

12th F.A.

March 23, 1918.

Dear Mother:

Well, we've gotten here, "on front". Hikes in rain one day, rode train all night and next day, sleeping anyway possible, hiked again and arrived here sometime during the night or morning - I know the moon was shining. Our base is a little in the rear and subject to practically no danger, except from the air and we haven't been troubled in that regard. However, have seen several air fights. Enroute, our first glimpse of war was a German plane brought down by anti-aircraft guns - and this, I understand, not happening too frequently, is quite a treat, as far as war goes. There were apparently four guns firing at the plane which seemed to be quite unconcerned. The sky was soon literally covered with bursts of shells, which came closer and closer to the target. Finally, it commenced to flop more or less like a bull bat shot in one wing. We list it on the horizon - and so it may have landed without serious injury to its occupants (I don't doubt but that you are glad to know of this possibility).

I ran across Vandegriff here - we are in different regiments and he had left before. We stood on a hill under the moonlight last night, listening to a continuous roar of cannon, and watching the sky line flash with light and hearing the buzz of airplanes. Beyond question, it was fascinating - to such an extent that thoughts of "making the world safe for Democracy" had to be summoned as a legitimate excuse for enjoying the situation. "Harg's" remark significantly, "Its a far cry to Alabama, I mean to say, who would have thought it".

The enlisted men seem to be enjoying things. In passing I hear remarks on this order "Buddy I reckon the rain'll be here pretty soon". "How come?", "Don't you hear that thunder".

Of course we havent been in the thick of things yet. But I hope to be able to say something about that in my next letter. The best we've done is to pass along roads in the fire zone.

I think we'll have opportunity to see things. Its far from a "dead" sector. I could mention names in walking distance that you would recognize without trouble.

Last mail was from Eason, date March 3rd. Address still
18th F.A. *a. e. f*

Love to everybody.

John.