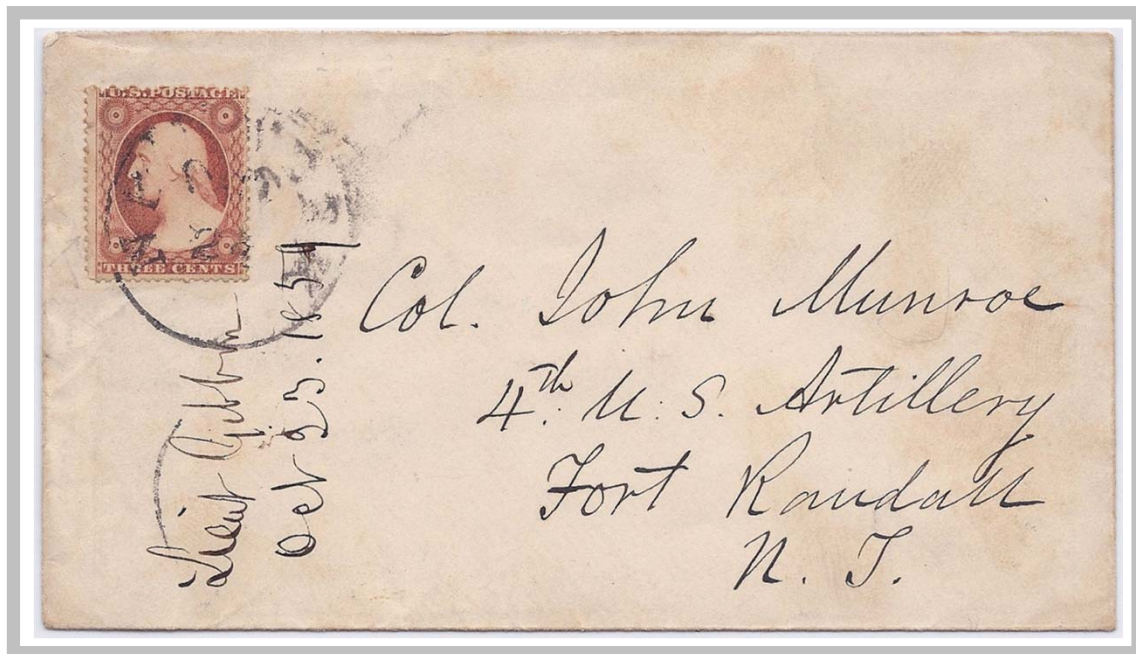


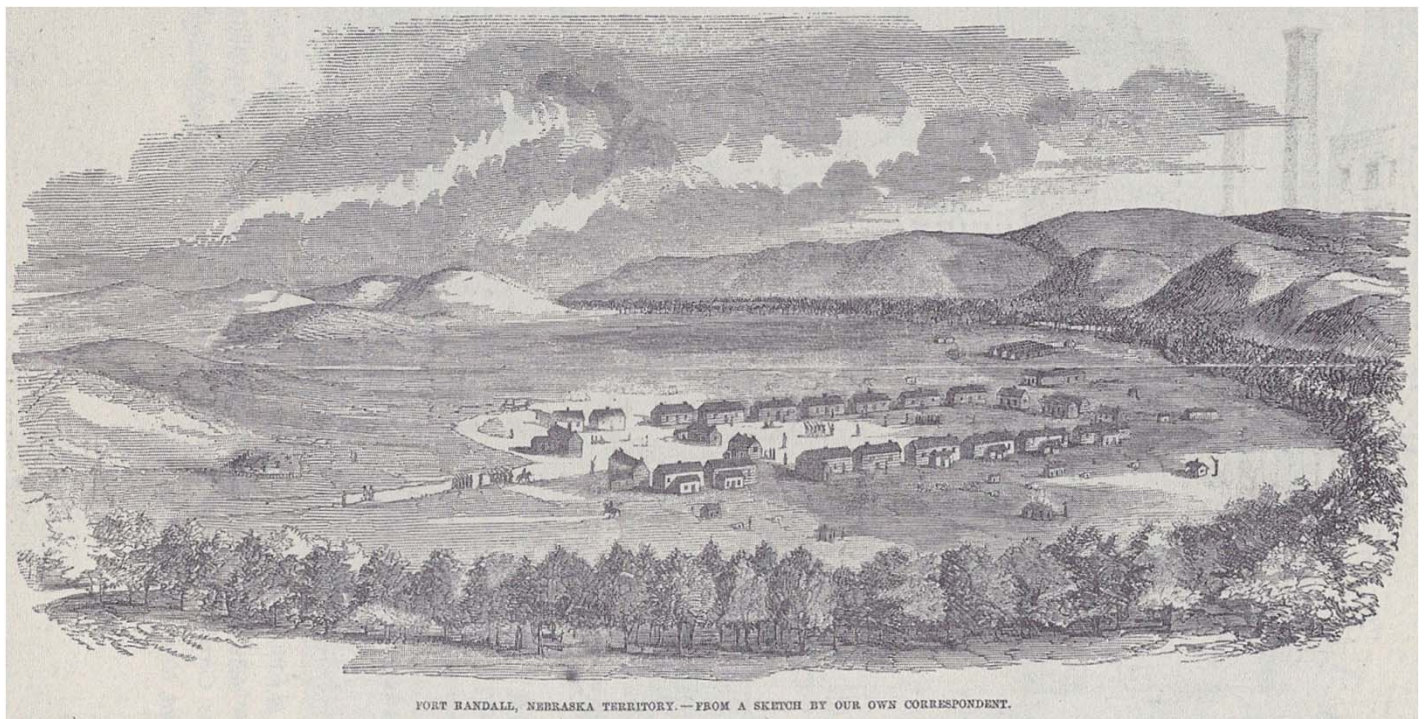
Colonel William S. Harney selected the site for **Fort Randall**, which was established June 26, 1856 on the west bank of the Missouri River on a plateau $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from the river, just north of the Nebraska line. The post was re-built in 1870-72, about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile farther from the river and slightly downstream from the original site. The Yankton Sioux Reservation was established northeast of the post in 1878 and the Ponca Reservation southeast at a later date. Fort Randall was established by First Lt. George H. Paige, 2nd U.S. Infantry, on a site selected by Colonel Harney, 2nd U.S. Dragoons. It was named for Lieutenant Colonel Daniel D. Randall, deputy paymaster general of the army, who died on December 17, 1851. Most of the military reservation was relinquished on July 22, 1884, and the garrison of the post was reduced in size after that date. Fort Randall was abandoned on December 7, 1892. The military reservation was transferred to the Interior Department on October 1893.



