

January 30, 1918

Dear Folks:

On account of the late hour I must make this as business like as possible. Tonight your letter of December 30 came, enclosing some interesting clippings. As you may have surmised from his letters, Louis Sechtman was billeted with us at the time of writing, in the exterior room of the mayors house. I bought some fire wood today from the mayor's eighty year old father, a good old man who has the virtue of speaking slowly and distinctly, ~~##~~ so that it is easy to understand him.

Tonight I sent father a birthday cable and included the words, "Don't send shoes" with reference to your suggestion in your latest letter about sending us high boots- paid for out of allotment money. Didn't appeal to us. We are issued three pairs of heavy shoes besides high rubber boots and "moccasins" and more would be superfluous. Don't be anxious to lavish our allotment money on us unless we cable for it, if you please.

Sherm and I have each received one box from home. Altho woolen sox are always good, as a rule we are well provided with knitted goods. Tonight our supply sergeant was issuing woolen helmets but was having a hard work making men take them since everyone already has two or three and the cold weather seems to be over. Of course we can use warm things next winter, but some optimistic souls hope that we will be back by then. One article in particular that you said you were about to send sounded very good- namely flash lights. The sooner the better. If I had had one tonight I wouldn't have spent about twenty minutes looking for the cable office in the pitch dark street in town. I had seen the sign over the door in day light and knew just about where it was, within a hundred yards, but the night was dark and foggy and the regulations about lights are strictly enforced.

I walked to town and back after supper and was back before 7:45 so you see it isn't very far. In one of your earlier letter you said something yhay made me think that you had us located about six miles from town and over a big hill. The hill is back of us. It only took me about 35 or 40

minutes to walk in tonight altho I couldn't see two feet ahead of me.

Lately we have been having a long daily ride in motor trucks- about 15 miles each way- past all kinds of interesting sights. Salisbury Plain in England has nothing on the place where we spend the sunny daylight hours nowadays. It is a spacious area for fair.

Every day after lunch Bob Case, Leonard Fisk and other old acquaintances get together with us (Vine Parmelee and others) and talk things over.

Sherman got a wonderful box of good things to eat from Uncle Vern's folks the other day. Both of us received Lowney's chocolates from Dartmouth College, the gift of the Boston Alumni.

I hope Alfred is feeling better than he was before Christmas. I also hope that Father is not working too hard. With lots of love,

CHANDLER

Not for publication
or extensive circulation.

February 6, 1918
at 3:45 a.m.

Dear Father:

This may take the place of a birthday letter since today (or rather yesterday, since it is after midnight) is the fifth. I hope you will find time to write more than you have, but I know that you must be very busy this winterowing to the conditions which the war has caused. Mrs. Rossiter sent me a card for which I will have to ask you to render my acknowledgements and thanks, because for the present the amount of mail I can send is limited.

It is my pleasant duty to write a thankyou letter to Uncle Vern and Aunt Mary for a wonderful box of eats- cake, candy, nuts, gum, etc. which came to me tonight- a few days later than Sherm's similar box.

Our work here (I mean in the sense of travail or physical work) comes and goes in bunches. Most of last week we were starting off ##### in the morning with scarcely time to finish breakfast- eating our lunch of bread, bacon and coffee several miles away, and getting back after dark, which

usually meant that we had the job of cleaning up the guns after supper. This week we are having entirely different work, but I can't go into details at all.

We certainly don't get all of the news in the papers over here after all. For instance the various congressional investigations of the war and ordinance departments were not mentioned until the Courant and Times and weekly magazines arrived from the U. S. I hope that Congress won't bother the President and Sec. Baker any more than is necessary. The army over here seems to be well provided for anyway, and you never hear any criticism of the War Dept.- at least I haven't?

I am on guard again as you might infer from the time of day. The only excitement thus far tonight was a chimney fire.

I have been reading the December Scribners which Mother has probably seen. The article on France by Edith Wharton is one which I wish all Americans could get thru their beans. Galsworthy's story I have yet to read but I won't miss it. "The Face of Paris" isn't bad. Don't miss the last line of that one if you want a subject for research.

During the last week or so there has been a regular shower of belated Christmas boxes. Besides the cigarettes from Don Aldrich and the fine money belt from Uncle Charles, I received a good sized box of candy of all kind which came from Wanamaker's in New York, but I have no idea whom to thank for it. There were no marks to show who caused it to be sent. Perhaps you can enlighten me so I can render my ~~reue~~ remerciement later on.

I hear that Sherm had a new job yesterday afternoon- driving a Ford. He was detailed to go to town and bring back one ford- so he did, with more or less success. I never knew he could drive one.

Our squad has a good time in the billet with feeds, singing and such amusements. One thing that amused us was the formation of the squad yesterday afternoon. So many of the men happened to be on guard or kitchen police that only three of four were left- with a buck private acting as corporal. Then a few special details were made, so that when drill call

was sounded the squad consisted of one man, Halvosa, as corporal, and one other, ~~###~~Kropp, as the "squad." Fortunately we didn't take out the guns.

I hope that you receive the cablegram that I sent a few days ago, and that it came in time for your birthday.

Last Sunday six of us took a walk across country to the same place that I mentioned visiting a few weeks ago. We spent more time looking at the fine series of mural paintings than at anything else, - pictures that correspond closely to Abby's Holy Grail series in the Boston Public Library.

It is funny to see the various imaginary pictures by the magazine artists of American soldiers in France. There are always big inaccuracies in the dress, equipment or surroundings. For instance, we don't possess any more the familiar wide brimmed felt hats, altho perhaps we may get them again later.

Please don't let Mother or yourself worry about our healths. I never felt better in my life (except for lack of sleep tonight) and Sherman seems alright too. The record of health in this battalion is exceptionally good according to official records.

I think that I shall stop now and fry an egg which Sergeant Hastings kindly gave me, before I post the next relief.

With more love than ever to all the family,

CHANDLER