

Head Quarters, Middle Department, 8th Army Corps,
Baltimore, Sept 23 1864

My dear Friend

I anticipated that you will be as much surprised at seeing the above heading as I was when I rec'd the order directing me to "report without delay to the C.O. Middle Dept for duty." In fact so certain was I of going to the 19th A.C. that when I read the order, I was under the impression that Sheridan com^{ded} the Middle Dept. instead of which he commands the Middle Div., which includes this Dept. The only explanation that I could get was that it was necessary that Asst Adj't Gen'l should go at once to B. as his services were very much required, which I find to be the case as I have on hand plenty of good hard work. The secret service, political prisoners, besides other Depts have been already turned over to me, which will give me an opportunity to become well acquainted with the people. I have been very careful to go into a good Union Bdg House, as I don't care to get acquainted with any but thoroughly loyal persons, as I shall see enough of the secesh element calling after "favors," etc.

I am paying \$30 for Bd per month, which I do not intend to do long. I am looking around to find a place which may be as good and cheaper, nearly all the clothing etc I purchased in N.Y. is rendered useless for the present by my coming here— I left white shirts, collars etc. in N.Y. but sent for them last p.m. I present an appearance anything but "office like."

The next application I make for a change of station will be to go to New York City as [] or "sich like." Then I will be of course ordered to Petersburg or similar place. However, I have the satisfaction of knowing that I used every effort to be ordered to a station which should have been more desirable to a soldier. As it is, I shall of course endeavor to perform the duties assigned me with promptness and energy.

By the way I bought a watch of the firm you alluded to, \$40.45 I gave for it. I have not yet been able to use it, as it stopped the 1st day out. The watch maker said it wants oiling etc. If you know of a good young fellow who is going to the field, tell him that "Matthews outfitting establishment for those going to the field is now open and his stock will be sold out at immense sacrifice—of old clothes—[].

I will send you the papers now and then, which may be of interest to you.

If I can get a copy of the order placing me on duty at these [] before the mail close I will enclose it in this scribble.

With best wishes for yourself and family
I remain
Yours Sincerely

Oliver Matthews
A.A.G.

P.S. How is the pony. I have not yet heard a word from my horse. I am getting anxious about him. I suppose the [] shipped him []

OM