

March 2 1918

Same old place -

Dear Father & Mother -

Well mom I rec. your letter Thur. and could not answer before now. Thur. we had a very hard inspection. We had to show everything we have. I had a poncho laid down and all my personal property on it; all government issue was on cot. My personal out lay sure was good. Looked like a jew peddlers curio display. I have a complete out lay of uniform, shirt - underwear - all my knit goods, wrap and leather leggings, stetson hat, collars, ties, gloves, and different other articles of wearing apparel to its self. Then next division was of map drawing outfit, pencils and rulers and all kinds of drawing equipment, then came my stationary and school books and the ones I have of Hoyts. Then came the mending outlay such as all my red cross stuff - all likes of thread - white 30 & 40 - black 30 - 40 - 50 - olive drab, and a big spool of linen shoe thread - all my comfort kits with pins - needles, thimbel sewing awl, scissors, 4 pr; and I cant begin to mention all the articles. and last the toilet articles which were a regular drugstore itself. 6 tooth brushes - 4 combs 3 cans powder; 2 shaving sticks, toilet soap, 7 tubes tooth paste, adhesive tape, brushes for clothes, shoes and scrubbing and hair & finger nails. I have 5 red cross bags and all of them had some very good articles in them I have three razors, brush and all else nessessary. The razor I use all the time is my Gillett. Sure is a little peach when it comes to shaving. It has it so much on the Eveready that I never use anything but the Gillett at all. I have the eveready Gillett and Duram Duplex. the last one was given to me. Gillett cost \$5.00. Sure is worth all of it too. So much easier on the face, is a pleasure to shave with it. Well with this out lay on the ground and all the rest of the company of 300 with simular displays - were checked up and we were all thru by 4:30. Started checking on the company at 8:30 and from 8:30 am to 4:30 PM we never left our cots. No Dinner at all and it rained quite a while about noon and hard too. I covered up my stuff and very little got wet and that was only clothing which dried out easy. all my personal display was not more than a little damp. nothing damaged at all. At 5 oclock we were formed into Company and marched out into Drill grounds and mustered in to pay roll. At 4:30 we were given some eats and that was all we got that day. Today we had gun inspection in morning - we took down all our stoves. This afternoon I washed some clothing. I nearly always send my clothes to laundry as I don't have time to do my own washing. I some times wash out towels, kerchiefs, sox, and send under ware and shirts to laundry.

We have been having some mighty hot weather down here. grass is getting green all over. Yesterday afternoon we did some maneuvering out in the woods with our sig. platoon. We signaled by relay from camp to a couple miles out in the woods. Every so far apart we set up a small station. one would send message to the other until it finally got back to camp. I was in charge of panel signaling of one station way out in the woods. Sun was hot, grass green warm breeze blowing and the areoplane roaring over head - I nearly went to sleep. Was an ideal picnic - (only with out the eats). I sure enjoyed the afternoon - was a sure enough rest for me.

Well the negroe Regiment is leaving here tonight. I don't know where they are being moved to.

Well you must have had a hard wind the night you wrote for Maude wrote the same night and you both said about the same thing about it.

Well mom as for advancement I guess I am about as far as I will ever get. I am a stranger in a strange Regiment and the officers are going to help the boys from their own towns first so you see I have very little chance for a thing more than I now have. No a corporals job is not permanent, they can bust you any time they think they have a reason to. sometimes personal feelings and some times on your own disability. To bust you means to reduce you to private.

The Army Signal Corpse is an organization like Infantry, artillery, cavalry and such. In this division here we have Infantry companys, Artillery batteries and one battalion of the Signal Corpse. The reason we have but one battalion in this cam or division is that signal men are not needed in such large numbers as other divisions of the service. The Signal Battalion here is a branch of the Regular Signal Corpse. But our signal platoon is not a part of the Signal Corpse. We are in the Headquarters co. of an Infantry regiment. The Hq. co. is divided up into different platoons. One of them is the Signal platoon. Has been reccomended by the war dept. at Washington. We work on the same line of work as the Signal Corpse does - we take instructions from them and are trained in their line of work as well as drilling as Infantry co. do. In actual war we help the Sig. Bat. and can give them valuable service as we are pretty well trained in their line of work. Can fight as soldiers for we are trained in bayonet fighting, grenade throwing and most everything else used. Able to jump in and so most anything that is needed.

