleman whom he called Rev. Mr. Patton of Chicago. Though I had never spoken to him at Chicago ---me and thee as a stranger, it seemed quite natural to see him. It was like bringing back a piece of my Chicago life last Fall and by the way at this time a year ago I was there. I asked him after --- Fisk Nicholls and Knight. I was sorry to hear that Nicholls was not very strong. He seems to be taking a tour of observation and I doubt not this his congregation will get a sermon or two on his experiences here. I should like to hear his remarks on the Sanitary Commission for to us on the spot it seems a rather vague idea of things which a man must get of our --- to stand a few --- at the entrance at our store tent. Take a view of our cans and boxes and then bid us good morning. Yet I suppose from what he sees and picks up in conversation with Dr. Douglas he will get up a large discourse on the subject.

I have now been here four weeks and unless I do more good than I have done I shall have hardly cause to think myself among the great martyrs to the cause of humanity. The Commission does its work on a scale so much larger than I had imagined that we have less drudgery and less --- for the sick than I had --- for. I had expected to have to travel about overlong distances under the hot sun giving a little refreshment from my canteen to the sick men who were to be found lying around loosely. I find myself however assigned to a squad of Sanitary Agents attached to the 9th Corp Hospital. The sick and wounded, the latter being now the small minority are collected in Regiment and Division Hospitals which are of course rather meager and then sent in ambulances here, where --- Hospitals of the 2, 5, 6 & 9 --- other, corps. Here -----tents and cots are provided and nurses who in view of their being men from the ranks are far better than I had thought possible. Some are really excellent such as I would gladly have if I were sick. Thus except in great

emergencies, watching during the nights, dressing of wounds etc. — not fall on the Sanitary Agent. Please remember I am not speaking of things as they were at Fredericksberg or at — House; there I am told the Hospitals were so little organized that the Agents had very hard work in doing anything and everything, and could they only partially secure for men the absolute necessities. ——— all is organized by the Government that our trunk is very light. In fact I think that but for the possibility of a great health ——— it would quite as well for the Commission to dismiss some of its numerous Agents. In this squad for instance are eleven men — our work is chiefly to distribute little articles which the ——— ——— ——— slowly. — on a great deal, it would seem more than half, toward clothing this Hospital, to feed an immense quantity of crackers (two barrels a day), tobacco to ——— chewing & smoking public, whiskey punch (to the very sick, sometimes to all) using often 18 to 24 large bottles of whiskey a day. Handkerchiefs, stationary, soap, canned meats and fruit & milk beside stimulants of all kinds go out of our tent in a way that astonished me on my first coming. Seeing what we carry around our selves and give out to nurses one might hastily suppose that we supplied all that was needed in the whole Corps Hospital. This is not however the case. Government does a great deal. Much is also done by the other Commission as the Chtn and State Reliefs. Each Division (there being three) has beside a Government Cook House also a special Diet Kitchen directed by either the Sanitary or as is true in one division by the Chtn Commission. The Government detail or pays cooks to work these extra kitchens but the Commissions supply the materials. Each of us agents has a certain number of tents which he superintends and sees that they are supplied with such delicacies as the surgeons allow or direct to be given. Most of the time I have been employed in the store tent giving out to applicants for ——— tobacco, fly-netting, clothes etc. Lately however I have had five tents assigned. I did not (especially at-first) find the work so interesting as I had thought. I expected to find men grateful for any little — and as much gratified over finding a friend to notice them as over the gift itself. On the other hand I found so many who took what you gave them with a cool look at it as if

