

**Steamer Keyport by artist James Bard**

Camp on New Market Heights, Va.

Jan. 2<sup>nd</sup> A.D. 1865

My Dear brother Israel & dear friends at home,

After considerable delay I again wield the pen to drop you a few lines, or more than a few I hope. As I have not written to you since leaving Opequan except a brief letter at Point Lookout, I will now endeavor to give you details that may be interesting to you. I will begin at Opequan Creek Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>, 64. That eve, at dark, orders came to move the next day at 9 A.M. That was most unexpected news and as no one knew when we were to go, not even Lt. Col. Wildes, our Brigade Comd'r, but all expected to Petersburg. Therefore the news was quite unwelcome and caused as much dread as disappointment on our minds for after our summer's campaign in the Valley, ever running back and forth and capped in the fall by three heavy battles, we hoped and desired to spend the winter in peace and comfort, especially after building our own quarters, instead of being transferred to another department, one where operations are kept up through the winter as sternly as through the summer. I said we did not know where we were to go but Petersburg was on the mind and tongue of every one and Petersburg was a bitter pill to swallow I assure you, and some wouldn't swallow it until we passed Harpers Ferry and then next in turn Washington City. Such cases preferred the taste of W. Va., Kanawha Valley & even Tenn. However, we all recollected we are yet soldiers and are liable to any fortune or misfortune just as the ticket happens to draw. So on Monday noon we took passage on the cars for we didn't know where and didn't care much where. A ride of 20 hours on the cars brought us to the World renowned city of Washington D.C. But we were not long detained there. We soon were on board the Steamer Key Port bound for City Pt. I did not see much of the city of W. Although I got on top the cars, I saw nothing of unusual interest except the Capitol House with its high dome and the nice yard and iron fence enclosing it, the niggers

working and hanging around there were black like all other niggers are, the cannons, howitzers, etc. and the great piles of solid shot piled up in the yard of the Arsenal. As soon as all was safely on board, we steamed out and down the old Potomac. We glided so smoothly that we were hardly conscious that we were moving at all. As we passed down the river we could see the flags floating above the numerous forts protecting Washington on the Va. side of the river. The weather was quite cold and being put in an uncomfortable place on the boat we did not much enjoy our long ride either by land or water. Travelling as soldiers have to taking care all the while of their bed, board, gun, traps, etc., etc. is generally as dreadful as pleasurable and in fact I prefer a peaceful quietude in quarters to any car or boat ride to any place whatever. I used to think that I would like car travelling and travelling generally, but I have changed my mind "Most beautifully" while I have a soldier's cares resting on my shoulders. I prefer boat riding to car riding. It is much smoother. The weather being cold and the boys disappointed, a lot of them seized the opportunity (supposing it to be the last one) of heating the inner man. Accordingly, a goodly number of the Regt, Co. D having a fair representation, got drunk, to use a plain term. Nothing else of interest occurred on the boat. We got to the head of the Bay (Chesapeake) till night and had to anchor. The water was too rough. Next morning, steamed down to Pt. Lookout where I wrote you while the boat stopped for our rations &c. Steamed out again and the water got too rough for our boat so we run to and anchored in mouth of the Rappahannock River that night. A while before night the boat was expected to sink, the sea being so rough. Next morning ventured out again, passed within about a half mile of Fortress Monroe. Her massive stone walls apparently almost covered on top with large guns that look as savage as so many bull dogs around a melon patch or fruit orchard. Anchored that night in the James River a little below City Point. That afternoon was a perilous one. The captain and crew of the boat were about certain we would go under and but few aboard doubted the grounds of those fears. For about an hour all of us nearly would gladly have changed our position for one in either of the fights we had in the Valley. There was some sober men for a while I assure you. The Captain of the boat ordered the officers' horses thrown overboard if the storm had not soon moderated. The boat was broken in several places and the water dashed in furiously, but thanks to Him who reigns on land and sea, we sustained no injury. Nothing else of interest occurred on journey by sea except we passed water vessels of all kinds and sizes, from the little canoe up to the great sail ships, iron clads and others, war vessels not excepted. Next morning (Friday) the boat reported at City Pt. and then came on up the river to the landing just below the pontoon bridge across the James and about a mile below Dutch Gap Canal. During the afternoon we marched to our present position which is about half way between Richmond and Petersburg. We are on the ground known as "deep bottom" and along the New Market road about two miles from Ft. Birney. This ground and its works north of the James was captured by Gen. Birney and Ord last September. I have not been around much yet so I can not describe much of our position. We are to the rear of and are temporarily attached to the 24<sup>th</sup> Army Corps which occupies the right of Grant's line. The 18<sup>th</sup> Corps (Colored) is on our left in the neighborhood of Dutch Gap Can. and James River.



*Pontoon Bridge Deep Bottom -*

**The pontoon bridge across the James River at Deep Bottom**

Having given you an account of our journey by land and by sea which brought us to our new department, which to make the best of it, was a cold, disagreeable, unpleasant one, the like of which we hope may not occur in the remainder of our three years, or in fact in our sweet little life time. We got here on Friday eve and pitched our dog tents on the naked ground the same as in the summer. On Sunday morning we got orders to put up winter quarters. It being the Sabbath and Christmas at that, for one I most awfully hated to commence the task, but being almost destitute of axes, the Lieutenant gave us his axe and requested us to commence the job. We were loath to do so but finally concluded to go to work. We succeeded during the ensuing week or last week in getting up our house and as good or better one than we had at Opequan Creek. We built on the same style but we had to use small stone & mud for the fire place and small pine and cedar poles for our bunk which we have covered with pine foliage and without jesting, makes an easier bed than boards do. Our same mess is together except Dunn who worked himself in as Brigade Quartermaster's clerk and is not with us now. He still remains in the Valley I believe.

The country here is about as level as where you live and is sandy, all sand in fact. There are lines of breastworks running in all directions and a line of substantial forts. These works are well made and I am glad they are now in our possession. I don't think they ever paid the rebs the expense they cost them of hard labor. The timber is mostly pine, some oak and hickory on the highest places with gum in the lowest places. Don't gum wood burn well! If we build another fire place I guess we will use gum wood

instead of stone for the jams. We get our water from a little ditch which [is] close by camp. I think water must be a scarce article here in the summer. Perhaps we will stay here long enough to find out. The improvements such as fences and buildings are all destroyed. The general appearance of the country now occupied by the Army of the James is that of a deserted, desolate, barren country, cut up by breastworks and forts presenting one field of grand military operations. We lie about two miles from the river. We hear the boats whistle daily. Our rations are hauled on wagons from the river by us. Our rations are the same about as up in the Valley though the pork and hard tack are not so good, but we don't starve as long as we get full rations. We draw every two days.

We have not been called out for any duty yet and the troops here say the duty is very light. We hear skirmishing and cannonading every day. The last several days has been much quieter than when we first came for the several first days we heard cannonading at Dutch Gap Canal about every five minutes day and night. Howlett's Battery is the one that has constantly annoyed our workmen at the canal and though they have fired thousands of shells at them, but fifteen have been killed in all. Those 200 pounders make a noise every time they are fired, but then we are used to war's alarms and as long as we can remain here about two miles in the rear of the line and lie on our back at our ease, I'm sure I don't care how much powder, iron and lead the Confederacy waste making noise for us. This is old Butler's department and is said to be the easiest on the whole line. I hardly think we will be wanted for anything more than a reserve as but one Division of Crooks command came down. Perhaps we will return to the Valley again after Butler gets thoroughly through with his expedition against Wilmington, S.C.



**Part of the Howlett Line overlooking the James River**



**Union soldiers digging the Dutch Gap Canal**

It seems that the combined land and naval force of Butler and Porter turned out to be as grand a failure as it was an undertaking.

Well I must now change my subject somewhat. We were without any mail until last Saturday night. Every one was getting anxious and uneasy but finally our mail come. I got 4 letters, one from Myra, one from Rhodes who is getting along finely at Clarysville hospital, and one from my ever faithful and highly cherished correspondent. I needn't say who. I was glad to learn of your health but regret the death of Mr. Kime as well as of any other valuable citizen of my old home community. I also got a Tiffin Tribune, the first one for six months or more, also the Pacific, the N.Y. Independent and 11 copies of the Telescope. We were very eager for reading matter, so those papers were very acceptable and last but not least, a pair of socks & suspenders. I got more papers yesterday and also today and another pair of socks and gloves. They came through all right. My heart is fuller of gratitude to you all for these favors than my ink stand is of ink and that lacks but little. My blots will vouch for that. My heart says, God bless My Mother and long may my kind brother live and may Heaven's blessings rest on all who did me these great favors.

I must [close] with saying I am in excellent health, fine spirits, comfortable situation and great happiness.

I hope to write this week again.

I remain yours in purest love,

My love to you all.

A. Powell

Camp near James River East Va.

January 9<sup>th</sup>, 1865

Brother Israel,

I was somewhat disappointed in my intentions in not writing you this last week, but I will commence early this week and can perhaps carry last week's intentions into effect this week, that of writing you twice.

We still remain in our quarters on a gentle hill called New Market Heights. We are now very comfortably situated in our little houses, having no duty of any kind to do except a light camp guard. We have no picketing to do, no breastworks nor forts to build and don't drill even.

We drew kettles, pans, &c to cook in the other day and we get the usual amount of pork, beef, beans, bread, &c so it appears they are fattening us up for some purpose in the future or are giving us good times to repay us for last summer's hard times, or it happens to be our good luck to be situated as we now are. This latter is by far the most probable, for I have learned long ere this that it is all luck and no sense whatever a set of soldiers have dealt to them. At least such is generally the case. Of course there are exceptions to all rules. We are now having the easiest times the Regt ever had, although we don't enjoy ourselves as well as last winter at Martinsburg because here is nothing but army life, that is, nothing or nobody to be seen but belongs to the army. No meetings, no nothing hardly of civil life like we saw last winter at Martinsburg.

Unusual quiet has pervaded here for several days past. We have not heard as much firing for several days as we did in ten minutes when we first came. The weather is very nice and moderate. Several inches of snow fell several nights ago but soon disappeared. The weather here, I think, is warmer than in the Valley. It evidently is much warmer than in Seneca according to your statements as well as of others of the condition of the weather there. The health here so far has been good. A few complain of bad colds, but no fevers yet I believe. My health continues very good. I hope the same is your case.

Having three of your letters to reply to again, I turn to them. Allow me first to say I rec'd one from Samuel the other night dated at Savannah, Ga., Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>. He was well and gave a glowing account of their campaign. I will include his letter with this.

I spose you have had some fine rides ere this as you said snow only was wanting as early as Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>. I wouldn't mind much and take a sleigh ride under the favorable circumstances you enumerate. I hope you and "Sallie" or whoever you may choose (for I spose the boys do the choosing now since leap year has expired) will have many a fine time "while the bells are ringing" and I hope those bells and belles will make you more charming music than the 200 pounders at Dutch Gap do this morning since I have commenced writing for they keep a tremendous thundering over there this morning which sounds very plainly this still smoky morning. I spose the Johnnies mean to hurt somebody just for the fun of it. Let 'em shoot. But perhaps you have yielded to the fascinating charms of that "gay beauty" an outline of whose features you gave me, and accepted her invitation in preference of going out a sleighing, or of staying at home with one more sensible and with one where presence and influence is worth vastly more to any young man than these gay young Madams which benefit is derived from one known by the favorite, esteemed and beloved name of Maam, a name common to every household and hearth stone group and which is oft mentioned away down here in our soldier homes. That name, even to me, is dear and is cherished and that person whom I recognize as my Mother is prominent among the very dearest ones of Earth, nor am I ashamed that she should know it. Well it makes no difference to me whom you associate with only that you keep in good society for you know the list of maxims that might be mentioned first here.

You speak of spelling schools next winter when you indulge the hope of my presence. Well, if they be such as Koch had some time ago, I'm quite sure I wouldn't "be chosen in".

Turning to yours of 23d Dec., I learn you are determined not to starve to death as long as beef, butter, taters, &c are as abundant as they are with you. So you have at last concluded to dispense with that celebrated corn crib, the one which I was sadly duped to transport from Gilbra. I freely admit I was cheated in that bargain, and allow me to tell you perhaps for your benefit, that that has learned me never to buy the cat in the log again. Of course I did it only for a brother's accommodation, but what so much mortified me was the misrepresentation of the animal made to me by several individuals whom I will not now mention. But live and learn is the maxim. So let the past be past. About the box. Had we remained in the Valley I would had you sent me a box of such edibles as you would choose to send, but since we have come down here, it is played out. While up there quite a number of boys sent for boxes. Reeme & Dice among the rest. But as yet, the boxes have not come and I don't care about one since you sent me those socks &c by mail. We have edibles enough in the shape of rations and if we want any extras we can procure them from the sutlers. And bread, meat, potatoes, onions, sugar &c we can buy at the Commissary at the government prices. I sell most all the sugar I draw as rations. Several weeks ago, sugar was worth 25c. per lb, potatoes .03c per lb. Now sugar is .16, potatoes .01¼ c. Other things in proportion. Sherman & Thomas I spose caused the decline. As to Mrs. Fisher, I meant the blacksmith's wife. I had not learned of Mr. F.'s discharge so I supposed he was still in the service, and at \$16 per month you know better than I what kind of a living it would make for his family in the circumstances he left it. However I only made her an instance of the case I meant to present to you, i.e. to be friendly or charitable to needy wives & families of absent soldiers. We have at times been pretty hard up for clothing within the last year, but I spose Reeme & Dice hardly more than mailed that letter when we got a lot of clothing. We drew again the other day so we are now pretty well supplied though we can't draw boots anymore. We have to take shoes.

