

4-12-1862

## Letter from George W. Porter to Francis P. Porter

George W. Porter

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Pittsburg Landing, April 12th 1862.

Dear Sister:

I Received your kind & welcome letter this evening, was gratified to hear from home & find you all well, I received a letter from Huldah & Ans, about a week ago. I also received a letter from Johnny, who was still at Louisville, I suppose as Buell's forces are here, John is somewhere near. I don't know where to write to him, so I will wait an ans, from you, hoping you will hear from him, by the time this reaches you. He told me to write to Louisville, but as he is not connected with any particular Regt. I knew not how to direct, when you write give best respects & well wishes, always warn him as regards bad Company, tell him to write off. I will now give you a description of our ups & downs since I wrote to Huldah, I believe I related to her about our Levant in which we killed two Cavalymen. In a few nights after this, our Company was called out for Picket Guard, Lieut. Miles Requested me to go with him, as we were expecting an attack, I told him I would accompany him. I did not take a post, but watched with him. and

helped him attach to the Guard, we was not  
attacked as we supposed to be, when we Return-  
ed to Camp the next day about noon, our tents  
were all loaded up & our Regt was fixing for  
leaving. as I had not slept much the previous  
evening (or rather night) I did not feel much  
like marching, we got started for this place about  
3 o'clock in the afternoon, arrived here about 8  
o'clock the same eve, distance 12 miles. However  
the morning before we came in off of Picket,  
the firing commenced at this point, and  
kept up until dark. It was terrible, and  
never ceased until dark, commenced about  
Sun-rise. The result was, our men were driv-  
en all day, in the first place they were taken  
by surprise. by the way we made a quick  
trip, (when we arrived we were tired & sleepy) we  
were <sup>then</sup> drawn up in line of battle, & commanded  
to sleep on our arms. The Capt. & I fixed down  
our blankets & threw our guns down to rest. I  
soon fell asleep. about midnight it commen-  
ced raining, & rained for keeps, from this time  
on until morning I could not get to sleep, for the  
Cry & Scream of the wounded on the field, which  
was awful. about daylight one of the boys of Co. G.  
went to take his pistol out of his pocket, when it went

Dear Mother  
I have my dear Mother  
to read her dear letter  
I hope you will  
write soon  
I am your affectionate  
son  
John

Sabbath morning April 13<sup>th</sup> 1862

This beautiful morning finds me seated in my tent thinking of the old homestead. & the many pleasant ours we have all spent together. But this morning finds us separated some distance from each other. Hoping soon to mingle together as in time past. I suppose you are fixing about this time to go over to Ashbury to Church. If I was there to go with you, what a pleasant time we would have. But thank God I am performing my post duty, to do what I believe to be my duty, I am not found as some lying around home, while others are out fighting our battles for us. I am satisfied with my lot, hoping when peace is declared to return home unharrassed. I am sure there is a just God who doeth all things well, why then fear, I will not say how I behaved during the battle farther than I was found always at my post. I can't say that I was scared as I supposed to be. I am here ready I wish they would push the thing through. I don't believe they will make more than one more stand & that will be at Corinth.

...you have a chance  
of my love to all the world  
J. H. A. Gillespie was near me all day  
during the fight, he behaved bravely, always at  
his best. Our officers did well. The Capt. got  
three or four ball holes through his coat, was  
struck on the finger by grape, not much hurt,  
a good many of our boys got holes cut in their  
coats. Our Regt. lost one man, 12 wounded.  
Divine Providence is all that saved us.  
You spoke of seeing my girl. I would like to  
know who she is. You spoke as if you thought  
she wasn't good looking, never mind, I will  
settle with you when I return. S. W. Morrison is  
riding Mad around. I will state that when  
I come around, give her my best wishes, tell  
her I would like to see her, you speak as if not  
feeling at home, you must make yourself at home.  
I hope when we all get west, we will have a home.  
How is Father getting along with his business. You  
never tell me anything about how you are getting  
along, which I am always anxious to know. Tell me  
what he is doing this summer & everything concern-  
ing his business. I only wish John had stayed at  
home. Always when you write to him coax him  
to come home. Father reads him so much, you  
must write often. It does us soldiers so much good to  
hear from home. I will write to Will today, as I  
have given you a full description of affairs I will close.  
Tell the little girls & boys to be good children, I hope  
to be with them some day, must continue to let on  
war matters, I think W. P. J. might write. This battle field  
is an awful sight. Tell Father & Mother I would like  
to see them, I hope to soon, give my love to all my  
friends. Let no one in my trunk save your self, if you  
get that School, don't hold it at Marshall's. The boys  
would talk about you before a week.

