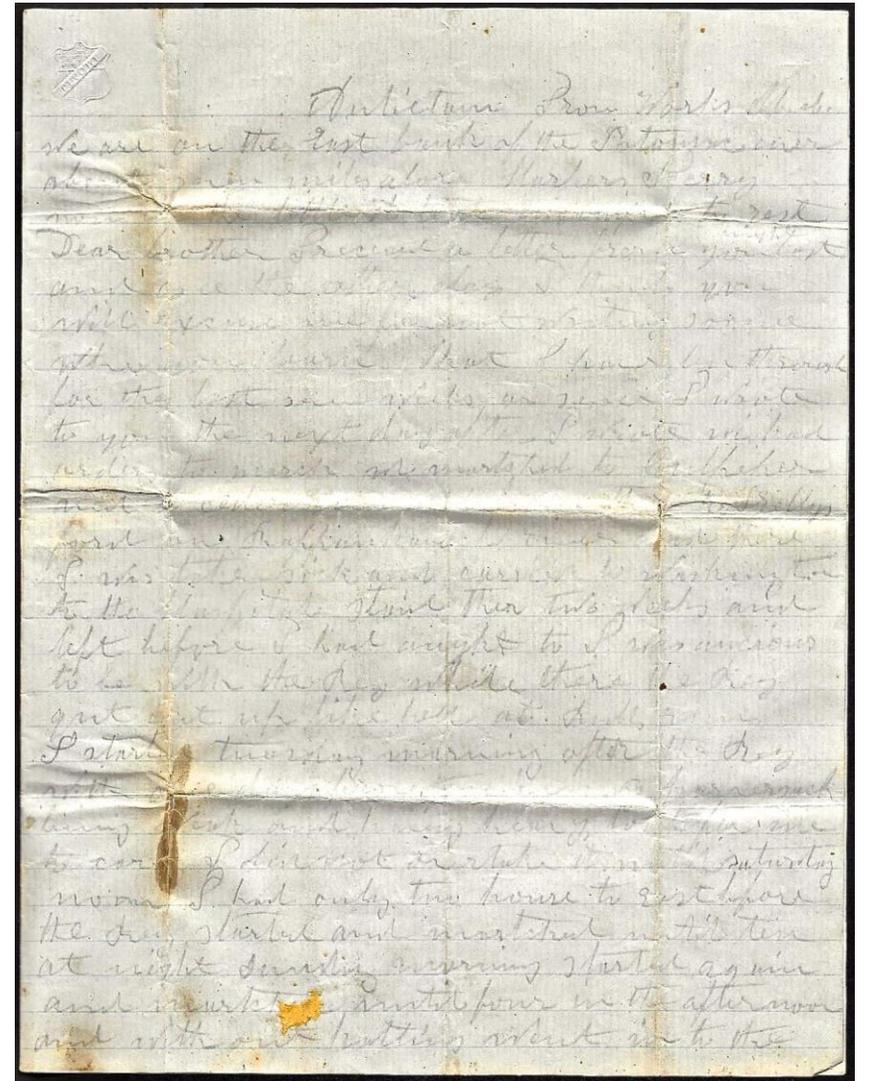




Envelope from Letter



Page 1

bottom of south mountain and piled up
the dead rebels in chains in front of
us they laid in all directions I counted
twenty in one pile behind a stone wall
in one small field five hundred feet
did so many more were piled the rebels
began all directions some across
stone walls others in the road some with
their heads in holes and others from
dirt rapped some of the rebels with
shoes or any thing else to make them
back descent have descended directly I could
but pity them yet started about noon
arrived in the morning and
battered for the night Tuesday the batteries
began to play killed two of our men and
two miles near us riding day arriving
the hills appeared in earnest the air in front
of the battle you have seen so I will
not attempt to give you an account of
but tell you a little that I myself
did not see the center or right the
6 am called I was ordered to charge
across the Antietam bridge and make
the charge went over and up the
hill and laid on the firing ground
for three hours but many of our poor
soldiers breathed their last and many

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more were wounded at the charge it
seemed as though the ground trembled
under us and I think it did and who
should it not a continual roar of
gunshots and party cannon all helping
together terribly terrible I do not
think after the battle was over that I
was saved for some reason yet unknown
to me while my comrades fell all round
me I escaped with a whole skin
but my clothes were some what riddled
and the shell burst all round me
after I was on picket after I crossed
the bridge that night we went on
the battle field ready if the rebels
had not got enough to give them some
more but they took the wisest course
and our army had not the means to
stop them if we had a few thousand
troops on the other side of the river
the rebels would not have
been in any more of it but
we drove past while as it was we took
more than thirty thousand of their
troops and thirty five thousand stand
of arms thirty five stand of colliers
and more than twenty cannon besides
hayrack and other stores two party goods
days work for us