asking why it was —— and I have heard so often begging and grumbling and even insolent remarks especially from the nurses and older fellows of the camp, that I found little pleasure in the work. The camp is already so comfortable and so much is done by the various Commissions but most of all by the Sanitary that those spending some time here get in some cases simply spoiled. You will see just now, as many sour-faces over being refused a bright red shirt or lemons & sugar or a can of condensed milk as you will bright faces over receiving them. However on a little longer experience I am better satisfied. I make the acquaintance of men, and in some cases can see that they are pleased when I come in. Quite a number I get really interested in as individuals, though I meet also very many who are most uninteresting characters in themselves. On the whole I am willing to begin my work again as soon as my —— are again filled. Just this day the sick have been moved from all but one of my tents into others. But it will probably not be long before a train of ambulances may bring us more men than we can accommodate. Some movement I think is soon to be made and may be begun even before this reached you which will bring in an engagement and send multitudes of wounded down here. We have hitherto had far more sick than wounded. Many are simply worn out. The cause of this I felt myself when I went to the front - a week or so --- much heat which you cannot escape and work or marching or even lying in such a din would in a few days or weeks send me to the hospital. I have not time now to tell of any of the strange wounds (some are indeed very curious) or of the odd or entertaining characters we meet here, for as it is now nearly 12 at night I must close. This is an extraordinary hour for our habits here but as my sleeping quarters are the store tent where the hours of chatting and story telling of my party are apt to stay later. I did not get into my letter and in very good — and in my zeal to finish am breaking all good rules for sleeping hours. I —— say —— here and have no hardships. I am engaged for two months but if no greater need for my-- services exist - at the end of August than now is the case I shall leave. Please give my regards to your wife and the other friends. Should you write as I hope you will please address

Ed-d A (or G) Smith

Relief Agent

Sanitary Commission Washington D. C.

[1960, Aug. 3]

Waterford Miss 8 miles South
from Holly Springs

Aug 10th Ordure. I was telling you of the uniform
man we find at home in the South. My story
begs unceremoniously broken off by a march to
this place yesterday - necessitating an early
start & a riding routine. The day was fiercely hot
and the bushes were hung around dripping
with perspiration instead of cooling water.
Reached the place at 1 P.M. Waterford is a very
little town, of dirty, poor whites and few houses.
a weak kind parasite on the rail road.

As we came in, other troops broke camp and
went on down the R.R. We hear that down at
the Tallahatchie crossing there has been heavy shelling
for two days, & that yesterday the rebels were driven
out of the bottom & routed. Last night we laid ready
to move out at a moment's notice, as we had
word that a rebel brigade was lying to the east of us
as though indicating an attack. We have a very
large brigade & would be much pleased to hear the
gun us a call.

A party of foragers are just returning, they bring
a bag of splendid ripe peaches and another

of apples, also a bag of chickens & turkeys. Did you
all imagine that we were starting to devote down
burn? - We may yet, but this looks like a poor
beginning for it - and certain heavy gastronomic
feeling tells the same over time later. He has not any
more peace just as present, thank you.

But in a more substantial way, the
foragers bring in also about 50 head of cattle &
a lot of nice snouts & horses. Now would you
relieve it, if a company of young free-handed
quits each with a fierce brace of seven
shooters, should ride into your yard full with
vigor upon your "dear chickens" using their rocks
and bag them, herd the cattle and start them
down the road, discover your buggy, and the
stable of horses, take each a nimble drag with
saddle, then going in about all your pans of
milk & doughnuts, spare flour & meal, and
lean with impunity? Not much, I think. But
how could you help yourself? Why, say, that will
make them lean when they have looked all about
and can find nothing more to sabbage - such
are foragers.

Well good by for the present, Before I can write
you again we shall have a fight or so. I know you
wish us all safely through -

With continue love to all the friends I am
Yours Russell Cheney & family } still your own David
Edward Lewis Thomas

1864 Aug. ??

Waterford, Miss. 8 miles south from Holly Springs.

[Transcript prepared by
Margaret A. Lee, 1936]

Aug 10th orders. I was telling you of the uniform man we find at home in the South. My story was unceremoniously broken off by a march to this place yesterday - necessitating an early to bed & a rising XXtimes. The day was fiercely hot and thunder showers hung around drenching us with perspiration instead of cooling waters. Reached this place at 2 p.m. Waterford is a very little burg, of dirty proclivities and few houses, a weak lived parasite on the rail road.

As we came in, other troops broke camp and went on down the R.R. We hear that down at the Tallahatchie Crossing there has been heavy skirmishing for two days & that yesterday the rebels were driven out of the bottoms & routed. Last night we laid ready to pounce out at a moments notice, as we had word that a rebel brigade was lying to the east of us as though indicating an attack. We have a very large brigade & would be much pleased to hear them give us a call.

A party of foragers are just returned. They bring a bag of splendid ripe peaches and another of apples, also a bag of chickens & turkeys. Did you all imagine that we were starving to death down here? - We may yet, but this looks like a poor beginning for it - and a certain heavy gastronomic feeling the same own true tale. "No Sir" not any more peaches just at present, thank you.

