

Camp of the 108th NY Vols.
Near Falmouth Va.
March 9 1863.

Dear Farley

As I have a few moments to spare I will improve the opportunity by writing to you and answering your long neglected letter. It is however so long since I received the above mentioned that you will please excuse my taking any notice of its contents and allow me to write on matters of more recent occurrence.

The boys are still out on picket and will not return until some time, when my duties as Adjutant will be more severe. At present they consist in sitting in the office to receive all orders from HdQrs, and paying an occasional visit to the camp to see that everything is "au fait". Since our new Brigadier Genl¹ arrived all the little minutiae of Camp duties have been attended to much more systematically and I really think that the Brigade already shows the change. Our Guard Mounting which until then was a mere Regimental affair has now become a Brigade matter, and as we always have a band in attendance it constitutes one of the pleasantest duties of the day. Soon after Guard Mounting which is at 9 A.M. drill call is sounded and the Regt drills by companies for an hour and a half. When with my company I of course participate in this drill, but now for a few days I shall be exempt. At 3 P.M. there is Battalion drill of an hour and a half or two hours, and shortly after dress parade. These exercises although not occupying in all more than five hours are so divided that our time is pretty well occupied and in pleasant weather we have little of it to spare. Mr. Nichols came yesterday just as the Col. was leaving and brought with him a small parcel for me for which please thank Mother very much. It was just what I wanted as you will see by my letter to Mother. My box arrived last night but as I have no more room I will leave that for another time.²

Your affectionate Bro Sam

[Written above the opening of the letter on the original page 1] Give my best love to all the Δ's [Delta Psi members] I am hearty as a buck & feeling bully. Give my best wishes to Seward and tell him if instead of staying in NY he should be sent to W – he must get a pass and come and see me. I see by the last letter you are unwell hoping before this reaches you, you will have recovered, I remain

Sam

Notes:

¹ Brigadier General William Hays (Dec.27,1862) took over Palmer's Brigade if French's Division (3rd) of the 2nd Corps.

² Mr. James Nichols was the Chaplain of the 108th NY who was discharged on March 14, 1863. Col. Oliver Hazard Palmer resigned as Colonel of the 108th on March 2, 1862. In his diary he took leave of the regiment on March 6th and may not have physically left the regiment until the 8th since a large part of the regiment was on picket duty from March 6-8 (see letter of March 24,1863). According to Palmer there was a significant ceremony – "A hollow square formed" and he "bid them farewell" [*Diary* p.101]. Porter may have missed the departure since he was on picket or chose to ignore it. The latter may be closer since he may have been still upset by Palmer's "imbecility" in the promotion fiasco (see letter of Dec 20, 1862).

Seward Gould was 1st Lt, 11th New York Heavy Artillery which was currently being raised in Rochester and later would become part of the 4th NYHA.

Transcribed by Terry Crooks.
The original letter is in the *Porter Family Papers*, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections,
University of Rochester Libraries.
