

ALEXANDER KEADY TO LOUISA KEADY.

Murfresboro Tenn
April 13th 1861

Sister Lou

I believe I will write to you this time, as I don't know who I owe or if I am in debt to any of you. I have kept no account of who I have written to but I know I write often & to all of you. I recon it don't make much difference whose name is on the Envelope so you hear that I am able to kick round What is Tom doing all the rainy days that you tell about having that he don't honor me with a few of his thoughts. Almost every letter I get comes with his writing on the back & I think well here is a Letter from Tom at last but when I opened it proves to be from a more prompt correspondent than he has proved to be so far. Perhaps he makes a mistake and directs all his Letters to--to-- well you know where that little picture came from. I Specty that's what's the matter Then he is busy rearing Calves feeding Pigs & all such duties belonging to one of his calling. If he was a Brave Soldies, he would not have to engage in such humble employments but he could perform bold dashing deeds like his younger Brother such as Scrubing, Moping, Sweeping Making Beds & many other daring deeds belonging to Soldier Life.

I believe the lastletter from Home was Janes of March 30th which I received about the 8th of the present month. I am glad to hear that things are so prosperous around Home, hope they may long continue so.

My Health is a great deal better this Week than it has been since I came here . I begin to feel like myself again . Will soon be able for duty if I have good luck & no backset. I sit up half the night occasionally just to give the Nurses a chance to Sleep. There has been one of them sick for a week of so past but he is better now. All the patients in our Ward are doing well now. I could get in for nurse if I just said so but I don't

Ap. 15th '61

between here & there they were put in Hospital here There were so many of them that a great many of us had to give up our Beds for their accommodation I got permission to Sleep up at the Captains as he has two extra Beds I will stay here till further orders Will have to report every morning. I think I will be sent to my Reg't in a few days, if I get along well Some of the men that came up on the Hosp't Train say our Reg't had a fight with the Guerrillas & that a few of them were taken Prisoners but I can't vouch for the truth of the Story I believe I will leave the other page & finish tomorrow

Friday Morning 14th (This is one of the most beautiful mornings I ever saw in my life Clear & Warm just the kind of a day to plant Corn or in fact to do anything but loaf round. When Tom gets about forth Acres of ground Plowed & nicely marked out he may send for me to drive the Planter as I can make a great deal straiter Rows than he can .

I don't know when this letter will get away from town for there is no communication north There are two Bridges washed away between here and Nashville. There has been no Train here from that direction since two days ago & no Mail either I spect I would have had a letter from some of you if the mail had come regular That Butter of Nathan's got through just before the bridges left. I tell you it is real nice eating. We had Light cakes for supper last night. What do you think of that. I fear I will lose a good home when I have to go to the front & take it regular Soldier fashion I get almost as good living here as you do if we had old Red here or her Milk we would not ask any favors of you.

I am quite anxious to hear what course the Minister persued after that vote. Your side did better than I expected they would. I was afraid you would be cowed down and not vote atall as has been the case many times before. The Stiffness certainly would come out of his back when he heard the elections returns. I can't think of anything to write this morning worth reading .

Alexander Keady to Louise Keady

Quincy Illinois
Feb 20, 1865

Sister Lou:

We are not very busy this morning so I'll just scratch you a few lines to you so that you may know that I have not played out yet We are looking for orders to fall in for Muster every minute so you must excuse this child if this letter is not got up in very good style. Our head quarters are still at the Broadway House at night and grub up at the Commissary. We get good Beef Coffee and Salt Bread Sometimes Beans. enough for comfort

The reason we dont sleep in the Hall is on account of the gas in the room There is some defect in the pipes thereby making it very unsafe to sleep in the room. One of our company died Saturday from the effects of it and there are any quantity in the hospital from the same cause The expense of sleeping in the Tavern is about 25 cts per night not enough to pay for risking our lives Our Squad consist of Wakefield and I from Rudnor Isaac Clayton Andy Graham and John Cameron from Trivolia. They are just as good a Squad as ever went to War There are a great many men here that I knew before I came here Some very good men and some mean ones. We have all got in Andrews Co but Cameron he is in Snows They are both so good that we want to go with both I believe I had not got my Blue when I wrote last We got it Saturday afternoon, and shipped our clothes (Wakefield and I) to R Emory in Peoria the same evening it cost us 65 cts apiece for expense and 50 cents for Box.

