



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
WAR ACTIVITIES



CAMP _____

Letter #5
Page 2

The above is the Wig-Wag in writing. By the way, I'm sending with flags the Wig-Wag is only sent with one flag. Wallie and Jake are also in the Signal Platoon. Jake is in my class. It is kind of hard for Wallie to get, but he is getting it alright. Only a little slow. Every morning we go out on the field and practice Signaling for two hours. Since I have been here I also have had gas instructions. I don't remember whether I told you about them, anyway I will write about it now. The first lesson we had was about how to breathe and put on a Gas Mask. The second lesson, which I believe is the last, we go through houses filled with different sorts of gas. Three kinds to be "specific." Chlorine or weeping gas, this gas although not exactly fatal makes the tears roll down your face, like a cloud-burst. Asphyxiating gas which kills. The Asphyxiating, we went though was not very strong, but strong enough to let you know it was there, even with the gas masks on. The last gas we went through was called paralyzing gas, but nobody got paralyzed. I have also gone on the range since I have been here. I have gone two times already. The first time I went we shot at targets. I got 61 out of a possible 100 score. I was told this was very good considering it was my first time on the range. The kick of the shotgun has nothing on the kick of an army rifle. I was nervous as "hell" the first time hundreds of guns shooting off, right in a row. I was afraid to pull the trigger as first for fear it would give me a "kop in the kisges". But I overcame that easily as was shown but the score I got. I might as well mention that the first shot I ever fired with an army rifle was a bull's "orgala". This was at a distance of 100 yards.

We also shoot at two and three hundred yards, I went to the range again today. We shot as ---. From the hundred yard trench they look to be about six inches high and you can imagine how they look from three hundred yard trench. The score is counted either a hit or a miss. A hit counts five and a miss nothing. I guess I got seven or eight hits. The reason for this poor shooting was that I used a different gun each time I shot. My gun is on the bun, also today it was rapid firing. Ten seconds a shot is what we were allowed. Ask anybody that knows about shooting if we had any time to wast in training. So much for the shooting. Last night we got a bunch of drafted men from Camp Grant. Tough nuts too but we the "volunteers" will take the toughness out of them pretty darn soon. The fellows are against the Drafted men pretty strong here. Can you blame them? The "slackers" we call them get all the credit from the people and are called the "Select Men". Now to answer a few more questions. You asked if I have a pal. No. You can report to the Club if you wish. While I am taking on this subject I might as well let you know that I received a Christmas package from a Mr. and Mrs. Hohlfeld on Breese Terrace. Do you



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
WAR ACTIVITIES



CAMP

Letter #5

Page 3

know them? I don't. I guess I better write them a letter and thank them for it. I suppose you would like to know what was in the package. Well the best of all was a part silk army handkerchief. I also got some cookies, candy, raisins and gum. You advise me to take \$5000 worth of Insurance. Well I will get some blanks and fill them out. I haven't asked for the allotment yet, but I will do so tomorrow or Monday. In your letter where you tell me to make an allotment you said "Uncle Sam has plenty of gold." If it wasn't for that line I would have shown the letter and asked for an allotment but like this I will have to go in without the letter. You say you didn't get any mail from me for 13 days. I don't see why. Since I left home I have sent a dozen letters and postal-cards. Didn't you get a letter from me about the 7th telling you I was leaving Jefferson Brks for Waco the next day. Also didn't you get a couple of letters and a postal around the thirteenth and fourteenth. Also I don't see why ma is worrying about me. I don't believe I could gain 15 lbs in a month if I were home. Do you? I believe I am better off where I am. Sorry your business is on the bum and hope it is better by this time. What kind of band work is Leo doing? Glad you got acquainted with Jake's parents. You better tell his mother to stay where she is for a couple of weeks.

We were supposed to leave to-morrow but I am sure we will still be here after Christmas New Years. This is all I know and I guess all any-body knows about when we leave. I received the 5 dollars and it is almost all gone. I have enough for pictures. Don't send anymore money as I can do just as well with out it. If I haven't any money to spend I stay home and "shluf". I and Wallie went to Waco Thursday and by ten o'clock I could hardly see. I was so sleepy. Last night I went to Little Waco and went Roller Skating. After I was through roller skating I came over to the K.C. and started this letter. Tomorrow I will ask for a pass and go to Waco and have my picture taken. You say I have \$2 76/100 coming from the bank. Take it out and pay up some quarters on my insurance. If I get time after I finished this this letter I will write Uncle a letter. It is now 8:20 and I have been sitting on my "tookas" since 6:30 writing this letter and still I am not through. I believe I will take your advise and try to write everyday, so I won't have to spend so much time writing one letter. You ask what kind of Uniform I have now. The same one I got at Jefferson brks. I have another coming I think because I was measured up for a uniform and overcoat. While I mention overcoats I might as well say that the cold spell has left us and we are running around in our shirt-sleeves and "switzing". It was pretty warm this last week. From what you write I think the old town of Madison must be dead. How about it? I



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
WAR ACTIVITIES



CAMP

Letter #5

Page 4

think we got the life of Madison here in Camp. I am sending a picture of a part of the life that is here. Do you remember him. I see him everyday. He still has a crooked "morale". Instead of hollering he sings on the Camp Mac Arthur Bugle and the Waco Morning News. I don't what else to write. Do you? Tomorrow we have a clothing inspection and most of my clothes are dirty. I am still in Bing Crapsers Tent and Marshall Depeu is home and is a Corpo-ral now. Some day if I get time I am going to write to some of the boys that asked me to write to them. I guess I will have to write Bob Wise a letter also. So far I haven't written to the barracks about the letters and packages yet, but I will do so tomorrow. This is all I have to say for this time, so I must close with love and kisses and best regards to all.

