

"SUCH IS WAR:"
THE LETTERS OF AN ORDERLY IN THE
7TH IOWA INFANTRY

*Edited by James J. Robertson, Jr.**

Frank Malcom was not an outstanding Federal soldier. His individual contributions to the Civil War did little to bring ultimate victory to the North and, like most of the 78,000 Iowa men who participated in that sectional struggle of the 1860's, his name — and those of his comrades in the 7th Iowa Infantry Regiment — are all but forgotten by modern generations.

Frank Malcom was not even a fighter; rather, he saw war from the desk of a regimental orderly. If he ever fired a musket at Confederates, no record exists of it. While many of his friends were wounded, and some met death,¹ Malcom suffered only two inglorious injuries during his eighteen months of military service. First, a wagon ran over his foot and sliced off half of a big toe. Next he contracted a severe case of poison ivy that prostrated him for a week. Malcom seemed content to let others do the shooting and killing, and he undoubtedly cared little for the inconspicuous rank of quartermaster sergeant that he acquired in his short military career.

And yet Frank Malcom had a keen eye and strong opinions about the environment of war into which he was thrust. Along with the usual contempt of officers held by those in the ranks, he also possessed bitterness toward the South and a strong desire to complete the task at hand and return home. His letters to his wife are not a literary gold mine for the period, but they have great value for the light they cast on Sherman's Atlanta, Savannah, and Carolina campaigns. Moreover, Malcom was a brutally frank writer who was not inclined to cover up the horrors of war.

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¹Capt. Henry I. Smith stated that Malcom's company suffered a total of 90 casualties among its 108 members. H. I. Smith, *History of the Seventh Iowa Veteran Volunteer Infantry* (Mason City, 1903), 299. Hereafter cited as Smith, 7th Iowa.

His references to the burning of Columbia, South Carolina, tend to place the responsibility more on Federal soldiers than on Confederate fanatics — a rather unusual confession for a Billy Yank to make.

His descriptions of towns and countryside make these letters a better-than-average travel narrative of Sherman's Marches. That Malcom failed to relate the details of any battle of which the 7th Iowa was a part is due to a combination of his non-participation and his apathy for war. In short, he held a rather enviable position in the last eighteen months of the struggle as an amateur military observer.

The writer of these letters was born in Rush County, Indiana, in 1834. His parents were natives of Virginia, and his father had fought in the War of 1812. Sometime around 1850 Frank Malcom moved to Fort Madison and gained employment as a bookkeeper in a mercantile business. In 1856 he married Eliza Ewing Sample, a cousin of the noted Maine statesman, James G. Blaine, and a woman of exceptional talents as a teacher, musician, and writer.² Although no children came from the marriage, it is apparent from Malcom's letters that a strong bond of affection held them closely together.

On January 5, 1864, Malcom joined the veteran 7th Iowa Infantry. This regiment, organized in Burlington in July, 1861, had compiled a valourous record at Belmont, Fort Henry, Fort Donelson, Shiloh and Corinth before its assignment to garrison duty in Tennessee in the closing months of 1863. As the two-year enlistments of most of the men expired soon afterwards, they were given a choice of reenlisting for the duration as veterans or of being discharged from service as volunteers. Three-fourths of the unit signed up for another tour of duty and were thereupon granted a month's furlough in Iowa.

Malcom was one of the replacements who joined Company D when it reassembled at Keokuk for the return to Tennessee. He stood five feet, eight inches tall, and had black hair, blue eyes and light complexion.³ He served as regimental orderly on the Atlanta campaign, in the March to the Sea, and during Sherman's drive through South and North Carolina. After the war he returned to Fort Madison and became a salesman for the firm of S. Atlee. He and his wife "Lida" resided on Third Street between

² *Portrait and Biographical Album of Lee County, Iowa* (Chicago, 1887), 462.

³ Return of Men, Co. D, 7th Iowa Infantry, March, 1864, State Department of History and Archives.

Cedar and Pine. An active layman in the Presbyterian Church, Malcom gained a reputation as "a gentleman highly respected in the community, both on account of his straightforward business methods and his high personal character."⁴ On January 18, 1884, Malcom died in Fort Madison of Bright's disease. He is buried in Wilson Cemetery, Washington Township, Lee County.⁵

Except for necessary punctuation and paragraphing, Malcom's letters, complete with misspelling and factual errors, are printed as he wrote them. A few repetitious passages, family references and similarly unimportant tracts have been omitted. The original letters are now a part of the Manuscripts Collection of the State University of Iowa Library.

Camp at Browns Mill Middle Tenn.

March 10th 1864

Dear Wife,

Being off duty today I concluded to commence a letter to you & will endeavor to finish it in a few days; I am in hopes by that time Something will turn up that will be worth wrighting. . . . The remainder of Co. D returned on Tuesday last looking fine.⁶ The duties now will not be so hard. I have only been on Picket guard twenty four hours but will come on tomorrow. After this we will have three reliefs, so I will come on duty every third day. We have four Stations & 3 men at a Station. We remain there one day & night, each man Standing two hours at a time, which makes it two hours on & four off.

I think I would like Soldiering very well if we had good fare & Good beds. We have all Succeeded in putting up tollerably good Shantyes with

⁴ *Portrait and Biographical Album of Lee County, Iowa*, 462.

⁵ *Keokuk Daily Constitution*, Jan. 19, 1884. Additional material on Malcom was gleaned from the Fort Madison census returns for 1860 and 1870, from the Fort Madison city directory for 1868, and from *Roster and Record of Iowa Soldiers in the War of the Rebellion* . . . (6 vols., Des Moines, 1908-1911), 1:1003. Hereafter cited as *Roster and Record*.

⁶ The men had been on leave in Fort Madison where, one member wrote, "the citizens received them with open arms (I mean the girls did) and as happy a thirty days as ever happened was enjoyed with round after round of entertainment." Smith, *7th Iowa*, 297.

Bunks.⁷ There is four of us in ours, viz. a Mr. Phillipps,⁸ Luther McNeil,⁹ Chas. L. Wood¹⁰ & Myself. Wood & I sleep together. We have good brick Chimneys & it is cold enough every night for fier. It has been raining for the last two days, which makes this place very muddy. The people living here tell us this is a fine place for the ague & I believe them, for two of our men have the chills & fever now. . . .

I have today been washing my Handkerchiefs. I know you would have laughed to see me roll up my sleeves & pitch into it, but I managed to get them clean. I can get shirts & drawers washed for ten cents apiece.

Head Quarters 7th Iowa Vet. Inft.
Adjutants Office, Prospect Tenn., Mar. 13/64

Dear Wife,

while wrighting the other day I was Interrupted by Capt. Gale¹¹ who had just returned from Headquarters with a detail for me to report to the adjutant immediately, so Frank had to go to work & pack up his duds & in one half hour I left Co. D for this place. I arrived here at 5 Oclock & reported according to orders to the adjutant (Mr. Cameron),¹² who informed me that I had been recommended to take the place of Mr. Sapp,¹³ who had been Clirking in the Office for over a year, & that my Business would be making out Reports, copping Orders & letters, wrighting passes & so on. Friday morning I went to work and think I will like the place,

⁷ When an army went into winter quarters, the more energetic soldiers either constructed log shanties (called "shebangs") or reinforced tent sides with boards, brush and dirt. See Bell I. Wiley, *The Life of Billy Yank* (Indianapolis, 1952), 55-8.

⁸ Born in England, William B. Phillips resided in Fort Madison at the outbreak of war. He was wounded at Corinth, Miss., in Oct., 1863, and mustered out of service the following July.

⁹ Cpl. McNeil of Denmark, Iowa, enlisted in the regiment at its organization in 1861.

¹⁰ Forty-six-year-old Charles Wood of Fort Madison joined the 7th Iowa with Malcom in 1864.

¹¹ Benjamin B. Gale, originally from Massachusetts, was named a first sergeant in the regiment soon after its formation. Promoted to lieutenant in the fall of 1861, he was elevated to captain in Sept., 1863. He resided in Fort Madison.

¹² Capt. Allen D. Cameron of Keokuk assumed the duties of regimental adjutant on Aug. 9, 1863.

¹³ William W. Sapp, a twenty-two-year-old native of Vincennes, spent his early service with the regimental band before becoming orderly sergeant. His transfer to the commissary department occasioned Malcom's appointment to headquarters staff.

provided I am able to fulfill the duties of the position. I think in a short time I will git along very well, as Mr. Cameron is very kind & shows me all that I do not undustand. . . .

My Board is much better here than it was when I was with the Co. I Board with what is called the *Non-Commissioned Mess*. There is about Eight of us in the Mess. We have a Black Woman for cook, one that has been with the adjutant for over a year. We sleep in the office, which is a double log House with an entry in the middle. Col. Parrott's¹⁴ office is in one end; the Quartermaster, Provo[st] Marshal & Adjutants Offices are in the other end. Taking it all together, we are very comfortably situated for *Soldiers*.

But I have got the Blues today. It is so lonsom; their is not a sole here that I know except Dennis Morrison.¹⁵ I worked until noon today making out the morning report & this afternoon I have devoted to you. I will wright again soon & you *my dear* do pleas wright often. I have not had a line from you yet. Give my love to all, *saving the greater portion for yourself*. Take Good care of Yourself & Believe me

Your affectionate Husband

Frank Malcom

Adjutants Office, Prospect Tenn. March 20/64

Dear Wife,

This is Sunday again and I will endeavor to fulfil my promice, though I must say to begin with that I have but little in the way of news. . . . There has been some excitement in camp the last five days about *Gurrl-lars*, Capt. Moore, Chief of a band of *robbers*, has been loitering near our picket lines for some time, has been seen several times within one mile of H'd Qrs.¹⁶ He captured two of our men on Monday last & two of the

¹⁴ Maryland-born James C. Parrott was living in Keokuk when he left for war in 1861 as captain of Co. E. Following promotion to lieutenant colonel, Parrott suffered wounds at Belmont and Corinth. In spite of continual ill health, Parrott led the regiment until its disbandment. After the war he served as postmaster and justice of the peace at Keokuk, where he died in 1898.

