4-15-1863

Letter from Thomas S. Armstrong to Francis P. Porter

Thomas S. Armstrong

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Winchester, Frederick Co., Va.  
April 15th, Wednesday 1863

Dearest,

I am glad to hear you say that you are getting so many photographs from your kind friends that you will get an album. I will send you a much larger one of my photo's sometime before very long. I was glad to hear that you were well and in good spirits. Frank I never got a "long letter" that he wrote to me. I am sorry indeed. I will write very soon. Thomas and I will "not write" me until I write to him. The same news as before. I am glad he has got the position of 1st Lieutenant on the 3rd Legget's Staff. I should like to hear him in the same place. But my chances lie with the East. Tom and Mary. I would much rather have his position now than that of Captain of Co. So tell you that your photograph fails of presenting lineaments of your face as the original is. I am glad to have from you before, when I was going in the 7th, at home. But the one I've got now brings you near me. The dear, good girl. Thus you are, tho' it is not by any means perfect.
I have the painful news from little Mary. Poor Bob Armstrong has recently lost his eyesight and she said he was in the way home from the Regiment. I am so sorry for him. He is a good-hearted, kind, generous, & busy man. What a misfortune! We have loved to read his little letters, loved to accommodate him to visit his friends, loved to do his duty. Loved the dear ladies. He has helped his way down the cold world in perfect darkness with nothing to place him. "You think because a young lady would rather he "not" would stay at home." That lad must think he is better than others."

"Why do you think if a lady requests her Dearie to stay at home & she does not, she is aware of her love?" Because I think it shows he can do what he wants in the army when the home of his "how" was menaced by enemy. But when you say "Now I am hastening against my urgent request I love him more than ever." Thank you for your love. I can truly say the same, for a "dear girl." I submit to what you have done, and only raise in my esteem. You said the cases general I put it particularly to you & me. This way should one Armstrong go with the army, without my consent."

(P.S. to Bob) Love him more than ever, signed (and returned) I am of the same opinion that men always going against the will of a good woman, is very wrong. You are a good woman, hence, I did wrong, axing. That good logic. I did not want to play you by hurting your feelings in my former letter.

Did I play you any?

I imagine I see you and Helstad streaking across the prairie putting our fire, "I want to see you to look." Will soon finish the war was over. Then you could have that chance. I am long for the time when you & I will be..." I thought you would come & see you at least."

I come to this. I am sorry you are living in prospect of a lonesome summer. I hope you will have a good time, being miles from home. Thank you for your love. I can truly say the same, for a "dear girl." I submit to what you have done, and only raise in my esteem. You said the cases general I put it particularly to you & me. This way should one Armstrong... Camm from Charleston. About 5 of our gun Boats being disabled. I am afraid the Necksburi affair will be a failure.
Will dont let us be discouraged our cause are all right Grant Burnside Rosencrans Hooker Sumter & Banks are around them in closing them in as with a wall of fire Secretary Chase tells the finances are in good condition and we will have to fight it through manfully. Well Frank the other day I got word from Mary that Father was very sick & that I had a new niece! Matilda asked the name for a name I thought "Frank P." was my choice.

Father has since recovered so as to go to Abrais to see his children. He has been in trouble in Ohio about the Copperheads but the Elections tell them now how they stand.

I dont know when we will leave this place. The rain is pouring down in torrents and the air is very damp. Our Regt is in good condition we have very few sick now. I have very good health have had some colds and about 2 weeks ago had a little fever. Mother and Father sent me to come home and see them. I should like to see them and all my friends. Well Banks dont forget your friend

To Dear frank

J.S. A.
April 15, 1863

Winchester Frederick Co. Va.

April 15th Wednesday 1863

Dearest,

I am glad to hear that you are getting so many photographs from your kind friends that you will get an Album. I will send you a much larger & better one of my ______ sometime before long. I was glad to hear that Geo was well and in good spirits. Frank, I never got a "long letter" that he wrote to me. I am sorry, indeed. I will write very soon to him and if he will "not write" me until I write him the sooner the better. I am glad he has got the position of 1st Lieut on Gen Leggett's staff. I should like to be with him in the same place. But my chances lie here with the eastern army. I would much rather have his position now than that of Capt of a Co.

To tell you that your photograph fails of presenting the lineaments of your face as the original is true. I left that one, that I got from you before when I was going in the 78, at home. But the one I've got now brings you near me. The dear, good girl that you are, tho it is not by any means a perfect picture.

I have the painful news from Sister Mary that Bob Hanson has entirely lost his eyesight and she said he was on his way home from the Regt. I am so sorry for him. He is a good hearted, kind, generous, & obliging man. What a misfortune? He that loved to read and write letters -- loved to accommodate, loved to visit his friends, loved to do his duty, loved the dear ladies, has to grope his way down thro the cold world in perfect darkness with nothing to solace him.

"You think because a young lady would rather her Hon stay at home," that lady must think him some better than others." "Why do you think if a lady requests her dearie to stay at home & he does not, he is unworthy of her?" Because I think it shows the man to see him in the army where the home of his "hon" is menaced by the enemies. But when you say "Had I one to volunteer against my urgent request, I'd love him more than ever" thank you for your love. I can truly say the same for a "dear girl" that submits to what you have done only raises in my esteem. You put the case general, I put it particularly to you & me. This way, should one Armstrong go into the army without my consent, I'd (FP Porter) love him more than ever, signed and returned. I am of the same opinion that "men always going against the will of a good woman, is very wrong. You are a good woman. Hence I'm wrong. Ain't that good logic. I did not want to plague you by hurting your feelings in my former letters. Did I plague you any?

I imagine I see you and Huldah streaking across the prairie putting out fire. "I want to see you so bad." Well Frank, I wish the war was over, then you could have that chance. I am longing for the time when you & I will be -- I rather think I will come & see you when I come to Ills. I am sorry you are living in prospect of a lonesome summer. I hope you will have a good time seeing Meda this fall.

Frank I am afraid that this war will not be over soon. Wasn't this discouraging news that came from Charleston? About 5 of our gunboats being disabled. I am afraid the Vicksburg affair will
be a failure. Well don't be discouraged. Our armies are all right. Grant Burnside Rosecrans Hooker Hunter & Banks are around them, enclosing them in as with a wall of fire. Secretary Chase has the finances in good condition and we will have to fight it through manfully.

Well Frank, the other day I got a note from Mary that Father was very sick & that I had a new niece. Matilda asked thro Mary for a name, I told them "Frank P______" was my choice.

Father has since recovered so as to go to Abram's to see his children. We had some trouble in Ohio about the Copperheads but the elections tell them now where they stand.

I don't know when we will leave this place. The rain is pouring down in torrents and the air is very damp. Our Regt is in good condition, we have very few sick men. I have very good health. Have had some cold and about 2 weeks ago had a little fever. Mother and father want me to come home and see them. I should like to see them and all my friends. Well Frank don't forget your friend T.S.A.