

Henry L. Sholts Collection Letters

Sholts Collection Letters

Guide to the Sergeant Henry L. Sholts Archival Collection, Company C, 38th Iowa Infantry
Residence: Fredericksburg, Chickasaw County. Nativity: New York. Enlisted Aug. 14, 1862, as First Corporal. Mustered Sept. 12, 1862. Promoted Fifth Sergeant Nov. 4, 1862; Second Sergeant Oct. 1, 1863 at Carrollton, La. Died of disease March 16, 1864, Brownsville, Texas. Buried in National Cemetery, Brownsville, Texas. In 1909 men buried at Brownsville were moved to the Alexandria National Cemetery at Pineville, La. Scholts (Sholts) Henry L. A collection of correspondence from October 1862 to January 1864.

DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

Repository

Civil War Museum, Resource Center Kenosha, Wisconsin

The original documents of the Henry L. Sholts Letters Collection can be found at the “Jack D. Michaels Resource Center” of the Civil War Museum in Kenosha, Wisconsin. Google, civilwarmuseum.org.

Language of Material

Material in English

Abstract

This collection consists of 27 documents, a majority of personal letters written to his wife and children. They were written from October 27, 1861 through February 2, 1864. Some of his final entries are transcribed from fragments found of his personal letters. Sergeant Sholts describes his life in camp and relationships with those with whom he served and his personal thoughts and reflections on the missing of his dear family and life at home.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Preferred Citation

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Provenance

Processing Information

Processed by Frederick J. (Rick) Holtz

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE:

COLLECTION LIST:

Doc. #1 of 27: A letter to his wife Martha and son Clinton, dated, October 27, 1861
from Camp Franklin, Dubuque, Iowa

Noteworthy: I am well and Lee is well and Lee will no doubt be promoted to second Lieutenant.
There is great commotion here about Colonel Brush who is not liked at all here.
We feel that Colonel Brush is not qualified for this position and many want his resignation. Governor Kirkwood has been here for three days trying to get the colonel settled and us mustered.
All of this waiting has many soldiers discouraged. Some are mad and some have even run away. But a large majority of them take it patiently and laugh it over.
I am not discouraged but satisfied and contented when I hear from my family often, but I want to be mustered in as soon as possible.
I received a letter from father yesterday and the folks are well. Bony Sholts has lost his oldest girl and the next one is not expected to live as they have the Typhus (Typhoid Fever).
Bony Marsh is sick with some disease and I heard that one of my cousins, George Golligan, in Michigan who was a Second Lieutenant was killed in the late battles.
Elijah Marsh will soon be discharged on account of wounds he received at Bull Run. Henry Marsh is sick in the hospital and Henry Eunis is dead. Our company is certainly the best in the regiment.
The measles still rage here and the hospital is full and there are lots sick in every barrack.
Yesterday we got our dress coats and they are very good.
I cannot tell anything about when we shall come home but in my next letter home, it may be possible that I can.
Martha, save what little gold you have as every dollar is worth \$1.50 easy now. It will be worth more when I get my pay. I should send \$225 to Wisconsin to pay taxes on our land.
The war can and must close by next March.
At the Battle of Pea Ridge (Arkansas) the rebels were badly beaten, and are all driven from Kentucky. The rebels surely want to go home

but the leaders fully knowing that they must suffer the punishment due to their crimes will push the war forward with all the power they can wield.

But war or no war, we must try to be content and happy as possible. It is wisdom to make the best of life.

I must go now and get Lee to come and write some in my letters. So I will close and may the Divine Blessings rest on my little family until I see them all again. Write often Martha and I will write the same. This from your affectionate husband.

H. L. Sholts

Lee has not time to write and I am going to town and must close.

Doc.#2 of 27: A letter to his wife Martha, dated November 23, 1862, from Camp Franklin, Dubuque, Iowa

Noteworthy: Dear Martha, It is a pleasure to write you, I am well.

We arrived at Dubuque yesterday at three o'clock P.M. and had a pleasant journey. Except it was lonesome on account of leaving the loved ones at home.

All the boys have seen our Degareaty type and they think I have a pretty woman. I know that better than they do. M. DB Hanan says that Sholts is the best man in the whole army.

The boys of my mess brought back a lot of Sweet Pie cakes, booked turkeys, chicken, and pigs.

Cain Legg is sick at Fredericksburg.

I have a nice overcoat and I cannot tell whether we shall stay here or not through the winter. It is impossible to tell at present.

The draft will come of this week in Dubuque, and I think we will make a fuss, but they had better quiet and probably they will.

The Supervisors of Chickasaw County have cut down the bounty of volunteers to one half, and the boys are very indignant to the course they have taken.

You will get six dollars per month for three months and then only three dollars. Still I think they have no right to swindle the soldiers in that way. I don't want you to feel uneasy about it.

I think of getting a protest and getting the names of all the Chickasaw County company members and having them sign it and send it to Newhampton to be published.

I shall write to Peter Case today to send all the money he can get and what he has got to you immediately

Lee is coming home and he will start in two or three days. He has a nice suit of linen clothes.

There is considerable war news. There will be a great battle at Fredericksburg, Virginia before this gets to you. There will also be a great battle at Vicksburg, Mississippi before many weeks. We hear the rebels are retreating all the time from North Carolina, so that state will be back in the Union in a month I believe.

David Darns youngest child is dead, dying two weeks ago.

A. H. Warren has cut down his sign. Cary now keeps tavern in the Julian house. Lockwood lives where Cary did and Peter Pitts lives in the house we did.

James Potter is at Benton Barracks and was taken prisoner at the Battle of Shiloh with the rest of the Iowa 12th Regiment. He is well except for having a bad cold.

If we should go south I think we will be in the same division he is in.

Warten Dyke and A.A. Brown have not come back as they are both sick.

Tell Wayland that Pa looks at his picture often and thinks of him and his little brother.

Kiss them for me Martha, and if we stay here Lee and I will come home again this winter if we can.

The war must close by the first of March I think.

Then Martha we will enjoy the God Given Right of living together again with nothing to molest our happiness!

Take good care of the children, and tell them Pa will come home again.

Give my love to Mother, Father, Susan Estoline, Willis, Helen, Marty, Wayland, Clinty and by all means Martha. I will write soon and I hope next time some good war news.

I have a poor pen and am in a hurry for the officers wanting me to come down to their quarters to sing.

Please write me often and tell me how you get along in every respect.

This from your affectionate husband forever! Ever for the Union and freedom to all!

H. L. Sholts

Kiss Martha, Wayland, and Clinty for me.

Noteworthy: Dear Affectionate Martha, After a long time I write you.
I received your welcome letter tonight and was glad to hear from my dear family.
Lee got back last night and I tell you I was glad to see him.
We had orders to march some time ago, but we are still in Camp Franklin. We will probably go very soon but who knows?
I have sent you all the papers that contain any news. The 21st Regiment was the one JV Carpenter was in (having been whipped) and loosing all their equipment, clothes and 5 men killed. I don't the names of the men who were killed.
The army of the west is all concentrating down the Mississippi River to form one grand army to attack Vicksburg, Mississippi, so there will be a hard fought. Then I think we shall probably go there.
I think if we are successful in the battle the war in the west is done.
I have written another sheet but dare not send it on account of the money.
Kiss our dear children. God Bless You All! Give my love to your mother and all the rest.
From your affectionate husband, H. L. Sholts
We will write again before we leave here.
The army on the Potomac is figuring but all on both sides are concentrating their forces in the Shenandoah Valley, the battle to come at Fredericksburg, Virginia will be the most bloody ever fought. Still the rebels may retreat and not risk a battle.
Burnside I believe is a good and able general and he has Siegle to back him.
I feel willing to go south fully believing that the God of battle will bring our armies victorious.
I look at my dear little family many times every day. Everyone of the boys say it is a beautiful picture!
I was paid \$13 dollars the other day and I will send you \$5 dollars in this letter and some more soon. I am going to save enough to buy some things that I may need and they will come home with me.
I have made \$6 today but I have to wait until next payday for it.
So I went to town with it and bought a watch for \$6 dollars and sold it to F. M. Appleberg for \$12.
A.A. Brown and A. B. Legge haven't come back yet. I expect they are at home sick. Two more of our company died and two more are very low, and they may not get well.

Most of the boys have allotted the most of their pay to their friends at home but it has to be sent to one man and he distributes it free of charge. I am glad you are all right. I knew you would be. Tell Wayland when you write again, to write some to his Pa. Tell him to be good to little brother and Pa will bring a nice horse for each of them. When you write again direct your letters to H. L. Sholts, Dubuque, Iowa, in care of Captain Tuikham, Co. 38th Iowa Regiment. Now Martha don't worry about me as I feel as well as any man in the regiment. That I hope in God's name I may be spared until I return never again to separate or until death shall disunite us!

H.L. Sholts

Doc.# 4 of 27: A letter to his wife Martha, dated, December 14, 1862, from camp.

