































10,000 prisoners since our expedition was commenced, there was several days that we were very short of food but now have plenty. I saw Arnold & several other old mates a few days ago he is well, also saw Lon Clark & Charley Coats several times that are both well. I received your letter of April 23rd a few days ago was glad to hear you was so well. I wish Mr & Mrs Spaulding C\_\_ (?) much joy & tell them I should like some of the wedding cake. During our march our feet got very sore but we all stood it finely I stood it as well as any one in the road am well now & think will stay so, Mr Coleman is well & stood the march finely he is now detailed to help plant some seige guns so he will not have an opportunity of writing now. Tell Mrs C\_\_ that he is well. The mortar boats keep dropping shells among the rebs pretty thick so they cannot sleep very sound the city has been set on fire several times by the gunboats. Capt. Gifts Brother was killed in the fight on black river he belonged to the 5th Iowa. Will try to give you a full description of our trip if we ever get settled  
Give my respects to all the friends. Direct to Co F 12 Iowa.

3 Brigade  
3 Division 15 Army Corps  
Department of Tennessee  
via Cairo Ill

your son.

Abner

This paper picked up off of the ground so it is dirty.

**MAY 24th 1863**

But little shelling going on today. The sharpshooters keep picking away whenever a man shows his head above the works; had inspection this afternoon.

**MON MAY 25th**

The day was ushered in as usual by the crack of the musket & boom of cannons. There was quite a stir here this afternoon caused by the hoisting of a flag of truce over the rebel works. It proved to be only a request for Ceassion of hostilities for a time to bury the dead. It was granted. All was quiet until 8 PM – The time the amnesty had expired.

**TUESDAY MAY 26th**

Remained in our old place. We were considerably gratified to get some mail.

**WED 27**

We slept on our arms last night as it was thought the enemy would try to break out but nothing occurred. We have kept our accoutrements on all day for the same purpose two Companies are off on picket details, are out to build rifle pitts & embrasures for cannon.

**THURS 28**

Pleasant Day – Things continue as usual

Camp in rear of Vicksburg May 28th 1863

Dear Parents and Brothers

Your letter of the 17th inst has just arrived and so will try to write you a few lines, we still remain in our old position being on the alert all the time we are entrenching ourselves & advancing by throwing up one line & then another so we are going safe but sure & Vicksburg must fall, we have lots of troops, any quantity of artillery, and all the ammunition we want to shoot & all the crackers we can eat. I think we are all right we are expecting the rebels to try to break out so we wear our accoutrements all the time and at night lay in line of battle with our arms. If they try to come out at all they will try to come out where our regiment lay & woe be to them if they try for we are ready for them, we think that their ammunition & provision are nearly gone, deserters say it is so & other things indicate it. Tuesday afternoon the rebs brought a flag of truce to bury the dead it took place all along the line, all firing ceased and we got out of our place of concealment looked at one another and some passed the lines to see old friends, at 8 o'clock hostilities were again announced, our mortar boats keep shelling them all the time so I do not think that they get much sleep, we are every day throwing their ammunition with their guns at them. We have taken over a hundred pieces from them in this expedition so they can not have much more field artillery. If they have they keep it pretty still, a deserter came in last night stating that they had orders to break out last night & night before but could not get volunteers to make the charge. I received a letter from Theodore yesterday containing his & his wife's photographs which I will send you as I cannot keep it here he writes that he has been lame for some time with a lame hip, we have papers as late as the 23rd which give account of our movement so you will get more information about our trip in that way than I can give you, after we get settled in camp I will copy off any diary & send you. The 21st lay only about half a mile from here but I have not been there & will not go until the fate of V\_\_\_ is determined we have considerable work to do but it is easier to do that than to charge the rebel entrenchments so we are content to work & see the rebels in their own works completely hemmed in, according to rebel papers they seem to be down in the mouth since our move and well they may be for it is the hardest stroke that have ever been given them. I think a great deal more of Gen, Grant & what used to be has certainly shown great generalship in this and I believe he will win. I wish you could be here a few days to see the movements, at Jackson was some of the grandest maneuvering I ever saw. I have not yet got my knapsack so I have to get paper & envelop as best I can, my envelop I got from the rebs at Jackson.

My respects to all the friends

Your son            Abner Dunham

Camp Sherman Miss Sept 19th 1863

Dear Parents and Brothers

I received Miss Ellis letter of Aug 20th written or (makin you a call, as she termed it). I intended to have written before, but I have been so busy since getting it that I have hardly had time to eat my meals much less write letters. I am clerking in the Adjutant Generals of our Brigade and as all the other clerks are sick it has kept me pretty busy they are getting better now and so I do not expect to stay but a few days longer I would like to be detailed in some place as this and will if I can be for I like it much better than idling away my time around camp this not only gives me employment for my body but also for my mind and it is as good school as a person can have in business matters. I have learned more about official documents since I have been here than I ever knew before. For the last two weeks there has been a great deal of sickness among our troops it is chiefly ague fever and diarrhoea we have lost several of our men lately. Lt. Morse has been quite sick for a day or two but is

considerable better today, as for me I still continue well and hearty I takemy regular ration of quinine and red pepper twice a week otherwise I would be shaking like the rest. Wigger of our Co. returned from furloughh he reports of having seen you (Father) in Manchester before he left. Selden French and Henry Preston started home on furlough yesterday morning. I wish you would get some of that German Tincture and send one by one of them as I am out and cannot get all the ingredients here to make it That cheese that you expressed to me has arrived in Vicksburg I am going down in a day or so to get it. Lt. Morse has also got a firkin of butter there and I am going to get some of him as there is morew than he will use. We are going to move our camp in a few miles from here in a few days it is thought that it will be healthier to be more scattered. The weather continues very dry and for the last few days has been quite warm I hope we will get some rain soon I hear the 2nd Brigadee firing over some poor fellows grave. A military funeral is a very solemn performance and seems to express a great deal more in the honor paid to the deadthan any other funeral I ever saw. To see and hear the band marching and playing some mournful air with muffled drums the company with reversed arms the bearers carrying the lost companionto his last resting place with the glorious old flag folded over him and then the long line of mourners following tells a long story.

