Letter No. 1 Commencing from 20

Head Qrs. 25th Iowa Inft.
Camp Sherman, Miss
Aug. 22nd, 1863

Dear Father,

I read yours No. 16 date 5 & 8th Aug. Was glad to hear of your safe arrival home from "War." Think you have pretty bg old times. I would like to be there a while to see how you "old coeks" do fight. I think I could take a part in such fights with a good grace. I hope however by this time you have got the "Rebellion Squelched".
We are lying in camp taking it easy as we can, nearly all the officers have gone home, it almost gives me the fever & then you encouraging me makes it worse. I think when some of the officers get back I will try how northern atmosphere goes. The Col. & Adjt. will start in a few days. Lt. Young will go as soon as his papers come back. That will leave me alone in Head Qrs. but I think I can stand it. I have been proposing that Capt. Dick & I go up together about the middle of next month. How will that do?

The boys of the 8th are well, as I see some of them every day over her, health of Reg. is increasing. Uncle Wm. is better. Hugh is well. Capt. Dick is well. I am well & feel bully. If I get up home I will convince you of that fact. Give my respects to all inquiring friends & with my best wishes for your welfare & hoping you may keep down Copperheads.

I remain yours truly,

D. J. Palmer
P. S. Since writing the above we have had dress parade which was very beautiful. The boys all came out well dressed & clean. After which the Col. Adjt. & myself took an evening ride. I upon my "foaming Steed". I tell you he was "gay" all afire & full of ginger. Just look in "Frank Leslie" & notice some of these horses & then you can imagine me.

D. J. P.

Enclosed please find my discharge, which lay up with those other papers & oblige me.

D. P.
Left off at 20 this is No. 2

Camp Sherman, Miss.
Aug 29th, 1863

My Dear Parents:

Another opportunity affords itself and I write. No. 16 is the last I have rec'd from you bearing date 5th Aug. No 15 I did not receive. Maybe you count some you do not No. I have rec'd several not No. I wrote to you a few days ago (did not No.) and enclosed a pass for father from Gen. Grant, allowing him to visit Vicksburgh and furthermore furnishing him with transportation from Cairo down, if he chance to meet with a gov. boat. I thought of not sending it until Lt. Young went up (he goes next Tuesday) and then I thought it would go safe in the mail & be there sooner for you to make up your mind & get things arranged. I wish you to come down if you can as it is a good chance and probably better than you will have again.
We are in Camp and I will try and accommodate you, at least to the best of my ability besides I think it will be more satisfaction for you to come down than for me to go up on a "20 day" leave of absence. I would hardly get home again until I would have to about and come back and you know that would not be pleasant. I think you could enjoy the trip frustrate. I will send money with Lieut. Young and you can use all you need to bring you through.

Health of troops is increasing. Weather has been quite cool for a few days making it very pleasant.
Our Brigade was out escorting a train yesterday that went for cotton. Had a pretty good time got all the fruit we could eat and a lot to bring into Camp. We got about 400 Bails cotton, worth about $300. a bail. Pretty good for one day, wasn't it? Had you been here I would have furnished you with a horse, and you could have enjoyed our company finely. Don't you think so?

I suppose you would see those furloughed boys from about Vicksburgh. Lt. Col. Bell is now at home I suppose. I went over to see him one day but that morning he had left for home. I am glad he got such a position. He is worthy of it, and if he make as good a Lt. Col. as he did a Capt. he will be a good one. I always thought well of him as Capt. and think all the "good Soldiers" in the Co. thought the same. Capt. Bell might have been promoted sooner but he was too anxious and you know in most cases that will not win. An officer in this Reg. killed himself in that way. I will tell you further about it in an other place.
We are having a pretty good time now, not much to do & plenty to eat & wear. I have quite an easy time for my part, while the Col. is here, but he expects to leave against Tues. or Wednesday, next. Capt. Dick is well, also Lt. Anderson. Uncle Wm. is getting along pretty well now. Hugh & Alex, Joe K. Dave. B. Wm. Shannon & Cal Kilgore are well, Stewart McDowell is not very well. Edd. Stewart is well. No use for me to try & name all of them for I cannot think of all the names now. But in general the Co. is well.

I would like to know about Geo. C. if he is well enough to come to the Reg. or where he is & what he is doing. Have they commenced drafting in Iowa yet, if not how soon do they expect.

