



Army of the Potomac Jan 24 63
Camp Pitcher, near Falmouth, Va.

Mr. Hannaford

Dear Sir,

Agreeable, to the promise that I gave you, before, I started from home, to shoulder my musket in the defence of my Country I now seat myself to redeem that promise, and endeavor in a poor way to enlighten you upon the manner in which we live, what our duties are and about everything in general what appertains to the present war as I now see it. 1st We as a Regt fare rather poorly, when we take into consideration the large amount of subsistence that Government allows

Contributed to Maine Memory Network by Maine Historical Society
MMN # 79909

Date: January 29, 1863

Description: Writing to Charles Hannaford of Cape Elizabeth, Pvt. George S. Dyer of Cape Elizabeth commented on the disillusionment of soldiers who had enlisted "for a great object, that being the restoration of the Union, as it was and, for the Constitution as our forefathers made it."

us, a small portion of which we receive, as an illustration of which please notice the following items which we have ^{had} delivered to us lately for five days rations 1st 35 cakes of hard bread, 1 onion & potatoes (which comprise the first vegetables that we have had since leaving Portland that I now can remember of) 1 pint of flour, the first we have ever received, 1 gill of beans, 2 table spoonfuls of rice, $\frac{1}{2}$ pound pork, a spoonful of coffee and sugar for each day, $\frac{1}{2}$ pound fresh beef, which I believe takes in all that we had,

Such living as that is rather hard for men to live upon and do their duty if there is any such a thing that can be called duty out here, in Seccessia, the

us, a small portion of which we receive as an illustration of which please notice the following

had

items which we have ^ delivered to us lately for five days rations 1st 35 cakes of hard bread, 1 onion 4 potatoes (which comprise the first vegetables that we have had since leaving Portland that I now can remember of) 1 pint of flour, the first we have ever received, 1 gill of beans, 2 table spoonfuls of rice, $\frac{1}{2}$ pound pork, a spoonful of coffee and sugar for each day, $\frac{1}{2}$ pound fresh beef, which I believe takes in all that we had.

Such living as that is rather hard for men to live upon and do their duty if there is any such thing that can be called duty out here in Seccessia, the

most that we have to do in Camp
is to be careful that none of the
officers that aspire to two rows of but-
-tons on their coat pass us without
a first class military salute from
us, and more so when they cross
their breast with a red or rather
crimson scarf, they then being offi-
cer's of the day, but then to be sure
we have drills and inspections in
great numbers.

But as my time is fast
growing limited I will write as
to how the men feel about this
war, and they are men that thought
when they enlisted that they were
enlisting in a good cause, and
for a great object, that being the
restoration of the Union, as it
was and ^{for} the Constitution as
our forefathers made it, but since

most that we have to do in Camp
is to be careful that none of the
officers that aspire to two rows of but-
-tons on their coat pass us without
a first, class military salute from
us, and move so when they cross
their breast with a red or rather
crimson scarf, they then being offi-
cer's of the day, but then to be sure
we have drills and inspections in
great numbers.

But as my time is fast
growing limited I will write as
to how the men feel about this
war, and they are men that thought
when they enlisted that they were
enlisting in a good cause and
for a great object, that being the
restoration of the Union, as it
for
was and ^ the Constitution as
our forefathers made it, but since

they have come and have seen with
their own eyes how it is conducted
and not looked at it through
the columns of some paper as
they did before they enlisted, and
now the scales have fallen from
before their vision and now they
behold things in their true light
and as they really are, and they
now think just as I do. Mr Eben
Jordan, Mr William Wheeler and
others from the Cape that I could
mention if I had the space, think
as I do, which is simply this, that
the war for the restoration of the Union
is a thing now obsolete, that it
never will be settled by fighting
is my firm belief and Sir allowing
that we whip them, what can the
war then be called, a restoration
with one half held by the others
soldiery, or a war of subjugation
it has the appearance of the latter
to me, but then people might say
O we could compromise them,
but if they will have to compromise
I see next sheet -

they have come and have seen with
their own eye's how it is conducted
and not looked at it through
the columns of some paper as
they did before they enlisted, and
now the scales have fallen from
before their vision and now they
behold things in their true light
and as they really are, and they
now think just as I do. Mr Eben
Jordan, Mr. William Wheeler and
others from the Cape that I could
mention if I had the space, think
as I do which is simply this, that
the war for the restoration of the Union
is a thing now obsolete, that it
never will be settled by fighting
is my firm beleif and Sir allowing
that we whip them, what can the
war then be called, a restoration
with one half held by the others
soldiery, or a war of subjugation
it has the appearance of the latter
to me, but then people might say
one could compromise then,
but if they will have to compromise
> see next sheet.