Philadelphia, Pa. Apr 15 (1857) to Wm. J. Armstrong, Hd.Qrs. 2nd Infantry, Fort Randall, Nebraska Terr'y (Care of Major Krontinger). The post office at Fort Randall was not established until Sep 29, 1860; however, mail was delivered via military couriers from Sioux City prior to that time.



Indistinct postmark on cover to Col. John Munroe, 4th U.S. Artillery, Fort Randall, N.T. with docketing "Lieut Gibbon, Oct 23, 1859", apparently indicating the contents (now removed) were from Lt. Gibbon. **Lieutenant Colonel John Munroe was commanding officer at Fort Randall from Jul 16, 1859 to May 10, 1860 and again from Jul 13, 1860 to Jan 11, 1861.**



FORT RANDALL, NEBRASKA TERRITORY.—FROM A SKETCH BY OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.

Fort Randall, Nebraska Territory (1858) with view generally to the north. This woodcut appeared in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* on Jul 3, 1858.



Manuscript postmark **Fort Randall NT Feby 28 1861** to Saint Louis, Missouri. Lieutenant Colonel John Munroe was commanding officer at Fort Randall from Jul 16, 1859 to May 10, 1860 and again from Jul 13, 1860 to Jan 11, 1861. The post office at Fort Randall operated from Sep 29, 1860 to Apr 30, 1897 and again from Dec 31, 1897 to Apr 15, 1907. Second half of letter below is in a cover in the George Kramer collection.

Fort Randall N.T.
February 25th 1861

Col John Monroe,
Dear Sir,

According to my promise to write occasionally and give you the small talk and doings at this Post, **I here break ground upon the subject of Randallania - please notice that this word is my thunder. The Bachelors gave a party in your house, Mrs Brown superintending the supper room, and it was quite equal to your party of last season.** Some time after, the two Misters Redfield, with their "papa", came up, and an "improvised" party was got up for them, in which Mr Bainbridge proved himself a Ladie's man. The next day Col Redfield came out strong in avowing that alcohol was what did the "mischief", but that a man might drink a dozen glasses of such wine and be no worse the next day. It was your Sherry. The two young ladies staid a week when Miss Florence went back to the agency. The other staid some time longer but has left us, not before Dr Stone had become somewhat attractive, extending far as a horseback ride. He is getting along as usual, with periods, **the Theater is flourishing under Mr Waddy's management, and Mrs Toodley is improving. Several new plays have been brought out since you left, and the acting has been very creditable. I think the "Poor Gentleman", has been the success of the season. "All Is Not Gold That Glitters" was well got up.** On the 22nd M Co led off in a Cotillon Party in the theater, and I suppose the lead will be followed up - **That party I am sorry to say has lost me my "Fidelity" - Mrs Dock is doing duty in the company!** McCown and McWilliams I believe are planning some additions to your trees. Getty made at hotbed in his back yard, but no one else has stirred - I am waiting for some information by the mails to guide me. A Dr Townsend from Sioux City has been up here some two weeks as a guest of Dr Huert's. Mr Waddy, Mr Gueuther and Dr Huert have a mess in your house, looked over by Hiller and Mrs Bose. Me Lee was the head of it before he left. **There have been many Euchre parties ongoing the winter ----**

We have lost Mr Lee, Mr James, and Mr Hallonquist and I think Anderson will go in ten days, if the mail does not bring us better news. Mr Best is AAGMGAACS. I ought to be under great obligation to Gov'r Hicks for relieving me from much anxiety by keeping Maryland quiet. Heaven only knows what is to become of us, for we are all here in a fog. **I hear we are on Gen'l Scott's list to come east in the Spring, and I must say that I am truly glad to hear of it, for two years at Fort Randall is sufficient to satisfy me.**

After an intermission of eight hours, during which time I went up to my garden and looked at the fences, and for timber to repair them with, I again start on my letter, Capt McCowen sent for McWilliams and after consultation, he and Private Trapper, of Co H are to go tomorrow to look for Trees. So you see that your good work it is being carried on. **Our Artillery School is engaged upon Gibbon at present, Capt Getty superintending.** I believe our winter is over with, or at least hope so - For six or seven days past the weather has been delightful and to day the thermometer stands at 72 in the shade - Much snow has fallen and is now running off rapidly, flooding the Parade ground - Mr Best and several men have had four or five morning's . . .



Fort Randall, N.T. Sep 1 (1862) to North Liberty, Iowa on Civil War Patriotic envelope (similar to Walcott L72) with enclosed letter transcribed below.

