

November Fifteen
Fort Wood, Mo.

Dear Uncle,

I have a few spare minutes here this evening so I wanted to get started on my weeks letter writing. I got your letter the other day and I was sure glad to hear from you. I guess I should have written more than that card from the reception center but I never got around to it.

Today and tomorrow will be easy days. We were at the rifle range all week and fired record range for qualifications last Wednesday. All experts were given passes for today and tomorrow. I lucked out and got 69 out of 84 targets. You only needed 60 for expert so I had plenty to spare.

I have my pass but I don't know whether or not I will use it. I may tomorrow (Sunday) but it would cost too much to go too far off post. It costs \$7.50 to go to St. Louis from here and I don't want to spend all my money for nothing.

Last week when we were at the rifle range we had binoculars over night. I had K.P. The next day so I got to come back to the barracks and not stay out. I don't know what would have been more though. That 18 hours on K.P. is a lot of shit. They are supposed to give breaks every once in a while but we didn't get any. I was really tired.

So far I haven't had to pull guard duty at all. Some of the other platoons have had to though. Mainly at the PX and Motor pools. The only thing they carry is a night stick, no weapons. It's mainly just for experience and show, nothing else.

We don't have any cadre here that have been in too long. Most of them are just in their second hitch. Our platoon sergeant has been in the Army for 13 years. There are others running around though that have been in longer. They are all pretty good to get along with now, we are almost over the hill. Less than three weeks left.

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I still don't have any idea where I will be going to after basic. Orders are supposed to come down from the Department of the Army in our seventh week. Since I am US I will probably be in a combat field of some sort. I'm not really in too big a hurry to find out what.

We qualified with the M-14 rifle. Some of us will get a chance to fire the M-16 while we are still in basic. Supposedly OCS, US, and RA's only but we don't know for sure about that either. It is a lot better weapon than the M-14. I have only seen it once in a warehouse. Another good thing about it is there are very few commands for the manual of arms with the M-16. You can carry it like a suitcase or at trail or port arms, that's about all.

Well, a few of us are going to go to the PX and then on to a movie this evening. The PX sells beer but so far I haven't drank any. I don't want to get

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anymore out of shape than necessary. Some guys go out and really get hemmed out. Last week on Veterans Day some guys got drunk and were fighting all day long. One guy took an entrenching tool to work on some other guys and one of them had to go to the hospital. They all got article 15's and right now are digging foxholes in the company area.

Well, we want to get going here pretty quick so I had better start to close. We had pretty good weather today but for a couple of days we froze our balls off. On our last day at the rifle range (night time) it snowed like hell. It got down into the teens so I finally put on my long johns. Today it was back up in the 40's.

I got up to put on some shaving lotion and lost my pen some where. Son of a bitch. Someone must have picked it up. Well, so I had better close they are ready to go. Be sure to write when you have a chance. I would appreciate it. As always,
Gary

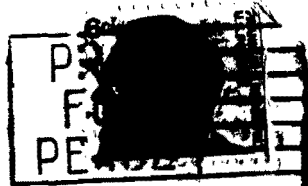
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