

## THE SERGEANT JEROME PEIRCE COLLECTION

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WRITTEN BY	Jerome
WRITTEN TO	Allie and Lulu
WRITTEN AT	Near Fredericksburg, Va. (Falmouth side of the Rappahannock River per text in letter)
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### ENVELOPE



### LETTER TRANSCRIPTION

Thurs Morn 11

Dear ones,

We are ordered to march at 8 ock. A battle is raging, and we move. We may not be *engaged* but I enclose what I hope will reach you.

Love to all as ever, and I hope to see you.

Jerome

I enclose \$5.00 more. I sent you *three* in my last. hope to hear all has reached you safely.  
Good-night

With a kiss, for Lulu And your dear self. Jerome

Have no means of knowing the *loss* on either side. Saw one or two wounded[.]

Thurs P.M. nearly 5 o'clock. 11 Dec /62

On the first page is a few hasty words I penciled, but concluded not to mail till fu[r]ther developments.

It has been an eventful day, beautiful in weather, but Oh for the horrors of war!

About 5 O'clock this A.M. the first guns opened, by the Rebs as we were laying the Pontoon Bridge for our forces to cross. Had an early breakfast, and marche[d] out to the field near our Camp where our Brigade have lain all day, ready to march, at a moment's notice.

With a short cessation, at noon excepted, the roar of Cannon has been incessant, and shot and shell hissing thro' the air, over the doomed City of F. The City is in flames, and we have walked down several times to observe the work of destruction. It is a fearful sight, but this only would seem to bring the traitors to terms. One lurid roll of smoke rolls up in front of us, while the Air is full of powder stench. A row of Cannon, a mile long, are playing upon the City. Jos. H. is just returned from the look out. says the fire is increasing. But enough of this[.] I know you would hear the news, and wish to inform you, of how matters are. We may move over the river at any moment, and of the future, we must trust to him "who doeth All things well. Will let you hear daily if possible. We are in good spirits, and feel assured that real work has commenced and the *end* must be *near*.

All sorts of rumors are in Camp, as that an attack on Richmond is being made in Conjunction with this &c &c. We have rested on Cedar boughs, all day. had *Coffee at noon* and to troops it don't seem so much--a Chapter in War. The saying is among some of the boys, "Burnside has got his sleeves rolled up."

But I know how you dear ones feel at home and I am not insensible to the time and occasion & trust to do my duty. Keep *calm* till you hear from some of us. We shall *probably* return to our tents tonight. We have only our overcoats, blankets, and *three days* rations of food.

I sent you some money \$3.00 a few days since. I enclose \$5.00 more[.] trust it will all reach you safely. A mail is reported in Camp but was not distributed on acct. of the position of affairs.

Can write no more now. heaven bless and keep you all, till I write again, which will be soon. A kiss for little Lu.

As ever Your husband  
*Jerome*

Please send me a *good pencil*. have just upset my ink, and pencils are scarce and poor.

Should have written Lulu but for the situation, but you are in heavens keeping.

*Evening at our tent once more*

Enclosed, is the strange *variable* record of an eventful day, and the last expiring moments Jos. H. and I devote to friends at home. First Came the *strange* rumbling sound of wagons, which waked me early, then a stir in Camp—something was up. I couldn't remain abed. Arose about 4 O,clk built a fire, ready for early movements, early *roll* call[.] In a line at 8. as before stated. Well just *after* I closed the

pencil note while in the *field*, we were ordered to march. Halted, about a mile from the City, when we were soon, faced about, and marched *back to Camp*. Knapsacks restored[.] So here we are, as in the morning, and we have no idea of what the morrow has in store for us. As far as we know, the City is, in our possession by the planting of *the bridges*, under the terrible fire before mentioned, but so many troops were passing that we could be better off in our Camp, for the air is lurid and thick with heat and *powder*. The heart of the City, with scattered portions, are burned, and such a Contrast to the other day when I was at the riverside as mentioned in a former letter! But such is war! It was a fearful scene for some *seven or eight* hours, without a cessation, and then this P.M. later, till dark.

But enough—there seemed to me no shrinking. Everyone seemed nerved to a sense of their duty, and I believe the *Thirty Sixth*, would have kept the honor of the Old Bay State!

We all felt quite as anxious for you at home as ourselves, thinking of the report you would get of the Affair, and we only wish we could head the *Telegraph*. Franklin's & Hooker's Corp's, or Artillery done the principle work, as I heard. Some three Pontoon bridges are across the Stream and we expect to cross the river tomorrow, sometime.

I hope to hear from you before long--the Mail is not yet distributed. possibly it will be in the morning.

'Twas a strange scene in the field. while resting several had their testaments and bibles out reading. I took a bible, and [turned] to a Chapter in *Jeremiah*—quite appropriate, to the occasion, by chance.

Of course all this will Call out all the *fortitude* and strength of my loved Wife, and I trust you may be spared bitter pangs of the worst disasters of war. I had hoped that peaceful measures might prevail, and I still feel that we shall escape the dread *ordeal* of battle, but if not I pray for sustaining power to do my whole duty. I never felt *Calmer* or more resigned in my life, and I thought and *felt much*, very much these last few hours.

There seems to be a something that prepares the mind and nerve for the work.

It is late. I am quite tired. Will mention that we are having fine weather, and I am in *excellent health*, and drew some *shoes* and *pants* this, or last Eve, so I am very Comfortable, and we have *lived finely* of late—good, and plenty of food. I mention this as I knew you would think of the exposure, &c.