Coming on to a new sheet I must not overlook your next sheet of 16<sup>th</sup> Dec., especially as it relates to home matters. So the old stand still has an existence and a place in the same room it used to have. What a lesson it teaches, for I have seen more substantial, more costly and more useful too, things pass away and perish since I left that old stand. But I must not stray from my subject. What a curiosity it will excite to one who has been three years absent to return and again view the very same old things which were old even before leaving, but I will not enlarge on that thought until I'm a little surer of seeing those things again. I surmise however my greatest desire will be to see not only the things but the persons of that dear old home, and in them may my great surprise arise, for I am astonished how Ruth must have grown since I last saw her. I got her photograph from Mr. Bowersox a while before leaving Opequan. Why, she must be a young woman already. I got the picture in good shape and hope I can keep it so it looks natural only in size. How she has grown. I still have yours which you sent me last spring, but it is more the nicer for having been on the Lynchburg raid and through the many rains and rubs it passed since it has been in my pocket. But in connection with the old stand you spoke of letters. The portion of "the many" letters that came to me from the old stand have been very welcome messengers. I truly hope they will continue as lengthy, interesting and frequent as ever. I have no stand to write on, but the whole number of my letters written for the year 1864 was 117 against 89 rec'd during the same time. I spent \$32.50, rec'd \$25.60 besides my govt. pay of which I got \$142.

Your sweet little sheet of Dec. 30<sup>th</sup> came to hand on 6<sup>th</sup> inst. A part of its news was surprising I assure [you]. If I was near enough I would present the daddy with a brass button, but then in times like these, everybody ought to do some thing for their Country. Long may the youngster live & grow fat. How did the big meeting result at the Grove? Will you please give me results of the meeting at the various churches this winter? I got two copies Pacific. The one contained a very interesting lecture. I am very fond of reading good lectures, sermons, and extemporaneous speeches.

Well we did not go in front of Petersburg as we thought to. We got to a more agreeable place and being about two miles in rear of our front line, your admonitions are unnecessary at present, though the time may come when things will not be so lovely with us. I have not been around much yet, it being against orders to go far from camp without a pass and only two men from a Regt are allowed to be absent on pass at a time. There is not much chance to sight around. But I have discovered a goodly number of camps along the front so I think there is no danger of a surprise as at Cedar Creek last Oct. There is no news here of late. We heard Ft. Fisher was captured by Admiral Porter after Gen. Butler left him. Whether true or not I can't say. There has been no papers in camp for several days.

I must bring this to a close.

I remain yours as ever,

To I. Powell

A. Powell

Camp near James River, Va.

Jan. 13<sup>th</sup>, 1865

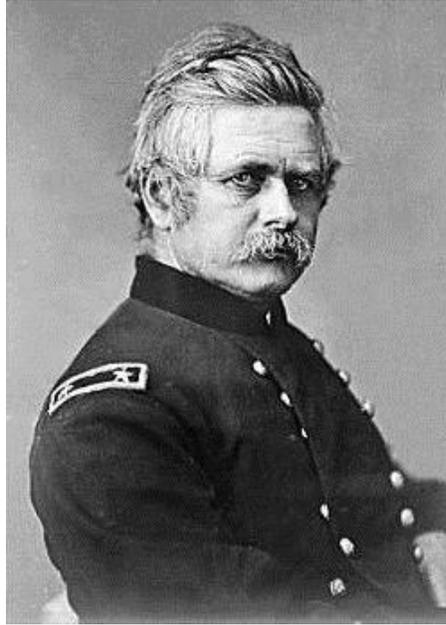
Dear Bro.

According to promise I resume my pen today to write you the second time this week. I am well as usual and truly hope you all are the same. The health in general still continues good. I have received no mail, except the Telescope, of which fourteen copies are now sent me for distribution, since I last wrote you. And as nothing of importance has transpired to form a theme of thought, I will have to dust some of the cobwebs out of the corners of the brain in search of subject enough [to] fill my sheet. I will first relate you the things that interest us most.

Old Ben Butler has lately been removed from this command and sent to lower Mass. to his wife. So away goes another old veteran General on the shelf to dry. His late conduct down at Wilmington or Ft. Fisher of which I spose you are aware, is thought to be the cause of his removal. It seems old Gen. U.S. don't want any of his officers to say "can't" when it goes to take a place from the enemy who happened to fall under his hand, won for him his popularity far more than his military genius or his grand achievements. Gen Ord supersedes him. Ord has a good reputation and is said to be a very fine man as well as an officer.



**Major Gen. Benjamin Butler**



**Major Gen. Edward Ord**

Last Monday night an order came, said to be a general order from Gen. Grant, for ten percent of the men to be granted thirty days furlough. Accordingly, the furloughs were made out in haste and were going the rounds when on Wednesday morning the order was revoked, thus allowing furloughs to none except a very small percent and them on Surgeon's certificate. So the grand thing was played out most beautifully, and to the surprise and chagrin of the lucky first lot who expected to see home in a week or less. Well, it didn't make any difference to me particularly for I had no notion of getting a furlough. I think I can wait seven or eight months yet. I guess I would better think so any how, but some of the boys went to considerable trouble and expense putting on style to go home and be somebody for a few days. I don't think the first order came from Gen. Grant for I don't think he is as much a lover of "the black bottle" as the originator of that order. However the revoking of that order seems to a great many who are naturally fidgetty, to mistake an early movement of some kind here. I am not much of a Prophet's eye myself so I will wait patiently for orders. Several days ago the enemy tried to erect a fort from which they could shell our gun boats in the river below, but our boys could not see it, so they set to work and judging from the tone of the cannonading that ensued for several hours, I don't believe the enemy could see it either. A tremendous thunder of artillery answered for several hours.

The upper end of Dutch Gap Canal was blown out several days ago and several weeks more of time and work will be required to get the channel in proper order for the Monitors to pass up it. It is not yet determined whether it will prove a success or a failure. If the latter, it will be another of Grant's big ones, of which I think he already has a quota for a man of his rank. The papers report Sherman again on the move coming toward Charleston. The Richmond papers howl furiously that Sherman is allowed to go where he pleases. They seem to have far more dread for him in Richmond now than for Grant. From all accounts Gen. Thomas flogged Hood as effectively as Sheridan did Early. Genl. Stoneman's raid is pronounced as highly satisfactory. The military situation all around is very encouraging and as usual at such times, a great many can see the end of the war ere long, this year yet.

The weather is very fine and quite moderate for this time of the year. The ground has hardly been frozen enough yet since we are here to prevent plowing or working of any kind in the ground, so we don't have so much need for clothing here as in the Valley. Yet those socks feel very comfortable and the gloves don't come amiss some mornings while the suspenders feel much better than leather ones. The price of such gloves here is \$1.50, suspenders \$1.00 & \$2.00 per pair. The kind of paper I now write on is worth 40 cents per quire. It's a fine quality, ain't it? Small size letter paper is same price. Butter 75 cts per lb., biscuits 0.4 c. a piece.

How shall I repay mother for those socks and the many other favors she has done me since I left home for the army? What kind of present does she desire? Anything in the line of books or papers, or of apparel, or she does not want any such articles? How would a patent clothes springer suit her, or is there more humbug than virtue about that article? Well, let her make her choice of whatever it may be, or if she desires nothing. Assure her that her kindness will not be forgotten by me as long as I live and if I am spared to return home, I hope I can repay her in after life. And by speaking thus of Mother, I don't forget Father either. As for yourself, I trust you need no further assurance of any appreciation of your many favors.

As soon as I can, I will have my picture taken and send to you.

I wrote to Justin last night and to Samuel several days ago.

For the present, I will close.

I remain yours as ever,

To. Mr. I. Powell  
Tiffin, O.

A. Powell  
24<sup>th</sup> A.C. Via Washington D.C.

P.S. Please send me some stamps again.

Camp near James River Va.  
Jan. 20<sup>th</sup>, 1865

Affectionate Israel,

I will endeavor this eve to write you a few lines to inform you that I am well as usual, truly hoping this will find you all the same, hearty, hale and in good spirits.

The usual quiet and monotony has prevailed here, this excepting the salute in honor of the capture of Ft. Fisher, which has been the subject of general talk and the cause of general rejoicing. There evidently was a strong and fierce contest for the possession of those works on Federal Point and I do not envy the heroes their brilliant glory and honor for their noble deeds of valor by which that almost invaluable possession to either party came into our possession. Our men suffered heavily, but according to newspaper reports they did not suffer more according to numbers than our Regt did at Opequan last 19<sup>th</sup> Sept. And the capture of seventy two guns and two thousand live prisoners together with the works is very gratifying.

The Confederacy is crumbling. Look out for its fall. I see in today's paper the escape of two more of the 123<sup>rd</sup> officers from rebel imprisonment. Our officers are lucky in slipping away from the rebs. Nearly all of them are now out, though but few of them are now with the Regt. Officers will play off too.

Yours of the 8<sup>th</sup> came to hand 16<sup>th</sup>. I learn from letters of more recent date of a very deep snow in Seneca. So I spose if you have good sleighing again, you hardly find time to spend the evenings at home with the more sensible but less gay of society, especially as you say there was a super abundance of spellings and singing even before sleighing. And the tone of your letter is such that it seems to be fashionable for young men to wait on

some lady. Just now, while I think of it, allow me to ask you, privately, who the leading or most attractive of the fair sex are by this time? Does Net Miller, for instance, still hold prominent posish, as we call it, among the good looking and admired, and how her near neighbor also? But enough of that for one dose, thinks I.

By the prices you give a person ought to make a fortune out of a few steers and as many pigs. As to my crop of wheat, I think it was 108 bushels from the machine. Does father intend flouring it or selling in the grain?

Well, it is getting late and I must close.

I remain yours as ever,

To I. Powell

A. Powell

Camp near James River, Va.

Jan. 25<sup>th</sup> '65

Dear Bro. Israel,

I improve this opportunity of penning you a few lines to inform you of the state of affairs as transpired since last writing.

Active operations commenced in the vicinity of Dutch Gap Canal. The enemy felt along our lines and made a desperate [attempt] to carry our works there, but our colored troops, who hold that part of our line, handsomely and effectively repulsed three charges. The enemy brought three gun boats down the River intending to run on down and break our pontoon bridge across the River which is about a half mile wide where the bridge crosses. Thereby they would sever our connection with the other side the River thus preventing our retreat and any reinforcements to our aid. They had a large force massed on our right of Infantry and Cavalry. That force was to flank and charge us as soon as their [boats] would come down the river and shell us out of our forts and breastworks. Thus you see they were going to play smash with all our force this side the river. But they were beaten in their own games. Our men blew up one gun boat and drove the other two ashore. The crew was on that one at the time it was blown up. That occurred yesterday and last night our men succeeded in bringing off the two that were run aground, capturing their crews.

This morning their massed force left our community doing no damage at all that I know of as yet. We were on the lookout for the chaps. We were up at 4 A.M. and waiting for their approach, but they failed to come in our sight.

We are now under orders to be ready for a move at 4 in the morning with two days rations prepared. We do not know if we will have to go any where or not. I thought I would write you tonight not knowing when opportunity will offer itself again, though I hope in a few days. We are not scared yet but take it cool as a cucumber. We've encountered Johnys ere this.

I still remain in excellent health and fine spirits, hoping you all are the same.

For the present, I close.

I remain yours a ever,

I. Powell

A. Powell

P.S. I sent you my diary of '63 and '64 yesterday. Also a package of papers of Independents. As soon as, or when you peruse the diary and the Sermons and Lectures of Rev. H. W. Beecher, will you please put them away for me in my little box, as I wish to preserve them all. This eve I send a pamphlet to Father, a narrative of Capt. D. S. Caldwell's prison life.

I rec'd a letter from Kate I. today. They were all well when she wrote. Also a letter from Mr. S. H. Ruse of near Hopewell. He reports a good

revival meeting at Hopewell, a notice of which by Rev. I. Crouse I saw in the Telescope.

I have had no mail from you since last writing. Are you too busy sleigh riding the ladies now? Just entertain one for me occasionally & report to me your success.

Camp Holley on New Market Heights  
Near James River Va.  
Feb. 1<sup>st</sup>, 1865

Bro. Israel  
Dear Sir,

I will make another effort to write to you in reply to your favor of 14<sup>th</sup> which came to hand 26<sup>th</sup>, yours of Friday 20, rec'd on Friday 2d, and of 24<sup>th</sup> rec'd on 30<sup>th</sup>. I was just ready to write you on eve of 30<sup>th</sup> when we got the order to pack up everything and be ready to move at any moment. Obedient to orders we soon put ourselves in readiness for action and then got orders to wait for further orders. We waited from 7 to 9 o'clock P.M. when we were ordered "to your quarters march and go to bed." We obeyed that with promptness and alacrity. I won't begin to tell you the thoughts that revolved in our minds during those two hours of intense suspense, nor of the names that flowed freely from every tongue. But I will tell you that we found out to our satisfaction the next day (yesterday) that the whole thing was a pill, or to use a soldier term, a complete bore, gotten up only in our own Brigade, for the purpose I suppose of seeing how quick we could get ready for action. Well there are tricks in all trades but mine, you know the saying is, and I indulge the opinion that there will be a trick or two even in my trade in less than twelve months. At any rate, I will wager my old hat on it if every thing comes around right.

When last I wrote to you we were expecting to leave but a Division of another Corps went instead of ours. It is supposed they went to Wilmington, N.C. We don't envy them their birth. The utmost quiet has prevailed in front of Richmond since my last writing. I am told our line on the extreme right has been advanced some distance since Lee's great failure on the James.

I have no news of interest to communicate this time. We have not had any papers nor dispatches for some days. The papers are rec'd regularly at Department Head Quarters but are not allowed there to go any further. The cause is supposed to be the Peace Movement. "What about Peace" is the universal cry here now and nobody of course knows anything much about it. Yesterday our Lt. Col. learned at Div. H'd. Q'rs that the Rebel Vice President Stevens and three members of the confederate Congress passed through our lines enroute to Washington in company with F. P. Blair who has been going back and forth a number of times of late with Peace Propositions. Some of our company who were working at Dept. H'd Q'rs several days ago saw about a dozen rebel deserters who came in our lines that day. Seven of them were of one Co. of the 7<sup>th</sup> Ga. Regt. They said desertion would be much greater but of late their officers told them there would be Peace by the first of May without fail. So it seems both armies confidently exploit Peace by May next, but I will inform you there are exceptions to this belief as well as all other rules. At any rate, I don't count on it very big so soon as that. I hope I am wrong.