Ft "R" August 29th/62

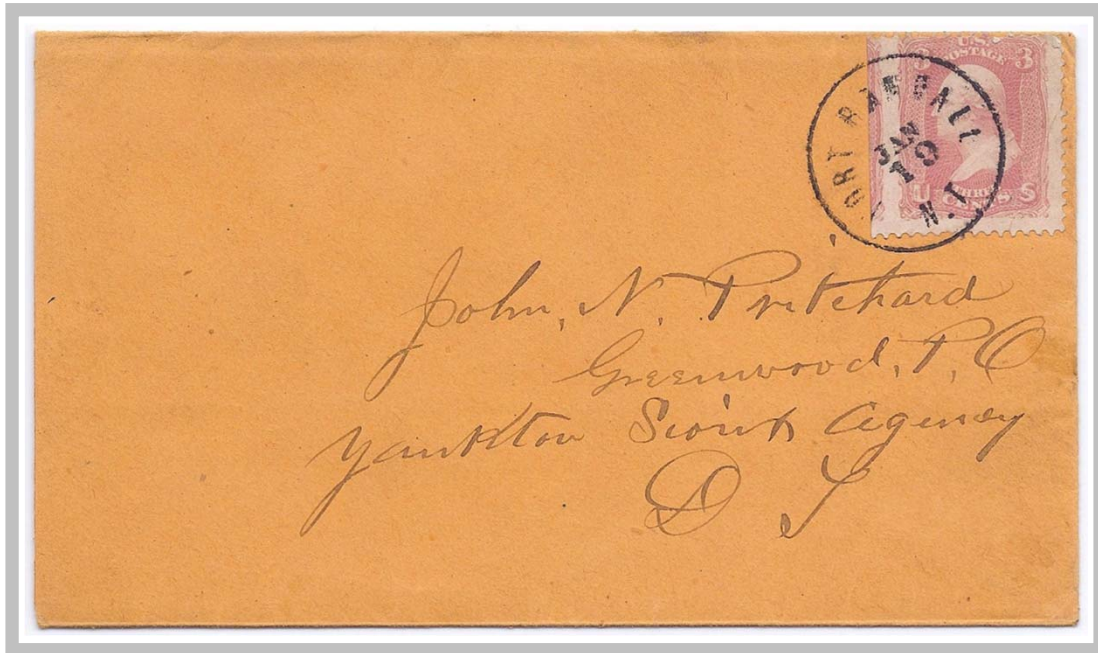
Dear Friend Mary

I received yours of Augt 12 by the last mail and I was happy to hear and know you had not forgotten me. Mary I should think you would be so lonesome since the young folks have about all left or are leaving for the war but I feel confident that you are patriotic enough to bear up under the inconvenience of the loss of friends for the sake of your country. This is the most that can be required of you if you can not go yourselves. Do or say nothing that will be calculated to disconvey your Brothers as [?] from going on. Cause is worth of our clearest sacrifice and **every effort should be made by our country's people to put down treason as soon as possible. Mary tell all your friends to "go and fight like heros there and back"**. Well Mary, I believe I can give you nothing of particular interest from our part of globe at this time any farther than that we have been apprised of the fact that **there was a band of guerrillas prowling about in the neighborhood of the Fort and the troops have been kept under pretty sharp discipline for the last 2 weeks and today the news as report that the Indians had commenced hostilities in and about Fort Ridgely and we have been warned to keep a look out for them but I do not think there will be anything happened to us at this place.**

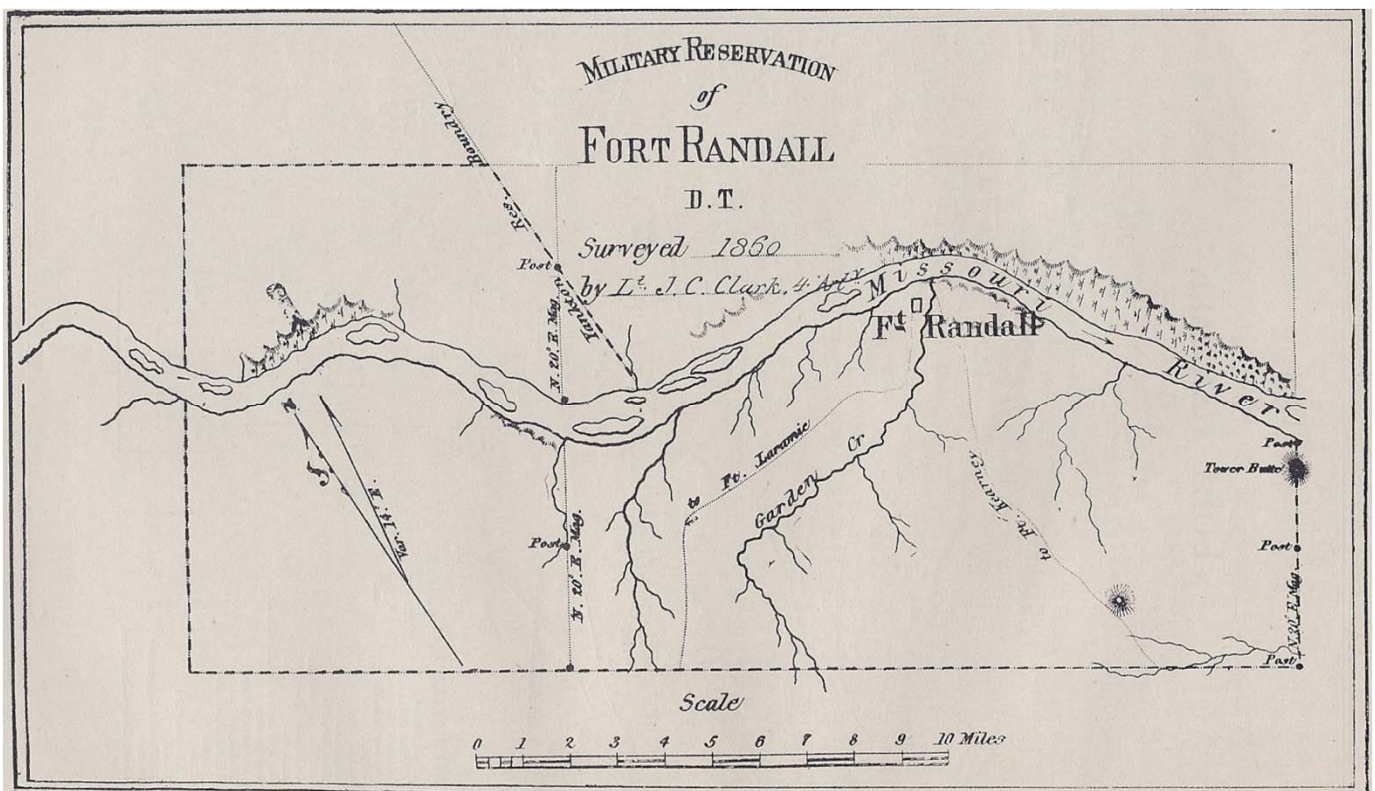
So, it seems that Mary Hamlin is [?] well all I have to say is "may the best of good luck [?] them through life" and I do think she will feel the loss of her husband very much and I believe I should have maintained until after my return at least I think I shall I must could be at home once more to enjoy the pleasures of being with my friends and if only for a short time but I suppose that is the want of all soldiers and must be put with whether we like it or not. Mary I will not take up your time and weary your patience with this long letter but will say to you that I hope you will write soon to me for your letters are a source great pleasure to me. I know that it was not in my power to interest any one with what I am say upon any subject but I have never written but very few letters and as it is rather a new business to me I hope you will see fit to excuse all blunders that may be made give my best respects to all the friends and accept my tenderest regards for yourself.

