

Letter from the Army.

The following extract we are permitted to make from a letter received by a gentleman in this vicinity from a member of a battery in front of Petersburg:—

CAMP IN THE FIELD, }
Near Petersburg, Va., July 9, 1864. }

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We (our battery) still lay in front of the enemy; I say still!—not so still, after all, for continually are we at work, but we have not changed our position only to advance, night before last one hundred and fifty yards to the front, so that now we lay within one hundred yards of the rebel skirmish line, and within four to five hundred yards of their main fortifications. It is now twenty-two days since we took our position, and have not been relieved at all, and during all this time we have lost only one man.

The 3d division of the 6th corps left here last Wednesday morning, reported to go to Maryland, and this morning the 1st and 2d divisions of the same have gone to City Point, reported to ship, but where to go I know not. On to 7th at 4.40 P. M. the enemy opened their artillery the whole length of their line and began to form infantry, but our artillery opened, and after a short artillery duel everything became quiet again. What they (the rebels) thought of doing I do not know, probably only trying our lines, to see if all hands were yet here.

We are now suffering for want of rain very much; the springs are becoming dry, and water has to be brought a great distance, and if it continues dry another week I do not know what the army will do. It will be very sickly I fear if we do not have rain soon. It is now more than a month since we had any rain at all, and this sandy soil here is continually blowing through the air, which is anything but pleasant, I assure you.

What is to be done here I cannot conceive, but I know that digging is going on. Strong forts are being built all along our lines, which ought to withstand anything which the enemy can bring to bear upon us, and while we are at work, the rebels I assure you are not resting, for new works can be seen nearly every morning in our front, and to the right and left also. My opinion if the two armies stop here, is that it will be a long siege before Petersburg is taken, if it is taken at all. My confidence in Gens. Grant and Meade remain unshaken, and I still live in hopes—and the greater part of the army think the same or nearly as I do. We are fed with all that could be expected; and from the Sanitary we have received considerable of late, which is a treat. We never had a thing until the 4th of July from them, although I hear and have heard they had issued to the Commissary for us before this.

The men (and animals next in rank) fare better now than when we lay in camp last winter.