

Camp of the 108th N.Y.
Near Falmouth.
[May 25?]

Dear Father

Your letter of the 20th came to hand yesterday. It was very welcome as are all letters from home. I was glad to hear that you had invited Graham & Locke ¹to dinner. The first is one of the finest officers in the Reg't and the latter belongs to Co. F. Graham is one of those who never gets discouraged, and after our late repulse when I got tired of listening to the rant & treason of Lieut. Colonel Pierce and men of his stamp, it was consoling to find that there was one officer at least who felt as confident of success as did myself. Of course I do not wish any of this to transpire at least not yet but Pierce is a Copperhead of the worst kind. He is a man of no principle and were it not more profitable than any thing he can turn his hand to he would leave the army as soon as possible. His reputation has always been very good in the Reg't, but the more thinking are beginning to see his shallowness and hypocrisy²_____ The last week has been intensely hot but a little shower last night cooled the atmosphere and our tent is once more comfortable during the day time. Our Co. still continues the largest in the Reg't. It is by odds the best Co in it. Henry Hamilton³ was over here last week and made a short visit. He is looking forward to a commission. I never hear anything new from the Real Estate Broker, how does business in that line progress. No news in Camp. Shall write again when Locke comes which I expect will be to day Monday. [May 25th]

Love to all
Your affectionate son
Sam Porter.

Thursday May 28th

I did not finish my letter in time for Monday's mail and being sent out on Picket early the next morning could not mail it until today. When I got back Locke was here and had several things for me. My Coat looks about as well as new. The news from Vicksburg is very encouraging and when other armies are so successful it inspires me with the conviction that the same adverse fate cannot always attend us but that we will before long do something to wipe off the stigma attached to the name of army of the Potomac.⁴

Sam

Notes:

¹ Andrew J. Locke, 2nd Lt. Co. F, 108th New York
John L. Graham, 2nd Lt. Co. K, 108th New York (Phisterer, 4, pp.3276, 3278).

²Despite the fact that Pierce viewed Sam as a close friend, it is interesting to wonder if Sam reciprocated such friendship since there was quite a degree of tension between them or at least from Sam's viewpoint there was. It must be recalled that Pierce was probably a Democrat, opposed to abolition and a dyed in the wool follower of McClellan and his cautious limited war aims. A Copperhead was a northern democrat who opposed the war policy and favored a negotiated peace with the South. To characterize the Pierce-Porter relationship as Love-Hate may be an understatement.

³ Henry Hamilton, after transferring from the 13th New York, joined the 140th New York as a 1st Sgt. Co. H. His commission as 1st Lt Co. I, is dated as July 29, 1863 (Phisterer, 4, p.3624).

⁴ The news from Vicksburg – how much was known of Grant's campaign by this date is hard to know. The news was encouraging since Grant was now on the eastern shore of the Mississippi and moving towards his goal of Vicksburg. Sam may have heard of the victories at Port Gibson, Raymond and Champion Hill. Ironically Sam's remark about 'stigma' would be proven true by the very man fighting at Vicksburg, U.S. Grant, when just under a year later he would take command of the Army of the Potomac.