

W. Co. 11.

make up the room mornings. She looks like a Rackham drawing, but is the essence of cheer and motherliness.

The first night I was a little nervous - not much - but next day I bought a lock for my door (I didn't have any) and I haven't had a nervous moment since. I have a key for the front door, and I keep it locked. When I come in at night, I admit I look under the two beds and into the closet. After that I lock myself up and am entirely happy.

Breakfast is a problem. I've not had any lately, except bread and jam I carry, and from supper, but I've unpacked a Thermos bottle to-day and I'm going to have real coffee tomorrow.

The wood question is temporarily solved. I bought some in Contres yesterday, and jollied a truck-driver into bring it over to-day; so I've enough now to last at least two days. Also, the Major has promised to try to get me some from the Army, though he doesn't feel very optimistic about it. Bricks without straw? My word! If things give out as they give promise of doing, it will be bricks without clay!

The boys like my hot malted milk chocolate quite as well as they did the condensed milk kind, so that's all right. We've enough of that to last a couple of weeks, I guess, and by the end of that time heaven knows how many changes may have taken place.

I certainly did have a busy moment the other night, just before our show. I was in the kitchen, mixing chocolate, two men helping me, another man telling me a hard-luck story - genuine enough - so I lent him a little money; another writing his mother's address and giving it to me - such a clean, nice boy! I sometimes write to their mothers, just to tell them their sons are all right. I think a word from an outsider sometimes means a lot; another waiting for general information about when the show was to begin and how I'd planned the numbers, and another telling me all about his mother and sweetheart and giving me 70 francs with the request that I spend it for him in presents for them; and all the while the chocolate line, fifty strong, waiting inside the tent. I suppose, literally, all that took about 15 minutes, but it seemed about half a second. I'm apt to be busy, but that was record.

Such funny things the boys come to me about - will I tell them how to get a line to the officers, will I look over a speech they want to make, will I get them transferred to a different kind of job, will I ask the General Post Officer where their letters are - and one pathetic one yesterday: will I buy a black band for a man who's just seen his brother's name on the casualty list. How I wanted to help that boy! I couldn't. I didn't know what to say. I got him talking about his brother, thinking it might be a relief to him to talk; but I simply hadn't the words for him. I hadn't the time, either, as a matter of fact. It was a man in another town I just got talking with while waiting for Miss Ely to finish inspecting. Bed-time now. Goodnight! Tomorrow is inventory day - some job! And then it will be October and I'll be 37 years old. I don't feel it!

Dearest love,

Mildred.

By the way, I'm particularly well and fit - in case you should happen to be interested.

OK

J.W. Waddell, Jr.
Lieut. S.C., U.S.A.