

Camp 2<sup>nd</sup> Mass Cav  
 Near Falls Church Va  
 June 24<sup>th</sup> 1864  
 To Hon<sup>ble</sup> E. D. Townsend  
 Assist<sup>ant</sup> Adj<sup>utant</sup> Gen<sup>eral</sup> U. S. A.  
 for  
 The undersigned  
 Officers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Mass Cav<sup>alry</sup> having been  
 appointed by A. C. to all War Dept<sup>t</sup> A. S. O. June 22<sup>nd</sup>  
 We have Private T. M. Chisholm of Co. H of this Regt.  
 has been ordered to report to Brig<sup>adier</sup> Gen<sup>eral</sup> Chittam  
 Louisville Ky with a view to his appointment as an  
 Officer of colored troops, take this method to express  
 to the Appointing power our firm conviction based  
 upon our own observation for a long time and also  
 the reports of his Co. Officers upon which we can imple-  
 -dit rely that Private Chisholm is a man totally unfit  
 for an Officer or even a non-commissioned officer of  
 any troops, either colored or white, the principal  
 reason for which being a want of moral energy on  
 his part sufficient to make him a willing slave,  
 & spirited private soldier much less to render him

fit to assume & discharge the duties and responsi-  
 -bilities devolving upon an Officer of any grade  
 whatever.  
 We make this statement because we  
 consider that the interest of the service require it,  
 to our  
 by Respectfully  
 Your Obedt<sup>servants</sup>.  
 J. W. & G. W. Townsend  
 Assist<sup>ant</sup> Adj<sup>utant</sup> Gen<sup>eral</sup> U. S. A.

**LETTER RECOMMENDING AGAINST PROMOTION – 2<sup>ND</sup> MASS CAV**

Original letter to E. D. Townsend, Assistant Adjutant General of the Army sent from near Falls Church, Virginia on June 24, 1864. The letter appears to have been written by members of the 2nd Mass Cavalry recommending against the pending promotion of Pvt. T. M. Chisholm to the rank of an officer. Pvt. T. Melville Chisholm, a 24 year old clerk who enlisted in the 2nd Mass Cav on June 20, 1863 had been ordered by General Order No. 216 from the Adjutant General's Office of the War Department to report to Louisville, Kentucky where he was to be commissioned an officer in a colored troop regiment.

The letter states, in part, "We take this method to express to the appointing power our firm conviction based upon our own observation for a long time and also the reports of his Co. officers upon which we can implicitly rely that Private Chisholm is a man totally unfit for an Officer or even a non-commissioned officer of any troops either colored or white, the principal reason for which being a want of moral energy." Apparently the protest was dismissed, as Pvt. Chisholm was promoted to the rank of 2nd Lieutenant in the 108th Colored Infantry on June 27, three days after the date of this letter. He survived the war and was discharged with the balance of the 108<sup>th</sup>.