

C0262B001F003L004

Image 1:

Aug 6, 1944

Dear Mother, Dad, and Grandpa,

It is now 6:30 Saturday morning and I am sitting here in the pup tent writing this letter. I have to go on K.P. at 7:00. I never in my life saw anything like it. I just had K.P. a week ago last Friday, It comes so often. I just hate it, too. It's the nastiest, dirtiest, job there is. The 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. keeps telling us that he is going to have 12 days between K.P. and guard, but it never works out that way. Some times I have them 2 days in succession and other times there may be 7 or 8 days in between. There are 6 K.P.'s every day in the field whereas in camp there were only 3. So with the details passing around a handful of men in R.I. these things come pretty often. There are about 150 in the company and R.I. does all the work! Battalion Hqs. is exempt from details. Why they should be I don't know. Then there are so many at school, on furlough, in the hospital, others like the mail clerk, company clerk, supply room men who are also excused. Then all the sergeants are

Image 2:

excused, but there are more than the usual number of sergeants in this outfit. I'm afraid that these details will come every 3 or 4 days now, although I did hear that K.P. would now be for a week at a time. They even have details yet back in camp – a week at a time one K.P. and several guards. They have to sleep in the mess hall. They say there is just as much work there on K.P. even though hardly anyone is there. For pots and pans are dirtied whether you cook for one or one hundred. They make just as much work for you in the field. If there isn't something for you to do, they make it their business to find something. I have to go on in 5 minutes. K.P. starts on week days at 5:00.

Here I was planning to go into camp today to call you, to get a shower, buy a newspaper (I can't find out what's going on anymore), eat at the Service Club, go to a show, read at the library, etc. This may all sound so silly, but where you are deprived of everything a day like that means so very very much. And I did want to call you today. I just can't even plan for a few moments of pleasure any more.

I guess I'll have to ~~undecipherable~~ stop writing now. It's time to start K.P. There isn't even enough time to write a letter at one sitting. It makes me feel badly when I stop to think how wonderful Sundays (and every day for that matter) are at home.

Image 3:

(3)

Aug 7, 1944 (Mon)

It's now Monday morning and I have a few minutes so I'll write a little more. I didn't have a chance to write another word yesterday. Oh, that was a terrible day. And on top of it there was a terrible rainstorm yesterday morning. I was soaked through and through. It looks like Guadalcanal around here. Only, thank God, there are no Japs. We are right in the middle of the woods with nothing but pine trees around. It's some fun doing K.P. anyway, much less in the rain.

---

Tuesday, Aug. 8

From the above you can see how much time I must have to write or to do anything else.

I received the box of oatmeal cookies, and they were delicious. They break up so easily in transit though. Most were nothing but crumbs, but I ate those just as well. They did taste so wonderful.

I have also been eating the other box of food, but yesterday I had to throw most of it out because the ants were getting to it. What I had of it was mighty good. It's a shame that you can't keep anything for a while. The heat is so intense, and that spoils food quickly, too.

Image 4:

I was also so very glad to get the magazines yesterday. I can't possibly count on being able to buy myself any more.

I do need more fatigues. Two more suits would be perfect. Do you think you could get them?

I ripped one pair clear across the leg Sunday. I sewed it up but it won't hold, so I will have to turn it in for salvage after I send it to the laundry. I must have it laundered before I can turn it in. Then I can get a new pair of pants in time. It takes quite a while though. That's one reason I would like more fatigues.

After I got off K.P. Sunday they had a truck take us to camp for showers. But 4 of us got off at North Camp instead and went to a movie, "[Summer Storm](#)" with Anna Lee. It's excellent. After the movie I went into one of the 9<sup>th</sup> Armored barracks and took a shower and shaved while the rest waited for me. We then took the bus that goes to Leesville from North Camp. It goes past this bivouac area before it reaches Leesville.

---

Wed. Aug. 9

The fellow I pitched my tent with doesn't sleep here, but goes to Leesville to be with his wife every night and comes back around 5:30- 5:45 in the morning. So I have the tent to myself. It isn't very large, anyway. Each soldier is issued a shelter half or in other words,

Image 5:

(5)

½ of a pup tent. The 2 halves are buttoned together to make a tent. It's awfully small for 2. For just one person, there is barely enough room to turn around.

It's Wednesday morning now. I do wish I could write a full letter every day. That's what I started out to do, and I hope that after this I will be able to.

Mother, I received your letter written on Sunday yesterday. I thought you would expect a call from me on Sunday, and in fact, I had every intention of calling. But I had K.P. and couldn't get to camp. I certainly hope I'll be able to call this coming week end. I hope I ~~[undecipherable]~~ don't have any details this Saturday and Sunday. I would like to go to Alexandria, but I suppose I'll have to be content with going to camp. How I'm looking forward to the day where I can go anywhere and whenever I want to.

I think I will have K.P. tomorrow. They haven't enough men, so it comes every 4 days now. How do you like that? I can't see the whole thing. About 24 of us are doing all the details for the whole company.

Jack Hughes had guard Monday

Image 6:

night and Tuesday morning and as soon as he got off guard he had to go on K.P. In case you don't remember my speaking of him, he is the boy from Milwaukee.

All we do is dig holes and fill them up again – garbage pits, latrines, refrigerator holes (they are building a box in which to store ice and it has to fit into a big hole in the ground). We came out here

several days [undecipherable] last week to dig that hole. It rained once and we had to bail all the water out and dig through the mud. Then Sunday it rained again, so they decided not to use that hole. Monday they started another one, got along pretty far, then decided the ground was too hard. So they filled that one up and started another. Yesterday I was on a detail filling up the hole we spent so much time digging last week – the original one. They are now using an earth bore and that helps to ease the digging somewhat.

