

**Lesson Designer:** Donna Olszewski  
**Course/Grade:** Grade 4  
**Unit:** BCPSS Grade 4

**Lesson:** The War of 1812 – Baltimore’s Role  
**Date:** June 26, 2007

**Outcomes:** Students will read primary and secondary source documents to identify the actions of the citizens in the defense of Baltimore during the War of 1812.

**VSC Objective Alignment:**

- 5.C.2. Explain the political, cultural, economic and social changes in Maryland during the early 1800’s
  - a. Describe Maryland’s role in the War of 1812
- 6.D.1. Identify primary and secondary sources of information that relate to the topic/situation/problem being studied
  - a. Gather and read appropriate print sources, such as textbooks, government documents, timelines, trade books, websites.

**Materials Needed:**

Transparencies of each Student Handout

1 copy for each student of Handout “Pictorial Field-Book of the War of 1812”

Highlighters

Colored pencils or thin lined markers

Copies of primary source documents and graphic organizers for Group Handouts (1 for each pair of students)

- Recruitment Poster
- Letter written by John and S. Bell to Thomas C. Bell
- Letter written by John Harris to Doctor William Harris

Paper for newspaper article

**Teacher Preparation:**

- Duplicate worksheets and primary source documents
- Prepare transparencies or charts of each activity from the worksheets

**Museum Connection**

The Maryland Historical Society – Access MdHS documents  
Fort McHenry

## **Teacher Background Information**

The War of 1812 was fought between the United States and Great Britain from June 1812 to the spring of 1815. Beginning with the end of the American Revolution in 1783 Britain frustrated the new nation by failing to withdraw from the area around the Great Lakes, supporting the Indians in the frontier and refusing to enter into equitable commercial agreements with the United States. Especially egregious was the practice of impressing Americans into British service.

One of the actions taken by the United States was the passing of the Embargo Act banning all American ships from foreign trade. The embargo failed to change British and French policies but succeeded in devastating New England shipping. Additionally, other economic measures that were attempted failed to deter the Europeans in their destructive policies aimed at the United States. The elected Congress of 1810 included a group known as the War Hawks who demanded war against Great Britain. New England shippers who feared further destruction of their trade opposed war. However, on June 18, 1812, President James Madison signed a declaration of war that Congress passed. The first two years of the war saw numerous campaigns, many of which devastated the young nation's forces.

In 1814 the United States faced complete defeat. The British planned to attack the United States in three main areas: in New York along Lake Champlain and the Hudson River; at New Orleans; and in the Chesapeake Bay. The British appeared near success in the late summer of 1814. American resistance to the diversionary attack in Chesapeake Bay was so weak that the British, after winning the Battle of Bladensburg, marched into Washington, D.C., and burned most of the public buildings. President Madison had to flee into the countryside. The British then turned to attack Baltimore but met stiffer resistance and were forced to retreat after the American defense of Fort McHenry.

### **Procedure:**

#### **Motivation**

*The purpose of this activity is to provide the students with an example of the mood of the citizens of Baltimore prior to the British attack in September of 1814.*

- Display Transparency 1
- Read aloud the words of the song.
- Ask the students to interpret what they think the words mean. (The students should be able to explain that this is a poem, or message about a battle or war. Accept all responses.)
- Reread the words again, line by line and “translate” for the students.
- Tell the students that this was an old song that the citizens of Baltimore sang when they knew that the British troops under the command of General Ross were advancing on Baltimore. Get reactions from the students regarding the mood of the citizens based on the words of the song.

## **Guided Practice**

### **VSC Social Studies Skills and Processes**

- 6.A.1. Use appropriate strategies and opportunities to increase understandings of social studies vocabulary
- a. Acquire and apply new vocabulary through investigating, listening, independent reading and discussing a variety of print and non-print sources
- 6.A.3. Use strategies to monitor understanding and derive meaning from text and portions of text (during reading)
- b. Use a graphic organizer or another note-taking technique to record important ideas or information

*There is vocabulary in the secondary source that should be cleared prior to beginning the activity.*

