6-17-1865

Letter from Thomas S. Armstrong to Francis P. Porter

Thomas S. Armstrong

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Dear Washington City Camp 122, C.T.I.
Saturday June 19th, Anno Dom. 1865

Dear Frank,

I am much obliged to you for writing once more. I thought you a very long time answering. Don’t remember anything of the Richmond letter at all. You tell me such good tidings of great joy; that you are enjoying yourself so well “better this summer than ever since you ceased to be a denizen of Buckeye-dom. Never had better health in your life.” Well, dear, I am so glad of it. I wish now I was out of this scrape of staying here. This kind of Camp life is a bore. Well, I have an endurable I assure you. While the arms of a kind, loving, and dear girl like your own self is only waiting patiently (or impatiently) are waiting for my reception. God bless you, Frank. You are too good for me. I always fell in love with you. You say, you wish I had stayed here this summer.” I’ll get out of this as soon as I can do so honorable. I should like to be mustered out honorably with my Regiment you know. The Herald says the 64th Corps will be mustered out before 7 days. But I can’t tell whether it is true or not. I’ll resign if not.
My dear [name],

May I ask you if you would like me to come home? If possible, I would love to study with you. I think it's as if I was cut out for a teacher, but I don't expect to make any money that way. But how you know? I can finish my education that way - I think you'll find that out. I'm thinking of my resignation, but it's a hard one. How can you want to leave school? I don't think I was writing a word of Indies, though you think perhaps about little boys. I just thought of the first of the month. You want to be ready in the morning. Was it for you got off? Did you get up? Did you get dressed?

I want to know if you catch a tadpole or a bean? What's the splendid dinner? Is it fish or beef? You must have had good luck in the fish for after dinner you fished to the limit in the evening. Did you fish by the light of the moon, or did you use any other method? I would have enjoyed it with you.

I write to tell you about that school. I don't see why I never got my letter. I am very anxious to hear from that school because I would do well and it's true. The select school I mean. Tell them Franks. I'll write them again about the matter as you can so tell them if you want to. Don't think that you want that school soon.

for your future husband. Don't do that without say. You must just show him this letter when he asks for the papers.

I got a letter from George when I was at Richmond. He was at the Potter house and I did not get to see him until I called at his house. The next day, I just departed the day before. If you see if you cannot get to see him, I saw the 1st corps in Richmond. Our Western Boys got the palms by the Washingtonians & the Army of the Potomac. Say the Sherman men look well in their dress, and we were larger & more war-like looking men than our earlier men of the Army of the Potomac. Our corps was reviewed by General D.H. Hill and other legends. Did you ever get the photograph? About the Richmond letter I'll talk to you when I see you. I don't understand exactly what you mean. Certainly you must talk to me. I don't want you to become drunk - Come over against the 4th of July. I don't know whether I can, but you must try to get into the army. But get along that when it comes to stepping out, it's hard work getting out. It's hard work getting out, like your own pleasure about going to the East. I'll advise you to go. Don't be up and done for. Let you stick with you.
I was then— I know you so well that— you are a lady to whom to talk propriety would be like talking to a saint & Christian. He or she'd better get religion. So if you want to, I've no right to ask you to stay away— I don't want to & I'd advise you to go and dance too. I think dancing improves ones grace & self-possession. I love gracefulness in a lady. How so ungraceful & awkward myself. What do you think of the fashionable world? I've seen some of it in Richmond & Washington lately. You can't imagine the low morals there. Washington is God save me if some curb be not put to the rein of licentiousness groaning or disgracing our land. God bless the fair, virtuous girls at home. Some of them even (I mean not the virtuous ones) have disgraced their sex. God pity them, and more their seducers. Pardon me, Frank, but then I know you have no false modesty— I won't faint at such allusions as I've just made. Your good sense will even cause you to talk to me & express the same opinion I believe. My affairs are prosperous at home. Jacob says— hoping to see you before very long, I will finish my letter. We will be at home before long. Write me soon & more than two pages tell me all the gossip if you know of it, its spicy you know. Farewell, and God protect you. I prosper you. Hoping soon to occupy the station in life with reference to which I subscribe myself, Yours truly, Tom.
June 17, 1865

Near Washington City Camp 122 O.V.I.

