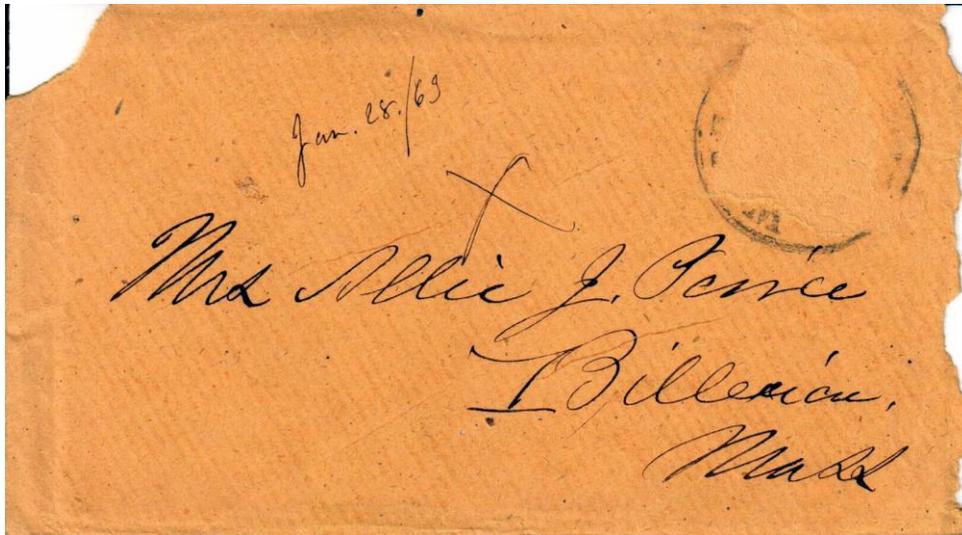


THE SERGEANT JEROME PEIRCE COLLECTION

LETTER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER	65
DATE OF LETTER	Jan. 28, 1863
WRITTEN BY	Jerome
WRITTEN TO	Allie and Lulu
WRITTEN AT	Camp at Falmouth, Va.
NUMBER OF PAGES	4
TRANSCRIBER	Charles Brewer
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ENVELOPE



LETTER TRANSCRIPTION

Jan 28th (Wednes) 1863

My ever dear ones,

Jos H. and I are curling over a warm fire while outdoors the elements are combined to make a most uncomfortable day. We have seen the sun but for a short time for a week, the Southern winter having fairly set in. It commenced raining again last eve. and this morning it turned to snow, and it's terribly muddy and forbidding outside so that "movements" even for necessary purposes are well-nigh prevented.

Have been reading the "Atlantic", singing and trying to be a little merry perhaps and dinner is just over. So, I must devote a few lines to you. I suppose the papers have given you the items of the last few days – the resignation of Gen. Burnside, Sumner and Franklin. So we hear, and none but Gen. Hooker left and he [is] not in the confidence and respect of the Army, if report is true, and it even goes so far as to say he will not accept the trust, and add to this Gen. Porter cashiered, and it looks as though we were drifting on into accumulated disaster and ruin that nothing but a Devine hand can prevent, and for once things look dark, dark. Well, I have hope and a dear spot towards the North Star to turn to, where I call to

mind the warm hearts and dear faces and me thinks I see you all, and hear voices and the little patting feet of our dear little Lulu, and if it is such a day as it is here with you, I can imagine you two, sitting near the fire and perhaps talking or thinking of those away!

But what shall I say? Have received some letters since my last (of Sunday) from Mrs. Ellis (Walpole), Ellen P. and Will C. It seems Alonzo is recovering slowly tho he has been very sick. Said she had a "comforting" letter from you. I will send you her and Mrs. E.'s letter. Have answered both. I have a letter from Dr. Bickford. Would you like me to send it sometime? Nothing particularly new from Will and Frank. All well and W. was "Corporal" and not quite as much exposed to some hardships, for which I am very glad.

It is a quiet, dull day in camp, all amusing themselves indoors with cards, checkers, to singing or reading.

Had a long "confab" with Ben Edmonds yesterday P.M. Chatted over old times to a great rate, and reading matter in particular, a very congenial spirit and not a little of a poetical turn. His nephew tents with him and has a copy of Byron, a present which introduced much matter for talk. I send you also a little gem cut from the "Register" which Ben copied off, for he is a collector of gems of the kind.

What shall I say to Lulu? I wish I had the faculty of talking to her, for I do want her to remember me. Oh what a "benediction" would a child's face be here! What a world it would be without them! And out here how fearfully we realize it too, where it is a constant struggle with our coarser nature but we are not left defenseless if we but improve the means even here provided.

How are you all and what doing? What do people think of things now? By the way had a pretty note from Lottie Waldo the other day in a letter to F. Croft. I added a word to her in one of his [letters] awhile ago. Full of friendly interest and literacy of course.

Have written Lucy within a few days, so by and by I must have a few letters, hope one from you tonight. Trust you are all well.

Lulu must write to Papa again for he wants to see her very much. Can she sew yet? Has she ever walked on the snow yet? Do the snow-birds come to see her? Heard a robin (and saw it too) sing the other day while chopping and how glad a sound but I fear he's fled again now, so wet and cold. Hope Mary is well and may heaven keep you all for a meeting sometime.

With love as ever
Jerome

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTES [Josef Rokus]

NOTE 1: The location from where the letter was written is not indicated. However, based on letters prior to and after this one and the history of the Army of the Potomac, it was written while the 36th Massachusetts Regiment was camped near Falmouth, Virginia, across the Rappahannock River from Fredericksburg, Virginia, in Stafford County.

NOTE 2: The "Jos. H." that Jerome referred to in this letter was 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, but as a corporal. Jerome was 31 years old at the time. According to the Unit History, Joseph H. Peirce was taken Prisoner of War at Pegram Farm, Virginia, on September 30, 1864, (See Letter No. 227) and he was later exchanged. He was discharged on June 21, 1865. Joseph H. Peirce was the son of Joseph Peirce, one of Jerome's brothers, and was, therefore, Jerome's nephew.

NOTE 3: 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. Ellen was one of Jerome's nieces.