But in a more substantial way, the foragers bring in also about 30 head of cattle & a lot of nice mules & horses. How would you relish it, if a company of very free handed gents each with a fierce brace of service shooters; should ride into your yard, fall with vigor upon your "dear chickens" wring their necks and bag them, herd the cattle and start them down the road, discover your buggy, and the stable of horses, take each a nimble nag with saddle, then going in absorb all your pans of milk & doughnuts, spare flour & meal, and leave with impunity? Not much, I think. But how could you help yourself? Why, cry. That will make them learn whom they have looked all about and can find nothing more to cabbage (?). Such are foragers.

Well good-bye - for the present. Before I can write you again we shall have a fight or so - I know you wish us all safely through -

With continued love to all the friends, I am still your nephew Danl

Mrs Russell Cheney
Emerald Grove
Wisconsin.

Camp of 68th U.S.C. Infy -
Holly Springs Miss. Aug 8. 1864

Dear Aunt Martha

I told Mittie that I should write you before long. I have written her since arriving here, telling her of the march & our arrival here, and I suppose that many little incidents of camp life, and our camp ways, form, presently, quite as interesting matter to the friends at home as a formal record of our movements and designs. At least these are the matters at which we most do laugh, or, the contrary, and which tell more definitely "how we are" than anything of more moment.

To be sure we sometimes have to laugh at what would ^{make the} blood of our friends at home run cold. When shall after shall some whirling & shrieking, and strike away out of camp, it would seem a strange thing.

to laugh at - yet it is done, and then jolly
darkies joke and laugh at the idea of "ole
ussah done throwing his iron away in de
confele" Now and then a darky with complacent
mouth stretched from ear to ear utters a
brilliant mine of song, comes down on his
fellow with the admonition: - "Gwa you white
man (barcase) this nigger'll done spile you,
sure". It requires a more stoical disposition
than mine to resist the ludicrous allusions,
and still more to resist the effect of the terrible
expression of mock ferocity, thin coal black
frontispieces. - Then comes another American
soldier of African descent, attempting to play
off (a trick they are all very apt at, requiring
a good surgeon to detect them), that he
has a "misery in his stomack", If not
attended to immediately he is quite apt
to govt where he has located his "misery" &
when brought up for examination he in the
quarrel suffering from a "misery in the back"
which increases with great volume as the

surgeon proceeds with his examination, the abundance of cotton soil is very apt to bring the "mining" to the surface -

~~Thurs~~ ^{Thurs} Ed Jones & the D.M. with a few mounted soldiers struck out on a foraging excursion. The morning they returned bringing in five horses & mules, a little colt, a one horse buggy, 15 head of cattle, a dozen sheep, a set of harness & for ~~to~~ some rascals had stolen ours; a pail of honey, some sweet potatoes, a skillet, & some linen shirts for handkerchiefs for the same. They cost them - well, if the people would not give them up, the articles were brought along just the same -

I would have gone along, too, but just as we were ready an order came detailing ^{me} the brigade officer of the day, whose business it is to see to the picket line. Our brigade line is very long, reaching more than one half around the town, making it near sunset before I had made the round, visited all the peach orchards, prospected for butter milk, and

and taken an interior view of this very band
some time on my way back to camp -

One remarkable thing we have noticed in all
our marches down here, that the country is
inhabited only by widows, who will inform
us with their most heart-breaking lamentations
down all the time: and (2^d) that everywhere
we find just one, & only one man. At every
house where a man is seen at all, it is
him, sometimes with slight changes in
his appearance, but uniformly the same.
He is much beyond the meridian of life, walks a
little stooping, beard is silver, face gaunt, thin,
and shriveled, complexion cadaverous, buttoned or
grey pants, black, broad limp hat, and a
peculiar hanging of the nose that seemed to make
it hang after each whisper. Sometimes it is
his son that is the ^{entire} army, sometimes his grand
son. Once we took him prisoner, when (as his
daughter in law told us) he had taken his shotgun &
gone over through the wood to see if geese were around.

Of course he's a good union man everywhere, but appears
if we can't pay him more than if we money, peace by -

Fort Greenvy, Colchester, N.Y.
Dec 19th, 84

Mrs Russell Cheney
Emerald Grove, Rock County, Wis.

