

Hugh Fisher correspondence

Section 4, Pages 91 - 120

The collection consists of incoming and some outgoing correspondence and personal recollections of Hugh Fisher, involving the military, Fisher family members, and others; as well as recollections of Quantrill's 1863 raid against Lawrence from both Reverend Fisher and his son Charles. Fisher served as chaplain and was commissioned captain with the 5th Regiment Kansas Volunteers.

Date: 1861-1865

Callnumber: Hugh Dunn Fisher Coll. #343, Box 1 Folders 1-11

KSHS Identifier: DaRT ID: 225900

Item Identifier: 225900

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KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY



McCleary

Blairsville Sept 25th /63

Rev Hugh S Fisher;

Dear Bro'

I have read with thrilling interest and gratitude the account of your Providential escape from the hands of the Rebels and I rejoice to know that my old and dear friend still lives.

Bless the Lord for his goodness. I felt like joining with you & your wife & little ones in praising God for his wonderful kindness to you and family.

Please accept the note within as a feeble expression of gratitude and love for you and yours.

I said to a brother that I intended to send you something and he handed me a dollar to help you.

Hugh Fisher correspondence

We are plodding on in the old fashion and things are so monotonous that you in the midst of scenes so exciting would feel but little interest in them.

The best of all is the Lord is still with us.

Our Black Lick Campmeeting was good 40 or more gave their names as Probationers.

The District is in great peace and we hope that next week our Elder W Dymek will have a mother for his children. She now resides in Yansville Oh

Our suffering Kansas! we hope that she may rise in her strength and demolish herder ruffians "Red Tape" and all that opposes freedom.

Please accept our most earnest



Hugh Fisher correspondence

Wishes for your well fair
and Mrs M^e going in love
to you, and your wife and little
ones.

As ever yours in Christian
and fraternal bonds.

J. H. Mc Cleary

\$ 500

\$ 100



Hugh Fisher correspondence

Phil^a Sept 25th 1863.
Dear Bro in Christ,

Your perils have been
great, "But out of them all the Lord has
delivered you," Continue to trust in
the Lord and do good, and thou
shalt dwell in the land, and surely
thou shalt be fed, accept this my
mite for your immediate wants
& oblige,

one who has read,

\$5.00



Hugh Fisher correspondence

St. Louis Mo.
Septm. 27th 1863
Mr. E. M. Fisher }
Lawrence Kans. }

Dear Wife & Boys,

I am most happy
to say I am well this morning
and in pretty fine spirits. I have
had a pleasant night's sleep so
I feel refreshed and comfortable
but would love very much to see you
all. And especially to see you in getting
into our home again. I sincerely
hope you will all be prosperous
and happy even in my absence.
I cannot tell how soon I may
be home but just as soon as it
will be possible for me to come.
Now what I cannot tell you more
about the business than you best
conduct this myself. I know you will.
This afternoon I met Bro. Turner and
Wilkinson colored gentlemen from Kansas.
They return soon to Kansas. I have
been called to consult with the
"Sanitary Commission" here on
the subject of oversight of the
colored regiments organizing

Hugh Fisher correspondence

They Propose to Oversee the Culinary department
 and instruct the Soldiers in their Diet
 so as to keep them as healthy as possible
 They have hinted to me that they will wish
 me to travel through the North so as to
 create sympathy for the Cause. if they
 can get Gen Halleck to Detail me
 But I hope Gen. Canby will be in
 ahead of them. That would suit me
 best what I could see you often than
 than by any other method of work
 But as it is all of God, not of my seeking
 I shall await the development without
 any undue anxiety. At the same time
 My Dear you must feel content with
 whatever shall be the result for I think
 we have reason to think you is our
 refuge in time of trouble, and will ever
 lead us in the way in which we should
 go. Oh I wish I could follow him closely
 My rebellious nature keeps saying that
 I ought to be at home. But how can
 I stay at home, and support my family
 when in Leavenworth Liz Bro M.
 proposed a plan. Do you know
 what it is, well this we will
 build a second Church. We fully
 sharing the Toils and Salaries with
 me

Hugh Fisher correspondence

He says it can be done. If so, I'd
could get one Standard a year for two
years, it would be better than what
I am doing by expenses are of
necessity more true than if I was
with my Regiment. but if I had
right need a Coffin as you
a Quaker. so I would rather
be here. But much better be at
home with my Dear Ones. so as
to enjoy their society and aid
in their comfort. Now I will
have written all. and we will
await Gods Providence to
direct.

Yours for Me.
Johns Tins

H. S. Fisher

Have the Boys take good care
of the man. and say I have
only received your letter of the
21st inst. I see Bro A. E. W. has
been raised and sent 14\$ for us
H.S.F.



Hugh Fisher correspondence

HEAD QUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF THE MISSOURI,

St. Louis, Mo., Oct. 12th 1863.

