

**Abram Bogart  
Letters, 1862-1865**

**20645**

**QUANTITY:** 1 folder (7 items)  
**ACCESS:** Open to research  
**ACQUISITION:** Purchase: Charles Apfelbaum, March 1993  
**PROCESSED BY:** Sarah Schelde, Volunteer, Manuscripts and Special Collections, July 2011

**Biographical Note:**

Abram Bogart was born about 1825 in Catskill, Greene County, New York. He enlisted on August 15, 1862, at Sidney, Delaware County, New York, for a period of three years, and was mustered in to the 144<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry Regiment, Company I, on September 27, 1862. He was transferred to Company K on October 16, 1862. He mustered out with his company on June 25, 1865, at Hilton Head, South Carolina, returning to Sidney, where he lived and worked as a farmer with his wife, Mary, and their children (Catherine, Albert, and Jane).

**Scope and Content Note:**

This collection is made up of letters from Abram Bogart to his wife, Mary, at home in Masonville, Delaware County, New York, regarding his military service during the Civil War. He details life in army camps with their daily routine of drill and picket duty, and comments on fellow soldiers from Masonville and vicinity.

Bogart uses his letters to deconstruct the war which he believes is merely political. He also writes about the link between the front and home, with soldiers like him having to worry about the battles they are in and the money that is coming to them and their families. His letters are often somber in tone as they mention the number casualties, the squalid conditions of army camps, bad food, and the troubles soldiers go through under their officers.

He also comments on the conduct of officers and what he perceives to be hypocrisy on the part of political leaders. For example, in the letter of May 28, 1863, he says "... this is a war of shoulder straps and money to the officers and not to put down the rebellion...," and in a letter postmarked January 1864 he writes, "... I should never [have] been here for it is nothing but a political war ..."

**Item List:**

Folder	Item	Description
1	1	Camp Chase, Virginia [Virginia], Arlington, October 15, 1862 Details traveling, starting with departure from Camp Delaware; discusses the arrival of a new regiment, made up of men from Sullivan and Tompkins Counties; mentions people they know who are also in the army; says they are in sight of the capital and a mile from Lee's house.

Folder	Item	Description
1	2	Camp Bliss, Fairfax Co[unty], Virginia, December 1, 1862 Says he is in good health, but death is everywhere around him; mentions food is not much; wants information on the hospital where "Henry" died so that he could possibly get his things; same for an Elette Balcon, and wants to know the hospital of Ebenezer Balcon for he has looked at many but cannot find him; says he hasn't been paid and needs postage stamps, but could trade for them; mentions to keep cherries for the family, and asks if they have a cow; asks Mary to write as soon as possible since he expects to move soon and wants to visit the hospitals. Attached is an envelope addressed to Mrs. Mary M Bogart.
1	3	Camp Cloud, March 22, 1863 Mentions many have died recently around him, but he is still alive, and that many are sick there, which is hard without family or friends; self-censors himself because she has asked him not to swear; says he doubts they will have more children because he will be there probably three years, but says he will also try to get home if she wants him; says lately they have been "diging [sic] ditches and guarding reble [rebel] property"; also says he must "leave all things there to you," and asks her to take care of herself; requests tobacco and postage stamps. Envelope attached.
1	4	Fairfax Cemenary [Seminary] Hospital [Va], April 23, 1863 Writes he is in the hospital with chronic rheumatism, which he says will clear up with better weather (it is currently raining); mentions they have been moving around a lot; says there are over 100 in his regiment now, not counting the many who died; mentions not getting paid since October 31; says he wants James to not think he has been spending it, and to wait to make payments; wants to know more about Henry [mentioned December 1] and asks about her money and living; asks to hear from the neighbors. Adds more on April 24: Asks again after James, and also after mother and father. April 25: Says he wanted to wait until another letter from Mary came but none did; the fourth time he has written a letter since he has heard from her. Envelope attached.
1	5	West Point, Virginna [Virginia], May 28, 1863 Reports they are digging ditches and careing [carrying?] timber in order to fortify against a rebel attack, since they are firing on boats every night; says his colonel is resigning, which they do not like because they dislike the lieutenant colonel; reports on the unhappiness of the soldiers, despite what the papers report, because they feel the war is not to directly put down the rebellion but for other political purposes; discusses what happens to soldiers who are preyed on for small mistakes by the officers; says Henry [aforementioned] was killed by his officers, and this makes his "blood boil"; says it is money that has brought the officers there; adds they are almost at Richmond, and that he has sent money to James and her; mentions a Joseph Thomson and his wife are there in a "convalescent camp." Envelope attached.
1	6	Folly Island, S.C., January 1864 Says he has not heard from her in a while and feels something must be wrong,

Folder	Item	Description
		but would rather know if there is something going on; says that he would not have been there if he knew the real purposes, since it is a "political war," and that things are getting harder for the soldiers every day under the officers; mentions a Henry Johnston, who deserted and will be shot if found unless he is pardoned; believes they do not think well of soldiers; wishes to enlist in the engineer corps because the work is easier; had to buy boots to march in the mud, as shoes gave him problems; mentions pay should be coming soon, and that they are marching and picketing constantly. Envelope attached.
1	7	Hilton Head, S.C., March 28, 1865 Mentions being well and enjoying hearing from them; says James was there yesterday and he is also well; feels bad about them sending a dollar, for he feels the children need it more; mentions women and children there "from rebeldom," in the "destitute" quarter; many have very young children and are in deep poverty; asks after their lives and those of the neighbors; says he expects to not work much when he gets home.

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