

## **Lesson Title: Fort McHenry as a Prison: A Soldier's Life**

**Grade:** Secondary

**Class Periods/Duration:** 1 class period

**Objective:** Students will use primary source documents to understand the activities and living conditions of soldiers garrisoned at Fort McHenry during the Civil War.

### **Vocabulary:**

Militia – any military force; any army composed of citizens rather than professional soldiers, called out in time of emergency

Regiment –a military unit consisting of two or more battalions and forming a basic element of a division.

(Post) Quartermaster - an officer whose duty it is to provide troops with quarters ( a place to live), clothing, equipment, etc.

### **Materials/Resources:**

Worksheet (data gathering chart )

(Note: Format and spellings taken directly as written from primary document)

Primary Source Documents (Maryland Historical Society - MS2129)

- #A Letters from Fort McHenry, 1864: Introductory Note
- #1 Mankin's Woods near Baltimore, Sunday morning, July 31/64
- #2 5<sup>th</sup> Mass V.M. Mankin's Woods near Baltimore, July 31, 64
- #3 Baltimore Aug 5. 1864
- #4 Baltimore Aug 7. 1864
- #5 Fort McHenry Baltimore Aug 11<sup>th</sup>
- #6 Fort McHenry Bal Aug 14
- #7 Fort McHenry Aug 21. 1864
- #8 Fort McHenerey 25
- #9 Fort McHenery Aug 29
- #10 Fort McHennry Sept 1. 64

Note: Additional pages of primary source document transcripts are included for possible extension and enrichment activities.

### **Teacher Background:**

History of Fort McHenry

(Adapted from Ft. McHenry Website <http://www.nps.gov/fomc/historyculture/index.htm>)

Fort McHenry's history began in 1776 during the Revolutionary War. The people of Baltimore feared an attack by the British, and wanted to build a fort for protection. Anticipating an attack at any time, a fort of earthen mounds was constructed quickly. Originally, it was call Fort Whetstone, because of the location on Whetstone Point.

The Revolutionary War ended without an attack on Baltimore, but improvements to the fort continued. In 1798, a French engineer was directed by the Secretary of War to draw plans for a new fort on Whetstone Point. These plans were expensive, and it was difficult for the people of Baltimore to raise money for construction. However, James McHenry, a well-known politician, was instrumental in raising funds for the new fort. The fort was renamed "Fort McHenry" in his honor.

At the time of the British attack on September 13, 1814, there were 1000 soldiers defending the fort from three fighting units. The first group of soldiers represented the U. S. Army "Corps of Artillery". These men lived at Fort McHenry and were paid eight dollars a month for their services. Another group of defenders was the "Maryland Militia," private citizens who felt it necessary to aid in the defense of the city. The third group were sailors from Commodore Joshua Barney's Flotilla, which had been formed in 1813 to provide naval protection for the Chesapeake Bay.

In the 1860's the United States was torn apart by the Civil War. Union troops were stationed at Fort McHenry to help keep Baltimore out of the hands of those who would have Maryland join the southern cause. The fort's guns were turned toward the city. Fort McHenry was used as a prison where political prisoners suspected of being Confederate sympathizers were held, often without trial. Many confederate soldiers were imprisoned at the fort as well.

In 1917, the U.S. Army established General Hospital No.2, a 3,000 bed facility to treat wounded soldiers returning from Europe. The hospital developed into a major surgical center, specializing in neuro and reconstructive surgery. When the war ended, the need for the hospital slowly diminished, and in 1925 the temporary buildings were torn down. Fort McHenry became a national park which today is administered by the National Park Service as the country's only National Monument and Historic Shrine. Exhibits around the fort will help the visitor visualize life at Fort McHenry during the various stages of its history.

For this lesson, students will be asked to imagine the daily activities and living conditions of a soldier garrisoned at the fort during the Civil War. They will read primary source documents which will describe not only the soldier's work but also his thoughts and emotions as expressed in letters that he wrote to his wife.

### **Lesson Development:**

1. Show a picture of Fort McHenry and one of a Union soldier. Ask students to imagine that the soldier in the picture is garrisoned at the fort during late summer and fall of 1864. Duplicate this chart on the chalkboard and record students' responses to these questions:

Where was the soldier housed?	What did the soldier eat?	What were the soldier's daily activities?
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	4.

2. Divide the class into several groups. Provide each group of students a packet of letters and blank worksheet (duplicate of above). Have students read the letters and complete the worksheets.
3. Have students report data collected during the group work. Revisit the chart and correct any pre-reading misconceptions and add any new information that was gathered during the reading of the primary documents.
4. Ask the students, "Can we make any generalizations or assumptions about the lives of Union soldiers during the Civil War?" Lead students to a discussion that generalizations and assumptions can only be made about other soldiers at Fort McHenry during this historical period. Conditions for other soldiers at other forts or battle locations would possibly be very different.
5. Have students use the information about this soldier to write a newspaper article describing his life at the fort during this period. Have students include information provided in the letters that did not fit under the original categories in the worksheet. (weather, friends or adversaries, emotions, etc.)

