

Knights of Columbus

War Activities

Camp Mc. Arthur

January 16 1917 (1918)

Dear Parents and All:

Today is the first time since I was home that I heard from anyone, and you can rest assured I was on the jump when the mail-orderly delivered my letters to the tent.

Besides your letter, papa, I got one from Bertha and one from Bert Moersch, all this afternoon. They came in just before we formed for drill.

I certainly was surprised to hear of the mild weather that is being witnessed in the northwest. For Bertha said that it was just like April in Spokane.

Bertha said too, "I suppose that it is nice and warm in Texas". Ha-ha! we've had the coldest weather that Texas has seen in eight years. I do not know just how could it was but I honestly believe that it was below zero for it was pretty snappy and we stayed in our tents and had a hot fire going all day and all night excepting when we were out on the wood-detail. That is we two hundred men all had to get out and go over the wood yard, a quarter of a mile away, and get wood for our line, or squadron. (A squadron has about two-hundred and ten men)

Each one of us made two trips carrying about two cord sticks apiece and so we had enough for our line tents and the kitchen. I had my winter underwear, woolen sox, woolen shirt, a pair of leggings a woolen suit, a heavy overcoat, a rain-coat, woolen gloves and a hat all of which were regulation army clothes issued by the Government. And, as luck happened, I had my ear-muffs, which I usually have with me, as you all know, so I did not suffer excepting where the wind hit my face. My hands and feet got cold too for the wind certainly did cut.

One of the boys in our tent, a big fellow from cold New York, froze both of his hands on the finger-tips and both of his ears. The minute he came in I saw how white his ears looked and I told him so we got some snow in a wash-pan and while he was his hands in the snow, I thawed his ears out with snow until the red color came back into them. His ears were swollen up for about a week now but they never blistered for we tended them right away, you see.

There was a lot of snow too and there still is quite a bit in places where it drifted. On there level when the snow melted and the ground was soaked the

dirt was just like glue and it would stick to your shoes until you were carrying half the state of Texas. I never saw such sticky dobe before.

It is a sight to see how thick the mud is on the floors in the buildings where the soldiers go in and out. We had to clean the floors with shovels at the headquarters.

But this is the heaven along side of Kellyfield for we were all sick of that place and hope never to see it again. However there are a lot of places that have this place skinned all to hell and the Palouse County is one of them.

As soon as I can, I am headed back for the God's country and will never leave it again. That sounds as if I were getting homesick but I am not, for as long as there is war I am with the U.S. and in her service but as soon as peace is declared I want to be released to dear old civil-life in the Northwest.

At this time I will ask a favor and that is that when I get out and I don't see fit to follow clerical work will you all give me a chance on the farm?

I am glad to hear that you are all well and hope it will continue so.

I regard to that package you sent me, if it comes back, keep it there for since we were issued our O.D's (Olive Drabsuits) we are not allowed to have any civilian clothes in camp whatever. And I am packing my other clothes up and will send them by express collect tomorrow. You can save the suit for me but the other clothes and overcoat I am giving to Charles for that will be out of style anyway and it would be lost if someone did not wear them. Of course, if I stay a year Charles can wear the suit too and all my other suits for they will not be any use to me any more

If Charles can't wear the overcoat you can brush it up and press it and stick it in the back again and give it to Albert I know he would wear it. The one he has is oldfashioned.

I would prepay the express but I have had no pay day as yet and so I need the little change I have left for little incidentals.

I could draw some through Bertha in Spokane but I'd like to keep that there to draw interest.

While I think of it, when you all sell your spuds I wish you would try to sell mine too and send the money to Bertha to put with the rest of mine, unless, you can make use of it.

If some of them have to be picked over give the kids a couple of dollars to do it some evening and hold it out of mine when they are sold. I noticed a few sacks had wet spots on them.

Gee! I would like to come home tonight and midnight and go into the cellar and help myself to the milk, butter, cream, eggs, jelly, apple sauce, sugared-doughnuts and good old home-made bread.

I have actually forgotten what butter and cake tastes like- ha-ha! for I haven't been away from camp.

In one letter I said I was going to send a birds-nest but we had inspection and one of the boys destroyed it.

I have seen great flocks of kildeers and meadow larks just like those in Idaho but never a robin. I saw two other kinds of birds that I never saw before but I could not find out the name. Oh! yes I saw some crows and hawks too.

The surrounding country here is all covered with brushy timber. There are sumac, scrub-oak, thorn, "muskeet" and some kind of cedar or juniper. Some call it blue-heather; I enclose a sample. Will try to send some trees later.

There are a lot of things I would like to write but it bed-time so good-night. Love and regards to all from your son and brother Henry.

P.S. Write to, Private Hy. M. Lorang

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