

Monday Jan 14, 1944

My Sweetheart.

Well honey – last night did go to the theater -- but don't ask me what the name of the picture was – I don't know. Who played in it? Russell Rosilada er something and somebody else. It was pretty good.

Then I came back to the barracks went on duty at 10 to 12.

At 12 I came back to the barracks and sent to sleep till 6 o'clock.

On post again at 8 to 10. At that I was through for the day but had to stay in the guard house till 2 this afternoon.

By the way – how does it feel getting up at 06:30 – or don't you like to be reminded of it. You'll get used to it.

Got a card from Ann. Tell her I said thanks. No letter or card from you for 2 days now, but I'm sure I'll get something tomorrow.

(1)

No other changes are here yet. The talk is side camps, but nothing definite here has been done about it yet. One rumor is that the whole Co. moves out together. There're not sending them to different places now. That's [sic] the rumor.

And tonight Rudy & I will see the "Lodger." I imagine it will be pretty good. Not going to town tonight.

I started to snow about 2 this afternoon and it looks like an all-night affair. Its coming down quite hard now.

It's kinda hard to write. Not hear from you yet.

By the way I saw the "Lodger" tonight. Its just fair. You might like it.

Well honey I better quit now. Happy dreams sweet.

Give Mamie my best. Hope she's really feeling a bit alright.

I love you,

xxxxxx

Leo

xxxxxx

(2)

Tuesday January 15, 1944

My sweetheart:

I received a letter from Ann today and I don't know how to answer. As for my picture - I'm glad you all like it. It's the best you can do or get for a quarter. And I won't forget that you, Jean, are responsible for it. You're a good kid and I love you - very much.

And tell Ann I said thanks for the Bond Salesman gag. I thought it was pretty good. The boys don't tell jokes around here - they act them - and are jokes. A lot of their antics are priceless.

So, the Skorko's are doing okay for themselves. Good. Congratulate them for me. I hope it lasts.

Jean, judging from Ann's letter, they expected you home a lot sooner. Each letter from Ann says, "We're

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expecting Jean home today, so I think I'll put on clean sheets." The next letter she says she'll change to pillow cases and the next letter mentions blankets. She better put them on. Another letter, Ann's cleaning your horses. Always cleaning something and drinking a good beer, or isn't the beer what it used to was.

As for me - I'm fine. I went to bed at 10 last night and this morning saw some pictures in the Post Theater. These were pretty good. And tonight, I'm on guard duty - 2<sup>nd</sup> relief stockade gate. Easy job.

You know something - I feel sorry for you civilians. Look all the worry you're got. Taxes - food rationing. Rotten everything. Me ---. I eat, sleep and be merry. Nothing to worry about. A few bucks in my pocket and a beautiful memory of what's back home. So, you see, things are darn good here, but there is one thing I would like to do and that is to go to some other camp. I mean a different place of operation.

(2)

Sure - side camps are okay and everyone is looking forward to go on these camp trips, but a new location. Instead of Douglas, Wyoming - Texas, California, Montana or even New York.

I was going to write more, but it's getting late and I better ---.

So Long - I love you

XXXXXXXX

Your Sweetheart

XXXXXXXX

Leo

Remember Mamie and Ann. I bet she's glad she doesn't have to write now.

Wednesday January 16, 1944

Dear Jean:

Just received a couple cards from Buffalo – and you felt good. I don't imagine that last 200 miles was too long. What about Kocik? What did Mary have to say? Did you stop at your aunt's? I guess I'll hear all about it when I get your letter.

Right now, I feel a little tired – or maybe lazy. I think maybe that's it. Had plenty of rest last night and today. Went to bed a little after ten last night and got up at five. Then rested for an hour before dinner. Incidentally we had split hotdogs with cheese melted in the cracked dogs. Not very clear but that's the general idea. Pretty good. Sometime you ought to try them.

I guess you know about the dance February 17<sup>th</sup> – well I won't be there. I'm on guard, but I don't mind. I don't care about going out anyway.

(1)

Will probably go to the Post Theater tonight – maybe not – who knows. I don't.

How about the car license? By this time, you will have had it out. Feel good?

I really don't know what to write about. Maybe something will turn up between now and then, so I'll wait.

Maybe I ought to add this. I feel good. Got a lot of time on my hands now that you've gone home – so much that it almost scares me. Don't know what to do with myself.

Just a couple more cards from Toledo, Ohio. I don't know how I got those before the others. Must have gone the roundabout way.

