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Bachelors Creek, N.C. April 17th 1863

Dear and Respectful 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 test. Inmemorial(?) sign for you by the members of camp. OK, I was very anxious to know of the above prayer was in your(), and I was much pleased yesterday in receiving your letter stating it was alright.

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 in summer days being one are(?), I sincerely hope you well promptly be cleared(?).

news here are scarce and as you know, they are often very contradicting; you probably know that general foster was at Washington N. C. with about 1500 men and thus he was attacked by a great force of rebels; many he was summoned to surrender but he answered that he considered such someone as an insult and that he would not be insulted long more(?).~ foster sent to Nebern for reinforcements and Gen. ()'s brigade went to assist him, but it was said that those militia men did run away at the first fire and() had to come back to Newbern after leaving his men in Washington; he took his regiments with him, also some military to attacked the rebels by the rear; He was in our camp yesterday afternoon and after his encounter with () Jones he left with his men for Kinston. – Shortly after that our regiment was order to be ready for March with 2 days caution, 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 came back I will perhaps have some interesting news to send you.~ Since your departure we have lost five men in the regiments; four of camp I. were taken prisoners on the () () and one of camp F. Was killed when and 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 there (their) intention was to resign but it is not a certainty. In regard to the vacancy of 1st 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 Coxley 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 an stranger was sent to us to fill the vacancy. What will be done? I do not know. ~

I w-i-s-h th-this w w wa war b b be over, I g-goit s s some p par particular () to be 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 Serg. Merrick, Hoffa, Handon [the baby], & Corp. Greene.

I hope you will write to me often and in bringing any letter to a close I address you that I can.

your true friend Charles Ricken.