

EDITED TRANSCRIPTION – Original files: “Letter Sept. 11th 1864a pg. 1-4.tif” & “Letter Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> 1864a pg. 5-6.tif”

Edited to enhance readability. Added notes are *{italicized-bracketed}*.

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Quartermasters Office Supply Train  
2<sup>nd</sup> Division 23<sup>rd</sup> Army Corps  
Decatur, Georgia, *{Sunday}* September 11<sup>th</sup> 1864

Dear Wife,

It is Sunday evening and it has been the first Sunday that I have been able to keep without work in five months. Today I have done no business and all of my men except those that are absent have nothing to do but take care of their teams. I got up this morning and eat my breakfast which consisted of boiled potatoes, boiled white fish, boiled beef, hard bread, pickles and black tea. After eating about all I wanted I laid down again and read myself to sleep and had to be called up to dinner. After dinner (the same I had for breakfast) I put on a new shirt, clean and starched, too, had my boots blacked and brushed up and had my horse saddled. I then rode over to my regiment to see the major and the boys. I was there until 3 o'clock and I found the veteran fever breaking out in some of the other regiments in the brigade. The 111<sup>th</sup> Ohio Infantry nearly

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all have reenlisted and while I was there the 80<sup>th</sup> Indiana Infantry took a vote and a majority of them went for reenlisting. These regiments are in the same brigade with the 23<sup>rd</sup> and have been a long time. The 111<sup>th</sup> Ohio Infantry has been side by side with the 23<sup>rd</sup> for two years and the boys are greatly attached to each other, they having fought together and what one has both have. The 23<sup>rd</sup> has no chance to veteranize, yet those two regiments had special permits from the War Department on application from their commanders. After seeing all the boys I invited the quartermaster over to my quarters to supper. We rode over together. I ordered supper (the same fare) and he stayed until nearly night and returned to the regiment. I then rode up to division headquarters to see how they got along and see if there was any mail for me and found none. I then returned to my tent to write to you for I know how glad you will be to get a letter from me that I am well and where I am, what I am about, and what I am going to do.

Well, Susan, the campaign is ended. Atlanta *{GA}* is ours with its fortifications, buildings that is not shot to pieces, and some rebels, also a lot of women & children. The 23<sup>rd</sup> Corps is stationed six miles east of Atlanta at Decatur to rest and refit for another

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campaign. I have to refit my train, fatten my mules, mend my wagon's harness, and also settle with Uncle Sam to prevent getting my pay stopped. I have just

heard from the regiment again. They took a vote to see how many would reenlist and only 9 that wanted to, so I guess that we do not get the thirty days furlough. I am not very anxious for them to for I would be kept on my last muster. However, I have been recommended, so I am told, for a 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant commission and the major told me night before last that he had had the pleasure of recommending me for Captain and Assistant Quartermaster of US volunteers and I think it best to accept them if they come, for the regiment will not veteranize and I can get out when that is mustered out for it is my opinion that the war will not last another year for when General *{William Tecumseh}* Sherman makes another dive the Confederacy will be pretty narrow. When the army retired from beyond Jonesborough *{GA}* back here the Johnnies thought that our army was making another flank movement, so prisoners say, and the rebs started for Macon *{GA}* as fast as they could go. To use their words, they said that Sherman had made another dive and it was no telling where he would come up, so they lit out for Macon. While we were flanking Atlanta it was three or four days that the rebs did not know where we were or where we had gone. They thought we had give up Atlanta and were going back.

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They thought to chase us but found the 20<sup>th</sup> Corps at the river and the 20<sup>th</sup> Corps whipped them and about that time we turned up way in their rear so they had to get out of Atlanta.

I have my train parked in a large field in two lines with my stable between the wagons made of pine boughs or what you would call an arbor. I built it more for shade than anything else. It is about 400 feet long and 24 feet wide. My quarters are close by in a nice pine grove and if you could see my quarters you would say that it ~~was~~ is could be nothing but comfort to stay here. I have my wall tent by myself and no loafers hanging around so I can, when I have time, be as quiet as I have a mind to. My bed is made soft with pine boughs and large enough for two. I have a good floor and keep it well swept. My cook has his kitchen in the rear and we eat under a fly put up for that purpose. My clerk has a tent close by where he does the writing. The sergeant stays with him. The teamsters stay up at the train. My tent was comfortable as can be and I wish you could enjoy it with me. I never have been so well situated since I have been in the army as I am now. And if I could have you come and see me I would now. You must not think of coming for you could not get here. No one can travel here without orders from the general commanding the department, so it would not be any use to think of coming to see me.

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The railroads are crowded to their untmost to keep us in supplies and transporting troops, consequently no citizen or anyone else can get transportation except on orders from a department commander. You must be

patient and as soon as I get my papers made up and my train reorganized I will make another attempt to go home. I think I will be more successful than I was last spring, for I have another channel to work through this time.

I am sorry that you are so lonesome without me, but I hope that the time is not very long before you will not be troubled that way, for I am as anxious to have your company as you are mine. I think I can stay home little better nights and Sundays when I get home than I did before I came in the army. I think that you and I can be as happy as anybody. We never did have any trouble together and I know we can live so again only more contented with each other and the more I think of it the more I know it with little Frankie to make fun for us we could be as happy *{as}* anybody. So we will be patient and keep up good spirits so that when the time does come we may be able,

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able to enjoy ourselves. Dear Susan, I hope that we may both be spared to see this country again at peace and to enjoy a government as good as before, without we never could prosper. I do think that it was my duty to come in the army for the services of all are required to put down this rebellion. When I get home I shall have the satisfaction of knowing that I helped my country for one when rebels attempted to destroy this United States and build up a Confederacy of the ruins.

How do they get along with the draft? Please send me a list of the fortunate one if you can get a list. I do not believe that my name will be on a list, at least I have no fears of such a thing. If I was home I should have that to fear. I am glad that I did not wait to be drafted, are not you? I was just thinking that you might be writing to me at the very moment as you say that you write every Sunday. I wish we could just talk together every time we write. I have now wrote you a good long letter and I will write you another one soon. My love to all. Kiss little Frankey for me and tell her to be a good girl and I will kiss you when I come home so good night and believe me. Ever

Your Affectionate Husband  
D. D. Keeler

Mrs. Susan M. Keeler  
East Saginaw, Mi

Quarter Masters Office Supply Train  
2<sup>nd</sup> Division 23<sup>rd</sup> Army Corps

Decatur Ga Sept 11<sup>th</sup> 1864

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my Wall tent by myself and no loafers hanging around  
So I can when I have time be as quiet as I have mind  
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for two I have a good floor and keep is well swept My Cook  
has his kitchen in the rear and we eat under a fly put up for  
that purpose. My Clerk has a tent close by where he does the  
writing the Serjeant stays with him The Sepoys stay up at  
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I wish you could enjoy it with me I never have been  
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I am now. And if I could have you come and  
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could prosper. I do think that it was my duty to come  
in the Army for the services of all are required to put  
down this Rebellion. When I get home I shall have  
the satisfaction of knowing that I helped my Country  
for one when Rebels attempted to destroy this United  
States and build up a Confederacy of the ruins.

How do they get along with the draft. Please  
send me a list of the fortunate one if you can get a  
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Sunday I wish we could just talk together every time we write  
& I have now wrote you a good long letter and I will write  
you another one soon. My love to all kiss Franky for me and  
tell her to be a good Girl & I will kiss you when I come home. So  
Good Night, and believe me as ever your

Affectionate Husband  
O. J. Keeler

Mrs Susan M. Keeler  
East Saginaw Mich