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## Preparing for War

(September 1862–January 1, 1863)

Most of McKnight's early letters discuss routine issues that many soldiers faced during the war. For example, a letter dated December 9, 1862, describes in detail the first half of a typical day in camp: "I have to detail every day at day light I have the Roll to cal. Then we al have to feed our Horses then water. After water then Breakfast at 7 then Officers drill at 8 then Guard mount at 9 then Squad on Company drill then feed Horses grain then dinner at 12." McKnight also talks about having a "good Bed to sleep in" and for the most part seldom complains about the quality or quantity of food. McKnight often writes that they have "plenty to eat" and on December 15, 1862, pens, "I smel fresh meat Cooking."

Two common themes in these letters persist throughout the entire collection. McKnight repeatedly speaks of loneliness, and coupled with that is a desire to receive letters from home. On December 17, 1862, McKnight states, "I am wearying for a letter I have written one about every other day. I have received no answer to any that I have written."

Most of Company K's early training was conducted in camps located in Middleport and Gallipolis, Ohio. By December 1862, Company K had moved to Camp Ripley in Ripley, Ohio, and McKnight realizes that his unit is preparing to leave Ohio. In a

letter dated January 1, 1863, McKnight writes that he will soon leave “our beloved state” and closes with “Good bye dear wife dear children Dear friends Dear old state.”

These early letters also reveal two personal situations that McKnight confronted before leaving Ohio. Samaria’s early letters do not exist, but she evidently informed McKnight of her pregnancy in the fall of 1862 (the twins would be born on July 4, 1863). McKnight’s initial response is curious: “O I am so grieved to think of your affliction. It almost unmans me the anguish and Heart rending of Parting only seems Doubled at the news. . . . I know I am to blame for it al and cant help it.” Soon after McKnight learned of Samaria’s “affliction,” he was apparently accused of being unfaithful. McKnight referred to the accusations as “slandorous lies” and stated that the mere suggestion of unfaithfulness had “inflicted a severe wound in [his] Heart.”

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September 1862<sup>1</sup>  
Camp Middleport  
Meigs Co Ohio

Dear Wife,

I seat myself to let you know how we are getting along in the first place. I am enjoying good health at present and we have sent for our clothing today they are at Athens.<sup>2</sup> We are to get Our clothing and be Mustered in and receive a part of our Money and it may be all of it and then we wil be permitted to come home once more to . . . see you all then we are to March to Athens thence to Cincinattia by Rail thence to Ripley Ohio fifty Miles above Cincinattia where there is Seven Companies of our Regiment.<sup>3</sup> There is a Mustering Officer on his way here we expect him here on Sunday and then you may look for me home.<sup>4</sup> My Horses is getting Better, when I was home last I tried to think and did not think that I was for all the Better and now there is Better Prospect for me than there ever has been seince I came into the company for using a Horse of my own it would surprise you to know for it did me I dare not tell you now but wil when I get home. I was ordered out to drill the Men yesterday and the officer said it was the Best drill they had had for a

Week. I am still acting as Orderly, and the boys seem wel Pleased so far with me. Our Colonel was here day before yesterday to see us and it . . . through him that the change is to be made it is by no effort of my own that theree is a Better Prospect for me. I Believe I have nomore to . . . tel you worth telling—do nomore at Present. From your unfaithful Husband.

William McKnight to Samaria McKnight

P.S. tel James ther is a chance for him. Bruncker wants to see him before long.<sup>5</sup>

W.M.