SPECIAL ORDERS, }

No. 268 }

10. . . . Chaplain H. D. Fisher,
Asst. Supt. of Contrabands, (with
two orderlies) will repair to
Leavenworth City, Kansas, in charge
of sixty contrabands, for the purpose
of procuring for them homes, in
that vicinity.

Having performed this duty,
Chaplain Fisher will report
back in person at these Head
Quarters.

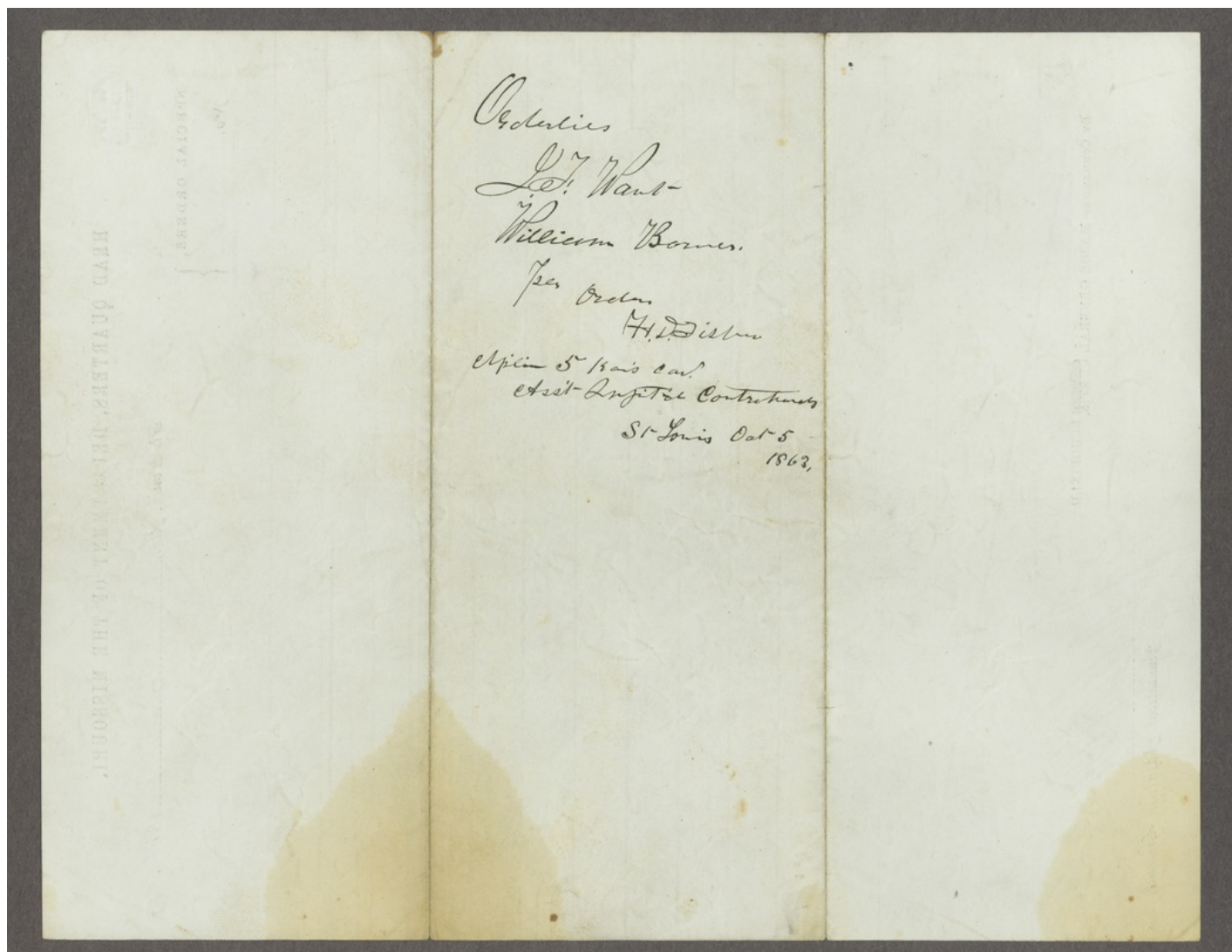
The D. M. Dept. will furnish
transportation.

BY COMMAND OF MAJOR GENERAL CURTIS, SCHOFIELD.

Chaplain Fisher

Assistant Adjutant General.

Hugh Fisher correspondence





Hugh Fisher correspondence

HEAD QUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF THE MISSOURI,

St. Louis, Mo., Oct 30th 1863.

SPECIAL ORDERS, }

No. 297. }

2. Chaplain H. D. Fisher, Asst.
Supt. of Contrabands, accompanied
by two orderlies, will proceed, without
delay, to Kansas, in charge of such
contrabands as may be turned over
to him by the Supt., for the purpose of
obtaining homes for them there.

