


6-17-1863

Letter from George W. Porter to Francis P. Porter

George W. Porter

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M^{rs} J. S. 1st. Brig. 3^d Division,
7th Army Corps.

In camp in rear of Vicksburg Miss. June 17th 1863.

Sister Frank's

Days & months have passed since I had the pleasure of perusing one of your good, kind letters. I am not censuring you for not writing to me. But it seems strange that I cannot hear from you at least once a month. When you are surrounded by every facility for writing, after school at night. Who would wish a better time for writing? The cause of me not getting more letters from home, must be the fault of the mail, not yours. For you certainly have a better opportunity for writing than I have. And I have never suffered a single letter from home to remain unanswered. Nor do I ever intend to. I will sit up & write all night first. The letter ^{my} Father sent me by Doct. Richards was the last and only letter I have received from home for some time. My desire is to hear from home just as often as possible. I hope you will all be prompt in writing. Well ^{my} Frank we are here in the rear of Vicksburg yet. I have written home three or four times since we came here. I also gave you a brief description of the battles we passed through in getting here. Therefore I need not bother you with this more. The fighting here consisted in sharpshooting & cannonading. This continues pretty warm. We are not losing many men. We are now as strongly fortified as the enemy. The fortifications are on a general line in good range for sharpshooting. The nearest point we are to them is not over twenty feet. This is from the Sap or Ditch we are cutting into their main fort. I have been

Very busy for the last eight or ten days in the Superintending of the cutting of this Sap. The boys are in good health generally, and in fine spirits, And all exclaim in one voice Dickburg must be ours, I think they will not be able to hold out much longer. Their Horn Bread must be getting short. The deserters who come out report that they are all in a state of starvation. I only hope they will hold on until they are all either killed or starved. This being the case we would not have to fight them at some future period. We keep them pretty well down here they cannot show their heads over their rifle pits. Our Sharpshooters are very vigilant. I have had several good shots at them myself. One afternoon not long since several of the Pats. got themselves into position where they could fire into my working party. They were so situated that our Sharpshooters could not get at them. I looked around awhile. And found a beautiful point where I could pick them from. I got a small piece of timber placed it upon the top of the works. and worked a small hole just underneath it. for my rifle. By this time one of our Old Scouts came along with two guns in his hands. One was an enfield Rifle the other a fine rifle Grant gave which shoots seventeen times without loading. I told him to climb up that he was the very man I wanted. Says he Lt. Can you see them? Very distinctly I replied, Take this Rifle said he (handing me his fine Rifle) and we will give them thunder. I fixed another place told the boys to keep at work. And we pitched into them. I emptied the rifle of its 17 loads. and took one of the boys enfields and gave them 10 more rounds. by this time we silenced them. I tell you now we have some exciting times here. I have been very lucky throughout this entire campaign so far. I only hope my luck will continue as good in all time to come. I received a good long letter from

H. S. a few days since he gave me all particulars about affairs at Winchester Pa. was well ~~and~~ ^{and} appeared to be in fine spirits. Said nothing about getting home. I suppose he thinks as the rest of us do. That he will see the war over first. If there wasn't quite so much of this coming home. In my opinion our Army would be much better off. Sump writes very interesting letters. He spoke of receiving a letter from my sister not long since. I suppose he meant Hallett or Mary or Mary Annand. Let me know in your next which one it is. He enquired very particularly of me as to how my Gal. was. I know no such a being in this world. Therefore I could not tell him. I saw Richey yesterday. he was here. looks well & hearty. and appears to be in fine spirits. I want to know how his folks are getting along since they lost Mrs. Couplin. This must be a heavy stroke upon the girls. They are young and need a Mother's advice. I sympathize with them I assure you. Tell Mother to be of all the service to them she can. They will surely appreciate all she does. For Hannah & Mod were good girls when last I knew them. and no doubt are yet. Tell me in your next when and what has become of Old Bailey's folks. I think they live near Chinton. Give my best wishes and respects to Hannah & Mod. Pete & all the family. Has Grandmother & Gary paid you that visit yet? I expect our Father would have spoken of it in his letter. I long for the day when I can visit them all. I suppose Worthington & Marion are getting along finely with their Old Women Foolish Boys. It is an old saying that when a man gets married "that he sees the end of trouble." I think it is a true saying. But I think the most of folks look at it in the wrong light. (Or rather if you please in the wrong construction.) They think it the last end of all their troubles. There is just where they