Noteworthy: Dear Martha, I am very well. We are going to start tomorrow for Cairo, Illinois. All is bustle and hurry in camp. Everything is being packed up. I will send you two more papers containing a part of the battle at Fredericksburg, Virginia. I think Burnside's forces will whip them bad. It is now just four months since I enlisted. I am not sorry we are going south but I do not expect as good times as we have had here,. Lee is well and feels well and there is a letter on the road for me from you but I will not expect it until we get to Cairo. We have a good many sick at present. I believe through the help of the Lord I shall be able to return to you and my dear children in the spring. Everything seems to work right. The Hand of the Lord is in the work and slavery must crumble to the earth and then we shall have peace. Now Martha, I shall write to you once a week. We may possibly see George I hope. It will take three days for us to go to Cairo then I will write again. I carry your and the children's likeness in my side pocket all the time so I can see you all very often. I do hope you will have no trouble where you are. When you do go to Wisconsin (and I want you to go) take great care while on the cars especially in getting on and off. Put your money where you won't get robbed.

Doc. #5 of 27: A letter to his wife Martha, from Camp in Brownsville, Texas, dated, January 6, 1863.

Noteworthy: My Dear Martha, It is with pleasure that I again write to you. I am quite well but considerably weak. Yet I still have a good appetite. I hope and believe now that through the kind aid of the Almighty God, I shall be restored to perfect health again. I received two letters from you yesterday (one on the 5th and the other on the 13th of December). Oh how glad I was to hear from you. But it does seem to me to take a very long time for letters to go and return, but we have had many hard storms on the Gulf since we came across. That hinders the mail going or coming here as boats cannot land in times of rough seas. I hope we can get back into America sometime next spring that we can get mail more often. It is extremely monotonous and dull to hear nothing either from home or anywhere else! We were paid two months pay on the 30th of December. That paid us up to the last day of October and on the 31st of December we mustered for two months more pay. I received \$43 (\$34 dollars monthly pay and \$9 dollars on my clothing account). I have been lucky that my clothes have done pretty well for I have plenty of good clothes yet and a brand new overcoat which I will send home in the spring. If I can get a chance, I have made some money since I came here and am able to Express to you at this time \$50 dollars. I shall put it in the Express office tomorrow but cannot tell you when it may start for you. You must do what you think best with the money. Be sure to keep enough for your own use. I do not expect to get any more pay before April or May. I have kept back twenty dollars for my own use and eating now costs me very high (butter is 75 cents per pound). Martha, please send me some postage stamps for I am nearly out. I have now sent you \$252 dollars besides what I sent from Dubuque. The government owes me now \$34 dollars more, which if I had it now I would send it. The last \$50 dollars will go to Madison just as \$72 dollars did from New Orleans by the Adams Express Company. The weather has been very cold here since Christmas and it is freezing today. The cold winds off the mountains chills everything here. Sometimes the weather changes from very hot to very cold in one moment of time. I love to have it cold but I don't like the piercing winds that attend it. The change is to very sudden for our health.

Kiss dear Wayland and Clinton for me. Give my entire love, respect,
and regards to all inquiring friends.

H. L. Sholts

May the Lord Bless the people in Rutland and you my dear family
with a double Blessing.

Martha, be patient and kind as you ever are and be not discouraged.
I will get back all right. Yet I believe so far the Lord has protected
me through many trials and afflictions and He is still willing and ready
for which I am truly grateful.

Lee is well and I will write again soon. God Bless You.

Doc. #6 of 27: A letter to his wife Martha, dated, February 4, 1863, near New Madrid,
Missouri.

Noteworthy: Dear Martha, I have just received your welcome letter of the 28th!
Oh how glad to hear from home this often! I received yours of the
25th. Your letters appear to come straight through.
Dan will no doubt here of another disaster of the 78th. Last night two
gunboats from Columbus came down here from the 75th Iowa Regiment
to reinforce us here at Island No. 10. It was reported that the rebels
had attacked us and also a force at NC 10, so the gunboats came down
shelling the shores. This morning all is quiet on the Potomac
If you hear of any such news do not worry until you know something
about it.
Our regiment is in good condition and improving in health.
Snow and Keith are still in the hospital but doing well. We have an
excellent hospital which is warm and comfortable. There is plenty to
eat and good nurses. H. Baker is our company and he is a good one.
R. W. Heider is not very well while Brewer and Hill have gotten well.
Aim King has got the mumps but is better.
I will write again Sunday. Write often Martha and don't mind what a
foolish Sweed may say. You and she are very different persons. You know
something, she the reverse. I can read your writing faster. Please excuse
the bad writing.
Kiss our little boys and May the Lord Bless you all. Give my respects
to mother Brinton. My love Martha, from you affectionate husband
and companion.

H. L. Sholts

Doc. #7 of 27: A letter to his wife Martha, dated, February 22, 1863, New Madrid, Missouri.

Noteworthy: Dear Martha, it is with pleasure I write to you. I received your letter of the 15th last evening. The reason the steamer "Ruth" did not land was the wind blew hard as she was laden heavily with government stores. When the mail steamer comes it blows the whistle four times day or night, and when I hear it, I always hope I shall have a letter from you. The mail is then brought into camp and taken to the adjutant's office and distributed there to the different companies.. Then the Captain or an orderly or somebody different will bring all the letters of his to company tents and will read the names. It is breathless excitement! Except as one's particular name is called, then the silence and then that is broken by "Here, here, give it to me!" I am as full as eager as any! But some poor fellows wait and wait until all the names are read. They turn away in silence thinking perhaps they will be one of the "lucky ones" next time!

I believe I get as many as any now in the regiment and the letters are all from my dear little Bub of whom I shall ever be fond!

My health is good. C. P. Snow has got back from the hospital so my mess (who I eat with) are all together again.

Our weather continues to be very changeable. On Friday it was warm and pleasant as summer while today Sunday, it is quite cold.

The river is rising very fast, a good indication for work below.

The gunboat, "Indianola" has run the rebel blockade at Vicksburg making it the second one that has passed the guns of that city.

The cut off canal is about completed and then our shipping can go down the Mississippi River in safety

"The Queen of the West" runs the blockade and is doing valuable service below Vicksburg.

It will be some time yet before the attack is made on Vicksburg.

I am glad to see the bill passed the Senate emancipating the slaves in Missouri. I hope it will pass the House and become a law. Then Maryland and West Virginia will follow for sure.

The reason the rebel Democrats of the north are agitated at present is they see now that their fathers (The Devil) government of Jeff Davis is going to be blotted out of existence, and they cry "Peace, Peace". But the only peace they want is national bondage and with it slavery as a national law! They, the rebs want to fight until they exterminate the whole race!

After we whip the south and get home, then it will be time to attend to those poor cowardly miserable insignificant Tories at the north.

The language of these northern Tories is encouraging the south. I will

venture to say that nine out of every ten soldiers will bring a revolver home with him to shoot Tories with. People even here do not hurrah for Jeff Davis or any thing of the the kind.

If I can feel and know that you and the children are well, have enough to eat and drink and more, and are well, then I am contented even in the army.

I want to see the rebellion put down right so it will fall on its knees and beg for mercy. This government must be preserved even if we have to sacrifice the lives of every rebel, let it come!

The rebel army have at last come to the stage of want. They are freezing to death and in want of clothes. Salt is a \$1 dollar per pound and other things in proportion. Their supplies are now cut off and they must yield to save their army from annihilation. Still the democratic process in the north cries in loud tones to give them six months armistice and we shall have peace and give peace on any terms.

May God never grant the day come when I shall be a traitor to my country.

No, I would sooner serve my 3 years and enlist for 3 more.

Had the traitors north kept their mouths shut, the war would have been ended by this time and we could all now come home.

Martha you must do the best you can and be as contented as you can.

Write as often as you can and I will write often to you and come home as quick as I can! And then Oh how I will kiss you bub (endearment) and embrace for the longer I am away, the more I love and esteem you! For I have known you from a child and know you but to love you.

You had better calculate and go to Wisconsin in the spring and if I can I will go with you. I hope I can

Tell Wayland pa will bring him a gun to shoot a rebel with. Martha

I think of you many times every day and of my children likewise.

May the Lord Bless and Preserve all until I get home. I still believe by the help of God I shall come out of this war and spend the remainder of my life with my happy little family.

Accept my love Martha and give my respects to mother.

Kiss Wayland and Clinton for pa.

H. L. Sholts

Noteworthy: Dear Martha, I again seat myself to write to the loved ones at home. Lee has just come into my tent to write and he and I are now at it. I wrote a letter last Sunday (yesterday) in that I said I should send some money in a week or ten days. But I have concluded to send it by express with Captain Miller.

I sent \$50 dollars to you in care of Joseph Hobson, the County Clerk of Fayette County. He will receive the whole amount for Company G and fifty dollars for Mrs. H. L. Sholts. Lee sends \$50 dollars to his father and \$50 dollars to Susan. It will probably be 10 or 12 days before it gets there. That will be somewhere between the 25th and the 30th of the month.

I hope and expect the Cases will pay their notes right along with Morse. With the rest of those small accounts you will have plenty of funds for the present and then bub keep it close.

When you start for Wisconsin make a small pocket in your under clothes and put into it all your money (except enough to pay your expenses on the trip). And sew it up as you might drop it out of your pocket or someone might try to rob you. Well no more on that subject.

All the boys that you know are well. We have only two sick men in the company and they are not much sick. The health of the regiment was never so good as it is at present.

I do hope you will have a pleasant trip on the road and a happy time when you get there. When you arrive I will make arrangements to have my allotted pay forwarded to Rutland, Wisconsin.