Upon arriving at Leavenworth,
the orderlies will be relieved from
further duty with the party, and
return, at once, to this city, and
report to the Supt. of Contrabands.

Chaplain Fisher is authorized
and directed to examine into and
report upon the condition of such
Contrabands as may have been here-
before sent to Kansas from this city
under similar circumstances.



Hugh Fisher correspondence

During his absence, Chaplain
Fisher will report, weekly, by letter, to
these Head Quarters.

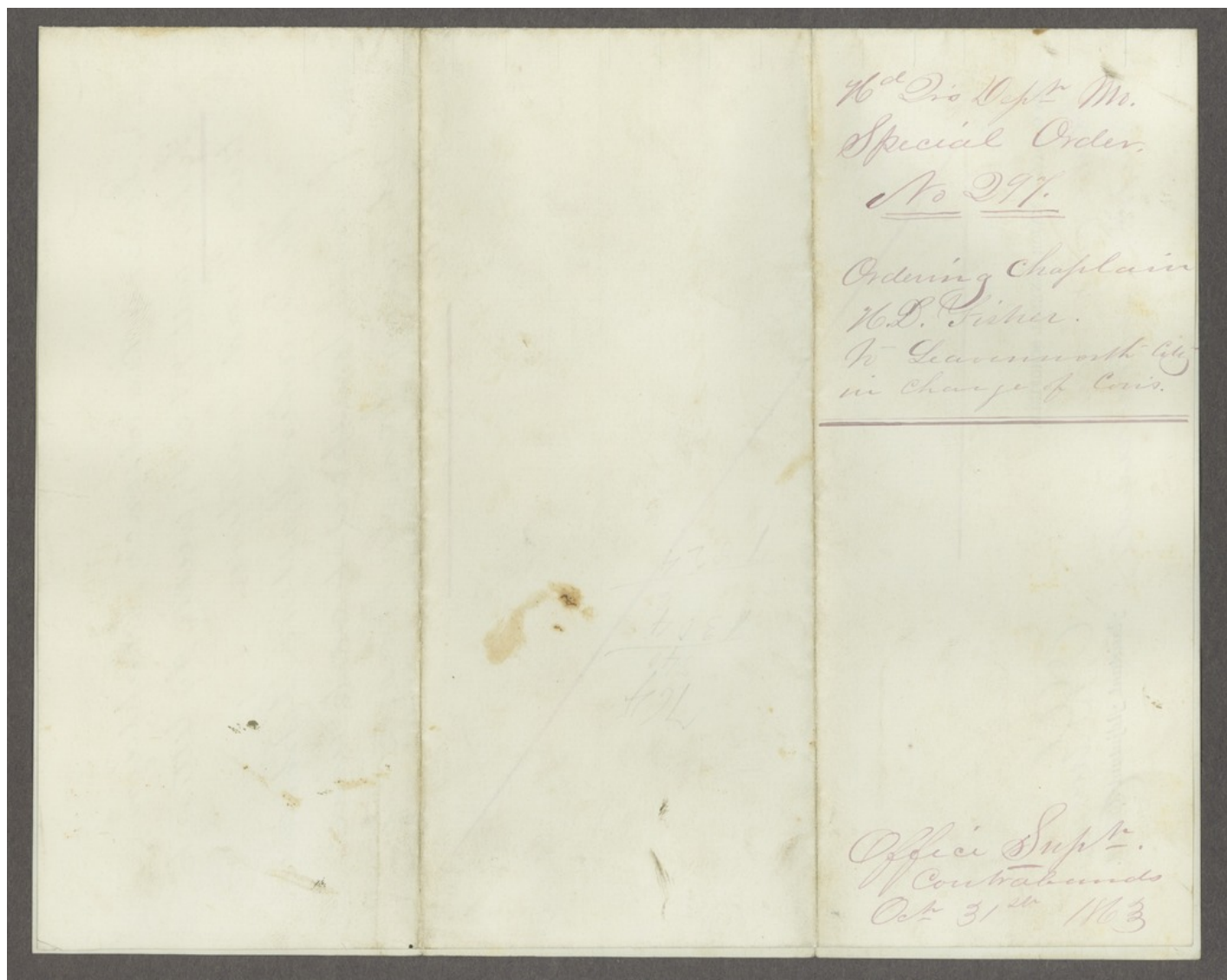
The Quarter Masters Dept. will
furnish transportation to and
returning from Kansas, to the
party. _____

BY COMMAND OF MAJOR GENERAL SCHOFIELD,

Chaplain Stone-
Supt. Contrabands

W. H. Guiney
Assistant Adjutant General.

Hugh Fisher correspondence





ROOMS WESTERN SANITARY COMMISSION,

St. Louis, NOV 30 1868

My dear Sir.