**Assessment:**

1. Accuracy of information used in the newspaper article.
2. Participation in group work and total group discussion.

**Closure:**

Have students present their newspaper articles in the form of a writer's table discussion.

**Extension:**

1. Have the students research living conditions at other forts or battle locations during the Civil War. Compare those conditions to the ones described by the soldier garrisoned at Fort McHenry.  
or
2. Have the students research living conditions at Fort McHenry during other historical periods (War of 1812 or World War I). Compare those conditions to the ones described by the soldier garrisoned at Fort McHenry during the Civil War.

Housing	Meals	Daily Activities
Notes:		



**Ft. McHenry Cannons**



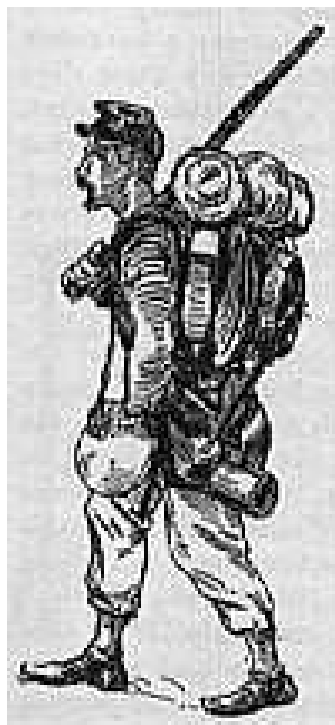
**Aerial View of Ft. McHenry**



**Ft. McHenry Entrance**



**Union Soldiers**



**Artist's Depiction of a Union Soldier**

Mankin's Woods near Baltimore  
Sunday morning, July 31/64

Dear Wife & children

I find myself once more in camp near the Rebs sitting by the side of a stump in good health and spirits. We had a very pleasant passage out and when I get time I will write all about it. We are situated in a beautiful Place on a high hill covered with large Trees so it makes it shady and nice. We have no tents yet. Last night I made up my Bed on the ground with nothing but the blue sky above and not having any Rest since I left home you can imagine that I enjoyed it very much. We marched from Baltimore up hear in the hottest time you sever saw but I got along very well. The mail goes out at 8 so wishing you much love I close.

Dear Wife

We have had an inspection of all the troops hear to day & we had a pretty hot time of it. There was 6 of our company that fell in the ranks but I believe I am fire proof having seen some sun before coming out hear. I promised in my letter this morning that I would give you a little account of my journey out hear so if you take the map you can follow me along to this place. We took the cars at Readville /Readville, Mass/ Thursday 28 at 1½ oc for Providence had a very Pleasant Trip arrived there at 3½ oc. Took a steamer for New York arrived there at 6 oc the next morning.

Changed steamers hear and went to Amboy where we arrived at 12. and it was one of the most splendid sailers I ever took. Left New York on one side and Brooklyn on the other this distance. We sailed on a River & it is settled on both sides with the most splendid Residences I ever saw. I thought it paid me for coming but perhaps I may feel different before 3 months. At Amboy we took the cars for Philadelfee arrived there at 5. They gave us a hearty welcome and a supper in the bargain. It seemed to be a genuine out burst of joy from men, women & children. I was glad to get away did not see any of Mr. Marches family. We then took the cars for Baltimore at 7. oc rode all night and arrived in Baltimore at 7 the next morning. Here they gave us some coffee. Then we rested a while & started for this place at 12. oc. So you see we have had a chance to see some of the country. We are situated in a beautiful place hear. It is one of the most splendid groves I ever saw very large trees and clear of all under brush. There is a large force of the one hundred days men here but we knew not how long we shall stay. Monday morning .... The sun struck Boys are getting along well.



Dear Wife & children

I was made glad to day by receiving a letter from you & to hear that you are all well. My health is good & am getting along as well as could be expected under the circumstances. The weather is not so hot as it was when we first came out here but the sun is very hot. But I shall not fear the hot weather if we have no long marches. I had one of my sick headaches last night but came out all right this morning. We have little small tents just large enough for two & John Wheeler and I bunk together & so have quite a cosy time. Our tent comes on the top of the hill so we can overlook the whole camp & it is a splendid sight in the evening when it is all lit up. You would not think that we were in the midst of war if you could be here in the evening & see how merry we are when it seems as the whole camp are singing. But so it is for we have all sorts of rumors but do not pay much attention to them .... It is time to blow out the candle we must stop for to night.

Saturday morning. The Baltimore Papers say that the hole of Lees Army is in motion to make a raid in Maryland but we don't believe it. It is cloudy this morning & look as though we were going to have rain. The sun struck boys are getting along well. Some of their cases were pretty hard ones. It took 6 or 8 of us to hold them. They were all out of town men I believe but one and they all had their hair clipped short which the Dr says was the grating cause. I want you to write to me often and long. Direct my letters to Baltimore 5 Regt Co G & it will come all right. If you put the papers in the office Monday morning I shall get them Tuesday. From your affectionate Husband.

