

Camp of the 108th
Near Falmouth
Jan. 27th

Dear Grandpa¹

We are once more quieted down, and there is such a prospect of our remaining for some length of time in our present comfortable quarters, that the boys are beginning to regain their health and spirits which the last five months trial had sorely tried. Although I do not class myself with the number of faint hearted ones still I must confess that the rest we have had for the past five weeks has done a great deal toward satisfying me that our Regiment was not fated to be always as unlucky as it hitherto been. Since we left R[ochester] we have been continually at work or on the march, and the effect was such on the Regt that we returned from Fredericksburgh (*sic*) we could hardly muster two hundred men fit for duty. Now however we muster four hundred and sixty eight men nearly 400 of whom are well. Port was over to see me on Sunday last and took dinner with me. His visit was interrupted however by me being sent out on picket. The night was very pleasant and we experienced none of the usual hardships. Yesterday the camp was electrified by the news that the Pay-master had arrived & would commence paying us off. Payments commenced in the morning and were continued until after dark. This is the first time we have been paid since we came out, and the sight of so much money in the hands of the men really did me good.

There has been another severe storm raging for the last twenty four hours and every thing looks as though the rainy season had really set in. I received a letter today from Mother announcing the death of Uncle Norman. Although I have known that his health was poor & had not expected any such danger and was very much surprised and grieved. I have sent letters to Father and Farley by Quartermaster Harris and wish you would notify them. It is getting late and I must close.²

Your affect Nephew
Saml Porter

Notes:

¹ Two choices for Grandpa: Samuel Porter (1779-1872), father of S.D. Porter
Joseph Farley (1813-1887), father of Susan Porter.
Why Porter would sign himself as 'affect nephew' is not clear.

² Porter Farley was Porter's cousin in the 140th NY
Norman Porter would be the brother of his fraternal grandfather, Samuel Porter who may be the Grandpa addressed at the start. Norman was 10 years younger than Samuel.
Farley Porter was his brother.
Joseph S. Harris was 1st Lt and Quartermaster of the 108th NY.