

HdQrs 3rd Brigade 2nd Div
October 2nd 1864

Dear Mary

Having a few leisurely moments I will improve them by finishing my letter to you of the 29th ult. Although orders preparatory to a move were received by us nearly four days ago, we were not ordered from our previous position until yesterday morning at about 2 P.M. In the mean time the Paymaster had arrived, and despite the danger of the spot and the rough condition in which he found us (under marching orders as we were) commenced paying the Brigade. Every thing in his department went on swimmingly until about 6 P.M. of the 30th. Then a demonstration was made in our front, and ball & shell fell among us pretty carelessly. Col Smyth (who was then, and is now) in Command of the Brigade routed us all out in double quick time. The Rebels were unable to advance far and soon ceased firing having inflicted very slight loss. There were but three or four casualties in our brigade. The Paymaster during this rumpus had been pretty badly worried, but when things had become quiet again he resumed payment and continued until after midnight when all elected to go to bed. In the course of an hour we received definite orders to move to Fort Davis, where we now are. In reaching this point we were led ~~through~~ owing to some mistake through Fort Sedgwick formerly Fort Schenck. While there one of our men was killed and two wounded. About 9 A.M. we reached this fort and although it rained hard went to work at once cleaning away the filth which the previous occupants had left. During the day an occasional bullet found its way into the fort doing no damage and annoying no one but a few citizens who on a variety of excuses had found their way into the army. This morning the minnie balls were superceded by thirty two pound shells, which for an hour or two really annoyed the rest of us. This shelling was about as accurate as usual and a new hand would have expected ~~that~~ our loss ~~would~~ to be quite severe, but I was not at all surprised to find that of the whole garrison but one man was hurt and he not dangerously –J. Howard 108th N.Y.¹

Last night I received a letter from you also one from Father containing \$50. I expect to buy a horse in a few days, but may not as one of the government horses I now have, is really a splendid ~~horse~~ animal, very fast and an easy rider.

I almost forgot what articles I mentioned in my last as needed by me. So will re-enumerate. New pair nice pantaloons, dark blue, small gilt cord. Sack coat fixed up. Heavy boots cleaned by Farley and sent. Vest. Two or three pair of thin socks 9 ½. Pair light boots and some old drugget or if you can spare me none a strip of carpet, the heavier the better, single breadth and about seven feet long, less would do.

Parsons is going to write for a few things which can be sent with mine. Send all these things in a valise a little larger than my old one. Go to Pritchards not Lockes.

Tell Father that unless my horse costs over \$250 I shall send him some money.²

News from Butler has reached us also vague rumor of success from Warren but nothing definite. We are all in high spirits and livestock very high.³

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

By the time this reaches you, you will doubtless be married and I trust happily.⁴
Hope that nothing may mar your pleasant anticipations, I am

Affectionately
Your Brother
Sam

Directions on valise

C. Rogers
Care Paster & Bros
Washington D.C.

For Capt Sam Porter in lower corner

Endnotes:

¹ For the confusion about the names of the various forts at Petersburg see the earlier letter of Sept. 10, 1864. It would appear that Porter finally got the correct spelling of 'Schenck' instead of 'Skenk'. The former name of Fort Sedgwick was *Fort Hell* until renamed (*O.R.* 42,2, p.983). What he was calling Fort Schenck (or 'Skenk') was probably Battery 21. Fort Davis was located SW of Fort Sedgwick. Jeremiah Howard, Pvt. Co. A 108th NY was wounded in the action described by Porter.

² A.R. Pritchard was a manufacturer of trunks and traveling bags. Locke could not be identified but could be assumed to be a rival retailer. Drugget is a coarse woolen fabric used as a covering or a substitute for carpet.

³ Maj. Gen. Benjamin Franklin Butler, appointed by Lincoln, commanded the Army of the James and was supposed to be part of Grant's multi-front offensive on the Confederacy but instead managed to get his army landlocked at Bermuda Hundred and therefore was useless for Grant's needs. So the news from Butler was probably no news at all. Maj. Gen. Gouverneur Kemble Warren attacked Heth at Peeble's Farm on Sept. 30, 1864 and took Fort Archer.

⁴ Mary Elizabeth Porter married Charles F. Pond on Oct 6, 1864.