

Kelly Field No. 1
South San Antonio,
Texas.

Dear Dad, Mother, May + Esther:

I've got just one hour now, and I'm going to try to give you a line or two. We left Fort Slocum, on Wednesday, Nov. 28, and started on our journey South. At the island, we took one of the Government boats and steamed out into the Sound. It was a cold dreary day and snow fell, while we were lined up for final inspection. It was some job trying to keep a laugh going on a day like that. The cabin of the boat was crowded, when we got to the landing so we shipped on deck. Cold? Oh my no, we just kept pumping on each others toes until they felt good. After a while we got used to it and started to enjoy scenery. Well, we came into New York harbor, saw the Statue of Liberty, battle ships, tall buildings and everything. (There I was just interrupted, as acting corporal, I had to go out to the supplies tent and get a stove, for our tent. Well now to get back to where we were, we stopped for a while, at Hoboken N.J. and then went over to Wehauken N.J. After waiting there for about an hour, we boarded a train (Tourist sleepers) and we were off. On leaving the station, we took what is known as the "West Shore Line" (Fall out, again for inoculation.) Oh joy!

Well, I'm back, but this is the next day. It's almost impossible to keep track of the days here. Anyway, we took the West Shore Line, and out through the western part of York State, the scenery was beautiful. We touched on the Great Lakes, and then struck south, following the Mississippi valley. We passed through wonderful corn country, where as far as you could see from the train, was level corn field. Then we started to touch the Negro section, and no doubt you have seen pictures of "shack settlements," which seemed to be greatly exaggerated. Don't think for a minute, that they were. The wealthy population live in the shacks, and the others, just exist. I never thought I'd ever see a family living in a log cabin, but I've seen a lot of things, since leaving home, all of which will only go to add to my education. Passing through Kansas, we stoppe at the city of Parson, and a tiny tiger kitten wandered out of the station. Needless to say, he was adopted, and placed under the care of the two Macs, McCauley and McCliggott. We always fed him scraps from our mess, and one of the boys bought him a can of condensed milk, and when that ran out, we got on the right side of the porter, and he used to swipe the milk that was served out to our Lieutenant, and save

it for little Parson. It was the funniest thing you could want to see, when about half of the men in our coach, would gather round our table, and watch the poor little kitten chase a string all over that table. After a while he got to be known all through the train as Mac's cat, and could be found most anywhere, at any time.

These people out through the west, may be patriotic, and all that, but darned if I can see why they should charge us an even dollar, for two small white livered pies, which anyone else could buy for twenty cents, a piece. Post cards were a nickel a piece, cigars and cigarettes just about double the normal price, and candy and fruit were almost impossible. We received these honors, simply because we wore "the uniform", and most of the boys were thoroughly disgusted. A soldier in the west, is not a soldier of the east, by any means. Saturday morning, at about seven o'clock, we crossed over into Texas, and at the first town we struck, the coach ahead of ours, left the rails. No one was hurt, and we were taken out on a hike. (Little Parson, went with us) We travelled through Texas, all day Saturday, and Sunday morning at 4³⁰, pulled into San Antonio. We had mess at 5⁰⁰, and after a lot of switching, we hooked on behind a freight, and went out to Kelly field, about 8 miles outside San Antonio.

We were all very much disappointed, on Thanks-

giving day, when they served us a very weak solution of onion soup, bread but no tea nor coffee, for our dinner. Some of the boys complained, but most of us took it as a joke, with the time worn expression, "You're in the Army Now."

As soon as we landed at the "Field", we were coralled in the center, and a guard placed over us. We were in quarantine, and are still.

It doesn't seem possible that you folks are having cold weather, Down here, we go about in our shirt sleeves all day. At night, however, it gets fairly cool. We sleep in tents, on small cots, a canvas for a spring, and a bag stuffed with straw, for a mattress. We have a pair of O.D. woolen blankets, a heavy, dark robe, and a perfectly good overcoat, to keep us warm. The southerners think it's awfully cold here, and can't see how we stand it.

We have about 90,000 men in camp, and yesterday, I did my turn in the company kitchen.

I ducked the guard, last night, and went down to the Y.M.C.A. and the K.C. It was my only chance to get a word home. We had hard work getting out, and were sent back once, but after circling the camp we slipped by the guard, and were out. Coming back, however, we were out of luck, we got as far as our street, nicely, but there we ran right straight into

into the Corporal of the Guard, and were challenged. After quite an argument, he let us pass, but had no right to, and it wasn't to his liking either. It gave me quite a scare, and I'm through. I absolutely refuse to leave camp again, until the blamed old quarantine is lifted. Incedently, it was my first offence, and I had to get caught.

It certainly was some "jab" they gave us yesterday. All along the line, today, you'll find one or two out of each tent, done up good. Poor old "Dud" Weldon of our tent, is awfully sick. I had to give him a rub down, and even after that, he didn't sleep a wink all night. They'll put him in the hospital, this afternoon, I think.

I was bad enough, Lord knows, but not half as sick as most of the gang. Think of it. I got two vaccinations, and neither of them took, so they said I was immune. Some of the boys have large sores on their arms now for more than a month. Wasn't I lucky? Three of my tent mates were feverish all night. But I wasn't, just a slight nausea, and head ache, and lame arm, which you may notice by this scrawling. By noon I intend to be back in the chow line full of pap, so you see, there is nothing to worry about.

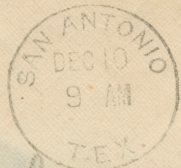
We have just had the most wonderful
sand storm you could imagine. Half
scissors! you couldn't see 20 ft. before you.
The wind was wild, and every minute we
expected to see our tent go flying off into
space. The storm lasted 3 hrs. It started
just at noon time so they postponed noon
till it was over. It's awfully cold here this
morning. What a heavenly freezing.

I think we have to set up our tents, now, as they
have been marooned all morning, so I'll close, as
the sergeant just blew the whistle.

Hoping all are well, and that you may be
able to get me a line or two, before Christmas, I remain

The same old kid.

"Peechie"



S. SAN ANTONIO
MILITARY
BRANCH



7th Letter

Received Dec. 15, 1917.

Mrs John C. McElligott.

91 Fenwood Road

Boston

Massachusetts.

From ERMCELLIGOTT
% Knights of Columbus
Kelly Field.
Texas.