Camp Near Brandy Station Va.
Dec the 11th 1862

My Dear Wife [Amanda Kershaw Stepter]

I have just recived your Welcom letter and i was glad to hear from you. But i am Sory to that you and the children have Been so porly. you say that you are Better and i hope By the time this reaches you that Lew [Lewis Stepter] will Be well again. i Dont want anything to happen to that Boy or any the rest of our little famly. i am well at present and have got perty well rested once more and i Dont think that we will have any more trips this winter unles old Lee undertakes to flank us again and i Dont think that he will doo that as it is too late in the Season. we have got on to good quarters and the rebs put them up for us that is

one good thing thay Done for us. When we drove them from Kel[l]y's ford on the raphanock river we found that thay had put up winter quarters and good ones thay are to[o] little log houses with good Big fire places in them. the prisners that we took told us thay thought that we had gone in to winters and thay were ordered to Build them. But thay had to leave them in a hurry. But we Did not go in to them untill after the last Battle the one i am in is a good one thare is four good men in it Bill Thompson.  Bill

Davis, West Pierce, and myself. So you see there is a good crowd and I think that we will stay here this winter. You want to know how far we are from Washington.

[p.3]
We are seventy miles from there and you want to know if I can get a furlough that is more than I can tell you at present. But I am going to try when they give them out. It is a long way to come. But if I can get off[f][f] I will come. You don't want me to come without a furlough. You need not be afraid of that. You can't leave this army without a furlough. If I was at Harpers Ferry, I could easy come. But I can't do it here. Tell Jim or Isac Taylor that they must be sure and send me the paper with Heanon and King's fight and they get one and tell Alec Hagerty that I started to go down to collect his rent, but couldn't get there. I was within eight miles of his place on the plank road. But couldn't get there.

[p.4]
But I will make it the next time. If their land is like the Land I saw I wouldn't take it as a gift. Where we had the fight was twenty-two miles from Fredricksburg. You seen by the papers it was called the Wilderness or Locust Grove and it is well named for it is nothing. But pines and swamps with heare and thare a small patch of cleared ground and when we were falling back here again we travelled the plank road to within miles of Fredricksburg and the land was all like. I got a letter from Wash. I will send it to you. He has fine times of it. Tell Emma and Will that I will sleep with them when I come home. I got your other letter and the stamps. Christmas will soon.

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3 [Wesley A. Pierce, Private, 6th MD, Co. B: Discharged May 23, 1865 with Disability. Wilmer, etc. supra, p. 229.]
Be here and I wish that I could take my dinner with you. But that can't be. So I wish you all a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Your loving husband,

James F. Stepter

Write soon.