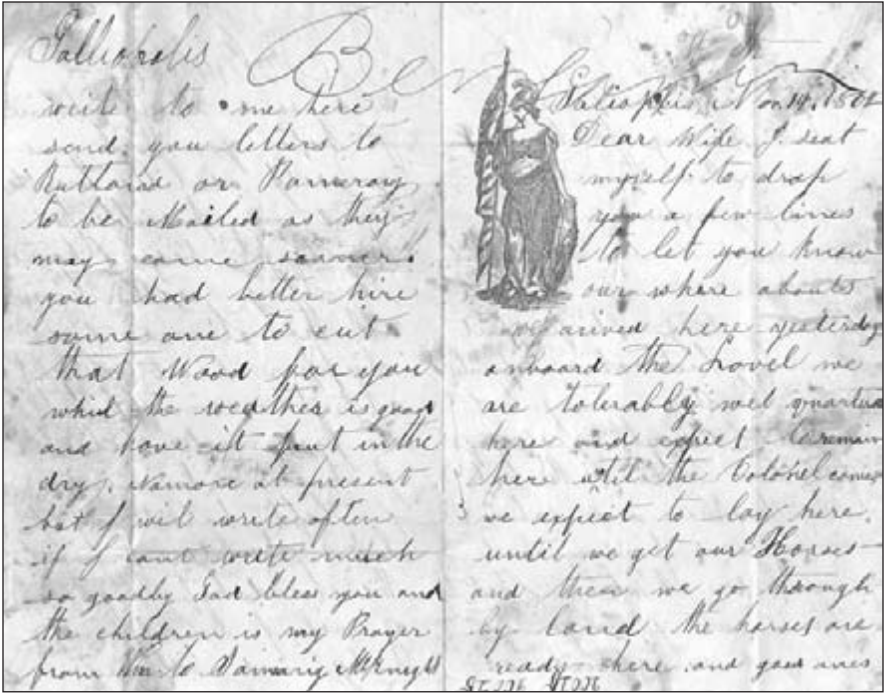
October 16, 1862  
Camp Middleport Ohio

Dear Wife,

You have nodout heard before this line that we have received Order to report when we are ready to move which may alarm you and make you tremble for fear that we may have to go far away but fear Not if we do go it wil only be to Camp Denison to organize the Regiment.<sup>6</sup> I think which we Could not do any other way the Captain thinks that when we get our horses and get organized that we wil be sent back here again. Our clothing is at Athens we expect to get them Before we leave but it is very uncertain we may Stay here all Winter. War matters are so uncertain the Boys are making a Buz about dinner and I wil have to go to dinner. I have had plenty of Dinner plenty of Pork and beans and some Bread and Butter & shugar to top of . . . If you may gess how it makes me feel to think of leaving you But there is a smile in my dour above that. I Depend on . . . to Protect us and I hope you wil put your trust in him who is able and willing to save. I hope you wil Pray for me . . . feel that God is stil as he has ever been a father and friend and is abiding. Kiss the children for me Come & se me if you can. Bring the children if the weather is good, bought me a carpet sack yesterday so I can take care of what I have we have received more rations today from Galliopolis.<sup>7</sup> The Rebels left Canwha.<sup>8</sup> Nomore at present but pray the God of love guide and protect u is my Pray.

From your ever loving husband.

Wm. McKnight to Samaria



William McKnight's letter to Samaria, November 14, 1862. Courtesy of Terry Hauger.

November 14, 1862  
Galiopolis

Dear Wife,

I seat myself to drop you a few lines to let you know our where abouts. We arrived here yesterday onboard the Lovel we are tolerably wel quarterd here and expect to remain here until the Colonel comes we expect to lay here until we get our Horses—and then we go through by land the horses are ready here and good ones. There is 2 Companies here belonging to this Reg and another the Athens Company expected today we expect to lay here about a week and mabe longer. I am geting Stripes put on my Jackcoat and pants and feathers in my hat which I Bought yesterday for two Dollars the hat and feathers and sabers letter and figure cost me \$2.25, & when I get fixt out I am going to get some Pictures and send them home I hope you wil give yourself as little trouble about me possible for the Capt says I have to Stay with him all the time I got supper last Night at the American Hotel the firs meals vituals I have eaten since I left home but I like Soldering foral the hardships I go with a wil.<sup>9</sup> I



William McKnight's letter to Samaria, November 18, 1862. Courtesy of Terry Hauger.

think it my Duty and Calling write to me here send you letters to Rutland or Pomeroy to be Mailed as they may come sooner.<sup>10</sup> You had better hire some one to cut that wood for you whil the weather is good and have it put in the dry. Nomore at present but I wil write often if I cant write much so goodby God bless you and the children is my Prayer.