¹⁵ Dennis Morrison, a native of Ohio, left his home in Lee County to join the regiment in the fall of 1862. He served in the ranks until a bullet amputated one of his thumbs, whereupon he was named quartermaster sergeant and then acting quartermaster of the 7th Iowa. He later resided in Fort Madison until his death in 1918. See *Portrait and Biographical Album of Lee County, Iowa*, 468-9.

¹⁶ Capt. George Moore commanded an Alabama company of cavalry in Lt. Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest's corps. At this time a Federal officer described Moore as

finest Horses in the Regt., one of them belonging to the Surgeon, Dr. Jos. Everingham of West Point. The men were recaptured on the following day by a scouting party of the 112th Ill., but the Horses wer lost. Moore was seen today within one mile of this place with about 30 men. There is now a scouting party after him, but as he is wel mounted it is almost impocible to captur him.

The health of the Regt. is Good, but the Contrabands are dropping off like sheep.¹⁷ They are certainly the most miserable looking set of human beings that I ever set eyes on. They are *dirty, ragged, sick & hungry*, and the Citizens are almost as bad off. U.S. is feeding about 400 negro Wenches up where Co. D is, and about as many more here. They are quartered in a *corrall* inside of the lines. Some of the negro men are soldiers, but a great portion of them are fit for nothing. The citizens are also a hard looking set; I think [they are] very well suited to this country. "Uncle Sam" is also feeding them. They come to the "Q.M." almost every day for their regular *Corn Meal & Pork*. I send you a Pulaski paper so you can see what Genl. Dodge proposes to do for them this spring. . . .¹⁸

Lt. Col. Parrott is in command, Col. Rice having command of the Brigade.¹⁹ Capt. Gale has sent in his resignation but Col Rice would not accept it, so I suppose he will have to serve until the 25th of July.

I can tell you but very little about this country. In fact I have seen but little of it myself. What I have seen is very poor. I think a small sprinkling of Yankees would do the country and people good.

"formerly of the rebel army, now horse thief and scoundrel in general." U. S. War Dept. (comp.), *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (128 vols., Washington, 1880-1901), Ser. I, Vol. XXXII, Part I, 404. Hereafter cited as *Official Records*; all citations are to volumes in Ser. I.

¹⁷ "Contraband" was a term commonly used during the Civil War in referring to freed and runaway slaves who followed in the wake of every Federal army.

¹⁸ Maj. Gen. Grenville M. Dodge of Council Bluffs commanded the XVI Corps in the left wing of Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman's army. His reminiscences are contained in two works: *The Battle of Atlanta and Other Campaigns* (Council Bluffs, 1911) and *Personal Recollections of . . . General William T. Sberman* (Council Bluffs, 1914).

¹⁹ A native of Pennsylvania, Elliott W. Rice of Oskaloosa became colonel of the 7th Iowa in 1862 at the age of twenty-six. He was promoted to brigadier general in June, 1864, and raised to major general at the end of the war. He died in Sioux City in 1887.

It would amuse you to see the Butternuts come in to take [the] Oath.²⁰ There is not more than one in ten that can wright there names.

My dear, why do you not wright to me? I have not received a line from you yet. I fear there is something the matter. I thought I was sure of a letter tonight but the mail is just in and no letters for me. Do pleas wright often & send me some papers. The other boys are getting letters & papers every day.

Remember me to all my friends. Love to my folks, your mother & Mary. Wright often & Believe me Your affectionate Husband

Frank Malcom

Adjutants Office, Prospect, Tenn. April 3rd 1864

Dear Lida:

It is Sunday again, and as I am through with my work for the day, I will endeavor to fulfil my promice to you. I received your welcom letter & the picture last Sunday Evening just after I had mailed my letter to you. . . . I think *your Picture* is excellent; it could not be better.

I have nothing in the way of news for you. Today everything is Jogging along after the old style. You know that when an army is not on the march that it must certainly be dull. I have not heard anything more about our being transferred to the Potomac and hope it is not so. I would like to help take Richmen [Richmond] but I think the trip would be a hard one so do not wish to try it.

Capt. Gale is determined to quit the service. I think it quite probable that his resignation will be accepted during this month. He claims that he is unfit for duty on account of a wound received at Corinth.²¹

The Guerillas are not troubling us as much now as they did at first. The country is full of Scouting Parties, and almost every day some of them bring in some Reble Prisoners. The "Guerilla Chief," Capt. Moore, was captured last week near Athens, Ala., by Genl. Dodge's "Boddy Guard."

²⁰ Under the terms of that period, any Confederate soldier could secure a parole and return home by surrendering, taking an oath of allegiance to the Union and promising not to take up arms again. Of course, such paroles did not apply to those troops captured in battle.

²¹ Gale received a saber cut at Belmont, Mo., in 1861 and was severely wounded at the battle of Corinth, Oct. 3, 1862.

He was sent to Nashville and will probably be hung. They killed four of his men and captured two.²²

Several Reble Deserters have come into our lines in the last few days, been Parolled & sent home, and I see by the Southern papers that in some places they are deserting by the thousands.²³ What few I have seen of them are hard looking cases — all dressed in Butternut clothing and apparently half starved. They all tel the same story & profess to be Loyal Citizens, but whether to believe them or not is the question.

You speak of Genl. Crocker. That was a false report. He is stil alive and giving the Confederacy all the hard knocks that is in his power.²⁴

Write soon and give me all the news. Love to Mother & Mary & Believe me Your affectionate Husband,

Frank

Adjutants Office, Prospect Tenn. Apr. 10/64

My dear Wife,

I have just received your kind and affectionate letter of the 3rd inst. bearing the *sad, sad* news of *Fathers* death. Oh Lide, what a shock, I cannot realize it. You can better imagin my feelings than I can discribe them, for it has not been long since you received the same sad intelligence in regard to the death of your own dear father. I wish I could have been at home. Little did I think when I bid him goodbye at the Depot the morning I left that it would be the last time I would see him. I thought that I stood in a far more dangerous position than he, & who knows: I may be next to follow. I do not know what Mother & Litta will do. I am afraid they will have a hard time of it. They both have such poor health; almost wish I had not enlisted; think my services are needed at home at

²² On Mar. 31 Federal cavalry bagged Capt. Moore, Lt. Col. Lemuel G. Mead and 30 Confederate horsemen. That the two officers then made a hasty escape is apparent from their raiding activities throughout the Atlanta campaign. See *Official Records*, Vol. XXXII, Part I, 654; Vol. XXXIX, Part IV, 280, 305, 624.

²³ While desertion in the Confederate armies did not reach such proportions in 1864, it certainly took on the characteristics of a flood in the last months of the war. See Ella Lonn, *Desertion during the Civil War* (New York, 1928), 21-38.

²⁴ Marcellus M. Crocker left a lucrative law practice in Des Moines to join the 2nd Iowa Infantry, and he attained the rank of lieutenant colonel before assuming command of the 13th Iowa Infantry in Oct., 1861. Valorous service at the head of the "Iowa Brigade" eventually brought him promotion to brigadier general, but ill health forced his resignation from service late in 1864. He died in Washington, D. C., Aug. 6, 1865. See *Annals of Iowa*, 4:765-68 (Oct., 1866); A. A. Stuart, *Iowa Colonels and Regiments . . .* (Des Moines, 1865), 255-64.

this time. But enough of that. I am a Soldier & must not giv way to such feelings.

I thought this morning that I had quite a lot of news for you & could write you a long letter tonight, but the bad news has driven it all from me. Consequently my letter this evening will be short. . . . As it is getting late I must close & Retier. Good night. Write soon to your

Affectionate Husband

Frank Malcom

H'd Qrs. 7th Iowa Vet. Inft. In the Field
South Chattahoochee River Opposite Roswell
Cobb Co., Ga. July 15th 1864

My dear Wife,

We arrived here on Sunday evening last after two days hard marching. Our Brigade is camped on a high mountain one half mile south of the Chattahoochee river and about two miles from Roswell. We have plenty of fresh air and good spring water & plenty to eat, such as it is. Blackberries are very plenty but I am too busy to pick them. Have had but one mess of them yet.

Our division, under command of Brig. Genl. G. M. Dodge of Council Bluffs, Iowa, is now the extreme left of Genl. Shermans Army. We was ordered from the right to this place, but what for is not known by us small fry. The 15 & 17 Corps crossed the river yesterday & today and are now in our advance a few miles. We may be ordered out tommorrow and we may remain here some weeks. Troops will have to be left here to garrison this ford, and it is very probable that our Brigade will remain.²⁵

All seems to be quiet in front. I have not heard the sound of a canon for five or six days, which is quite a relief. It is reported this evening that Genl. Schofield has entered Atlanta, but how true it is I do not know.²⁶ Suppose you at home are as wel posted in regard to the movements of our Generals as we Soldiers are, and perhaps better.

²⁵ Crossing the Chattahoochee River on the night of July 10, the 7th Iowa constructed and occupied earthworks one-fourth mile south of the stream until July 17, when the unit began moving on Atlanta via Decatur. *Official Records*, Vol. XXXVIII, Part III, 445.

²⁶ Maj. Gen. John M. Schofield commanded the Army of the Ohio (as the XXIII Corps was then called). At the time of Malcom's letter, Schofield's troops had just effected a crossing of the Chattahoochee and were moving toward Decatur and the right flank of the Confederate position. *Ibid.*, Part II, 515-16.

