

Head Quarters 93rd Ohio Vols
May 13th 1863

Capt
Sir

Your communication of this date asking "the reason if any" why the sentinels at Station No 14 were not moved across Stone River as directed" just rec^d. I had to answer that the order was given to me yesterday verbal while at my head quarters on the picket line. The order was merely to throw the sentinels named over the river, and no indication or direction was given as to the post or points at which the sentinels were to be placed. I immediately visited the ground to be occupied. I found that to change the line to the left bank and leave it near the river, or at any point between the river and the elevated ground beyond, would give the sentinels a very limited view to the front, and bring them within short range of the points from which they were fired upon when on picket on the 5th of March, on that occasion the enemy approached unseen, from the opposite side of this elevated ground. I inferred therefore that it was not intended to leave the line along or near the river. I then examined the high ground in front and found that no safe or useful line could be posted there without extending it some considerable distance from the river. To put it where I thought it ought to be if ~~it~~ across the river at all, it would be entirely lost from the reserves, and there I had no orders to move.

I should have stated above that my orders were to connect with Genl Thomas' line at the rail road bridge. Across the river from this bridge and a little to the right as you face to the front is a small body of timber, this being admirably accepted to cover an enemy, I supposed should be covered by the line, and as its position was such as that it would not be covered by it, if the line was left along the river, an additional reason was presented to my mind for supposition that it was not intended to leave the line at the bank or near the river. On the whole I concluded the best under the circumstances to leave the line as it was until ^{of some} the Corp Insp. He did not visit my part of the line if he did I did not see him. Thinking it important to give early of the fact that no change had been made I called upon him ^{on my} on my return this morning and gave him the above explanation verbally.

Francis P. Stearns
Capt^{cy} U.S.A. 3rd Regt

Very Respectfully
Hiram S. King

Head Quarters 9rd Ohio Vol
May 13th, 1863
Capt. Sir,

Your communications of this date asking "the reason 'if any' why the sentinels at station No 14 were not moved across Stones River as directed" just recd. I have(?) to answer that the order was given to me yesterday ?verbally? while at my head quarters on the picketline. The order was merely to throw the sentinels named over the river, and no indication or direction was given as to the post or points at which the sentinels were to be placed. I immediately visited the ground to be occupied. I found that to change the line ?___? the left bank and the leave it near the river or at any point between the river and the elevated ground beyond would give the sentinels a very limited view of the front, and bring them within short range of the points from which they were fired upon when on picket on the 21st of March. On that occasion the enemy approached unseen from the opposite side of this elevated ground. I inferred therefore that it was not intended to leave the line along or near the river. I then examined the high ground in front and found that no safe or useful line could(?) be posted there without extending it some considerable distance from the river. To put it where I thought it ought to be, if across the river at all, it would be entirely too ?far? from the reserves, and these I have no orders to move. I should have stated above that my orders were to connect with ?Genl? Thomas' line at the rail road bridge. Across the river from this bridge and a little to the right as you ?_____? to the front is a small body of timber, all ?m___? accepted(?) to cover an enemy. I supposed ?_____? be ?c_____? by the line, and as its position was such as that it would not be covered by it, if the line was left along the river. An additional reason was presented to my mind ?for the? suppositions that it was not intended to leave the line ?along? the bank or near the river. On the whole I concluded ?it? was best to leave the line where it was until I saw the Camp Insp. He however, did not visit my part of the Camp. If he did I did not see him. Thinking it was important to give early ?_____? of the fact that no change had been made I called upon him ?_____? my return this morning and gave him the above explanation verbally. Very Respectfully.

Hiram Strong

Frank P. Stratten
Capt ? ?. ?. 93rd brg