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November- 1917.

Dear Mother:

Well we are very comfortably settled now in what we hope will be permanent winter quarters. After our eight day stay in the old leaky shack we were glad enough to hear that we were to be billeted. There are seven of us in a little room over a barn and we consider ourselves quite fortunate. By the best of luck we seven agents pulled the strings and were finally given this little apartment all our own.

The peasants downstairs are very pleasant and have helped us to fix up the place. Besides our seven cots there is just room for a little stove, a table, and two camp chairs. Our table is a special concession not possessed by most of the other company billets.

I have just come back from Chan's billet a few houses down the street where his squad are fairly comfortably settled at last. Until yesterday they were without a stove of any kind, but to-night the place looked pretty good. I stayed there till someone (Kropp I imagine) put some green wood on the stove and it smoked the place out in great style.

Our meals have been improving lately both in quality and quantity and now we always bring some bread back to the billet for toast. We are all broke now but as soon as we get paid we will have some swell feeds on our stove.

We had Wednesday afternoon off and Jack Wiley and I went on a sightseeing expedition into the large sized town several miles distant. Between us we had about 6 francs but we had a fine time trying out our French on the storekeepers and pricing sweaters, socks, etc. I finally bought a pair of socks and a can of beans which we consumed that evening.

Have you received all our letters? For some reason mail to us is very irregular. I received my first letter from you to-night which was postmarked Hartford October 22nd. It is quite certain that there is a large batch of mail due us for we have had no mail from U. S. for dates between October 8th and 22nd. This is my third letter to you since we arrived in France. Have you received them all? I'll number all my letters and wish you would do the same.

Thanks for the clippings .-----

Three days have passed during which time I had a day on guard and to-day I was on fatigue so I have not had any time to finish this letter. Yesterday (Sunday afternoon) Jess Willard and I went in town and listened to a band concert by a large French military band. After the concert it was a fine spectacle to stand on the street corner and watch the cosmopolitan crowds throng by. Hordes and hordes of French soldiers and also American soldiers, American officers, French generals etc. (the place seems full of

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them) in their cars, American ambulance drivers, British Royal flying corps, aviators, Servian soldiers etc. etc.

All the stores are open Sundays here and there is such a crowd that every store has to have its own traffic laws. It was worse than Xmas in Hfd. I was broke but we had a pretty good supper at a table with five Frenchmen for only 55 cents consisting of steak (horsemeat undoubtedly) French fried potatoes and coffee and french bread. Of course after dark the streets are all darkened and the cafes operate in back of curtained windows. We stumbled home in the dark about 7.30.

After supper to-night we staged a little feed up here in the room. Besides we seven there was Mc Elwains and Bob Paisley and we had a feed consisting of heated tomatoes on toast. The tomatoes bought in town and the toast which we save every meal from our regular ration of three slices. We certainly have great times in our little joint here. This morning at inspection by the officers it was judged the best looking and neatest billet in the company.

Did I tell you that Dr. Miel has been in camp again? He left today after preaching yesterday. Unfortunately I was on guard and did not hear him.

The doctors here have been kept pretty busy but so far I have been feeling very fit (rap, rap). I noticed that Chan had a little sore throat this morning but was out drilling this afternoon all right.

A company of engineers arrived in town the other day and among them are two Dartmouth fellows, both sergeants. One of them is in my class. Haven't heard from Al Street since my last letter to you so don't know whether he can arrange for our meeting. Well I will chose for now.

Don't forget to send me those socks, heavy vest etc. If Al is not using my big heavy Outing Club shoes it would be a good idea to send them too.

Love to all

Sherm.

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November 2, 1917.

Dear Mother:

Well we are trying to get settled down once more after another long trip across a good share of France. We left our last camp early Wednesday afternoon and were bumping along in these French cars, nothing more than small baggage cars, till this morning. There were forty of us in our car and we had a lot of fun but very little sleep as we could not all lie down at once.

Our meals consisted of the famous army field rations, the hardtack and tinned corned beef, which were doled every day. It looks as tho our journeyings are over for a time as we have reached our training grounds. Till our permanent barracks are completed we are being billeted around in the little French village, five or ten men to every house and barn. Every house in this section of the country is marked showing the number of troops they can take care of. At present we are in the small Y. M. C. A. waiting to be assigned to houses.

This noon we all assembled around the village pump and took a good wash, the first possible in three days. Maybe it didn't feel good. All the little French kids came around while we were eating noon mess and we had a lot of fun with them trying out our limited French with varied success.

Censorship is very strict now and there is not much else I can say now.

Eats are good now. American plan.

Love to all

Sherman.