

EDITED TRANSCRIPTION – Original file: "Letter Jan. 26th 1863.tif"  
Edited to enhance readability. Added notes are *{italicized-bracketed}*.

*{Envelope (probably not the original one:}*  
*{Stamp:} Nashville, Tennessee, Aug 22 '64*  
Mrs. Susan M. Keeler, East Saginaw, Michigan

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Camp of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Regiment of Michigan Volunteer Infantry  
Bowling Green, KY, Monday Jan. 26, 1863

Dear Wife,

I have not received a letter from you in a long time and I keep writing every week to you so you will know how I am. I am well yet and hope that you and the children are. We have had but one mail since Christmas and we begin to want another one and are expecting a large one every day now. I suppose you have got my letters regular and have answered them expecting that I got them. There has been no express running since the railroad was smashed and consequently I have not got that box yet. We had had some bad weather lately. It snowed and rained here three nights and four days without stopping and the snow was very near a foot deep when it stopped, but it didn't stay on long and there is not a bit to be seen now and the weather is quite warm again and we are enjoying spring weather in January. Well, I guess that I can ??? now we have got a mail at last and I got two letters, one from you dated Jan. 16<sup>th</sup> and the other from Sarah, the first that I received from her in a long time. I feel better now that I know that you are all well. I tried to write this forenoon, but could not do much at it so I stopped and made up my mind I would wait until the cars came and see if the mail come. It come and there is a great many of our regiment fees better

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and everyone that can get paper is writing. I cannot write much news for there is nothing transpires here outside of the ordinary line of camp duties which is not worthwhile to mention again. The three companies that have been on provost guard in the city are going to be relieved this week by the 25 Michigan Infantry and they will come back into camp again, which will relieve us of some of our duties in guarding the camp and railroad depot. We now take our turns by company in guarding, so I do not have to detail a guard every morning from the company. We have not drilled much lately, only one hour every day when the weather will permit, so our labors are not very hard now. I have not done enough lately to keep me from getting lazy. I built 2 ovens for the regiment so we will bake our own bread now. The two ovens will bake 800 loaves to one baking, so you can judge how large they are. The major had me do it alone for there was not another bricklayer in the regiment. They are now ready for use and we will soon be eating our own bread instead of ??? hardtacks. Yesterday our company

were on guard at the depot and today they to rest in. We see a lot of paroled prisoners from the south. They speak very ill of the rebels. Some of them say that they were used very well and others did not fare quite as well and a rebel would not fare very well if they should get into their hands now. They say that they can strike a rebel now with a good conscience.

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Company A is detailed to guard them through to Louisville *{KY}* tomorrow. Major *{Benjamin F.}* Fisher is going to resign and will be in Saginaw *{MI}* in two or three weeks. I will send a letter by him when he goes and if I can get my likeness taken I will send that by him too. Perhaps we will be paid before he goes. If we are I will send you some money. You must be in need of some by this time as well as myself. The captain of Company A will probably take the major's place and some more of the officers are going to resign and the consequence will be another batch of promotions. Whether it will reach me next time I cannot tell yet as six orderlies stand between me and promotions, so I will have patience and time will bring it around. Instead of Company A being detailed to go to Louisville, Company B is going. I have just detailed the men to go. I may probably go myself with them. I have not made up my mind yet. I will send this letter through by some of the men to have it mailed at Louisville if I do not go. Lieutenant Graverse of Company A died tonight. That is the reason why they are not going. It is raining tonight and the rain patting on the tent make me feel like sleeping good tonight and I think I shall while I am writing. I have to stop occasionally and talk with Lieutenants *{William A.}* Lewis and Ashby and I have made up my mind to go with the guard to Louisville. Consequently I have to get ready with two days rations to report at 4 o'clock with the men at the depot and as I have got to write another letter yet

