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Bachelor's Creek, N.C. April 17th 1863

Dear and respected friend!

Your welcome letter dated March 29th did arrive in due time and I would answer sooner if I did not expect every moment another letter from you acknowledging the reception of the humble testimonial signed for you by the members of Comp. K., I was very anxious to know of the above paper was in your hands, and I was much pleased yesterday in receiving your letter stating it was all right.

I hope these lines will find you in better health; the change of climate is probably the cause of your sickness; but the tender cares you are surrounded with and summer days being near; I sincerely hope you will promptly be released(?).

News here are scarce and as you know, they are often very contradictory; you probably know that Gen'l Foster was at Washington /N. C./ with about 1500 men and thus he was attacked by a great force of rebels; many

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times he was summoned to surrender but he answered that he considered such summon as an insult and that he would not be insulted long more. ~ Foster sent to Newbern for reinforcements and Gen. Spinola's (?) brigade went to assist him, but it was said that those militia men did run away at the first fire and Spinola had to come back to Newbern. Foster kept his position there and the night before last he runned the blockade and arrived safe in Newbern after leaving his men in Washington; he took 4 regiments with him, also some artillery to attack the rebels by the rear; He was in our camp yesterday afternoon and after his encounter with Col Jones he left with his men for Kinston. – Shortly after that our regiment was ordered to be ready for march with 2 days rations, and our men left at () last night. As I was on piquet(?) I am left in camp. At the present time /noon/we hear a heavy firing and when our regiment come back I will, perhaps, have some interesting news to send you.~ Since your departure we have lost five men in the regiments; four of Comp. I were taken prisoners on the () road and one of Comp. F. Was killed when on fatigue, by the fall of a tree.

Captain Clay is well and in good spirits, but Lieut Clay is in camp, officer of the guard and

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he do not feel very well; I heard that their intention was to resign but it is not a certainty. In regard to the vacancy of 2nd Lieut., It was said that Sergt. Major Ward was chosen by Capt. Clay but it appears Ward has another place and it was reported to me that the Adjutant did propose Loxley to Capt. Clay, but without success; then the adjutant said to Capt. that he will have to promote one of his sergeants; The answer was that he would not do it. - A few days ago our Company set a petition to Col. Jones. stating our company would be disgrace if a stranger was sent to us to fill the vacancy. What will be done? I do not know. ~

I w w-i-s-h th-this w w wa war b b be over, I g-got s s some p par particular b bus business ho ho home.

Patience is the mother of all the Christian virtues and it is a great consolation to know that everything has an end.

I'll send you their best regards, but in particular Sergt. Merrick, Hoffa, Handon /the baby/, & Corp. Greene.

I hope you will write to me often and in bringing my letter to a close I address you that I remain

your true friend

(?) Charles Ricken.