It seems to me that you are working wisely & with the right spirit: and therefore make no further suggestions. Probably Mr. Forbes will do as well for us at Washington as any one, & we cannot send special members on the Com^e named, uninvited.

A private letter from Secy of War expresses cordial sympathy for the general work & promises all practicable assistance to all workers. Of this you can speak freely. Also, of the President's hearty feeling with the enterprise.

I inclose a recent letter from Mr. Y. We have sent all he asked for, which will relieve some party the suffering.

Yrs truly,
W. G. Eliot.



Hugh Fisher correspondence

Office Supdt Contrabands
Benton Barracks Mo
Nov. 2^d 1863.

To
Orderlies Barnes. and Dix.

You are directed
to take the entire Charge and Control
of the Party of Contrabands en-rout for
Kansas, as far, Genl Schofield's, Special
Order No 297 Dated Oct 30th 1863 at
St Louis Mo. and Report the same
to me without delay at Leavenworth
City Kansas.

The accompanying Orders
are furnished you, to facilitate Safety
and Transportation without delay for the
party to their destination.

H. D. Fisher Chaplain, 5th I.C.
Assistant. Supdt Contrabands.

J. R. Newell
Chaplain, 1st Infy Mo. I.C.
and Sup. of Contrabands



Hugh Fisher correspondence

Head Quarters, Department of the Missouri,

St. Louis, Mo., *Nov 12* 1863

SPECIAL ORDERS, }

No. *319*

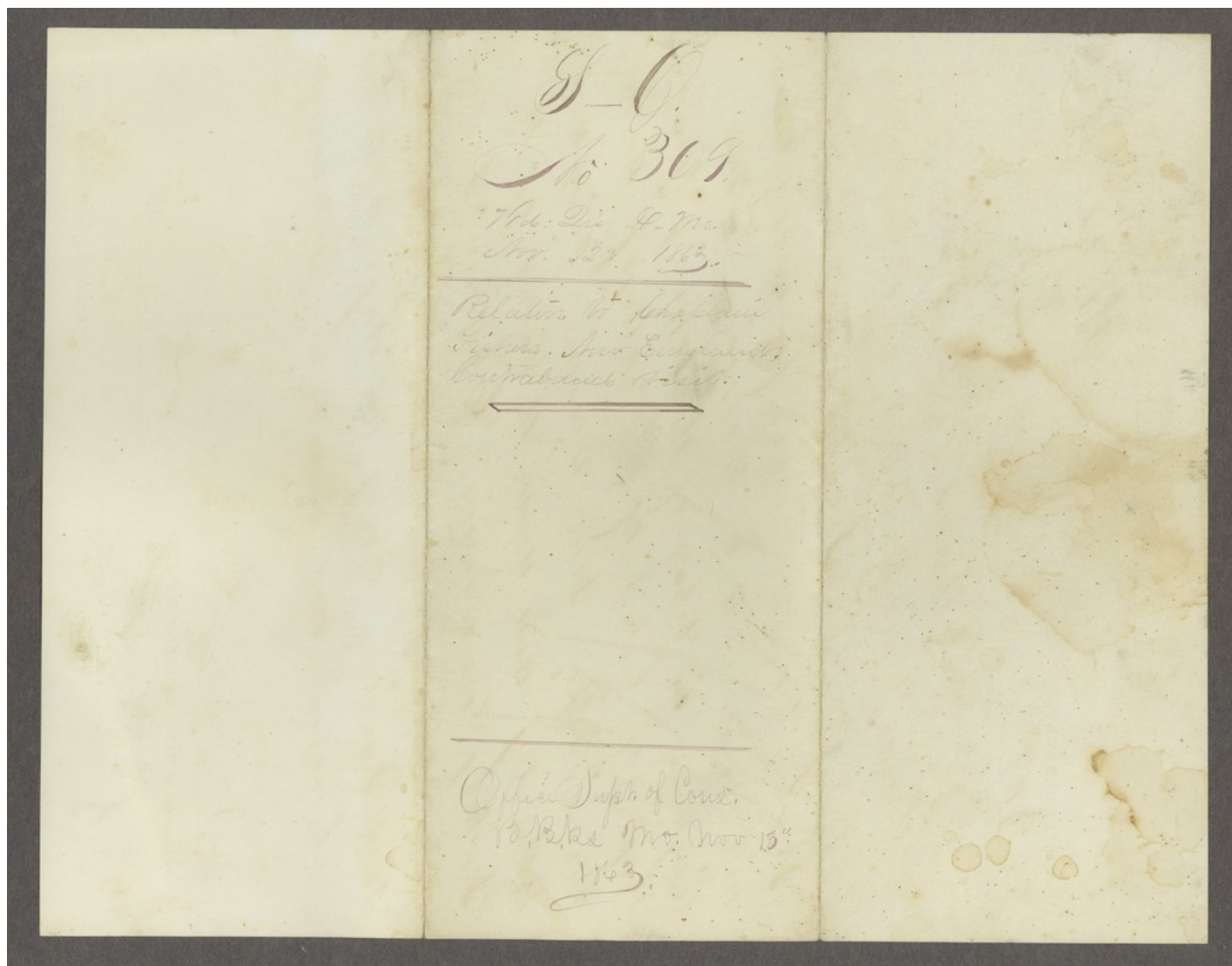
8. . . . Chaplain H. D. Fisher of the
5th Kansas Cavalry, will report without delay
to Mr. James E. Seaburn, President Western
Sanitary Commission, for instructions
with reference to a mission to New
England, in behalf of the suffering freed
people, (of color) of the Valley of the lower
Mississippi. Said mission being under
taken by and under the control of the
Sanitary Commission. Chaplain Fisher
will make reports in writing to these
Head Quarters, every ten days as to his
whereabouts and success in the mission.

