

7-9-1863

Letter from George W. Porter to Francis P. Porter

George W. Porter

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No. 1

Inf. Hd. Qrs. 1st. Brig. 3d. Division
17th. Army Corps,

Vicksburg Miss. July 9th. 1863.

Sister Frank:

Your kind favor of 28th.
June was received a few moments ago,
and I hasten to reply. I have written
home so often lately. I have nothing of
importance to communicate. However
I will endeavor to interest you as best
I can. I was much pleased to learn
you were all enjoying such good health.
I hope Father's health will continue to
improve. When I think we would be
perfectly happy when this "cruel war" is
over, I hope all will have a fine visit at
Bloomington. I would like much the
pleasure of accompanying you. But
don't think I can this trip. I don't expect
the folks up in that vicinity would
know G. W. Porter. I am getting older

every day. Isn't this strange? This
Younger Col. Kelley speaks of. belongs to
my Co. He is a fine soldier. You begin to
fear I will think myself some. Don't fear
I am ahead of you. I have thought this
some time. I am pleased that Younger
gave me such a puff. In fact I don't think
you can find a single man in my Regt.
(yes in my old Brigade) but what will
endorse all Younger said. And I have
already numerous friends in this (the
1st) Brigade. I reckon Younger didn't say
I run at any of our fights. I would like
much to know what he did say. I wish
you could call in and have a talk with
the Genl. and ask him how George behaved
on the battle field, and see what he would
tell you. If you wish to know tell Father
to write him a few lines asking him
how George conducted himself as a gen-
tleman & a soldier. I have always done
my duty as a soldier should. I owe my
country all I am able to give her.

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In fact my all is laid down in good
faith in behalf of this beloved Old Union.
I have passed over several battle fields with
God knows I feel thankful that I am
yet spared. But sister many a noble soul
have I seen lay down his young life during
this campaign. The thought would strike
me as I passed by and witnessed the cold
form lying prostrate upon the cold ground.
He has likely a kind ^{Father} Mother. Brothers &
Sisters, who are anxiously waiting to hear of
their son & brothers being safe and of his
noble conduct upon the field. But Oh! how
those kind friends are disappointed instead
of their hearts being filled with joy at some
daring feat performed by their noble boy.
They are filled with grief at the announce-
ment of his death. I ask here why mourn?
It should fill your hearts with joy to know
your son or brother died the noblest of all
deaths. He died for his beloved country.
That which has made him all he is, and
which he loves next to his God. He died for

that which gives us all that is dear to
 us upon this earth. Also that his younger
 brothers & sisters may enjoy the comforts
 & blessings of all our free institutions, In
 a single word he died for liberty, In the
 words of St. J. "give us liberty or give us
 death," We laid our lives upon the altar
 of our country that it might be saved, and
 we will all either see this rebellion crushed
~~or~~^{or} leave our bones to bleach upon Southern
 Soil. This motley set of prisoners are here
 yet. We are about through paroling them.
 They will be sent away I think tomorrow.
 In fact there are a number of them who
 say they are not going at all. Yes quite
 a number. I find the number of prisoners
 here to be more than I thought. It exceeds
 3,000 men. This is certainly one of the
 greatest victories of the war. Our forces
 were attacked at Helena on the morn-
 ing of the 4th. (the same day of the surren-
 der) our forces thrashed them completely
 and took 2000 prisoners. killed 400,

I made
quite a
mistake
in writing
this for
George.
I have
changed the
pages.
I had one
more this
time.
George.

When you get all this news. I guess you will begin to think we are all some down this way. Our intention is to, clear them all out down here as fast as we can get our hands on them. The news is good from the east. Of course we are all in fine spirits, nor spirits of alcohol. I want you to understand, for this article is not allowed to be used about these quarters. Our Brigade was the first to march into V. (Maybe I didn't feel large on this occasion. I would like much to know what Col. Kelley said about my letter. I never have received one word from him. Had I most assuredly I would have answered, for I esteem him very highly. I have answered all letters received from Will. I will write to him soon again. We captured here fifteen General Officers, one Lt. Genl. (Pemberton) four Maj. Genls. ten Brigadiers. also one hundred and ninety General

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Brother Goss:

Your letter was received with thanks. I was very much pleased to hear from you and find you were well. I hope you are enjoying yourself at school and learning fast. I want you to soon be able to write. You say you have a fine Newfoundland Dog I expect from your description of your dog he is a fine fellow. Do you think he could take me down? I expect you think so. You say John has a fine horse. I would like much to see him. I expect you have fine times riding him after the cows. I have a beautiful riding horse. I rode him through the battles of Raymond & Champion hills, also during this whole siege. He fears nothing. I have rode him where the balls were flying as thick as hail he never flinched. He is a gallant horse. if he & I both live I will take him home with me. I would not part with him for anything in the shape of a horse.

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Staff Officers. (It is so good I will have to repeat it.) 3/000 men. Gracious! isn't this a glorious hand! We have beautiful quarters in an old Leech house yard. We have several girls two of whom are wounded by our sharpshooters. I have never spoken to any of the family yet. I have no love for Leech in any shape whatever. I hope you all had a fine ^{th.} I enjoyed myself finely. I think one of the happiest ^{th.} I ever spent. To be sure I would like much to have been with you all. But my duty was elsewhere. Therefore we must all be contented. I will be contented (if possible) let come what may. If I insulted Goss in my last letter I ask pardon. For this was not the intention. I will mention no more of the girls to him if he takes it to heart. I will close and write him a few lines. My best love and kind wishes to all. You will all please write soon and often. I remain your affectionate Brother. C. W. Potter,

I hope you will have the pleasure of
 riding him someday. Richy talks
 of going home. I don't know how it will
 be about his getting leave. I find they are
 going to be rather strict. There are so
 many who want to go. If I could go home
 and stay a month. I would like to
 go. But to pay 100\$ and go home for
 a day or two I don't want to do it.
 I would rather not go, than to have two
 or three days only to stay. I would like
 much to see you all. And would
 could I stay any length of time. But
 as it is don't think of looking for me.
 I will close for the present. Hoping
 to hear from you soon. I am your
 affectionate brother.

G. W. Porter.

P. S. Direct to Lt. G. W. Porter Genl.
 Leggett's Staff. Logan's Division
 Grant's Army. I wish you to
 all direct your letters in this way. Then
 I will have no trouble in getting them
 my love to all. G. W. Porter.

My respects to
 Constance & the
 Alas ever yours
 G. W. Porter



Miss H. P. Porter
Clinton

De Witt Co. }

Illinois.



July 9, 1863

Addressed to Miss F.P. Porter

Clinton, DeWitt Co.

Illinois

Hd Qrs 1st Brig 3d Division 17th Army Corps

Vicksburg, Miss July 9, 1863

Sister Frank:

Your kind favor of 27th June was received a few moments ago and I hasten to reply. I have written home so often lately I have nothing of importance to communicate. However, I will endeavor to interest you as best I can. I was very much pleased to learn you were all enjoying such good health. I hope Father's health will continue to improve. Then I think we would be perfectly happy when this cruel war is over. I hope all will have a fine visit at Bloomington. I would like much the pleasure of accompanying you but don't think I can this trip. I don't expect the folks in that vicinity would know G.W. Porter. I am getting older every day. Isn't this strange & this Younger Col Kelley speaks of belonging to my Co.

He is a fine soldier. You begin to fear I will think myself _____. Don't fear. I am ahead of you. I have thought this for some time. I am pleased that Younger gave me such a pass. In fact I don't think you can find a single man in my Regt (yes in my old Brigade) but what will endorse what Younger said. And I have already numerous friends in this (the 1st) Brigade. I reckon Younger didn't say I run at any of our fights. I would like much to know what he did say. I wish you could call in and have a talk with the Gen'l and ask him how George behaved on the battle field and see what he would tell you. If you wish to know, tell father to write him a few lines, asking him how George conducts himself as a gentleman and a soldier. I have always done my duty as a soldier should I owe my country all I am able to give her.

