

718.

Private

Orr
 G. L.
 C. S.
 Senator
 Richmond
 Va.

Charleston S. C.

April 24, 1863.

Dear Col

Your letter of the 4th inst - has been received - but the events of the 7th inst - have prevented me from answering it sooner, even now I have time only for a few hasty remarks - I feel indeed highly flattered by the confidence shown in me by the Senate in the affair relative to the increase of the Artillery force here - you may well imagine my surprise at the position assumed in the debate by Senator Phelps, who probably takes me for a Cromwell in Embryo! Let his slumbers be sound, I aim at but one thing, the success of our cause - & whoever can accomplish that, shall receive my hearty support. The Senator's supposition of antagonism to the President on my part is unfounded I had no such idea, & no expectation that the President would object

in the matter. I had repeatedly applied to the War Dept for additional Artillery force as essential to man the works here, & was answered that no new companies could be raised as by the law, all men subject to conscription must be absorbed by organizations in existence (Apr 16, 1862) a correct decision I found on examination. I then sought to obtain the Authority, by the law in question, for the War Dept has invariably expressed a disposition to authorize the Companies but for the legal restrictions. At first it was proposed to draw up a Bill to authorize a Battⁿ of 4 or 6 Co's, but on reflection, it was thought more economical (sparing a field officer) and as best calculated to be speedily & effectively carried out, by adding two Companies each to the 1st Regt S. C. Artillery and 1st S. C. Infantry, which last was, had been doing, and (from the necessities of the service) must continue to do

Artillery Service. It was for this service, also, that I desired to have the designation of the Regiment made de jure to accord with its de facto condition, which I presume had not been done by the War Dept solely for want of power, as I could think of no other objection to such a measure on its part. There are no less than 3-1st Regts of So. Carolina troops in sight of Charleston - all on Artillery duty! Rhett's, Butler's and Frederick's; the result being much confusion. Moreover there is another 1st-Regt (Gregg's old Regt) in Virginia -

Please communicate this to Senator Phelan, who may be assured, I have no desire to interfere with the President's prerogatives, as he would be convinced were he to know me better. I am happy to find that Wigfall is the "Preux Chevalier". I always took him to be; give him my kind

thanks - In the matter of Guérin,
 let me say that the charges
 were forwarded long ago; that is,
 as soon as it became apparent
 the President had determined
 to revise the matter himself.
 Meantime, Guérin had been
 only in mere nominal arrest;
 he was never disturbed in the
 least in the discharge of his
 duties, simply because I wished
 to avoid disturbance with
 Northrop (his relative by
 marriage) & with the President.
 Rarely are charges ever preferred
 in the field, or when expecting
 battle; within the 8 days prescrib-
 ed in the articles of war. -
 Staff Officers have been kept
 in arrest or off duty, under
 such circumstances, for many
 months in the Regular Service,
 & Mr Seddon has been im-
 posed on he may rest assured.
 The charges against Guérin
 are as yet unacted on; it is
 even said by his friends, that

that they have been disapproved.
 The charges are not trivial or
frivolous, & could have been
 greatly multiplied under each
 head. Besides, Mr Seddon has
 read & admitted the force of my
 letter showing Guerin's untruth-
 ful conduct in relation to arrange-
 ments about hides; he will not
 say that my allegations are not
 sustained, & yet Guerin remains
 on duty. The fact is, the Subsistence
 Dept - here (as I fear elsewhere) is
 a nest of corruption - agents are
 getting rich with impunity,
 under my very nose, for I cannot
 reach them - Guerin's weakness
 is a gold mine to them; & the
 course of the Govt towards
 him emboldens them. —

I care not personally who tries
 my delinquent officers - all
 that I ask is that the guilty
 shall be punished & the worth-
 less turned adrift - I have
 not time, if I were so disposed,
 to favor friends or persecute

Enemies - My whole body & Soul are in this contest, which is one of life & death, to a nation of which I, my family and friends form a part.

I believe & hope, that my love of country is unsullied by selfish views or personal considerations; all that I had or owned, my wife & daughter, are all in the hands of an unscrupulous Enemy.

When I parted from my family, I expected to have been absent only two weeks, but we have now been separated over two years!

Mrs B. all this while, has been almost on the point of death!

I do not say this to praise myself, but to show what I have at stake in this contest. All that I ask is, not to be cramped, decried, or unnecessarily driven into opposition to the Govt, where a united front, & the concentrated efforts of all are absolutely

required to withstand the gigantic storm which threatens to engulf us at any moment. I am well aware that, like others, I have my faults & my deficiencies; but thank God, selfishness & Ambition form no part of my nature.

In conclusion, I can but express my thanks to the Hon. Sec^y of war, for his good intentions to assist us here - I feel convinced that, so far as he is concerned, we can rely upon him, & I am aware, also, that his means of assistance are unfortunately quite limited. But the essence of war, after all, is, to know what to give up in time, to save or gain more than we can ~~lose~~ lose, & always to do quickly what has to be done.

Not having time to write in a legible hand, my brother has done so for me.

I send you a copy of the President's instructions to

725-

Col. Chesnut, when the latter
came here, last-month; it is
a you can fill up the
blank yourself.

With kind regards to Wigfall
& other friends.

I remain,

Yours truly,

(Signed)

G. F. Beauregard

P. S.

The truth is just-coming
out-in the Yankee papers relative
to the Battle of the 7th inst. It
seems that we nearly exterminated
the tribe of Monitors in 2 1/2 h.^s

"What a fall was there my countrymen!"

G. F. B.