These are unimportant papers belonging to the diary because their contents are written in the narrative already.

These are papers of Tilghman R. Vestal son of Rhonda Mendenhall Vestal. He was confined in Castle Thunder during the Civil War and very harshly treated because of his refusal to bear arms or in any way participate in the war. When finally . . . he came to our home and attended New Garden B.S. . . . M.M.H.

2nd Mo. My Aunt came to Richmond to see and do what she could for me, but on the 2 of the mo. I was sent to Salisbury C.S.M.P. therefore I did not get to see her. We maed(?) Salisbury in the evening of the 3rd we arrived at during the 4 I wrote to Mr. . . . Cuthrel, Henry Reed & Aunt Billshinia(?), the 5 at roll call Lieut Lyerly separated me and others from the rest and told us that we were not in the right room, that I ought to be with the Confederate souldiers in sted of the Cittazens, that he had my name immediately from Richmond & I might of known he would catch me he said that when he called for the Confederate souldiers I ought to have come out (of the . . . that came from Richmond) instead of coming out when the cittazens were cauled. I replied that I was not a souldier & never had been He said directions came from Richmond concerning us & he had to . . . & I must go up on the next floor & that he would see to it the next day, but I was let alone a week or two, he at length told me again I replied that I was willing to be obedient and go any where I was ordered but I wanted him to understand my case before he acted he appeared kind & said he would give me a hearing . . . reply, I would like to have a good hearing & for . . . Woodsides a man in the room who wished me to stay to be foresent he said I should have it but I herd no more of it until he sent me up. I did not care much for there ware 31 more coming in the room that I was then in & it was already full. However there was no peace to be seen a mong the rebels for there was a clan that hung together that ware very troublesome. In a few days I found that there ware several in the room who wished to study, and I agreed to teach them. If I could get a room in one of the small brick houses to teach in, as they were not . . . . I cleaned one of them out and made a fire in it everyday and it . . . in it except during the night whilst we were all confined in the main building. I wrote an article and after several had signed it I wrote a note below to secure the room and keep other prisoners from disturbing us, I then sent it to Capt Galloway for him to sign and asked him to write us a notice to put on the door He wrote back that he would take the matter under consideration , but that was the last of it & we had no school 3rd mo mo. Some tunneling has been going on & we are kept in th house whilst the tunnel is being stoped up. One day I took off my clothes to kill bodygards in the room just as I was done an Irishman came up and talked very rough to me said I was to get 25 that night for striking(?) in the room because it would make it full of the bodyguards. I replyed that I did not know anything about the orders against it. This seemed to excite him because it had been spoken to the room at the beginning I told him that I was not in that room at first & that I came in after the notice was given. He cursed awhile and went off: presently he came up with a heavy rough stick & after coursing me etc. asked if I would do so again I remarked that I would kill them whenever I caught them, this aroused his ambishion for
most persons had bowed to all his beaks(?) and nods until he had become principle ruler of the room, he pretended that he was ordered so to be by Lieut. Lyerly, but if he had any orders, they did not extend to the point to which he went, for with no more offense than is above mentioned he struck me and said you will Reply. I do not say that I will take off my clothes but wherever I find them I will kill them From this he pitched on me with his stick and wounded my head considerably. I did not resist but did not beg or hollow though I was badly hurt, the blood ran down my neck over my color and down on the floor I then walked out of the corner by him to the place to wash and started to go down to report it, but the idea struck me that there might be some way to let them know it without exposing myself to the censure of the clan I then washed a little and went back, in a few minutes another man came up with the same stick I suppose to make me promise not to report as it was customary but he after looking at me turned away to the window I then went to him and kindly asked him to have my court marshal put off until my head was well: they were in the habit of trying me for having dirty clothes etc. I was to be tried for the above mentioned offence. He said I should not be court-martialed that he would stop it until my head was well. In the space of an hour I was sent for to see my Aunt & Cousin who had come to see me I went down with the blood all over me & it saved the trouble of reporting, I then went back & washed off. . . . we went over to . . . Lieut. Lyerly voluntarily said he would send me to another room it pleased me very much for the room to which he sent me was a small one . . . 18 men in it . . . ware . . . that came to the prisoners . . . for they could not stay in the main building on account of the rogishness that was going on. The second night that I was in the new room there was a proposition mad to break up a box. I opposed it and gave . . . of the men a pie & a cake because he said he was hungry. I told him I had rather see him . . . that than break open a box . . . that night but after we . . . went into they paid some for it but not to the satisfaction of the owner.

J4
3rd mo 20th I received a letter from Crenshaw stateing that I can(?) be released and get a situation in Richmond and also that . . . will be sent to Salisbury. But it was not done neather did I hear from it. On the 1st of 4th mo and order came from Gen Winder for me to be . . . on the 3rd I(?) wwent castle Thunder on the morn of 5 8 was released

Verso:

Cost of narrative $ cts
1st of 3 mo. Papers pens etc. 25
" " " One months work 9 00
Assistance given me by
Junious H.(?) Brown 5 00

J5
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1863
The Regt is on picket. I stay in camp & try to read the bible.
[Mine] to be moved ½ month hence . . .
SUNDAY 11
We leave . . . to go to . . . instead of marching with . . .
MONDAY 12
An other day . . . something in the . . . In the morning I went to Capt . . . let him know I was in
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1863
WEDNESDAY 14
THURSDAY 15
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1863
We move camp from the river & I wash in the evening.
FRIDAY 23
We build our house & there is talk of moving to other camps
SATURDAY 24
Rainy weather. The company(?) advises me to pay the tax.
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25, 1863
MONDAY 26
TUESDAY 27
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1863
The . . .
WEDNESDAY 4
. . .
THURSDAY 5
We cover ours . . . charge to me
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1863
SATURDAY 7
We fix up the chimney & quarters are cleared up. Corn husking in the country & one man goes from the company.
SUNDAY 8
We leave our houses at 2 o’clock March until 12 Stop to cook rashons but do not
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1863
We cross Rhapedan go in to our old camps It snowes a little
TUESDAY 10
Cold Windy weather. Benson refuses to take a flannel shirt or the pay for it that I carried on the march & he had left
WEDNESDAY 11
Move to new camp Walker sends a man from the wagons that was by me & looked at me but said nothing
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 1863
We are not satisfied & talk of moveing rashons are . . . & a letter is received from J.(?) T. Booker Brookshire’s . . . is read
FRIDAY 13
Orders to cook up 2 . . . . I make 2 good percimom pudding pies Very nice day expecting to move
SATURDAY 14
Nothing of importance
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1863
In the evening orders came to march . . . ware ready & it was countermanded
MONDAY 16
. . . McMaster . . . verce 8th B to trust in god than . . . in man
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1863
I am not well & do not eat much I am sent to Gordensvill on my way to Richmond suppose to casen tunder

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20
I take the cars to Richmond get there at 7 oclock p.m. go into casel tunder & stake $70 confederate & $10.35(?) specia

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1863
A man is carried from the room who it is supposed had the small pox

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22
I wrote to C.P.M. to pay the tax if it could be done Pease(?) told that some of us I for one were going to Salisbury

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23
I write to Crenshaw we are not sent to Salisbury I was vaxinated

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1863
We were put in a separate room to be sent to Salisbury & Friend Crenshaw stoped(?) me

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25
I let a sick man lay on me . . . afterwards was told that he had the smallpox . . . leaves room with the

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 26
I was . . . and thrown into a . . . by a yankee who I reported(?)