Yesterday was rather a curious Sunday for a boy from the quiet country Military affairs went on just the same as on other days. We had no duty to do except to famm in and escort the body of our dead comrad to the Depot I went to Presbyterian meeting at Eleven and Seven Yesterday heard two good sermons Will go to Methodist Church tonight Since writing the above our Reg had to fall in to be reviewed by Gen. Prentiss. he read some orders made speech and issued some orders on his own hook among which

Alexander Keady to Louise Keady

Dalton, Georgia
Friday May 5, 1865

Sister Lou:

I will write you a few lines tonight as I may not have a chance to write or mail a letter for some time as we are going to break up this camp early in the morning and march to Resacca and join the Regt. They have orders to march for Kingston at 7 oclock on Sunday Morning so we will not get much rest. I am stronger and more healthy now than at any time since I Enlisted and if nothing happens I hope to go through all right.

We have had a busy time this afternoon packing and loading our Camp Equipage We will not get it near all along but we have done our best Most of the stuff left will have to come off Uncle Sam

I put my Blanket Over Coat and one Shirt in a Box with our First Sargent's Clothes and will express them in the morning I will not get them till he and I get home but I did not want the expense of shipping alone and did not want them If I find I need anything I can draw from the Quartermaster after the March or pick up anything I want on the March I have had a fine time here since Sunday. I have not had any letters from anyone since I left Murfreesboro but I look for some soon If you dont get any from me for some time you may ascribe it to the want of Transportation You may direct by way of Chattinooopa I may get them I must go to Bed and sleep ready for the March So Good Bye

Alex Keady

Addressed to--
Miss Louise E. Keady--
Southampton--
Peoria County--
Illinois--

the first time since leaving last winter. I viewed the various Lions of the city Got a new shirt and socks at the Sanitary Commission, got a nice white shirt but could not get what I went after which was a pair of Office Slippers. They gave away the last pair they had yesterday. The Aid Societies have forsook the commission so their stock is slim. I drew me a new pair of pants this morning as my old ones were beginning to get thin on the back. I got a pair at Kingston but they were to small so I let one of the other boys have them. Will be under the necessity of renewing my boots when I go on duty out of the Hospital. I dont feel as though I had wrote enough so Ill stop and finish tomorrow.

Friday Morning 18--

I must finish this letter this morning and send it on the way rejoicing. Ill bet you cant guess where I went when I quit writing last night You must not be scared when I say I went to a dance. dont you think that is a great place for a soldier to be yet it is true they had quite a number down in one of the large dining room to which the Clerks were all invited I went over about 9 o'clock and sat on a bench and watched till I got sleepy when I sought my couch. There were quite an array of the Fair ones of the South present. I hear rumors from various sources of a correspondence between Barb and a certain Ex Military Officer. I can hardly understand what all these things mean. Think I must hasten home to regulate things or I will have no home to go to. Guess Mom and I can win the machine through if all the rest do desert it. Does Tom still indulge in the English notions or has Sally succeeded in winning his affections away from Maggie. I see very plainly that I am going to be left to trend the old Bachelor path alone. I advise you to stay with your Maning till I come home for I want to help move you off the old farm if it has to be done.

Alex Keady

Addressed to Miss Louise E. Keady, Southhampton
Peoria County, Illinois---

ganized in Quincy the same time our Reg was Our Co. was assigned to that Reg. Cap Andrews left or got his Co transfered to the 151 because he could not get to be Co A. You see I came near having to go home this fall. I think our Reg. will go out in November if there is no more trouble in the South. I saw the famous murderer Champ Ferguson this morning He is rather an ugly looking character but does not look like the terrible scoundrel he has been proved to be. Will have the pleas- of seeing him hung some of these days if it is done in public.