Dear Aunt

There has been a letter in my trunk for nearly six months waiting to be answered - I do not apologize for such delay for during a great part of that time an occasional letter to Mittie (who accompanied the steamer with you) should have kept you in assurance of constant remembrance by your nephew - Since Mittie went home it has been a frequent bother to answer my correspondence but there have been very many things here which have monopolized all my available time -

Dec 2nd - Co F (My Company) & Co I were moved from Fort Halleck to relieve two other companies of the regiment, at this Fort, that they (the late garrison) might be brought under better discipline in the command of Fort Halleck - Since moving I have worked very hard to fit up quarters here and have just completed them - They are small but comfortable.

- Commodious, and - home-like.

The office she formerly occupied in this building must have been content with very wretched accommodations as the house was open as a barn and bore a close resemblance to one.

The exterior appearance is not changed except by the use of two good sized windows - the interior bears none of its former appearance.

I think I shall be pleased with the change of location - my room overlooks the town and river and the view is extended and, in a clear day, is beautiful - The location is healthier than at Fort Halleck -

My health has been good and at times excellent since the first days of August -

I am indebted to "Doctor" Agnes Cotton for the acceptable condition of health. The bitters were put up by Father, after an old time receipt he has, and Dorin brought them to me -

I cannot but consider it very fortunate that Dorin arrived home safely and that he is not suffering from the Army Fever - He says he is losing his hair from the effects of his numerous campaigns - & he may regard himself fortunate if he has

nothing more - I was very anxious about him when he had returned from Memphis and was so debilitated -

He reports the home folks to be enjoying good health - Miss Warner & Belle are there, and, all together, father must have a house full this winter.

I have also a letter from Sam (Dec 9th). He is well - has good health, and is enjoying life both at heart and in the military sense - He will, without doubt, be promoted to Lieut. Col. of his regiment in a few months - He does not entertain the idea of going home until the war is over and his services are not needed any more - I am in hope that he will make me a visit sometime this winter -

Time flies by rapidly, and we may all be relieved - (within the coming year - probably). The successful march of General Sherman has shown how often the rebellion is at heart and a few more such masterly blows will surely demoralize the Southern Army.

It is a fact which will be faithfully shown in history that the downfall of the Rebellion began when its enemies murdered our gariboldis, in cool blood - Assassinated

them after they had surrendered and become
prisoners - Ah, Susan South - Her moral
character had never been a matter of pride
and she was the first to be true life against
the Federal Government, first to cast the
virtues of treason and the black flag and
first to denounce all claims to humani-
ty and respect from the world and
consecrate her only hope to the vengeful
spirit of dishonor - Her downfall and
disgrace before the world will forever have
their laurel wreaths - Plymouth & Fort Pillow.

I am not sanguine of early
success by our present government but it
is inevitable - No other cause is just and
our armies are invincible and clothed
with the might of all power and justice

The question of Slavery & the
negro are subordinate to that of the Federal
Government and must be merged beneath
it - the genius of the government will pro-
vide for all incidents & emergencies -

Happy will be the day when
loyalty has sieged the hearts of the people for
then there will be peace throughout our land
- With love to all I remain

Your affectionate nephew
B. D. Emerson

Fort ————— Columbus Ky?

Dec 19th 1864

Mrs Russell ^{Cherry}~~Gentry~~

Emerald Grove Buck County Wis

Dear Aunt

There has been a letter in my trunk for nearly six months waiting to be answered. I do not apologize for such delay for during a great part of that time an occasional letter to Millie (who sojourned the summer with you) should have kept you in assurance of constant remembrance by your nephew. Since Millie went home it has been a frequent resolve to renew my correspondence but there have been very many things here which have monopolized all my available time.

Dec. 2nd. Co. F.(my company) & Co. D. were moved from Fort Halleck? to relieve two other companies of the regiment, at this Fort, that they (the late garrison) might be brought under better discipline in the command of Fort Halleck? Since moving I have worked very hard to fit up quarters here and have just completed them-they are small but comfortable commodiations, and -home like.

The officer who formally occupied this building must have been content with very worldly accommodations as the house was open as a barn and bore a close resemblance to one.

The exterior appearance is not changed except by the use of two good sized windows-the interior bears none of its former appearance.

I think I shall be pleased with the change of location-my room overlooks the town and river and the view is extensive and on a clear day, is beautiful. The location is healthier than at Fort Halleck?

My health has been good and at times excellent since the first days of August.

I am indebted to "Fever and Ague Bitters" for this acceptable condition of health. The bitters were put up by Father after an old time receipt he has, and Orrin brought them to me.

