

Camp of the 97th Reg. A. V. V.
near Belle Plains, Va.

April 14th, 1863.

Dear Father,

Since receiving your letter, I have written
once to Mother, & should have written again sooner,
had I not been so busy with military affairs.
Dright before last I received letters from Mother & Gus-
tave, which of course were very welcome.

I am well aware that your time is closely occupied
with business, & can readily excuse you for not writing
often; indeed I have not expected you to do so;
though it always affords me sincere gratification to
receive letters from you, which I prize so highly.

I would have been glad to get
settled out, in the event of consolidation, & made
a strong effort to have it so arranged. But my object
in so doing was not to leave the Service finally, but
rather for the purpose of returning home for a time, &
afterwards to secure a position, if possible, in some new
Reg. as I have before said. I have hardly felt wil-
ling to leave the Army without adequate cause, & sub-
ject myself to the chance of a draft. Now that I am

electd to stay, I feel well enough satisfied; the more so, since both you & Mother have since advised me to remain, unless I could be content to come home & stay. - Quite a number of the Officers had no choice, in regard to going or staying, as the Col. insisted on their remaining with the Reg, saying that their services could not well be dispensed with.

I am glad to know that the Col. considers me faithful & efficient in the performance of my duties, as he has repeatedly & in various ways given me to understand that such is his opinion of me. Being the only Collegian in the Reg. many things pertaining to literature are referred to me, and where there are resolutions to be gotten up, or any thing of that nature called for, I am expected to take a leading part. I do not speak of these things boastingly, as I am conscious that there is no occasion, but in order to give you an idea of my pleasant circumstances & satisfactory relations in the Reg. I am deeply sensible of my numerous deficiencies, and must of course be thankful for whatever ability I may possess, to render myself useful to the cause in which I am engaged, & to gain the esteem & good will of those with whom I am associated.

The Consolidation of the 104th. with our Reg.

has not yet been effected, & in my mind there is some doubt of its being accomplished at all; as we rec'd an order from the War Dept yesterday, requiring a Gen. Order of all the troops, to be made on the 10th inst; the Gen. Order to be sent to the Provost Marshall Genl, then ascertaining the no. of men required to fill all the Regts up to their full complement.

Day before yesterday our Division was reviewed by Gen. Hooker. The day was rather an unfavorable one, as the wind blew a perfect hurricane, raising clouds of dust. I never had seen Gen. Hooker before. He is a noble looking man, of a very ruddy complexion, which item of his appearance, gave rise to the remark, that it must have cost some money to get up such a color, intimating that he had been imbibing freely of expensive liquor. Of course there are many stories told to the discredit of Gen. Hooker, but they are as often contradicted, & not much credited.

It is not generally believed that any definite time is decided upon, for the movement of this Army, but that it is to be dependent upon circumstances. There are rumors of the execution of Virginia by the rebels, & their intention to hold on; which would of course necessitate a complete change of our present campaign.

your report & the progress of the war, & the fact that
(with regard to) has been in progress, the most feeling of
an unsteady state of feeling. It is not only true that
the war is now in progress, & the result of the war,
the state of the world yesterday or yesterday evening,
with regard to all right & wrong, & the result.

indications of an improvement in the popular feelings &
sentiments, regarding the prosecution of the war.

The feeling of the army has been of a nature to be
creating bitter against the Congress, & the
attempts & actions; as well as the numerous reactions
emanating from all part of the army, & the
adoption of a ^{policy} ~~policy~~ ^{policy} ~~policy~~, & the
of the ~~policy~~ ^{policy} ~~policy~~ ^{policy}, & the
of the ~~policy~~ ^{policy} ~~policy~~ ^{policy}, & the

I hope to be able to get a meeting, in the course of a
month or so, & to explain the main reasons for the
can. A number of the officers who first went down from our
by our presence, & we get into, but one has forwarded
a note, which is not yet returned, for our other 2 yrs.
It is assumed that the same officer will be discharged,
as in answer, if he has not already been.

I feel more than ever anxious for the speedy & accurate
your issue of the war, desiring as I do to return home & cooperate
with you in those plans, which I perceive you have formed, re-
specting myself; feeling assured, as I do, that a future of useful-
ness, & of high endeavor, is open before me, which can hardly
fail of its realization, if I but know myself worthy of the benefits
which you have conferred upon me, & profit by your example &
guidance.

Your Son,
Rudolph P. Gads.