From Wm to Samaria McKnight

November 18, 1862  
Gallipolis

Dear Wife,

It is with a ful heart that I seat myself myself to adress to you a few lines to let you know that I am not unmindfull of you. It is not daylight yet I am alone with the Capt. I had to get up and leave the table to hide my tears warm tears of love for you and the little ones at home nearly hide my paper. I hope to se you again although I feel a strong foreboding that I my never



Civil War stationery symbol. Courtesy of Terry Hauger.

se home again after we leave here but I put my trust in one who is able and willing to save. I and the Capt and Lieut Bruncker draws our rations and Board at a private house and have a good Bed to sleep in together and a good place to write. I never felt Better in my life in health. I have not got any washing done yet and have plenty Clean cloths yet I have not got acquainted with any Boddy here yet only Soldiers and it seems to me somewhat dry sort of a place. I think you had Better take Alexanders Note if he cant pay you soon. Nomore at present from your Affectianate Husband.

Wm. McKnight  
To Samaria McKnight

P.S. We are quartered a little belo the Publick Square at the Greenwood House. Tell the children Pa is comeing home to se them some day.

November 25, 1862  
Galliopolis

Dear Wife,

I landed here safe last Night and find that we are to leave tomorrow morning for Ripley by land. I expect the orderly of Geyers Company got shot yesterday by a Negro in a drunken scrape.<sup>11</sup> He is better this morning. Direct your letters to Camp Ripley Brown Co Ohio.

Nomore from your loving Husband write as soon as you think that we get to camp. Good by dear ones. Good by.

From Wm to Samaria McKnight.

*In margin:*  
In hast.



William McKnight's  
letter to Samaria,  
November 25, 1862.  
Courtesy of Terry  
Hauger.

November 26, 1862  
Galliopolis, Ohio

Dearest wife,

I again take the opportunity of again addressing to you a few lines to let you know that I never forget home and family. My mind is constantly turning homewards. I have just finished detailing the gards to gard our horses which we have drawn today.<sup>12</sup> I got my choice of the hole lot and got a very fine horse I think. We cant leave before the day after tomorrow I am glad I came back when I did for we have had a great deal to do today. We have 30 more Horses to draw in the morning. Our horses Color is

dark browns and blacks and a very good lot of horses. They make a fine appearance. We drew our saddle and horse blankets today every thing except Revolvers we drew knives and forks and pans and Bought a Cooking stove so we get along very wel. We drew heavy Revolvers one for each man six shooters splendid weapons for fighting. I get along very well with the drill I can Beat either of Lieutenants. It is now near midnight and all the rest are in Bed and the old stove smokes and the night is getting cold and I am somewhat tire so I guess I had Better quit for the night. So good night Dearest. Good Night goodby little ones. The tears Blind me so I cant se to write any longer although I have felt livelier to Night than common. I cant tell any thing about comeing home yet But I think there wil be a chance. Write soon. Give my love to all my folks and keep it al for yourself and the children.

Old Frank was a relation of the Cap. The rest of the men were quartered around in town. The 3rd Night we stayed in Piketon and Fared very wel.<sup>13</sup> The 4th night at Locust grove fared prety hard.<sup>14</sup> 5th Night at North Liberty where we fared splendid put up early shaved and put on a clean shirt. Next morning we left 2 horses and proceeded. Arrived here about 3 o'clock with thre Horses less than we started with. Prety sore about where the horses tail sprouts. The trip cost me nothing. I never had my Purse out the whole way. The Peopl treated us with great kindness on our rout apples Pies sigars milk and cider plenty. Since I came here I have had twice as much to do as I had in Middleport.<sup>15</sup> I am quartered with the Captain Lieutenants and Sargeants by our selves and Hary Spires cooks for us.<sup>16</sup>

Again seat myself to finish my letter. We intended to start today But we have been busy al day and are hardly ready yet. We are to start tomorrow the 27th. We are to go by Centerville Jackson and Piketon and so on to Ripley.<sup>17</sup> When we get there you wil hear from me as soon as we get straightened out as I can find time. We have had a good deal of fun today riding bad horses. Several got unhorsed though none hurt. I have as much as I can attend to. I hardly get time eat. Our company has 50 horses to take for another Company. I hope you wil not be the least uneasy about me and I hope that you wil feel Better against these lines reaches you

Write me a great long letter when you rite again. Tel the children that I expect to surprise them again some Morning. Tel them to be good children and good to one another. Go to School if the weather is fit to go.

