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Edited to enhance readability. Added notes are *{italicized-bracketed}*.

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Camp of the 23rd Regiment, Michigan Volunteer Infantry
Bowling Green *{KY}*, Dec 9th 1862

Dear Wife,

You must excuse this delay of my writing, for I am so busy that I have not had time to answer but one letter in a week and that was to Frank. I should have written last Sunday but our company were out on picket and we did not get in camp until most noon on Sunday and then we had to have regimental inspection and then I had to go and draw rations and distribute them to the company and got on some clean clothes and by that time it was time for dress parade then supper, and by that time it was dark and I could get no candles for the quartermaster had none and could not get any until today and now I have got some light and I am improving it. I am well and never enjoyed better health in my life than I do at present and I have enough to do to keep me busy all of the time so you must not feel alarmed if you do not hear from me regularly, but I will write as often as I can, once a week sure.

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I have not received any letter from you since a week ago last Sunday and I answered that immediately. I received one from Father the other day and I must answer that tonight if I can. He said that you were at his house with Lucy and that you was writing to me then. If you did I had ought to have received it before this time. We are still here at Bowling Green near the railroad bridge which we guard and we have not found out whether we are to stay here this winter or not yet. But General *{Gordon}* Granger promised to let us know in a day or two. I guess that we will stay here a little while for they need us here now and more troops besides for it looks as though that we were a going to have a fight before a week. There was a battle day before yesterday at Gallatin *{TN}* about 40 miles from here and the rebels are said to be marching on this place to destroy the railroad bridge and get possession of a large amount of army stores that is here and cut off the railroad communication with Nashville *{TN}*. They have not got here yet and they had better stay away for I guess we can hold the town which is fortified in every direction with the rebel General *{Simon Bolivar}* Buckner done last

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year. One of them is on a round hill which commands the town and the surrounding country. It is a hard place to take if it was well garrisoned. Last night three companies of our regiment were under arms, A, B, and G, and were to be ready to march at a moments notice at the firing of the signal gun and

tonight three other companies stand ready with loaded guns to be ready a moments notice so you see we are watchful and they can't take us unawares. Yesterday every precaution was taken here to be ready for any emergency. If we have a fight here I will write immediately and let you know how we are. You must not let this letter worry you at the prospects of a fight for we came here to fight and we will stand then one hack anyway if they come this way. There is more of our troops here than the rebels are bringing if all reports are correct. You must write as often as you get time and I will answer all of them and tell Father that I received his letter and that I am well and thankful for his kind letter. I have just had to call the roll consequently have had to leave this for a few minutes and while out I heard some firing on the other side of the

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town. What it means I do not know. I guess that it does not amount to much so I won't bother to find out. I have heard so much firing lately that when we hear it we think nothing of it for we do a good share of it ourselves in the daytime. We all have to practice target shooting two hours every day from 10 o'clock until noon. Today I fired 32 rounds of cartridges 60 rods in less than 20 minutes and commanded the company at the same time. The way we do it is the whole regiment is formed in line the same as dress parade and each company has its own target and at the order we commence firing, loading and firing at will, and it is one continual rattle like a whole bunch of firecrackers only louder. Some of the time we fire by battalion the whole regiment at once, then we make a noise sometimes by rank, sometimes by companies, and by file and we use up some ammunition. We have to drill eight hours every day except in stormy weather, 2 hours skirmish drill, 2 hours target shooting in the forenoon, and 4 hours in the afternoon battalion or brigade drill. So it keeps us busy all day and we are now pretty well drilled and have the praise of being the best drilled regiment in the brigade, which speaks well for Major *{Benjamin F.}* Fisher who has toiled hard every day and hard to accomplish. It is after taps and I must stop so good night. Tell George that his Deck will be home by and by.

From Your Affectionate Husband,
D. D. Keeler

Camp of the 23^d Regt Mich Vol Inf
Bowling Green Dec 9th 1862

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From your affectionate Husband

D. J. Wheeler