

24-10

Regal Apartments  
December 5, 1917.

Dear Emily:

At last I've found the time to write a good long letter and also have the inspiration, for last night I received a fine letter from you and three others from Rachel, Lucile and Gerald Sign. Louis Lyman and I just came off guard and now have the rest of the afternoon to ourselves. The guard last night was not at all tedious and I managed to get in five hours sleep. Louis and I were on posts 5 and 6 which are up at the mule shed guarding the mules. Last night we started a little fire in the horse shoer's forge and had a little feast of hot coffee and toast. When I got back to the guard house at 3:30, some one had borrowed my blankets so I proceeded to borrow Jack's as he was on guard at that shift. I wish I had your letter here now to refer to but Chan has it just now. It certainly is fine being able to exchange mail with him for we get news from home so much oftener. Neither of us have heard from Al for quite a while but that is not strange for a good share of our mail is held up somewhere. A couple of carloads arrived in the neighboring city the other day so for the past few days we have received several sacks daily. Night before last, I had a delicious box of candy from Ethelwynne Bidwell which lasted just three minutes. If you chance to see her don't mention the fact for it was market "Xmas Goods" and I don't intend to acknowledge it before then. Also had a letter from Helen Taylor and Mrs. Pratt.

So the dances are starting up again. I'm glad to hear that you enjoyed that one in Farmington so much. It certainly makes me homesick when you speak of getting out the old canoe. Mother's last letter told that you finally received our cable and how the old telephone wires burned that day. You were right about our first destination over here but we did not stay there long. Among the mail last night was an issue, Oct. 30th of the Hartford Courant and you should have seen us all devour its contents, down at the guard house. It gave a lot of space to the drafted bunch at Ayer, the dear things. If you people want your eatables and sweaters appreciated you should send them over here. Of course anything sweet is at an awful premium. For instance, gumdrops are about \$2 a pound. Please send over any cheap tid bits such as butter scotch, gumdrops or maple sugar. At present I have two Red Cross sweaters, one helmet and one abdominal belt. Believe me I have come to appreciate the value of the latter. Lu said in her last letter that she would knit me a heavy sweater but if you can knit socks, I wish you would send me a pair. I am short of them.

A strange thing happened just now. A French airplane swooped down over our little village and the pilot dropped a note. It turned out that the pilot was an American in the Lafayette Esquadrielle and the note was for his brother in the 101st engineers here in town. These engineers are a fine bunch of fellows and I've become quite chummy with several of them, a couple of Dartmouth fellows also Brown fellows.

I hope mother changes her mind about sending clippings for believe me they are very acceptable. They go the round of the bunch here. I'm sorry to see that Dartmouth has felt defeat twice by Penn. and Brown. Did Al go to the Brown game?

The old couple who live below us have two sons in the war and one of them is home on furlough at present. He is a fine young chap, 28 years old, a poilu at Verdun. I enjoy going down and talking with him and last night he came up to see our little apartment. Incidentally he showed us some fine little snap shots of the trenches and passed around little souvenirs. He gave me a German name plate off a German field kitchen, also several German rifle bullets. He has been in the war three years and has won the Croix de Guerre three times. To-night he is coming up again and we are going to have a little feed in his honor.

Suppose you folks know of our insurance. I intend to take out the full \$10,000 which will dock my monthly wage about \$7. From now on we will only get 50 per cent of our pay in cash. So deducting the insurance I'll allot to mother about \$12 a month. Well it's mess time and I must close. Lots of love

Sherm.