Vocabulary: (display the words and discuss the meaning of each)

artillery – weapons for discharging missiles; a branch of an army

battery – an emplacement for one or more pieces of artillery

blockade – an action to keep supplies from getting into or out of an area

brigade – a large unit of soldiers

fortifications – a fort or defensive earthwork, wall, etc.

master – a person in charge; a military title

repose – calm, peace

vessels – ships

Purpose for reading: *What actions did the citizens of Baltimore take to prepare for a possible attack by British forces?*

- Display transparency of Handout #2
- Distribute “Pictorial Field Book Handout #1” (Note to Teacher: This is a secondary source document. Make sure that the students understand the difference between a secondary and primary source. )
- Direct students to paragraph #1. Read this paragraph, highlight or underline words or phrases that are important to the understanding of the text. Complete the graphic organizer which asks, *Who, What, Tell Me* and *Show Me*.
- Distribute the graphic organizer to groups of students and assign each group a paragraph to read.
- Bring the students to the front of the room in the order that their paragraph appears in the reading. Have students retell the story using their graphic organizers as a guide. Emphasize the role of the citizens and troops in preparing for the battle.

### **Independent Practice**

- Divide the class into pairs. Assign a primary source document and reading guide sheet to each pair of students. The documents include a recruitment poster from 1813 and letters written immediately after and several months after the actual battle.
  - Groups: Recruitment Poster (Teacher’s Note: There is a recruitment poster from Connecticut included for display purposes only.)  
Letter written by John and S. Bell to Thomas C. Bell  
Letter written by John Harris to Doctor William Harris
- Have students read the assigned document and complete the appropriate worksheet.
- Allow students to respond to the prompts. Record responses.

### **Assessment (Student Product)**

- Direct students to prepare a newspaper report using the facts from the primary source documents.
- Display the newspaper articles on a bulletin board.

### **Wrap-Up**

Have students share the newspaper articles to retell the events related to Baltimore’s participation in the War of 1812.

### **Homework/Extension Assignment:**

Assign Lesson 10 “Francis Scott Key” <http://www.nps.gov/fomc/index.htm>

### **Differentiation/Modifications:**

- Student Grouping: When assigning students to work in groups, make sure that groups are heterogeneously mixed so that there is an opportunity for peer support.
- Primary Source Documents: For low literacy students, provide *student friendly wording* for each document. Assign passages based on level of difficulty and student ability.

### **Additional Resources:**

Maryland Adventure by Suzanne Ellery Chapelle pages 93-95  
Cobblestone Magazine. *James and Dolley Madison*, March 1996,  
Volume 17 – Number 3.

“The gen’ral gave orders for the troops to march down,  
To meet the proud Ross, and to check his ambition;  
To inform him we have decreed in our town  
That here he can’t enter without our permission.  
And if life he regards, he will not press too hard,  
For Baltimore freemen are ever prepared  
To check the presumptuous, whoever they be,  
That may rashly attempt to evade our decree.”

# PICTORIAL FIELD-BOOK OF THE WAR OF 1812.

BY BENSON J. LOSSING

1869.

