

Camp Sanford
Newport News, VA.
April 13th, 1862

My Dear Mother,

This morning I left the hospital at Fort Monroe and walked 8 miles to our Regt. carrying my knapsack & etc and arrived in good spirits not at all tired by my walk. All were glad to see me and I felt as though I was at home once more among my friends, but alas! My pleasure was soon turned into sorrow as I read the letter that the Orderly had for me. At first I could not realize nor believe that my dear my only brother was dead, that I should never see him again on earth. It seemed like a dream, from which I should soon awake. Oh to soon I did awake to the terrible reality. My feelings I will not describe your own experience in this sad affliction will tell you mine. But after the first deep throb of anguish had rent my heart strings, after the first full realization of the sorrow that had come upon us there came a calmer hour to my stricken soul and I cried "Thy will be done oh God and not mine."

It grieves my heart to think that I could not grasp his hand and bid him a last farewell as he entered the dark valley of death. But mingled with the sorrow is gladness that he died at home and not here, far away from home & friends. This I know, that he had good care while he lived and that he now sleeps in peace in the quiet graveyard where his grave will be respected and you would be as thankful as I could you but see how & where soldiers are buried here. But it makes very little difference where our loved one sleeps for whether his body molders into dust on the shores of the Chesapeake or on the banks of the Oswegatchie, his soul all the immortal part of him will return to the God who gave it and we can meet him again in the land where sorrow can never come. "What I do thou knowest not now but thou shall know hereafter", saith the savior, and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God. Calmly then let us submit to the will of Him who chasteneth us for our own good and this application will work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory and it may we all live here on earth so that we shall meet an unbroken family in the land of eternal rest.

You ask me to come home; at present this is impossible. Our troops under McClellan are now besieging Yorktown some 15 miles from here and we are held as a reserve and no one can get a furlough now as every man is needed. You speak of my resigning. It is impossible. If we take Yorktown & Richmond I can begin to think of coming home.

The De Kalb boys are all well. I will write again soon and you will please to write often as it takes time for letters to reach us. You say you have not heard from me lately. I write every week surely but the mails are irregular. If they don't reach you at once, don't worry about me.

Yours in haste

John

De Kalb, NY Historian's Office
Transcribed by Bryan Thompson, De Kalb Historian

www.dekalbnyhistorian.org

Please direct to: Co. I 92nd Regt. NYSV 3rd Brigade General Casey's Division
Washington DC