

EDITED TRANSCRIPTION – Original file: “Letter Dec. 14th 1862.tif”  
Edited to enhance readability. Added notes are *{italicized-bracketed}*.

*{The letter is to his sister, his only one being Sarah, who was then 13 years old. He tells her to mind Lucy, his brother Sanford’s wife, so Sarah was probably living with them at the time, since her mother had died October 5, 1862.}*

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Camp of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Regiment, Michigan Volunteer Infantry  
Bowling Green, KY, Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> '62

Dear Sister *{Sarah Edwene Keeler}*,

I suppose you would like to hear from me so I will write you a few lines while I have time. Well sis, I am well and hope you are. I suppose you would like to know how I like the soldiering. Well, I can tell you I like it pretty well and it is no harder than I expected. The only thing I don't like is being away from Susan *{his wife, Susan M. (Reading) Keeler}* and the children and not seeing the folks when I want to, but that can't be helped as long as the war lasts; and there is no other alternative but make the best of it until the war is over and if nothing happens *{to}* me I will come back with the satisfaction of doing my duty to my country. Perhaps you would like to know how we live and what we live on. That is easy told. We live on bread, beef, bacon, beans, rice, coffee, and sugar and while on a march we have nothing but hard bread & bacon, coffee and sugar. Sometimes we confiscate a chicken or a goose that happens to be handy and take a farmer's ???

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to cook and keep warm by. We live very comfortably in our tents with ??? ??? in them, but on the march we have to take it as we can get it. Sometimes we have stones to sleep on. Sometimes we find a hay or straw stack, then we use that for a bed. I have got so I can sleep on the ground no matter how hard it is, as well as if I were at home in bed. If I should come home now I should have to lay on the carpet a while before I could sleep on anything softer and get used to a bed by degrees. I would like to come home and stay a few days on a visit, but there is no use of thinking of it so I don't let it worry me. I keep busy and that helps me from getting homesick. The first thing I have to do in the morning is to call the roll and then make a report of the strength of the company to the Adjustant, then detail the guard, then breakfast, then take the sick to the doctor and get the company out to drill until noon, then dinner and at one drill again until four o'clock, then inspection of arms for 1/2 hour, then dress parade, then supper, then draw rations for the next day, call the roll again and at 8 o'clock lights out and all noise stopped. Answer soon and be a good girl and mind Lucy *{M. (Nelson) Keeler}* and I will write again.

From Your Affectionate Brother, D. D. Keeler

Camp of the 23 Regt. Mass. Infantry  
Bowling Green N.Y. Dec 14th 1862

Dear Sister

I suppose you would like to hear from me so I will write you a few lines now I have time well I am well and hope you are I suppose you would like to know how Dick is liking well I can tell you I like it pretty well and it is no harder than I expected the only thing I don't like is being away from Susan and the children and not seeing the folks when I want to but that can't be helped as long as the war lasts and there is no other alternative but make the best of it till the war is over and if nothing happens me I will come back with the satisfaction of doing my duty to my country perhaps you would like to know how we live and what we live on that is easy to tell we live on Bread & Beef Bacon Beans Rice Coffee and Sugar and what on a march we have nothing but Hard Bread & Bacon Coffee and Sugar sometimes we confiscate a chicken or a goose that happens to be near by and take a farmers Guide to

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Thom Your Affectionate Brother D. Drake