

Camp 1st. Me. Cavalry  
Warrenton Junction Va.  
April 15. 1862

Official Report of Captain Robert F. Dyer. Company "C"  
1st. Me. Cavalry, detailed for a Reconnoissance on the line of  
the Orange & Alexandria R. R. to the Rappahannock river,  
— accompanied by Lieut R. F. Tucker Adj. 1st. Me. Cavalry.

We left camp according to orders at 9 1/2 o'clock A. M. proceeding  
on the line of the R. R. — met two Contrabands, who informed  
us that they left the camp of General Smith on the opposite side  
of the river, at 9 o'clock last night. Also informed us that a  
part of the Confederate Army were encamped there — supposed to  
be from 5,000 to 7,000 — that they were constructing a bridge across  
the river two miles across the R. R. bridge, with the intention of  
crossing. They were also throwing up Earthworks —

We then proceeded along the line of the R. R. coming soon to a  
house occupied by an Irishman, who informed us that the  
distance to the river was two miles, when it could not have  
been more than 3/4 of a mile — We then proceeded about 1/2  
mile to an unoccupied house, where my company halted.

Adjutant R. F. Tucker accompanied by A. W. Engeroll of the  
Regimental Band, advanced about 1/4 mile to an old Earth-  
work to Reconnoitre the opposite shore. They discovered plainly with  
the naked eye, a line of Rebel Earthworks at intervals for two  
miles, — could also see the Blacks at work upon them, and with the Field  
Glass could see everything within the line distinctly. — Should  
judge there were from 150 to 200 houses picketed in the rear of a grove  
could also see a large White House, which we supposed was H<sup>d</sup> Q<sup>r</sup>s.



Saw a Rebel flag flying near the house, - could not discover any guns within the Earthworks. Thinking that we had examined sufficiently (and judging that the encampment contained 3,000 to 4,000 troops) we were on the point of leaving when they opened upon us from a masked battery at the Southern extremity of their encampment, throwing Annapolis, one shot striking near Lieut. Tucker and Ingersoll, and another striking about twenty feet from the centre of the company in the rear. Immediately another battery opened upon us from the centre of their encampment, throwing 10<sup>th</sup> shot striking in the rear of the company, about 40 feet beyond the first discharge. Then a third battery opened from the extreme North of the encampment, throwing about a 12<sup>lb</sup> shell after which they came thick and fast from the three batteries making a cross fire. There were 13 shot struck in the vicinity of us before we were able to get out of range. After getting out of range we thought it not prudent for us to make any farther reconnoissance up or down the river, from the fact of their having so large a body of horse within their encampment, and being able to cross both by fords and also by a bridge. On our return, a short distance from Peale's Station, two black women having seen us coming some two miles distant, ran half that distance to inform us that they had seen eleven mounted Cavalry upon this side of the river this morning, dressed in Grey uniform, some of whom they knew to be rebels, also that they were in the habit of meeting in the vicinity of Liberty Church a Blacksmith named Robert Willis. Said Willis being in the habit of coming into our camp, and giving information in relation to our pickets and the position of our encampments which he was known to communicate to the enemy, - that they were contemplating to cross the river. The same information in regard to the Blacksmith Robert Willis, was given us from various sources, after leaving them we struck off to the west and visited the Randolph Plantations, but could discover nothing farther.



Robert Willis me Took Poetry & brought him into Conn

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Open Oct. 18th  
S. P. 18th

Wm. Howell  
Apr. 14.