The Governor of Ga. will not allow Genl. Johnson to fortify near the city of Atlanta for fear of destroying the place.²⁷ So I suppose the next Grand Rally will be nine miles beyond at Pine Mountain.²⁸

During our march on Saturday last we passed through the Rebel Works on the south side of Kenessaw Mt.²⁹ I never saw anything to equal it in my life. The timber & underbrush for about five miles was all cut off smooth by our canon & musket balls. Some of the dead rebels were yet unburied & in fact the whole battlefield was a graveyard. The Officers all say that they have not seen as good fortifications an as good a position for defense since they have been in the service. I am told that General Sherman said give him as good a natural position and the same advantages that the rebels had then, and he would not be afraid to meet the Whole Rebel Army combined. This goes to confirm what we have been hearing all summer, that the Enemy is becoming demoralized and will not fight, if they can help it. It is only a few leading men of the South that is keeping up the war. They know they are ruined and are now trying to bring the North as near on a level with the South as possible.

We passed through Marietta on Saturday evening. It is a beautiful town, almost as large as Fort Madison. It almost made me homesick to pass through so nice a place and not to be allowed to stop & rest. The buildings are not as fine as we have in the north, but they are great for

²⁷ Although Gov. Joseph E. Brown of Georgia proved a political thorn in the side of the Confederacy by his strict adherence to the doctrine of states' rights, he voiced no opposition to the fortification of Atlanta by Gen. Joseph E. Johnston's Army of Tennessee. Indeed, he dispatched to Johnston's assistance some 3,000 state militiamen — civilian volunteers of such ridiculous appearance and doubtful ability that the men in the army quickly dubbed them "Joe Brown's Pets." For a laudatory history of this group, see Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel (eds.), *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* (4 vols., New York, 1884-1887), 4:331-35. Hereafter cited as *Battles and Leaders*.

²⁸ Malcom obviously had his geography confused, for Pine Mountain, thirty-five miles northwest of Atlanta, could have had no bearing on the campaign at that time. Lt. Gen. Leonidas Polk of the Confederacy had been killed on June 14, 1864, while reconnoitering from atop the eminence.

²⁹ On June 27 Sherman temporarily abandoned his flanking movements around Johnston and delivered a frontal assault on the Confederates at Kennesaw Mountain, two miles northwest of Marietta and twenty-five miles from Atlanta. Johnston demonstrated his defensive mettle by inflicting over 3,000 Federal casualties at a loss of 630 of his own men. Soldiers on both sides felt that Sherman acted rashly in doing battle at Kennesaw, and one Federal summarized the battle as "an utterly needless move, and so an inexcusable slaughter." H. V. Boynton, *Sherman's Historical Raid* (Cincinnati, 1875), 107.

shrubby. I never seen anything to equal some of the Parks & Yards of the old Secesh, but it does not do them much good now. The most of them have gone south & our Officers are enjoying the fruits of there labor, or rather the labor of there slaves, for they were all of them slave holders. I am told that some of the rich men near Marietta sent as many as five hundred slaves south and had them sold two years ago but remained here themselves until this summer. . . .

Roswell was a manufacturing town situated one mile and a half from the Chattahoochee River on a beautiful pine ridge & consisted of about one hundred & fifty fine Buildings & three or four Large Cotten & Woolen Factories offoring employment for *Eight Hundred* Young Women, *four hundred* of whom are still here & the others have gone north.

The Factories are all Burned to the ground. The Superintendent claimed Protection from the French Government, but our Authorities would not recognize it. So Mr. Frenchman was sent north for safe keeping.³⁰

We have no Chaplin & hav not had since Teater resigned.³¹ I have not heard a sermon since I left Home excepting one Nigro sermon at Prospect.

You must excuse this disconnected and unintiresting letter, for I am very busy & bothered so much by Officers calling on me for papers of diferent kindes that I hardly know what I am doing.

Be sure to write often & Believe me ever Your Affectionate Husband
Frank Malcom

Near Atlanta, Ga. Aug. 3rd '64

My dear Wife,

The Regiment has been engaged all the time building fortifications & gitting ready for the final struggle. The enemy opened on us on the morn-

³⁰ When Federal soldiers made their way around burned bridges and entered Roswell, they found several of the mills in full operation — and at least two of them flying foreign flags. This feeble subterfuge infuriated Sherman; he ordered the mills destroyed and all persons connected with them sent northward under arrest. Because most of the employees were women, Sherman's order prompted loud cries of outrage from all corners of the South. *Official Records*, Vol. XXXVIII, Part V, 73, 76-7, 92; Jacob D. Cox, *Atlanta* (New York, 1882), 137. See also W. T. Sherman, *Memoirs of General William T. Sherman* (2 vols., New York, 1892), 2:66. Hereafter cited as Sherman, *Memoirs*.

³¹ Virginia-born Isaac P. Teeter left his Oskaloosa congregation in Aug., 1863, to serve as regimental chaplain of the 7th Iowa. He resigned in Jan., 1864, to become a hospital steward.

ing of the 31st of July with 84 lb. shells.³² Several of them have bust near our Regiment but as yet we have sustained no Injury from them. The men in the front lines have strong works and trenches to get into for protection & we at H'd Qrs., which is about 50 yards in the rear, have piles of Logs and Holes dug behind them to protect us during the night, for there is no telling when a shell may be thrown amongst us & we think it well enough to protect ourselves when we can.

Our Batteries have all been quiet until last evening. They was ordered by Genl. Sherman for all of them that could reach the City to open on it.³³ They done so and such another Thundiring I never heard. It was kept up for about three hours but with what success is not yet known. All is quiet today and it is believed that the enemy is trying to get away.

Capt. Ben. B. Gale is now out of the service or will be in a few days, as his resignation has at last been accepted & he left last night for Chattanooga to be muster[ed] out.³⁴ He is now out and it is a good thing for the service and I hope for himself too. He had become utterly worthless — did not seem to care for himself or anything else. He was drunk almost all the time. Lieut. Morrison is A.D.C. on Genl. Rices staff and is a good Officer.³⁵ Some of the men do not like him — say he has the *big head* &c., but as long as he treats me well I will say nothing against him.

You speak in your last letter about *Drunkin Officers*. You do not detest them any more than I do, for I see them almost every day and I often fear that poor whisky will give us trouble yet. On the day of our last battle, the 22nd, several of our Officers was Intoxicated (I mean in the

³² If the Atlanta defenders had any 100-pounder Parrott siege guns, they did not have enough ammunition to fire many rounds. The cannon most commonly used in the Civil War were the 12-pounder Napoleon and the 10-pounder Parrott. Both weapons were used as siege and field artillery. L. Van Loan Naisawald, *Grape and Canister* (New York, 1960), 29-31, 37.

³³ Sherman's steady bombardment of Atlanta throughout the month of August was intended not only to hammer the city into rubble but also to mask the southward inching of his army as it strove to cut the last two rail lines into the city. See Sherman's remarks in *Official Records*, Vol. XXXVIII, Part I, 79.

³⁴ After being "wounded accidentally by revolver, May 27, 1864," Gale resigned from the service on Aug. 3. *Roster and Record*, 1:964.

³⁵ Joseph B. Morrison of Lee County was promoted to captain during that month. Shortly thereafter he refused a major's commission in a Negro regiment in order to resign from the army. In the postwar years he and his brother Dennis (see note 15) operated an implement business in Fort Madison.

Regiment), but do not be alarmed about me, *my dear*, for I have not tasted liquor of any kinde since I left Keokuk, and I do not intend to.³⁶ I know that *pure lips* are praying for me and hope & pray that I may be able to resist the temptations that are daily thrown around me.

The Non Veterans all started for Chattanooga yesterday to be mustered out of the service, their term having expired on the 1st of August. There was 185 of them, which will reduce the Regiment to about 550 men. Almost all of the Officers are going to quit the service. Our Major & three or four Captains are going to start for home this Evening.³⁷ We will have an entire new organization soon and I hope it will be an improvement. Lt. Col. Parrott is now in the Hospital sick & the Regt. is commanded by Capt. Mahon.³⁸

Please write often & Believe me Ever Your Affectionate Husband

Frank

Before Atlanta, Ga., Aug. 18th '64

My dear Wife,

I have nothing for you this Evening in the way of War news. All is quiet and has been for several days with the exception of some firing on the skirmish line and an occasional shot from the batteries. Our large guns have been shelling the city but I do not think they have succeeded in doing much damage yet. I have just returned from one of our Large Forts where, with a field Glass, I could see the city. Could see men & women in the streets & Rebel Flags floating over all the public Buildings. Atlanta is

³⁶ It was not uncommon for soldiers to take a drink of whiskey before going into battle, and if some of the officers were guilty of imbibing before the battle of Atlanta, they did so to a moderate degree. No record could be found to substantiate Malcom's assertion.

³⁷ Among the men who resigned from service at that time were Maj. James W. McMullin and Capts. George J. Bennett, Curtis F. Conn, Thomas L. Montgomery, Robert Reiniger and Jesse F. Warner.

³⁸ Ottumwa's Samuel Mahon served as captain of Co. F until his promotion to major in Aug., 1864. He received a lieutenant colonel's commission a month before the regiment was mustered out of service. For Mahon's own war observations, see John K. Mahon (ed.), "The Civil War Letters of Samuel Mahon, Seventh Iowa Infantry," *IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY*, 51:233-66 (July, 1953). Writing at the same time as Malcom, Mahon stated of Col. Parrott: "The old gentleman is about worn out. he cant stand it much longer. everybody advises him to go out of service but he hangs on." *Ibid.*, 255.

said to be a beautiful city, and at the breaking out of the war had about fifteen Thousand Inhabitants.³⁹

The Rebel Army here is under comd. of Genl. Hood.⁴⁰ It is reported that he was reenforced a few days since by Longstreet and 20,000 cavalry.⁴¹ How true the report is I cannot say, but I do know that their cavalry have cut our communication between this [place] & Chattanooga, and that we are now on $\frac{3}{4}$ rations. But I presume it will not last long, as the road will soon be repaired and the Rebs drivin out of the country.

I do not think we can advance much farther until the army is rested and recruited up. It is astonishing *the difference* in our Army now and last spring. I do not think it is one half as large as it was then.