Page 3

my health is not good I have got
the liver complaint and have the doctor
all the time and living is damn poor
and we have laid out doors nights
all the time until we got here since
we left the Patuxent bridge and after
in the rain and heavy dew's nights do
not find that you are writing to the
dead when you write to me if I am
killed you will see it in the papers
I can not write to you when I am
on the march for I get so tired that
I can not write you must write to me
when I am at home if I do not write
will write as often as I can I have
been wanting to write you for a long
time but my health has not been good
and the duty that I have to do tires me
out most every day so I do not feel
like writing and he can hear me
when I do not write I want to
write and tell you about the
battle and take a little rest
I will write of it if we stop here direct
your letters Washington I have no
ink so you must find this out if you
can from your brother P. Starbuck

Page 4

Antietam Iron Works, September [1862]

We are on the East bank of the Potomac over about seven miles above Harper's Ferry near the battlefield _____ to rest.

Dear brother,

Received a letter from you last night and one the other day & think you will excuse me for not writing sooner when you learn what I have been through for the last six weeks since I wrote to you. The next day after I wrote we had orders to march We marched to Culpepper and to Cedar Hollow and then to Kelly's Ford on Rappahannock River and it was there I was taken sick and [took the] cars on to Washington to the Hospital. Staid there two weeks and left before I had ought to. I was anxious to be with the regiment. While there the regiment got cut up like hell at Bull Run. I started Tuesday morning after the regiment with [paper creased]... I did not overtake them until Saturday noon.

I had only two hours rest before the regiment started and marched until ten at night. Sunday morning started again and marched until four in the afternoon and with our battalion went in to the Battle of South Mountain and piled up the damn rebels in winrows. In front of our regiment, they laid in all directions. I counted twenty in one pile behind a stone wall. In one small field five hundred laid dead. So much for their fooling [with] the Union. Rebels lay in all directions — some across stone walls, others in the road, some with their heads in holes, and always poor, dirty, ragged sons of bitches without shoes or anything else to make them look decent. Poor deluded devils; I could but pity them.

We started about noon on Monday. Went to Boonesborough and buttoned for the night. Tuesday the batteries began to play. Killed two of our men and two mules near us. Wednesday morning the battle opened in earnest. The account of the Battle [of Antietam] you have seen so I will not attempt to give you an account of [it] but will tell you a little that I saw myself. We were on the left wing and could not see the center or right. The New Hampshire 6 and Maryland 2 were ordered to charge across the Antietam Bridge and made the charge,

went over and up the hill and took on the enemy ground for three hours but many of our proven soldiers breathed their last and many more were wounded at the charge. It seemed as though the ground trembled under us and I think it did. And why should it not? A continual drone of musketry and forty cannon all belching forth their terrible thunder. I could but think after the battle was over that I was saved for some service yet unknown to me. I escaped with a whole skin but my clothes were somewhat riddled and the shell bursted all round me.

When I was on picket after we crossed the bridge that night, we stood on the battlefield ready if the damn rebels had not got enuff to give them some more but they took the wisest course and run and we had not the means to stop them. If we had a few thousand troops on the other side of the river, the damn devils would not have bothered us anymore this fall. But we done pretty well as it was. We took more than thirty thousand of their troops and thirty-five thousand stands of arms, thirty-five stand of collars and more than twenty cannon besides baggage and other stores. Two purty good days work for us.

My health is not good. I have got the liver complaint and have the diarrhea all the time and tiring is damn poor and we have laid outdoors mighty all the time until we got here since we left the Potomac Bridge and often in the rain and early dews nights.

Do not fear that your are writing to the devil when you write to me. If I am killed you will see it in the papers. I can not write to you when I am on the march for I get so tired that I can not. You must write to me once a week. If I do not write, I will write as often as I can. I have been wanting to write Ephraim for a long time but my health has not been good and the duty that I have to do tires me out most every day so I do not feel like writing and he can hear from me when I write to you. I [paper creased] to be with and tell you about the battle and take a little whiskey. I shall write often if we stop here. Direct your letters [to] Washington. I have no ink so you must find this out if you can.

From your brother, — P. Hardy

Bio of Peter Hardy

Born in 1813 Pvt. Hardy was the son of David Hardy (1776-1849) and Hannah Hardy (1776-1833). [David and Hannah were cousins.] Peter was married first to Lydia P. Hunt (1808-1860) in 1834. He married second to Abigail S. Pevere (1816-1902) in September 1861, just as he enlisted in the 6th New Hampshire. He was mustered out of the service in April 1863 at Providence, Rhode Island.

At the battles of South Mountain and Antietam Hardy was a 49-year-old Pvt. of Company C, 6th New Hampshire. It was the 6th New Hampshire and the 2nd Maryland that made the crossing at Burnside's Bridge with The 51st New York and the 51st Pennsylvania. Peter passed away in 1898