Camp Opposite Fredericksburg  
January 16, 1863

My dear Jane

I wrote you yesterday, and for fear I may not have an opportunity again for some time I will devote a part of this Evening to sending you this note. Our mail arrangements may not again be so regular for a good while. We have received marching orders & will be off from here at 8 o'clock tomorrow morning. We were ordered to prepare three days cooked rations and sixty rounds of ammunition. Last night was the stormiest one we experienced since we left home. Besides a tremendous wind it rained torrents. Today the wind continues but it is clear and dry. Willie was out in the rain all night. His gum blanket kept some of the wet off, but not all. He came back whistling this morning as if it was nothing at all. We are all sorry to leave here after making so many improvements. We don't know where we are going to. The rumor is that Second Army Corps crossed the Rappahannock yesterday eight miles above here, and that we are to follow. Another rumor is that a corps of nine months men from Baltimore arrived at Aquia Creek two days ago for the purpose of relieving us and that we go to Baltimore. The facts you will probably see in the newspapers before you get this. These movements have made a great stir in our kitchen. We are cooking up everything we have and packing up knapsacks & haversacks as we used to do, but have almost forgotten how, it comes so awkward now. We have to leave behind a lot of stuff we can't carry, among other things a large jar of good molasses Kate sent to Willie. We also find that we have been getting very lazy, and perhaps this movement is designed to keep us in good fighting order. I heard last night that Robert and Jim M'Knight had started off. Robert said he would be around to see us before he left, and I can hardly think he has gone off so suddenly.

You will direct your letters as usual, for wherever we may go they will be forwarded after us. I was very lucky in getting all my sewing done before we left. I was just sewing on the last button when the orders came.

Will write you again as soon as I have an opportunity.

With much love

Your ever

William