

Lancaster, N. C.  
Nov. 30, 1941

Jo.  
Received both of your last letters although they were held up ~~some~~, as we didn't have mail call every day. I have a lot to write about, so this may turn out to be an awful long letter.

You may write to this address at all times! If we are moved the address will be almost the same. A.P.O. # 9 stands for Army Post Office No. 9. It will remain the same because regardless of where we go it will still be the same as we will still be <sup>in</sup> the 9<sup>th</sup> Division.

Incidentally I don't know whether I told you or not, but I am a member of Co. A of the first Battalion, 60<sup>th</sup> Inf. Regiment, in the 9<sup>th</sup> Division of the First Army. And are nicknamed the "Go-Devils".

I have now heard from Uncle. He seems to have taken it very hard. I think we all have. Things like that only happen in True Story magazines. One never realizes that some day he may be a victim of such a circumstance

Yes, it seems hard when almost everyone you look forward to seeing dissolves into nothing but a memory, something you once had and never realized how really content, happy, and well off you were until it isn't there anymore. I feel for Uncle. Junior, you, and I may get over it some day but I'm afraid that Uncle might go to pieces. The only thing that may keep Uncle together is Jr. It's hope that he keeps him together long enough for Uncle to get back on his feet. You do your darndest to keep Jr. content somehow and I'm sure that Uncle, though hurt will pull through and some day may find happiness again. I think that the whole thing rests on Jr. and Auntie. Jr. is the only one that can hold Uncle together.

As for you and I all we can do is to try to help in some way without letting it show to Uncle. I'm no psychologist so I couldn't say what we can do for them. So for the time being I think the best thing to do is to leave them alone until some time elapses and then time to forget or that

is give them time so it will at least get dimmer in their minds. If Uncle stays away from drinking he'll pull through.

Thanks for the stamps they sure came when most needed. I bought some paper yesterday but couldn't get any stamps.

Merchisers are over Thank God! We are still in the field, but are ready to go into Bragg. All we are waiting for is transportation. The highways are choked with army traffic. There is a continuous string of Army trucks on the highways all day and all night long. It is estimated that there are 30,000 soldiers in the area.

The last week was a nightmare. We lost track of time and place. It was something beyond description, it was something a person has to experience to realize just what punishment the army deals out. We are still in sort of a dream. If my letter doesn't make sense you can blame part of it to the lack of sleep and I'm awfully tired.

Last week started Monday morning, we were on the go until last

nite, Sat. We got about two or three hours sleep per day for the five days. All of the three hours weren't spent sleeping because we had to make our beds then roll up our packs again after just barely falling asleep. We were getting two meals a day and three of the days we only had one <sup>very poor</sup> meal and two jelly sandwiches. That was to the extent of our meals.

From Mon. at noon until Wed. night about five we walked some sixty or sixty five miles. The other two days we were on the go in trucks. I'm telling you they kept us going until we were already to drop. It wouldn't have been so bad if we'd have had some sleep and something to eat. We would no sooner lie down then we would have to get up get our stuff together in the dark and start off again. No fires were allowed for the last two weeks.

About one third of all the men dropped out, and there were a lot of stragglers many of them would catch up just in time to start out again. It was awfully cold, too. Two mornings we were all at the side of the road trying to get some rest and you could

almost see the frost set in. On our hats and coats was almost a half an inch of frost. It was that way for two mornings. during the coldest part of the day we just sat and waited for orders then during the hottest part we were walking low feet off. Our feet were so sore we could hardly walk any longer. We walked along like old men afraid to set our foot down for fear we would not be able to pick them back up again. We were almost out on our feet just picking them up and laying them down automatically.

It was all a nightmare I'm sure glad it is over with at least for awhile. Except for actual war I don't think they could have punished the men any more than they did. The men were almost at the end of their endurance. Many of them were almost ready to quit. The hike put fifteen men out of our company in the hospital. Most of them had bad feet. It was something one has to experience to know just what we were through.

In regards to furloughs

all the men are getting fifteen day  
furloughs. I've turned mine down  
for that is I didn't apply for one.  
To start with I don't have enough  
money to get to Denver. Then I didn't  
know just where I'd stay when I did  
get there. If your letter, telling me  
I could stay with you, had come  
sooner I might have taken the  
chance on hitch-hiking. It is too  
damn cold to try to hitch-hike. My  
luck is running so low I'd have  
probably run into a <sup>big</sup> storm all the  
way home. So I thought I'd wait  
and see if I couldn't get a furlough  
sometime in the Spring then I  
could hitch-hike.

