

## Civil War Letters of Jeremiah Shumway

letters from Jeremiah Shumway from the Civil War: they were copied, I believe about 1910 and it is plain that the spelling was corrected as I know J.S's spelling to have been poor. However additional corrections have not been made. - HLF

at the end of the document is a list of letters and also a description of who the various people mentioned were.

● #1

Rochester. Nov 18th 1864

Dear Wife:

I am in Rochester<sup>1</sup> yet as you will see by the date of this. I am agoing to be a soldier boy. There is no chance for me to come home unless I stay here untill there is enough reports [i.e. enough other conscripts reporting] from the town to fill the town's number, but I was drafted first and I will not have it said that any one went to fill my place. Capt. See has kept me along, told me not to report, but if I had known how the thing was aworking I would have gone with the Boys, but I expect to find them at Fort Snelling. I will not write much, I expect John [Robinson? Albee?] will go home and he will tell you all the news. I expect Duty [Paine] tonight, if he does we will get a chance to go to the fort together, if not I shall report in the morning. I want you to take good care of your health and the children's, not to send them to school unless they are well and the weather is good. I sent Herbert a knife by Norice [Norris?]. Tell him to be a good boy, tell Viola and Evey to try to be good, tell Edmund that his father will be to home next summer. Try to keep up good courage for I shall get along very well. I will not write any more tonight. I will write a few lines in the morning after I get my soldier clothes on. Good night.

Nov. 19th - Well, I am a Boy in Blue. I expect to be sent to the Fort tomorrow. It is not so bad as you may think, we will get along first rate, keep up good courage, I shall fetch round all right in a year. Take good care of your health and the childrens. John will tell you all there is to be told. I will send you a line every chance I have. As soon as I am where you can write to me, I will let you know. Duty has not come yet so I shall not be apt to hear from you till I see him up to the Fort. I expect John will start for home soon, so I cannot write any more.

From Jerry

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<sup>1</sup>Minnesota

● Nashville, Tenn Dec 5th 1864

Dear Wife:

Here I am in Tennessee. I arrived today. We are all well. I hardly know what to tell you. There is quite a scare here. Hood is trying to take the City. We can hear the fighting. There is so many rumors, I do not know what to tell you. I expect our Regiment is engaged. I do not know when we shall join them. I do not think we shall till after the fight. Rufus [Shumway], [Ellery C.] Arnold and [William Walker] Everett are in good spirits. Borrow no trouble about me, but take good care of your health and the childrens. We are in such a hurley burley here I cannot write much, I will write again soon. If you do not get letters regular do not be concerned. It may be impossible for letters to get to you, the Rebs tare up the Railroad track around here a good deal. I want you to write as soon as you receive this. I want to hear from you. Tell Viola to write a few lines. I want all my friends to write. I may not get half of your letters, write often so [I] may receive some of them. Direct your letters to

Nashville, Tenn.  
5th Minn. Reg.

I have not been consigned to any Company yet, when I have been I will let you know.

From Your affectionate Husband, Jeremiah Shumway

P.S. Kiss all the children for me.

● #3

Nashville Dec 12th 1864

Dear Wife:

I write you a few lines, we are getting along finely. Rufus, Arnold and Everett and myself are in one company and mess together. We are in front of the enemy in plain sight. There is picket fighting all along the lines, has been ever since we have been here, we expect an attack every moment. That seems to be the wish of the boys, they would rather fight him here than to follow him. We are well fortified. You can find out the position of the armies better from the papers than I can tell you. If you do not have time to read ask John McNelly. He will keep you posted. George [Shumway] is here. I seen him every day. His health is not good yet. He is not put on duty yet. John Robberson [Robinson?] Boys is close by here. I have seen the Waterloo Boys. When John joins his Reg. I want him to bring all the news, you try to see him if you can before he comes. I want you to write as often as you can. Tell all my friends to write. I want to hear as often as once a week. Take good care of yourself, take good care of your health and the children's in preferance to anything else. My year is fast passing off. 'Twill not be long before I shall be at home, if 'tis the Lord's Will. I will try to get this in the office if I can, we are under marching orders.

We are liable to move any moment. Try to get your summers wood cut as soon as you can. I have wrote 3 or 4 letters, I do not expect one from you yet, but now you know where to direct your letters, I want to get one a week, if you do not get my letters you can hear from some of the others. Rufus, Arnold, Everett or myself will try to write almost every day.

Direct your letters to

Nashville, Tenn, Camp A  
5th Minn. Reg.

From your affectionate Husband, J. Shumway

● #4

Five Miles from Pulaski, Tenn Dec 25th 1864

Dear Wife:

I take this first opportunity to write you since we left Nashville. We stop here today the first time we knew that we were agoing to stop an hour since we left Nashville. We left Nashville the 15th day of Dec. We commenced fighting as soon as we left, fought all day the 15th and 16th. Everett was killed the 16th about 3 o'clock. I took his money and covered him up in his blanket, the next morning I went back and burried him. I wrote to John Mc. [McNelly] all about it and sent him some of his hair. For fear he will not get the letter, I will send you some to give his wife. Rufus was left to a farm house two days ago, he was not able to keep up; he will be apt to have good care. I stand the march very well. I received a letter from you direct[ed] to Fort Snelling. That is all I have heard from home. I shall expect to hear now soon.

Write and tell all my friends to write, I do not have a chance to write. You said Green wanted to take my farm. You do the best you can with it. You have friends that will tell you what to do. Tell Viola to write all about Christmas what the children all had in their stockings. Viola wrote that Evey was agoing to be a good girl. I am glad of it. Tell Edmund Father will let him have all [the] pie he wants when he gets home. I sent Herbert some money so he will always have some. Tell Wate to write how my stock is agetting along and all about things, but not [to] expect a letter from me till I get in camp. You do not know what a treat it is to have a letter from home. The boys will gather around the camp fires every night and read old letters over and over again. Tell everybody to write to me. I do not think a description of our life will be interesting to you. We do not know where we are agoing to, we expect the Tennessee River. We are afollowing Hood up, but I think he is againing on us now, but the cavalry is afollowing him up and bringing in prisoners every day. Take good care of yourself and the children's health. My year is fast passing away. I shall soon be at home if 'tis the Lord's Will. The mail is agoing out, I must close.

From your affectionate Husband, J. Shumway  
Arnold is well

● #5

Clifton, Tenn Jan 8th 1865

Dear Wife:

It has been a week since we arrived at the Tenn. River. I should have wrote before, but I was waiting for a mail to come in so I could hear from home. I have not heard from home since that letter you sent to Fort Snelling. We are ordered to be ready to get on to a boat at a moments notice so I write a line to let you know I am well. I do not know where we are going. I will write every time I get a chance. I expect a letter from you as soon as we get a mail. Write every week. Tell Viola to write all about what the Children say and do, tell everybody to write. I could pass the time off very well if I could hear from home every mail. Take care of your health and the childrens. The year is fast passing off, I shall soon be at home again, if 'tis the Lord's Will. I have not heard from Rufus since we left him. I do not know what is agoing on, I have not seen a newspaper since I have been in the army. Tell John Mc. to send me the "Press." Elery is well. Take care of yourself and keep up courage.

I remain your affectionate Husband, J. Shumway

● [#6]

Eastport, Miss Jan 21st 1865

Dear Wife:

I have just come in from picket duty, the mail has been in and I got 3 letters from home. You do not know how I prize them, nobody but a soldier does. It is the first news I have had from home since I received yours directed to Ft. Snelling. The mail did not follow us on the march, but while we are here we shall receive mail every few days. We have gone into winter quarters here but we do not know how long we shall stay, like as not before you receive this we shall be a 1000 miles from here but we expect to be here a month or two. We have been here two weeks. I had ought to [have] wrote before but we have had so much to do I could not. Elery and I mess together and every moment that we get off duty we are to work on our house. I was agoing to write last Sunday but I had to be on guard duty, now I have just come in from picket they will not put me on duty today, and it seems so I cannot work on the house, so I am having a good time reading your letters and writing. I wish you could just look in and see me keeping house. Elery is out on a picket and I am alone. We have got a good house, fire place in it, a good roof, [and] a bed and it is warm and nice, one day's work more on the chimney and we shall have it done. I am boiling some rice for my dinner. I take a good deal of comfort in eating. I never had such an appetite in my life. I have been hungry for three weeks. I dast not eat what I want to stop hunger, old soldiers say, it must be awful and I want to do what is for my health.

You would like to know how I like soldiering I suppose. I had rather be at home but as I have got it to do I am satisfied with my Reg. and Company. I have the best officers in

the world. We conscripts seem to be the Captains favorites, he comes in and spends the evening with us quite often and anything he can do for us he will do it. He is not a professor of religion, I have talked with him on the subject. He is a well wisher of religion and respects any one that is and lives up to his profession. My lieutenant is a professor and a good man. I am glad you enjoy your mind so will try to live faithful and by the Lord's help and your prayers I will enjoy my mind well and my determination is to do my duty and live with a conscience void of offence towards God and man.

I have not heard from Rufus since we left him Christmas. George is here. I saw him a day or two ago. He stood the march but has not done any duty yet. I do not think he will do much more work for Uncle Sam, he begins to bloat like Edward Blew [Ballou] he is waiting for his pay then I think he will get a furlough or a discharge. Tell everybody to write to me, not wait for me to answer theirs, if I stay in camp I will try to write but sometimes we are on duty and do not come to camp in a week, when I do I want to find my shebang full of letters. You wrote you did not want to sell Fann, I do not care, I will give her to you, you may do what you have a mind to with her. I want you to see to having your summers wood chopped up this winter. If you do not want Hannah to live in the Log House next summer, I want you to let it to Duty or Charles and have them take the proper course to make her. We have just about such weather here now as we have there in May, no snow, some nights it freezes some, thaws out in the morning. I do not want you to send anything when John Rob [Robinson?] comes. I can get anything I need. Take care of your health, do not work too hard nor let Viola. I must stop writing. May the Lord protect and keep you. Jan 22, We are all well.

From Jerry

● #7

Eastport, Miss Feb 3 1865

Dear Wife:

Your letter of the 18th was received the 1st day of February. Since I have commenced receiving letters I have received them every week. You do not know how good it seems to hear from you so often, for it was five or six weeks when we were on the march before I received any letters. I think I have received all of your letters but one or two now. I have wrote to you every week but one, that was when we first came here. I shall write every week that I possibly can. I am glad you are getting on so well. I think that I can stay my time out pretty contented if you continue to get on as well & you all have your health. I am well as usual. I was over to see George today, he is in the hospital. I do not think he is any worse than he has been. When I saw him before he did not want a furlough until he got his pay, now he says he will take one. I think he will be at home on a furlough or discharge pretty soon. Henery Blew is not very well, but is on duty. Tell Burnam that Horatio is here, he was over and took dinner with me a few days ago. He is well and in good spirits. You wrote that you had money of John to live on and wanted to know if I cared. If you & he can agree it is all right, but I should think he would get tired of supporting so many families.

But when he wants the money, try to get the wheat in to Lansing and if you do not think [it] best to sell, raise money on it to pay him. I wish you would write whether James & Charles has paid them little debts & whether Coil let Charles have the money for the Colts & whether Charles has given you his note & whether Wate has given you his note for the horse & wagon & all about the little things that I left with you to settle. About my stock not having feed enough, do as you think best, either sell the heifers that I had of Coil if you can or buy feed. If you sell the heifers you can sell them on time till next fall. Get advice of any one of your friends what it is best to do. Do the best you can with the land, have it all got in with a crop if you can. Be sure to get the wood for summer cut up this winter. If J. Robberson has [not] started yet, I wish you would send out a box of Janes' Pills & a bottle of disentary drops that you can get of Mr. Arnold, those that Elery brought he lost, if John will fetch them; try to get my friends to tend to it and see if my descriptive list cannot be altered, as soon as they can. It seems to me that if I have to stay them two months it will seem longer than the rest of the year.

