May 17, 1918

My dear Essie:

What seems to be the matter with the mail, now? It's quite a while since I have heard from home. I try my best to get about three letters a week home, but sometimes I slip up. This week, for instance. But I have an alibi. You see I wrote to Uncle Col. and Henry.

Yesterday, we had a squadron holiday. Oh my! Never got up till 8 to imagine it. Went without my breakfast, just to sleep. And when I did.
get up, I could not call down to mother, and tell her to have my breakfast ready. But what I did, was to wait until 10:30 when the canteen opened, then bought some scones and coffee. We had a dandy dinner, and plenty of it. You see many of the boys were out on pass so it made quite a difference in the rations. At about 12:30 I started for a hike, with another fellow, and choose for our destination, a little village, six or seven miles away. We rambled on, and on, sometimes for as much as an hour, without meeting a person. At one time we passed right through a small village and never even saw a soul. At just about three, forty-five, we struck the out skirts of the
town for which we set out, and it was much larger than we expected. You see neither of us had ever been there before, but we knew the general direction and felt that if we did miss it, and walked for enough, we'd strike another town. We sat down on the banks of the canal for about twenty minutes, and then started back. We sat on the canal bank for several reasons, some of which are, we were tired, it was hot, we were broke, and couldn't get into a teacorn. (I carelessly left my money in the tent), and then, it
was a nice comfortable spot, where we could see the water on one side, and the street on the other. Coming back to camp, we had the time of our lives. Thought we would save a little time and energy by cutting cross lots. The fields in this country are divided by hedges, instead of rail fences or stone walls. After crossing one field, we jumped a hedge and went over a knoll and found ourselves, suddenly in the middle of a herd of cattle. About thirty bulls, I should say, some of which we very politely, stepping aside, to let us pass. One old fellow, though took a dislike to one, or maybe both of us, and started to follow us. Well at first we just laughed at him and told him to go home, but
he wouldn't mind watch a cent. When he got too close, in comfort, Whit threw his coat at him, but that was just what he wanted. He put his head down, and let his hind legs fly. Now all this time, all the rest of the herd, was watching, very closely, and at the signal, two of the rear guard came up, on double time. Again Whit let let drive, but that coat had no more effect on those bulls, than water has on a duck's back. You see neither of us had been brought up on a farm, so we didn't know just
what to do. So we ran. And when we ran, the whole darn bunch followed those three leaders. Talk about excitement, we were surely in hot water for a few minutes. Finally we gained the hedges at the corner of the field, and went over the top. Then we hiked, and hiked, and hiked, over all kinds of fields, till we came to a canal. Whew! We had to hike along the bank, now, until we came to a bridge. Well, after a while, we struck a road, and as it was going in the right direction, we followed it, and after a while, saw a house. Fortunately no one had had a drink, since early morning we decided to turn one. We asked the 'man of the house' for a glass of water, and he asked us to
come in and have tea. Wow! Would we? Well I guess. It was after six then and we hadn't had a bite since noon. We had some real tea, (quite different from Army tea) and plenty of bread and butter. Feeling much better, we again set out for camp, and made it at about 9½. Tired and hungry, but happy. We cleaned up a can of corned beef, which Whit had, ever since we left the boat. Then we went into the cantin, and bought duff and a can of peaches, and some cocoa. Satisfied, we went to bed, and maybe I didn't sleep. I'm going to sleep.
again tonight. But I wasn’t very tired today. We were fairly quiet all day, so I did some splicing. Now, the first ‘bad’ (meaning bad) day we get, or maybe sooner, I shall have to put new control wires into my machine, as the ones which are now in use, are pretty well worn.

I guess that’s about all now, except that we are going to have a cooky thunder shower tonight. The clouds are rumbling, and lightning flashing, in great style.

I hope that you all are well and that May is contented in her new position, and that dad has forgotten how to worry. Remain

Lovingly

Dick.

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