

6/3/42

Good morning, Dear,

I got to work a little early this morning, and if it doesn't interfere with the fellow cleaning up (who insists I'm a full hour early, though I doubt it) I may be able to type this entire letter on a decent typewriter, even on a typewriter desk.

So let me get down to the real point of this letter without further ado, though let me first say I have no news to report. As I told you I have purchased a book on Company Administration for the sole purpose of learning the stuff in the hope that, at my eventual assignment I might be able to "buck" for a better, easier job and possibly a rating. Well, I have been spending my free moments in the barrack reading it. This morning I was reading the section on discharges and came across the following: A man accepted for limited service is to be discharged if he can not do manual labor day after day. This is the language of the text book. It quotes as its authority War Department Circular 395, dated December 5, 1942. Now, it seems to me that this clearly covers me (and let me add, parenthetically, that when the State Director of Medical Service for the Selective Service told me that I would not be accepted he read me a similar bit of language relative to my back injury). Now here is my point. As you know, I do not want Marc to do anything for me that would or could by even the remotest stretch of the imagination now or ever ~~do any thing that~~ do him any injury, no matter how slight. Hence I'm not writing this to him. But I think it would be better if he, or someone with his abilities and understanding of the way such things work, read this circular, which I think will probably be available to him. It might be to me, too, but I don't want to ask for it. You think it over dear, before you speak to him. While I cannot see how this might effect him, I want your concurrence first. All I'd like of him is that he get the circular, read it, and let me know if he thinks it covers me. If he does, then I'd like him to let me know and make any recommendation as to my course of action.

While I know how difficult it is to get some of the rights to which one is entitled, I think I am really covered by this. As you know, I really have not been able to do "manual labor day after day" since the accident on Lydia and Bill's boat. And even now, when I do "too much" as on the hike, I pay for it for a while, and this had no connection with the back injury.

If he is interested and should want to know, I have taken perhaps 75-100 treatments for the injury. A wrong thought just came into my mind: you and I alone know the strange and embarrassing times it can hurt!

Well, dear, that covers that. But please speak to him right away about it if you agree with me that it won't have any effect upon him. Of course, I'm quite willing to supply all the details they might want on the accident, for as you know there were three witnesses. And I'm quite willing for the Army doctors, if they so desire, to put me to manual labor and see whether or not I can do it. Five or ten minutes with a pick or shovel should show the most skeptical (remember the potato patch the last Sunday I was home?).

Also, in a similar connection, but not connected with the request re Marc, I have been told by some of the men that frequently limited service men are kind of pushed through when draft boards are having trouble meeting their quotas by the simple expedient of leaving off of the record some of the troubles or ailments.

You remember what happened the result when I asked that my back trouble be put on my service record? And at the induction center they said they weren't going to do it? Well, at that time I saw I was down for defective vision and flat feet (flat feet to you). When I saw my service record at Dix I saw no flat feet on it, but the sacro-iliac strain was there, after the induction center saying they were not going to put it on. Curious, isn't it? Likewise, they claimed I had no sinus trouble of any sort and refused to take an X-ray. And during the examinations I had at Dix when the doctor wanted to have me classified for light duty only, they found no sinus trouble. Yet they have treated me for it, I have known men to be discharged for it (though for more acute cases than my own by far), and one of the men in M Co. with me, a perfect specimen, an engineer who had volunteered, was, against his wishes, put into limited service because he had had sinus trouble, though he never had any trouble with it. Strange how it all works out, huh?

Well, dear, apparently the cleaner upper was right, because half of that hour has passed and several of the boys have only just come in, and they haven't started work yet. But it seems to me I have been working by 7 every morning I have been here.

So, darling, please do something about the above right away. If you should disagree with me, then please ask him to get me a copy of it right away so I can read it. Very frankly, if it does cover me—and from the Army book I have been going over I have no doubt, and have no doubt whatsoever I could get all the medical and other proofs necessary to establish it—I certainly want to avail myself of the right it would give me (and incidentally, the discharge specified is an honorable one).

About ten days ago, when I went to the hospital here for a sinus packing I had to wait for the doctor for a long while, as you may remember. At that time I tried to be allowed to weigh myself on the medical scales, but, believe it or not, though I had been told by the Army doctor to try and lose weight, they would not (by they I mean the soldier, not officer, in charge) allow me to weigh myself. I want to get weighed on a good scale because I think I have lost some weight. It may be just that I have taken off my winter underwear.

Well, dear, others have come to work, and while they are not actually at work, I think I'd best ready myself for work. You'll hear from me as soon as I have any news whatsoever. Please remember me to Marc and the J's.

Love

Harold