



# KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

## WAR ACTIVITIES



CAMP .....

Aug 14

1918

Dear Cousin Mable as I sit here thinking how enthusiastically you search the morning mail for letters from your soldier boys I will add this one to your pleasure. I will be deprived of an answer to this on account of not being able to give you any permant address. I am still at Jefferson Baracks but dont know how long I will remain here, on account of my pappers getting misplaced. I havent yet been examined as soon as they are found I will be examined and given a uniform and then will be on my way to parts unknown as they never tell us where we are going when we leave here, when I arrived here I was put in a bunch of 70 that being the way the men are aranged, we were called up for examination

on Saturday morning and when the  
 papers was looked over mine was  
 missing the rest of the bunch was  
 examined and shipped out of here  
 Sunday and I was told that I  
 would have to wait until my  
 papers were found so I am  
 still waiting. I have been told  
 that such happening are not at  
 all infrequent and often causes  
 us to be kept here for several days  
 but I should worry, all that we  
 have to do while we are here is  
 sleep and eat and take in the  
 sights, there is lots of amusement  
 here in the barrack such as the  
 Y.M.C.A. this is equiped with  
 thousands of volumes of good books  
 plenty of music such as the piano  
 phonograph, and various other  
 instruments owned individually  
 by the soldiers, it is equiped with  
 a stage and has a vast seating  
 capacity, it also has a beautiful  
 ladies rest room with all the  
~~modern~~ conveniences, to which  
 the ladies have free and welcome  
 access, there is long writing tables



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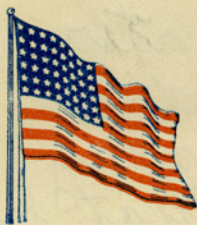


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and comfortable chairs and seats, these tables are loaded with pens and ink and stationery which is all free to the boys. It is equipped with phones by which we can phone any where but of course we have to pay for that, there is electric fans to keep cool by and you can bet they have been kept running at full speed for the past week then there is open air entertainments such as boxing and wrestling contests by the boys, and musical comedies given by various opera players. There is a big dance hall in the K. of C. building and always lots of girls for partners. The coons are given the exclusive right to this one night out of the week last night being their night. There is a big

amphitheater at one end of the  
parade grounds, in front of  
this is a fine base ball diamond  
where they have some warmly  
contested games, at 9 O'clock  
every evening at this place is  
struck a canvas on which is  
shown the very latest and best  
movies and is usually watched  
by about all the amphitheater will  
seat which is probably 3,000  
people, as I have mentioned the  
parade ground above I will go  
ahead and give you a slight  
idea of what the barracks are like  
as I had often wondered myself  
before arriving here, they are  
located about 10 miles south of the  
city of St Louis along the banks  
of the Mississippi and occupy I  
guess about 640 acres I am told  
that this is one of the oldest army  
posts in U.S.A. and was used  
for these same purposes in the  
Civil war, and a standing  
army is maintained here in  
time of peace, the parade ground  
is located in the center and



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covers possibly 20 acres, around this is built many big substantial brick buildings from 1 to 3 stories in height the streets and drive ways are all macadamized and the buildings are all fronted with nice lawns and broad cement walks. here I must say though that it has been necessary to greatly enlarge the barracks in size since this great war was declared and there has been many wooden structures added to the original barracks and besides these there are several hundred tents stretched. I am at present quartered in a tent these tents each contain ten cots and accommodate 10 men we are provided with one army blanket each and have to furnish our own pillows.

these tents are strictly water proof. having with stood a 2 hours down pour yesterday evening the first rain that has fell since I arrived here.

I would tell you a few things about the mess hall but I wrote Mother and Father a long letter shortly after I arrived here and give a pretty good explanation of this in it. I asked them to publish it so perhaps you have read it by this time. The sight of big army aroplanes is a daily occurrence here they come over here from scott field which is located across the river at Bellville Ill. there was one lit here on the parade ground at 8 o'clock this morning and at noon there was 20 manuvering over our heads, there is about 8,000 men here on average now they are coming in and going out at a daily average of about 25 car loads, they are seldom kept here over 4 or 5 days and are fully equipt when they



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leave here, we are given two pair of heavy army shoes, 6 pairs of socks, 2 suits of under-wear, 2 pair of kaki trousers, 2 wool shirts 1 hat, 3 towels, 1 blouse, 2 heavy wool army blankets, 1 pair leggings, 1 comb and hairbrush, knife, fork, spoon, cup and plates we are told to have our own shaving out-fit, and pillow and are allowed to take as many towels, Handkerchiefs, socks, underware, of our own as we see fit and are allowed to buy and wear our own shoes if we don't want to wear the ones they give us, many prefer to do this as the heavy army shoes are so tiresome when we are allotted our clothing we are given a large sack made of heavy duck about the size of an ordinary potato sack

at the top of this sack is a heavy cord which answers as a draw string to close the sack and serves to carry it by, ever thing we are given and allowed to take with us is placed in this sack, we then take our suit cases and civilian clothes and other things that we are not allowed to take to camp and have the privilage of sending them home or selling them to the Government if we prefer the latter there is a Government buyer who pays a fair price for them, this is a great life to live and one has many things to learn and meets with all kind of men from all parts of the good old U.S.A. there is two fellows in the tent next to the one I am in that was examined monday when the uniforms was handed to them they threw it back at the officer and said they would not put it on, when asked why they said it was against their religion to kill and would not wear a soldiers uniform, they were forced



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to put it on, but this morning  
 come out of their tents with  
 their civilian clothes on, then  
 the fun commenced there has been  
 a bunch around their tent all day  
 threatening them with everything  
 such as hang them take them to  
 the river and many other things  
 I really believe they are pro-Germans  
 and I have been told that the  
 officers has given them just so  
 long to put on their uniforms  
 or face a court martial which  
 would mean either being shot  
 or go to prison for at least 20  
 years for such an offence as this  
 there is at least 20 soldiers in  
 their tent now some of them  
 trying to reason with them to  
 get them to put on their uniforms  
 and others cursing them but

up to the present hour they have stood pat and absolutely refused to put on their uniforms if I find out what happens to them I will tell you in my next letter. I have been in St Louis twice ~~times~~ since I arrived at the barracks as long as we are wearing our civilian clothes we can pass in and out of the barracks as visitors just so we are here at our tents from 6 to 9 in the morning and 1 to 3 in the afternoon I am associating with a little fellow who lived in St Louis before coming here, he invited me to go to the city with him yesterday afternoon, after arising at his sisters home where he was going to get some clean clothes we were immediately invited to stay for supper to which we agreed to do with out much persuading, we were served with the finest of fried chicken and many other good things to numerous to mention after which

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they wished us all kind of good luck and thus we returned to camp none the worse off for our trip now Mable I will send you my address as soon as I have arrived at camp I will also ask that you show this letter to Mother and father and if you consider it of enough interest you may have it published for the benefit of other friends who might like to hear from me as it is impossible for me to write to them all, Boost for the good old U.S.A. and don't forget to write to the soldier boys

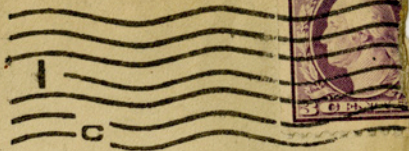
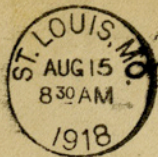
From Your Cousin  
Roy Croson  
at Jefferson Barracks.



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FROM

Ray Croson  
Jefferson Barracks,  
St Louis, Mo.



Miss Mable Croson  
Kirksville.  
Mo.

% H. C. Croson's store.

W. I. 59.47

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