

Hd Qrs 108th N.Y.S.V.
Nov. 13 1863 –

S.D. Porter Esq.
Rochester NY.

Dear Sir

Your form of the 10th Inst. Informing me of Sam's improved condition and prospects for an early recovery and return to duty, is received and I thank you much, for we were all anxious to learn how much or how badly he was hit.. We had no opportunity of finding he was wounded when we were all getting in & could not inquire of him, the Dr. had no opportunity of examining and the drivers told that he seemed pretty stiff and sore. I feared very much that it might turn out worse than at first showed and had begun to feel that I was to blame in the matter for sending him to the exposed duty when he received his hurt but felt also as strong as that. I did not blame myself the Enemies Sharp Shooters were annoying us a good deal and I being isolated with my command and in close woods. I wished to learn how strong they were and if they were skirmishing in front of a large body or a curtain to cover a flank movement to our left, and so who could I send n but Sam. He was the only one that would have found out and reported. It was like knocking at the doors of a Hornets nest to see if they were in or not but the safety of the command depended upon the knowledge I had of the enemies movements and in such emergencies it is the "custom of the service" to pick out the heroes for the reconnaissance.

The compliments which you have been kind enough to pay our brave little Corps and the 108th which always performs its humble part in winning glory for the trefoil¹, I feel gratified for. It is not often that they say "well done" or can be brought to acknowledge that we have done anything but badly. It is not merit but success that is rewarded in War. And as far as the end to be attained, when attained, will be award enough for every true patriot.

Give my kind regards to your Sam. Tell him that his company regret his absence, but that Lt. Locke² attends to their interests thoroughly and has them well in hand. Do not let him hurry himself away until absolutely well as he probably will not have a chance to get hit again until spring opens.

I am
Very truly
Your obt srt
Charles J. Powers³

Notes:

¹ The trefoil was the badge of the 2nd Corps.

² Andrew J. Locke was 2nd Lt, Co. F (March 3, 1863), 108th NY

³Charles J. Powers, Col. of the 108th NY, was lawyer which his writing reflects. He employs the most convoluted method of expression for a simple idea – ie. his comment about self-blame is torturously labored. His motive for the letter was considerate of Porter's parents but still could have been more simply said. His joking remark about Porter getting hit again in the spring was doubly ironic. Porter did get hit again the following May as did Powers and the wound to the latter crippled him for life.