My compliments to Jennie & Berry, tell them I'd like to have a scratch.
Last account boys of the 8th were well. Lt. Maxwell of the 8th has tendered his resignation. I guess the boys won't care. Capt. Maxwell of our Reg. is very low at present. I doubt he will not recover. He has some kind of fever. I saw Maj. Stanton a few days since he was looking well and what's more had a lot of "greenbacks" which he allowed to distribute among us. He is in charge of the Pay. Dept. this time & is now paying our Corps. We will soon receive pay, they have already paid some in the Div. Had the Maj. remained with the 19th he would doubtless have been Col. of that Reg. I suppose lately you saw the order not allowing a Col. to be a Reg. or a 2nd Lt. to a Co. You see should Col Stone resign or be promoted, I could not get a commission as Col. because the Reg. is below the minimum no (850) of men. There is likely to be a difficulty about Anderson getting mustered in, but I think probably it will be all right.
You will perhaps think strange I have scarcely mentioned my promotion. Well I have no reason in particular, only I didn't care about making a "blowing horn" of my self for trifles. Last spring at Youngs Point, La., Col. Brydolph tendered his resignation & no one had any doubt but that it would be accepted immediately. So wire working commenced, but I laid low. So we started down the River to "Hard Timea Landing". Col. Brydolph did not accompany us & Maj. Taylor was under arrest. So the Col. called the officers together & stated that Col. B. had tendered his resignation & would doubtless get it accepted & at any rate he wanted some one to assist him as he was the only field officer on duty & that person would be the one designated by the officers of Reg. & beyond all my expectations I was chosen as the person. You may be shure I was astonished for I did not expect it, neither had I said a single word to an officer outside of my own Co.
I suppose I was as much disappointed as the officer was who had been fishing for it & whom I thought would certainly get it. He was a fine officer & would have filled the place I thought better than I, at least I voted for him, but as a majority of the officers thought different, I was perfectly willing to submit. Was there anything wrong in that?

Well I acted in that capacity until the 22nd day of May when Col. B. finding his papers long coming returned to duty & remained with the Reg. until June 9th when his papers came. Col. Stone again called the officers to decide who should fill the vacancy (as the other had only been temporary). This time I felt as though I stood a chance & I am happy to inform you again run a good ticket having a majority of the votes cast. Since then I have been performing the duties of Lt. Col. to the best of my ability. I expect Capt. Newbold would have been Maj. but he took sick & went home & the general impression was he would never be back. Capt. Perkins of Co. "D" from Burlington was made Maj. He is a good officer & is worthy of the position.
You wished to know who corresponded from the 25th to the Burlington Hawkeye in my favor. I do not know, I did not see anything only what was in the Press. Capt. Bell sometimes corresponds to it. It however makes but little difference, I think such puffs are but little account.

If Iowa drafts any I expect some officers from the 25th will be sent up to bring them down, if so I think I will stand a chance as nearly all the officers have been home on leave. I think it would be a nice thing to go up & get a bolt of a few copperheads to bring down & place in the ranks.

What Beliefs did Allen Meek have about sabbath when he was on his death bed? and Does Kilgore still believe in the Advent Doctrine?

Have the girls got old enough to accompany the boys yet? Do they still go without hoops?
I have a contraband to take care of my horse &
black boots brush. (torn edge). pants sweep out the
tent keep my sword bright &c. &c. All has to be said
is: Barney I want my horse & in a few minutes he is
prancing at the door. Barney I want my boots blacked
& in short time they are shining like a "nigger's heel".

So you may be shure I aint going to heat myself
in this southern Confederacy, while I can have it done
by "de colored Population".

Give my respects to Aunts folks John's & Aunt Jane's
& all inquiring friends & neighbors.

I will close at present.

Your very affectionate son,

David.

P. S. Since writing the above I receiv'd a letter from
Gideon he has been in hosp't on account of sore eyes,
but is out now & is getting better.

I notice in Press that Col. Chipman is cutting quite
a spread issueing Gen. Orders. Wish him much success
with his command. If you see him tell him so &
give him compliments & best wishes generally.
Head Qrs. 25th Iowa Inft.

Sept. 1st '63

Dear Father:

Enclosed please find a clipping from "Memphis Bulletin", 1st a letter from Le Grant Byington to Gen. Grant & 2nd Grant's reply. the latter will show that Loyal Citizens can visit the troops from their States.

You see Gen. Grant is not much in favor of Copperheads in the no. 7th. He don't give them much holt. If they come down round here passing they'll be apt to get a chance to take the oath, a thing they'll not like.

