

THE SERGEANT JEROME PEIRCE COLLECTION

LETTER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER	186
DATE OF LETTER	Dec. 27, 1863
WRITTEN BY	Jerome
WRITTEN TO	Allie
WRITTEN AT	Blains Cross Roads, Eighteen miles from Knoxville, Tenn.
NUMBER OF PAGES	4
TRANSCRIBER	Tom Neubig
TRANSCRIPTION DATE	Nov. 26, 2018 and Jan. 9, 2019

ENVELOPE



LETTER TRANSCRIPTION

Blains Cross Roads (18 miles from Knoxville)
Sunday morn 27 Dec 63

My ever dearest wife!

Safely again with the gallant battle scented 36th.

Sitting beside Bro[ther] Ben. He scribbling a letter in great haste like myself! An opportunity this morning to mail a letter back. A w[ee]ks bundle of letters from home which I haven't had time to read, only yours of the 30 Nov. and 6th Dec. as I arrived late last night and must mail this soon.

Have struggled on the mud and over mountains and rocks across Clinch River since last Thursday, the day I left Tazewell. Wrote you the day before to direct letters to Lieut. Cross or etc. Resume your old direction to the Regt.

Your letters and my arrival with the Regiment brings up so much, but I can only say now that I am safe and well. Have seen no fighting or rebel prisons as my letter will assure you. My heart is full this

morning and I can hardly think what to write. Shall cherish so much your letters and love. Don't dear wife question my love for you. Shall have such a delightful time reading and talking over adventures.

Joe met me at once and helped me to a supper. He and Ben are great friends. I feel very very much attracted to him. Am glad to know you were at Boston. Hope you will learn of my health and safety and may it add to your enjoyment for Christmas and New Years.

The whole prospect is indeed encouraging and indications point to a close before long of the heavy fighting.

No one knows where the enemy are. We are in an impregnable position among the Clinch Mountains in a beautiful country.

Lulu's Birth Day yesterday. Came ten or twelve miles with the teams and Col. Bowman Curtin of the 45th [Pennsylvania], and feel once more at home, all that I can away from you.

I shall forget many things. Poor Stevens you have doubtless heard is dead. Killed with a bullet thru head at Campbell's Station. Dreadful! He had 27 letters of mine, but he could not be saved any way as the troops were in full retreat and hard pressed. His knapsack and everything was lost of course.

But I must close. Will write again in a day or two. The road is clear to this place and I hope to hear again soon.

Have just looked over in haste Alonzo's letter. Will answer soon.

Love as ever to all and ever your own,

Jerome

Gave Ben your love and he said "bless her heart!"

Inspection at 10 o'clock, breakfast waiting.

Sad for Col. Joslyn!

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTES

NOTE 1: Colonel Henry Bowman rejoined the 36th Regiment on December 26th, 1863 with Jerome. Col. Bowman was on special duty as Chief of Staff to Gen. Willcox, commanding at Cumberland Gap and in East Tennessee, from November 21, 1863 to December 25, 1863. He rejoined the regiment at Blaine's Cross Roads, Tennessee on December 26th, but was unable to muster as a Colonel, since the regiment was below the minimum strength. He was appointed Asst. Quartermaster on Feb. 29, 1864, and served in the 3rd Division, 9th Army Corps in the Virginia campaign until the end of the war. Regimental History, p. 317.

NOTE 2: The letter refers to three close friends of Jerome: Ben, Joe and Alonzo.

NOTE 3: Edwin Stevens, age 39 of Orange, was killed Nov. 16, 1863 at Campbell's Station, TN. In the retreat from Lenoir's, at Campbell's Station, the 36th Regiment lost one officer and three enlisted men, including Stevens, in Confederate General Longstreet's attack.

NOTE 4: On the last page, there is a side note saying "Sad for Col Joslyn." There is no Joslyn in the Massachusetts 36th Regiment, but there was a Lieutenant Colonel Ed. Joslyn in the 36th Infantry Illinois Volunteers, who fought in East Tennessee in late 1863. According to Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Illinois (<http://www.illinoiscivilwar.org/cw36-agr.html>), the Thirty-sixth Infantry Illinois Volunteers Regiment took an active part in the battle of Missionary Ridge November 25, 1863, its colors being among the first planted on the Ridge. On Nov. 28, they started under Sheridan for Knoxville, Tenn., to relieve Burnside. They reached that point December 6. Moving out on the 12th, they marched to different points east of Knoxville until they bivouacked in midwinter at

Blain's Cross Roads on the 17th, where Jerome may have heard about the Colonel when he arrived there on Dec. 26th. It could not be determined what happened to him, since he may have been killed or wounded between the 17th and 26th.