From your loving son and brother

Max

P.S. For Rose and Markus:

Dear Marcus and Rose I thank you very much for your letters and I will answer them when I get more time. When I was in Waco I forgot to get some postal cards but I will do so before long. Dear Rose, I could get an Armadillo shell basket but they cost too much.



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

WAR ACTIVITIES

CAMP Mac Arthur



Dec 21 1917

Dear Folks:

Received your letters all in a row. I believe the first one I got was from Marcus. Tell him if he expects me to write to him, he should write so I can read and understand what he writes. I believe the next letter I got was dated the 15th, in which you say you are sending a money order. The next letter was a registered one with the money order in it. The next letter was dated the 15th & 16th. Rose also had a little letter in it. The first one I said was dated the 15th was the one with the money order. The other I received was dated the 17th. Last night which was Thursday, I received the little package you sent and I thank you very much for it. First of all I hope you are all well by this time as for myself I must say I am feeling fine. You asked about the "gout." Well when I left home I weighed about 129 or 125 lbs. Last night I went to Waco, and while there I weighed myself. Can you guess how much I weigh? Well I suppose

you couldn't even come close. I weighed
 just 140 lbs. That's must mean I get
 "good grub" and plenty of it. Now I
 am going to answer your questions of
 the letter dated the 15th. I told you
 before that I had some trip to Camp
 "Mac Arthur". I forget to mention that for
 hundreds of miles we saw nothing
 but cotton fields and also plenty of cactus.
 On almost every tree around here is
 growing mistletoe. I was going to get
 some and send it home but I get
 don't think it will keep that long.
 You asked what branch of service is the
 Headquarters Co. Well the Headquarters
 Co. originally consisted of the Band and
 Mounted Orderlies from Madison
 some time ago everything was changed
 around, but the Company still
 contains the Band and Orderlies.
 In addition to these was added
 Infantrymen. Headquarters is the
 choice company of the Regiment.
 Just this last week the Infantrymen
 part of the Company were divided into
 different sections. Some of the sections
 are Signal Platoon, Bombers &
 Sappers, Motorcycles and bicycles and
 also some Infantrymen. I am
 in the Signal Platoon. This is
 considered the best section of all.
 A good deal of our time is spent
 going to school. We go to Signal
 and Electrical schools. We also
 do quite a bit of drilling and



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

WAR ACTIVITIES



CAMP

Dec. 22, 1917

3

marching. Our signal work consists of Semaphore and Wig-Wag or dot and Dash Codes. After we pass examinations in the Semaphore + Wig-wag we are taught to send the Wig-wag over Buzzers or Telegraphical Instruments. The Wig-Wag Code, is the Morse name as used in telegraphy. I can send the Semaphore pretty fast now. The rate required is thirty five letters a minute and in the last examination I took I made forty-eight a minute. Semaphore originally is done with two flags. I am just learning the Wig-wag of the base another examination Monday and I hope to pass.

The above is the Wig-wag in writing. By the way! In sending with flags the Wig-wag is only sent with one flag. Wallis and Jake are also in the Signal Platoon. Jake is in my class. It is kind of hard for Wallis to get but he is getting so alright. Only



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

WAR ACTIVITIES



CAMP _____

4

191

a little slow. Every morning we go out on the field and practice signaling for two hours. Since I have been here I also have had gas instructions. I don't remember whether I told you about them, anyway I will write about it now. The first lesson we had was about how to breathe and put on a Gas Mask. The second lesson, which I believe is the last, we go through boxes filled with different sorts of gas. Three kinds to be specific - chlorine or weeping gas, this gas although ~~not~~ exactly fatal, makes the tears roll down your face, like a cloud-burst, Asphyxiating gas, will kill. The Asphyxiating we went through was not very strong, but strong enough to let you know it was there, even with the Gas Masks on. The last gas we went through was called Paralyzing gas, but nobody got paralyzed. I have also gone on the range since I have been here. I have gone two times already. The first time I went we shot at targets. I got 61 out of a possible



