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**MC073: Folder 35: William Joseph Palmer to Thomas Sharp Palmer 1861 March 7**

*This transcription from the original letter contains language contemporaneous of the time and is being presented as part of a historical record. Please note that this transcription has not been reviewed for final editing. Please contact us with any questions.*

Charleston SC March 7, 1861

Dear Tom

Your letter was received a short time since. I was very glad to hear from you the more so as you said but little in regard to Politics and were it not for two paragraphs in your letter I would not mention it at all. The first is this, you said you are afraid the State will seize our horses thereby subjecting us to loss if I was not smart enough to dispose of them first. In answer I would merely say our Government are honest and pay for all they get. Only yesterday they paid us over a thousand dollars. We have sold them over two thousand dollars worth of horses and some days do \$50 worth of work for them, all of which is paid for excepting my own and partners services which we throw in gratis, but for our teams and men we are paid for.

The other paragraph I referred to above is in regard to John volunteering his services to come and fight us. I scarcely know what to say on this matter. I dont like to tell you that you have told me a story and yet I cannot think a man of his good sense could be so foolish and fanatical. Oh no, Tom, you must be mistaken. I never can believe that till we meet on the battlefield, which may God forbid. What is he fighting for, a mere idea, I almost said, of which he knows nothing. I think I hear you say, what am I fighting for. I answer my home, my wife and my little ones. I was in high hopes it would all have been settled peacably but I see Lincoln says in his inaugural that the power confided to him will be used to hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the Government and collect the duties and imposts. This we suppose means he will not only retain the Forts now held by the Government, but he will attempt to retake those occupied by our troops, and collect duties in our harbours. This of course, will open the Ball and in we go, every man seat to his position.

But enough of this. Kate is getting along as well or better than could be expected, the children are both quite well. We have had a great deal of wet weather this winter but very little cold. I have not heard of ice in the City but once this winter and then not thicker than a 5 cent piece. The weather now is very fine, our garden has plenty of roses and flowers in it. Business in general is not very brisk with our people now, but more than there was sometime back. We

have been quite busy for the last month with our teams hauling cannon, shot, shell, powder, etc. Last week we bought about sixty head of horses for the Army. We have now [unclear] Livery at our Stables 45 horses which we are putting together training , or Artillery, belonging to the Army. I think we will send most of them into camp in a day or two. We received a dispatch last night that the Railsplitter was fitting out some [unclear] for our benefit. We will try and be ready to receive them in a becoming manner. I have sold all the horses I brought with me that I can spare. Some I done very well with. The prettiest one I brought I sold to a friend for a parade horse. I keep one for myself for when I go to battle it will be on horseback so I can get out of danger. I expect ere this reaches you there will be warm work on our harbor. My God, Tom, but this is terrible when we think of what may happen in a few days. Many of us who are now full of life and health may in a few days be among the things that were. Even this may be the last letter you will ever receive from me. May God in His mercy forbid and avert the impending storm. When I look upon my sickly wife and dear little babes my heart fills and I can scarce restrain the tears ready to burst from my eyes. But this is their native land and I must not stand back and see it run over by foes.

Remember me kindly to Nancy and the children, also John and family. Tell him for God's sake to stay at home with his family and when that home is invaded it will be time enough then to fight. May God forbid we should ever meet as enemies.

Goodbye, may God bless you all

Truly your brother  
WJ Palmer