My health still continues good am doing well and never was so fat and stout since I left, your bed and board The worst thing I miss is some one to wash my shirts have to wash twice a week as I have only got 2 white shirts yet. will have to wash tomorrow.

Friday Sept 1

I did not write 3 cents worth last night so will put in another slip this morning. We had a fine rain last night and it is raining some yet. It is the first time the dust has been laid in Nashville for more than six weeks Sept has come in fine and cool if it only continues. They had another dance here last night I went over and looked on for a while but did not shake my toes any

I dont know what to think about the maids getting married off so if Cynda is gone my last hope must die out I must apply for a Furlough and come home and see about it There is some talk of breaking this hospital up this month but I dont believe they will as long as there are so many soldiers in the field as there are now. It would be rather hard for me to go back and shoulder a musket after such a nice time as we have been having. I have not stood guard since we were at Enharler Mills last spring and I dont think I will soon again Musket Soldiering is played out since the war is over. Recon Tom and Sam will soon scour up the plows for a vigorous fall campaign. They are getting along so nice that I dont want to come home and disturb them. Guess I had better get a position down here I must go to my days work so good morning to you.

Addressed to Miss Louise E. Keady, Southhampton
~~Peoria~~ County, Illinois---

THOMAS KEADY TO MRS. MARY F. KELLY, SOUTHAMPTON, PEORIA CO., ILLS.

Jefferson City, Mo., Friday, Nov. 29th, 1861.

Sister Mary,

I shall improve my leisure moments this morning, in writing you a reply to that kind letter of the 13th. Was indeed very glad to have an epistle from my old "Tow-head" home.

Those were quiet happy days I spent with you, and their remembrance yet is food for genial thought. It always makes me feel sad to know that another occupies my bed & place at the family board, yet never for a moment have I regretted this step; if I fall by the way may it be my better lot to enter the Golden Portal, if not, I hope yet to spend quiet hours in the enjoyment of home.

Two months have past since I came away,-- strange months flitting by an alloy of bright & darker hours,-- Two months were, and what shall be the record?

You think I have made a fortunate escape from picking that field of straggled corn; it may be so, yet, as a change, I would be happy to try one through, with Sal & Jenny; methinks I could enjoy a private whistle in the field, as in other days.

How I should like to see those two favorite pigs, Aye & help pick their ribs. I fear twas foul play to take away the quads' living by thrashing out that notable stack, that too, when the foul weather is coming on.

Deal not gently with "Glerk" should he come to shoot my rabbits, as, if I return, their chase & soup, will afford me amusement & succor. How I should smile to see Peter pick me out of bed now, were I once in it, after this long reposing on a couch so hard (by the way, I never slept better than since in camp).

THOMAS KEADY, NOV. 29th. 1861.

Do not think by my connection with the sick that it affects me always, as it would, were I but to watch by a man dying couch for a night only. No, a person gets used to any mode of living almost, & my feelings, naturally sensitive, are now not affected by the death like groans of the afflicted ones.

My letters now are always written while watching at night, with sick men all about, & no well person nigh; you may well suppose that it required patience to write & obey the calls of the men at the same time; but tis a useful exercise, I get 4 hours sleep a night for two nights, & the third sleep all night. Am not affected by loss of sleep. Do not sleep in the sick room, but in a lower room where is an open fire place. As there is a surplus of hospital blankets my bed is not the worst. You ought to see me of a morning, with sponge and water, brushing up mens faces, then too propping them up in bed with pillows blankets, overcoats, knapsacks & giving them their grub. But few have any stiness in asking for what they want, & for many things not to be had

Yesterday, I suppose, by what Nat wrote, you were all feasting on Turkey, & like good things at the home mansion; you all relished the viands. I too was there, in thought, while quietly eating my bread & beef at table with Strangers. Will it not be a day of thanksgiving when this war among brethren shall terminate & the fathers, husbands, Sons & brethren shall return to their quiet homes? Alas, too, how many hearth stones will be desolate, how many will be tearfully looked for, but never saw more. My best wishes to all. Tell M.J.H. I shall answer hers soon if nothing prevent. I shall enclose little notes in reply to the ones in yours but have no more time now as the morning is near. Write soon as convenient

Your Brother

THOMAS KEADY

THOMAS KEADY TO MRS. MARY F. KELLY, SOUTHAMPTON, ILLINOIS.

