Letter from John Henry Jenks to Almina Crawford Jenks; July 22, 1863

Jenks, John Henry, 1823-1864

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Recommended Citation
Camp Adirondack Washington D.C. July 22nd., 1863

Dear Wife yours came to hand yesterday which relieved me very much, I worried all the week about you and Flora but since there is a change for the better I feel encouraged, I hope Henry will soon be well again for it is a sight of trouble to take care of a well child and ten times as much of a sick one. I am glad you have decided to go to Oakham, you all will be so much better, to be there while berries are ripe and have plenty of nice sweet milk, I wish I could be there to enjoy them with you, for I tell you I should. Henry will be big enough by fall to go with Flora and pick berries won't he. It will be useless for you to think of riding down on the load of goods for they will have just as much as two horses can draw without you and then the goods cannot be brought on so you could ride as they will shuck all about, and then it would make your all sick could you do it. The best way for you to do is to take the cars for Ashburnham and have some one meet you there. I suppose it will not be possible for Father to get a wagon with springs so the things you do send, will get pretty well shook up. The things you have named over will make a pretty large load, you better get the box from Mrs. Estys barn and get Foster the organ man to put the organ in for you, you better pay a dollar to have it put up in shape then to have it hurt, and it will be a rough tumble for it the best you can do with it before, there were screws went through the box into the legs, and the Sub. base fastened to the side of the box, also the handle by leathers nailed on, now Organ Foster will understand how to pack it in shape so it will ride. Capt. Carter started Monday night with 2 Lieuts, 1 Sgt, 6 privates for Concord. I am still on Camp duty, all is quiet here, we feel greatly encouraged here at the news which comes in from the Seat of War. If success continues I will be at home by another spring to stay E. Hastings, and Sidney Tolman from our Company have their discharge papers, on account of disability, and start for home to day, I wish I was in their place.
Enclosed I send you $20 and Flora 25 cents which is for her to buy oranges, lemons or anything else she chooses, with, I think while she is sick she may want something of the kind, does Henry say anything because I dont give him something, tell him to wait till he gets a little bigger, then I will give him a gun and sword.

Our Chaplain has his discharge, came yesterday he feels pleased enough about it. Our Capt's trial still continues, they are bound to put him down if possible. I went to see Mrs. L. last night, she thinks she shall stay a while longer here, her health is good. Sgt. Healey from our Company has made application to get a commission in a Negro Regt. I presume he will get one, he feels quite anxious that I should go to but I dont see it yet, I dont doubt but what I could get a Com. but I want to get out of this as soon as possible, and the Negro Regt. will have to be the last in the field. There will need to be a large standing army for a long time and I am not sure but it will pay for me to get a Com. & keep in the business and after the war is over have you be with me wherever I may be. Thursday a fine day but very warm all quiet in camp. Mrs Haynes goes down to the city on duty - every other day.

My health is quite good, only I am loosing strength and flesh this warm weather; I hope to hear in my next that Floras eyes are well and you and Henry all right. I must close for it is near mail time. With much love to you all I shall remain.

Yours ever true

J. Henry Jenks