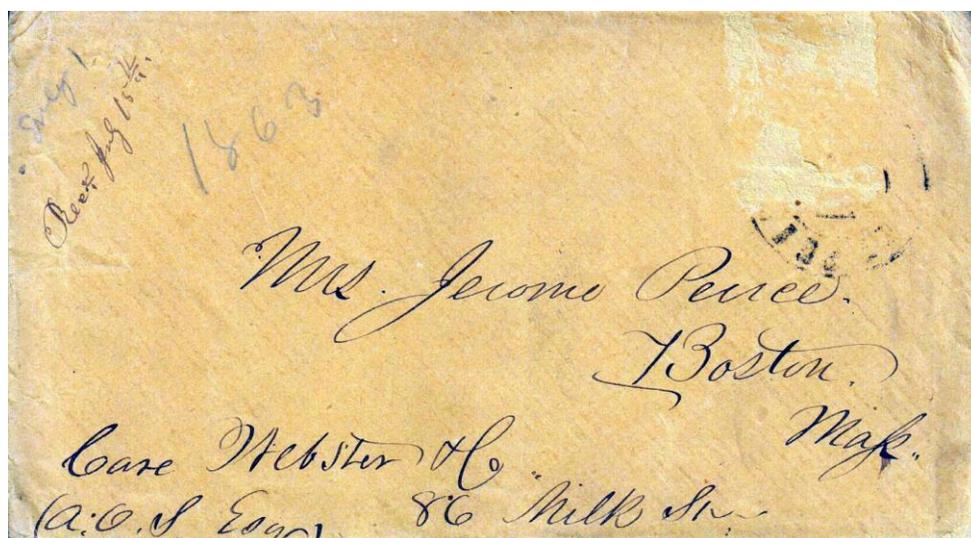


## THE SERGEANT JEROME PEIRCE COLLECTION

LETTER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER	135
DATE OF LETTER	July 1, 1863
WRITTEN BY	Jerome
WRITTEN TO	Allie
WRITTEN AT	Milldale, Rear of Vicksburg, Miss.
NUMBER OF PAGES	6
TRANSCRIBER	Paul and Louise Marahrens
TRANSCRIPTION DATE	Oct. 15, 2018

### ENVELOPE



### LETTER TRANSCRIPTION

“Milldale” Rear of Vicksburg July 1<sup>st</sup> 63

My dearest Wife,

Ben E. [Edmands] is here with me. Jos. H. left me this morn for the train once more. All to myself again, an airy, nice tent “all to myself, and a spare bed and board.” Ben and I have just taken cold coffee together, he writing to somebody. [I] have just finished a long letter to the friends at O. [Orange] (for Jos. H. and I). Mail closes very soon and I can only say a few words this time to acknowledge yours of the 14<sup>th</sup> ult. came yesterday, also a “Register” and can you imagine how good it seemed to receive it? Our big mail, they say, is close at hand at last and then what a treat! Ah, dear Allie, how much I’ve talked and thought of you! and all our dear home joys, our little Lulu too. How my heart reaches out to meet you both! No news, all quiet, and the Co. away on picket again.

Am well excellently, and have been so busy improving my tent, and “policing” about, cleaning up all the chips and litter about it. It is called “policing”, and then I have seen and heard the mockingbird sing, to know him I mean for I have heard and wondered what it was, a slate colored, jolly fellow so full of songs and imitations, perfectly wild with joy all the time, and it seems as though he mocked and

laughed at everything skimming from tree to tree, tho' he hovers about a big tree near us, and the Adj't's tent, chatted quite a while with him this morn.

Alonzo is well. Did not receive letters yesterday and was quite disappointed. It seems so strange to be so long without a mail! but the letters directed [to] Louisville come thro' but now you must direct them "via Cairo, Ills." Mails come but I fear I shall have to close this before I receive it.