*I think the whole  
of getting out there, I don't think he will go home  
I don't think he will go home*  
and shut him through the hands. Soon after  
the firing commenced & it came thick & heavy.  
Beauregard was in Command. & as they had  
driven us all the day previous, he told his men  
that if they would pitch in, it would only be a  
nice little breakfast shell, to clean us out, but  
as you find he was sadly mistaken, we were  
now drawn around on the right flank, where  
we were soon found at our post, we were exposed  
to the severest of their fire the whole day, at some  
times the shells would burst right above our  
heads, we were now marched up into an  
open field, the enemy had formed in the timber  
on the opposite side, here we were right out with  
with nothing to protect us & they sheltered by the  
thick growth of timber, here I witnessed one  
of the most beautiful Scenes I ever saw, our  
whole Brigade drawn up in this large field  
of about I think 30 acres, If you had been  
listening, it seems to me that you might  
have heard us Charing, we now pitched into  
them regular, and you ought to have seen  
them Madaddle, here I saw some very  
narrow escapes, as we were marching up, a  
cannon ball came along, & I don't think it

to be forwarded immediately.

(Latter part of the day, I saw a number of  
Crows & 5 or 6 N. Jays. Co. of 48th Regt. I. O. C. 20.)

I struck a tree farther in front of me than  
I felt a shell passed by, I saw it strike the  
ground about 3 rods off and it glanced  
right over our heads, it is of no use to try to me-  
asure the number of times, I came so near  
being struck, to make a long story short, the balls  
& shells come thick & fast, around us all day, until  
about 5 1/2 o'clock, when they shaded for  
kicks, our General says we behaved the most  
cool, & our fire took the best part of any other  
Regt: we give them one fine volley, they broke  
immediately, our guns are so superior to theirs,  
they can't stand up to us any more. Our forces  
here was about 80,000 men, theirs 140,000  
beyond doubt, our loss was 5,000. theirs 11,000.  
The battle of Donalason is no where to be  
compared with this, during Monday (the  
day we fought them), I don't think the firing  
ceased ten minutes during the whole day,  
but was a continual volley the whole day,  
this is the 6th day since we left our tents, I left  
out ever since, until tonight we pitched them  
to day, and I am now in my tent for the first  
time since, & it has rained every night since  
last one, I will close for to night.

April 12, 1862

Addressed to Miss F.P. Porter

Hopewell Muskingum Co.

Ohio

Pittsburg Landing April 12th 1862

Dear Sister:

I received your kind & welcome letter this evening. Was gratified to hear from home & find you all well. I received a letter from Huldah & Gus about a week ago. I also received a letter from Johnny who was still at Louisville. I suppose as Buell's forces are here, John is somewhere near. I don't know where to write to him. Lo I will wait an ans. from you hoping you will hear from him by the time this reaches you. He told me to write to Louisville but as he is not connected with any particular Regt, I knew not how to direct. When you write give best respects & well wishes. Always warn him as regards bad company. Tell him to write after.

I will now give you a description of our ups and downs since I last wrote to Huldah. I believe I related to her about how about our scout in which we killed two Cavalrymen. In a few nights after this, our company was called on for picket-guard \_\_\_\_\_. Wiles requested me to go with him as we were expecting an attack. I told him I would accompany him. I did not take a post but watched with him and helped him to attend to the Guard. We was not attacked as we supposed to be. When we returned to camp the next day about noon, our tents were all loaded up & our Regt was fixing for leaving. As I had not slept much the previous evening (or rather night), I did not feel much like marching. We got started for this place about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. Arrived here about 8 o'clock the same eve, distance about 12 miles. However, the morning we came in off of picket, the firing commenced at this point and kept up until dark. It was tremendous and never ceased until dark. Commenced about sunrise. The result was our men were driven all day in the first place, they were taken by surprise, by the way we made a quick trip. (When we arrived we were tired & sleepy. We were then drawn up in a line of battle and commanded to sleep on our arms. The Capt & I fixed down our blankets & threw ourselves down to rest. I soon fell asleep. About midnight it commenced raining & rained for keeps from this time on until morning. I could not get to sleep for the cries and screams of the wounded on the field which was awful. About daylight, one of the boys from Co. G went to take his pistol out of his pocket where it went and shot him through the hand.