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to Sarah Lester I will have to stop before I get this sheet full, so you must excuse me this time if I do not write a full sheet, and as I can't get any letter paper I have to take foolscap and it holds more than letter paper. Tell George I have not shot any n----- yet, but I hate them bad enough. I would not have a Kentucky n----- around me for any price. They are not worth much and the more n----- the secesh have the worse they are off in my opinion. I came down here to fight for the Union and not for the n-----. If they are like the ones around here they are a curse to any country where they make slaves of them and I say curse the rebels with n----- if they want them. We have great n----- regiments here in our camp and there is but few that likes them. I must stop this and let them do what they have a mind to with the slaves. I won't bother my head with them. So take good care of my boy and girl and also yourself and I will look out for myself and I will write again as soon as I get back. So good night and be sure and write to soon to

Your Affectionate Husband,  
D. D. Keeler

Camp of the 28<sup>th</sup> Regt of Mich Vol Infantry  
Bowling Green W. Va Monday Jan 26 1863

Dear Wife

I have not received a letter from you in a long time and I keep writing every week to you so you will know how I am I am well yet and hope that you and the children are we have had but one mail since Christmas and we begin to want another one and are expecting a large one every day now I suppose you had got my letters regular and have answered them expecting that I got them, There has been no express running since the Rail Road was smashed and consequently I have not got that box yet We have had some bad weather lately it snowed and rained here three nights and four days without stopping and the snow was very near a foot deep when it stoped but it did not stay on long and there is not a bit to be seen now and the weather is quite warm again and we are enjoying Spring weather in January Well I guess that it is now we have got a mail at last and I got two letters one from you dated Jan 16<sup>th</sup> and the other from Sarah the the first that I received from her in a long time I feel better now that I know that you are all well I tried to write this forenoon but could not do much at it so I stoped and made up my mind I would wait till the cars come and see if the mail come It come and there is a great many of our Regiment feel better

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again. The three companies that have been on forward  
Guard in the city are going to be relieved this week by  
the 25<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry and they will come back  
in to camp again which will release us of some  
of our duties in guarding the camp and Rail  
Road Depot. We now take our turns by  
company in guarding so I do not have to detail  
a guard every morning from the company.

We have not drilled much lately only one hour  
every day when the weather will permit.  
So our labours are not very hard now. I have  
not done enough lately to keep me from getting  
lazy. I built 2 ovens for the Regiment so we  
will bake our own bread now. The two ovens  
will bake 800 loaves to one taking so you can  
judge how large they are. The Major had me do  
it alone for there was not another brick  
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instead of ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> bread baked yesterday our company  
were on Guard at the Depot and today they  
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Rebels, some of them say that they were used  
very well and others I did not fare quite as  
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if they should get in to their hands now.  
They say that they can strip a Rebel now with  
a good conscience.

Company, A, is detailed to Guard them through to Lousville  
to morrow Major <sup>140</sup> Fisher is going to resign and will  
be in Cayman in two or three weeks I will send  
a letter by him when he goes and if I can get  
my likeness taken I will send that by him too  
perhaps we will be paid before he goes if we are  
I will send you some money You must be in  
need of some by this time as well as myself  
The Capt of Co A will probably take the Majors  
place and some more of the Officers are going to  
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& In stead of Company A being detailed to  
go to Louisville Co B is going I have just  
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to Sarah Lester I will have to stop before I  
get this sheet full so you must excuse  
me this time if I do not write a full sheet  
and as I cant get any Letter paper I have to take  
Bools cap, and it holds more than letter paper.  
Tell Georg I have not shot any Niggers yet but  
I hate them bad enough I would not have a  
Kentucky Nigger around me for any price they  
are not worth much and the more Niggers these  
Secesh have the worse they are off in my opinion  
I came down here to fight for the Union and  
not for the Niggers if they are like the ones around  
here they are a curse to any country where  
they make slaves of them and I say curse  
the Rebels with Niggers if they want them  
We have great Nigger Arguments here in our  
camp and there is but few that like them  
I must stop this and let them do what they  
are of have a mind to with the the Slaves I wont  
bother my head with them So take good care of  
my Boy and Girl and also your self and  
I will look out for my self and I will write  
again as soon as I get Back so good night  
and be sure and write to soon to your  
Affectionate Husband  
O. O. Wheeler



Mrs Susan M Keeler  
East Saginaw  
Michigan