Yours truly,

James Cambridge



Fort Randall, N.T. Jan 19 (1863) to Greenwood P.O., Yankton Sioux Agency, D.T. Corporal John Newton Pritchard was detailed as an orderly to report to Brigadier General John Cook at Greenwood on Jan 18, 1863, per the previous document in this collection. He enlisted Sept. 23, 1861, and just one month later was mustered at Iowa City, as Corporal of Co. A, 14th Iowa Volunteer Infantry. He was promoted to Sergeant on May 24, 1865 and mustered out June 22, 1866, at Sioux City, Iowa. Enclosed letter transcribed on following page.



Map showing the *Military Reservation of Fort Randall, D.T. (1860)*



Iowa City, Ioa. Nov 4, 1862 and "Soldier's Letter" oval to Fort Randal, Decotah Territory with forwarding hand stamp **Fort Randall, N.T. Jan 22 (1863)**. Due 3 likely applied at Iowa City where the 3c 1857 issue adhesive was not recognized per the *Detained for Postage* manuscript notation. Pritchard was serving as an orderly on detachment to General Cook at Greenwood when this letter was forwarded to him.



Fort Randall, N.T. Feb 22 (ca1862) to Dubuque, Iowa on Civil War Patriotic envelope (*unlisted in Walcott*).



Fort Randall, N.T. Jul 1 (1864) to Mantorville, Minnesota. The enclosed letter was written by John H. Shober to his father and is transcribed below. Shober was one of the original settler of the Bon Homme community and this letter represents his last written from Dakota, as he left for the gold mining region of Montana Territory.

*Fort Sully
June 23 1864*

Dear Father,

I embrace this opportunity to inform you that I am well, and hope this will find you the same.

*We have thus far had a pleasant trip but have marched very slow in consequence of the expedition with which we are with. **We are now with Gen. Sullys command and will follow that through.***

We will probably not reach the mines before the last of August, but I apprehend we will experience no difficulty from Indians as we will be under the immediate protection of about two thousand troops.

The summer thus far has been very dry. – crops in this section have suffered materially from the drouth.

If you write to me address to Virginia City Idaho Territory.

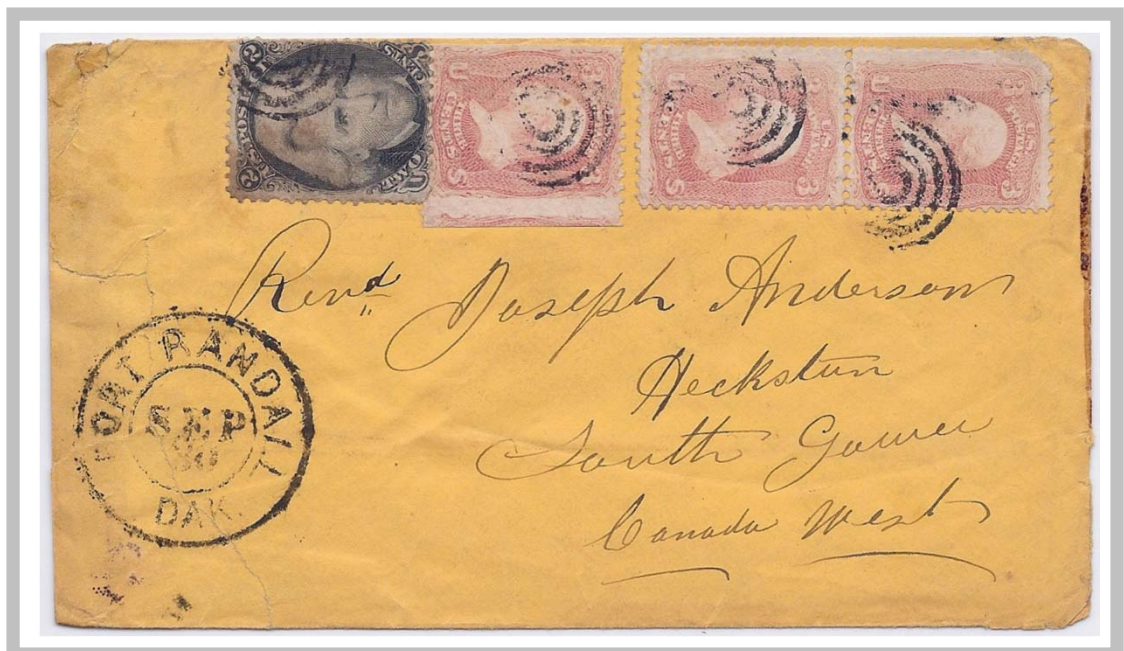
I have nothing more of interest to communicate to you at present.

Respectfully yours,

John H. Shober



Fort Randall, Dak. Jul 11 (1864) to Heckston, Canada West with 10c postage paid by two 5c 1861 issue adhesives (Scott #76).



Fort Randall, Dak. Sep 30 (1864) to Heckston, Canada West with 10c postage overpaid by 1c with three 3c and one 2c 1861 issue adhesives (Scott #65 and #73).



Fort Randall, Dak. Sep 18 (1865) to Clear Creek PO, Iowa. Enclosed letter, transcribed in part below, was written by John Hartley, Company F, 6th Iowa Cavalry while at Crow Creek Agency (Fort Thompson) to a lady friend back home. Carried by steamer downriver to Fort Randall where it entered the mails.

Crow Creek Dakota
Territory
Sept 12th A.D. 1865

...General Sully and his command are on their return. We expect to see the boys back in a few days. I don't think they have had any fighting with the Indians...Friend Sarah we expect to be relieved by other troops soon and mustered out. But we dont know when for certain...You wanted to know if I got any fruit up here. I will tell you all the fruit I have had was a few apples that I bought on a boat that came up the river about three weeks ago...Friend I don't know that I shall hear from you any more before I get home, but if this should reach you time enough for you to answer it, I shall be glad to hear from you if you write direct as before then if I am on the way, I shall call at fort Randall and Sioux City postoffices.