The 7th Iowa left Prospect on the 29th of April last with 631 effective men and it now numbers 335 — a loss of Killed, Wounded, Sick & Discharged of almost one half, and I believe the whole Army has been reduced in that proportion, if not greater.⁴² We are all waiting for the draft this fall. [I] think then we will be reenforced. I do hope those copper heads in Ft. M. will be drafted. What do you think they would do down here [in] this hot weather, on $\frac{3}{4}$ rations of hard bread, Pork, coffee & sugar, and have to carry knapsack, canteen, haversack & 3 days rations, something to cook with, Gun & Accoutirments, with 60 Rounds of Ammunition, a Gum & Wool Blanket, all weighing about 65 lbs.

³⁹ Although its 1860 population was listed at 13,000 people, by 1864 refugees had swelled the city's inhabitants to almost 22,000. William Key, *The Battle of Atlanta* (New York, 1958), 17.

⁴⁰ Johnston was removed from command of the Army of Tennessee in the middle of July and succeeded by Gen. John B. Hood, a man possessed of more pugnacity than military skill. Seven months and five major defeats later, Hood resigned and the army's favorite, "Uncle Joe" Johnston, returned to lead the remnants of the Confederate force to the end.

⁴¹ Malcom fell prey to rumors at this point. Gen. James Longstreet, commander of the First Corps of Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia, was then in Virginia recovering from wounds received at the battle of the Wilderness (May 5-7). Hood had not been reinforced by cavalry; rather, Maj. Gen. Joseph Wheeler had taken his 4,000 horsemen on a raid along the Atlanta-Chattanooga railroad and thence almost to Nashville. Wheeler's report of the campaign is in *Official Records*, Vol. XXXVIII, Part III, 957-61.

⁴² Col. Parrott put the regiment's strength at less than 400 muskets early in May. Counting losses incurred in the battles around Atlanta and resignations from the service, the unit at the time of Malcom's letter probably totaled less than 300. Yet by December replacements had swelled the ranks to 549 men. *Report of the Adjutant General . . . of the State of Iowa* (Des Moines, 1865), 1061.

I believe I told you in my last about Sergt. Thomas of Co. D.⁴³ He was killed instantly with one of our own shells. Poor man. We gave him a Soldiers Burial which was all that we could do. He was in command of the Co. and, had he lived, could have been 1st Lieutenant.

Genl. Corse recognized me one day on the field; was very pleasant & enquired very particularly for you.⁴⁴ You asked how we like Genl. Dodge. He is *Loved* by both Officers & men in his command.

[Rest of letter lost]

In the Field in front of Atlanta, Ga., August 24th '64

My dear Wife,

Truly death is visiting us all over the country. There is not a day passes that I do not see men killed or mortally wounded. One of our men was yesterday shot through the head just below the eyes and in front of the ears. He is still living but in dreadful agony. The ball passed clear through and came out on the other side.⁴⁵ Another man was shot through the arms. One arm was amputated, and it is thought he will lose the use of the other, but such is war.⁴⁶ It is useless for me to attempt to discribe the one hundredth part that I see. If I did it would keep me writing all the time.

We still remain in front of Atlanta. Our front line is about one & a half miles from the City and about 1/2 mile from the Enemys first line of works. Our line is only fifty yards from the Rebel skirmish line! The two

⁴³ A resident of Van Buren County, Sgt. Benjamin Thomas was chatting with Lt. Henry Smith when a shell from a Parrott gun plunged into the breastworks and decapitated him. Smith, 7th Iowa, 166-67. His death occurred on Aug. 11.

⁴⁴ Born in Pittsburgh, Pa., John M. Corse resigned from West Point to enter the field of law. He was practicing in Burlington when war began. Valiant service with the 6th Iowa Infantry brought him promotion to brigadier general and Sherman's staff late in 1863. Given command of a division in the following spring, he distinguished himself on several occasions, particularly at the battle of Allatoona, Ga. (Oct. 5), where he held off repeated Confederate assaults and, after the battle, sent Sherman a famous telegram which stated: "I am short a cheek-bone and an ear, but am able to whip all hell yet." After the war he held a number of Federal appointments, including postmaster of Boston, Mass. See *Battles and Leaders*, 4:254, 321-23, 325, 425; *Annals of Iowa*, Third Series, 2:1-19, 105-45, 278-304 (Apr., 1895-Jan., 1896).

⁴⁵ The wounded soldier was probably Pvt. James Dunlay of Co. K, who died of injuries on the date of Malcom's letter.

⁴⁶ Pvt. Zenus W. Johns of Co. A was wounded severely in the right arm on Aug. 10, but remained in service until Jan. 20, 1865.

lines are in speaking distance and the men on Picket have some very interesting conversations, and some of the Rebs have ventured over to our men to have a Social Chat, on promise that our boys would not keep them as prisoners.⁴⁷

Our Guns have been shelling the City continusly. The Guns in our Division have for the last week fired one shot every fifteen minutes during the night. They have also been throwing hot shot into Atlanta, and in that way have kept the Enemys Guns quiet and done as much damage as possible to the City.⁴⁸

We are expecting marching orders evry moment. Will write you again as soon as I can. Love to all. Write often & Believe me Ever Your Affectionate Husband,

Frank Malcom

P. S. 9 Oclock P. M. Atlanta is *on fire* & our Guns are throwing shells into the city as fast as they can. Just imagine a bunch of *fire crackers* exploding all at one time and you can then form an idea of the cannonading that is going on now. I do hope the city will be burned to the ground.⁴⁹

Near East Point, Ga., Sunday, Sept. 11th 1864

My dear Wife,

I presum you have been looking for a letter from me for sometime. The only excuse that I can offer is a want of time, and if I had taken time to write, I do not suppose I could have got it mailed.

I believe I told you in my letter of the 24th of July [August] that we were just on the eve of marching. We started on the afternoon of the 25th

⁴⁷ The friendly intermingling of Johnny Rebs and Billy Yanks between battles reached such proportions during the war as to give officers on both sides deep concern. Indeed, one Federal soldier wrote of such informal get-togethers: "We generally end by mutually wishing we had let those who made the quarrel be the very ones to fight. If the question was left up to the two contending armies here, we would restore the Union tomorrow and hang both cabinets at our earliest convenience afterwards." Wiley, *The Life of Billy Yank*, 350-51.

⁴⁸ Designed for incendiary purposes, "hot shot" was made by heating 24-pounder shells in stoves erected near the cannon and then firing the redhot projectiles at targets. They were first used with effectiveness in the bombardment of Fort Sumter.

⁴⁹ At this time one of the city's inhabitants likened the artillery barrage to "all the fires of hell, and the thunders of the universe . . . blazing and roaring over Atlanta." Key, *The Battle of Atlanta*, 69.

and that night all of our Corps evacuated the works in front of Atlanta — the 20th Corps falling back across the Chattahoochee River to protect our Rail Road Communication, while the Army of the Tennessee and the Army of the Cumberland & the Army of the Ohio advanced in the direction of the Atlanta and Macon Rail Road.⁵⁰ The move is called Shermans Raid. It was a very perilous one and was made by Genl. Sherman in opposition to the advice of the President and Genl. Grant.⁵¹

The object of the move was to cut the Macon Rail Road, draw the Enemy out of Atlanta, and in so doing enable the 20th Corps to march into the City, and it has proven a success, for as you doubtless have heard before this time, Atlanta was captured on the 2nd. Our Army received the news on the morning of the 3rd and a happy day it was for us, for we then knew that the desired end had been accomplished . . .

Our troops had some hard fighting, and skirmishing was going on all the time. We struck the Montgomery R.R. at Fairburn and destroyed it for some ten miles, then advanced, driving the enemy before us one day & night, cut the Atlanta & Macon R.R. at Jon[e]sboro and destroyed it for several miles. While there we received the news of the capture of Atlanta. Genl. Sherman immediately ordered all distruction of property to cease, stating that all had been gained that he expected.⁵²

I regret the death of Capt. Adams.⁵³ Poor man, he had a hard time of it. I fear it will almost kill his Wife.

⁵⁰ Leaving Maj. Gen. George H. Thomas' Army of the Cumberland before Atlanta, Sherman on Aug. 25 ordered Maj. Gen. John A. Logan's Army of the Tennessee and Schofield's Army of the Ohio to complete the Federal investment by striking the two remaining rail lines that entered Atlanta from the south. Sherman's strategy was simple: by the move he could sever the last connections the Confederate defenders had with the outside world, and for Hood to combat the move meant abandoning the Atlanta earthworks to do battle. Hood quickly sent Lt. Gen. William J. Hardee's corps to Jonesboro, twenty-two miles south of Atlanta. But Sherman skillfully piled his troops in a wedge between the Confederate forces, defeated Hardee at Jonesboro on Aug. 31 and then broke the rail lines. At 5 p.m. on Sept. 1, Hood began withdrawing his troops from the Gate City. The two-month siege of Atlanta was over.

⁵¹ Neither Lincoln nor Grant voiced any opposition to Sherman's final thrust on Atlanta. Indeed, with national elections just around the corner and with Grant's army bogged down at Petersburg, Lincoln was anxious for any move that might hasten the fall of the Georgia city.

⁵² Maj. Gen. Henry W. Slocum and his XX Corps marched into Atlanta at 11 a.m. on Sept. 2; on the following day Sherman issued an order for the temporary cessation of hostilities. Smith, *7th Iowa*, 184.

⁵³ A family friend; no Iowa officer by that name was killed in the Atlanta campaign.

We have a nice place for a camp and in a few days will be very comfortable. I was disappointed in not getting to see Atlanta; think I will try and visit the place before we start again. East Point is at the Junction of the Macon & Montgomery R.R. six miles South of Atlanta and consists of three houses & a water tank. We are one mile west of it in the woods.