Feb 4- It is a very pleasant day, the birds are singing. It is like a spring morning. There is quite an excitement around camp this morning, we have not had orders yet but we expect to leave here soon, perhaps before night. Some rumors say that we are agoing to join Shurman, some say to Memphis, some say to Minnesota to fight the indians. I do not know but I think Memphis, forest [Forrest?] is giving them quite a scare there. If I could have my choice I should go to Minn. but we do not any of us know & it does not make much business. I will mail Sarah's letter in this, you can let her have it after you read it. I have not heard from Rufus yet. As soon as we start on the March I will remail his letters to Hannah for I cannot carry them. Tell Edmund he must not make [break??] a sheep of eating beans for lambs like beans, he must save some for me when I get home. I hope Viola will go up to Uncle Dute's & learn to sing. She is old enough now to learn. I received a letter from Duty. Tell him and all the rest of the folks to write, not wait for an answer, for when we are on the march we do not have any way to write and I do not expect to be in camp much more.

Herbert & Evy must be good children & when I come home they must have their faces clean. I am glad you enjoy your mind so well. It seems to me that no harm can befall me when I am having the Prayers of one that lives so nigh the foot of the Cross. I enjoy my mind very well. We had a Prayer Meeting last night & am agoing to have another tonight. We had a good meeting. Two come forward & told their determination to try to live a Christian life & when they meet their companions again, to meet them Christians. O, it was a good time to me. Pray for me & may God protect & guide you is the earnest prayer of your Husband.

J Shumway

● #9

Ohio River, Feb 8 1865

Dear Wife:

We have started on another expedition. We started Monday. We have just come into the Ohio River, expect to get to Cairo today, where I expect to leave this. We expect to go to New Orleans from there. We do not know where, some say to Mobeal some say to Shurman. My time is so short, only a year, I think they are very kind to show me all the southern Confederacy. If we had staid in camp it is time I had another letter from you. It will be uncertain now when we get the mail, but keep writing. I will write every chance I have, it will be uncertain how often. I have to write now on my knees and it is awful cold, coldest day I have seen since I have been south, but in a few days we expect to be where it is warmer. Rufus come to us the day we started. He is pretty well but does not relish Government rations yet. George is along with the fleet. I think he will be left to Cairo or Memphis, but do not know. Take care of your health and the childrens, borrow no trouble about me. As long as I can hear good news from home I can stand soldiering, I can eat hard tack or anything else. Elery is well. My health is good. Have Charles & John tend to my description list. If Capt. See will not do anything more have him send me an affidavit stating when I was drafted in September. I will make the most of it that I can. See that he does what he agrees to for he will forget it as soon as they are out of sight. You need not send anything by Bob. He left his division at Eastport, we may not come together again. I must stop writing, it is so cold. You do not know with what pleasure I am looking forward to when I shall again meet you and the children.

May God protect and keep you is the Prayer of your Husband, J Shumway

Direct your letters to Cairo, Ill to follow the regiment

● #10

Cairo, Ill (Feb?) 9/65

Dear Wife:

I wrote yesterday. You may not get all my letters and I have got a good chance to write so I will write again. Rufus received a letter from Hanna last night mailed at Lansing Jan 29th, so I heard that you were all well. I am in hopes that I shall get one before we leave here, if not I do not expect to get one before we get to New Orleans. We stop here a day or two to coal up and load rations. I have been with George all the forenoon. He said the doctor told him that he would be left at Memphis. His officers are getting up a recomment [recommendation?] to grant him a furlough. I think he will be at home in a few weeks. Frank Heley & myself are up town at the Christian Commission Rooms writing. I have nothing new to write. For fear you would not get the one that I wrote yesterday I write this. Hanna wrote that John Albee had received a letter from me so he knows what I want

him to do. If he cannot do anything more I want him to get an affidavit from Capt. See stating when I was drafted and the first time that I reported and send me, but do a better way if he can. I feel anxious about this.

Hannah wrote that Edward Blew<sup>2</sup> was telling what good time they had in the Army, them that have good times. I wish [we] was the ones to be in it. The 10 Minn. Boys will tell no such stories, nor any one that has had fighting and marching to do, but folks do not write home the worst of soldiering. When I wish such & such ones was drafted, you may know that I wish them hanged. If they were all conscripts in the army, it would be endurable. I do not think any more of veteran soldiers than I do of horse thieves, 9 out of 10 reenlisted to make money and do it by stealing. When they get in such a place as this where they can express things home, they will steal everything that is worth expressing, overcoats, blankets, or anything they can put their hands on. We have only been here a day and they have broke into two stores, stole about two thousand dollars worth. They say that the Division has it to pay for, it comes rather hard to have my things stolen & have to help pay for what they steal besides. But enough of this, but I do not want you to put yourself out much for a Soldiers Aid Society. If you have any friends in the Army that you want to help, give it to them. But maybe I will feel different in a few days if I stay here a day or two. I will write again. I will try to make this my last about Soldiers Aid Society or Veteran Soldiers, but when they will steal Blankets & Overcoats [in] such weather as this, I must say something.

Remember me to all the children, separately and all inquiring friends. But I must close.

From Your Husband, Jeremiah Shumway

- #11                      Camp near Vithburg [sic], Miss. Feb 16 1865

Dear Wife:

I received your letter Feb. 2nd yesterday. You do not know how glad I am to get a letter from Home. I have not gotten the letter before your last, but I must expect to miss some. When I wrote last we expected to go to New Orleans in the Boat, but when we got here we were ordered ashore & have gone into camp 6 miles from Vithburg. There is no use trying to tell where we are agoing for we do not know, we may stay here a month & we may start tonight. You must not think it strange if you do not get another letter for months. We may go by land to Mobeal or some where that way, if we do we may not get a letter back in some time, but if we stay on the River we get mail regular. Keep writing. We come up here today. They are plowing & planting here. The grass looks green. Cattle get their living. We got our dinner, pitch our tents now. I set in it, all stripped off like a summers day, writing. I wish I knew what the weather was up there. If you do not hear from me you must not borrow any trouble for my health is good & I think I can stand soldiering for a

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<sup>2</sup> Ballou

year. I am sorry that my affairs seem to trouble you, you must not let them. If my wheat fetch[es] about two dollars as I expected, it will come out as I expected, if not it is just as well. I do not expect Everett wants his money. If we stay here a few days we expect to be paid off and I will send some money home. If you want anything and have not got the money, you had I think better get it to [i.e. at] Smith & Tarts. If you have borrowed any money and they want it you had better sell the oats. I am glad you all seem to enjoy your mind so well, it does me good every letter that I get from any of you. It seems to me that Prayers offered up in my behalf with so much faith will protect me from all harm & every letter that I get I feel more encouraged to press forward. I often wish that I had your faith, but live near the foot of the Cross and by the grace of God helping me I will live a better man, for it seems to me that His goodness has followed me all the days of my life especially since I have been in the Army. Write all about what the children say. When you write what they are talking about I can almost imagine myself with you. Keep up good courage and enjoy yourself all you can. It will not be long before my year is out, then I want to find you looking young and pretty. I received a letter from Wait & will answer it if we stay in Camp. I cannot write on a march. You can tell him I have wrote you about my affairs. Rufus is awriting home. Elery has gone after water for supper. George was left at Memphis. I should not wonder if he is at home by the time you get this. Tell Viola that I cannot send her letter to him, I do not know what hospital he is in. Tell her & Herbert to hurry & learn to sing so they can sing like birds when I get home. Remember me to all inquiring friends and take good care of yourself and may the Lord protect and keep you is the Prayer of your ever faithful Husband,

Jeremiah Shumway

Direct letters to Cairo, Ill. to follow the Reg.

● #12

In camp near New Orleans Feb 23 1865

My Dear Boy [Herbert?]:

I write you a few lines to let you know where we are. We arrived here yesterday and have camp on General Jackson's battle ground of 1812, expect to go to Mobeal, go by land to Lake Ponchartrain thence by water to Mobeal but nothing certain about it. I wish you and your Mother and Brothers & Sisters could be here a few moments to see how it looks here. I cannot hardly realize that you are up there in snow banks, it looks like summer here, trees leaved out, rose bushes all in the blossom, orange trees hang full of ripe oranges; there is so many that the whole army gets all they want to eat, but they are not very good, rather sour. We have not got any letters from home since Feb. 2nd, have been on the move so the mail could not overtake us. If we stay here a few days, we will be pretty apt to get mail. I

will try to write again before we leave here. Mother must not expect letters every week for there is a great many weeks that we cannot write, but I will write often as I can. I am glad your Mother and Aunt Sarah thinks you are such a good boy, try to always be good and help your Mother all you can till I get home. I expect you and the girls will have good times next summer riding horse back. I am glad you did not sell Fan so you can have something to ride. I expect you will be such a big boy when I get home that you can do most all the work so I shall not have to work much more. I send you an orange leaf . Rufus just brought in the biggest orange that I ever saw and I have just been making some Lemondate out of it. Tell Evy to look out next time for a letter. Be a good boy and may God protect and keep you from doing anything naughty.

From your affectionate Father, Jeremiah Shumway

We expressed a bundle to James Paine when we left Vithburg, our overcoats, it is so warm we did not want them anymore. I sent two coats I had a chance to buy one cheap. One of my coats had two pockets and one none. Rufuses had a button on the Pocket, Elery's none; one shirt was mine, one Elery's, Elery's shirt was marked. We sent Everett's socks, mittens, Cams & Cabberd & three Buttons that I cut off of his overcoat and valet, I wish James would see that his wife gets them. As soon as we are paid off we will all send money, Everett's with it. We sent the bundle to Lansing.

Mary I do not get any news 'twill be interesting to you, it is about the same thing over and over. I write every chance I have to let you know how I get along. [Do] not borrow any trouble about me, I get along first rate, nor about my affairs. If I can come home and find you all in health I shall be satisfied. When you write all about what the children are saying and doing, I can almost imagine myself with you when you write what they are doing, but I must close. May God protect and keep you is the prayer of Your ever faithful husband,

J. Shumway

● #13

In Camp Near New Orleans Feb 26 1865

My Dear Little Girl Eve:

I thought you wold like a letter from your soldier Father so I will write you on this pleasant Sabbath Day. We have been here four days. It has rained every day till today. Today is very pleasant. I washed up this morning then I went out into a garden to look around. They have just as handsome gardens here as you can imagine, all kinds of Trees and Flowers grow here, oranges, Lemons Figs and all kinds of Evergreens. I wish you and your mother, Brothers and Sisters were here to see the pretty things with me, as that cannot be I do the next best thing, write to you. I send some little flowers I cannot send much in a

letter. I expect they will all be wilted before you get them. Be a good little girl & not grow so big but what I shall know you when I got home. Tell me next time Mother writes how you like to have letters.

Mary- I received a letter from you the 24th mailed the 7th. I got your letters in about two weeks when the mail can get to us. I cannot see what makes my letters so long going to you, the last one you got was mailed Jan. 8th, there must have been 5 or 6 on the road. I have wrote every week but one, sometimes twice. I have received all of your letters but one the 6th. You wanted me to write what we had to do and what we had to eat. I have wrote you what we had to do, I dast not write what we have to eat for fear you will not know how to appreciate it. We think it is dreadful good. My appetite is not as good as it was at Eastport, I am glad of it; I think it will be better for me. I eat enough. You wrote that the children talked a good deal of what they were agoing to raise in the garden for Pa to eat. They thought it would be funny for Pa to eat their raising. I shall think all summer how the things look growing. I shall know every week about how large the things are and how they look growing and how you all look working in the garden.

I want you to do the best you can with my land. James has sold out; if he is not drafted perhaps you can make a trade with him to carry on some land & live in the log house but do anything you think best. Be sure to get your summer's wood cut before they begin about their spring's work, if you can. I spoke to Rufus about that barrel. He said he never said anything to Hanner [Hannah Shumway] about a barrel. I never had one of him, if you know my barrels get them and keep them. I wrote to you about you had better not let Hanner live there next summer. Let her go home; she has got a good home to go to. If she stays there you will not own anything around there long. If you do not get my other letter I wrote if Hanner would not go you better let the house to Duty or Charles & have them put her out according to law. I shall feel better to have her gone for I know you & the children will be imposed upon all summer. The children cannot be out to play & take any comfort, she will be scolding them all the time. You need not be afraid what folks will say, tell them that it is my wish. If I was there with you I should not mind it so much, but to be away and have you and the children imposed upon as you have been I do not want you to do it. We cannot tell how long we shall stay here. We may go before night & we may stay a month. I send my letters without stamps, it is hard to get them. I write short letters, I write so often.