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 1863
The yankee was taken out of the roomes & I suppose punished. We get better rashons than ever has been given

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28
Friend Crenshaw came to see me or(?) to get a Friend out of prison I got his plate. . . .

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1863
Nothing of importance except a . . . in our room . . . is done

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1863
. . . I write . . .

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1
2 men . . .

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2
ask . . . man in to whos hands [I] put the money . . . 25 [of] the mo

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1863
I converse with a pennesianian about paying tax

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4
I was unwell & a bad . . . in my mouth the Doctor gave me a pill 2 men leave the room one with measles . . .

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5
We are all put out in the yard and the house is scoured & whitewashed

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1863
I was thrown up on a blanket 5 times by a company of men that were at such tricks every day
MONDAY 7
Chills began to come on me Friend Crenshaw came to see me . . .
TUESDAY 8
I was vaccinated again we draw potatoes regular because they are roting
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1863
I am getting better and am able to stand [&] sit up with out a quilt around me
THURSDAY 10
Friend Crenshaw came to see me & said that secretary had said he should not release me
FRIDAY 11
I read the tracts Crenshaw brought me I am taking medisen for my cough
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1863
Crenshaw tells me that my money is all right that he saw Capt Alexander about it
SUNDAY 13
We have a sermon get trats papers etc. There is a prisoner preacher in the room and he holds . . .
MONDAY 14
. . . has bread brought up to the rooms to sell as the men cant . . . fast enough
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1863
A man from no 10 comes to our room & we take him in as a bedfellow his wife is to come to see him with provision he divide
WEDNESDAY 16
The men all go out in the yard and the room is scoured. I stay in the room by the fire
THURSDAY 17
Tonite rainy & disagreeable my cough is worse I begin to use cough drops again
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1863
I am trying to use the plane language more than heretofore
SATURDAY 19
I have a crick in my neck & shoulder & soar throat I still have a cough but it is helped
SUNDAY 20
My right jaw is soar & the crick is out of my neck
MONDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1863
I have the momps the other jaw is soar the pallet of my mouth came down
TUESDAY 22
I go to the hospital placed in ward A . . . room I find some of the men from the Casel
WEDNESDAY 23
My jaws are better yet swollen I set up nearly all the day the doctor came around from Casel
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1863
I go to the table for the first time get along very well
FRIDAY 25
I bought some bread and had it stolen from me because I simpathied with an old man that was abused
SATURDAY 26
Quakerism . . . I leave the hospital
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1863
I get some potatoes out of the dirt box wash them in cold water it makes me worse
MONDAY 28
I have an interesting discourse with friend . . . wet weather I let a sick man lay on my bed
TUESDAY 29
Fair weather
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1863
Fair weather Friend Crenshaw came to see me
THURSDAY 31
Rainy weather Thrown up(?) on blanket Cough and sick bed
MEMORANDA
[Monday] 26 June 1863 . . .
MEMORANDA
Words to spell
Impediments
Eager
Deserve
Paradise
Incredible Door
Necessity
Number . . . [written over names and amounts]
MEMORANDA
[names and amounts]
MEMORANDA
. . . The . . . in Carthage . . . Henry Reed
. . . Mills N.C.
. . . Alabama
. . . Tenn

J6
3rd 12th 1863
Dear Friend –
We are very anxious to hear from Tilmon again – and hope thou can pay the tax, as he is now willing to have it done – if at any time thou thinks it necessary for any of us to come to Richmond on his account please to telegraph to Cyrus at Greensboro or to me at High Point.
Please to let us hear from thee relative to his case as soon as convenient – have received but one letter from him since he left Orange.
My love to thy own and thy father’s family - Truly thy friend,
Judith J. Mendenhall

J7
Greeneville Tenn Augst 9th / 63
Dear Cousin
I received your letter yesterday evening informing me of your where abouts If I am not mistaken it is uncle Amos son Tilman that I am writing to you sign your name T.K.V. (?)
I suppose it to be Tilman you may be . . . that I was glad to here from you for I have heard nothing from any of your Fathers family since the war but I am sorry to here they have you conscripted I hope from what you say you will be released shortly If you get off come up and see me I would be glad to see you I am not in the Army nor I hope I never will be I will not . . . if I can help it I have an office that exempts me and will for several months yet I am Revenew Collector for the County. Be sure and write me again as soon as you get this I want to here from you every week and if you can get off come up and see me we are all well I would be glad if you could come and stay with me until the war is over If you want employment in a shop you can get it here or you can get other employment that will suit you so(?) be sure and come if you can. I have nothing new to write you I wish this war was over(?) write me what your Farther thinks about the war & I will look for a letter from you this week. So nothing more but remain your Cousin

C.M. Vestal

Greenville Tenn August 27th / 63

Dear Cousin

I received yours of the 17 inst and I was glad to hear from you but I was sorry to hear that you was in trouble I hardly know what to say to you but hope you will come out all wright yet I think if I was in your place I would pay the $500 Dollars and get out of the Army if I could and I will say to you if you need any money I will lone it to you Do not think that I will not assist you If I can I will do all in my power to help you out let me hear from you and what you say about paying out we are all well and would all like to see you at Greenville one time more you may think that I need not offer to assist you without being asked but I would like for you to be out of this war write as soon as you get this and let me know what you will do Don’t be Backward in letting me hear from you write for what you need of money if any or if it is all the amount and you shall have it

I Remain your

Cousin

P.S. If you can get out of the Army come and stay with me Until the war is over.

Recounce 9th mo 5th 1863

Dear Friend

Tilmon R. Vestal

Thy second letter was received yesterday, the first having been received in due course of mail; the reason that I delayed writing was to see if I could do anything for thy relief. About the same time thine was received, I also received letters through our friend Jonathan Harris, giving an account of the sufferings of Himelius M. Hackett & Jesse D. Hockett on account of their refusing to bear arms or pay the tax. I assumed the responsibility of addressing a memorial to the Secretary of War, setting forth the facts of your cases, the Secretary has forwarded said memorial to your Officers for inquiry; but in a private conversation which I have had with him since, he clearly intimated that he did not see any way of release except by payment of the tax, & advised that the Society in the case
of its members, ought to pay said tax without consulting them in as much as a large majority of its members subject to conscription had already paid out.

Number of members who have paid 182, " " refusing to pay 7.

Those connected with the Society about as thou art who have been allowed exemption on paying the tax, about 28.

Thou art right in saying each individual should be governed in this matter by his conscientious convictions as to the right or wrong of paying said tax, & I could not advise any one to pay it against his conscience, but there are several points on which thou seems to be misinformed, first, all monies paid under the conscription act go into the common treasury, & upon Congress rests the responsibility of how it is appropriated, even where it is paid to an officer in camp he has to report it to the treasurer, & give that department credit for it, as if he had drawn it from the treasury, so I was to day by Col. Shields commandant of conscripts of Virginia. Secondly, there is no law for distraining from those who refuse to pay, nor can I learn of its having been done in a single instance.

The Meeting for Sufferings of North Carolina Yearly Meeting after a lengthy consideration of the subject, decided to leave it to conscientious convictions of each individual as to the payment of the tax; those who are in favor of paying argued that our Savior himself set the example when he wrought a miracle to pay what he denounced as an unjust tax or tribute to the military government of Rome see Matthew 17th Chap. 24.27. Again by refusing to pay we give room for some to accuse us of doing so for love of money, while we should rather manifest a willingness to surrender all our earthly goods rather than take up weapons of carnal warfare.

I shall be glad to hear from thee frequently and am ready at any time to render thee any aid in my power

Affec thy friend
John B. Crenshaw

P.S.

