

## THE SERGEANT JEROME PEIRCE COLLECTION

LETTER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER	205
DATE OF LETTER	Apr. 7, 1864
WRITTEN BY	Jerome
WRITTEN TO	Allie and Lulu
WRITTEN AT	"Camp of Rendezvous", Annapolis, Md.
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TRANSCRIBER	Tom Neubig
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### ENVELOPE



### LETTER TRANSCRIPTION

"Camp of Rendezvous" Annapolis, Md April 7/64

My ever dear wife and Lulu,

Once more I resume the pen to give you the earliest word of my whereabouts and condition.

We left Covington [Ky] last Sabbath morning marching to the east end of Cincinnati to the [railroad] cars. By the way, passed on the way the establishment of "John Decamp", steamboat furnisher, cabinet maker, etc., the husband of your old friend Miss Hill, I suppose. It being Sunday I could not attempt to call of course.

After waiting and delay we finally steamed away for the East and stacked arms this morning a little before 8 o'clock. Had a fine entertainment at Pittsburg Pa. at midnight and at Baltimore yesterday till afternoon when we came down here. Thus closing another tedious R[ail] Road campaign.

Have no tents pitched yet. Am sitting on my blankets, the sun warm and a gentle wind. The spot is very fine, a vast level plain on the R[ail] Road near the city, here and there woods and orchards, with the numerous camps of the fast gathering old 9<sup>th</sup> A C [Army Corps]. We expect "A" tents in a few days

and then the old camp regulations as at Newport News, and the rest no doubt you will learn by the papers.

Have just got a nice letter from Alonzo and Ellen. She has just written you and thought they would soon visit B. [probably "Billerica"] Great things are expected this summer of Genl. Grant and we are to take an active part which no doubt is true.

Wish I could write you a long interesting letter but of late you know it has been nothing but hard work and fatigue, and now I am outdoors the wind playing the mischief with paper and the sergeants laying out streets [for the camp] and I expect any moment to be ordered to move. But my first duty and pleasure is to say something to you! As such you must accept it and then I am going to rest up [as] fast as possible.

Of my health I will speak a little. Have had a severe cold and coughed a good deal tho the last of the march but that is much better. Have had some lameness in the right leg which manifests itself in the joints occasionally. But I hope rest will cause it to disappear altogether. Appetite good and as I have improved much since arriving at Covington I count myself quite well.

The matter of furloughs is all talked of but nothing known. We hope to get home for a brief time and ought to but must only wait and hope for the best. Saw Capt Ames this morning, looking quite well again. Hope if we don't get furloughs some of the friends will take you and Lu and take a ride down here, just a pretty trip. But does it not seem good to be so near home again!

Had a taste of good things in Baltimore. Jos H. had some given him by his officers, and he is generous. Took raw oysters with Ben and Geo E. etc. etc.

Hoped to be paid off immediately and will send home all I can. Am a little indebted from stern necessity and shall keep but little as we shall be paid again soon. I did not think to mention about Lieut. Smith. I hope to meet him when the Regt. reaches him. The 56<sup>th</sup> I believe is here and the others soon will be. Our friends of the 45<sup>th</sup> Penn had hot coffee for us as soon as we arrived on the ground. They reenlisted and have been home on a furlough.

Shall have to move and pitch tent and so must close for now. Hope to get a mail soon and trust you are all well.

'Tis Fast Day with you I suppose. Would I could join you but I do in spirit and hope it will be joyous with you as it is with us in the prospect of rest for awhile at least.

Give love to all and reserve a choice sum [of love] for yourself and Lu. If you see Alonzo and Ellen acknowledge their letter.

Will write as I can.

As ever your loving husband  
Jerome

Thanks to Frank for his letters. Will write him by and by.

Direct [your letters to] "Camp of Rendezvous" 9<sup>th</sup> A. C. [Army Corps] Annapolis Md.

Fri. P.M. In Geo Edmunds tent. No opportunity to mail this. J.H. is here and will do so. No news. Quietly resting and cleaning up, a luxury indeed. Weather pleasant and feeling like myself. Do not cough any to speak of and shall soon be all right.

Ben down town. Will soon go home I suppose and receive his commission and orders.

A Colored Regt. from New York passed our camp this morning, a fine appearing affair.

Expect mail today. Nothing yesterday but Alonzo's letter.

Please mention again what Regt. Sgt. [Sergeant] Smith is in. I believe you said the 59<sup>th</sup>. 56<sup>th</sup> is here nearby.

Will write again soon,  
Jerome

## TRANSCRIBER'S NOTES (Tom Neubig and Josef Rokus)

NOTE 1: From the Unit History: December 20, 1863 – April 6, 1864. The regiment moved numerous times in eastern Tennessee, including in the Knoxville area, before being ordered to move by train, by way of Baltimore, to Annapolis, Maryland, where it arrived on April 6, 1864.

NOTE 2: The “A Tent” or “Wedge Tent” was a canvas tent stretched across a six-foot long horizontal bar with two vertical supporting bars in the front and back. These Civil War tents could sleep up to six men, but could only accommodate four men comfortably. If five or six soldiers were sharing the tent, they would have to turn over at the same time. It was a rather large tent and was not easy to transport when an army was on the march.



An “A Tent”

NOTE 3: April 7, 1864 was a Thursday. On the fourth page, Jerome added a fourth page marked Fri. PM, apparently the next day. The front of the envelope shows a note that reads April 7/64, but the postmark date is not clear. Therefore, the letter could have been mailed after the 7<sup>th</sup>.

NOTE 4: Capt. T. Edward Ames, from Charlestown, Massachusetts, enlisted at age 24 as a First Lieutenant in the 34<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Volunteers. He was promoted to First Lieutenant on August 12, 1862. He was then transferred to Company B of the 36<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Infantry Regiment on August 22, 1862. Ames was promoted to Captain on August 2, 1863, and commanded Co. F of the 36<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts before serving in a number of staff positions for the balance of the War. He was mustered out with the regiment on June 8, 1865, and he was promoted to the rank of Brevet Major for “gallant and meritorious conduct before Petersburg, Virginia, April 2, 1865.”

NOTE 5: The “Jos. H.” Jerome referred to in this letter, and frequently in other letters as “J.H.” or “Jos. Henry”, was almost definitely 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 and he was 31 then. According to the Unit History, Joseph H. Peirce was taken Prisoner of War at Pegram Farm, Virginia, on September 30,

1864, and was later exchanged. He was discharged on June 21, 1865. Joseph H. Peirce was a nephew of Jerome.

NOTE 6: In *A History of Massachusetts In the Civil War*, by William Schouler, 1868, on page 260, the camp in Annapolis is referred to as "Camp of Rendezvous." Annapolis was also called a Camp of Instruction to which paroled prisoners from New England were to return to (p. XXXV of the General Orders Affect the Voluntary Force: Adjunct General's Office.) Apparently, there were multiple camps in Massachusetts called "Camp of Rendezvous" as a place for gathering. Not sure if Jerome had been in this same camp earlier in the war for him to call it by that name.