

EDITED TRANSCRIPTION – Original file: "Letter April 3rd 1864.tif"
Edited to enhance readability. Added notes are *{italicized-bracketed}*.

{Envelope:}

{Postmark:} CH???, TEN 10 JUL '64

Mrs. Susan M. Keeler
East Saginaw
Michigan

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Headquarters 23rd Michigan Volunteer Infantry
Mossy Creek, Tennessee, *{Sunday}* April 3rd 1864

Dear Wife,

Yesterday I received yours of the 24th inst and I was glad to hear that you are all well. I am well as usual and in good spirits. I received a letter from Sarah day before yesterday. She wrote me a good long letter and I must answer it today. Today is Sunday and a fine day it is and I am not going to do much today except write letters. Inspection is over and there *{is}* nothing to do until time for dress parade that I know of now. Yesterday I had my likeness taken and I sent it by mail this morning. I hope you will get it. I sent two and you may give one of them to sister Sarah Keeler and tell her to write to me occasionally. I have not heard a word from her except what you have wrote in a long time. I sent you a draft of one hundred dollars on the Assistant Treasurer U.S. at New York and I have another of one hundred and fifty yet to send you. I sent it by mail in a letter and as soon as you get it let me know. It ought to reach you in two or three days from now. When you get it use it as you think best. You wanted my advice about moving up on the farm and renting

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the house in town. My advice is if you think best to move up there with Father and Mother do so and if you can be of any help to the old folks nothing would please me better than that. They have been good to us and we should be the same to them. I am glad to hear that you want to save all that you can and pay up our debts, but I do not want you to go without things that you need to do it. I thought that Father had sold his place to Mr. Crouse and was going to move last winter. Has the trade been made?

Sarah writes that Harrison's health is very poor this spring. I hope he will soon get well and fit for duty again. We are still at Mossy Creek and in the same camp that we have been since we moved back from Morristown *{TN}*. The other day we had orders to be ready to march at a moments notice and that was the last of it. We did not go, only one division of our corps marched and they only went to Morristown. We have to drill every day when the weather permits and go on picket once a week and it will be our turn for picket tomorrow. I got me a

horse and if we march I can ride after this. We cannot brag on the weather we have had lately. It has been very disagreeable cold, windy & raining more or less every night. The spring here is very backward I should think for this country.

We have lived very poorly lately and things are again improving. We had enough such as it was and did not go hungry, but we did not have much of a

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variety. For about two weeks we could get nothing but hard bread, bacon, sugar and coffee, a few beans and mixed vegetables. The mixed vegetables are a great institution. It consists of all kinds of vegetables cut up fine and mixed together and pressed. It comes in tin boxes and we buy it off the commissary for 23 cents a pound. We have to soak it in cold water overnight and boil it until noon in a camp kettle with a piece of meat and it makes bully soup or beaugeau. When we get hungry we eat but we generally have our meals regular three times a day. There is five in our mess and we have a good cook who does nothing else but cook for us except nights he plays cards.

Dinner is over and a good dinner it was, more vegetables and sweet cake to top off with and good prospects of more for supper. You must not worry about me not getting enough to eat for Uncle Sam does not starve his soldiers when there is any possibility of feeding them. I hear that there is now three months supply in Knoxville {TN} and we can't be starved again as we were last winter. Susan, I have seen the soldiers pay 25 cents for one ear of corn to parch and everything else in proportion. The first 21 days in January last our men only drew 3 days rations of bread suff and that in corn meal, one pint of wheat and full rations of meat, poor. No other rations were issued during that time so you can imagine that we have had hard times and we had to work every day besides,

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either on the fortifications or on picket; and besides we marched through mud and dragged artillery up hill and through the worst mud holes, sometimes going twenty-four hours without eating. Well, we have got over that now and are now improving. I hope that you will not worry over what has passed or I would not wrote it if I thought it worry you. I had it easy to what some of the men did for I had a horse to ride and I had more to eat and no load to carry.

I wish you would get your ambrotype taken and send it to me and Frankie, too, so I can see how you do look. Sarah says that you look younger. Tell Lottie that I will write to her before long. I am bothered so I will not write any more. I have details to make, orders to write and papers to sign, etc. I will write soon again. Give my respects to all inquiring friends & dear Susan, believe me. As ever,

Your Affectionate Husband
D. D. Keeler

Headquarters 23rd Mich^d Inf^y Vol^s
Massy Quets Camp April 3rd 1864

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D. P. Miller

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