

21.
1/3/7
March the 1862 Camp near North Carolina near Newbern
Dear father and mother to day I received your kind and welcome letter and
was glad to hear that you was all well this finely we in rather poor health
I have got the fever and ague tucked on to me we are incamped in the
Emmings tents near Newbern you can see the City of Spier from this
place this was the strongest and best fortified place in no the Carolina
but the yankees now hold it and will hold it you might come and
travel all over the Battle ground and you nor nobody cannot
tell how that we took it with ten thousand soldiers they
had twenty thousand men behind a breast work two miles in
length and defended with three Batteries with six brass pieces each
their Cannons did not do them any good in the first of the fight the
left wing of my regiment made a charge on them and shot their
horses and they had to run and leave them and we had to run
behind the Cannons was five thousand rebels they formed in line and
charged on us and you had ought to see us run three to one is nothing
but six to one is too much I was in the left wing on one the part of the
field enclosing the best that it could be in front of us was twelve rifle pits
large enough to hold nine hundred men we picked in to the largest one of
them they was behind their breast works and we was in plain sight of
them we was about twelve rods in front we stood right up and if one
of them showed his head there was three or four of us waiting for him and he did
not show his head again I was no more afraid than I am that this
present time if you spare my life I will make more of them
bite the dust I think that John is in big business tell him to
go and join the Southern army and then we may meet in
single combat tell him that I can whip a dozen like him
with the gun in single combat we are well skilled the Cavalry
has nothing to do with us when that we started from Wicks we was
nine hundred and eighty strong and now we have about seven hundred
we reported for duty sickness and war is making sad work with us
I have seen the rice and Cotton and tobacco green in the South to day
is it is as warm as a July day the peach and plum and cherry
are in full bloom the grass begins to look green all looks inviting
to man some of our troops are quartered in the city of newbern
they live in deserted taverns and lawyers offices and nice dwellings
the rebels deserted their city and burnt the bridge that crosses the
Severn river and shot fire to the city but our soldiers assisted by
the union men of the city put out the fire ~~at~~ newbern is a city
with fifteen thousand souls it looks old the buildings are old we took
a printing office or foundry where they make Cannons and shells and ~~balls~~

K
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and grape shot. Beaufort in North Carolina is in our hands when we took
this place they sent a flag of truce and surrendered to Buenside and
our third Brigade now holds possession we have our hand fighting to do in
North Carolina at Kingston they have retreated there they are some fifteen
thousand strong awaiting for us we have twenty thousand reinforcements on the
way to us when they get here then the rebels will have to suffer the day after
battle of newbern I went out to see what they I had seen and find I found
one house that they had deserted they left their furniture and cattle and
hogs their furniture was of the best not far from this house was a cotton
and factory where they cleaned the seeds from the cotton the land here is
good it is of a sandy loam I never saw better timber in my life than there
is in North Carolina it is the Norway pine white oak white wood
red sector and hickory the land is uneven the hollows are filled with
water that creates the fever ague I should like to see my native town and view
the place of my childhood the place looks familiar to me dear father we may never
meet on Earth let us try and meet in Heaven then we will meet no more dear
little sister often times I do think of you you was small when last we parted your
Mammy now be as large as your Mother I cannot send any money home the boys have taken it
and kept all that they had this life is dangerous in battle when the balls
fly like hail then the soldier thinks of home I have had my eye and left hand
wound shot by my side yet I did not receive a scratch the next time may
be mine god only knows if I do die in battle you may know that it will
be in the defence of my Country while that I do live I am ready
to defend that good old flag and the Constitution of the United
States want you send me some of the Essex County papers
we get but very little news here all that we do get we get from home I will send
you a specimen of Southern Money it would pass until we get there now it is
good for nothing I got it out of a dear rebels pocket that I think that I shot
with my eye I can see you receive this and tell me all the news and
send me some papers with out fail this may be the last that you will
hear of me all the I think we will meet again if that I do ever
go home it will not be to stay at home but a very few days there
is better places for a man to live than in old fern we all like to hear
from home this from Josephus Thew

to
~~Direct your letter to Josephus Thew of the 21~~

Direct your letter to Josephus Thew Co I of the 21 reg Mass
vol Second Brigad Buensides division B Fortess
Monroe