Baltimore Aug 7. 1864

Dear Wife

It is verry hot and lonsome day to me to day. We have not had any Religious services hear to day as we have no Chaplain and I am afraid we shant have any. We had an invitation to go over to the 8 Regt to attend services this morning but we did not get through Inspection in season so we did not go. We went over to the 8 fast day as a Regt & heard a serman from Mr. Suell of Wenham who is Chaplain of that Regt. I was surprised to see his countenance. So this afternoon I went over to see him & he seemed right glad to see me & I spent an hour very pleasant with him. His is coming over to see me tomorrow. It seems to be my good luck to always fall in with a good spiritual XXXX adviser. Our Capt has just been along & say is a prospect of our having a Chaplaine a man that went out with the Regt

first 3 months.

Thuesday mornning. I received your letter of the 5 last night & was glad to hear from you all & to know you wer getting along se well. My health is good. The weather is dry and warm but I stand it first rate. I hope some of these cockers /?/ at home will have to take there chance at it. Chaplain Sewall came over to see me yesterday but I did not see him as I had gon out to do a little job for the Courtnal .... I live entirely on the Army rations except milk which is 15 cts pr qt. But I get some for my coffee when I can. It comes pretty hard for some of the Boys to com down to Hard Tack & coffee but I understood that before I came. Sumner Butters has been slim since hear but looks better to day .... I dont know as you can make this out for I write it laying on my back in my little Tent.

Fort McHenry Baltimore Aug 11th

Dear Wife & children

You will see by this that we have changed our position. We had orders yesterday at 4 oc to brake Camp at Mankin's Woods & take all our duds on our back & march for this place which is 8 miles 4 miles this side of Baltimore & we had a hard march. We left camp at 7. oc and arrived here at 11. I think I never knew what it was to be real tired before. The hele Regt got into the Fort and said right down on the ground & went to sleep altho I did not sleep much as my head ached verry bad & it has all day but I feal better to night. I have not eaten much to day. It is a fine place to hear we are almost surrounded by Water. They had a Regt of Pensylvaneans here but they did not sute for there was not any goed mecanics in it so they wanted to exchange for a Mass Regt. So you see it is lucky for me as I have been detailed to day as Carpenter & shall probably stay my time out hear. We have a large shop in an arrey /airy?/ place with Guards to stand at the deer day & night so you see we are protected.

We came through the prettiest part of the city of Baltimore. We past the Washington monument whitch is a splendid thing. They received us in silence & ne doubt they would like to throw Brick Bats at us if they dared to. They drugged a seldier yesterday. He was a well & hearty man. He lived just long enough to get into the fert & died. He was buried at 10 this mornning. It seamed rather a solum introduction to camp. The first thing I saw this mornning was the Gallos clese by where we slept. They say there is to be a Rebil spy hung tomerrow on it. But I shall endeavor to ceap clear from it ....

Friday morning. We had a severe thunder shower here last night & it rained hard. It makes it bad for the boys as they did not have time to get their tents up but I had a grand nights rest & feal Tip Top this morning. I have had to by what I have goe to eat as we have not drawn any rations. Our mail comes twice a day so Send often. I shall send as often as I can.

Dear Wife & Children

It is Sunday afternoon. I been to Church this morning & had a very interesting meeting. The Post Chaplain is a Methodist & seems like a smart man. He urged upon us that we should be better men than we wer at home and I shall endeavor to profits buy it. I had an invitation to go into the Choir. We had a very good singing /singing/ there was three ladies in it & one in the Congregation. Good fortune seems to follow me as I have /been/ put in Boats of the hale concern and have more libertiys than I did at Newburn. The Post Quarter Master seems to have learned that I was reported to be an honest man as he has put every thing in my hands & told me to take any thing I wanted without an order a thing that is not done often to soldiers.

So it shoes to me that a good name is better than prashous eintment. I have the best quarters of any one in the Regt not excepting the Courral. I will send you one of my orders so that you can see how they dee business. I was in the Qr Masters Department last night and they wer cutting up Beaf & he cut me 4 lbs of Beaf Stake & gave me. So I got one of the coeks to fry it & it made the hole Shops crew a Stake supper the first we have had since we left home. He told me any thing I wanted I should have fer nothng so you see I am bound to find friends if in a fouren clime. Well I guess hou have heard enough about me ....