## CHAPTER XL.

### EVENTS AT BALTIMORE, PHILADELPHIA, AND NEW YORK IN 1814.

The British in Chesapeake Bay. – An Attack on St. Michael's. – The Defense of St. Michael's. – Exploits of Sir Peter Parker. – Infamous Conduct of Admiral Cockburn. – Repulse of the British. – Death of Sir Peter Parker. – The British Fleet in the Chesapeake. – Baltimore threatened. – Exasperation against it. – General Samuel Smith. – Preparations for the Defense of Baltimore in 1813 and 1814. – Patriotism of the Citizens. – Fortifications at Baltimore. – Troops for Defense, and their Disposition. – The British land at North Point. – Preparations for advancing on Baltimore. – General Stricker sent to oppose them. – Position of the American Troops. – Disposition of the British Troops. – Preliminary Skirmish. – Death of General Ross. – Advance of the British. – A spirited Battle. – Picture of the Battle of North Point. – Retreat of the Americans. – The British Fleet approaches Baltimore. – Preparations to attack Fort M'Henry. – The Defenders of Fort M'Henry. – Bombardment of the Fort. – Its effective Reply. – Attempt to seize Fort Covington. – The Invaders driven off. – End of the Bombardment. – The Star-spangled Banner. – The British move toward Baltimore. – Arrangements for an Assault on the Defenses of the City. – The British fall back and return to their Ships. – Effect of the Repulse of the Invaders. – The British Programme. – Honors to Colonel Armistead. – Tokens of public Gratitude. – The Armistead Family. – Battle Monument in Baltimore. – A Visit to Baltimore. – Services of a valued Friend. – A Visit to Patterson Park and other historical Localities. – The City Spring. – The Color-bearer of the Twenty-seventh Regiment. – Visit to North Point Battle-ground. – Monument where Ross fell. – A Visit to Fort M'Henry. – The Circular Battery and its Outlook. – New York and Philadelphia relieved. – Philadelphia Troops. – The Volunteer Companies of Philadelphia. – Protection for Duponts' Powder-mills. – Captain James Page. – Organization of Troops. – Camp Dupont. – Camp at Marcus's Hook. – Public Meeting in Philadelphia. – Committee of Defense. – Citizens construct Fortifications. – New York stirred up. – Committee of Defense. – Patriotic Action of the Citizens. – Neighbors assist New York. – Gathering of Troops in and around the City. – "The Patriotic Diggers." – General Swift's Report of the Fortifications around New York. – Fortifications around New York. – General Swift's Report. – Fortifications around New York. – A proposed Revolving Battery. – Description of proposed Revolving Battery. – A proposed iron-clad Vessel. – Remains of a Block-house. – Iron-clad Gun-boat. – A Floating Battery authorized by Congress. – Launch of the Battery. – Steam-ship or Floating Battery, *Fulton the First*. – Extravagant Stories concerning her.

---

"The gen'ral gave orders for the troops to march  
down,

To meet the proud Ross, and to check his  
ambition;

To inform him we have decreed in our town  
That here he can't enter without our  
permission.

And if life he regards, he will not press too hard,  
For Baltimore freemen are ever prepared  
To check the presumptuous, whoever they be,  
That may rashly attempt to evade our decree." –

exertions for the defense of the city, and Annapolis, the political capital of Maryland. That vigilant officer had been active ever since the first appearance of danger in the spring of 1813, when a British squadron appeared in the Chesapeake. It was well known that the enemy felt great exasperation toward the Baltimoreans because they had sent out so many swift "clipper-built" vessels and expert seamen to smite terribly the commerce of Great Britain on the high seas. "It is a doomed town," declared Vice-admiral Warren. "The American navy must be annihilated," said a London paper; his arsenals and dock-yards must be consumed, and the truculent inhabitants of Baltimore must be tamed with the weapons which shook the wooden turrets of Copenhagen."

So early as the 13th of April, 1813, the City Councils of Baltimore appropriated twenty thousand dollars to be used for the defense of the city, under the direction of the mayor, Edward Johnson, and seven other citizens, who were named as a Committee of Supply. <sup>8</sup> The governor of the State (Levin Winder) also called an extraordinary session of the Legislature, to meet at Annapolis on the third Monday in May. Meanwhile a rumor reached the city that the enemy were approaching, and within a few hours at least five thousand armed men were found in their proper places, and several companies of militia from the country came pouring into Baltimore. Several persons were arrested as traitors and spies. These demonstrations of preparation and power undoubtedly saved the city from assault at that time. Very soon afterward, Stricker's brigade, and other military bodies in the city, full five thousand strong, with forty pieces of artillery, were reviewed. At the beginning of June a battery was erected at Fort M'Henry for the marine artillery of Baltimore one hundred and sixty in number, under Captain George Stiles, and composed of masters and master's-mates of vessels there. It was armed with 42-pounders.

