

William H. Boyle to Isaac H. McCauley

Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, 5 July 1863.

Autograph letter signed, 2 pages.

Chambersburg, July 5, '63

Friend M'Cauley,

Having an opportunity to send a letter outside the Confed: lines I will give you a short account of our situation. The rebs have stripped this valley of everything. All the Stores – Book, Dry Goods, Groceries, Mills and Warehouses have been emptied. There is not enough left for the people to live on for two weeks. Both railroads are destroyed. All the new depot building are down. Many farms are destroyed by roads over them and encampments upon them. The telegraph lines are all destroyed. We are completely cut off from the outside world. We have had no northern papers here for over two week. We get our news via Richmond. I bought three Richmond papers from one of their newsmen on the street for 25 cents – for the three. The outrages committed on private property and on individuals have been dreadful. Murder, rape, robbery and arson are the [2] names by which you designate a few of their atrocities. Gen. Lees order to respect private property was laughed at by the vallains that compose his army. They have destroyed our Lodge room – all the regalia has been carried off or torn up to get off the lace and bullion. Not an article of regalia is left. The lamp fixturs shared the same fate. When they took possession of the Hall I saw the officer in charge and begged of him to respect that room-he promised me it should not be disturbed and placed a guard over it. The guard broke in three times and plundered it. M L [*illegible*] and Stumbaugh's offices are destroyed. The safes are broken open – yours among the rest – the book cases thrown down all the books carried of or scattered about, the papers strewn over the floor and tramped in the mud. Such a picture of ruin as the office presents you cannot imagine try your best. The town is one vast and nasty horse-stable. It smells so bad we can scarcely live in it. I am fearful of an epidemic. The country people fared worse than the town. All sorts of outrages were commited on their persons and property. This morning about a dozen of wagons with wounded from Gettysburg passed through here. They were followed and captured. The wagons and horses were run off and the wounded left in the Hospital which the rebs: have still here.. The wounded say the fight was going against

them up to Saturday morning when they left. If they retreat through here I fear they will destroy the town. I will write to you soon again if we can get a mail through. I send this to be mailed at Harrisburg.

Yours W. H. Boyle