

Hdqrs: Orange Co. 20 Apr '64

Genl

I recd. last night your letter of the 18th by your Courier. I regret that your troops are coming in so slowly. Can you not expedite them? As far as I can judge by the reports of our scouts, the enemy are all prepared to advance, packed, provisioned, and equipped, & waiting only for the ground to dry. Around us it is dry now, save in spots, & we may expect them any day. Their Artly., ambulances, pontoons are brought South of the Rappr. but I cannot ascertain what route they will take. Sutlers, bakers, sick, women (?) sent to Washington. I have not heard of Burnside's expedition leaving Annapolis, & have no way of learning save through their papers. Reports from Richmond recd. from deserters state that he is assembling his troops at Williamsburg. A dispatch from Elzey recd. last night reports upon information of a citizen of Williamsburg, that he was landing troops at Yorktown and Gloucester Point. I think it doubtful. It certainly lacks confirmation. As to your going to Petersburg you can but judge whether you can be spared from your command and what arrangements you can make for it. Your visit there, if not inconvenient & disadvantageous to your troops may have the effect you anticipate, & if you think best you can go. Let me know what troops have arrived and who will command in your absence & I send the authority in case you should want to use it. I have endeavored to push forwd. the entrenchments around Richmond for (yours? or years?) - - They are in pretty good condition now except for the injury sustained through the winter & they are connected with Chaffin's Bluff - If you go to P—you must return quickly.

Very Truly

R E Lee

Genl

Genl J Longstreet