are mistaken. It is no doubt the first of man's trouble, This is
my opinion of the matter at least; I received a letter from
Virginia some time since. She writes a good letter. I want you
to write immediately and give me all the news, Tell Mother
& Father not to be uneasy about me, and console them as best you
can, I hear Mother frets herself a great deal, This she should not do.
Hope for the best and be ready to withstand the worst, I am ready
as a true soldier to do my duty & my whole duty, I will close and
go to supper, Thank I had a very good supper. Not quite so nice
as you used to get up, But I'll bet there is not a man in the
whole Army that live better than we do, My board doesn't cost
me more than \$1.50 per month, I will close for the present hoping
to hear from you all soon, I remain your affectionate brother,

G. W. Porter,

Direct. To G. W. Porter Lieut, Col. 1st. Regt. 3^d. Divis.
Grant's Army, and Oblige
George,

Be a good
like a good
one of you, I want to
send you a few lines
by the 1st. of October
also my respects to
Mr. Porter
and your family
I hope you are
all well
I close
G. W. Porter

Thank; as the mail had ~~not~~ gone yesterday evening,
when I finished your letter I concluded to not seal it. So if any
happened I might tell you. I had a gay time to day. The
Genl. and Staff were sent an invitation to dine with Col.
Wiles of the 78th Regt. to say, I was with the Genl. we just
came from there, had a splendid dinner. Plum Pudding,
Pieo cakes and everything nice and you know I enjoyed
it. The thought struck me while at the table that I must
tell you of our dinner, It was fine. Nothing of importance is oc-
curring to day, while I was out in the works this morning one of the
78th Regt. was shot by a sharpshooter. I saw the rascal shoot him. I
took a gun and shot at Mr. Pat, twice. But am afraid I did not hit him
I close, ever.

June 17, 1863

Hd Qrs 1st Brig 3d Div

17th Army Corps

In camp near Vicksburg Miss June 17, 1863

Sister Frank,

Days and months have passed since I had the pleasure of perusing one of your good kind letters. I am nor censuring you for not writing to me, but it seems strange that I cannot hear from you at least once a month. When you are surrounded by every facility for writing, after school, at night, who would wish a better time for writing. The cause of me not getting more letters from home must be the fault of the mail, not yours. For you certainly have a better opportunity for writing than I have. And I have never suffered a single letter from home to remain unanswered, nor do I intend to. I will sit up and write all night first.

The letter Father sent me by Doct Richards was the last and only letter I have received from home for some time. My desire is to hear from home just as often as possible. I hope you will all be prompt in writing.

Well Frank we are here in the rear of Vicksburg yet. I have written home three or four times since we came here. I also gave you a brief description of the battles we passed through in getting here. Therefore I need not bother you with this more. The fighting consisted in sharpshooting and cannonading. This continues pretty _____. We are not losing many men. We are now as strongly fortified as the enemy. The fortifications are on a general line in good range for sharpshooters. The nearest point we are to them is not over twenty feet. This is front the Sap or Ditch we are cutting into their main fort. I have been very busy for the last eight or ten days in the superintending of the cutting of this Sap. The boys are in good health generally and in fine spirits and all exclaim in one voice, Vicksburg must be ours. I think they will not be able to hold out much longer. Their corn bread must be getting short. The deserters who come out report that they are all in a state of starvation. I only hope they will hold on until they are all killed or starved. This being the case we would not have to fight them at some future period. We keep them pretty well down here, they cannot show their heads over their rifle pits. Our sharpshooters are very vigilant. I have had several good shots at them myself.

