

on the Potomac  
(the Garrison)

Camp at Whiteford Dec 25<sup>th</sup> 1862

My Dear Wife

I received a letter from you last Saturday night, but have not had time to answer it, nor have I now. This is just to let you know how I am. We are laying here guarding the river. We took up our line of march on Sunday morning and went into camp yesterday. There was fighting all night last night just below us, and we are expecting an attack every moment, but we have a very commanding position. We have arrested some 7 or 8 spies within the last 24 hours. Our men are sharp and shrewd. We are 21 miles below Harpers Ferry, and 6 miles from Point of Rock (below), by looking on the map you can see just where we lay.

The Rebs are gathering in force on the hills opposite of and we expect every moment to hear the infernal scream of shell flying over our heads, but we lay in such a position that they cannot throw any into our camp. We are in all 4000 strong. But with all the dangers ahead we are not going to be cheated out of our Christmas dinner. I fraged a large fat turkey yesterday from a bloody Reb.

I wish you all a merry Christmas, and do not let any seeming dangers to me detract from your happiness. For if there was no danger there would be no honor. The Medical Director at Washington has asked twice to have me detailed to go into the medical corps of the Army of the Potomac, but our Col has flatly refused at my own request, and not only that he said he