BY COMMAND OF MAJOR GENERAL SCHOFIELD.

Chaplain Newell
Sup. Contrabands

O. D. Linn
Assistant Adjutant General,

Hugh Fisher correspondence





Hugh Fisher correspondence

Contraband Inspected
Benton Banacks
Nov. 13, 1863.

Rev Dr. Stebbins:

My dear Sir:

The bearer, Rev Mr. Fisher, whom the Sanitary Commⁿ sends to the East, on a mission for the aid of the Contrabands, is an associate of mine, in the good work here.

I cordially recommend to you and others, as a man in every respect worthy your confidence.

I am

Yours

J. R. Newell.
Sup. of Contrabands
Benton Banacks,
Mo.



Cincinnati Nov. 15. 1863

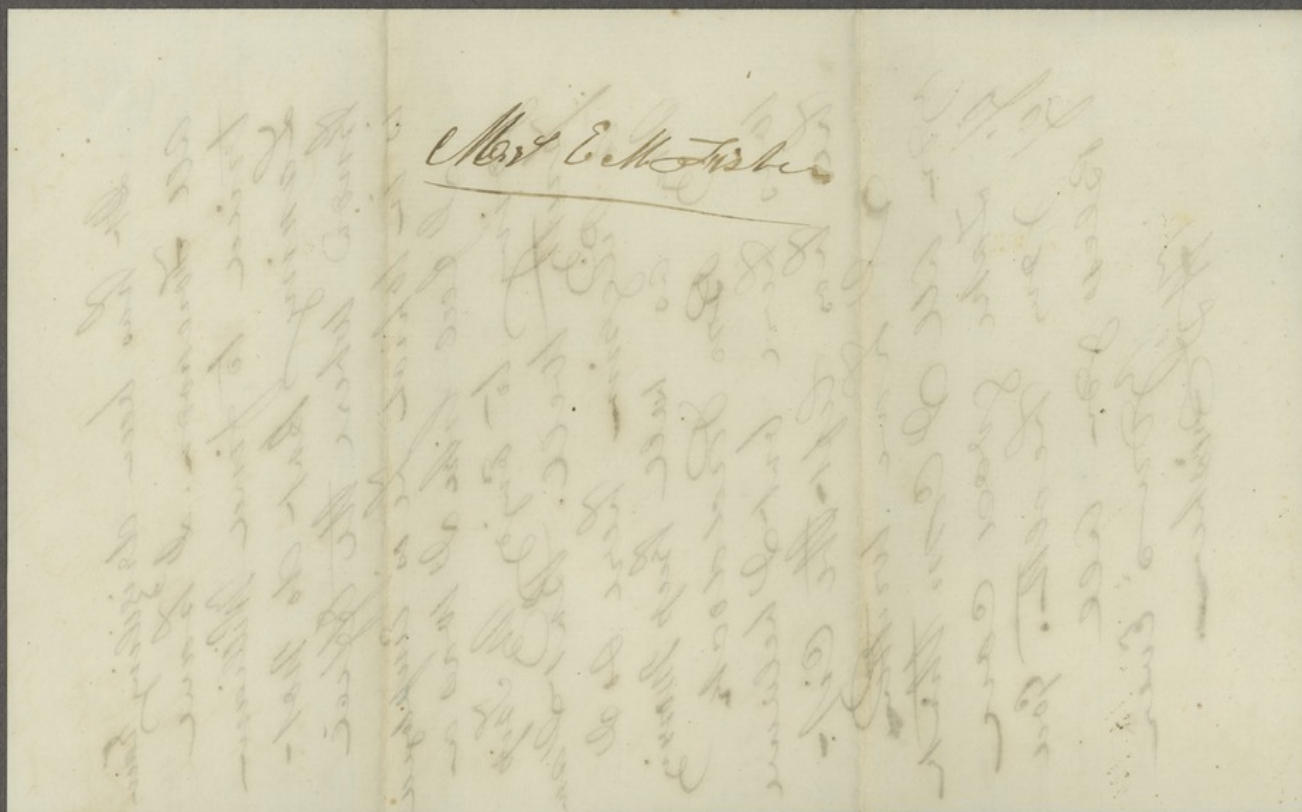
Dear Lib & Family

I arrived here in the Train from St. Louis at 9 A.M. Took Breakfast at the Henrie House. I had a good Night's Sleep in the Sleeping Car. Which is a grand affair. After Breakfast I proceeded to the Trinity M.E. Church. was invited to Preach this Evening, which I expect to do. I told them I was on my way to New-England and would visit them on my return. I have just my Dinner and feel pretty well. I should love to have the pleasure of sitting this afternoon by your side, and talking to you all

Hugh Fisher correspondence

It has been drizzling rain
all forenoon. I have
tried to find William
Lanning but do not
know where the office
is in which he is employed.
I feel like I was a
going to enjoy my trip
pretty well. But I am
a Pilgrim here so I
may as well keep moving.
Bro Paddock
was here but I believe
he has left the city.
I have written
you all I can think
of. Take good care
of your health. God
Bless you all
Yours Ever
H. Fisher

Hugh Fisher correspondence





Fitchburg Shunday
Ery. Dec 3/63

Mr Gardner

Dear Sir

I have
just come from a meeting
of our Citizens. at which
an organization was perfected
for the purpose of securing
contribution for the suffering freedmen.

At the meeting I made
use of your suggestion
of yesterday in regard
to obtaining the aid of
Rev Mr Fisher. The
meeting authorized me
to obtain him at the
earliest convenient time
Will you call at



Mr F: send quarters
and if possible obtain
him to come here
Saturday Evg. to speak
next Sunday Evg.

If he cant come
then. a week from
Sunday will answer
the same we get
to work. the letters
from the needy ones
concerned -

Please reply tomorrow
if possible. that I
may post him Saturday
Yours truly

B. Snow



ROOMS WESTERN SANITARY COMMISSION,

St. Louis, Dec 5. 1863

My dear Sir.

At this distance it is hard to advise, and you seem to be doing excellently well.

