

Headquarters, First Corps Army of Va
Sperryville Aug 7th 1862

Dear Col.

I have just received your very kind letter of the 2nd and as we are ordered to march tommorrow I may not have an opportunity of answering it soon again. So I shall do it now. I am not surprised although considerably disappointed, at Col Andersons reply. I am not surprised at it for I hardly dare to expect that he would do anything.

By a late order from the War Dept I see that soldiers are not allowed to leave the organizations now in the field on merely an appointment to recruit for the new regts from Govs of states so I need not expect to get out of this neck of the woods. Well d__n it they can't put me very much lower than I am now. So let em ent. I shall endeavor to do my duty as well as I know how without fear or favor but I certainly shall not do anything more; as it seems to me that the men that know least and do the least work get the offices. You can perceive the effect here with half an eye. We have as good material for a regiment as any one here and would have as good a one as any; but of course if we have no other incentive but that of the money we get to do even our duty it very soon becomes a drag and we do just as little as we possibly can get a long with. The only way I think to make a good regiment in every respect is to reward those that deserve it and punish those that do not come up to the mark I suppose that after Col Schliech has given offices to all his own and all of his wifes friends and relations, we outsiders may have a chance. I am certain we will not before. If I had known before I came into the service that I was going to be under his command I should have given this Regt a very wide berth. This enough whining and grumbling for one dose how ever I shall hold up.

We had a review this morning before Genl Pope. He came over from Little Washington and was greeted with the greatest enthusiasm by the boys as they have got tired lying here and look to him to break up the lethargy that has grown over the camp. He was accompanied by Major Genls Siegel Schenck and Shurr [Schurz] and Brigs Bohlen McLean Milroy and others that I did not know. This corps looked very well as they have all drawn new clothes and of course every fellow had on his best bib and tucker. I was greatly astonished to hear from one of the staff officers that I am acquainted with and who is thoroughly posted, that we have in this corps only twelve thousand infantry with fifty-four pieces of Artillery and thirteen hundred Cavalry. There is twenty four regiments of infantry making an average of five hundred men to each. Now: Why the h__l the different states to which these skeletons belong to, don't fill them up in place of appointing new officers at home and raising new regts is something that I cannot fathom, unless it is to give favorites high salaries without their earning them. Why Sir there are Ohio regts here that I know positively have not three hundred effective men and that never heard a musket but what was shot by themselves, but they all have a full team of Field Staff and Company Officers. I really think sometimes that the North ought to be whipped out of their boots for not attending to this Volunteer Service in a more sensible way. It

seems to me as if it was managed more as if we were on a big militia muster than as if we are at war with a most desperate and bloodthirsty foe.

Genl Pope I think is the first one who has taken hold of the right end of the string to unravel the knot, but it makes the Secesh and northern traitors squirm. I wish to heaven that (if the thing was possible) the Rebs could march an army through the north without injuring anyone but those northern gentlemen with Southern principles. They would very soon discover the difference between Southern Chivalry as it is, and as they think it is. The Provost Marshalls here have been administering the oath to those that are willing to take it and making those that are not, skedaddle out of the lines. There is not many men left here though to trouble, except those that are too old to fight. The rest are at Richmond.

We are going to Madison twenty-six mile southeast of this. Banks Corps is at Culpepper and as it is pretty well ascertained that there is a large Confederate force at Gordonsville we will no doubt have a chance to see how fighting goes, or else Siegel will make one of his masterly retreats. I don't think that he is very anxious to move very close to Jackson yet awhile. In a letter published the other day from him it seems that he is not a little anxious to have more men sent him from the new levys.

We are having extremely hot weather her for just now. We have nothing to do, but drill about two hours in the morning except to loaf about and sleep except once on a great while have a little picket duty.

We are extremely fortunate about water as we have several very fine springs around us and we are encamped on the bank of a creek that affords us an abundance of water for bathing and washing clothes.

I dread the march tomorrow and next day as the roads are very dusty and I am told the road between this and Madison is very mountainous. We have just had our large Sibley tents taken away from us and in lieu have got a small shelter tent that aint worth a wooden d__n a thousand. It is intended for three men and would do well enough to keep the dew off but rain bah: it will pour through like it would through a sieve. It is divided into two parts and two men can carry it very easily but a dollar bill would answer nearly every purpose they are intended for and they look for all the world like a chicken coop.

One of our men was out on Monday with the Quartermaster on a foraging expedition. They were shot at and this man struck in the hand and one finger shot off. He came some eight miles with it wrapped up in a handkerchief and rode to our surgeons tent to get it dressed but that gentleman either not fancying the undertaking or else not knowing how to dress it. He declined to attend to under the plea of not feeling very well. So the poor ___ had to get to the post hospital about a mile and a half where the Asst Surgeon was before he could get anything done for him. A splendid surgeon truly. His name is Pierce.

He is one of Cols particulars. I blew around so much about it that the Col threatened to arrest me but the more he talked and threatened the more I blowed for I was certain to expose the matter if I was hauled up so it finally settled down. Is it not awful to

have the mens limbs and lives at the mercy of such men. This is only one out of fifty just such acts or worse that he has committed since we have been here and if any more such happen he will be published all over Ohio if there are papers enough to do it. We have hardships enough to undergo Lord knows, without having such infernal brutes to torture us unnecessarily. As the first call is beating for dress parade I shall have to close this. I will write to you again as soon as I can get a chance. Please write to me for you scarcely have any idea how welcome a letter is to a poor D___l here. We get very few papers here and those only semi-occassionally but sutlers are not allowed to come further than Alexandria with goods and you can imagine we are reduced to great straits for tobacco. I do not know what we shall do for a _____ soon for it mighty scarce now. Please remember me to all

Yours truly
Robt Patterson

Col J.F.Harrison
Dayton
Ohio