

10-17-1864

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

George W. Porter

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Show this letter to Dr Goodbrake. And tell him not to laugh  
too heartily. Col Kelly also. For this is no laughing matter.  
I want to see you & give you a full account of this. All  
mine soon & join. My love to all.

Again as ever your brother  
Head Quarters 3<sup>rd</sup> Div. 17<sup>th</sup> A. S. G. S.

Near Villanova La. Oct. 17<sup>th</sup> 1864.  
Sister Frank.

This being my first opportunity of  
writing since I received your kind & most  
welcome letter of 26<sup>th</sup> last month. I will endeavor  
to give you a brief description of our movements  
since then. The only letter I have received  
from home since I left was the two from you.  
I hope our line of communication will soon  
be reestablished. For I am anxious to hear from  
home again. I want to know how Father and  
Mother came on in that trade. I will send  
this to Chattanooga by one of boys who is going  
home. He will mail it there. We start from  
here directly South again. The enemy have  
gone in that direction. They did not make  
much by their race on the Rail Road. But  
had to leave before accomplishing their object.  
I think it was a complete failure on their  
part. I don't know how long this campaign  
will last. I will endeavor to get home as soon as

All I lost in my adventure was my belt & Pistol.  
I brought my horse saddle & Bridle all with me.



We get through with this. I want to spend  
Christmas at home. But may be disappointed.  
I am well and hearty, enjoying myself finely. We are  
all in good spirits & think Lincoln will be  
elected Pres. I say Bully for the returned claims  
of Blinson. May they ever be as successful.

I will now give you my experience as a  
Captiv. This no doubt will surprise you a  
little, I will be as brief as possible. And give  
you full particulars when I return. I think I  
have good luck. That I will see the Elephant  
in every shape. I am succeeding admirably.  
These times.

On the night of the 13<sup>th</sup> of this month  
while on the march from near Rome this State  
across the country to Hainville on the Chatter-  
nooga R.R. The roads being very bad. we had  
trouble in getting our train along. On passing  
through a low woodland of some two or three  
miles some of our teams were stuck in the mud  
and caused a gap in the train of about three  
fourths of a mile. Genl. Leggett sent me  
back to draw them close up. This was about  
11 O'clock at night. And the moon was shining

forth in all her beauty & splendor. I was alone  
riding along looking for the coming train.  
In a very careless manner. When I observed  
a man coming down the road meeting me.  
I noticed he was dressed in our clothes. And  
paid no attention to him in the least. Thinking  
he was one of our boys. When he came close enough  
he seized my horse by the bridle. Presented a  
revolver to my breast & ordered me to dismount.  
Saying I was his prisoner. I now knew who he  
was. Or at least that he was a Reb. On disguise.  
My pistol was in the holster next to him. I  
attempted to get it. But he shoved the Pistol  
in my face. Telling me to hold on or he would  
shoot me dead. And again ordered me to  
dismount. I again hesitated. He told me if  
I hesitated one moment he would kill me  
dead right there. I dismounted thinking I  
would grab him & give him a hand to hand fight.  
But he kept his revolver between him & me and  
wouldn't allow me nearer than about six feet.  
He then ordered me to move into the woods.  
Following me closely. So much so there was no  
chance for escape. We had not gone far when



He mounted my horse. And started me on foot  
through the woods & swamps. I had a fifty dollar  
note (50<sup>00</sup>) in my pocket-book being all the money  
I had. I thought I would need this. <sup>what</sup> from. I had been  
able to learn from our boys who had been prisoners.  
I knew they would take my money. And my  
clothes. I succeeded in getting my money out of  
my Pocket Book. And rolled it up in a small  
lunch. I then complained of my foot hurting my  
foot. And asked permission to stop long enough to  
pull off my boot. He granted it. I took my boot  
off also my sock. In putting my sock on I put my  
money in the bottom of it. Then pulled on my boot  
and proceeded on my way. (But not rejoicing.)  
We proceeded but a short distance when he halted  
and whistled. He was answered some distance off.  
He then marched me in that direction. He then came  
in a camp of a squad of Forty. Here he called his  
men all up and showed them what a fine horse  
Laddie & Bridle he had captured. They all made  
a great deal of sport of me. And said when they  
got to the Towah River they would take my clothes,  
And all valuables. If I had any. They now  
began to prepare for the march. When he ordered his



men to mount their horses. I asked if I had to  
walk. He said I had. I told him that I was tired  
down and could not walk. He said I could. I  
told him I would not. My horse was standing  
close by just as he was taken from me. Birden &  
Saddler. He called one of his men to let him to  
put a strict guard over me. And let me ride  
my own horse. Thinks I you will have a chase  
now. I concluded I would light out right then.  
But on looking around. I found the underbrush  
so thick that it was impossible to get through  
it. I found they were going to take me across the  
River. I then knew they would have to cross  
the main road leading from Kingston to  
Rome. And then I concluded to take whichever  
end of the Road they didn't. And run my  
chances. For when I got my horse I concluded  
that they would either kill me. my horse or that  
I would get away. On arriving at this road I  
was not sure it was the Kingston road. I thought  
I would find out certain. Before attempting my  
escape. I remarked. Well boys we have struck the



was at last, one of them answered. Yes this is the  
road. I then enquired the distance to Kingston.  
He said about eight miles. On marching they  
had put me about the center of the Squad with  
a man on either side of me. I concluded I would  
risk my horse for a race at least. When we  
struck the road the Sergt sent two men down  
towards Kingston to reconnoitre. They returned  
in about half an hour. And from what I could  
learn from the run of their conversation they had run  
against some of our men. The order forward was  
now given & they headed toward Rome. I put  
spurs to my horse bursted through them and  
looked towards Kingston. The man on my right  
fired at me just as I started but fortunately  
for me missed me. I let my horse fly for some  
little distance. then halted up. no one followed  
me (far at least) I found some of our Pickets  
within about half a mile from where I escaped.  
I think I was the happiest boy you ever saw. When  
I returned they had given me up for captured and  
enough. Thus ends my experience as a Prisoner.  
I will close for this time. Will write the next oppor-  
tunity I have. Remember me kindly to all friends.