Point Pleasant, Mo. Monday, March 10th, 1862.

Sister Mary:-

As there is a slight prospect of sending letters mail-
ward soon, I will pen you some lines. I'm enjoying good health, &
buoyant spirits. Our neighborhood boys are well.

The 47th. has yet an existence; is, with other troops, holding
this point & endeavoring to blockade the river. They have planted
some cannon & dug rifle pits on the shore; from these they fire on
the river craft. The steamers however, hug the Tennessee shore & man-
age in some instances, to pass.

Then too, they have gun boats to act as escorts; these gun boats
are poorly constructed, but are mounted with heavy guns; too heavy for
our field pieces. They shell us every day, but without effect.

The 47th. has picked off Pilots, Engineers & fire steamers. We
hold a point lower down the River than any other of our troops. Gen.
Rope is at New Madrid, but cannot hold the place for lack of heavy
guns to drive off the gun boats. His guns however, have disabled one
gun boat, & keep the others at a respectable distance.

Probably all that will be done at New Madrid & this place will be to
shoot down until the arrival of heavy guns; or until our gun boat
float gets down. If it gets past No. 10 Island, nothing here will be an
obstacle. This general detail I need not pursue as the prints will supply
all, if not more.

I wrote last at Benton; we have had some troubling it, coming through
the swamps. Jeff Thompsons crew tore up the bridges, & felled trees across
the road, so that we made slow progress. Our Cavalry pursued Jeff & held

THOMAS KEADY, MARCH 10th. 1862.

I would not grieve the present by images of the past. If we all meet not here again, may we, in the hereafter, not be severed.

James & Mats of Feb'y 18th. & H. J. Harveys' of the 20th are the latest letters I have received. Please direct to Commerce Mo. (Our nearest Mail point). I expect to send this by a person going back & know not when I may have another opportunity. (Hope the river will soon be open to us)

I expected when sailing to be back to help plant corn, & am not yet diverted of that idea, yet as the rude blasts of Winter here have given way to the milder breath of Spring, I hope to enjoy it if longer detained.

Tell Alex to have my chess King in proper plight for inspection when I return. If he has enough of that corn plucked to pay the rent, let the balance go for a fertilizer, or to aid the poor, I care not which.

My best wishes to Uncle Moses & his family, when next you write. Hope Sam will not be called on to fight the U. S. I am in need of nothing; plenty to eat & wear. In camp, have only to care for myself & my team (mules) & on the march manage my vehicle.

Thus far I have written; more there is that I have not time to write; & more again that I must not write.

Truly your Brother

(Envelope addressed)

Thos. Keady.

Mrs. Mary F. Kelly,

Southampton, Peoria Co.

Illinois.

THOMAS KEADY, JULY 15th. 1862.

They are said to have some Cavalry & Artillery prowling near. We are dwelling in a fortified place, earthworks crowning the hill tops, & entrenchments greeting the eye all around. Quite a little force is scattered round the place, mostly German Regts. from Fox Ridge. The force likely is adequate, but somehow seems small, when compared with the immense army that crept into Corinth.

That Richmond Army certainly is having terrible times. The Nations best blood seems of small moment now, & yet the tide is likely to flow. A foreign foe may yet be to be repelled. Truly the days are dark, but the reins are held by a Power Above. Man may plan but only by His permission can ends be accomplished.

Will the new call for men be promptly answered to. Scarcely I fear there is not enough to fill it in time. Then too, the old Reg'ts are to be filled up. It would be risking life by disease, to come South into the Army before the Summer is over. The new Regts will likely hold captured territory, while the old will be thrown in concentrated forces on the enemy.

I see not, when the South is conquered, how that bitter spirit is to be subdued; the very women we meet, almost gnash the teeth. Men who have come into our lines as distressed Irish Men, were captured no later than last week, in armed murdering bands & base eyes.