My individual opinion is that under all the circumstances of the case friends may pay the tax on Non Combatants without a sacrifice of principle yet I could not persuade any one to do so against their conscientious convictions. Should thou change thy mind & wish to be released by paying said tax let me know & I will aid thee therein.

Secretary of War on the 4th of this month issued the following order.

Bureau of Conscription

For enquiry The department has been compelled to regard the act of conscription rather as announcing a principle than as designating persons in the case of the Non-Combatant sects of religion. In a number of cases persons who have been sent to the army have sturdily declined the performance of all duties in the field & have at last been discharged. If the enquiry shall show that there is no disposition to evade the performance of duty & that the faith is genuine although the technical requirements of the act of exemption be not fulfilled exemption has usually been allowed upon payment of the tax.

By order of the Secretary of War
4th Sept. 1863

J.A. Campbell

A.S.W.
Dear Friend

I received your letter a few days ago; it gave more news than any that I have received. When I left home, I was under the impression that the tax went into the public treasury; but partly understanding the law, I became mistaken. The conscripts in Tenn tried earnestly to get me to pay the money saying that I had no right to believe that the money would go to the support of the war. I often read about Christ's paying... hopes that there was some difference in the two examples that made one... probably the difference was so small that we can't see it but the spirit over us may direct us which way to go. Oh! That we may follow this spirit & not be too much dazed with the contrary one. I thank thee for thy kind offers to help me affectually.

T.R. Vestal

Do not be uneasy about my welfare. I think the storm is over; the men are very kind to me, obtain suitable things for my comfort, & say they do not think I will not done so any more... to be very sorry this much has bin done, though the Col said at first that I would be put to death if I did not take up arms & I am guarded day & night. My wounds are getting well but still they cause a... of this awkwardness in writing please excuse ti.

I have no old acquaintances here but that makes strangers the more accommodative. This is a pleasant camp in the woods and water convenient; we draw beef & corn meal or bacon & flower sometimes rice & sugar. I have money enough to do me some time yet as there is nothing much to buy. Father's family are all well when I left but they were grieved at my condition but they were satisfied with my course. Some of the soldiers are fasting today, others swearing & playing cards.

T.R. Vestal

write soon direct to
Orange Court-house
14th Tenn Regt. Co. J
Virginia
22(?). My wounds are getting well; I was not garde last night; I do not know why I was not.

J11

Racounce(?), 10th Mo. 3rd 1863

Dear Friend

Tilmon R. Vestal

Thy last favor was received to day. I have thought much of thy case since I last wrote thee. In reverting to the writings of early Friends in reference to the subject of war, I find that Thomas Clarkson, their great historian, writes of the Quakers, "They believe it unlawful for Christians to engage in the profession of arms, or indeed to bear arms under any circumstances of hostility whatever. Hence there is no such character as that of a Quaker soldier. Where he has no choice, he either submits, if he has property to distrains upon it, or if he has not, to prison. The Quakers have been charged with inconsistency in refusing military service, & yet in paying those taxes, which are expressly for the support of wars. To this charge they reply, that they believe it to be their duty to render to Caesar the..."
things that are Caesar’s, & to leave the applications of them to Caesar himself, as he judges best for the support of government. This duty they collect from the example of Christ, who paid the tribute money himself, & ordered his disciples to do it, & this to a government, not only professedly military, but distinguished for its idolatry & despotism. Personal service, however, they conceive to militate against a positive command by our Savior."

We see from this extract that our early friends thought they might pay taxes imposed on them, even though the money might be perverted to the uses of war but in no case would they consent to render any personal aid. Thou queries of me in reference to cooking for the soldiers; this is a very close question, for they are our fellow men, & while in the flesh, need nourishment whether they be soldiers or not; yet I certainly could not cook for them as soldiers any sooner than I could clean up a soldiers camp; but in reference to the clothing, it seems clear to me that if thou buy of them for the sake of getting it at a liss price thou becomes a beneficiary of their military arrangements which thou will seat once, if thou will reflect, that I or any other who is not in the army, would not be allowed to purchase shoes or other clothing at government prices; therefore if thou art allowed thus to purchase, it is only because thou art classed as a soldier & it may eventually prove a snare; again, I should think that thou who art bearing a testimony against war would not be willing to appear in a soldier’s garb.

In reference to buying & selling apples, I fear that too, might prove a snare, & cause the soldiers to be envious towards thee when they saw thee making use of the privilege thou now has to make money.

Thou hast made a noble stand, & my desire is, to encourage thee to faithfulness therein, & I cannot advise thee to obtain thy release by payment of the tax so long as thou art conscientiously scrupulous against it, though, I, myself, think it admissible to pay it, yet I feel it right to caution thee that it would be nearly or quite as much sacrifice of principle to avail thyself of thy position to buy clothes cheap or speculate in any way as to pay said tax. Earnestly desiring that thou may be enabled to keep upon the watch tower & guard against errors on the right as well as on the left, I remain in tender sympathy,

Thy friend,
John B. Crenshaw

J12
20th 10th Mo 1863

Dear Friend

Brother Cyrus wishes thee to pay the tax for Tilmon without consulting him – says he will repay all charges. Mother has been rather in favor of paying it all the time, but I have not felt satisfied, nor do I yet believe it to be in accordance with Friends principles. But at his request I write, hoping thou will take such steps as for thy own son or relative.

I think it entirely safe to say that Tilmon has not a relative who would be unwilling to advance thee money if able to do so – and some not at all connected with his family have voluntarily offered to pay him out. Cyrus says if it can be done he thinks it should be – would have attended to it some time ago but did not fully understand that it would be accepted unless he were a member of society. He was from home several weeks during the summer and knew but little about Tilmon until recently.

Since writing the above brother Nereus cabled in and said he was perfectly satisfied, indeed thought that I ought to write as Cyrus directed. He has himself been willing to pay
the money for Tilmon provided he was satisfied that it should be done, but did not feel at liberty to encourage him in paying the tax – more particularly as his letters have all seemed to indicate an unwillingness to have it done.

I wrote to Tilmon some time ago, and told him if he should need money to apply to thee for it, as I believe there would be less risk in sending from Richmond than from this place and besides he could get it sooner – but he has plenty for present purposes. If thou get him released we wish him to come to Jamestown.

Mother wishes to be remembered to thee – also my kindest regards to thyself & family.

Thy friend
Judith J. Mendenhall

Sometimes I am afraid, that even in writing, I will assume too much responsibility – but hope thou will consider the matter sufficiently. He has had but little opportunity for knowing anything about Friends except his mother’s example. I cannot add one word by way of encouraging the fine to be paid, but I could greatly rejoice if fully satisfied that it would be right to do so.

J13
New Garden Guilford N.C.
10th mo 23rd(?) 1863
Dear Friend,
I received thy letter of 16th today and now merely reply that if thou can arrange for Tilmon to go on the same conditions with the Hockett boys, or whether they go or not – I have no doubt that it would suit him and all his friends better than any thing else that could be done.