I cannot but consider it very fortunate that Orrin arrived home safely and that he is not suffering from the Army Fevers-. He says he is loosing his hair from the effects of his summer campaigns & he may regard himself fortunate if he loses nothing more. I was very cautious about him when he had returned from Memphis and was so debilitated.

He reports the home folks to be enjoying good health-Miss Warner & Belle are there, and all together. Father must have a house full this winter.

I have also a letter from -----(Dec 9th). He is well-has good health and is enjoying life both at heart and in the Military sense-. He will, without doubt, be promoted to Lieut. Col. of his regiment in a few months-. He does not entertain the idea of going home until "the war is over" and his services are not required any more. I am in hope that he will make me a -----some-time this winter.

Time flies by rapidly and we may all be relieved (within the coming year-probably). The successful march of General Sherman has shown how rotten the rebellion is at heart and a few more such masterly strokes will surely demoralize the Southern Army.

It is a fact which will be faithfully shown in history that the downfall of the Rebellion began when its armies murdered our garrisons, in cold blood-assassinated them after they had surrendered and became powerless. Ah, Sunny? South. Her moral character has never been a matter of pride and she was the first to be take life against the Federal Government. First to exalt the virtues of treason and the black flag and first to denounce all claims to humanity and respect from the world and consecrate her only hope to the vengeful spirit of dishonor-Her downfall and disgrace before the world will forever have their black marks-Plymouth and Fort Pillow.

I am not sanguine of early success by our proud government but it is inevitable- No other cause is just and our armies are invincible and clothed with the might of all power and justice.

The question of Slavery & the negro are subordinate to that of the Federal Government and must be be ----- it. The genius of the government will provide for all incidents & emergencies.

Happy will be the day when loyalty has siezed the hearts of the people for then there will be peace throughout the land.

With love to all I remain
your affectionate nephew
B Densmore

1865, May 12

Camp 68th U.S.C. Infy. Pontchartraine, La.

20 miles below Lake, May 12. 1865

Dear Uncle, Aunt & Friends

It was with great pleasure that I found yours of the 9th ^{inst} in our last mail. The kind remembrance in which you hold me I feel to be most highly complimentary & assure you, and ever have no other intention to correct action and thought in these former times and especially in this former calling, most certainly the memory of friends at home and the kind appreciation of those who are first & last in our return, were sufficient. It is human to deem to be "well thought of" - ~~almost~~ a little more than human, however, to always fully deserve it. "Act with your past, there all the power lies." - ~~But~~, though, it is not surprising - ~~that~~ ^{being} written with the military service in mind.

I wrote Homer a day or two before we left Montgomery from which letter you will learn of our late journeying &c. He was expecting, somewhat, to be stationed here as a garrison. I was quite well pleased with the prospect of so doing, as this city is a very pleasant place, and the region high and healthily healthy - much more so, I think, than the sand barrens and the ~~land~~ ^{stagnant} bays along the Gulf. But the soldier knows no rest, has no permanent abiding place, and, just when he thinks that of a certainty he will remain, he strikes his tent and journeys "according to order." So to comfort my philosophy, I hear the proverb, "But not thyself because of

our movements, but consider, only, that thy knapsack be well filled, let
thy journey be longer than thy expectation, - a text ^{tho' exhausted} fully as well adapted
for practice as preaching. On the eighth I was erecting a shelter for
our horse, and taking such pains for strength, that in case we could, by
and by, get some boards, we could put on it a tight roof. I was calculating
how best to trace the corpse, when orders came to break camp at 5 o'clock in
the morning, to march to Portland on the Ala. River (40 miles), there to take
transport for Mobile!!! Well, boys, will leave it right there, you may go to
your companies! - That would have been a splendid stable, if we had completed
it. - 5 o'clock in the morning found us all alive and busy with preparation. Cannot
say that we worked with our usual heat, for if the war is over, why should
we be called upon for long marches in hot weather? The first feeling with
every soldier is, that now the war is over I wish to get home, little
thinking that after the gaining of peace, there comes the reestablishing of
peace beyond the possibility of its omission. The government made all its
soldiers today, as much as it did at anytime during the last two
months. But there is no philosophizing, under orders. Daylight found us
on our winding way now, or then, and the present cares and labors soon
crowd the whisper out of our minds. And, after all, the Gulf Coast is not
so very unhealthy; and we shall get our pay (since Aug. 31st 1864) at Mobile
and be near America; and "may be, if we go into garnier there, have
a show for a hour of absence", &c, &c, at the mile beat by under the
thousands of weary feet. Yet why this Div. returns to Mobile, none of us
know. We only know that we go, and for my part I can but little stand.