Judging from the tone of your late letters you must be having some gay times, lots of sleigh rides and plenty of fun. From the characters you name, it seems the world has been moving and the girls growing at home considerable within the last two or three years. I recognize several names you mention and remember them as quite young girls. Now they are holding conspicuous places in the ranks of womanhood and courtship. But what has become of the

older ones? Removed to the state of oblivion? You already told me many had gone to despair. But then "when this cruel war is over" and "when Johnny comes marching home" &c, there may be such a general convulsion in that mysterious land as never was dreamed of. Well I hope you are having fine, pleasurable times this winter and I think from the names you have mentioned you have not sought the dregs of society for companionship. This gives me peculiar pleasure. I am glad to learn you are having much pleasure and that your company with the respectable from which you derive your pleasure. I never could, or at any rate, never did enjoy myself very well in the society of ladies. Why I did not I can not exactly explain. Sometimes I would start on one of those popular expeditions and would fail to realize my anticipations, and this failure would so mortify my feelings, which always were sensitive to a fault on that score, that I would prefer remaining at home and busy myself with some book or other, either old or new. Perhaps it was the "nature" of the brute for all natures are not alike. I used to have a very limited power of speech especially in the line called into requisition in such company. But if I am allowed to be my own judge, I think I have improved somewhat in the powers of conversation, on general subjects at least. And I think I have lost some of my former bashfulness too. I have more times than once faced the belching cannon amid its thundering roar while shot and shell were flying fast, yet how do I know but that I will quite as easily as ever before a woman's modest look. However, boyhood days are past and childish things are put away henceforth we must live as men, not children. But this subject is nearly exhausted and we must change, but before changing, allow me to beseech you not to become too fond of pleasure that is based entirely on mirth. I think you will get the full and proper idea of my meaning by referring you at once to Eccl. XI-9. Always preferring duty to pleasure is a safe and good rule.

The weather here is very nice now, warm and sunny, but instead of it producing those lively sensations common in spring, it seems to produce a somewhat stupefying sensation. That is, we feel dull and drowsy.

I must close this. I remain yours,  
as ever in love.

To Mr. I. Powell Esq.

A. Powell

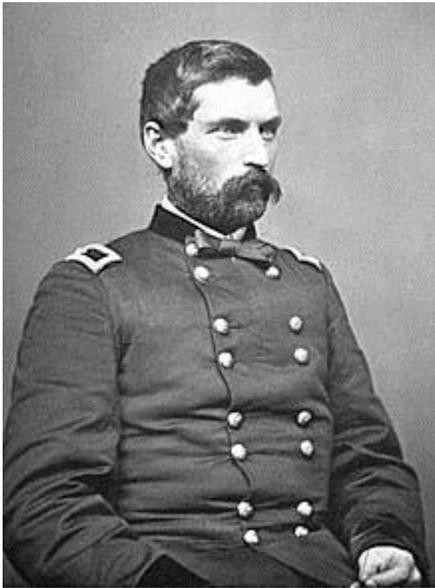
Accept my thanks for 11 stamps in your last letter. I write to Samuel today.

Camp Holley, Virginia  
Feb'y 8<sup>th</sup>, 1865

Bro. Israel,

I am a little late this week in writing the weekly correspondence, owing to some accidental circumstances over which I had no control. For instance, on Monday I had charge of a squad of men cutting wood at Dept. Hd. Qrs. Tuesday was kept busy preparing for the Division inspection of today. Perhaps this needs some explanation. I will explain: By order of Gen. Gibbon, our Corps (24) Comd'r, we have company inspection every Wednesday, when the Co. is inspected by its comd'r. Each other Sunday, the Regt is inspected by the Regt'l comd'r and each other Sunday, each Regt is inspected by the Brigade Comd'r. On these inspections we have our arms and equipments in fine trim, also our knapsacks, blankets, etc and haversack and canteen. The Regt that is reported in best condition in the Brigade is excused from all guard and fatigue duty for one week. The Regts that are best on Sunday's Brigade inspections are reported to the Division Comd'r who inspects each best Regt on the following Wednesday. Our Regt came off best last Sunday in Brigade, so we were inspected today by our Division Comd'r, Brevet Brig. Gen.

Harris. If we come out best in Division, we are excused for one week more. One of the Gen.'s aids said our Regt was best today so if justice is done us, we will have two weeks to rest from all duty.



**Brig. Gen. John Gibbon**



**Brig. Gen. Thomas M. Harris**

We have been kept pretty busy for several weeks past at cleaning up our guns, but now we have them in fine condition. We always heard and read a great deal about style in this army, but I don't think we heard too much. At any rate, if the style which consists of clean guns, neatly packed knapsacks, blackened boots or shoes and equipment and polished brass which we have to exhibit to our inspecting officers twice a week, if all such would put down the rebellion, this army would be far more famous for victories than it is. But such military style it seems was first learned from the notoriously well disciplined Major General George McClellan, who thank fortune, is now in a more fitting place for one of his abilities than in command of this army.

From the tirade I offer against style, perhaps you think I speak improper for one of my standing. Being of the best Regt in the Division you may think we should pride ourselves in such glory. Well, I am like most all of my comrades and many of our officers, disgusted at so much foolery, for too much even of a good thing is worse than not enough. I believe in having our arms and equipments clean and in good order, ready for action wherever needed and in being good soldiers, but style don't add much to the fighting qualities of any one and as fighting seems to be the policy more surely fixed upon than ever of late, for ending this war, I think those qualities should be mostly encouraged. But they will have their own way any how. So mote it be.

When last I wrote to you peace rumors were rife in great abundance. Everything was kept hid from us until today. The daily papers came around for the first [time] for a number of days. From these papers we learn that President Lincoln and Sec. Seward returned from Washington on Saturday and the rebel peace commissioners to Richmond from their interviews at F'tress Monroe. All we can learn of what was accomplished is: Lincoln gave them a plain statement of his firm and determined resolutions to maintain the law and constitution of the Country he presides over, and they, the rebel com'rs, did not agree to yield. For my part, I never counted big on peace through a compromise, so I am not much disappointed at the failure of those high

notables to make peace. I look with more hope for peace to the movement of Sherman and others, though that picture has a dark background. I plainly discover in it some awful battles. Our latest war news are that Sherman is moving in three columns, the strongest heading toward Charleston, he being reinforced by the troops from Tenn., and Sheridan's raid on to Lynchburg with 20,000 cavalry. It's late and I close for the present.

I am well & remain yours  
as ever,

To Mr. I. Powell Esq.

A. Powell

Camp Holley near James R., Va.  
Feb'y 16<sup>th</sup>, '65

Bro. I.

I will resume the weekly correspondence this evening, though I have not rec'd any from you this week. I rec'd yours of 4<sup>th</sup> on 10<sup>th</sup>, the day after I sent you my last. It contained all the stamps you mention as well as several previous letters.

It seems your fine sleighing, like most all other things, came to a close finally, and I should judge a little too soon for all those who enjoyed it as much as yourself. Of course I judge from my own stand point, but never-the-less, do I not judge rightly? And from your repeated statements there is no lack of the feminine gender for to increase the enjoyment to its utmost extent.

From the glowing accounts you give, that class of beings just named must be more plentiful in the Buckeye State than they are down in this part of the old Dominion. The thing nearest to a lady that I have seen since we are here is a piece of a lady's hoop several inches long which one of the boys found in his plug of tobacco, except the day I was at Dept. Hd. Qrs. I saw two wenches who excited as much curiosity and elicited as much hallowing, laughter &c. from our sixty men as a theatre would under some other circumstances. But hold up. I beg your pardon. I just now thought of one and only one more exception - Love letters. I mean I saw some of the other boys have some of that species of correspondence. Boys will be boys you know.

Perhaps you will be interrogated. What's the news from the Army of the James, and will revert to me for its answer. Well there is plenty of news just now again. We are quite flush with reports and rumors for the first time since the deep lull which followed the failure of the peace commiss'rs. But all that I have time to give of what seems to be reliable is a whole Regt of the enemy, officers and all, came in to our lines on this side the River, bringing in their arms along with them. My bunk fellow, E. N. Flenner, was at Dept. Hd. Qrs. today to see his cousin, E. E. Scott of Tiffin, now in the Signal Corps, and saw the Regt which he thinks is as large as ours - 400 strong. Also about 90 others came in through our lines last night. Several Capt's and Lieut's were with them.

Desertion has revived to a lively trade again since the peace operations blew up. Let 'em come. That many less to fight. Those who bring their guns with them and turn them over to our Quartermaster get a receipt for \$13 in greenbacks.

Of course you are aware ere this of Grant's late fight on the 7<sup>th</sup> inst. whereby he gained five miles more of the enemy's territory. There is heavy cannonading over in that direction to night. Perhaps Grant is starting again for the South Side R.R. We here can hear the cannonading just distinctly enough to count the number of shots. Hostilities have ceased in this department since Lee's failure to come down the River with his rams and gunboats last month.

It seems that you get my letters irregularly. I can account for that only by blaming the mails. I still adhere to the old policy of sending one every week, and sometimes an extra one. I wrote to Father & Mother last week. Sometime since I sent you my diary of '63-4 and an Independent & several Sermons. Did you get them? I will send another gist of Sermons next week. You will do me the kindness to preserve them all when you have read them through, in case you choose to read them. I also sent Father a copy of Capt. D. S. Caldwell's Prison Life. Was that rec'd? I will finish reading the Jan. No. of Atlantic Monthly soon and will send that to you. I rec'd a letter from Justin a few days ago. They were all well then. Dut thought it time to saddle up the Canadian Pony.

I suppose the draft came off on the 15<sup>th</sup> so all that drew prizes in the grand lottery, or the most of them at any rate, have concluded to travel north for health's sake, of course. I have had no letter from Samuel since the one I sent home and none from I. J. Powell for a coon's age.

The report that twenty peace commissioners came through our lines enroute for our base to try terms of Peace again on Wednesday was first communicated yesterday and is fast gaining ground for reliability, though it don't cause much emotion. The other effort was such a grand humbug that every [one] has lost confidence in the like.

I must close by saying I am well as usual, hoping [you] are the same.

Yours as ever,

To Mr. I. Powell

Corp'l A. Powell

Camp Holley, Virginia  
Feb'y 24<sup>th</sup>, '65

Israel Powell

Dear Brother,

Your favors mailed 11<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> came to hand 17<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>. I have been prevented from replying since their receipt by circumstances under which I could not do the matter justice in my own opinion, hence I delayed the matter until today, now improving the opportunity with much pleasure. I will now explain what I have already stated.

On Monday I volunteered to do fatigue duty, which was to go to Deep Bottom Landing on the James, two miles from our camp, and help unload a canal boat of hard tack. I handled more hard tack that day than I would like to be compelled to devour before getting my discharge from the service. The eastern hard bread differs from the western considerable. The latter are the best quality and made at Cin. or other western cities. Four of them make a pound. The eastern, the kind we now get, are made at Brooklyn, N.Y., ten make a pound, are packed in 50lb boxes of dry pine lumber a foot deep, a foot & a half wide and two feet long. We now draw hard bread half the time, soft bread the other half, but we can trade coffee and sugar for soft bread and can buy it at the Brigade Commissary at seven cts per loaf of 18 ozs each. We have an abundance of both kinds on hand all the while as well as other rations of meat, &c.

Since Monday I have been tinkering around at one thing or another and doing nothing much at last, more than drawing the company rations which now is my special duty. A few days before the New Market fight last May, Capt. Shawhan made Corp. L. Coe Company Commissary Sergeant. Coe was wounded in the battle and never was with the company any more.

Corp'l D. E. Reeme succeeded Coe in the business and attended to [it] until I succeeded him several weeks ago, he being detached for the Regt Brass Band, which has been reorganized since coming down here. This duty formerly was attended to by the Orderly Sergt, but he has so much other duty to attend that makes it necessary to have some one else see to the rations for rations

you know must be seen to and nothing hardly causes so much grumbling in the Companies as the rations when not properly attended to. No one likes to be cheated out of an ounce of either article drawn.

Yesterday was pay day and on such occasions the boys generally feel lively and are noisy. Last Tuesday, Keller & Leitner came to the Regt and took up quarters in our house and the influx of comrades made so much confusion I could not write very well and you are well aware I do poor enough at writing even under best auspices.

Today about half the Company are at some H'd Qrs doing fatigue duty, so I have an opportunity of holding the accustomed weekly correspondence. I am still enjoy[ing] excellent health and fine spirits and very agreeable circumstances, all of which I sincerely hope you all at home enjoy similarly. I rec'd a letter from S. J. Powell on 20<sup>th</sup>. He and family were well. He reports a very favorable situation for himself at a salary of not less than \$700.00 per annum. That much surely ought to keep his head, financially, above the tide.

Nothing of importance has transpired here lately that I know of yet. We had the rumor several days ago of the capture of Charleston and Columbia by Sherman, and this morning we learn of the capture of Ft. Anderson by Schofield. Yesterday we were startled with the report of the capture of Cumberland, Md. and of Gens. Kelly & Crook by some rebel cavalry. That's shameful if true.

Having digressed from the subject I intended writing on, I will turn and notice your favor. I hope you will properly and profitably use that axe and those boots, articles of your late purchase. Be careful that that axe don't cripple you for the cripples and disabled men predominate already when Uncle Abe calls on the Country for aid. Especially does such seem to be the case in Hopewell T.P. And be careful and rightly "break in" those new boots. Don't learn them to carry you to bad places, to places in which you would not wish the best one of the dozen of those fair ones, to see you, and I would call it very bad manners of those boots if you should consent to the request of that one who is likely to paralyze you with "women on the brain", to wait on her to some of those places formerly known as Shindig, if they, the boots would throw your feet into the waltz cotillion, etc., or has such things what was so very common five or six years ago gone into disuse with some good things of that age? At any rate, I hope those with whom you associate do not follow up such practices. Also, don't let those boots lead you too frequently into such places of resort as John Boer's and Phil Grummel's groceries, for I judge those and kindred places to be very risky and ruinous ones to young men, if I dare put any belief in the reports of more than half a dozen of our Co. who were home on furlough through the course of the summer.

But those boots can hardly take you too often to Church, lectures and kindred places where refinement, intelligence and religion are the predominant features. But I must close.

I remain you humble  
brother, Andrew

To Mr. I. Powell My motive for writing this are purely good. I hope you will receive it in a spirit of kindness, the same as I give it.