Anyhow, you love me and say I'm the only one is your sweet life. That's sweet honey, I feel the same. I love you and you're the only one.

So, honey – that's all for now.

XXXXXXXX

Your PFC

XXXXXXXX

Leo

P.S. Say hello to Mamie

(2)

Thurs. Jan. 17, 1944

My Sweetheart:

This is some of the paper that Rudy and I borrowed from the day room. Got plenty of it – and envelopes too.

And today is my lucky day, got Mondays Feb. 14<sup>th</sup> and Sundays February 13<sup>th</sup> letters. I was tickled to get them. I was really worried about how you made out.

In the first place – Thank Mamie for the 5 spot. I guess I just can't say how grateful I am. I've already said "thanks." Maybe it's like getting a new dress or something. You're anxious to try it out.

You kept me very well informed as to your whereabouts. That – I'm grateful for, but then I couldn't be sure where you were because the mail wasn't regular.

You got home at 6 a.m. Sunday morning? That wasn't very good time was it?

And so, you found home quite comfortable. I was sure you would. Your own room – your own bed – your friends and family. You'll be plenty busy explaining and talking about yourself and good old Wyoming. Now Mamie will feel better now that you are home. And Ann. She won't have to write any more. And to be truthful – I'm glad you're home. I feel better now that I know that you're safe. As for the boys – they don't need to be reminded that you've

(1)

gone home. Naturally they miss seeing the best looker Douglas ever had – and I'm told that by all your friends. They all miss you and so do I.

Honey – you were swell when you were here. I'm afraid I rather misbehaved at times, but that was due to Cecil wanting to go home and breaking up my home. I'll never forgive her for that. She's just plain miserly. I know you're pretty stingy at times, but I come first – I think, but that didn't make any difference.

This morning I gold bricked. I went to the post library and talked to the Lt. in charge. He's familiar with Binghamton. He's been through there several times. Must have been a salesman. Anyhow, he and some other officers were holding a court martial in a short while. I asked him who was being tried. He didn't know. What was he being tried for? He didn't know. In other words, he was being tried by some guy with a bar and his judgement was considered fair because he was an officer. Still the officer didn't know who and what he was being tried for. Inside of 5 minutes he would hear the case and pass judgement. Rules and regulations don't mean a damn. And that's the truth. He said he didn't know anything about court martials.

(2)

The private that worked there can't verify this statement, because he and I were the only ones there. They had the trial in the library, so we went out together. We talked about it for a while.

Last night the Capt. felt like blabbing. We talked about the side camps for this year. H and the Col. Looked over a couple sites one of which was Worland, the place that Lesko went to last year and another, a new one about 60 miles from here and called "Parmain" on the edge of Medicine Bow National Forest. The Capt. says it's a beautiful spot. He would. Ne's going to take charge of all the camps so he won't be in any hole for any length of time. He says he wants me with him, but I don't believe him. I'm really going to try to get away from him. I really think he's the one that is holding me back. He asked about you. He wishes you were back here. He would – the wolf.

Anyhow, we expect to be here for some time. Maybe a couple months. Oh! We will have to live in tents too. No town nearby. No transportation. In other words, you're stuck when you get out there.

Got back from the barbers just a while ago. I went into one of the compounds and gave one of the P.O.W.s a pack of cigarettes. They break their neck to please you. I guess I didn't explain. I got a hair cut for a pack of cigarettes.

(3)

Well, I guess that's all Jeanie except that I love you and miss you.

xxxxxxxxx

So Long – Honey  
Your sweetheart  
Leo

P.S. Thank Mamie again –  
Been here 6 months yesterday

(4)

January 18, 1944 Sunny Cool

My Sweetheart:

Well, honey – I guess we go on the trip Monday. About 48 of us will make the trip. I don't know where we're going. Oh! Rudy is going too. It will be a nice change after being here so long. Oh! It will only be for a few days, because we're taking light pack. Underwear, shaving equipment. Just a few things.

It will be pretty nice. We will guard P.O.W.s going down, but when we come back, we'll have plenty of time for relaxation. In fact, it will be eat and sleep.

We may head east. I'll try to keep in touch with you as I go along but don't plan on a letter every day. I may not get a chance to mail one.

So, don't be alarmed if you don't hear from me for a couple days.

Oh, yes Jurena's going too.

And today – I didn't do anything. Got up about 6:30. Cold as hell. 10 below. Had breakfast then hung around the Capt.'s Quarters – Cafeteria – Library and Day room.