Col. Stone, Lt. Young, Adjt. Snow & Lt. Tizard left this morning for home. You will see Lt. Young. I gave him a letter to carry up.

I am alone com'd'g 25th. I guess I'll appoint Lt. Anderson to act. Adjt. until Adjt. Snow returns. If you were down here now I have lots of room for you & could let you have my horse to ride over to the 8th or any where you wished to go, & go a riding with you sometimes too. The "Bulletin" says today that Ft. Sumpter is fallen. Hope it may be true. Nothing new going on here. With my best wishes for you all I close remaining your affectionate Son,

Dave.

Lt. Col. Com'd's 25th
My Dear Parents:

Last night after dark we arrived in Corinth.

Today we came out to this Camp about 3½ miles distant. We have a pretty nice Camp, but I am afraid it will be unhealthy, as we are surrounded by swamps, but troops have been camped here before and got along very well & I hope we will. We had a pleasant trip up the river. met a boat on the way which bore Mr. Woodburn. We took him off. I received a letter by him. He was well pleased with his entertainment at your house. I was glad of it for Lawrence is a good soldier & you know how partial I am to good soldiers. If I had a brother in the army & he not a good soldier I could not think well of him. That is perfectly natural & you will hear every one say the same. I could not tell you of men of whom I thought but little at home, but make such good soldiers that I cannot help liking them & will always remember & respect them for it.
Also on the contrary there are men of whom I thought a great deal & thought I was personally acquainted with them, but have turned out to be poor soldiers & with all my endeavors I can not like them, neither are they liked by any one not even by their own intimate associates. This may seem strange but you may ask any one & they tell you the same. There are men now in this Reg. who at home stood high (& when we were recruiting men would come up & tell you "now if you could only get that man what a noble soldier he would make" & all such stuff as that) but now are no where & could not get a promotion to save their lives, just simply because they try to "play off" as the boys call it.

Met Dyre Glasgow & Jack Coulter at Memphis. Read a letter by their hands. Was glad to hear from you. We were in Memphis 3 days & 3 nights. It is quite a fast town, everything is high. I tell you it takes a good deal of money to keep a fellow down in this country.
I sent to Davenport for a suit. I found out in Memphis that it has gone on to Vicksburgh. I do not know when it will get here now. I sent to have it sent on after me.

I saw some of the 2nd & 7th boys. They are well, they are camped at Lagrange halfway between M. & Cor. Adjt. Snow got back yesterday. Young is not yet here. Col. has not yet come. I am getting along well. The health of the Reg. is better.

Every time I receive word from home now, you want me home. I am sorry to inform you I can not go at present. So I would be glad you would not mention it, as it make me feel as though I ought to go when you ask me to. I could have gone but I thought others needed to go worse than I. I was sorry the furloughs stopped, for I allowed to furlough Uncle Wm. next time & that would have been in a day or two had we stayed at Black R. Miss. It would not have been just for me to have done it as Co. "A" had its share already, but I allowed to do so for I thoughtshould furlough him.
A great many think a furlough is an easy matter & they ought to be attended to, but I do not believe in showing favors. However I would have done it in that instance, had I done so I would have had to done it over the Captain's head & fooled somebody else perhaps needed it worse than he.

I have had but few letters lately. I do not know what is the reason. I have written a great many letters to Ohio & not recd any ans. Why it is I do not know. I think I will soon stop.

Left the 8th boys well at Vicksburgh. Did not get my watch from Barton. Left Joe Kilgore sick at V., not bad however. I think he will maybe get home on furlough soon. Hugh is well. Alex H. is well & still orderly for Gen Woods. Dave Boyer is well. I tell you Dave is a good soldier. One whom I could recommend for anything. D. Millers is still with the 1st Miss. A. D. doing well from what I can hear. Also Wm. Burnside.
I was surprised to hear of Wm. McC. death. It would be quite a shock on his friends & Parents. I saw the W. M. of that Reg. and he says he was buried decently. I think it was done as well as could be. I saw Mitchell Currie in Memphis, he is well. I understand George is in Iowa City doing well. I am glad of it. Give my resp'cts to Mr. and Mrs. Currie, also the other neighbors.