One afternoon not long since several of the Rebels got themselves into position where they could fire into my working party. They were so situated that our sharpshooters could not get at them. I looked around awhile and found a beautiful point where I could pick them from. I took a small piece of timber, placed it up upon the top of the works and worked a small hole just underneath it for my rifle. By this time, one of our Old Scouts came along with two guns in his hands. One was an Enfield Rifle, the other a fine rifle Grant gave him which shoots seventeen times without loading. I told him to climb up that he was the very man I wanted. Says he, "Lt, can you see them?" I say distinctly, I replied. Take this rifle said he (handing me his fine rifle, and we will give them thunder. I fixed another place, told the boys to keep at work, and we pitched into them. I emptied the rifle of its 17 loads and took one of the boys Enfields and gave them 10 more

rounds. By this time we silenced them. I tell you now, we have some exciting times here. I have been very lucky throughout this entire campaign so far. I only hope my luck will continue as good in all time to come.

I received a good long letter from T.S. a few days since. He gave me the particulars about affairs at Winchester Va. was well and appeared to be in fine spirits. Said nothing about getting home. I suppose he thinks the rest of us do. That he will see the war over first. If there weren't so much of this running home, in opinion, our army would be much better off. Sump write very interesting letters. He spoke of receiving a letter from my sister not long since. I suppose he meant Huldah or Mary or maybe Amanda. Let me know in your next which one it is. He inquired particularly of me as to how my gal was. I know no such being in this world. Therefore I could not tell him.

I saw Rickey yesterday. He was here, looks well, and hearty and appears to be in fine spirits. I want to know how his folks are getting along since they lost Mrs. Conklin. This must be a heavy stroke upon the girls. They are young and need a Mother's advice. I sympathize with them I assure you. Tell mother to be all service to them she can. They will surely appreciate all she does. For Hannah and Mod were good girls when I last knew them and no doubt are yet.

Tell me in your next letter where and what has become of Old Billy folks. I think they live near Clinton. Give my best wishes and respects to Hannah and Mod. Pete & all the family. Has Grandmother & Janey paid you that visit yet. I expect not as father would have spoken of it in his letter. I long for the day when I can visit them all. I suppose Worthington & Marion are getting along finely with their Old Women. Foolish Boys. It is an old saying that when a man gets married that he sees the end of trouble. I think it is a true saying. But I think that most of the folks look at it in the wrong light (or if you please in the wrong construction). They think it the last end of all their troubles. This is just where they are mistaken. It is no doubt the first of man's trouble. This is my opinion of the matter at least.

I received a letter from Virginia some time since. She writes a good letter. I want you write me immediately and give me all of the news. Tell Mother and Father not to be uneasy about me and console them as best you can. I hear Mother frets herself a great deal. This she should not do. Hope for the best and be ready to withstand the worst. I am very ready as a true soldier to do my duty & my whole duty. I will close and go to supper. Frank, I had a very good supper, not quite so nice as you used to get up. But I'll bet there is not a mess in the whole army that live better than we do. My board doesn't cost me more than \$1.50 per month. I will close for the present hoping to hear from you all soon. I remain your affectionate brother.

G.W. Porter

Direct to Lt. G.W. Porter Hd Qrs 1st Brig 3d Div Grant's Army, and oblige

George

Frank the mail had gone yesterday evening when I finished your letter. I concluded not to send it lo if any happened I might tell you. I had a gay time today. The Gen and staff were sent an invitation to dine with Col Wiles of the ____ O.V.I. today. I was with the General just came from there, had a splendid dinner, plum puddings, pies, cakes, and everything nice. And you know I enjoyed it. The thought struck me while at the table that I must tell you of our dinner. It was fine.

Nothing of importance is occurring today. While I was out in the works this morning one of the 78th boys was shot by a sharpshooter. I had the rascal shoot him. Then took a gun and shot it at Mr Reb twice, but I am afraid I did not hit him. Be a good girl and write me often. I wrote to you of my appointment to Col of a colored regt. Also my protests against it. And none of you said anything about it in your last. _____ you did not get my letter.

George