We had preaching this afternoon. It seems good to hear preaching again. We have Prayer meeting this evening. May God bless and keep you is the prayer of your ever faithful Husband. J Shumway

● [#14]

In camp near New Orleans Feb 28th 1865

My Dear Wife:

I guess you think that I have nothing else to do but write. We have not had much to

do since we have been here. We have been here a week and this is 3 letters I have wrote to you. I thought that I would begin this and when we leave here put it in the office. We expect to have orders every moment to leave. The first Brigade is aleaving this afternoon; I have just come from the boat the Tenth Reg. goes in. I saw all the boys in the tenth. Henery Blew is here, he was left at Memphis with George but got better & was sent to his Reg. He said George was a little better. Things goes on about the same with me, my health is good, it is the same thing over and over so I cannot write anything interesting. Tell Edmund that I know how he looks running around there without any aprons; tell him he must be careful & not get bigger that Herbert<sup>3</sup>. It would look so funny to see Edmund the biggest when I get home. We mustered today, if we stay here a few days longer we expect to get pay & will send some money to you. It is about time that I had another letter from you. You do not know with what anxiety I look for the mail when it is time for me to get a letter, especially when I have nothing to do. I have not as yet got them papers you spoke about sending. I should like to know how the Draft went there, but I hope no one else will have to go off of the Prairie, but I expect I shall hear how it went by the time you get this.

March 2 - Everything goes on as usual; we do not have much to do here & the time seems long - when we have to drill twice a day time passed off better but we expect to move from here soon. We are some 6 or 8 miles from New Orleans City. I have not been up there yet. If we stay here a day or two more I am going up there. We have been waiting all day for the mail. We heard that it came in last night, but it has not been give out yet. I expect to get a letter. It is a week since I got one. You may feel thankful that you have the work to do & your children to see to, I tell you the time seems long when I have nothing to do; but the year is fast working off. I am looking forward anticipating a great deal of pleasure when I get home again.

I washed my clothes yesterday and today [?] have been mending my pants. I think that I have done it very nice. When I get home I expect I can do my own cooking, washing and mending unless my girls get so big that we will have to let them do it to keep them out of mischief. If I could only step in and see you for a few minutes it seems to me that I could come back and stay pretty contented, but as that cannot be I shall try to make myself as contented as I can. I never have thought that there was any chance for a peace this summer till lately. I am in hopes now that there will be so that I will be able to get home before the summer is out.

March 4 - I thought that I would wait till I had a letter from home before I sent this, but the mail came in last night and we none of us got any mail so I send this and when I get one I [will] write again. We went to New Orleans yesterday to see what we could see and pass away the time; it is about 8 miles. We could not see much, there was so many houses. You can tell Miss Stone when you see her that I saw William Stone in New Orleans. The 6 Reg. is there now. He is well and likes soldiering. My health is very good. Remember me in your prayers that I may prepared to live & discharge the duties of life and that I may be

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<sup>3</sup> Edmund wound up being the tallest of the sons, and Herbert one of the shortest.

prepared to die and meet my Maker in peace. Kiss the children for me and may the Lord guide and bless you.

Good Bye, Jeremiah Shumway

- [#15] Fort Gains on Dauphine Island Mobile Bay March 8 1865

Dear Wife:

The last time that I mail[ed] a letter to you from New Orleans I little thought that we should march so soon. We had orders about 10 o'clock at night to be ready to march at 4, so you see we cannot tell what we are agoing to do. We arrived here last night. We have got a good place to camp, it is on the beach. We get all the Oysters that we want. Elery and I went out this morning & got what we wanted, we can get a meal any time that the tide is out. It must be healthy here, a great deal healthier than on the Mississippi River. We expect to stay here two or three weeks but for fear that we will march by tomorrow I will write a line to let you know where I am & that I am well. We are busy, have not got settled down yet. If we stay here a day or two I will write again. As I said before, you must not feel anxious if you do not hear from me for months for we may be where we cannot send mail. We expect to go to Mobile if the Rebels evacuate it or we whip them, we will be pretty apt to follow them into the country. If you could hear the boys talk you would think that there was no danger of us getting whipped. We expect to be in a battle before long. You must not feel anxious about me. It does not seem to me that I am to be killed. I think that I shall come around all right at the end of the year.

Tell the children that I think of them every day. Tell them that they must be good all the time for there is not much of the time but what I am thinking what you and they are doing on. We do not have excitement enough to draw my mind from home, not even in the midst of battle. It does seem to me that if my life is spared to go home again there there is a great deal of happiness for us. I never knew how to prize such a home as I had. I think this will be a good lesson for me. I do think that if I get home again I shall be a different man to you & the children, not but what I loved you but was too thoughtless about your wants. It seems to me that this was necessary for me, it has taken my mind off getting money. I wish that John Mc. & Charles Albee could learn the lesson, but I hope they will not have to learn it the same way. When we come to Minnesota we gave up all happiness for the sake of getting money. But I must close, we have so much to do today. I have not got a letter since the 7 of Feb. We have been moving so do not know when we will get a mail here but will get the more when I do get them, as I did at Eastport. I should like to hear how the Draft went. I understood that there would be none in Ioway. I am glad that Wait does not have to go. Pray for me that I may be able to say the Lord's will be done at all times and my Prayer is that the Lord may guide and protect you. If we stay here I [will] write again in a few days.

Jerry

Dear Wife: I received a letter from you today mailed at Caledonia. You wrote about Viola & Evy having the diphtheria but was getting better & I saw Frank Heley today, he had a letter from Mrs. Lapham dated one week later, she spoke about my children being sick but had got well so I feel pretty easy about them. You must have had a hard time taking care of them. I wish I could be there to help you instead of laying here doing nothing. I have not had anything to do since we left Eastport. The time passes off slow when I have nothing to do, but we expect orders to march evry hour. They are sending troop all the time towards Mobeal, they land the Troups about half way to Mobeal. They have had a battle there the last two days. We could hear the cannonading plain here and they bring the wounded back here. We hear no cannons today & the report is we have affected a landing & taken a fort. I am sorry that you do not get my letters. I wrote 4 or 5 at Eastport that you had ought to have received by the time you wrote me. I have wrote every week but once and often twice. I get your letters regular when we are where the mail can get to us. I have not missed but one. It has been so long since you received any of my letters that I hardly know whether to write the same over or not. I wrote about things that I would like to hear about but I will wait a few weeks longer to see if you do not get my letters. If I was sure that you got my letters I would like to write half of the time. I sent one from here 4 days ago. I have to report myself wounded today. I am wounded with an oyster shell, not a very severe wound. I think I hear you say for a soldier not a severe wound, but rather sore; I was out getting oysters & I cut my leg 3 days ago & have not been able to walk around much since but am getting better. We had a meeting this afternoon, the text was 2 Corinthians 4 Cha. 18 Verse. I had just been reading your letter about the children being sick & thinking how uncertain it was about we all meeting again in this world, the text seemed to hit my case & I was led to see how necessary it was for me to live so that if we are not all permitted to meet again we can meet where parting will be no more.

March 13 - Nothing new today. You wrote the 16 & 17 of Feb. it was snowing then, I was at Vithburg then it was so warm that we had to get into the shade to keep cool, but since we have been in this Island it has been colder than it has been for a month back. Herbert, I want you to write again. I can read it pretty well. Take pain and have the letters made plain. You wrote about playing with the dog. I did not know you had a dog. I want you to tell me all about him. I wish the children would write every time you do, they write about things that interest me that you would not think of. Do with the farm as you think best. I wish I was there to help you. When I have nothing to do I do not have to think, all I have to do it to do what they tell me to do and that is not much, but I will make it up when I get home. Enjoy yourself all you can, [do] not borrow any trouble about me, I get along first rate. I know how you must feel with so much to do & think about but I will baby you all to your hearts content when I get home if I feel any as I do now. I have sent Herbert his money. I must have sent 6 or 8 letters that you have not gotten. I am in hopes you will get them.

March 14 - It is a very rainy day. We can hardly get out of our tents, everything else is about the same. We get no orders yet to march. The mail came in today is about the same. I feel anxious to hear how the children get along and how the Draft goes & who has to go. I hope that no one else will have to go off the Prairie, but I shall be able to hear in a week or two. I received a letter from Duty. I should have wrote to him, but I did not know but he would have had to do with the war. As soon as I hear that he is at home I will write him. I wish you could look in and see us now. The tent is just big enough for we three to lay in, we lay just like so many pigs. I have not had my clothes off since I left Minnesota only to change them to wash. We have just drawn five days rations & it is piled up around the tent with hard tack, pork, coffee, sugar, salt, pepper and sour kraut. I guess you would laugh if you could see us. We have been talking about home & every thing that pertains to home. Try to write every week if you do not write but a few lines. Let the children write. I will direct my next to Herbert. We are all well, but I must close. Remember me at the Throne of Grace. Kiss all the children for me.

May the Lord guide and sustain you in all your troubles is the prayer of your Husband, J. Shumway

● [#17]

Dauphin Island March 17 1865

Beloved Wife and Children,

Last night we was called up to strike tents & be ready to march. We stacked arms and laid by them all day, now we have had orders to go into camp again, but we expect to go before morning. We received mail today. I had a letter from Nancy and one from you wrote in January, so I have got all your letters up to the first of March. Rufus & Elery got letters mailed the 2 of March, that was the time Nancy's was mailed. I did not get one that date from you. Nancy wrote that Evey had been very sick but was out of danger. She said she had just come from there. She wrote just as you was agoing to write to me so she did not write much about you, but perhaps the children was so sick you did not get a chance, but I can put up with a disappointment if I can only hear that you are all well. Elery's folks wrote that you had got my letters, I am glad. Herbert, I just heard today that you had [bumped?] your nose, but you did not write any about it so I guess it has not hurt you much. Viola & Evey, I have picked up a whole lot of sea shells for you, if I get a chance I will send them to you, but I think it will be doubtful if I can get a chance. Nancy wrote that Edmund did not want anyone to write that he was a naughty boy, tell him every one says that he is a dreadful good boy. You must not be disappointed if you do not get a letter for several weeks for we expect to go some where some time. I must make this letter short for it is late & I must put it in the mail tonight. We are all well. Do the best with the Farm that you can. I received a letter from Brother Waite; tell him I would write to him but I have nothing to write that

would interest him. He can hear all the news from you. I would like to have him write to me - but I must close. Take good care of yourself and the children. Do not overwork if you can get anyone to help you and may the Lord bless you.

From your ever faithful husband, J. Shumway

● [# 18]

Near Mobeal April 1 1865

Beloved Wife & Children:

I take this opportunity to write a few lines although I do not feel much like it. We see war in good earnest. We have to work almost night and day. We have been a fighting for over a week. Our lines now are within musket shot, the general opinion is that we have gone as far as we can. I do not think we will have to charge their works. I think we are fixing for a siege, but you can find more by the papers than I can tell you. Rufus and I are sound and well yet. Elery has been sent to the Hospital, he was struck on the leg by a shell, it did not break it, only a bruise. Do not worry about me for by the time you get this we will be apt to be out of this. I received two letters from you day before yesterday, one the 8 and one the 15 of March so you see I get your letters in two weeks. I am so glad to hear that you are all so much better, but you must have had a hard time. I am glad you have let the land money rent<sup>4</sup> so you will have it off your hands. I feel anxious to get another letter from you to hear if you are all still getting along well and to hear who was drafted. I hope no one will have to come off of the Prairie, but if they do have to come I hope they will come to this Reg. I wish you would write me what Evret [Everett] is agoing to have the land with Wait and how the winter wheat and Apple trees look, I am glad Wait is agoing to have the land. I think he will be capable of [caring for?] the apple trees. I wish the children would write to me. All the leisure time they have, they write a good many things that is interesting that no one else would think of writing. Tell Evy and Edmund that I will get them their book for taking their medecine good when I get home. I sent Evy a picture in Elery's letter. I am glad you write so long letters. I would write longer letters if I had anything to write about. My health is good, never was any better. Keep up good courage, be not anxious if you do not get letters regular for we may be where we cannot send them, but I shall try to write a line every week. I suppose the children will be able to work in the garden by the time you get this. I shall think a good deal about their gardening. I suppose they are having a good time today April fooling one another. I do not think there is much fooling going on here but try to have them enjoy themselves they way they can, perhaps by the time you get this we will be having a good time, but I have not time to write any more. May the Lord sustain and protect you.

