


5-19-1862

## Letter from John W.A. Gillespie to Editor

John W.A. Gillespie

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### Letter from the 78th Regiment.

(From our own correspondents.)  
CAMP NEAR MONTICELLO, TENN.,  
Monday, May 12th 1862.

Editors of the *Register*:—Yesterday the 78th with the 7th and 10th Regiments D. V. I. made another move toward the Confederates, and we are now encamped in an open cotton field, five miles from our last camp, one mile south of Monterey, and about seven miles from the extreme front of our lines. The 20th Regiment was sent back to Pittsburgh Landing several days ago, for guard purposes, and will not, in all probability, be with the Brigade again for some time. The other Brigades of General Wallace's division, will be up to-day or to-morrow.

During our march yesterday, the sun shone quite warm, and the road was very dusty, but the boys of our Regiment marched along cheerfully, singing, laughing and talking, as tho' they were going to a wood chopping, with a prospect of something very nice to eat when night should come.

Night came, (as nights will do) and we found ourselves brought to a halt. Then came the commands, "Front! right dress! fix bayonets! stack arms! unfasten knapsacks!" Each command was very cheerfully obeyed, and soon after bright fires were blazing along our entire line. In a half hour from the time that we reached the field, our supplies of coffee and crackers, were dispatched, and in less time than it takes me to write it, the men, with their blankets wrapped around them, had thrown themselves upon the ground to seek rest and repose in the arms of "Morpheus."

This morning early, our wagons were unloaded, and tents pitched, and now we are ready for anything else that may "turn up." Every movement of the grand army of the Tennessee, indicates that a terrible battle is near at hand. How near, I will not say, for the very good reason that I do not know.

Severe skirmishing has been going on, between our advance guards, and the enemy's pickets, for several days. A number of Federal officers have been killed and wounded.—The loss of the enemy has been greater than ours.

On Friday morning last, Col. Leggett rode out to General Grant's Head Quarters, for the purpose of ascertaining something in regard to the rebel lines and works. Gen. Grant requested the Col. to take command of three or four hundred cavalry and infantry, and go out on the line, for the purpose of learning the position of some rebel cavalry, and if possible to drive them back.

After marching his command by column, up a deep ravine, he ordered a left flank movement, and, very much to the surprise of the rebels, made his appearance on a hill, a few hundred yards to their right, and ordered his men to fire. They did so, but with what effect the Col. did not learn. The rebels fired two volleys and fled in dismay, and soon disappeared behind their outer earthworks.

Col. Leggett's fine horse, had a bunch of his mane cut away by a rebel rifle ball, at the first fire. The Col. immediately dismounted, and sent him to the rear, then mounted a cavalry horse, and had rode but a short distance forward, when the horse received a ball through his left fore leg and immediately making a desperate plunge forward, fell heavily to the ground, at the same time throwing the Col. with violence to the earth. By this time the rebels had disappeared, and our little party, having accomplished all that it expected to do, returned to the General's Head Quarters, with one man severely wounded and with the loss of four horses. Col. Leggett was considerably bruised by his fall, but is now all right, and ready, when occasion requires it, to lead his gallant band into action.

I must stop writing for the present. Charlie Roper a bugle is calling the companies into line. And here comes an order: "Two days' rations in haversacks and 100 rounds cartridges to each man." Something is "turning up." Just now (2 o'clock P. M.) the big guns are booming out toward Corinth. I expect that some person has raised a row out there and is looking for some friend, or friends, to bring about an amicable adjustment of affairs. If so, we are on hand, "like a cut finger," and will add our mite toward quelling the disturbance.

4 o'clock, P. M. After standing in line two hours, expecting orders to move forward, we were ordered to stack arms in line and go to our quarters to await further orders. The roar of artillery has been heard all evening along our lines in front, and I should not be at all surprised to hear of some one getting hurt.—i. e. if they don't quit shooting at each other.

May 21st. I am just off 24 hours picket duty, and find the brigade still waiting for orders. In the direction of Corinth, heavy firing was kept up all day yesterday. Madam Rumor says that the rebels in large force attacked our troops, and were driven back with terrible slaughter. We took several hundred prisoners, and a number of guns. Our loss was not very heavy. I have learned no particulars in regard to our casualties, except that the 8th Missouri lost 8 or 10 men killed and 30 or 40 wounded. This Regiment fought like tigers, and drove three times their number from the field.

