

Camp at Hines Mill
Near Kinston May 4th 1863

Josiah Collins Esq.
Dr. Sir

It has been about two weeks scinse I was down in Washington County. While down there I saw your overseer George Spruill and he told me to say to you that the Yankees had been down at the Lake and had taken everything and told the negroes that they were all free and that in speaking of you they call you old Collins. They say that if ever you go or send down there for them they intend to leave. Bill went around the Yankees and showed them where the things were concealed. I never thought he would act in this way. Things look very gloomy in Washington County the Yankees and buffaloes have stripped every-body of all their property.

If you wish to write to anyone down there send your letter to me and I can send it down for you. I should have written you before but I have been on the march ever since I returned. Remember me kindly to Major Georg and Lt Arthur. Believe me Sir to be

Yours Very Respectfully
R. B. Ainsley

Dirtch to Kinston
Care of Capt Norman Co." ___17th Regth
NC Troops