Fort Mc Henry Aug 21. 1864

Dear Wife &amp; Children

It is Sunday morning. I get up this morning and washed up & ate my Breakfast of dry Bread & Coffee. Then went away in a quiet place red my Testament & as I trust oferd a sincear Prayer to God for my owne protection & that of my dear ones at home and I feal the asurance that God will hear and answer my prayer. I am well as usual. Have had a pretty buisey weak this weak .... There is 4 men to be hung here the 29. as you will see by a slip of paper I will put in this. The Galles that we have is only large enough for one. These men are to be hung all at once. So I have received orders to build a new one & am to work on it now have got to get it don this weak. It is not a verry pleasant job for me. I sert of emajin I am framing a Barn so I get along verry well. We had a good Prayer meeting Wednesday night in the Chappel. The Chaplaine is a verry interesting man. We have a splendid Band here of twenty pieces. They play a good deal every day. It makes me think all the mere of my own dear home as I hear their sweat music. I have plenty of T /tea, & wugar. The Qr Master I guess gave me a lb of T & 5 lbs of sugar so I can make me a cup any time I want to. Mr. Harriman is detailed as Harnise Maker & his shop joins mine so we go in too geather & buy a pint of milk in the morning & at night so we have good T & coffee. We dont draw as many rations as we did at Newburn. It comes hard for some of the boys but I get enough. As it is I dont have a raving apitite. I have lost 10 pounds since I came out but I shall begin to fat up by and by. There is but 5 Companys of our Regt hear now and they think that they shall go soon as a New York Regt is coming in here of one years men. But I think I shall stay until I am ordered away as I know I cant get in a better Plaice. If our Company goes I shall have my letters directed to the Qr Masters department & will let you know of the change ....

(7 - continued)

Sunday noon

I have attended services at the church & when I get back I feund a letter from you & George & Caddie & I must say I feal better for Sunday is a lonsen day in the Army to me .... I have received all the Papers you have sent. Reading matter is scarce here. My Cemferter has been a grate blessing to me since I came. I have net got it wet yet. It makes a Pillew and fether Bed for me. My time is  $\frac{1}{4}$  gone it seems short & will seen pas away. If Israel /brother in Washington/ dees net come down to see me I think that terds the last of my time I shall go up to see him but I cant tell. It will be hard to get a Pass here for the Officers cannot get a pass to go out of the fort. I should like to see Washington before I go home .... I wish you had some of our good Peaches out here. They are verry plenty. We get splendid ones for 5 cts a qt. I dont buy anything for fear of getting Poisoned as two of the Regt have been poisoned since we came in the fort. I have know doubt but what any of the Baltimoreiens would Kill us they dared to. They are a sewer looking lot....



Dear Caddy

I received your letter this morning and sit down to answer .... I am well. My work is now pretty hard but if we stay here we shall not have so much to do. The Qr Master says he dont want me only to look after the business but I cant help working . It is not natural for me to lay still .... I was pleased to see Samuel Gramman & George Cenn & little Charley Converse /Weburn visitors on 21 August/. They have gone to Washington except Charley he is going to stop here some time with his father .... There was but two letters for the Regt this morning & one of them was for me & two bundles of papers one from you and one from Mr. Shute for whitch give him my thanks .... I went into the prison this afternoon. They are a hard looking set of men as I ever saw whitch I shall have a good deal to tell you about when I get home. We had our prayer meeting last night. The Chaplaine was not there. There was not but 3 of us to take part in the meeting .... There was about 25 there .;.. The Chaplaine came in just as we wer singing the Doxology & he seemed pleased that we had sustained the meeting. He said he had unexpectedly had to attend a Court Marshall ....

\*Private Kimball's thirteen-year old daughter.

Fort McHenry Aug 29

Dear Wife & Children

I received your letter of Saturday this morning .... I did not write to you yesterday as I had no news to write. We expected to see these men hung this morning but we got disappointed in it as there reprieve came last night. But I did my duty. I had the machine all ready for them & was disappointed in not seeing how it worked. I guess there never was a job done that was watched closer than I have been on this & that caused more talk but it works like a charm. I put the ropes all up and we all supposed they would be hung but the President has seen fit to have their sentence changed to imprisonment /imprisonment?/. I think he seems to much lenity for I think if any one should be hung it is a spie. He seemed to feel anxious about it for after he sent the dispatch for fear that it would not get through in season he sent two men from Washington & they got in here between twelve & one last night. It is splendid weather here now. The wind is quite cool, and I feel first rate because I am in out of the Draft ....

Dear Wife & children

I received your letter of the 30 to day .... When I can hear from you every day or two & know that you are all well I feel quite contented but when I dont I feel uneasy till I do. I had rather buy Postage stamps & go without Peaches of the two. I am well as usual. Mr. Pearsens /Persens/ is quite sick & in the Hospital. He sent for me to come & see him to day & I went. He is in a good deal of trouble. He said the Doctors examined him to day & think he is going to have the Small Pox. You better believe I get away as quick as I could when he told me that .... I have been to work down to the Doctors this afternoon so I asked him about his case. He says he is afraid it is so & if it is so it will develop it self temerrow. They teek him out of the Hospital this afternoon & put him in the Pox Tent away off buy himself & do not alow any to go to him. It seems hard .... To day down to the doctors I have put up a frame over her /wife's/ bed to put a netting over to keep the mesquitos off. She treated me Kindley as the Ladies always doe you knew gave me as many Peaches as I wanted to eate & when I came away gave me a Bole of Peach Preserves. I have had nothing so nice to do since I came from home. I gave all in the shap some net forgetting the guard at the deer & have got enough for my Breakfast. Lent Seeley has just got back from Harpers Ferry has been up with 38 Prisoners Bounty jumpers & left them at their Regts. He says they are fighting every day there. He went near enough to see both lines of Battle. I believe I had rather not see it than to go but if they come here I believe I shall git my courage up enought to Kill a catt.



