

# **Intelligence Story in Three Parts**

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**CONFIDENTIAL**

*Order of battle, courtesy of helpful medics and the loyal press.*

**Edward M. Zivich<sup>1</sup>**

Camp Near Falmouth, Va.

April 21, 1863

Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War:

I would respectfully call your attention to the inclosed extract, published in the Washington Morning Chronicle of April 17, 1863 with the correspondence of the medical director of this army in regard to same. Already all of the arithmeticians in the army have figured up the strength of sick and well, as shown in this published extract, as belonging to this army. Its complete organization is given, and in the case of two corps the number of regiments. The chief of my secret service department would have willingly paid \$1,000 for such information in regard to the enemy at the commencement of his operations and even now would give that sum for it to verify the statements which he has been at great labor and trouble to collect and systemize.

By the inclosed correspondence it will be seen that it was not published by this army. I trust that the matter may receive attention and investigation at your hands.

Very respectfully, &c

JOSEPH HOOKER,

Major-General, Commanding

Surgeon-General's Office

Washington City, D.C.,

April 23, 1863

Brig. Gen. W. A. Hammond

Surgeon General, U.S. Army

General: To your inquiries in reference to the publication of a report of Surgeon Letterman, and my knowledge of the same, I have the honor to reply that about a week since the report referred to was received at this office, and read by me as an ordinary sanitary report. Soon after its reception, a newspaper reporter came into the office, and to his entreaties for news as to the health of the army, I let him copy the letter, directing him, however, to omit the address and signature, and any marks which might denote the official, and thus attach to it importance or credibility. ... In this connection it might be stated the only newspaper reporters who visit this office belong to the New York Times and the Washington Morning Chronicle, both of which I believe to be loyal papers, and incapable of using to the public injury information that they might obtain ...

Jos. R. Smith

Surgeon, U.S. Army

Head Quarters Army of

Northern Virginia

May 10, 1863

Hon. James A. Seddon, Secretary of War:

Sir: ... We are greatly outnumbered by the enemy now. Taking the report of Surgeon Letterman, medical director of General Hooker's army, the number of sick reported by him and the ratio of the sick to the whole number, his aggregate force, by calculation, amounts to more than 159,000 men . . .

I am, with great respect, your obedient servant,

<sup>1</sup> From the *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, War of the Rebellion*, Series I, Vol. XXV, part II, serial No. 40, pp. 239-241 and 790.

<sup>2</sup> Lee could have used this information to advantage before his great battle at Chancellorsville, May 1-5. He did actually get an advance on it during the last week in April from the Signal Bureau, Richmond, but he was not given the source and so discounted it in favor of his own much lower estimate.

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