Sunday evening 20th 1863

I will try and finish this tonight . Last night I was out on a little expedition, it was this, about 8 Oclock a couple of negroes come in and reported that there was several secesh cavalry out here about three miles at a mans house by the name of Harris and that they were going to get their suppers there. So the Col. commanding the Brigade directed a couple of companies to go out & capture the party. A Co. from the 8th & one from the twelfth were selected to go. I asked permission to go also which was granted, and we went out but the bird had flown, when we got there an old nigger woman came out and said Oh Sor a massa , why did you not come sooner. I am cook here and kept de supper waiten as long as I could, but they've done gone sure now, we inquired into the matter and found they had eaten supper and gone about an hour before, so we had the pleasure of marching back to camp without any game. We got back about half past eleve Oclock. I have not had much to do this afternoon and consequently do not feel very tired. I reced a letter from Theodore Campbell yesterday, his hip is getting better but is quite lame yet, he has been bying a place to live on it is about ten miles from where he lives now but he does not say where it is, he got a large house half an acre of land a barn smokehouse and a good well of water for \$550.00. he says Aunt Amy is well, he heard a few days before that Dwight Dunham was married but did not know the particulars. I am glad that Gus Manning got home safe. I was afraid when he left here that he would not stand the trip, and now that he has got home he stands a show of getting better, it will take a long time for him to get entirely well if he ever does, the chronic diarrhoea is no easy thing to get rid of. I got my cheese this morning, it was in good condition and a good cheese I tell you it tastes like home as it has come through so well a little butter with the same direction on it would be very acceptable send any quantity that will be the most convenient for you to send. As for other things I do not care much about if I can only have butter & cheese I can get along first rate, when we have to buy butter and chees here it costs something, butter sells at fifty cents per pound and chees at forty, and that not fit for a hog to eat. It is real cold tonight I am hardly comfortable with my tent closed acoat on I hardly think we will have any more very warm weather this year. but I dread the time when the rain begins to come for the mud will be so deep that we can hardly move. Yesterday Genl. Tuttle made his appearance in camp againe, what he intends doing I know not, but after he left there was considerable politics talked and all down on him, there is bets that he will not get a 100 votes in our Brigade and I hardly think

he will. I know of but one or two persons who will vote for him, however we will see when the time comes. I have just been detailed permanently as Adjutant General's Clerk of this Brigade, I can think of nothing more to write only that all the Manchester boys are well and it is getting late I must close. Give my respects to all the friends, from

Abner

Head Quarter 3rd Brig. 3rd Div. 15th A.C.  
Post Pocahontas Tennessee Dec. 21st/63

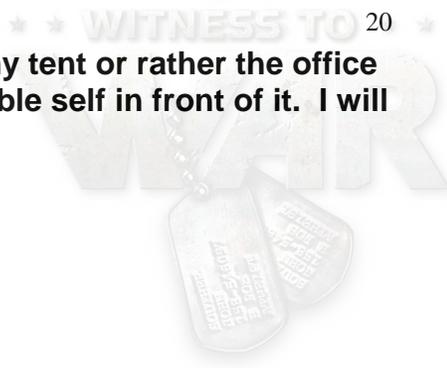
Dear Parents Brothers & Cousin Mary

Again I find myself seated at my desk writing to those at home. I must confess that I have not been as prompt during the past week as usual, and I plead guilty as I cannot conjure up any good excuse. Only laziness; hereafter however I will try and do better.

This is a very warm and pleasant night and the moon and stars shine forth in all their glory, it seems too pleasant to stay in my tent; as I sit here I hear singing and the music of the piano all of which will naturally make a person uneasy, fidgety, as Mother calls it, the weather for the last three or four days has been quite pleasant and I have enjoyed it hugely, but from appearances I think that it will not last long as small clouds begin to float along the edges of the horizon.

I received a letter from Mary last week dated the 6th I looked for another today from some of you but it failed to come hence I will look for one tomorrow. Capt. Morse arrived yesterday he looks much better than when he left us. I am very thankful for those socks they are real nice. I am going to put a pair of them on next Sunday.

Excitement here runs high in regards to reenlisting, the greater portion of the 12th has already reenlisted and probably by this time have enlisted as a Regiment, that is, three fourths of the Regt. has, as three fourths have to reenlist before the old organization can be kept up. I think it will go almost unanimous; now about myself, I have not yet reenlisted but by tomorrow night I probably will, don't think hard of me nor think I have spurned your advice. It is to the contrary I have weighed the matter well, I have studied on your advice; when I enlisted first I said I intended to remain a soldier until this cursed Rebellion was crushed, then, I knew but what I would have to withstand but now I consider I have some idea; my time will not expire until November/64 by that time the fall campaign will be at its height, if my services are needed will not the government retain me? and would not I freely give them? If they are not needed neither will they be needed as Veteran And again my Regiment goes in, I am put in another Regt. to serve the remainder of my term, perhaps that Regt. has disgraced itself in some previous engagement, the 12th I contend has its share of the honors of this war. shall it lose any of the luster by me? No, it goes to Iowa, recruits up, and after a time returns with filled ranks, and as happy as can be, while I am compelled to remain and share the name of some disgraceful retreat. Supposing I served the present term out, am honorably mustered out of the service, return home, still have good health, the war still continues, do you have the last idea that I could remain quietly at home and see those boys who have been with me constantly for over two years, who have endured the same hardships have been through the same dangers, and now leave them to bear my burden? Not much. I have not yet fully decided to enlist, but a few days will determine the matter when I will immediately inform you of the result.



I still continue well, I will send you a photograph of these Hd Qrs my tent or rather the office is the center one of those near together, you will observe my honorable self in front of it. I will close by wishing you all a Merry Christmas

Abner

Camp Detachment 12th Iowa Infy  
Mouth of White River Ark.  
June 22nd 1864

We were attacked the morning at day light by the enemy about 600 strong, they deployed & crept up near the pickets then fired & charged. They made their attack mostly on our right flank, most of us were in bed & went out with nothing on but a shirt & drawers on. I was one of the number the rebs got within a few feet of the stockade and we repulsed them, they fell back and were preparing for another charge when the gunboat opened on them & they left, our loss was one killed & four wounded. Corpl. Hunter of our Co. was killed a ball passing through his body, wounded Sergt Cottle Seaman Clapp & Charles Coolidge of Co. F & Black of Co. A. Sergt. Cottle was wounded in the hip shivining(?) the bonr & the ball passing upwards we fear he will not recover. Clapp was hit in the shoulder & leg is a bad wound but not mortal. Charley Coolidge was hit by a spent ball on the chest so he ia able for duty. I do not know where Black of Co. A was wounded. We have found six of the rebs two of whom are dead and the rest will die a great many of their dead & wounded was carried off for we could see them take them off they were the 10th Mo. Cav. Dismounted & in command of a Lt. Col.. we captured several stand of small arms. Our boys are in good spirits. Please excuse these few hastily written lines. I must go now for we have our poor dead boy to bury, he was the pet of the company. I am as ever Yours & etc