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

WAR ACTIVITIES

CAMP

5



191

100 score. I was told this was very good considering it was my first try on the range. The kick of a shot gun has nothing on the kick of an army rifle. I was nervous as hell the first time, hundreds of guns spotting off right in a row. I was afraid to pull the trigger as first for fear it would give me a "kop in the kisser." But I overcame that easily as was shown but the score I got. I might as well mention that the first shot I ever fired with an army rifle was a bull's eye. This was at a distance of 100 yards. We also shot at two and three hundred yards. I went to the range again today. We shot as dumplings. From the hundred yard trench they look to be about six inches high and you can imagine how they look from the three hundred yard trench. The score is counted either a hit or a miss a hit counts five and a miss nothing I guess. I got seven or eight hits. The reason for this poor shooting was that



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
WAR ACTIVITIES



CAMP

6

191

I used a different gun each time I shot. My gun is on the burn, also to day it was rapid-firing. Ten seconds a shot is what we were allowed. Ask anybody that knows about ~~shooting~~ ^{shooting} you had any time to wait in training. So much for the shooting. Last night we got a bunch of drafted men from Camp Grant. "rough nuts too" but as the "volunteers" will take the toughness out of them pretty damn soon. The fellows are against the drafted men pretty strong here. Can you blame them? The "shockers" we call them get all the credit from the people and are called the "select men." Now to answer a few more questions. You asked if I have a pal. No. You can report to the Club if you wish. While I am talking on this subject I might as well let you know that I received a Christmas package from a Mr + Mrs. Mohlfeld on Bressel Terrace. Do you know them? I don't. I guess I better write them a letter and thank them for it. I suppose you would like to know what was in the package



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

WAR ACTIVITIES



CAMP

7.

191

Well the best of all was a pair
silk army handkerchief. I also got
some cookies, candy, raisins and gum.
You advise me to take \$5000 worth of
insurance, well I will get some blanks
and fill them out, I haven't asked for
the allotment yet, but I will do so to-
morrow or Monday. In your letter
where you tell me to ~~make~~ an allotment
you said "Uncle Sam has plenty of gold."
If it wasn't for that line I would have
shown the letter and asked for an allotment
but like this I will have to go in without
the letter. You say you didn't get any
mail from me for 13 days. I don't see
why. Since I left home I have sent
a dozen letters and postal-cards. Didn't
you get a letter from me about the 7th
telling you I was leaving Jefferson Bkhs
for Wash the next day. Also didn't you
get a couple of letters and a postal around the
thirteenth and fourteenth. Also I don't
see why ma is worrying about me. I don't
believe I could gain 15 lbs in a month
if I were home. Do you? I believe I am
better off where I am. Love your business



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

WAR ACTIVITIES



CAMP

8.

191

is on the bus and hope it is better by this time. What kind of hard work is Ted doing? Glad you got acquainted with Jake's parents. You better tell his mother to stay where she is for a couple of weeks. We were supposed to leave tomorrow but I am sure we will still be here after ~~Christmas~~ New Years. This is all I know and I guess all anybody knows about when we leave. I received the 15 dollars and it is almost all gone. I have enough for pictures. Don't send any more money as I can do just as well with out it. If I havent any money to spend I stay home and "shlep". I and Wallie went to Waco Thursday and by ten o'clock I could hardly see, I was so sleepy. Last night I went to Little Waco and went roller skating. After I was through roller skating I can over to the K. C. and started this letter. Tomorrow I will ask for a pass and go to Waco and have my picture taken. You say I have \$2 $\frac{76}{100}$ coming from the bank. Take it out and pay up some quarters on my insurance. If I get time after I finish this



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

WAR ACTIVITIES



CAMP

9

191

this letter I will write Uncle a letter. It is now 8:20 and I have been sitting on my "kookas" since 6:30 writing this letter and still I am not through. I believe I will take your advise and try to write everyday, so I won't have to spend so much time writing one letter. You ask what kind of uniform I have now. The same one I got at Jefferson Brks. I have another coming I think because I was measured up for a uniform and overcoat. While I mention overcoats I might as well say that the cold spell ~~has~~ left us and we are running around in our shirt-sleeves and "switzing". It is pretty warm this last week. From what you write I think the old town of Madison must be dead. How about it? I think we got the life of Madison here in camp. I am sending a picture of a part of the life that is here. Do you remember him. I see him everyday. He still has a crooked "mole" instead of hollowing he sings. Camp Mac Arthur Bugle and the War Morning News. I don't what else



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

WAR ACTIVITIES



CAMP

191

10

to write. Do you? Tomorrow we have a clothing inspection and most of my clothes are dirty. I am still in Bing Crapsen's tent and Marshall DeFew is home and is a Corporal now. Some day if I get time I am going to write to some of the boys that asked me to write to them. I guess I will have to write Bob Wise a letter also. So far I haven't written to the Barracks about the letters and packages yet but I will do so tomorrow. This is all I have to say for this time so I must close with love and kisses and best regards to all.

From your loving son + brother
Max.

P.S. To Rose + Markus:

Dear Marcus + Rose I thank you very much for your letters and I will answer them when I get more time. When I was in Waco I forgot to get some postal cards, but I will do so before long. Dear Rose, I could get an Armadillo ^{skin} basket but they cost too much "geldt".