It is thought, by those who profess to know, that the engagement will become general along our entire lines, within a very short time. When it commences, the shock of battle (in my humble opinion) will be the most terrible that the world has ever witnessed.—I may be disappointed in thinking as I do, and assure you that I earnestly hope and pray, that the final result will prove contrary to my expectations. But this cannot be, unless the rebel army evacuates Corinth, and such a course pursued by Beauregard would have such a demoralizing effect upon our troops, that it would be almost impossible for him to rally them to a sticking point, at any other place within a hundred miles of their present strong position. Such is my belief, gathered from the "signs of the times," and from the opinions of others; and now leaving the future to wind up the whole affair, and trusting to a higher Power than that of man for the success of our cause, I shall come down to simple facts, relative to our own regiment.

We had a great deal of sickness among our number, and many have laid down their lives, a sacrifice for their country. (The particulars of each man's death have been sent by the officers of the different companies, to the friends at home.) Many others have been sent away on hospital and sanitary visits, to Cincinnati and other cities North, where they can receive proper care and attention. Dr. Shipley, of Nashville, Ohio, has been with us a little over two weeks. In this short space of time, he has labored constantly with our sick. His entire attention has been given to the wants of our suffering companions, and all his efforts have been attended with the most satisfactory and beneficial results.—Since he came, he has sent one hundred and five of our number on sanitary visits to Ohio. On the 20th inst. the steamer *Tyson* started for Cincinnati, with 56 of our sick on

board. Dr. Shipley has justly won the esteem of the Regiment, and all will be sorry when he leaves us. When he does go, the blessings of all will follow him. In this connection I will not forget to mention that Dr. Todd, of New Lisbon, Ohio, has been with us for (or some time). He assisted Dr. Reaves, a great deal, but owing to a want of medicines, and hospital stores, his efforts were not crowned with the success that they would have been, under more favorable circumstances. Dr. W. Morrow Beach, of Lafayette, Madison County, Ohio, has received the appointment of assistant Surgeon of our Regiment, and is now with us. Dr. Beach is a young physician of fine appearance and good address, and has commenced business, like one who understands what he is doing. On Saturday morning the 17th inst. Andrew Francis, of Company B, died in the hospital, of Camp Fever, and was buried the same evening. He had only been confined to his cot a week, but sunk rapidly, from the first of his sickness, until death claimed him, and carried him to the spirit world. Andy was a good, kind hearted, christian youth, and his spirit has gone to that happy land where the clangor and tumult of war is not heard.

On the 19th inst. Samuel Lewis (of Putnam, Ohio) a member of Company B, died very suddenly, at our old Camp, near Pittsburgh Landing. Daddy Lewis (as the boys familiarly called him) was a very good man, and always tried to do his duty well, but the hardships of the campaign broke him down, and now he, too, is numbered with the patriot dead. His family in their bereavement, should not be allowed to suffer. "A hint to the wise is sufficient."

Thursday, May the 23rd. Yesterday morning the 3rd brigade pulled up stakes, marched five miles, and now occupies a position on the extreme right of our line. We are encamped in the woods, and are pleasantly situated. If we had good water to use for drinking and cooking purposes, we would be well satisfied, but the water here is miserable stuff, and hard to get in the bargain.

We commenced fortifying this morning, and will continue to do so while we stay at this place. Skirmishing is still going on, but it seems to be the impression now that the general engagement will be delayed for several days yet.

This letter is already entirely too lengthy, so I shall bring this to a close, by saying to my friends at home, that I am well and hearty.  
Yours, &c. JOHN W. A. GILLESPIE.

### An Excellent Reply to a Very Common Inquiry.

The following letter and reply thereto, is from the *Marion County (Va.) National*. The inquiry is about in the same style that Chapman usually treats such matters. Whoever is the author, we think that Chapman ought to secure his services as co-editor, as they will certainly agree in such matters precisely.—The letter is about the same kind of slang that the *Citizen's Press* has been trying to get into the mouths of its readers for the last twelve months. The answer is very proper and ought to be taken by the *Press* also.

