

Q.M. Dept Ft. Marshall
Baltimore July 3th 1864

Dear Mother

As I have not much to do to day day. I thought I would drop you a few lines letting you know what we are doing.

Yesterday while down at the Hospital by invitation from Joe Muse taking supper. One of the men told me Patterson Brown was at the Fort and wanted to see me. I hurried up there and was glad to see him. He said Mary was at the Eutaw House. So we went in there and spent the evening. They go to Washington this morning and return this evening. I expect to go in and see them to night. I told them I would give them a letter for you.

I suppose you will know before this reaches you that the Rebs have made a raid into this state.

They were at Hagerstown at last accounts But as the papers were suppressed this morning And telegraph offices closed We have nothing defintite. They have destroyed part of the B&O RR And all the rolling stock of the road is at this place.

The Rebs around here say that Genl Ewell will be knock[ing] for admittance into the city of Balt. in 24 hours. They are delighted at the prospect.

Our Q.M. is just from town he says they are pressing everything into the service. The street RR horses are being all pressed into the service. And everything is warlike. The Union League reported at 10 this morning to Genl Wallace. The report in town today is that they are to relieve us and that we are to march after Earley. [General Jubal Early] I suppose we will know tomorrow. As it is we have our knapsacks packed and ready for action. The Q.M. at Frederick came into town today with 200 wagons loaded with goods. He said he had been up for two days working and getting his goods packed to move and today they came in on impressed wagons. The city is full of people all excited. Because. Erley [Early] could make his way to this city very easy. He has 17000 men and is at Frederick 50 miles from here.

We have only 3 thousand altogether. We can hold the forts very easy but not the town. But enough of that. I don't think we will be disturbed. I got a letter from Bob Schenck the other day he is at Kanawha Court House West Virginia. He is a private and likes it very well.

How did you spend The Fourth at home. I suppose Cousin Henry came out and had a Family Picknick.

We had a regular military Fourth. In the morning the bells rang. And at twelve oclock N the Forts fired a National Salute.

First the guns of Ft McHenry first opened out with 34 rounds. Then Old Ft Marshall opened out with its 36 pounders and gave 34 rounds then the gunboats and ship in the harbor which were beautifully trimmed up with flags. Belched forth. Then Federal Hill with her 34 guns broke forth together with the bells in the city ringing made it the prettiest sight I ever saw. Baltimore was full of flags yesterday and last they had fireworks in three of four different places beside the many others at Private houses.

Well I suppose you will be tired reading this before this.

But I must tell of some fun we had yesterday. When the big guns fired off, about a dozen Co.B boys run out in front of them.

And when they went off some of them dropped when the others picked them up and carried them into their quarters. They carried it out so well that the gunners thought sure they were shot.

Well I will write soon. Especially if we move from here. I will write as soon as anything important takes place. Write soon

From Your Affec Son
John H. Patterson

(PS) John Creighthead and his Mother were out yesterday to see us. He is practicing Law in N.York.

J H P