then, would it not be just as well to settle it now in a rational manner and thus put a stop at once to the further loss of life and the effusion of blood, which is now deluging our once happy Country, if the restoration of the Union is the object that the leaders have in view, but in my humble opinion the object has a little darker hue, if I am to judge by the Proclamations issued by the President, in which the Negro's emancipation seems to be chief subject, if I had not been totally blind to these things before I enlisted I never would have signed my name nor have requested my friends too. Each and every man that

then, would it not be just as well to settle it now in a rational manner and thus put a stop at once to the further loss of life and the effusion of blood, which is now deluging our once happy Country if the restoration of the Union is the object that the leaders have in view, but in my humble opinion the object has a little darker hue, if I am to judge by the Proclamations issued by the President, in which the Negro's emancipation seems to be chief subject, if I had not been totally blind to these things before I enlisted I never would have signed my name nor have requested my friends too. Each and every man that

I have had any conversation
with think that the War is
rotten at the core, and they all
seem to have the opinion that
if there was any good being done
by their staying out here and
fighting, and suffering every thing
they would not grumble, but
they all, as I have said before
do not believe, or ever can believe
that this can be settled by trials
of arms, for instance look at the
last battle of Fredericksburg.
what did it amount to on the
whole, nothing only showing more
plain than ever before, the rash-
ness and foolhardiness of some of
our great Generals, also showing
that they are guided more by
others judgment, than by their own
as I look at Burnside's declara-
-tion, in which he takes the blame
on his own shoulders, as nothing

I have had any conversation
with think that the War is
rotten at the core, and they all
seem to have the opinion that
if there was any good being done
by their staying out here and
fighting and suffering every thing
they would not grumble, but
they all, as I have said before
do not believe, or even can believe
that this can be settled by trial
of arms, for instance look at the
last battle of Fredericksburg.
what did it amount to on the
whole, nothing only showing more
plain than ever before, the rash-
-ness and foolhardiness of some of
our great Generals, also showing
that they are guided more by
others judgment than by their own
as I look at Burnside's declara-
-tion, in which he takes the blame
on his own shoulders, as nothing

but a stroke of policy, and a gener-
ous desire on his part to shield
others, misconduct and ignorance
of how our army was situated
then, as if he takes the whole respon-
sibility of it; why, if as he says
no one knows how near we came
to a victory, and he allowing that
if we had have gave them battle
on the tuesday following the retreat
that he was confident of a vic-
tory, &c, why did he not take the
responsibility, and gain one, instead
of listening to the advice of Genl.
that he is supposed to command,
and who counseled him to fall
back, and thus nothing was
accomplished, but loss of life,
and and the fact fixed upon
the minds of all those engaged
in it; that the War is badly
managed, and ^{that} this Union can
never be restored by such blun-

but a stroke of policy, and a gener-
ous desire on his part to shield
others, misconduct and ignorance
of how our army was situated
then, as if he takes the whole respon-
sibility of it, why, if as he says
no one knows how near we came
to a victory and he allowing that
if we had have gave them battle
on the tuesday following the retreat
that he was confident of a vic-
tory, &c, why did he not take the
responsibility and gain one, instead
of listening to the advice of Genl
that he is supposed to command,
and who counseled him to fall
back, and thus nothing was
accomplished, but loss of life,
and and the fact fixed upon
the minds of all those engaged
in it, that the War is badly
that
managed, and ^ this Union can
never be restored by such blun-

-dering. but if my views are cor-
-rect the restoration of our Union
is not the thing. the head men
of a certain party, are working
for, but rather, to sacrifice, all
for the emancipation of a be-
-ing or rather a race of beings, that
were never designed to mingle
with those of another color and
of higher organization of intellect,
it only requires a single glance at
the contrabands here to convince
one of the above fact, and only
a single glance at the speeches
made by Senators and the Pro-
-clamations issued by others, to
see why this War is still prolonged.

But my space is limited and
I will now close hoping that this short
note will prove acceptable to you, and
if not interesting you, must attribute
it to something else, than my humble en-
-deavors, as I have endeavored to make
it as much so as possible.

Give my best respects to all.
Yours Respect
George S Dyer

-dering. but if my views are cor-
-rect the restoration of our Union
is not the thing the head men
of a certain party are working
for but rather to sacrifice all
for the emancipation of a be-
-ing or rather a race of beings, that
were never designed to mingle
with those of another color and

a
of ^ higher organization of intellect,
it only requires a single glance at
the contrabands here to convince
one of the above fact, and only
a single glance at the speeches
made by Senators and the Pro-
-clamations issued by others to
see why this War is still prolonged.

But my space is limited and
I will now close hoping that this short
note will prove acceptable to you, and
if not interesting you must attribute
it to something else than my humble en-
-deavors, as I have endeavored to make
it as much so as possible,

Give my best respects to all.
Yours Respect
George S Dyer