

Colonel [B. G.] Baldwin informs me four Napoleons were sent up this week, and nine more will be sent next week to you.

It will be best to proceed with the completion of the organization of the battalions. The officers have been nominated, and their names sent up for confirmation. If the enemy attacks us here, I will need all the artillery you can bring up, but General Longstreet will need some also, as the attack may be simultaneous here and on the south side of James River.

I sent Lane's battery to him, so that he could operate on the river with his long-range guns. The exchange of batteries, of which you speak, can be deferred for the present.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. E. LEE,  
*General.*

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[MARCH 21, 1863.—For Vance to Seddon, in relation to impressment of forage, see Series I, Vol. XVIII, p. 934.]

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GENERAL ORDERS, ) HDQRS. ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,  
No. 43. ) *March 21, 1863.*

With a view to a resumption of active operations by the 1st of April, the army will at once prepare for the approaching campaign.

I. All surplus baggage, public and private, properly marked, will be sent to Richmond, under charge of a responsible officer from each brigade, to be turned over to Captain [W. E.] Warren, assistant quartermaster, who will receipt therefor in bulk, and retain the same in the store-house provided for the purpose until it shall be required.

II. No further leaves of absence will be given, to extend beyond the 31st instant, except on surgeon's certificate of disability, as prescribed in Regulations, or in cases of extraordinary urgency.

III. There being some misapprehension as to the returns required to be made by regimental officers to the several departments to which property in their hands appertains, and returns having in consequence heretofore been omitted in many cases, commanders of regiments will immediately take an inventory of all ordnance stores in the possession of their regiments and ordnance sergeants; file them with accounts now in hands of said sergeants; forward receipts to the Chief of Ordnance at Richmond, Va., for stores thus found, and make out hereafter the returns required in Army Regulations. All future losses must be accounted for by certificates of company officers, stating the circumstances of loss; and where through fault of the men, that they have been or will be charged on the muster-rolls, specifying the months. Returns will also be made by company officers of all property in their hands, except arms and ammunition accounted for by regimental commanders, retaining duplicates with company papers. When an officer is relieved from his command, he will pass receipts and invoices for property to his successor. If removed by accident, the next in rank will take an inventory immediately of all the public property for which his predecessor was responsible, and send receipts therefor to the proper departments, to aid in settlement of his accounts, and as evidence of his own responsibility.

IV. It will be necessary to reduce the transportation of the army to the lowest limit. This necessity arises from the difficulty of procuring animals and forage, and from the increased demand for transportation