I have not yet had a chance to get a picture taken but I will as soon as my coat (double breasted) gets here. I do not know what our next move will be. I expect to Chatanagu. I think if the foreign powers keeps their hands off we will be through with this war soon. The R. R. from Memphis out is principally guarded by negroes. They do well, better than I expected. You would be astonished to see how well they soldier & take up the tactics. It seems to be naturly in them. I am in hopes they will form our army in future, as I think it will be a good chance for them to be educated.
As they are now, they are not fit to enjoy citizenship from the fact of their being too ignorant, but the learn fast. I have one of the best little fellows named "Horas" he is attending to me & the Adjt. He keeps my horse in fine order. I read the pass. I am sorry Father did not get down. I would have done him so much good to have seen Vicks to have seen those holes in the ground.

Give my Respects to all the friends. Tell Jennie I am waiting patiently for an ans. also Berry. Have you seen Mrs. Woods lately. I am sorry for her in her bereavement. It was a hard stroke.

I understand All G. takes it hard about H. Robertson. Well she may for Hugh was a fine fellow & would have made no doubt one of the best Husbands. If you see All. remember me to her.
Dear Parents.

Here we are still at Corinth but do not know how long it may so continue. We did think at first that we (the 15th A. C.) would get to stay about Memphis & Corinth, but, it is undecided whether we or Hurlbuts Corps goes. I think it would be unfair to take us who have seen so many hard ships & leave Hurlbuts forces who have been here for about 16 months resting themselves.

Lt. Young arrived safe, have not yet re cn my coat or pants. they went on to Vicks. I have sent for them. Am looking for them now as soon as I receive them I expect to get a few "Ushers" taken & distribute round. The reason I am deferring it is that I have no "dress suit". Re: a letter from Joe P. folks are all well in Ohio.

"Copperheads" flourishing. I am provoked to think that Carroll Co. would suffer a copperhead flag to be carried round. I think there is a lack of "Love of Country" that should be instilled in every man, woman or child.
Peter Dick of the 7th was to see us. He is hearty.
that Reg. is generally well. I tell you they havnt seen
what the 25th has although it is an old Reg. & seen a
great amount of service, however it wouldn't do to tell
them that. The R. R. from Memphis out is principally
guarded by colored troops. They do duty pretty well.

"Horace" (my little darky) is sitting near by you
would be diverted to hear him sometimes. He is quite an
intelligent little fellow. I was telling him I was writing
to my mother & what kind of a woman she was &c. &c. He
then got to making fun of me, say he "I'll bet your mother
is proud to think she has a son a Lt Col." Says he "your
gal will be saying she has a Lt Col for a beau &c. &c." expressions you would think he didn't know anything
about. We have good times getting a squad of them
together & haveing them sing & dance & cut up all kinds
of shows.

Give my res'pt to all. Your Son truly

D. J. Palmer

Write soon.
Dear Father:

I again take pleasure in addressing you a few lines from the "Land of Cotton". I am well. Hope this may find you the same. Have not heard from you for some time, was rather disappointed at your not coming down, but perhaps all for the best. I would not advise you to come down now. I think we will soon be off for Rosecrans. It seems the 15th A. C. is all the Corps that can stand the knocks. We left the 16th A. C. (Hurlburts) at Memphis. It has already been there for a year. I think it would be nothing but right to have sent them & let us rest. For my own part I care not, I can stand it, I think, but the men need rest, & I think they ought to have it.
The great trouble is Hurlburt has as many "Stars" as he can get & so he thinks he will take it easy. Col. is not back yet, am looking for him daily. hope he may soon come, as it will make it much easier on me, it keeps me pretty busy, but I am getting along well. Our Reg. has a good name & is in good repute with Gen. Osterhouse (our Brig. Com'd'r) he give the 25th the preference when a chance affords itself. Some of the Reg'ts I guess envy us. Some of them call us "Osterhouse's Pets". But you know it makes no difference, so we have the benefit of all the joke. The other day our Reg. & 31st Iowa was detailed to take an expedition out into the Country & when we reported I asked the Gen. if my Reg. would follow the 31st? (as I was junior officer, Lt. Col. Jenkins Com'd'd the 31st) No, says he, "You take the advance." So you see that was quite a privilege, putting me in advance when I was Jr. to the Com'd'r of the 31st.
This is getting near where I got "plugged" a year & a half ago. I hope I may have better luck hereafter. We are now camped in the edge of the town of Iuka. I have my Head Q's in a room of a house belonging to a man named Hubbard. The room is furnished with 2 feather beds & chairs & a good fire place &c, &c. Ain't that putting on style? The boys are getting along well. Uncle Wm. was sent to Memphis. I hope he may get home. Hugh is well, all the neighbors are in tolerably good health.

