Camp Near Brandy Station

April the 4th  Va.

[1864]

My Dear Wife-

I have recived your welcome letter and it found me well and I hope these few lines may find you all the same. I am glad that Lew [son Lewis] has got well again. Well about getting home it has played out and we will have to stay away a while longer. Two companys of our regiment were ordered home. But we were not the lucky ones and I tell you that we are all very much disappointed. But we will have to put up with it. That is all. I am glad that Tom is going down to Maryland again and I think that is the time for you to go and I hope that you may get along without any trouble. You can make a little garden and that will be a great help to you. I know that will is glad that you are going down home.

We have had a moving since I wrote you last. We had to change camps with some of the other troops. But we are not far from where we laid before and it is a better camp. It is on higher ground. But I don't think that we will stay here long for as soon as the weather sets I think that we will cross the rapidan river again to try our luck under U.S. Grant. You tell me that Tom said that he thought that I had turned wobbly head. I am one and all the rest of the Boys are the same. But one or two and they are of no amount. Tell him that I am sorry that he is a coper head for it is that party that keeps this war up. But they can't elect McClenan next fall for the president. Old Abe is the man for it. Little Mac is played out. Mr-
Thompson is not Better yet Bill got a letter the other day.

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i Seen By the paper that William Kershaw had got a school out in West Virginia and I am glad that he had turned out Such a fine man and I wish that he may have luck in his new Situation you Say that I have Been to the top of the lader and am coming Down I know it and one Summer and one winter more will fetch me to the Botom of it I am Sorry that Will [son William H.] will loes his School when he gets Down in maryland you will have to try and Send him to hayes after he gets acquainted with the place I am glad that he learns so fast tell ema [daughter Mary Emma] that She wont get to Sleep with her pap for Some time yet But to Be a good Girl and i will come home after while and I think that I can Stay there when I Doo get home three years is long enough for me to Be Down in the wildernes at one time.

[p.4]
You Say that you wish that I was home the Night you rote your letter and you would make it all rite with me and I thought my Self that I woud have Been home Before this and I had old Dick in good order for work But I tell you that him and me Both got Disappointed But I will give him a mes[?] when I Doo get home that's so when you get moved I will Direct the letetters in your own Name we have not Been paid off yet and I Dont know when the paymaster will get down here I would like him to come Before we move So that I can Send the money home to you for the mail wont be regular after the campain comences ask Dello [Kershaw] if She has forgot me altogether I think that She has as She never Sends me any word now I must Bring this to a close give my love to al and rite Soon from your
loving husband, James F Stepter