

Transcript of Letter from Frank L. Lemont to Samuel R. Lemont, March 12, 1862

Collection: Bean (Paul W.) Collection, Special Collections at Raymond H. Fogler Library

Box Number: 277

Folio: f.5

Author: Frank L. Lemont

URL: http://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/paul_bean_papers/15/

Transcript Begins on Page 2

Fairfax C. House, Virginia, March 12th 1862

Dear Father:

I improve the present opportunity of addressing a few lines to you. I have to do it with a bad pencil. But you will please excuse it for it is the best I can do at present. You will see by the place of the date of this letter, that we have at last moved. Yes we are at Fairfax C.H. Orders came at two o'clock Monday Morn. to be ready to March at 9 o'clock. A.M. We were in line at the appointed time and commenced our march ignorant of our destination. At 4 o'clock P.M. Our Regiment halted inside the fortifications on the east side of the town of Fairfax having marched 15 miles. Here we pitched our little tents and laid our selves down for the night. Perhaps you do not understand what I mean by small tents .

All the troops have been provided with small tents. Each man has one and carries it packed in his knapsack. They are like unto a snail that carries his house on his back. The camp of all the Army and the tents are still remaining, pitched in the places heretofore occupied by their regiments. But four baggage wagons are allowed to a Regiment and all we carry, we carry upon our backs. Thus you will see the propriety of the small tents. Without them we should constantly exposed to the weather. But now comes the strangest news of all. When the Army of the Potomac moved as it nearly all did on Sunday and Monday It was expected by all, from the highest in authority to the lowest in the ranks, that it had a particular duty to perform. And that was to give the enemy battle at Centerville, Bull Run and Manassas. And ere this time had the enemy permitted it, we should have met them, and ere this the fate of the Country would have been decided. But instead of that terrible battle, to which even the bravest have looked forward with misgivings we behold one Brigade march triumphantly through C, (Centerville) B.R. (Bull Run) and quietly take possession of this strong hold of the Rebels Manassas. What does it look like? What could prompt them to leave their strong fortifications(?) Does it not look mysterious? Had they made a stand there, we should have arrived there last night and to day (Wednesday) would have witnessed the fiercest and most smugly contested battle ever recorded in the annals of history. We still remain at Fairfax and know not where we shall go next. Their movements have confounded our speculations as to our future operations. But we have one at our head who is not confounded by their strategies and who is ready with a clear head and able backers to follow them up demoralized as they are and deal them a blow that shall tell, for liberty and posterity The troops are in excellent spirits and every thing seems to partake of the air of triumph.

I will not boast too much of our strength till we have an opportunity to prove it to the world. But when that time does come be assured that the army of the union will prove its efficiency for putting down Rebellion. I

have very many little incidents that would be of interest that I shall be unable to write at this time. However I will write all I can. Only last Sunday quite a battle was fought, but a short distance from where our Regiment is encamped. Som 100 were killed on both sides. So you see we have followed them pretty closely. The village known as as Fairfax C. H. is a quiet, quaint old place, but little larger than Greene Corner, and to bring (?) its name from the C.H. situated near the center of the place. The C.H. is an old Brick

March 12th 1862

- 2 -

building hardly fit to be compared with a country school House outside and much less inside. The buildings are mostly what we should call hovels, looking much like paddy shanties. There being only about a half dozen respectable residences in the place. A large body of troops are assembled here and on all sides as far as the eye can reach, can be seen the glitter of bayonets and the solid columns of our forces. Since I wrote the preceding I with Capt Daggett have been up town and had the good fortune to gain admittance to a room containing eight Rebel soldiers. They were that I have ever seen. I gratified my curiosity amazingly to see them and talk with them. They were poorly clothed, and each wearing a different uniform. In fact it was no uniform at all. Some were from Louisiana, some from Georgia and some from Virginia and Maryland. We passed Gens. McClellan, McDowell, Porter, Franklin &c on the main street of the place.

I am sorry that such grand sights as met our eyes on every side cannot be seen by some of the people of Maine. I wish you could be with me one day. We are having most beautiful weather now. The roads are settled quite well and the mud in many places is dried up.

My health is complete and my spirits never were lighter. But ere I close let me say this, among all this excitement and the din and turmoil attendant upon such occasions, I am not forgetful of home and those so dear to me. Your images are constantly flitting before me. In the heat of battle, should I be called there even then shall I find time to think of you. And here let me beseech you, as I have done on similar occasions, not to give yourselves any uneasiness whatever. I am content to meet my destiny, and so should you be. It is not certain even now that we shall be called to fight again. It is as uncertain as every other earthly thing. But I am forced to close. Please excuse all my mistakes for I have written this out in the open field, and don't know as you can read half of it. My love to Mother and all the rest.

Yours as ever.

Frank.

S. R. Lemont