I will close.

Your son,

David

S. R. Palmer,
Washington, Iowa.
Iuka, Mississippi
Oct 17th '63

My Dear Parents:

We have marching Orders. Think we'll move tomorrow. Direction is east, think we'll not go far. I expect our final destination is "Rosecrans". We are repairing R. R. as we go.

I have not yet received my package of clothing. I sent Lt. Young to Memphis to attend to some "Ordnance" I think may be he may get my package there.

I wrote a letter a few days ago. Have not heard from you for some time. Expect to get paid off today as the paymaster is now paying in our Brigade.

Geo. Currie arrived a few d'ya ago; looks well.

Enclosed you will find a "poor picture", had not time in Memphis to get one & have had no chance since to get a good one. I did not have a dress suit. So you will notice it is a kind of a "roudy" or "Fatigue" cut. Think maybe I will get a better one some time.
Nothing new is going on, boys are improving in health, hope the war will soon be over. Am sorry to inform you that Tuttle got 70 votes in the 25th. Not but that Tuttle is a good man, but is in bad Co. Volandingham got 50 votes in the 76th Ohio. Aint that to bad. I'II tell you that ought not to be, those men ought to be discharged dishonorably.

Col. Stone is not back yet. Have not heard from Uncle Wm. since he left, he will get along well in Memphis. It is a healthy place.

Write often, it makes me feel happy to get a letter from home. I would like to write more news but have not time now. As soon as the Col. gets back I can give more news, that is I'll have time.

I'll close, as ever

Your affectionate son,

David

25th Iowa Vol.
2nd Brig. 1st Div. 15th A. C.
Memphis, Tenn.
H'd Q'rs 25th Iowa Vol.
Camp near Cherokee Alabama
Oct. 22nd 1863

Dear Parents:

Again I am glad to have an opportunity of writing to you. You will be surprised when I tell you we had another fight. I have not time nor much opportunity to write but will explain in as few words as possible.

I wrote to you from Iuka. We left there on the 18th. marched to Bear Creek, remained there until the 20th. from there we came to this place (on the 20th. in the eve.)

Yesterday it rained. About 11 o'clock A. M. our pickets were driven in. We formed (we were in advance) & marched to the front, after advancing about a mile we met the enemy 'hat it pretty brisk for about 3/4 of an hour. We occupied the extreme right, the 30th. on our left. The 30th. lost pretty heavy, they lost the Col. killed & several officers wounded. In all they lost about 20. The 25th. lost 1 Lt. & 3 men wounded, none of them serious. Co. A. lost none. Col Kilgore got his cap shot through.

Taking all things in consideration we got along well.

I must close as the officer going back is ready to start.

We sent the enemy back flying. I do not know whether we will attack them to day or not. We are lying on our arms.

Your son,

David.
Camp 25th. Ia. in the Field
Bridgeport, Ala.
Nov. 18th. '63

Dear Father & Mother.

Yesterday I received a letter from you dated Oct 17th (quite an old one, wasn't it?) About the 1st of the month I received one dated 23rd.

We arrived here today. We have been on the March for 18 days, averaging 17 miles per day (pretty good marching I think for greenhorns). The boys stood it fine at rate, as for me I need say nothing for I got along "Bully". I walked considerable too & let some of the boys ride my horse. We expect to cross the River in a day or two. There are two Divs. to cross before we can go. Co. "A" is doing well. We have to leave Capt. Dick at Chickasaw. The Dr. pronounced him unfit for the march & I am glad he staid for I think he would not have stood it, it was a pretty hard march.
We depended on the country entirely for our meat. Well we got along pretty well too. It would make you laugh to see the boys wading into the Southern "forkers". You see there is no firing of arms allowed on the march or in camp & the boys have to Charge Bayonets on them. Sometimes one of the Boys thinks he can shoot a hog & not be caught at it, but generally he "slips up on it". So poor hungry soldier" is arrested & brought before the Col. who generally turns him over to the Maj. of myself & we punish him according to the merits of the case.

Yesterday we arrived at Stevenson. Camped over night, had quite a time. We came in contact with some of the Potomac troops. "Youd ought" to see them they put on more style than a little. It was diverting to hear some of their stories to our boys. They were telling about their hardships, they said they had marched 10 days on 5 crackers pr. day (other things in proportion) wasn't that funny? They didn't think I suppose of our trip round in rear of Vicksburgh, when we did on once cracker a day & sometimes less. Just think of it. 50 cts. offered for one cracker. But then it can't be helped sometimes.
We always console ourselves with the idea that it is
for a noble country & say "Who wouldn't be a soldier?"
& think of the "gal I left behind me," & a hundred other
things, that make the time short.

