

# S O L D \$3220.00

## Lot # 540

### Durkee Family letters

The following is a brief compilation of some of the highlights included in 43 letters written by Private Harvey Durkee of Company A, Morgan's Division of the Army of Mississippi.

#### 1861

##### Date Written

- 9/26/61      **written from Camp Chase, Columbus, Ohio**  
- writes about his enlistment  
- is issued an oilcloth blanket
- 9/29/61      - describes activities and conditions in Camp Chase as he begins his training
- 10/7/61      - 37 "Sesesh" brought into camp as captives  
- describes his participation in the arrest of a drunken union soldier
- 10/9/61      - has been issued his gun  
- his regiment is nearly ready
- 12/14/61      - writes of the final activities in camp prior to leaving for Louisville, Ky.
- ?/?/1861      This is a partial letter.  
- describes weather conditions  
- 1200 confederates and 1000 mules captured
- 12/17/61      **written from "Catlitts Burgh" (Catlettsburg, Ky.)**  
- Quite descriptive letter concerning his troop movements and his desire for action

#### 1862

- 1/3/62      **written from Johnson Co., Ky**  
- Describes the makeup of his brigade  
- have 3000-4000 "rebels" surrounded  
- is his 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday
- ?/13/62      **written from "Paintville"(Kentuckey)**

- very descriptive and detailed account of the battle of Prestonburg

- 1/26/62      **written from Camp Buel**  
- 30 confederate prisoners captured and rumor that General Zollicoffer was killed  
- will send a "Sesh" (secessionist??) pistol home as a present
- 2/8/62      - writes about conditions in camp  
- reacquainted with two of his childhood friends who are also in his company
- 3/10/62      **written from Camp Brownlow, Piketon, Ohio**  
- describes wide spread sickness  
- names 5 native sons in his company who died  
- abundance of food in camp  
- Union Calvary hunting for scattered rebels who murdered 2 people
- 4/11/62      **written from Camp Prestonwood, Louisville, Ky.**  
- sent \$20 home to his brother
- 4/27/62      **written by C.H. Chapman, Lexington, Ky.**  
- Harvey recovering from illness  
- describes close call in a horse-drawn cart accident
- 5/28/62      - **written by Harvey, Cumberland mountains**  
- thirteen Union regiments (10,000 men) located 20 miles from the "Sesech"
- 6/1/62      **written from Cumberland Mountains**  
- describes very hot weather conditions
- unknown      **written from Kanawha Valley, 10 miles from Charlestown, Va.**  
- awaiting orders to move out
- 6/29/62      **written from Camp Pleasant, Cumberland Gap, Va.**  
- describes the food and pleasant surroundings of camp
- 7/5/62      **written from Camp Virginia, Cumberland Gap**  
- discusses his options for sending money home  
- describes camp food
- 8/9/62      **written from Cumberland Gap**  
- expresses his moral concerns about appropriating produce from the locals - as many as 100 hogs run freely about the camp

- 8/16/62      **written from Camp Virginia, Cumberland Gap**  
 - requests new boots from home as well as other personal items  
 - describes nuisance value shelling of confederates by Union  
 “30 pounders”
- 10/3/62      **written from Greensburg (Kansas??)**  
 - describes troop movements from Manchester to Camp Dennison, via  
 Ohio River, Portsmouth, Wheelersburg, and Sciotoville
- 10/7/62      **written from Camp Oak Hill**  
 - describes Confederate harassment as his troop retreated
- 10/26/62     **page includes stamped ink dwg & imprinted verse**  
 - request for several personal items, including a bottle of “Meca  
 oil” - the unit is now commanded by General Cox; also mentions  
 General Morgan
- 11/5/62      **written from Charlestown, Va.**  
 - discusses the requirements of picket duty
- 11/11/62     - anticipating troop advance to Cincinnati
- 11/16/62     **written from Cincinnati**  
 - preparing to advance to Memphis to spend the winter
- 11/20/62     **written aboard the boat “Faney McBernie” (Fannie Mcburnie??) in  
 route to Memphis from Point Pleasant (about 600 miles)**  
 - writes about the happenings at home
- 12/3/62      **written from Camp Oliver, GA.**  
 - Saw 20 gun boats during river travel  
 - inquires about relatives and friends at home
- 12/25/62     **written 13 miles from Vicksburg**  
 - 200 boats transporting Union troops  
 - writes of General Sherman  
 - describes the burning of plantation houses and the ensuing effect upon  
 the coloreds

1863

- 1/2/63 **written from Vicksburg**  
 - describes an unsuccessful Union skirmish

- 1/4/63
  - Union troops badly beaten with 5000 casualties
  - General Maclernard (McClernard) now in command
  - not hopeful about taking Vicksburg
  
- 1/5/63
  - in retreat and 3 wounded from his company
  
- 1/7/63
  - still on boat to unknown destination
  
- 1/10/63
  - sailing up the Arkansas River with plans to take a fort
  
- 1/13/63
  - written from Horseshoe Bend on the Arkansas River**
  - describes successful union battle resulting in the capture of 6000-7000 Confederates
  - describes the entrapment of 2 Confederate regiments
  
- 1/15/63
  - written from steamer "Empress" on the Arkansas River**
  - writes of the destruction of Rebel fortifications and speculates the next troop movement
  
- 1/17/63
  - complains of high local food costs and widespread sickness
  - provides names of 4 soldiers who recently died
  
- 1/25/63
  - written from Young's Point, La. near the Yaso (Yazoo) River**
  - tells of building a canal in the midst of rebel harassment
  
- 2/14/63
  - describes the reaction of the coloreds after Lincoln's proclamation and gives his opinion of abolition
  
- 4/26/63
  - written from Van Buren hospital, Milkins (Milliken's) Bend, La.**
  - writes about Union boats successfully breaking through a Confederate blockade
  - refers to General Osterhaus
  - 27 Union soldiers killed at Grand Gulf, 40 miles from Vicksburg
  
- 7/15/63
  - writes about the fall of Vicksburg and Point Hudson
  - thousands of Confederates killed or wounded
  - General Grant is chasing General Johnson
  - disparaging remarks about the Copperheads
  - 18<sup>th</sup> Army preparing to move out
  
- 7/21/63
  - inquires about another draft at home
  - envisions his hope for his post-war future