From your affectionate Husband, Jeremiah Shumway

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<sup>4</sup> rent for money rather than a share of the crop?

● [#19]

In the Trenches Near Mobeal April 6 1865

Beloved Wife and Children:

I write a few lines to let you know that I am well. We have pretty stirring times here now. I am not with the Regiment now. Rufus and I have been detailed as sharp shooters. We do not expect to go the the Regiment again till we take Mobeal. We have rifle pits to shoot out of to pick off their gunners. I like it full as well as to be with the Reg. We have regular details so we know just what we have to do. We are on duty twelve hours and off twenty four. When I was with the Reg. I was on duty three nights running. We are digging trenches to get up to their works. We have to dig nights. Since we were detailed as sharp shooters we have no digging to do and it is generally understood if we make a charge on their works that the sharp shooters will not have to do any charging. We have been fighting ever since we have been here, but it is done mostly between the sharp shooters and the artillery. We do not know yet whether Canby will charge their works but I think it is doubtful. There is rumors every day that we will charge but I think it is doubtful. It looks to me that their work is quite a snag to run against. Elery has got back to the Reg. but is too lame to do duty yet. Rufus and I enjoy good health and have not got a scratch yet. I have not got any letters since I wrote before but expect one when the mail comes in. I feel anxious to hear from you, the children not being well when you wrote, but I hope for the best. There is quite a stir around camp today about peace, I think there is more prospects of it than there was last winter. I think that after we take Mobeal that it is about all the service that we will have to do. I hope it will be, for I do want to get home, but I shall content myself the year out if I have to stay. By the time you get this I expect the children will be to work in the garden having good times. I hope so; try to enjoy yourself and have them all you can. I would send the children something if I could get it but we are camped here in the woods and I cannot get anything. I send Evy 25 cents. I believe I have sent the boys some. I send Viola something as soon as I can get it. Do not feel anxious if you do not get letters regular for it may be so that we cannot send them, but I shall write every week, if I can. Tell the children that they must not grow so fast but what I shall know them when I come home-but I must close my letter and get supper for we are on duty tonight. Remember me to all inquiring friends. O how I wish I could see you and the children for a few moments, but as that cannot be I bid you a good night. From Jerry.

● [#20]

In Camp near Mobeal April 10 1865

Dear Mary: I suppose you will feel anxious to hear from me so I write a few lines every opportunity.

We took the Spanish Fort night before last, Rufus and I was on the squirmish line; we found out they were evacuating about one or two o'clock. We went into their works, took about one thousand prisoners and twenty-five or thirty cannons. The next morning we

started for Blakely to take that place, the first and third division done all the work at the Spanish Fort, the second Division was held in reserve; when we started for Blakely, the second Division was sent ahead, we held in reserve. They charged about dark last night, they carried their works and took the garrison all prisoners. We were not in the engagement at all, but you will hear by the papers what is going on here better than I can tell you. We have taken all their outer works, now we expect to go to Mobeal. We hear good news from Grant and Sherman, the boys are in good spirits and will fight with a good will. We all think that we will get a chance to go home by the Fourth of July. Keep up good spirits, this thing will soon play out. It seems good to be above ground once more, for the last two weeks we have lived under ground like Pocket Gophers, dast not put our heads above ground, we were so close to their works. We have been sent to our Reg. again and are not under fire today. It seems good to sit down and feel safe once more. Elery and Rufus is asleep and I am about half asleep. I shall keep them company as soon as I get this in the mail. I am well, only feel rather curious being broke of my rest so much. I have not had a letter from you since the 15 [of] March, expect one every day. I have wrote 3 since, but I must close. We may have orders to march any moment and I want to get a little sleep. Tell the children that I think of them every day, I hope it will not be long before I can see you all. Remember me at the Throne of Grace and may the Lord sustain and protect you is the prayer of your Husband.  
Jerry

● [#21]

Near Mobeal, April 12 1865

Dear Mary -

I must tell you the good news, Mobeal is ours; our troupes are going into the City today so I expect this campaign is ended and I have not got a scratch. We have not had any very hard fighting but a good deal of scurmishing. I was on the scurmishing line for over two weeks and it seems good to be where I can feel safe again. It is hard telling what we will do next, there is rumors that we will start up the Mississippi River in a day or two. It will seem good to be on the way towards home again, but we were in hopes that we would be sent to garrison Mobeal, but the talk is now that the 13 Army core has the job. We do the fighting and they get all the easy jobs, but our Reg. has got out of this campaign very well we only had 11 men hit, 3 in our company. Elery was hit. We were under their fire, we were ordered to lay down; it rained, he and I took a blanket and laid down close together and spread the blanket over us and the shell came and hit the ground ahead of us, glanced, hit his leg and went on and never burst. It hurt him pretty bad. He spoke and said it had smashed his leg all to pieces, but after a little bit he got up and went to the rear alone but I will tell you all about these things when I get home. What suits us best is the rumors in camp about Grant taking Lee and his whole Army - we dast not believe it yet; if it is so, we all expect to be at home by the Fourth of July, we hope it is true. You wanted me to send you some orange blossoms. I

have not seen anything but sand banks and pine trees since we left New Orleans. It is a perfect wilderness down here, nothing but swamps and pine woods. Tell Edmond that I will send him some money as soon as I get some. I think he must be a great fellow for money. You wrote that Evy was hopping and skipping across the floor, so I guess she is most well. You must have had a hard time, the children being so sick. Do not try to get along alone when any of you are sick if you can get any one. Do not borrow any trouble about me, I have gotten to be quite a soldier. I can sleep on a log and I can eat hard tack and drink coffee with the best of them. The children wants to know if I use tobacco, no I do not use it. We draw rations of tobacco, I let Rufus have mine. I intend to come home with no more bad habits than I had when I left. I am glad you write such long letters, I want you to write all the time you can get, and I want the children to write. Tell Emily to write often all about her folks. I do not expect any of the rest of her folks will write much. I received a letter from you two days ago, I expect to have to wait almost a week for another, it seems a long time. I wish you could send one every other day, but as the mail does go out but once a week I shall have to be contented to get one a week, but when I write so often I must not write long letters. You write that you do not get letters every week, you cannot have gotten all of my letters for I write every week, sometimes two or three. I send you a flower that grows wild here in the woods. Tell the children I do not have a chance to have my picture taken. I will come home and bring it as soon as I can. We have not been paid off yet.

Good Night. Jerry

● [#22]

Montgomery May 1 1865

Dear Mary:

The time has been that I was afraid of, that I could not write to you. The day that I wrote last, April 12, we started on the march for this place and there has been no chance to send a letter till now. I stood the march of 200 miles as well as any of the old soldiers. We got here [the] 25, the fleet did not get here till yesterday; it started from Mobeal about the time we did, so it brought no mail, but the river is now open; we expect to get mail regular. I cannot write but a few lines now, the mail is going in a few moments. I did not know it in time to write. I [will] write again in a day or two. I do not know what is going on in the civilized world. We have had no news from the North in about a month, but it is generally understood that there will be no more fighting. I had made up my mind to stay a year and I could have stayed contented but if there is no more for us to do I shall feel very anxious to get home. It seems to me I can hardly wait, but if the thing is settled we will be at home before the summer is gone. We expect soon to get news from the North then we shall know what is going on. My health is still good, for which I am very thankful. I enjoy my mind very well. The Lord has been very good to me and mine for which I try to be thankful. Let us try to live faithful and may Heaven's choicest blessings rest on you and the children, neighbors and

all the loved ones at home is my prayer. I hope it will not be long before I can see you all, but the mail is going out, I must close. Elery is on picket so he cannot write, tell his folks if you see them that he is well.

Goodbye, Jerry

I send Edmund money. Tell Viola, Herbert, Evy I [will]write them soon.

● [#23]

Montgomery, Alabama May 7 1865

Herbert my Dear Boy -

I have not forgotten to write to you, but I should not have wrote quite as soon, but we have orders to be ready to march at a moments notice. We never know where we are going but it is generally understood that we are going to Selma then be distributed on the Railroad from there to Meridan to guard it while they are repairing on it, we do not expect to get home as soon as we did a few days ago. We heard last night that hostilities were ordered to be commenced again. I do not think that there will be much more fighting, but I think that Lincoln's death will put back settling the war for a good deal. We may not get home before our time is out, but that will not be long, if I do not get home before, it will be good luck. I wish you would write when Mother writes. I can read you letters very well. I am glad to hear that you are such a good boy. You must be a good boy and help Mother all you can. Viola wanted me to send her some orange peel. There is no Oranges here. I have not seen any Orange trees since I left the mouth of the Mississippi River. Tell your Mother that I am glad that she writes just as she feels. Be sure and write every week. I am glad you sent those envelopes, but you need not send any more at present. Rufus had a bunch sent him, they will last some time. I wish you would send me a half sheet of paper in every letter for sometimes when we are on a march we are entirely out; we have no way to carry such things, they get wet and spoiled. I have nothing to send you and Evy this time. I believe I sent Evy a picture last. I [will] try to get you and Evy something next time. I expect you have got the garden all planted by this time, but when school commences you must go to school, not think you must stay out to work. Write me if you have got a pig and how big he is - but I have got my paper full so good bye. Be a good boy.

From your affectionate father

● [#24]

Montgomery, Alabama May 9 1865

Edmund my Dear Little Boy -

How do you like to have a letter from your Father, Mother says you like to get a letter so I write you one and Mother says you wanted me to send you some money so I send you ten dollars. You must not forget me so when I come home you can be Father's boy. You must not get so big but when I go up on the Prairie I can carry you out as far as the gate. You have got to be such a big boy. You must be a good boy and not cry much nights so to plague Mother. Can you help Herbert do the chores any, bring in the wood or pick up chips? I guess you can, you wear pants and vest. How big is Charley? Is he big enough to play with you any yet and how does he look? I guess he is a little homely fellow, or is he a good little boy? You must be a good boy and I will send you some more money pretty soon.  
From your Father

Mary, Sunday when I wrote about having the head ache, before I got through I thought I had got over it, but Sunday night I was pretty sick. Last Saturday I washed out all my clothes, pants, coat and all. On the march here I threw away my clothes so I had not a change and I put them on wet and I took a sudden cold and it settled in my bones, my head and legs ached so I could not sleep nights. We expected to march this morning and I could not march and the Doctor sent me to the Hospital. I hated to go but there was no help for it, my legs ached so I could not march, but they gave up going today and I come back now to keep with the Regt. the Doctor says if I cannot march I may ride in the ambulance. I do not think it will amount to much. I was afraid that I was agoing to have the fever and ague, but I have no fever. I guess it is nothing, I think I [will] be all right in a few days. I shall try to keep with the Regt. for if I leave it there is no knowing when I can get to it and I cannot get any letters from home, and I feel more at home in my company, but I do not think that there will be any need of my leaving it. I will write again as soon as I can, but I do not expect to get a chance till I get to Selma. You must not put too much dependence on my getting home till my time is out. Take care of yourself and enjoy your self all you can. Do not think that there is much the matter with me. I [will] be all right in a few days.

Good night. Jerry

● [#25]

Demopolis, Alabama May 19 1865

My Dear Wife.