John Hartley

Independent.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY WOLF & McKAY.

VOL I.

FORT RANDALL, D. T., FRIDAY, MARCH 10th, 1865.

NO. 11.

THE FORT RANDALL INDEPENDENT.

Popping the Question.

By moonlight, on a mossy bank,
Within a quiet dell,
Sat a handsome youth and a maiden fair
With clustering locks and dark brown hair
That on her shoulders fell.

As still as mice these lovers sat,
As lovers always do,
Till Willie vowed his love in haste,
Then round her dainty little waist
His arm he quickly drew.

And as he pressed her to his heart,
He said: "My dear Maliss!
Will you consent to be my wife,
And share with me the cares of life?"
She blushed, and stammered "Yes!"

Letters to Soldiers.

Have you written that letter to your soldier brother, Mary? You remember when he left home to join the gallant boys in the field, you talked ever so good to him, and promised to write him every week, CERTAIN; to send him papers and do all in your power to cheer his loneliness. So did you, mother, and so did father and the rest of the family. So did sweethearts and wives promise to remember the absent ones every hour during their enlistment. Have you all done as you promised? We fear not. The poor boys feel this neglect more than the enemy's bullets, and they are strengthened more by loving words from home than they are from food. Indeed we saw it stated that a young soldier was given up to die from sickness and despondency, and just then letters from his beloved and his mother reached him and he got well! There is a healing balm in kind words, and all persons may be practicing physicians in this noble profession. None need such medicine more than he who ventures life for his country's honor. Look, in imagination, at the Regimental Post Office when the mail arrives! All the boys get letters but your brother, your son, your husband, or your betrothed. The others, nearly crazy with joy, tear off the envelopes and devour their home-messages with almost maniac ecstasy, while Tom or John or William or Charley, steps slowly aside to bury his sorrow in tears.

What wonder is it he gets sick or resorts to run to kill out reflection! Come now, friends, don't neglect this holy duty any longer.

"The brave, poor soldier ne'er despise,
Nor treat him as a stranger,
Remember, he's your country's stay,
In day and hour of danger."

Lincoln and Davis Contrasted.

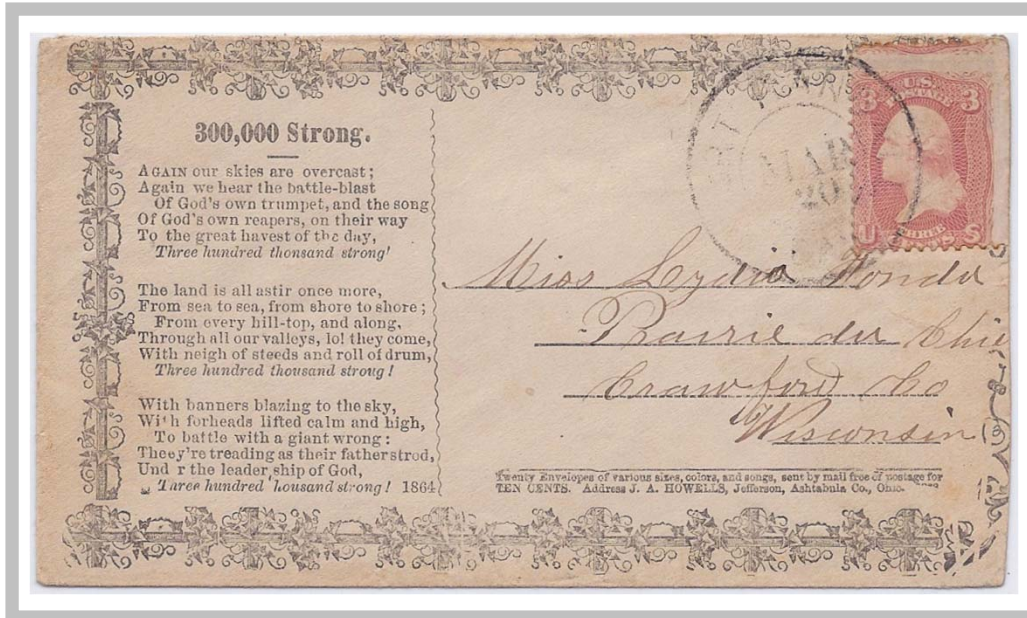
From the Charleston Mercury, Jan. 10th.]

When Abraham Lincoln took the chair of the Presidency of the United States, he promised in his flat-boating to "run the machine as he found it." Whether he has strictly kept his promise, those may doubt who choose to consider the subject. It is enough for us to know, that whether "running his machine" in the path way of his predecessors, or not, he has run it with a stern, inflexible purpose, a bold, steady hand, a vigilant active eye, and a sleepless energy, a fanatic spirit, and an eye single to his end—conquest—emancipation. He has called around him, in counsel, the ablest and most earnest men in the country. Where he has lacked in individual ability, learning, experience or statesmanship, he has sought it, and found it in all men about him, whose assistance he unhesitatingly accepts, whose powers he applies to the advancement of the cause he has undertaken. In the Cabinet, in the field, he has consistently and fearlessly pressed on the search for men who could advance his cause, and has as unhesitatingly cut off all those who clogged it with weakness, timidity, imbecility or failure. Force, energy, brains, earnestness, he has collected around him in every department. Blackguard and buffoon as he is, he has pursued his end with an energy as untiring as an Indian, and a singleness of purpose that might almost be called patriotic. If he were not an unscrupulous knave in his end, and a fanatic in his political views, he would undoubtedly command our respect as a ruler, so far as we are concerned.—Abroad and at home, he has exercised alike the same ceaseless energy and circumspection.

