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Camp of The 96th regt N.Y. Vols Dec 12th 1864

Dear Aunt

Your letter of the 27th of November came to hand to day and found me well as I hope this will find you and yours I had given up all hopes of getting a letter from you I did not know but you had started writing to me because I did not and could not with a clear conscience vote for old Abrikana I do not like him and I can vote for him altho I do as well as the best of his friends I do not spend my time in the Hospital but I feel the dangers of battle as well as if I spent my breath in crying for a man I can not agree with his principals I for one do not think more of a negro than I do of a good white Soldier I respect them as far as is their due but no farther I do not like either of the platforms that was up for candidates for the people to vote on but of the two evils choose the least I am in favor of a compromise on fair terms but if the Confederate States do not want to do what is right and just I am one of the men that is for not showing them cunny quarters let us whip them and whip them so they will not forget it in one generation

I do not know but the people at home may call me a traitor but one thing is shure I am not a Coward and a traitor both. I do what the most of the people that supports the present administration will not. I stand my chances with my fellow Soldiers and do not get out of reach and try to set others on I show the face of a man that is not afraid of defending the laws of my Country I can show as good a reputation as any Soldier in the Army and have the honor of belonging to one of the best fighting Corps in the World. If the men of this Corps are the most of them men of the same opinion that I am but I do not wish to lecture on politics for I am a better business than arguing on things of as little importance as political matters are. I am suited with the present Administration if others are. Aunt you wished me to write you about the Thanksgiving Dinner I will tell you just what all this that you people are a doing for the Soldiers amount to and that is just nothing at all not that I or any other good Soldiers wishes to grumble but you only have your trouble for nothing we do not get any thing that is destined for the Soldier it is only helping the Officers to fill their pockets.

You may think it strang but as is
Gods sacred truth we do not get onley
in hat the Officers cannot sell or eat
them selves so I advise all the people
of the north that wishes to show there
friendship to the defenders of our Country
to visit the families of the Soldiers
and if they find them needy give to
them. The Soldiers get enough and
that is what I am afraid many of
the Soldiers Widow and Orphan do not
I think it would be more benefit to
the Country if the people of the
North would form a society of relief
for the Widows and Orphans of the
deceast Soldiers than to send there
money to the Army but I do not
want you to think we are not
truly grateful to all of our friends
for the gifts we do get we are not
all blind the Officers try to make
think that all we get is from
there influence but we know better
the Officers of the army get more
than three fourths of there living
from what the Soldiers friends
intend for the Soldier but about
that Dinner we had a verry good
Dinner we got two small Chickens
for sixteen men but it was enough
for the boys that was sick and
that was all we cared for Government
victuals is good enough for me altho sometimes
I would like something a little diferant

But still I do not complain of what
I get Aunt There never was an Army
fed and Cloathed as well as this Army
is in my opinion but I am not supposed
to pass my opinion on Things Aunt I
wish I was at your house to supper I think
it would last good Tell Helen I was very
glad to hear her write to me I am not
half so lonesome when I get a letter
from the people at home Aunt Tell
Kate that I am much obliged to her
for her compliment but I do not wish
any one to kiss my foot for I do
not think it worth any ones while to kiss
my foot give my best respects to
Uncle Daniel Tell him I am as true
to my country as the Sun that shines
and am bound to see the last traitor
striped out if I live and nothing happens
to me Aunt I heard that Dams was
going to Keeseville to work and Uncle
Peaters folks was a going to Petee to
live one of Uncle Abrahams Parsons Girls
wrote to me and she writes a splendid
letter I tell you they wanted me to
let Freddy live with her she says
he is the smartest child she ever saw
but I am able to keep those boys
yet I think I am proud of them I
think that they are as smart children
as there is in the Country I will
put two hundred dollars on Willie against
any thing of his age in York State on
reading or any thing else that a child
of his age should know

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Can't I guess that I have bothered you
with enough of my nonsense for this ^{time} your
letter went to 18th Corps Sheridan's Army they
thought it was the 90th insted of the 96th
but I will close for this time by
asking you to write direct to 96th Regt
Washington D.C. and it will follow the
regt where ever it goes but enough for
this time so good by for this time write
and oblige

Yours

Except this from your Nephew

J. H. Kirby

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Mr. Daniel Shew
Tene.
Clinton County.
N. Y.

