



CAMP NEAR BURKEVILLE, VA.

April 19, 1865.

*My dear Carrie:*

It is now evening. I have been here about 24 hours.

It seems hard to return again to army fare, but I shall soon become accustomed to it. We have nothing but hard bread and salt pork with sugar and coffee.

Soon after leaving you at Concord I was on my way to Boston, where I arrived at 5½ (the 11th).

Found brother Parker—went to the Museum. Next day heard the great organ and at 5½ left for New York, via Sound. Arrived at Jersey Ferry in time for the first train and reached Washington at 8 P. M. the 13th.

Washington was in grand illumination, celebrating Lee's surrender, with bands, fireworks, etc. It was the grandest sight I ever saw.

Next day (the 14th) saw all our friends in Washington and several of the officers of the Reg. Also saw Gen. Grant. His pictures do not do him justice. You see the *man* only when he is in earnest conversation.

Went to the theatre that night and witnessed the greatest event of the last 200 years.

Next day, 15th left W. for City Point. We were obliged to "lay to" near Pt. Lookout until next day at dark. Then left for Fort Monroe, and just after daylight, the 17th, arrived at City Point.

At 11 A. M. took cars for Burkeville, via Petersburg. Took dinner at Petersburg,—then all night on a train in a box car, and arrived next day, the 18th, just before dark at Burkeville.

Thus I was 8 days making a journey, full of thrilling events, some joyous, some awful. I surely had excitement to my heart's content.

While I live I shall never forget the events I have witnessed during the past ten days.

Will write more tomorrow. Please write me soon—at once. Kiss the children for me. Kisses for yourself.

May God bless and protect us all.

W.

Some further facts came to my mind later which I was too agitated to notice or write about at the time.

As Booth crossed the stage he held

in his clenched fist a dagger, pointed downward. He did not "brandish" it, as has been sometimes stated, but held it in a position ready to strike, should he be intercepted. I distinctly heard him say—"There's revenge for the South."

As soon as I could make my way through the confused, excited and almost frantic crowd, I went around to the President's box, and, saying that I was a physician, asked if I could be of any assistance. The reply was—"No, as his own physician and others are already with him." The curtains at the entrance of the box were partly drawn and I could see the bleeding, lifeless form of our beloved President, stretched out in an easy chair, while his wife sobbing and fainting knelt on the floor by his side. One glance was enough. God grant I may never see such a sight again.

The above narrative was dictated to me by my father, William Child, M. D., in his eighty-second year, fifty years after the events themselves transpired.

His expressive countenance, his snowy hair, his eyes, now flashing with excitement, and now dimmed with the quick rushing tears, his voice so thrilling in its earnestness, but trembling and choked with emotion as he read aloud to us those precious letters—all together made his recital most dramatic and affecting.

We have in our possession the original letters, with many others of great interest and value written by him while in the service—also his commission, his sword, sash, shoulder straps, etc.

It is needless to say that these priceless treasures—these precious relics—will ever be guarded with pride and cherished with affection by "his children and his children's children."

KATHERINE CHILD MEADER.  
BATH, N. H., 1915.