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Transcribed by Kara Kralik 07/07/2020

[*Letter is written on letterhead with Quartermaster Corps insignia with text:*]

CAMP LEE

VIRGINIA

March 31, 1943

Dear Ones,

I'll try to start a letter now - before 7 in the morning - but I'll be very surprised if I get to finish it before 9 tonight. I feel well; the last traces of my cold are disappearing and my blisters are well on the mend. As you know I can officially tell you nothing about our basic except that it is tough and each day is very tiring. My attitude is at last the right one, I think. I have just stopped thinking. Of course everybody gripes over the lack of free time, but my viewpoint is that the time keeps passing and I just do everything as we go along the best I can. The quicker the days disappear the better. Basic will be over before we know it. (It is now 1:45 in the afternoon. I

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received your letters. I have written cards to the people in Richmond. Thank you for being my social secretary and explaining to the clan why I write only occasionally if at all.) (It is now 8:30 - so here we are). Tonight I have had to waste quite a big period of time dodging the corporal. The grass-lawn around the mess hall had to be dug up and my back just didn't feel in the mood. Since everyone else is writing home the facts I guess I can outline our basic so far - Infantry drill and tactics, military law, [*illegible*], and discipline, first aid, defense against mechanized, air, and gas attack. We have been

issued rifles but have not been taken on the range yet. I am becoming quite experienced in making a pack, cleaning a rifle, not to mention

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sweeping and mopping the floor and making the bed. They are fanatically insistent on clean barracks and they talk a lot about personal cleanliness but the last suffices. During the day we just don't have time to wash our hands during the day. Shaving every night has to be squeezed in but showers are often sacrificed to cleaning a gun. I am getting more used to our system of eating, most of the fellows are learning the advantage of cooperation. The period of sleep, no matter how troubled by visions of screaming corporals, is still the most pleasant part of the 24 hours.

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I will draw about \$30 pay Saturday. I take it I lose \$6.50 on bonds and \$13 for 2 insurance installments so that \$30 actually seems high. I still think I'll push my bonds up to \$10 a month since I can never use over \$30 in 30 days, and I still have your \$25 money order uncashed. I hope you have cancelled the daily paper; it was a nice idea but I can never read it - so please have it cancelled. I have received all your mail - I appreciate even H.B.'s joke album - please keep it coming. I guess that campaign goal will give you one or two bright spots of hard work. I certainly hope you go over the top. About my shoes, the rain and damp at Devens spoiled them - I will ~~through~~ THROW them away when the

others arrive - using the shoe ties to preserve them.
Now about the Richmond trip. It takes about ½ hour by bus to Petersburg.

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I left around 12:30 at noon Sunday.
At Petersburg I caught the bus (99¢ round trip) for Richmond - I arrived at 1:45 and called Mrs. B. The trolley bus ride to her house took 45 minutes. She received me warmly; the house was full of grandchildren and children. I had a snack and felt right at home. She then drove me to the Galeskis. (*printed:*) GALESKI). Barbara G is a high-school senior, very pleasant appearance and very intelligent. She had a bunch of friends there but they soon left. We played ping-pong, listened to the Sunday afternoon radio music and then I called you up. Barbara and her mother were cordial but I left before supper, took a snack at

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the bus depot and was back at camp before 8. It was a very pleasant day - the home atmosphere and the phone call made me feel marvelous as you can imagine.

That covers things. I hope I have answered all your questions - and that you can read these letters.

Love,
Sumner