Yours &c., A. Powell

P.S. Don't think from this that I propose to be your guardian.

Camp Holley, Va.

Feb'y 27<sup>th</sup>, 1865

Affectionate Bro. -

I rec'd a letter from Samuel day before yesterday and answered it this A.M. I will enclose and send it to you. And yours of 17<sup>th</sup> came to hand yesterday and I will try and answer it this P.M.

My health continues good and I hope you all at home can say the same. Nothing of much importance has transpired here since my last writing. I believe I told you our Div. had marching orders. These orders still continue valid as of course they will until executed or else countermanded. There are two reports as to where we are to go. One is to Wilmington, N.C. The other is to the Shenandoah Valley again. And perhaps we will not go anywhere.

Having been interrupted in my writing, I again resume the pen, as I have drawn and divided out the rations for another day. We now draw every day as we expect to leave, when of course we are expected to have four days rations in our haversacks. We have rations in abundance now. In fact, we waste more than half our hard bread. We are all getting fat as porkers.

The weather has been quite Spring-like. For several days past the frogs have been making their appearance and singing with usual glee along the little brooks and swamps so common in Deep Bottom. The warm rays of the Sun dries our blood to its usual degree of laziness, making us feel and making nature look very similar to that season of the year in old Seneca known by the "Last Days of School". Though nature is similar, how different in circumstances.

Yesterday after Dress Parade of the 34<sup>th</sup> Mass. Reg't, I had the pleasure for the first time since 8<sup>th</sup> May last of hearing a short sermon preached. A Christian Commission delegate came up from the rooms of the Commission at the River and preached a short Sermon. There is a revival in progress at camp H'd Qrs. but we are several miles distant and we are not allowed much privilege here of going around at any distance from camp.

I suppose you hear all the preaching you wish to, and many opportunities go unimproved then yet, while we away down here hear but little. I would be very glad if those means of Grace could be somehow economized and more equally distributed. But while such is our will it is not the will of Him who doeth all things well, or at least it is not His Providence and to Him we must submit. He doeth all things well. With Gospel, grace like many other things, we who have a love for such have come to that appreciation of it that we never did before entering the army. I hope when my term of service has expired to enjoy better religious privileges than I do here. I have felt and realized to a more than ordinary degree, I think, the value and importance of a godly profession. I never have regretted the steps I have taken in the cause of my Master, and today when I ask myself the question, am I prepared to live, I bring to memory the very sweet recollections of my Christian profession. And when I ask myself, am I ready to die, I assure you that profession brings no evil forebodings to my mind. Think of the idea, yes, the fact that we must die, and not be prepared? And how be prepared otherwise? Reflect.

I now draw your letter from my side pocket where not a few of excellent epistles from various authors have found a temporary deposit until the pocket becomes too full when I give it a general cleaning out, leaving only a few of the last received ones in. As I think I told you once before that ever since receiving your first favor at Monroeville, Ohio, I have kept one or more of them constantly in my pocket, as well as some books or other papers that contain my name, so if I should accidentally meet the fate of many of my fellow soldiers, the word unknown will not be the only one to grace my grave's head board, even were I am so fortunate as to get a civil resting place for my body. But I am off my subject already. I am very eccentric today. You call my attention to the Colored troops. The article you refer to in the

Telescope was taken from the Jan. No. Atlantic Monthly. They do make good soldiers. The 25<sup>th</sup> Corps, Colored - joined the 24<sup>th</sup> on the left and the statement of the white soldiers who know the conduct of the col'd men praise them very much. We here have nearly as much confidence in them as in the white soldiery. I mean to fight here behind the breast works and where they can't run far. Perhaps if they were in the open field like we had in the Valley they might not do as well. I don't think the route at Cedar Creek Oct. 19<sup>th</sup>, '64 could [have] been turned into so brilliant a victory with the same number of col'd soldiers as was done by the whites. Their merits are esteemed by our enemies too, or they would not have the debating on that question of arming them that they have. They feel proud of themselves as soldiers and do their duty very well.

Protracted meetings - I will be very glad to learn a more favorable account of them than you give. Have you ever given your attention to the matter of how much good a good revival does in the world? Not only at the present time, but in the future. But this subject is so extraneous I will not attempt a discussion of it. Allow me to say I am as much in favor of revivals as ever and hope to participate in that good, glorious and to me, pleasant duty in [the] future, if my life is spared. I hope you do not think that such a profession does in any degree disqualify either sex of any age whatever for your society. I may resume this subject in the future if not disagreeable to you, for if it is disagreeable to you, any thing that I may have to say would not be profitable to you, and unless it would be profitable, perhaps I had better keep silent. Woe, woe unto Bascom & all kindred places.

You astonish me a little, I confess, in the case of a lady I need not mention. But perhaps next time I will have my thoughts together and under command enough to give you my occasional message on that subject - Ladies. The history of my Corporalship needs a little explanation which I hope to have time to give in my next letter.

Yesterday I rec'd \$72.00 for four months pay. Today I sent a comp'd int. treasury note to the Express Office with Lt. Leonard. I addressed it to father, Tiffin, Ohio. I suppose you and father are posted enough on financial business to know what is best to do with such notes. Today I sent you some more of Beecher's Sermons and Lectures. You will please preserve them for me. I sent Ruth the Jan. No. of "Our Young Folks". I will send you the "Atlantic" soon.

I remain yours as ever,

To Mr. I. Powell, Esq.

A. Powell

Evening 24<sup>th</sup>. The good news continues to pour in. A few days ago a salute of one hundred guns was fired in [the] Army of the James in honor of the capture of Charleston and Columbia, S.C. Another salute today in honor of the capture of Wilmington, N.C. It is currently reported that Petersburg is in our possession now. We have rec'd orders to pack up every thing and be ready to move at any moment. Where & when, we know not. I enclose the Express Receipt for my money. There was an exchange of 900 prisoners today. Some of our Co. were among the exchanged. A number of others of our Regt were sent to Wilmington to be exchanged. How it will turn out with them remains to be seen.

No more at present.

Yours &c.

A. P.

If we don't leave here I should be very glad to receive those magazines you speak of when the School Maam has finished them. They will be all the

sweeter for her reading them. I am supplied with stamps just now. You may send some occasionally to keep on hand a constant supply.

The New York Branch of  
The U.S. Christian Commission,  
30 Bible House, New York,  
Send this as the soldier's messenger to his house,  
Let it haste to those who wait for tidings.

C Co., 55<sup>th</sup> Regt, 3d Div., 20 Army Corps.  
Feb. 15<sup>th</sup>, 1865

Dear Brother,

Your most interesting and ever welcome missive I had the pleasure to rec. some time ago, but have been unable to answer it sooner. Contrary to your expectation, it found me in a rather declining state. In fact, I had become so low that I found myself forced to enter the hospital. Shortly after my arrival my complaint grew worse and within a few days, I was unable to leave my sick couch having first the Chronic Diarrhea, which after having brought me become considerable, which was succeeded by a fever which I think originated from the change of climate, and which in connection with the first came very nigh bringing the earthly career to a sudden stop. But with the aid of God and good treatment, I find myself now fast recovering. Of course very weak, but nonetheless out of danger, the disease having left me.

I remained with the Regt for some time after the taking of Savannah and had found myself again upon the march when Providence put a stop to my further advance with our victories. I got as far as Danville from where I was brought back to this place and disposed of in the 2d Sec. of the U.S. Gen. Hospital where I am at present and so here I undoubtedly will remain until again fit for the front which I fear will be for some time to come.

But no more of my complaint. I am getting better and that suffices. Yes, you rightly guessed we had quite a good time as far as soldiers can see & call it, for everything is gay with us as long as our health is good and U. Sam or even Jeff Davis's dominion furnish enough to eat and let me assure you that the latter had to, if I presume against their wish, furnished frequently more than we needed.

News I know none in particular, so hoping that this may find you in the best of health and enjoying all a soldier can enjoy. I close,

remaining as ever  
your most affectionate  
Brother

Sam Powell

Please write soon & direct,

Sam Powell  
2d Sec. U.S. Gen. Hospital  
Ward No. 1 Savannah, Ga.

Your brother is recovering fast & I think that he will be able to leave his bed within 2 or 3 days.

Yours truly,  
Geo. E. Hammond  
Chief nurse

Camp Holley near James River, Va.  
March 5<sup>th</sup>, 1865

Dear Brother,

Having spent the forepart of the day in doing my own washing, then cooking beans and pork for dinner, dividing rations and reading the papers, I now turn to devote the rest of the day in writing and since I have it to do and just now feel so inclined and having your favor of 24<sup>th</sup> ult. before me, why not turn to Our Weekly?, even if a hundred or more of our Regt are playing paddle ball on the parade ground just outside my tent and their gibbering, gabbing, jesting, lying, swearing, talking, laughing, comes as distinctly to my ears as I wish for and considerably more so. But today is a most beautiful warm sunny day and the boys having returned from "General Review" at our Division H'd Qrs. where our whole Division was reviewed by a number of Genls, among whom was Gen. Ord, Department Commander. I was not on review as my present sphere of duty exonerates me from the like when I wish it to, and I generally wish it to. So when I want to attend to something else worse than that the boys tell me our Brigade (1<sup>st</sup>) pays the others in the shade for military appearance and our Regt having the reputation of being the best in the Brigade, I presume playing out of doors something innocent and health invigorating is very agreeable to the "boys".

As to military movements, there are so many rumors, all of a high color to our side however, that it is hardly possible to come at the truth. But now like always in the past, I aim my arrow at the mark of truth and when it hits that I will give you facts. When I do not know whether it strikes truth or not I will give you rumors, so that you can distinguish between the two.

The facts are that about 25,000 troops left the Armies of the James and the Potomac on the River transports to go somewhere, that rumor says to meet Sherman, reinforce him and help combat the same number of the enemy under Gen. Lee to the opposition of Sherman. Our latest news through the papers is that Schofield effected a junction with Sherman and a fight with the enemy under Lee was expected. I now might fill up my sheet with rumors but having something else to write, perhaps of more interest and importance, I forbear.

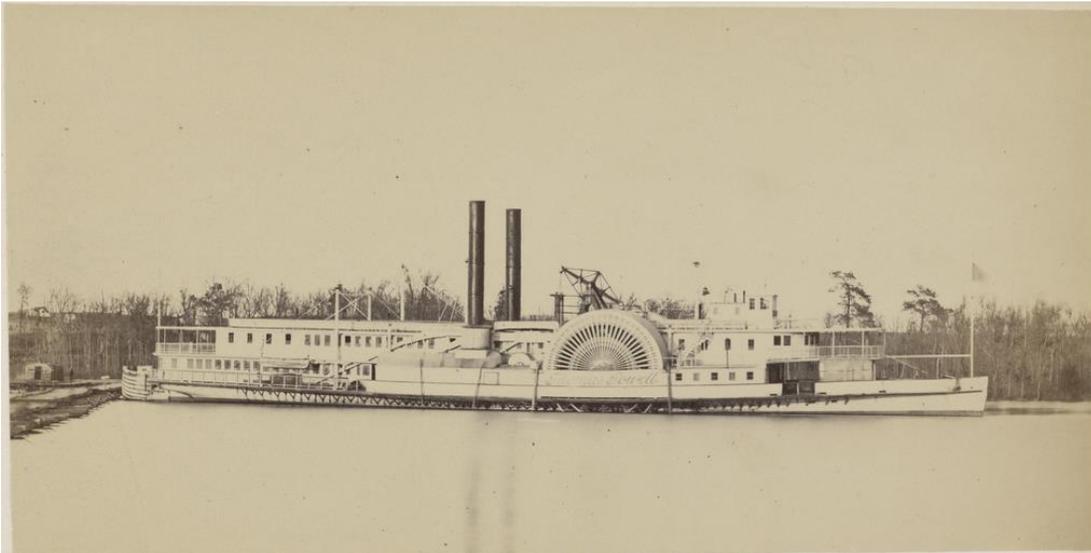
Quiet still prevails all along the lines and deserters continue to come in through both armies to the average of 120 per day. So says the N. Y. Herald's correspondent at City Point. As the reviews are now coming off which were appointed before the late marching orders, I presume we will not be called on until some other requisition is made. I am glad of it. I hope we can remain in our present quarters for a month or two yet and even then not come out of them for to fight, but if such is our lot, we must abide it. We hope for the best.

You inquire of my Corporalship and its duties, etc. I was first made Corporal Aug. 31<sup>st</sup>, '64, appointed by Lt. Leonard. He reduced Sergt Clark at that time, which made the vacancy among the Noncommissioned Officers which I then supplied. My name was put on the muster roll (July & Aug.) unbeknown to me until the mustering officer called my name, so you will understand I did not seek and ding-dong at the Lt. for the promotion. Several weeks after Capt. F. S. came up to the Regt and he had the rolls made over again and changed for he was marked "absent without leave" for a considerable length of time which you know would have involved him in difficulty about his pay. Clark is a very fast friend of the Capt. and he (Capt.) being incensed against Lt. Leonard for that remark on the Muster Roll, reinstated Clark which consequently gave a surplus of Noncommish. and being the last promoted, my name was again placed in the old order. The Capt. promised me then (I helped him make out the rolls) that by the next mustering he again [would] promote me. He was wounded at Winchester and has not been with us since. Lt. Leonard got sick a little before the Winchester battle and was not with us until in Nov. In a few days after coming back and resuming command of the

Company, he properly reduced Sergt Clark and promoted me again by order of Lt. Col. Kellogg, Com'd Regt. I did duty as corporal ever since first mustering as such, and on last pay day I drew pay as such from 31<sup>st</sup> Aug. The above history is as sufficient as I can well give on paper. I have always told you the nature of my present duties but if you desire any further information, you shall have it by asking.