I must now tell you of my misfortune. I am *badly wounded* — but *unfortunately* for me it was not done by the enemy. I have been with the teams for the last month getting my work straightened up. On the morning of the 30th of July I was at work getting some papers out of my Desk, the team started without my knowing it, and the front wheel of a six mule team ran over my right foot, cutting the *big toe* off just at the root of the nail. At first I did not think I was hurt much, but when I pulled off my shoe & sock the end of the toe fell off on the ground. The Quartermaster⁵⁴ very kindly hunted up a Surgeon, but as we were on the move nothing could be done for it. I got into the sutlers wagon & road all that day and all night without having it dressed. All that I done for it was to keep it out with cold water. I wanted to go to the hospital but my friends would not allow me to do so. They have been very kind — have done all that they could for me. My toe was very painful; all the *nale* & flesh was cut off smooth, leaving the end of the bone sticking out. The Dr. thinks that the bone will have to be taken off but I hope not. It is much better now. I can walk very well with a cane; have attended to me business all the time.

Love to all & Believe me ever Your Affectionate Husband

Frank Malcom

Near East Point, Ga., Sept. 20th '64

My dear Wife,

As Lieut. Morrison starts home in the morning and has very kindly offered to carry anything that I wish to send you, I concluded to write you a few lines, but as I wrote you a long letter on Sunday last my letter this evening will be short.

My health is good as usual. Am quite lame yet but my toe is improving as fast as could be expected. I have managed with much difficulty to attend to my duties in the Office and hope to be able to do so, but I do not expect to be able to ware a Boot or Shoe for one month yet.

⁵⁴ Capt. Charles H. Trott of Nashua assumed the duties of regimental quartermaster in June, 1863. For praise of his work, see *Official Records*, Vol. XXXVIII, Part III, 493.

The Regiment is now in Atlanta Preparing grounds for an Army Hospital. It left here this morning at daylight and will remain away two or three days. I remained here in charge of the office and have been very busy all day. I am *getting tired* [of] doing an Adjutants work for a *Privates Pay*.

Col. Parrott & Sergt. Hamilton⁵⁵ have not arrived yet, though they are expected daily. I do not think the Colonel will Resigne; we all hope he will. He has always treated me well, but I think another commander would be preferable. I do not think a man that drinks as much whiskey as he does should command a Regiment.

J. D. Hamilton is now 1st Lieutenant of Co. D. His commission arrived last week. Lieut. Morrison was commissioned Captain of the Co. but would not be mustered, so that will make Hamilton Capt. *Pretty Good for Dave*.

Remember me to all my friends. Give my love to Mother & Mary. Write to me *often* & Believe me Ever Your Affectionate husband

Frank Malcom

Rome, Ga. Nov. 8th 1864

My dear Wife,

As this is Election day and being one of the clerks, I have a few moments to write. It is now noon and we have closed for one hour. We have polled two hundred and fifty-seven votes up to the present time & not one for Little Mack.⁵⁶ I will write you as soon as I can and give you all the news.

Yesterday was *Pay Day*. We all Recd. our pay up to the 31st of August last. I Recived \$181.80. I send you \$170. The Paymaster takes it to Louisville, Ky., and then forwards it by Express to any point that the Cos. may designate. Company D sends theirs to Chas. Brewster, Esq. of Fort

⁵⁵ A resident of Montrose, Sgt. James D. Hamilton was promoted to captain of Co. D on Sept. 18.

⁵⁶ To oppose Lincoln in the 1864 presidential race, the Democrats nominated Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan, former commander of the Army of the Potomac and a leader well liked by the troops in the East despite his over-cautiousness in battle. The anti-Lincolnites hoped that a combination of McClellan's popularity and a platform calling for peace would carry the Democrats to victory. Lincoln won with 55% of the popular vote; he garnered 212 electoral votes to McClellan's 21. Of 344 votes cast by the men in the 7th Iowa, Lincoln received 338. Frank Malcom to Wife, Nov. 9, 1864.

Madison.⁵⁷ You will call on him and get your package when it arrives. I will write soon.

You must excuse haste now & Believe me Ever Your Affectionate husband

Frank Malcom

Andisons Plantation, 9 Miles South West
of Savannah, Ga., Dec. 17th 1864

My dear Wife,

I have the pleasure of acknowledging the Receipt of your kind and affectionate letters of the 6th, 13th & 21st of November, for which I am much obliged.

We left Rome as you have doubtless learned on the morning of the 11th of November and started on a Winter Campaign.⁵⁸ The City of Rome and all the Camp and Garrison Equipage was burned on the morning of our Departure,⁵⁹ as was Kingston and all the Towns that we have passed through since that time.⁶⁰ The City of Atlanta was burned to the Ground on the 15th of Nov. I had the pleasure of seeing it in flames, which paid me in part for the long weary days that I spent last summer behind fortifications & dodging Rebel bullets.⁶¹

Shermans Army resumed their march from Atlanta on the 16th of No-

⁵⁷ Charles Brewster was president of the Fort Madison Bank and one of the largest landowners in the county.

⁵⁸ On the March to the Sea the 7th Iowa, along with the 52nd Illinois, 66th Indiana and 2nd Iowa, formed the First Brigade of the Fourth Division of the XV Corps. Maj. Gen. Peter J. Osterhaus commanded the corps, Brig. Gen. John M. Corse the division, and Brig. Gen. Elliott W. Rice the brigade. *Official Records*, Vol. XLIV, 849-50.

⁵⁹ Gen. Corse, acting under Sherman's orders, burned the major factories, warehouses and railroad equipment of Rome on Nov. 10. *Ibid.*, Vol. XXXIX, Part III, 729-30.

⁶⁰ On Nov. 12 Hood's chief of staff, Brig. Gen. Francis A. Shoup, reported that Sherman's men had destroyed everything of military value from Rome to Kingston. *Ibid.*, Part II, 808.

⁶¹ Sherman entrusted the destruction of Atlanta to Col. Orlando M. Poe of the engineers, who carried out his orders efficiently. On the evening of Nov. 14, railroad buildings and storehouses were set afire, and a combination of drunken soldiers and exploding shells in one of the arsenals ignited and eventually gutted thirty per cent of the city. As Sherman moved eastward toward the sea, he looked back and beheld Atlanta "smouldering and in ruins, the black smoke rising high in the air, and hanging like a pall over the ruined city." Sherman, *Memoirs*, 2:178.

vember in 3 Columns⁶² — our Corps (the 15th) being a part of the Center Column; the Left Passing through Millageville, capturing that city without any opposition from the Enemy; our Right Passed near Macon and engaged the Enemy for five days while the Center and Left Columns were passing, then passed on, leaving them in their glory, not deeming the place worth contending for, as all the Rail Road Communications had been destroyed, rendering the place of no use to any one, not even the Rebs.

We then advanced slowly, crossing the Ogeechee River at several points & destroying the Georgia Central Rail Road. Our Division would cross the River, Destroy 8 or ten miles of the Road and then Re-cross the River and advance down stream on the opposite side from Savannah. The 1st Brigade did not fire a gun at the Enemy from the time we left Rome until we arrived at Jenkins Bridge on the Ogeechee River 20 miles from Savannah. small skirmish, but the Rebs soon skedaddled. The 2nd lost two men, the lost one man severely wounded: John Kreiger of Co. D, shot through the head.⁶⁴

We have been in camp here since the 11th. We are in sight of the Enemys forts and the two picket lines are within speaking distance of each other. Cannonading is going on continusly and skirmishing has got to be a common thing with us again. I do not know what this inactivity means for we would all of us rather push ahead but presume it is for the best.

Fort McAllister was captured by our forces on the 14th with about 300 prisoners, which opened our communications to the Sound.⁶⁵ We have a

⁶² Numbering about 60,000 men, Sherman's army was actually divided into two wings. Maj. Gen. Oliver O. Howard commanded the Right Wing, composed of the XV and XVII Corps, while Maj. Gen. H. W. Slocum led the Left Wing, made up of the XIV and XX Corps. Thomas' Army of the Cumberland had been detailed to keep an eye on Hood, who was then moving toward Tennessee.

⁶³ The skirmish at Jenks's Bridge took place in the afternoon of Dec. 7 and involved Rice's brigade and a detachment of Confederates who were attempting to maintain control of the crossing. An assault by the 2nd and 7th Iowa routed the defenders. Wounded in the affair were Pvts. Job A. Clark of Floyd County and Oliver G. Knudson of Oskaloosa. *Official Records*, Vol. XLIV, 126, 137.

⁶⁴ Alexander Kreiger of Co. D was severely wounded in the skirmishing of Dec. 11. He later returned to service and was with the regiment through the remainder of the war. He resided in Fort Madison. *Roster and Record*, 1:986.

⁶⁵ Fort McAllister surrendered at 5 p.m. on the afternoon of Dec. 13. Federal losses in the battle were 24 killed and 110 wounded; Confederate casualties numbered 14 killed, 21 wounded and 195 captured. An exuberant Federal officer began a telegram announcing the victory with the statement: "Take a good big drink, a long breath, and then yell like the devil. The fort was carried . . ." *Official Records*, Vol. XLIV, 704.

fleet at the mouth of the Ogeechee River which empties into the Sound 20 miles below Savannah. This is all the communication that we have open with the gulf yet.

Our forces are now bombarding Ft. Jackson on the Savannah River five miles below Savannah which, when taken, will open communication with Fort Pulaski at the mouth of the Savannah River. When Ft. Jackson falls our Gun Boats will be able to reach the City of Savannah and with their assistance the place will soon fall.

I must now close for the mail is Ready to start. My health is good; I never felt better in my life. Get quite lonsom at times but that we all expect. You must, my *dear*, excuse my bad writing; hope I will be able to do better soon.

Remember me to all. Write to me as often as possible and Believe me
Ever Your Affectionate Husband

Frank Malcom

P.S. As the mail did not leave as soon as I expected, [I] concluded to add a few more lines. . . .

