

Company E, 157th Inf, APO 45
c/o Postmaster, NY, NY
June 3, 1945

Dear Gramma,

Your last two letters were real nice and I appreciated them lots--wish you'd write to me more. I'm getting so I write less and less; by the time I'm Dad's age I'll write less than he does.

Guess Katharine told you that we're in Munich--Hitler's old hide-out. The city is wrecked almost beyond recognition--the attick room where Uncle Frank used to stay is in perfect order and neat as a pin by comparison! We don't know how long we'll be here or where we'll go from here but most of the troops over in Europe are supposed to get home for a while at least sometime this year. It surely would be good to get back on the farm again for a while.

Of course what I miss most is my family--Kath, Posterity, and you folks. Remember how you used to miss us by the time we'd been gone a couple of days and then think that I haven't seen my boy for nearly a year and then it was for just a few hours. In some ways the strain of war has slackened but we get more homesick than we did last winter.

Then for another thing I'm hungry--want some batter bread and butter milk, want some fried eggs and cocoa, want some hot biscuits and cow-butter (tired of this kind that grows on cotton plants and bean stalks). I'd like about a dozen real batter cakes and I still think they're better if snitched before breakfast. And I want about a quart of icecream a day for a year or two--real ice cream made with cream instead of skim milk powder and corn starch. I want some whole wheat bread and cabbage. Dis Army ain't got nuthin good ter eat.

Lewis? We're so close to the Alps that it never gets very hot and we sleep under heavy cover at night. There's been ice since we've been here. We've passed quite a few well known spots since last winter. We crossed the Rhine near Worms, stayed in Nurnburg a few days, crossed the Danube and then came here. Europe has lots of pretty scenery--villages surrounded by green mountains and snow capped peaks, well kept woods, picturesque farm houses and roads with fruit trees on both sides. These people had enough to make anybody happy but they're just like most Americans--never satisfied.

I guess you're expecting me to come home looking like a physical wreck and with a lot of strange habits--these articles in the magazines on how to treat old soldiers are funny--they're like the good advice old maids give on marriage and child rearing. I really haven't changed much. We got the gizzards scared out of us quite a few times and saw some pretty rough sights but war doesn't change many men much--it merely deepens already existing traits of character.

There were times when the things that people worry about so much seemed mighty unimportant. Of the men who were in the company when I came there are about a dozen left. I've had some shells burst pretty close, a few bullets that were too near for comfort, shrapnel holes in my stuff and once I missed being cut off with a group that never got out by a matter of fifteen or twenty minutes. I ~~think~~ the Lord just took care of me--maybe it was because you folks prayed for me--at least that's the way I feel about it. Going through it all makes you think a lot but it doesn't change men my age very much.

Does Andy bother you much? What do you say when he turns over the molasses jar on a clean table cloth, when he kicks over buckets of milk or throws cups around just to hear them smash? Guess he must be able to get into a lot of mischief by now. If he breaks up something that's replaceable, get another and don't worry about it like you did about the ones we busted. That's one of the reasons I sent you the fifteen dollars--remember the money you bawled me out for allotting to you? It surely is good of you to help Kath take care of him. I hope you'll spank him when he needs it, teach him that "no" means "no" and so on. With as much spoiling as he gets and no spanking he'll be a wild man in no time at all. (Of course I understand that neither you nor Katharine nor any of his aunts or uncles ever actually spoiled him--nobody ever spoiled me either!)

Will you give the picture-slide to Katharine; she sent me several but I think they're too heavy to send back in one envelope, so I'm splitting them up.

Tell Cap I appreciated his letter lots--he's really the most interesting correspondent I ever knew, --except Katharine of course. I don't guess he shows you his letters but they're funny as a joke book, serious as a sermon, and as newsy as gossip at a Missionary Meeting--and all this at once. Tell Dad to write to me sometime; I'd surely like to hear from him too.

I sure do hope I get to come home sometime before too long. Sometimes I hope I can settle down on the farm, for part of the time at least. But then things never turn out--or seldom--just the way we think or hope. Would you have guessed five years ago that today you'd be getting a letter from one of your boys in the birth-city of Natzism?

Love to all -
Brew