Here we are instead of at Selma. Smith's Army is scattered all over this state taking care of Government Property. The first Division is scattered from Selma to Meridan. We are quartered in some houses have a very good place. We are doing Provose Duty. We have a good deal to do. We are on duty half of the time, but we expect some more of our Brigade

will be here to help us. My health is good again. I only rode one day. I do not know what is going on, have not heard any news since we left Montgomery. We have not got any mail since we left, it takes two or three weeks after we move before we get mail then we get it regular. We expect to get one now every day. We have given up the notion of going home in a hurry. We do not hear a word said about sending us home. I have given up the notion of getting home before Fall, so I have got pretty contented again. We have not been paid off yet. If we had any money we could live pretty well for butter and eggs is plenty and cheap, but we expect if we stay here long we will get paid. It is getting very warm here, we cannot bear to stir around any more than we can help. I feel anxious to hear what is going on at Washington. I do not see what they want of so many men. I should think that they would be discharging some before long. I will write again in a few days. I have nothing to send the children, only some money I guess that they do not care much about that. Tell them that I often think of them and you. I hope the time is not far distant when I can again meet with all the loved ones at home.

Jerry

[#26]

Demopolis, Alabama May 25 1865

Dear Wife:

I write a few lines altho I have nothing new to write. We received a mail day before yesterday. I received two letters one dated April 28 [and one] May 4. I am glad that you get along as well as you do altho I was sorry that you took it so hard when I was at Mobeal. You write in almost every letter for me to take care of myself for your sake. You must try to do the same and not make yourself sick worrying about me. I should not have wrote you till it was over but thought that you would hear where I was and feel worse then so I wrote; but it is over now and here I am in good quarters. But I am afraid that we will stay here longer than I wish to. We do not hear anything about being discharged that we can depend on. I received that money and it came in a good time for the next day we had not a mouthful to eat. I went up town and got some Baker's bread and Butter for our squad. No one knows how good it tasted, only those that had lived on hard tack and pork for the last six months. When we get our rations we have enough to eat, but when we go to a new place we get ahead of our rations. When we was at Eastport we did not get full rations none of the time; some of the time all that we got was about a pint of corn a day. But I had a little money then and we got along very well. When we went to Montgomery we got 8 lb. of meal for 32 men for two days. When the money come we had not a mouthful to eat and would not have till the next night so you see that it come in a good time. Rations has come now so we have plenty. My health is good but some times I do not have much appetite, the same that I used to be at home in warm weather. Now I can get a few eggs and butter and some little things that I can relish but I do not think so much about the good it will do me as I do to think that you was so

thoughtful as to send it to me, I want you to keep writing till you know that I am on my way home. Since we have been here I have wrote to all that I owe a letter. Viola wanted to know how long since we had snow here. I have not seen any snow since last January before we left Eastport, it has been pretty warm ever since. I suppose that the children will get their letters before you get this, tell them that I am glad that they are so good to their mother, because I am away; tell them that I think of them many times a day. I see that they are all selling out there<sup>5</sup>. I have not [a] fever to sell out, all the fever that I have is to get home. I have no desire to go to Missouri, Iowa or anywhere else but I have filled this letter up with nothing. Will write again soon. Remember me at the throne of grace and may the Lord protect and keep you is the prayer of your ever faithful husband,

J. Shumway

● [#27]

Demopolis, Alabama June 2 1865

Dear Wife:

I received a letter from you dated May 11. I receive one now every week. I am glad that you all enjoy good health. If you can only keep well I can stay here very contented. You must not try to work so hard. You know that you cannot stand so hard work. Let the gardening go if you cannot hire any one to tend it, not make yourself sick trying to raise something good for me to eat, for since you sent me that money and we have got settled down here, we live first rate. It does not take but a little money besides what we have to live well. We draw flour rations and we trade it off to the bakers for bread and we trade off coffee for garden sauce. Yesterday for dinner we had new potatoes, mustard greens, cucumbers and bread and butter. We buy a little butter and a few eggs, is all we have to buy to live well. That five dollars does me more good than ever five dollars did before. We have good quarters here, but we live an idle life. We drill about 1/2 hour in the morning, and dress parade in the evening, it takes about 1/2 hour and every four days I come on duty but sometimes when I am on duty I only have an hour's duty to do. I am anxious to get home, this life does not suit me, but then I think I can stand it till we get our discharge. My health never was better. We have liberty to go where we have a mind to, fishing or anything, but it is so warm we stay pretty close to our quarters. I try to stir around enough in the cool of the day to have good health. Rufus and the Orderly Sargent has gone off on a tramp, Elery is on duty. I have been looking around over the Regt. to give you a description of what we are doing but there is no use, there is no two about the same business so we git [give?] it up, but I must stop writing this morning and go to cooking some beans for dinner. I will try to finish this letter this afternoon. I have wrote to Duty, Wait, Coil, all that I owe a letter. I have been

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<sup>5</sup> There was indeed a great exodus for Portland Prairie at this time, most people going to Iowa or Dakota territory.

expecting a letter from John Mc. I write to him last. I have not got a letter from him since last Fall. I do owe Ella and Emely a letter, I have not wrote to them direct, but I try to buy them off. I send them ten dollars apiece so I guess that they [will] write to me again. Elery wrote home from Fish River three days from Spanish Fort, I sent a picture to Evy. He says he has not heard from it and you have not said any thing about the picture so I suppose they never got there letter. Rufus has just come in with a canteen of milk, so you see we live like a pig in the clover. I do not think that we will cook our beans till tomorrow. Viola writes a good deal about Charley. I suppose she thinks he is something nice. I guess he is not much of a boy. I do not think I should know him, if she will send him down here by express, I [will] send her a negro boy, one that has black curly hair. I am sorry that the children lost their colt, it would have been a pretty play thing for them. You wanted me to tell Frank that his sisters had been down there, his Regt. is not with us now. We are scattered all over Alabama. I have seen an order to discharge all soldiers in hospitals so I suppose George will be at home before you get this. I am glad that John Mc. appears to be contented with his farm. It does not seem to me that I shall ever want to sell out. Amos Granville tells me that John Cook and Smith is sick enough of Cedar Falls, he says he is not agoing to live there and that John is agoing to live there as soon as he and Amos get home from the Army. It seems very foolish to me for any one to sell themselves out of house and home, with a large family, and not know where they are going to. I have talk[ed] of selling out, it was because I wanted to buy Dute's farm, but that and James' is sold. I like mine now as well as any of them. Tell John and Nancy that I will make a bargain with them to not sell till they do. I do not think Charles will sell. I am sorry that Duty and James could not be contented to live there. I hope Dr. Batchelder will conclude to stay where he is. According to what Amos says those that have gone down in Iowa is agoing to sell and leave there as soon as they can but if any one is not contented they had better go where they can be. If I can get home I think I shall be contented to stay there the rest of my life if we can get a living. Tell John Mc. that I want him to write to me who they have got for town officers and all about what they are doing in the town. I wish that he would carry in my bill for the county money and tend to it for me. I wrote the children all long letters when we were at Montgomery, I hope that they will get them. Tell Mrs. Waite that I have been waiting very impatiently for that letter that she was agoing to write me. I think it might have been missent so that I never got it. She must write again. Tell Sarah that I believe I wrote to her last. Everything is such a sameness here that it is hard to full up a letter. We get no news, and there is nothing going on here that would be interesting to you. Most all the amusement that I have, we go out in the cool of the evening and have a game of quates [quoits] most every place that we have stopped at before we have evening meetings but I have hardly seen the Chaplain since we have been here. Last Sunday I was on duty in the evening I went out to hear a citizen preacher. I liked him very well. Next Sunday I want to go to the Methodist Church to meeting. Tell Edmund that he must feed his pig so that it will get bigger than Herbert, tell Herbert that he must hurry and learn his books through so that he can, when he gets a little bigger, help me on the farm. It has been so long since I have done any work that I will hate to go to work again, but I expect

Viola and Herbert will be big enough to do the work pretty soon so that we will not have to work. Evy and Charley must not grow very fast, they must be the babes for I must have a boy and a girl baby. Tell Edmund that he may grow as fast as he has a mind to so he can help Herbert work, but I must close. Let us try to live close to the foot of the cross so that we shall be prepared to live and when we come due we shall be prepared to meet our savior in peace. May the Lord guide and sustain you is my prayer.

From your ever faithful Husband, Jeremiah Shumway

● [#28]

Demopolis, Alabama June 7 1865

Dear Wife:

Your letter of the 17 May was duly received. The mail comes in every other day so I get your letters as soon as they come through. It is lucky for you that the mail does not leave there but once a week, for I should insist that you should write every mail day, as it is I do not expect a letter but once a week. We have been expecting an order to muster out troupes, it has come, but it does not take us. You must know what the order is so I [will] not write it. It takes about a third of our Regt, I expect the 10 Regt. Boys will be at home before you get this. We do not expect now to get home very soon. We do not know what they will do with us, but there is a rumor that we will be sent to Minnesota to fight the Indians. If we are, I can put in the balance of my time pretty contented. If we are sent up there I shall try to stop and see you when we get up the river. I think you can get some one to cut the winter wheat and hay. It will do to cut before the rurring times [roaring times??] comes on. I wish you would try to get the hay cut and stacked in good shape if you can. If I do not get home till my time is out it will be all the fodder that we will have, try and get the winter wheat stacked if you can before the folks gets to cutting spring wheat or else it will be most all wasted before you can get it stacked. Try to get it stacked at the barn so we can have a little straw. Unless Mr. Wait is milking those heifers that I had of Mr. Coil you had better sell, if you can get what they are worth, for I do not expect we can winter them and they will sell better now than they will in the fall. I expect that when I get home you will be quite a farmer, and a good judge of buying and selling stock, but enough about farming this time. We expect to be paid off today, the pay master is here. If I can see anyone that is going home I shall send you some money, if not there is no express from here and I dast not send it in a letter. I have nothing new to write. It is the same thing over and over here. My health is still good, that is the main thing now. You cannot be as anxious to hear from me as I to hear from home. There is only me here and there is so many of you there and the children is so apt to be sick; try and take good care of your health. I think that we can stand the warm weather here very well, if we do not have active service to do. The Regt. enjoy the best health here of any place we have been in. I send Ella and Emely that money that I promised in the other letter. I forgot to put it in. Tell Nancy and Sarah to write to me or send me money to induce me to write again. I expect John Mc. and Charles will write when they get a good ready. Remember me to all inquiring friends, tell them I [am] coming home just as soon as Uncle

Sam will let me. Tell the children that I [do] not call them all by name this time, but I think of them by name every day. Tell Edmund he must feel in my pockets as soon as I get home and see what he can find.

Yours till death, Jeremiah Shumway

● [#29]

Demopolis, Alabama June 11 1865

My dear Dear Wife

Since I have been in the Army and have had time to think over my past life you do not know how I have regretted the way that I have lived since we were married, allow we have lived together in a way to make life endurable but when I think how we might have lived and how well we might have enjoyed ourselves it seems to me I can hardly endure it. I never doubted your love for me since we were first acquainted, I always thought you would be willing to sacrifice your own pleasure for mine, and I know that I have been too thoughtless of your happiness before marriage and since. I have caused you many unhappy hours and all the excuse that I can make is that I did not think about it as I should have done. I know that I am selfish and think too much of having my own way in everything, but I must plead thoughtlessness in doing as I have done for I never saw anyone that I love as I do you and there is nothing but what I would do[it] for your happiness. I will try in the future to be more thoughtful.