(11)

Fort McHenry 5. Sept

Dear Wife &amp; children

I received today your letter of Saturday .... I am well and hearty as usual.... Tell Mr. Wood money is no inducement to me to go to War. Weburn is not worth enough to hire me to go. I am glad they are doing so well in volunteering. Hope they will get their number .1... The boys are all well. I got Coffing and Butters detailed as Carpenters to day & they have moved in with me to night. They seem pretty graitful for the favor. They say any thing but military. When is Israel going back to Washington? I have a grate notion of gitting a pass to go there when he gets back if I can for I may never have another chance .... We have a library here in the Church & I have red two volumes through one the life of Whitfield which has been very interesting to me ....

(12)

Fort McHenry Sept 9. 64

Dear Wife &amp; children

.... I am verry tired and sleepy tonight but I thought I could net go to bed without commencing a letter to you. Last night I sat up with Mr. Piersens. He is a verry sick man .... The Capt Telegraphed to his Wife yesterday .... I hope that if I am sick I shall have my dear Wife to take care of me. I have had the promise they will let you knew imediatley but I dont want you to understand from this that I expect to be sick for I am getting along first rate. I have got a stove in the shep with a good Oven in it & the Post Qr Master has given me all the cooking utencils I want. Mr. Harriman & I bought  $\frac{1}{2}$  Pck of Potatoes Sweet for 40 cts & we buy a few aples for sauce so you see we live quite extery for soldiers. I seam to have good luck for which I bless God. I have had severill Pieces of scrip put in my hand by the Officers for Whome I have don small favors. To day after I got a job don for one of the N.Y. Officers he put a tew /two/ dollar bill in my hand. What do you think of that? There is nothing like doing right. I went out to night to get 5 cts worth of Peaches for sauce for our supper & I picked up money under the wagen to pay for them with .... We had a splendid Band Concern in the Church Wednesday night the best pallying I ever heard. The tickets are free and we are to have enjevery Tuesday night .... They are Germans ....

Saturday morn. Mr. Persens is dead. He died at 3 this morn. dropped off verry easy. His Wife & Mether got here at 6 this morn. but net in season to see him alive.. I pitty them verry much. The Coach that brought them takes them back againe. His beddy will be sent home in haste.

(13)

Fort McHenry Sept 11

Dear Wife &amp; Children

It is sunday night. I have had a good supper of Boiled Rice .... You inquire about my financies. I believe I told you in my last letter how I was getting along in that respect. I trust I shall net have to call en you for any money for I have the same amount that I had when I started from home. My wants are few. We get splendid Bread it is Bakers Bread and net sewer at all and I am en good terms with the Baker & he tells me whenever I am out to come to him and he will give me a lofe. He has done so a good many times. Sweet Potatoes are cheeps here now 40 cts  $\frac{1}{2}$  Peck & I hope you will get all you want for the children all love them so well. I have had two invitations to eat at the Generals the woman of the house takes quite a fancy to me. Both times I ate there she gave me hot Bisquit & Butter sauce hot Coffee & Milk & to me it was a graite treat. She gave me an invitation to day at 10 said she would give me a splendid diner but I declines en account of going to Church. I dont think it best to be bashful at such kind invitations but accept all that I can. The boys are getting quite jelious of me to think I get so many favors. I feal that I

am heighly favered & I feal to bless God for it .... I have charge of the sining /singing/ in church this afterneen. The Chaplain and 4 of us singers went over to the Hospital and had services in the social rooms. They wer verry impressive. There is about 60 in the Hospital. This fernen the Chaplaine preached a splendid sermon on the state of the country. Our company attended in a bddy out of respect XX of the Death of Mr. Persens .... If any of us are sick we can send home quick as there is a Telegraph Office here & it is only 1.00 dollar to send word home .... It is splendid weather here now & my health is good. I expect to begin to fat up now.

(14)

Fort McHenry Sept 15

Dear Wife &amp; children

I received your letter of Sunday yesterday .... How I would like to have you Xuddle me to night but I hope to before long. The time seems long but it is half out today. But I hope the last half will not go so slow. Some times I feal home sick but I try to be and contented as I can .... It was hard for me to leave home the first time but it /is/ nothing compared to this for I felt as though I must. I think if the hundred dayes men had not come they would not have tried to get ther men but would have let the Draft come. But I am out of it now any way. I went to Baltimore the 13 on buisness for the Q Mr went in his Carriage & had a chance to ride over almost all of the Citty. Had a fine time did my buisness all up prompt get back just before sundown. Hr told me yesterday that he should pay me 40 cents pr day extery. So you see how he apreciates my labor. I labor hard to do my duty & I know it is appreciated by the Kindnises I receive from all the Officers here. It will be a good thing if I get the extery Pay. It will buy us a barrel of flower. We had our little Prayer meeting last night. The Chaplaine was not there. There was but 3 to take part in the meeting but it was a geed meeting to us. Tuesday night we had another Concert & it was a rich treat to me. They Pay 1.00 a ticket at home for a concert that is not so geed as these are. I never herd anything equal to it. We are gein to draw over ceates. If I thought we should stay here our time out I should not but we may move any time & I should suffer without one .... There is 4 of our company in the Hospital. Winn & Knox are 2 of them. Knox has the Dyseentary but is doing well. I went in to see him this afterneen but he dont want his Wife to know it. Winn is better. I got the Papers to day. It is raining to night. I will send you my Pass so you can see how we get out of the fort.

