



ARMY AND NAVY
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
"WITH THE COLORS"



May 26, 1918.

Dear Marie,

We are still at Fort Leavenworth but still always expecting to leave the next day. The trip to Camp Wadsworth will take five days and we are having trouble getting pullman cars.

Your letter of the 23rd came yesterday noon and I was going to answer it last night but I started a letter to Gladys Warren, a sister of a good friend of mine, which was interrupted by Morse, who came down for a visit. He stayed until supper time and I walked up to his barracks with him.



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Morse is sure a fine fellow and I am sorry he and I did not get acquainted sooner. We talked radio, buzzer, and ground telegraph almost half the afternoon.

Your telegraphic message was O.K. In your last letter you told me to tell you exactly what you wanted, you to do, to please me the most so I am going to take that liberty.

Regarding telegraphing I would advise you to drop it entirely. Don't waste time on a thing of no value to you unless you find real fun in it. My pet weakness



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during the last five or six years was studying too much, too many different things. Radio and buzzer telegraphy, photography, chemistry and a half a dozen other hobbies all had a hold on me and I spent time studying technical books for which I might better have spent otherwise. I don't want to pat myself on the back too hard but I believe that my understanding of the theory of radio is better than that of the average man in the company and for photography,



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the Personnel Officer from Washington told Captain Murphy that I had the best technical knowledge of photography of any of the 80000 men he had examined. But what have I gained by it? The long hours I spent at home studying these things have paid me back very poorly and I look back at that waste of time with a good healthy feeling of regret. So please let me caution you against studying too much outside of school. Of course photography is a worthwhile



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hobby which I expect
to be of value to me.

If you really like
telegraphy as a recreation
go to it but remember

that swimming & outdoor
sports of all kinds are
absolutely the best and
I would say necessary for
a normal life.

I am certainly glad
that you have the
opportunity to learn to
ride and sure do hope
that you will make the
most of it. The drill book
gives some interesting
dope on riding and the
managing of saddle horses.



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(6)

Spend all the time you
can outdoors —

swimming, hiking,
bicycle riding, tennis
or anything else.

What wouldn't I give
to be with you this summer,
just when we have learned
to understand each other
and love, we are separated.
Marie you have my full
unselfish love, and it
urges me to help you to
my limit.

You will never under-
stand me, maybe, but
my own sisters don't either.
In your last letter you
hoped that my next letter



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from Ft. L. would be a "nice" one.
Well, I don't know what
you thought of the one I
wrote last but I simply
had to write that way. I
told you that I would never
mention my love for you again
and I mean it.

Do you realize that you
are only fifteen (right?)
years old and yet we talk
of belonging to each other.
Marie I do love you and
you only and I believe you
love me — more than
you should. It is dead
wrong for you to think
of me as you do. You
are shutting yourself from



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other boys and that is
one thing I am dead against.
Of course I realize that you
are too young to be going
to theatres, etc., a great deal
with boys — but anyway it's
your thoughts.

Judging from your letters
this Spring, I have put
the idea in your mind
that I am a little better
in some ways than the
next fellow — and
then the more I said it
the opposite, the more you
believed it. Forget it.

Well I will put it to
you this way —



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You were only fourteen years old last year I think. We became acquainted and were together a great deal and I am sure that I learned your ways, your character, and your whole self as well or better than my own sister. And even though you were, and are, so young, I learned to love you as I have never loved anyone else — and it's the purest and most unselfish love anyone can give. The greatest thing I could look forward to would be to make you my own,



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(10.)

and I feel positive that
I never will marry
unless it is you.
For I never could be
satisfied with anyone else
after caring ^{as} I do for you.

(Now you must feel
that I am in earnest
and sincere in what I
am writing.)

But I want you to
know that I am almost
sure that I never will
marry — the war not
being considered at
all, yet I wish and
hope that we can
remain what we are to
each other until you are
say — well along in high school.

HELP YOUR COUNTRY BY SAVING. WRITE ON BOTH SIDES OF THIS PAPER.



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(11)

Please tell me exactly what you think and be equally frank and honest with me.

I do love you, Marie, and I do want you to love me, too, but please have other good friends among boys. It must seem queer to you to read this, but there are a great many things to think of and I want us to avoid any mistakes.

With love,
Forrest.



Leavenworth Community House
LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS

Return to F. W. Bassett,
Address Co. "A" - 67th Bn., V.C.

Miss Ava Marie Shaw
389 Highland Ave.
Beloit, Wis.