In September [1813.] the British fleet went to sea, and Baltimore enjoyed a season of repose. The blockaders, as we have observed, reappeared in the Chesapeake in the spring of 1814, and all the summer and early autumn infested its waters, during which time occurred the destructive invasion recorded in the preceding chapter, when every thing that could be done by vigilant men for the safety of Baltimore was accomplished. A Committee of Vigilance and Safety, of which Mayor Johnson was Chairman, and Theodore Bland was secretary, co-operated unceasingly with General Smith and the military. On the 27th of August, three days after the capture of Washington, that committee called upon the citizens to organize into working parties, and to contribute implements of labor for the purpose of increasing the strength of the city defenses. The city was divided into four sections, and the people of each labored alternately on the fortifications. The exempts from military service and free colored men were required to assemble for labor, with provisions for a day, at Hempstead Hill (equally well known as Loudenslager's Hill), on Sunday, the 28th of September; at Myer Garden on Monday; at Washington Square on Tuesday; and at the intersection of Eutaw and Market Streets on Wednesday. Each portion, comprising a section, was under the command of appointed superintendents. The response of the citizens in men and money was quick, cordial, and ample; and volunteers to work on the fortifications came from Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. By the 10th of September General Winder was in Baltimore, with all the forces of the Tenth Military District at his command.



RODGERS'S BASTION.

The principal fortifications constructed by the people consisted of a long line on Hempstead, or Loudenslager's Hill, now the site of Patterson Park. At proper distances several semicircular batteries were constructed, well mounted with cannon and ably manned, some of them by volunteer artillery companies of Baltimore, but chiefly by men-of-war's men, about twelve hundred in number, under the general command of Commodore Rodgers. The spaces between these batteries were filled with militia. One of the larger of these bastions, known as Rodgers's Bastion, may now (1867) be seen, well preserved, on the harbor side of Patterson Park, and overlooking Fort M'Henry and the region about it. Four of the smaller batteries on this line were in charge of officers of the *Guerriere* and *Erie*, the former then lying in Baltimore Harbor.

A brigade of Virginia Volunteers and of regular troops, including a corps of cavalry under Captain Bird, were placed under the command of General Winder; the City Brigade of Baltimore was commanded by General Stricker; and the general management of the entire military force destined for the defense of the city was intrusted to General Smith. Fort M'Henry was garrisoned by about one thousand men, volunteers and regulars, commanded by Major George Armistead. To the right of it, guarding the shores of the Patapsco, on the Ferry Branch, from the landing of troops who might endeavor to assail the city in the rear, were two redoubts, named respectively Fort Covington, and City, or Babcock Battery. The former was manned by a detachment of seamen under Lieutenant Newcomb, and the latter – a 6-gun battery – by another detachment from Barney's flotilla under Sailing-master John A. Webster. In the rear of these, upon high ground, at the end of Light Street, near the present Fort

Avenue, was an unfinished circular redoubt for seven guns, in charge of Lieutenant George Budd. On Lazaretto Point, across the entrance channel to Baltimore Harbor, opposite Fort M'Henry, was also a small battery, in charge of Lieutenant Rutter, of the flotilla. To these several batteries, and to Fort M'Henry, the citizens of Baltimore looked most confidently for defense. 12

Such were the most important preparations for the reception of the enemy, when, on Sunday evening, the 11th of September, they were seen at the mouth of the Patapsco, in strong force, preparing to land at North Point, twelve miles from Baltimore by water, and fifteen miles by land. Off that point the fleet anchored that evening. The night was a delightful one. The air was balmy, and the full moon shone brightly in a cloudless sky. The earth was refreshed by the falling of a heavy dew. The fleet lay two miles from the shore. Brief repose was given to its people, for, at two o'clock in the morning [September 12, 1814.], the boats of every ship were lowered, and then the land troops and seamen went to the shore, under cover of several gun-brigs anchored within a cable's length of the beach. The boats went in divisions, and the leading one of each was armed with a carronade ready for action.

At about seven o'clock in the morning, General Ross and Admiral Cockburn were on shore, with a force nine thousand strong, composed of five thousand land troops, two thousand marines, and two thousand seamen, led by Captain E. Crofton. They were furnished with cooked provisions sufficient for three days. Each combatant bore eighty rounds of ammunition, and carried as little baggage as possible, for they were to march rapidly and take Baltimore by surprise, where Ross had boasted that he should eat his Sunday dinner. At the same time, a frigate was sent to try the depth and take the soundings of the channel leading to Baltimore, as the navy, under the immediate command of Captain Nourse, of Cockburn's flag-ship *Severn*, was to co-operate with the army. Intelligence of these movements produced great alarm in Baltimore. A large number of families, with portable articles of value, were sent into the interior of the country, and every inn, for almost a hundred miles northward of the city, was crowded with the refugees.