P.M. No dear Allie, I gave up the idea of mailing this today for I did receive your letter of the 4<sup>th</sup>, or rather third, June, and I find so much that I must refer to, that I felt I must make out a passable letter to you. Ever loving and living for me! like a true dear wife that you are! Your birthday, the 4<sup>th</sup>. Ah yes, but as I said before I have lost the certainty whether it was the 4<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup>. I remember mentioning as we were marching along, "This or the 6<sup>th</sup> is my wife's birthday to one of the guards." Oh, how my thoughts lingered over the past, even in that weary march, for all the tender memories "help" us so! Ben E. [Edmands] says (as I mentioned your age) that, if the memory of the oft coming birthdays had one unpleasant thought, it might console to know that his came the preceding day, the 3<sup>rd</sup>, and again the further we get on the nearer we are of an age for the good place of rest knows no difference of age. He always has some pleasant, cheering thought.

And now let me enter here from my "diary" the record of that day.

Thurs 4<sup>th</sup>. Mysterious movements. We usually have a bugle call as we fall in, but on that day no unnecessary noise was allowed which gave the impression of a retreat, hence "Mysterious movements". Rapid march of the Brigade back to Columbia. Left about noon, arrived at C. [Columbia] about 9 P.M. (20 miles strong), fording the river by light of a lantern and wetting the lower limbs. Camped near the former headquarters (of the Gen'l.) Rumors afloat. Letters from wife and sister Abbie.

Such was the day with me and how dear were the letters received and how eagerly read by the candle as I told you doubtless. I have often mentioned my appreciation of the kindness of your (and my) friends towards you. Tell them a soldier's heart is [as] large as his arm is strong.

But your history of the Linen was funny indeed and Ben and I had a hearty laugh over it. No, we've seen but little, the poor fellows at Memphis you know. I mentioned the wounded all had white loose draws and frocks like and I doubt if any were among those.

Ben got a nice package of letters from "His Amy," Bro. Isaac and papers, Harper's Magazine etc. and shares all with me. He sits here reading the papers now.

Feel much, very much, interested for Frank and Will. I do trust Will will recover his wanted, and more than wanted, health. Of Frank, if he must come again, how gladly would I welcome him to "ours", but I trust 'twill seem fit for him to remain at home, altho I feel that it is the first duty of all that can come, and have we not left loved ones at home as dear as any to "rally round the flag" for one grand last effort, and then goes up the "All Hail and well done!!" And sweet peace and victory is ours. It must be so.

Recd. a nice "Diary" from Alonzo the other day, and I am writing with the pencil of it, thick and slate colored. Shall send home my old one soon. But I close. When the mail is regulated and I can look for something often, how pleasant t'will be. Papers recd. are of the 20<sup>th</sup>. Vicksburg affairs are well told but let us hear soon of the utter destruction of Lee and his invading hosts of the North. 'Tis the duty of our folks to do it.

I've two more envelopes directed to Milk St., but they will be all right. I want to hear of your receiving all of my letters etc.

Intended to have written Foster's folks today, will tomorrow, or very soon. I hope my last month's life will be deemed an excuse for silence, as long as they could know this [through] you of our movements, for I was indeed tired and worn down but I'm once more myself, so love to them and all and ever your devoted and loving husband

Jerome

## TRANSCRIBER'S NOTES (Josef Rokus)

NOTE 1: The "Ben" referred to in this letter was Benjamin B. Edmands. He enlisted as a Private at age 27 from Brookline, Massachusetts, and he was subsequently promoted to Corporal. On January 20, 1864, he was discharged from the 36<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Infantry Regiment for promotion as a Lieutenant in the 54<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Regiment of Volunteers.

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 36<sup>th</sup> 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.

NOTE 4: Abbie (Abigail) Jaquith was Allie's younger sister. Abbie was born in 1836, and she died in 1915. Allie (Albinia) was born in 1834, and she died in 1920.

NOTE 5: Foster Peirce was one of Jerome's older brothers. The 1850 U.S. Census listed him as being born in 1812, living in Charlestown, Massachusetts, and being in the furniture business. It is interesting to note that when that census was taken, Jerome, then 19 years old, was living with the Foster Peirce family, with his occupation being recorded as a "gilder."

NOTE 6: The genealogy information found for the Jaquith family on ancestry.com shows that Allie (Albinia) had a brother by the name of Franklin, who also went by "Frank." He was born in 1839 and died in 1922. In an 1864 letter Allie wrote, "I will be coming to Orange with my brother Frank."