In company with your last letter came one with the same post-mark, but from a different correspondent [than] the regular correspondent from the north region. Will Lang finally interviewed the subject of the "fair sex". I will enlarge a little on it seeing this is the last page of the sheet, and your letters for some weeks past being brim full of the same subject. I am like Gen. Grant in [the] House of Representatives a few weeks ago - out of my proper element. But having seen a white woman two weeks ago today on the hospital boat "Thos. Powell" down at the river landing, together with a few little missives received since then, assure me that such things as the "fair sex" still exist in some part of the wide, wide world and judging from your letters, I feel well assured they exist in your community and that you are well aware of it yourself. Trusting you to be as adept in the business of which you volunteer to do some for me, I guess I shall have to accept your services. But upon a second thought and close consideration of your own obligations, compassion will excuse you, for it would not be humane, much less brotherly, to impose any more obligation upon you now that you are already engaged two and three nights weekly for your self. However, if you have unoccupied time to throw to the wind, why just improve it on my credit in case you find enough of my credit among the fair to improve it on. I'll not warrant you to find that very abundant anywhere and I don't' know where it is the most so. And I leave you with the instructions to report to me of your success semi-occasionally, and if you prove satisfactory I will promote you to Chief of Staff.

Aside from all joking, allow me to say that the ladies do not trouble me much, nor I them. I hardly think of them from one letter to another and care so little about them that so far as I am concerned at



**Steamer "Thomas Powell" at Broadway Landing, January, 1865**

present, it makes me but little difference who they company with, only that, like you, I bow with reverence and respect to the pure, undefiled, chaste, virtuous class while to the opposite I look down upon with disdain and contempt. If any body becomes very friendly, reciprocate their friendship

for there is no harm in friendship. As for writing to the Miss you mention would seem as awkward and abrupt and to all probabilities as unprofitable as to kiss the goddess of liberty on our Nation's coin. And since you have the prerogative of making selections of your own on my account, perhaps said lady's name will soon appear in some of the "reports", I am ready at any time to receive. Wishing you success, I close for the present on this theme, and will have to bring the whole epistle to a close, as I have several other letters to write today.

The present finds me still in the enjoyment of good health and truly hope this will find you all the same.

I remain, yours as ever,

A. Powell

To. I. Powell

P.S. Will you please get me a good silk handkerchief, medium sized, one large enough to bind up a wound if necessary and not too large to carry in my pocket? Send by mail. Whoever hems it shall have a present.  
A. P.

1 o'clock P.M. 7<sup>th</sup>

Your little but interesting letter of 26<sup>th</sup> ult. came in today's mail. I can not account for the irregularity of the mail. Yours seem to come to me regular enough. I am glad to hear from Henry once more. I wrote to him some months since and no reply has come yet. His charity is truly praiseworthy. I am not in need of anything now but what I can get or have you get and send to me. Samuel's wife, or more likely Samuel himself, is more in need of something. I wrote to him a few days ago and told him if he wanted anything or any money, he should send to you for to draw on my account.

Yours &c.

A. P.

Accept my thanks on the reading matter you send.

Camp near James River, Va.

March 15/'65

Dear Bro.

Though a little late already for the usual weekly correspondence, I will now endeavor to act on the principle of "better late than never". I have been very busy this week in reading "Evidence of Christianity", a book of some size which I finished reading yesterday and mailed it to your address. Will you please take care of it for me? You are at liberty to read it if you like.

Everything still remains quiet here with us. Several hundred Cavalry and a Brigade of Infantry went to Fredericksburg several days ago. Some of our troops captured several hundred thousand pounds of tobacco there some days ago.

Gen. Grant has been reviewing some of the troops here lately and Gov. Brough, I am informed, has also been here. The weather continues very nice, warm and dry. The mud is fast drying up and we may expect roads solid enough to move on soon if no more rain falls for several days.

War rumors are very numerous and those concerning Gen. Sheridan have a brilliant hue. Sheridan evidently won a victory near Waynesboro and the rebels seem very uneasy about him. We do not know where he is or how he is succeeding. Rumor says he was in Lynchburg and destroyed the rebel government property there and then struck for Grant's left flank. No news from Sherman. Deserters still continue to come in through our lines.

Your favor of 3d came duly to hand but of its news I was previously advised. I have written to Samuel twice since receiving his last. I sent him some stamps thinking they might come handy to him. I sent you a copy of N. Y. Herald which contained an account of the late inauguration. You will

readily perceive the writer is a democrat and if I had him by the coat cuffs, I hardly know which of two things I would prefer: have him retract what he says of Andy Johnson, or introduce some sole leather to his exterior. I may be deceived but I think Johnson is as competent for the Vice Presidency as Lincoln is for the Presidency and where is the man in the whole Democratic demagoguery that can hold a candle to Abraham Lincoln. But as you and I are of one mind on such topics, there is no chance for a quarrel, so let's change subjects.

Orderly Sergeant J. C. Leahy rejoined the company several days ago. He is here but where are those photographs you gave me to believe you was sending me with him? You seem to be playing off on me. How is it? Frank Hart and I went over to Corps H'd Qrs. last Saturday and today went there again and on the payment of \$4.00 per half doz. or \$7.00 per doz., demanded our shadows. I will enclose one of mine in this. I need not tell you that it is no "very good" representation of me. You can discover that for yourself. Neither is it a "very bad" one, so the boys tell me. As I never made any pretension to beauty of course, I can not complain on that point nor is there enough about the picture for a basis of such complaint. Well, I patronized the best gallery that I know of in the Department so you must not fault me for the ugly thing. If I can get a good ambrotype some of these odd come shorts, I will do so and send to you. I now intend to gratify the many and off repeated wishes of my various friends as I had a dozen photos taken.

I believe I [have] nothing further of importance to communicate this time and supper is too near ready to commence gassing, so I will close for the present.

I remain yours as ever,

To Mr. I. Powell, Esq.

A. Powell

P.S. The exchange of prisoners of war still continues in this Department. Gens. Crook and Kelly and 400 men came down several days ago. The hospitals are returning to us many men who from previous wounds are not fit for service. The lame and maimed are being sent to us.

Can you send me a silver half dollar U.S. coin? I want to get a finger ring made of it, if not too much trouble to you.

A. P.

Please send in one of your posts.

#### U. S. Christian Commission

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

Camp at head Quarters of  
2<sup>nd</sup> Div. 24<sup>th</sup> A.C. Army of James  
March 21<sup>st</sup>, '65

Dear Bro.

Having opportunity, I hasten to improve it to write you a few lines today, informing you of the changes with us here. Last Sunday morning (19<sup>th</sup>) our Company was detached from the Regiment, as well as three other companies of the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigades, and us four Companies now form a "Detachment" of sharpshooters of 2<sup>nd</sup> Div., 24<sup>th</sup> A.C. We turned over our Springfield muskets and drew the "Spencer Repeating Carbine" which loads at the breach, contains seven loads in the breach and one in the barrel, so they will hold eight loads at once. They shoot a metallic cartridge, namely the powder and ball are capped together with a brass cap. The hammer of the carbine strikes a kind of sharp probe which strikes and explodes the cartridge. The ball is about caliber .52, over a half inch diameter. The carbine is calculated to

carry 800 yds. per sights. Our Co. just moved our quarters over here yesterday and today we had orders to march at 8 A.M. We were in readiness, but the move has been postponed for today. I hear it mentioned that the fleet on the River was not quite ready. So you may anticipate the nature of our movement. Our whole Division I am certain was ready to move with four days rations in haversacks and I think the whole Corps was in equal readiness. As we did not go today, we expect to go soon. Where? To Richmond if we can?

Of our carbines, our detachment, etc. I hope to be able to tell you more the next time I write. The Lt. did not draw me one, being the Company Commissary. This is the first time since drawing one at Monroeville that I have been unarmed, and if I always have to run as much, go to as many officials and get as many official papers as last night to draw rations on, I will have quite enough to do without a carbine.

The weather is very nice and fair and nearly as warm as in Seneca at corn planting.

Last night eight of us boxed up our overcoats all in one box and sent to H. A. Buskirk & Bro. to whose store you will please go and get the coat having the initials A. P. on it on a white rag and the expenses, if any, will be paid to Mr. Buskirk.

Your favor of 10<sup>th</sup> with one from Myra of 13<sup>th</sup> came to hand 19<sup>th</sup> and one from S. J. of 9<sup>th</sup> on 18<sup>th</sup>. John's boy was quite sick at time of writing. I want to write to Myra and Henry today so I must close this.

I remain your  
Ever affectionate Bro.

To I. Powell, Esq.

A. Powell

Direct as usual yet a while.

Don't wait too long to send me more stamps.

Camp at Head Quarters of  
2<sup>nd</sup> Division 24<sup>th</sup> Army Corps  
Army of the James, Va.  
Mar. 24<sup>th</sup>, 1865

Israel Powell, Esq.

Dear Brother,

Your interesting and amusing epistolary of Saint Patrick's day came to hand this morning and found a hearty welcome, all the more so because of the Photo. I am glad to learn of your good health. But how do I know you are well? Why, because you don't say the opposite. Well, I too am still highly favored with the same inestimable blessing of a very kind Providence. For a week or more up at the other camp, I was unwell. Not seriously, but enough so to lose four of my one hundred and seventy five pounds of flesh. But if I had to be very industrious I believe I might spare a few more pounds and the photo I rec'd this inst. assures me that I am not the only Powell in that predicament.

Your favor rec'd this morning is unfolded before me and I will hasten to notice its points. You ask, do the Catholics ever feign to keep holy days? I ask, do the Protestants feign to keep the sabbath? I answer both do when circumstances will admit. But our duties as soldiers is no more lenient on Sunday than on Monday. Consequently there can not be any more relaxity of daily avocations on Sabbath than on any other day. This is one of my principle objections to soldering and thank fortune I have but just six months more to serve.

You make a very generous wish for Co. D, 123 Oh. Vols. Thank you Sir. The time is coming when perhaps the majority of Co. D would gladly accept such an invitation somewhere in Seneca Co., say at the most central point in

Tiffin somewhere. But we don't expect any such honors to be paid us for all our boys who have been home on furlough say the people paid so much attention to the hundred days fool killers that they can not now notice old soldiers. Well, let them go. If we get home all right we will be able to take care of ourselves and then maybe we'll find an occasional friend besides.

I am pleased to learn that the highest prize was borne off by Ruth. She shall have another prize if I can find a suitable one here for her. How far is she advanced in the various branches of science? But I am not so well pleased with the incoherent decorum of Jas. Kime, especially since he is one of your associates and that people cherish just as high opinion of him for his intemperance as if otherwise is a mystery to me. Either your kind of society or else myself, is much at fault in that matter. I hope I have written enough to you previously to induce you to observe proper carefulness not to indulge too freely in handling and tasting of that cup which multiplied thousands of inebriates stand out as a witness against to every thoughtful, considerate man. But I trust you are too much of a refined, intelligent and sensible young man ever to be seen under the influence of liquor. I do sincerely hope and earnestly pray to God that no one will ever need to take care of you or I while in such a wretched state as both of us have had to care for others. Trial not, taste not, handle not. I say all the above in the warmth of brotherly love and esteem.

I am much pleased with your photo. Would like to have it on a larger scale but that one does very well. You appear to be getting younger by your looks. Well, I am beginning to look old enough for the whole family, so no difference. Don't neglect to send Ruth's in due time.

Our Division did not move the other day when we expected to and I suppose the moving is all over with now, unless another order comes up. Brevet Brig. Gen. Harris has been relieved from command of our Division by Brevet Maj. [Gen.] Gibbon. We don't like the change. Harris is a religious man, a minister I believe, before he accepted a Colonel's commission of the 10<sup>th</sup> Va. Vols.

Our Battalion is not organized yet. We expect to organize in a few days. In connection with my duties as Commissary, the Lieut. also appointed me to attend to the Co. mail. My duties are not hard but steady. I just rec'd those 3 magazines you sent. I rec'd my Missionary Certificate this morning. I will send to you for its preservation. The weather is a little chilly today. I must close. I remain yours as ever,

My love to you all,

To Mr. I. Powell

A. Powell

#### U. S. Christian Commission

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

Deep Bottom Landing, Va.

March 27<sup>th</sup>, '65

Bro. Israel,

I improve this opportunity of writing you a few lines to inform you of our movements. On night of 24<sup>th</sup>, we got orders to have four days rations in haversacks and be ready to march the next morning. I promptly drew two days rations and next morning (Saturday) at day light, we were on the move, our Co. of sharpshooters taking the advance. We (our whole Division) marched to Bottom Bridge across the Chickahominy 10 miles from our old H'd Qrs. The pontoon corps laid down the pontoon bridge for Sheridan to cross on as it was thought he would come that route from the White House. We remained there waiting for him till next morning when news came that he crossed elsewhere

and we were not needed there. We came back and when near our old camp, a dispatch came ordering us to come here to the River and await orders, as near as we can learn. We don't know where we are to go to nor when but I suppose we will go somewhere soon.

I left your magazines in the Sanitary Commission Room. The agent promised to send them to you. I left the directions with him.

I wrote you several days ago. I have rec'd no mail of any kind since. I am well and truly hope you all are the same.

I will write again soon if circumstances will permit.

I must close this.

I remain yours as ever,

A. Powell

To I. Powell

Direct as before until further notice.

2 o'clock P.M.

I rec'd a letter from Samuel today. He is in moderate health. He complains bitterly of not having rec'd any letters from any of his relatives since he took sick. Will you write to him at once? Address him at

Camp Gen. Hospital

Dauids Island

New York Harbor

Pavilion 11

Camp near Hatcher's Run, Va.

Mar. 29<sup>th</sup>, 1865

Dear Bro.

I avail myself of this opportunity of writing you a few lines to inform you of our whereabouts at present. I wrote to you on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> at Deep Bottom Landing.

That night at sundown, the forces from north of the James River, which are now here, left there. The said force consists of our entire Division and several other Divisions in part or whole. We marched till 4 A.M. 28<sup>th</sup> then rested till 8 A.M., then started again and got near here till sunset when we bivouacked for the night. This morning was awakened at 4 A.M. and came here and relieved a Division of the 2<sup>nd</sup> A.C. which with the other troops, moved out westward.

It is needless for me to say that the whole Army here is in commotion for you will hear it ere this reaches you, and with it I suppose you will hear of a big battle in the neighborhood of the South Side Rail Road. The whole or principle part of the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> A.C. marched out in that direction this morning, commencing long before day light and continuing till noon. I saw more Yankees today than I would want to shake a stick at and I don't suppose I saw one half of the Army. General Sheridan's Cavalry is also with the other troops or cooperating with them. It has been quite quiet today though we can now hear some cannonading in the distance. We, our Division, are left here to watch the lines here and if actually needed, of course, will go out and become engaged also. Owing to our hard marching ever since Saturday morn, I suppose caused us to be left here. We are not sorry I assure you.