(1)

That completed the first round or morning. In the afternoon – loaf. It's all I do – so help me. On guard tonight 10 to 2. Lower #1 (near the Cafeteria). It's a walking post too, during the dark. What a joke.

Remember the boys hanging around the day room?

Oh! I love you? Know?

I love you again – again and again.

Just heard talk that we're heading east to Missouri. "Camp Carson." I think it's a new Camp. I'm not sure.

I love you!!!!

Oh, well – I better quit. Don't know what else to write about. Maybe I'll write more later tonight.

So, honey, so long for now-

xxxxxxx

Your sweetheart

xxxxxxx

Leo

Remember Mamie.

(2)

Friday January 18, 1944 Warm Sunny

My Sweetheart:

Received a letter from you today. In fact, it's Monday night. Took a good 4 days to get here. By the way Jean, are you throwing my letters away? I hope not.

It's too bad you're having so much trouble getting the car license. It could have been easier if we co-signed it, but we never thought much about it at the time. I hope it turns out alright. I'll remember what you said. I did know about that, I must admit.

As for me, again. I'm fine. Got up rather late this morning. Usually we get up at 0500 to get ready for guard at 0600. I got up at 0545. Nobody woke me up. Got up myself. It's funny how a person can wake up at certain times. I was up but my partner on the tower wasn't. He got up a little after 0600. Somebody woke him up. It wasn't our fault though. It was the Cpl. in charge of the relief. And guess who we had to relieve. Rudy? That's right, and was he mad when we came 15 minutes late. Can't blame him. It always happens. One-time Rudy was relieved a little

(1)

late. You should have seen him.

"Swiped a couple grapefruits (whole ones), wanta bite?" He fumed and fretted. He couldn't talk but that temporary. Then he laughed and swore like hell. IT was funny.

I guess I'll head for the U.S.O. tonight. Another BINGO game. Maybe we'll go to the show before we go there. It doesn't start till about 0900 (21:00). This will be the first time I will have been to town this week.

Oh! Oliver says he thinks some of the boys will move out Wednesday. Even if we do, don't worry. I'll keep in touch with you if it's the last thing I do.

How does it feel to be back to work? Not so good. I was hoping you would stay home longer. I know how you hated to go back. Why don't you get out? Maybe you can get something else, but then maybe you wouldn't be able to get off when you wanted to. Maybe you're better off.

And now, I commence to lose my memory. SO that means, so long for now.

With constellations of love – Your sweetheart

XXXXXXXXXXXXX

Leo

Give Mamie a squeeze for me.

(2)

Sunday Night January 20, 1944 Warm Sunny

Dear Jean:

As I write this, things race through my mind. Am I going on this trip or ain't I. And why do I think that way?

Wee this afternoon, I had a machine gun go off in the tower. No, not me. The Officer of the Day came up the tower, chipper as all hell. He's the new one with the 462<sup>nd</sup>. He barged into the tower, pulled back the bolt, which loaded the chamber. Open the cover and pulled out the belt of 250 drs. 30 caliber, pulled the trigger and BANGO!! Right through the window went one shot. I stood there for a minute, stunned at what he did. The Lt. couldn't say anything, but wen tout and then the telephone started to ring. Everybody and his uncle called up. "What happened?" Offices, Noncoms and EM (Enlisted Men) wanted to know what happened. They could hear the shot all around the camp. The fellows on the next tower, No. 2, damn near jumped out of their pants when they heard the shot. You see the gun faces in their direction.

Anyhow, we may be called s witnesses. That's why I say I don't know if I make the trip or not. I don't want to miss the trip. Some of the boys are going to be pretty busy pulling

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extra guard duty. One of the boys just came off guard duty this morning. He's through at 2 tomorrow. Then at 2 tomorrow he goes on duty again. 72 hours is what he's pulling.

Did I tell you Douane is helping out with dogs?

So, you see, that's why I would like to go on this trip. If anything happens between now and then, I'll let you know.

It's still near Kansas, Missouri.

Received a letter from you today. Thank you honey. In it you mentioned that you got straightened out with the car. Good.

How does it feel getting into your car again? Pretty good, eh. Getting enough gas? I hope so.

Just got back from last minute instructions. We'll be near Kansas or we'll be going through there.

We can write, but can't mail them till we get there. So, you won't get mail for a few days.

I better quit for now. I love you – goodbye for now.

XXXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXXX

Your Sweetheart

Leo



Monday January 21, 1944

Dear Jean:

I'm on my way heading toward Missouri. I left my pen in my coat and my coat is way back through some prison cares and I hate to make the trip back there. I just got off duty after a 6-hour trick. Seems quite long – doesn't it?

Right now, I'm sitting in the troop coach. It's quite different than those I've ridden on before. It's a coach with a steel body, about 9 feet long and equally as wide. It has 3 separate cots 3 high.

By the way, I'm not on that train. I'm on another one now.

Don't have much time to write honey.

This is just to let you know where I am.

I love you

Leo

I thought I mailed this, found it on the train this morning

(1)

Tuesday January 22, 1944

My sweetheart:

It's still rather difficult to write. I'm in Kansas City, Missouri – on the train. We will be rid of our P.O.W.s in a short while.

As you know, I started on this trip as one of the boys – yes – pulling guard. Well it didn't last long. I pulled my first 6 hours – then the Capt. pulled me off. So now, all I've been doing is sleeping and taking it easy. Had a full night's sleep – 9:30 to 6 this morning. Then had bacon and eggs and then came back and went to bed. And thusly I spent the morning.

Boy, am I getting fat. I bulge all over. I noticed that for the first time this morning. They have full length mirrors in the wash room. I don't look again. I'm afraid.

Oh, yes – we took about 200 P.O.W.s with us. 47 men. Then we picked up another bunch at Scott's Bluff. 300.

(1)

All told, about 500.

Don't know how long we will be here. Probably till tomorrow about 9:00 and after which we will head back to camp. We expect to be in camp Friday.

So, until the next letter

Goodbye for now

I love you

Leo

XXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXX

(2)

Saturday January 27, 1944

Dearest Jean,

Arrived at Buffalo about 9:00 p.m. Train was a little late, but we made pretty good time anyway. About 5 ½ hours. Not bad. When I got here I boarded a transfer bus which took me directly to the New York Central train station.

And no, I have about an hour to kill, so I managed to find a U.S.O. in the station. Had a bite to eat here, hot coffee included.

And now, even though not so far away, yet it feels as though I'm in the other part of the world, I manage to think of you.

The card I sent, I wrote while in Elmira.

After eating a couple of cookies, I happened to notice a colored fellow sitting opposite me. He looked familiar. I talked to him. It turned out that

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he was from the first ward and he lived on Clinton Street for 20 years.

So, we had quite a chatter. We talked about the old gang. He's over age, incidentally. I guess he plans on staying in Buffalo for as long as a job holds out.

I thought of your relatives, but I know it's useless to get a hold of them. Time is short as is. I would like to see them

I thought of Bert too. If I get any time to myself, I'll hunt him up.

It's funny to break away from home after a bit of home pleasure.

And all I think of is how much I love you. You'll hear a lot of that from now on.

I guess that's all for now sweet,

Goodnight, Sweet

As always, Jean

Your husband

XXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXX

Leo

XXXXXXXX

(2)

Sat. Jan. 27, 1944

Dearest Jean:

I did sit with this girl. She stopped off at Almira. Married and has a boy 10 years old. I didn't ask her. She felt like talking, so I let her prattle. She also works at the I.B.M. Name, Bailey. She worked at Links sometime or other.

Train kind of empty. Had seat to myself. I don't feel much of anything. Something lacking. Do I miss you, even though I just left you? I guess I do honey. It's kind of funny writing slush on a card like this, but I don't care.

"I love you!"

Is that plain enough? Let everybody know it.

Ain't hungry yet –

xxxxxxx

Your husband  
Leo

12 M.W.T.  
Tues. Jan 29, 1945

Dearest Jean:

To be or not to be. That is the question. To be in camp on time. That is the question. What's the answer?

Here I am in Ogden, Utah. It's a sort a picturesque spot. It's a little chilly, but comfortable. I guess that's to be expected since we're nestled between snow covered peaks extend high into the sky. As you know we're in the Rockies.

We have one little kid about 3-years old. He's the life of the train. So much pep, and so much hell. He calls me, "Pap." His father hasn't seen the boy in two years, so I imagine the expression on his face would one of utter amazement – that is, when his Pop sees him.

This kid is a little hell cat. He wants to fight with every soldier and sailor in the place. I guess that's because the fellows kinda aggravates him. He talks a blue

(1)

streak. You know the kind. Blue! And Blue! He's quick to pick up slang. Well – he's just a card. On the go all day long.

