Camp Near Bealton

1863

My Dear Wife,

I have just received your welcome letter and I am sorry to hear that you have the rheumatic in your arm get it cured as soon as you can as it is a bad complaint to have. I am well at present with the exception of a bad cold I was out rabbit hunting and got wet. But I am getting better of it. We have got through working off the railroad for the present. I tell you the rebels made a complete job of tearing it up. We have been mustered in for pay and I expect that we will get paid off by the fifteenth of this month. They will pay me 26 dollars. I am glad to hear you speak so well of the children you tell me that you are going to send Emma to school. That is right for I think she is old enough to go. I want them to learn all they can. You tell me in your letter that Amos is going to renew that note. I want you to tell me in your next letter if he ever paid you anything and how much and I want you to send me a note in the next letter you write and tell me how much had been paid on the note give me the different dates that it was paid on. You will find them on the back of the note. Give me the date the note was drawn up on. You can write me a note just like the one that you have got. But don't send the old one and don't let Amos renew the note until you get another letter from me.
and if you think that you will Need the money tell him so and Don't have
the Note renewed if he Says that he can't pay it i will Draw you up a new
Note for him and his Mother to Sign i am glad that you went to see Mary
and Mark for i think the out[ing?] will Doo you good and i want you to
tell me in your next what your Mother intends to Doo i was very Sorry
that i Did not get home to vote But it could not be helped But as Soon as
they Begin to give furloughs i will try and get one i am sorry that Isac
Taylor got his arm Broke But i expect that he was trying to Show a
mank[?] when it was Done tell your Jim that i will Bet him a Drink that
Heanon Whips tom king tell him to Send me a clipper [clipping?] once in
a while they will Be very exceptable Down here and i want him to Send
me the paper with the fight in when it comes off you tell me that you
have got the childern thair winter clothes i am glad of it and i want you to
get yourself some good warm clothes if you think you ne[e]d them Old toby
has not got here yet i heard that thay got home to vote the rebs are getting
hard up for something to eat i heard that all of the prisners that we to[o]k
at the Battle of Bristow Station had a little ham[m]er and a Nail in thair
pocket to crack and pick nuts with as that is what thay live on now i Don't
tell this for truth

[p.3]
there is going to Bee another Draft this winter i want you to tell me what
the people think of it up thair it will Bring some of the cop[py]erheads in in
this time as the three hundred Dollar law has played out i hope the
government will send us Back to Maryland to enforce the Draft thair for
there is some in cecill county that i woud like to see in the service of uncle
Samuel i must Bring this to a close i want you to rite me a long letter the
next time if your arm is well enough wich i hope will Be tell ema.
[daughter Mary Emma] to keep her hug for me and tell her and Wille [son William H.] as well i will send them some money when i get paid off and they must buy Leaw [son Lewis] some candy too as he is a curtain man.

[p.4]
i think there will be a move in this army before i write to you again give my love to all and keep a portion for yourself hoping to hear from you soon again i will bid you good by for the present from you loving but absent husband.

James F Steptoe