Oh make sure you give the Post Master at West Union instructions in writing to forward all of your mail to Rutland (Dane County), Wisconsin.

Oh how glad I would be to see you, Wayland, and Clinty tonight, but as I cannot and knowing I am in the service of our beloved country to put down traitors, I feel I am doing a great and good work and may God Bless my good intentions. May He graciously Protect and Preserve my dear family and spare me to to return safe to you all. I do firmly believe that I shall finally return to you dear Martha! And then oh may we rear up our children aright!

I don't think we will leave from here for a couple of weeks. We expect the 21st and 22nd Iowa Regiments here soon. Carpenter is in the 21st.

I will write again in two or three days. And I shall look for your latest letters tomorrow.

God Bless You Bub, H. L. Sholts

Doc. #9 of 27: A letter to his wife Martha, dated, March 22, 1863, from New Madrid, Missouri

Noteworthy: My Dear Martha, I again attempt to write a few lines to you. I have written three times since I have received any from you. Lee has gone to town after the mail, and it may be that he will bring me a letter from my dear companion.

I am lonesome when I do not hear from you for a long time. The last one I got was dated the 10th of the present month. So you see it has been a long time since I heard from you.

In my last I stated that I thought we would go south from here, but now I guess there is no danger of going south for a long time. The 23 Regiment left yesterday and today for Memphis, Tennessee. The 21st and 22nd Iowa Regiments went by here last Thursday night. Yesterday the 1st Nebraska Regiment and three gun boats were all bound for the south, so the 38th Regiment is alone again.

The government has made this a military post and we are here to defend it. We have lots of things here (150 mules, 20 or 30 horses, six siege guns), and the government has sent us a very pretty battery of six field pieces. On the whole we have guns you cannot test and splendid lot of ammunition.

I tell you I hated to see the Iowa boys go off, although they were not so clean and neat as the 38th Regiment. We are blessed of Heaven for we have been lucky. Although Company "C" has had to lay in the mud several days and nights. We now have plenty to eat and drink.

There has been a good state of feelings in the regiment among men and officers with the exception of a very few fanatics who have chosen to identify themselves with Fayette County heaping abuse on each other. This does not affect me in the least as I am on the best of terms with all. I suffice you must by now have gotten some of my letters and in them I told you about my sending \$50 dollars to you.

The war news is still very encouraging at present.

Newton folks are well and I got a letter from mother and father. All are well,

I read Wayland's sheep has a buck which pa says he will take and give in this place, there off a ewe lamb to Clinton if I say so. I think it would be best to do so ma says, and she will have the fleece of Wayland's sheep kept. And when you get there she will help you spin it. She has made lots of cloth for their own use. Oh Bub I do wish you and the children were there today. God Grant you a safe and pleasant journey and a happy time there. That I may be so miserably happy as to meet you and my children

at my father's house, no more to part until death shall call some one of us to heaven above. Where I hope through the Atoning Blood of Jesus we may all finally rest.

Martha I am sorry to tell you that Benedict is dead. He died the 15th of February at Helena while on board a boat that was to bring him to St. Louis. Tomorrow I shall write a letter to my parents. I am afraid you are sick Bub as I don't get any letters from you. Oh, it does cheer me up to get a letter from home! I am perfectly happy although I am far from those that are near and dear to me.

It is the Sabbath evening and I have attended divine services today.

I have no place to write as Lyman is using the desk. When you get this put it in the fire.

Write often dear Martha. God Bless you and tell me all that is going on.

Kiss my babes often and tell them of pa so they won't forgive me.

May the Lord Bless. Give my respects to mother and all my love to yourself Martha. Write often and tell me when you expect to go to Wisconsin.

H.L. Sholts

Doc.#10 of 27: A letter to his wife Martha, dated, March 24, 1863, (location not mentioned)

Noteworthy: My dear Martha, I just received two very kind and affectionate letters from you. Oh I was glad to hear from you dear bub and that you as well the good little boys are the same.

I had begun to get quite lonesome but now I am OK for I have heard from the ones dear to my heart.

I hope Charleston is taken and we will soon be triumphantly marching in towards Vicksburg, Mississippi. Richmond must fall in a few days. The rebels are discouraged all over the south. I tell you bub the sympathizers here look gloomy and sad.

It is reported that Old Price is coming back into Missouri, and I should not be surprised if he did. For the whole rebel army is almost reduced to starvation on the east side of the Mississippi River, and Price can get lots of plunder if he can get into this part of Missouri.

You must not be surprised if you hear of a rebel raid into Kentucky as Bragg is moving in the direction of Lexington.

Savannah is blockaded and will be taken by storm or bombardment in a short time I think. Mobile, Alabama is under siege of ironclads and Charleston, South Carolina's harbor is under control of the iron Monitors. May God graciously grant that the old flag (be blessed in sign of our nationality) and may soon wave over the ramparts of Forts Sumter and Moultrie.

I hope the war will end by the first of June and I hope to spend the 4th of July with you dear Martha and my children at my father's house in old Wisconsin.

If the war lasts for years, God grant that my life be spared to the end of the war and to return to thy bosom, I love my wife and children. I love my brothers and sister. I love all my friends and above all I love the Savior of all mankind, and next to Him dear Martha, I love you. I am proud that I was born on American soil and that my wife and children are also Americans. And that I have an undisputed right to help fight the battles of my country and am sworn to support her constitution and her laws.

May I ever be true to all her rightful institutions and God grant that we may early learn our children to love their native land.

But it pains me to think that armed traitors in the south are trying to overthrow the best government that was ever instituted on earth by openly violating every law both human and divine.

I cannot express my feelings when I realize how the soldiers in the Union Army have left their homes, wives, fathers, mothers, sisters, and brothers (all that are near and dear to them to endure the hardships of camp life). The fatigues of long hard marches in a sterile country, the many chances of death on the battlefield, the maladies and diseases that send many to their long homes while thousands at home sneer at these terrible sufferings, God will certainly punish such a people.

I look forward to the rejoicing when this war will finally close and when our soldiers do get home.

Nothing arouses the feeling of anger in a soldier's breast more quickly than the fangs of copperheads that have kept this war going. I think as you that the conscription law will make them squirm as it will bring them into the field.

The health of our regiment is now good and all the other regiments have gone. The 38th is alone in our glory and I think we will stay here.

The rebels know if they try the 38th, they have men to contend against three thousand rebels, and they cannot take us for we have plenty of rifled cannon.

You had not better start for Wisconsin until you get the \$50 dollars I sent you. I should think you would get the \$20 dollars I allotted to you. If Case don't pay his note to soon, I will write to Merriam to sue him.

Also the same with Morse as they must pay up soon.

When you get to Wisconsin, I will tell you what to do with some of the money. Kiss my children Bub. Accept my love and well wishes and when you get home I can make you squeal like a mink. Oh how

I wish I could slip into bed with you tonight. And I know you would

hug up tight as a mink. But never mind, I will be home just as soon as possibly. Can you know I love you dear Martha?
I love my dear children too and my God Bless you all, and may he kindly watch over you as he has done so far.
I have nothing to fear, Lee is well and he and I will be on guard duty tomorrow. I will write you again next Sunday.

H. L. Sholts

Doc. #11 of 27: A letter to his wife Martha, dated, April 13, 1863, New Madrid, Missouri

Noteworthy: My dear Martha, I have just returned from scouting and I am all right. I hope that you and the little children are as well too. I received 3 letters from you last night and when I got back oh how glad I was to hear from you.

I hope and pray that my dear little Clinty boy may out grow the diarrhea. I know you are a kind and loving mother and a lovely wife and you will do all you can for him.

When I see other men's wives here in the regiment, I almost feel sad to think I cannot see mine. But never mind Martha, I shall be home when the war ends and then we will spend the remainder of our lives in the society of each other and our family.

Tell Wayland that pa would like to eat some of his boiled eggs. Tell him to be a good boy.

Kiss my boy. He was two years old last Friday. Oh how it would be to see him, Wayland, and especially my little girl.

Still I know better than to be homesick. I am as contented as possible. Accept my love dear bub and give my respects to mother.

H. L. Sholts

Well bub I will give you a short description of our expedition. We started out last Tuesday the 7th of April with 50 men. Most of us started on a boat at 9 o'clock in the morning. We took one wagon drawn by six mules to carry provisions. After we got below Point Pleasant, we began to get horses, mules, and saddles. We headed for a swamp and by nightfall, we stopped at three different houses (all secesh). We stayed all night and the women cooked for us.