That's the life of the party. And to top that off the sailors add to the lime light. A bunch of young fellows who have 3 or 4 campaign ribbons. One of these sailors had some "Bag" just in front of me. The lights went off early – so he had an early start. And you know how it is. One eye closed and 1 eye open. That's the way it is on the train. And me. I happened to be asleep. I miss it all damn it! Anyhow this sailor commits Carnal. You don't know what that means, do you. But you have an idea, and you're correct. I picked up that word in school.

The boys tell me there's an awful commotion. The seat weaves back and forth. The seat squawks under pressure. And me. I'm asleep. I miss all the fun.

Right now, I'm parked on the yards. Ogden Utah.

And right now, I better sign off with oceans and oceans of kisses for you and eternal love to you from ---

XXXXXXXXXXXX  
XXXXXXXXXXXX  
XXXXXXXXXXXX

Your sweetheart  
Leo

P.S. I love you

Dear Jean:

Feel a little tired right now. Can't understand why. Had plenty of rest, in fact too much. Got in last night "Saturday" at 12:30 and slept till 11:30 this morning "Sunday." No, I didn't eat breakfast. Had good dinner though. Ham. Plenty.

Didn't go to the dance last night. Couldn't get Rudy to make up his mind. He hung around the doorway and so did I. What else could I do. Finally, about 11:30 we left the place. Had a cup of coffee at the Coffee Club, then went back to the barracks.

I can name the places now and you know where they are, and

(1)

then perhaps even better than I do.

Right now, I'm writing in the guard house. I'm on the same post I was on the other night. And Rudy is here with me now. I mean in the guard house. He's still on duty. He's supposed to walk around the building for 4 hours, instead he's sitting in here reading his old favorites, "The Sgts. Manual." Let's see. I was on from 2 to 4 this afternoon then 10 to 12 tonight and 8 to 10 tomorrow morning. (6 hours). Rudy is on from 2 to 6 this afternoon and 2 to 6 tomorrow morning. I've really got a better job. More rest. Don't think we can go to show tonight, but I'll try like hell. Bet you I don't go.

Just came back from an art exhibit in one of the P.O.W.'s building. Those boys are pretty clever. Paintings, drawings and carving – also woodwork.

Honey, I can't do much justice in pen scratching right now so for the time being, I'll quit. Maybe something will pop up.

Maybe I'd better tell you about supper. Nothing spectacular. Just steak – all you want of it. Scratch my heart.

I'm pretty happy honey but I miss you all.

I love you.

Your baby?

Leo

(2)

Dear Jean:

Feel a little tired right now. Can't understand why. Had plenty of rest, in fact too much. Got in last night "Saturday" at 12:30 and slept till 11:30 this morning "Sunday." No, I didn't eat breakfast. Had good dinner though. Ham. Plenty.

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I love you.

Your baby?

Leo

(2)

PFC Leo Skorko  
Asn 32935861  
SCU #1662  
Fort Sheridan, Ill

Mail  
Here I think it will work Do you  
suppose you could notify the Sun by phone?

Raining like hell It's  
Muddy like hell

Jean Sweetheart,

Here it is Sunday and whipping day. The barracks are pretty well cleaned out now and the boys have resumed the usual gambling. And it's raining like the devil.

I guess we have quite a crew going to Fort Sheridan. A bunch of Headquarter men are going too. Nearly all of them have been busted. Also, the 462<sup>nd</sup> has donated manpower for the trip.

This camp Sheridan is supposed to be a nice place – about 30 miles out of Chicago and near the Great Lakes Naval Training Station. Hear they have a large park out there.

Some boys get a break. They live in Chicago. Isn't that luck.

I hope something good like that

(1)

happens to me.

I received a letter from you today. You said you received 2 letters with snapshots. The mail service is bad out here. Still bad weather. I ought to get your letters in a couple days out there.

And sweet. Don't worry about the noise you make with your violin. I'm sure they don't mind. They admire you for your courage to take it up. Do you think you are getting anything out of it?

This morning, Jurena and I went to town. Yep. Went to get a last glimpse of the church.

After that we had dinner at the coffee shop.

Duane always tells me to say hello to you. And so, do a lot of people. They wonder how you and I still love you. I always say I do, very much to earth's end. Then I say she's, meaning you, wonderful. The most wonder girl what is.

That's all Jean for now. I'll be able to tell you more when we get started.



I love you – I love you.

Your husband

XXXXXX

Leo

XXXXXX

P.S. Regards to Mamie and Ann

My last letter out of Douglas.

P.S. I love you "Angel."

(2)