October 17, 1864

Headquarters, 3rd Division, 17th A.C.

Near Villanow, Ga October 17, 1864

Sister Frank

This being my first opportunity of writing since I received your kind & most welcome letter of 26th of last month, I will endeavor to give you a brief description of our movements since then. The only letters I have received from home since I left was the two from you. I hope our line of conversation will soon be established for I am anxious to hear from home again. I want to know how Father and \_\_\_\_\_ came out in that trade. I will send this to Chattanooga by one of boys who is going home. He will mail it there. We start from here directly south again. The enemy have gone in that direction. They did not make much by their rade on the Rail Road but had to leave before accomplishing their object. I think it was a complete failure on their part. I don't know how long this campaign will last. I will endeavor to get home as soon as we get through with this. I want to spend Christmas at home. But may be disappointed. I am well and hearty enjoying myself freely. We are all in good spirits and I think Lincoln will be elected. I say bully for the returning soldiers of Clinton. May they ever be as successful. I will now give you my experience as a captive. This no doubt will surprise you a little. I will be as brief as possible and give you full particulars when I return. I think if I have good luck that I will see the elephant in every shape. I am succeeding admirably these times.

On the night of the 13th of this month while on the march from near Rome this state across the country to Adairville on the Chattanooga R.R. The road being very bad we had trouble getting our train along. In passing through a low woodland of some two or three miles some of our teams were stuck in the mud and caused a gap in the train of about three fourths of a mile. Gen'l Leggett sent me back to have them close up. This was about 11 o'clock at night and the moon was shining forth in all her beauty and splendor. I was alone riding along looking for the coming train in a very careless fashion when I observed a man coming down the road meeting me. I noticed he was dressed in our clothes and paid no attention to him in the least thinking he was one of our boys. When he came close enough, he seized my horse by the bridle, presented a revolver to my breast and ordered me to dismount, saying I was his prisoner. I now know who he was, or at least that he was a Reb in disguise. My pistol was in the holster next to him. I attempted to get it, but he shoved the pistol in my face telling me to hold on or he would shoot me dead. And again ordered me to dismount. I again hesitated. He told me if I hesitated one moment he would kill me dead right there. I dismounted, thinking I would grab him and give him a hand to hand fight. But he kept his revolver between him and me and wouldn't allow me nearer than about six feet. He then ordered me into the woods following me closely, so much so that there was no chance for escape. We had not gone far when he mounted my horse and started me on foot through the woods and swamps. I had a fifty dollar note in my pocket book, being all the money I had. I thought I would need this from what I had been able to learn from our boys who had been prisoners. I knew they would take my money and my clothes. I succeeded in getting my money out of my pocket book and rolled it \_\_\_\_\_ in a small bunch. I then complained of my boot hurting my foot and asked permission to stop long enough to pull off my



boot. He granted it. I took my boot off, also my sock. In putting my sock on, I put my money in the bottom of it. Then pulled on my boot and proceeded on my way. But not rejoicing. We proceeded but a short distance when he halted and whistled. He was answered some distance off. He then marched me in that direction. We came soon to a camp of a squad of forty. Here he called his men up and showed them what a fine horse, saddle, and bridle he had captured. They all made a great deal of sport of me and said when they got to the Etowah River they would take my clothes and all valuables if I had any. They now began to prepare for the march. When he ordered his men to mount their horses, I asked if I had to walk. He said I had. I told him that I was tired down and could not walk. He said I could. I told him I would not. My horse was standing close by just as he was taken from me, bridled and saddled. He called one of his men, told him to put a strict guard over me and let me ride my own horse. Thinks I you will have a chase now. I concluded I would light out right there. But in looking around, I found the underbrush so thick that it was impossible to get through it. I found they were going to take me across the River. I then knew they would have to cross the main road leading to Kingston from Rome and here I concluded to take whichever end of the road they didn't and run my chances. For when I got my horse, I concluded they would either kill me, my horse or that I would get away. On arriving at this road, I was not sure it was the Kingston road. I thought I would find out certain before attempting my escape. I remarked \_\_\_\_\_ boys we have struck the road at last. One of them answered yes this is the road. I then inquired the distance to Kingston. He said about eight miles. In marching, they have put me in about the center of the squad with a man on either side of me. I concluded I would risk my horse for a race at least. When we struck the road, the Serg't sent two men down \_\_\_\_\_ Kingston to reconnoitre. They returned in about half an hour and from what I could learn from the sum of their conversation they had run against some of our men. The order forward was not now given and they headed toward Rome. I put spurs to my horse, bursted through them, and took towards Kingston. The man on my right fired at me just as I started but fortunately for me missed me. I let my horse fly for some little distance then halted since no one followed me far at least. I found some of our pickets within about a half a mile from where I escaped. I think I was the happiest boy you ever saw. When I returned, they had given me up for captured sure enough. There ends my experience as a prisoner. I will close for this time. Will write the next \_\_\_\_\_ I have. Remember me \_\_\_\_\_ to all friends.

Show this letter to Dr. Goodbrake and tell him not to laugh too hearty. Col Kelly also. For this is no laughing matter. I want to see you and give you full account of this. All well soon and often. My love to all.

I am ever your brother

George (Porter)

All I lost in my adventure was my belt and pistol. I brought my horse, saddle, and bridle all with me. All think it was a narrow escape.

George