METHODIST MEETING HOUSE.

When it was known that the British fleet was anchored off North Point, General Smith,

Handout #2

The War of 1812 - Events At Baltimore

WHO

WHAT

TELL ME

SHOW ME

# VOLUNTEERS WANTED!



For the Company of CONNECTICUT

# CAVALRY

assigned to the First Congressional District.

**NONE BUT GOOD HORSEMEN RECEIVED.**

Apply immediately to

**WM. H. SEYMOUR,**

or to **ALBERT H. NILES,**

**311 Main St., opposite State House,**

**HARTFORD.**

G. MONTAGUE, Printer, cor. Main and FISH STS.

Major Armistead, commander of Fort McHenry from 1813 till his death in 1818, placed the following recruitment notice in various Baltimore newspapers in the summer 1813.

### To Reputable Young Men

Will be given a Bounty of FORTY DOLLARS and One Hundred and Sixty Acres of Land for enlisting in the 3d Regiment of Artillery by applying to GEO. ARMISTEAD, Major Fort McHenry

Answer the questions below using information from the recruitment ad.

1. What kind of person is being recruited? (Hint: Read every line)

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Who is doing the recruiting? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Where would the recruit have to report to enlist?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What will the recruit receive once he enlists? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Design your own recruitment Broadside

A soldier was given \$124 and 160 acres of land upon his honorable discharge from either the "duration of the war" or five year's service. Many citizens enlisted at Fort McHenry, coming from many walks of life: laborers, sailors, tailors, wagoners, blacksmiths, etc. Below are some guidelines.

- No recruits under 18, nor above 40 years of age, nor any who are not able-bodied and free of disease (liability to fits, scald-head, ruptures, sore legs and scurvy) shall be enlisted.

Using the information about recruits, design a recruitment poster. Remember to include information about what the recruit would do, the health of the recruit, and what the recruit would receive if he enlisted.



## PRIMARY SOURCE # 13 (DOCUMENT)

Bell, John. Letter from John Bell to Thomas Bell [14 November 1814]. War of 1812 Collection, MS.1846. Manuscripts Department, Maryland Historical Society Library, Baltimore, Maryland.

- WHAT? Letter that describes the aftermath of the Battle of Baltimore
- WHO? Written by John and S. Bell to Thomas C. Bell
- WHEN? November 14, 1814
- WHERE? Baltimore
- WHY? To update their son on personal matters and affairs in Baltimore since the British attack in mid-September

### Description of the Source

In this letter to his son, John Bell describes the situation in Baltimore two months after the British attacked the city from September 12- 14, 1814 during the War of 1812. Soldiers defending Baltimore still filled the city, and many of them created disturbances. Bell also recounts the dreadful scene of the dead laying on Hampstead Hill after the battle. The entire city was dramatically affected by the British invasion. During the Battle of Baltimore, thousands fled the city, while thousands more contributed to the defense. As Bell's letter indicates, it took several weeks for the city to recover from the attack and to feel secure.

### For More Information on Topics Explored by this Source, See:

Brugger, Robert J. *Maryland: A Middle Temperament, 1634-1980*, pp. 181-185. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988.

### Research Topics

- ↳ How did the Battle of Baltimore impact the citizens of Baltimore?
- ↳ Were Baltimoreans unanimously in support of the war effort?
- ↳ Why did Britain target Baltimore?
- ↳ Describe soldiering during the War of 1812.
- ↳ What impact did the Battle of Baltimore have on the course of the War of 1812?
- ↳ Investigate the roles of General Samuel Smith and General John Stricker in the Battle of Baltimore.
- ↳ How did Baltimoreans react to the British attack?
- ↳ How did the war affect Maryland?