Some rebel deserters who came in this morning state that the whole rebel army had orders to be ready to march at an early hour morning also.

Gen. Meade and staff passed here early this morning. Gen. Grant and a Major Gen. said to be Gen. Sherman and other high officials passed here about noon going to the front. There evidently will be a heavy battle. Last Saturday the enemy charged on and captured two forts from the 9<sup>th</sup> A.C.'s line,

but the 9<sup>th</sup> massed, passed in their rear and captured 2200 prisoners and recaptured the forts, artillery, &c., all uninjured. At the same time the enemy tried their hand near here and our fellows captured 500 prisoners, our loss trifling. The 9<sup>th</sup> A.C.'s loss was about 300 killed and wounded.

There is great activity here now in every department, Sutlers, Newspaper reporters, Telegraph Operators, Christian Commission Agents, &c. The Military R.R. comes around this far and the telegraph passes here, goes further around.

We must now draw two days more rations. This and other duties calls me from my stand. So far, all is well with me. I will write soon again if possible.

My love to you all,  
As ever,

A. Powell

To Mr. I. Powell

P.S. Please excuse the haste of my late writings. A. P.

Camp of Co. D, 123<sup>d</sup> O.V.I.  
10 miles from Petersburg  
Ap'1 4<sup>th</sup>, 1865

I. Powell

Dear Brother - I seize this opportunity of writing you several lines before we renew our march this morning to inform you of my welfare up to the present. We have had a great deal of very hard fighting within the last week. On 30<sup>th</sup> our Division marched out and took its assigned place in the line, just on the right of 2<sup>nd</sup> A.C. We maneuvered around all day and next morning the company went out as sharp shooters for our Brigade. A lively engagement was soon commenced and our Company lost eight men wounded. One died soon after and two more fatally wounded.\* Was not actively engaged again till Sunday, 2<sup>nd</sup> when our Co. was very fortunate in not getting one man wounded, although charging up on the forts with the main column. The Reg'ts in the column suffering severely. Yesterday morning, Petersburg with all its works, fell into our possession. Also Richmond at 8 A.M. We are in the best of spirits and feel gay. Our feelings being dampered only by the horrible sights and deeds of the past few days. I have not time to particularize now. None from our neighborhood in our Co. was wounded.

Personally, I was not engaged as I am not armed. The Lieutenant ordered me to remain in the rear with the knapsacks, &c of the company. He said I should keep far enough to the rear to be out of danger.

I must close as the bugle has sounded.

I remain yours  
as ever

A. Powell

To I. Powell

**\*Records show that Private Charles C. Roberts was killed in battle on March 31, 1865. Sergt. Hiram Root died from his wounds on April 8<sup>th</sup>. Private Alexander H. Lott was wounded in the right arm resulting in amputation. Other members of Company D reported wounded are privates John A. Heckman, William Crossley, William Hoover, William I. Locust, and John Wertz.**

Camp at Appomattox Court House, Va.  
Ap'1 12<sup>th</sup>, 1865

Dear Bro.,

Expecting to have an opportunity soon of sending out mail, I will improve the few moments at my command in writing you again. I last wrote you

near Hatcher's Run, 29<sup>th</sup> March. Since then we have been busy in our Country's cause. I will give you a brief history.

On 30<sup>th</sup>, our Division marched out and maneuvered around - not engaged in action. 31<sup>st</sup> moved out a short distance and came on the enemy's works. An engagement ensued lasting all day, heavy firing incessantly. Our Company lost 1 killed, 7 wounded. April 1, our company was not actually engaged. No loss. I rec'd your interesting letter, silk handkerchief & half dollar, for which please accept my warmest thanks. 2<sup>nd</sup> A general assault on the enemy works which proved successful, routed them and drove them to their defenses around Petersburg, assaulted and captured Forts Gregg and others. Co. engaged all day but no casualties. 3<sup>rd</sup> In morning Petersburg and also Richmond were evacuated. We started immediately in pursuit, marched rapidly but no fighting on the route our Corps took until 6<sup>th</sup> when a heavy skirmish took place in P.M. Our Co. lost 1 killed.\* Rapid marching again until morning of 9<sup>th</sup> when we surrounded the enemy and after a brisk fight for an hour, the enemy was rapidly driven back several miles to Appomattox Court House where Gen. Lee surrendered to Gen. Grant. Hoisted the white flag about 9 or 10 o'clock A.M. when all hostilities ceased immediately.

We have been lying here quietly since then. The enemy lying a half mile in our front. All is now quiet and the Paroling of the prisoners is being rapidly executed. The terms of the surrender is not known to us yet more than we know. The enemy is being paroled and allowed to go where they please and they retain all their private property, such as horses, mules, &c. that are not branded C.S., they are allowed to keep.

They number about 35,000 but have only about 12,000 arms. We have captured about 200 cannon since the 1<sup>st</sup> of Ap'l. Wagons, horses, mules etc. in great quantities. We got orders last night to be ready to march this morning at 5 o'clock but through the night the order was countermanded. The news of the capture of Lynchburg and Gen. Early, Jackson and McCausland and 4000 prisoners by Gen. Stoneman having been received. But little paroling was done until this morning owing to our unoccupation of Lynchburg. This morning they are going out in great squads, by hundreds. It is supposed also that Johnston has surrendered. Our Reg't & 54 Pa. was captured last Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup>, but on 9<sup>th</sup> they formed a part of Lee's surrender - recaptured - but they are to be sent to the rear as paroled prisoners, so reported.

Personally, I was not engaged in any of the late actions as I am unarmed and the Lieutenant ordered me to remain far enough to the rear to be out of danger, so I have fared very well in those respects. I am well and hearty. I might write much more if I knew you would get it, but I have no such assurance.

I close for the present, remaining yours,  
As Ever in Love

To Mr. I. Powell

A. Powell

**\*Private Peter Swartz was killed at High Bridge near Farmville, VA.**

Camp at Burkeville, Va. April 19<sup>th</sup>, 1865

Dear Bro. Israel -

I will endeavor this P.M. to write you a short note to inform you that I am still well and on the move. I wrote to you once since Lee's surrender and sent the letter with some of our company who were with the Regt when it was captured and they went to the rear from Appomattox C.H.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> our Division went to Lynchburg and remained there until 15<sup>th</sup> when we started back and have been marching every day since and arrived here today at noon. We do not expect to remain here long though we halt for the present. To give you a full account of our travels, doings and seeings since

the campaign commenced would require more time and space than I think I have at my command at present.

You knew long ere this of the effect of our campaign - quite likely you are better aware of what and how the things were done, especially at the last ditch - Appomattox C.H.- than I do myself, although present on the spot. We were constantly on the march from early morning till late at night, except the forenoon of 6<sup>th</sup> inst. when we remained quietly in camp and the consequence was that our Regt and the 54<sup>th</sup> Pa. were surrounded and taken prisoners, they having been sent from camp at 4 A.M. of that day to High Bridge on the Rail Road 10 miles west of this, for the purpose of guarding it. Our company has not been with the Regt since its detachment. We stay with Brigade Hd. Qrs.

We marched very fast on 8<sup>th</sup> inst. and until 11 o'clock P.M. when we laid down until 3 A.M. 9<sup>th</sup> when we were routed up and on the march again. Marched till sun rise when we halted near Gen. Sheridan's Hd. Qrs. and got our breakfasts and were soon on the go again and soon after were engaged with the enemy - drove them back - being in their front, our Corps aided by Sheridan's Cavalry, succeeded in completely cutting them off from their retreat toward Lynchburg. They gave back before our line of skirmishers so that there was not [a] general engagement. Lee finding himself thus cut off and our other Corps closing in on him on all other sides, he made a prudent and manly decision as to what to do, and run up the white flag in time to save his men from being cut up terribly.

We went out to Lynchburg to attend to matters there. We destroyed about 100 cannons with a great many small arms and munitions of war.

We lived well on smoked meat, flour, bread, molasses, etc. while out there. The whole army nearly is camped near this station. Our Corps, it is thought, will go to Petersburg and Richmond in a few days. I hope to write soon again. We are sorry to learn of the misfortune of Lincoln & Seward.

I must close hoping to be able to find time to write more soon. I rec'd yours of 31<sup>st</sup> on 16<sup>th</sup>, also one from Henry and from Myra.

My love to all as ever,

A. Powell

Near Richmond, Va., Ap'1 29<sup>th</sup>, 1865

Israel Powell

Dear brother,

Having finally settled down with the prospect of spending at least one day in Camp uninterrupted, I very gladly improve the opportunity of addressing you again. I might write at considerable length, but perhaps short and often will answer the purpose best. I hope to be able to again enter into regular communication with you and also all others who may be inclined in the same way. I hope soon to have a long list of correspondents.

The present finds me in the enjoyment of good health and favorable circumstances as usual. I truly hope you and all of the dear and "oft" thought of ones of home enjoy the same of Heaven's great favors, also Uncle Knight and the neighbors in general.

I wrote you last from Burkeville, more than a week ago. Our Corps left there last Saturday. We arrived near Richmond on Monday P.M. On Tuesday we marched through Manchester and Richmond crossing the James on pontoons a little above, but in fair sight of Libby Prison. We marched up Main Street passing the Confederate Capitol Building and other once notable buildings. Richmond is the largest city I have been in. It evidently was a pretty nice town before it was so shamefully destroyed by fire on night of 2<sup>nd</sup> inst. Upwards of 30 blocks I learn were then destroyed including most all of the Banks and many



**Pontoon Bridge across the James River at Richmond. Wool mills in the background.**

other valuable houses. The bridges across the James were all destroyed.

Our Division encamped near the canal just west of the city. Yesterday our Brigade moved north of the city. We have a very nice camp, soddy ground with wood and water convenient. We expect to remain here for some time, perhaps until we take a trip homeward bound.

The scenery around here is very nice. Splendid large plantations with elegant and showy mansions, nice fields, every thing convenient and handy. I feel quite sure I could content myself to live here if I owned a plantation with its appurtenances.

The soil is not very rich, it being a kind of white sand on the surface, but a high state of cultivation produces an average crop. Richmond is strongly fortified. There is a continuous line of breast works all along running like a worm fence, and at an average of forty or fifty rods there is a strong fort. Since getting an inside view of these works, I am more than ever convinced of the foolhardiness of trying to take them by storm. If they were but half manned it would cost much life to carry them by assault. The country through here is very level, much more so than I was always informed by our prisoners who were here.



The utmost peace and quiet now prevails in and all around the City.

Yesterday, a salute of one hundred guns was fired from the various batteries here in honor to the surrender of Johnston. Gen. Grant sent the dispatch himself. We have not yet learned the particulars any more than that he surrendered on the same terms that Lee did.

With the surrender of Lee and Johnston, the evacuation of Mobile and the disbanding of Kirby Smith's forces, I think we may now soon look for Peace to perch

**The Confederate Capitol Building in Richmond** upon our banners.

The army here was in fine spirits after Lee's surrender until we heard of President Lincoln's assassination. That threw a deep spirit of gloom and vengeance into every heart. Deep and many were the curses heaped upon the assassin. We are glad to learn that Booth has been caught and by soldiers too, though in the attempt he met what he long since deserved - death.

Now that things continue to work so well under President Johnson's administration and Johnston's surrendered and all looks favorable again, we begin to forget our sorrow over Lincoln and rejoice at the overthrow of treason, the maintenance of the Federal Constitution and the supremacy of the Law.

Forgetting war a little and turning to peace, I will write a little about the agricultural prospects here. Wheat is now coming into head. Rye has been out some time. Both crops promise well. Also clover, considerable corn and oats have been put out this season and is up and coming up nicely. Fruit trees commenced to blossom the middle of March and a better prospect for an abundant crop than now I never saw. The weather thus far has been mild and pleasant. We had some frost last Monday morning. I see in the papers you had snow at Buffalo, Cincinnati, and other locations. It is cool and breezy here today. Perhaps you have snow again.

Our Company is yet with the Brigade and I suppose will remain with it until the Brig. is disbanded. We now have 40 men and 2 commissioned officers. There are also about 25 men belonging to the different Co.'s of the Reg't now with us, such as were not on the campaign and consequently not captured. The last we heard of the Reg't it was at Camp Parole, Annapolis, Md., but expecting to go to Columbus, O. Of course it has a soft thing where ever it is. There is about a dozen of Co. D with the Reg't, among them is Dan Reeme, Andy Leitner and Jas. Wentz of your acquaintance. Reeme and Leitner belonged to the regimental brass band. Wentz & Vance were color bearer at that time. Our Co. has marched over 350 miles during this campaign. Lost 5 men killed and 6 wounded.

I have not had any mail since receiving yours of 8<sup>th</sup> inst. I suppose our mail now goes to the Reg't first, thus causing some delay for that of our Co. In order to avoid that delay, you will follow the directions I give. I have carried all of your letters rec'd during the campaign up to the present and will now notice them. The fear that might arise from the source of Mr. King's logic of course will now lie dormant. I don't claim to know more and perhaps I don't know less about what would have become of our national currency in case we had failed to suppress the rebellion, but as for changing our form of Government, he is entirely in error. He advances a very popular idea or rather an acceptable one perhaps to some officers, but it must be borne in mind the whole army is not made up of generals and colonels, nor of an unintelligent and unenlightened body of men. There are but few American born privates in the ranks but what know entirely too much as to what their real interests are, to be made such a hireling or mere machine in the hands of the officers by which they, the officers, could effect the change. Mr. King has too low an opinion of the American Soldierly of the present age. It was to maintain the principles of the federal constitution that we left our homes and joined the Army and we would not so easily let ourselves be betrayed for the good only of the chosen few. I have no fears that such will ever be the case until the American mind of today makes a complete revolution.

The peace commissioners you speak of in another letter were the right kind of men as has since been shown.

You are right as to the terror of Co. D to hard tack as well as to all other eatables. I still continue in my old position. I hope to be relieved between this and July 11<sup>th</sup>, 1865.