Monday morning we were taken in for a couple hours of code. Then 4 of us, including myself, were sent back to the bivouac area around 11:00 for the rest of the day to dig the officer's latrine. The officers have canvas all around their latrine with a special passage way!!!!!! How wonderful! I felt like throwing some of the dirt in their faces. The Major came into relieve himself while we were digging. He used the old latrine. His only comment was "It's awfully hot to be digging, isn't it boys?" to which we [undecipherable]-respectfully answered "Yes sir." Our thoughts were unprintable.

Image 7:

(7)

August 9, 1944

Monday night I intended to go into camp for a movie, but all of us had to stay here for a show which everyone had seen before, the "[Battle of China](#)," one of the films in the "Why We Fight"<sup>1</sup> series which they show in basic training and keep showing forever after. We were to have another one last night but there was a terrific rainstorm so naturally it was called off. Have been hoping that we won't have to see it tonight, although we probably will. In the Army you just don't have any free time at all. You work 24 hours a day. It seems to me that a person should work certain hours and then be free. It's that way in civilian life. If civilian workers had to do one tenth of the things required in the Army, they wouldn't stand for it. They would either strike or find a new job.

Yesterday morning we had 2 hours of code and then had to come back and shoulder a pick and shovel as usual.

Image 8:

During a 10-minute break in camp I went down to the day-room where the telephone is located, but the phone was all locked up. I had intended to call you during the noon hour –but I couldn't have done so anyway because we had to come back to the bivouac area for lunch. Gee, I sure get tired of eating out of mess kits trying to balance everything on my legs while sitting on the ground. It's no wonder I was sick. We wash our mess kits and utensils before and after meals in 3 big garbage cans filled with water. One has hot, soapy water and the other 2 are for rinsing. But 99% of the time the water is neither hot nor clean. The water is naturally very greasy and that sticks to the mess equipment.

My flashlight bulb is very dim. I hope I can get to the main PX to get some bulbs. I think they sell them. If not, I'm sunk, because it is impossible to find your way around these woods at night without a flashlight.

Image 9:

(9)

---

<sup>1</sup> A series of films developed by the United States Government to convince American service members and the American public of the necessity of the war. To some extent they represented the mobilization of Hollywood for the war effort, as most of the films were directed by famed director Frank Capra and many of the animated maps were created by Disney.

If I can't buy them, I'll write you for them. Then too it's the only means we have for reading and writing at night. One fellow last night keep filling up his cigarette lighter so he could see how to write a letter.

This morning we had 2 hours of code and then they brought us back. So this afternoon we will probably dig holes again.

I have a few minutes after lunch in which to write. Mother, I just got your letter written Monday afternoon. I knew you would expect my call Sunday. I was so disappointed when I couldn't make it. I will have to write every day. But look how I have been writing this letter – a few lines during 10-minute breaks, before and after meals when I have a few minutes, by flashlight at night, etc. You see, if I can, I go in to take a shower in the evening. I wanted to stay in camps to write and see a movie, but had to come back.

Image 10:

Now tomorrow I think I will be on K.P. Oh, oh, there's the whistle. I'll have to stop. See how it is?

---

It's now almost 8 o'clock and I'm sitting on a truck waiting to go to the Service Club. I'm in front of the theatre now. I'm coming back here in a hour to meet some fellows and we're going to see "[Mr. Skeffington](#)" with Bette Davis. They brought us in for showers around 6:30, so I had my shower and shave. Guess what? I was right! I'm on K.P. tomorrow. I just found out a little while ago. I'm all cleaned up now and in a few hours I'll be dirty as a pig slaving away at that damned K.P. I'd rather eat vitamin tablets or C or K rations if that would get me out of K.P. I really mean it.

I spent the afternoon in a manner which I fully expected – with a pick and shovel. They had labor details all over the place. (I'm now writing in the library. Just had a Boston cooler at the Service Club).

2 officer's latrines were dug, a garbage pit was filled, the ice box hole was dug (my assignment), a load of sawdust was brought in, etc. The dirt here is all clay and is like concrete. The earth bore could

Image 11:

(11)

Aug 9, 1944

not even budge some of it.

I just bought the Aug. 12 issue of "Sat. Evening Post." I wasn't sure whether Stanley's article was to be in this issue or the next. However his name is mentioned on page 2 in the list of next week's articles. They have his name as Stanley Frank. Does he use that for his pen-name or is it a misprint?

I'm afraid I wouldn't have any means of using that little radio you bought. It sounds so nice from your description, Mother. I just don't have any means of connecting it. It's such a shame. I do wish I could use it. It would help the time pass more quickly if I had a radio. Weren't you able to obtain a battery set –not one like mine that won't work, I mean? If I were in a barrack, I certainly could use it.

Grandpa, I hope you are feeling much better. Take it easy. I should think you would be glad not to have to run down to the office every day and worry about

Image 12:

everything. Boy I know I wouldn't work unless I had to. Right now I have to, and I don't mean maybe. It's either a case of digging ditches or facing a court martial. I'll take the former. But I and everyone else would get the latter if we didn't work. It looks like we are in a labor battalion.

Mother, you write that Grandpa is only using one kidney. Just what is the condition, what causes it, and can anything be done about it? I was very much surprised to hear that. It worries me.

Well, I must come to a close. This sure is a botched up letter.  
Love to all of you.

Lovingly,

Jerome, Jr.

P.S. A year ago today I had my first Army physical at Ft. Thomas and a year ago tomorrow I was sworn in. I can hardly believe that a whole year has passed, can you? I hope it all ends soon!!!