Abner Dunham

Camp Mouth of White River Ark.  
June 27th 1864

Dear Parents Brothers & Cousin

Having a little leisure I will try and give you a little more detailed account of our littlr fight on the 22nd which has proved to be a nicer affair than was at first supposed. We had been expecting an attack for several days but the enemy made no very great demonstrations until the 22nd a little after 4 A.M. they succeeded in crawling up to within a few yards of our pickets. Charles Coolidge of our Co. was on vidette and hearing a suspicious noise was peering about to accertain from what source it came. He had looked but a short time when one of the rebs fired at him and it was maraculous that he escaped with his life, the reb undoubtedly fired at his heart. But Charly had his gun leaning across his body, the ball struck the upper band binding it breaking the ramrod and driving the band through the stock to the barrelthe ball then glanced off and struck him in the breast-but not hard enough to inflict a wound. After the shot was fired the rebs charged yelling demonds and fireing on the pickets and negroes who were coming into the stockade as fast as theier legs could carry them. As soon as the first shot was fired every man in camp grasped his musket and in less than the twinkling of an eye went all at the stockade; for some seconds it was almost impossible to know who found us for sure(?) as the rebs pickets & negroes were all mixed up together, they at first came up on our front but finding no entrance their Col. gave the command to swing around our right which they did at double quick time and we swung around also and gave

them a most galling fire, the succeeded in getting up to within a few feet of the stockade and it was then that Hunter was killed and Cattel wounded, the fellows that shot them paid dearly for it as they wre both shot, John Bremmer shot one the ball passing through his back, the other one was shot through the left eye the ball coming out and cutting off the top of his left ear he was a lieutenant there is a prospect of his getting well. They soon found it too warm for them and fell back into the cotton field and were reforming for another charge when the gunboat opened upon them and they left double quick. They were forming in column and would have made a desparate charge, we would liked to have followed them but it would not have been provident as they outnumbered us eleven to one according to their own statement. So we had to be content with picking up the dead & wounded Seamons(?) Clapp was on picket & wounded before he got into the stockade and laid outside during the engagement, we immediatly took the wounded onto the gunboat where they had every attention, we set the negroes to burning the dead rebels and we got a coffin from the gunboat and in the afternoon buried Corpl,. Hunter with honors of war. the reb that John shot has since died he asked John to write to his sister in Mo. And inform her of his death, when they retreated they took a citizen which lived near the picket post, he has since escaped and says they report twenty five killed wounded and missing, also that we had a thousand men some artillerey and four gunboats. He says that they were awfully scared and I should think they were from the way the shoes were left sticking in the mud their force as near as we can learn was about 560, while we had 48 muskets engaged of which several was dismbled(?) during the action, several of them made considerable trouble to get them off, we had been as busty for several days and the weather is wet-that was impossible to keep them in good order. I have drawn a kind of platt of our situation it is poor but perhaps you can get some idea of how we are situated. The stockade as represented is a great deal too long while other things are not proportional, the rebels came in on the road from Smiths and charged across the cotton field.

Last night a soldier came floating down the river we got him ashore and buried him found sixty five dollars in gold and one hundred and eighty in greenbacks. Could find no name or regiment to get a clue where he belonged. Our boys health is declining very fast. John Bremmer is quite unwell today. I am afraid he will have the fever. Lt. Small has gone to Memphis sick. I still remain well, have not heard from Colman for some days, the weather is very warm and but little air stirring & our reenforcements are from Co. A 6th Minn. Infy. They are just(?) from the state they have fought indians ever since the have been in the service. Best respects to all I remain Yours Truly

Abner Dunham

Camp 12th Iowa Infy  
 Memphis Tenn. Aug 30th/64

Dear Parents & Cous.

Home again not from a foreign shore but next thing to it.

We arrived here last night at six oclock well, but with sore feet, ragged clothing, plenty of real estate, and some live stock.

I will try and give you a short account of our trip from the date of my last letter the 17th the 18th was raining, the rest of the army came up with us and camped in our immediate front. I reced a letter from Mary , got a late paper giving the particulars of the doings at Mobiel & etc. & etc. on the 19th ordered to march at 7 A.M. and accordingly started on time. Went about a quarter of a mile and halted. About this time rain commenced falling fast. We remained there

two hours and was orderd back to our camp, and we went back with a “yell” rain continued to pour down until night but by means of our rubber blankets we managed to keep ytolerable dry. Duringthe night and the 20th but little rain fell and the 21st came off pl;easant, marched at 7A.M. Cavalry on the front and flanks #rd Div. 16th A.C. taking lead of infantry 1st Div. Next and negro brigade bringing up the rear and guarding saupply train. Went nine miles crossed Hurricane creek and camped at 2 P.M. all quiate. Roads very heavy for artillery and trains. 22nd revele at 3 A.M. marched at 6.1st Div. Leading infantry marched to Oxford Miss. 9 miles by 10 A.M. halted and remained here until 4 P.M. while here reced a dispatch from Genl. Washburn about the Memphis raid, ordered to “about face” and went back to last nights camp. The rear and train did not leave camp at all. On the 23rd moved back to our old camp on the Tallahatie(?). as the rear came in the rebels made a dash with the intention of capturing the rear guard, bu were not smart enough, the 8th Wis. & 4th Ills. Infty (?) charged on them killing 22 and wounded 7 which were left in our hands also captured a captain two Lieutenants and several men, our loss one killed and 7 wounded. Only two of the wounded had to be taken in ambulance, one of which died. Since that we were not troubled any more. 24th laid in camp in afternoon the regt. went foraging. I did not go. 25th left camp at 11 A.M. our brigade bringing up the rear crossed the Tallahatchie 12 ½ P.M. after we marched very fast for three miles to avoid being shelled from the hills on opposite side of the river. I never marched when the heat was so oppressive before most all of our men gave out and quite a number sunstruck. After the first three miles went at a more moderate pace & came very near giving out fell behind about a mile before going into camp we marched to Waterford nine miles. I went on picket. Next morning (26th) started at 8 ½ oclock A.M. marched fast, the sun being under a cloud made it quite comfortable traveling reached Holly Springs (distance ten miles) at 11 A.M. when we got within a mile of town Col. Stibbs(?) read orders for our Regt. to be provost guards . we were immediately distributed around town and while we remained had a fine time. I staid with a man by the name of Mosley he fed me well gave me a good bed to sleep in and treated me first rate., he was a strong dsecesh but talked quite reasonable much more so than the northern copperhead, we had several interesting debates on the subject of rebellion, all in good humor and when I left he wished me well. perhaps before we had got a mile from town he was after us with a musket in his hand . on the 28th marched at 8 ½ oclock our Regt. bringing up the rear of cavalry and all for a couple of miles and then passed up the train. The army devided into three colums at Holly Spring, the 1st Div. On the road to Lagrange the negro troops on the road to Collinsville and the 3rd Div. On the Hernando road leading to this place, we belonging to 1st Div. Came on Lagrange road marched to Davies creek (distance 23 miles) by sundown the road was dusty and my feet were sore feet and was glad when we camped. 24th marched 6 oclock and reached Lagrange at 10 A.M. and went into camp the wagon train and artillery was sent on and and the infantry sent on the cars. Our Regt. came in last night at 6 oclock, it being the last of our Div. Have got washed, clean clothes on and have consigned ragged clothes and live stock to the flames. We do not know how long we will remain here, probably not long as we are under orders to go to Sherman. The boys are all quite well. I read a letter from James last night, also one from Dewitt one from Mary, one from Amy, one from Colman one from Milton Hurd(?) and a notice of one in the Post office in Memphis. Please excuse this scrawl for I have writen in great haste and that on the bottom of a camp kettle. I have to go and help Jihn do some company writing

