

Head Quarters 4th Reg. Maine Vols.
Camp Pitcher, near Falmouth, Va.
January 1st 1863.

Dear Sir:

Your favor of the 21st ult. is at hand. In reply I will make the following statement.

I left my regiment at White Ford, Md. October 28th, 1862, in compliance with Special Orders, No. 298, Hd Qrs. Army of the Potomac.

During my absence they crossed the river and marched in zigzag lines through Leesburg, Mt. Gilead, Millerville, Middleburg, White Plains and Salem arriving near Waterloo Nov. 6th. The 10th crossed the North Fork of the Rappahannock as a support to General Pleasanton's cavalry. - recrossed the 12th - 15th on Pickle three miles from camp along North Fork. - 16th marched to Warrenton. - 17th to Bealton and Fayetteville. - 18th to Morrisville.

I joined them the 20th near Stafford Court House at which place they arrived the evening before. The men at this time were very poorly clad, many of them being without overcoats or shoes. We arrived at our present encampment Nov. 22nd. Clothing to nearly supply my command arrived on the evening of Dec. 2nd. - The morning of the 3rd I received orders to report to Genl. Woodbury ^{Comd'g Engineer, Riggles} for fatigue duty, with 4 days rations. We moved down the river about 7 miles. - here with the assistance of the 120th N. Y. regiment we cut and loaded 300 teams with timber for corduroy or bridging.

The evening of the 8th I received orders from Genl. Woodbury to have the teams in readiness to move the next morning. - My instructions were to move ten miles down the river with my command, the 120th N. Y. regt. and the 300 teams, construct a corduroy road 24 feet wide across a swamp 1100 feet, grade the approach to the same 200 feet. - an officer of his staff would accompany me as guide. - The work to be done on the night of the 9th, and me to return as much unobserved by

the enemy as possible. - On the morning of the 9th we moved as directed and arrived within $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of our destination at 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ P.M. and waited for night to conceal us. - At 4 P.M. I received orders to park the teams, provide three days rations for men and beasts and await further orders. I immediately sent for rations, shelter tents and blankets for the men, which arrived the next morning.

The night was cold and we suffered much from exposure. The day was occupied in preparing quarters. At 4:30 P.M. of the 10th I received orders to complete the work that night. - By the exertions of Lt. Col. Carver the teams were put in motion and at 9 o'clock P.M. they were all unloaded and had retired. At 4 o'clock on the morning of the 11th the work was completed and I had received orders to join my Brigade. I arrived at the encampment which we left on the morning of the 9th at 12 o'clock M.

My men being nearly exhausted I resolved to remain here until the next morning, but upon visiting the Qr. Master I ascertained that he had a second order for me to join the ^{Brigade} immediately. Upon this I thought best to report without my command, and started for that purpose, but had proceeded but a short distance when I met one of the General's Aides with special orders to join the Brigade without delay.

This order, the first one since being in the service I was tempted to disobey. - I returned to my fatigued command where I remained until 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ P.M., at which time we moved, leaving 36 men who were completely worn out by fatigue. The day had been warm and the roads were very muddy. The Brigade had moved and I was unable to find them, night coming on we were obliged to spend it without shelter or fire as no fuel was to be had about our location.

The morning of the 12th I joined the Brigade with 22 Officers and 253 men. - One officer and 30 men were immediately detailed to report to Prof. Lowe, the Balloonist.

At 4.30 P.M. we were on the move and bivouaced at 11 P.M. at 5 o'clock on the morning of the 13th we were again in motion and crossed the river between 9 & 10 A.M. - Moving to the left and front about two miles we found ourselves in a place where shot and shell were falling thick and fast.

Here the men relieved themselves of knapsacks. - Of the 21 Officers and 213 men who had crossed the river, 13 men had been detailed as Brigade Guard; - 10 (the Pioneers) to guard knapsacks, leaving but 21 Officers and 190 men to go into action. My position was assigned in rear of a Battery as a support where I remained about 30 minutes, losing two men killed by the explosion of a shell in our ranks, from a rebel gun.

At this time I received orders to follow the 38th and 40th N. Y. regts. which were about to charge and take possession of the R.R. These regiments were about 25 rods in advance of us. I moved through the field in line of battle, on arriving at the woods I joined them on their right. The line was at an acute angle of 25 degrees, my regiment being furthest from the road. The regiment that first arrived at the road and saw the position of the enemy became panic-stricken and both regts on my left retreated. I attempted to bring my regiment off by the left flank. When I gave the order the right wing was driving the enemy, and was so hotly engaged that the order was not understood. The left wing having moved a few rods to the left, I was obliged to halt them to hold the position or my right wing would have been lost, for it was at this time flanked on the right. My left wing nobly held the force which had put two regiments to flight, until the right wing which had advanced to the road, had joined them, when we retired bringing off many of the wounded. The enemy following they were not checked in their advance until Gen. Berry who was near at hand arrived with his Brigade and drove them back, punishing them severely.

We fell back to our former position where we re-

mained until the next morning, at which time 30 of my men were detailed to assist in working a Battery, and the remainder relieved the Brigade guard. On the evening of the 15th we recrossed the river. Being Division officer of the day it devolved on me to remain and bring in the Division Pickets which though done without accident was an unpleasant task.

I can but speak in the highest terms of praise of my men and officers during this fearful engagement. Several of those slightly wounded returned to duty as soon as their wounds were dressed.

Major Pitcher who fell was a good and brave officer and Christian. He was beloved and respected by all in the Regt. By order of Gen. Birney, Comd^g Division this Division Camp is known by the name of "Camp Pitcher" in honor of that brave officer.

Enclosed I send a list of those engaged and the result as near as can be ascertained.

In justice to Surgeon Martin I would say that many a wounded soldier will long remember him for his kindness and exertions to make them comfortable.

On the morning of the 16th we arrived at our present encampment, the same we left on the morning of Dec. 3rd, having been exposed seven days and nights without shelter, and living on pork and hard bread. Since that time until the present the duties of the men have been nothing but drills and ordinary camp duty.

Elijah Walcott
Col. Comd^g 4th Me Vols

John L. Hodgeson
Adj^t. General of Maine.

Colonel Elijah Walker,
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— January 1. 1863 —

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