By the next morning we broke through the swamp and camp upon a place called Gayoso or Pemiskote, Missouri which by the way is a miserable dilapidated place of about 20 houses built on a narrow strip of land about 1/4th of a mile from the Mississippi River with swamps all around it. One mile from this place is Lincoln Island. It is so called

because the people on it are Union. Beyond this we found it impassable to proceed farther were obliged to leave part of our force for a guard to our baggage and provisions. So we left half of the men and rest saddled up the horses and mules. We strapped our blankets and overcoats onto the saddles and swung on our guns in double quick time. We were told to fix our ammunition when we had to swim so it would stay dry. The young horse I was on swam like a fish though I had such a load on him that he sunk all under but his head and neck. Then we traveled on the ground about a mile and reached a Cyprus swamp. Occasionally we came upon a house of the meanest style where human beings lived (I mean stayed). The men, women, and children we saw were sunken eyed, dirty and ragged (almost indescribable). They trembled and cried when they see us coming. We treated them all very kindly at which they manifested surprise. As we went into one house the woman said, "Gentlemen, take everything I have got but don't hurt me and my children." At another house after we got in we heard a little boy of ten or twelve say, "Mam, they are not Yankees, they are men." I do not think one in ten of them can read or write.. Well through the day we took several guns and broke them to pieces as we could not carry them. One night we came to a house where there was a man suspected of being a guerrilla and as we approached we all put the horse through the best we could and before he was aware, we surrounded the house and took him. He was badly scared for as we came up to his dooryard, our horse jumped his fence and some knocked the rails in every direction. He had his gun hid out by the side of a log and it was loaded. When we told him he must go with us his wife and children began to cry piteously. Oh bub I felt for the children. I know they were not to blame and I thought of my children. This family had not enough to eat for one day but we took the man. We could not find out if he was a guerillas and the next day we let him go.

Doc. #12 of 27: A letter to his wife Martha, dated, May 9, 1863, New Madrid, Missouri

Noteworthy: Dear Martha, I just received your kind and affectionate letter of the 3rd. It was carried by here and up through Memphis. I expect to get another today or tomorrow.
How glad I feel that you got to Wisconsin. I am sorry that my dear

mother is sick but I do know you feel for her and you know how to take care of her or help her when you can. Yes Martha, she is a good mother. She always was to me and I know she will be to you.

I think you as fortunate in coming at the time Mr. Ecker came. I saw him and thanked him for his kindness. He gave me the sugar for which I thank you.

I am very thankful you are well and kindly received by my folks. I am pleased at the way my little children are treated. I shall always remember with gratitude the acts of kindness shown by anyone to my family.

Enclosed please find \$5 dollars for Wayland and next time I will send some to Clinton. But Mea must keep it and use it.

Yesterday I had my picture taken and today I send it to you. The sun shone brightly to make a good picture but I guess you will know it.

Martha, kiss my children and tell them often of me and they will remember me.

I am so sorry that Mr. Watermons child met with so sad an accident. Oh if it was ours how hard it would seem, but truly I can say, I am very thankful that our lives and health have been spared and I hope it may be the same in our future.

It will be a joyful time for us all when the war ends and I get home.

I am well and feel well.

I am waiting for news from Charleston. I think the war will end this summer.

Calvin says you are not like the war widows there for they are all "Copperheads".

I am so proud of you for your patriotism.

I tell you Martha we have a splendid regiment of about 900 men, all well drilled, well armed, well clothed, well equipped, well fed, and well used.

Good judges that been all through the armies say they seldom see so fine a lot of men or so nice a regiment. Colonel Hughes feels very proud of the 38th He was offered a Brigadier Generalship of the Missouri Militia but would not leave the old 38th.

Tell Calvin I will write to him very soon and give my respects to all. Tell Perry Phillips to get up and howl.

Lee sends his respects to you and a kiss to the children.

Martha, do you remember what occurred 5 years ago today?

I had the pleasure of calling you (Dear Martha) for the very first time. Since then we have seen good times and hard times but never has our affection for each other been for a moment broken and during

that period we have been presented with two beautiful and lovely boys! God has Blessed Us most of this time with health and the common necessities of life. Our comfort and happiness was uninterrupted until the roar of cannon told that our country was in danger of being overrun by armed mobs. Then Martha I left my home and family and all that was most dear to me to do what little I could to rescue my country from the dangers of this servile insurrection.

What the next 5 years may develop is hard to tell but I look forward with a hopeful heart to a government as sound as ever and every traitor subdued or silenced with universal Peace.

May the Lord Bless you Martha, Wayland, and Clinton.

Yours ever for the Union,

H.L. Sholts

Well you say what do you think of New Orleans? I will say that the buildings are generally good and clean and many of them cannot be beaten for elegance in the U.S. The streets are regular and straight but narrow. They are substantially paved with deep ditches on each side in which is running a stream of water. The streets are washed daily from the force pumps at almost every corner by a hose that dashes the water all over the pavement and everything is as clean as water can make it. It is certainly a beautiful and splendid city and the military authorities compel that everything be kept clean.

The inhabitants are a mixed multitude but mostly French, Spanish, and Dutch, while the lower part of the city is populated by Negroes, creoles, and mulattoes. There are many Yankees here and the northern people all profess to be for the Union but I am convinced there are thousands that sympathize with the rebellion, though they do not show it out much.

Restaurants, saloons, and eating houses are numerous on every street and corner. Churches of every denomination are found here and some are very nice. Yesterday was the Jews New Years Day and they were assembled in their synagogue. I passed by and heard them sing but did not go in being I was a gentile. Their synagogue is a splendid building with Hebrew inscriptions over the door. Some of them dress in old Hebrew style. It was very odd.

Streetcars run all over the city and for miles out. I intend to take one in a few days and see the beauties of that salt lake and bathe in it, and then I will give you a description of it. Ships and steamers arrive and depart for and from New York almost daily.

The war news we get is quiet but encouraging and I expect our division back in a few days or we will go to it. I will write again soon.

Lee is well and we are all getting better fast. Keep up good courage my dear girl and I shall finally get back to stay with you. Kiss my children.
May God Bless you all, affectionately,
H. L. Sholts

Doc.# 13 of 27: A letter to his wife Martha dated, May 17, 1863, from New Madrid, Missouri

Noteworthy: Dear Martha, It is a pleasure I set down to write this beautiful Sabbath morning. I am well and feel contented because I believe you and the children are well and satisfied.
Several of the boys got letters but I got none. But I guess I will get one next mail.
There are no war news of any account, just everything now seems to be wrapped in mystery and I do not know hardly what to think. I still hope on and hope ever that the war may close this season. I have written several times to you lately. I write twice each week but I get only one letter from you. I am anxious to hear from you now. It is now a little over nine months since I entered the service and I can truly thank God that I have had good health all the time and that family also have good health. I hope to hear that dear mother is well. Lee got a letter from Susan. All you folks were well when she wrote. A.A. Brown's wife moved back from Fredericksburg. Hannah Kidder, Chancy Stone and a whole lot of others were baptized last Sunday.
The spring is backward in Iowa up to the 10th and they had planted no corn.
A. H. Warren's wife has been quite sick for a long time.
C_____Keely is not expected to live. He had the measles at Camp Franklin and when he got to St. Louis he was worse.
Wortendyke is still at St. Louis. He gets no better and as soon as his descriptive roll gets there he will be discharged. He is a fine man.
Kerigsberg expects his wife here this week and then himself and wife will cook for our company officers. I would not want my wife to come to such a place to be a servant even if she could make a few dollars.
No Martha, I want you to live where there is society and where there are folks and female women.
This is an awful place for gambling . Though many officers and citizens do the same now, moral restraint is lacking. Here little boys and women

go to horse races, bet and get drunk almost as frequent as the men. Even Negroes attend the sports and take part in all that transport. Masters have to use their slaves well for they never know when slaves may run away. But if slavery was to be as it is here at this time, Negroes had better stay with their masters. The farmers in this vicinity are plowing corn and almost all are preformed by negro men and women. There are thousands of acres that lay out and cannot be cultivated on account of no fences or hands to work them. There are no schools here, no churches or nothing to moralize or Christianize the people. I have never seen but one minister of the gospel in the state and I believe that 99 out of 100 men drink whiskey, swear, gamble, run horses and do anything.

Oh how glad I am that my wife and family were born in the north amidst the glow of gospel light and free institutions where science and art are practiced and the press instead of tradition is the power of the people.

Time may make a great change in the south but certainly this generation must pass away before life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness can be realized _____. Three fourths of the people living here can neither read or write and their means of knowing any thing with their regard to the country or government are so small that I may say that they hardly know they live in America.

But no more of this, I hope you will write often and tell the rest to write some also. Kiss our children for me and tell them pa will not forget them.

I remain as ever your affectionate husband and friend, ever for the Union and right.

Doc. #14 of 27: A letter to his wife Martha, dated, May 24, 1863, from New Madrid, Missouri

Noteworthy: My dear Martha, I just received yours of the 20th and I hasten to reply. I am glad you are well and the children so well. It makes me happy and I am so contented to stay as long as the war lasts, although I ten thousand times prefer peace and home and the associations of my family and friends to staying in the army. I am well and my boys are well and all appear to be contented. The health of the regiment is good.

Lee is well and I got a line from George the other day. I have come in from a boat where I had a talk with a gentlemen just from Vicksburg. He says Grant is in the rear of the town about two miles from it. Haynes Bluff is evacuated and our mortar boats are shelling up batteries of the city. The gun boats are shelling the lower batteries.

He also says that the rebels can march in the rear of Grant's army

and force him to retreat, but this is his opinion. I believe Grant will take Vicksburg before long, this week at the farthest. If that Potomac army would only cross the Rhappahannock and engage Lee's army, it would be a great saving of life to western soldiers. For then the rebel army of the Potomac could not spare men to fight Rosecrans and Grant.

One great thing gained in the battle of Chancellorsville was that Stonewall Jackson was wounded and died, although he was wounded by his own men. I can say of him he has shown the most bravery of any General of the war. I regret he was on the wrong side being engaged in an unholy and cruel war against his country.

