

EDITED TRANSCRIPTION – Original file: "Letter March 17th 1864.tif"
Edited to enhance readability. Added notes are *{italicized-bracketed}*.

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Headquarters 23rd Michigan Volunteer Infantry
Morristown, Tennessee, *{Thursday}* March 17th 1864

Dear Wife,

I now answer your kind and welcome letter of the 1st inst. I received it night before last and you may believe that I was glad to hear that you and Frankie were well and I hope you will continue so. I am well and busy as ever. We marched from Mossy Creek *{TN}* to this place a few days ago so now we are forty-two miles above Knoxville *{TN}* on the railroad. The rebs are at Bulls Gap *{TN}* fifteen miles further above us. No fighting yet except a little skirmish last Sunday with a small party of rebel cavalry by our cavalry. They only came in sight of our picket line. Rebel deserters come in every day. I saw several squads come in today. This is the place where we came last fall and stayed a few days and returned to Loudon *{TN}*. The rebels were camped here all winter. When they left they left their winter quarters standing and we have burned them since we came here. We now do picket duty by regiments. Our battalion has been on once since we came here and while going through one of the rebel camps I found a leaf of Company B Descriptive Book

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with my own handwriting on it. The book was lost at Lenoir *{NC}* last fall when we abandoned our baggage. Today we got a few sanitary goods such as potatoes, onions, dried apples and pickles. My mess got enough for a good meal. We have had a few recruits come to our regiment and we expect more. They are not as good men as our old soldiers. Out of the forty I do not believe there is over ten that will be of any good to the service and the more that we get the larger will be our sick list for six months. Very few of the first men that came out and that are with us get sick. I do not know when nor where our next move will be. The railroad is repaired so that two trains arrive here daily from Knoxville so we can get supplies as fast as we want them. I expect that our next move will be to the front farther or an advance towards Bulls Gap, yet I do not know anything about it. We have considerable force here but how much of a force I can't tell. As far as I can see is camps on all sides but one and that is in front. Nothing but the picket line in front of us. We have two drills every day, part of the time by skirmish when you can see lines of skirmishers in every direction drilling. We have been here now long enough so that we have burned every rail fence within a mile of camp and made a big drill ground large enough to maneuver our whole army.

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You said that you heard that we were going to Cincinnati, Ohio. Well, I wish it was so. That has been the rumor here for over a month, but we have not gone yet nor is there any signs of it here. If we are ordered there and stop there a few days I will let you know so you can give me a call for I would be willing to let you come to Cincinnati to see me, but I could not think of your coming down here. However, we must not get discouraged but keep up good spirits and the time will come when I can go home to stay and I hope it will not be a great while either. I do not think that the war can last the summer out if proper efforts are made, which we have every reason to believe are being made for a speedy and successful close of this war. We expect to be paid four months pay tomorrow or next day. The men signed the pay rolls yesterday and the rolls sent in to the pay master to be figured up yesterday. I will send you some the first opportunity, so you may soon look for enough to relieve all of your wants for some time. I probably shall send about \$300.00 and as I shall need some myself I will keep one hundred to use. If I get a chance to buy me a good horse cheap I will keep more. I have made requisition on the quartermaster of the division for one and he has not got any yet and it may be some time before he can get any and I do not think I had better wait very long for him as I need a horse now. Yet I had rather draw one then buy one at present.

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I got a letter from Frank a few days ago. He is well and back on the Potomac again. By his tell he has enjoyed 30 days of unparalleled pleasure and comforts and now finds himself back again on duty. There is another that will have his turn bye and bye or it will be because I cannot. We have plenty to eat and enough to wear so you must not worry about my any more. It is getting late and to close this I must wish you good night and pleasant dreams. My love to all inquiring friends and tell little Frankie for me a few times and I will return them with interest when I get home, so believe me, as ever,

Your Affectionate Husband,
D. D. Keeler

Co 2^d Michigan Vol Infy
Morrestown Tenn March 17th 1864

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Your Affectionate
Husband

D. D. Weeks