Abner

Camp 12 Iowa Infty  
 Cape Girardeau Mo  
 Oct 6/64

We arrived here last night having marched about 350 miles in 19 days about the heaviest marching done during the war. The road lay through a desolate country and in some places almost impassable for our artillery and trains. Part was rocky and mountainous and part swampy. Considerable rain fell during the trip. We were on half rations all the time. The men are all ragged as we can be. I have not had a clean shirt for over three weeks. We are to get new clothes today. We will probably start on another trip in a day or two. I am quite well but worn out. John is also well. I will try and give you a history of our march when I get rested. I remain as ever yours & etc

Abner

Camp 12th Iowa Vet. Vol. Infty  
Nashville Tenn December 6th/1864

Dear Brothers & Cousin

Although the cannon are belching forth their messenger of death and the sharpshooters exchanging shots I seat myself to write you a few lines. We are still on the line where we were when I last wrote you have got up heavy works and feel confident of repulsing the enemy if he approaches us. We have two lines of entrenchments surrounding the city we lay in the outer works and in case of an immergency will fall back to the inner which are about half a mile to our rear. The works in front of our regiment are made as follows viz. First we piled up rails about three feet thick and two and a half high then have thrown dirt over them so that it is as high as my shoulder about six foot thick at the bottom and three at the top. On top of this are placed large logs raised a little so as to fire under them. In front of the works are placed the prickly thorn bush so thick that will be almost impossible for a man to get over them and I am sure if this regiment lay behind them that no force can take them. We have a great deal of artillery more than we have infantry to support it. Artillery is brought to bear on every approach. I never saw men more anxious for a fight than they are now for the feel confident of success and are afraid if we do not fight here we will have to do some more hard marching. Our artillery is shelling the rebs. They can be seen quite plain formed in line of battle. Some of our men are perched in trees on the highest hills watching the effect of our shell. They make no reply. It is a mystery why Hood does not attack us for if he is ever ready he must be now. this morning the 72nd Ohio Infty. Went out on a reconisance and run on to a brigade of rebs who charged on the 72nd killing one and wounding five all the rest came safe into camp; a few nights ago the pickets got to talking. Reb. Said they were going to winter in Nashville to which our boys said if they tried to come in here they would winter in hell. A brass band has just struck up a national air it contrasts finely with the booming of cannon. The sky has been cloudy all day and now appears like a storm. We have our tents so we will be quite comfortable. Most of our baggage and convalescents are sent to the rear so we will not be bothered with them in case of an engagement. I recieved Marys letter last night. I suppose you reign supreme over all you survey as probably father and mother are in Laporte on this. I was much surprised to hear it and doubt if any of our ablest generals would have anticipated such a movement. I hope they will enjoy themselves and not worry about home when they get there. After dark 7 P.M. I had to stop to issue some rations (as I am yet Acting Commissary Sergt.) and now I will try and finish this. Our batteries have ceased their shelling but now and then a heavy roar breaks up on our ears which tells us that our gunboats are saluting the enemy by an occasional broadside. The picket skermishing also becomes quite frequent. John Bremner sits by my side reading a romance of this war and quite a number of the company are sitting and laying near by listening to him, I wish you could be here to see; perhaps it is the most beautiful sight you ever saw. To us it is nothing new but still it looks

beautiful. Every hill and vale is lighted up by the camp fires on one hill can be seen our signal lights and occasionally can see the flash from the gunboat as they discharge their contents into the enemies camp.

It seems that I have been rather selfish in keeping Amies Photo so long and it seems I kept it too long. As I was coming up the river I dropped it with a new day book into the river and as the boat was under motion could not recover it. I was stooping over to draw some water when it dropped from my pocket. It seems that Milton has concluded to enlist for life instead of for three years or during the war. If such is the case I wish them both much joy. Also you Mary and Allen although it is not quite Christmas but I will wish you joy in time. Woe be unto you if I dont get some of the weddin cake. You need not try and make Allen think that piece of "Janie Annies" dress is yours and you be careful of it. I have spies out to see that you take proper care of it so look out. All the boys are well I was never better in my life. The 88th Ills Infty. Is here but I have not seen your Richard yet. If you know of any of the Laporte boys being here write it to me and tell me where they belong. Our batteries have opened againe and fairly make the earth quake. My respects to all friends This is dirty but you must consider where it comes from

Abner

Camp 12th Iowa Iowa  
After Hood in Tenn  
Dec 27th 1864

Dear Parents Brothers & Cousin

We are still in pursuit of neighbor Hood who is leaving this vacinity as fast as he can. We are now about half way between Nashville and the tennessee river. We move slow seem to be in no hurry which is one great beauty of the movement. The roads are very bad so the whole army have to move on the turnpike. I am thinking Hoods movement in tennessee will amount to about as much as Prices said into Mo. It is evident he is leaving in a hurry as he leaves so much of his artillery behind. He threw one whole battery into Duck river which we got out and yesterday we found one piece buried, it had a head & foot board as mans name Co. & Regt. & day he died inscribed on it (pretty Sharp) citizens report that he has only 8 pieces with him we having taken all the rest. Genl. Thomas gives our Div. credit for 3110 prisoners & 32 pieces of artillery. We are ordered to march immediately. I must close. We are all well. I am with the Co. now.

