Nov. 20 - 1918.

My dear Cecil-

Just got the letter of Oct 22 and will write you a few lines if not more. Am always so glad to hear from you. I have not heard from Carl at all. Suppose he forgot to write after all.

So you have your electric lights in now. I can remember back far enough to know how convenient they are. I know you appreciate them to their fullest. I would now if only I had a chance to. I use a little gasoline lamp, burns like a torch has a rope like wick, small and very easy to carry. Our dugout has a nice stove and beds for four of us. a small place but enough room and is very dry. We found a whole case of cannon powder - comes in sticks that look like speriment gum - can hardly see any difference in shape, size and color. Fine to start fires with, keep putting on a couple at a time and soon you have a find hot fire. Will start any kind of wood to burning.

Have to be carefull tho and not get on too much at once, for she sure burns quick.

It has been freezing here lately. These old woods seem lonesome and cold at nite. And so awfully quiet. Not a sound and the cold still moon peeking over some high ridge. Some rough country between verdun and metz and we have been in here some time now. Have no idea what will be done now with us or where we will be sent. At present we are doing nothing but drill and the band rehearse. We rehearse twice a day. Am getting pretty well on to the run of things now and certainly enjoy those rehearsals to their fullest. Can't get too much of it. I sure feel lucky to be in the band now that war seems to be over and if I was in some other outfit I would be drilling and be pretty much a waste of time, as all the real things are of the past.

But in the band I am getting a bit of training that I will benifit myself by and have been wanting for some time. It did not bear much on my mind tho before the war, for little did I expect to be so alive and healthy at the end of the fray. And as it now looks as if some time we will be home ward bound I am anxious to learn all I can.

For I remember quite a few very enjoyable evenings we've spent together on our music and I am hoping for more to come soon. I suppose I will be more or less a bother to you if you want to study much tho. For you sure can't study with me around.

I certainly am so sorry to hear of so many cases of the Sp. Flu. Jove every one seems to be taking their turn at it. Is there no chance for a let up some time soon? It will throw you out of lots of good s[c]hool but you keep practicing all the time don't you? That should not hurt your individual practice.

You sure had some time at your friends house that Sun. evening. Boys are funny fellows - are they not? They are so hard to see things. Don't seem to know. Have to be told every thing - have no initiative. They are not all alike tho, thank God. But it is a generally excepted thing that a boy is a stupid sort of an insect.
Have a hunch I will be more than stupid when I get back, will be really ignorant of so many things, but I'm telling you, in trenches, dugouts and froggie billets is no place to learn little items of etiquette and there are a great many things I am going to have to stop doing and a great many things I will have to start. For instance, my general use of the english language is simply rotten.

Was just noticing lately how I have been using it. Not only myself but all of us. I will remind you a great deal of a ruffian when you see me. But I guess I can learn to be a civilian again easier than I learned to be a soldier. Maybe before long I will have the long looked for opportunity to try.

Our division has recieved quite a few medals now. We have been awfull hard hit and have done some of the hardest kind of fighting.

Quite a number yet in hospitals but there are a lot that never got that far. We have seen some of the hardest knocks since being in the service and our work the least appreciated of any. Have kept us so quiet, any ammount of times I've seen items in papers of divisions that at the time were operating with us or by us and never do near the work and stand the roughing as we did, but you never see 33rd div. mentioned.

Old Ill. has done and said lots for her drafted boys & camps, but the old prarie div. I never see mentioned. We are not grieving, only its noticible, we have done our part and a bloody sight more than many a one.

We are highly spoken of by british and Austratian as well as French - even if our own state doesn't say a whole lot. It's enough to know you - as a whole, could do what was done by us. And the way those boys worked. They deserve much.

I now have the chance to get all the Y.M.C.A. paper I need, am using yours tho for I like it better. I dont believe it will be so hard now to keep paper on hands.

Will close for this time. keek writing as long as I am over here for no telling how long now we will still have to stay. Time sure goes slow. nothing exciting.

So write often as you can and is convenient.

Yours

Paul B Hendrickson

Hdg. Co. 129 Inf. A.E.F.