

EDITED TRANSCRIPTION – Original file: "Letter March 11th 1865.tif"
Edited to enhance readability. Added notes are *{italicized-bracketed}*.

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Steamship Oriental, Beaufort Harbor, North Carolina
{Saturday} March 11th 1865

Dear Brother Frank,

I hastily write these few lines to let you know that I have arrived safe in port after a voyage of seven days from Washington *{DC}*, five of which were spent on the Atlantic and four days in a gale off the coast of North Carolina. Our good ship Oriental weathered it fine and no accident happened except the breaking loose of the mules and tumbling them about the hold of the ship promiscuously and killing a few. I could have enjoyed the trip but for the poor animals which I pitied from the bottom of my heart at every roll of the vessel, yet we done all we could to secure them and finally between a lull of the storm we managed to secure them very well and succeeded in making them very comfortable. I never expected to witness a storm at sea, but I have seen it in all it grandeur which I tell you was grand indeed.

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I got through without being the least bit seasick during the whole trip and I did not miss a meal but one and then only for being asleep and preferring to sleep I missed one meal.

My men were all seasick and wanted to die while I like a lucky fellow as I am never sick much to their wonder how that the lieutenant was never sick was more than they could see.

Well, Frank, I saw a sight that but few have witnessed which surpasses all yet, that was a Monitor at sea in a gale of wind and in a tremendous sea. She was in tow of a gunboat and a good ways out and I thought to see her go down every minute, but she would come up and throw the water off only to pitch clear under the next sea that some along. She was even with the water when not in a sea, but when one of those big seas struck her she would show nothing but the top of her turret and chimney. I think I never saw anything equal the awful grandeur not even the Niagara itself. I hope that she made a safe ??? or harbor for I felt for the men

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in her and you may excuse me from going to sea in a Monitor and I considered myself safe in the Oriental, a large steam propelled built of iron and in good sailing condition. We first went to Fort Fisher *{NC}* and found too little water on the bar for us to cross and we were then ordered to this port and we came in this evening. I have just been ashore to report and will probably commence unloading tomorrow. The 23rd Corps I am told is at New Bern *{NC}* and as for

news I have heard none yet and can give you any late news which you will get in the papers sooner than I could write it.

I suppose you have got my letters from Washington and probably answered them before now, but I have received no mail lately and will let this be an answer for the first one I do get. I suppose you are in the railroad office yet and busy as ever this spring and as navigation will soon open there you will have plenty to do. I have wrote a heap of letters during the last month and it is most time to receive answers from all parts of the north. Well, I cannot tell where I shall be when I next write but will

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try and write often and you must do the same and give me the news about home. I received a letter from Sant and as usual he had all he could attend to in the shop.

Remember me to all inquiring friends and believe me, as ever,
Your Brother
D. D. Keeler

Frank D. Keeler
East Saginaw
Michigan



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March 11th 1865

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