

Alexander Stewart Letter to his brother, June 11, 1863

Private Alexander Stewart of the 149th Pennsylvania, mortally wounded at the Battle of Gettysburg, was cared for by 21-year-old nurse Sallie Myers. Stewart penned this letter to his brother, Henry, in June 1863.

H'd Quts, Provost Guard
3rd Division 1st C.O
June 10th, 1863

Brother Henry,

I have just this moment received a letter from you and so will just answer it.

You asked my opinion in regards to an argument, on neither the pints involved in a certain discussed by you and others

Well! The mere technicality upon which you seem to hinge your argument I have nothing to say. The relation between the master and Slave you say still exists the same as before the Rebellion — Not so north a gard. Many of them at least— a number of them aint there any more, But as [?] the “Moral rights” have the master has no moral right to hold a slave at all. In short no right save what Municipal or state Authority gives him send that is ounly founded on might not justice nor right and is of no binding effect save the Slaveholders ability to hold the negro. Now the government is no longer [bund?] to assert its authority in assisting the rebellious slave holders in the possession of the slave property - Now under these cucumstances you will not pretend to deny the negro’s right to fredom, and that [two] by whatever means God has placed in his hands. I should not be surprised if the people of the south would [vsited north] the honors of St Domingo, if so they here no one to blame but themselves, they alone are responsible - The Negro will yet in my opinion play an [importants] part in the History of this war. I believe he will fight and I say let him fight. I am for putting down this rebellion and I don’t care how it is done so it is done if necessary I will take a commission and drive south up to the [works]. They are as much interested as any other class but I must stop my health is improving I am now about as well as ever. [Mr. Burten] has written to you [Holgbish] is still on Stevens staff, we are now having a very pleasant time, I do think we will now move for some time. Gen Hooker has made a bold reconaissance for the purpose of ascertaining the exact position and numbers of Lee’s army in front, it was successful I have been asked was General Hooker wounded during the battler of the first of May. I answer [emphatically] No- and I do know - for on sabbath I seen him three different times through the day, on, I seen him different times and he was as sober as any. I believe it would be [mightily] right to have some of the copperheds in your neighborhood a whole at best but I close my love to all your affectionate Brother

A. M. Stewart