

THE SERGEANT JEROME PEIRCE COLLECTION

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ENVELOPE

This letter has no envelope associated with it.

LETTER TRANSCRIPTION

Old Camp, Falmouth &c Tues Eve 16 Dec 1862

Yes, my dear Wife, J.H. & I sit here in the old place, in our *tent*, alive, safe, and I am in excellent health[.] J.H. is fatigued somewhat from the tiresome experience of the last few days. he is reading a paper from home.

And how can I speak of these "*latter days*"? Have been since last *Thu[r]sday*, within *sight* and hearing of all the Combined *horrors* of war expecting every hour to face the cannon and musketry, which have swept many noble men into eternity, but the thought of those at home, of their fearful anxiety, this was worse than thought of myself. Words fail me, but I felt I must send a line home, to tell you of my safety, and thus my "*presentiment*" still holds true! Such strange & novel situations! It fatigues me as I recall them! I have kept a few *notes* which I enclose, made during moments, expecting every moment to meet the enemy. *A stormed & sacked City!* it beggars all description. Every house riddled with shot—furniture, and *books*, keepsakes bedding and everything pertaining to *store* and *housekeeping* in one dirty, Confused mass in the streets, and indoors—here a room with splendid *sofas* and *pianos*, bedsteads Cut *in two*, or torn all to pieces with shell and shot, while soldiers were ransacking and carrying off everything they could get hands on, and officers taking their meals in the *best* houses, smoking &c amid all this ruin! *Mayor's Slaughters* house was the most elegant house, in a fine garden. I did not enter it, but Capt S did. it shared the Common ruin. Books in abundance. He secured a Copy of Longfellow's "*Hyperion*," and *read it through*, while awaiting orders, in the field, or street, while I passed much time, reading Harper's Magazine, or *Pierpont's* "*Introduction to the National Reader*", which I intended to have brought away, but was obliged to throw it away. I picked it out of the *mud*, in a *field*, and I may tell you more of it sometime.

It is Roll Call and I must write a line to Fosters folks and Jos. H's. Your letter of the 7th was read while standing in the street on Sunday, *mud ankle deep*, in line of battle. Also one from Ellen P. Wrote a brief note to you just *before* I got them. Yesterday got you[r]s of the 9th while in the Ravine, a little ways from the City. Also a beautiful one from Kate, and *Henry P.* what a good hand writing for one so young! Will answer soon. Also (on Sunday) one from *Will*. All well. one from Mr C *Mayo*[.]

I can only tell you by *word of mouth* of these days. Your notes to my fri[e]nds *with* my pictures are all right. My *talk* about Capt S. and your *messages*, was *banter*. I gave them. he wished to be as

kindly remembered to you. I showed him you & Lulus picture, but he cannot appreciate a family mans feelings, I think, fully. *Your letters* I am *not ashamed* of! *no, not so!* Send ever thing like *stockings* vests &c shirts *by mail*. They come to others every day safely. I *need* only *1 Pr Socks*, two pairs *woolen draw[er]s*, one *thick* (ribbed) if possible) undershirt, but a thick *vest*, button to the chin, (of *old Cloth just as well*), more than all. We have to be careful of loading our knapsacks. Our movements are a mystery, but the *rebs* cannot be beaten with *infantry* out of their forts *about F*.

Will write soon. Adieu Jerome