I will probably write more at length in a few days, but thou need not wait for that.
Thy friend
Nereus Mendenhall

J14
James Town N.C. 8th of 2nd mo 1864
My Dear Tilmon
Thy letter to Delphina came to yesterday and as she nor Judith were neither of them at home I thought I would try to write a few lines to thee, tho I am aware that I shall make a poor out of it for I cannot see the lines Judith has not returned from Richmond yet we look for her sometime this week. Delphina went to Richmond with her niece Adelaid Nixon and another young woman to get a pas port to go to Philadelphina when Del. And Judith gets home, I think they will write or go to see thee
A letter from Judith says the girls got a passport but did not say when she would be at home. I have got a hat for thee if it suits thee when thee sees it I shall send it as soon as I have the chance. I hope we shall be able to send some other things May the lord be with thee and comfort thee in sickness or in health, so prayeth thy Grand Mother
Mary Mendenhall
1st mo 1864 Parson Carpenter brought in a Christian Review gave it to a man who gave it to me I read it & ask the Parson to bring me another volume & he did so I one night left it
laying on the book board of the stand on which I was selling & while I was there reading . . .
it through a little hole(?) to a man in another town I missed the book soon but read on as if
I new nothing of its being gone after I was done reading the man came to me and sit down
to taking, as if he wanted to hear me quarel about the book as that is just what they glory
in & partly what they steal for. I said nothing about it but treated him kindly gave him some
peas to eat that I had more than I wanted. He seemed to hint a little on the book subject
but said nothing immediately to the point This was the first time that I had ever used
kindness in a case of this kind instead of bringing the rogue to measures by the law &
regulations & I had a curiosity to know how it would turn out The next day the fellow came
to me and asked right out if I had another vol of the Christian review I told him I had had
and how I lost it etc but did not hint that I believed he had it & talked with him about the
books until he . . . like them very much & wanted to bory all that was in the house he then
said that that he had one . . . not lend it to me but asked if I new my . . . me I had lost that
I would . . . I told him I did not . . . I went to him & asked him to lend . . . book he has . . .

J15

Rocounce 2nd mo 26th 1864

Dear Friend
Judith Mendenhall

I had a long interview today with the Assistant Secretary of War Judge Campbell;
they have decided on Tilman’s case not to allow him exemption by payment of the tax and
that privilege under the late law is entirely withdrawn from Friends.
Judge Campbell seemed very kind and anxious if possible to open some door of relief for
Tilman; and asked me to suggest any kind of government work on which he would accept a
detail. He mentioned taking care of horse, nursing in hospital, etc. I said that Tilmon was a
potter by trade but that I did not feel willing to assume the responsibility of accepting a
detail for him and asked for the matter to be delayed a few days until I could communicate
with his friends. The matter is now before you for your decision; please let me have a
decisive answer as soon as possible. There is a potter in Richmond that I have no doubt
would be glad to have Tilman; perhaps you may know of some place nearer home that
would suit him better should he conclude to accept a detail. Desiring to be remembered to
inquiring friends, I remain thy friend,

John B. Crenshaw

Dear Friend – Thee may perhaps feel interested in hearing more particularly from us; since
thee left both my little ones have been very sick, we fear they are getting whopping cough.
Thee can realize that they leave one very little time for making bolting cloth, etc., etc. I
have felt very much for thee in the decision relative to thy nephew. I can speak from
experience of the anxiety one feels for so near a connection, my own sister’s son being a
volunteer in the Federal Army. We may hope still for the best, tho’ there seems little room
for hope in the present condition of our distracted country. With the hope of hearing of thy
safe arrival at home, etc. I reamin thy friend

J.A. Crenshaw

PS John B says he expects to write to Tilman tomorrow, but suppose you will, of course,
communicate with him at once.
J16
Recounce 2nd mo 27th 1864
Esteemed Friend
Tilman R. Vestal
I received thy . . .
. . .
John B. Crenshaw
Salisbury N.C. 3rd Mo __
Dear Aunt
I received thy kind letter this morning but there was no copperas in it and as nothing was
said about, it or receiving my letter asking for, it I supposed thee had forgotten it. My
wounds are healing. I have not the opportunity of getting my money changed yet as change
is not to be had I expect to send it out to buy some thing worth enough to get it off. We
have a spelling lesson in the dictionary every night probably I will buy candols and have the
clafs to partly pay me for it candols are $1.00 a piece
I would like to know something about the people of Yadkin I have written to Thomas Martin
but received nothing I want to know who is there &c
My love to all Tell Susan I have not forgotten her but I do not want to tire Capt Galloway
with too much writing I can write to her another time
Affectionately thy nephew
Tilmon R. Vestal

J17
Salisbury, 3rd Mo. 2nd 1864
Dear Friend,
John B. Crenshaw
I have just received thy letter of the 27th but do not know how to answer it. As for
accepting a detail I think it is not advisable for me to do so. If I had felt willing to do
government work I could have gone at it before I was punished, and could have mifsed all
this imprisonment: I chose rather to be punished and am not sorry that I did so, neither do
I wish that I had paid the tax in the out set: and even when I was in Castle waiting to hear
whether I was to be released on payment of the tax, I cared not whether the answer was
“yes,” or “no,” (that is at times) for fear that it was best for me to remain in prison. As far
as making shoes for soldiers is consurned I am sure I could not do that and as shoemakers
are exempt by military Authorities they would of course expect it. When details were offered
me last August I replied that if I were to do anything to assist the army I would take the
gun at once and be a soldier indeed
I do not know what to do! – I would like to work at the potters buisnefs; and if it as a trade
would exempt me I would willingly do so; but to go at it as a detailed hand working for the
government, is more than I will promise to do without further consideration & investigation.
Very respectfully,
Tilmon R. Vestal

Dear Aunt Judith:
I send this by Jamestown that thou may see it and say to Friend Crenshaw anything
that thou can, for I do not know what else to say, I have spoken my sentiments and if it is
not pleasant I cant help it.
I would like very much to get out of prison but if the Lord ever required anything of me, to show publicly to the people that I am truly, religiously or conscientiously opposed to war, is certainly one: and I fear that the reason I have been chastised so far is that I have not attended to the small still voice of God as I should have done, and I believe that this nonattendance commences in the evening of the 1st day the 11th 10th mo when I with very unpleasant feelings followed the army instead of going to Orange C.H. & stating my case to the Authorities & telling them to do as they pleased with me for I could not go the battle. If this be true, God forgive is my prear. I remain thy kind friend

T.R. Vestal

J18

1st of 3rd 1864

Dear Friend,

Thy letter has just come to hand; I do not suppose Tilmon will be satisfied to accept of a detail under any consideration tho’ cannot determine for him – a letter from him this morning is very comforting to us, as we learn there from that he is pleasantly situated – compared with hid condition before – I took him some books, but went more particularly to ascertain what he needed most. If he will be permitted to remain where he is, & we not forbidden to furnish him things needful for comfort, I greatly prefer it to his being detailed now – unless he could be allowed to erect a pottery himself & furnish a certain portion of the proceeds to the county, or state, for the benefit of the needy – and this I would not consider as having any thing to do with the Government – except as any Christian or humane person might clearly do – The decision as I now under stand it is imprisonment during the war – without any additional punishment. He does not object, I believe, to working the garden at the prison – but cannot assist in the carpenter’s shop nor with the blacksmith either – nor would he consent to be a constant labourer in the garden – not at all for the Army.

I was intending to write to thee to day any how am anxious to know if Jefferson Davis is a Free Mason? – or if – Seddon is one – or Odd Fellows?

Suppose T. should be detailed – would he not be subject to the Authorities at any time – liable to arrest or might have to undergo a more severe trial than he has already experienced – We all appreciate Judge Campbells kind felling and so we do thy incessant care & labour for his welfare but I am not satisfied to have him detailed. If I understand the nature of his sentence – some, I learn are placed in work houses but whether this will apply to him I know not.