This is the first letter I have written since I left
Tenn. & I expect this will be the last one for
a long time. So if you here any one speaking about my
not writing tell them I haven't time & expect to wait
untill I can get time. I owe a great many letters but
can not ans. I reed a letter from Aunt Jane yesterday.
Have not time to ans. it either. But hope to have some
time. Uncle Wm. is in Memphis, have not heard from him
since he went there. Hope he may get a furlough or
discharge for he isn't fit to be in the army. He takes
things too hard.
Bully for I. G. Moore & J. Walker got married hey!
Well glad to here it. But I hope all the fair sexes
won't get married & we poor soldiers to "back it" the
ballance of our lives. Just tell 'em to not be hurried
& we'll be home sometime. Got the School "Marm" at our
house hey! "Bully for us." But then I think it a
sortev takin the disadvantage of a feller when he's in
the army. You used to be oposed to borders so much. I
begin now to see that reason. I notice is it since I have
left that you begin to take them in. I suposed had I
been at home I couldn't have hired you to let the "school
Marm" board at our house. Well perhaps its all right. But
anyhow I'd like to be at home now I think I'd make a good
scholar. I supose Henery will go to shool, tell him to
be a good boy & get his lessons well & learn all he can.
That I think he'll do.
Nov. 19th

Still here waiting to cross the river for Chattanooga.
I'll go to town today & I think I telegraphed home. It will go so much quicker. I have not read that bottle of quinine & handkerchief. Had to buy a coat the other day in consequence thereof I am not caring for it now for a while. Need nothing but socks.

Very affectionately yours,

David

My Best respects to Miss Alma & her scholars
Send two pr. socks by mail at once. (In margin)
Bridgeport, Ala.
Dec. 12th '63

Dear Mother:

Again I write you. I wrote you the other day, but could tell you nothing definite about Hugh. Today I heard from him, he is much better & great hopes of his recovery. Oh! I'm so glad for Hugh is such a good boy & a soldier. You have no idea of my feelings when I know of a good soldier's suffering. I suppose there's no one that values a good soldier as I do & it makes me feel so good when I hear of them recovering from wounds read while at their post. Please inform Aunt's folks at once as I presume they'll be uneasy about him. He's still at Chattinuga, but Dr. Plummer (Our Div. Surg.) says he'll have him brought away as soon as he'll bear moving.

Remember me to all the friends & believe me still

Your affectionate son,

David.

Mrs. Margret Palmer,
Washington, Iowa.
Dear Father & Mother

Once more I seat myself in my "Cotton house" 8 by 10 for the purpose of writing you a few lines. In one end of this venerable institution is a small fire place constructed somewhat in this wise. A small ditch is dug in the ground in one end of the house. This is covered with an old "tin pan," which is half in & half out of the tent. (In order that it does not burn the tent). On the outside is a small chimney erected of little sticks built up & dobed with mud, on the inside is where we insert the wood & fire. This does most nobly only when the wind comes from a certain direction & then the inmates have to "skedaddle" or cause the fire to be put out. (The latter generally is done.)

Unfortunately the wind is from said direction to night consequently there is no fire in that nobly constructed fireplace, & it may be it will freeze me out ere I get this letter finished.

In one side of said house is my "virtuous" couch. This is constructed of six forks driven into the ground. (two at each end & two in the center) Across each two is placed a small piece of rail, which supports a sufficient No. of small poles for two to sleep on. On these poles is a tick filled with grass & leaves. My bunk mate is Maj. Perkins formerly Capt. of Co. "D" of Burlington, Iowa, on the other side of the establishment is a single bunk which is occupied by the Adjt. Sam. W. Snow of Burlington.
In one corner is stacked our implements of war, such as swords, pistols, revolvers &c & above our heads is what you’d know best by calling it Hidgpole, supported by two strings. This serves to hang our extra clothing on. These are the circumstances under which I write.