We have during the last month passed through a fine country with the exception of about 3 days travel in the pine swamps, and with the exception of four or five days the weather has been beautiful & the Roads good. Forage has been plenty, and while on the march we lived fine — had plenty of frish Beef & Pork, Chickens, Turkeys, Gees &c. In fact, we had all that we wanted to eat — had Plenty of Sweet Potatoes, Turnips, Cabbage, corn meal, molasses, salt, sugar &c. There was a guard stationed at every house to guard all that was inside of it & to protect the Women & Children, but the soldiers were at liberty to take all that they could finde outside of the house, or on the farm.⁶⁶

We are now living rather hard but I think we will have plenty in a few days. All that we have to eat now is corn meal & Beef. We live on mush & fried Beef. I would not care if I could get plenty of coffee but we do not get anything excepting what I have mentioned.

I must again ask you to excuse my bad writing, for it is the best I can do on my knee.

⁶⁶ As might be expected, the rule of soldiers guarding but not entering homes was broken as many times as it was obeyed. For examples, see Haskell Monroe (ed.), *Yankees A-Coming: One Month's Experience during the Invasion of Liberty County, Georgia, 1864-1865* (Tuscaloosa, Ala., 1959), 36-69.

The next four letters contained only weather reports, rumors of impending campaigns, and pleas to Mrs. Malcom that she write. No mention was made of the fall of Savannah. In one of the war's most famous telegrams, General Sherman presented the city to President Lincoln as a Christmas gift on December 22.

Savannah, Ga., Jany. 15th 1865

My dear Wife,

I have been waiting patiently for sometime to hear from you, but as I have failed to do so, concluded to write again. . . .

I attended Church on last Sunday with Dennis A. Morrisson, and as the Catholic Church was his choice, I went with him but cannot say that I appreciated the service, altho everything was nice and in good order. The Church was largely attended and the music was fine.

I attended Church today also; it was my entention to attend the Presbyterian Church, but was informed that there was but one church of that Denomination in the City and that it was closed.⁶⁷ I preferred the Methodist as my next choice. The sermon was quite lengthy and very good, but was not quite as strong[ly] Union as I would wish.⁶⁸

We are still in Camp on the Savannah River one mile from town, but there is strong talk of our moveng in a few days. I will write you before we start. I visited the City last Tuesday in Company with my Friend Capt. Cameron. The Capt. called for me early in the morning and brot with him a fine horse for me to Ride. We rode all over the city and then witnessed the Review of Genl. Kilpatricks Cavalry by Genl. Sherman.⁶⁹ The

⁶⁷ Malcom was misinformed, for the Presbyterian Church was very much open. Maj. Mahon wrote his sister of attending services there that very Sunday and added: "The building was very crowded, citizens and soldiers all together." The minister, S. Edward Axson, defiantly omitted the prayers for the President in his service and simply passed on to the next oblation. *IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY*, 51:259 (July 1953); M. A. deWolfe Howe (ed.), *Marching with Sherman: Passages from the Letters . . . of Henry Hitchcock* (New Haven, 1927), 199-200. Hereafter cited as Howe, *Hitchcock*.

⁶⁸ Savannah churches were very pro-Southern and held union services throughout the war "to supplicate the protection of God upon the Confederacy." See T. Conrad Bryan, *Georgia in the Confederacy* (Athens, Ga., 1953), 231, 233-34, 238-39, 242.

⁶⁹ Maj. Gen. Judson Kilpatrick was a squat, red-bearded officer full of vanity and ambition. Dubbed "Kilcavalry" for the manner in which he drove his men and horses, he had little sympathy for Southerners and was largely responsible for the depredations that occurred on the March to the Sea. However, Confederates exacted

review was a grand one. We took our stand on Bay Street opposite the Exchange buildings at 12 M. and the procession did not pass where we were stationed until after 3 P.M. General Sherman took his stand just across the street from us. The Old Gentleman looked well pleased and was bowing to almost all that passed.

I also had the pleasure of seeing *Secretary Stanton* and *Q.M.G. Meigs*, who had arrived the evening before on board the Ocean Steamer, *Crescent*.⁷⁰

Mr. Stanton is a fine looking old man of about fifty and resembles Wm. D. Ewing of St. Louis very much.⁷¹

I must close now. Will write again in a few days. The weather is fine and warm. I can work all day without a coat on or fire in my Tent.

Believe me Ever Your Affectionate Husband

Frank Malcom

Savannah, Ga., Jany. 18th '65

My dear Wife,

No news from you yet and we have today received marching orders, or what amounts to the same. We are to be ready to move at a moments notice. The 3rd Division are moving today, as is also the Pioneer Corps, and it is quite probable our Division will move tomorrow or the day following.⁷²

We were in hopes for a long time that our Division would Garrison this place, but it is settled now that we have to endure the hardship of another Campaign, and in fact the most of us would rather be on the move with Sherman's Army than to be doing Garrison duty. We are proud of our

a share of revenge three months later when cavalry raided his camp, captured several aides and one of his mistresses, and sent the general scurrying for safety, "a sorry-looking figure in his shirt and drawers." *Southern Historical Society Papers*, 12:127 (1884).

⁷⁰ Widespread rumors in Washington that Sherman was displaying merciless treatment to Negroes prompted Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton to pay a two-week visit to the army at Savannah. Accompanying him on the trip was Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs. Satisfied at Sherman's Negro policy, Stanton and Meigs returned to Washington on Jan. 25. Sherman, *Memoirs*, 2:244-52.

⁷¹ Ewing was evidently a kinsman of Mrs. Malcom.

⁷² The Third Division of Logan's XV Corps was composed predominantly of troops from Illinois and Ohio. The "Pioneer Corps" were engineers entrusted with building roads and laying bridges. The 7th Iowa was a part of the Fourth Division of the XV Corps.

Leader and feel sure that another victory will be the result of the coming Campaign.

Our Destination is as usual not known but I presume we will march on to Charleston, S.C.

We have just Received the news of the fall of Fort Fisher. It is glorious news. General Butler made a failure and the General in command of that Department has been quite successful. Our force captured 70 Guns and 1780 prisoners.⁷³

General John M. Corse is now *Brevet* Major General and is entitled to his two stars. The young man is quite proud of them. For my part I think Uncle Sam is piling it onto him rather thick. He is a good officer but I fear the two stars will spoil him.

I will endeavor to write to you as often as I can during the campaign. . . . I must now close for I will be kept busy until a late hour packing up.

Good night & believe me every your affectionate Husband

Frank Malcom

Hd. Qrs. 7th Iowa V.V. Inft. In the
Field Near Fayetteville, N.C., March
13th 1865

My dear Wife,

We have once more arrived at a point where we can send off a mail and I hasten to write you a few lines to inform you that I am still alive and well. My health is as good as usual. I am almost worn out with the fatigue & hardships incident to a long campaign, but as soldiers are expected to undergo such hardships & privations, we stand it as soldiers should, and, I believe, as none but *true* soldiers can. We crossed the Savannah river on the evening of the 4th of Feby. and that night pitched our Tents for the first time on the "Sacred Soil" of South Carolina. Since then we have been pursuing the Enemy slowly and destroying the country as we passed through it.

Genl. Sherman met the Enemy in front of Columbia, S.C. on the 15th

⁷³ In Dec., 1864, Maj. Gen. Benjamin F. Butler conducted a campaign against Fort Fisher, N. C., so replete with bungles and might-have-beens that the cross-eyed general was removed from command. Maj. Gen. Alfred H. Terry and his X Corps then moved on the fort in January and captured it and 2,083 defenders on Jan. 15. Howe, *Hitchcock*, 209-10.

of Feby.⁷⁴ Skirmished with him on the 15th & 16th. On the night of the 16th the City was evacuated, and by noon [of] the 17th the City was in our possession, the Iowa Brigade being the first troops to enter the place. On the night of the 16th our Division crossed the Saluda river and on the forenoon of the 17th the Broad river four miles above town, and at two P.M. marched through town with the 7th Iowa in front. We passed through in good order and camped one mile south east of the city on the Charleston R.R.

That night the city was Destroyed by fire (I am told contrary to the wishes of Genl. Sherman).⁷⁵ I visited the city on the 18th and witnessed a sight that I never will forget. Wish I could describe it to you, but as I cannot do the subject justice, will not make the attempt. Columbia was the finest city that I have seen in the south and contained about fifteen thousand Inhabitants. Thirty six blocks out of the heart of the city was burned to the ground and many other fine buildings in different portions of the town. All the public buildings were destroyed excepting the Churches and the New State House, which was not finished. The streets were filled with men, women & children begging for protection from the soldiers. Many of the buildings burned was filled with Rebel Army Stores that had been left behind in their hasty retreat. I cannot give you an idea of the amount of property destroyed; presum you will see an account published in the Northern papers which will give you more information than I can.

The troops were engaged on the 18th & 19th Destroying R.R.s and on the 20th we Resumed our march to the north western portion of the State. Met the Enemy again at Lynch Creek.⁷⁶ Routed him and resumed our

⁷⁴ The Federal advance on Columbia ground temporarily to a halt on Feb. 15 when Confederate cavalry under Wheeler put up a stiff but short fight with portions of the XV Corps at Broad River. Hopelessly outnumbered, the graycoats withdrew, and on Feb. 17 Mayor T. J. Goodwyn surrendered the city to Sherman.

⁷⁵ While many accounts have been written blaming first one faction and then another for the burning of Columbia, research tends to point the finger of guilt at Federal soldiers interested more in whiskey than in Sherman's orders strictly forbidding the wanton destruction of civilian property. See Smith, *7th Iowa*, 216-18; John G. Barrett, *Sherman's March through the Carolinas* (Chapel Hill, 1956), 80-89. Hereafter cited as Barrett, *Sherman's March*.

⁷⁶ On Feb. 26 Federal troops wading across the waist-deep waters of Lynch's Creek encountered unexpected trouble from Confederate cavalry under Lt. Gen. Wade Hampton. Brisk skirmishing ensued before the Confederates withdrew. In the affair two members of the 7th Iowa were mortally wounded, and a private in the 81st Ohio was shot seven times — but lived to brag about it. *Official Records*, Vol. XLVII, Part I, 229, 339, 343, 351.

march to Cheraw, where the Enemy was again routed.⁷⁷ The Army then crossed the Great Pedee river & moved eastward. Crossed the line into North Carolina on the 8th of March and on the 11th the 14th Corps arrived at this place, Drove the Enemy out and now occupy this city. Our Corps arrived here yesterday. We are in camp two miles from town.