Soon after the firing commenced -- it came thick and heavy. Beauregard was in command and as they had driven us all the day previous, he told his men that if they would pitch in it would only be a nice little breakfast \_\_\_\_\_ to clean us out, but as you find, he was sadly mistaken. We were now ordered around on the right flank where we soon found our post, We were exposed to the severest of the fire the whole day. At some times the shells would burst right above our heads. We were now marched up into an open field, the enemy had formed in the \_\_\_\_\_ on the opposite side. Here we were, right out with nothing to protect us & only sheltered by the thick growth of timber. Here I witnessed one of the most beautiful scene I ever saw. Our whole



brigade drawn up in this large field of about I think 50 acres. If you had been listening, it seems to me that you might have heard us cheering. We now pitched into them regular and you ought to have seen them skedaddle. Here I run some very narrow escapes. As we were marching up a cannon ball came along & I don't think it stuck in a tree farther in front of me 3 feet. A shell passed by. I saw it hit the ground about 3 rods off and it glanced right over our heads.

It is of no use to try to mention the number of times I came so near being struck. To make a long story short, the ball and shell came thick and fast around us all day until about 5 o'clock when they skedaddled for keeps. Our general says we behaved the most cool and our fire took the best effect of any other Regt. We gave them one fine volley. They broke immediately. Our guns are so superior to theirs, they can't stand up to us anyhow. Our forces here was about 80000 men, theirs 140000 beyond doubt. Our loss was 5000, there's 11000. The battle at Donelson is no where to be compared with this. During Monday, the day we fought them I don't think the firing ceased ten minutes during the whole day, but it was a continual volley the whole day. This is the sixth day since we have left our tents. Slept out ever since until tonight. We pitched them today and I am now in my tent for the first time since & it has rained every night since, save one. I will close for tonight.

Sabbath morning April 13th, 1862

This beautiful morning has me seated in my tent thinking of the old homestead. The many pleasant hours we have spent together, but this morning finds us separated some distance from each other. Hoping soon to mingle together as in times past, I suppose you are all fixing about to go over to Asbury to church. If I was there to go with you, what a pleasant time we would have. But thank God I am \_\_\_\_\_ at my post striving to do what I believe to be my duty. I am not found as some lying around home while others are out fighting our battles for us. I am satisfied with my Co. hoping that when peace is declared to return home unharmed. I am sure there is a just God who doeth all things well, why then fear.

I will not say how I behaved in the battle farther than I was scared as I was supposed to be. I am here, ready. I wish they would push the thing through. I don't believe they will make more than one more stand and that will be at Corinth. J.W.A. Gillespie was near me all day during the fight and he behaved bravely always at his best. Our officers did well. The Col. got three or four ball holes through his coat, was struck on the finger by grape. Not much hurt. A good many of our boys got holes cut in their coats Our Regt lost one man, 12 wounded. Divine Providence is all that saved us.

You spoke of my seeing my girl. I would like to know who she is. You spoke as if you thought she wasn't good looking. Never mind. I will settle with you when I return. G.W. Morrison is \_\_\_\_\_ Meda around. I will state that when I come around. Give her my best wishes. tell her I would like to see her. You spoke of not feeling at home. You must make yourself at home. I hope that when we all get west we will have a home. How is father getting along with his business? You never tell me anything about how you are getting along which I am always anxious to know. Tell what is doing this summer and everything concerning his business. I only wish John had stayed at home. Always when you write to him coax him to come home. Father needs him so much.

You must write often. It does us soldiers so much good to hear from home. I will write to Will \_\_\_\_\_ today. As I have given you a full description of affairs, I will close. Tell the little girls and boys to be good children. I hope to be with them soon. \_\_\_\_\_ must continue to \_\_\_\_\_ on war matters. I think W.P.A. might write. This battle field is an awful sight. Tell Father and Mother I would like to see them and hope to soon. Give my love to all enquiring friends. Let no one in my trunk, save yourself. If you get that school, don't board at Marshalls The boys would talk about you before a week.

Give my love to Will's folks. Tell all to write. I would have written soon had I a chance.

W.F. Armstrong is well. Sump has his discharge and is getting better. Says he don't think he will go home. I think he will

Quadlock is coming down. Sis, if the rest of you can forgive him, I never can. He may invite for me. I never expect to darken his door. I hope you never will.

Direct to G.W. Porter, Co. B, 78th Regt, O.V.I. Savannah, Tenn River, Tenn. Care of Col. M.D. Leggett to be forwarded immediately.