Dear . . Dear . Wife and children can it be possible that I am destined to see you nomore in this World. Certainly not I hop not I think not. I

feel assured that after Passing thru many hardship I wil be permitted to return to the Bosom of my family to enjoy home again. So may it be good night dear ones good night half past ten. Good night. Write as soon as you get this no more from your ever loving Husband.

William McKnight  
To Samaria McKnight

December 6, 1862  
Camp Ripley

Dear Wife and little ones,

I again seat myself to write you a few lines to let you know that I have not forgotten you. I received your letter of the 1st inst and it did me an awful site of good.<sup>18</sup> I was Proud of it. It was so well composed. Wel we left Gallipolis Nov 27th 11½ oclock am and marched to centerville that Night arived there after dark and had a pretty hard night of it. The men slept on an open Field had our suports get after feeding and taking care of horses our company led throug 50 Horses for an other Company. The thre companies led throught 200 Horses and we made a string about ½ mile long.

Oh I just wish you could have seen us. The 2nd Night we stayed at Jacson and they treated us like Brothers. The Cap and I stayed at the Widow Smiths. Old Frank smiths Widow. I received theops letter.<sup>19</sup> As soon as I get time I wil answer it if I had time. I want to write to Mother and Mary and Willie and Janet and Elliott Mart Emy Jane Elens folks Aunt Sallies folks and al the rest of our folks but they need not wait for I knew the real value of a letter before. Eleven o clock good night my own dear Wife good night. Tel the children that I wil try and bring them some Christmas Presents. Kiss them once for yourself and once for papa. Do the best you can. God bless you.

From William McKnight  
to Samaria McKnight

December 9, 1862  
Camp Ripley

Dear Wife,

I take this oportunity to inform you that I am wel at present sincerely hope these few lines may find you & our Dear little ones enjoying the same inestimable blessing. The camp has become quiet the men are al in bed except the guards. There is 12 men 3 Corporals & 1 Sargeant on

Horse Guards around our own Horses every Night and ten on Camp duty every day. Each relieved every twenty-four hours & sometimes 8 or 10 on fatigue duty around the Camp which makes 35 men. I have to detail every day at day light I have the Roll to cal. Then we al have to feed our Horses then water. After water then Breakfast at 7 then Officers drill at 8 then Guard mount at 9 then Squad on Company drill then feed Horses grain then dinner at 12 then Orderly call at 1 when I have to go to Headquarters and get the morning report Book where I have to keep an account of the number of men and horses fit for Duty unfit sick Commisioned and non Commissioned Officers present and absent at 2. Battalion drill at half past 3 water and feed Horses Hay super at 5 gard to put on Duty Roll call at half Past 8 at Eight forty five the taps. Al this done to the sound of the Bugle and so on to the end.<sup>20</sup> I am so busy that I do not get much time to study or to Play. I have not been in Town but 4 times since we came here. If there was any place here for woman I would like to have come to camp and se us but I cant say to yo come for I know the little ones wants to me and then I wil come and see you if there is any Possibl chance. I have no idea how long we wil stay here Probably some time. It is a very nice Place above town. It has been fitted for a fair ground the nicest kind. The boys are al wel in our Company except some thing not very serious. I am hearty and Contented with my fate but Oh for you and the Dear little ones is my great trouble. But know that God wil protect you an them. If you cant write very much write often. Tel children Papa say he would like to se them awful wel but Cant tonight.

We are considerable crowded here 4 shanties about 12x15 2 stories is al the room we have. The Furniture in our shanty consists of one table one Bench one stool 2 trunks one Barrel 2 Boxes stove and some Pots knives forks Pans and spoons for the mess and any amount of hors equipments sabers revolvers and Blankets. Oh yes we have a Broom and Plenty of towels. So nomore at present. Write soon Dearest and often to if you can find time. Good night deares ones good night.

Do you mis me at home do you miss me  
Twould be an assurance most dear  
to know that at this time some loved one  
Is saying I wish he were here.<sup>21</sup>

From Wm McKnight to his Wife and family  
Samaria God Bless you good night.