*Editor of the National*:—Why don't you pitch into the abolitionists for trying to take the slaves; you give the rebels fits for firing the government, when Garrison and other members Congress want to use the government want to stop them from no more slavery in the country. If we don't have slaves how will you get taxis to carry on the Government, if we don't keep slavery in Western Virginia the Southern States want by slaves here, then I suppose they have to go, where they please. Well I don't care nothing for niggers but Congress ought to pass bills too set them free in this state, the people have the right, Mr. Vallandigham says so in his speech, I think he nose as much as Mr. Stanton.

Yours, A SUBSCRIBER.

### ANSWER TO THE ABOVE.

If our correspondent is a subscriber, we don't think he has gained much information from what he has read; perhaps the reason is that he has not paid his subscription.—However, his bad style is his misfortune, and we shall say nothing about it, except that it argues greatly in favor of a Free State School System. But our correspondent is sadly behind the age. We will answer him, however, that the reason we don't keep up a hue and cry on the subject of "abolition," is that that is an underhanded way the secessionists and Knights of the Golden Circle have to weaken the Government. We don't belong to the Order, and we are not afraid that the Administration will violate the Constitution. Whatever may be our conservative opinions in time of peace, we think that in time of war the Government has a perfect right to do all necessary acts to sustain itself both against domestic insurrection and foreign intervention. The rebel leaders have officially offered to abolish slavery if the European powers will only recognize them, and since that bait has been thrown out to the self-assumed philanthropists of Europe to aid in establishing a Southern Aristocracy, it would not do for the Government to set itself up as the only defender and protector of the institution which it is contended has had so much to do in bringing on this wicked war against the Great Republic of the world—the bulwark of civil and religious liberty. If that is destroyed, the liberty of white men is destroyed. What do you think? Are you satisfied?

But we must correct your history.—Garrison is not a member of Congress, and there is not a corporal's guard of fanatics in that body. The great proportion of taxes in this State is not raised from slaves, (there has not been a fair share from that source,) and the increased enterprise and business of a free State more than makes up for that. We don't suppose that our loyal slaveholders are anxious to sell to the cottonocracy, and just as you say, they can "go where they please," to buy chattles.

The people here of course have the right to deal with their institutions, and the Government doesn't interfere with them; but don't quote such a miserable, sneaking traitor as Vallandigham for that, and at the same time cast an imputation upon the gallant, Union loving Stanton, who has been a conservative man all his life, and a Democrat at that. The President exhibited patriotism and good sense in appointing him, and we honor them both as good true men, working manfully and effectively in the best cause under the firmament. Now, if "Subscriber" doesn't like these sentiments, let us know, and we will discontinue his paper, and if he has paid, will remit him the balance due. But don't let the "Knights" have an improper influence over your judgment, and you will soon believe as we do.

Pittsburgh, May 30.—River 3 feet 10 inches by the pier mark and falling. Weather wet.

WANTED At the Passenger Eating Rooms, two GOOD GIRLS. None but good workers need apply.  
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May 19, 1862

We are happy to be able to present our readers to-day with a letter from our regular army correspondent whom report had pronounced dead \_\_\_\_\_ ten days ago. The letter from J.W.A.G. will be read with interest.<sup>1</sup>

Letter from the 78<sup>th</sup> Regiment

CAMP NEAR MONTEREY, TENN.  
Monday, May 19, 1862.

EDITOR COURIER: Yesterday, the 78<sup>th</sup> with the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ Regiments O.V.I. made another move toward the *Corinthians*, and we are now encamped in an open cotton field five miles from our last camp, one mile south of Monterey, and about seven miles from the extreme front of our lines. The 20<sup>th</sup> Regiment was sent back to Pittsburgh Landing several days ago for guard purposes, and will not, in all probability, be with the Brigade again for some time. The other Brigades of General Wallace's division will be up-today or tomorrow.

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<sup>1</sup> Daily Zanesville Courier, May 30, 1862, p. 2

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JOHN W. A. GILLESPIE