

EDITED TRANSCRIPTION – Original file: "Letter Dec. 29th 1864.tif"  
Edited to enhance readability. Added notes are *{italicized-bracketed}*.

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Quartermasters Office Supply Train, 2<sup>nd</sup> Division 23<sup>rd</sup> Army Corps  
Columbia, Tennessee, {Thursday} December 29<sup>th</sup> 1864

Dear Susan,

I suppose you are again anxiously looking for a letter from me and I now will take advantage of the first time I have had in some time to write to you in preference to anyone else. I do not think I have wrote to you since I left Nashville *{TN}*. I left there the 15<sup>th</sup> of this month and followed the troops with my train loaded with subsistence stores and I camped the first night on the battlefield in front of Nashville and I saw as many dead rebels laying around as I care about seeing again, and before I was ordered to move in the morning I set my teamsters to burying the few that lay around camp. The ground was strewn with guns, cartridge boxes, and other accoutrements where the Johnny rebs had thrown them down and run.

I suppose that an army never was worse routed than old *{General John Bell}*'s Hood's was and is yet.

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They fled in all directions and our men have captured them by droves. The prisoners say that Hood has no organization now and that the men are scattered all over the country and that *{General Nathan Bedford}* Forrest is driving them south to prevent the capture of the whole of Hood's men. I passed through Franklin *{TN}* again and over the battlefield there and I never saw a graveyard to equal it. Along the line the graves are as thick as they can be with little headboards to each rebel grave. One place they had dug a long trench about eight rods long and what was buried in it was all from one Mississippi regiment. They were laid crossways of the trench and as close together as they could lay and so covered up. Our men that they buried were thrown in the ditch outside the breastworks and the bank thrown down on them. When our forces again came there fatigue parties were detailed and buried our men over again more decently and all that could be recognized were marked with a headboard with his name, company, and regiment. The wounded that fell in to their hands were put in hospitals and one of our surgeons was left there to attend to them.

The rebels left their wounded there when they went back and a rebel surgeon with them and they receive the same attention our men do.

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I found one of my teamsters that I supposed killed when my train was attacked. He had been taken prisoner and they left him at one of our hospitals at Spring Hill *{TN}* to help take care of our wounded there, first administering an oath to

him that he would not attempt to escape or in any way assist our government against them. So in their hurry they forgot him as he kept out of their sight and he fell into our lines again all right except a bullet hole through his hat. I unloaded my train at Spring Hill and waited there until the cars got to running to that place and I loaded again and drove to Columbia (this place), crossed the Duck River and was ordered to Pulaski {TN} with my load for the 4<sup>th</sup> Army Corps and I have just returned from there tonight and have orders to go back to Spring Hill tomorrow and load again and return to this place, so you see I am pretty busy. The weather is cold, wet and rainy, making the roads almost impassible. However, we have to keep the supply train going to feed the men, for they eat as much when the road are bad as when they are good. I was one night all night long moving the train the length of it the road was so bad. It is now raining and tomorrow the roads will be muddy. I drove 22 miles today, but the road was pretty good and the train empty.

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I stand the racket as well as ever and I hope that I shall always do so. I had my carpenter make me a stretcher bed and I sleep up off of the ground nice and dry even if a stream of water runs through my tent.

Well, how did you spend Christmas? I had a chicken pot pie for my dinner and supper, otherwise the day passed the same as other days. New Years is now close at hand and I expect nothing new any more than usual, but I now wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and lots to eat. I will get along as I have done before; that is, to take what I can get and be satisfied. I think I eat enough while I was at Nashville to stand for Christmas and New Years. Well, dear Susan, I have been thinking of you most all day today and I have counted the time over several times that I have to stay and make it out a little over eight months and growing beautifully less every day. It is now nearly ten o'clock at night and snowing and I must soon go to bed. I suppose you are asleep by this time, but that makes no difference, I shall soon be. Happy dreams to you and Frankie. I hope that Tip has not troubled you any more. Tell Lotty I will answer her letter as soon as I can get time. Give my regards to all and retain the most to yourself. Take good care of my little girl and tell her the Pa loves her. I am as ever, dear Susan,

Your Affectionate Husband,  
D. D. Keeler

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I M Office Supply Train 2nd Div 23<sup>rd</sup> AC  
Columbia Tenn Dec 29<sup>th</sup> 1864

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I passed through Franklin again and over the battle field there and I never saw a grave yard to equal it. Along the line the graves are as thick as they can be with little head boards to each rebel grave. One place they had dug a long trench about eight rods long and what was buried in it was all from one Mississippi Regt they were layed cross way of the trench and as close to gather as they could lay and so covered up. Our men that they buried were thrown in the ditch out side the breastworks and the bank thrown down on them. When our forces again came there fatigue party's were detailed and buried our men over again more scanty and all that could be recognised were marked with a head board with his name company and Regiment. The wounded that fell in to their hands were put in hospitals and one of our Surgeons was left there to attend to them.

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Affectionate Husband

W. H. Miller