

Camp Petersburg

7 July '64

Mr. President

Lt. Albergelts Command Scouts at Rolands mill, on river road & south of Harrisons Point, reports that during forepart of yesterday six transports passed down James river carrying troops with arms. During the day a number of transports with a few troops & stores passed up the river. During the latter part of yesterday six more transports passed down the river loaded with troops. At Clark three transports were at Jordans Pt: taking on troops, & the wharf was apparently crowded with troops awaiting transportation. As the troops passed Harrison's landing they cheered heartily.

Coupling this report with the statement in the N.Y. Herald of the 4th, that about daybreak on the 3rd it was reported at Martinsburg that a body of our troops were approaching that place & that after some fighting at Bunkers hill Gen. Sigel evacuated M. and fell back to Harpersburg<sup>Ferry</sup>.

I fear the troops reported to have descended James river are on the way to Washington. I have inquired whether Lt. A. saw himself what he reported, how near he was to the river & whether he was certain that the troops were armed.

( It is not known yet whether any troops have been withdrawn from the point of Petersburg, but a Corps on their left, especially if held in reserve, might have been taken during the night of the 4th without being discovered. The Herald also states that Hunter with Crooks & Averill are in vicinity of Charleston on the Kenawha, which is corroborated by a despatch from Gen. Morgan. ( It is so repugnant to Grant's principles & practice to send troops from him that I had hoped before resorting to it he would have preferred attacking me. ) It is possible that some of these men may belong to the regts. to be discharged, of which 68 (regts) go out this month. I do not know how many belong to Grant's Army, but I believe all from Maine, Mass., Vermont., Conn., N.Y., Md., and several from Ohio, Ind., & Penn.

I learn too that Sheridan & Wilson's Cav; are encamped on Blands farm, just south of Jordans Pr; and many of the men seen about the wharf might have belonged to them. The probabilities are that they are troops bound for Washington, & if Hunter is brought up the Ohio & around by R.R. (Early may be opposed by a force too large for him to manage.) As soon as I ascertain more definitely, I will send to apprise E. that he may be on his guard. The troops referred to will have passed the mouth of the Potomac today. There are letters from nearly all the Corps of Grant's Army published in the Herald of the 4th, showing they were here as late as the 2nd.

Most respt. your obt. servt.

R.E. LEE

Gen.

His Excel. Jefferson Davis

Pres: C. States