And I have not tended to the wants of our children as I should have done. I do not know but what I have done as well as I should have and have nothing to regret for anything that I have done to any of them but Herbert. He requires a good deal different management from any of the others. He is very sensitive, would take as a slight what the other children would not think of and he is very tender hearted; anyone if they are only kind to him can get him to do almost anything. I do not think you need to be afraid of his getting too good of an opinion of himself. Learn him to think he is just as good as anyone then he will not think so much about being slighted, and he will learn to rely on his own judgement. You cannot be too particular to try to learn him when he does anything wrong because some one told him how wrong it is and that he must learn to think and act for himself. To sum it all up I think he has your disposition. If you think you have any faults try to correct them in him; only he is a boy, will be a man if he lives and I want him to learn to act and think for himself and not to be easily lead about by smooth words. I think he has got an impression that I do not like him as well as I do the Girls, try to correct him, for if he gets the impression fastened on his mind it will be hard to get him to think otherwise. (2 o'clock)

I thought that I would write a long letter but we have been out to pick some blackberries and when we come in I got a letter from you dated May 25 and I want to put this in the office tonight. We have been paid off up to the first of March. I could send you

\$50 dollars if there was any way to send it, but there is no express office here, and I dares not trust it in a letter. If I can see Frank Heley before he goes I will send it by him. You wrote that you got me a good supper last night; I am afraid that you will get tired of getting me suppers before I get home. I do not see that we are any nearer home than we were two months ago. We do not hear anything lately about being discharged. You had better make up your mind to wait for me till my time is out and write me long letters. If I get out before it will be our good luck. Make yourself easy about me, my health is good and if I should happen to be sick I shall get my discharge, the Doctor discharges anyone that comes to the hospital. You must not work so hard, you know that you cannot stand it, let the garden go if you cannot get anyone to tend it. Just think what shape you would be in if you were sick. If you do not stop your hard work I shall begin to scold. Tell Edmund that he must feel in my pockets as soon as I get home and see what he can find. Try to learn Charley how I look so he will not be afraid of me. I have got acquainted with a family, they have a boy just Charley's age. I make a pet of him and carry him sugar so I can tell about how large Charley is. Tell the Girls and Herbert that I am coming home as soon as Uncle Sam will let me. I shall not stay a day longer than I am obliged to. We do not get any news to write, but I will try to begin my next [in] time enough so that I can write a longer letter. Try to bear in mind about that scolding so you can be able to write me that you have got rested, in the meantime I try to find enough to do so that I know what work is when I get home. There is a regular bedlam [sic] here since I have been writing. They have been playing on a fiddle and fighting and everything but what interests me, there has been such a fus [sic] that I hardly know what I wrote. Tell George that I congratulate him on getting home safe and as well as he is. Now I put this in the office and go and see my boy, then I shall know how Charley looks and acts trying to talk. I should like to step in and see how you look tonight, but goodbye.

Jeremiah Shumway

● [#30]

Demopolis, Alabama June 12 1865

Dear Mary.

I will try to write a little every day to let you know how we spend our time. When I sit down to write a letter it seems to me that I have nothing to write about. There is nothing going on here that would interest you and you know more there what they are doing (the soldiers) than we do. We have not heard yet whether any soldiers only those in the hospitals have been discharged or not, there had not been any here yet. I am not doing anything only to keep cool. It is very warm. I have been up town to see my Boy and Girl, they have a girl Viola's age and a boy Charles age, they are good children. They have a boy about Herbert's age but he is so different from Herbert that I do not think much of him. I seem to be welcome so I go pretty often to get out of the noise of camp.

June 13 - I am on Provose Guard today, there has [been] nothing happened today that will interest you.

June 14 - Elery and myself has been called on today as witnesses at Court Martial; a fellow was taken up for breaking into a house. We knew something about it.

June 15 - I am on Camp Guard today.

June 16 - Elery is out on a plantation as a safety guard. I went out today to see him and staid all day. They begin to have a better opinion of the yankees here than they did when we first came here. They said that they will pay us from twelve to fifteen hundred dollars a year when we get our discharge if we will stay and take charge of a plantation. What do you think of my staying here 4 or 5 years and when I come home with a lot of money. Write in return mail what you think of it.

June 17 - We are doing nothing today. It is the day we expect letters so I wait [until] the mail comes in. No letters today. There has [been] nothing happened today worth writing.

June 18 - I received a letter today. I should have been disappointed if I had not got one. You come very near of not writing. I am sorry that you are expecting us every day. I am afraid that it will be a long day before we get home. You had better make up your mind that we are not coming home before our time is out, then if we should get home you will be happily disappointed. We have made up our minds to stay our time out. It looks long to look ahead but the time passes off fast. We have been here five weeks. It seems but a little while. We will have but about four months to stay when you get this letter. I expect the reason nobody but you writes to me is that they expect me to come home. Tell them to write and not expect me till they see me. We have got so that we put no dependence in reports. To show you how much we can depend on them, the last report was that thirty thousand Minnesota troupes was ordered to fight the Indians, when the state has not 1/4 of them men. It seems that I get your letters a good deal sooner than you get mine. We get our letters about 17 days after they are wrote. We have got every one that has been wrote to us. I think you have missed a good many that I have wrote. You had ought to have got 2 or 3 more from Montgomery. You wrote about helping Herbert go after the cows and about being tired. If you are tired I want you to write so, but remember that scolding that I am agoing to give you, I thought Mr. Wait was tending to the cows.

I have not been to meeting today. Our Chaplain I think has played out. We have been here five weeks and he has not been in here but once. I know that the Christian Commission send us paper, envelopes & newspapers, but we get none here, but he does his duty. I should have gone to meeting today if it was not so warm. Warm is no name for it, but we enjoy good health. Try not to think so much about my coming home. I am afraid it will make you sick. Make up your mind I am agoing to stay my time out, but goodbye.

O, take time to care for the wants of the children. There is a great responsibility resting on us, I feel it more every day. Now you have it all to do. I know you always were more thoughtful than I have been, but you have so much to see to that I am afraid that you will overlook it. May the Lord give us strength and wisdom to bring them up as we had

wished we had when we come to give a strict account for the deeds done in body, but I guess you will think by this time that I have given advice enough. When I get home if I do not practice what I have preached you must remind me of it. Tell Evey and Edmund that I will get them those books that they wanted. Tell Viola that she must make you get her that paint so that she can paint good by the time that I get home. How did she and Herbert make it learning to sing up to Dutes? If you or the children want anything now is a good time to ask for it; you would be very apt to get it or the promise of it. But I think you will be tired of reading by this time. May the Lord guide and direct you in all your trials is my Prayers.

From your ever faithful Husband, Jeremiah Shumway

● [#31]

Demopolis, Alabama June 19 1865

Dear Wife: I will try to write every day this week and you can read it at your leisure. I am Provose Guard today. You must not think that we have to work when we are on Guard. There is no work about it. We are on duty two hours and off four. When we are on duty all we have to do is set in the shade and keep as cool as we can. What work there is to do they get negroes to do it, so you see we have learned the ways of the South pretty quick. Most evry squad in the Regt. has a nigger to bring water and cook for them. They do not lift their finger to do a thing. We have made out to do our own cooking yet, allow we are thinking pretty strong of getting a cook. We have plenty of rationing to feed one with, that we have no use for. I have a good appetite, but I am doing all that I can for my health. I don't suppose that I have eat a pound of meat since we have been here. The niggers bring in garden sauce and Indian bread and we give 'em our meat for it. We get blackberries and so much garden sauce that we do not eat half of any rations that we get. You must not think that we are the dirty, lousy set that we were in the field. We keep clean. There is negroes swimming around every day to get out washing, take their pay in meat, hard tack, coffee, or any thing that we have. I never took as much pains to keep clean before. Since we have got our pay a good many gets everything that is good to eat, but we get but a very little, a few eggs and a little milk, that I think is for our health. I eat just as little and keep as clean as I can for my health. When I get home and can have some one to take care of me if I am sick I am going as dirty as I want to and eat all I want (with your leave).

June 20 - I have nothing to do today, have been up to play with my children, telling them about my yankey children that I have up north. There is a pretty little girl about three years old that I talk of taking home with me, ask Evy if she wants me to bring her home for a baby or whether she wants to be my baby girl. I have been talking with a lady that was born and brought up in the same County [Worcester Co, MA] that I was, she seems to be very friendly to the yankeys. There is a very different feeling towards us now than there was when we first come here. The man that owns the Plantation joining the one where Elery is

was the most bitter yankey hater that they had here before we come. We were out to his house and staid all the afternoon, he was very friendly. He wanted us to set a time when we would come again and he would go out and shoot some squirrels and have them cooked and treat us to the best that he has. There is a great difference between the way that the people live here and at the North. Here the white people do not pretend to work much, it is so warm that they cannot, and they like to have company; they have nothing else to do but to entertain them. At the North we think that we cannot take time to go anywhere, it is nothing but work and make money. I think that if we should take a course between the North & South we should enjoy ourselves better.

June 21 - Nothing new today. We are travelling on in the even tenor of our ways.

June 22 - I am on camp guard today. I came in about two o'clock, the mail had come in and I got a letter dated June 8. Now I am agoing to scold you. When I left home I got all off your hands that I could for I knew that the best that I could you would have more to see to than you had ought to have. You know that we had a talk about the cows and that I would not consent that you should have anything to do with them. If I had known that you would have had any trouble with them I would have sold every cow before I left home. I thought that I had made a bargain with Mr. Wait to take the cows, I did not want you to have any more trouble with them then so you did not have a cow<sup>6</sup>. If the bargain was misunderstood with Mr. Wait or he does not want them or if you have made a different bargain with him about them I want you the day that you receive this to get them off your hands. If Mr. Wait is a mind to take them and see to them let him give you just what he has a mind to, if he does not want them in any way turn the calves [in] with them and let them run or sell them. I tried to tell you how to work about the cistern before I left. If it looks as it will not hold water try if you possibly can to get some one to cement it over and then hire some one by the day to put water into it, if you can. I do not know that Rufus' wife uses water out of it, I am perfectly willing that she should, if you can hire water put into it. If you cannot I am not willing that you should draw it yourself when she has a father and brothers that are able to do it. You seem to think that the more you can do the better it will suit me, it would if I thought that you were able to do it, but you know that when I was at home that I never would allow you to go after the cows or draw a barrel of water. If I was in ever so big a hurry I did not think you were able to do it, and I cannot think that you are so much better than you ever were before. About the garden, I thought it would be for your health to work out doors some when you get time, but if you think that you must tend to it and get as tired as you tell of being, working it, I shall wish that I was sunk in the bottom of the sea. Now, I do not want you to think me harsh and severe, I know that you want to do what will suit me the best. Now I have been in places since I left home that I would have given all that I have to have been guaranteed that I should come out of it alive and sound. Now I would risk my life twenty times rather than that harm should happen to you or one of the little ones and to think

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<sup>6</sup> It seems that Jeremiah had arranged for someone else to keep the cows milked and fed, the milking being an arduous task. If the cows weren't milked the calves would have to be turned in with the cows or the cows would be in pain and get udder infections.

how careless you are of your health doing more than you are able to, I cannot help writing in a way that you may know that I mean it. It will not satisfy me for you to tell me that you are able and still keep doing it for I think that I know best, and if you want to please me you will try to arrange your work so that you will not have to write every time how tired you are. I hope that you will take this in the same spirit that it was wrote for I do not now expect to get home much before my time is out if any, and I want you to take the best care that you can of your health and the childrens' [and] not sacrifice it for a few dollars. I would be willing to begin again without a cent if when I come home I could find you all alive and well.

June 23 - It is warm, warm, warm but we all still have good health. I suppose by the time you receive this the Hay and Winter wheat will be cut. Write me what kind of a crop there was. I wrote you about trying to get the winter wheat stacked before spring wheat was cut - for fear you did not get the letter I will say you had better if you can, for it will be half wasted before the spring wheat is stacked. You wrote me that you wanted my picture. There is no chance to have it taken here. I would send the children something but there is nothing I can send very well. I will send them a little more money. You can give it to them as you think will please them best.

June 24 - Nothing new today. I will mail this letter tomorrow. I will send one every week while we are here. I have time to write one every day, but I guess you would not want one like this every day, but if you do not want me to scold you will have to stop working so hard. I wish you Minnesota folks that is selling out to find a warmer place could be here about a month, I think that they would like to get to Minn. again. I hope you and John Mc. will see that the bill about my bounty is tended to.

June 25 - I am going out today where Elery is and get some blackberries. I wish you and the children were here today to go with me. I do not think that I shall ever be afraid again of having the children go with me when I go any where again. Try to enjoy yourselves the 4th of July. I thought one spell that we would be home the 4th, now we set the time to be at home Christmas. The days seem long but the time is fast passing off and it will not be long, if it is the Lord's will, before I shall be with you again. You need not send any more papers, we are where we can get it but good bye. Remember me in your prayer.