As a general suggestion I w^d repeat that we should avoid all appearance of rivalry or competition with other organizations. It is a matter of indifference to us who does the work, so that it is done. Let them send to New York Socy if they prefer, & thank them just the same. The Boston Organ^z is good, and we can work with it or as its agents & distributors, with satisfaction. I am particularly desirous that it should be understood that we take hold of the work only because of the necessity & because St. Louis is the proper base of action. I Congratulate you on your prospects - and remain

Yrs truly.

Rev. H. D. Fisher.

W. G. Eliot



[Smith?]

Fitchburg, Dec 7th/63

W. N. Woodruff, Esq

by Mr. [unclear]

Dear Sir

Please

Engage Mr Fisher to come
up to address our Citizens
on Sunday Evg next.
I wish to engage him also
to supply the pulpit of
the Unitarian Church, same
day. "3^d Church is now
without a settled pastor
The church is poor & can't
pay him but \$10. for
his services - He should
take the 4:00 ch train on
Saturday, from Boston & ask
the Conductor to pass me
out to him on the arrival
of the train here - on



Dear Mr. F. act for
any organization - or
under Govt. sanction
Please reply as
soon as possible as
I wish to advertise
him in our paper
for Wednesday - & by
posters -

In haste

Truly
Yours

B. Smith



ROOMS WESTERN SANITARY COMMISSION,

St. Louis,

Dec. 7.

1863

My dear Sir.

My letters from Mr. Yeatman enable me to say what I hesitated to say before, - that this urgent charity demand for the freed people is only for a few months. As soon as justice is done to them & fair arrangements are made for their employ^{ment}, they will take care of themselves. What we want therefore now is liberal contributions to meet the pressing ^{& temporary} exigency. Probably six months will carry them over the charity stage, ~~but~~ ^{and} a slow working plan would do no good at all. Perhaps I am too sanguine, but Mr. Yeatman says that every thing he sees, convinces him that the freed people are able & willing to take care of themselves, as soon as they have a chance. They

all expect to work and
only ask reasonable wages
& fair treatment.

I advise that you present
these views ^{publicly &} strongly, as the
facts of the case. Do not let
the people think that this is a
permanent encumbrance, or
that it is beyond their strength.

Let Charity work freely to re-
lieve the immediate distress, &
political economy & the usual
laws of demand & supply will
provide for the future.

Very truly Yrs -

W. L. Eliot.

To Chaplain

H. D. Fisher.

Also

M. J. Leudder Esq

Secy. to

(This may be published, if you think best.)

Hugh Fisher correspondence

LETTER OF INSTRUCTION.