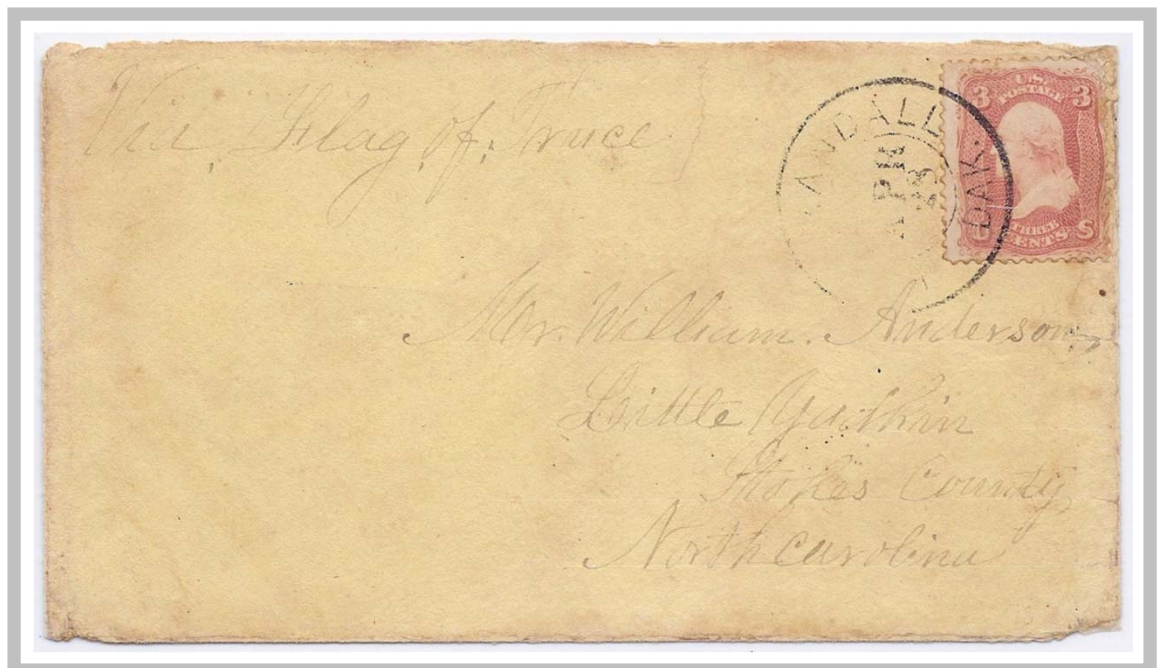
We turn our eyes to Richmond, and the contrast is appalling, sickening to the heart.

A RELATION BY MARRIAGE:

As my wife, at the window, one day,
Stood watching a man with a monkey,
A cart came by with a "broth of a boy,"
Who was driving a stout little donkey.
To my wife I then spoke, by way of a joke,
"There's a relation of yours in that carriage!"
To which she replied, as the donkey she spied,
"Ah, yes, a relation by marriage!"



Fort Randall, Dak. Mar 20 (ca1865) to Prairie du Chein, Wisconsin on Howell's Poem Civil War Patriotic cover (*unlisted in Walcott*).



Fort Randall, Dak. Apr 28 (1865) to Little Yadkin, North Carolina *Via Flag of Truce* manuscript. The earliest known use of this postmark is Jul 11, 1864, making this an 1865 usage.



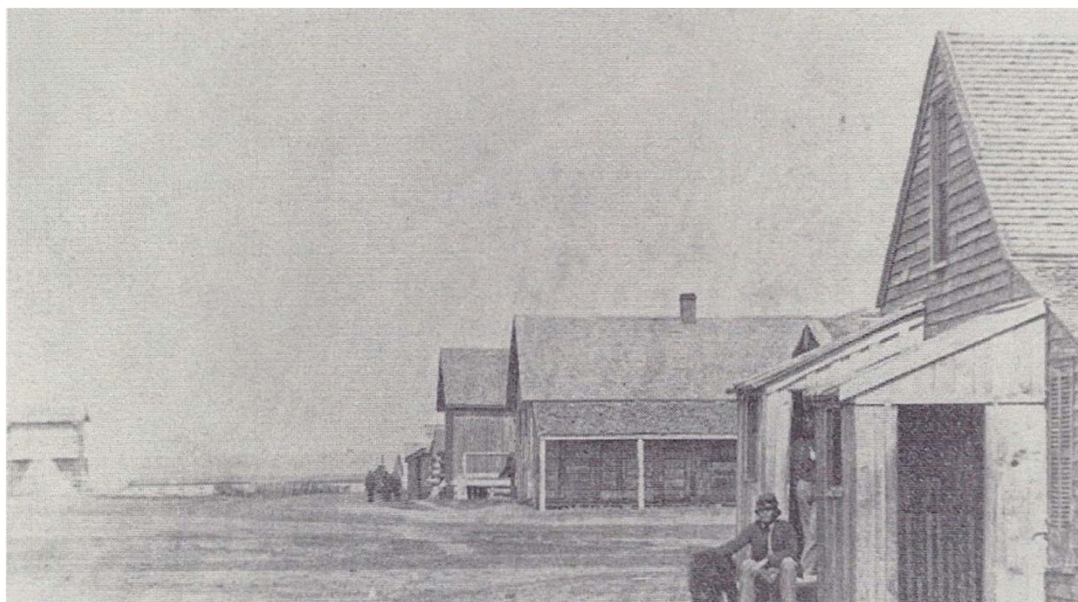
Fort Randall, Dak. Sep 17 (1866) to Lancaster, Pennsylvania. McCaskey correspondence letter enclosed, transcribed fully on following page, with key excerpts being... *We have not seen much up in this region lately to excite us. Emigration from this country seems to steer eastward - coming home from the mines. Seems to me the life of the "miner" or "gold-seeker" is rather a rough one. About 500 have passed down the river, coming overland from Oregon to Benton and then float down the river.... Politics in this country, are decidedly Johnsonian, Burleigh the ex-Indian agent - the ex-radical - &e. - has also been drawn in - to the good graces of Mr. J....*