December 13, 1862  
Camp Ripley, Ohio

Dear Wife and children,

It is under Painfully tryings circumstances that I seat myself to let you know that I am well at Present. Hopeing and trusting that these lines may find you enjoying the same Blessing. I received your letter and likeness the joy of receiving was soon overcome by the contents of the letter it cast a damper over my soul that I cannot shake of. O my dear Wife what shal I do what shal I say what can I do for my Dear Wife. Here I am and Cant help myself. I hardly expect that any of us wil get a furrow from here the Probability is that wele not remain here long where we go I cant tel. O I wish I could se you again but if we never meet in this world I hope we wil in the next where Parting is nomore. O I am so grieved to think of your affliction. It almost unmans me the anguish and Heart rending of Parting only seems Doubled at the news. My dear Wife be Patient reconcile your self as wel as you can. Be assured of one thing you have my tenderest affections my deepest solicitude. I cant express my feelings. O I am so sorry that I hardly know what to do. If I could only be with you it would not seem so hard to bear. It is hard I know and you may cast reflections on me. I know I am to blame for it al and cant help it. I want you to writ all about it all about every thing concerning our family how you get along whether the children is shod and clothed or not O train them up in the way they should go. May God Bles them you and them are all the world to me. You may think I have neglected you but if you could se me while I write and see me turn my head away to keep from spoiling the Paper you would at least know that I had not forgotten you. O my dear Wife O my dear children. O if I could be with you to night it would be the happiest Hour in al my life Not because I am tired soldiering but because I love you better than any thing. God has blessed me with and you are mine and I am yours. I cant think of any thing else. But Gods wil be done. We have been drilling on horse today for the firs and did splendidly although I could Not take command of my Platoon on account of horseness. I looked on and seen the movements and I tel you it is a splendid sight to se somany horseman with glittering sabers and Prancing Horses. There is 8 companies they cover several acres of ground in their movements. I can go through as wel as

any of them in the company. I have Been asked if I had not been in the service. It getting late dear Wife and I have some other writing to do so I must close. I got another Pair of Pants since I came here and got Patrick McCans Wife to sew on the stripes.<sup>22</sup> They are different from the first ones nearly as Broad as your 2 fingers. I have never put them on yet. I think I shal save them until I come home. We received company teams today 26 Mule teams. We got some straw today to put in our Bunks. The Cap and I sleeps down stairs together the rest upstairs. We have plenty of every nesenary. Nomore write soon I have written 5 or 6 letters and received 2. O yes and your likenes. God bles you good night Dearest. Give my respects to and a thousand Kisses to the Children. O can I say good night.

From William McKnight to his Wife and family.

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December 15, 1862  
Camp Ripley

Dear Wife,

I again seat myself to write you a few lines to let you know that I am wel as usual. We have had fine weather for drilling although it has been rather Cold for sleeping comfortable but we get along very wel here. Every morning at 5'-45" oclock I have Roll to Call at 6 watter call & at 7 Breakfast at 8 sick cal. Al the sick have to report to the surgeon. Officers drill at 8 fatigue at 8 when I have to report men for duty. At 9 gard mount when I have to bring out 8 and 10 men for Camp guards then squad drill 2 hours, dinner at 12 then at 1 Orderly Call when I have to go to head quarter to get my morning report Book where I have to report al the sick men wel men sick horses wel horses number of men absent and present and a number of things not enumerated. But I get through them al very wel for the sake of my family and Country. I can goe through it all and more. But O dear Wife the hardest fate is to leave you and goe far away from you. Since I commenced writing the Captain tels me that we are to leave here in a few days 6 days at the farthest and we leave for Lexington Kentucky.<sup>23</sup> 4 companies of our Regiment goes tomorrow or next day then ours goes 4 day later. It is sealed. I goe far away without seing you. O may God help us to bear up under it and O may he watch over you and your littl flock and Dearest Wife put your trust in him who is able and willing to save. I would to God that it were otherwise but I am rezined to my fate. God's wil be done.