Well about the eats - don't try and send me anything - for I get three meals a day and on an average could have more anytime than I could eat so don't send me anything now for the public is having to do on less rations it seems than we do. and our eats are furnished and you have to buy yours so don't go to all the expense for me.

I did not know that Pink Cunningham was dead. Was sure nuff surprise to me to hear it.

It sure is tough luck for Cecil - I am so sorry she can't get better, just now when she is beginning to get out and see a little of what is going on out side of home - coming to the place where she has a fine chance for something pretty good - if she is as you say getting to be so good looking - it certainly is a shame she has to have this tough luck first for what it means physicaly and next what it is going to knock her out of. She has been kept in so close that now she has a chance for enjoyment, sure is hard.

In Maudes last letter she said her father told her that my application had been rec. and passed on and passed all O.K. He is a mason in the Danville lodge. Seems funny I don't get no official notice from them what to do. Do they know my address here at camp? They know my Danville adress - but do they know my address here in Texas?

Well you mentioned about the cornet and watch - I am glad papa is wearing my watch and keeping it running - far better for it than not running also doing someone some good. And about your not complaining about the noise if I was there to blow the cornet - well I was just thinking we used to growl around a good deal and I don't imagine either of us would do much of it now if we only could be

together again. I haven't any desire to get married - just want to come back and be with pop and mom again. The army may be changing me in some ways but some it is not.

Yes daddy did the right thing to have the picture enlarged if you get enough satisfaction out of it to feel that it is worth the price. Same with me - about my Gillett razor - I did not need it but the satisfaction I get shaving with it is worth the price I paid and more.

Well I don't know if we are going to be here long or not - but I would not count on getting a pass to get to me - for it would be a big expense even with a pass for no more than you would get to see me.

We had some tough luck here yesterday. Our platoon leader - Serg. Lebeau, he is not as large as I am but one of the best drill masters I ever drilled under broke his leg playing basket ball. He is in the base Hospital now. He is positively the best friend I had in the army. Was doing more for me than any one else and I miss the loss most keenly. We have been in the same tent together for quite a few months now. I've been learning some valuable drill dope from him. He has been in the service since 1903. He sure knows all parts of the business. The Sgt. that was in charge of this platoon was reduced to private and Eddie LeBeau took his place. I guess he will be discharged from the service now on account of the accident. He is 37 years old and tough as a nut. He sure is dissapointed for his heart was set in this work. When they had him on the stretcher, he sure was suffering, but was kidding the fellows that were carrying him in - and same way at the Hospital - no matter how bad he is feeling you never know it. Well he is a catholic but absolutely the best little fellow I ever met. his brother is in this platoon and I'll wager he does not feel the loss as much as I do, for living in the same tent with him and he sure was the life of the tent.

Well this is Sunday morning and tomorrow we go to the trenches for another week. I think the weather will be much better this trip.

None of the fellows were seriously sick the other trip. they are all back at work now. So if you don't get word from me when you think you should you will know I had no chance to write. If I get any eats at all - I think I will enjoy this trip much more than the other one. I am going down to Aunts in a couple hours now. Looks a little like rain today.

I am going down to Ellington fields as soon as pay day comes - I want to see the fields before we leave here as they say Ellington is the best and finest equipped fields in the United States.

Their barracks are in the old style panel effect in dark oak and between the panels is finished in white enamel. Sure are swell.

Well I must shave and change clothes. I wish I had one of my white shirts and those two military collars of mine could wear them here.

My ring is standing the wear and tear of army life just fine.

Well I will write again when I can find time. And you might find out if Schultz has my Texas address, I sure want to get the work thru before we leave here if possible and I will have to get busy if I do.

I hope you are all as well as I feel, all I'm afraid of is that I will get fat. Write soon

from you loving son

Paul B.