My health is very good, but the summer heat begets a languor, that almost renders a person indifferent to any thing; locomotion is not performed with much agility. Our boys are all flourishing only Stevens, who is complaining some. Tell M. J. Harvey that I will answer her letter in due time.

THOMAS KEADY TO MRS. MARY F. KELLY, HAGERAMPTON, ILLINOIS.

Hospital Bld. Div.- 15th. A. C.

In rear of Vicksburg, June 5th, 1863.

Sister Mary:-

I do not send you this sheet as a necessity, but as a sample of the manufacturing skill of the Chivalry. It was "confiscated" in the "Confederate House" Jackson, Miss.

I rec'd your letter a month old, with others of like maturity. Have one from Lou of May 25th. Latest from Akron, May 8th. The situation at Vicksburg remains as usual, a complete and prolonged siege. It began on May 18th & will end -- sometime, I hope. The Rebels are very tenacious to hold on, & Grant equally positive in his endeavors to smother them out.

We have a large quantity of artillery in position, pointing directly into the doomed City. & large siege guns are being added to the No. daily. The bombardment continues day & night, all along the line of the rear & from the mortar fleet on the River. I do not see how they live in such a storm of iron & other deadly missiles.

No Infantry charges have been made since May 22nd., but rifle pits are dug close along the enemy's line of defenses & the boys in these pick off every Reb that imprudently shows his head, seldom giving their artillery an opportunity to approach their guns.

The deep ditches & perpendicular breast-works are too much for our men to charge over, as they have well tested. Artillery, aided by grant famine, will have to do the work, & these effective agents are at Grants command.

The hope of success from Johnson or some other outsider, seems to sustain Pemberton in his forlorn effort. It remains to be seen whether they can bring up an Army large enough to raise the siege. I think not unless they abandon some of their other strong points, which would be

THOMAS KEADY, JUNE 5th. 1863.

names of our young men.

Ah Mary, these are strange months in my life, widely in contrast with the experiences of home; congenial spirits are only confined to a narrow circle, but this has become a usage of months standing, & I am not troubled with discontent. In fact I had heavier strokes of the "blues" in a single week at home than altogether since in the army. This doubtless arises from a fixed purpose, in view of present circumstances. If I were returned home today a civilian, the old woody question would very likely be re-established: "how & where shall my life lot be cast." Do you remember how Mother used to urge upon me marriage as the very aim of life?

My real views on that subject are much as formerly. The War, however, is the one all absorbing topic of the present, the one in which all others are merged.

You keep asking for a new edition of my handsome visage. No chance to get one struck. Why not look at those fine Jefferson City ones & be satisfied, or that "clerical looking" type of my youth. Ah, that I had won a maid in those my handsome days. The golden opportunities of youth have passed from me for ever.

Am truly glad to learn of your brightening financial prospects; hope the freshening breezes of prosperity will waft you into Summer Seas. There is no prospect of my coming home before the end of the War, or of the term of enlistment, which you will perceive is wearing away.

The 47th mail comes to Division Head quarters & I get mine out. Please write again. Truly your Brother

Thos. Keady.

THOMAS KEADY, JULY 26th, 1863.

Another raid to the grand Capitol of Miss. & it may be numbered with the fated "Citizen of the plain". The people seem to be entirely broken down & hopeless; a confederation of dupes, ruined & disgraced. It does seem to me that the time draws near for a pause; surely this people is not so reckless as to court entire annihilation. May the day of peace burst suddenly & gloriously upon us, brightening the folds of the old "Flag of the Free".

I saw the 47th. again after a separation of two months. John W. & I reclined in the shade & reviewed the events of the period & went back into the receding mists of "long ago".

The 47th. is but the shadow of its former self, yet not so bad as I feared. They told me how Dutton was gone to his brother & the good Old Chaplain was taken from the weary toils of earth. That river swamp is a terrible place in the summer time.

Our Division will probably go into camp on Bear Creek, in the wooded hill country 20 miles back from Vicksburg. These hills are a secluded & healthy retreat, probably as much so as the camps of Clear Creek & Riensel. We often long for the gushing springs of Tusculum Ala.

