

HeadQuarters 2nd Div
Feb 1st 1865.¹

Dear Mother

Since coming up here, I have been very busy, reading law, and revising the proceedings of two Genl Court Martials which are under my supervision. As yet I have not been detailed as J.A. of any particular court, and unless cases of more than ordinary importance arise I shall do my business through minor courts. The more I see of my position the better I like it, and consider it if permanent the most desirable upon the Division staff. I find that I have need of all my wits to prevent mistakes, and even with all possible care, cannot expect always to escape blunders. My duties when not Judge Advocate of a court are two fold. First to see that all charges made against officers or enlisted men of the Div are properly drawn up. Second to see that the proceedings of the court in which the case was tried, are legal and the punishment such as could properly be inflicted by the Court. The Genl Commdg Div is of course the man who approves the proceedings and who would be blamed by superior authorities for any error, but as the Genl depends to a very great extent upon the opinion of the J.A. he would in reality be the person at fault. For some time back the mails have been very irregular but last night I received a letter from you and one from Mary.² Both complain that I write very seldom. Perhaps I do, but now that we are in permanent camp should you care for frequent letters. I never was made for a letter writer and especially am I at a loss what to write about, when you are entirely ignorant of military and unacquainted with all of my associates. No papers have reached us for nearly a week so you can imagine in what state of excitement we are. The army however was never in so joyous a spirit, the good news from Sherman and Terry having produced its natural effect. Have I written to you that Terry & the troops with him were a part of Genl Gibbons new command (24th A.C.) G they say feels very proud over it. There was a very fine review of the 1st Div last week, we have one tomorrow and expect to surpass that of 1st. I received a long letter from Sallie Farley³ a short time ago in reply to one from me. Poor girl life can offer very few attractions for her. Fathers check reached me safely. I an very sorry to learn that there has been so much sickness in the family.

Love to all
Your affect son
Sam Porter

Endnotes:

¹ Internal evidence indicates that this letter is incorrectly dated as 1864 and should be 1865. He was already appointed to the JA post in his letter of Jan. 15, 1865 and also see the notes re: Gibbon;s promotion in the same letter.

²Mary was his older, now married sister.

³Again the Sallie Farley conundrum –see letters of Jan 6/63 and Jan 3/65.