

113 F. A.

Am. E. F.

France,

July 20, 1918.

Dear Folks:-

For over a week I have failed to write to you, largely because I have been sick during part of the time. I was taken about 5:00 A.M. last Saturday with a severe headache and nausea which turned out to be this so-called Spanish Grippe. Why they put it on Spain I do not see, but I do know that it knocks the pepper clean out of a man. I haven't near gotten my strength back yet but am progressing well. Have been up and about for three days now so it really had me down only four days. Did not have much fever, but many aches.

As John McSween, Chaplain of 105th Ammunition Train, and I had gone to Rennes on Wednesday the officers tried to make out that they thought that Rennes was due the blame for my condition. Quite a few do come back the worse for these trip(s) as all must walk pretty circumspectly around camp here.

The training of officers and men is going on. It is interesting to see how quickly the men get on to the 75's and how accurately they work them. Their part is more simple than that of the officers and the men seem to me to be ready for the front right now, and to see service. It would surprise you how keen these boys are to be doing something, and as you all see by the dispatches, the Americans can do something when called on to. Another million and a half, all trained to take

care of themselves from unnecessary risks, and we will be able to start something next spring that it will take something for the German to stop. All are overjoyed now at the success and all hope that it augurs great things for the future.

One thing these men, (an officers) hate to do is to wear the gas-mask. As such a large percent of the casuals have been gassed we are all trained in defense before going near the front. But after an hour in a mash one almost wishes he were gassed.

We had some extra officers here for a week and so I have a room-mate now. It is Lt. Mears of Baltimore, one of my best friends, and an excellent officer. He has quite a lot of junk which fills the room up completelt. These barracks have five rooms on each side of the hall, and as mine is the one next to the front door I get all the noise.

Am going to have a suit made next week. The one I bought a year ago is about worn out now leaving me with only one suit, and that not an extra good one. So I am going to pay a French tailor fifty dollars to build one around my frame. Hope he comes some where near me in the process. As we will be in the dug-outs soon sleeping in our clothes I guess it doesn't matter what they look like at the start,

This letter was interrupted before its completion, and this afternoon before I could finish it a base ball game was played. We beat the 105th Ammunition Train 2 to 1 in a fine game. It rained before it was over for a short while. It is a pity we cannot find more time for play over here, but the men are busy for the entire day. First call sounds at 5:30 and from

then until 6:00 P.M. there is something to do in almost every moment of the day.

Tomorrow I am expecting to hold two services, one at 9:30 in the Y.M.C.A., the other at the Hospital at 7:00 P.M. I am very poorly prepared for either of them, but hope to prepare tonight and tomorrow morning.

America is beginning to seem very far away. It takes such a very long time for an answer to come. My first letter was written six weeks ago yet you had not received it when I last heard from home. I got a nice letter from Mary and Tom one from Rufe and we read each others letters. In fact we read each others home letters, but like our own best.

I sent Father a money order for \$100.00 last week. I hope it got there O.K. Has the Y.M.C.A. sent the \$50.00 I sent by them about three months ago.

Good bye to you all, and may God bless and keep you.

Affectionately,

Ben.

Addressed:

Mr. B. R. Lacy,
537 N. Blount St.
Raleigh,

N. C.

U.S.A.

O. K. ~~sent~~

B. R. Lacy Jr,
1st Lt.