

It went well. Unbelievably well. Everybody seemed instead of just going to life for their own speeches. The shepherds looked like shepherds and the little white angel was tremendously effective against the blue background. As she finished her "Fear not" speech the organ and violin took up the angels chorus - music which Bill wrote for me especially for the occasion - and the actors held their positions as though it were a tableau. Not too long though.

Between scenes - while the hillsides became the stable by the simple means of removing the fire - the music played "Holy Night" and then without stopping broke into the angels Glory song. As Ray began to speak the organ stopped, but the violin continued playing an obligato until the entrance of the shepherds. After the last speech there was another good tableau with a slow curtain while the Glory song rang out again.

It was rather a daring thing to do - to put on a mystery play - (Not Ye had a minstrel show or something like that) but it "got over" We played to a hushed house every time and I believe the boys liked it.

We repeated it three times; 6:30, 7, 7:30. One shepherd forgot his part the last time and had to be prompted. That and a slight fire during the 2nd performance were the only mishaps. One of the scater baifs was pulled too near the reflector and began to smoulder. I saw it and got there in a hurry. The curtain drawer and a shepherd put it out with their hands. It wasn't bad, but it made a pretty big hole in the baif.

F.T. isn't really pretty, but that night, in white, with a soft blue veil, and candlelight, she was quite radiant, an ideal Mary.

The tent emptied after the last performance just long enough to get the stage down and so free the counter. And then a mob filled it. Free chocolate and sandwiches at one side of the counter, a shining little Christmas tree in the middle and "Gibraltar" standing on a chair at the other and giving out the remaining socks. (Gibraltar because Fowler switched his allegiance to F.T. when she first came, but Garrison pounded himself on the chest "Harold may be fickle, but you know Gibraltar - that's me")

Oh it was a hectic night. A lot of the boys brought their own mess cups though and that eased up the washing question and relieved congestion a lot. It lasted until after ten, but I didn't care. I was so relieved and happy at getting it all over and well over - that I was hardly tired. When one of the men brought me in a sardine sandwich at about 9 P.M. I wondered why he thought I wanted it, and then I suddenly remembered that I hadn't had any supper. I've often skipped meals in my life but I don't think I've ever just plain forgotten one before.

And now its all over. Movement orders have come - and the whole Division clears out next week. These boys are all from the far West, I'll probably never see them again, but I know neither they nor I will ever forget our Christmas at St. Romain.

I don't know anything about my own plans yet. St. Romain may not be refilled with troops, our little tent may close up entirely. Even if it doesn't I'd like to move. I feel I've done just about all I have it in me to do here. I need the inspiration of a change of work. Mr. Helms has promised me a week off anyway and after that we'll see. I want take it though until after the boys go - I'd hate to fail them their last few days here, but by the 9th they'll probably all be gone. It would be awfully hard to start everything going again, to "stoop to build it up with worn out tools". Of course I'll do it if the Chief decides that's my job, but I do hope for a change.

And I haven't an idea what to do on my week off. I'm going to try to join Viracilla but may not be able to. Oh well! I didn't write for a month but read these last two letters and I know you'll forgive me I don't expect to be so hectic again. Christmas was a milestone, now that that's passed I feel on the homeward stretch. April isn't so very far away. Dear love to you all - if anyone has survived this time with sufficient energy to send it, and a Happy New Year. Mired