The Officers at Salisbury are kind – one of them as much a descendant of Friends as T. – tho his father was not consistent – & finally disowned.
Dr Benbows case was by no means exaggerated – and there are two others belonging (if I am not mistaken) to the same meeting (Dover) who furnished substitutes & then paid out. McLean says the law had been so much abused was the reason why it was repealed – He was able to inform his friends when he came home that Tilmon would not be released -- & I am inclined to fear he spoke something unfavorable to Davis after we left the office.
I hope the children may not suffer with whooping cough but it is a favorable time of year for having it. J. Cox was just here – all well at N.G. but many are greatly troubled – a number will come under the law from 17 to 50. but I think – hope at least – that some way of relief may yet come –
If T. is detailed and allowed to go into a Pottery would it be a final detail; others are generally exempt for but 60 days – Cyrus has gone to Wilmington & will not return for several days – I hope T’s reply to thee will be decisive.

We all agreed and wrote asking thee to act for him as for thy own son & are still satisfied with this.

Mother joins me in love to you all
Truly thy friend Judith J. Mendenhall

J19
3 Mo 12 1864
Ink made at Salisbury 3 Mo. 12/64
Crenshaw did not wish me to be delayed(?) 3 Mo . .
I ask for prears. 9th Mo 25/63
Conclusion to pay the tax 11 Mo 20/63
I write for a plain coat and am satisfied(?) 4 M 12 4
The first letter to A from R 4 Mo 10th 4
Crenshaw writes to me about detail 2,24
Dispatch to U.C. 4 mo 25
Missellaneous
$50 per scholar for making . .
Sprouce said, if I just had the religion to refuse to do what I kno to be wrong like this boy I would not take all th . .
The boy who is . .
Having spent . .
3 in army at . . . on my way to army . .

J20
Richmond, March 17th 1864.
This is to certify [to] whom it may concern that Tilman R. Vestal, who has been detailed to work in our pottery, has our approval to remain at Jamestown, North Carolina, or neighborhood for the space of ten days from the time of his reaching there from Salisbury.

David Parr & Sons

J21
Salisbury, N.C.
3rd Mo 26 1864

Dear Friend:

I received thy letter which informed me that there was a probability of my release by going into a pottery in Richmond which is not engaged for the government. I also received the second letter which enclosed permission for me to stop ten days at Jamestown I am pleased with the movement . I had just become satisfied that I ould not be released and had made up my mined to be content and beare with patience the punishment put upon me. I am very thankful to thee for intercedeing with so much patience If I unde rightly I am not to be considered a detailed soldier, under the command of Confederate authorities, but to be considered exempt either as a potter or as a Friend, and bound to work at the potter’s trade If my discharge comes here I will come to see thee. then we will
understand each other perfectly and I will take the situation mentiend if things are as I understand they are.

Respectfully,
Tilman R. Vestal

J22

Forks of Pigeon April 4th

Dear Cousin

I received your letter last week. I was not expecting it, but it was not the lefts acceptable on that account The other letter of which you spoke was also received & I have been intending to answer it, but have kept putting it off because I had nothing interesting to write you, but I ought to have written sooner if I had only acknowledged the receipt of your letter & thanked you for it. My school was out the 25th of March & I had an opportunity of starting over the 26th – by coming then I would have had good company & it would have cost me nothing, but would have been on the road all day Sunday, but since I could not conscientiously do that I remained until the 1st of April & started over in the Hack & traveled part of the day with a driver & two passengers who were drunk. Just before I got to Webster the horses bauked & the driver let the horses run back until the hind wheels of the hack ran off of the breastworks, they stopped long enough for me to get out without being hurt. In Webster the horses were changed, but I felt very uneasy not knowing where to stop & fearing to go on, but after riding three or fours miles I looked ahead & saw a genteel man standing by the road with carpetbag in hand & when we got to him he asked for a seat – but there was no room for him & some of them swore that if he got in we would break down – but he told them he was going & he got in & presently turned to me & said he supposed this was Miss Wilson introduced himself took me under his care to Waynesville & Brother William met me there & brought me home; not however until I had returned thanks for a providential care & bidden adieu to hack drivers unless I know them. I found Sister mary in bed but she is better today & able to be up. I expect to return to Franklin the last of this mont[h]. I saw John Hoke again at our court; [h]e had paid Miss Gould for me at my request & I replaced the money. So except for what I owe you I am out of debt – . . . I owe a small account or two in Franklin but could have paid if the company had paid me all which they will do if I ask it Laura & Jethro write to me often I reckon Orie has heard that Sister Evalina has another daughter. I have been greatly tried since I wrote to you & even now sometimes am tofsed about like a vesel without a pilot, but at other times have faith to claim the promise “That all things shall work together for good to those who fear the Lord.” Cousin write to me just as often as you can. I am never looking for a letter from you, but they seem to come when I need them most & always make me feel like I did when Levi Cox went to Crabtree to see me – like they were sent [for] a purpose. Give my love to Cousin George & all the rest. Tell Orie I may write to her before I leave if I do not I will write soon after I get to Franklin.

Affectionately
Kate Wilson

If you can let me know what I owe you I will pay it soon
Head Quarters Department of Henrico
Richmond April 4th 1864

Extract
Special Orders
No 82
I The Provost Marshal will dispose of the below named prisoner in the manner indicated Vis
{ Deliver to David Parr
{ & sons to work for
{ them during the war
{ without pay and
{ allowance from the
Government

Tilman R. Vestal
Comp J(?!) 14th Tenn

By order Brig: Gen John H. Winder Comd Dept
Sined W.S. Winder
A.A. General

Copy
LW Richardson
Capt and A . . .
Comd:
a true copy

Recounc 3rd mo 16th 1864

Dear Friend
Judith J. Mendenhall

It is with real pleasure I take my pen to write thee this eve of the satisfactory
termination of the case of thy nephew. I this day received for him a clean discharge from
the Confederate service transferring him to Parr & Son during the war. Parr & Son are
potters in the City of Richmond an old well established firm here in operation long before
the war: they have a contract with government & do not intend to . . . any contract with
government; so I could see no possible objection in the way. It is proper that I should state
that they do not wish a contract with government as a matter of policy & not from
conscientious scruples. I had felt very much discouraged about Tilman’s case, and had
feared that his accumulated trials would have induced him to accept a detail on government
account, and was much gratified at the receipt of his last letter in which he declined it in so
simple & yet so noble a manner. I carried it to the Assistant Secretary of War, telling him
that tho’ the young man had not had the opportunity of an education I thought I could not
better answer his question as to T’s decision, than by showing him the letter; he read it
attentively, turned to me & enquired if there was a pottery in the City of Richmond & if I
could get him a situation there. I said I thought I could; went out to see & soon returned
with the necessary arrangements completed. Truly we may say, “the Lord’s arm is not
shortened that it cannot care, for just as we had lost all hope from man, He hath opened a
way where there seemed no way, and hath set the Captive free. To him be all the praise,
now henceforth & forever. With much love, in which the rest unite,
I remain thy friend
John B. Crenshaw
Thy brother & friend Isham Cox are here tonight. I send thy letter by the former, & with it a copy of the permit granted by Parr & Son for Tilmon to remain with you ten days from the time of his leaving the prison. It will be best for him to keep it with his exemption papers to save him from annoyance.

New Garden 11th mo 1864

The above is a copy of the instrument which was given me when I was released from prison, Crenshaw having in his possession the Original Discharge T.R.V.

Richmond June 22nd 1864

Military operations having occasioned a temporary suspension of my business I here by grant permission to Tilghman R. Vestal, to repair to New Garden, in Guilford Co North Carolina there to remain until further notice from me.

