

Camp Cuba Libre Jacksonville, Fla., June 11, 1898

My dear Mother

I am again now in a very awkward position to write a letter. I am leaning on our eating table with a fine brush arbor for shade, during the day our company is only allowed ten passes and as I was off yesterday to see the town, and secure some suitable place to write letters I don't think it exactly right to try for another pass as I might deprive some one of the opportunity I had yesterday hence I am writing as I am.

On Saturdays & Sundays we do no drilling, but are compelled to stay in camp during the day except Sunday when I understand we are entirely free. I met our Chaplain this morning & he invited me to spend some of my leisure time in his tent.

We are faring much better now than usual having some vegetables for our dinner and sleeping apartments are very good & we are compelled to keep our blankets over us at nights because they are very cool, the days are hot, except in the shade & then it is very pleasant, the wind is blowing all the time.

There are at present nineteen boys around me so you may know how disagreeable it is for me to write.

No doubt you have heard by now of the disgrace of one of our sergants [sic] who while drunk, came in late & tried to pass the sentinal [sic] & upon being refused threatened to shoot him, in all probability he will get about two years in the Sing Sing Prison.

I presented my letter of introduction to **Gen Lee** last night at the Windsor Hotel & had about half an hours chat with him.

Our blue flannel shirts were delivered to us today and our uniforms will be given us Monday or Tuesday & as soon as we get them I intend to have my picture taken and sent to you.

There is some chance of me being detailed to the hospital corps but I understand they are to enlist for three years instead of two and if that is the case I will not consent to it, but if it is only for two years I shall accept the position [sic], besides getting \$21.60 per month instead of \$13.60 I will be relieved from sentinal [sic] duty and all active service except caring for the sick & wounded it was through the efforts of my friend **Sergt Snead** whom I met while at the Blues Armory, that my chances are as good as they seem to be.

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Right here I stopped for dinner and while eating, your letter of the 10th was received and was more than glad to here [sic] for the reason it was my first from home with the exception **Billys** & with yours came a letter from **Miss Ready**.

Well I commenced this letter this morning at the camp & here I am now in Jacksonvill [sic] in the Windsor Hotel, so you see how little we know what we are going to do with in an hours time.

As I said we do no drilling on Saturdays or Sundays and are not allowed to go in town on Saturdays nights, but are given our liberty from 12 M until 6.45 P.M. On Sundays I understand we are perfectly at liberty and as we have a church in this town I expect to attend & by the way if **Mr. Sweeney** knows the pastor of it I would be delighted to have a letter of introduction.

Probably you would like to know some of our military laws & discipline: we have to arise every morning at 4.30, dress in seven min. then is roll call, then clean our tents, eat breakfast, it is then about seven at 9.30 we drill untill [sic] twelve then we have dinner which by the way consisted today of the following which I enjoyed very much: stewed beef with thick gravy & irish potatoes & bread & water. Now you may think that is an awfully bad dinner but I enjoyed it very much.

Then you are compelled to salute every commissioned officer you meet & if sitting when they pass we have to arise & stand at attention then salute him and for failure to comply with this, you are placed in the guard house & given a stump to dig up the next day.

When in the city we are compelled to keep our Jackets buttoned up tight unless we have on our blue shirts & then our suspenders must not be worn but simply a belt to hold our trousers up.

No standing collars or cuffs are to be worn. Last night two members of the "B" Co. Blues, were in town on the street with two girls & the sentinal [sic] stopped them & made them take off their collars & cuffs right there.

One would think J'ville was under martial law as sentinals [sic] are all over town.

I expressed two alligators to the children at home & at sisters, have they received them yet.

I certainly wish you all could be here even if we are in camp, because we are having such a fine time time [sic], no

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one has been sent to the hospital from our company, and I think there are only ten from our regt.

With love to all & trusting you may write soon I am your
aft. son. **Walter**

[Envelope postmarked 11 June 1898, Jacksonville, Fla.
addressed to **Mrs. L. A. Crenshaw** 316 Lombardy Street
Richmond Virginia