

July 10, 1918.

Dear Mother and Dad;

To my great joy and contentment I received a huge bunch of mail to-day. It included nine letters from you and Dad, one from Aunt Annie, Aunt Lou, Ethel and Nace and Aunt Ethel. It certainly cheered me up to know you received my first letter. I am numbering my letters so you can keep track of them. Very often boats lose the mail and in coming to us the mail trains are often blown up, so you see mail often goes astray, or higher than we are.

I can easily see how anxious you would be to get word, so as to keep in constant touch with me. The clippings enclosed are just the stuff, and I will always be glad to receive any number of them. You can see how often we get mail by the dates I have received them on. Most of them coming out every three weeks, once in a while every two weeks. Letters are just like a spring tonic. They give me new life, hope and courage, and make things easier to bear. I believe you will get all my letters, let's hope so.

I wish you would thank Ethel Nace for her letter and tell her sometime I will try and write. Congratulations to Aunt Helen and Uncle Will. I would like to write more often than I do, but cannot get the materials and time. Often I cannot even mail them, owing to mail not being received.

I can imagine the good time you and Dad had on your anniversary. Let's hope I can help celebrate your next one. I am fixed up pretty good in clothes now, just received a new pair of socks, wrap woolen leggins, pants, shirt and underclothes. Everything I now carry and it is for my own comfort that I carry very little, hence besides what I have on I only carry shaving and toilet articles, blanket, needle and thread, kit, extra pair of socks, pair of gloves and raincoat, half shelter tent. The weight is made up in three days reserve rations and ammunition.

For seven weeks no shelter has covered my head except one leaky barn and a shelter tent. Most of the time we just put our blankets on some pulled grass, then two sleep together, that gives us two blankets. Just at present I am brown as a nut, badly in need of a shave and bath. There being a creek near by I expect to take a bath this afternoon after this letter.

I also have an appetite like a pig, and am getting as hard as nails from the long hikes and forced marches of which we have had several.

My fourth of July was far from pleasant, although very exciting. Yesterday was watching a French gun crew fire a hu e gun into the German supply trains. I heard them receive word of a direct hit on one train. At the bottom of this letter you will find my Captain's signature. This I believe will allow any box you wish to send me to come over and will insure its deliverance.

I am very glad to hear about George Gower and would like his address very much. Believe me it certainly sounds good to hear Dad speak about selling plenty of eggs. Some day we will have to run Chas. Bickley and Son a race.

Remember me to Mr. Alexander and Mr. & Mrs. Mounce. I will have to close now with regards to everybody.

Love to yourself,

Ever lovingly,

Howard.

Cigars, chocolate and candy, tobacco.

James F. Coper,
Capt. 109th Inf.