I rec'd 6 letters yesterday, among them yours of June 22nd & of the 26th, also Lou's of July 7th. latest from Akron June 26th. Thank you for the stamps. I must set apart one of them to convey sweet tidings to that gentle one far away. (I must not desecrate the Sabbath by going into a partriture of my angelic needs; you know how they affect me).

I imagine Peter & Alex are a full complement for that new machine. Doubtless the sheaves fell thick & straight. I knew they could tinker & groan & punish Hooster, but am not so certain of their efficiency in matted & verdant grain.

THOMAS KEABY TO MISS MARY F. KELLY, SOUTHAMPTON, ILLINOIS,

Black River, Miss., Oct. 12th 1863.

Sister Mary:-

My pen is idle just now, & with your consent, I'll jot a line to your account. What with your domestic duties & gossiping hours you may not unravel my mysticisms soon. No difference, it will move my filial stake a week ahead and make a balance in my favor.

You have got dinner over & those impudent men out of sight for another little season -- what an ungainly lump of flesh is man; and yet he can do little acts of usefulness.

The measurable rocks and by-ways of "Tombs" are before me. My "mouth waters" while thinking of these purple clusters of Black Mass -- trifles of themselves, but I was a school-boy then, & appeal a world of romantic memories by them suggested.

What am I but a school-boy now, taking less ideal & sterner lessons in life? Time whisks us along through varying scenes, but ever shaping for the shores of immortality. Are we rightly impressed with the "lessons of life"? If so, how much brighter will be the path.

I think quite pleasantly of those days on the prairie -- that brief visit from Dixie's sterner shades. It was a goodly change; is now a theme for reflection.

New items are not very reliable here just now, rumor being a large ingredient. One easily disturbed by visions of the foe would get little sleep here. New alarms every night and men sent out to patrol the roads. Guess there is not much real cause, but vigilance is wisdom on the borders.

Indications point to an early move on our part; think it likely a Srd. raid to Jackson is brewing. I would greatly prefer a new track if an

THOMAS KEANE, OCT. 12th, 1865.

Hope Rosecrans will yet be able to drive Bragg out, & charge the "last ditch". The 47th. is 6 miles below here, camped on the R. R. Have not visited their camp but once since getting back. Tom Harvey is camped close by here.

A. Young came up a few days since & staid all night with me. He said that Aaron L. was quite sick & was sent off to General Hoop's at Vicksburg. Over 500 sick were sent from the Division at the same time, this in anticipation of future events.

Tell Alex how I admired his bright eyed young maid, & might have become a dangerous rival had she honored me with her presence that Saturday eve, probably she feared Sanders from.

My respects to Peter & Mirk. Tell Peter to send me a profile of the King Reg. I must to my couch and dream of luscious grapes and of -----

Good night & write to me

N. F. Kelly.

Brother Tom.

THOMAS KEADY, AUGUST 2nd. 1864.

What progress at gathering in the harvest? Too much corn has tumbled out between my arena of labor & the Tow Head Mission to permit me a view of the "binner sight" flowing out from the South window. I suppose it to be yet there & am frequent in mental surveys of the smacking vizards spread out before ye lusty harvesters.

Could you crowd in an extra plate for a bank & not remarkably voracious "Hine Gout"? If there are enough ravenous men to consume all the "chicken fixings" I can wait a little, if you will make me a neat little pot of mush or a good grizzly cup of tea.

That new farm, seems to me, will be a cool place when grim old Winter comes blustering on; however the idea of sole proprietorship will probably modify the cutting blast.

Wonder if this stray fragment will ever creep into possession of a Humer heritage? — improbable quite. Guess I shall continue to beat up & down the world loose, keeping out of the way as much as possible.

Have you a Helen patch? Would ask 70 questions if in tongue range; F's a job too cumbersome to ask them out at pen point & I'll give it up. You can make a long talk without my propositions.

About affairs here; We have had a few days of quiet in camp, but this is being changed. The Division is now all gone out the R. R, but these Head Q's & they are to go tomorrow. The 47th started this morning by train for Holly Springs, Miss.

