

THE SERGEANT JEROME PEIRCE COLLECTION

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WRITTEN BY	Jerome
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ENVELOPE



LETTER TRANSCRIPTION

Sat P.M. 15 Nov 1862 –
Camp near the *Rhappahannock [sic] river*

My dearest Wife,

I seize the little remaining daylight to pen a few words to you. First let me thank you for the letter and contents which came *safely to hand* and which I will make the *most of*. Your letter was written from O Nov 5, and here let me ask you to say *where* my last letters are from as well as the *date*, as I often forget just *where* I write them from, for I have to[o] much to do to keep a record of it, altho' I shall try to hereafter if ever so brief.

I was very much delighted too, to receive the "Atlantic." I shall enjoy it so much. Borrowed the Oct Number of it of the Capt. and had just read it th[r]o'. We were quite unexpectedly detained at the last Camp and reading matter is very precious, and you know my taste. But I must tell you of *today*. We left the Camp "Near Warrenton" this morn, and marched to this place—about Six miles nearer the river, where a Rebel force had erected batteries to dispute the passage of the river, and we heard firing as we

approached, found *as usual* they had “left.” Gen Sturgis’ division I am told, passed over after giving them about forty rounds of shot or shell, so we went into Camp behind a little hill, which conceals us from view in that direction. We are in a “run” or *hollow*, a little stream or *ditch* at the bottom, a pine wood at the top opposite. (it seems so good to see the *pine* once more)

You spoke of my fatigues and dangers. I am surprised myself to see how indifferent we become to both, and you must not allow yourself to worry too much, for I am in such excellent *health* and *spirits*, and as we approach danger we think less and less about it, all because of *dis]cipline* or *habit*. I still think there will be no serious opposition from the “rebs” at present, and feel as tho’ we should be spared any serious experience at present for we are a *reserve* I think by the movements, and then there is such a *tremendous force*, and we can’t “begin” to see the whole either, that it would seem in vain for them to contend, and makes us *feel* safe and careless of danger.

It has been a beautiful day, and the march was easy, and now we are not subject to such long and fatiguing marches. I had no idea of camping so soon today, but we were soon *tented*. (I have J. H’s. half tent, as he sleeps in the wagon, which we covered with Canvas [sic], and makes a tent, so that I can pitch a tent by myself) and as we get all “fixed” fires burning, Coffee and *tea*, (many thanks for the tea,) sleeping we present a *social scene* which makes a soldiers home, and we are soon Chatting[,] laughing, eating, reading, and *don’t forget the darlings at home*, and you would not think we were *very unhappy*, if you could see us. Speaking of the *election*, I am glad Andrew is elected, and for the rest, they Can’t have much to say till a year from next Dec. so something will turn up before that time.

You ask me how I keep my *writing materials*. I keep them done up snugly in a *roll*, and in papers, between clothes in the knapsack. I have one of the potent rolls—a wooden thing opens, with a little bar across, and forms a *board* which I rest on my knee. I take precious care of them, and the *sutlers* have a little *ink* so “all’s well”.

I am glad you have seen the friends at O. Mr Gibbs, the Harringtons & I should like to write to some of the friends but it is so *hard*, to so many, not that I think the less of them. I hope you will keep up a correspondence with some of them at O, the *Mayo’s* in particular. Henry sits here, near by. Nelson S. and some others all well, and very busy over their *supper*, and think little of the *hardships* I assure you. It is getting towards dark. How I should like to see you and talk over a thousand things I cannot write, and the sweet memories of *home friends*, and the dearest ones to me, are all *more precious* than ever, but we are resolved to glean all the *enjoyment* we can from our situation, and we find many *hours* of genuine enjoyment. Last eve we had a *rousing* fire of hardwood logs in front of the Capt’s tent and he invited us to *sing*. a large number of the Co. did so and we had a fine time till “*taps*” when all noise, singing &c must cease at half past 8 Oclk P.M. He sat a while and told us stories of school boy days, for sometime, and a social time we had of it. Some of us generally hang round the Camp fires till nine or ten Oclk quietly, and sleep all the better for it. The rolling hilly Country, clear weather of late, remarkable for the season, fading leaves, and reading keep one[’s] thoughts busy, and for myself I never felt *busier* in my life.

Happy to hear that Mary F. has a school. She must remember her *brother* once in a while.

What news from Frank? I hope to meet him by and by.

I want to ask you, what *became* of that *maple Sugar* in the *box* that we had in the Spring? I have so many times wished I could have some here, which of course is impossible, but I must inquire after it. Hope the “folks at home” had a taste.

Tomorrow is Sabbath. Hope we shall be spared marching. We have evening meetings every other eve. our chaplain Conducts them. Any one speaks, reads scripture or offers prayer, and they are very interesting[.] Our Chaplain is *improving* somewhat, and seems a little more in unison with the soldiers. No doubt time will make all well.

Saw Alonzo R. last eve—had a letter from Nellie. they were expecting you there with J. and she expressed earnestly a wish that you would Come. I trust you will strive every way to keep your mind occupied, forget your loneliness as much as possible, and I shall feel much better. don't allow yourself to be alone, and how can you with our little *Lulu*. Darling I mention her name but little but I think of her hourly and imagine her little ways and talk, and enjoy many hours in thought of you all.

You spoke of being at Mr Ballou's. Did he receive my letter written I think at "Pleasant Valley"? I have never hea[r]d it mentioned.

Of the talk about our homesickness enough. Someone *did* write so, but it is no matter. I am resolved to think no more of such things and am sorry I ever did.

It is hard to close, but I must. Shall write when I Can, and I hope we shall rest tomorrow, and then *onward*, for the end, victory and home, as soon as may be!

Love to *all—all*—for I never forget you, and am

As ever lovingly
Your own
Jerome

Direct as ever, and send no boxes till we tell you, altho' we should like them. Send any mailable package as you do letters. Shall be glad of the mittens. Edmund Ward had a pain last Eve, and Caps[?] like mine[?] come. I need a silk Hdkf. which I have mentioned before.

Glad you sold your things so *well*, wood, &c.

[Marginal notes]

[Page 5] Have J.H's letter. Came last eve: Also papers. will deliver them[.]

[Page 6] Have not seen J.H. for a few days. no doubt he is well.