(15)

Fort McHenry Sept 18. 64

Dear Wife

... My health is good. I have a plenty to do. I had 5 more Carpeters detailed this weak so now I have 12 men to work scatered over the Fort & it keeps me pr pretty buisay to keep them all going. I judge from the maney testamenies I receive that they are pleased with my stile of doing things. I told the Qr Master this mornning I was warring my shoes through on the bottem. He said he had some nice seed Beets & he would let me have a paire at the lodst cash price & let it go in on my extery pay so I shall count them as a present to me. He also told me he had it aranged for me to receive 40 cents a day extery & the other detailed men 25 cts so you see that is quite a little income. We had a splendid sermon to day by the Chaplaine of the 91 N.York Regt. He is a smart man he arived yesterday. I was introduced to him last night by the Qr Master. Tomerrow I am gein to make him a bed stead. He told me he was going to send for his wife to come out & live here with him. If I could have my Wife & childfoe here with me I should be perfectly happy. When I went to the Chaplains this mornning for the Hymns he asked me in & said he had a little stuf for me. He had sent up to Baltimore and bought me one peck of Sweet potatoes 1 peck of Aples 1 peck of Peaches which he insisted in my taking all for nothing. But you better believe I thanked him as well as I now how. It could not have cost less than two dollars. So you see how they treat me out here. The Peaches I distributed with the boys in the shop the Potatoes & Aples I shall keep for



Mr. Harriman & myself. I have a tew dollar Bill on the Woburn Bank that I brought from home & did not brake for fear I might be sick & as I have had a little addition to my perse since I have been here I want to give 1 dollar of it to George & the other to Jaimie for being such good boys ... and taking care of my garden, Pig and other things in generall ... I have drawn me an overcoat it is a very good one ... Knox is in the Hospital yet but is doing well. Otis Winn has got the Goute one of his legs is swelled up as big as two & he suffers a good deal paine ... Tomorrow I am going to work on a large floting target to be fired at by the large guns.

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Fort McHenry Sept 21. 64  
(Wednesday)

Dear Wife & Children

I received your letter of Monday today. It is now  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 8 in the evening. I have returned from our little Prayer meeting ... It has been a pretty exciting day here today. Last night a condemned criminal was brought in here to be shot today. He was a Reb Spy Traitor & all & a hard looking nut. I am to work in the Prison putting up cells so that I saw what I never want to again. He was shot between 9 & 10 today the whole force was out to witness the awful sean. It became my duty to prepair his Coffin & screw the poor fellow into it ... He gave the Chaplaine his pencil the only thing he had the Chaplaine gave it to me so I have one rebil Rellic. At 12 today there was 100 guns fired here in honor of the great victory of our Armys & it brought us up on our feat. Our shop is situated so that the guns fire right over our heads it like to have shook it all to pieces. The ring has not gon out of my head yet. I reckon it did wake up the Rebs in this vicinity. It made the prisoners stair some. I think this War is about played out. I have not a doubt but what Lincoln will be elected againe. The soldiers will all vote for him. I think the mean suns that will vote for Mclelon had better leave the country. I am in hopes we shall get home in season to vote. We had another concert last night ...

(17)

Fort McHenry, Sept 25. 64  
(Sunday)

Dear Wife

I have written two long letters to day and now I commence one for you. I received one to day from Mr. D Persons making inquiries about his brother's death. It seams he was a spiritualist but I did not know it until after his death ... He seamed a verry good & honest man but I am afraid he was not prepared for death. It is a poor time to prepare for death on a death bed. I rote to him all the perticuliars I could think of ... I have got from the Quarter Master a pass to go to Washington on Saturday to stay till Monday morning I have written Israel a letter today ... I had one of my sick head aches last night I did not get much rest but feal better this morning. Last evening we had a prayer meeting in the Church.

## (17) Continued

There was neather of the Chaplains there. So they insisted on my taking the charge. I read the last Chapter of Ephesians. I felt that I had the presance of God with me ... In the N.Y. Regt are almost all Methidist but the name is nothing if we are not Christians ...

