

THE SERGEANT JEROME PEIRCE COLLECTION

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ENVELOPE



LETTER TRANSCRIPTION

Camp Near Sharpesburg [sic] Sept 25, 1862

My dearest Wife,

I had scarcely closed my last at Keedysville last Sunday P.M. when we were ordered to *pack up* and about 3 P.M. started for this place, 4 miles, which is with the main force of Gen *Burnside* and formes [sic] one of the Army Corps which holds the rebels, who are in Virginia in a shattered condition. Have been waiting for a mail before I wrote again. expect one today as it is on the way and hope to get it before I send this.

Have no particular news to offer. have not seen a paper since Sunday, but our Capt. was ill at Frederick City, and came yesterday. Says the impression is that the fighting is about over with. I hope it may be so, for to see the carnage and ruin hereabouts is sufficient to sicken one of war.

We passed this the village of Sharpesburg [sic], and it is *riddled* with shot from our Artillery at the fight a week or more ago. One fine brick house has a ball hole completely through it, and the course battered away four[?] two feet, as tho' a 64 pounder had hit it.

Have seen Converse Mayo, and *Harland Metcalf*. They are pretty well. Converse had three narrow escapes at the battles, was in two at So Mountain and Sharpsburg. bullets burnt his skin in three places, either of which would have ruined him if not killed him. He is a soldier every inch.

Metcalf was well—attendant to Dr Church, a light duty.

We are encamped on *Antietam* Creek, woods, cornfield in the rear, a steep bank within ten feet of our tent, some 50 feet high like Millers River near Acted[?], only the creek [?] half as wide. Here is about 130000 troops hereabouts, and the night time presents a fine sight sight [sic].

The *measles* are in the Reg some which prevents us from moving for the present. Shall probably be at Harpers Ferry sometime[.]

We have little to do but go thro' the manual of Arms, and inspection of arms, as the ground is not fitted. Dress parade last we[ek] in a Cornfield, on a hill side—awkward job. Weather is fine with Cool nights and mornings. The health of our boys is good[.] We are in an out-of-the-way region and have short rations some of the time. Got some Sugar and splendid molasses sy[r]up yesterday with a few home made cakes from a farm house, and we have *lived*. Jos H. is tenting with us for the present. Wrote to Sister *Sarah* yesterday[.] (Jos H. has just come in with a loaf of warm bread—*bravo!*) We find it hard to get *postage stamps*. please enclose some occasionally. Will add more by [?]. 5 P.M.—As a specimen of what we live[?] here. Just as we were closing the 10 Oclk Drill, this A.M. orders came to pack and be ready for marching at 1. O clock P.M Well all ready, stood till 4 P.M. when we [were] ordered back to tents, so here we are waiting for supper, Henry M. reading the paper. News seems favorable. the *Proclamation* I hope will close the war shortly. We know nothing of the future. The rebs “May make another *dash* for *vi[c]tuals*[.] if they do we are ready for them A beautiful day and have thought much of you. Are you at Orange? Hope you will be fixed at B son, where I hope to meet you all in less *than a year*. No mail yet. will not seal this till morning. A kiss for you and Lulu, and may heaven keep you always. Went to a *tent* meeting last Eve[.] fine singing, scripture reading, and a beautiful *prayer* from Sergeant White of Roxbridge[?][.]

Evening by Candle light—

Jos H. reading "Baltimore Clipper[.]" Dress Parade. there was no mention of marching tomorrow, so we may remain but, I think not. Thought I would add a few words as I could, as when we do march, it will be rapidly, and I shall be too fatigued for much writing. Had a nice supper of *biscuit* and molasses, Coffee &c *sweetened* with our own sugar. The Union folks at the farm house, like the Mass Boys, and make more money selling bread, than regular work. We share so that a little Cash goes a great way, for we have been short at this Camp.

You will think we think of nothing but *eatables*, but we have singing, reading, and it would do you good to see how much attention the "*Good book*" receives from some of the boys, and I often think of *Cromwell's army* as pictured in "Woodstock[.]"

Have "*confabs*" with Lou R and Ben E. Had a cleaning up of the Camp grounds yesterday, which makes it look more Comfortable.

I don't know as these things will interest you, but O try to give a picture of Army Life in a dispirited way, for we are liable to "pack knapsack" at any moment. Tell Edward P. and H. I will remember them soon, but they must not wait for me. How goes life at C with Ed P? Saw some gentleman from Worcester sent out for the wounded of the 35th[.] Said the "men were coming"! Am glad of it, for I think the *appearance* of this vast Army will settle the matter soon, for evidence accumulates daily of the desperate condition of the "rebs," and the wretched state of things at the South.

Must bid you Good Night, and shall close in the morning anyhow, but hope for letters from home before I do.

Direct, to 36 Reg Co H. Mass Vols "*Ninth Army Corps*," as we get letters by the Division Mail now. Two Divisions (40,000) form a Corps[.] We are part of the 1st Div 3d Brigade 9th Corps &c. A Div. Composes 4 Brigades[,] 4 Regts a Brigade &c

8. P.M. Henry M. just came in. Says the talk in Camp is that we shall move at 4 Oclk A M which means early, so I will Close. Love abund[ant]ly to all.

Ever Jerome

[*Marginal notes*]

[Page 1] Capt Hastings Co. My *Testament* is a dear Companion.

As ever your own

Jerome

[Page 2] Direct to the *Ninth Army Corps*, in addition to former way.