

Henry - Jim in the barracks, off this a.m.

I got your letter of the 19th yesterday, but couldn't answer it because I got a pass & went to Wilmington.



FORT ONTARIO  
OSWEGO, NEW YORK

I almost didn't get the pass, over, in fact, got it

Edo me to see the 1st Sgt & not to be helpful. Two and a half hours after I went off duty I found the 1st Sgt. who promptly turned me down without asking a question. I asked him if the purpose or destination or necessity made no difference. He said it didn't to him, but I might see the C.O. - which I did.

Politely & smilingly said C.O. gave me a pass good for 15 hrs. instead of the 6 hr. pass I was hoping for. I felt pretty good, seeing them again. They are all in fair shape. I got back early, but not as early as I expected. It seems as though I missed a bad accident by a matter of minutes. Reports at this early hour are fragmentary.

This morning I expected to ship. Two of the others did, but not I. One of them got in only late Friday night.

There probably is a letter from you today, but I won't be able to get it in hours if there is.

They have just turned the lights out, as they do in the barracks every morning, & it is still pretty dark, so I'll stop for a while.

You correctly noted a flaw, or a note of falseness, in my recent long letter. But you don't say it right. I'm not trying to talk myself into anything. I know the course on which I have decided is not the correct one. But I also know that any other first, even in futurity, and also, will result in personal sufferings. What my decision really amounts to is this: Six suspended efforts to have myself directed to a useful capacity. I have decided to wait until I'm sent & try my best to do exactly what I am expected to do. I realize that I'm not really

Wed. a.m. - 2/24/43

only by accident. There appears to be a ban on all passes save on weekends, and restrictions on those. I was turned down by the "C.O.": He

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discharging my responsibility (so far as I am concerned), but  
there appears to be no other course open. It is this realization  
that prompted me to give you the lengthy  
explanation. I know that this is not the best course,  
but I don't know what I can do to get a worthwhile  
job, and I do know it is easy to get yourself worked  
loose by trying and asking. To abbreviate & simplify  
a bit more: I'm just not doing anything, which is the  
situation everyone else is in at a reception center. But I  
still feel guilty & dejected about it.

But I strongly disagree with you & Marc when  
you say the Army is no place for one who has thought for  
himself but is for those used to not thinking & doing  
only what they are told when they are told. It is  
probable that people of the first group are ~~not~~ unhappy  
& wasted in many cases, but it is the absence of such  
people in the right places that causes this. People  
who can do things & act on their own are very  
necessary. A good soldier is not a blind follower. Look  
at the difference between the individual Nazi & Soviet  
soldier to get a good picture of this... But I think  
there is no questioning the appalling stupidity &  
stupidity of those responsible for the deplorable messes.

I hope this is a bit more lucid an explanation.

I'm sorry that Marc didn't speak to his friends  
down. I'm afraid it is too late. But I'd like to talk him up.



FORT ONTARIO  
OSWEGO, NEW YORK

I'm surprised at Mann's wanting Aid along the other night on the projected "party" that may have taken place. Have you heard from Aid? I hope so, & that he is getting his situation settled.

I'll try to get Bob's letter from C.C., where it should be. I haven't had a chance to look his friends up but I hope to today.

Say "hello" with love to Georgia for me, & to by love to Bill.

That seems to be about all for the moment. I'm returning the article sections, maybe in here I hope you can read this. I have been standing writing on the bed, not the best style, but better than anything besides the Service Club, & I didn't want to take a postman's holiday there this a.m.

Remember me to your folks if you speak to them. Love  
Hank

Tomorrow is my office day for Parking &  
hope I don't slip. Got this week has poor  
day.

GRAPHIC TRACE  
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