

THE SERGEANT JEROME PEIRCE COLLECTION

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WRITTEN BY	Jerome
WRITTEN TO	Allie
WRITTEN AT	Lexington, Ky.
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ENVELOPE

This letter has no envelope associated with it.

LETTER TRANSCRIPTION

Lexington Ky 31st Mch 1863

My dear wife,

I wrote you a few lines again today to inform you principally how to direct your letters in future. It is as follows: Co., Reg. & Corps as before but to "Burnside's Department via Cincinnati, Ohio" and I shall get them. Have not heard from home yet since our arrival and you may imagine how anxious I feel to receive some tidings.

I wrote you last Sabbath and to Abbie yesterday. We shall probably receive a mail soon. I have nothing new to write. It is quite cold here and snows a little today. The people think it is our doings for 'tis uncomfortably cold for the season. Lumber is being distributed to raise our tents so by and by we expect to be nicely camped once more.

Have been very busy this morning cleaning up equipments and for inspection this P.M. but I think there'll not come off. The boys have been having a smart game of ball as it is a nice place and all in the best of spirits. There is a swift clean brook runs thru the grounds in the rear, so we have a nice chance to wash. Great fine black walnut trees adorn our ground. The state lunatic asylum, a large mass of brick buildings with red roofs, stand at the left while [Henry] Clay Monument looks down upon the opposite side, while cars are constantly coming and going in front of us and it don't seem possible that we are so far from home as it is an old settled place and seems like Mass. very much.

A gentleman formerly of Providence, R.I. called upon us on Sunday P.M. and a very pretty little boy with him. I showed him little Lulu's picture. He looked funny and hardly knew what to do. He was a roguish little fellow.

The church bells and the general hum seems quite [a] civilization once more. We can get passes to attend church and I shall attend at every opportunity.

How do you all do? What do the papers say? I want very much to get a "Journal" and I suppose our movements were all talked over before we knew precisely where we are going. Many thought we were going to garrison places north to look after "Copperheads" but I understand they are growing "beautiful by less" everywhere and so I think they will.

What of Will and Frank? I feel anxious about affairs in Suffolk for it looked like a fight when we left Va.

No paymaster yet but expected daily and then I hope to send you something and have a little myself, for so far from home [I] shall need a little.

Is Alonzo at home? I presume you will anticipate all these questions in your letters so I will close. Love to all and a special share for yourself and Lulu.

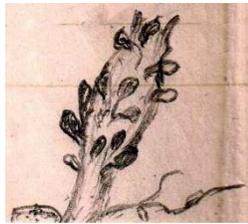
As ever your affectionate husband,

Jerome P.

Transcriber's Note: The following is an apparent continuation of the letter on a separate page.

Allie, I suppose you will hear from Dan Preston's family by this time all I could write What a tragedy! Oh Allie, there is something worse than my being here. To think of the fate of Ellen and her feelings! I pity her very much for wiser one might have saved her. I think by a right course Lucy wrote me about her.

I send you some leaves and a purple flower, the "hyacinth". The leaves are the 'mistletoe', a sacred plant with the English. Druids used in their worship I believe. They shoot out of maple trees, many feet from the ground. The limb swells like a sore and these shoot out all around it like this.



Transcriber's Note: The following note was written vertically on the margin, possibly not by Jerome. "Contents of the letter all safe."

Transcriber's Note: The following appears on the reverse side of this page.

This came in one of the first letters but took it out with some flowers and did not see it till this morning.

Private

We are pretty well. How is Alonzo?

Your affec[tionate]
Sister Hattie

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTES (Josef Rokus)

NOTE 1: Henry Clay (1777 – 1852) was an American lawyer, planter, and statesman who represented Kentucky in both the United States Senate and House of Representatives. Clay helped elect John Quincy Adams as president, and Adams subsequently appointed Clay as Secretary of State.

Clay served four separate terms in the Senate, and he ran for the presidency in 1824, 1832 and 1844, and unsuccessfully sought his party's nomination in 1840 and 1848. In addition, he created the Whig Party.

Clay died on June 29, 1852, in Washington, D.C., at the age of 75. He was the first person to be lain in state in the United States Capitol rotunda. He was buried in the Lexington, Kentucky, Cemetery. The Henry Clay Monument, shown below, was erected at the cemetery in 1857 and consists of a 120-foot tall Corinthian column surmounted by a statue of Clay. The remains of Clay and his wife Lucretia rest in two marble sarcophagi on the floor of a vaulted chamber at the base of the monument. Clay's estate, known as Ashland, is also located in Lexington and is now open to the public.



NOTE 2: In the 1860s, the “Copperheads” were a faction of Democrats in the Northern United States who opposed the Civil War and wanted an immediate peace settlement with the Confederates. Republicans started calling anti-war Democrats “Copperheads,” likening them to the venomous snake. Those Democrats accepted the label, reinterpreting the copper “head” as the likeness of Liberty, which they cut from Liberty Head large cent coins and proudly wore as badges. By contrast, Democratic supporters of the war were called War Democrats. The “Copperheads” represented the more extreme wing of the Northern Democrats. Republican prosecutors accused some prominent “Copperheads” of treason in a series of trials in 1864.

NOTE 3: Hattie was Allie’s younger sister. Her complete name was Harriet Walker Jaquith, and she was born in 1845. The information about her on ancestry.com indicates that she probably died in 1930.

NOTE 4: The “Alonzo” Jerome referred to in his letters was Seth Alonzo Ranlett. Ranlett enlisted in Co. B of the 36th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment as a Private on July 24, 1862, at age 22, and he was from Charlestown, Massachusetts. He was promoted to First Sergeant on August 27, 1862, and was commissioned as a First Lieutenant on December 1, 1862. On December 17, 1862, he was appointed Adjutant of the Regiment. He was mustered out “on account of physical disability from disease incurred in the service” on February 20, 1864. Ranlett was born on March 18, 1840, in Charlestown, Massachusetts, and he died May 21, 1905, in Newton, Massachusetts. Ranlett’s wife was Ellen Peirce Ranlett, with a date of birth of March 22, 1842, and a date of death of January 12, 1914. They were married on January 21, 1864. Ellen Peirce was one of the children of Foster Peirce and his wife Catherine Abby Beaman. Also, Foster Peirce was a brother of Jerome. Therefore, the Ellen that Jerome mentions in his letters was one of Jerome’s nieces, and starting on January 21, 1864, Alonzo was the husband of one of his nieces.