## (18)

Fort McHenry    Sept 30 64  
(Thursday)

Dear Wife & Children

Only one month more. I received your letter to day & was glad as usual to hear that you were all well. I also received a box of good things which all came through in good shape & they come in a good time as I have not been very well this weak but got to day in good trim for the good things from home. & while I am writing I am eating the Grapes ... They are splendid so are the Pies and Snaps. I have just got in from an evening Prayer meeting. We had a good meeting. There was so many there I had to stand. It put me in mind of old times at Newbern and as we sung the song ... I have received a letter from Israel. He sayes they shall be delited to entertain me at Washington. It was one of his best letters. I let the Qr Master read it to day. It pleased him very much. Said he would go & see the Genorial him self after dinner for he could alwayes doo best with him then. He did. The old Gen said he would for he was a worthy man. So the QM gave me the pass & wanted me to go down & get him to sign it. I did. He wanted to know what tim I wanted to go. I told him about noon. He said come up to my Office in the morning & I will signe it. So you see that tommorrow I shall probley go to Washington. This I consider is a grate favor as he will not give an officer a pass to go to Baltimore unless they can show him that they have business of importance ... There was the boddy of a man washed ashore close to our shop this morning. He proved to be one of the 91 Regt and had been missing since Sunday night. He had Four hundred & seven dollars on his Person. He was a hard looking sight. He was buried this afternoon.

## (19)

Fort McHenry    Oct 4. 1864  
(Misdated: Written on Tuesday,  
Oct 5)

Dear Wife & Children

Last Saturday I went to Washington & got back last night at  $\frac{1}{2}$  pst 6 O.C. So it gave me two days at Washington. I found Ivory (Ivory S. Kimball) at the Depot waiting for me. Took me in the horse cars & carried me up to where Israel boards where I was received with open alms. In the morning I went to church with them. Dr. Gueleys (?) Presbytarian. Herd a good sermon & some good Organ playing. In the afternoon Israel, George & Ivory & myself walked almost all over the Cittey & took a grand external view of Washington & Monday morning Ivory got excused from duty & devoted the day to me. We went over all the publick Buildings & what I saw I cannot

## (19) Continued

discribe to you with Pencil but if I should live to get home I shall have a good deal to tell you. I saw the President stood beside him for 5 minutes. He is a noble looking man. His picture does not do him justice. I have seen more in my 3 days excurtion than in all my life before. This may seem wild to you but I think it is so. When I came away they gave me one dollar a piece to pay my faire. So you see my money afairse are bound to come out all right ... Ivory...got me two Patent Office reports & got them franked & put in the ofice for me so you will get them in a few days... My health is not very good. I have been quite poorly for two weeks. This morning I went up to see the Doctor. He says I have got the jandous. He gave me a pil to take at 10, a dose of salts to take at 2 this afternoon and some other medicine to take once in 4 hours. Thinks he can help me right of. He is a kind man to me & I know he will do the best he can. You kneed not worry about me for I am not so I cannot attend to my business. Have no appitite & what I eat seems to hurt me. I got a quarter of a pound of good T last night at Baltimore for 60 cents & I am goin to get some White sugar to go with it. I shall write to you often & let you know how I get along. I was disappointed at not getting one from you at noon to day. I put in my pass so you can see it. I should like for you to save it. The Qr Master said when I went away that he did not believe there was another man in the Fort that could leave got a pass to go to Washington. Love & Kisses to all from George.

## (20)

Fort McHenry Oct 5th 1864  
(Actually 6th, Wednesday)

Dear Wife & Children

I was glad to day to hear from you all... I have felt pretty slim to day but feal quite bright to night... My Jandous (jaundice) has come out pretty well & I suppose I am quite a yellow boy... I am goin to get along first rate. The Doctor sayes he will keep me on my Pegs. One of our boys has been in the Hospital sick for a fortnight with the jaundous. He was discharged yesterday. He came in to se me to day. He sayes the Dr. is puting me through the same corse... I have had a good maney of my Christian friends in to see me of the N.Y. Regt. They were afraid I was sick as I was not at the Prayer meeting. The Chaplaine came down to see me to day. I had a present of 12 sheats of this Paper to day ...

## (21)

Fort McHenry, Oct 9, 1864  
(Sunday)

Dear Wife & Children

I received your letter to day of the 7 & was glad to hear from you. It has been a cold day to day & I have stuck close to the fire all day. I am getting along first rate have got the jandous almost all out of me never had medicen work better on me... I have not been very well since I have been out here but thought it might be the climate. I have not been so light since I was a boy. I weigh less than 150 lbs but I am in hope to fat up before I come home... I bought  $\frac{1}{2}$  pck of sweat Potatoes & I am going



(21) Continued

to have a Peck of apples tomorrow so I shall have enough to eate. The Regt except the detailed men have gon on an experdition into Maryland. They went in Transports & it takes them one day & night to go so you see I get rid of one hard job by being detailed. They went aboard the Boat at 7 last night. The wind blew hard and they must have had a hard time. Mr. Winn arrived hear to day after his son that is in the Hospital. Kelley was with him but I have not seen them. I maide out the skedule of Lumber for a large building to be put up here yesterday to be 30 feet by 50, 2 storys heigh with a Piazza all round, 5 feet wide for Officers quarters. How do you get along for money. If you want any you must borrow of John for we shant be Paid of till we get home...

(22)

(This letter is the only one on a letterhead: Head Quarters, 2nd Separate Brigade, 8th Army Corps, Defences of Baltimore.

