

Transcript of Letter from Frank L. Lemont to Samuel R. Lemont, May 22, 1862

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Camp, 5th. Maine Regt. Va. May 22nd, 1862

My Dear Father;

For a number of days I have neglected writing you but not without reasons. I am in the enjoyment of good health as also are nearly all of the Co. I hope this will find you all in good health. We have marched nearly every day for the past week, which with the labor attending such marches has offered but poor opportunities for writing. Our marches have been from 5 to 8 miles long. But moving as we do it is worse than going twice that distance by oneself. We are now only 10 miles from Richmond. Up to today we have met with no resistance from the enemy. Last night we encamped two miles from new bridge which crosses the Chickahominy. This morning the Rebel Pickets appeared in strong force upon this side of the river only a mile and a half from our camp. Two Regts from our Brigade the 27th and 16th N.Y. were immediately sent out to support our line of pickets, and for a while this forenoon it seemed as though a general engagement would result.

During the forenoon nothing has occurred to disturb our quiet. This afternoon our Regt was called out this afternoon in great haste but all we done was to form in line of battle, and then were ordered back to await orders. up to this time nearly sundown all is quiet. Col. Coke of the 96th Penn, has just come in from the Pickets and reports that the 27th & 16th, are within 5 miles of Richmond, this is doubtless true. They are retreating as fast as they can go, and in a little time we shall be in their Capital.

With regard to Mr Whittums Son, I can say that such reports as were contained in your letter (which I this moment read,) are absolutely false. He was unwell for nearly a week before we left Camp Franklin, and was unable to march from the camp to the boat. During this time he was under the care of the Surgeon of the Regt. We left him at the Hospital in Alexandria, the same day we embarked for Yorktown. He was not insane or dangerously sick at the time. The Doctor told me he had a pretty severe attack. But thought he would soon be able to rejoin his regiment. We had to leave him and did not hear of his death until it was officially announced at the H.qtrs. of the regt. Immediately Capt. Daggett informed Mr Whittum of his death. No blame can be attached to anyone it seems to me under the circumstances. We are not our own masters in this calling. Those to whom we would gladly render assistance, have to be left to the mercy of strangers when the stern voice of duty calls. I regret the death of this kind young man. but I done all in my power as long as that power was left me. I have written in previous letters all I know of Mr. Gould. His papers are in his possession for discharge and I suppose he will be discharged. But as I have said before stop rendering aid to his wife, for he is able to do (it) himself. To night we got a mail the first for 6 days, so you see the mails are very irregular. I recd your letter of the 15th, Oh! I am so thankful to hear of Mothers good health, and that Josie is recovering. Are we not favored in that we have

had our lives and health spared to us during the past year. Today is Josie 's Birthday. I wish (I) could make her a Birthday present. Perhaps I can next time . Soon I shall be twenty one. in less than a month. Then I shall have to look out for myself. Do you think I shall be able to? Do you wish I were at home? Would you like to have me resign when I get to Richmond? Please answer.

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It is a beautiful evening. The air is cool and refreshing from the effects of a shower and the heavens look I suppose the same as those that hang over you. I wish I could be at home if only for an hour. But I cannot be there, and I submit. My imagination is as vivid almost as reality itself. I can imagine what I should see and meet if I could at this moment be in your midst .

But think not, because I long to greet you once more than I am repining. No, I am contented as yet but dont like -the idea of going farther south during the summer months, Very many intend to resign when they get Va. cleared out. But the darkness warns me that I must close, and I will obey the warning by giving my love to all of you, and subscribing myself your

Affectionate Son;

Frank

Samuel R. Lemont Esq