

Civil War Letter - July 7, 1861

This letter was written in a Confederate camp along the Potomac River, just south of what is now Quantico Marine Base, in Virginia. The letter was written by my great grandfather, Joseph Marion Wyatt, and was sent to his parents, William Richard Baynham Wyatt and Martha Francis (Scott) at their home, Edgewood, near Fredericksburg, Virginia. Joseph was 23 at the time and had left Emory Henry College to enlist in the Confederate Army.

The date of the letter is exactly two weeks before the first battle of Manassas (Bull Run) and his beliefs reflected in the letter (that the war would be over in 6 weeks) were common beliefs at the time. Joseph and his regiment marched to Manassas, but they arrived late in the evening after the battle had ended. He served throughout the War and fought in battles including Antietam and Gettysburg.

Joseph met his third cousin, Ida May Wyatt during the War and returned to her home in Clifton [now a bed and breakfast near Monticello in Charlottesville, Virginia] and married her there in 1870. Joseph and Ida had three children including my grandfather, William Richard Baynham Wyatt II whose son, Joseph Marion Wyatt Jr., was my father.

Joseph Marion Wyatt died in 1891 at a Confederate Soldier reunion in Richmond, Virginia at the age of 53.

Joseph B. Wyatt

[I have tried to transcribe verbatim, but some words are difficult to decipher – JBW]

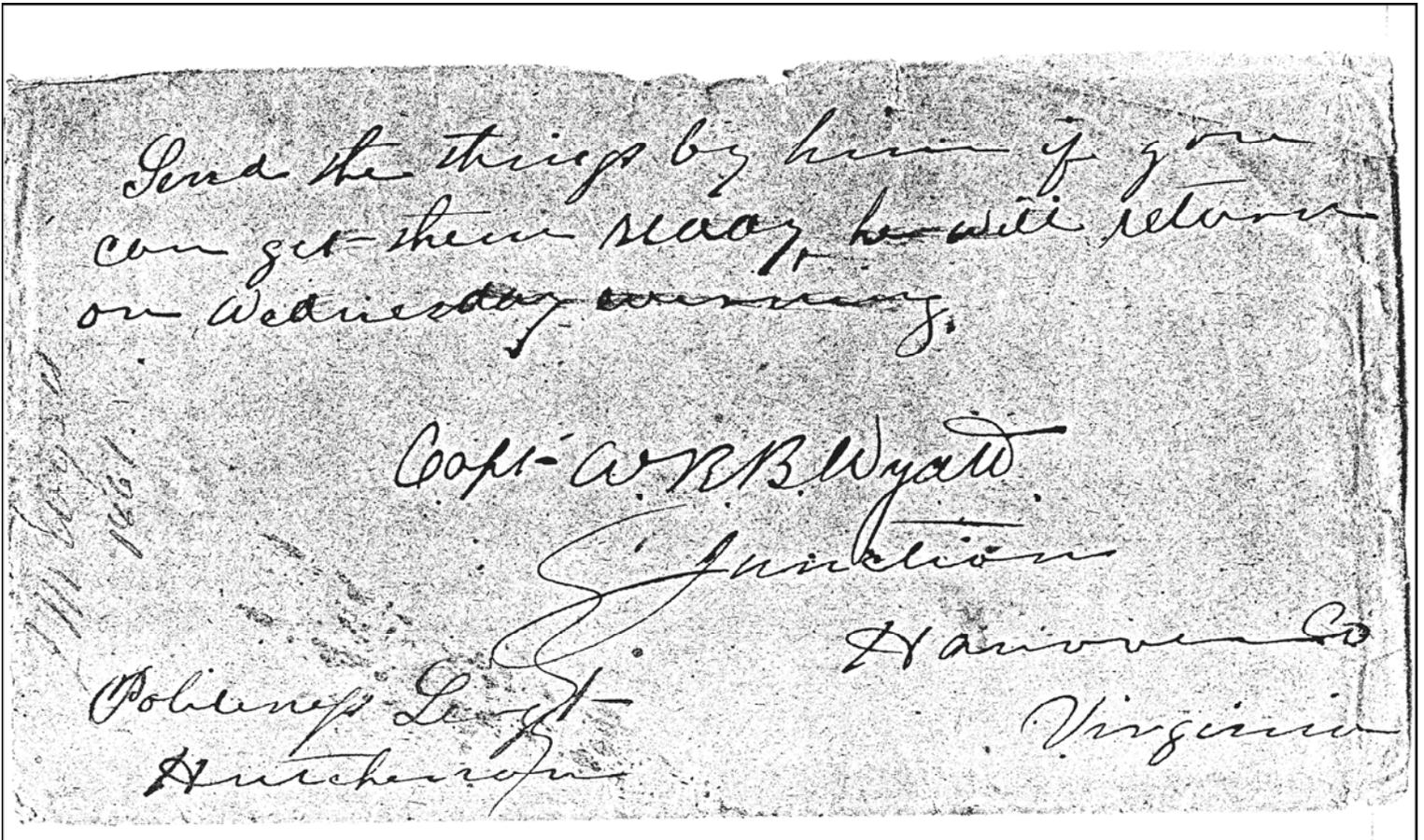
Envelope:

Send the things by him if you
can get them ready he will return
on Wednesday evening.

Capt. W R B Wyatt
Junction

Pob? Li??t
Hutchison

Hanover Co.
Virginia



Camp Marlboro Point
Stafford, Co Va, July 7th 1861

Dear Parents,

I arrived safely in camp Thursday about two o'clock & found everything all right & all of our boys tolerably well. I had a dull time coming up by myself & hearing soon after getting on at Chesterfield that they're fighting at Matthias Point & that our Regt. had

gone down. I felt quite lonely thinking that I would have to take a short walk by myself. I didn't like it much. When I got to Fredericksburg, they told me there that probably they would have a big fight that day. That eight steamers were lying off at Matthias ready to begin, & told me that part of our Regt. had gone down the night before. Our small company of brave men were left behind as they usually are since we have split into little fragments. It is a great sin for us to stay together as a company, & if I was Capt., I would resign my commission & tell the men to go as they pleased, to fight or go home - or not. I think it is doubtful whether

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as he informed us this morning by sending two ships down upon our battery and giving us the war salute by firing several big guns at us. We returned the fire with spirit and after

as he informed us this morning by sending two ships down upon our battery and giving us the war salute by firing several big guns at us. We returned the fire with spirit and after exchanging about 8 shots she hauled off & went down the river. You may rest assured that Congress has declared War, & war it will be, as soon as things are positively known. Alexandria will be attacked & taken, & I hope that they will show the Yankee no quarter, ask for none & show none. In less than six weeks from today, their congress will be begging that we show ^{them} a little favor & give them a little time to think over the matter. I don't know that it is right but I wish that they may all meet the fate that they deserve & that is death. As soon as I got home they put me on duty and such a time I had you may imagine. I had ten prisoners & some two or three of them drunk & such cutting up, I wanted to tie them down & gag them, but the officers of the guard wouldn't let me do as it:

Most of our sick boys are out, & will soon be well enough for duty. I forgot to say tell you when talking about Matthias, that we had no fight there & the boys had the pleasure of marching down there Wednesday night & back Thursday morning. The Rebels are certainly frightened out of their wits, & the dispatch of yesterday says that Johnson has hemmed old Patterson up in Martinsburg with 3400 men. If they do take them I hope they will kill every one of them for it will be too expensive to feed so many rascals.

Give my best love to all & tell them that I am well & am anxious to have a b??ch with ?? ?? fellows. Write soon to you
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