Thank you and thank the  
girls for being so considerate, offering  
me a place to stay. I'd sure like  
to get away from this man's army for  
at least a few days and live like  
a human-being again. I'm sure  
getting fed up with it, so is everyone  
else. It is not the work it is  
all the nonsense a fellow has to  
take. I don't mind doing anything  
no matter how hard it is if

There is any sense to it but they make a fellow do ~~so many~~ things, small things, that just don't make sense no matter how you look at it; it just irritates a fellow something terrible. As I said before if your letter had come a little sooner I might have gone. It is too late now as all applications for furloughs are in. I'm trying to get one soon as possible after the first of the year.

They have estimated that there will be about 800,000 soldiers on furloughs during the month of Dec. I imagine that many of them will be hitch-hiking.

What you girls might do, if you want to make a soldier happy, at least until it gets is to bake a cake and some cookies and send them to me. You couldn't overdo that I'm sure at least as far as I'm concerned. Don't limit yourselves though and don't do it unless you have a lot of spare time. By what you say you don't have an awful lot of spare time.

I'd sure like to have some home  
cooked meals. As I said though don't  
do it unless you can spare both  
the time + money.

The fellows are all planning  
and talking about their furloughs,  
that is all you hear. It makes me  
feel kind of bad to be one of the  
few who can't go home. I don't  
mind so much though. Unless for  
a miracle don't expect me until  
sometime next Spring.

As for the farm in Mex.  
I think the best thing is to sell for  
the most we can get out of it. If  
we don't we may never get anything  
later on. So you follow what ever  
Uncle thinks is best and write to them  
in Mex. asking them how much we  
might get. Uncle knows more about  
it so you write to him then  
correspond with them in Mex. But by  
all means sell if not we may never  
get anything out of it. So ask Uncle  
for advice and do as you think best.  
I'm leaving it up to you for the  
time being. You tell me what you  
think of it. Bye now Pito.





USO



P.S.

I quit thinking I could get this letter off ~~in~~ but the mailman just left so it is too late.

In regards to the farm you write and tell me what you think. If you think the same as I do, that is to sell for whatever we can get, don't waste any time in writing.

Uncle wrote but he isn't very detailed in what he says and you aren't either in your letter. So you and Uncle do what you think is best. You do the corresponding with them, cause chances are

they'd never get my right  
address on the envelope thus  
I'd never get their letters.  
Also for the reason that I'm  
in the army I think you  
better do the writing to them.  
You know Fifth Columnist  
reason. Ha! Ha!

Thanks again both you  
and the girls for offering  
me a place to stay. It is  
sure a temptation to get  
away from this ~~damned~~  
place. I'm fed up I'm  
sick and tired of the whole  
army.

I've gained an awful  
lot of weight. The last time  
I weighed I weighed 158 lbs.  
I've gained some fifteen pounds.  
There are still rumors about  
us being shipped North probably  
to the New England states.

P.S. No 2.

1/2 Keep this up. I'll have <sup>to</sup> ship this Parcel Post. Just as I was addressing the envelope they yelled "let's go." So I had to quit, put the letter in my pocket and start gathering my junk. That was Sunday now it is Tuesday morning. I'm trying to finish this before we are told to do something (It won't be long). We are back in Bragg, but still in Prep tents because our barracks are being used as a hospital. It is getting colder by the day. Rumors have it that we'll be here two weeks, but Heaven only knows how long we really will be. I carried the letter in my pocket so it is rather dirty.

I'm sure getting fed up with this Army. I'm getting sick and tired with the inefficiency of the whole set-up. I'm almost at the bursting point same as everyone else. Heaven help the Army if they turn down the furloughs. I'm afraid if they do, they won't have much of an army left.

As for your cooking killing me I'm afraid that after what we have eaten here there isn't much of anything that could kill us. You should see the water we wash our mess kits in

Tell the girls if they do write, not to expect much of my answers and just a plain common everyday and pretty dumb too.

sometimes it is so dirty it looks more  
like kerosene out of a grease trap  
than water to wash mess kits in. I have  
seen dirtier water but just now  
I don't remember where or when.  
So I'm sure you girls cooking couldn't  
kill me, no matter how bad, besides your  
cooking is probably very good. After  
eating what we eat here poison  
wouldn't affect us in the least.

As far as knowing the reason  
for the happenings at home, I'm afraid  
that I would be the one who would  
know the least. I haven't the slightest  
idea for the cause.

I hope what I wrote Sunday  
makes sense. I was in a daze yet when  
I wrote it. Sunday we didn't get to  
sleep until Mon. morning at three. Regardless  
of how late we get to bed even when  
everyone is on duty, we still have  
to get up at six.

I'll close now, if I don't quit I'll  
keep going on forever. Once I get started  
I can't quit writing. F

Tell the girls hello for <sup>me</sup> and tell  
them if they have time and would like  
to write I'd be tickled pink to hear <sup>from</sup> <sup>you</sup> <sup>now</sup>  
from them, and will answer promptly. Cito.