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CO B 32 AR APO 253

PM NYC NY



*John D. Goodin*

MRS GLENNA GOODIN

RFD 1

ERWIN

TENNESSEE

Oct. 26th 1944

Dear Mom,

According to the papers, the boys have had their first snow, and it looks like a winter campaign against the enemy. I can see you worrying over me now...well, honey, I have three pairs of heavy long johns and wool socks, a nice big mackinaw, and as far as that goes...when we aren't actually in the front lines, we are staying in houses, and will be I guess for quite a while. So, darling... please don't worry about me. I'm sleeping in a nice bed..all to myself, covers and all..and I open the windows at night and get plenty of fresh air, and things that ordinarily would get me down don't bother me anymore. I have a grand (not a baby grand) piano upstairs, a fire and hot water to wash and shave in. (had the loveliest hot water bath...just got soaked and soaked in it..best bath I've had since I left home, and no kidding). We have hot meals (lovely hotcakes..tonight we had the best hamburger) hot drinks.. and well..Mom..for a war to be so short a distance away..it doesn't seem real at all.

Got another bronze star for one of my boys tonight...still am sweating out three more...I now have 5 for them, and several Purple Hearts. I have three others in for them, but they haven't received them as yet.

Today I wandered down to the front...the houses are all shot to hell, and the pictures you see and the stories you read of ghost towns, are just what I see. No one around, a dead cat in a doorway, baby clothes hanging on the lines, windows shot out, glass all over the place, a tank knocked out. German machine guns shot up, gas masks and other stuff laying around..where they (Jerries) had been shot or captured. A helmet.. hole through it, bicycles, wheels off; wires stringing everywhere... broken up, twisted..houses all the same. A church steeple banged to pieces..yet standing majestically viewing the countryside and the vacant streets..a puppy..vest pocket size, wandering around..he'll make a good Allied pooch when he grows up..he certainly can't!! A civilian gal being led, unceremoniously (particularly for her) out of the restricted area. Shops all torn up...people wandering in the permitted zones..and wondering why the hell we have to put up with them, their smiles, sometimes smirks. The lovely gals..already we have cases of venereal diseases because some dopes can't control themselves. As some one said, if they aren't trying to kill a german, they are trying to kiss a German girl. (There is a beautiful little brunette next door to us here. )

But so much for that...I think of my own little home town. The Erwin Record, the show, the drug stores, A!R. Brown stores, Unaka stores.. the Y, Hale's, Hotel Erwin...and Johnson City...me, me. A cold morning on top of the mountain picking up a maple tree and bringing it home. The old Howells at the line...and their whiskey and trimmings!! My, my. And the many little things that we did together..a joy of living that made more love between just you and me than thousands of things that psychologists try and tell you. And a love that thousands of miles, millions of people, and 24 hours day of action cannot wipe out..and the very picture of Death herself cannot wipe out, obliterate, or even mar or scar to the slightest degree. That same love, Mom, that enables me to bring you and God together and we have a talk together ever so often..just to see that I don't wander too far away from my peacetime thoughts, ideals and principles. The love that says Johnny, you know right from wrong..and that is wrong; or maybe a compromise is worked out. Sometimes..I don't think you'd exactly approve, but you'd understand it all...and maybe that is best. And I look forward to the time that I can get back and tell you all these things that I want to tell you, and I can't tell you now--as we sit in front of a big fire, eating potatoes with 2 pounds of butter, and a gallon of sweet milk.

Well, Mo..it's getting a little late and I think I'll go to bed. Write when you get a chance and I'll try and write you more often from now on.

All my love from your,

Sookcalf!!