This has been one of the most peculiar marches that I have taken. I wish that I could
present it all to you just as we have seen it, and as everything has seemed
to us. I put a thousand times paid for the task of marching through. It has been
an array of magnificent pictures, connected with the most fearful history
of deeds strange, direful, diabolical, horrid. ^{and now it is over} We have come through one
of the most rich and picturesque regions of the "Lunatic South" (to most of the towns
for a comfortable breakfast), beautiful landscapes of fields and groves, hillside
woodlands, winding streams, and the clean white villas of the planters,
the very picture of home and happiness, just disclosed to view here or
there when the route seemed almost or the sight more magnificent - all
made it a continual feast of loveliness. Now, we were walking through some
broad plantation, where the sweet birch hedges on either side presented an
unbroken wall of gorgeous roses from which the fragrance so sweet &
rich would seem to follow us for miles beyond. Then near the big house
we would catch the perfume of the bloom of the China rose, the great
"Queen of Sweetness". The locusts stretched themselves in broad clusters
over the lawn, over stambards and blossoms in the garden, on the
pillars of the porch, up in the peach tree, over the windows, over the
railing, out through the fence, where the soldiers would pick them, and,
(if he had been a white man) smell them, and think of home. And everywhere
was fruit, apples like rubies in eye, plums ready ripe, peaches on every last
branch a wing, blackberries everywhere with clusters more red than an old
school teacher's nose, quinces, pears, figs, well, what are there not? ~~But~~ I can
handle neither paints nor words, your imagination must fill out the full picture.

But on all this most fair and beautiful land is written the same yellow
What I ^{do} know, and yet I full sure it will ^{not} be called fanaticism
black republican frenzy, or what-not, that is identical. The solemn
truth is, that it is hardly in the power of tongue or pen to express
the entire enormity of the institution of slavery - the story of it
is too black, too diabolical, to find expression in a human
language. I thought I could imagine to a considerable extent
the evils of the system, that I could trace the causes out to their
inevitable and horrid results, but I never dreamed of such
blackness as hangs about it. - That its victims, its rather victims,
are white, traitors, does not now surprise me. I am by far more
surprised that three things called "southerners", or "southern custom",
(oh, shameful sarcasm!) have not long since rebelled, and cut their
parents' throats as a nation. - Does it surprise you that our soldiers
have been stoned to death in southern prisons, ~~and that~~ by other
chivalric people? That they treated them ~~with such humanity~~
what most astonishes me. They took the bones of those stoned men, &
fashioned ornaments for their wives, sword-knots, and arms to wear, - the
horrid feelings were in question there - there were their columns, mile
summit and death. We halted one day for dinner in the midst of a
spacious and beautiful plantation. Our men found down the creek bed for
fresh ground. They inquired of an elderly black woman where they were.
Oh, she is the name of some of us black men - Tim, and his little fourteen sunny
and Eliza and her two little children. She once killed him yesterday shot
in with black shot, came he thought they are going to run off. - One of our party
picks from Montgomery found twelve bodies of blacks wishing for arms of the
city - they are shot as they passed along the road. - These things are very, very
true here, and they are, sad as it may seem, without parallel comparison. - I did
cannot repeat to you the utter depravity of the slave labor system here. - These tales tell you

but little of all the contemptible character and constitution of the southern rebel. You must sit down and talk with him, to see his mind, to see his heart, and you must look at him in a physical view, to fully understand him. From whatever standpoint you view him, you discover nothing but littleness, despicable littleness and meanness. His mind is small, and is distorted by the ignorance that has mistaken the grand object of the institution, that he is unable to follow safely from premise to conclusion, - he is so debased by the systematic cruelty which is the essential ingredient of slavery, that he is ignorant of the thing called humanity. He has not even a safe heart to guide his unsafe head, - And, lastly, look at him as a physical organization, - a swarthy faced or a pig faced animal, white-eyed, yellow, distorted, round-shouldered or bloated - - I am uniformly brought to the conclusion whenever I meet him, that, as a man he is in every sense played out. Contemptible. An old radical in Missouri said to me that he thought, when a man becomes a rebel, he becomes forsaken of God, he is devilish, and an invincible reprobate. - I only differ from him in stating the proposition - that when he has become such, (see the slave taught Johnny) he is inevitably a rebel, and that in spite of all preaching, or the teachings of experience come. - And why not? I have often thought what institution or at the North here that has any such full and complete control of the entire man, ~~and~~ as the institution of slavery has over the southern rebel. I think of none that so fully control