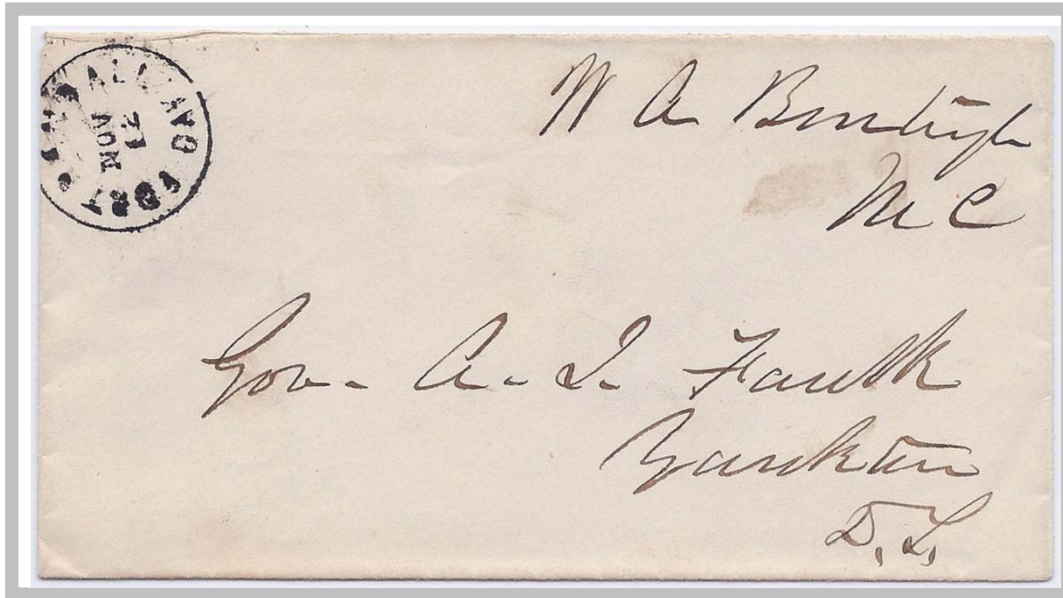
Log officers' quarters along the west perimeter of the parade ground at **Fort Randall** (1866 photograph by C. L. Hamilton). Lieutenant William McCaskey would have been housed in this building, or one similar, at Fort Randall during the time this letter was written.



Fort Randall, Dak. Sep 25 (1866) to Lancaster, Pennsylvania; McCaskey correspondence letter transcribed on following page with key excerpts following... *We are glad to hear of Mr. Johnsons arrival in Washington for we are tired reading of his "town" and think better matter will be found in the papers hereafter; besides, Gen Grant can now go to work and reorganize our army....Prof Hayden has returned from his trip to the "Bad Lands" and of eight trips he has already made he concludes that this has been the most successful. He has received many fine specimens of petrified heads of Rhinoceros, Bear, Wolf & etc...*



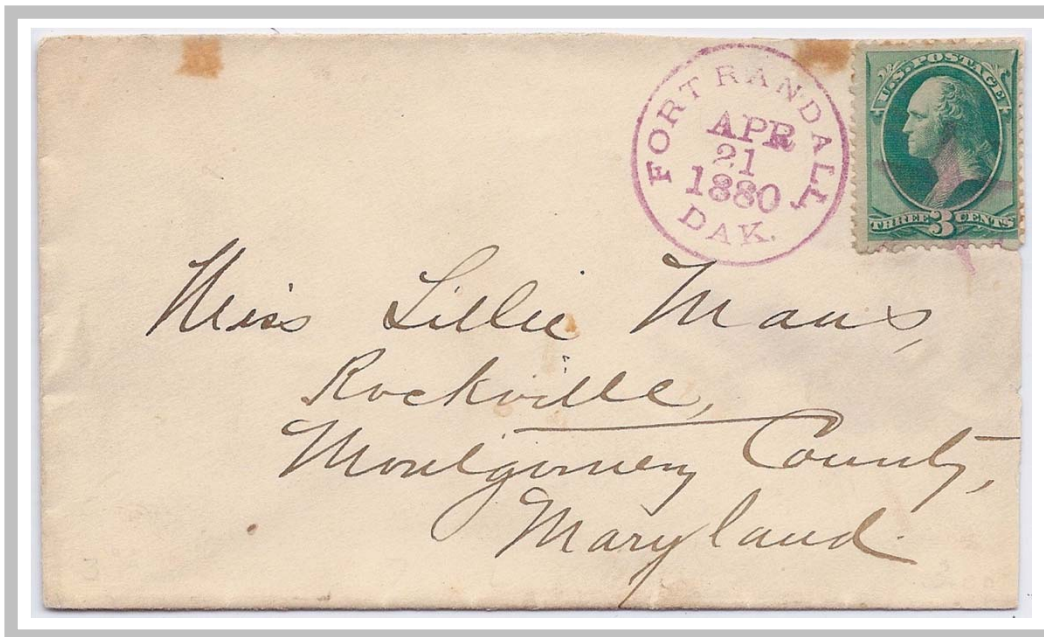
Post quartermaster's office, 1866, showing soldiers of the 4th U.S. Volunteer Infantry, with storehouses beyond (photograph by C. L. Hamilton). McCaskey would have undoubtedly visited the quartermaster's office during the timeframe this letter was written.



Fort Randall, Dak. Nov 12 (1868) to Governor Faulk at Yankton, D.T. Andrew Jackson Faulk was governor of Dakota Territory from Aug, 1866 to May 10, 1869. This style postmark was only used in 1868 and 1869, dating this Nov 12 usage to 1868. W. A. Burleigh was Member of Congress from Dakota Territory from 1864-1869.