ROOMS WESTERN SANITARY COMMISSION,
St. Louis, November 10th, 1863.

REV. H. D. FISHER,
Chaplain Fifth Kansas Cavalry.

DEAR SIR:

At the request of this Commission, you have been detailed by Major-General Schofield, Commanding this Department, to proceed to New England and present to the consideration of the Friends of Liberty and Humanity in those States, the suffering condition of the colored people of the valley of the Lower Mississippi, who have been set free by the President's Proclamation of Freedom; but who, owing to the disturbed condition of the country, the presence of armed forces, and the absence of employers, are reduced to a situation of great misery, and are perishing in large numbers, from neglect, want of clothing, shelter, suitable food and medicine, which, to all who are not in the military service, can only be adequately supplied by the benevolent action of the people of the Free States, until returning peace shall afford these poor, emancipated people occupation upon the soil and the rewards of labor, with which to provide for themselves.

The fact that the Commission has, with your concurrence, requested your assignment to this work, and that the Commanding General has cheerfully granted the request, will be an evidence to you, and to the friends of this cause, that you are deemed worthy and competent to undertake this mission, and will commend you to their confidence, while it will also indicate the great importance attached to the undertaking.

In sending you to New England to engage in this work, the Commission think it advisable that you should be provided with a letter, which will serve the double purpose of an introduction and of advice and instruction to you as to the general method of accomplishing the objects of your mission.

I. It will be advisable for you to proceed, in the first instance, to Boston, and get together fifteen or twenty of the leading friends of the cause, to whom you will present copies of the letter of the Commission to the President of the United States; setting forth more fully the manner in which the Commission is called to this work, the pressing necessity of it, and the appeal it makes to the patriotism and humanity of the country and the government to engage in it; adding to the letter such facts and considerations as are within your own knowledge and experience on the subject.

II. You will then invite their co-operation and friendly conference as to the best method of awakening an interest and sympathy in the public mind in your mission, suggesting whether the co-operation of the clergy cannot be obtained, and they induced to present it to their congregations, and take up collections, and establish "Freedmen's Aid Societies;" inviting, also, the loyal women of the East to engage in the work; and suggesting, further, the appointment of an ADVISORY FREEDMEN'S AID COMMITTEE, and a GENERAL RECEIVING AGENT, at Boston, and of COLLECTING AGENTS, to assist you in canvassing the towns and cities of New England: establishing in them auxiliary committees and agencies, to act in conjunction with the CENTRAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE and GENERAL RECEIVING AGENT, at Boston. And in all this you will endeavor to secure the influence of the public press in favor of your work, and will suggest to the more active friends of the movement to aid you by writing articles for the leading newspapers on the subject.

Hugh Fisher correspondence

III. The character of the contributions most needed may be described as follows:—*First*, MONEY, which will be required in generous sums to carry out so extensive a work, to establish and sustain the necessary agencies, to purchase many things not contributed in sufficient quantities, and to provide, as far as practicable, schools and teachers in localities where large numbers of freed people are congregated. *Secondly*, CLOTHING; good second-hand garments, for men, women and children, and, which is preferable, materials for clothing; chiefly coarse blankets, linseys, jeans and heavy osnaburgs, coarse woolen socks and stockings, or yarn, and shoes. *Thirdly*, MEDICINES; cough and diarrhoea medicines being greatly needed, and in large quantities. *Fourthly*, Articles of Food, farina, &c., for the sick. *Fifthly*, competent volunteer teachers, either male or female, having strength, courage, fortitude and a heart for this work; willing to go for small salaries, and able to endure hardships as good soldiers of Christ.

IV. All contributions obtained for this cause will be forwarded, without unnecessary delay, to the WESTERN SANITARY COMMISSION, at St. Louis, Mo., under whose direction all disbursements and distributions will be made, through existing agencies and such others as it may be found expedient to establish, in which the co-operation of the Freedman's Associations of the West will be invited.

V. In the furtherance of this important work, the President of the Western Sanitary Commission is now just starting (November 10th, 1863) to visit the whole field of operations between this city and New Orleans.

VI. After visiting Boston, and organizing your work there, you will visit the leading cities of New England, Providence, R. I.; Worcester, Springfield, New Bedford, Lynn, Salem, Lowell, Lawrence, Mass.; Portsmouth, N. H.; Portland, Me.; Hartford and New Haven, Conn.; and on your return from your mission to New England, you will also visit New York, Philadelphia, Newark, N. J.; Syracuse, Rochester and Buffalo; Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago and Cincinnati, and secure what aid you can in those cities.