Baltimore Novr 14 [1814]

We received Dr son your letters bearing dates thirty first octr & 15 Novr inclosing thirty dollars & but for that we had long since been destitute of the most ordinary comforts. We would gladly have wellcomed you home and two or [sic] days; Doctor Edgar and myself attended at the stage office for that purpose but we must take the tide at the flood. The work in which i am engaged (night & day views of the Bombardment the sige [sic] of the church) is an heavy one your aid was peculiarly necessary, especially for the shipping but necessity has furnishec me with both hands eyes & ideas and am now rapidly progressing my view is laid the back of the six gun battery, fort Covington on my right, & McHenry on the left, the bomb brigs laid broadside to the fort about five miles distance and discharging in rapid succession and frigates & other ships stretching out at great distance across the river towards the bodkins at the commencement of the action a shot from the fort has struck apparently the bowsprit of one of the Bomb vessels she is represented loosing her sails & removing to a greater distance, when these are finished and inspected if baltimore do not give me something hansome for them a gentleman observed in my room they ought to be dam'd my Church is still on hand i am preparing tickets for it, but am doubtful of success every necessary of life being so high, wood 8\$ We hope you will at any rate stay no longer in york that you can double your expenses, and forget not to inform us of the exact time you will arrive and we will meet you at corner of Gay and marktett street with respect to the dog, if not sold cut it off the strainer and roll him up and bring him on in the stage.

We conceive there is no danger this fall of another visit from the British heaven knows what the spring will effect [?] baltimore is surrounded by encampments and the poor things called soldiers are dying off rapidly great severities are exercised towards them Captn Hearly called on me Saturday himself and family are living out fifteen miles on the York road I met Cptn Frazier a few days back he promised to call but i expect he, like other sunshine friends conceive it his best course to steer clear of my wake I have not suffered the slightest insult, since my return; trifling neglect is all This, poor Mrs Calff and family experience in a great degree, now he is no more - I have seen Mycrofts people twice once at Church, and at Markses - no invitation up the hills I shook hand with Mrs Sampson she wishes to be remembred to you Young Sykes is about to be married to a pretty Quaker Thus two of Mrs. S. beaus are gone Flint & Sykes Dr Edgar has just relapsed into his old way Miss Edgar is unwell Mr & Mrs Sykes were much beaten in their own house by raskally would be soldiers - Mrs Microft had her crockery ware broken before her face by some vagrant irishman but she was reli[e]ved from further violence by a boarder officer stepping in at the juncture and pat decamped without prize Many of the bodys of the American dead by American Monsters were brot up on the hamstead hill many days after the battles in a state of putridity and openly exposed to the soldiers & their distracted relatives wo continuously [?] recognized them by their Cloaths what a scene Ginthart also saw an English soldiers corps[e] taken up - set against a fence & savages peircing his body with the sharp point of a fence rail the iniquity of this people can never be washed out &c I procured your paper intrusted it to the

care of a sick york volunteer who arrived in Mr Smiths waggon man lives in York  
the volunteer is a tall man [missing ] nose [?] is very sick young woodyear told  
me his name [missing ] or Lorman or some such name directed to [missing ]  
hope you have got it the frames i send on to [you are (?)] the best I could  
procure hope they will suit tho rath[er (?)] smaller I paid Six dollars  
for them. if you want [me to (?)] purchase some of those who were left  
at Hallers by I believe Farr [?] if they can be cut to suit your purpose if I send  
them by stage you will find them at Arbuckells [?] directed to Mr Shange [?] for you,  
if by a wagon to Mr S post office I have no more to ad[d] but my respects to Mr  
Armstrong Mr & Mrs West [?] and others David is progressing in his sugar business  
he is very slow but sure we are all in health and write our Love to you hoping  
soon to see you

Your Affectionate Father & mother &c

John & S Bell

[On back]

Mr Thomas C Bell  
Miniature painter  
Little York  
Pensilvania

[John Bell - Thomas Bell

Original of this letter is owned by Harry Bland of New York]

John Bell - Thomas Bell

Original of this letter is owned  
by Harry Cloud of New York

Mr Thomas C. Bell  
Miniature Painter

Little York

Wm Hall Pleasant Street  
in Maryland  
THE MARYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Baltimore

