

Letter of correspondence from Sergeant Charles C. Dow of Company "G" 2d Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry Regiment while in camp on the banks of the Rappahannock River near Falmouth, Virginia.

Camp Opposite Fredericksburg,
June 22d, 1862

Friend Sam:-do you want a blast from my bugle to-day? Well I don't know whether you do or not, but I am bound to blow it I don't sell a clam.

I have just been to dinner, and now I am laying astride a board which I am using for a desk, and my little cotton house is doing me proud in keeping off the rays of a very scorching sun.

I imagine I present about the same appearance that Jonah did when the whale found him a stranger and took him in; but then I ain't no Jonah or whale. In fact I don't know of there being but one of the 1st mentioned articles in the Union Army and he is down near Richmond under the special charge of one McClellan, who is making a tour through the the south this season, and I understand he is to exhibit the critter at Richmond in a few days, when it is my private opinion somebody will get whaled. I have seen a part of him, and if you will allow, me to Judge, I should say he is a "big thing."

I don't suppose a recitation of what we have been doing and where we-have been for the past month would be any more interesting to you than it is to us for we have not accomplished anything consequently I will pass it by.

This place seems to be the one allotted us for "three years or during the war," for every time we take a scoot out into the country we are sure to return hereafter an absence of a few days. This may be a strategically point, but I "don't see it" except that it is a good place to watch (on a bluff), but it is a poor place to *prey*, and as we think more of the latter than we do the former, we are anxious to leave camp, to go we care not where, but would prefer going where the army had not been, for there we can find just what we like, hoe-cake and honey, &c. that "and so forth" means a great many things too numerous to mention and can't be drawn from the Quartermaster's even with a requisition.

Judging from present prospects, our "onward to Richmond" move will be made about next Christmas - perhaps not till New Year's. 'Twill depend altogether on how soon the *sliding* comes; that is all they are waiting for, I believe. Then the programme will be, we shall slide in, while the rebels slide out of Richmond. I suppose you are all anxious to have this war progress faster, or have us, in the language of McClellan, "push the enemy to the wall." Well, I would admit that it would be a good thing for you who have to foot the bill, to have the war ended, but having no particular interest in that part of the programme, I go for the extension of the war, and I would say to the *powers that be*, make it just as long as you can, for it is seldom that we get a good thing, and we have got it, let us keep it.

Is not every year that we have a war, especially one where private soldiers get thirteen dollars per month and officers receive pay in proportion, and all for doing *nothing*. Just 'go on' with your warring. I can do as heavy sitting around as any man on the public works, and I shall not leave the job till they cut the pay down to less than six dollars, for I can earn that amount at this time of year, chewing tobacco and spitting on onion beds, which is a new patent for killing bugs on vines.

There is no news in this part of the army worth reciting. The boys are quite well, in fact, I might with propriety say, they are tough. As for your humble servant, he is quite unwell, and does not expect to live from one end to the other.

Our regiment is considerably reduced in numbers from what it was when we started from Arlington Heights, last spring, but I think what there are left of us are made of the "real old stuff." I don't think it would be safe for any such diseases such as cholera, small pox, or typhoid fever to attack us single handed. Perhaps take the three combined they might make us *sick*-- nothing more; for nothing short of a Minnie can kill us, or we would have been dead ere this.

We are having some very warm weather, but how warm I cannot say, for I have not seen a thermometer since I left Wisconsin, but if I remember aright as to their length and which way the mercury runs, I should think it would take one about three feet long to indicate the weather here. When you want any more bugling from me just let me know.

Respectfully,
Charlie

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Compiled by Tom Klas

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