Saturday June 17 Anno D. 1865

Dear Frank,

Much obliged to you for writing once more, thought you a very long time answering, don't remember anything of the Richmond letter at all. How kind you are to tell me such good tidings of great joy that you are enjoying yourself so well "better this summer than" ever since you ceased to be a denizen of Buckeyedom. "Never had better health in" your life. Well dear, I am so glad of it. I wish now I was out of this scrape of staying here. This kind of Camp is a bore -- well nigh unendurable, I assure you. While the arms of a kind loving and dear girl like your own self (is only waiting patiently or impatiently) are waiting for my reception. God bless you Frank. You are too good for me -- I always felt that.

You say you wished I "had stayed here this summer." I'll get out of this as soon as I can do so honorably. I should like to be mustered out honorably with my regiment you know. The Herald says the 6th Corps will be mustered out before eight days but I can't tell whether it is true or not. I'll resign if not.

My dear sister Mary wrote me that she wanted me to come home if possible as she wants to study with me, It seems as if I was cut out to be a teacher but I don't expect to make my money that way but then you know I can finish my education that way & yours too. You say in speaking of my resigning "wish you could." O you wicked tease. How can you talk so? Excuse the word "wicked" -- only a word of endearment, rather strong though, you think perhaps.

About that "fishing party of fifty one persons (ladies & gents)" you "went out early in the morning" was it before you got up? Did your mother "know you were out?" "fished till noon. Did you catch a tad pole or a bean? & then the "splendid dinner," was it the fish you caught. Tad poles & beaux. Had you a pin hook? You must have had poor luck in the fore noon for "after dinner" you "fished until late in the evening." Did you fish by the light of the "olde moon?" Yes, I would have enjoyed it with you?

I wrote to Col. Kelly about that school. I can see why he never got my letter. I am very anxious to secure that school because I could do well with it I know. The Select School, I mean. Tell him, Frank. I'll write to him again about the matter. You can tell him if you want to. Don't blush, that you want that school reserved for your future husband. Don't that sound funny? You need not show him this letter when he asks for the "papers."

I got a letter from George when I was at Richmond. He was at the Relay House, Md. I did not get to see him though I called at Mr. Harvey Smith's 456 9th St. Washington. He, Col. Wiles, & Adolph Searle had just departed the day before so you see I did not get to see him. I saw the 17th Corps in Richmond. Our western boys got the praise by the Washingtonians & the Army of the Potomac. Say they (Sherman's men) looked well & marched well & were larger and more warlike looking men than our eastern men of the Army of the Potomac. Our Corps was reviewed
by "Andy" itself. It's the Corps that made little Phil. Sheridan. I saw William Tresize(?) of Zanesville.

Did you ever get my photograph. About the Richmond letter, "I'll talk to you when I see you." I don't understand exactly what you mean. Certainly you must talk to me, I don't want you to become dumb -- "Come over against the 4th of July" I don't know whether I can. I tell you one thing I've found out, it's very easy to get into the army but "get away dear" when it comes to stepping out. It's hard work getting out.

Use your pleasure about going to the Ball. I'd advise you to go. Don't be afraid of me for I'd go with you if I was there. I know you so well that you are a lady to whom to talk propriety would be like talking to a saint & Christian. He or she'd better get religion. Go if you want to. I've no right to ask you to stay away -- I don't want to -- & I'd advise you to go and dance, too. I think dancing improves one's grace & self possession. I love gracefulness in a lady tho so ungraceful and awkward myself.

What do you think of the fashionable world? I've seen some of it in Richmond & Washington lately. You can't imagine how loose morals are in Washington. God save us if some curb is not put to the rein of licentiousness, gracing or disgracing our land. God bless the fair, virtuous girls at home. Some of them even (I mean not the virtuous ones) have disgraced their sex -- God pity them and more their seducers. Pardon me Frank but then I know you have no false modesty and won't faint at such allusions as I've just made. Your good sense will cause you even to talk to me & express the same opinion I believe.

My affairs are prosperous at home Jacob says. Hoping to see you before very long I will finish my letter. We will be at home before long. Write me soon and more than 2 pages, tell me all the gossip you know of -- its spicy you know. Farewell, may God protect you & prosper you. Hoping soon to be occupying my real station in life with reference to you, I subscribe myself yours till Death.

Tom