6-17-1863

Letter from George W. Porter to Francis P. Porter

George W. Porter

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.owu.edu/harvey-letters

Part of the Military History Commons, Social History Commons, and the United States History Commons

Recommended Citation


This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Harvey Letters (All) at Digital Commons @ OWU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Harvey Collection Letters by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ OWU. For more information, please contact earutigl@owu.edu.
Oct. 21, 1864, Biv. 11th Divn., 11th Army Corps,

Camp on the N. of Richburg, Nov. 17, 1863.

Sister Stearns,

Dear Sister,

Three months have passed since I had the pleasure of receiving one of your good, kind letters. I am not penning you for that writing to me. But I am so strange that I cannot hear from you at least once a month. When you are barnacle clung 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, that of course, for you certainly have a better opportunity for writing than I have. And I have never received a single letter from home to remain unanswered. Nor do I ever intend to. I will sit up & write all night first. The letter Father sent me by Dr. 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.

Dear Sister, we are here in the rear of Richburg 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 consists in Sharpshooting & Cannoonading. 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 as 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 running of this ship. The boys are in good health generally, and in fine spirits. One or two in one voice express a wish that they might be able to hold out much longer. Their present course must be getting short. The seamen who come out expect that they are all to be in a state of emigration in a few weeks. I only hope they will hold on and that they are all in better health as hitherto. This being the case, we would not have to fight them at some future period. It helps them greatly that, when they cannot throw their hands over their life-boat. Our boys are very capable, I have heard several good shots at them myself. One afternoon not long since, about 3 of the boys got themselves into position where they could fire into our weather-hulk. They were determined that our life-boat could not get at them. So I ordered a whale-boat and forced them from their position. It was a very beautiful thing when I could pick them from it. It was a delightful piece of work. I ordered the boats to be put in the water at the proper time, and as soon as the boys gave the signal, we gave the boys a fine shot. I was absent myself, which short distance, I had no means of knowing, I asked them to signal when he was the very moment, to give the shot. As soon as they did it, every man immediately fired. I ordered both of them in, to keep the boys near us, we finished into them. So upon the officer of the 17 boats gave the word, and gave them broadside, the boys were very active in throwing their lines. In about three times, there was no way of stopping them. I only wish my luck will continue as good as it has to come. I received a good long letter from

...
are mistaken. It is one and the first of man’s troubles. This is my opinion of the matter at least. I received a letter from your mother, I believe, last night, in which she writes a good letter. I want you to write immediately and give me all the news. Tell Mother that I am to be uneasy about one, and console them as best you can. I heard Mother feel herself a great deal. She should not do it. Hope for the best and be ready to withstand the worst. I am ready as a true soldier to do my duty and my whole duty, I will close and go to supper. Thank God I had a very good supper. Not quite so nice as you used to get up. But still there is not a man in the whole Army that lives better than we do. My board consists of $1.60 per month. I will close for the present hoping to hear from you all the love! Remain your affectionate brother,

C.W. Porter,

[Address]

U.S. Army, 3rd Div. 3rd Corps, Inc.

Grant’s Army, Head Quarters

[Signature]

Frank, as the news have gone yesterday evening, and I, finished your letter. I concluded not to seal it by any means. I might like you, I have a gay time to day. The Captain of the 74th Co. was present the other day, and I just came from there. That Heliodorus answer. Please Pray for me. I eat cakes and everything nice, and you know I enjoy it. The thought furnished me while at the table that I wrote you. Tell me of our family. It was fine. Nothing of importance occurred today, while I was out in the woods. My morning ride on the 19th I was told that a sharpshooter killed Mr. Fat Twice. But an affair I did not see.
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. 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.

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 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