We received Dr Jones your letter bearing date  
thirty first oct<sup>r</sup> & is now inclosing thirty dollars  
that for that we had long since been destitute of the  
most ordinary comforts. We would gladly have well  
comed you home and two or three Doctor Rogers  
and myself attended at the stage office for that  
purpose but we must take the tide at the flood  
the work in which I am engaged (night & day views  
of the bombardment the siege of the church) & in  
many one your aid was peculiarly necessary especially  
for the shipping but necessity has furnished me  
with the both hands eyes & sides and am now rapidly  
progressing my scene is laid the back of the city  
battery, fort Covington on my right, & the Henry on  
the left, the bomb barks laid broadside to the fort about  
five miles distance and discharging in rapid succession  
and frigates & other ships stretching at great distance  
across the river towards the bottom at the commencement  
of the action a shot from the fort has struck apparently the  
browprit of one of the bomb vessels who is represented  
loosing her sails & removing to a greater distance, when  
these are finished and inspected if Baltimore do not  
give me

something pleasant for them a gentleman showed in  
my room they ought to be done. My health is still  
on hand I am preparing tickets for it, but am doubtful  
of success any necessary of life being so high. Word of  
we hope you will at any rate stay no longer in York  
that you can double your expenses and forget not  
to inform us of the exact time you will arrive and  
we will meet you at corner of Gray and market street  
with respect to the dog if not sold cut it off the strainer  
and roll him up and bring him in to the stage.

We conceive there is no danger this fall of another visit from  
the British's heaven knows what the spring will effect. Baltimore  
is surrounded by encampments and the poor things called  
soldiers are dying off rapidly great severities are  
exercised towards them. Capt. Healey called on me Saturday  
last and family are living out fifteen miles on the York  
road. Capt. Frazer a few days back he promised to call  
but I expect he like other sunshine friends conceive it his  
best course to stir clear of my water. I have not suffered the  
slightest insult since my return trifling neglect is all  
this poor Mrs. Caff and family experience in a great  
degree now he has no more. I have seen Myroth  
people twice once at Church, and at Market. no  
invitation up the hills I shook hand with Mrs. Sampson  
she wishes to be remembered to you. Young Sykes is about  
to be married to a pretty Quaker. Two of Mrs. S. beaus  
are gone Flint & Sykes

Dr. Edgar has just released into his old way Mrs. Edgar  
is unwell. Mr. & Mrs. Sykes were much better in their former  
house by accident would be sold. Mrs. Myroth had her  
crockery ware broken before her face by some long and  
but she was relieved from further violence by a boarder of  
stepping in at the juncture and got discomfited with it.  
Many of the bodies of the American dead by American soldiers  
were put up in the hamstead hill many days after the battle  
in a state of putridity and openly exposed to the view of  
their distracted relatives to render ~~any~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~  
their cloaths what a new Lanthorn also saw ~~of~~ ~~the~~  
soldiers corps taken up and against a fence & vanages  
piercing his body with the sharp point of a fence nail  
the iniquity of this packet can never be washed out. I  
I procured your paper intrusted it to the care of a  
York volunteer who arrived in Mr. Smith's Waggon  
shares in York. The volunteer is a tall man  
hope is very sick young woodyear told me his name  
or some he or some such name directed to Mr.  
hope you have got it. The papers I send on this to  
the best I could procure. hope they will suit. The rest  
smaller I had six dollars for them. if you want to  
purchase some of those who were left at Hallers by I believe  
if they can be out to suit your purpose. I send them by  
if you will find them not suitable directed to Mr. Chang  
for you, if by a wagon to Mr. S post office. I have no more  
but my heart to Mr. Armstrong or Mr. West and other  
David is prospering in his whar business he is very slow but sure  
we are all in health and unite our love to your happy  
soon to see you  
Your affectionate Father & Mother  
John & P. Bell

Baltimore Novr 14 (1814)

We received Dr son your letters bearing dates thirty first octr & 15 Novr inclosing thirty dollars & but for that we had long since been destitute of the most ordinary comforts.

1. When was this letter written? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What was the financial situation of the writer of the letter? Use words from the text to support your response.

