

THE SERGEANT JEROME PEIRCE COLLECTION

LETTER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER	183
DATE OF LETTER	Dec. 13, 1863
WRITTEN BY	Jerome
WRITTEN TO	Family and friends
WRITTEN AT	Tazewell, Tenn.
NUMBER OF PAGES	4
TRANSCRIBER	Tom Neubig
TRANSCRIPTION DATE	Nov. 20, 2018

ENVELOPE



LETTER TRANSCRIPTION

Tazewell Tenn. Dec. 13 1863

My dear family and friends,

Again 'tis Sabbath morning and oh how I wish I could join you, instead of attempting to write in this uncongenial scene. But a soldier must be used to everything and I feel like I am having experiences.

Have been here since last Sabbath when we returned from the ford near Clinch River. Have been busy with the Quartermaster handling stores as this is a post now where supplies have to be loaded and unloaded, transferred to the post commissary etc. etc. without end and a great deal of night work. But we have good living and sleep under cover which is much tho the weather is warm and delightful for the most part.

The Rebels in this vicinity have been compelled to fall back or change their position and the 9th Corps are about 25 miles from here at Rutledge and with others are pressing Longstreet with a view to capturing them in a body. We have a lot of provisions in a house close by and things are decidedly

favorable and it is only by a series of unblushing lies that the rebel leaders keep up the spirit of their men.

From all accounts I have been rescued from much hardship and even death for if accounts be true, the man who took the colors from me was killed at Knoxville during the late struggle there. Of the future I know nothing. Am trying to get my pay. Whether I finally join the Regt or not I can't tell. The Quartermaster so far seems satisfied with me and it may prove a permanent thing. He is absent today at the front (at the Corps) and when he returns I shall probably know what is to be done.

You must be patient. Everything you well know has to be done "just so" and it takes time. If I remain here shall have a way of getting my pay etc. I know how much you need it, but if I can work into a place here I shall learn more about business and after a year's hard service with the Regt. I shall do the best I can especially in a pecuniary point.

Things are now quiet here and it is a mere depot of supplies. And if the rebels are disposed of and the six months men soon go home for are no others to speak of even this will be broke up and so it stands.

The mail was forward yesterday, mine with the rest, I expect, but I hope to receive it yet.

It is quite a trial to be away off here not a word from home, yet there is no other safe way yet awhile.

Among the number employed here is a gentleman of education from Indiana, in (one of the six months men) a private, an independent character, and we find time to chat books and the better things of home, generally so that life is not quite a blank and with my reading I manage to keep the rust off.

Yesterday, you would have been amused I think, mending and making all day what time I had from my duties. Patched my tent-cloth. Ditto blanket, both having holes burned in them sleeping out of doors by the fire. Washed out haversack and other bags. Then made a new box to-knapsack, etc. so that I am all in condition to move or keep still. Today I devote to writing and reading. I always if possible try and distinguish someway Sunday. Hope to succeed, better today than sometimes, as the chief is absent and things necessarily are at a standstill.

Have just finished a letter to the "Socials" commenced some days since (Directed it to William Finney).

How do you all? There are more I ought to write to but positively I cannot. More difficult than when with the Rgt. Will C. and his father and the girls. You must for the present share them as to all.

Little Lulu too, but there is little I could wish her to see or know of my life here. The birds are silent and no flowers to send her. All is fear and desolation of season and war's red hand.

You are having, I trust, the good word today with the comforts and quiet of home in full. There are two or three buildings here designed as meeting houses but like the rest devoted to hospital or other army purposes. So we still live within ourselves, or the precious memories of the past and what could we do without them!

Have written you but once a week of late. Two weeks ago at the Gap and from here last Sabbath. Life is monotonous and confused. Hope to know soon what I am to do and can feel more settled and contented.

Mailed a letter to Fosters the other day.

Am reading regularly as possible. Jeremiah, Proverbs, Psalms, 1st Ep[istles], and Corinthians and gleam great comfort therefrom.

And so goes life. Tell father and mother I know I ought to have some word especially for them for their care and kindness to mine as the New Year approaches, but they are not forgotten and they must accept a cordial "Christmas" and "New Years" from me with the hope that we may see by and by some compensation for these days of separation and disorder.

Dear Allie, I still have yours of the 8th and 16 Nov[ember] to look over and hope for more soon.

Can think of no more for the present. May the good Father still keep you in his care, in health and peace till we meet.

A kiss for Lulu. Tell her Papie is living in a house a little while just now and thinks much of her. My Ind[iana] friend (Mr. Major) much admires her picture, one of the child pictures. He loves to see so I must prize it all the more. Regards to Mr. Salloway, always and all friends.

Once more adieu and ever your loving husband,
Jerome

Have you heard of late from Mr. Ellis (Walpole)? Tell them if opportunity offers why we or I have not written them. What of the Prestons? Dreamed of them last night.

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTES

NOTE 1: Foster Peirce was one of Jerome's older brothers. The 1850 U.S. Census listed him as being born in 1812, living in Charlestown, Massachusetts, and being in the furniture business. It is interesting to note that when that census was taken, Jerome, then 19 years old, was living with the Foster Peirce family, with his occupation being recorded as a "gilder."

NOTE 2: This letter references a number of family friends: Prestons, Salloway, Ellis, William Finney and Will C.

NOTE 3: It is not clear what the "Socials" refers to. Mr. Finney appears to be one of their number.