And that is not all. I’ve just been to supper & it was so good that I ate so much I can hardly lean over to write. Mr. Jas. Nace of Co. "C" is our cook, he is a good one. The other night we invited Col. Stone & his staff to take supper. (Col. Stone is now commanding the 3rd Brigade.) We had stewed oysters hot biscuits & butter, hot coffee, soda crackers, dough nuts fried ham & beef stake, sponge cake to finish up on. You perhaps thought we couldn’t have nice things, but I tell you Mr. Nace knows how. I would that you were here & we’d give you a Christmas dinner. I guess Col. Stone is going to have a Christmas party for all the officers of his Brig.

The weather is somewhat cool, it rained yesterday. Don’t know how long we’ll remain here. I have not yet rec’d my suit. last I heard it was at Memphis. I’ve sent for it to be forwarded. The reason I did not get my watch was that Barton broke it on his way down the R. & on his arrival at Vicksburgh he met one of Co. A’s boys & gave him the bottle of quinine & handkerchief & towel & said he would get the watch fixed. I sent word for him to send it to me & never mind fixing it & even went
all the way over to the 8th to get it but he was away & had the watch so I didn't get it. I hear theys guarding R. R. in rear of Memphis.

Perhaps I'll see them as I understand we're going back a piece further.

I rec'd the socks by Mr. Kopp. Was in good time. I needed them. I wish I had a Christmas gift to send you but I have not.

Give Henry a "v" for me as a Christmas gift & tell him be a good boy & try to learn fast.

Maj. Perkins rec'd his commission as Maj. the other day so he is all right & I'm glad of it. There's no chance now for that old "Soap Sticks" (Maj. Taylor) to be reinstated. Co. "A" is getting along well. Cal, Alex, Dave B. Ed, Wm. S. & Sam Mc are well. Heard not long ago from Dave Miller he's in Vicksburgh & well. Charity Allen, they say is married. Oh! what a "charitable" circumstance that must have been. Oh! that I could enjoy such a thing.

I must tell you a little "nancy goat" connected with our Div. & Gen Grant -- Our Noble Chieftain -- You have doubtless heard of the kind of Bridges we make across the streams in this country. It is called a "Pontoon". This kind of bridge is what we used in crossing the Tenn. R. two of these are to cross in going to Chattimuga, within ½ of a mile of the town. After the troops had all gone across & were pursuing the enemy the train (the most difficult) had yet to cross. Only one wagon is allowed on such a bridge at a time. There stood the train of all
Gen. Hooker's Army (Potomac boys you know) & our Div. Train. Fighting about who would cross first. The Potomac boys had an order from Gen. Hooker for the Bridge. So Capt. Keyser (Div. Commissary) went to Gen. Grant's H'd Q'rs & related the circumstances to him. The old Gen. drew his brows together & said "that the Potomac boys had to wait until the 1st Div. of the 15 A. C. came before they could take Lookout Mountain & he guessed they'd have to wait & let the 1st Div train cross the Pontoon first, & wrote an order to that effect. So the Capt. went back & took possession & crossed our train. It is growing late & cold & I'll have to suspend "hostilities". So Good night.

Dave.
December 19th.

Things more favorable this morning, wind in a good direction, so I can have a fire. Have a detail at work putting up a log cabin, expect to move in this eve. Won't you come to the "spree" if you do I'll have the "niggers" invited to fiddle & dance & we'll have a big time generally.

Nothing new has transpired since I wrote the 1st of this letter.

There is to be an inspection next Tuesday. I expect to have the cleanest camp & best appearing reg't in the Brigade. That's talking pretty large, ain't it?
Yours dated 4th inst. I read. Was glad to hear that you had read my dispatch, as I know it would afford satisfaction. I composed the dispatch in such a manner as to give satisfaction to all the friends of Co. "A". I haven't heard from Hugh since I last wrote. I hope he'll get well. I'm trying & find out if I can his whereabouts.

Bazil Lipton is detailed on recruiting services, he left on the 14th. I sent home my old dress coat which you will keep for me.

Any person you know of enlisting try & encourage them to come to the 25th. I am in hopes Baz will succeed in getting some recruits. I do sincerely hope Iowa will not let the draft catch them. Iowa has a name & I would love to see her keep it. Don't let those "Nobs youths" hang off too long. Let them come & assist us in the defense of this glorious government.

How is school progressing? Is Henry learning fast? How is the "School Mare" liked? Have you all the corn pulled & how are the crops this year? How are my colts getting along? Have you the two old mares yet? How much fencing have you done on the place? Had you any breaking done last summer or are you going to have any this summer?