I would like to have some money but there is no chance now. I can get along some way. We do not expect to be Paid very soon I have a little money yet. I have been very saving of what I had. I have not gotten any washing done since I came here and I have 2 clean hankerchiefs and 2 Pair of socks yet. I pressed 2 Pair at Galliopolis gave one to the Captain and kept the others. They are the best socks I ever had home made and comes to the tops of my Boots. The Boys killed al the Hogs in Camp today had a great time of it and seems to me that I smel fresh meat Cooking. We have changed our mess. The Captain 2 Lietenants 2 sargeants 2 Buglers and the Orderly. I get very little else here. I doo wish some of my folks could come and se me. You can come to me but I cant come to you. I sent a letter to you yesterday. I intend to write you often whether I write to any one else or not. So nomore at present. Write soon Dear wife. Tel Willie to write to me I would like to know how he gets along. Letters that has any thing in it particular kep it to yourself. Good by dear Wife and Dear little ones good night.

From William McKnight to his Wife.

December 17, 1862  
Camp Ripley

Dear Wife,

Again I seat myself to talk to you again throug the mails again. I am wel at present. There is some sickness in the Camp. I reported 4 this morning not bad. I am wearying for a letter I have written one about every other day. I have received no answer to any that I have written since I came here. The weather has changed and is very disagreeable. The Horses stand out all tied on one line and eat their feed of the Ground. In the firs place there is posts set in the ground then Bored and a rope put through and al the Horses tied to it about 2 feet apart on each side alike. We dril thre times a day at half past 9 then at 2 oclock this afternoon we was out and I had Command of the first Platoon. I dont like to Brag but I get along as wel as any of them. The Boys sid today Orderly you going out today if you are we go if not we dont. The Boys stick to me and have from the first. They think a great deal of our Captain. We all like him for al the Bad reports about him. If we stay here this winter we wil get to come home if not it wil be some time before you se me again. I would like to have the childrens likenesses if it was not so far of. If you have any

more trouble let me know it. I do hope and pray that what you wrote to me is not so for I thought you would not have that to worry about. It has always been a source of trouble to you and I but blame me for it al for it is my fault I know But I know you will forgive for it. O dear it makes my heart acke for you it makes me sad but I cant help it now.

The Cap and I have got a very good Bunk to sleep in now. He is turned in and I am tired and feel like turning in to so good night sweet ones. O my heart wels up Bitter tears and my lip quivers and my breath groes hard when I close my letters to you. I can hardly se to write. So good night dear ones. I hope to see you al again. May God sustain us in this our severest troubles. O my dear Wife and children if I Could be with you again it would be the greatest Comfort of my life. Give my respects to al you know to be my friends for my sake. The fact of the case is there has been more slanderous lies told about the men of the company than I ever new about any thing this world. I think the folks at home must have very little to do and you dear Wife inflicted a severe wound in my Heart when you intimated that I had been unfaithful to you God bless. You are all the world to me. When I sit down to write I cant think to write to any body else but you. If you knew how much I mis you would never entertain the doubts to cause you trouble. If you never go any farther than I have it wil al be right. If you have any douts about me I wish you would write and let me know for if you do I want to know it for I am not aware that I have ever swerved from my duty to you or my children I hope not and with the help of God I never wil I hope. The Company that was to leave here to day has not gone but are getting ready as fast as possible. They wil possibly goe tomorrow. Tel the children to be good. I would like to bring them home some Christmas Presents and se their dear little faces again but alas that is denied me now but I hope it wil not be long for I think there is some Prospect of Peace.

Remember me to the Children and to Willie Saunders.<sup>24</sup> I know you wil Remember me for my meannes if nothing else. You must look over my poor compositions for the house has been crowded of night again. I bid you good night dear wife. Nomore good night.

From William McKnight  
To his Dear Wife and children  
Write soon.  
Direct your letters Camp Ripley  
7th OVC Co K Care Capt Higley

