

9-22-1864

Letter from George W. Porter to J.J. Kelly

George W. Porter

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Head Quarters 3rd Div. 19th A. C.
Near Atlanta Georgia Sept. 22nd 1864.
(Col. J. J. Kelly)
Dear Sir—

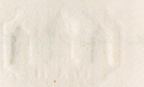
This gloomy morning finds me again in camp, and seated for the purpose of addressing you a few lines. Thinking you will be anxious to learn of my safe arrival here. My trip this time was a very tedious & tiresome one I assure you. On my arrival at Louisville Ky. I found the Genl. who I was very much afraid would be waiting for me. But he had just arrived there, and all was right. I missed Columbus at Panama and had to remain there over night. This is why I was fearful the Genl. would be waiting for me. But it appears that I was no more lucky than I. The day I arrived here at camp (which was Sabbath last.) Richy Cowardin started for home on leave of absence. I think his intention is not to return. But resign while there. I miss him for Rich & I have always been fast friends, and I find in him a true friend one whom I could always rely upon. This is more than I could say of many. I find the army a great place to study human nature. It is the best place I have ever been able to find to learn just what a man is. This no doubt you have noticed in your experience. The Genl. has not been assigned to duty yet.

And I of course have had nothing to do. Therefore the
time has passed slowly by. Genl Blair started home yes-
terday on leave. Genl Leggett takes command of our
corps to-day. This pleases me. I will be busy now again.
And my time will pass quickly. I will also feel that
I am doing some good. (At least trying to.) This is some
consolation to a soldier who is trying to do his duty.
I find there is a Captain's commission here for me. But
I don't know whether to accept it or not. If I do I am
in for three years more. If not my term of service expires
on the 26th day of Nov. next. I have almost concluded
to come home at this time. For if Lincoln is re-elected
(and he is sure to be.) The rebellion is on its last legs. I
can feel that I have done my duty. And Father has
drudged along without me three long years. He needs
my help yet & I feel it due him the family & myself for
me to come home. Yet I hesitate and hardly know
what to do. It is about time for me to be doing some
thing for myself. I have a debt to make for myself which
I don't think I should ~~lose~~ lose sight of. If I do not
one else will look to it for me certain. The question now
arises. Should I look to this at a time like this? I
doubt I should not nor would not. Had we not
plenty of men to take my place. And those who have
served here in the service. I want to do what is right
in this. But hardly know how to decide. If I thought
my services were actually necessary I could not be
dispensed of without injuring our cause. I assure

you I would be one of the last men on God's earth
who would think of leaving. I feel Sir that I owe
my life to this government. And if necessary am
willing to lay it down in its behalf. I think this fall
will end the hard fighting. Then of course we will not
need so many troops. And some can be spared. Those
who are of the least service should be allowed to leave.
Under this head I can come home.

Doct Goodbrake started for home
day before yesterday. I tell you now I hated to see him
go. I always felt while he was here. If anything should
happen me that I would be taken care of. This is a great
consolation. To know let come what may that. There is
some one who will care for you. Doct was a good faith-
ful officer. I hope he will be received by the good
people of Clinton as a man who has done his duty towards
his Country. And who when necessary (Although becoming too
old for service) is ready and willing to do again. I only wish
we had more such men. May he enjoy the comforts of
home & pass the remainder of his days in peace and
quietude. I will close for the present. Remember me
kindly to your family. Please write soon.

And oblige your friend.
G. W. Porter.



(7) 28 (2)
St.



De Witt Co.
Col. J. J. Kelly
Clinton Ills.



September 22, 1864

Addressed to Col J.J. Kelly

Clinton, DeWitt Co., Illinois.

Head Quarters 3d Div 17th A.C.

Near Atlanta, Georgia Sept. 22nd, 1864

Col J.J. Kelly

Dear Sir

This gloomy morning finds me in camp and seated for the purpose of addressing you a few lines, thinking you will be anxious to learn of my safe arrival here. My trip this time was a very tedious & tiresome one, I assure you. On my arrival at Louisville, Ky. I found the Gen'l who I was very afraid was waiting for me. But we had just arrived there and all was right. I missed a connection at Pana and had to remain there over night.

This is why I was fearful. The Gen'l would be waiting for me, but it appears that he was no more lucky than I. The day I arrived here at Camp, which was Sabbath last, Rickey Conklin started for home on leave of absence. I think his intention is not to return, but resign while there. I miss him because Rick and I have always been fast friends, one whom I could always rely upon. This is more than I can say of many. I find the army a great place to study human nature. It is the best place I have ever been able to find to learn just what a man is. This no doubt you have noticed in your experience.

The Gen'l has not been assigned to duty yet and of course I have nothing to do. Therefore the time has passed slowly by. Gen'l Blair started home yesterday on leave. Gen'l Leggett takes command of our corps today. This pleases me. I will be busy now again and my time will pass quickly. I will also feel that I am doing some good. (At least trying to). This is some consolation to a soldier who is trying to do his duty.

I find there is a captain's commission here for me, but I don't know whether to accept it or not. If I do, I am in for three years more. If not, my term of service expires on the 26th day of Nov. next. I have almost concluded to come home at this time, for if Lincoln is reelected and he is sure to be the Rebellion is on its last legs. I can feel that I have done my duty and Father has drudged along without me three long years. He needs my help yet & I feel is due him the family & myself for me to come home now. Yet I hesitate and hardly know what to do. It is almost time for me to be doing something for myself which I don't think I should lose sight of. If I do, no one else will do it for me certain. The question now arises. Should I look to this at a time like this? I answer I should not would not had we not plenty of men to take my place and those who have never been in the service. I want to do what is right in this but hardly know how to decide. If I thought my services were actually necessary, I could not be dispensed of without actually injuring our course. I assure you would be one of the last men on God's earth who would think of leaving. I fee Sir that I owe my life to this government and if necessary am willing to lay it down on its

behalf. I think this fall will end the hard fighting. Then of course we will not need so many troops and some can be spared. Those who are of the least service should be allowed to leave. Under this head, I should be allowed to leave.

Doc't Goodbrake started for home day before yesterday. I tell you now I hated to see him go. I always felt while he was here if anything should happen to me, that I would be taken care of. This is a great consolation. To know let-come-what-may that there is someone who will care for you. Doc't was a _____ faithful officer. I hope he will be received by the good people of Clinton as a man who has done his duty towards his country. And who when necessary (although becoming too old for the service) is ready and willing to do it again. I only wish we had more such men. Many he enjoy the comfort of home & _____ the remainder of his days in peace and quietude. I will close for the present. Remember me kindly to your family. Please write soon

and oblige your friend.

G.W. Porter