Abner

Camp 12th Iowa Infty, Eastport Miss. January 22nd 1865

Dear Parents Brothers & Cousin

Yours of the 8th inst came to hand yesterday soon after I came in from picket and now I will try and drop you a few lines in return.

The past week we have busied ourselves with cleaning up our grounds, drawing clothing washing our dirty clothes, cutting hair shaving &c &c and now we begin to feel as if we might be white folks, have got our line of fortifications completed so now our duty is comparitively light and already the old jaded look and action begin to wear off. It is surprising to see the change in the looks of the country around us, two weeks ago all the ground inside our works was a dense forest and now it is all cleared off, the logs off the trees have converted into

cabins, the tops into firewood and the underbrush have been piled in heaps and burned; our camps look like a dwarf city and as we walk about in the evening no piano or malodian can be heard. But the silvery notes of the brass bands the schreeching of fifes the tapping of drums and the scraping of the violin breaks upon our ears in almost every direction. It tends to enliven us, tells us plainly that peace is not declared and that this is only a short respite in our great work. Last evening on dress parade a congratulatory order from Genl. Thomas was read. I will try and obtain it and will send you a copy in my next.

Day before yesterday Quartermaster Morrissy who was captured at Jackson Miss. a year ago last July returned to us. he escaped from Columbia South Carolina and was thirty nine days getting through to our lines, he looks well as is bound to see the war through with us. was mustered yesterday as Quarter Master. I have not had an opportunity of having a talk with him and have not heard his story. he was in prison with me and was paroled at the same time, he has served about two thirds of his time in prison.

The weather is warm but rainy and the roads bad, my hope is that we may be permitted to remain here until good weather at least.

One day last week a division was sent out to Corinth with orders to burn every thing there is in its vicinity it returned yesterday having done all that was wished, there was no force there only about 800 cavalry which left as soon as our troops made their appearance.

The rumored peace movement mentioned in the papers create considerable excitement. I cannot credit the rumor as I cannot believe that our government is going to offer terms to the rebels, I see that Brooks has left the rebel congress in disgust. he must be getting ashamed of his own work. I wonder if he does not want to secede again. Col. Stibbs has gone to Washington I suppose for the purpose of getting the regiment filled up if possible. Major Knee is in command of the regiment.

It is too bad that Mary should act so that Allen could not stay and I think mother would be justifiable in whipping her.

All the boys are quite well. several have bad colds which has not improved any since we have got in our shanties. Colman has had a bad cold but it is getting better. John Bremner and Charley Robbins is well. Charley makes a splendid soldier, he is always ready for his duty and did first rate on the battle field. he is very steady and seems to try to do right instead of learning every thing bad that he can. Dont you wish you could look in and see us this evening. It is raining out of doors and we have a huge fire and are taking solid comfort. John is blowing on the flute and says if he had a teacher he would like to learn to play it, we would like that big chair now, to be sure we have not much spare room but I guess we would get it in if we had one, we have one good common chair which comes quite handy. I will send you a Harpers Weekly in which is a picture of Nashville and of our line of works & camps, it looks very natural.

It is getting late and I must retire. Give my respects to all friends. I remain as ever Yours &c  
Abner Dunham Co. "F" 12" Iowa Inftry.

Camp 12" Iowa Inftry, Eastport Miss, January 29th 1865

Dear Parents Brothers and Cousin

Another bright sunny sabbath morning has rolled around and finds us comfortable and enjoying ourselves as well as can be expected while so far from home and dear friends. Although it looks pleasant out of doors, the wind is chilly and our good fire in our little fireplace increases the comfort of our cabin to a great degree.

The past week we have busied ourselves with the usual camp duty which is just enough to keep us in good health, the only thing we can complain of is the scarcity of food for the last four days, the fleet which supplies us not arriving as was expected our rations have been short and not of the best quality, as only corn has been issued us, yesterday we got some

flour and meat and probably today will get groceries as the fleet arrived last night, a bakery is being built so while we remain here we will have light bread

I received Marys favor of the 15<sup>th</sup> inst. day before yesterday, as regards James Loring he was struck twice both at the same instant by minnie balls, one in the left breast and the other in the left loin, either one would probably have proved fatal as he fell Sergeant Lee of my Co. was going to stop to attend him but he motioned with his hand for him to go on, I believe he did not speak there are few who bears a nobler record than he did. Although his parents may feel almost frantic at his loss yet they may be proud that he fell a noble sacrifice to his country and his God; as to my opinion about friends trying to get their relatives who have fallen in battle, on some fields it is impossible to get a body while on others it is easier if you have someone as a guide who is acquainted with the ground wher the Brigade or Regt. fought. In the summer time it is generally very difficult as several bodies are often put in the same grave. I think however that James Lornings body can be obtained easily if some one can be found who knows where our Regt. fought. He was buried with one of the 7<sup>th</sup> Minn. under a small cherry tree, his name Co. & Regt. is on the head board. as for myself if it should be my lot to fall it makes but little difference to me where my body lies, but it might be consolation to you to have it in the family graveyard and if I should fall you know my feelings about it so go according to your own feelings.

I cannot see what object French in abusing Dock Morses character. I did not approve of his going out of the service as he did but no one can justly birate his character I probably have been with him as much as any one for the last three years and know as much about his morals and whoever abuses his character can be no better himself, in fact I condemn any one who abuses another character publicly whatever I may write home about another person unless it be in their praiser you must consider it confidential. I do despise a person who is forever blabing every thing they may see or hear.

Mrs. Colman must certainly be enjoying herself for she never condcends to write to Colman. He has not heard from her for near two months, he thinks it very strang and I do not wonder at his thinking so.

Last sunday 46 recruits arrived for our Regt. They are conscripts substitutes and bounty jumpers, six have deserted already. Ten was assigned to our company they are all here and seem to be first rate fellows. they are big stout men and look as if they would stand soldiering first rate. I have been out drilling them a little.

MONDAY JAN 30th

I had such a tremendous headache yesterday that I did not finish this. I feel well today, we got pleanty of rations last night so we begin to feel better about the stomach. The weather is quite warm and the clouds indicate a storm. I hope it will hold off a day or two as I expect to go on picket tomorrow, that paper which I entended sending you with the picture of Nashville was destroyed before I was aware of it, but I will send another with a charge which our brigade made on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Dec, the man falling from a horse is to represent Col. Hill (Comdg. Brigade) he was killed when near our Company. our flag was a little to the right of the one you can see flying but cannot be seen for so dense a smoke.