the thoughts and ~~control~~ the whole man, except our religious institution
having in their control as they do all the educational enterprises of our land.
And what is slavery but the religion, the great, grand, all controlling
religion of the south. Everything with him assumes form and
importance in so far as it seems to him from or subserves slavery.
Now exactly similar to the influence of our religious institutions on
everything pertaining to, or creating up a mean, in the North, is the
influence of slavery to the same end, in the South. You can easily
bring the mental pictures in contrast.

— All along our road as well as in Maryland or out frequently
with Confederate soldiers of Lee, Johnston, Taylor, or what nots army
marching quietly homeward. Poor fellows, they have seen a rough time
waiting all the way from Virginia perhaps. No one could resist a feeling
of pity for them. Yet when we accosted them they seemed cheerful, downright
glad, and that, all over one, single idea, "they are going home" they had
seen all the fighting they wanted, and from them self, they had seen the Confederates
and they were by no means so vile and disputable a case as they had
been told they were but altogether the contrary - and, finally, they have concluded
that in the whole matter of the war they have been most abominably deceived.
The day at - home, however, have a different song. "They have not been whipped
they are only overpowered!" That not one of them can now come down here
to live, for they ^{will} slip a dish into him in a twinkling - "Evangelism along
we found among them, a rumor that France had taken up the fight and
the war had but hardly begun between the North & South etc etc, in the same

ridiculous bombast. My impression is that the advice and representations of the returning soldiers (upon whom must again devolve the fight if one is taken up) will quiet down three fifths men & women of war. But they cannot inherit in them their lost soundness of mind, heart, and physique, and so the South may find its greatest difficulty in settling upon the proper policy in regard to the slave. They are too much hindered to devise a plan, too unwilling in humanity, to use moderation in treating them, and too white-headed to be able to support the cause. We find some men, however, who talk quite sensibly. and while they hold that slavery is right, just, and in every phase profitable, claim that we in the war have killed it, and now they must cast about them and make the best they can out of a bad matter.

All seem greatly interested as to what is to be their status under the government. Are they to be allowed to hold their property? Are they to be allowed to sell their cotton now on hand, so that they can make a start at living? for there is not a man of them has five cents to buy a glass of liquor or a shew of tobacco. The rich(?) planter are glad enough to give us butter, eggs, or vegetables, for a little coffee or sugar or tea. And they seem especially pleased if we will only go in and take a dish of strachewina, and ^{with} them is a friendly, conciliatory spirit.

Well, I have written a long letter, much beyond what I thought I could have the time for, I could say a great deal more about all this for what I am saying affects me deeply. I sometimes feel almost repulsed when I have to compare what the slave owner is making

of the negro write what we are ~~not~~ endeavoring to make of him.
They say we cannot make soldiers of them, we cite them to the
bars and place ^{them} where their salient and chivalric sons have been
roundly thrashed by the negro troops. They say that the negro soldier
is lawless, thieving and incapable of discipline - we mount them
on through their cities and through their lands, and not a
person is disturbed, not a dollar's worth of property molested. They
say the nigger can't be taught anything. We teach them military drill
and find them very apt, and we have taught very many of them
to read and write, notwithstanding they have been almost constantly
engaged on some campaign. They say the nigger is an animal.
We have proved that he is a man, capable of ^{the} finest traits of
manhood - only let him be freed from the domination of their
heavenly religion - But here I am talking on again -

Will you give my love to the friends at Norman's, Uncle
Heaford's, Jacobs, "Stephens", Uncle & Aunt Scott, & distinctly to
Uncle Hattie. How long a long time has passed since I have
seen you. I have no expectations of seeing you or any of the home
friends for a long time to come. The war is on but not settling.
But I hope you to be content of remaining in your kind and
forgiving remembrance. A soldier's life has very little in it that
is alluring to me, and though by no means aged, I begin to feel
like getting old - But still I am as ever
Dear

Frederick Cherry Esq of family }
Annabel Cherry
Wisconsin }