

Camp Logan Texas - % H.Q. Co - 5th Ill. Inf.

Oct. 1 - 1917 -

Well dear Mother - your Birth day past and I never sent you a thing - I feel so bad about it too. but have been So busy and hardly know what to do next some times. I have charge of the men alright, but that just means more work and responsibility. I have so much to say I hardly know where to begin. And so little time to write in. Have just written a little letter to Maude.

Well I will start with our going to France. I don't know why such a report should be out, but as for me I have not heard one thing to verify it. Have no idea of leaving here for some time to come, if then. So please don't worry just yet a while; for there will be lots of time for that when it really does come; and if we were going so soon, we surely would know something about it, and even if we were going - I would never regret having enlisted when I did. It has been the only thing for me. Has really made more for me than anything else and is just what I have been needing since I almost run myself to death there in the Prouty. I feel now like living; and while I am very busy I feel good for it.

I am sending you my old programe given to me by the captain, by order of the colonel, for the month of Sept. My Oct. programe is more to do than the one I am sending you.

I am having to get pretty hard boiled here lately. I have been pretty easy on the fellows and they are slipping it over on me when they get a chance. So from now on I am going to do the slipping if there is any to be done - see - And the Captain said if they don't do as I say, just bring them over and he would raise a little hell with them - So here I am inexperienced and more responsibility than our first sergeant has. for all my drilling with the buglers is before commissioned officers and if I don't deliver the goods I mighty soon would show myself up, while the sergeants of this co. are never seen by commissioned officers while in charge of the company.

So you see all my spare time is put to studying so I can deliver the goods when called on to do it. Also have charge of mounted scouts at certain times of the day now.

Was out this morning teaching our horses how to jump. My little horse is a jumper and can run like a jack rabbit. sure love to ride it. I may have a horse issued to me some time or other. Am on map drawing again - and most everything else a man may be required to know. The captain is either taking a liking to me and giving me a good chance or else he is putting a lot of extra work on me for just a privates pay. rather think the last - is more correct; giving it to me because I am willing to do it.

But I may change his mind for him soon, as I believe I will be transfered to signal corpse before long - if they will let me in there and I guess they need men who can take hold.

At present tho I am waiting to see what they are going to do. here. I like this alright, if there is anything in it for me.

I guess by the end of this week all of this division will be together. I don't know how many thousand there will be but it will be a great many. I know that.

Well I spent Sat afternoon riding my horse and Sunday in Galveston. And will say it a picturesque place. so old and some pretty picture in real life, the palmm trees and flower trees and green foliage is sure beautiful. We rode around over the city in a machine and all along the sea wall and to the warves where the big Ocean freight boats were being loaded. Saw one big boat pulling out for England. saw an interned boat has been anchored in harbor 4 months. There are many large boats there. We crossed the harbor to the fort. They have dissapearing rifles there and mortars. Saw jelly fish and caught one. Saw big fish 7 or 8 feet long. They are tarpons I think. They were playing out in the bay. boat went close to where they were.

Also was in bathing. I sure like the salt water. Easier to swim in it. Makes your eyes smart if you dive with them open, but it is swell to lay on the beach and let the waves wash up over you. The whole day was full to the finish and I saw all a person could see in one day. was educational as well as enjoyable. There is not one regret for every thing went well. On the picture of the 4 of us is Serg. Baum, Corporal Blankenburg, Glaspy and myself, all of Danville. we stuck together all day. And they were all in for all we could see in one day. While there were some rather good looking girls in bathing (one piece suits) I never spoke to one all day. It seems that the people down here have never forgotten the Civil War and it is noticeable by their actions, while they treat us alright, yet there is something lacking - that we were used to up in the north, and to say you came from Illinois sure don't help things any.

Well dear mother - I feel like I am the busiest man in camp. There is so much I ought to know, that I have so short a time to learn in - and to be a commander takes teaching and training - just what I have never had. And to do justice to the fellows and yet get out of them what must come out, it is a perplexing proposition that makes me think as I have never thot before. for this is the first time in my life that men were ever under my direct supervision and I have almost absolute control or authority over 26 men. And they will bring things up and ask questions you would never have thot of and no manual or militaryisms in the world would ever be able to answer them. and yet they ask me and expect me to give them a reasonable answer.

Well this is Tuesday night and we are still here with no chance of going to France if we wanted to ever so bad. Really do believe the 5th Reg. will never get away from this camp as long as the war lasts.

Well I will close and write again some time as soon as I hear from you.

Give Lena one of the pictures, for I really want her to have one and thot she did get one, so give her one and tell her I am glad to hear that she even so much as wants one.

Do I look in the picture I am sending like I am not enjoying my soldier life and do I look worse for the wear? I look kind of tough I think and I do weigh about 140 or more, so I can't be worrying myself away. I am so sorry it is so lonesome for you, for I do like it so well in this business, compared to any other work I have ever done. And I like my little riding horse too.

Say what is Ethels address now. If she is any where between here and Galveston I am going to see her. Well please don't worry about me for things are alright and we are here for some time, hoping to hear from you again only not so sad a letter.

I am as ever your loving son

Paul B.

[the programe]

Morning Instruction

With Companies

Hendrickson will report with

mounted orderlies at 7:00

o'clock at picket line.

Afternoon:

1:30 to 3:00 Semaphore signalling

with mounted scouts.

3:00 to 3:30 Sitting up exercises

under Sgt. Major Becker.

3:30 to 5:00 - Bugle practice under

Hendrickson, Hq. Co.

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Buglers -- Deliver to

Hendrickson.