

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

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Camp of the 23rd Regiment of Michigan Volunteer Infantry
Bowling Green, KY, Dec. 20th 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 *{M}* 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 graybacks 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*{ayette}* 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.

Camp of the 25th Regiment of Mich Vol Inf
Bowling Green Ky Dec 20th 1861

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 any one else either so I begin to want one from some one. We are still at work here getting ready to winter and fortifying our camp. Doing picket duty and we are kept pretty busy too and we dont drill any more now wont till every thing is done. We have to go on duty every week on picket and one day at the Rail Road 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 Cadesaw before we can get it here we occasionally get a Louisville paper but we dont believe half what that says and the only news that

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some of the troops move some where else
Gen A. Franger is taking every precaution
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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 guns a day or two yet or till they exchange
the ammunition. The new Guns are the
same kind as we use first to guard the
camp in Saginaw the the old flint lock
musket altered over to cap locks and they
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according to rank Our first Lieut E. Smith
is now Captain of Co B and Lieut Lewis

it now our first Lt O J Davis is promoted to
sergent major and now I am Orderly Sergt
and before I get any farther I have got
to wait till all of the other orderlys in the
regiment have advanced one grade

The next position above Orderly Sergt is
commissary sergt next Quarter Master
Sergt and next sergt major then
second Lieutenant so you 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 a gain at any rate it dont
worry me for I am contented where I
am and let some one else take responsibility on
me now the mail has come and I will
stop writing till night and see if there is
any things for me Later time 8 o'clock No
No mail for me so I will finish this
any way for I have nothing more to do to
night unless the Rebel Morgan comes
before morning which I dont think he will
for we have looked for him so long that it
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from Officers he is marching this way with
a force of mounted Rifle men to destroy the
Rail Road Bridge which would greatly inconvenience
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heard from Frank since the Battle at Fredericks
burg and tell him I am well and tell him
that I have got the Diamond given my
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I have commenced looking for a box of traps
from you and as soon as any thing does come
I will let you know no more at present but so good night
give my love to all from your Husband
D. Needer.