---

---

We conceive there is no danger this fall of another visit from the British heaven knows what the spring will effect? Baltimore is surrounded by encampments and the poor things called soldiers are dying off rapidly

3. Does the writer think that the British will attack Baltimore again? (read carefully) Explain your response.

---

---

4. If there is no battle going on at this time, why do you think that soldiers are "dying off rapidly"?

---

---

5. How would you describe the mood of this Baltimore resident?

---

MS 1846

1814 September 27 Harris, John to William Harris

Newcastle September 17, 1814

Dear William:

I feel very anxious to hear from you. I have wrote you several letters but never have received a line this six weeks. I hope you have not for got me I wrote you some time since informing you I had joined the Marines of the \_\_\_\_\_ at Charleston \_\_\_\_\_. I have had a very fatiguing time since marching but not much fighting, when we got to Baltimore the Citizens had not determined to defend the town I believe had not Commodore Rodgers and his crew arrived there as soon as they did they would have capitulated. We remained there five days. We were ordered to Washington. We got within three miles of Bladensburgh our orders were countermanded we were ordered back to Baltimore all except one hundred that went on to Alexandria. They had a small scrimmage there, drove the enemy down the Potomac, and returned to Baltimore. The particulars I presume you have heard before this. I think the handsomest sight I ever saw was during the bombarding to see the bombs and rockets flying from our three forts it was much handsomer at night than in the day the firing continued for over twenty hours. I could see plenty of red coats but could not get within musket shot of them.

I expect if the enemy don't go back to Baltimore we will be in Philadelphia in two weeks. Give my to Mother and all the family

Your affectionate friend,

John Harris

Letter was addressed to

Doctor William Harris  
East Whiteland Post Office  
Chester County, Pennsylvania

Newcastle September 27<sup>th</sup> 1814

Dear William

I feel very anxious to hear from you  
I have wrote you several letters but never have received a  
line this six weeks I hope you have not forgotten me  
I wrote you some time since informing you I had  
joyned the Marines of the Quire at Charleston. Sardinia  
I have had a very fatiguing time since marching but  
not much fighting, when we got to Baltimore the British  
seem'd not determined to defend the town I believe  
had not Commodore Rodgers and his crew arriv'd there as we  
or the vid the would have capitulated we remained there  
two days we were order'd to Washington we got within  
three miles of Blandensburg our order's were countermanded we  
were order'd back to Baltimore all except one hundred  
that went on to Cascovia the had a small victory  
there drove the enemy down the Patuxent and return'd  
to Baltimore The particulars I presume you have heard  
before this I think the handsomest sight I ever saw in  
during the war being to see the bombs and rockets

flying and the firing, and in three weeks it was  
much more severe at night than in the day the firing  
continued for an hour or more I could see plenty of  
red coats but could not get within musket shot of them

I expect if the enemy don't go back to Baltimore  
we will be in Philadelphia in two weeks give my  
love to mother and all the family

Your affectionate friend  
John Harris

Handout (to be used with the primary source document – John Harris letter)

Read the letter written by John Harris to Doctor William Harris and answer the questions.

1. Look at the date that this letter was written. Was it written before or after the Battle of Baltimore?

---

2. What job did John Harris hold? \_\_\_\_\_

3. When John Harris first arrived in Baltimore, did he think that the citizens would defend the city? Write the phrase from the letter that supports your answer.

---

4. What happened to change his mind about the citizens defending the city?

---

5. How do you think he felt during the actual battle in Baltimore? Use his words from the letter to support your answer.

---

---

---

On the back of this sheet is a timeline. Use the facts as written in this letter to complete the timeline. Some of the events are listed in the box below the timeline. They are not listed in the correct order. Reread the letter and place them in the correct order on the timeline.

## John Harris' Activities During Late Summer and Early Fall of 1814

Joined  
the Marines  
at  
Charleston

(?)	Aug. 19 <sup>th</sup>	Aug. 24 <sup>th</sup>	Sept. 13 <sup>th</sup> - 14 <sup>th</sup>	Sept. 17 <sup>th</sup>	Oct. 8 <sup>th</sup>

- Arrived in Bladensburg, Maryland
- Marched from Charleston to Baltimore
- Watched the bombardment of Baltimore by the British
- Wrote a letter to Doctor William Harris
- Arrived in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



---

---