

Chanute Field,

Rantoul, Ill.

Dec. 26, 1917.

My dear Dad;

How can I express the thoughts within me? Surely I can appreciate your feeling, and can say little to relieve the anguish which fills the hearts of all to whom Uncle Richard was so near and dear. You may believe me Dad, when I say I am sorry: But sorrow is not the word needed to describe the condition of my heart.

It was with great anxiety, that I opened the envelop, containing that sad, sad, news, and you can imagine how I felt, when instead of seeing the glorious season's greeting, I read the worst. No: I can't say the worst, for we have already learned that things are never so bad that they could not be worse. It seems hard to live up to that motto, Dad, but that is the one which I have picked, and am going to try and live up to it.

I was sitting on my bunk, with the other boys, after mess, today, and all were reading the news from home, and comparing notes. Upon hearing nothing from me, they inquired if anything had gone wrong. I could not answer them, I just broke down. Even now, my eyes are wet at the thought of our loss.

Your loss and my loss. Oh: Dad dear, if only I were there, to try and be of some assistance, and relieve you of some of your burden. Surely there are many things I could do to help out. But: were I to leave, even now, it would be thirty-six hours before I'd get home, and then my stay would be a short one. So perhaps it is best that I remain here until such a time presents itself, when a furlough will be granted.

Again extending my heart-felt sympathies, and trusting that the Lord will answer our prayers, I remain,

Your loving son,

Richard

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*Richard*