We have communications open with Wilmington, but the river at this point is not large enough for Government transports to run up this far, so we will have to go to Goldsboro [Goldsboro] 70 miles from this place before the Army can be supplied with food & clothing. The army will move for Goldsboro in a few days, where we will probably remain for a few weeks to rest & recruit.

You must excuse this scribbling for I am writing on my Knee out in the wind. The weather now is quite pleasant but for the last two weeks it has rained all the time which made the roads awful bad. Be sure to write often & give me all the news. Remember me to all & Believe me Ever Your Affectionate Husband

Frank Malcom

Near Goldsboro N.C., Mar. 25th '65

My dear Wife,

I have only time this morning to write you a few lines. We arrived here last evening at dark and am quite busy today getting our camp in a comfortable condition. General Sherman has issued his Congratulatory Order in which he says we will have a short season of rest preparatory to embarking on new and untried dangers.⁷⁸ So I suppose we will remain here a few weeks at least.

I wrote you on the 13th at Fayetteville which I presume you have received by this time. Since then the Army has had a hard time of it. We have been on short rations and many of the men are bare foot. General Sherman encountered the combined forces of Bragg, Hardee, Johnson & Fitz-Hugh Lee on the 19th, 20th & 21st at Bentonville on their own Ground. Whipped them & pursued them across the Neuse River. The

⁷⁷ Three small engagements occurred in the vicinity of Cheraw before the city was formally occupied by Federal troops on Mar. 3. See *ibid.*, 381, 391, 674, 1045, 1052.

⁷⁸ Sherman's Special Field Orders No. 35, issued from Bentonville on Mar. 22, expressed the General's appreciation of the efforts put forth to date by the men, and it closed with the statement: "You shall now have rest and all the supplies that can be brought from the rich granaries and store-houses of our magnificent country before again embarking on new and untried dangers." *Ibid.*, 44.

Enemy left the field on the 21st leaving the dead & wounded in our possession. I cannot give you the particulars of the Battle as I do not know them myself. The 14th Corps Lost in Killed, wounded & missing about 800 men; do not know the Loss of any of the other Corps.⁷⁹ The Enemy left in the direction of the Capital of the State & it is probable that will be their next stopping place.

I must close. Please excuse Haste & write often to your Ever affectionate Husband

Frank Malcom

P.S. I did not think to mention that my health is as good as could be expected after a campaign of fifty six days & marching near five hundred miles.⁸⁰

Near Goldsboro N.C., Mar. 29th '65

My dear Wife,

I have in the last three days Received six of your kinde and welcom letters and I assure you they were welcom visitors, for I never in my life wanted news as bad as I did on our arrival at this place. I had been over two months without a line [from] you. . . .

I am feeling much better than I did on our arrival at this place. I was not sick but the Campaign was a very hard one and I was almost worn out. We were fifty six days out from Savannah to Goldsboro, and a great portion of the time wading swamps, sometimes knee deep, and often to our necks. I am surprised that the men stood the trip as well as they did. The Campaign from Rome to Savannah was fun compared with the one Just ended. The country that the Army passed through was rather poor but every thing was taken that would be of use to the Army, and in almost all cases the buildings and fences were burned, leaving almost all of the citizens in a destitute condition.

⁷⁹ The battle of Bentonville proved to be the last victory for Johnston's skeleton Army of Tennessee. On Mar. 19 the Confederates withstood an attack by Sherman's Left Wing, counterattacked and sent the XIV Corps reeling in confusion back to the support of the XX Corps. On the following day Johnston's force hurled back assaults on both its flanks, then retired from the field on Mar. 21. Confederate losses were 2,600 out of 18,000 engaged. Sherman reported casualties of 1,527, of which 886 came from the XIV Corps. *Ibid.*, 71-73; Jay Luvaas, "Johnston's Last Stand — Bentonville," *North Carolina Historical Review*, 33:332-58 (June, 1956).

⁸⁰ The army trudged 425 miles from Savannah in what Sherman termed "one of the longest and most important marches ever made by an organized army in a civilized country." Sherman, *Memoirs*, 2:306.

We succeeded in getting plenty of forage by sending out organized foraging parties in charge of a Commissioned Officer. It was then a dangerous business for the Country was at all times full of Guerrillas. Our foragers were often found in the woods with their throats cut from ear to ear. The Enemy killed all of our men that they caught foraging. You had better believe *this childe kept close to the road*. I thought it best to live on Government Rations than to run the risk of being Captured. The destruction of property was not so great in North as it was in South Carolina. The soldiers had some vengeance against that State and it seemed impossible to hold them in Check. In fact I do not think the Commanding Generals cared much.

I believe I told you in my letter of the 13th about the burning of Columbia. It seems hard that people should be treated in that way but I cannot sympathize with them.

The 7th Iowa [is] in camp one mile East of town on the New Bern R.R. The Road is in good order; there is from Eight to ten trains pass up each day Loaded with Army Stores and about the same number pass down to New Bern, Loaded with Refugees and Discharged Soldiers.

We are now drawing full Rations which is the first time since leaving Savannah.

I must now close. Please Excuse bad writing & all mistakes. . . . Remember me to all my friends. Give my love to Mother & Mary. Write often & Believe me Ever Your Affectionate Husband

Frank Malcom

Goldsboro, April 6th 1865

My dear Wife,

I Received your kinde letter of the 20th & 21st of March last week and would have answered it immediately but was not able. I did not mention in my last letter to you that I was badly poisoned; thought at that time that it was not worthwhile to mention so small a thing, but since then I have concluded that it is no small matter to be poisoned. I have been sick with it for six days. This morning is the first time that I have had a pen in my fingers since the 2nd of the month.

My hands & face have both been badly swollen, was blind with it for one day & night; am much better now. My face is almost well but my hands are very sore and are yet badly swollen. Could not get anything

until yesterday to relieve me. Think now that I will be well in a few days. I hav no Idea how I got poisoned; presum I got it from the poison Ivy that grows in the swamps in this country. Several others in the Regiment hav the same Disease, among [them] Geo Rollett,⁸¹ but none hav had it as bad as I. Otherwise my health is good and I think in a few days time I will be able to inform you of my entire recovery.

Do wish I could see you once more. The time is beginning to pass slowly, but their is no alternative. The only consolation that I have is the belief that the war will not last my time out. It is reported in camp that we will start on another Campaign the 10th of this month. I do not think we will start so soon as that but the Army will probably be in motion by the 15th and then our watchword will be "on to Richmond."

Remember me to all our friends. Give my love to your Mother & Mary. Be sure to write often; giv me all the news & Believe me as Ever your Affectionate Husband

Frank Malcom

Near Goldsboro N.C., April 8th 1865

My dear Wife,

I wrote you day before yesterday in which I believe I gave you all the news that is afloat in this section of the country. A few hours after mailing the letter to you we Recd. the news of the fall of Richmond.⁸² Is not that glorious news? The soldiers are having a good time over it, and I suppose our friends in the north are as well pleased over it as we are. Recd. Genl. Grants official Dispatch Last night & it will be Read on Dress Parade this evening. Nearly everything looks encouraging & it is to be hoped the war is hastening to an end.

General Shermans army will probably be on the move again in the course of a week. Our future destination is not known, but he will doubtless move on to Genl. Lee, who is now massing his forces near Danville.⁸³

⁸¹ George Rollett of Fort Madison suffered wounds at Corinth, Miss., and Dallas, Ga., before his promotion to first sergeant in Nov., 1864.

⁸² Following the battle of Five Forks on Apr. 1, Lee abandoned the Richmond defenses, and the city was occupied by Federals on the morning of Apr. 3.

⁸³ At that time Lee's army was moving southwestward to Danville, Va., where he hoped to rendezvous with Johnston's forces retreating northward from Raleigh. Pres. Jefferson Davis, his cabinet and several government bureaus were already at the temporary capital. See A. J. Hanna, *Flight into Oblivion* (New York, 1938), 15-21.

There is work to be done and that quickly, and when there is Campaigning to be done, *Uncle Billy* is always on hand.⁸⁴ His army is now in good condition, having had two weeks rest & drawn a good supply of clothing.

I was not much surprised at what you wrote about Col. Harper.⁸⁵ You know that I never thought him an honest man. I wish the Authorities would confiscate all the money and then *Dishonorably* dismiss him from the service, which I think will be the result of a proper Investigation.

I will write you again before we start if I have time. You must be sure to write often. Direct as before to your affectionate husband

Frank Malcom

Morrisville N.C., April 19th 1865

My dear Wife,

Was compelled to ride in an ambulance for three days during our March from Goldsboro to this place; was too weak to walk. Am now as strong and feel as well as ever.

We are all feeling good over the glorious news. Our Army moved from Goldsboro on the 10th and on the afternoon of the 12th we Recd. the news of *Lees Surrender*.⁸⁶ On the 13th Raleigh was captured and on the forenoon of the 14th our corps (the 15th) marched through the city in *Grand Review*.⁸⁷ By the way, Raleigh is one of the nicest places that I ever saw. It is not so large as Columbia was, but it is a much handsomer place.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ Gen. Sherman acquired a variety of nicknames from both sides during the war. His men generally called him "Uncle Billy" and "Cump," the latter an abbreviation of his middle name, Tecumseh.

⁸⁵ Malcom apparently was referring to James P. Harper of Fort Madison. Appointed captain of Co. D in 1861, Harper had become lieutenant colonel of the 1st Tennessee Colored Artillery in 1863.

⁸⁶ Cut off from Danville by the rapid encirclement of Maj. Gen. Philip H. Sheridan's forces, Lee surrendered the remnants of his army to Grant at Appomattox on Apr. 9.

