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Camp Chase, near Columbus, Ohio
May 10th, 1862

Hon. John S. Carslile
U. S. Senate
Washington City

My Dear Sir,

Although I am personally a stranger to you yet I am induced to address you by the following extract from a letter addressed to me under date of the 23rd April by Joseph D. Rapp Esq. of Buckhannon, Upshur County, my Brother in Law, speaking of such friends of his, whose aid he might ask, in the endeavors to cause my release from this prison and my return to my family. I am intimately acquainted with Hon. J. S. Carslile at Washington. Being limited to one page I will endeavor concisely to define my position in the past and at this time. Up to the States being plunged into the unknown sea of secessionism I was a Strong Unionist defending on the stump the one time honored Union. But on that event owing to my peculiar position holding a Commission of Brig. General of Militia and being a Marked Man by the Secession Leaders I was compelled to act for safety & against my choice and judgment, for I assure you My Dear Sir I was never a Secessionist per se. I was ordered by Henry A. Wise & Gov. Letcher to call out the Fayette and Raleigh Militia. This was a very partial turn out of the Militia, owing to their dissatisfaction & Union sentiments, and in a few weeks John B. Floyd who had superseded Wise disbanded them. This was all the share I had in opposing the U. S. and it was done under the stress of circumstances I could not resist.

On the 8th Feb I resigned my commission to Gov. Letcher, and voluntarily came home, (my family never removing from home) & surrendered myself to Col. Hayes of 23rd Ohio Regt. at Raleigh Court House. I was kindly received and suffered to remain at home, on my verbal parole for three weeks, and received assurances that I would not be removed but permitted to remain giving my parole for the War on 4th April I was ordered to be sent to Wheeling. I was there on my parole some two weeks and then sent here owing to the stringency of General Fremont's instruction from War Department. Judge J. J. Jacksons, Benjamin H. Smith U.S. Atty and Adj. Gen. Samuels gave me a strong recommendation to Genl Freemont but in vain. Now My Dear sir, I came home as "the prodigal son" to resume my fealty and my wish is now in good faith to make amends for my short dereliction. Probably you have received a letter from my Brother in Law, will you please intercede with me to the Secretary of War. I can obtain a petition from 9/10 of the people of Raleigh County founded by my own personal influence in favor of my return to my County. I have sent to my son John Beckley to have one sent to me. With this appeal to your humane feelings. My dear Sir

I am Your Obedient Servant
Alfred Beckley

(On back of letter – "Respectfully referred to his Excellency Governor Pierpont by order of Secretary of War)

**P. H. Watson
Asst. Sec. of War**