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April 21, 1865

HEAD QUARTERS MUNFORD'S CAV. BRIG.

APRIL 21, 1865.

SPECIAL ORDERS.

No. 1.

SOLDIERS,—I have just received a communication from the President of the Confederate States, ordering us again to the field in defence of our liberties. Gen. Johnson, with an army constantly increasing, well appointed and disciplined, still upholds our glorious banner, we are ordered to report to him. Our cause is not dead. Let the same stern determination to be free, which has supported you for four years of gallant struggle, still animate you, and it can never die. One disaster, however serious, cannot crush out the spirit of Virginians, and make them tamely submit to their enemies, who have given us, during all these terrible years of war, so many evidences of their devilish malignity in our devastated fields, our burned homesteads, our violated daughters and our murdered thousands. Virginians will understand that their present pretended policy of conciliation is but the cunning desire of the Yankee, to lull us to sleep, while they rivet the chains they have been making such gigantic efforts to forge, and which they will as surely make us wear *forever*, if we tamely submit. We have sworn a thousand times by our eternal wrongs, by our sacred God given rights, by the memory of our noble fathers and our glorious past, by our gallant dead who lie in every plain of our war-scarred State, by our glorious victories on many a well fought field that we would be free. Shall we not keep our oaths? Can we kneel down by the graves of our dead, kneel in the very blood from sons yet fresh, and kiss the red which smote them down. Never! never! Better die a thousand deaths! We have still power to resist. There are more men at home to-day, belonging to the army of Northern Virginia, than were surrendered at Appomattox. Let them rally to the call of our President and Virginia, our beloved old Commonwealth shall yet stand triumphant and defiant, with her foot upon her tyrant's prostrate, and her proud old banner, never yet sullied, with its "Sic Sempér Tyrannis" streaming over her.

Soldiers of the old Brigade, to you I confidently appeal. You have never been surrendered! Cutting your way out of the enemy's lines before the surrender was determined, you, together with a majority of the cavalry, are free to follow your country's flag. The eyes of your Virginia, now bleeding at every pore, turn with special interest to you: Will you desert her at her sorest need? You will never descend to such infamy. Let us renew our vows, and swear again by our broken altars, to be *free or die*. Let us teach our children eternal hostility to our foes. What though we perish in the fight, as surely as the God of justice reigns, the truth, the right will prevail, and though we may not, our children will win the glorious fight, for it is not within the nature of her Southern sons, to wear the chains of Yankee-rule.

We have still a country, a flag, an army, a Government. Then to horse! to horse! a circular will be sent to each of your officers, designating the time and place of assembly. Hold yourselves in instant readiness, and bring all true men with you from this command who will go, and let us who struck the last blow as an organized part of the Army of Northern Virginia, strike the first with that victorious army which, by the blessings of our gracious God, will yet come to redeem her hallowed soil.

THOMAS T. MUNFORD,
Brig. Gen. Comdg Div.

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