

Letter of Charles H. Pierce,
Company D, Marine Battalion.
Eve of First Bull Run.

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Hennessy

[http://www.mqamericana.com/
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This and direct the letter as follows;

Company St. Marine Battalion
Near Manassas Junction
Virginia

Tell me what the papers
say about us. I mean what
is said of our intentions

We are with few sides of the money who are very numerous
and strong, but untrained (they say - but we are better equipped
about their strength.)

Charles R. Lee

I do not have an idea what I shall get shot
But I do not believe I can stand the hardships
of the march much longer. You may consider
this a letter from the little-piper. Fighting is now
going on between our advanced guards & the enemy at
a place called Antietam

Encampment of U. S. Marine
Battalion 14 miles north of
Manassas Junction Virginia
Saturday July 20, 1861

Mother:

We crossed the Potomac last Tuesday and joined the advancing army. We marched all day & encamped at night near Fairfax Court House where the enemy were located in numbers to the amount of 10,000. Next morning we took the town after a short contest. The Southern Troops under General Beauregard fell back to a place two miles from where we now are.

We remained all day at Fairfax & next morning marched to attack Beauregard. We were repulsed and had to fall back. The 69th New York Regiment, it is said, had 40 men killed. We are now encamped in an old field by the side of the road, awaiting guns to come up from Washington, before we can make another attack. They will be here tomorrow. We should take Manassas Junction next week and then push on to Richmond. I have suffered dreadfully since I have been on the march. The roads are hot & dusty, water is scarce, & I have often wished I could get shot to get clear of the intolerable thirst. My feet are all blistered & sore. We have to rest at night & every morning I feel almost unable to get up off the ground upon which we all have to sleep. I am writing this letter on my knee sitting in the shade under a tree. Write as soon as you get this and direct the letter as follows:

Company D Marine Battalion
Near Manassas Junction, Virginia

Tell me what the papers say about us. I mean what accounts do they give of our intentions.

We are within five miles of the enemy who are very numerous and strong, entrenched (they say but no one knows anything about their strength.)

Charles H. Pierce

I do not have an idea that I shall get shot. But I do not believe I can stand the hardships of the march much longer. You may consider this a letter from the battlefield, for mighty is war going on between our advanced guards & the enemy at a place called Centreville.