

Winter 2-2-1879

# Letter from Delphina E. Mendenhall to John L. Ham, February 1, 1879

Delphina E. Mendenhall

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Jamestown N. C.  
1st of 2nd mo. 1879

To John L. Ham

Dear Friend

I am the old lady who rec'd  
four prisoners discharged from Salisbury,  
when it was expected Gen. Sherman would  
march from Columbia S. C. to that  
place, and avenge the murder which had  
been perpetrated there.

It was a cold, drary, rainy evening  
when you reached my house, and we  
received at the kitchen fire, until we  
could kindle a fire in the dining-room.

~~After supper you were sent to the~~  
office, and were supplied with hot water,  
soap, towels, oil for the frozen feet &c.

You had blankets, that had been sent you  
by your Government. (I am thankful that  
I can now say, our government.)

Next morning after breakfast you were  
furnished with some provisions to carry with

has passed away in peace, to the "Better Land".

One daughter preceded her - another daughter  
died four years ago, both prepared for the  
solemn change of worlds. The other children  
are gone - some in Indiana - some in  
Texas - to try to make a living.

Some of the colored people emancipated by  
my Husband, are doing very well. One of them  
is a graduate of Howard University, Washinton  
City, and is now teaching a school of 70 pupils,  
about 10 miles from me. Another noble boy,  
graduated at Howard University, & married a  
young woman also educated there. They both  
studied medicine, at Washington, & are in  
Heaven, Ohio - with a fine practice among both  
white & colored people.

My dear friends, if I have been the instrument  
in doing any good act, remember, not I,  
but the Lord Jesus must have the thanks.

Truly thy friend  
Delphina E. Mendenhall

Please let me hear about thy journey home from  
and history since. I have written partly by way of sample -  
Wilmington

you. Just at starting, I asked your names  
& residence - George Gardner of N. Y. State  
& John L. Ham of Maine, are all the names  
I recollect - tho' I have in the house a  
Mem. book containing the address of each.

My maiden name was Gardner. My husband  
George W. Mendonhall emancipated 50 Slaves  
& removed them to Ohio previous to his death  
in 1860. By will he emancipated 30 more -  
being all he owned, & left me sole executrix.

In 1860 I succeeded in removing a part  
of these to Ohio. In 1861 I started with all  
the remainder, & was turned back by an  
armed mob - There was great rejoicing among  
the free & many part of the community. Yet  
as calm as a summer sea, on my way home,  
for I trusted in my Saviour for deliverance.

Every year during the war, efforts were made  
to take some portion of these poor colored people  
out of my hands for army use - The war  
closed without one of them being involved  
in it - for God was with me.

I did not suffer any losses by either  
army - But by the destruction of the Banks,  
and State stock, this means my Husband  
left for my support in old age, is gone - and  
persons indebted to my Husband's estate, were  
made insolvent by the effects of the war.

My cousin Abel Gardner, who had been  
an inmate of our family more than 20 years  
during the life of my Husband, still lives  
with me. He has been all his life, a rare  
example of pure integrity & uprightness.

By losses in the Bank, & the insolvency of  
those who had borrowed money from him,  
his comfortable estate, was also mostly  
destroyed by the war. He is now 70 years  
of age. If I live two days longer, I shall  
be 68 - on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of this month.

He is the man, who walked with you to the  
Depot. We live 1 1/2 miles North west of the  
depot.

My only sister, a widow, residing here  
with her young children, when you were here,

Jamestown N. C.

1st

of 2nd

mo. 1879

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Dear Friend

I am the old lady who rec<sup>d</sup> four prisoners discharged from Salisbury when it was expected Genl. Sherman would march from Columbia S. C. to that place, and avenge the horrid cruelties that had been perpetrated there.

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