

THE SERGEANT JEROME PEIRCE COLLECTION

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| WRITTEN BY | Jerome |
| WRITTEN TO | Allie and Lulu ("My dear ones at home") |
| WRITTEN AT | Camp Dick Robinson near Bryantsville, Ky. |
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ENVELOPE



LETTER TRANSCRIPTION

Camp Dick Robinson Near
Bryantsville Ky. 10th Apr 1863

My dear ones at home,

I learn that a letter mailed this A.M. will go this P.M. so I send you a line. As I hinted in my last [letter] at Lexington (last Tues) we were ordered to move and started on the march Wedns A.M. Went this [P.M. to] the principal streets of L [Lancaster] which reminds me of Lowell, [Massachusetts], tho not as neat.

Soon found ourselves out of town and at our old trade. Weather warming and very dusty and two days marching of the severest order brought us to this place quite famous as the camp of both Rebel and Union troops at different [times]. We are about 25 miles south of Lexington. A small village about a mile away. It is in a grove of Blk. [Black] Walnuts on the main road.

It has been a terrible time for us and I can write you but briefly not that I am sick but foot-sore. The whole regt. [is] in a bad state. So long since we have marched. Made the first use of my linen

bandages since I came out yesterday A.M. "fall out" about 10 o'clock, a blister as big as a half dollar bursting on the ball of my left foot which dropped me as quick as tho I was shot. Bound it up and took my time with a great many others. Got our knapsacks carried most of the way. Caught up with the Regt. at noon. Having a dinner halt on the Kentucky River amidst the grandest scenery I have yet seen. High cragged rocks hundreds of feet on the right of the road which winds with the river several miles and on the left as far down to the river and very steep. At Hukman's Bridge is a perfect "Gibraltar" and it might be fortified so as to render the passage of the road impossible. I forgot for a time my place in this grand scene and wished that I was an artist. The long train of wagons passing down the defile of the mountains, which at every step seemed to present an impossible barrier. Looked like war. Kept with the Regt. and came in about 4 P.M., jumped down to a beautiful brook nearby and bathed and washed feet, etc.

This morn J.H. and I looked like veterans as we went again to the stream. The Col. smiled and called it rough. Our feet were wrapped up in blanket pieces, (for we are reducing knapsacks and I have two.)

Now I have told you considerable, but don't worry, we shall come out 'all right' for there is really a sign of the paymaster today and when the mail comes all will be well. We shall probably remain here a few days and perhaps some time. Some say we are going to Cumberland Gap but we don't know, only that work is on hand and it is hoped the work will be finished this summer.

I am strong and well, and but for my feet, should have stood the march finely. You would think [it] strange to see how light we make of all these things. Our officers (of the 36th) done all for our care they could and Maj. Goodell is greatly beloved by the Regt. He is a man every inch and very humane and kind and spoke to me as I fell out in the kindest manner. The Col. is kinder I suspect than he appears and on the whole, we have as good officers as they average.

I am sorry I cannot write you more and the other friends but we [are] now in the real work and we have to spare our strength in camp all that's possible.

Have you a War Map of Ken. [Kentucky] and Tenn. [Tennessee]? We shall operate here and 'Harpers' may have one. I would like you to follow me. Wish I had one myself. Saw Ben E. this morn. He is quite smart.

Have not written Abbie for some time, but you will explain. It seems a long way from home here, but I trust we are really nearer home.

In the prospect of closing up. Tell Lulu Papa is in his "little home" again and in the morn. the birds sing to him which makes him think of her. What a Jubilee when the mail comes!

I hope this will [find] you well. J.H is writing home.

One thing let me tell you that I am in the best of health. When on the move, our coffee and eatables go so nice! Have had enough of camp life for the present. Good angels keep you.

With the love of your husband

Jerome

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTES (Josef Rokus)

NOTE 1: Camp Dick Robinson was a large Union Army organizational and training center located near Lancaster in rural Garrard County, Kentucky. The camp was established on August 6, 1861, despite the protests of Governor Beriah Magoffin, a strong secessionist and Southern sympathizer. It was located about halfway between Cincinnati and the Cumberland Gap, and was about 25 miles from Lexington, Kentucky. It was constructed on the farm of Captain Dick Robinson, a strong pro-Union supporter. The post served as a rallying point for local loyalists, as well as for Unionists who had left their homes in eastern Tennessee in order to enlist in the Union army. In 1862, the Confederate Army seized the camp

and renamed it "Camp Breckinridge," in honor of Confederate general and former U.S. Vice President John C. Breckinridge, a native Kentuckian. The advance of the Union army into the region forced the Rebels to abandon the camp, and Federal troops regained its possession for the remainder of the war. After hostilities ceased in 1865, the camp was phased out of existence.

NOTE 2: Arthur A. Goodell enlisted at age 23 from Worcester, Massachusetts, as a Sergeant-Major on April 18, 1861. He was transferred as a Captain of Company C of the 36th Massachusetts Regiment on August 16, 1862, and was promoted to Major on January 29, 1863. Subsequent to the date this letter was written, he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel on July 31, 1863, and he commanded the Regiment from that date until October 10, 1863, when he was severely wounded at Blue Springs, Tennessee. Goodell returned to the Regiment on April 1, 1864, but resigned on May 5, 1864, because of disability resulting from wounds. He was subsequently promoted to Brevet Brigadier General, U.S. Volunteers, for "gallant and meritorious conduct in the field." Goodell died at Worcester, Massachusetts, on June 30, 1882, on his 43rd birthday.

NOTE 3: The "Ben E." referred to in this letter was Benjamin B. Edmands. He enlisted as a Private at age 27 from Brookline, Massachusetts, and he was subsequently promoted to Corporal. On January 20, 1864, he was discharged from the 36th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment for promotion as a Lieutenant in the 54th Massachusetts Regiment of Volunteers.

NOTE 4: The "J. H." that Jerome referred to in this letter was Joseph H. Peirce. He enlisted as a Private in Orange, Mass., on August 4, 1862, at age 18. Jerome also enlisted in Orange on the same date, but as a corporal. Jerome was 31 years old at the time. According to the Unit History, Joseph H. Peirce was taken Prisoner of War at Pegram Farm, Virginia, on September 30, 1864, (See Letter No. 227) and he was later exchanged. He was discharged on June 21, 1865. Joseph H. Peirce was the son of Joseph Peirce, one of Jerome's brothers, and was, therefore, Jerome's nephew.

NOTE 5: "Abbie" (Abigail) Jaquith was Allie's younger sister. Abbie was born in 1836, and she died in 1915. Allie (Albinia) was born in 1834, and she died in 1920.