In fact my all is laid down in good faith of this beloved Old Union. I have passed over several battle fields unhurt and God knows I feel thankful that I am yet spared. But Sister, many a noble son have I see lay down his young life during this campaign. The thought would strike me as I passed by and witnessed the cold form lying prostrate upon the cold ground. He has likely a kind Father, Mother, Brother, & Sisters who are anxiously waiting to hear of their son and brother being safe and of his noble conduct upon the field. But oh, how these fine friends are disappointed instead of their hearts being filled with joy at home, daring feats, performance by their noble boy. They are filled with grief at the announcement of his death. I ask here, why mourn? It should fill your heart with joy to know your son or brother died the noblest of all deaths. He died for his beloved country, that which has made him all he is and which he loves next to his God. He died for that which gives us all that is dear to us upon this earth. Also that his younger brothers and sisters may enjoy the comforts & blessings of all our free institutions. In a single word, he died for liberty. In the words of A.L., "give us liberty or give us death." We laid

down our lives on the altar of our country that it might be saved. And we will all see this Rebellion crushed or leave our bones to bleach upon Southern soil.

This motley set of prisoners are here yet. We are about through paroling them. They will be sent away, I think tomorrow. In fact there are a number of them who say they are not going at all. Yes quite a number. I find the number of prisoners here to be more than I thought. It exceeds 31,000 men. This is certainly one of the greatest victories in the war. Our forces were attacked at Helena on the morning of the 4th (the same day as the surrender). Our forces thrashed them completely, and took 2000 prisoners, killed 400.

When you get all this news, I guess you will begin to think we are all _____ down this way. Our intention is to clear these all out down here as fast as we can get our hands on them. The news is good from the east. Of course we are all in fine spirits, not spirits of alcohol, I want you to understand for this article is not allowed to be used about these quarters.

Our brigade was the first to march into Vicksburg. Maybe I didn't feel large on this occasion. I would like to know what Col. Kelly said about my letter. I never have received one word from him. Had I most assuredly I would have answered for I esteem him very highly. I have answered all letters received from Will. I will write to him soon again. We captured here fifteen General Officers; one Lt Gen'l (Pemberton), four Maj Gen'ls, ten Brigadiers. Also one hundred and ninety General Staff officers (It is so good I will have to repeat it; 31,000 men. Gracious; isn't this a glorious haul; We have beautiful quarters in old Secesh and yard. He has several girls, two of whom are wounded by our sharpshooters. I have never spoken to any of the family yet. I have no love for any Secesh in any shape whatever. I hope you all had a fine 4th. I enjoyed myself finely. I think one of the happiest 4ths I ever spent. To be sure I would like much to have been with you all, but my duty was elsewhere. Therefore we must be contented, I will be contented (if possible) let come what may. If I insulted Josy in my last letter, I ask pardon for this was not the intention. I will mention no more of the girls to him if he takes it to heart. I will close and write him a few lines. My best love and kind wishes to all You will all please write soon and often. I remain your affectionate brother.

G.W. Porter

Brother Josy

Your letter was received with Frank's. I was very much pleased to hear from you and find you were well. I hope you are enjoying yourself at school and learning fast. I want you to soon be able to write. You say you have a fine Newfoundland dog. I expect from your description of your dog he is a fine fellow. Do you think he could take me down. I expect you think so. You say John has a fine horse I would much like to see him. I expect you have fine times riding him after the cows. I have a beautiful riding horse. I rode him through the battles of Raymond & Champion Hills; also during this whole siege. He fears nothing. I have rode him where the balls were flying thick as hail; he never flinched. He is a gallant horse. If he and I both live, I will take him home with me. I would not part with him for anything in the shape of a horse.

I hope you will have the pleasure of riding him someday. Rickey talks of going home. I don't know how it will be about his getting leave. I find they are going to be rather strict. There are so

many who want to go. If I could go home a stay a month, I would like to go. But to pay 100\$ and go home for a day or two I don't want to do it. I would rather not go than to have two or three days only to stay. I would like much to see you all and would, could I stay any length of time. But as it is, don't think of looking for me. I will close for the present hoping to hear from you. I am your affectionate brother.

G.W. Porter

P.S. Direct to Lt. G.W. Porter, Gen'l Leggett's staff. Logan's Division. Grant's Army. I wish you to all direct your letters in this way. Then I will have no trouble in getting them. My love to all.

G.W. Porter

My respects to _____ folks; also Col. Kelley's