VII. In all these places you will endeavor to secure the appointment of "Freedmen's Aid Committees" and "Societies" with responsible Collecting Agents, who will forward their contributions to this Commission; and you will hold public meetings, make collections, and receive private contributions, as far as practicable, yourself; and forward them in drafts, or otherwise, to the President of this Commission, keeping a regular account of the same; and a separate account, also, of all the expenses of your mission. And should you be unable to visit all the places named in Massachusetts, you will endeavor to reach the interior towns by such agents as the Advisory Committee at Boston may recommend to you; or by letters and circulars addressed by mail to the clergymen and leading men of those towns, and of all the towns and cities of New England. In this the Boston Advisory Committee will be able to lend you important and valuable assistance. With these letters and circulars, it might be well to inclose copies of the letter of the Commission to the President of the United States, to which his response will be added when it is received, and also of this letter of advice and instruction.

VIII. Commending you to the friendship, confidence and well-known liberality of the people of New England, whose blood has been so freely shed on every battle-field of our country, in the sacred cause of Union and Liberty, and whose generous contributions have already enabled this Commission to do so much for the sick and wounded of the Great Western Armies; we confidently rely that your mission will be crowned with success, and that this appeal to the Christianity and Humanity of the nation will not be made in vain.

JAMES E. YEATMAN,

President Western Sanitary Commission.



LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

ROOMS WESTERN SANITARY COMMISSION,
St. Louis, November 6th, 1863.

HIS EXCELLENCY, A. LINCOLN,
President of the United States.

SIR:— The undersigned, members of the Western Sanitary Commission, most respectfully represent, that the condition of the Freed Negroes in the Mississippi Valley is daily becoming worse, and calls most loudly upon the humane and loyal people of the Northern States for help. There are probably not less than fifty thousand, chiefly women and children, now within our lines, between Cairo and New Orleans, for whom no adequate provision has been made. The majority of them have no shelter but what they call "brush tents," fit for nothing but to protect them from night dews. They are very poorly clad—many of them half naked—and almost destitute of beds and bedding—thousands of them sleeping on the bare ground. The Government supplies them with *rations*, but many unavoidable delays arise in the distribution, so that frequent instances of great destitution occur. The army rations (*beef and crackers*) are also a kind of diet they are not used to; they have no facilities of cooking, and are almost ignorant of the use of wheat flour; and even when provisions in abundance are supplied, they are so spoiled in cooking as to be neither eatable nor wholesome. Add to these difficulties, the helplessness and improvidence of those who have always been slaves, together with their forlorn and jaded condition when they reach our lines, and we can easily account for the fact that sickness and death prevail to a fearful extent. No language can describe the suffering, destitution and neglect which prevail in some of their "camps." The sick and dying are left uncared for, in many instances, and the dead unburied. It would seem, now, that one-half are doomed to die in the process of freeing the rest.

Our purpose is not to find fault, but to seek for the remedy. Undoubtedly, Congress must take the matter in hand, to mature plans of permanent relief; but, judging from past experience, a good many months will elapse before its final action, and there will still remain a great deal that properly belongs to private charity, and for which legislation cannot provide.

To meet the present exigency, and to prevent or lessen the sufferings of the coming winter and spring, we offer our humble but active services, asking no reward of any kind, but the opportunity and encouragement to work. Our experience for two and a-half years past, in the sanitary cause of the sick and wounded, has taught us the lessons of economy and prudence, and we are too much accustomed to difficulties to be discouraged by them. It may not be unbecoming in us to say, in recommending ourselves for the work proposed, that in the two years from October, 1861, to November, 1863, we have received and expended for the sick and wounded of the Western Army, in stores or money, to the amount of a million and a quarter of dollars, and that the total expenses of distribution, including all salaries and incidental charges, has been but little in excess of *one per cent*. For the manner in which the work has been done, and the good results accomplished, we refer to Major-Generals Grant, Sherman, Steele, Schofield, Curtis, Fremont, and to the Commander-in-Chief, Major-General Halleck. We also refer to Assistant Surgeon-General, Col. R. C. Wood, and to all members of the Medical Staff of the West, with whom and under whose direction we have always worked.

We now respectfully ask permission and authority to extend our labors to the suffering freed people of the South-West and South. If you will give us your endorsement in the undertaking before the people, we think we can raise large sums of money, and accomplish great good. Nor would it be only a work of philanthropy, but equally of patriotism, for it would remove an increasing reproach against the Union cause, and by lessening the difficulties of emancipation, would materially aid in crushing the rebellion. At present, hundreds of the blacks would gladly return to slavery, to avoid the hardships of freedom; and if this feeling increases and extends itself among them, all the difficulties of the situation will be increased; while, at the same time, a most effective argument is given to the disloyal against our cause.

We most respectfully leave the subject before you, feeling sure that you will agree with us as to the necessity of prompt and energetic action, And have the honor to remain,

Your cordial friends and obedient servants,

JAMES E. YEATMAN,
GEORGE PARTRIDGE,
JOHN B. JOHNSON,
CARLOS S. GREELEY,
WILLIAM G. ELIOT.