

EDITED TRANSCRIPTION – Original file: "Letter July 6th 1863.tif"
Edited to enhance readability. Added notes are *{italicized-bracketed}*.

{This letter is dated July 6th 1863. However, on page 7 about half-way down it says Aug 6th, and on page 7 near the bottom it says it is Thanksgiving, which in 1863 was November 26th.}

{Page 1:}

Camp of the 23rd Regiment of Michigan Volunteer Infantry
Lebanon, KY, July 6th 1863

Dear Wife,

I now am going to answer three letters at once that I received from you last night. We have joined our brigade again and are at Lebanon, KY. We arrived here last night and got our back mail. I got three from you and one from Frank and three newspapers. We are not going to stay here long. We expected to move today to the Rolling Fork where water is plenty, which is about 6 miles from here at New Market *{KY}* where we were camped last fall. We perhaps will stay there until we are all ready for another march, which will take two or three

{Page 2:}

weeks or longer, then we expect to go into East Tennessee. I figured up the number of miles we had traveled since the 22nd day of Jun, 1245 miles, so you see we have not been idle and need a little rest to get ready for another march. There are but few regiments that have traveled that many miles in the time we have done it and all on account of *{General John Hunt}* Morgan, who now is safe in prison in Columbus, Ohio. You wanted to know how Shirley was, well he was well the last time I saw him which was a month ago. He was well and was driving General *{Henry M.}* Judah's ambulance where he is yet. It is a good place for him. He was on the march and has not had time to write I suppose. Louis Delivergne is well. He was not with us until we got here. Captain *{Henry Heber}* Woodruff is on his way home.

{Page 3:}

I got my commission yesterday too, but it is of no use to me at present on account of an order from the War Department to muster in no more 2nd Lieutenants that dated since the 20th day of June where the company that they go into does not number 80, which unfortunately is the case of Company D which only has 74 enlisted men. So I have got to be a 2nd Lieutenant with only Sergeant Major's pay as I cannot get Lieutenant's pay until I am mustered out as Sergeant Major and mustered in as Lieutenant and I cannot be reduced any lower so you see I am no better off than I was before unless Captain Huston gets some recruits for his company, which only wants six. He starts for home today

on 20 days leave and he says if there is six men in Tuscola County *{M}* ~~he will~~
that will

{Page 4:}

enlist he will bring them back with him, then I shall be all right under the circumstances. You ought to get your money from the Volunteer Relief Fund as usual until I get mustered. I have got to be economical and so have you. I am not alone in the box for the order affects other officers as well as 2nd Lieutenants. Do not get discouraged for I do not think the war can last a great while longer. I have to do duty in Company D most of the time and some of the time act as adjutant, so you see they keep me busy. I have acted in most every capacity except command the regiment since we have been on the march and as my services are so much needed that have no time to be sick, so you must not worry on that account.

{Page 5:}

My health is good now. I have not been off duty one day since last fall on account of sickness. I had a cold while we were up in Ohio, but I am over that now and am ready for anything. We had good times while we were up there. We were well fed and treated like gentlemen. I wish we could soldier up there instead of KY. We did not see a bit of cornbread up there, but sponge cake instead, and that way with everything in the same thing way. I heard a Kentuckian say that Kentucky would not hold him when his time was out for they lived too well in Ohio and he was going there. We were cheered and welcomed by most every lady where we went

{Page 6:}

and while we were at Portsmouth *{OH}* they kept a big caldron kettle boiling potatoes for us from daylight until dark every day and other kettles in proportion for other things such as cabbage, beets, beef, hams, etc., etc., and did not we live then, all free. Now how different here in KY where we have to pay a cent for a little cake no bigger than a cent and so on for everything. You wrote that our house caught fire and like to burned up. Did you mean the house up by Mr. Delavergne's or Father's? You said that Mr. Delivergne has had several applications for that strip of land and wanted to know whether I wanted it. Well, I would like to buy it and I can give an answer

{Page 7:}

better when Captain Huston gets back. If he gets the men required to fill his company to 80 which only lacks six, I can get mustered and get more wages and be able to pay for it right along. I not, I could not do very soon so I will defer giving a ??? decisive answer just now and if he keeps it a while longer it will not fall in value any.

After dinner Aug 6th.

It rains and we are getting a right smart shower which will lay the dust and cool the air and make it better for us to march to New Market tomorrow. I say

tomorrow because we did not go today for the reason that it is Thanksgiving
{November 26th in 1863} day and we are ordered not to do anything that

{Page 8:}

is not actually necessary and it is more of a Sunday than I have seen in over a month. I would like to see little Frankey and hear her talk. If she can climb a fence she will soon be able to help you. Tell Sant and the rest of the folks that I have not been able to write to them for the reason that we have been on the go all of the time and what little I wrote to you I had to write with a pencil on my knee or some other way. I see you sent back one of my letters that I wrote near Jeffersonville *{KY}*. I did not want to see that. Remember me to all of the folks and write often and direct to Lebanon, KY, instead of Louisville *{KY}*. I will write again soon and to Sarah & Sant also. From

Your Most Affectionate Husband

D. D. Keeler

Camp of the 23^d Regt of Mich Vol Infy
Lebanon Ky July 6th 1863

Dear Wife

I now am going to answer
three letters at once that I received from
you last night we have joined our
Brigade again and are at Lebanon
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day of June where the company that
they go in to does not number 80
in which unfortunately is the
case of Co D which only has 74
enlisted men so I have got to be
a 2nd Lieut with only Serjt Majors
pay as I can not get Lieut pay
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lower so you see I am no better
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Houston gets some recruits for his
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with him then I shall be all
right under the circumstances
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Order affects other Officers as well
as 2nd Lieutⁿ do not get discouraged
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a great while longer. I have to do
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as my services are so much needed
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is not actually necessary and
it is more of a Sunday than
I have seen in over a month
I would like to see little Nancy
and hear her talk if she can
climb a fence she will soon
be able to help you tell Sam and
~~the~~ rest of the folks that I have
not been able to write to them
for the reason that we have been
on the go all of the time and what
little I wrote to you I had to write
with a pencil on my knee or some
other way I see you sent back one
of my letters that I wrote near Lebanon
I did not want to see that. Remember
me to all of the folks and write often
and Direct to Lebanon by mail
of Louisville I will write again soon
and to Irak. In Sam also from
Your Most Affect Husband
D D Keller