December 22, 1862  
Camp Ripley

Dear Beloved Wife and children,

I again seat myself to converse with you once more through the Mails. O if I could just see you or know how you was it would relieve me of an awful load of grief. I have written nearly every other Day to you and have only received 2 letters from you and none from any one else since I have been here. I have wrote to John Susan and Mary Jane and have received no answer. I am looking for Brother John to come down to see me before I leave. It seems that he is the only one that can come very wel. I want to see some of my relations so bad before I leave the State of Ohio. I have been nearly as hoarse for some time back as I was last winter but I have recovered so I feel as wel as ever. I had some chicken for dinner to day and it was good. I have been very healthy ever since I left home. When I left Gallipollis I weighted 175 lbs. but I guess I am not so heavy now. We expect to leave here in about 8 days. Our Horses is to shoe yet then we wil have to leave and when we get to Lexington we expect to get our pay when I shal be able to send you some Money I hope and when we get there I will be with Cousin Marion Rathburn he is there.<sup>25</sup> I wish you would write and let me know how my Customers pays you since I left home.<sup>26</sup> I am afraid they wil neglect you. But I hope you wil not suffer for anything while I am gone. I have hopes that you wil be cared for while I am absent fiting for my country. I hope that ere this time my sweet Lucy wil be wel and all the rest of you And O how sincerely I hope that you wil be al right. I wish you knew the feelings of my Heart. If you did I think you would rest wel. You all my care and trouble all my hopes and fears. I care Nothing for my own hardships. Tel Johnny that Pa has got a horse like Charley that Wiseman got only he is nicer. He can run as fast as an horse in Camp I believe and jump as high. We expect to Cross the River at Maysville about 10 miles above here and then we wil have 50 miles farther to go to reach Camp.<sup>27</sup> We expect to get heavy Carbines when we get to Lexington. O my Dear Wife it is like parting from you every letter I close to you. O u do seem so near to me tonight and I know you are so far away that my heart feels ready to Break. I write some words of Comfort as you used to talk to me when I was sad. Nomore from your truly affectionate Husband.

William McKnight  
to his Wife and family  
Write soon Please.

January 1, 1862<sup>28</sup>  
Camp Ripley

Dear and Beloved Wife and family,

I seat myself to inform you that I am wel at present also the Boys are generally well. We are still at Camp Ripley yet but one more day in Ohio is probably all that we wil be permitted to remain in our beloved state as we are packed up ready to start. We are now waiting for Carbines for the Battallion. As soon as they arive we goe for Lexington which is said to be a very nice place. The 2nd Battalioin is there and we expect to winter there. If we do it may be that some of us wil get to come home. If there is any chance atall you may look for me. There is not over 5 or 6 men unable to ride in our Company. There is 4 companies here at present and we bear the best name among them all. Co K is a crack Co. I tell you. We mustered for pay yesterday. I have been working on the Pay Rolls tonight. I have Copied two Hundred names on our Muster Rolls. We have 100 men all present but 2 Jo McCaskey and a man by the name Myers who are at Lexington.<sup>29</sup> When we al get there we expect to be Paid of. It is 65 miles to travel. The Boys are ready to go some would rather not go but they are ready to do their duty. We have the least trouble with our Boys of any Co in camp. Tel Willie that I was very glad to hear from him & tel that I wil answer it when we get through. I was awful glad to hear that our little Lucy was better and the rest of you wel. I would like to be home to day we hardly know it is Newyears. There is nothing to make me think of Newyears. If I had been at home I think I would had some Rabbit for dinner but as it was we had a little extra today and went without dinner for want of water to cook it. We hav got good tents 6 for the men and 2 for the Officers.<sup>30</sup> The Captain says that the Orderly has to stay with him the 2 Lieutenants together so you se I wil fare with the Best of them but I do not ask it. I ask nothing better than the men. I take Notice that somehow or other my Canteen is ful of strained honey (curious). Wel Honey and good bread wil do when we are on the way but that is not all we wil have Boiled Beef and Coffee and some other neseries. I am in good spirits and hope you wil receive this. So do not give way to trouble atall. You must not give yourself any uneasyness about for when I cant take care of myself my friends wil take care of me. Asher has sore Eyes but they are geting Better. You may know that when I dont say any thing about our Boys that they are al wel. The Boys says

that I am fat as a hog wel bout 175 lbs. I hope these few lines wil find you enjoying the best of health. We have Plenty to eat and that to that is good. It is now halfpast eleven and I must bring my letter to a close. The last for some time that I expect to write in Ohio. But write often yours is always exceptable. Good bye dear wife dear children Dear friends Dear old state. I go to defend you against al enemies. Good night.

From William to Samaria