⁸⁷ Several reviews were staged in Raleigh — and were not always marked by dignified formality. A colonel in the XV Corps turned a bright crimson when, just as he rode past Gen. Sherman and presented a stiff salute, his horse "did some of the finest kicking that ever was seen." Barrett, *Sherman's March*, 255.

⁸⁸ Malcom was not alone in his praise of Raleigh. Another Federal wrote: "Perhaps there is no town of the same population in the South that affords so many evidences of wealth, elegance and social refinement. . . . Beautiful Raleigh!" George W. Pepper, *Personal Recollections of Sherman's Campaign in Georgia and the Carolinas* (Zanesville, Ohio, 1866), 388.

On the morning of the 15th our Division resumed their march to this place; a distance of twenty miles.

On the 16th & 17th Genl. Sherman and Genl. Jo. Johns[t]on were in consultation in Regard to the surrender of Johnsons Army, which is about fifteen miles north west of this place.⁸⁹ Yesterday, the 18th, the Consultation was renewed and Last night at 9 Oclock we Recd. the news that Johnson had surrendered and that Jeff Davis had also surrendered the whole of the Confederacy. This we hope is true but it yet lacks confirmation, but there is no doubt but Johnsons Army, which embraces Georgia, South & North Carolina, has been surrendered to Sherman. On what terms we do not know. This is glorious news for us poor, tired & foot sore Soldiers.

Really it begins now to look like we would once more see the faces of the loved ones at home — and yet while we rejoice over our national victories we cannot but feel sad when we think of the death of our beloved President and that too by the hand of an assassin.⁹⁰ We Recd. the Sad news on the afternoon of the 17th while Genl. Sherman & Johnson were arranging terms of peace. I cannot describe to you the change that came over us all. We did not then care whether Johnson give up or not, but I assure you it is a good thing for this Country that he did, for if Shermans Army had been compelled to follow him through this country their line of march would have been marked for years to come by the destruction of everything that they came in contact with.

I must now close; will write you again in a few days. Remember me to all. I now hope that I will return home to you before the summer ends. Please write often to Your Affectionate Husband

Frank Malcom

Near Raleigh N.C., April 23rd 1865

Dear wife,

I have Glorious news for you this morning, but I suppose you have heard it all before this time. I wrote you from Morrisville on the 19th in

⁸⁹ Johnston initiated the preliminaries of surrender with a letter to Sherman on Apr. 14. The two commanders then began discussions at a farmhouse near Durham three days later. See Sherman, *Memoirs*, 2:346-47; *Official Records*, Vol. XLVII, Part III, 234.

⁹⁰ On the evening of Apr. 14, while attending a comedy at Washington's Ford Theater, Lincoln was mortally wounded by a fanatic Southerner and frustrated actor, John Wilkes Booth.

which I stated that Genl. "Joe" Johns[t]on had surrendered his Army to Genl. Sherman and that it was reported that Davis had Given up the Confederacy, but at that time the report lacked confirmation. It is now known to be true and we have been Officially Informed that on the 19th inst. John C. Brackenridge, the Rebel "Sect. of War," surrendered the Southern Confederacy from the Atlantic to the Pacific to General W. T. Sherman.⁹¹ Johnsons Army was immediately paroled and the treaty of Peace sent to Washington for Rattification. All hostilities have ceased and the *paroled* rebel soldiers & our men now mingle with each other as if they had always been friends.

Our Division mooved back from Morrisville on the 21st. We are now in camp two miles north west of Raleigh. We have a nice camp and are all as happy as larks. Their is nothing official yet in regard to the mustering out of troops but it is Generaly believed by officers high in rank that this Army will be disbanded within two months time. I hope *my dear* that I will be able to spend the 4th of July with you.

I must now close. . . . You must excuse my bad writing this morning as I hav a very poor steel pen. Hoping that I will be with you in a very short time, I Remain as ever your affectionate Husband.

Frank Malcom

Near Raleigh N.C., April 25th 1865

My *dear* Wife,

I Received Your kinde letter of the 11th inst. last week and answered it immediately. At that time I thought I had quite a lot of good news but I finde now that I must take a part of it back. I mean the part in regard to my getting home by the fourth of July. Next, the terms of peace agreed upon by Genl. Sherman & the Rebel Authorities on the 18th hav not been Rattified by our new President & his cabinet, so we are to again Resume the *war path*.⁹² The 14th, 20th & 17th corps have moved out and our

⁹¹ Malcom's exhilaration was premature. Moreover, Maj. Gen. John C. Breckinridge, who had served for a time as Confederate Secretary of War, was called into the discussions strictly for legal counseling. Sherman took the credit for the writing of the surrender document. *Ibid.*, 243-44.

⁹² Sherman's initial terms of surrender, while fair enough for a man of Lincoln's humanity, were far too lenient for the Radical Republicans and their military spokesman, Secretary of War Stanton. The term were overruled in Washington; Sherman and Johnston resumed their discussions and reached an approved agreement of capitulation on Apr. 26.

Corps has orders to move tomorrow. Our destination is not known, but we will no doubt go to the front, and if we are going to try to Run down the Rebel leaders we in my opinion will have a summers job of it. I feel very much disappointed over the news but it will do no good to complain. Will do my best to live through it.

Was in hopes the war was over and that I could get Home soon. I am getting sick of the service and especialy the 7th Iowa *with our present commander*. He is a disgrace to the Regiment, is drunk more than half the time.⁹³

General U. S. Grant & General [George G.] Mead[e] are here. I had the pleasure of seeing the Lieutenant General today for the first time.

Love to all & Believe me Ever Your affectionate husband

Frank Malcom

Near Raleigh N.C., April 28th

My dear Wife,

You will see in the papers that I send you that Johnson has at last surrendered and that this Army will move again, The 23rd Army Corps will remain at & near this place to receive the Arms & parole Johnsons Army.

We have just Received Marching Orders. We move tommorrow at 9 A.M. and it is believed by all that we are going to Richmond [and] thence to Washington D.C. and unless something unusual turns up, will be sent from there to Iowa and mustered out.

This is a short letter but I must close. It is now quite late and I have some office work to do yet before I can retire.

Good night & Believe me ever Your Affectionate husband

Frank Malcom

Camp Near Washington D.C., May 25th '65

My dear Wife,

I wrote you on the 21st inst. when in camp near Alexandria Va. informing you of our arrival there. Presum you have seen accounts of the *Grand Review* in Washington on the 23rd & 24th insts. that will give you

⁹³ Malcom's condemnation of Col. Parrott runs quite in contrast to those of other members of the regiment. See *Annals of Iowa*, Third Series, 3:364-93 (Apr.-July, 1898).

a much better idea of the performance than I can give you this evening.⁹⁴ Hav not seen any of the papers myself but understand they all published very flattering accounts of it. Do hope they will give Shermans Army their *just dues*, but as their is such a disposition on the part of the Potomac Army to ridicule the Western Troops, I hav no Idea that they will hav justice done them.

We broke Camp on the 23rd and moved up near Washington & Bivouacked for the night. On the morning of the 24th at Daylight the Army was in motion as follows: 1st the 15th Corps; then the 17th, 20th & 14th. Crossed Long bridge, passed through the principle streets of the city & then down Pennsylvania Avinue past the Presidents Mansion, the Treasury Building & Capitol. I had the pleasure of seeing all the big men of the day. Did not hav time to visit the public buildings but entend to do so as soon as I can get a pass to visit the city.

Washington is a Beautiful place. It looks more like a Northern city than any that I hav seen since I left home. The Crowd was the largest that I ever saw at one time in my life. Do wish you could have been present. All *grog* shops were closed and evrything seemed to pass off to the satisfaction of all.

I am told by those who witnessed both reviews that Shermans Army marched better and was a much finer looking set of men than the Army of the Potomac. We had all of us Drawn new Clothing & fixed up a little, and I flatter myself that our sunburnt hands & faces did not make an *unfavorable comparison* with the white cot[ton] Gloves & pale faces of the Army of the James. The difference in the two armies is this: they have remained in camp & Lived well; we have marched, fought & gone Hungry, [and] Ended the war, and now they are not willing to admit that we are soldiers — call us Shermans Greasers, Slouch Hats, &c., & say they ended the war — *they* took Richmond — when evry sane man knows that if Sherman had not made his Campaign in the Carolinas that Richmond never would have fallen. It was *Sherman* and *Sheridan* that did the work, with Genl. Grant to Advise them.

We moved out from Review yesterday afternoon to our present Camp

⁹⁴ The Army of the Potomac passed in review through Washington on May 23; Sherman's army paraded down the streets on the following day. For a comparison of the appearance of the two, see U. S. Grant, *Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant* (2 vols., New York, 1885), 2:534-35.

three miles North West of the city, We will have when fixed up a very nice place. . . . I Hope it will not be long until their will be an order Issued sending us all Home. I believe yet that I will be home by the 4th of July.

It is now midnight & I must retire. Will write again soon. Love to all & Be sure to write often to Your Affectionate Husband

Frank Malcom

Camp near Louisville, Ky.

June 14th 1865

My dear Wife,

It is now reported in camp that we are going to St. Louis Mo. I do not believe the report *but hope it is true* for then I can get home without any trouble. We are all very anxious to get out of the Service. [We] feel that we hav done all that we agreed to do and now should be sent Home. Our dreams by night and our conversation by day revolve around that central pivot. We have been told by Generals and newspapers that we were on our Journey home. "The War Is Over." Our work is accomplished. We have borne toil and hardships and danger without murmuring whilst an armed foe remained, but now that peace is restored we wish to go back to Civil Life. We wish to enjoy some of the benefits of that peace which we have conquered. For my part I am for the first time since my Soldier life began beginning to get "home-sick," but trust this will not last long.

Remember me to all our friends, love to your Mother & Mary & Believe me as Ever Your Affectionate Husband

Frank Malcom

On July 12, 1865, Quartermaster Sergeant Frank Malcom was mustered out of military service at Louisville, Kentucky.