The Miss. Central is opened down that far from Grand Junction. We will likely be at Holly Springs by evening of tomorrow. The expectation is that another expedition will strike out from there. Look over in the heart of Miss. for a town called Columbus. That is the objective point talked of now.



Alexander Keady

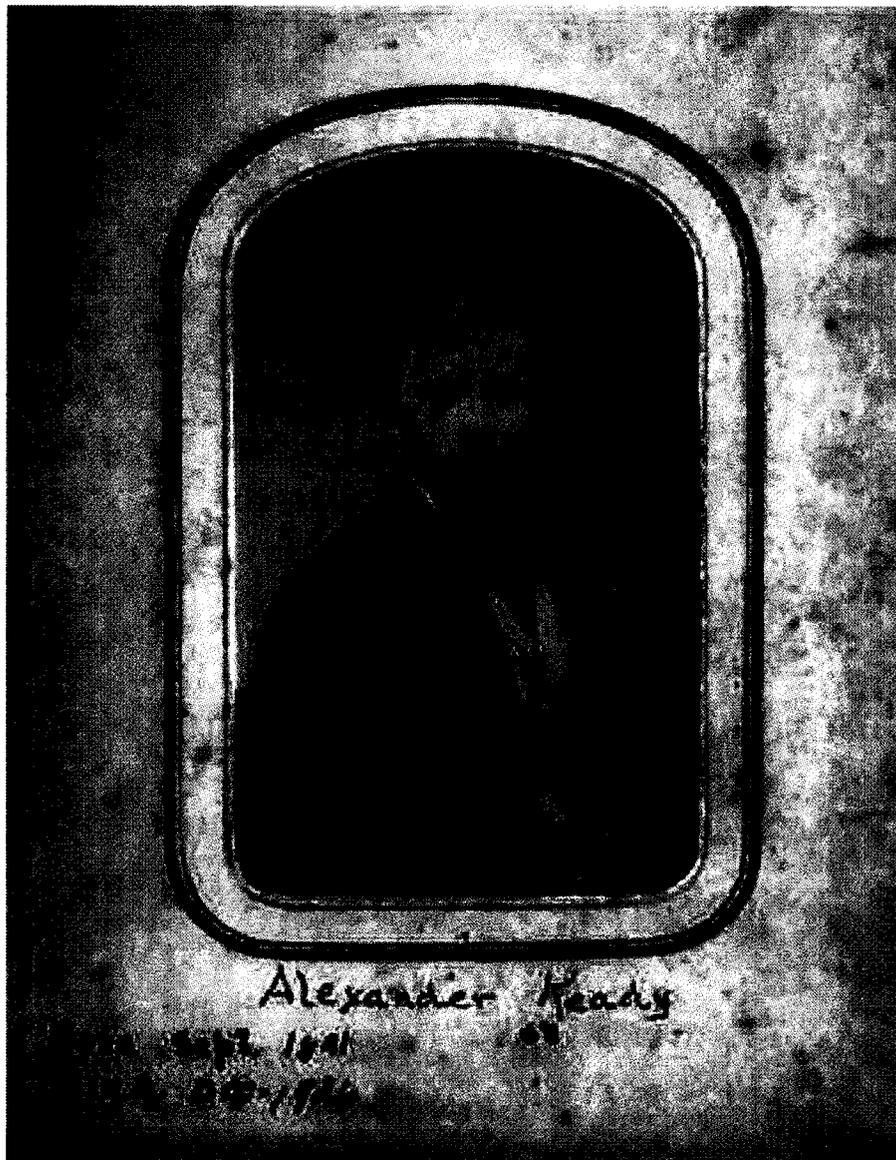


Louisa Ellen Keady and Alexander Keady



Keady brothers, L to R

Thomas, Alexander, Samuel 1914



Alexander Keady (b 9/17/41 - d 10/1926)



Thomas Keady (b 12/6/36 - d 4/26/1918)
CO. A 47th Illinois Infantry

Davis
Conrad

Jackson
Hedley

Conrad
Henas
Hedley

Wade
Cannon

Ellis S
Ellis S

Edmunds
Hogans W
Lilke

Holm
Cott

Dick
Watkins
Kinnell
Nagle

Wade