David Parr & sons,

Copy of permission with which I came to school at New Garden in 7th mo. 22nd T.R. Vestal

This was approved by order J.A. Campbell 22 June 64 A.S.W.

J24

Richmond 4th mo 10th 1864

Dear Aunt

No doubt thee was very much disappointed when the red my note and ascertained that I could not stop at Jamestown, but thee must not be troubled about that, rejoice rather because thee went to Salisbury in time for me to get clothes before leaving. The Authorities here did not have me brought here under guard to punish me, but I think it was done that they might know who they were releasing, and as Parr had to give a receipt for me, I think they wanted to be sure that I reached him. I was released from Castle Thunder on the morning of the fifth. I proceeded immediately to Parr with the man who took a receipt for me. I talked with Parr a while and went out to see my benefactor Crenshaw. There I found the most affectionate family that I ever visited: and I do hope that my temper and mind is tender enough to be influenced by them. I have just written a letter to Father and if I can only hear from them and know that he has ascertained what has become of me I will be willing to stay here two years Take every advantage to let the family know where I am for I expect to remain here. I like this pottery much better than fathers. I board with friend Parr. I and another journeyman have a room to our selves. I have not commenced yet but expect to in the morning. John B. brought me here yesterday made arrangements with Parr and I turned some to see what I could do. The river is very high and still raising. I went up to Whitelock's to meeting this morning and the water was over the streets for a hundred yards when I got back so that I had to crofs in an ambulanch. Drift is coming down and the seamen are busily engaged to keep it from lodging against the boats. I was very successful in getting my things here from Salisbury. I left the skillet for the use of the room and in the care of an honest man I think, his name is E.J. Cornealerson: to him I gave written authority to keep the skillet until Blackmer cauled for it and to deliver the skillet to him at the breaking up of the prison. I also sent Blackmer authority to demand the skillet at any time the or me should call for it. The had better write to Blackmer and find out whether he received the authority or not. I gave Junius Brown one sheet the bottle of vinegar and flaxseed. I do not want thee to try to send me any clothes by exprefs for it is an uncertain business. My black summer pants are nearly new and will do, I do not want to be too much
expence, for it will be a long time before I can support myself and go to school too and that is what I want to do. Aunt Judith Crenshaw put a pocket in my coat and I sent her a glass jar for her kindness I bought the jar cheap when I was at Salisbury. J.B.’s father presented the life of Wm. Penn

Tilghman R. Vestal

J25

Esteemed Cousin

The receipt of your letter was to me truly gratifying. I am grateful for your kind expressions of regard & esteem and assure that they are reciprocated – a reciprocity which is I feel sure, well merited.

I trust that in all your plans as to your movements & occupation you may be wisely led. I hope you may yet pitch your tent in old Virginia and near us. T’would be very pleasant. If the subject of removing to this part of the world should be agitated in your mind at any time please command my services in any inquiries you may wish to make relative to business prospects hereabouts. You speak of not being fully determined as to continuance at your present place. Hence I have thought that in looking around your eyes might have, under the influence of your conjugal connections, been turned somewhat in this direction. Should you come, I think we could have a great deal of friendly talk together & would he like to become good friends I am sure though disagreeing in some points, I can love(?) a brother in Christ that is under a strait . . . . A very good place as my experience proves to find a warm heart & an honest one too. I cordially respond to the charity you exprefs in this respect and trust that the . . . comes in apace when the motions of love in the breast of God’s people will be so strong as to . . . the barriers of sect, & section & party The truths on which we agree are the truths that save us. How much more important & how much more numerous they are than the points upon which we differ. However much Christians differ in doctrine they all pray alike. The Apostle peter I doubt not felt deeply the evils of the Roman Government with its slavery, its wars & its tyranny – yet was called to visit one of that Government’s servants who feared God & wrought righteousness -- & learned that before the same Lord where he worshipped the “prayers & alms’ deeds(?)” of the centurian had . . . up for a “memorial”

I deeply regret the slavery agitation to which you allude – I respect the scruples of our Northern brethren & am anxious we should keep every treaty with them on the subject – I always understood the Missouri Compromise to exclude slavery from that part of the Country where Nebraska lies – I think it recognizes an erroneous principle viz that Congrefs has power over this matter in the territories but where a contract has been made upon this principle I say let it stand, the principle of . . . first. Let it stand, make no more treaties recognizing it – but let this stand until it can be repealed by consent of both parties. When Mr. Webster in his great compromise speech a few years ago said this matter was fixed in all the territories by some law that could not be repealed that is excluded from California by . . . &c I understood him to mean that it was excluded from the Nebraska latitude by the Missouri Compromise – Nobody then complained of his positions they were left unanswered. As to slavery in the abstract I don’t contend for it – To the servant without regard to the manner in which he became a servant I say as did the Apostle obey your masters – “not only the good & gentle but the . . . also” – If ye be buffeted(?) take it patiently. To the
master "Render to your servants that which is just & equal(?) knowing that you have a
master in Heaven" – And I think this is the likeliest way to remove slavery – I humbly think
it is God’s way & that man by aiming at a more . . . process has postponed Gods good
purposes – Why my dear friend, we know that the evil of slavery is not so much in slavery
as in the heart of man – there is a wicked master & a wicked slave, both are wretched.
Make the slave free he is wretched still – Had he no opportunities of knowing & doing the
will of God while he was a slave? Yes just as good as he has now & better than thousands of
white men have. Now suppose that instead(?) of becoming free outwardly he had become
the Lord’s freeman Ah! He has obtained that which reconciles him to his lot which leads him
to praise God for his privileges instead of . . . at his disadvantages. He now sees that he is a
thousand times happier than many who . . . of their freedom – But go further Suppose he
has a “believing master” & the gospel work is thus complete – He receives things that are
just & equal from his master Christian love flows between master & slave, & the latter
scarcely feels himself a slave – If he wishes it he is probably soon emancipated – Now this I
take to be the Gospel way of curing the evil.
I know that a great deal . . . he said in reply, & is said about the equal rights of men to visit
the fountains of knowledge & have equal privileges of all . . . but we know full well that
with all these privileges without the divine habits of meekness, patience, & forbearance
which the gospel teaches men would be just as miserable as they are now.
You have been treated unjustly & so have I, we have been imposed upon, probably we have
worked where other men received the wages we ought to have had. What was our duty as
Christians, to rebel & summarily overthrow our oppressors? – or take it patiently thanking
God for the privilege of knowing Him by suffering for His sake – receiving the benefit of the
discipline in those hidden joys which the patient endurance of trial brings(?) to the heart, &
having the sweet assurance that in his own good time & by his own pure & peaceful means
full & complete justice & rich rewards would be ours.
I write in my office much hurried – Pray excuse all defects Remember me & my wife
(though she knows not of my writing) very affectionately to Cousins Sallie & Susan Mrs
Pleasants has been very low & her recovery is yet doubtful – Mary is with her & Eliza P also.
Her patience & meekness are truly edifying -- & the rich affection(?) which her lively spirit
has cherished in the hearts of her children are now returned upon her in a manner truly
interesting(?) & instructive Her brother Wm Bates of Ohio came to see her. He left last
evening – He is a lively character – yours truly P B P___(?)
As to your adrefs at the Temp(?) meeting – I think the frankness & good sense of your
remarks commanded the respect of your hearers to a gratifying degree
I had the pleasure of seeing Mrs B’s family a few weeks ago We have . . . heard more
recently Cousin M is I hope still . . . not having heard the . . .