War news continues encouraging and peace rumors subsiding, I wonder what reply Jeff will make to Lincolns circular "To whom it may concern" I guess it will be a stumper for him. there is a rumor is afloat that Wilmington has been taken, but I cannot believe it as there has not been time, I think when we leave here that our destination is Mobiel. An order was read on dress parade last night uniting department of the Ohio with the Cumberland and also such parts of Mississippi Alabama & Georgia as Genl. Thomases army may occupy. this is why I think our destination is Mobiel. All the Manchester boys are well. Give my respects to all inquiring friends I am Yours &c Abner Dunham Co. "F" 12<sup>th</sup> Iowa Infy

Camp 12th Iowa Inftry  
Somewhere in Southern Confederacy March 31st/65

Dear Parents Brothers and Cousin

In order to give you minute detail of our movements I will write a little every day and then transmit my journal to you as often as convenient. I wrote you a line on Dauphin Island before we left there and will begin from that date (the 19th) We broke camp at 11 oclock A.M. and moved down near the wharf stacked arms and remained there until after sundown when we went on board of Gunboat No. 48. This boat had formally belonged to the Mississippi Squadron. A little after dark steamed over near fort Morgan and anchored. The weather was fine and bid fair for operations of any kind. Before going aboard we received a mail & I got a letter from you dated the 5th inst. 20th Thin clouds patially overspread the sky and before night there was strong indications of a storm. At 9 A.M. we started up the bay. Genl. Smith's Hdq 21st boat taking the lead. Genl McCarthon next with our 1st Brigade of our Division on it. then the T. R. Groesbeck with 2nd Brigad. Then our baot with our Regt. and part of 35th Iowa. Then followed several boats carrying the 2nd Division proceeded up the bay to the mouth of Fish river (15 miles from Mobile) and went up it about 10 or 12 miles and landed (rest of page illegible)

(next page) the trees are topped, we saw one quite extensive establishment for making spirits of terpine. There is but few houses along the banks and most of those are deserted. 21st We had a tremendous rain last night and this morning but has stopped now for a time. We are pleasantly camped the ground slightly rolling and sandy. The timber is all pine. It is as straight as an arrow. The boys say it would be fun to skirmish through here as there is no underbrush to bother we expected to march today but I guess will not now it being near noon. We are to draw one days rations which will include the 23rd. we are on the east side and about eight miles from the Bay. It is reported that we are to capture a fort opposite Mobiel which the boats cannot get at if so we will probably see fun soon. We have no teams along and but few of the officers have their horses. The boys are all anxious to get the work done for sunsipence is worse than fighting. 8 P.M. The clouds have cleared away and the weather is very pleasant we got papers of the 18th this afternoon but they contain no news of importance. A part of our transportation and the officers horses have come up and the prospect seems favorable for remaining here a few days. Hospitals are being put up which indicates that this may be made a base. The 13th Corps has arrived on the opposite side of Fish river and now pontoons are being laid for it to cross upon.

22nd The day broke clear and pleasant. At 8 A.M. a report came in that the enemy was advancing in force immediatly the bugles blowed the assembly. The long roll was beat and we (word illegible) and marched out about a mile and formed a line (portion illegible) the pickets were advanced and deployed (rest of page illegible)

(next page) was no danger and we returned. The 1st & 2nd Brigades remained out and commenced building works. Our Brig. could not go to work as our tools had not arrived. The rest of the day passed away auiately. I wrote to Uncle & Aunt Davison

23rd The sun rose clear but a dense fog hid it from view from 7 A.M. until 9 A.M. when the fog cleared away. It had hardly dissapeared before the pickets commenced skirmishing. The reserve post moved out and drove the rebs about a mile killing three. None of our boys were hurt. We got all our things on but was not ordered to fall in until 10 oclock when we moved out and commenced to build works and now (5 P.M.) have them two thirds done. We build them on the following plan viz. We cut pine trees from two foot to two & a half in diameter and from 40 to 50 feet long and lay them along for a fondation then cut braces about 8 feet long notch them on each side. Lay the noched end on the log & the other on the ground then put a log on it until about 4 feet high. Then throw dirt from the outside against them

making the base six feet thick an the top four. This makes a forminable work. A field piece would make no impression on it.

24th Weather pleasant. A detail of 50 men went out & finished the work. This morning the 13th Corps came on in the afternoon. We have we have orders to move at daybreak tomorrow. I reced a letter from Theodore today.

25th Moved at 5 A.M. the advance skirmished all the way five (rest of page illegible) (next page) sharpshooter on our flank. Marched 7 miles and formed camp in line of battle. Threw up a line of works. I went on picket. All quiate along the picket line.

26th Moved at 7 A.M. skirmishing not as heavy as yesterday. Marched 7 miles formed in line of battle and threw up works. weather pleasant.

27th Cloudy in afternoon rainy moved at 7 A.M. marched 3 miles formed in line and invested Fort Blakely. Drove the enemy inside their works. heavy skirmishing and artillery firing the rest of the day. Four or our Regt is wounded. This is an old spanish fort and is very strong. Do not know whether an assault will be made or not. Have opened communication with our gunboats on the bay. They signal to us that Gen Sheridan occupies Linchburg Va. This is good news if true.

28th Pleasant heavy firing on both sides by both artillery and skirmishiers. At 8 A.M. our Regt. moved back a few rods and fortified, finished them about 2 P.M. tonight we are going to raise a fort in front of us so that our guns can get a more enfalading fire on rebs. Are to have some 32 pounder Parrotts in a day or two. I do not think that we will assault the rebel works. It would be a needless loss of life as for every one is of the opinion that they cannot be taken in that way. Our gunboats are working their way through the obstructions and as soon as they can get through the rebs will be fast. Both of our flanks rest on the bay so there is no retreat by land. About a mile to our left is a position from which the city can be seen. Can see tranports plying between there and the fort. Our skirmishers get near enough to throw a stand inside the rebs fort and they pick off the gunners when they attempt to fire. Notwithstanding they occasionally send a shell over here that make the boughs of trees fly but few have been wounded today. Since I commenced to write our gunboats are getting through the obstructions and have thrown several shells into the fort. It is reported that a rebel ram has started for them and they will soon meet & have a fight. I would like to be where I could see it. I am in hopes we will get mail soon. Since we left the river I have seen Gen. Canby several times. He is a very ordinary looking man and does not put on any style. Everyone seems to like him. He seems in no hurry and moves cautious. I believe he will not sacrifice men unnecessarily (rest of page illegible)

