

Feb 24 1919

Echternach - Lux

131 Field Hospital

My dear Cecil-

In my last letter I mentioned feeling pretty bum - well I had 102 fever that day so they sent me to this hospital. I rec. your letter of Jan 31 the same day. The hospital here they tell me has been a convent, monistary or some such thing - which I have no doubt it was - and they say it is one of the oldest in Europe - well I believe that too. for it is the oldest looking place and seems to be carved from a solid rock - instead of being built by putting pieces of rock one on the other.

I am either fortunate or unfortunate in getting to see so many interesting things and having so many interesting experiences, this one now is not at all the least pleasant. for these little beds - with their 14 inch spring mattresses - clean white sheets, and all I had to do was swallow pills with plenty of water and eat my meals when they brot them to me and not infrequently did they have to waken me for them either; and sleep. All they wanted of me was my name to begin with and at certain intervals afterwards they would come for to feel my pulse & take my temperature. Which I was always willing to give; with a few exceptions when they wakened me to get it.

I was in that bed 3 days & 3 nites - solid comfort. Nurse said I was not a patient but a convalescent as my pulse was always normal and my temperature the same. Well I did get all the sleep I wanted and now I am in a convalescent ward. Which is a warmer room - I dont have to wear the white mask over my face and can wear my clothes and move about as I please. As this was some kind of an educational place as I have here to fore mentioned, there are numerous desks & seats sitting about - nice place to read & write. It is now about bed time but the lights are good and I have had enough sleep to last me for a week, probly that explains why I am now writing and not sleepi[n]g.

Cecil - I would like to see you all dressed up and no place to go. Id do my best to suggest something to fit the occasion. I sure would try - I know. So you have high heels now. Are they neater than the others? I believe that is generally the effect they have on a persons looks - adds class. Well I've seen some of the Paris class and Luxemburgs Royal class and some more - but yet I would hate for any one to put any dependence on my judgement about that - for - when you have on a heavy pair of hob nails - a rather rough looking uniform & an overseas cap - you are not an object to attract much attention as you are only an ordinary soldier and there are many like you. And as you know - a man never notices beauty and class so much as when he entertains some notion in his head that there is a chance for him - but us - there is so decidedly no chance that it makes us home sick every time we look at a good looking woman.

So that is why my judgement would be at a discount, for looking at a woman - I associate pictures of home, & friends I know with it, so close that the unreal becomes so visulized in that person that the unreal is what I see and I could tell you nothing directly about the real person. What kind of a loon you make me out to be by my above statement - I care not - just blame the army for it.

But - I notice from one little statement you entertain some dreams too. Probly you will sympathize with me more, because you are also subject to that weakness - if weakness it is, - than if you did not do it. I wonder if your dreams seem as real to you as mine do to me. I wonder if they are at all alike. I have so little else to do that it is a very easy thing to fall into a very realistic dream. I have so much to dream of - home - and all that means - what I want to do - and many other things I might mention if it would do any good.

I assure you the gum was much appreciated and chewed with greatest of pleasure and right here in this hospital too. so your letter was good to the taste as well as to the eyes.

I certainly was glad to hear of your good luck in the short hand class - I am hoping it comes easier now you are becoming more acquainted with it.

And now about your picture. a small one would please me more than any other as they are so much easier to take care of an[d] keep from getting broken. I carry with me every picture I have over here.

So you have a Jewish friend and he gets peeved. Well of course you have no idea what peeves him - so I will not ask but all I need is one guess. Well young men do have some peculiar notions I dare say, nice fellows, but really get peeved over nothing, you might say. It seems to be quite a habit amongst us and tho I may be changed from 2 years ago - yet I remember vividly that part of my life.

I must really close - as much as I hate to do so - and do my natural duty of going to bed. I sleep in pajamas now - really a comfort in itself. Since I've been over here I've slept in every thing but pajamas until now, by that you will probly be able to judge to what extent I appreciate my good luck.

With love to all - I am your friend & pal -

Paul B Hendrickson - Hdq. Co. 129 Inf. A.E.F.