Well I must have a drink & a little more fire, so I'll call Horas! Oh Horas! Ans. Here! Says I bring in some wood. Away he jumps & comes in with an armful of wood. Now boy! bring me a drink. In he comes bearing a glass of water. Hat in hand & the white of those eyes rolling round it would make you laugh to see him.
Now Horas I want you to dance "Jim Crow". So he commences accompanies it by singing "first open the heel top then upon the toe & every time you jump up you jump "Jim Crow" &c.

"Now sir! I'm through with you" says I & he leaves untill called on again. If I was going home I'd like to take him along with me & I think I will if ever I do, if Adjt. Snow doesn't lay too strong a claim on him.

I hear Joe K. is at home I'm glad he got a furlough. He'll get well so much faster. I wish every one that gets sick could get home & get a motherly care for a while which would do more good than a dozen dozes of quinine. Look at what even a letter from a mother does. It often assists in getting that poor soldier out of the Hospital. There is nothing so encouraging to the soldier as a kind letter from a parent or wife or perhaps a "Sweetheart." You have no idea of what an excitement it raises in camp when it is announced "A mail in Camp". "Come & draw your rations of letters," is echoed from tent to tent. Here comes some poor man who has been sick for perhaps some time & scarcely able to be about, but on hearing of a mail is revived hoping that this time may bring him tidings from home. Surly enough his name is announced as having a letter. Poor fellow how changed is his countenance, he feels better than if he'd taken a dose of medicine. Now soldier's friends don't let your friends in the army suffer for what can be sent for a little 3 cents.

Many a man has died from no other cause than discouragement & that discouragement arose from carlessness of h
of his friends in not writing to him.

Geo. Currie is getting along fine.

Send me another pr socks & I'll give a pr. to Horas.

We have a good joke on the Adjt. When we arrived here we thought we'd like to have some butter. So the Adjt. telegraphed to his father in Ohio to send him 50 pounds by express & when the dispatch arrived at its destination it read 50 barrels. We made great fun of him about his 50 Brl's asking him "how long he expected to Suttle for the Reg. \[m^t]\? &c &c."

Frank Ford is a Sergeant now. I hope you will keep up a correspondence with him, as it serves greatly to pass time away to receive a letter from a friend.

Don't always wait until he answers. The last letter he told me to direct via Cairo.

Remember me to all the Friends & Neighbors. Tell Jennie I rec'd a letter from her & will ans. it as soon as I can.

I think if I can get time I'll write a letter to Penn. & wake a few of the Copperheads in that part of the Country. It is a shame that we have such relations, ain't it?

I think Jim Moore is as bad as any of them. I think it was decidedly mean in him to show the letter at any rate, although I don't care a cent.

Give my respects to All & Henry & the balance of the family.

Your affectionate son,

David.
Dec 26th. '63

Arose at 4 A. M. raining. Order to march at 6½
My Reg. rear guard. Roads very bad. Teams stall
a great many times. After traveling a short distance
I rec'd orders to leave half of my com'd with the
Train & report with the balance in Larkinsville
without delay.

In pursuance thereof I left Maj. P. & 5 Co's
& started with the balance walking on the R. R.
after going a mile rec'd another order to stay with
the 1st Mo. Battery which had "stuck in the mud."
Finally it got out & we came in with. Camped ⅔
mi. from L. the Train & balance of Reg. got in
at dark. it rained most all day which made it
very disagreeable.
27th Dec. 1863

Reveille at 7 A. M. no orders to move. Still raining. Sent out foraging parties. Got plenty of corn & fodder. Boys came in with chickens, Turkeys & "such". 6 P. M. Still raining. rec'd orders to move at 8½ A. M.
28th Dec. 1863

Reveille at 6 A. M. Moved through Larkinsville.

Roads very muddy. Sky cloudy weather cold making it disagreeable. The men were favored by being allowed to march on the R. R. After going about 5 mi. received orders to face about. We had not marched back very far until we were ordered to face about again & proceed on to Woodville (a station about 12 mi. W. of Larkinsville,) only got about ½ way, when we camped for the night. The country round about abounded in many fowls of various kinds of which the boys partook freely.
29th Dec. 1863

Reveille at 5 A.M. Marched at 7 A.M. arrived at Woodwill in good season. Went into camp. Weather clear & cool.

30th Dec. 1863

Still in camp. Expect to stay some time boys all put up chimneys in their Tents making it quit comfortable. Cloudy; Favoring rain.

31st Dec 1863

Raining cold Mustered the Reg't. Rec'd orders to prepare winter Qrs. Boys all making houses & chimneys &c.