Family Home Page

Contact Information

EDITED TRANSCRIPTION – Original file: "Letter Dec. 20th 1862.tif" Edited to enhance readability. Added notes are *{italicized-bracketed}*.

#### {*Page 1:*}

Camp of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Regiment of Michigan Volunteer Infantry Bowling Green, KY, Dec. 20<sup>th</sup> 1862

#### Dear Wife,

As I have a little time and I thought I could not use it to please you better than to write you a few lines and let you know that I am well and what I am about. Well, Susan, I have not received any letters from you since last week and from anyone else either, so I begin to want one from someone. We are still at work here getting ready for winter and fortifying our camp *{and}* doing picket duty and we are kept pretty busy, too, and we don't drill any now nor won't until everything is done. We have to go one day every week on picket and one day at the railroad depot. Tomorrow we go on picket and I would not have a chance to write while out so I will write when I get a chance. There is not much news here to write about so you must not expect to get much war news for you can get it in Saginaw *{MI}* before we can get it here. We occasionally get a Louisville *{KY}* paper, but we don't believe half what that says and the only news that

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I can write is that we expect to be attacked before long, how soon no one knows. When the gravbacks come they will find us all ready to receive them and the longer they put it off the worse it will be for them unless that some of the troops move somewhere else. General *{Robert S.}* Granger is taking every precaution to guard against surprise and they will find us ready at any time. Our new guns came today, but they were not distributed on account of the ammunition. It is not the right kind and we will have to use our old guns a day or two yet or until they exchange the ammunition. The new guns are the same kind as we {had at} first to guard the camp in Saginaw. The old flintlock musket altered over to caplocks and they shoot an ounce ball and three buckshot and are recommended in preference to any other at short range for four ball are surer to hit than one. If the old ones had good locks we would not like to exchange for they will farther than the smooth bore muskets. Col. Chapin is in command of the regiment now and he has been making promotions. The way he done it was according to rank. Our first Lieutenant F {avette} Smith is now captain of Company B and Lieutenant {William A.} Lewis

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is now our first lieutenant. O*{scar}* S. Davis is promoted to sergeant major and now I am orderly sergeant and before I get any farther I have to to wait until all of the other orderlies in the regiment have advanced one grade. The next position above orderly sergeant is commissary sergeant, next quartermaster sergeant, and next sergeant major, then second lieutenant, so you can see what way that I have got to go to get up along the way to the shoulder straps which I am not in a hurry for. I might have to come down again at any rate it don't worry me for I contented where I am and have enough responsibility on me now. The mail has come and I will stop writing until night and see if there is anything for me. Later time 8 o'clock p.m. No mail for me so I will finish this anyway for I have nothing more to do tonight unless the rebel Morgan comes before morning, which I don't think he will for we have looked for him so long that it has got to be an old story. From what I hear from officers he is marching this way with a force of mounted riflemen to destroy the railroad bridge, which would greatly inconvenience the men at Nashville.

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You must not feel alarmed on my account for I am as safe as anyone, and I have got a revolver that will shoot as well as a rifle and it is well loaded and if there is a chance I will try my skill in shooting rebels which I came down here for. I am pretty good at target shooting which we have considerable practice until within a few days and if I don't get frightened and shoot in the air or river I will be apt to hit some of them. When you answer this let me know whether Father has heard from Frank since the Battle at Fredericksburg and tell him I am well and tell him that I now have got the diamond on my sleeve which ought *{to}* have had long ago for I have done the duty of first sergeant since I have been in Kentucky and part of the time acted as lieutenant besides. When you get lonesome you must find something busy yourself with and let your mind be on your work and you will soon get over it. If I had nothing to do I should be as homesick as you can imagine, so I am glad that I have enough to do and when I have leisure go to writing. I have commenced looking for a box of traps from you and as soon as anything does come I will let you know. No more at present, so good night. Give my love to all.

From Your Husband, D. D. Keeler.

Campor the 23° Regiment of Mich Colont Dear This as I have a little time and I though I could not use it to please you better than to write you a few lines and lit you know that I am well and what I am about well Susan & have not received any letters from you since last week and from any one else eather so I begin to wont one have some one all are still a work has sting realing wind willing and we are hefet phetty our too and we dont duil and now nor wont til every thing is done We have to go moday every week on Ricket and one day at the Bail had Schot Formorrow 100 90 out Ricket and Doorald not have a chance to corite while out so I will write when I get a chance There is not much news here to write about is you must not expect to get much war. mews for you can get it his Chaquan Select we ada get it here we accetionly yetta Louisvill paper but we don't belleave half what that Lays and the only news that

I can write is that we expect to be attacted, before long how soon no one knows It here the gray Backs come they will and no all ready to preceave them and the longer they put it off the worde it will be for theme unles that Some of the brooks more some where else Gen afranger is takeing every precaution to guard a gamest surfirise hand they will find us ready at any time Our new yours came to day but they were not distributed on account of the ammunition it is not the right kind and we will have to use our old gives a day or two yet or till they explang the amound tion the here you are the same king as we we will to quard the Muchet altered over to cake locks and they shoot an owner ball and three buck shot and are recommended in preference to any other at short range for four ball are surer: to hit than one off the old ones had good locks we would not like to erchance for they will farther than the smooth fore musketo, Dol Chapin is in comand if the Regt wow and he has been makeing hismolions the way be done it was acording & rank Our first Sweat B. Smith is now captain & Co & and hunt bewie

is now our first for OD Davis is promoted to dergent major and now I am Orderly Lergt and before I get any farther A have got to wait till all of the other orderly in the regiment have advanced one grade The mest position above Orderly Dergt is commissary sergt mext- & warter Indeter Gergt and mext dergt major them second Secutement 25 you see what way that thave got to go to get rike along the way to the shoulder steaks which of an not in a herry for might have to come down a gain at any rate it dont worry and for it am entented where of and and he age responsibility on me now the mail has come and V will stop writing till might and see it there is any sing for me Caler time 8 clock the Artiail for one so Baril finish this any way for Shar nothing more to doto night unless the Rebel Morgan comes before Morning wich I dont think heavill for we have looked for him is long that it has got to be an old story for what A hear from Officers he is marching this way with a force of mounted flighte mede to destroy the Bail Broad Bridge which would great by microvenance the menal hashord .

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