Well I have just been down to the river. The Memphis Bell landed and I got a Memphis paper. It says that General Sherman under Grant has taken Haynes Bluff with 8000 prisoners and that Grant is doing anything generally at Vicksburg. But we shall wait several days with anxiety to see the truth of the statements confirmed.

Bub, I will take your kind advice and be careful when I am out scouting. The colonel thinks that I am the most successful scout he knows.

While scouting near a swamp I learned that there were twenty guerillas close by me. I had but four men and I left two to guard the horses while the rest of us went into the swamp.

I would like to sing with you but glad you go to singing school.

I don't believe there is a lady in Rutland that can beat you singing.

I am glad our mail goes through so quick now.

I shall write again Wednesday or Thursday.

Tell Wayland and Clinty pa kisses their pictures very often and I have another one by the name of bub that I also kiss. That picture I sent you is not a good one. Tell Pa not to work too hard as it will bring on another one of those fits.

Accept my love for you and the children. This from your affectionate husband.

Henry L. Sholts

Doc. #15 of 27: A letter to his wife Martha, dated, May 27, 1863, from New Madrid, Missouri

Noteworthy: Dear Martha, I have just received your very kind and affectionate letter of the 22nd and as ever I am very glad to hear from you. I know Martha you can work but you are not very strong and now the hot weather is upon you. So be careful and do not over do. I was a little unwell with diarrhea and I went into the woods and got

some bark and roots and they cured me in two days, so now I am well and feel tip top.

All of my boys are very well and appear to be satisfied but some of their families are sick at home. The people in Fredericksburg have got the Scarlet Fever and Brown Snows and Hill's children are quite sick with it. Browns wife is still very sick. Mrs. Kingsberg arrived here this morning with her little girl.

Kingsberg and wife will now cook for the company officers. I am glad you are not here for I think this is no place for a woman. You are far better off where you are.

Lee is well. His is a fine fellow and sends his love to you and all the folks. He thinks when this war is over he will go to Wisconsin. The weather here is very warm now but today it looks like it will rain. I can stand the hot weather pretty well.

We have just had GLORIOUS NEWS from Vicksburg, and I suppose you have had the same. The news are not yet confirmed in that a boat has not been up here for three days but we expect one very soon. One thing is certain. Grant has whipped Pemberton and Joseph Johnson most beautifully. Our forces have taken Canton, Jackson, Black River Bridge, Haynes Bluff, Chickasaw Bluff and have gained the entire rear of Vicksburg. Reports from all quarters have it that Vicksburg itself has surrendered. I believe such is the fact and today or by tomorrow I expect to know such. We heard this glorious news while we were at Dress Parade and when we got through the colonel marched us up into close order and we gave three loud long Ernest and heartfelt CHEERS for General Grant. I said "thank God". I know our loss must be great. To those who have fallen, peace be to their ashes, and may my camp never forget that they laid down their lives for the great cause of humanity and for their love of country and their loved ones at home. Although now they sleep where no war or battle sound is heard, they live on earth for their deeds as truly as they live in heaven. While friends mourn their loss, may they not forget that they have died the most humble and glorious death that men can die. When I get the news as to all the movements and the fortifications I will write again.

Oh I got a letter from Peter Case this morning and he told me all about the money. It will be all right.

I will send you a small rose but it will be smashed when you get it. There are many kinds of roses here and they are in blossom each month. Give my respects to all the folks and accept my love for you and the children.

I remain as ever your affectionate husband and friend ever for the Union and the Constitution and enforcement of the law and peace on earth and good will to man.

H.L. Sholts

Doc. #16 of 27: A letter to his wife Martha, dated, June 7, 1863, from New Madrid, Missouri

Noteworthy: Dear Martha, In great haste I write to let you know we are going to start immediately. The 24th Missouri have come to relieve us and we are going south. I cannot tell where. But I think to Helena, Arkansas or Vicksburg, Mississippi. As soon as I get through and have a chance I will write again.

Although this is a very pleasant place, the 20th Iowa, 36th Indiana, and two other regiments including one from Wisconsin are here.

Lee is well.

I sent you \$35 dollars by Mrs. Kingsly to be mailed at Alton, Illinois. I hope you get it before you get this. That makes \$130 dollars I have sent since I came here.

Martha direct your letters just as you have to Cairo, Illinois. It will be some time before you get another.

I feel well and I do believe I shall come home all right. Oh I hope you have good health and that the children will keep well and healthy.

Tell grandmother Sholts I send my best respects hoping they live until I get to see them again.

My respects to my Father and Mother and all, my brothers and sisters. And accept my love dear Martha and Wayland and Clinton. Tell Wayland I guess he had better not enlist for a few days yet. But if he wants to, tell him to come down to the 38th Regiment.

Tell Wayland to take good care of his brother's sheep.

Accept my love dear Martha and children. I remain every true to you my family and country.

H.L. Sholts

Doc. #17 of 27: A letter to his wife Martha, dated, June 11, 1863, from Sherman's Landing, 15 miles up the Yazoo River.

Noteworthy: Dear Martha, we have docked at the shore at this place and are awaiting orders from General Grant. It is over 5 or 6 miles to Vicksburg and I think we will march across to Big Black River to meet up with Jo Johnson's forces.

They had a fight here yesterday and came out all right. Jo Johnson attacked Grant in the rear and Grant turned his forces upon him driving him across the Big Black. While Grants army was fighting Johnson, Pemberton tried to cut his way through Grant's lines. By a flank move, Grant's men cut a part of Pemberton's off and captured 8000 rebels. I saw part of them way up the river Things are encouraging. We can and will take the place. I expect this will a grand battle and one that will turn the whole face of the _____.

Oh Bub how desolate everyone looks in this country. You can hardly imagine what a terrible devastating thing this was up the Yazoo River.. A narrow, deep, crooked, and sluggish nasty stream and very unhealthy to use! Still we are obliged to use it and consequently many have diarrhea. Quite a number in our regiment are sick.

I am well and feel all right.

There are about 30 large steamers all loaded with soldiers that just arrived, and we expect 25,000 more tonight or tomorrow.

The 3rd and 9th Iowa are up to Haguez Bluff. I guess we shall go there before we get off the boat.

I believe George is all right. I have seen the list of killed and wounded in the 3rd and his name does not appear.

The bell is now ringing and we are off. I will write again in a few moments. I just had the pleasure of shaking hands with Lieutenant J. J. Tisdale who looks healthy and all right.

All the fleet is moving and we are going back down the Yazoo. I will stay until I find our destination.

It's five o'clock dear Martha and we have just landed at Young's Point just above Vicksburg. We are on the Louisiana shore. The mortar boats are shelling the city. I tell you bub they make the ground tremble and a colonel from the front says that the fortifications must give way and the city surrender in side of 3 days. Yesterday they took a dispatch from a carrier. It said, "Send reinforcements soon or we shall be obliged to surrender in four days." The dispatch was from Pemberton to the rebel authorities.

Martha, I cannot tell how long we shall stay here. I have over two dollars worth postage stamps and plenty of paper and envelopes so I am in good for writing. I shall write often and you must do the same.

Kiss my children and do not worry Martha about me. I'm well and shall write and send a letter at every chance.

May the Lord Bless you all and me too. This from your affectionate husband and friend.

H.L. Sholts

Doc. #18 of 27: A letter to his wife Martha, dated, July 13, 1863, from 38th Iowa Camp, Vicksburg, Mississippi

Noteworthy: Dear Martha, it is a pleasure I write you a letter at this time. I am getting along well and I have had the ague and fever. At any rate I am getting along so I can run up and down these miserable hills and feel like myself.

I wrote you a few days ago when George was here. George stayed all night with me.

I wrote in that letter that our boys had gone to Port Hudson. Well they started out and got the levee in the town, and the news came that Port Hudson was taken on. For the 8th the order was countermanded and the division was ordered up to Yazoo City. The next morning they were on the boats for that place. I should have gone with them but the captain thought I was hardly able. He wanted me to stay with the company. Now I have my hands full for they are all sick that are left but me.

For today I got Stile off to the town hospital and I think he will get well. He has been sick a long time and is very much emaciated. We've had glorious war news and of course you get the news long before I do. I will only say God Bless our army and navy, our country and our homes.

I do not expect to hear from you Martha for some time.

I hope and trust you are well and my little Wayland and Clinton are all right, and that you will keep well. That my brother John A. will get well is my hearts desire.

I will tell one thing that Hod Baldwin is a notorious coward as he has never even been in a skirmish. We could not get him out on the lines to fight and when the shells came in our camp, he always ran. He is good to me and thinks everything of me but I despise a coward.

Martha, I am contented and considerably happy for we have had good and encouraging news. I think it does seem the war cannot last long. I think it must close in a short time or all the soldiers in the rebel army will go home for their families are actually starving to death. Oh the wretchedness of the South!

Oh Bub, I just got three little silver rivets and they are very pretty. One of our soldiers made rings and I had him make us a nice one as he could. I gave him .75 cents for his work. Did you get the ring or not? If you did not get it never mind, let it go. When I get home I will give you a kiss in place of the ring.

Tell Wayland and Clinton to be good boys and I will give them a horse a piece when I come home. Give my respects to all my friend and especially to my brother John Sholts.

Well it is dark and I will close. God Bless the loved ones at home.