APRIL 1865

TUESDAY 18th

Quite warm, moved at 6 ½ A.M. marched quite steady & went 20 miles. the country begins to be settled up quite well camped at 5 P.M. every house has a white flag flying. peace rumors are rife every where

WEDNESDAY 19th

Pleasant, moved at 6 ½ A.M. marched 20 miles, reced official news of the declaration of peace great rijoicing by all, we had a good supper Hard Tack Ham, Honey &c&c

Camp 12th Iowa Vet Vol Infty  
Montgomery Ala, April 30th 1865

Dear Parents Brothers and Cousin

Our present position is but another evidence of the marked changes which time will bring about. three years ago now I was held as a prisoner of war here allowed no priveledges and compelled by force of arms to obey those who had rebelled agains the law of our country, but how different now. Our Star Spangled Banner now waves where the secession rag then did

the sentinel in blue marches to and fro instead of the one in grey and I and my companions can rove through the shady groves lay by the little brook or bathe in the waters of the Alabama without fear of rebel bullet or bayonet. I can hardly realize it all. it seems more like a dream than reality. We left our camp near Fort Blakely at 7 A.M. the 13<sup>th</sup> inst, and took our line of march for this place to make an average of 15 miles per day. our march was not very hard with exception of a couple of days when the rain made the roads almost impassable for our trains; laid up one day in consequence of bad roads. We arrived here the 25<sup>th</sup> and are camped 2 ½ miles northwest of the city in a very pleasant place, have got it nicely cleaned up good shades built so we are quite comfortably fixed . If we had plenty to eat and could get mail would have nothing to complain of when we left Blakely we had 7 days rations they had run out when we got here. For some reason the boats have not got up so we have to depend on the country for supplies which consists of cornmeals and fresh meat. Hark! a boat is whistling and hard tack is coming. The camps are resounding with cheers. We'll get mail too. Ain't that Glorious? I find I am in a different mood from what I was five minutes ago. who can wonder at it? I can hardly write I feel so good. Yesterday John and I visited the city was surprised not to see a prettier place it is scattered the streets irregular and but few fine houses. It is well shaded by ornamental trees which add much to its beauty, we went in the state house visited the various chambers but nothing in or around it come up to my ideas of such a house. I expected to find every thing substantial and beautiful. the building is a rickety affair and nothing arround it is nice from the tupelo a fine view of the country can be had. Nothing has been destroyed in the city only public stock and works which was burnt by the rebels. We visited our old prison it had been burnt and torn down by Wilsons cavalry. The stores are open and sell very reasonable. They come down on gold basis. I asked them if they sold things as cheap for confederate money, they said no that with thate things were six and eight times as much, a good wool hat would cost \$150, a pair of boots \$300 and other things in perportion. a couple of the boys visited the lady the other day who used to furnish us papers. It was at her house that Lieut Bliss was shot by the guard, as we passed through the city the other day a woman said I know those men, they were prisoners here. We hear through rebel sources that President Lincoln has been assassinated. I hardly give credit to the report for if it was so we would have heard of it before this officially. I hope it is not so at least for I want to see him finish this work up that he has begun so well. Although I was a supporter of Andrew Jonston. Still I should dislike to see the administration fall into his hands at this time. He is a smart man strong for the Union still I do not believe he can adjur..(?) matters as amicably now as many others whom I could name

Tuesday May 2nd I have just come from picket and hasten to get this ready for the mail. The fleet day before yesterday brought officially the sad tidings of the death of Lincoln & Seward which spread a gloom over the army. Yesterday half hour guns were fired from sun to sun and minute guns from 12 M. to 1 P.M. Flags were at half mast, it is well for the rebs that they are coming to terms as they are for if we should get into another fight I would not inshure life. Every one regards the war as over and looks for a speedy disbanding of the army, the city is full of paroled men and officers from Lees army.

(letter ends here without signature-a page is probably missing)

Camp 12th Iowa Vet.-Vol. Infy.  
Selma Alabama May 27th 1865

Dear Parents Brothers and Cousin

Yours of the 7th inst is just received and read and as I can always write more freely after receiving a letter than I can after a day or two will drop you a few lines.

Night before last we had a fine rain. Yesterday the clouds cleared away and now the air is quite cool so much so that a blouse or coat adds to our comfort the wind is in the northwest.

In my letters for a few weeks past I have expressed the hope of getting out of the service in a very short time but from orders which we received last night I think we will be held for four or five months yet, the substance of one order is to discharge all men who are in hospitals who do not need medical treatment except veteran volunteers those of the 1st Army Corps (Hancocks) veteran Reserve Corps and regulars. The second order is to organize a volunteer regiment of Engineers from those having more than ten months to serve. Three companies to be raised in the department of Mississippi, three in the department of the Gulf, three from the 13th A.C. & three from the 16th A.C. this is evidence in my mind that our regiment is fast for a time.

John Bremner received a commission as Captain and I one as 1st Lieut. last Tuesday. At first we thought of not mustering but have at last concluded to. our discharge papers have gone to Genl Smith and will probably be back today or tomorrow and if approved will muster immediately. The Major seems to be very anxious for us to do so. Last night when we were almost ready for bed he came over with the orders I mentioned to prove to us that we would stay some time. He came over as soon as he got them. If I understand engineering any I should apply for a position in the Engineer Regt, for there a person can get a practical knowledge of it. Seven commissions came for other companies with ours, they are all dated April 29th, if I find that we are ready to stay I am going to apply for a furlough as soon as railroad communication is open to Cairo

I have made the acquaintance of a family near camp who have a very fine library and they give me the privilege of getting books from it to read so time will not be irksome as it has been of late as long as I can get plenty of reading matter I can content myself very well.

Several men near here have been arrested as the authorities have evidence that they helped to raise a sum to aid in the assassination of President Lincoln. It is said that one gave \$1000. they have been sent to Corps Hd Qrs for trial and if found guilty will probably suffer. I hope so at least.

A man belonging to Co "I" has gone to see his family near Tuscaloosa. he deserted from the rebels and joined our Regt. last spring at Memphis he dressed in rebel uniform and Genl. McArthur gave him a parole as belonging to Lees army. He is going to bring his family back with him and send them north I think that the Genl. was very humane to help him to see his family.

