

EDITED TRANSCRIPTION – Original file: "Letter March 20<sup>th</sup> 1864.tif"  
Edited to enhance readability. Added notes are *{italicized-bracketed}*.

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Headquarters 23<sup>rd</sup> Michigan Volunteer Infantry  
Mossy Creek, Tennessee, *{Sunday}* March 20<sup>th</sup> '64

Dear Wife,

Today is Sunday and it is time that I wrote to you again so I will. I am yet as well as ever and I hope you are, too. I received a letter from you while at Morristown *{TN}* that I did not answer that I remember now, however, I wrote you one from there and I received one while there. We marched back here to Mossy Creek day before yesterday and left Morristown for the rebels again. We had burned all of the fence rails within a mile of there and made one large field, large enough to maneuver our whole force which was done the morning we left as the whole army started at the same instant marching to the rear in line of battle for two miles. We are now camped near where we were before and all quiet, as they say, on the Potomac.

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The 10<sup>th</sup> Michigan Calvary is here and a great many are acquainted in our regiment, so we have plenty of visitors. I do not know when nor where our next move will be as it is none of my business I suppose. I heard last night, and it is credited by some, that we (the 23<sup>rd</sup> Michigan Volunteer Infantry and 25<sup>th</sup> Michigan Volunteer Infantry) are going to Cincinnati *{OH}* and that we would start inside of ten days. I do not put a great deal of confidence in the report and if we do not go I shall not be disappointed. It seems too good to be true. The idea of getting out of East Tennessee is too good to be thought of at present. However, I suppose we are as well off here as anywhere, for we get enough to eat and wear and the climate is not excelled in the world. Plenty of good water is found in abundance and before the war it was one of the most fertile and rich country in the South; an abundance of everthing a heart could wish for, but now how changed, everything laid waste and stripped of all that is worth anything.

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I have not been paid yet, but expect to be tomorrow as I hear that the paymaster came up from Knoxville *{TN}* today on the last train. I guess he has come, for a sutler has arrived and is now putting up his tent only a few yards from here. I do not think he would come without he knew that we were to be paid. I will send you some money the very first opportunity and how I do not yet know, unless I send it by mail and I dare not send a very large amount that way, so I will send it by some trusty man that goes north to express it to you, that being the safest way I know of at present. The express ~~does not~~ line is not yet established here yet or I could express it from here. If I could only go with it myself it would suit me best,

but as I cannot I will have to send it. I know you would like to see me and I would be glad if you could, but the same old story prevents me from going, which I hope will soon be removed so that I can at least pay you a short visit.

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You must try and live patiently until I can come. It is hard I know to wait, but it must be done a few months more. The time is fast shortening when my time will be out. I am now on the last half of my term and if I have to serve my three years I have more than half of it served and am now on the shortest half. In little over four months 2 years will be served and then I am exempt from draft. That is worth staying until then for. Then if I can get home honorably I will! So do not get discouraged, dear Susan, for I am doing the best I can and I hope you will approve of it and by that time I guess I can save enough to pay for the place and I would like to have enough besides to have a good rest and not be obliged to go right to work as soon as I got home. I have not lost a day since I was home last spring but have been on duty every day since and I am thankful that I have had so good health and I hope it will last me as long as the war lasts ~~or until~~. Take good care of Frankie and may God bless you. Tell Mrs. Delavergne that Lute is well and is with us. My best respects to all inquiring friends and I will write again soon. I am, dear Susan,

Your Affectionate Husband,  
D. D. Keeler

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Continued

Oh, how it makes me feel to hear of such news as often comes from from the state where they have had a chance to go to school and church and where they have everything a heart could wish in an enlightened country. These unmitigated cowards, God forsaken scoundrels, hell deserving villains, black hearted devils seek to induce honest men from their duty and discourage enlistment. May they hereafter the unprincipled dastards, dishonest lying scoundrels, and revolting hypocrites be held to the scorn contempt and hatred of honest and loyal men passing them and re-passing them day or night. May they never prosper and may they be kicked to death by n-----, for hell is waiting to receive them where they will surely go.

*{Page 6:}*

I was in hopes that you would have a pleasant visit and enjoy yourself, but I am disappointed and I hope he will, the hell deserving villain, never attempt to visit me, to come in my sight if ever I get back, for I would make it unpleasant for him or get licked myself. It is no use of me wasting any more ink on him or his class for they are not worthy to live in a civilized community and ought to be transported to some God forsaken hole where they could dispose of their venom without insulting a soldier's wife by the cursed abuse of one of the best governments that ever a loyal man lived under. I am going to live to see all such

mean, impudent, and lousy skin flints punished as they deserve, which will surely be for they cannot escape

*{Page 7:}*

justice which is only waiting for them. I hope this letter will find you in Saginaw *{M}* where you will find people that know something and not claim allegiance to Jeff Davis and his damnable crew. I hope you will keep on writing as you have done and I will answer them as often as I can. Our mail facilities are not very good here but we want to hear from home every time a mail arrives. You must not worry about me for I am well and in the best of health. I had a horse to ride on the march since we left Glasgow *{KY}* and have not had to walk any, only when I got tired of riding. It is getting late and I must close this epistle and wish you a good night and you will kiss Frankey for me five or six times and give my love to all inquiring friends. Direct your letters as I

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directed you to, to me 23<sup>rd</sup> Regiment Michigan Volunteer Infantry, 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, Judah's Division, 23<sup>rd</sup> Army Corps, Glasgow, Kentucky, and they will reach me in time.

From Your Affectionate Husband,  
D. D. Keeler

W<sup>th</sup> Quarters 2<sup>nd</sup> Mich<sup>l</sup> Infy Vols  
Mossy Creek Tenn March 20<sup>th</sup> 64

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G. Neuler



Continued

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and give my love to all my dear  
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From your affect Husband

D. D. Wheeler