H. L. Sholts

Doc. #19 of 27: A letter to his wife Martha, dated, August 17, 1863, from New Orleans, Louisiana

Noteworthy: My dear Martha, I take the present opportunity to write you. I write this by candle light. I am well and feel pretty well for I am a little fatigued. I've had to work pretty hard on account of having so many men and so few well ones.

Well I go back to Ft. Hudson.

On the 14th I received three letters from Calvin and John. Give them my thanks and tell them I will write them when I have time.

I also received 8 glorious and lovely patriotic letters from my little Martha. Oh how good they did do me!

I must confess that you possess more ability in writing than I ever was aware of.

Give my respects to my folks and tell them I am for the Constitution and enforcements of the law.

Buy all you want to make you and the children comfortable but enough of each and everything to last some time thus saving time, trouble and money.

Now Martha in buying things remember there is a good difference buying things cash down and trusting ad infinatam and that prices must be arranged according so when you want groceries, go where you can get them cheapest and best.

Be sure to keep a lock on your door and never leave the house accessible to anyone no matter who.

Keep what money you have locked or otherwise properly taken care of.

Avoid being away from home at nights and I advise you to take in no borders unless it be a little girl.

I hope you had a glorious time at Spauldings bub.

With a painful heart I must announce that our good and noble Captain Henry Tinkham is dead. He died at Port Hudson on the morning of August 14th. We have lost the head of our regiment.

Our division is ordered to Mobile and I cannot tell how soon we will go. I hope not for a few days as we are in the most beautiful camp I ever saw. Here we can get what we want.

The health of regiment is improving very slowly but fall is approaching and it soon will be cooler. The air is not half as hot here as it was in

Vicksburg.

May God Bless you my dear friend and companion. Be not discouraged for I am shall not for I am through it and return to my once happy and contented little family. Kiss Wayland and Clinton for me,

Henry L.

Doc.#20 of 27: A letter to his dear wife Martha, dated, August 23, 1863, from New Orleans

Noteworthy: My dear Martha, Today is the first time I have had a chance to reply to your very kind and cheering letter of the 7th and 8th. I am very glad to hear from you that you are well. I am quite well and in good spirits. We have but a few men fit for duty. Both of our lieutenants are sick and Orderly Barton is not well. I am therefore acting as Orderly Sargent and most of the care of the company falls upon me of course. Now you see why I cannot get time to write my dear family. I will try my best to write twice a week. Our division is now under marching orders and will no doubt go to Mobile before long. There are not over fifty men really fit to march now as we loose some everyday from disease they contracted at Vicksburg. Accept my thanks for the nice flowers bub. May they bloom in fragrance and beauty. Yes Vicksburg cost us valuable lives and the debt is not yet paid. Some more must die that got sick there but I think now that almost all that are here will get well. Lee is pretty well but not as strong and robust as he was. I think James Boswell is not very well. Don Nichols is unwell with diarrhea. All of the Fredericksburg men are sick but none dangerous. R.W. Kiedder was left at Vicksburg in the hospital and this morning we got a report he was dead. The decimation of our regiment is not far from 200 men. We have 31 from our company now in the hospital and more that aught to be there. Still I think if most of them can stay here four weeks, most will be well or nearly well. I am contented and feel quite happy when I can hear from home often and that my little family is well. Oh I have ten thousand reasons to be thankful for the Mercies and Blessings the Lord has conferred on us all the days of our lives, especially for His Kind Care and Protection during the past year. I look forward to Eternal Life where there is no war nor sorrow or parting of friends but an Eternity of Felicity. To this I hope with my family to come.

Martha, keep up courage and do not get disheartened. Try to do right as I believe you do.

I am just now informed that on account of poor health our regiment will not go with the division to Mobile. I hope for the good of the regiment that we will not go for a month.

Colonel Hudnott died last night. I guess you remember him. He used to come up to Bogarts.

Do not feel despondent Martha for I shall try to do the best I can.

We got two months pay last week and I shall send you some money to Stoughton or Madison.

Kiss my children for me (Pa will not forget any of you). Give my regards to all friends. This is affectionately from your H L ever true to his country and his God.

H. L.. Sholts

Doc. # 21 of 27: A letter to his dear wife Martha, dated, August 26th-27th, 1863, from New Orleans, Louisiana

Noteworthy: My dear Martha, at this moment I received your kind and affectionate letter of the 9th and 10th.
I do not feel very unwell today for my medicine is just working the bilious matter of Vicksburg loose and I vomit a good deal. I feel it will all be for the best in two or three days for I am going "to take a regular cleaning out" as the boys say. Most of my friends here are plenty sick too. Our sick boys up here at Carrollton have been moved to the U.S. Hospitals below the City of New Orleans. J.D. Keith is very sick and I hope he may yet recover. I think there is a powerful army concentrating here. I presume a forward march to Mobile.
Tell L. L. Hanan that I thank him for his encouraging letter. If this army should move forward very soon I think our regiment would not go far. There are not enough able men in it to make a full platoon. Lee is well and sends his love to you, Wayland and Clinton. I hope you will get all your things from Iowa. While at Vicksburg I sent my overcoat and blanket by Express with several others goods to Peter Case. The coat is worth \$10 dollars and the blanket \$4 dollars. I have a chance to get on General Bank's bodyguard and I think I could get the position of Chief Clerk at \$40 dollars per month. But I will have to reenlist for three years and that I do not want to do for God knows I ask not for money or fame.

I desire to stay in the army of the Union until we can have an honorable peace. Then it will be the proudest time of my life to retire from the bloodstained field to private life.

I am truly thankful that my father is kind and obliging to you.

Martha I want you to pay him for all he does for you and the children.

Thursday, August 27th, 1863.

Good morning Martha, Wayland, and Clinton,

How do you do?

How much do you think I would give to see those black eyes snap and kiss those rosy cheeks.

I would give you a ten dollar greenback at least just to be with you all twenty minutes.

I feel pretty smart this morning but somewhat weak on account of my medicine. But it is working good and will be just the thing

I have needed for a long time.

The nights are quite cool and I think the health of the regiment will soon be better.

I will write again soon. Write often and let me know how you get along.'

Barrow got a letter from home that stated that N. H. Kendall was not expected to live and that Esquire Quackenbush had died with the bloody flux. Several others had the same disease.

May the Great Giver of all earthly Blessings watch over you and guide and protect you my dear friend.

Affectionately, your husband and friend, now and ever for the Union.

H. L. Sholts

Doc. #22 of 27: A letter to his dear wife Martha, dated, September 6, 1863, from New Orleans

Noteworthy: My dear Martha, I am happy to write you this beautiful Sabbath morning. I received two good and interesting letters from you yesterday. I am glad my little bobo lenty is well again. I hope you will not get sick. I am improving fast and shall go on light duty in a day or two. My fever is all gone. I think and I have no more diarrhea as my bowels are in better shape. I believe I shall live to come home and enjoy the happy society of my little family. Martha that note against Eyegabrand is due in October and you better send it to Peter Case or Esquire Merriam. The furloughs will prove a failure. I guess I shall have to send money in a letter from here.

On your last you said "By all means do not get discouraged".
Well Martha that is good advice and just the way people at home writing to friends in the army ought to write. I know I must not get discouraged. I have seen many die in the army and I know that died had been homesick and discouraged. That was the the way with Still and Keith.
So you see I have determined to be contented let what come.
I hope that may be the case that I put my entire trust in Him that inks the destinies of the world. Have no fear as this morning I opened my testament and read the 27th Psalm. Now you read it and then sing the part of it we used to sing. One thing have I desired of the Lord that I should like to sing it with you this morning, but I cannot and will not worry about it.
I am glad you are going to get your things from Iowa.
I hope by the time you get this you will be keeping house and then if you are blessed with good health, you and the children can take comfort.
I hope this war will end so I can come home and live with my family by winter. If Charleston soon falls it will be another death blow to the Confederacy. It is reported in the papers that Ft. Sumter and Moultrie, Ft. Gregg and Battery Wagner are in possession of our troops. I hope that is true. Old Jeff Thompson (that we chased so much in Missouri) is at last captured with his whole staff. He is an old villain and I hope he will hang.
Our regiment is on the improve and all our boys are getting better, but Muilwine and Horning (that you know) are at a stand still.
Martha, I have a grand chance for making a small fortune or misfortune as the case might be. I can have the position of Captain of a negro company here and get my commission from Major General Banks at \$130 dollars per month by enlisting or joining the army for the term of five years. But I will not do this at present. When you write me again, tell me what you think of this. If I thought the war would last two years longer I would go in. You see it will amount to \$1500 dollars per year and it will cost probably \$500 dollars out of that to live and support my family. That would be a savings of \$1000 dollars per year. But oh the dread of being away from home so long is what ails me! But if you think I had better go into it I will do it. And if you would rather have me remain poor and run the risk of the war ending in any respectable time, I will not take a commission but remain contented where I am at \$17 dollars per month. And when the war ends I can come home. I wait for your reply.

Osgro Hill died at St. Louis the 15th of August.

J. H. Michners wife is dead. She was confined _____ and the child was still born. She survived but two weeks. I pity poor Mich her husband.

It is reported that S. J. Tisdell is dead.

I took supper with J. V. Carpenter the day before yesterday and he paid me a dollar his folks owed me at Fredericksburg.

