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Report of Col. William B. Hazen, Forty-first Ohio Infantry, commanding Second Brigade, Second Division, Twenty-first Army Corps.

CAMP AT READYVILLE, March 2, 1863—12 m.

CAPT.: There are various rumors of considerable re-enforcements having been sent to Woodbury. The officers I sent in yesterday are from Duke's Second Kentucky Regt., which yesterday morning went from near Bradyville to Woodbury. We also have a prisoners from Smith's Fourth [Eighth] Tennessee Regt., which, he says, is at Woodbury, having gone there yesterday. Everybody brought from the country concurs in the story that there are two regiments at Bradyville. These, with the one that has been at Woodbury all the time (which is neither of the ones mentioned), make five in my front. It is quite certain that considerable re-enforcements have been received there since day before yesterday. The two men (Smith and Prater) whom I send to you can tell you what they think they know about it. They speak of the forces that were at the Fort Donelson fight being at Woodbury. You had better, perhaps, take them to Gen. Palmer.

Yesterday morning, at 4 a. m., I sent out three parties of 100 each, picked men, under picked officers, who went on different roads to the front, taking cover at light, and endeavoring to bushwhack the enemy. The party toward Woodbury had a brisk skirmish, and retired without loss before a vastly superior force of cavalry. One of the enemy was known to be shot. The party toward Bradyville also had several little skirmishes, catching one; but as the enemy are all mounted and know the country much the best, I think they will come out best at bushwhacking. I have a forage train out now which has been attacked, and the firing is now going on. The officer in command has sent in for re-enforcements, and I have sent him all I dare to, as it will not do to expose my camp.

I would beg respectfully to suggest that, while such a force is in my immediate vicinity, foraging necessary to subsist my animals, with any escort it is safe to spare from the camp, is almost too hazardous for expediency.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. B. HAZEN, Col., Cmdg.

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