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Camp of the 53 near Raleigh, N. C.

April 22, 65

Dear Father and Mother. I will try and address you a few lines this pleasant evening to inform you that I am in the best of health and spirits hoping these few lines may arrive safe to your hand and find you all enjoying the same great blessing for it is health alone that makes a good and well satisfied soldier. I received a letter from Barbary yesterday, stating that produce and everything was coming down and that the Oil fever was about subsiding, also that the draft had been enforced. I was sorrow for some of the boys and the rest it made no difference though these men will never see the front. I wrote you a letter or too from Goldsboro giving you something of a history of our travels through the Carolinas, we marched out of Goldsboro the 10 of April heading for the capitol of N. C. the Army moved in three grand columns the 14 and 30 Corpses called the army of Georgia taking the left flank commanded by Gen. O. O. Howard the 10 and 23 corpses forming the center command by Gen. Schoefield the 15 and 17 corpses the right flank commanded by Gen. J. A. Logan. This grand army of 15000 men all moving on one place was enough to make Johnson tremble in his boots after 4 days hard marching through rain and mud we reached the devoted city. (the first news we heard was the fall of Richmond, This caused great cheering and saluting throughout the army) Johnson had evacuated the city on our approach. Kilpatrick close on his rear he retreated back 20 miles and made a stand (so the 16 the news reached us that Grant had captured the combined army of Lees this caused great rejoicings here. The boys begun to think that the war was drawing to a close) Sherman sent in a flag of truce ordering Johnson to surrender im-

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mediately. So terms was agreed upon giving Johnson 5 days to arrange matters. So at the expiration of 5 days he surrendered his entire command up to Sherman so the army thinks the war is about played out. The general opinion is that the army will soon be disbanded. So I am in hopes that I will be at home in time for harvest though this is guess work. The news reached us a few days since of the murder of the President. The news had a telling effect, the mutterings and curseings spread deep and wide throughout the army. Retaliation was the only thing talked of. I expect it done them butternuts some good to hear of it but they will have to keep close when the boys gets home again. The boys is all well at present but A. ^L Sprinkle he has the chronic dierrhea though I am in hopes he will soon get over it. Wilk Gibson was left sick at Goldsboro and I think it is doubtful whether he will recover or not. Christian Schwintker has returned to duty the boys is in fine spirits. John H. Deed² Deen says tell you that he thinks that he will soon be back to join the Oil rifles again. John thinks we will be at home to take the 4th of July. The country here is high and healthy and plenty of good water. Raleigh is a very nice town. It has a fine situation. The State house is a very nice one. We have gone into camp just west of the town. Someday we will go from here to Maryland by way of Richmond. Others say we will go to Newbern and thence to New York. I do not believe we will stay here long and I am in hopes we will soon be at home to take apart in passing events there for if peace is made I am well satisfied soldiering. I have seen enough of the Sunny South to satisfy my curiosities. Give my best respects to all enquireing friends. I believe I have written all the news. I can think of so I will close by saying attend to my business as best you can until I came back. I wrote for Barbary to send me some writing

material. Tell her she need not send any more until I write again.

So no more. I am still your Obodient Son as ever, John C. Esarey

To his Parents

Direct to Raleigh, N. C.