Our division has gone out on a raid for cotton and ni_____ers but the 38th being mostly on the sick list did not go and staid guard duty.

I will close for this time hoping and trusting that God protect and prosper you and my little boys.

Give my respects to my folks and kiss Wayland and Clinton for me accepting my love and kindest regards.

Affectionately from your husband,

H. L. Sholts

Doc. #23 of 27: A letter to his dear wife Martha, dated, September 29, 1863, from Carrollton, Louisiana

Noteworthy: Dear Martha, I am well except for a slight headache. I am gaining strength and flesh every day. So you see I have a thousand reasons to be thankful for the goodness and mercies of our kind heavenly Benefactor, and then I think how my family has been blessed with health and life since I left them.

I have a full and lively hope of returning to that loved spot my home sweet home and the dear ones that I left behind me.

All the men you know are doing very well but Jacob Horning cannot live but a short time.

I shall not send much any way of a few shirts and such stuff.

Martha buy your wood already prepared for the stove as it is cheaper and better and will be much more convenient and handy for you.

Tell J. B. Burton that I will write to him soon.

Barrows has been promoted to 2nd Lieutenant form Orderly Sargent. That is the way the promotions are gotten in our regiment, by regular grade.

It is raining hard today and looks gloomy with the boys in their little shelter tents. Soon everything will be mud knee deep.

We have just heard that the Rebs were concentrating a powerful army near Chatuaungeo and were likely to give General Rosecrans a very hard battle. In fact it has already been reported that Rosecrans

has lost heavily.

I am very glad that you keep up such excellent spirits. Oh I am glad you are keeping house and I do hope that you will soon get your things from Iowa.

I wish you could get my over coat and woolen blanket from Fredericksburg. I do not know but I will send some clothing for myself before we leave here. I will send it by express if at all. It will cost high.

Martha if you have a place to put potatoes you had better get about 10 bushels while they are good and cheap and put them somewhere where they will not freeze. Also get 15 or 20 pumpkins, a few turnips, and lots of cabbage and vegetables in your cellar.

I expect we shall get paid off soon and I will send you some by Express to Stoughton or Madison.

Oh if the war would end and I get home to you and would not care if I did not have a dollar. I know you could live happily but do the best you can my dear companion. Be patient and do right by all.

Don't get discouraged and I shall not. Write to me often and tell me all the news. Kiss my little boys. Buy that cow if she gives milk all winter.

I will write soon again. This is most affectionately from your husband,
H. L. Sholts

Doc. #24 of 27: A letter to his wife Martha, dated, November 25, 1863, from Brownsville, Texas

Noteworthy: My dear Martha, I am well and in good spirits and am gaining in strength a little very day I think. I have not received any letters since I wrote last but I intend to write three a week and you must do the same at least. The health of our regiment is good but at present our regiment is small for a great many are home on furlough. Lee had the ague last night but he will come out all right. I think this is a very healthy place. All but the mail matters. They are so far behind time. Still we must be patient. Things are the same as when I last wrote. The 19th Army Corps are in the eastern part of Texas coming this way slowly. General Banks has taken Corpus Christi and Galveston is in our possession, and our armies are on the road for Austin. I conclude that Texas will very soon be back in the Old Union. We are getting new recruits now every day and organizing a new regiment. We are building new and extensive fortifications around

this place. The colored troops _____ that darky soldier is of some value at least to the government. I wish that every negro in the U.S. _____ were able to be field equipped with a gun, shovel, or pick ax.

I expect it is very cold up there now Martha. How cold it will be in the winter mornings for you to get up and build your fires, I heartily I could be there to do it for you and my little boys.

Do the best you can and take good care of the children. I hope God may continue to Bless them and you with good health and the necessary comfort of life. When I get home it will be a happy time to me and to you also.

There is no news to write. The weather is cooler now and the nights especially get quite cold. I have plenty to keep me warm. I have bought me a pair of \$7 dollar boots. I have plenty of money. I was in town today and got a tip top dinner for 50 cents.

The people here are ignorant and dirty but are generally very kind and courteous to the soldiers.

I will give you a description of Brownsville and when I get over to Matamaras I will give you a description of that place.

I will write again soon next Sunday, so goodbye for this time.

May God Bless you all,

H. L. Sholts

Doc. #25 of 27: A letter to his wife Martha, dated, Dec. 4, 1863, (no address given)

Noteworthy: Dear Martha, the last letters I have received from you were all written in October, so you see it is a very long time since I have heard from you and my little boys. I feel anxious to hear from home and anxious also to get war news.

Lee is well and ok and sends his respects.

In the letter I wrote you the day before yesterday I gave you a description of Matamoras, Mexico. I cannot describe some of the atrocities. Everything here goes on as usual, nothing much to change. There is the monotony of camp, drilling, guard duty, but I am perfectly satisfied and contented.

The weather is warm here and sometimes the nights get cold. December and January is warm and in February they plant corn and garden. I hope we will go north before another hot summer comes.

I have reason to believe I will be happy if I and you all live until I get home. A few days ago a portion of our Division went up the Rio Grande and took Ringhold Barracks, a military post that was held by the rebels.

Our boys took everything the rebels had and most within the garrison walls were taken prisoner.

I do not see much prospects of going very soon. From here north to San Antonio the country is a barren desert.

I wish I had something to write that would interest you.

Try to do the right thing, do the best you can by the children and your folks.

Be as wise as a serpent and as harmless as a dove. Be of good cheer my dear bub for I shall be spared and I believe I will return to you when this war has ended. Bless, preserve, and protect you all,

H. L. Sholts

Doc. # 26 of 27: A letter to his dear wife Martha, dated, January 3, 1864, from Brownsville, Texas

Noteworthy: My dear Martha, I have not heard from you for a long time. I attempt to write you in the land of the living.
I hear there is mail at Point Elizabeth and tomorrow I will get some I hope from loved ones at home.
I am now the acting Orderly which is not very hard.
I hope you had a good Christmas and New Year. To me they were dull and dry cold days, nothing to excite any interest, just the dull monotony of camp.
Lee is well and healthy. Dan Nichols and Rubin Watrous have the ague occasionally. C.P.S. is very sick and went into the hospital today and I shall not be surprised if he never recovers.
For a few days the weather has been very cold with freezing nights and the wind has blown very hard. And this is the reason we have got no mail. Enclosed you will find \$50 dollars I send as a New Year's gift and I desire you to let it out in safe house. Perhaps you can loan it all for I think I will send a little more home soon. Don't you think bub I do pretty well to send you \$50 out of two months pay of \$34? You see I have made something in trafficking in revolvers and watches, and after I send you Fifty I have plenty left to last me until next pay which is now due.
I do not get any war news at all for we get no mail but I hear the President's message is a good one and that there is great hope that a speedy peace may soon come!
God knows that I long to be with you my dear companion and my little children. For heaven knows I love you and will do anything that will

facilitate your happiness.

I remember you everyday and in secret I forget you not. In the night when I lay awake, my mind goes home to you and my little boys and I long for this cruel war to end. I am contented here for I know I have got to stay until the war is over.

Do the best you can dear Martha. Save all the money you can without stinting yourself, and when I get home we will go at something that will secure for us a good honest living.

I hope to be with you before another New Year's Day shall come around, and then we will have a horse, a pig and a cow.

I feel perfectly safe in letting you handle all the funds.

General Herron has at last come back to us for which I am very glad for we like him much better than General Dana.

I will write again soon. Tell my little children Pa will not forget them and you must not let them forget me.

This affectionately from your husband who is ever faithful and true to you. Kiss my children and accept my love and respect.

Yours truly,
H. L. Sholts

Doc. #27 of 27: To Headquarters Co. "C", Iowa Volunteer Infantry, dated February 2, 1864, from Brownsville, Texas

Noteworthy: Application to apply for position of Lieutenant in the Corps D. Afrique Henry L. Sholts makes application for the position of Lieutenancy addressing The Adjutant General of the Rio Grande.

The application is respectfully forwarded and signed by Horace C. Baldwin.

Fragment sentences follow from a letter to his wife Martha in which Sargent Sholts states-

Martha, there is a good deal of sickness in camp because we do not get our pay and clothes and a good many are deserting. But I am going to stick til the last choir is not back.

The drum is now beating for church but I guess I will finish my letter. There are a good many cases of measles here. The funeral procession marched through camp playing the Dead March with muffled drum and it was very solemn.

Hardly any in the regiment can eat their rations

I should like to have you write often for it is lonely here and it does much good to hear from the girl I left behind me.

A kiss for Ma, a kiss for Way, a kiss for Clinty

HLS

(Kindly Note): What follows are fragments of Henry Sholts' letters that were also written to his wife Martha. Unfortunately it is impossible to determine exactly when they were specifically written and the exact location but I my transcriptions of them will highlight what I think are the main ideas.

