

113th F. A.

A. E. F.

Aug. 14, 1918.

Dear Father:-

Two very interesting letters from you came Saturday and Sunday, and I have never enjoyed mail quite so much. No doubt on the front we will enjoy it more even than here for they say life gets very boring up there. So far our life has been quite pleasant here in this camp, but our time here is quite limited. Like all true soldiers we are always ready to move to new places and even if we go to the hottest part of battle we think a change will be interesting. There are several things that make me loathe to leave Coetquidan. It is a very comfortable place with good barracks and baths, good corrals and gun packs. Also I have made several friends with Y.M.C.A. men, and with some of hospital force, and I have no doubt I shall see few of them again.

Speaking of the Y.M.C.A., I cannot understand how it has been so slandered in the States as you say it has. I did hear of a sore-headed doctor who was with a regiment bound for the front and who got transferred to a hospital back here in the line of supplies say that the "Y" was no good and that all its money should be given to the Red Cross. I also heard of an officer in our regiment who last night was cussing the "Y" out because it would not cash his personal check on a N. C. bank for \$550.00. But he was promptly and effectively squelched by

all the officers present.

As I wrote Charlie Rose a few days ago, there is no agency that in any ways compares with the "Y" in its influence for morals and morale. There is simply no measuring the good it does here and they say its place is even greater on the front. It furnishes absolutely the only wholesome amusement the men have, does more to encourage writing home than anything else, gets good books into the hands of the soldiers, and works like a "nigger" selling them tobacco and what other things they can get at less than cost over here. There is something going on in the "Y" every night. One week night is for religious service, but even that night they sometimes have a movie too.

On Sunday Hut No. 1 has Catholic Mass at 8:00

113 F. A. Service at 9:30

Bible class at 10:30

Evening Services at 7:30 P.M.

They are eager to serve.

In spite of the fact that two ships carrying athletic equipment were submarined the "Y" has made possible our ball games and most of the Athletic events. It would take a book for me to tell you all it does, but if anyone says it does nothing he has been hidden away in a dugout in one place all the time, and simply does not know or else he is a sore head who has tried to get some special privileges that the "Y" could not afford. Now of course there are some slackers no doubt over here, but they are rare birds.

We went on a two day practice march. Going out Monday

and making camp, and returning yesterday after dinner about 5:00 P.M. It was my first night in a dug out, and I managed to get through with it very well. The ground seemed pretty hard, but it was dry which made things lots better than they might have been.

Since beginning this letter I have been to dinner, and while there the mail was brought over and I got a letter from Mama and one from ~~Emma~~. <sup>blank blank</sup> ~~Emma's~~ was mailed on July 24th. So letters are coming through pretty well these days. My mail was lighter today in proportion to others than it usually is, but it was enough to make me feel mighty fine.

Everybody at home seems to think we are in the big push, but you see it takes longer to get the Artillery end of it in shape than to get the Infantry. Horses have had to be secured and trained; men and officers instructed and practiced in new methods of warfare. Also a mistake by us would be so injurious to the Infantry we are to support if we happened to drop a barrage back in their trench.

When we were being trained in the States the Regular Army officers used to try to make us think that no outfit in the world was quite as sorry as we are. But over here on the range we are discovering that we are about as good as the best, and lots better than many. There is quite a good deal of talk about some of our officers having to remain to instruct other units which will come over at once. Most of the officers who have seen our regiment close at hand say we have an enlisted personnel far ahead of the average. They are so much more eager to fight than the drafted regiments are. But the drafted men

we have gotten, especially those from the West, Kansas and neighboring states, are well up with the average here.

All dope it out that we can win a decision next summer and finish this thing up. I hope so, and do not see how it can continue, but also I do not see how it can be wound up, without absolutely crushing Germany. I fear that will take two years instead of one.

~~Have you ever gotten the \$50.00 sent by the Y.M.C.A. or the \$100.00 sent by Postal Money Order, of the \$10.00 check from Bank of Garner which I cashed for young Mitchener? Hope all go through O.K.~~

I hope your Asthma is better, and that you are enjoying good health again.

With lots of love to all.

Ben.

Tom is O. K.

Addressed:

Mr. B. R. Lacy,  
Raleigh, N. C.  
U.S.A.

O.K. B. R. Lacy Jr.,  
Chaplain.