J26

Jamestown N.C. 7th mo 23rd 1864

Friend John

I was very successful in getting off from Richmond; I succeeded in getting a seat
except from Greensboro to this place. The road which the Fedrels is nicely lain again with
good tea iron which is much better than the old flat iron. I think the corn crops between
Richmond and Danvill look better than those near Richmond, but between Dannville and
Greensboro the drowth seems to have been greater than at Richmond, here at Jamestown it
was dry weather for two or three weeks, but recently a very heavy rain has fallen, both here and all the way from Richmond. I made all the connections without trouble, carried my trunk myself from depot to depot, and made plenty of money as I had no expenses of laying over. I reached this place at half after twelve night found Charly Crump at the depot; he was coming to Grandmothers on a visit, as the burning of a br[idge] between here and Charleston S.C. has abated his labor at the shops. I believe there has been two bridges burnt on this road recently. It is supposed that some individual enemy of the Confederate States did the mischief; probably it was a deserter who was lying out, and I expect this the most likely. However Charly and myself came over and very agreeably surprised Grandmother and Aunt Judith, whom we found well except Judith has a boil. They were very glad to receive kind regards from thee and thy family. Able Garner and Aunt Delphinia are tolerably well, and all seem glad to know that I can go to school a little while.

Please write if thou art not very busy, if so authorize some one of thy useful family to write.

Very affectionately
Tilghman R. Vestal

J27
Jamestown N.C. 8th of 1st mo. 1864
To Tilman Vestal
My Dear Nephew

I have often thought of writing to thee, but still refrained – feeling that I could do no good – and believing that the true Comforter, the God of all Comfort, had been and was still drawing near to thee – to protect, and save.

Thy Grandmother, Aunt Judith, & other friends are in ordinary health – and all supported by the same blessed hope that the Holy Redeemer will be thy Friend and Saviour – even to the end. Our hearts are united in prayers for thee, above all blessings asking this, that He may enable thee to “follow” Him thro’ all tribulations – and thro’ the gate of pearl.

If there had been the faintest hope that our presence would have ministered to thy welfare, we would willingly have gone to Richmond. Judith & I have often talked of it, but without hope that some good would result from our visit, it seemed almost impossible for me to leave home.

When most dejected and oppressed, I have remembered thy faithfulness with joyful thanksgiving – and I have been truly refreshed – and my own faith strengthened by reflecting on the great goodness of the Great God toward thee.

If thou needs anything in our power to furnish, please let us know it.

Very affectionately
Thy Aunt
Delphina E. Mendenhall

J28
Recounce 8th mo 13th 1864
Esteemed Friend
Tilghman R. Vestal

Thy letter giving account of safe arrival among friends was rec’ed before I left Father’s, and should have been answered sooner; but perhaps thee has hardly yet realized the having so much to do as to make one . . . off from time to time almost anything that
can be: but at this time I ought not to plead off on that account, . . . our family is just now so much reduced; I feel as though I have almost nothing to do in the providing line, and am enjoying almost as much a holiday, as during my two weeks visit at Shrubbery(?) Hill. It will be two weeks tomorrow morning since J.B. went up in the carriage taking the three girls, who are still there on second day morn, we returned home, tho’ at a rather different rate of speed from that of our journey up; we had two horses instead of the mules that gave thee such an exercise of patience. Wm Crane was gone, and Mary Ricks went next day, so I have had only Timmy & Micajah besides John & the little children. Mickey went up to father a few days since, John B. went very early yesterday to caroline to the Ricks & thee knows is frequently away in the day (I am to meet him at the depot this eve) & Jimmy goes every day with a load of melons &c to market, so my little Willie & I have been dining together of late, quite a change from the long table thee is used to see here is it not? Immediately on our return we wrote to Natty to come home at once, which we fear by his not appearing has not been rec’ed. If so please tell him his Father wrote him word to settle all his accounts & get any balance of money [that] might remain with Jonathan Harris, and get the hides from A.W. Tomlinson’s packed & sent by express and come immediately. I regret that your opportunity of acquaintance is thus suddenly put a finish to, at least for the present.

We hear frequently from the girls, they are enjoying themselves very much at Fathers, & will remain another week or two. I have not been to Richmond but hear all are improving at Jane Whitlock’s. We are enjoying an abundance of fruit & vegetables; melons, peaches, cantelopes & apples very fine for such a dry season. We miss thee much, & should be glad to have thee enjoy these good things with us, & I wanted to have another talk with thee; but hope this is now in a way to improve in learning, & feel sure that thy capability, obliging disposition & willingness to learn, which have won for thee warm friends here, will always be to thy advantage in whatever situation thee may be placed: what is called the ‘etiquette of Society’ or, what is necessary to be known of it, is soon learned by intercourse with it, while the awkward blunders of one just entering are soon forgotten, particularly when one is known to act conscientiously from principle. _ _ My love to thy other Aunt Judith, tell her I have not forgotten her kind letter, but intend answering it: _ _ and ask her is she will be jealous if I accept the title the sometimes gave, & which being so accustomed to before I came here I quite liked. _ _ Jimmy has just go home, says he encountered a regiment of Cavalry, which not only relieved him rather summarily of nearly his whole load of melons and cantaloupes, but seemed inclined to take his hat, coat & dinner(?) into the bargain; the little fellow came off bravely however, as he usually does, when he feels imposed upon.

Write to us whenever thee feels disposed, of whatever interests thee, & how thee is progressing, & at all times feel assured of the regard & sympathy of thy sincere friend & well wishes

Judith A. Crenshaw

The enclosed letter came for thee a few days since. My love to Mary Harris. I wrote her when John B. wrote to Nattie.

8th mo 15th Nattie came in about one oclock in the night . . . .

J29

Esteemed Friend

Recounce 10th mo 9th 1864
Tilghman R. Vestal

Thy last two letters have come to hand but my dear J. has been too busy to write & I have felt very little like doing so since our sad bereavement. When thee wrote thee did not seem to have heard that our dear little Mary had gone so soon to [join] her brother in their eternal home with the dear Saviour, who lent them for a brief space, but has called them from a world of sin sorrow and suffering. How stripped it makes us feel, I have no language to tell, but thee has seen something of the affectionate disposition, and lovely winning ways by which they so twined themselves about the heartstrings. May we accept this trying dispensation as the (?) chastisement of a loving Father, and be enabled to bow in stark submission to the will of Him who doeth all things well.

We have heard nothing further about thy coming on & hope thee may be allowed to remain quietly at New Garden & with thy friends till after Yearly Meeting at least which I suppose is about three weeks off. _ _ We have very much enjoyed having Nattie with us & wish it might be longer but suppose it would not be best for him to remain out of school: he expects to leave us day after tomorrow with his Father who will see him some distance on his journey, should nothing occur to prevent. During this last (?) “on to Richmond” the Federals got at one time as far as cousin Martha Ann Bates and stationed their pickets here . . . her friends that best for her to come away, she is now in Richmond but expects . . . come out here and bring the rest of their children. Mickey & Jakey (?) are here now. Our three girls have the whooping cough, but I suppose are getting on with it quite favorably. _ 

Debbie & Katie are at home but Margaret is still at her Grandfather’s where she went to stay with Mother while Sister Mollie came down to attend our Half Year’s meeting one week ago, where we had the company of three friends from the lower meeting notwithstanding the troubled state of the country and their having to come round by Greensboro N.C. to get here from Southampton.

