

October 29, 1917.

Dear Mother and Dad;

Received your letter and likewise Dad's also. I just left off writing a few minutes, while I went down to the shower bath to watch some of our boys scrubbing one of the fellows who hasn't taken a bath, well by looks, for several months. They gave him warning and he paid no attention to it, so they tied him hand and foot put him on a stretcher with all his clothes on and shoved him under the shower. They then stripped him and made him wash from head to foot with sand and scrubbing brush. Some bath. That is what they do to anybody who persists in being dirty.

The dutch cake which you sent down I enjoyed immensely and finished for Sunday nights supper. Dad and your reference to the continuing of cigarettes I will state now you need have no fear. I do not like them well enough to even spend 5¢ a pack for them. I have given nearly all of them away and only smoked about 5 cigarettes. I like cigars very much and a pipe is a great friend of mine.

Tonight I have been invited to a party given in our mess shack. The Sargent of the first platoon had a bet on. He said he would put up a dinner if he lost. To make good with his platoon he also promised them a feed, which took place last night. All our company officers and the new captain's. The Colonel did use the honor of attending the party. The reason I was invited, was because I am in his tent likewise am very good friends with him. We had eats, smokes and speeches. The Colonel made a beautiful speech, touching on our company, regiment, division, and country. He spoke about our going across which is in the near future.

Mother according to our officers we will not be here by Christmas. Our Colonel believes we will be lucky if we spend Thanksgiving in this country. I do not want to alarm you but just by way of cautioning in case we should leave real sudden.

I have been thinking it over and thought I would ask you if you wanted me to apply for an 8 day furlough over Thanksgiving. From preparations made down here I do not believe we will be here more than six weeks. That is stretching it some. Our course of 12 weeks training is up in 5 weeks and after that we are supposed to leave for France. When we go the entire division will go together. I am now going out to drill and will finish my letter later.

I had thought perhaps if you and Dad could afford to pay the train fare I would speak to the Colonel for 6 or 8 days leave. Over Thanksgiving. The train fare is \$17.50 single fare \$35.00 round trip. It would take 22 hours one way. Allowing two days travel I would have either 6 or 4 days to spend home. I now have \$5.00 if you think it will make any impression on the trip. If you can make a decision so soon let me know by the next letter, so as I can put in for my furlough at once. If you decide against it, I will take a chance on Christmas but owing to the officers advice I am sure we will not be in this country. They might only be pushing faster by this means in our work, but some large operations are taking place. This morning they gave out the fife and drums and I have just been practicing on the drum which was issued to me.

Lorelle and Laura Sanborn sent me some fine magazines. Please send me the rest of the Saturday Evening Posts as I am reading a serial story, after you are finished with them.

This evening we are going to have night drill and bombing parties, from 8 to 10. Tomorrow we are to sign the payroll which means we will soon get paid. I am starting today to put on three penny stamps on account of the new stamp rule. Would appreciate very much if you would send me some ones. I am going to close and hope to hear from you real soon.

Lovingly,
Howard.

P. S.

I am going to buy a (Camp Hancock tablet.

One thing I nearly forgot. They are making up an honor roll of our company including 250 men. To be made in picture form, cost \$1.00. I have ordered one of these and you will soon receive it. It is something of which you will appreciate very much and later on will value.

H.