Fort McHenry, Md., October 16, 1864  
Sunday

Dife & Children,

I received a letter from you yesterday of the 12... I am gaining first rate and have a strong apetite I dont want you to say any thing about Brown Bread & Squash Pies untill I get home for it only makes me feal bad. Our Company live pretty mean. Since I have been sick ther stuff makes me sick to think of it. They have a good maney of those Salt junk soops. The thought of them makes me sick. So I have to buy almost every thing I eate. I pick up a little money once in a while & it works in pretty handy. Friday morning I went to the Fort to get a paile of watter & coming out I picked up in the path 60 cents in scrip that some one had dropped. I think I am a lucky man. Our Company got back yesterday & today received marching orders to be in readiness at a moments notice every man but the detailed men. It is shure I shant leave the Fort untill we come home. I dont know as they will be willing to have me go home when our time is out. Agetent Wyer told me this weak that Gen Moris liked me so well he was goin to have me on his Staff but I dont think I shall axcept. I drew the Plans & figured up the Lumber yesterday for another building 150 feet long 40 wide to be put up immediately. I have 16 men to work now. I dont have to do anything myself only to give directions to others. If you could be with me one day you would think I was of some consequence here. This morning we had services in the open aire as we are firing the church. This afternoon we attended a funeral of one of the Regulars. I should like to see you with a full set of teeth when I get home. My extory Pay will get you a good set. I expect to get 40 cents pr day for all my time here. So I shant be as poor as you may think ... One of our Boys is just gon in the Hospital. He is liable to die at aney time. His name is Flag, Henry Flag's son. He has the consumption & has been spitting Blood & I am afraid he is not prepared to die.

(23)

Fort McHenry, Oct 19, 1864  
(Wednesday)

Dear Wife & Children

I received a letter from you to day of Monday ... (illegible) has heard

## (23) Continued

rumor that they are to start home one week from next Monday. That time will soon come but I shant place much confidence in the stories until I start for home. We wer paid of to day up to the first day of Sept one month an ten days 21.60 cents but I think I shant send it home as I am coming home as quick ... Dr. Curennes (?) sent for me to go and see his Wife said she had a little work for me to do. I went down this afternoon. She is the lady I have spoken to you about before as being kind to me... I am getting along first rate. I have been rasing a large building to day. The QM said he never saw so large a days work don as we did yesterday. They are not use to so much work don by soldiers as we do. A part of our Company are doing guard over the Baltimore stores that have been shut up for being dislaival. They arrested two Car lodes this weak & sent them to Washington. They took 60 sixty out of one store Proprietors and Clerks. That is the way to serve them. I went to the city Monday on business for the QM and had a fine time.

## (24)

Fort McHenry, Oct 23, 1864  
(Sunday)

Dear Wife & Children

I am in hopes this is the last letter I shall have to date from this place for rumor sayes we start for home the 27, Thursday. If so we shall be at home Saturday... Brigham & M----- (?) went to Baltimore to day. They saw Mr. Clements Boy of the 8 Regt. He has had a fever & been in the Hospital for some time but is fat & harty now. My health is good. The detailed men have our own rations & cook them in the shop. There is 10 of us. The Chaplaines Wife sent me a squash Pie Thursday. It was a nice one & it reminded me of home. I found out yesterday that I shall not get aney extory pay as the department will not allow it. I dont caire if I can get home safe... I expect we shall go to our Company Wednesday. York has been for severral days ... Dolever is sick in the Hospital but I think will be able to go home with us. Flag is still alive but will never see his home on earth...

## (25)

Fort McHenry, Oct 26, 1864  
(Wednesday)

Dear Wife & Children

I was in hopes I should not have to write to you again from this place. But the prospects are now that we shant come home before next week as they have no troops to releive us with so I shall settle down as contented as possible & wate our turne... Mr. James Ellis & wife were here yesterday. I was glad to see them. I shoed them over the Fort. Went down to the Prison & Hospital shoed them som live Rebs. Monday there was 500 hundred brought in here from Sheridans army & tonight 428 more came in & I hope they will have to stay here till the war is over. Last night Mrs. Flagg & Mrs. Persons came out here to see her son who is just gon. It is doubt full

(25) Continued

if he lives through another day. I never (saw) a person run down so quick as he has it is quick Consumption...

(26)

Fort McHenry, Oct 30, 1864  
Sunday

Dear Wife & Children

Another Sunday still finds us hear and there is no sertainty when we shall be releived but I think we may have orders to go at any time... I have had some handsom presents of money this weak which will make you laf when I get home. It is enough to make quite a start in the Bank... but I dont want you to say any thing about it as it will make some of my Brother chips here feel bad. I went into the Hospital & sat with Flagg 2 hours this afternoon. He is just gon. His mother sits beside him and cries all the time. It was hard for me as it is natural for me to Weap with those who Weap & rejous with those who rejous. But I fear he is not prepared to die. It is a poor time for a man to prepair to die on his death Bed. I went to Baltimore yesterday afternoon got me some Butter & apples... The 8 Regt went home to night.

Monday morning. Flagg died last night. It is a fine morning & I am anxious to leave for home. Love and kisses to all. George.