Jerry

● [#32]

Demopolis, Alabama June 29 1865

Dear Mary - We are here yet doing nothing as usual. We are all pretty well. Rufus has had a chill, a good many of the boys has had attacks of the Fiver and ague, but it does not amount to much. My health is first rate. It has been a little cooler this week so we have enjoyed ourselves very well. Rufus had a letter yesterday, I did not get any. I felt disappointed. It is the first time that any of them got a letter and I did not, I can't think but what you wrote. I shall expect one in a day or two. I was on a court Martial again this week. They boys say

that they are agoing to write to you about my courting so much. I expect they will write about the time that Mrs. Waite write to me. Fruit begins to be ripe here, apples, pears and peaches. I do not get any to eat, it does not seem to me that I can take any comfort eating them with neither you nor the children here to eat them with me. I shall try to get a good dinner the fourth. I shall expect you will be enjoying yourselves. We have nothing here to hinder us from enjoying ourselves only our being from home. Our officers give us all the liberty we want, but we do not want to enjoy ourselves here, all we want is to go home. I sent Herbert a song and you a flower. The flowers are most gone here, only this kind, they grow on bushes like lilacs, they are very pretty growing. If we do not move from here in a week or two I will send you what money I have for they have express started here now. It is not as pleasant for me here now as it was before we were paid, for there is nothing going on now but gambling, they gamble night and day.

July 2 - I have not got any letter this week. I cannot think but what you wrote. I think it must have been missent. I felt disappointed. I suppose that it is hard for you to get much time to write. I wish you could not write in such a hurry. You need not be afraid of what you write for nobody sees your letter. I do not expect now to get home much before my time is out. We get papers now from the North so we know what is going on. We hear nothing said about the 16 Army Corps, I guess they have forgotten us. They did not use to when there was anything to do, but the time soon will pass off now if you will write long letters. The Orderly Sargent got Rufus and me a pass to go out in the country with him today to take a boat ride, but I thought that I would not go today, I stay at home and write to you and go to church. Rufus is going. I think you had better sell them heifers that I had of Coil if you can get what you got for the other. Give any one all the time they want, take their note. The other stock, if we do not get home [in] time enough to get something to winter them on, I can kill them. The letter that I have not received ought to have been mailed June 15, if there was anything in it that you wanted me to know you can write again. I wish the children would write more. You had better make up your mind that I am not coming home till my time is out. It will only be about three months after you get this. It will soon pass off if I get home before it will be so much good luck. How does George enjoy himself since he got home? But it is about meeting time, we finish this after we get home.

Two o'clock - The mail has just come in and I got that letter that I have made such a fuss about and have had a good time reading it. It seems to me impossible for it to do you as much good as it does me to get a letter, for I have nothing else to do from one week to another only wait for a letter. I do not know what I should do if I got your letters as irregular as you get mine. I write two to you from Montgomery after I wrote the children. It seems you never got them. I dare say it was a good thing you did not for I was sick when I wrote them but it did not amount to much so it would have made you feel bad for nothing. You wrote that Charley would seem more like Edmund than Edmund would, I expect it is so. It seems hard that they must grow so fast, it seems to me that I must find the children just as I left them. I cannot think of Edmund being large enough to go to school. I cannot think of Charley as only a little baby that is of no account, but I expect Viola will be a great girl, she

has got into her teens now, and I expect Herbert will be quite a horseman, his having a horse to take care of. I have not heard from Evy yet whether she was agoing to be my Girl baby or whether I have got to fetch one home. Tell Edmund that he must try to learn his A and O so to tell me when I get home. You say Charles [Albee] has offered his farm for sale. Tell Sarah that if she wants to live where you are that she must stay on Portland Prairie unless I see a place that I like better than I have yet. It seems you heard that we were at Mobeal, but we expect that when we go from this place we shall either go to Texas or go home. If we [have] got to stay our time out, I do not know but what I had as leave go to Texas as anywhere. The time passes off faster when we are travelling around than it does to stay in one place. Allow this is a very good place, the health of the boys is good. There must be quite an alteration there when I get home, there is so many moved away. I do not see why they could not be contented to stay where they were doing well enough. It must seem bad to see some one else living at Dutes and James, but if they could not be contented they had better go, for there is not much use in living if we cannot be contented. I think if I get home and they will let me stay there that I can be contented for one while. But I must close. Make up your mind that I am not coming home till my time is out for hope deferred makes the heart sick, but I shall not stay a day longer than I am obliged to. I do not see why John or Nancy does not write, but I expect they think we are on the way home. I would like to have you send me the "Saint Paul Press," send as late ones as you can. Goodbye, Kiss the children for me.

From your ever faithful Jerry

● [#33]

Demopolis, Alabama July 9 1865

Dear Mary:

That expedition that I spoke of yesterday was given up so I did not go so I will write a few lines. How did you spend the fourth? I hope you all had a good time. I was on duty and did not feel very well but I had a pretty good time thinking about the good time you were having. We did not pretend to have any fourth, but a night or two after I went to a theater for my fourth, but I did not enjoy myself at all. I can truly say that the things I once loved I now hate, I could be led to think that it was on account of my age and being away from my family was the reason that I do not enjoy the things that they most all seem to enjoy so much, but I can enjoy serving my Lord and Master here as well as at home and a great deal better for I have more time to think of his goodness towards me or I take more time. The Lord has been very good to me notwithstanding my unfaithfulness. He has given me a living hope that I shall when I have done with the things of life he permitted to hear the glad tidings "well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of the Lord," and I have been blessed with a good and faithful wife and good and loving children. O let our daily

prayer be that the Lord may give us the wisdom to bring them up in the right way, in the fear of the Lord. I am looking forward for a great deal of happiness when I get home again. The time seems long but if I can only hear every week that you are all well I can get along very well. I do not get letters now from any but you. Why don't John and Nancy write me? Have sent money to Smith & Tart. We thought they would be in Lansing and could get it. I sent you \$40 Dollars, they only paid us \$54 dollars and we had used up Everett's money, and we paid Mrs. Everett out of this, so it only left us a few dollars. Smith will let you have the money. If you have borrowed any you had better pay it or if you want any to pay for cutting the wheat or hay or anything else, use it but if you can spare any you had better let Smith & Tart have it. I think that if we do not come home soon that they will pay us again. There is 4 1/2 months due us. I suppose the emigrants have all left by this time. I suppose they have all bettered themselves, but the last time that I saw Amos Granville he said that his folks did not like [the new place?] at all and as soon as he got out of the service he was agoing to move from there. He talks it that he and George Shumway, Frank Heley and a good many of the 10 Regt. wants to go out west where they were after the Indians. I expect to hear that John has that Fever. I think there is more reason in that than any other move they have made there. They have given me such a description of the country that I do not know but what I should be tempted to go [if] it was not for the Indians. Where in the world does Charles want to go, if he wants to go to Rhode Island, that I will talk with him about it. But I think when the rest get off that he will give up the notion.

July 14 - I should have finished this before but I have been waiting 3 or 4 days for mail to come in so to get a letter from you. It come today dated June 29. I am glad to hear that you all keep well. I am glad that the soldiers are all getting home. I expect the 10 Regt. boys will be at home before you get this, but we do not expect to get home now much before I time is out, but the time is fast passing off. Keep up good courage. I have not been feeling very well since about the fourth, but I am beginning to feel well again. It has been a little cooler for a few days. There is nothing new to write about. We are going on in the same old way. O I like to have forgotten there is something new. I let the boys shave me today. It is the first time since I left home. They say that they have made a nice young man of me. I would send you my picture if there was any place to have it taken, but there is not, so you will have to wait till I can come and fetch it. We do not see how our letters could be mailed where you spoke of. We put them in the office here. Tell Viola that I received her picture. I wrote about it, it must be you did not get the letter. I think it is pretty. John Mc. has had very bad luck this summer I think. Tell him to write and all the rest of the folks. Letters do more towards keeping us well and in good spirits then anything else. We expect to hear from you again soon, so I do not write any more. Take good care of your health and believe me ever yours,

Goodbye, Jeremiah Shumway

Dear Wife & Children:

Today is Sunday. I came in off guard this morning, got ready and went to meeting, came home, got dinner. Now I sit down to write a few lines to the loved ones at home. For two or three weeks it has been cooler than it was in May and June. We are in hopes that we shall not have any more so very warm weather. It seems like the fall of the year, apples, peaches and melons are ripe and the gardens are all dried up. I feel well today. We had a good meeting and I have been thinking if you were having a meeting today or not. I want you to write me all about the meetings, whether you have prayer meetings and who is class leader and how the class is getting along. I should think you would miss James and those that is going off of the Prairie at the meetings, but I hope you will try to keep the meetings up so when I get home I can hear a good report from you all, be able to hear you all say that your journey is still onward and upward. I feel great interest in the Class. I have enjoyed a good many meetings with them and I hope that if my life and theirs is spared to meet again that we shall live so that we shall still be able to encourage one another on the way to heaven.

July 20 - I received your letter today, dated July 6. I am glad that you are still all well and had a good time the fourth. I am still well, feel first rate, but Rufus and Elery has the fever and ague. They are not very sick, Elery stays out at the plantation yet. Rufus is not doing duty, he feels very well only every other day he has the fever and ague [malaria?]. They do not think much of it here, most every one has it. There is only 11 fit for duty in our company. I have not had it yet, but I cannot expect to keep clear of it if we stay here much longer. I think that there is some prospects of our leaving here for home before long now, but we do not know when. There is two and three Regt. that passes here every day for home. The 6 Minn. passed here yesterday. I was at the depot but did not see Wm. Stone but he was along. We are the only Regt. there is here now. We have more to do than we did. We are on duty every other day. You need not expect me till you see me, but I think there is more prospects of my coming home now before long than there was a few weeks ago. If you have not sold any stock you need not till you hear from me again, for we think we shall be at home now, [in] time enough to kill it. I believe that I shall not write so long letters for I have got tired of writing about I. I have nothing to write about that will interest you only what I, I, I do. You try to write letters all about what I do you will get tired of it. You must not put too much dependence on my getting home till my time is out but we expect to now. If you see me coming say nothing to Edmund, I want to see if he will know me. We can stand the hot weather better than we did. We are more used to it. I wish you and the children could have some of the fruit that there is here. It is very plenty, figs and most every kind. Kiss the children for me. Remember me at the throne of grace and remember me as your ever true and faithful husband.

Jeremiah Shumway

P.S. You wrote that my boys mother might kiss me once for you. She told me the other day that any one might travel a good ways and not find as good looking man; that will do as well I suppose. I told her that she had good looking children, that was as far as I could return the compliment.

● [#35]

Demopolis, Alabama July 27 1865

Dear Wife:

I received a letter from you yesterday dated July 13, was glad to hear that you are getting on so well. As for myself, I still enjoy good health. We get along about the same, nothing new to write about. All the troupes seem to be going home but us. The 7 Minn. Regt. went past here yesterday. We are the only Minn. Regt. there is left in this Army Corps. It will be apt to come our turn sometime, if they should pay us off again most of the boys would go home on their own hooks, but if I live I shall stay my time out unless I can get an honorable discharge, but I do not blame the veterans now the war is over. I do not think that they have any right to keep them, but we still think that we shall get home before our time is out; but if we do not it will not be long now. The time will soon pass off.

I do not know know whether I want to rent my farm or not, can't tell till we get home. You need not sell any stock, I think now that I shall be at home [in] time enough to tend to it. I wish you would write me how the crops are this year and what is going on generally in the neighborhood, for I get no letters from any one but you. Write the same as if I was not coming home in ten years. You seem to think that I shall be at home before I get your letters and when I do get them they do not seem to satisfy. I am glad to hear that you all are well, but I want you to write all about what the children are saying and doing and all the little things as you used to. If I undertook to write you about myself it would be the same thing over and over from one week to another. There is nothing going on here that would interest you at all, I should think you would \_\_\_\_\_

Aug 4- I suppose you will be disappointed in not getting a letter last week but before I finished this I was sent out into the country as a safety guard. I am out 11 miles. This is the first time I have been into Camp. I come in to get my letters and send you one. I got one from you dated July 20. I have a first rate of a place to stay at, my health is good. When I get another letter Rufus is coming out to fetch it to me, and I will send one in by him. I will write you a long letter, have not time now, am going back today. I can stand the warm weather first rate now. It does not seem as warm as it was the fore part of the summer. I do not think there is much more danger of being sick, as long as I stay where I am, than I would be at home. I should like to go home but can stay very contented as long as you are all well. We do not hear anything about going home, but my time will soon be out. You had better make up your mind not to see me till then, but you can believe that I shall come as soon as I can, but I must close.