I will try, my friend, to find the letter thee wishes tho’ it may be no easy matter as John B. had all or most of his letters heaped away to make more room in his desk; but if I cannot now, I will try to get them all together and send by John when he goes to Yearly Meeting as he has now a prospect of doing, but I want to take the liberty of mentioning to thee a little matter: this war is not over, & we know not when it may be, or what any of us may yet be called on to suffer or endure on account of it and while we trust the sufferings & privations thee has already undergone have been received in a spirit of meekness, and humility, we know not what may yet be thy portion, and if thee is spared to see the close of the strife now raging in our midst, & to hold out faithfully in support of our Christian testimonies to the end it seems to me that would seem a far more favorable if not a more consistent time to publish to the world an account of thyself. “Let not him that putteth on his armor boast himself as he that putteth it off.” __

Since writing the above John says tell thee that Parr is anxious to know if thee is coming on to him, or going to ask for a transfer to someone in N.C. Parr is about to engage in government work. John wrote thee fully about it, which letter I suppose thee has rec’ed. I have been quite surprised at rec’ing no letter from Mary E. Harris, my love to her. I must close for this evening, with best wishes for thy welfare I remain thy very sincere friend _

Judith A. Crenshaw
J30
Recounce 11th mo . . . 1864
Esteemed Friend
TR Vestal

I have had quite a search for thy letters & send all I can find, by friend Carter together with the narrative of the sufferings of the three men I was speaking of to thee, and the Bible thee gave into my care during our long & tedious ride up to Fathers, it belonged I believe to thy brother Wm. I very often think of that ride, and how happy and contented I felt with my lovely little ones, and how much they seemed to enjoy the whole visit, sometimes I feel afraid I am not as much resigned as at first to parting with them, sometimes I fear I am almost murmuring(?) and yet I can say I would not wish them back. It seems to be uncertain whether the friends come back to our house, but I have several more things to get together, and letters to write, and would like to write more to thee, but must conclude for the present, my attention even now being very much divided between writing this and listening to the conversation of the friends which I do not like to miss. With love to thy Aunt and cousins, I remain

Thy attached friend
J.A. Crenshaw

I wrote thee immediately on my return from N.C. & sent a flag of truce letter which I hope thee rec’ed.
We rec’ed the minutes of the Meeting.
Please take care of the narrative – Return it by some convenient oppor-
tunity but we are in no hurry to have it again.

J31
Recounce 11th mo 12th 1864
7th day Eve.
Esteemed Friend
TR Vestal

On reaching home this eve we found the enclosed Flag of Truce letter in any(?) envelope directed to John B. which I send . . . & take the same opportunity to tell thee we arrived safely in Richmond about 7 o'clock last eve, after a wearisome ride since early in the morn or three oclock the last night. We had a very pleasant evening at Dr. Benbow’s, his wife seemed a very interesting & lovely woman, quite a number staid there beside our party. We formed quite a different idea of Greensboro after a moonlight view of it, from our first experience in its streets in the mud and darkness. I was very much pleased with the style of building there.
We found all getting on pretty well at home, Jimmy went to Richmond but they discouraged him by telling how irregularly the train came in & as he was uncertain of our coming that he had best go home; so we staid all night at Jane Whitlock’s & sent Marcelus home for the buggy & came out this eve; it is really pleasant to get home again even after a very pleasant visit, & one I shall ever remember I hope with feelings of satisfaction & gratification. Our children send love to thy cousins and thanks for the chestnuts; and I send
mine to the dear children and their Mother. We expect to attend the funeral of Edmund Pleasants tomorrow, he was a cousin of my dear John and married cousin Micajah Bates’ eldest daughter, she died about two years since, they leave three orphan children. Cousin Martha Ann Bates & children left our house, while we were away, for their new home at Chesterfield. Mickey is still with us & I expect will remain probably for some time. I am very much disappointed at not finding a letter from my dear Father have had none for twelve months. Hope thy letter contains good news from the home circle. In haste
Thy friend
J.A. Crenshaw
Love to thy Aunt Judith when thee sees her. John B. sends love to enquiring friends.

J32
Orange Court-house Va.
21st of 8th mo /63

Friend Crenshaw

That thou may be acquainted with me I first give this introduction: my name is Tilmon R. Vestal I was born in Yadkin Co N.C. in 1844 the child of M.A. Vestal, & Nephew of Richard Nereus Mendenhall who I suppose thou went to school with at Newgarden. In the year 59 I with the rest of my Fathers family reashed Maury Co Tenn. The family then consisted of 5 girls, our parents and three boys, the oldest one of these thou most faithfully attended to at Richmond last summer, and I am the next oldest, I am here in camps but not in service of the Confederate states or any other states I was conscripted last march (or February when I was taken up) and carried to Shelbyville Tenn where I was joined to a regt but I refused to do any kind of duty I was not punished but released by GI Polks A.A. GI who just wrote to the provost Marshall that I seemed to be a Quaker & exempt & that he would approve of a pasport for me to Columbia: he did so and I went home stayed until the 27 of the 6th mo when all of suitable age ware ordered to go up to town where there discharges would be read & there cases investigated to see if they ware exempt I went with the writing given me at Shelbivill which was to the provost Marshall & not to exempt me. The superintendent of the conscript said I could be exempt by paying $500 to the Treasurer of the Confederate States or hire a substitute this I new before I was first arrested but I did not choose to buy an exemption furnish a substitute or give ade to the war in any way and as $500 in the treasury would aid it I concluded to risk the consequences & submit to the penalty of the law: he advised me to pay the money saying the GI at Shelbiville did not understand the case or he would not have released me & that I would not be released any more; his name was Butler & seemed to be a kind man giving all their dues according to the law Some men that belong to the Christian or Camelite Church in my neighborhood payed the money but that did not influence me to do so. I suppose the Dunchards &c. and some of the Friends have paid the fine but others I understand have refused & their property has been taken to the amount wanting. Major Butler under the influence of my enroaling officer gave me four days in which I could go home before I went to report to the same regt that I was in & released from in the 3 mo it was then at Shelbiville I went home & started from home in time to get to the regt before the four days ware out, but it moved to Chatanuga as my enroaling officer had stood security no writings drawn for me that I would report to the Col of the regt I still pursued; when I reashed the regt the Col. seemed glad to see me but said I must fight or dy and set the hour he did not have me garded or punished in any way
except he would draw no rashons for me no one expected me to be executed & him in particular after about three weeks. I was sent to the conscript camp at Knoxville Tenn There I remained several days & was for the first time put under gard it was because I would not drill I was sent from there here assigned to the 14th Tenn regt as any other conscript I informed my officers of my condition, but they said they could do nothing for me & they must do their duty which was to make me fight I was sent to the Brig Gl he read the law to me which was that an actual member that had belonged before the year/62 was exempt by paying to a quartermaster or their A.A. a sum of $500 here the money would all go immediately to the use of the war The Gl asked me if I belonged at that time I told him that I never had belonged to the church he said I was in for the war then & told the sentinel to take me to the Col & tell him to make me go into it, this was the 16th of 8th mo I was not put on drill for some time but eventually I was detailed to clean up camps on 18 I refused to do it told the Col that I could not do any thing for the benefit of the army but as a punishment I could submit but he said it was no punishment it was a regular detale Well I just tell you I can not do duty at this he jumped up said I will make you went off and brought up his police with guns & bayonets one of them set a shovel by me & said take it and go to work I did not comply and up came the police & repeated the command I looked him full in the face & said do you think I would endanger my soul to benefit my body at this they began to pierce me with their bayonets I received 16 pierces one of which was an inch deep the remainder about a quarter and still refused saying nothing could make me go to war I was then put on a dirt pile with a spade across my neese the doctor came up had me carried to my tent and drissed my wounds

affectually Tilmon R. Vestal