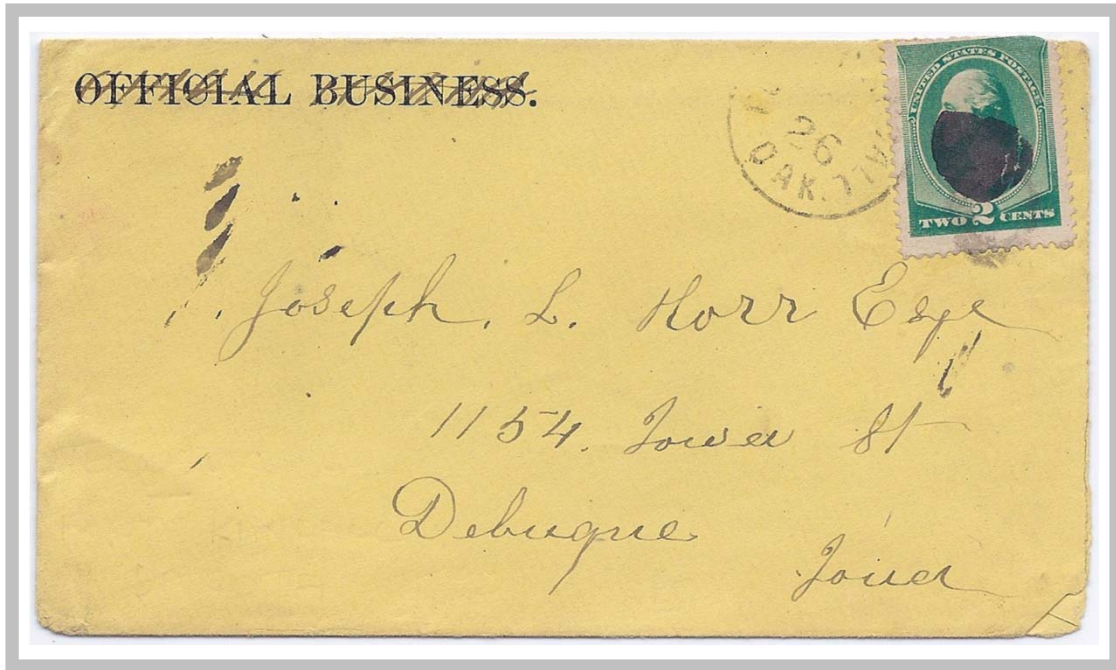
Walter Atwood Burleigh served as Indian Agent at the Greenwood Agency, Dakota Territory from 1861-1865. He was the second (non-voting) delegate to Congress from Dakota, serving from Mar 4, 1865 to Mar 3, 1869. He moved to Montana from 1879 to 1893, returned to South Dakota, and became a member of the State Senate. He died Mar 7, 1896 and is buried in Yankton



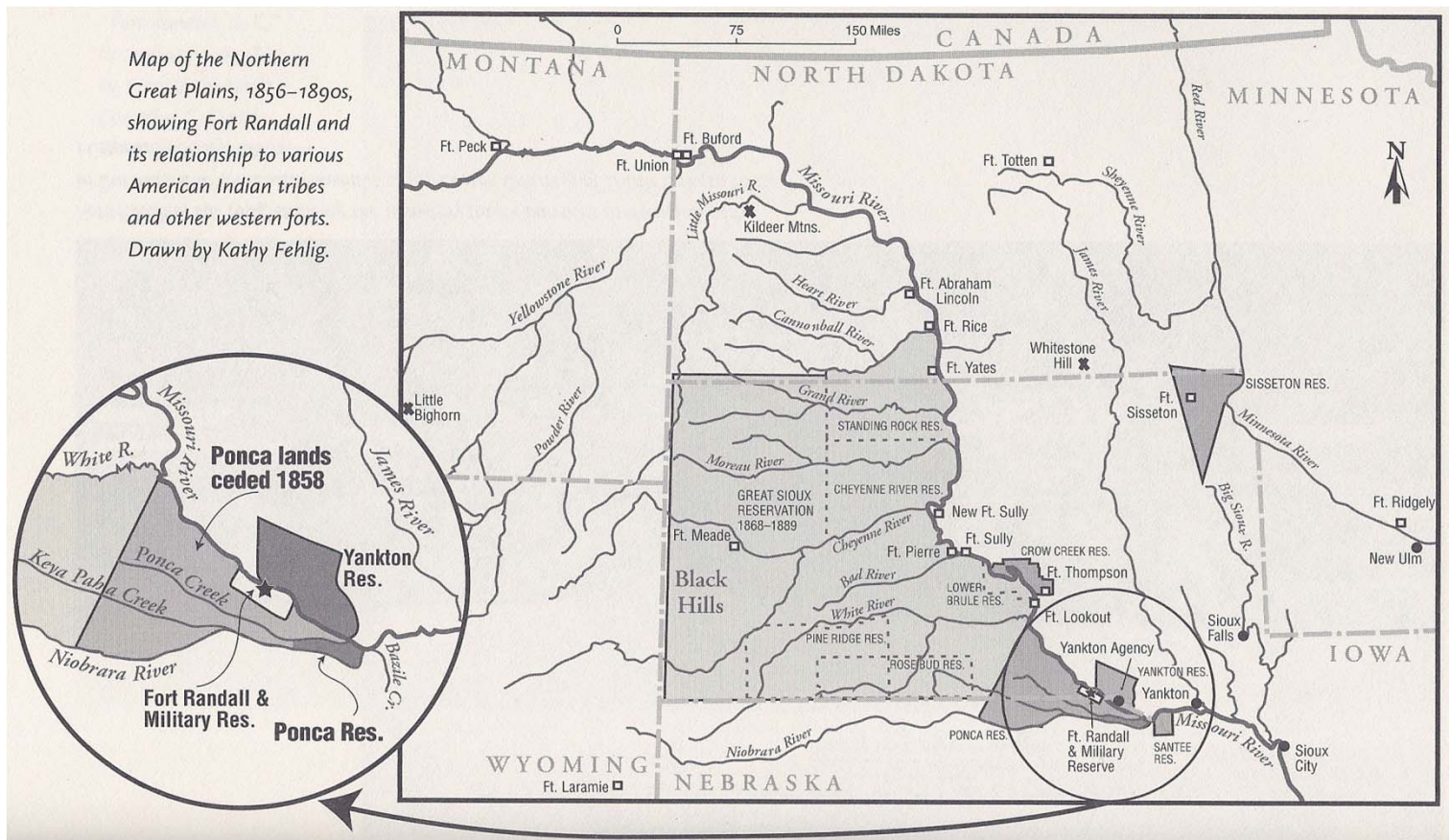
Fort Randall, Dak. Apr 21, 1880 to Rockville, Maryland



Fort Randall, Dak. Dec xx, ca 1880 to Richmond, Indiana. Stamp moved to show War of Rebellion, Indian Campaigns insignia.



Fort Randall, Dak. Mar 26 (1888) to Dubuque, Iowa. *Official Business* crossed out and used privately with postage paid by three-cent banknote adhesive.



Map of the Northern Great Plains, 1856-1890s, showing Fort Randall and its relationship to various American Indian tribes and other western forts. Drawn by Kathy Fehlig.