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HEAD QUARTERS

7TH WEST VIRGINIA VETERAN CAVALRY,

August 7th, 1865.

OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS :—

You are on the eve of departing for your homes ; our organization will soon cease to exist ; and, as it is probable that many of us will never meet again, I would speak a few parting words, as your Commanding Officer. While profoundly thankful to God for bringing the war to so glorious an end, and for his mercy in permitting us to live to see its termination, and heartily rejoicing with you all at the prospect of soon visiting our friends and homes, still I see this separation with feelings of the deepest regret.

No Commanding Officer ever had truer men under him, and, I believe, few Regiments can equal ours in the general kind feelings displayed by the officers and men for each other, and in freedom from intestine disorders.

We have been a happy family, and this breaking up of our relations calls forth every noble and manly feeling of our nature.

I can testify to the devoted patriotism which so many of you exhibited by volunteering in the early part of the war (when the conflict was around your very door-stones) at immediate great personal risk, and leaving your wives, little ones and earthly possessions surrounded by your enemies. I can willingly bear record to the sound and noble loyalty which the nineteen hundred men of the Kanawha Valley, who have belonged to the Regiment, have manifested in battling for the Right, when so many of their friends and kinsmen have fought for the Wrong.

We will long remember the dangerous and exciting scouting service in the Kanawha Valley, in 1861. We will never forget the trying times of 1862, with Fremont, in the Shenandoah Valley, at Strasburg, Mt. Jackson, Har-

risonsburg and Cross Keys,—with Sigel and Pope and Milroy in Eastern Virginia, at Madison C. H., Cedar Mountain, Freeman's Ford, and Bull Run,—and with Cox, driving the enemy from your own valleys and mountains. We will, with pleasure, often call to mind the brighter days of 1863, with Averill, at Williamsport, Martinsburg, Winchester, Monterey, Huntersville, Warm Springs, White Sulphur Springs, Droop Mountain, Lewisburg, Covington, and the heroic fortitude shown on the Salem Raid. We will proudly recount the experiences of 1864, at the beginning of which more than three-fourths of your number nobly re-enlisted as veterans, and soon after fought successfully, under Crook, at Princeton, Cloyd Mountain, Dublin, Newbern and New River Bridge; then with Crook and Averill, at Lexington, Liberty, New London, Buckhannon, and Lynchburg, on the Hunter raid; after that, divided up in detached posts, you successfully held, for months, a line more than a hundred miles long, although repeatedly attacked by several times your numbers.

You should be thankful that you witnessed the closing scenes of the Rebellion on the very ground where you first felt its curse, and received the submission of the very men who first wronged you.

You need not blush with anything but pride when you read the record, and you can gloriously recite the deeds done on these battle-fields to your children and children's children.

We will ever retain in affectionate and honorable remembrance, the recollections of those gallant men of the Regiment who devotedly fell on the battle ground, or were foully murdered in rebel prisons. The names of such officers as Curtiss, Gardner, Parker, Priester, Morehart, Neumann, and Newcomb, and such men as Foster, Monk, Woods, Forth, Marshall, Hamrick, Grinstead, Harper, Cook, Ballard, Vaughn, and a host of others, are engraved upon the tablets of our hearts.

The battle is ended—our Country is regenerated and saved—our work, as soldiers, is finished. We have now to enter upon the responsible and binding duties of citizens. Exert yourselves to aid and hasten the restoration of civil law in every part of West Virginia. Submit yourselves thoroughly to it; you have been good and gallant soldiers,—see that, as citizens, you still maintain the fair reputation of our Regiment.

The Kanawha Valley is rich in mineral and other wealth : develop it, and every mark of the ravages of war will soon be effaced.

Accept my most profound and heartfelt thanks for the cheerful and active assistance, almost universal good discipline, and prompt obedience you have ever evinced.

Be assured that the recollections of our four years' associations are indelibly impressed upon my life. I offer my earnest and best wishes to each officer and man, for his future welfare and a long and happy life.

I came to you a perfect stranger. I feel that I am leaving my brothers and best friends. FAREWELL!

*John A. Oley*

*Brevet Brigadier General,*

*and Colonel Commanding.*