If some folks can't find anything else to talk about than to blat around a certain story concerning myself, tell them to come this way and I will give them some Morphine pills or chloroform because their brain needs rest.

I will enclose Henry's letter in this. Also, I will make you a present of our Corps badge made of the wood of the apple tree under which Lee is said to have raised the white flag on 9<sup>th</sup> inst. The tree was cut and carried off root and branch by both armies.

I must close for the present.

I remain yours as ever.

My love to you all.

I. Powell

A. Powell  
Sharp Shooters  
1<sup>st</sup> Brg. Independent Div.  
24<sup>th</sup> A.C.

Sweetland P.O.  
March 5<sup>th</sup>, 1865

Dear Bro.,

Your favor of Jan. 18<sup>th</sup> is at hand. We began to feel anxious of your whereabouts. My answer to your last was returned to me, which I looked upon as a bad sign, but all seems to be right now.

Yours finds us enjoying excellent health and plenty to eat, drink and wear. I have received my pay from sale of diggings with the interest in full. All told amounts to \$18,018.00 in coin which I can lay my hand on at will.

We are having a hard winter here. The standing prices of all eatables is up higher than at any time since I have been here. Flour \$8 to 9 pr cwt, spuds 6 to 8 cts pr lb., meats 20 cts to 30 cts. All groceries increased also. Hay 3 to 4 cts pr lb. or \$60 to 80 pr ton, all payable in coin at that.

I am farming a little this season. Last Wednesday I ploughed. Thursday I went coon hunting in the snow. I found and caught two. Wednesday night about 3 inches of snow fell which put a stop to my ranching. The snow is gone and I will try it in the morning again. I want to put out about 8 acres of oats for hay. We make hay out of it by cutting it whole in the milk and cure it the same as grass.

The mines - these never paid better here than they are doing this winter.

War News

Yesterday we celebrated the inauguration of Uncle Abe and the recent great Union victories.

On the defense

There is a Co. organizing and arming themselves with Henry's repeater, which shoot 16 times without reloading. I am in the Co. My gun with 250 rounds cost \$40.

You seem to enjoy yourself finely where you are, but what will you do when your time of service expires? What makes me ask is this. Uncle Tom Knight wants to sell his farm. The point is, would you like it? If so, what do you consider it is worth in coin, or have you seen anything in your travels that you would like better? When you are ready to set up shop for yourself, I will assist you.

I see you boys have a Cal. word which is the name of your tent. It is used quite different here. It means a whisky shop kept by a woman, but I believe it is spelled Shebang.

My boy cannot be beat, Sir. He is admired by all that have seen him. As soon as I get through farming we are going to Marysville, then I will have his size taken and you may expect something.

Yours as ever,  
Henry Powell

To: Andrew Powell

Near Richmond, Va May 4<sup>th</sup>, 1865

Dear Israel,

As we expect to soon take up our line of march for Washington, I may not have another opportunity of writing to you again for a week or more, so I will improve the present opportunity this warm, sunny, pleasant after noon while I can sit so comfortably on my knapsack with an empty cracker box between my knees for a desk with my coat off and shirt sleeves rolled up enjoying the breeze.

We have not got any orders yet to march but we can smell a rat occasionally. We much dislike the idea of marching there when the government can so easily give us transportation in boats, but as we presume it will be the last one, I presume we will have to grin and bear it. It's all for the Union, you know.

We still continue laying quietly in camp with almost nothing to do but eat and sleep, myself excepted for my duties don't lessen much. Soldiers will eat government rations even if the war is over, but many of them wouldn't had they the collateral but then their green backs are all played out, the sutlers and hosts of pie, cake and milk peddlers that swarm our camps daily find dull sale for their commodities even at the extreme low price of 25 cts a qt. milk or small pie that has so much shortening about them that they are about three inches across and are kept together by a liberal mixture of hair which if it be red or auburn betrays the Irish breed but if black and very curly then the manufacturers belong to that super human race we read so much of nowadays.

But howsoever, I still command a **V** in the green back department and I think I am as capable of commanding it as such very moderate, accommodating peddlers.

Perhaps sometime between this and Christmas next I can sit down to my own maami's table once more. Then stand back O ye Virginia cooks & bakers.

The Co. is beginning to get a slight sprinkle of mail daily now. We learn that the whole Regt, except Co. D, is now at home. The reason that "D" is not there is apparent to all: the government is going to dispose of all the trifling, worthless, needless ones first and keep the first quality until last, when "D" will come in, or rather, go out.

There is nothing of any interest going on here. Every thing is dull.

Well, I guess I have gassed enough this time, so good bye.

Please write soon but don't enclose any stamps or anything valuable. Direct as I said before.

I. Powell

I remain yours as ever,  
Andy Powell  
Sharp Shooters Batl'n  
1<sup>st</sup> Brig. 2<sup>nd</sup> Div. 24<sup>th</sup> A.C.  
Richmond, Va.

Camp near Richmond, Va.

May 10<sup>th</sup>, 1865

Dear Israel,

Having waited only to be disappointed daily for mail from you, I have finally concluded to wait no longer for a letter to reply to, but will shove another off in the hope that it will elicit an early reply and such a one too as will finally make up for all past failures.

I have not had any mail since 4<sup>th</sup> Ap'l although I have written ten letters addressed to such names as surely ought to respond without delay. Others of the Co. receive mail daily and why not I? Am I forgotten or forsaken, or am I just unfortunate?

The present finds me still in the enjoyment of excellent health and easy circumstances. We have nothing else to do but cook, eat, and sleep. We take time easy now, lying on our backs with heels gently elevated, in our cool, airy tents this warm weather. We sometimes suffer from an attack of the Spring Fever, but I surmise we can recover from the effects ere we die of old age and some of us undoubtedly will if we die outside of a poor house. But just for the novelty of the thing, if for no other motives, I should like or would have no objection at any rate, to relieve you for [a] while of the plow handles or of the hoe handle if you are using it to insure a crop of melons this fall or of beans or potatoes or corn for I am on the best of terms with corn dodgers, mush, etc. Perhaps it is because friendship is always warmest where the parties seldom meet. But perhaps you think if I stood in your shoes this morning, I would feel quite different from sitting comfortably in my tent away down here at Richmond writing about such things. Well then I consider my own past experience. It tells me the same thing. So then, not to get you out of humor, I will quit this subject and turn to the state of affairs in Dixie, as we used to call a certain portion of our once divided but again united and glorious Country, and after the 20<sup>th</sup> inst., we may call it peaceful too for after that all hostilities in Va. and N. C. are to cease, or the violators will be considered outlaws and when caught will be dealt with as such by Order of Genl. Halleck who commands the Military division of the James which embraces Va. and N.C.

From accounts which you may read in the papers and the leniency of our authorities and the friendliness of Union and Northern establishments to the people of Richmond, you may think Richmond is almost as truly loyal to the Union or Federal Governance as any northern city, but that is a grand mistake. There are some and not a small some either not only in Richmond but in every other place that are as bitter to the core as ever they were. They still are in the Superlative degree. I have seen and heard enough to convince me of the status of the mind of the rebel soldiers, especially on part of the officers in "Confederate gray".

Let me first now answer you that President Johnson will not be too ridged or severe in his administration over them. I only fear he will allow himself to be befogged by some high officials who may have considerable to do with the rebels and whom they, the rebels, will practice the wolf out in lamb's clothing. When they want and must have favors from our officers, they can humble themselves and be very kind and innocent. But just reverse the case then look out. Then the nigger jumps out of the woods. But as the President perhaps got good training in Tenn., he can be trusted at least until he should weaken and [show] undue leniency.

For the safety of the Union which we have done so much to maintain, we feel quite confident that it will be unsafe to allow those staunch and once leading rebels and traitors to hold officers of much importance either in the U.S. or in their own States. If Freedom, Liberty and Justice are the safe guards of the Federal Republic, I would much sooner trust the issues of the ballot box to the negro than the rebel. I believe in extending due hospitality to an enemy, but if I conquer an armed foe and he wants mercy

shown him, he must cease his hostility toward me. I hope that President Johnson will hold the sword of Justice in his right hand and the crown of Mercy in the left and this hope firmly grasps the hope I have for the welfare of my country.

Last Saturday I was in the city and saw the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Corps pass through on parade. They were reviewed by Gens. Halleck, Mead and others. Today the 14<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> Corps pass through all enroute for Washington. I should like to see Sherman's Army but today is ration day and I must be at my post. We learn through the papers that the 24<sup>th</sup> Corps is to remain in Va. for the present. The boys are beginning to abandon the idea of being discharged before our time is out 24<sup>th</sup> of Sept. I am waiting patiently for July. I think we will be discharged about that. But as long as we have plenty to eat and wear and nothing to do at \$18.00 per month, I can sand it a while yet if the government can't get along without me. Last Saturday several of us boxed up some clothes and expressed to Tiffin. You will please go to Mrs. Brinkley, wife of Andrew Brinkley of our Co. who lives near to Mrs. Beeler, wife of the deceased Doctor B. at Fort Ball, and get a Dress Coat I sent in the box. A paper with my address was pinned in one of the pockets. I wore the coat since last Nov. but having a good chance to send it home, I done so. It may yet do me good service. I must bring this to a close, hoping to hear from you soon as mail comes from Tiffin in 5 days.

I send my love to all.

To: Mr. I. Powell  
Tiffin Ohio  
P.S. Be sure and direct

A. Powell  
Sharp Shooters Bat'ln  
1<sup>st</sup> Brig. 2<sup>nd</sup> Div. 24<sup>th</sup> A.C.  
Richmond Va.

Near Richmond, Va.  
May 15, 1865

Dear Brother Israel,

Having just finished reading Beecher's narrative of his trip to South Carolina given in the Independent, which I will send you in a day or two, I take to my old yellow pen once more on this cool, pleasant and very lovely May morning. Having previous to reading the narrative, read the morning Richmond Whig which among other things, announces the startling official news of the capture of Jeff Davis & family on 10<sup>th</sup>. The telegraph dispatch reached here yesterday P.M.

Dear Israel, I do not like to increase any one's indebtedness, especially who already is deeply involved, but from a sense of love more than Justice to myself, I will address you another letter which is the fifth and may I not as well say right out plain, the last one to you unanswered.

You now see in how high esteem I hold you as a correspondent that I write the fifth time, for usually the first, and only in special cases, the second time, must suffice.

Henceforth, I will adopt the old system of writing on Monday so that you can receive the same on Saturday for I spose Saturday is still the town going day and while the news are so very abundant and so good, I would attach no blame on you if some member of the family visited the city semiweekly or even oftener.

Yesterday sabbath, Serg't Reynolds, Corp'l Hart and myself went to the city and attended divine services in the Methodist Church on corner of Broad & 10<sup>th</sup> Streets. It is the largest and most elegant church edifice I was ever in. The congregation was medium sized for the house. Citizens and soldiers of both armies in their former uniforms composed the attentive, or to a great measure, the sleeping congregation. The opening prayer was long, dry and it [was] very patriotic. The music by the organ and choir was sweet and mellow.

The sermon by a gray bearded man who at present is Pastor was not long nor short, delivered from the latter part of 12<sup>th</sup> verse, 13<sup>th</sup> chapter of 1<sup>st</sup> Cor. His sermon was a reproduction of one of Rev. H. W. Beecher's lectures, "Shall we know each other in Heaven", which I sent you last winter in the "Independent".

After church we walked around some in the city. Visited the iron works as they are called where there is almost an endless amount of engines and water power wheels that turned the machinery necessary for the manufacture of all kinds of arms and ammunition. We saw several huge ones. One that was dressed ready for mounting on carriage weight 21,993 lbs. or eleven tons minus 7 lbs. Another one yet in the lathe and not quite bored out I think will weigh not less than eighteen tons. It is about four feet in diameter at breach and three feet at muzzle, fifteen feet long, bore, one foot caliber. We saw some round shells two feet in diameter. Such are the things used in the game known very commonly for years as "breakfast spell", "old woman's job with broomstick" and the like. They were ready for filling arranged up in stacks and lie around in great profusion. Fire growed all that part of the city where their foundries, factories, rolling mills, arsenals and armories were which of course were all burnt when the city was evacuated. And the burning of those large buildings, rail road bridges, etc., extended the flames to a great deal of private property. A large portion of the city and by far the most valuable portion, such as tobacco and other warehouses to which the largest in Tiffin can not hold a candle for size which were near the Canal and River.

We also saw Belle Island where many of our noble boys were confined among whom the 123d Ohio perhaps is cleverly represented as almost any other Reg't in this grand Yankee army.

We did not visit Libby Prison as that has undergone considerable change and does not present any uncommon appearance, and anything that does not have some very peculiar attraction about it is not very apt to receive a visit from soldiers who are as tired running around and seeing curious things and hungry too as were when the fast receding Sun bade us turn our steps campward. Our camp is about two miles from the city and one mile west of the Fredericksburg R.R. on which from four to six trains pass daily in full sight from our camp which is an agreeable sight to us in this country.

Prices are reviving rapidly here around and in Richmond. I believe I would sooner make a purchase of anything whatever in Richmond today than in Tiffin. Stores, Groceries, Drug shops, wares of all kinds, Smiths and tinkers of all kinds, Banks, Hotels and what not are numerous and in full blast. Little groceries especially are very abundant. Strawberries are becoming plentiful, also ripe cherries huckleberries, currants, etc. Those who are well provided with greenbacks can live in great luxury now.

There is nothing of especial interest to communicate this time that I know of. The 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> Corps passed here during last week. They looked rather better than the Potomac troops.

There are no hopes yet of our being discharged soon that I know of. All is quiet and time glides smoothly away.

I sent you the Richmond Times and Whig last week. This week I will try and get the Bulletin to send with the Independent. I want you to read the Narrative in the Independent for I believe it is exactly true and his sentiments agree with mine. Read what Beecher says he would do if he was President, then you have my policy too except in case of Jeff Davis. I think Justice calls for his death in the same Country where so many innocent lives were sacrificed to please him.

Until I get mail from you, you may expect me to suspend "the weekly correspondence".