Fragment, page 5:

Noteworthy: But the sailors understood their business and finally succeeded in getting every man off the sinking boat and in a short time she went down. As good luck would have it the time we were taking the crew and soldiers from the water, their stars shown very bright and made the night as light as day. Next morning not a ship was in sight but we steamed on in a northwesterly direction as we had lost our course during the night. We arrived at Brazos De Santiago on the 31st of October and lay at anchor until the 3rd of November when we landed in a small boat on the old sight of where General Taylor had his supplies and his headquarters

Fragment, page 6:

Noteworthy: _____ from Corpus Christi towards the Rio Grande. We stayed there until the sixth and marched down the sea coast to the mouth of the Rio Grande. We then marched across a channel where we had to wade up to our necks in salt water arriving on the banks of the Rio Grande River at ten o'clock at night. We were very much fatigued but here at least we could get all the fresh water we wanted. This camp was where the Battle of Pablo Alto was fought (Mexican War). The next day we did not march but killed some beef as there are thousands of fat cattle on these plains. The day following we marched to Brownsville and marched till you can't. I was never as tired in my life as when we got into this city.

Fragment, page 7:

Noteworthy: The rebels evacuated the place at our approach and fled to the interior after having having destroyed the fort and everything they could. Brownsville is a place of about two thousand inhabitants, mostly Mexican and Spaniards. The few whites here are mostly in business in Motamaras. There are thousands if not millions of bales of cotton in sight on either side of the river which have been taken across from the U.S.

General Dana is our new commander and he is very strict and we have had to work very hard.

Fragment, page 8:

Noteworthy: I am pretty well but not very stout for the constant changes in food and and water gives me diarrhea, but I am in good spirits.
I don't hear from home anymore.
It will be a long time before letters go from here to you. You must be very patient and not worry about me for I do the very best I can.
I hope you got the money I sent you from New Orleans. I will send you more when we get our pay.
Oh I shall be glad to get back to America again so I can hear from that dear little family of mine.
Motamaras is a city of about thirty thousand inhabitants extending from the Rio Grande back about five miles and along the river about four miles. The river is quite low and presents to us a view from this side of immense lining of cotton bales that have been smuggled and are worth millions of dollars.
The best residences are near the elevated plaza owned by Americans or Germans.
A Spaniard or a Mexican will have a dirty little hut made in the most rude manner of brush and mud and covered with the hides of cattle or old bark sacks, with an old rug hung up for the door.
The way they cook is they build a little fire in the center, just as those Indians did at Fredericksburg. They broil their beef on coals and bake their bread in the ashes. With few exceptions this is precisely the way the inhabitants of Motamaras live.
There is another class of men I must speak of. They are the water carriers of Motamaras and have large barrels (42 gallons). They roll them into the Rio Grande and fill them at the bung hole attaching a rope to each so that the barrel will revolve like a wheel. When full they pull it out of the bank and away they go all over the city like mules at the plow. The carriers get 25 cents for each barrel (hot, cold, wet or dry) and they stick to their business year after year.
It never rains here or rarely and since there is so little rain, there is of course little vegetation.
The only kind of timber here is a kind of brush that grows ten or twelve feet high and is called Chaparral. Goats here live on the leaves of the bush.

There are a great many cattle here but I guess one in four are milked. It is truly amusing to see them milk a goat. They get 50 to 100 in a yard catching one at a time. They draw the hinder leg forward and then milk in a small cup. Each goat gives from one to two tea cups full of very rich milk. I do not like it for it is strange but they sell it for \$4 dollars a gallon. Things are very high in price as I have told you before. Lee is well and ok. I hope you will get all my letters and that I shall get yours. Write often Martha for oh how it cheers me to get them. Give my regards to all and kiss Wayland and Clinton for Pa. Tell them I love and remember them.

God ever bless and protect you.

H.L. Sholts

Fragment, page 5

Noteworthy: But the sailors understood their business and finally succeeded in getting every man out of the sinking boat and in a short time it was daylight. Next morning not a ship was in sight but we steamed on into a northwesterly direction as we had lost our course during the night. We arrived at Brazos De Santiago on the 31st of October laying anchor until November 3rd. Then we landed in a small boat on the old sight where General Taylor had his supplies.

Fragment, page 6

Noteworthy: We stayed there until the sixth and marched down the seacoast to the mouth of the Rio Grande. Then we marched across a channel where we had to wade up to our necks in salt water. At ten o'clock P.M. we arrived on the banks of the Rio Grande and were quite fatigued. But here we could get all the fresh water we wanted. This camp was where the Battle of Palo Alto was fought. The next day we camped and killed some beef. There are thousands of fat cattle on these plains. The next day we marched from Brownsville til one could not rest. I was never as tired in my whole life as when we got into this city. So it was with all.

Fragment, page 7

Noteworthy: The rebels evacuated the place at our approach and fled into the interior after having destroyed the fort and everything they could.

Brownsville has about two thousand inhabitants, mostly Mexicans and Spaniards. They all talk the Spanish language and there are few white. All are in business.

Matamoras is right across the river and almost a stones throw from Brownsville. It is the headquarters of southern smuggling.

Fragment, page 3

Noteworthy: Martha, I notice by your letter that you hear a great many things by the way of letters from others that are in this regiment who have friends in this vicinity. For instance Nichols _____ Moulten _____ there has been 10,000 lies written home about this as well as other regiments. Some say they have not enough to eat. That's a lie. We have plenty and so it is with the homesick worthless fellows who write. Now about the health of these places, people here say it is unhealthy in the winter season. But my experience has demonstrated that this is a healthy place. Only two men of our regiment of 900 have died since we came here, and there are no cases in the hospital now. But we are getting better.

Dr. Heart is well liked by the sick. J.D. Keith is again back in the company though quite feeble. C.P. Snow is getting well. I am well and feel first rate, but I am sorry things go as they do with your folks.

My dear Martha, don't believe you hear until it is confirmed. We have not gone to Vicksburg and I am beginning to think we will not go there at all. General Curtis said the 38th regiment had taken New Madrid after the 32nd had burned the barracks, the cannon carriages, spiked the cannon, and blew up the magazine deserting it all together. This was then left in the hands of the rebels. Now they have taken it and still hold it. The 38th can stay there as long as their company commander wants to.

Fragment, page 4

Noteworthy: The Battle of Vicksburg cannot come for a month yet. I am beginning to think our forces will take Vicksburg in spite of combined efforts by the whole South. When Vicksburg falls into our hands, it is the last great battle. I say after Vicksburg is taken the serpent of secession is cut in two and it must die. Jeff Davis says if Vicksburg falls they are gone up the spout.

I have a report that Fort Hudson has fallen by the hand of the hand, brave General Banks and I hope it is true. Then the two Mississippi fleets will

come together at Vicksburg. Be patient my dear Martha, it will soon be warm weather then go to Wisconsin. If I don't get back there, there are going to be more Indian troubles in Minnesota. But you are safe. I am confident through the mercy of God I shall be home in the spring. Martha, don't give way to discouragements. If you cannot stand it you will have \$7 dollars due from Peter Case, and \$15 dollars and interest due you from John Case. I do not want you to go to Wisconsin. Your gold is now worth \$1.60 on the dollar. I can't tell you when I shall get my pay. It will be good when it comes all in a file.

Fragment, page 3

Noteworthy: For some time I have been well and felt well ever since I have been there. It did seem like a long time to wait for mail, but at least I got 3 letters at once and they were written the 18th, 24th, and the 25th, respectively. The January 11th letter I received told me about the bounty I have not got yet. Lee is well Martha. In your last letter you seemed somewhat discouraged about the war, but you know you will hear a great many things that are not so. At any rate I intend by the help of God to come home to stay in the spring. God has Blessed me ever since I have been in the army and I am not afraid but that I shall live to come home to my family (the dearest to me of all below the sun)! Martha, I would gladly give everything I and you have got to have the war over and be home in peace. But it is as it is and we must make the best of it. The Negroes here are smart and they know all that is going on. In the spring they will make a break for liberty. It is too cold for them now. Tomorrow I am going to get for my squad a nice large chest and bake kettle to make corn bread and some_____.

Now about the Battle of Vicksburg. General Sherman tried very foolishly to take the city of 35,000 so as to have the honor alone. Of course he had to fall back. But still he felt of their stronghold and now knows much better how to attack them. Sherman should have waited for Generals Grant and McLernand to have come up. Those combined forces would have taken Vicksburg. But Sherman could not wait. Vicksburg must be taken but it will be hard to take and many brave boys (as Wayland sings) must fall. But we must clear the river and then the rebels will certainly starve out. Tell Wayland and Clinty that Pa thinks of his little boys many times every day. I think of you all the first thing in the morning and the last thing at

at night. I often see you all in my dreams as I hope to see you in reality.
May God's Blessing Rest upon you all and preserve you from disease and
death until I return. This is my prayer.
Oh Martha, do not worry about me as I am trying to do my duty fighting
for my country and trying to protect the rights of my dear wife and children.
If I had no children I would not care so much, you and I could stand it.
But we have two intelligent pretty little boys that I want to make men.
I want them to have a country to live in.
Give my love to all your folks. Tell my big boy I will bring him a horse
and one for his brother. I have plenty of money. This from your affectionate
husband,

H. L. Sholts

Fragment, top of page 4 (the final entry)

Noteworthy: The storm has eased and the weather is fine. It freezes some nights.
Oh that I could embrace you tonight! I would kiss you a thousand times
and the children the same!

Doug-HENRY SHOLTS is FINALLY FINISHED and SAVED including all fragment pages at the
end!

41 total pages. Wife just called from Sears and wants me to come over and look at something there.
Have a great weekend. Will see you Tuesday around 11.

Think about anything special you would like me to work on. Thanks, Rick
12:55 PM