

Letter of Adj. L. A. Duncan, of the 42nd Regt. Iowa Vol. Infantry

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LETTER OF ADJ. L. A. DUNCAN, OF THE 42<sup>D</sup> REGT.  
IOWA VOL. INFANTRY.

[The following extract of the letter of Adjutant Duncan, as published in the *Iowa City Republican*, was accompanied with the chain described; and it is safely deposited in the Cabinet of the State Historical Society.—EDITOR.]

FORT HALLECK, COLUMBUS, KY., }  
Thursday, Jan. 8th, 1862. }

*Eds. Republican:*

On the 1st inst., a negro slave came into camp with a chain, weighing four or five pounds, tightly fastened about his neck, The poor negro had been guilty of the enormous crime of borrowing a gun from a Union man to shoot a squirrel for his sick wife, and for this unpardonable offense he was chained like a culprit. But the negro outwitted his master and got the chain off the rafter to which it was fastened. He was not ceremonious in bidding his master an affectionate farewell, but made for Columbus, where he arrived safely, with one end of the chain about his neck and the other end in his pocket. Some of the Company B boys of our regiment soon secured a file, and were not long in removing the hated load from his neck. I secured the chain as a present to the State Historical Society of Iowa City, and sent it to Iowa City by favor of Dr. S. W. Huff, Surgeon of the 12th Iowa. I hope it will be kept in the archives of the Institution as an evidence, in future years, of the barbarity of a system that will soon, I trust, be numbered among the things that were.

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