So far I am happily disappointed with Andis administration I begin to believe he will guide the Ship of State aright and bring her safely in. He seems to be going at his work with a spirit that I like. That of not being too rash but determined that traitors must abide the penalty of law. We have got a stronger hold of them than I at first thought we had when I see the terms of Lees surrender, but now I see that Genl. Grant not only displayed a great military genius but also the characteristics of a statesman. I was very sorry of Shermans first blunder but I believe it has been set aright. The Johnnies still continue to pass through here but not in such numbers as they did a week ago. Jeff Davis and his cabinet are prisoners and I think they ought to stretch hemp. Colman has gone to Mobiel with a detail to guard something we surmise it is the pay master but do not know

Sunday afternoon May 28th

The weather is cool and pleasant today. I attended our regimental services and heard a good sermon by Chaplain Humphries. I did not go down town as I intended to; there has been a considerable excitement created yesterday and today in the Brigade by some fellows striking "ile" (???) in a well, or rather finding quite an amount of coin, when Wilson came in the people threw their money into wells, buried it or whatever they could do with it. Somehow some of the boys got an inkling of it and went for it and now there is any quantity of men looking in wells digging in suspicious looking places, all the boys are well. My respects to all the friends. Abner

\* \* WITNESS TO \* \* 31

**Camp 12th Iowa Vet. Vol. Infty  
Selma Ala. Aug. 20th 1865**

**Dear Parents and Brothers**

**Yours of the 6th inst. came to hand about sunset. The one written on the 2 has failed to reach me. The same with the papers which you sent. I cannot imagine what is the matter with the mails there is no regularity about them at all.**

**Today is my birthday and I am twenty four years old. Oh, how time flies I cannot realize that I am so old. But time waits for no man so man must try and keep up with time.**

**The past week as usual has been extremely warm. The earth is so parched that vegetation is being litterly burned up. I never saw such a drouth before. Last Monday we were favored with a little shower but it was only sufficient to lay the dust for a few hours. I am not on duty today as of late on Sundays but have been too lazy to attend church. Our duty is not as heavy as it has been I come on about ever fifth day.**

**Last week Capt. & I thought we would try boarding out as our cook was going to leave us so after considerable hunting found a lady who would take us. Her husband was killed when Gen Wilson came in. She says he was murdered. Her family consisted of one son about 22 years old and a daughter of 11 years and three lady boarders. They once were rich and aristocratic, but as their all was invested in Confederate bonds and negroes so now they are hardly worth a cent. They were all taken sick and could not keep so today I commenced boarding with the company and capt. Has found another place. We have come to the conclusion that we will not marry down here whether we get letters or not. When I see ladies who only know how to play the piano read love storeis and talk nonsense and cannot make a pan of buscuit or sweep the floor I make up my mind they wont do for Iowa farmers wives.**

**The sickness of the regiment is about as it was when I last wrote to you. None of our Co. are dangerous. I do hope we will get away before we loose any more. Another rumor is current that we are going home but I shall not believe a word of it until I see the papers made out and signed by the Mustering Officer. Gen McArthur is relieved from his command here. Genl. Smith instead of taking command of his Regt. has returned to Montgomery and is in command of this district which is classed as letter C. the Colonel of the 47th Ill. Infty is in command of the post. The boys dont like the idea of a bounty broker and a substitute having command of us**

**Well father I dont know as I can answer your question respecting the negro satisfactorly but I am satisfied in my own mind that it is not expedient to give him the right of sufferage at present. I will tell you as nearly as possible what I think should be done with him. And not only that but will aid (if the government should ever see fit to dispose of him in this way) in carrying it out. for four years I have battled for the restoration of authority over these states and in doing that have abolished the accursed institution of slavery. Now we find millions of these freedmen who if properly instructed will in a few years will not only be intelectual and enterprising but will take care of themselves and thus prove to the world that we are a christian people and that the negro is a human being. But as you say, how is this to be done & it cannot be done by leaving them here with their inhuman masters, nor by giving them the electic franchise in the north, but by the government taking them in its fostering care colonize them. Send good and industrious men to teach them religion educate them learn them to be industrious and enterprising and after a few years we will see the fruits of our labors which I believe will make our government stronger and better than otherwise. I am aware that it will cost an immense amount of treasure to accomplish this but our greatest statesmen tell us that a nation unlike an individual grows more powerful and richer by being in debt. Some will say it would take an army on the dividing line line to keep them on their side but this is a mistake they are as much attached to their own society as we are to ours and they will remain together. Others say that the south would suffer for the want of hands to make usgar and**

cotton. Well let them suffer for a few years. It will do these damnable wretches good. It will learn them to be more industrious and more loyal. But the south will not suffer. Northern industry and enterprise will soon wake it from the trance in which it has always been sleeping and but a short time elapse until we will see this country covered with cottages schoolhouses churches manufactories &c. &c. I am confident from what I know of the freedmen that they are not competent to vote. Does the child of five years know what a responsibility rests on him when he casts that ballot? Think I hear you say no, if he does not then does the freedman whose mind is no longer know the responsibility of it? if not is he capable of enjoying the elective franchise? I speak of them as a mass not as individuals. For I am aware there are some who are fully competent of enjoying that boon. But they cannot be singled out when the right is given. These few prove to me that they may in a few years be so elevated as to enjoy every right and privelage. I have no doubt that in a few years I will vote for their sufferage if they remain with us for by that time the rising generation will be enough elevated to enjoy that right. but I cant do it now. I feel it would be doing them injustice as well as ourselves, the government is doing a good thing for them. At almost every post is established a freedmens school and the little ones are becoming gradually enlightened. I am not statesman enough to figure this all out but I believe it is on the right principle. Although I shall probably oppose the pending question when it is brought before us for descision if I am beaten then I will use every energy to facilitate their enjoying it. I believe in the majority ruling and I will fight for that principle. Our regiment a few days ago passed resolutions expressive of its feelings on the changing our state Constitution by striking out of the word "White" in the article on sufferage. You will probably see them so I need not copy them. I was a member of the committee on resolutions and was opposed to the last part of the preamble but was overruled. I cannot think that the men who have brought this subject before the people were disigning demagogues but they could not be as well acquainted with the condition of the negro as I am.

Now father we are of different opinions on this subject the first I believe we ever differed in and as there is often hard feelings existing between those who have been the warmest of friends caused by politics, I want to say one word about our corrispondence. I like to argue on any such subject for the purpose of drawing others out and learning myself. Now if we can write upon this subject (or any other) and use facts and leave out all language which is liable to irritate I shall like it, but if we cannot let us drop it immediately and never mention to one another again. I believe we have our different opinions from a pure motive and as such we should never allow trouble to grow out of it.

We have just received Gen Shermans farewell address to his army. It is splendid. Well I must close. Give my respects to all friends. Give Mary fits for not writing. Yours &c.

Abner