Bell Plains, Virginia

May 20th, 1864

Dear Del,

As you will see by the date of letter we are fairly into the land of rebs. I caught up with the regt. between Harrisburg and Baltimore where a train was off the track. They gave us no opportunity to write until we arrived here nor can I now tell if this will reach you, but hope it will for when we leave here there will be no possible (sic) chance for sixty days. We are now ten miles from Fredricksburg and 23 from the main army guarding supplies. How long we will be kept here I can not say but expect not long. There is no danger of our haveing (sic) much fighting to do as we are not mounted and though they can use us for Guards they will not probably attempt to make us fight as infantry. So far as I am concerned I would as soon fight as infantry as cavalry. You must not feel uneasy if you do not hear from me till the fighting is over for I will certainly turn up all right. I dare not write anything in the way of news though I am quite certain I know nothing but what the rebs do for their scouts are all arround (sic) our camp. Have you heard from Annie since I left. How is she suited with country life. If I do not return before July on your vacation you must go and see them. And go prepared

to stay if it suits you. It is but a little over a week since I saw you and yet it seems a month. If I get out this time I will stay at home the rest of my days. I think I will get to come home by fall anyhow if not sooner. Give my love to all at home. I send you my sweet little pet lots of love and plenty of kisses.

Direct to Bell Plains care U.S. Sanitary Commission and then possiably (sic) it will get through. A member of the USLC will take this to Washington.

Your loving husband,
Steve

This was written on the ground not a very good desk.