Remember me to Mrs. Wait and all inquiring friends. Kiss all the children for me. Tell them to be good children and not grow so fast but what I shall know them. I do not think that I grow old very fast, am not much grey yet, but good bye.

Yours in haste, Jeremiah Shumway

● [#36]

Macon, Alabama Aug 6 1865

Beloved Wife:

Here it is Sunday morning Aug. 6 and I am still in the land of Dixey. It is rather later in the morning for we went a-Possum hunting last night. I have just had my breakfast now. I will have a good long chat with you, but am afraid that I shall have to do all the talking. But will tell you how I am situated and that don't take but one, I am out here eleven miles from Camp, no other Yankee near here. I am on a large plantation. It is [a] very pleasant place, as pleasant a place as I have seen any where south. My business here is to guard government cotton, but the man that I live with wants me to see to his cotton and things around the plantation. The negroes had rather have a yankee around then a Reb. There is about one hundred here, they have made a contract to stay till Christmas. I am situated here as pleasant as I can be away from home. I live here the same as I should be if I had a private room at a Hotel. I have a room by myself, my meals [are] brought to me, there is everything in the room that I want, a wash basin and pitcher, everything that I need, and they live well and have plenty of melons, peaches and figs - and I have a mule for my own use to ride when I want to and have a negro to take care of it for me. I seem to suit the old folks and I expect to stay here as long as the Regt. stays at Demopolis, if nothing happens. But it does not make up for the loss of home. I hope the day is not far distant when I shall lose all these good things and have to work again for a living, but Uncle Sam treats me better than he did the first six months. I have nothing to find fault with only I want to go home. I am situated so pleasant here that it seems to me that if I could be with you and the children a day and see the folks around there a few moments that I could stay my time out very contented. I have been through so much and seen so many different places and the climate and everything that I see is so new and strange that it seems to me that it has been as much as ten years since I left home. I can not think how you or the children look. Instead of telling Edmund that he will not know me, I do not know that I shall know any of you. You must be sure to be at home when I come, not have anyone else there or I may take them for you.

About that scolding, if you had told me just how it was I would not have cared. You had not wrote anything about the cows before and you wrote about Herbert and you going after them and said nothing about Mr. Waite [so] that I did not know but what you was trying to take care of them yourself. You write that you thought that I would be glad to have you try to take care of yourself. You need not be afraid of my scolding you about saving or

trying to get along as cheap as you can. It has been a great damage to me leaving home as far as money is concerned, especially if I do not get home to fix up for winter, but I try not to let that trouble me, it will all be for the best no doubt. I want you and the children to get what you need to make you comfortable, what things you need to work on for winter you had better get as soon as you want them, but what you do not need you had better wait till I get home.

You wanted me to write what I think about. [I] do not think about much only home and what is going on in Portland Prairie and when I am going to get there. Tell Emily that I got her letter and that I have not got any Confed. money now, but will get her some so she can have as much as Ella.

They have just brought in my dinner. I will tell you what I had, it is the same every day, in the first place they bring in a dish they called Gumbo, it is mostly made of Okery [okra], it is first rate, then they bring in what they call Squabs, they are pigeons just before they can fly, they are friends [fried?] and most all kinds of garden sauce excepting potatoes. Sweet potatoes are not ripe yet. I used to, when we lived on parched corn, think a good deal about getting home to get something to eat, but I live better now than I could afford to at home. When I get another letter I expect Rufus will fetch it out to me and I can send this in. They may something happen before I can send this that I will want to write, so I will not write any more now but take my mule and go [on] a mule back ride.

Aug 7 - I expect Rufus out there tomorrow and I have not time to write when he comes but there is nothing to write about new. I am still well. It is rather lonesome here but shall try to stay. I think it will be better for my health.

Aug 10 - I am going to Demopolis today on business. I expect to get a letter from you; if it is necessary for me to write any answer will write a few lines when I get in there.

I got a letter today also one from Sarah & Emely. I can get along very well as long as we get letters regular. You spoke about writing again that night so shall expect another soon. Tell Sarah & Emely that I was glad to have them write, want them to write as often as they can. But they can hear from me by you and am coming home so soon that they must not think it strange if I do not write. Remember me to all friends. Found them all well in camp. Yours in haste,

J.Shumway

● [#37]

Macon, Alabama Aug 15 1865

Dear Wife:

Instead of going home as we have been hoping to all summer, here we are yet. I was in Camp yesterday. Got a letter from you dated July 27, did not know that I was going in or would [have] wrote and carried in a letter to send to you, but will try to mail this week. I found Rufus pretty sick with the ague. He has had it three or four days, every day. He says

Elery has it pretty bad. I have not seen him in 3 or 4 weeks. We do not happen to be at Camp together, but I still enjoy good health and am situated a great deal pleasanter than I ever expected to be in this country. Some think it would be lonesome out here, there is so much going on around Camp but there is nothing going around Camp that interest[s] me. I like to go to Camp once a week to see my Company, it seems some like going home. I like the Officers and the boys first rate. I am situated as pleasant as I could ask to be; I am my own master almost as much as though I did not belong to the Army. All that is required of me is to be here when I am called for by the Capt. but as Sarah says I am homesick, homesick, but the time is passing off. I shall only have two months to stay after you get this, but we keep hoping to get home before our time is out.

The man that I live with is an oldish man and is lame, cannot get around much. He wants me to see to his things what I can. He has not got any overseer. He says that he will pay me for it so I keep busy most of the time.

Aug 16 - I come to Camp today on business. I have not much time to write but will send this, there is no news. Remember me to Mr. Wait, tell him that I think he must have had his hands full this summer taking care of two families. I [will] try to take one off his hands soon. I send Emely ten dollars [Confederate], if that is not as much as Ella has got tell her to write me and I [will] send her more. Viola and Herbert has not wrote lately. I wish that they would write every week. Tell all the children to be good and remember their papa. It would seem bad to come home and not have them know me.

I wish you would find out what all the children would rather have me bring them when I come and write me; [do] not tell them that I am going to bring it, tell them maybe. I will not tell them that I wrote about it, but goodbye.

Ever your Jerry

● [#38]

Demopolis, Alabama Aug 20 1865

Beloved Wife:

I did not get any letter last week. The mail does not come as regular as it did, it only come in once last week, but expect to get one every day. I come in to camp to stay yesterday. All the safety guards are called in. Elery came in but the man that he stays with got a special order for him to stay a few days longer. We have given up all hopes of going home till our time is out, but what they are keeping us here for is more than I can tell. There was a Reg. of Cavalry come here last week to help us. We had nothing to do before but to watch each other, now I suppose we will have to watch each other, but will not write any complaints. Our time will soon be out, I am still well only am broke out with the [prickly] heat, look as though I had the measles, most all of the boys are so, but it does not amount to much. All the first of October men will be mustered out tomorrow or next day. There is

about one hundred of them. If I had got credit from the time that I was drafted I should get out now, but my time will come after a while. Military is about played out, we have no role call, no drill, no inspection, no nothing, only stay here and kill time the best we can. The boys are beginning to wish that the officers and the whole United States was sunk to keep us here doing nothing when we are needed so bad at home.

August 23 1865 - Nothing new, only we do have some hopes of going home next week. Genn. Hubbard & Col. Gear [?] time is out next week and about one hundred men. Genn. Hubbard is trying to get the Reg. to go home when he does, if we do we will be at home about the time you get this; if they go and leave us here we shall not expect to go home till our time is out, but time and tide waits for no man. But time goes off rather slow. The mail come in yesterday, Rufus and Elery got a letter dated Aug. 10, I did not get one. Hanna wrote that N. Coils, that Grandmother Coil was dead. I was in hope that I could see her again, so suppose you did not have time to write. Rufus and I did not receive any letters dated Aug. 3; they must have been lost, so you see it has been a long time since I got a letter. I feel disappointed but nobody is to blame. I am at a stand what to write. Just imagine yourself in my place; no body to write about, only myself and every thing was the same from one day to another and one month to another all summer, it is the same thing over and over and think[ing] what you would write about. I love to have you write if you did not write anything only that I was still remembered by you, but you have so many things to write about; all that I have to write about is, that will interest you, iss that I am well and that you are remembered. I have nothing else to think about, only home. It does not seem to be that you or the children are out of my thoughts at all night or day. I do not like to write a complaining letter, but this summer has seemed a long long time. Remember me to all the children, to all friends, and to the throne of grace and ever believe me your ever true and faithful husband.

Jeremiah Shumway

● [#39]

Demopolis, Alabama Aug 27 1865

Beloved Wife & Children.

Here it is Sunday again and I will try to tell you what I have been doing. I have been lying on my back reading the *Little Corporal* that you sent me and thinking about home and how long it would be 'fore I should see you. I have a little news to tell you this time. We have official orders to be mustered out of the United States Service. We expect to start for home in about a week, if we do we will be at home about the first of Sept, if we do not start as soon I will write again. I will not write much for we expect to be there about as soon as this letter. Can I wait for the time to start home, a week looks like a long time, but good bye

till I see you. Tell Herbert to take good care of you till I come. When we go by Lansing if I do not see any one from the Prairie will try to leave a letter for you.

Yours till I see you, Jeremiah Shumway

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### **Jermiah Shumway Civil War Letters**

Rochester, Minn	Nov 18	Demopolis, Ala	May 19
Nashville TN	Dec 5		May 25
	Dec 12		Jun 2
nr Pulaski, TN	Dec 25		Jun 7
Clifton, TN	Jan 8		Jun 11
Eastport, Miss	Jan 21		Jun 12
	Feb 3		Jun 19
Ohio River	Feb 8		Jun 29
Cairo, IL	Feb 9		Jul 9
Vicksburg, Miss	Feb 16		Jul 16
nr New Orleans	Feb 23		Jul 27
	Feb 26	Macon, Ala	Aug 6
	Feb 28		Aug 15
Ft Gains/Dauphin Is	Mar 6	Demopolis, Ala	Aug 20
	Mar 12		Aug 27
Dauphin Is	Mar 17		
nr Mobile	Apr 1		
	Apr 6		
	Apr 10		
	Apr 12		
Montgomery Al	May 1		
	May 7		
	May 9		

### **Cast of Characters**

Jeremiah Shumway, age 37 during this time

Mary Maria Paine Shumway, his wife; aged 32

Viola Shumway, his daughter; aged 11

Herbert Shumway, his son; aged 8

Mary Evelyn "Eva" Shumway, his daughter; aged 6

Edgar Edmund Shumway, his son; aged 2  
Charles Shumway, his son; an infant born Jan 1864

John McNelly, his brother-in-law (married to Nancy Shumway)  
Rufus Shumway, his brother; aged 31, married to Hannah Metcalf  
George Shumway, his brother; aged 24  
James Paine, his double brother-in-law; Mary Paine Shumway's brother and widower of  
Jeremiah's sister Ruth; aged 34  
Duty Paine, his brother-in-law; brother of Mary Paine Shumway  
Charles Albee; the husband of Jeremiah's sister-in-law Sarah Paine Albee  
Sarah Paine Albee; Jeremiah's sister-in-law

Henry Blew; Henry Ballou, a neighbor  
Edward Blew; that is, Edward Ballou

Ellery Arnold; a relative from Portland Prairie; also in Civil War  
William Walker Everett; friend from Portland Prairie; killed  
Robberson - ?John Robinson;

\_\_\_\_\_ Green  
\_\_\_\_\_ Burnam

Horatio \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Coil - there were Coils among the earliest settlers of Portland Prairie, a good friend and  
Civil War vet was Jackson Coil

Frank Heley - Frank Healy

Mrs. Lapham

Aunt Pheba

"Emely"

Ella - perhaps Ella McNelly

Frank  
Amos Granville - a Portland Prairie neighbor, he m. a daughter of John Cook

John Cook - a Portland Prairie neighbor

\_\_\_\_\_ Smith

Dr. Batchelder - Alex Batchellor, a Portland Prairie neighbor

Mr. Wait/Waite - possibly Charles Wright of Portland Prairie; his wife was born Mary Metcalf

Mrs. Waite - see Mr. Wait (above)