

Keopon Barracks N.C.

Dec 15th 1863

My dear Maria

I rec^d a letter from you yesterday the one you wrote just after getting my letter so long on the way and I don't wonder at your scolding I am aware I need a little touching up occasionally, but you know it is not as easy and natural for me to write as for you, in fact I am unable to put my ideas on paper and I would give any thing if I could and in good language, I begin to see that I mispd it when young in not paying better attention to my business & composing especially - For this great defect in me my friends have to suffer or at least have to go without letters from me, when were I am easy write I could keep them as in a pleasant mode continually, You know that it is not because I don't think of you that I