

EDITED TRANSCRIPTION – Original file: "Letter March 8th 1865.tif"
Edited to enhance readability. Added notes are *{italicized-bracketed}*.

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Steamer Oriental, Atlantic Ocean
off North Carolina, *{Wednesday}* March 8th 1865

Dear Wife,

For want of something to do I thought I would try to write you a few lines and have it ready to mail the first opportunity. I am doing better at it than I expected when I commenced, for the ship is heaving, jumping and rolling like a potatoe in a boiling pot. I have slept, read, walked the deck and could find nothing to do to amuse myself so I thought I should try writing. I have fastened myself down and I roll with the ship and am doing well. I sailed from Washington *{DC}* on the morning of the 5th and arrived at Fortress Monroe *{VA}* the next morning at 8 a.m. Sailed from there at 2 p.m. and got we out to sea before dark, weather fine and pleasant. Next morning the 7th we passed Cape Hatteras *{NC}* and saw no more land again until this morning when we arrived at Fort Fisher *{NC}* at the mouth of

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the Cape Fear River and 15 miles from Wilmington *{NC}*. Learned there that the corps were at New Bern *{NC}* and received orders to take our anchor and proceed to Beaufort, North Carolina, that being the nearest place we could land and so now we are on our way there and will arrive there early in the morning. It is now 4 o'clock p.m. and we are now out sight of land and a fairly stiff wind and the sea is kicing up and tossing us about considerable. Most all of my men are seasick and want to get ashore. I like it so far and have not yet been the least bit seasick nor do I think I will be either or I would be now, for the Atlantic is rough enough to make anyone sick that was not used to it. I hope you will not worry about me for I see no occasion for any accident and will be landed safe before I can mail this, so by that you will know that I am safe. I have the sickest lot of men you ever saw and would like to get in a hospital or anywhere to get out of this. It is curious that I do not get sick. I am as well as I ever was and I eat my meals regular and

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have the best kind of an appetite. I will soon be at work again with my train and shall write you as often as I can and if you fail to receive any letters from me as often as usual it will not be my fault as the mail does not run regular yet. I suppose you have my photograph and know how I look. I had it taken full length thinking it would suit you best that way. How this ship rolls. I can hardly hold myself in my seat. Well, Susan, I have but three days over six months more to serve and I will then be yours and yours only. I will when I get started make good

time going home I will bet, so be patient and I will and the joys of meeting will repay the grief of parting. I look forward as anxious as you do for the time and will not delay it one minute more than I can help. I want to see little Frank and you; tell her that her Pa has six months more to serve before she can see him. I want her to mind you and be a good girl. I have no idea how she looks now and I do not think I would know her as she has grown so by this time. I will be surprised I expect

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to see the change that has taken place since I left home. However, I am used to changes now and one more change then I will be satisfied, that is when I am changed to a citizen again. As I have wrote more than I expected I will bring this to a close, so good night.

Give my love to Sarah, Father and Mother and retain your share.

I am as ever

Your Affectionate Husband,

D. D. Keeler

Mrs. Susan M. Keeler
East Saginaw
Michigan



Steamer Oriental Atlantic Ocean
of North Carolina March 8th 1865

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