Camp Lawn

Dumfries Va Dec. 18. 1861

Col. E. W. Pettus

My Dear Sir,

Your long interesting letter, of 2d inst, was received on Friday last, & I was delighted to hear from you once more.

I rejoice that you are so well pleased, and only regret that we are not nearer to each other.

All hope of an attack, from McClellan, appears to have expired, as the weather, for two weeks, has been mild & clear, and if he had wished to advance, he could have

had no better time - His men behave so badly, in all of their skirmishes, that the opinion has gained ground, that he has no confidence in his army - Ours was never so well prepared, & if the battle does take place, we will give a good account of ourselves. I fear he is waiting until this army becomes weakened, by the return of the 12 mos. men, next spring - The new act of congress will not secure more than one fourth of the men here - & I think Congress had better proceed at once to draft an army to supply the deficiency - If we could be discharged, in Jany or February,

are allowed to go home,
Nine tenths of the volunteers
would reenlist for the war.
I will not return, unless I
have a better position, as
I think my experience &
position deserve it — This is
the feeling with many offi=
cers, of merit, in the regiment.
I would like to get a field
office in your regiment, in
Winston's, or Judges — but there
is such a scramble for office,
that I do not feel much
inclined to make the at=
tempt —
Goldsby & myself went over to
Mr Rogers on Friday — His reg=
iment is about 12 miles from
us — in same brigade are Col.
Miller & Col. R. T. Jones — We found

all of our friends there cull-
Sam Col. Allen Jones, Capt Webb,
Capt Ferguson, of Pickens - Pegues &
Col. Miller, of the 6th - Morgan
had gone home, on furlough,
to ascertain, from the Supreme
Court, whether vacancies
were filled by election or by
promotion -
Pegues & Morgan, I regret, are
estranged from each other -
& I fear Morgan has treated
Pegues badly - having indu=
ced him to become a can=
didate, for Lieut Col., and then kam=
ing to himself, without any ex=
planation to Pegues - There are also
some other matters of difference, about
which Pegues has just cause of complaint.

We are now building log cabins for the winter - when we will be as comfortable as lords -

These matters are too long for a letter, & I hope will be forgotten by the parties - Pegues, you know, is not a man <u>groundlessly</u> to take offence -

Duval has resigned; & will probably not live through this winter. We dined with Col. Miller - He is very grey, but looks better than usual - The same (latter) remark applies to most of us, in this away, who have had health - Pegues looks older, & is low spirited. The loss of his little girl has depressed him, & I feel deeply for him - Col. Allen Jones is as grey as a badger, but is in fine health - I have the promise of a furlough, as soon as the campaign closes,

and will return home - I
fear it is wrong, as coming
back will be worse than stay=
ing away altogether, but as
I have promised to do so, I will
I heard yesterday from Mr
Matheus - He seems very much
disposited, & is evidently no
admirer of the present great
men of the Confederacy - I think
he takes a wrong view of things.
We must have hard times &
harder at home than in
the army -
I heard that Reginald was
very sick, at Yorktown, with
typhoid fever, but cannot
yet have of alleviate visit
him - I hope the report is exagge=
ated -
We have just heard that we

have again obtained a
glorious victory at Cumber=
land Gap - Is it not strange
that the Yankees are not ti=
red of this war? - So far they
have not gained any ad=
vantage, where we had an
equal number engaged -
All of your friends here are
well - Gladly was never better
& begs to be remembered to you.
I showed your letter to Gen Rob=
ertson, she expressed much
gratification at hearing from
you - He is quite well -
I have seen Col. Gudge recently
all well - Baine makes a
capital officer - Their regiment
is at Evansport, within gun
shot of the Yankee batteries,
in Maryland - The Yankees

will never take their batteries by a land attack - we can throw 30.000. men upon either of our flanks, in five hours, we will always have twelve hours notice of their approach, as a telegraph is built from Centreville & Leesburg to Acquia Creek - others are offices at every division - I have never seen more beautiful weather in Ala - we have ice nearly all the time, but it is not as cold as the same weather in Ala - Should I go home, in January, I hope you will be able to go home at same time - as it would be a great pleasure to see you - Remember me to Lt. Yarrott & Capt Guild -

Goodbye - With many wishes for your prosperity & health, I remain,

Yours very truly,

N. H. R. Dawson