Yours as ever

To Mr. I. Powell  
Tiffin Ohio

My love to all  
Corp'l A. Powell  
Sharp Shooters  
1<sup>st</sup> Brig. 2<sup>nd</sup> Div. 24<sup>th</sup> A.C.  
Richmond Va.

Did you get my overcoat this spring and did you get my \$50 I sent home in July? Where is Samuel now? Do you ever see Daniel Rhodes and what is he doing, where living & how getting along?

Near Richmond, Va.  
May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1865

Dear Israel,

I am happy to say that your long reticence was broken on 19<sup>th</sup> inst. by your double sheet bearing date of 12<sup>th</sup>. Your silence in part I can excuse you for, but before I forgive & forget all I must ask an explanation for our silence from 8<sup>th</sup> Ap'l to May 12<sup>th</sup>, as my letter list acknowledges no receipts from your pen in the measurement. But then as you have been trying to benefit a brother and a Soldier, I will freely forgive you on the promise you will henceforth do better.

I presume you had quite an interesting and agreeable tour to and from the great American Metropolis. You had not a very good opportunity for viewing the great belt of Country you passed through or else you passed through a different kind of Country in Pa. from what I did or you would [have] been more enchanted by it than you seem to be. You travelled much more speedily than we do when we march or you would not count fifteen hundred miles in one week only I am glad you made Samuel the visit and I hope he may soon be transferred. I thought he perhaps was discharged in accordance to an order from the War Department until your letter reached me when a sadder state of affairs was announced. I had hoped when Samuel reached Savannah that he would stand soldering first rate but when the chronic Diarrhea seizes a man in the army of Samuel's constitution his case is not as desirable as might be wished for.

What do you think of soldiers and soldier life so far as your experience and observation goes? But then you might visit all the hospitals in the United States and be on the grand review tomorrow and next day at Washington of two hundred thousand troops and yet you would hardly learn the first letter of the alphabet of the great book Soldering. Right at the front is the place to learn or get that schooling the quickest. But as there is no call any longer for such schooling we will talk of other matters and things.

Every thing here remains about status quo civilly and militarily. The 6<sup>th</sup> Corps has arrived here from Danville. They expect to go to Washington soon.

We know nothing yet of our being discharged though various reports are agreeable to that idea. I learn from a good authority that an order came here to Gen. Gibbon several days ago to honorably discharge all of his Corps whose term of service expires previous to Oct. next immediately, but he dispatched back the thinking that there was a mistake in the order and awaits further orders. If such is the true case I hope Sec. Stanton will order Gibbon's arrest or dishonorably discharge him immediately for had the order been to confine or to shoot some poor fellow Gibbon is one of the last men to stop to execute orders immediately. Such is the character and disposition of more than one officer of our Army. But presently the day will come when they will cease to be Lord of the Volunteer Army as their subjects and sooner the better.

The present finds me in the full enjoyment of good health and fine spirit and easy times as usual. I truly hope this will find you all the same. The weather is growing comfortably warm and even more so but the occasional showers and heavy thundersgusts keep the air in moderate temperature. We had very heavy rain most all last night with good prospect for more, but rain here does not retard farming as in Seneca. The surplus water soon soaks or flows away. The soil is sandy and the country rolling.

Yesterday I had the honor, or shall I say honor not merely the accident, of attending Divine Services in the same house that Gen. R. E. Lee of the late Confederate Army did which was St. Paul's Church of Episcopal denomination. That seems to be the first church of the city. I mean the most popular and wealthy one where the upper tier attend church and I think some of them attend more for the show than for the real good of it. I hope they all mean good but I fear not, and I am with the Episcopal Church of Richmond as H. W. Beecher is with the negros of Charleston - "Such may be their way of worship, but it is not mine." The rustling of silk and satin and the show of fine ribbons of the females, the display of fine cloth of the males and the display of shoulder straps of Union officers made the meeting charming too.



**St. Paul's Episcopal Church as seen from Capitol Square, Richmond, Va.**

And if I intend to go to Uncle Knight's farm I reply "not any". Uncle undoubtedly has a good farm and he knows it. I, near as my plans are now matured in this, if I am not urged by a sense of duty to parents to live on the home farm, I will go west, perhaps Fallon or Henry Co., perhaps Indiana or perhaps northern Missouri or Kansas. True, I have not thought much about such things during the last three years and I don't know as it is much use to do so yet until I get home once more, but as for Uncle's farm, I am quite decided about that already unless the same person who proposed that have some further scheme in view that I yet know nothing of. But of all these things I hope to converse with you some time in the future. As to the choice of your trade, I think it pretty good. Cabinet preferable as with that you can employ a capital which an ordinary Carpenter can not do. I would also recommend the trade of carriage trimmings. The trimming only. Not the making nor ironing nor painting, but trimming, such as the tops, seat cushions, etc. Wm Kern of our Co. has that trade and he says he could easily make \$2.00, 2.50 or \$3.00 per day at it in another man's employ. But would you not prefer to teach school? I mean night school. I think there will be

a good demand for good advanced teachers in the Southern cities for years to come.

But it is near mail time and I must close my hastily written letter. More anon.

My love to all  
Your brother,  
A. Powell

Mr. I. Powell

Near Richmond, Va.  
May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1865

Dear Bro.

As the mail is now in for another twenty four hours and brings me nothing, I reluctantly arise from my easy bunk to lay Waverly Magazine on the shelf and take down my portfolio and draw forth my old pen from my blouse pocket and set myself to the task of writing a letter. Yes, I say a task for such it is more than a pleasure when one waits patiently for, waits anxiously for a missive from the fond ones at home, and then for all his waiting, is rewarded only with total disappointment.

But upon opening my portfolio the envelope containing the shadows of some of the loved ones forces itself out to view and willingly do I take another affectionate look at those faces that were familiar less than three years ago and which may be familiar again in less than three short weeks if we dare build hopes on rumors of even vivid colors, for rumors of several days past will have no discharges in less than ten days hence. Some even say this week yet. So you see it is hardly worth while to write at all much less under such disappointment as I now labor. And wouldn't you be awfully surprised if this would be the last letter I write you while a soldier's blue covers my person? But I am getting rather in advance of my subject so I will change from the fancied to the real thing.

Allow me first to say you need not look for me home until you see me, and you will not see anything very pretty then.

As to general news, I have nothing much to communicate that you are not already informed of. The most interesting to us is the special order of the War Department announced in the papers several days ago and reiterated every issue since that all men whose term of service expires prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> of Oct. next are to be discharged immediately in the field, and this morning Lt. Leonard received blanks upon which to make out the Descriptive list of all the recruits of the Company whose time does not expire then. This morning's paper thinks the "62" men will be mustered out within ten days, but the papers now-a-days are not strictly gospel.

The grand review at Washington last week evidently was a grand thing, a magnificently grand display of Federal American Troops and perhaps was designed as much to cause a European sensation and to produce an impression on the leading minds of all foreign powers especially those unfriendly to the United States as it was to gratify the American mind, that of President Johnson, his Cabinet and other high civilian officials as also Gen. Grant & Co. of the Army. I would like to been one of the reviewers but by no means did I ache to be one of the reviewed. It's not pleasant business. I can go home cheerful without being or seeing a single pageant of military honor, but then we are ready as ever to do or take whatever falls to our lot.

The weather here for several days past has been cold, rainy and blustering, very similar to an occasional wet spell in June in Northern Ohio, but the sun has made its appearance again and is a temperature quite hot enough to shame us for shivering under three blankets a night or two ago.

The crops here look fine, corn especially. Wheat is short but promising an abundant yield. Oats here turned out to be about half chest since heading

out which is the result of sowing their own raising for several years past. To prevent such a failure, seed oats for this and more southern climates has to be brought from the north every year or two. The further north the better. Novia Scotia preferably. Fruits and berries very abundant. Some of the boys have been luxuriating on cherries for some time past. They pick them themselves. Yesterday I had a stew of green huckle berries which so much resembled green currants or rather the sugar put in them that I think I will have more of the same article for they are more abundant and nearly as hardy to our quarter as the currants of your garden to the kitchen. In a few more weeks there will be an abundance of raspberries. Dew berries and black berries will soon follow.

I wrote to Samuel last week but have no mail from him. If we are mustered out and paid here I think some of going there via New York unless I learn of his transfer from there ere then.

You will please continue to write to me as usual but not send any thing unless a slight sprinkle of stamps. Or no, not even them but continue writing until you know positively it is needless to do so. We learn by an order by Gen. Turner of our Division that the part of the Reg't that was at Columbus was mustered out last week. I must close for the present.

Remaining yours as

Ever,

To  
Mr. I. Powell  
Tiffin  
Ohio

Corp'l A. Powell  
Sharp Shooters Batln  
1<sup>st</sup> Brig. 2<sup>nd</sup> Div. 24<sup>th</sup> A.C.  
Richmond, Va.



**General John Wesley Turner**

Camp near Richmond, Va.

June 12<sup>th</sup>, 1865

Dear Israel

Your interesting favors of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> came to hand on 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> inst. respectively. Consequently, I resume my pen in a little more agreeable mood of mind than usual of late. I am much pleased to learn of the health and happiness of the old homestead. I fancy I would liked to have been out in your midst about last Sunday but perhaps I would have marred your happiness,

for three years of army life does not cultivate much refinement. But I would tried not to shock the modesty of any one present by anything unless by uncouth manners. However, as this cruel war is over now, perhaps by the by, "the soldier boys are coming home" will be the watch word & song.

I have no acquaintance with any of the visitors named from Hancock but I thought some of making their acquaintance sometime this fall or winter. But I suppose I will have so many other acquaintances to make nearer home, unless I content myself to be a stranger living at home, that I will have such a wholesale business to do in that line that I can not stand my operations outside of the home community, but then with your services, which I hope to secure in many cases, especially of the gentler sex, you being so proficient, I hope to meet with good success.

You must be quite lonesome indeed with no other company than Mother on so vast a scope of territory as you have at your command to roam over. I often get very lonesome here where more than forty brothers of us live in one short row of little houses, besides the whole Brigade lies in a row not a quarter of a mile, the most distant company, and the brass band of the 34<sup>th</sup> Mass. Regt. is quartered only a few feet to our rear and their horns are very noisy when they get in close proximity to the musicians' throats. But lonesomeness will force itself on us sometimes even if thousands surround us. I hope you fully enjoyed the visit of the friends.

There is no telling when we will get home or even go away [from] here. Every thing looks as unpropitious as a month ago. We are beginning to make up our minds to stay our time out unless the officers pay a stipend before that time. It seems to be entirely useless for the War Dept. to issue any orders for the benefit of the private soldier any more for it has to come through so many General's hands before it reaches us that the good is all taken out of the orders before they have any bearing on us. We came into the service at the Hare's speed but are going out at the Tortoise's pace. So must it be. Our Corps will be reviewed in a few days. Then we expect some action will be taken for our discharge.

There is nothing of much importance going on here now. The usual quiet and dullness still prevails. The weather is not so hot any more as some days ago. Harvesting goes on in good earnest. Wheat is good. It seems that the world is busy at home in making changes by the enumeration of them that you give. I suppose it is contrary to Bob Culbertson's tactics to remain at one place long. I hope good luck will always attend him. What has become of Wm. Kline & wife, if Dan Rhodes now occupies his house? Did he go to war? Geo. V. and the girls, I suppose, still go buggy riding occasionally. Joseph Boner, I learn, is at home enjoying himself in the superlative degree.

As to Mr. Lebar's request for teaching the school the coming winter, I am not yet prepared to say. I thought to have one winter to myself and thought I would take the coming one, but perhaps I might as well teach as do nothing. However I am not yet prepared to say what I will do. I suppose there will be time enough to see about teaching when I get home. I will not teach any other school but might be persuaded to teach the home one "if all hands are agreed."

For the present, I must close. I remain yours as ever.  
My love to you and Mother.

I. Powell, Esq.

Andy Powell

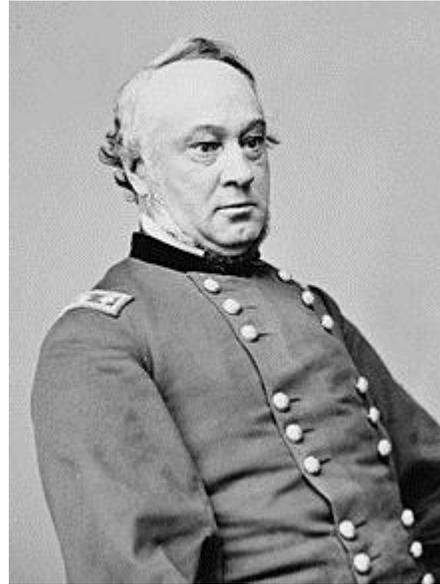
Near Richmond, Va.  
June 17, 1865

Bro. Israel,

Finally, an order for our relief has come. The Lieutenant first rec'd the order from Maj. Gen. Terry, who now commands this Department, vice Gen. Halleck who has just been relieved from duty here to report at San Francisco. The Lt. will immediately apply to the Dept. Quarter Master for transportation and as soon as transportation can be had, we will be "out on the ocean" "Homeward bound".



**Major Gen. Alfred Terry**



**Gen. Henry Wager Halleck**

We will be detained at Columbus some time as all our papers will have to be made out yet. However we feel pretty good over the prospect of getting away here.

It is very lonesome here now for the 116<sup>th</sup> Ohio and 34<sup>th</sup> Mass. Reg'ts are mustered out and gone home. As our Brigade is entirely smashed up, those whose time does not expire previous to Oct. are consolidated in the veteran Reg'ts.

Since last writing to you, your letters of May 20<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>, June 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> came to hand, so I suppose I have finally rec'd all you wrote. Four of them I rec'd this week. They were a little old but good notwithstanding. Owing to existing circumstances at present, I deem it not necessary to reply to them in detail.

I don't know that it will be worth while for you to write me here any more. So you need not write until further notice.

I have just written a letter to Ruth which I will enclose with this.

For the present, I will close. Hoping to hail you from Columbus, Ohio next time I write.

Yours truly,  
As ever,  
Andy Powell

Mr. I. Powell

I will send an Ostrich feather in this to Ruth as a trophy of the modern Babylon, Richmond. Surely there is no harm in raising the white feather now the war being over!

A. Powell